

Call for UN peacekeepers in Palestine

Manama, Bahrain - The Arab League Summit on Thursday called for deployment of UN peacekeeping forces in the occupied Palestinian territories.

In its final statement - the 'Bahrain Declaration' - the 22-member grouping called for international protection and peacekeeping forces of the United Nations in the occupied Palestinian Territories until a two-state solution is implemented.

It also adopted calls by host Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa and Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas to 'convene an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations, to resolve the Palestinian issue on the basis of the two-state solution'.

The final communiqué also discussed the conflicts in Libya, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, among other points.

Open wound

Mahmud Abbas told the summit his political rivals in Hamas gave Israel an excuse to wage war on



Gaza with its October 7 attack from the Palestinian territory.

"The military operation carried out by Hamas by a unilateral decision on that day, October 7, provided Israel with more pretexts and justifications to attack the Gaza Strip," he said.

Speaking at the summit, UN

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres described the war in Gaza as "an open wound that threatens to infect the entire region", calling for "the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages".

Guterres said, "The only permanent way to end the cycle of

violence and instability is through a two-state solution."

The Bahrain Declaration also urged 'all Palestinian factions to join under the umbrella of the Palestine Liberation Organization', which is dominated by Abbas' ruling Fatah movement.

The Arab League declared it

considered the PLO 'the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people'.

The league strongly condemned the attacks on commercial ships in the Red Sea, saying they threaten freedom of navigation, international trade and the interests of countries and peoples

of the world. The declaration affirmed the Arab nations' commitment to ensuring freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and surrounding regions.

Sayyid Asaad at the meet

Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, Sayyid Asaad

bin Tariq al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs and Special Representative of His Majesty the Sultan, headed the Omani delegation at the summit.

In his address, Sayyid Asaad said that the historic injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people "compels us all to take a stronger, more impactful and a more efficient Arab position that guarantees to the Palestinian people their right to self-determination and their aspiration to a comprehensive global recognition of the Palestinian State".

He added that it has to be a stand that applies the highly-desired, long overdue two-state solution, in accordance with the United Nations resolution, the Arab Peace Initiative and rules of international law.

"Without that, our region will never enjoy a lasting peace or sustainable prosperity anticipated by the people of the region and the world at large."

Agencies

Trade surplus widens 23% to RO1.7bn in February

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Helped by a robust growth in non-oil exports, Oman recorded a trade surplus of RO1.693bn for the first two months of 2024, up 22.9% from RO1.378bn recorded during the same period in 2023, according to preliminary statistics from the National Center for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Total merchandise exports grew by 19.5% to RO4.414bn during the January-February period of this year compared to RO3.695bn during the same period a year ago.

The value of registered merchandise imports reached RO2.721bn, marking a 17.4% increase compared to RO2.317bn in the previous year.

The rise in export value is primarily

attributed to an increase in oil and gas exports, which totaled RO2.566bn, a 7.2% rise from RO2.394bn at the end of February 2023.

Within this category, crude oil exports increased by 21.5% to RO1.905bn. Conversely, refined oil exports decreased by 19% to RO210mn, and liquefied natural gas exports dropped by 20.5% to RO451mn.

Non-oil merchandise exports saw a 49.1% increase, reaching RO1.601bn by the end of February 2024, compared to RO1.074bn in the same period of 2023. Mineral products led this category with a value of RO839mn, up 142.7% from the previous year. Ordinary metal products followed at RO232mn, a 16.3% increase, while chemical industry products decreased by 12.1% to RO167mn.

The value of plastic and rubber products exports rose by 9.5% to RO153mn. Exports of live animals and animal products increased by 2.8% to RO58mn, and other products also amounted to RO153mn.

On the other hand, re-exports from Oman rose by 8.9% to RO247mn by the end of February 2024. Re-exports of machinery, appliances, and electrical equipment increased by 13.4% to RO62mn, whereas transportation equipment re-exports fell by 1.3% to RO60mn.

Food, beverages, and liquids industry product re-exports decreased by 3.7% to RO24mn, while re-exports of live animals and animal products increased by 9.1% to RO23mn. Re-exports of mineral products rose by 12.6% to RO18mn, and other products amounted to RO61mn.

UN Tourism regional meet in Muscat on Wednesday

Muscat - Oman, represented by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, will be hosting the 50th UN Tourism Regional Commission for the Middle East from May 22 to May 24.

The meeting will also see the organisation of the conference on 'Investing in Tourism: Opportunities and Challenges in Sustainable Financing'.

The opening ceremony will be held under the patronage of H H Sayyid Taimur bin Asaad al Said, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Central Bank of Oman. Hosting of the meeting by Oman is of great importance, according to MHT, for highlighting the tourism sector and its cultural components, as well as strengthening relations with its counterparts in the region.

The conference, accompanying the meeting, represents an opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities related to financing in the tourism sector in a sustainable manner.

According to UN Tourism, in 2023, the Middle East was only region to surpass the pre-pandemic levels with arrivals 122%

In 2023, the Middle East was only region to surpass the pre-pandemic levels with arrivals 122% above 2019 levels

above 2019 levels, reaching 87.1mn international tourists.

With the strong forecast growth in global tourism to 2030, significant investment will be required to provide the accommodation, transport and other tourism related services and infrastructure necessary to meet expected demand, while enhancing economic, social and environmental outcomes.

'This will require an integrated approach across many sectors (e.g. transport, environment, agriculture, innovation, education, tourism) and levels of government (national, regional, local), with input and support from industry. Investment will also be critical in managing this growing tourist flows in a sustainable manner.'



SHARE YOUR
CULINARY MAGIC



Nominate your Champions

- Barman
- Call Centre Attendant
- Champion Housekeeper
- Concierge
- Commis Chef
- Demi Chef
- Engineering
- Events Person
- Finance person

- Food and Beverage(Junior)
- Food and Beverage (Senior)
- Front Office (Junior)
- Front Office (Senior)
- HR Assistant
- Hygiene Officer
- IT person
- Kitchen Assistant
- Laundry

- Marketing
- Pastry Chef
- Pool Attendant
- Sales
- Security
- Spa/Fitness
- Training and Development
- Unsung Hero
- Young Hotelier of the Year

Go to champions.nhioman.com

to register your property and nominate your Omani staff from the categories listed

Closing date: JUNE 27, 2024

Don't miss the chance... Call: 98246267



Terms and conditions apply



We help your deposits grow for a brighter future!

Higher returns on deposits for customers of the Ladies account at BankDhofar.

Scan to learn more





bankdhofar

2479 1111

www.bankdhofar.com

EA invites photography enthusiasts to help in conservation of avian life

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Environment Authority (EA) has launched a photography campaign for the preservation of Oman's avian diversity. Titled 'Feathered birds through the lens of nature lovers', the campaign seeks to encourage people to come forward to capture the country's diverse wildlife and stunning natural landscapes with a special focus on birds.

"This initiative specifically focuses on showcasing the avian diversity found in the wilayat of Sohar in North Batinah," an EA official told *Muscat Daily*.

"The authority is extending an

invitation to environmental enthusiasts and leaders passionate about wildlife to participate in this inaugural initiative. It targets individuals and institutions dedicated to the conservation and appreciation of wildlife and biodiversity across the sultanate," he elaborated.

Speaking at length, the EA official said that the objective of the initiative is to foster greater environmental consciousness, particularly regarding the birdlife in North Batinah, while providing support to key stakeholders in the environmental sector.

Participants can expect a range of benefits, including specialised training sessions by renowned wildlife photogra-

phers, the opportunity to join an exclusive environmental camp to be organised by the authority, and the issuance of experience certificates upon completion of the initiative.

EA has outlined specific eligibility criteria for prospective participants. A participant must be a citizen aged 18 years or above, possessing a camera, and consenting to EA's ownership of any photos contributed during the initiative. "Through this programme, Oman is taking proactive steps to preserve its natural heritage and inspire a new generation of environmental stewards dedicated to safeguarding its rich biodiversity."

Emphasising the vital role of

environmental diversity in preserving the habitats of these birds, the authority said that the availability of lakes, creeks, sandy beaches, agricultural land and tidal mudflats in North Batinah governorate offers optimal environments for various bird species. Notable bird species, which can be seen round the year in North Batinah are gray egret, rock heron, red-cheeked plover, sooty gull, swift tern and common mynah.

The winter visitors include little egret, great egret, little sand plover, little crested tern, red leg sandpiper and water curlew. The summer season attract species like pink tern, common tern and white-cheeked tern.

Sultanate's CBSE toppers credit school, self-study

Muscat - To excel in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) board examinations, students often tend to turn to external tuitions and coaching, however this myth has been broken by this year's toppers in the Indian schools in Oman.

The recently announced CBSE board exam results have brought forth stories of triumph and dedication. Among these achievers, Devika Balakrishnan from Indian School Al Ghubra (ISG), Yadu Krishna Balakrishnan from Indian School Darsait (ISD) and Gunjan Karwani from Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir (ISWK) shared their aspirations and the paths they have taken to achieve this success with *Muscat Daily*.

Interestingly, none of these toppers sought external coaching or assistance, relying solely on school resources and self-study. This highlights the effectiveness of the educational infrastructure provided by their respective institutions.

They credit their enthusiastic teachers, self-made notes, Internet resources and their wonderful classroom experience for their results.

Devika, with an outstanding score of 96.6%, shares her journey and future plans. "Since middle school, my passion has been in fashion design," she said. With supportive parents, who have creative influences on her life, and a clear vision, she is set to attend university and pursue fashion in London.



Gunjan Karwani



Devika Balakrishnan



Yadu Krishna Balakrishnan

counting and finance. She is considering Dubai for her higher education but is also keeping her options open in Oman.

Devika advocates for finding balance in life's pursuits. Immersed in art, music, dance, photography and poetry, she credits ISG for providing a platform to explore her diverse interests. Balancing academics with extracurricular engagement, Gunjan talks about the power of applying theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. Other than being the president of the Business and Entrepreneurship Club at ISWK, she is also involved in charity programmes, balancing her academic pursuits and contributing to the community. Gunjan credits the encouragement of her academic achievements, emphasising the role of her family and educational support system in nurturing success.

While he prioritises academics over extracurricular activities, Yadu Krishna acknowledges their importance in holistic development and recognises the value they add to an individual's growth.

Their study routines vary, reflecting their individual approaches to learning. Yadu Krishna highlights consistency as his key strategy.

Their stories of self-reliance and support from family and teachers serves as an inspiration for students who will write their board examinations in the future.

Contributed by Sneha Lijoys





إعلان مناقصات

TENDERS ANNOUNCEMENT

SOHAR Port and Freezone invites Tenderers to the following tenders

تدعو شركة ميناء صحر والمنطقة الحرة للموردين للمشاركة في المناقصات أدناه

No رقم	Tender Ref الرقم المناقصة	Tender Title عنوان المناقصة	Tender Fee OMR مبلغ
1	SIPC 2024 - 016	Supply and Installation of Chiller System at SOHAR Port Admin Building	105.000
2	SIPC 2024 - 017	Windows Replacement at SOHAR Port Admin Building.	105.000
3	SIPC 2024 - 018	Bathymetric Survey of basin and approach channel	52.500
4	SIPC 2024 - 019	Protective Coating for Bulk Jetty Structure	52.500
5	SIPC 2024 - 021	Marine Concrete Enhancement	105.000

• The above-mentioned tender fees including the VAT 5%.

• Tenderers can request to receive the electronic tender documents from 9:00 am on Sunday, 19/5/2024 until 4:00 pm on Thursday 30/5/2024.

• Tenderers to follow the below procedures and steps to obtain the electronic tender documents:

• **Step 1:** Interested Tenderers should remit the stated tender fees as per the below bank details:

• تشمل رسوم المناقصات المذكورة أعلاه ضريبة القيمة المضافة ومقدراها 5%.

• بإمكان مقدمي العطاءات طلب استلام وثائق المناقصة إلكترونياً ابتداء من يوم الأحد الموافق 19/5/2024م (الساعة 9:00 صباحاً) وحتى يوم الخميس الموافق 30/5/2024م (الساعة 4:00 مساءً).

• على مقدمي العطاءات اتباع الإجراءات والخطوات التالية للحصول على مستندات المناقصات إلكترونياً.

• **الخطوة الأولى:** يجب على مقدمي العطاءات سداد رسوم المناقصات وفقاً للتفاصيل البنكية أدناه.

Account Name
اسم الحساب

SOHAR Industrial Port Co
شركة ميناء صحر الصناعي

Account Number
رقم الحساب

3101-007970-500

Bank Name
اسم البنك

Oman Arab bank SAOC - Main Br
بنك عمان العربي، شارع ع.م - الفرع الرئيسي

SWIFT
رمز التحويلات كود

OMABOMRUXXX

Note: Bank transfers is the only mode of payment accepted.
ملاحظة: التحويل البنكي هي الطريقة الوحيدة المقبولة للدفع

الخطوة الثانية:
يتعين على مقدمي العطاءات تقديم المستندات التالية:

- طلب الحصول على النسخة الإلكترونية من مستندات المناقصات
- نسخة من إقرار التسجيل البنكي
- وثيقة العمل التجاري للشركة على أن يتم إرسالها إلى: sipc.procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

الخطوة الثالثة:
سوف يتسلم مقدمي العطاءات نسخة إلكترونية من مستندات المناقصات عبر البريد الإلكتروني.

- بتوفير ميثاق صحر بالمنطقة الحرة قبل أو ضمن أي مورد بدون الإفصاح عن الأسباب
- يتوجب على جميع المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة تقديم بطاقة زيادة إلى جانب مستندات الفحص
- في حال وجود أي أسئلة أو استفسارات تتعلق بالمناقصات أودع التوصل معنا عبر البريد الإلكتروني: sipc.procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

Step 2:
Tenderers to send the following documents:

- A request for the electronic tender documents Scanned bank transfer
- The firm's commercial registration documents
- All shall be communicated to the following e-mail address: sipc.procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

Step 3:
Tenderers will receive the electronic Tender Document by e-mail.

- SOHAR reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reasons
- All SMEs are requested to provide their RIYADAH Card along with the required documents
- For any clarification regarding the tenders please send an e-mail to: sipc.procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

It all starts here

+968 2685 2700 | soharportandfreezone.om



COMPLETE ANTENATAL BUNDLE

All Three Trimesters Together

190 OMR

170 OMR

60 OMR

1st Trimester

80 OMR

2nd Trimester

50 OMR

3rd Trimester

Normal Delivery

320 OMR

C-Section Delivery

580 OMR

*Package contains Delivery rates and Baby care charges including vaccines

MOH No - 940380

2200 4000

9972 8290

9797 1672

Omani film Ta wins prestigious award in Algerian film festival

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Omani short film *Ta*, directed by Muhammad al Darushi, has won the Best Short Film in Animation award at The Digital Gate International Film Festival in Algeria.

This is the second accolade for the film, which also received recognition in Oman last year.

Created during the COVID-19 pandemic, the two-minute silent film addresses child safety and kidnapping. It was shot in Amerat and Muttrah and features five characters navigating complex situations.

Reflecting on the film's creation, Darushi said, "It took long because I was not used to ani-



It has been a unique project as I shot and did hand painting, and finally, in After Effects, did animation

MUHAMMAD AL DARUSHI

imation and have been involved in making documentaries. It has been a unique project as I shot

and did hand painting, and finally, in After Effects, did animation. That is the reason why we took a

long time. I wanted to make something different."

The film employs a blend of traditional and digital animation techniques using Adobe Premiere, After Effects, Vegas, and Moho. Darushi sought to push storytelling boundaries, creating a narrative that resonates deeply with audiences.

"The recognition garnered by *Ta* at the Algeria film festival is a testament to the burgeoning talent and creativity within Oman's film industry," Darushi said.

"The film stands as a shining example of the power of storytelling to provoke thought, evoke emotion, and spark meaningful dialogue on issues of social relevance."

Musandam plans agricultural city, flood-protection infrastructure

Our Correspondent
Muscat

An agricultural city is set to be established in Musandam governorate as part of ongoing efforts to develop the region and bolster the nation's food self-sufficiency.

The announcement came during a recent municipal council meeting convened by the wali of Madha's office, under the patronage of Sayyid Ibrahim Said al Busaidi, Governor of Musandam.

During the meeting, various developmental and service projects across the governorate were discussed. Among the topics addressed were the establishment of an agricultural city, the construction of a breakwater in the wilayat of Dibba, addressing illegal possessions in the wilayat of Khasab, and the need for a protection wall in the wilayat of Madha to mitigate risks from flooded wadis.

Breakwater is an artificial offshore structure to protect a harbour, anchorage, or marina basin from water waves. It intercepts longshore currents and prevents beach erosion.

Additionally, the council deliberated on a request from Nama Electricity Distribution for land allocation to build a major transformer station for distribution in



the wilayat of Khasab.

Furthermore, the meeting took an overall view of the assessment of sites and plans susceptible to flood risks in the light of extreme weather events and climate change in the region.

Recently, the governorate has announced several development plans, which include 14 tenders floated by the Municipality of Musandam for upgradation of amenities in various villages within it.

Those villages include Al Balad al Bahriyya in Khasab, besides Al Shariya al Hilweh, Al Aqaba al Bahria, Das al Bahria, Sanat al Bahria and Adas in Dibba.

The civic body also called for tenders for the development of villages in Khasab including Qana, Maqlab, Mansal, Nazifi al Bahriyya, Ghab, Qubbat al Bahriyya, Ghazm al Bahriyya, Shabus al Bahriyya and Saibi al Bahriyya.

A tender was also floated for a 1.7km Madha dual street project.

According to an official, these initiatives are aimed at positioning Musandam governorate as a tourist destination, so as to make it more equipped to contribute to the nation's income in a bigger way, and create employment opportunities for the local residents.

New Scale Award announced to address tech industry challenges, drive innovation

Our Correspondent
Muscat

ITHCA Group, in collaboration with the Oman Investment Authority and the Central Bank of Oman (CBO), has introduced the Scale Award for emerging technology firms as part of the 33rd COMEX Global Technology Show, scheduled from May 27 to 30.

The purpose of this award is to bolster investment opportunities for emerging companies, both locally and internationally, aligning with the vision of the organising bodies.

Its objectives include connect-



ing winning companies with the relevant authorities, fostering investment dialogues between them, and translating innovative solutions into actionable initiatives that advance the companies' operations.

Tahir bin Salim al Amri, execu-

tive president of the CBO, elucidated that the award is poised to positively influence the banking sector by exploring technical solutions to financial challenges.

He expressed optimism regarding the award's ability to fulfil its objectives and generate

technical ideas that enrich the banking sector's functionality.

Said bin Abdullah al Mandhari, CEO of ITHCA Group, affirmed that the Scale Award is designed to address a range of challenges encountered by companies under the Omani Investment Authority across diverse sectors. He emphasised that the award targets technology-driven startups participating in the COMEX exhibition or those associated with relevant startup ventures.

Following an initial evaluation stage, finalists will be selected for further filtration based on competence and the quality of proposed solutions to the challenges.

Second largest dam project in Oman 77% complete

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The largest dam on Wadi Adounab in the wilayat of Salalah is 77% complete, the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries, and Water Resources (MAFWR) stated.

Ali bin Bakhit Bait Said, Director, Water Resources Department at the Directorate General of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Water Resources in Dhofar governorate, said, "The ministry is continuing its construction work on the dam, which boasts a storage capacity exceeding 83mn m³ of water."

"It is the second largest dam in Oman after Wadi Dayqah in Muscat governorate," Said confirmed.

The project encompasses the construction of a dam on the course of Wadi Adounab, measuring 386m in length and 70m in height.

Additionally, a water drainage channel is being constructed to empty the dam lake. Said informed that the dam's watershed covers an area of 217sqkm.



The dam project includes the construction of a concrete side spillway spanning 80m and the installation of various monitoring devices for measuring groundwater levels and water levels in the lake, as well as devices to detect leaks in the dam, cadastral points, and to measure the percentage of silt in the lake.

The ministry is trying to implement a flood protection system in Salalah by retaining rainwater originating from the mountains and flowing towards Salalah Port, Raysut Industrial City, and the Salalah Free Zone.

Upon completion, the protection system will significantly reduce sediment entering Salalah Port by up to 70%, Said asserted.

oman OASIS

Exclusive OFFER

عيد مبارك

Hot & Cold Dispenser

2 Full Bottles

30 Refill coupons

White Tap Dispenser

2 Full Bottles

15 Refill coupons

800 71 222

9275 5522

MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No.(12 /2024)

International Companies specialized in the field and registered with Tender Board, may obtain tender documents for the website through the following link: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) against non-refundable fees as mentioned below starting from the date of this announcement and until the end of deadline stipulated below.

Tender Number	Description of Tender	Last date to collect the tender	Tender return date
PRE/23/150	Consultancy Services for Master Planning for Al Nasim Park	04/06/2024	25/06/2024
PRE/23/293	Construction of Al Sifa Park	04/06/2024	25/06/2024
PRE/24/132	Consultancy Services for Design of Al Qurum Beach Road	04/06/2024	25/06/2024
PRE/24/133	Consultancy Services for Master Planning for Riyam Park	04/06/2024	25/06/2024

1. Bidders shall submit their offers electronically.

2. Clarification and Support:

● For any inquiries regarding tenders, please visit e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) .

● For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om) or call (+96824402200).

LOOK CLOSER

Double-Power cleaning coming soon

\$126mn fund launched to boost liquidity on Muscat Stock Exchange

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) on Thursday witnessed the launch of a new fund dedicated to enhancing market depth and boosting liquidity on the Omani bourse.

The Tanmia Liquidity Fund, valued at \$126mn, has been launched by Oman National Investment Development Company (Tanmia), a leading investment and fund management company, in partnership with SICO, a Bahrain-based regional investment bank. Tanmia will act as the investment manager for the fund in collaboration with SICO.

The timing of the fund's launch aligns strategically with the ongoing reforms within the Omani capital market, coinciding with announcements of new initial public offerings (IPOs), regulations pertaining to market making, and intensified marketing endeavors by MSX through roadshows and other promotional activities.

In recent months, the Muscat Stock Exchange has undergone a series of initiatives geared to-



Tanmia Liquidity Fund has been launched by Oman National Investment Development Company (Tanmia), in partnership with Bahrain-based investment bank SICO

wards bolstering the local capital market, and there has been a notable reform in certain capital market regulations, particularly concerning the dividends tax.

In a statement, Khalid bin Awadh al Balushi, CEO of Tanmia, emphasised that this project marks a milestone in Tanmia's long journey with its strategic partners to launch the Tanmia Liquidity Fund, which will expand the investor base and enhance liquidity in local financial markets.

He expressed gratitude to the Financial Services Authority, the Muscat Stock Exchange, the Na-

tional Program for Financial Sustainability, and Muscat Clearing and Depository Company for their adequate support in realising the vision of establishing the new fund.

Balushi added, "This fund is an extension of the company's journey since its establishment in 1998 in launching various investment initiatives and products that achieve investment returns and enhance the national economy. We at Tanmia always seek to promote sustainable investments and maximise value for shareholders in collaboration with various financial institutions

and regulatory authorities to achieve Oman's Vision 2040, in line with the noble directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik."

SICO's Group CEO, Najla al Shirawi, said, "The launch of the Tanmia Liquidity Fund underscores the joint efforts of SICO and our partners in Oman, backed by the regulatory authorities in the sultanate. We are grateful to our partners for their confidence in our abilities and dedication to improving the liquidity for shares of listed companies."

Shirawi noted that highly liq-

uid financial markets are essential in providing tangible advantages to the national economy. "A robust and dynamic capital market can significantly increase economic growth and promote a more diversified economy."

The partnership between SICO and Tanmia aims to emulate the prosperous model of the Bahrain Liquidity Fund, SICO's fund on the Bahrain Bourse. Since its inception, this fund has nearly tripled the market's overall liquidity. Consequently, the index has achieved impressive returns, while listed companies have enjoyed enhanced valuations.

SICO is a leading regional asset manager, broker, and investment bank with \$6.2bn in assets under management (AUM). SICO operates under a wholesale banking license from the Central Bank of Bahrain and also oversees three wholly-owned subsidiaries: an Abu Dhabi-based brokerage firm, SICO Invest, a specialised regional custody house, SICO Fund Services Company, and a full-fledged capital markets services firm, SICO Capital, based in Saudi Arabia.

Intaj Suhar, Immensa join hands to boost manufacturing sector in Oman

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Immensa, the largest digital manufacturer in the Middle East and North Africa region, has announced a strategic alliance with Intaj Suhar for Advanced Manufacturing (ISAM) in Oman. The companies have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to boost in-country manufacturing in the sultanate.

In line with Immensa's business model - building digital warehouses servicing the energy sector to enable spare parts on demand - the MoU will lead to collaboration to localise the manufacturing process in Oman.

Immensa's strength in digital inventory solutions and additive manufacturing, coupled with Intaj Suhar's local capabilities, will create a complete solution for Omani companies to procure locally produced parts.

The announcement complements Oman's key strategies of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals' 'In-Country Value' and 'Manufacturing for Wellbeing' Strategy 2040. Strengthening the supply chain via the local sourcing of goods and parts, the MoU directly aligns with Oman's aims of a sustainable and competitive local market.

Oman is an important milestone in Immensa's organic growth plans. The strategic partnership with ISAM will further catalyse the company's growing regional expansion.

In a press statement, Sary Diab, Chief Operating Officer of Immensa, said, "We are delighted to sign this MoU with an esteemed manufacturer such as ISAM and extend our solutions in Oman. It is an attractive market for Immensa and in line with our organic regional growth strategy. We also look forward to



Majid al Hinai



Sary Diab

strengthening Oman's manufacturing sector and accelerating its adoption of cutting-edge technologies - in line with the country's Manufacturing for Wellbeing and In-Country Value strategies."

Majid al Hinai, General Manager of Intaj Suhar, said, "ISAM is excited to enter this collaboration with Immensa, which will greatly enrich ISAM's additive manufacturing capabilities. The partnership with Immensa aligns perfectly with ISAM's growth strategy and presents a tremendous opportunity to expand our solutions in the attractive market of Oman."

"This collaboration also aligns with ISAM's commitment to strengthen Oman's manufacturing sector and contribute to the country's Manufacturing and In-Country Value strategies. This partnership will drive innovation, foster growth, and make significant contributions to the manufacturing industry in Oman and beyond, positively impacting local and regional economies," he added.

Adrak, MHUP sign deal for Haitham City's NH 12 D

Muscat - Adrak Developers on Saturday announced a significant partnership with the Ministry of Housing & Urban Planning for the development of Neighborhood 12 D (NH 12 D) within Sultan Haitham City.

The signing of the development agreement took place at the Oman Design & Build Exhibition 2024 held at the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre.

The project signifies a commitment to redefining luxury living in Muscat. NH 12 D will encompass over 300 high-end residential units spread across a

land area of 56,166 sqm. With an estimated investment value of RO38.7mn, the development promises to be a landmark addition to Sultan Haitham City.

The signing ceremony was held under the distinguished patronage of H E Dr Khalfan bin Said al Shueili, Minister of Housing and Urban Planning, alongside other esteemed dignitaries.

Highlighting Adrak's vision for the project, Dr Thomas Alexander, Chairman of Al Adrak Group of Companies, said, "We at Adrak are honored to partner with the Ministry of Housing &

Neighborhood 12 D will encompass over 300 high-end residential units. With an estimated investment value of RO38.7mn, the development promises to be a landmark addition to Sultan Haitham City

Urban Planning on this transformative project. Neighborhood 12 D embodies our vision for creat-

ing luxurious living spaces that elevate Muscat's residential landscape. We are confident this development will be a cornerstone of Sultan Haitham City and a testament to Oman's commitment to innovation and progress."

H E Shueili emphasised the project's alignment with the ministry's vision. He said, "The ministry is delighted to collaborate with Adrak Developers on Neighborhood 12 D. This project aligns perfectly with our vision for Sultan Haitham City, fostering a vibrant community and of-

fering residents a world-class living experience. We are confident this development will contribute significantly to Muscat's growth and prosperity."

Ryan Maxwell, Business Development Manager at Adrak Developers, said, "We are thrilled to be a part of this exciting development. Neighborhood 12 D represents a unique opportunity to redefine luxury living in Muscat. It is a privilege to work alongside such esteemed partners, and we are confident this project will be a resounding success."

WE NEED TO TALK

Omanis with disabilities and social media

The primary objective of people with disabilities is to attain inclusion. Therefore, my extensive research spanning decades on understanding the relationship between Omanis and social media has consistently emphasised the pivotal role that social media plays in the lives of Omanis with disabilities, who are integral members of the broader Omani society.

However, academic discussions on inclusion predominantly center around the various ways in which the public and society at large incorporate individuals with disabilities into community activities. Given my commitment to highlighting the agency of individuals with disabilities, I chose to approach the connection between social media and Omanis with disabilities through a different lens.

Specifically, I aim to showcase how Omanis with disabilities foster inclusion for themselves, raise awareness about their capabilities, and actively participate in the broader community, particularly through platforms like X, formerly Twitter. In essence, my research underscores how Omanis with disabilities participate in civic engagement, akin to other members of the Omani public.

This study, which is part of my Sultan Qaboos University funded project focusing on the role of social media in promoting civic engagement in Oman, is significant in light of Twitter's evolution under the leadership of Elon Musk into a platform that offers diverse and lucrative opportunities for all individuals, including those with disabilities. Crucially, my research aims to demonstrate the various ways in which we can



NAJMA AL ZIDJALY

(Najma is concerned about topics on self, national and cultural development. She is a researcher and associate professor of social media and Arab Omani identity in the Department of English Language and Literature, College of Arts & Social Sciences, at Sultan Qaboos University)

learn from individuals with disabilities about leveraging social media to advance our own careers and personal development.

But first a word on academic research on the topic: Existing research on social media and disability presents four divergent perspectives. The first asserts that social media provides benefits for people with disabilities. The second argues that social media poses challenges for this demographic. The third suggests that the technology itself may be exclusionary, as evidenced by the historical difficulty faced by individuals with visual impairments in accessing visual content on platforms like X and Instagram. The final perspective rightly contends that social media reflects the same biases and exclusionary practices present in offline settings.

For example, if women in a particular society, such as Arab women, are less inclined to participate in civic engagement, they are also less likely to engage on platforms like X. However, this argument falls short among Omanis with disabilities, as the two most prominent and active social media influencers with disabilities in Oman are a male and a female:

Akram al Mawali and Sheikha al Jassasi. This serves as a testament to the unique experiences of Omanis with disabilities. Additionally, research indicates that if a society as a whole is not inclusive, the same exclusionary tendencies will be mirrored online towards individuals with disabilities.

Further research has shown that many individuals with disabilities utilise social media for various purposes, including connecting with others who share similar disabilities, updating friends and family about their health status, advocating for themselves and others with disabilities, sharing personal experiences and establishing businesses on platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. They further use social media to protest against policies that affect their quality of life and voice their desired societal changes to achieve full inclusion.

Most importantly, research indicates that social media also serves as a tool to dismantle barriers, allowing individuals with varying degrees of limitations to assert their presence both online and in society, challenge stereotypes surrounding disability, and create and seize opportunities for themselves and others.

In summary, the evolution of communication tools, particularly social media, has played a crucial role in bridging the gap between individuals with disabilities and those without. Social media has been a lifeline for many, as the internet circumvents barriers such as inaccessible transportation. This was particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, when many activities transitioned online, providing individuals with disabilities ample opportunities for engagement without the logistical challenges of daily life.

However, research has also highlighted the potential negative impact of social media on the mental health of people with disabilities, as posts often contain negativity or create unrealistic expectations. Moreover, there is a prevailing expectation for individuals with disabilities to present a flawless image online, as they are often seen as representatives of the entire disability community, leaving no room for error or vulnerability and adding to the existing burdens associated with disability.

The findings of my research on the relationship between Omanis with disabilities and social media suggest that these individuals use

social media for similar purposes as their global counterparts, albeit with additional nuances influenced by the Omani culture and their esoteric disability experience.

For instance, Omanis with disabilities use X to connect with others - both with and without disabilities, and to showcase their personal interests and hobbies. Sheikha al Jassasi, one of two most prominent Omani social media influencers with a disability, exemplifies this approach through her engaging posts about her life and travels, which demonstrate that her identity transcends her disability. Consequently, she has garnered widespread recognition, including opportunities to speak at Ted Arabia events.

Omanis with disabilities also use X to integrate themselves into the broader Omani community, such as by sharing Eid photos on the popular Omani hashtag #Omani_Snapshot_in_Eid. Additionally, they utilise the platform to disseminate information about events, raise awareness about disability, share personal news and general knowledge, empower themselves and others by sharing international experiences, and advocate for their rights and the necessary changes by directly engaging with relevant authorities.

In my personal journey of researching the actions of Omanis with disabilities on X, I have not only gained insightful knowledge about disability but also learned valuable lessons on becoming a social influencer. Omanis with disabilities have mastered the art of social media, proving through their actions that disability is but a social nuance rather than a medical hindrance.

World economy to grow 2.7% in 2024: UN

New Delhi, India - The growth rate of the world economy is expected to remain around 2.7% in 2024, and 2.8% in 2025, according to the World Economic Situation and Prospects report released by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of United Nations.

The report added that global economic prospects have improved since January, with major economies avoiding a severe downturn, bringing down inflation without increasing unemployment.

The current projections are up by 0.3 percentage points from the January forecast for the year 2024 and 0.1 percentage points for the next year, 2025.

However, the UN report kept the world growth outlook in the cautiously optimistic category. The world body added that higher-for-longer interest rates, debt sustainability challenges, continuing geopolitical tensions and ever-worsening climate risks

continue to pose challenges to growth, threatening decades of development gains, especially for least developed countries and small island developing States.

The upward revisions mainly reflect a better outlook in the United States, where the latest forecast points to 2.3% growth in 2024, and several large emerging economies, notably Brazil, India and the Russian Federation.

The United Nations has revised upwards India's growth forecast for 2024 by 70 basis points to 6.9%, from 6.2% estimated in January this year, driven by robust public investment and resilient private consumption.

For 2025, however, the UN has kept its India growth forecast unchanged at 6.6%. On the consumer inflation front, the report said that inflation in India is projected to decelerate from 5.6% in 2023 to 4.5% in 2024, staying within the central bank's 2% to 6% medium-term target range.

The outlook for China regis-



The United Nations said that higher-for-longer interest rates, debt sustainability challenges, continuing geopolitical tensions and ever-worsening climate risks continue to pose challenges to global growth

ters a small uptick, with growth now expected to be 4.8% in 2024, the report observed.

On the other hand, it highlighted that the economic outlook for Africa has deteriorated since the last release, with expected growth lowered by 0.2 percentage points for 2024, threatening adverse impacts for many of the world's poor.

On average, global growth in the coming years is expected to remain below the average of 3.2% during 2010-2019.

Going ahead, the report added that the softening international commodity prices and tight monetary stances adopted by most central banks have set the global economy on a disinflationary path, several developing economies continue to grapple with stubbornly high inflation.

Many developing economies also face challenges such as elevated borrowing costs, persistent exchange rate pressures, and lingering political instability.

The stagnant employment situation in developing economies contrasts with that of developed economies, particularly in North America, Europe and Japan, where unemployment rates remain near record lows.

Furthermore, the near-term outlook for certain economies is clouded by the potential intensification of geopolitical tensions and multiple conflicts across the world.

In the wake of the growing use of minerals in electric vehicles and semiconductor components, the report highlighted that the energy transition can also be an opportunity for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in many developing countries.

"Countries endowed with critical mineral resources will, however, need smart policies, as well as effective implementation capacities to reap the benefits and avoid a renewed 'resource curse,'" the report underscored.

ANI

OPEC remains optimistic on oil demand growth



Tsvetana Paraskova

A resilient global economy early this year has additional upside potential in the second half with the possible easing of monetary policies, the Organization for Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) said, keeping its 2024 and 2025 outlook of robust oil demand unchanged from last month.

In its closely-watched Monthly Oil Market Report (MOMR) released on Tuesday, OPEC maintained its forecast from the April report, which sees global oil demand rising by 2.25mn barrels per day (bpd) this year and by another 1.85mn bpd next year.

OPEC estimates that global oil demand rose by 2.4mn bpd in the first quarter of 2024. For the

full year, total world oil demand is anticipated to reach 104.5mn bpd, driven by "strong air travel demand and healthy road mobility, including trucking, as well as industrial, construction, and agricultural activities in non-OECD countries."

Petrochemical capacity expansions in China and the Middle East are also set to boost demand growth this year, according to the cartel. "The global economy showed resilience in 1Q24, with key economies demonstrating stable growth that, in certain instances, surpassed initial projections," OPEC said.

The organisation kept its world economic growth forecasts for 2024 and 2025 at 2.8% and 2.9%, respectively, but slightly raised its estimates of the U.S. economy this year and next.

OPEC now expects the US economy to grow by 2.2% this year, up from 2.1% in last month's report, and by 1.9% next year, up by 0.2 percentage points compared to the April assessment.

Regarding the world economy, OPEC said "Despite certain downside risks, the continued momentum observed since the start of the year could create additional upside potential for global economic growth in 2024 and beyond."

An expected shift towards more accommodative monetary policies by major central banks in the second half of the year, and a more robust growth trajectory in Asia, notably India and China, may also contribute to the acceleration of global economic growth, OPEC noted.

(Source: Oilprice.com)

Aramco signs deals with US companies for lower-carbon energy solutions

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - The Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Aramco) on Friday announced the signing of three Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with leading American companies to advance the development of potential lower-carbon energy solutions.

The MoUs were signed in the presence of Minister of Energy for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman al Saud, and US Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm. The MoUs signed by Aramco included agreements with Aeroseal, Spiritus, and Rondo.

Following a successful trial of Aeroseal's technology in Saudi Arabia, Aramco and Aeroseal agreed to explore opportunities to accelerate the deployment of Aeroseal's technology in the company's building fleet and elsewhere.

With Spiritus, Aramco agreed to explore opportunities in the field of direct air capture. Spiritus' novel approach to direct air capture could address the major cost challenges of current direct air capture approaches and includes reducing energy needs, passive air collection, and a proprietary sorbent material to potentially remove carbon from the atmosphere at up to a tenfold increase in adsorption efficiency compared to existing methods.



Innovative technologies deployed at scale can help reduce costs of reducing carbon emissions, and we are investing in developing these through our R&D, venture capital, and technology deployment programmes

ALI AL MESHARI

Aramco and Rondo agreed to explore deployment of heat batteries in Aramco's global facilities to reduce operating costs and support emissions reduction initiatives. The companies have started engineering studies for a first industrial scale deployment of Rondo Heat Batteries that could contribute to reduction of emissions from Aramco facilities, with subsequent scale up to 1GWh.

Ali al-Meshari, Senior Vice President of Technology, Oversight and Coordination, Aramco, said, "Aramco has stated its ambition to achieve net zero Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions across its wholly-owned operated assets by 2050, and sees opportunities to potentially build a lower-carbon new energy business. Innovative technologies deployed at scale can help reduce the costs of reducing carbon emissions, and we are investing in developing these through our R&D, venture capital, and technology deployment programs. We see the technologies of Aeroseal, Spiritus', and Rondo to have the potential to scale globally, and specifically in the Middle East."

WAM

Russia finds huge oil reserves in British Antarctic

Guy Taylor

Russia has found huge oil and gas reserves in British Antarctic territory, potentially leading to drilling in the protected region.

The reserves uncovered contain around 511bn barrels worth of oil, equating to around 10 times the North Sea's output over the last 50 years.

The discovery, per Russian research ships, was revealed in evidence submitted to the Commons Environment Audit Committee last week. The committee was assessing questions regarding oil and gas research on ships owned by the Kremlin's Rosgeo, the largest geological exploration company in Russia.

Antarctica is currently protected by the 1959 Antarctic Treaty, which prohibits all oil developments in the area.

It was set up to ensure the region was used "exclusively for



peaceful purposes' and would "not become the scene or object of international discord."

The committee heard from minister David Rutley, who assured MPs Russia was conducting scientific research in the

region. "Russia has recently reaffirmed its commitment to the key elements of the treaty," he said.

But Klaus Dodds, a professor of geopolitics at Royal Holloway University, argued the Antarctic policy environment was "arguably at its most challenging since the late 1980s and early 1990s."

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has created "widespread concern that a worsening relationship with the country will spark

strategic competition and make it even more explicit in Antarctica."

He believes Russian activity in the region equated to hunting for oil and gas as opposed to scientific research.

"Russia's activities need to be understood as a decision to undermine the norms associated with seismic survey research, and ultimately a precursor for forthcoming resource extraction," Dodds said in comments reported by the Telegraph.

The Antarctic Treaty is the largest of Britain's 14 overseas territories but it has faced competition claims from Argentina and Chile in the past.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said: "Russia has repeatedly assured the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting that these activities are for scientific purposes."

(Source: City A.M.)

Eurozone GDP expands 0.3% in first quarter

Brussels, Belgium - The gross domestic product (GDP) in the Eurozone increased 0.3% quarter-on-quarter this January-March quarter, shifting from a 0.1% contraction in the previous two quarters, according to a flash estimate on Wednesday.

This is the strongest quarterly GDP growth since the third quarter of 2022, Eurostat data showed. The GDP in the full EU also rose 0.3% from the previous three month period in the first quarter, after being stagnated in the previous two quarters.

Germany, Europe's largest economy, saw a 0.2% growth in the first quarter of 2024 after contracting by 0.5% in the final quarter of 2023.

On an annual basis, the GDP increased 0.4% in both the euro area and the EU in three months to March.

The eurozone/euro area, represents 19 member states that use the bloc's single currency, the euro, while the EU includes all of its 27 member countries.

Eurozone's industrial production growth lost momentum compared to a month ago in March, according to data released on Wednesday.

Industrial output in the euro area rose 0.6% from a month ago in March, easing from February's upwardly revised 1% hike, Eurostat data showed.

Production climbed by 1% for capital goods while it fell by 2.7% for non-durable consumer goods, 1.1% for durable goods, 0.9% for energy, and 0.5% for intermediate goods.

In the EU, industrial production grew 0.2% in March after a 0.9% monthly increase in February.

Anadolu Agency

Winners of Lulu's 'Shop and Win' get cash

Lulu Oman concluded its Ramadan Shop and Win promotion by handing over RO100,000 worth cash prizes to the winners of the campaign.

The Shop and Win promotion, which was held from February 15 to April 20 at all Lulu stores in Oman, gave customers a chance to win RO100,000 worth cash prizes during the entire promotional period.

Customers who made purchases of at least RO10 at any Lulu Hypermarket in Oman during the promotional period were eligible to enter e-roulette draws. The cash prize included a grand prize of RO10,000 and weekly cash prizes of RO5,000, RO750, RO500, RO200 and RO100. There were eight draws to select a total of 281 lucky winners throughout the period.

Sirajuddeen was announced as the lucky winner of the Grand Prize of RO10,000. Buthina Mohammed, Eman al Yaqoobi, Mohammed Paramban, Ahmed Abou Ghodaia, Mohammed Shah Alam, Saalim Said, Gafour Vengali, and Hussain Aziz were the eight winners of the weekly cash prize of RO5000 each. Other weekly cash prizes of RO750, RO500, RO200 and RO100 were won by Lulu cus-



tomers from all over Oman.

Ananth A V, Director of Lulu Hypermarkets Oman & India, stated, "I would like to congratulate our lucky Grand Prize winner and all other winners of this year's Shop and Win promotion. "As part of Ramadan and Eid,

Lulu had offered a range of exciting deals and discounts to celebrate the festive occasion. From discounted prices on groceries to special deals on clothing and household items, there were amazing deals and a variety of offers to help shoppers make the

most of their holiday season."

Congratulating the winners, Shabeer K A, Regional Director - Lulu Hypermarkets, Oman, stated, "We are overwhelmed by the response and the positive feedback generated by this campaign. This initiative was an op-

portunity for us to highlight our commitment towards our consumers, meet their everyday needs, as well as provide them with high-quality products at competitive prices. Through this promotion, we were able to further enrich our customers' shop-

ping experience and help them win exciting rewards that we offer during Ramadan and Eid."

Lulu remains dedicated to providing exceptional value, top-notch products, and unparalleled services consistently. By consolidating all possible consumer

needs in one convenient location, Lulu creates a remarkable shopping experience. The exclusive promotions, unique deals, and special offers at Lulu are designed to make a positive impact on the lives of consumers across the globe every single day.

Hormuz Grand Muscat top business hotel

Hormuz Grand Muscat, A Radisson Collection Hotel, announced their recent achievement of winning the reputable award 'Oman's Leading Business Hotel 2024' by the World Travel Awards at the Arabian Travel Market exhibition held annually in Dubai.

This accolade consolidates Radisson Collection Muscat's position as the ideal destination for modern business travellers.

The recognition emphasises the hotel's personalised approach and experienced event and banquet management as well as eleven customizable business event spaces, including two ballrooms that can each host more than 500 people, as the key factors for its success.

The awards aim to acknowledge excellence across all key sectors of the travel, tourism and hospitality industries, and Hormuz Grand Muscat's victory reflects its commitment to delivering exceptional business experiences to its guests.

Reflecting on the hotel's ac-



complishment, District Director of Oman and General Manager of Hormuz Grand Muscat, A Radisson Collection Hotel, Panos Panagis, expresses gratitude and excitement while highlighting team effort and hard, steady work as the foundation of success.

He also stresses the importance of building a trusted hotel brand through continuously exe-

cuting seamless business events and focusing on guest satisfaction.

"Being celebrated as 'Oman's Leading Business Hotel 2024' shows our deeply-rooted dedication to our guests, our Yes-I-Can mentality and our pursuit of delivering exceptional moments. This award encourages us to continue raising the bar in Oman's hospitality industry."

Set where East meets West, the Hormuz Grand Muscat, A Radisson Collection Hotel celebrates a new kind of luxury, rich in culture while overlooking the Muscat Mountains.

The 5-star luxury hotel is centrally located between Muscat International Airport, Ministries and the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre.

Two-hundred-and-thirty-one

elegantly appointed rooms and suites, as well as five restaurants, lounges and bars and Hormuz Grand Spa with nine treatment rooms, an equipped gym and a pool at the courtyard invite travellers to relax and unwind.

Eleven event and board rooms with a maximum capacity of 600 guests, make it an ideal destination for business, conference and leisure travellers.

Joyalukkas to open new US showrooms in Dallas, Atlanta

Joyalukkas, the esteemed jewellery brand, has announced the forthcoming openings and re-opening celebrations of five of its US outlets.

Led by Joy Alukkas, chairman of Joyalukkas Group, these events mark a significant step in the brand's expansion strategy in the US market. The inaugurations will feature new store unveilings in Dallas and Atlanta, alongside renovations and re-opening's in Houston, Chicago, and New Jersey.

The festivities will kick off with the reopening of the renovated store in Houston on Saturday, followed by the inauguration of the new store in Dallas on May 26.

On June 2, Joyalukkas will proudly unveil its new store in Atlanta, followed by the renovated outlets in Chicago on June 9 and New Jersey on June 15.

To commemorate these spe-

cial occasions, Joyalukkas is offering exclusive promotions across all its US outlets. Customers purchasing gold jewellery worth US\$1,000 or more will receive a complimentary 0.200gm gold coin, while those purchasing diamond and polki jewellery worth US\$2,000 or more will be gifted a free 1 gm gold coin.

These enticing offers are available only during the inauguration period and underscore Joyalukkas' commitment towards providing exceptional value to its patrons. John Paul, Managing Director of Joyalukkas Group, expressed his enthusiasm for the US expansion, stating, "We are thrilled to roll-out our new and revamped outlets in the US. With our exquisite jewellery collections and unparalleled customer service, we aim to cater to the discerning tastes of our American clientele."



Team Geethotsava from Muscat Kannadigas holds musical event

Approximately 600 Kannadigas gathered on May 11 at the CBFS Hall in Bousher, Muscat for an enchanting music concert by Team Geethotsava from Muscat Kannadigas.

The lineup featured esteemed performers including Pancham Halibandi, Supriya Raghunandan, Mstr, Ayush Marathe, Ananya Prasad, Kishan Shetty and Karthik Gowda.

Led by the esteemed TV Host Reena Krishnappa, the evening began with the traditional lamp lighting ceremony conducted by

Dr Saritha, Dr C K K Anchan, Ramakrishna, S D T Prasad, Ramananda Shetty, Anupama Prasad and Sushma Kishan Shetty infusing the atmosphere with cultural reverence.

Sugama Sangeeta, known for its emphasis on both lyrics and melody, was eloquently presented by Supriya Raghunandan and Pancham Halibandi, stalwarts in the domain. They showcased beloved Kannada literary compositions, captivating the audience with their renditions.

Moreover, the duo took the

opportunity to enlighten the attendees about two significant ragas - Yaman and Pahadi - leaving the audience yearning for more. Adding to the cultural extravaganza were three captivating dance performances choreographed by Supraja Iyengar, Susheela Sathish and Delicious Dance Academy adding a dynamic layer to the event.

Generously sponsored by Cosmo Medical Centre, Gemini Energy LLC, Sahara International LLC, Hitamber Attavar and Prasad Marathe.

ISC organises 'Easy-Lifestyle' workshop

Sumangala Bhavikatti conducted a workshop on 'Easy-Lifestyle' with amazing dexterity of a professional with utmost sincerity that the women absorbed every detail with rapt attention.

A native of Bangalore, Karnataka and now residing at UTAS (University of Technology and Applied Sciences) campus, Ibra, Sumangala is also a member of the Karnataka wing, ISC Oman.

Her passion for cooking took her to great levels of achievements. She has earned many certifications on cooking and baking including premixes for beverages, ice creams, chocolates, sweets, curries of various dishes etc. she is a multitasking person who has 20+ years of experience to her credit for taking cookery courses and teaching various crafts that include jewellery making as well.

Sumangala conducted the workshop demonstrating to the women how to prepare an array of premixes ranging from breakfast muesli, waffles, sharbats, variety of ice cream premixes, curries, idli, sweets like gulab jamuns, kesar peda, falooda etc.

True to her professional style she had displayed her working counter with all the ready premixes of different food items along with ready cakes, with and without eggs which she prepared beforehand.

She conjured up a live demonstration of an aromatic and delicious mattar paneer (cottage cheese with green peas) dish



with the red curry premix she taught in the workshop which towards the end everyone got to taste and enjoyed.

Her tender coconut ice cream was soft and light. One could really not differentiate between a store bought and the one she taught us. She also prepared waffles, sharbat etc by making them live. Her effort, energy and enthusiasm was well appreciated by all those who attended the workshop.

The women were indeed fortunate to get an opportunity to add more value to their culinary skills. Learning the art of making premixes helps in creating magic in our kitchens. It's especially handy when we travel and ultra-useful for kids away from home.

The event started at 6pm and ended at 9pm with more than 25 premixes recipes covered in the workshop. The event concluded with taste tests of all the amazing stuff she prepared. The ladies expressed their appreciation and delight which was graciously received by Sumangala's humble demeanor and sweet smile of contentment. When asked who her inspiration is, she said that her husband Praveen is her source of encouragement, inspiration and backbone.

The event ended with awarding Sumangala a certificate of appreciation. The ladies' coordinator thanked ISC Oman's chairman Babu Rajendran for his continued encouragement and support and the staff who made this event a success.

ISWKi Cambridge emerge on top in Youth Earth Day Conference

ISWKi Cambridge school team consisting of six students - Dev Mallikarjuna, Rahil Maniar, Shlok Babariya, Manhar Ajmani, Kaivalya Akarte and Hridayesh Khetan - in a nail-biting finish, bagged the first place amongst all the international schools.

The event was organised by The Achievers Programme (TAP), India in collaboration with Credence High School, Dubai for students across the world for the 7th International Youth Earth Day Conference on April 22 and 23, a press release said.

The theme of this year's conference was 'SPACE-Challenges & Possibilities'. This platform is launched for students to think and innovate as global citizens of the world. It will be an opportunity for students to research, discuss and innovate.



BankDhofar offers prizes for Olympic Games

BankDhofar has announced the launch of its Olympic Games Paris 2024 Campaign, giving Al Riadah and Al Rifaa customers the opportunity to win exclusive packages to attend the Olympic Games Paris 2024 scheduled from July 26 to August 11.

The campaign will run till May 31 and a draw will be conducted to announce two winners who will attend the Olympic Games Paris 2024. Packages will include air tickets along with a companion, as well as luxurious hotel accommodation, city experience, and tickets to attend the event, a press release said.

To qualify for the campaign, customers need to spend a minimum of RO100 per month using the eligible BankDhofar Visa Credit Cards. Each RO100 spent locally gives the customers one chance.

Bilal Faiz Muhammad al Raiisi, AGM - Cards and Bancassurance, said, "We seek to be always closer to our customers by participating with them in all

events and occasions and providing premium offers and exceptional campaigns to meet their expectations and needs, giving them a comprehensive and exceptional banking experience that suits our Al Riadah and Al Rifaa customers.

"The exclusive outstanding offers provided to our customers around the year reflect our endeavors to offer them a combined banking experience integrated with our cutting-edge, innovative banking products, services and payment solutions."

BankDhofar credit cardholders get a chance to participate in the bank's campaigns all year round, in addition to enjoying a unique lifestyle through the various benefits offered by these cards.

Manish Gautam, Visa's Country Manager for Oma, said, "BankDhofar's Olympic Games Paris 2024 promotion is a great example of how our clients can leverage Visa's sponsorship to create exclusive, rewarding.

ISS Class X toppers announced

CLASS X TOPPERS		
		
SCHOOL TOPPER Eshant Kumar 97.8%	SECOND TOPPER Karthika Krishnakumar 97.2%	THIRD TOPPER Malavika Ajith Kumar 97%

Indian School Sur (ISS) announced its list of toppers at the Central Board of Secondary Education board examination for Class X which was declared on May 13.

Eshant Kumar secured the first position in the school with an exceptional score of 97.8% followed by Karthika Krishnakumar (97.2%) and Malavika Sivapriya Ajith Kumar (97%). Out of the 63 students who appeared for the CBSE Board examination, 17 students secured

more than 90% marks, 22 students scored above 80 % while the remaining students scored above 60%.

The subject toppers, along with their marks and percentages were: English - Arnab Sunil, Karis Stafrina (98 marks), Hindi - Insha Kamran, Sudip Paul, Sivasree Nandhu Binu, Gurleen, Vyom Bharatkumar Patel and Zaid Ali Baig Mohammed (95 marks), Mathematics - Karthika Krishnakumar (100 marks),

Science - Eshant Kumar and Joel Mathew (99 marks), Social Science - Karis Stafrina and Gurleen (98 marks), Arabic - Eshant Kumar (99 marks), Malayalam - Jisna Jaison and Meriya Susan John (100 marks)

Jami Srinivasa Rao, president of the School Management Committee, along with SMC members and the principal, Dr S Srinivasan, have congratulated all the successful students for their outstanding achievements.

ISS Class Class XII toppers

CLASS X TOPPERS		
		
SCHOOL TOPPER Abhinanda R S (94.2%)	SECOND TOPPER Munish Dilip Dhabarde (91%)	THIRD TOPPER Puja Rani Ray (90.4%)

CLASS XII COMMERCE TOPPERS		
		
SCHOOL TOPPER Hashim Ashraf (85.4%)	SECOND TOPPER Aswani Anilkumar Sinimol (83%)	THIRD TOPPER Prianti Barua (81.6%)

Indian School Sur announced its list of toppers at the Central Board of Secondary Education board examination for Class X which was declared on May 13.

Eshant Kumar secured the first position in the school with an exceptional score of 97.8% followed by Karthika Krishnakumar (97.2%) and Malavika Sivapriya Ajith Kumar (97%).

Out of the 63 students who appeared for the CBSE Board

examination, 17 students secured more than 90% marks, 22 students scored above 80 % while the remaining students scored above 60%.

The subject toppers, along with their marks and percentages were: English - Arnab Sunil, Karis Stafrina (98 marks), Hindi - Insha Kamran, Sudip Paul, Sivasree Nandhu Binu, Gurleen, Vyom Bharatkumar Patel and Zaid Ali Baig Mohammed (95 marks), Mathe-

matics - Karthika Krishnakumar (100 marks), Science - Eshant Kumar and Joel Mathew (99 marks), Social Science - Karis Stafrina and Gurleen (98 marks), Arabic - Eshant Kumar (99 marks), Malayalam - Jisna Jaison and Meriya Susan John (100 marks).

Jami Srinivasa Rao, president of the School Management Committee congratulated all the successful students for their outstanding achievements.

ISAM Class X, Class XII results announced

Akshaya Alagappan and Bhargavi Vaidya topped the Class X examinations of the CBSE Board which were declared on May 13.

Akshaya scored 98.8%, followed by Bhargavi with 98.6%, securing the top two positions among Indian Schools in Oman, a press release said. The third spot went to Aniruddha K (98.2%).

It is noteworthy to mention that 37 students are centum scorers in the Class X and XII CBSE Board examinations. Their outstanding achievements showcase an extraordinary fusion of academic excellence and relentless effort.

In the Class XII exams, Samay Sajjay (96.8%), Alphin K Biju (95.8%), and Afshin (93.6%) emerged as top performers in Science, Commerce, and Humanities streams respectively. Notable achievements include 100% in Psychology (3 students), Artificial Intelligence (3 students), Food, Nutrition & Dietetics (2 students), and Yoga (13 students).

Noteworthy achievements include 100% in Mathematics (3 students), Malayalam (9 students), Arabic (2 students), and Sanskrit (2 students).

School Management Committee president Shamim Hussain congratulated all the successful students for their astounding performance.

CLASS X TOPPERS		
		
SCHOOL TOPPER Akshaya Alagappan 98. 8 %	SECOND TOPPER Bhargavi Vaidya 98. 6 %	THIRD TOPPER Aniruddha Mulgund 98. 2 %

CLASS XII COMMERCE TOPPERS 2023-24		
		
SCHOOL TOPPER Alphin Biju 95.80%	SECOND TOPPER Nevin Shiju 95.6 %	THIRD TOPPER Aron Roy Mathew 94.80%

CLASS XII HUMANITIES TOPPERS 2023-24		
		
SCHOOL TOPPER Afshin (93.6%)	SECOND TOPPER Mili Susan (88%)	THIRD TOPPER Syed Zania (80%)

CLASS XII SCIENCE TOPPERS 2023-24			
			
SCHOOL TOPPER Samay Sajjay 96.80%	SECOND TOPPER Pushpashree Ramgopal 96.60%	SECOND TOPPER Ananya Manoj Nair 96.60%	THIRD TOPPER Asiya M S 96.40%

Chery unveils new development strategy

The Chery Beijing Auto Show and Global Dealer Conference was held in April, during which Chery's new development strategy, new technologies, and new vehicle models were unveiled. The theme of this event was 'New Energy, New Eco, New Era'.

In the face of new challenges and a new environmental context in the global automotive industry, Chery Automobile has actively responded by adopting measures such as the Qpower

powertrain architecture, the 4P+2P management model, and the development of an automotive ecosystem to show its unique competitiveness, a press release said.

Chery has implemented sustainable development technology routes and decarbonisation solutions for the entire industry chain and the entire life cycle, adhering to the concepts of 'sustainability, innovation, family, and companionship' and an im-

portant strategic direction of 'green and low carbon'. Through these strategies, the QPower brand has achieved lower production energy consumption and showcased Chery's future vision of building a green ecosystem.

QPower represents the pinnacle of Chery's 26-year journey in powertrain technology, evolving into a 4.0 comprehensive architecture that spans the full spectrum of energy types - ICE, PHEV, and BEV.

Chery Automobile is deeply committed to building a brand that resonates with users by putting them at the heart of everything. The company actively seeks out and collaborates with global partners across research and development, production, and sales. This collaborative spirit not only enriches Chery's offerings but also ensures that wherever you encounter the Chery brand, you're experiencing the pinnacle of what it stands for.

US warns China over support to Russia

Washington, D.C., US - A top US defence official has warned his Chinese counterpart about China's increasing cooperation with Russia, even as Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin met and pledged to strengthen ties between the two countries.

Ely Ratner, US Assistant Secretary of Defence for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, spoke by video teleconference with China's Major General Li Bin, Director of the Central Military Commission Office for International Military Cooperation, on Friday.

Ratner discussed the relationship between Russia and North Korea as well as 'serious concern over China's support for Russia's defence industrial base that enables Russia's war in Ukraine', the Pentagon said in a readout.

Putin was on an official two-day visit to China to mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of ties between Moscow and Beijing, during which he and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping pledged a 'new era' of partnership.

The US Defence Assistant Secretary also reiterated that the United States remains committed to the 'One China' policy, which is guided by the Taiwan



Russian President Vladimir Putin met Chinese President Xi Jinping and pledged to strengthen ties between the two countries

Relations Act, the Three US-China Joint Communiques, and the Six Assurances, and he reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace and stability across the Strait.

The US official also spoke with his Chinese counterpart about the escalating tension be-

tween China and the Philippines near the South China Sea shoal.

China, meanwhile has criticised the US of 'military collusion' with Taiwan.

According to Beijing-headquartered *Global Times*, the Central Military Commission Office for International Military Coop-

eration told the US Assistant Secretary of Defence in the video call on Friday that the 'military collusion' between the US and Taiwan as well as the 'separatist acts' of the 'Taiwan independence forces', are the main sources of disruption to the current stability in the Taiwan

Straits.

"China will take resolute and decisive countermeasures against any 'Taiwan independence' separatist activities and foreign connivance and support," the spokesperson noted.

China on Friday also criticised a US military vessel's recent

Ely Ratner, US Assistant Secretary of Defence for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, spoke by video teleconference with China's Major General Li Bin, Director of the Central Military Commission Office for International Military Cooperation

'provocative moves', stating that the US side's invocation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) reveals its hegemonic nature.

Addressing a press conference in response to a media query about US guided-missile destroyer USS Halsey's sailing through the Taiwan Strait, a Chinese military spokesperson said: "The Chinese side strongly deplores and firmly opposes this and has lodged solemn representations with the US side." ANI

US conducts subcritical nuclear test

Washington, D.C., US - The United States conducted a subcritical nuclear test at Nevada earlier this week, according to a statement released by the US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration.

The experiment, the third under the administration of President Joe Biden, was carried out on Tuesday to collect 'essential data' regarding the country's nuclear warheads, according to the National Nuclear Security Administration.

The experiment was the first in the Nimble series, executed at the Principal Underground Laboratory for Subcritical Experimentation (PULSE) facility in partnership with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

The NNSA, an arm of the US Energy Department, said it relies on subcritical tests to support the safety and effectiveness of nuclear warheads, without the use of nuclear explosive testing. ANI

FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS



A woman poses for photos amid blooming cole flowers during a flower festival at a park in Gyeonggi-do Province, South Korea, on Saturday (Xinhua)

Tense calm prevails in New Caledonia

London, UK - A tense calm prevailed in France's overseas territory of New Caledonia on Friday, with the number of police and gendarmes on the South Pacific island expected to rise by the evening.

The unrest gripped New Caledonia for five days, prompting France to declare a state of emergency.

As more troops arrived at the French army-controlled La Tontouta International Airport, the French territorial High Commission on the island issued a statement saying that for the first time since Monday, the state of emergency allowed for a calmer and more peaceful situation.

The statement added that gatherings are prohibited for Caledonian residents, and a curfew is in effect from 6pm to 6am local time.

France has decided to deploy additional forces to the island with the number of police and gendarmes on New Caledonia expected to increase by Friday



Hundreds have been arrested on the Pacific island of New Caledonia after deadly unrest erupted over a bill allowing French nationals to vote in provincial elections

evening. France has also declared a state of emergency in the territory.

On Thursday, a second gen-

darme was killed in what officials described as an 'accidental gunshot' during ongoing riots on the same day.

Hundreds have been arrested on the Pacific island of New Caledonia after deadly unrest erupted over a bill that would allow French nationals to vote in provincial elections, an official said on Thursday.

The unrest was sparked by a constitutional review initiated by Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin in New Caledonia.

Anadolu Agency

Where reggae meets the Himalayas: The allure of Nepal's Bob Marley Hotel

Kathmandu, Nepal - Muktinath, a sacred pilgrimage site nestled high in the Mustang region of Nepal, offers breathtaking Himalayan vistas and an atmosphere steeped in spiritual significance.

But for weary travellers seeking a touch of familiar comfort after a long journey, a surprising sanctuary awaits: the Hotel Bob Marley.

Step inside and the crisp mountain air gives way to a warm embrace of reggae vibes. Lobby walls adorned with portraits of the iconic musician and vibrant murals in the Rastafarian colour palette set the tone.

People lounge around in comfy couches adorned with colourful fabrics, catching a Bob Marley documentary playing on a flat-screen TV.

Silhouettes of the musician strumming his guitar mingle with traditional Nepali landscapes, creating a unique fusion of cultures, as sunlight streams through strategically placed windows, illuminating the interior of

the hotel with a golden glow.

The communal area is the heart of the hotel.

Here, fellow travelers gather around a crackling fireplace, sharing stories of their adventures on the Annapurna Circuit or the arduous trek to Muktinath itself. The air hums with easy conversation, punctuated by the occasional burst of laughter, creating a sense of camaraderie that transcends language and culture.

"The ambience is so cool here," said Felix Bauer, a German traveller who checked into the hotel after finishing weeklong hikes in the high Himalayan terrain. "It's a place that perfectly symbolises the chilled personality cult of Marley."

The influence of reggae extends to the hotel's on-site restaurant as well.

The menu features hearty Nepalese staples like 'dal bhat', which is lentil soup with rice, alongside international dishes - a nod to the diverse clientele the hotel attracts.

But it is the aroma of Jamaican



Legend has it that Marley once visited and dined at the spot in the 1970s, leading to the establishment's name

jerk chicken or a plate of simmering curry, wafting from the kitchen, that truly transports someone, momentarily, to a sun-drenched Caribbean island.

"I've read rave reviews about this place in many travel blogs and wanted to visit here for a long time," Estela Lutero, a traveller from Canada told Anadolu.

"Jerk chicken, Reggae music, gourmet breakfast, and an incredible view from the bedroom window. It's too good to be believable."

Did Marley really visit Muktinath?

Legend has it that Marley once visited and dined at the spot in

the 1970s, leading to the establishment's name.

The story, however, clashes with documented history, as Marley's well-researched biography offers no evidence of a 1970s trip to Nepal.

Struggling financially at that time, a trek to the Himalayas seems unlikely for the musician.

When travel finally became an option, Marley ventured to Africa in 1978 to explore his Rastafarian roots.

Karma Chhiring Gurung, the owner of the Bob Marley Hotel, cannot confirm whether Marley ever visited Muktinath, let alone dined where the hotel stands today.

He, however, said the legend surrounding the place has only strengthened with time.

"There's a definite sense of Bob Marley's spirit here," Gurung told Anadolu, referring to the positive and welcoming atmosphere the hotel cultivates.

Marley's popularity in Nepal transcends language barriers.

Deep in the Himalayas, trekking porters hum his melodies, even without understanding the words. Many of Kathmandu's streets are a vibrant tapestry of Rastafarian colours - green, gold, and red - adorning taxis, rickshaws, and shops.

Stickers celebrating Marley's legacy are widely available in

souvenir shops in the capital Kathmandu or Pokhara, showcasing the movement's signature colours and the Ethiopian flag, a symbol of Rastafarian heritage.

The legend of Marley's connection to Muktinath likely stems from Nepal's role in the Hippie Trail during the 1970s and 1980s - an era that was also associated with the easy availability of recreational drugs.

Kathmandu's Thamel district, particularly the infamous Freak Street in Basantapur, was a major hub for travellers seeking alternative lifestyles.

Jhoniche, a popular area, became synonymous with the counterculture movement, attracting young people searching for peace and spiritual experiences.

Another legendary singer Jimi Hendrix is also believed to have visited Nepal during that time. Much like the one about Marley, legend has it that Hendrix visited Jomsom, an area about 25km (15 miles) from Muktinath.

Anadolu Agency

How ‘Angel of Mostar’ came to the aid of Gaza’s children

London, UK - In the early 1990s, amid the chaos and devastation of war in the Balkans, a British woman emerged as an unlikely hero.

Sally Becker, then 30, became known as the ‘Angel of Mostar’ for her daring efforts to deliver aid and evacuate wounded children and their mothers from the besieged city of Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Now, decades on, she has done the same in conflict zones around the world - her latest mission being in Gaza, where Israel has been waging a devastating war since last October.

She recently spearheaded the evacuation of nine children from Gaza, who were airlifted to Italy on a private jet, including Ahmed Shabbat, a three-year-old double amputee, and Yousef Hatab, who lost his lower leg in a missile strike.

The mission, coordinated with the help of Gaza Kinder Relief and funded by Project Pure Hope, faced numerous bureaucratic obstacles.

The initial step involved extensive negotiations with Palestinian and Israeli authorities to

secure passage to Egypt.

In Cairo, Becker and her team of doctors met the children at a military base before flying them to Italy, where they were taken to a hospital in the northeastern city of Trieste.

“I had around 40 cases referred to me by Gaza Kinder Relief, an amazing organisation of 35 women based in various countries who have been coordinating everything remotely,” Becker told Anadolu.

When initial attempts to bring the children to the UK were thwarted by bureaucratic hurdles, Becker found support from hospitals in Germany, Italy and Jordan. She coordinated with Project Pure Hope and Direct Relief, a US-based charity, to fund the flights.

The journey was fraught with last-minute obstacles, such as securing visas from the Italian Embassy in Cairo, which extended its hours to ensure all children received clearance from the Egyptian Health Ministry the night before they were due to fly out. “It wasn’t until 2am that we finally got clearance for the flight, and the next morning at



Sally Becker recently spearheaded evacuation of nine children from Gaza, who were airlifted to Italy on a private jet

9am we set off,” Becker said.

The group, consisting of 21 Palestinians including the children, their mothers and some siblings, arrived safely at their destination later that night on May 2.

‘These children are so resilient’

For Becker, the mission was a bittersweet success, as many critically injured children still remain in Gaza awaiting permission to leave.

“Some of our patients are still

in Gaza ... and have permission to leave, but on the night they were actually ready to depart, the border closed,” she said.

The British aid worker expressed particular concern for Kareem, a 14-year-old at high risk of losing his leg, and Zayna, a two-year-old girl with severe burns.

“These children are victims of a conflict, not of their making and beyond their understanding, and we have to do everything we can to help them,” she said. “These children are so resilient.

It’s unbelievable ... Obviously, we can’t go back. We can’t prevent what has already happened. But let’s at least try our best to stop things getting worse by helping to save these children’s limbs and possibly their lives.”

Decades of dedication

It has been more than three decades since Becker entered the field of humanitarian work, where she has now left an indelible mark.

Speaking about how it all began, Becker said she went to Bosnia in May 1993 with one simple objective: to volunteer for a few weeks. With no official support or specialised training, she faced many hurdles, but persevered through them all.

“I contacted a lot of organisations offering my help, but they didn’t want me because I had no relevant experience. I wasn’t a nurse or an engineer. So really, none of the major organisations could offer me a position,” she said.

Undaunted by the disappointment, she made her way into the heart of the raging conflict. At that time, Mostar was under siege, with the eastern part completely blockaded, similar to the current situation in Gaza, she said. Essential supplies could not reach those trapped inside, leading to a dire humanitarian crisis, and Becker began by bringing aid to the western side of the city.

Her breakthrough moment came when she was approached by Leo Sorensen, a UN Civil Affairs officer. “He said, ‘you’re one of the only international aid workers allowed to go in and out

of Mostar. Can you get permission to evacuate a child from the east side?’” she recalled.

She did manage to get permission and took on the perilous task of crossing the frontlines in an old ambulance, eventually evacuating hundreds of people, including injured children and their mothers.

For Becker, her life’s work has been driven by a sense of compassion and impartiality, with the suffering of innocent children transcending the boundaries of nationalities or politics of conflicts.

“To me, there’s no difference between a child suffering in Mostar, or a child suffering in Lebanon, or a child suffering in Israel, or in Kosovo, or any number of countries,” she said.

“I never look at who they are or what their background is because it doesn’t matter. What matters is that these are innocent children who’ve been harmed because we haven’t yet found a way to settle our differences - a way to avoid hurting the innocent each time we go to war with one another.”

Anadolu Agency



Pro-Palestinian student protests continue across US

Ankara, Turkey - Pro-Palestinian student protests continued at numerous universities across the US, demanding divestment from Israel or Israeli-affiliated institutions and calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

Protesters have established encampments and held sit-ins, calling for an end to investments supporting Israel’s actions in Gaza. Since last month, the US has seen a wave of demonstrations at US university campuses calling for an end to the war on Gaza, with student protesters facing police violence and arrests.

On Friday afternoon, pro-Palestinian protesters took over the Institute of Politics building at the University of Chicago on Friday afternoon, *The New York Times* reported.

A sign identifying the Institute of Politics building was covered with a cardboard placard that read ‘permanent ceasefire now’, according to the daily.

According to university spokesman Gerald McSwiggan, the incident unfolded around 4.40pm. Despite directives from

police to disperse, the demonstrators refused to vacate the premises. Also, academic workers at the University of California (UC), Santa Cruz, are set to strike from Monday, in protest against the university’s response to pro-Palestinian demonstrations, announced the union representing 48,000 graduate students and educational workers across UC campuses.

The strike, involving about 2,000 members at Santa Cruz, addresses concerns over free speech, safety, and unfair labour practices, according to the *New York Times*.

Meanwhile, the Academic Senate at the University of California, Los Angeles, voted against rebuking Chancellor Gene Block over his handling of a pro-Palestinian encampment attack, with motions for a no-confidence vote and censure failing to gain majority support.

Nearly 3,000 protesters have been arrested at US campuses since last month, according to US news outlet Axios.

Anadolu Agency

Gaza: Death toll nears 35,400 as Israel’s offensive continues

Israeli attacks killed 83 people and injured 105 others in the last 24 hours



Many people are still trapped under rubble and on the roads as rescuers are unable to reach them, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry

Gaza City, Palestine - At least 35,386 Palestinians have been killed in Israel’s ongoing offensive on the Gaza Strip since last October, the Health Ministry in the besieged enclave said on Saturday.

A ministry statement said that 79,366 other people have also been injured in the onslaught.

“Israeli attacks killed 83 people and injured 105 others in the last 24 hours,” the statement said.

“Many people are still trapped under rubble and on the roads as rescuers are unable to reach them,” it added.

Israel has waged an unrelenting offensive on the Gaza Strip since a cross-border attack by the Palestinian group Hamas last October 7 which killed some 1,200 people.

Tel Aviv has also imposed a crippling blockade on the Gaza Strip, leaving its population, particularly residents of northern Gaza, on the verge of starvation.

Over seven months into the Israeli war, vast swathes of Gaza lay in ruins, pushing 85 per cent of the enclave’s population into

First shipments of humanitarian assistance arrived on the shores of Gaza through the multinational humanitarian pier

JOE BIDEN

internal displacement amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine, according to the UN.

In an interim ruling in January, The Hague-based International Court of Justice said it is ‘plausible’ that Tel Aviv is committing genocide in Gaza, ordering it to stop such acts and take measures to guarantee that humanitarian assistance is provided to civilians in the enclave.

Aid arrives via humanitarian pier

Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden announced on Friday the success-

ful arrival of the first shipments of aid to the Gaza Strip via a multinational humanitarian pier. “Earlier today, the first shipments of humanitarian assistance arrived on the shores of Gaza through the multinational humanitarian pier thanks to the tireless work of CENTCOM and our teams at USAID and the State Department,” Biden wrote on X.

He said the aid, facilitated by USAID, comprises ‘170 metric tonnes of nutrient-rich food bars’ tailored to ‘support 11,000 vulnerable children and adults’.

Additionally, the shipment in-

cludes ‘ready-to-use therapeutic foods and essential supplies’ aimed at providing ‘shelter, clean water, and hygiene’ support to more than 33,000 individuals in Gaza, according to the US president. “More aid from the US and other countries continues to arrive in Cyprus, where it will be loaded onto ships for delivery via the pier,” said Biden.

He also stressed the urgency of addressing the situation, underscoring critical need to expedite the aid delivery to those most in need.

Anadolu Agency

Israel on losing end in Gaza war, says former Mossad deputy chief Ben-Barak

Jerusalem - Israeli Knesset member and former Mossad deputy chief Ram Ben-Barak on Saturday said that the ongoing war in Gaza is ‘futile’, asserting that Israel is on the losing end and facing economic collapse.

“This war lacks a clear objective, and it’s evident that we’re unequivocally losing it,” Ben-Barak told the Israeli public radio.

“We are forced to engage in fighting in the same areas and end up losing more soldiers,” he said. “We’re also facing setbacks on the international stage, with our relations with

the United States deteriorating significantly, and the Israeli economy in decline,” he said, adding: “Show me one thing we have succeeded in.”

Daily, Palestinian factions report the killing and injury of Israeli soldiers along with the destruction of military vehicles often sharing video clips documenting their operations. Locally, Israeli authorities face accusations of concealing a higher number of casualties and injuries within the army’s ranks.

The Al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of the Hamas movement, said on Saturday



that they killed 15 Israeli soldiers east of the city of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. They also stated on Friday that over the past 10 days, they targeted 100 different Israeli military vehicles across all fronts of the conflict.

Israel continued its brutal offensive on the Gaza Strip despite a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire in the enclave.

Israeli army ‘bombs Hezbollah targets’

Meanwhile, the Israeli army claimed on Saturday that its

warplanes bombed a missile launch pad and military buildings for Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

In a statement, the army said: “On Friday night, warplanes bombed a missile launch pad and military buildings for the Hezbollah organisation in the Kunine and Khiam regions in southern Lebanon.”

“Earlier on Saturday, the Israeli army attacked with artillery the Hanine area in southern Lebanon, to remove a threat,” added the army without providing any further details.

Anadolu Agency

INDIA

PM Modi provoking people, says Kharge

The Congress president said the Election Commission should take action against the prime minister

Mumbai, India - Reacting to the charge of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that, 'SP, Congress will run bulldozer over Ram Temple if voted to power', Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said that the former is 'provoking' people and the Election Commission 'should take action'.

He also accused Modi of supporting the 'illegal' Mahayuti government in Maharashtra.

"We have not used bulldozers to date... The Election Commission should take action against those who make instigating speeches. The prime minister himself is doing it. He is provoking people. After our government comes, everything will be protected as per our Constitution," Kharge told reporters here.

He was speaking at a press conference in Mumbai. Nationalist Congress Party (SP) Sharad Pawar and former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray were also present.

"INDIA bloc will win 46 out

of 48 seats in Maharashtra. People are saying this themselves. Our alliance will win maximum seats and defeat BJP..." Kharge claimed.

The Congress chief also lamented that the party symbol was 'taken away' from the 'real parties' in Maharashtra, referring to Shiv Sena and Nationalist Congress Party and given to parties 'supporting' the BJP.

"The illegal 'Mahayuti' government of Maharashtra was formed on the basis of betrayal and conspiracy and the prime minister himself is supporting it and his rallies are also being held in Maharashtra and wherever he goes, he tries to create a rift among the people..." he alleged, adding, 'the party symbol was taken away from the real parties and given to the parties supporting BJP. This is the decision of the court, ECI but everything happens on the instructions of Modi ji...'.

"PM Modi is saying that he is providing 5kg ration to 80 crore poor. We will give 10kg after forming the government..." he



Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge (ANI)

added.

Speaking on the alliance between the Aam Admi Party and Congress in the National Capital

for the May 20 Lok Sabha elections and the two parties' decision to go solo in Punjab, the Congress chief said: "We have

alliance only on 3 seats in Delhi, there is an alliance in Chandigarh, we have given them seats in Gujarat and Haryana, we will

work there only."

"But we are fighting against each other in Punjab. This is a democracy, it is not autocracy. We will do whatever has to be done to defeat BJP," he said.

The Congress leader also said that West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee, who recently announced to provide

seats of Mumbai are scheduled for Phase 5. The seats going to polls are Mumbai North, Mumbai North West, Mumbai North East, Mumbai North Central, Mumbai South and Mumbai South Central.

The other constituencies of Maharashtra that will be part of the ongoing election in the fifth phase include Dhule, Dindori,

After our government comes, everything will be protected as per our Constitution... we will follow the Constitution

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE

outside support to the INDIA bloc government if it is voted to power after the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, is naturally with the anti-BJP front.

"Mamata ji, first she said that they will support from outside. Recently she has said that if the INDIA government is formed then she will join the government, so, naturally, she is with the alliance," Kharge said. Elections in six Lok Sabha

Nashik, Kalyan, Palghar, Bhivandi and Thane.

Maharashtra has 48 Lok Sabha seats, the second largest after Uttar Pradesh. Voting for the first four phases has concluded and for the fifth phase of the Lok Sabha polls, polling is set to be held on May 20. The 2024 Lok Sabha elections are being held in seven phases running from April 19 to June 1. ANI

'Indian talent in high demand globally'

New Delhi, India - External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday stressed the growing role of Indian skills and talent at the global level and said that the developed countries of the world are now manifesting interest in concluding mobility agreements with India.

"In the era of a knowledge economy, the role of Indian skills and talent is also being reassessed. The nature of technological advancement is itself creating greater demand. But there is also the reality of demographic shortages in developed countries. These trends are manifesting themselves right now in an interest across the world to conclude mobility agreements with India," Jaishankar said while speaking at the CII Annual Business Summit 2024 in New Delhi.

"On our part, we too would like to see that our talent is treated fairly and transparently. As a global workplace emerges - and believe me, it will grow faster than all of us anticipate. As a global workplace emerges - there are some immediate consequences. Expanding the scale and quality of skilling at home becomes an even more



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar speaks at the CII Annual Business Summit 2024 in New Delhi on Friday (ANI)

urgent imperative. This is very much in line with the Modi Government's thinking. They are supported by the spread of the innovation and start-up culture as well. Businesses too need to do their fair share in the upgrading of our human resources," he added.

Asserting the obligation to secure Indian citizens even abroad, he also highlighted India's successful operations held to evacuate Indian citizens from Ukraine and Sudan and said that their goal is to make India a global hub for innova-

tion, research, and design as well.

"As the global workplace expands, the obligation to secure our citizens abroad will also grow proportionately. Fortunately, this is an area where we have already built capabilities and created SOPs, as evidenced recently in Ukraine and in Sudan. We are also deploying technology more widely for the ease of living of Indians traveling and working abroad," the minister said.

"However, as we contemplate the relevance of our talent

with the importance of 'Make in India', our goal is to make ourselves into a global hub for innovation, research, and design as well. 'Work in India' is the natural outcome, I would say, a supportive basis for 'Make In India'. But it will also have 'Work for the World' as its subset," he added.

He also underscored the crisis engulfed across the world due to the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza and said that the world is experiencing a 3F crisis of fuel, food, and fertilizers, in which India is acting with the judicious combination of 'Bharat First' and 'Vasudaiva Kutumbakam'.

"Instead today, what is the reality we are staring at? A Ukraine conflict now in its third year. A huge escalation of violence in West Asia/the Middle East that could spread beyond. The disruption of logistics due to war, due to sanctions, drone attacks, and climate events. The world is experiencing a 3F crisis of fuel, food, and fertilizers. In Asia, new tensions have emerged in land and sea as agreements are dishonoured and the rule of law disregarded," he said.

ANI

Embassy in Kyrgyzstan asks students to 'stay indoors'

New Delhi, India - As the mob violence against international students in Bishkek continues, the Indian Embassy in Kyrgyzstan advised the Indian students to stay indoors and to get in touch with the Indian embassy.

The Indian embassy also shared a helpline contact number for the students.

"The situation is presently calm but students are advised to stay indoors for the moment and get in touch with the Embassy in case of any issue. Our 24x7 contact number is 0555710041," the Indian embassy in Kyrgyz.

Reportedly, there have been several incidents of mob violence against foreign students in Bishkek since last evening, the Pakistan embassy in Kyrgyzstan said in a social media post, adding that the situation heated up on Friday. "There have been a number of incidents of mob violence against foreign students in Bishkek since last evening. According to the Kyrgyz press,

the matter boiled over yesterday due to sharing online of videos of a fight between Kyrgyz students and medical students from Egypt on May 13," the Pakistan embassy stated.

Highlighting that the situation is reportedly calm now, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday, emphasised that they are monitoring the welfare of Indian students in Bishkek.

"Monitoring the welfare of Indian students in Bishkek. Situation is reportedly calm now. Strongly advise students to stay in regular touch with the Embassy," he said.

Moreover, a few hospitals of medical universities in Kyrgyz's capital and private residences of international students have been attacked, the Pakistan embassy said.

"The hostels are inhabited by students from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. There have been reports of light injuries to a number of students from Pakistan," it added.

"So far, the violence ap-

pears to be directed against all foreign students and not specific to Pakistanis," the Pakistan embassy stressed.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif shared a post on X, highlighting that they have directed Pakistan's Ambassador to provide all necessary help and assistance.

"Deeply concerned over the situation of Pakistani students in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. I have directed Pakistan's Ambassador to provide all necessary help and assistance. My office is also in touch with the Embassy and constantly monitoring the situation," Shehbaz Sharif said.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Saturday expressed concerns about the ongoing situation in the Kyrgyz Republic. "We have established contact with the Kyrgyz authorities to ensure protection of Pakistani students. I have instructed our Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan to fully facilitate them," he said.

ANI

Four killed in armed attack in Afghanistan

Bamyan, Afghanistan - At least four people, including three foreigners, were killed, and seven others were injured in an armed attack in Bamyan province of Afghanistan, as reported by Khaama Press News Agency, citing the spokesperson of the Taliban-controlled Ministry of Interior.

Spokesperson Abdul Mateen Qani shared that four individuals have been arrested on suspicion of their involvement in the attack and out of seven injured, three are foreigners. Abdul Mateen Qani added that four individuals suspected of involvement in this attack have been arrested.

As of now, no individual or organisation has claimed re-

sponsibility for the attack.

Qani condemned this attack on his social media platform X and said the perpetrators would be arrested and punished, Khaama Press reported.

The spokesperson for the Ministry of Interior of the Taliban did not say anything about the identities of the foreign citizens targeted.

Later on, Spain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that the three individuals killed on Friday were Spanish citizens. At least one Spanish national was also among those injured. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said he was 'overwhelmed by the news'.

ANI

Germany pledges support for Moldova's EU entry

Berlin, Germany - Germany will do its utmost to support Moldova on its path towards the European Union, Chancellor Olaf Scholz said on Friday.

Speaking at a joint news conference with Moldovan President Maia Sandu, Scholz praised the country's reform efforts to become an EU member.

"European enlargement is in the strategic interest of entire European Union, Germany and Moldova. We would be happy to support you on this path," he said.

Scholz accused Russia of trying to destabilise Moldova, but underlined that Germany and its European partners will be supporting Chisinau in addressing challenges it's facing in the region. "We are all aware that Moldova is suffering massively from the Russian attack on Ukraine and its consequences, which of course have both eco-



nomic and security consequences," he said.

"Let me make it clear that Germany will continue to stand closely by your side, and we will do our utmost to support Moldova," Scholz stressed.

Moldovan President Sandu, for her part, underlined that her country is currently undergoing significant transformation, and working hard to achieve progress on its path for EU membership. "Our commitment to Euro-

pean integration is central to our national agenda. We are enhancing our energy independence, aligning with the European standards, fighting corruption, and reforming our judicial system," the president said. She also called on

European enlargement is in the strategic interest of entire European Union, Germany and Moldova

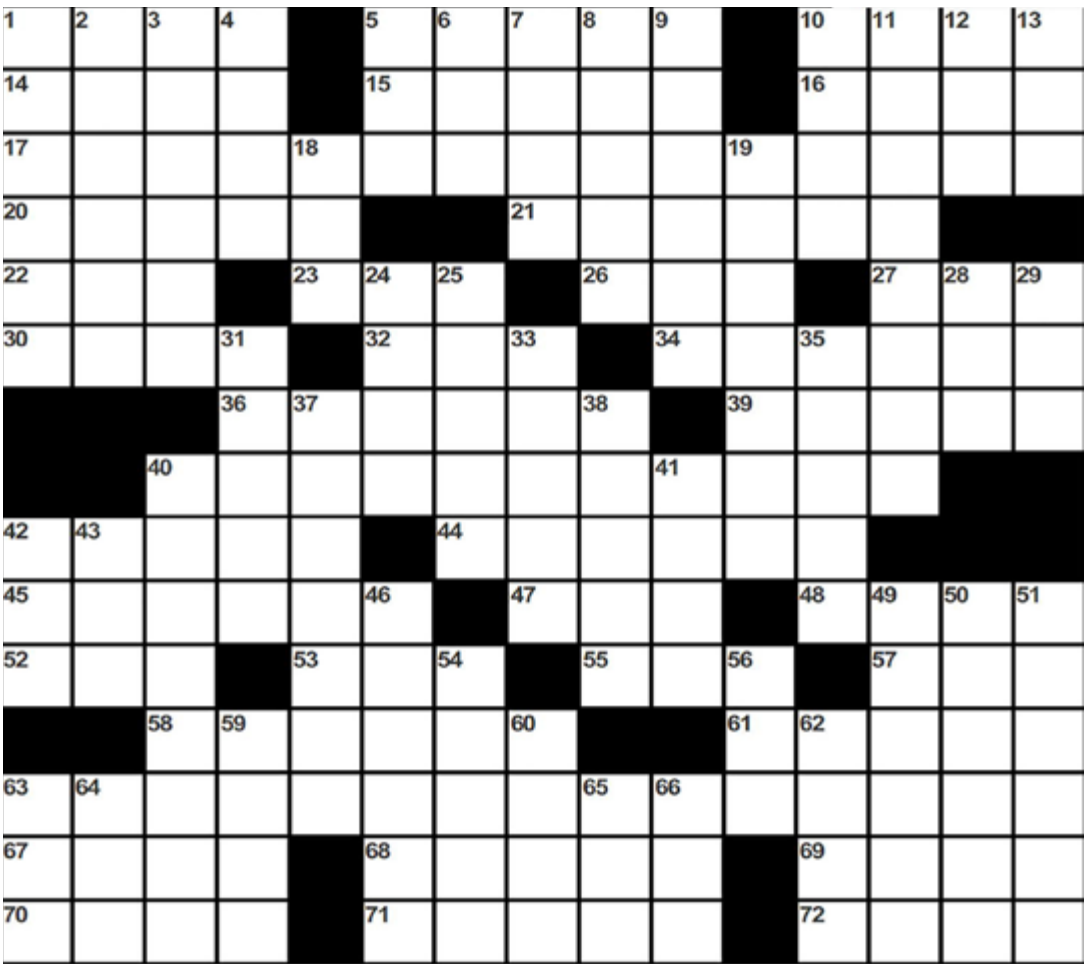
OLAF SCHOLZ

European countries to further increase their support for Ukraine, after Russia launched a new offensive in Kharkiv.

"Supporting Ukraine is not just solidarity, it's defending the principles of our collective security and freedom. By supporting Ukraine, you also support Moldova, my country wouldn't be safe today, without Ukraine's resistance," Sandu said.

Anadolu Agency

DAILY CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 1) Carp like fish
 - 5) Hired thugs
 - 10) Recipe meas.
 - 14) Primo rating
 - 15) Judging group
 - 16) Miscellaneous medley
 - 17) Knocked out
 - 20) Crumble to the sea, as shoreline
 - 21) Tiger's rival, sometimes
 - 22) Cigarette ingredient
 - 23) "Good_!" (praise for a batter)
 - 26) "Yuck!"
 - 27) Org. of Wizards and Warriors
 - 30) Lip_ (mouth the words)
 - 32) Letters on an ambulance
 - 34) Light-headed?
 - 36) Have great respect for
 - 39) "... on a true story"
 - 40) Throwing a match, in the rmg
 - 42) Iranian language
 - 44) Give, as blood
 - 45) Raises cattle
 - 47) Game, _ and match
 - 48) Cleaning cloths
 - 52) Drink refresher
 - 53) Letters on a tachometer
 - 55) Amniotic _
 - 57) '60s war zone, infonally
 - 58) Faunas' kin
 - 61) What cats and rats do?
 - 63) Give up
 - 67) Flue dirt
 - 68) Guided trips
 - 69) Bulb measure
 - 70) Identifies
 - 71) "Forest and Dove" painter Max
 - 72) Caustic materials
- DOWN**
- 1) Middies' opponents
 - 2) Hip appendage?
 - 3) Like new clothes on the rack
 - 4) Assume a stooped posture
 - 5) Where IRS forms are made
 - 6) Small-boat mover
 - 7) Not fooled by
 - 8) 1960s jacket eponym
 - 9) Santa's vehicle
 - 10) Hammer, for one
 - 11) Puritanical person
 - 12) What God says not to do
 - 13) It may call the kettle black
 - 18) Professional payment
 - 19) Share an apartment
 - 24) Bigfoot's cousin
 - 25) Correct a manuscript
 - 28) Buzzing insect
 - 29) Stick in
 - 31) Stop
 - 33) Lily family members
 - 35) Four-time Wimbledon champ Rod
 - 37) Hard-luck area
 - 38) Currycombs comb them
 - 40) Arboreal amphibian
 - 41) Computer input or output
 - 42) "Most Wanted" org.
 - 43) Rainbow, e.g.
 - 46) Elfish one
 - 49) "As I was saying ..."
 - 50) Reproductive cell
 - 51) Bruce Wayne's home, for one
 - 56) Old PC display part
 - 59) Land parcels
 - 60) Take aback
 - 62) Wolfs wail
 - 63) Little sister of 10-
 - 64) U nharden a garden
 - 65) Stats for sluggers (Abbr.)
 - 66) Fish story suffix?

NOTE PAD

ATOP TOAD CLAIM
BABU OLLA HENRI
EXIT NEAR ACTON
LITTLE ORN THING
SOP SAT
CAB GOER TIPPEY
OGRE EVEN LEAVE
SHORT MEMORY SPAN
TAIGA SAGO TADS
ASLOPE POOL LEE
ILO TEA
RUNTOF THE LITTER
ISAAC HONE LADY
DEBRA EMIT ALGA
ESSES REDS SEEN

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Someone who is far away is going to be on your mind today, and you are on their mind as well. In fact, they've been thinking about you for a while now and are eager to get back in contact. Perhaps they've even started a game of phone tag with you. If so, today you need to make an extra effort to reconnect with them. Send a message or reserve time for a long phone call. Not all of the people from your past are meant to be left there.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Your quick thinking in a tricky situation will leave others quite impressed today, although you might not completely understand why. In your mind, you did what anyone else would have done in that position. You won't understand the significance of your actions until a few days from now, and then you can pat yourself on the back. Lately, you have been pleasing people without even trying, and you're starting to get a taste of what it must be like to be a superhero.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Be careful not to go along with that latest theory people are pushing right now. As you know, new ideas are not always good ideas. In terms of your romantic life, you shouldn't adhere too rigidly to some new self-help philosophy. You could end up playing too many games and not being your genuine self. And in your professional life, suggesting a new idea is a great way to get noticed as long as you make sure it's a sound plan before speaking up!

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Today is a great day to clean out your emotional closet and finally say what you have been wanting to say to that certain someone. Holding on to your feelings is not wise. It could cause your imagination to run wild and fear to overtake you. You could convince yourself that something is going on or something could be happening that isn't really true. Once you get your feelings out of your system, you will be amazed by how much lighter and happier you feel.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

There's a fine line between being charmingly talkative and being a blabbermouth. You know how to walk that line, but not all people do. Keep an eye out for a friend or coworker who isn't watching what they say today. Step in and help prevent them from putting their foot in their mouth or (if you are too late) help them dig themselves out of an awkward hole. Your quick thinking and quirky wit can help everyone move forward to better topics and better ideas.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

The only thing that matters today is doing what you want to do. Stick to your plan and don't let yourself get distracted by anyone or anything. Some very flighty people have been inviting you to join in on their adventures, but you are wise to decline politely and focus on your own agenda now. Even if you're jealous of those who always have something going on, realize that their gambits aren't productive, and none of them will help you reach your goals.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

Don't take any backtalk from anyone who thinks they have you where they want you just because they know one of your secrets. Even if they also know how badly you want to protect it. You probably know dirt that is just as potentially uncomfortable for them, and while you'd never choose to say anything about it under normal circumstances, you might need to let them know what you know.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Good and bad energy are floating around you today, and you need to figure out how to avoid the bad. Sure, negative vibes are just a part of life. Sometimes a bumner in your day provides the motivation you need to make a change. But you don't have to deal with it if you don't want to right now. Avoidance isn't a long-term solution, but it's good enough for the time being. You deserve a day without having to deal with a bunch of different hassles.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Not every romance is a constantly sizzling affair. From time to time things cool off. They have to. So if your current romance is feeling less than dynamic, don't assume it's headed for the end. Each of you needs space once in a while to get back in touch with your independence and individual identity. You two are not attached at the hip, and it wouldn't be healthy if you were. So try not to be too possessive right now.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Fake it till you make it today. It's fun, it's exciting, and it's usually incredibly effective. If you get stuck in a situation that's a bit over your head, call upon your best acting abilities to bluff your way through it. Perhaps some forgotten detail you left hanging from a past project rains down on you today. You'll have fun dancing between the drops. You're sharp, but you can't possibly stay on top of every little detail. Luckily, you can make the best of it.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

If you're looking for more insight into your latest dilemma, turn to your coworkers or classmates. You need to consult someone who is either in the same situation or has been there before. There is nothing better than firsthand experience to help you figure out what to do. When you talk to them, don't be mad if they leave out some minor details. They're doing it for your own good. Some things you have to learn on your own.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Avoid group activities today. Everybody wants something different, and trying to get your people on the same page will be a frustrating experience. So focus on activities that are best done alone. Save time for things like reading, napping, relaxing, researching, and even just thinking about life. When you only have to consult with yourself, you are much more likely to stay in a great mood all day long.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- In what country was the "Red Cross" founded?
A. England
B. Germany
C. France
D. Switzerland
- In 1954, the US Department of Defence established what song as the official musical tribute to the president of the USA?
A. Hail to the Chief
B. I Think It's Gonna Work Out Fine
C. Imagine
D. Smoke Gets In Your Eyes
Correct Answer: Hail to the Chief
- Although an annual Thanksgiving Day had been observed in several colonies throughout what became the USA, who proclaimed USA's first national Thanksgiving Day?
A. Abraham Lincoln
B. George Washington
C. Theodore Roosevelt
D. Harry S. Truman

Answers: 1. D 2. A 3. B

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

I	C	E	I
S	D	C	T
O	T	T	E
I	M	I	A

Each game will present you with a matrix filled with letters. The objective is to form words by linking adjacent letters - to the left, right, on top, bottom, or diagonal to each other. The Boggles Classic game uses a 4 x 4 matrix. Words are valued at one point for each letter in excess of two letters. A three letter word is worth one point, a four letter word is worth two points, and so on. Valid words must be at least three letters long.

SOLUTION
20-25 words: Excellent,
15-20 words: Very good,
10-15 words: Good,
5-10 words: Average

DO YOU SUDOKU?

LEVEL EASY: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9 and only one instance of each number

				3			7	
6	5					4	8	
	2	8			5	1		
		5	9	6	4			
4			3		2			7
			7	5	1	9		
		2	8			7	9	
	7	4					2	1
	9			1				

WORD BUILDER



You have three minutes to find all the words contained in this word.

Rules: Words should be at least four letters long, proper nouns and duplicates don't count

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

9	4	8	7	1	2	5	6	3
1	2	5	9	6	3	4	7	8
5	6	7	8	4	9	2	1	3
4	5	6	1	5	7	9	8	2
7	5	9	2	8	6	1	4	3
8	1	2	7	9	6	5	3	4
6	9	1	5	7	4	8	2	3
8	4	7	6	2	1	7	5	9
2	7	5	8	9	1	4	6	3

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Klopp exiting Anfield stage after leaving a lasting legacy

London, England - When Juergen Klopp addressed the media for the first time as Liverpool manager in October 2015 he spoke of turning doubters into believers. Nearly a decade and multiple trophies later, he will leave with mission accomplished, and much more.

The 56-year-old German would thoroughly endorse the saying that no individual can ever be bigger than a football club.

But as he prepares for the 491st and final game of his reign on what will be an emotional Sunday afternoon at Anfield, it is impossible to overstate Klopp's impact on the club and the city.

"What he has done is incredible, not just for the club but for this city," John Pearman, founder and editor of the Red All Over The Land fanzine, says of the German.

"We'll never see his like again."

Klopp did not only return the club back to the pinnacle of English and European football, he embodied the Scouse spirit of a city that always regards itself as a bit different.

On the pitch his high-octane heavy metal football delivered seven trophies including a first English League title for 30 years, a Champions League crown and a Club World Cup. Off it, Klopp



Jurgen Klopp's high-octane football delivered seven trophies for Liverpool, including a first English League title for 30 years, a Champions League crown and a Club World Cup

grasped the psyche of the city's residents and showed empathy and compassion, always managing to retain an admirable sense of perspective.

As a mark of the bond between Klopp and Liverpool he was given Freedom of the City status in 2022 - a ceremony at-

tended by Margaret Aspinall, chair of the Hillsborough Family Support Group which campaigned for justice for the victims of the 1989 tragedy that resulted in the deaths of 97 fans.

"The families have had a lot of sadness but the joy he has brought us, the excitement he

gives you, you forget all your sadness, that's what's he does," Aspinall said.

Liverpool have had some great managers but Pearman says Klopp will be held in the same esteem as Bill Shankly who famously said: "Some people believe football is a matter of life

and death, I am very disappointed with that attitude. I can assure you it is much, much more important than that."

Klopp would not echo those words, although the passion he brought to his job bordered on the fanatical with his trademark touchline sprints to celebrate

Klopp will be a tough act to follow, but leaves Liverpool in good health with a crop of talented youngsters already making their mark alongside serial trophy-winners like Van Dijk, Alisson and Salah

their mark alongside serial trophy-winners like Trent Alexander-Arnold, Virgil van Dijk, Alisson and Mohamed Salah.

It is a far cry from when he arrived to replace Brendan Rodgers with Liverpool in 10th place in the Premier League and the fans disillusioned. There was no quick fix as Liverpool finished eighth that season although appearances in the League Cup and Europa League finals hinted at a new era.

In his first full season in charge

Klopp steered Liverpool back into the Champions League and they went all the way to the 2018 final - losing out to Real Madrid.

Everything began to click the following season in what proved to be an epic title race with Manchester City - Liverpool edged out despite collecting 97 points.

Redemption was just around the corner though as Liverpool beat Tottenham Hotspur in the 2019 Champions League final, having staged a spine-tingling comeback to beat Barcelona 4-3 on aggregate in the semifinal.

Liverpool's 30-year wait for an English title followed the next season although sadly the pandemic meant The Kop was empty as Klopp's side sealed it with seven games to spare.

We will just focus on our game, says Arsenal's Martin Odegaard

London, England - Arsenal players must not let their emotions get the better of them as they chase the Premier League title into the final day, captain Martin Odegaard said ahead of their match against Everton.

Arsenal are two points behind leaders Manchester City going into Sunday's final round of fixtures. The Gunners must win to stay in contention, while City could lift their fourth title in a row if they beat West Ham United.

Arsenal's hopes of ending their 20-year wait for the league title dwindled after City's 2-0 win at Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday put the Manchester side at an advantage.

"We spoke about it the day after (City went ahead)," Odegaard told TNT Sports. "We have to focus on ourselves, we can't get too emotional about it."

"We have one more game, at home, it's the last game of the season and our goal and our task is clear, we have to win that. We'll see what happens. That's our mindset now, win that last game, give the fans a good last game



Martin Odegaard

and we'll see. It's out of our control, we just focus on our game."

The Norwegian midfielder said his side have been amazing this season. "We've taken good steps and I feel like we're a much better team compared to last season," he added. "We've had some really good games, some good results, and we are now there until the last day, to push for it."

Arsenal finished second in the

2022-23 season, five points behind City. They last won the league title under manager Arsene Wenger in their 2003-04 "Invincibles" season when they went the entire campaign unbeaten.

Arteta hopes for Moyes helping hand

Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta said he hopes his former manager David

Moyes can give them a helping hand in the title race when West Ham travel to leaders City. Moyes signed Arteta in 2005 when he was Everton manager, bringing the Spanish midfielder to England where he spent the rest of his playing career before going into management.

"He's been instrumental and so important in my career, as a footballer and a person. He could help us to fulfil our dream and my personal dream to win the Premier League," Arteta told reporters on Friday.

"The only thing we've discussed is to give ourselves an opportunity to live a beautiful day. It's possible, it's football. We have to play like every single week. We have to win, then hope West Ham to help us achieve our dream. That first part is on us, it's the only thing we can focus on."

Arsenal fell short by five points last season when their title challenge collapsed in May but this time they have been with City every step of the way in the closest title race in Premier League history.



Mohamed Elneny

Elneny to leave Gunners after eight years

London, England - Midfielder Mohamed Elneny will leave Arsenal at the end of the season after eight years at the Premier League club, the Egypt international said on Friday.

Elneny joined Arsenal from Swiss side FC Basel in 2016 for 5 million pounds (\$6 million) and has made 161 appearances for the London club. A knee injury restricted the 31-year-old to eight outings during the 2022-23 season. He has made six appearances in all competitions in Arsenal's current campaign.

"Gooners, I'm here today to

send you a message, to say goodbye and thank you for everything you've done for me," Elneny said in a video posted on X on Friday. "The love, the support and the kindness. I'm really going to miss you so much and you'll be in my heart forever."

Elneny did not say where he would go after leaving Arsenal.

He said he would bid farewell to fans at the Emirates on Sunday as Arsenal host Everton in their final league match, hoping for a Manchester City slip-up against West Ham United to secure their first title in 20 years.



Arne Slot

Dutchman Arne Slot confirms Liverpool job

Rotterdam, Netherlands - Feyenoord's Arne Slot confirmed on Friday that he would be Liverpool's manager next season after Juergen Klopp leaves at the end of the campaign.

Liverpool have not yet confirmed Klopp's replacement, with the German manager leaving after the club's final game of the season against Wolverhampton Wanderers on Sunday.

"I can confirm that I will become the trainer there next year," Slot told a news conference. "Until now I was not thinking about this being the build up to my last match, but that starts coming now. At the beginning of the week you are thinking about training and those kind of things."

"But the feeling gets stronger now. That is why I'm a little bit late now (for the news conference), because I wanted to say goodbye to some people personally and take time for them, more than just shaking hands. So yeah, the feeling grows. I understand that good results help, but it is very nice to feel that people really are thinking it's a pity that I'm leaving."

Guardiola expects final-day chaos

Manchester, England - Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola said he expects another nail-biting finale to the Premier League season, similar to the 2021-22 campaign where his club nearly lost the title on the final day before late goals secured the trophy.

City are two points ahead of Arsenal heading into Sunday's final round of fixtures and can secure a fourth title in as many seasons if they beat West Ham

United at home.

City pipped Liverpool to the title by one point in May 2022 but Guardiola's side made things difficult for themselves when they went 2-0 down to Aston Villa at home before they eventually won 3-2 to deny the Merseyside club the crown.

"I have the feeling it will be (like the) Aston Villa (game) again. We would like to be 3-0 up after 10 minutes but it's not going to happen. I've seen

enough (of West Ham's matches)," Guardiola told reporters on Friday.

"I'm ready for it to be a tough, tough game. I want to put in the minds of my players, 'Look at Tottenham, how they fight for every ball, the aggression they had.' I didn't have any doubts about that."

"The 11 players of West Ham will be ready to beat us. Like Aston Villa, two seasons ago, they didn't play for anything but

know what happened. Ourselves and our people have to be ready from the first minute, to be with us and do it together."

Like Aston Villa, two seasons ago, they didn't play for anything but I know what happened

PEP GUARDIOLA



Pep Guardiola

PHIL, THE BEAT OF MAN CITY

Foden voted Premier League player of the season

Manchester, England - Phil Foden has been voted the Premier League's player of the season, the league announced on Saturday after the 23-year-old had the best campaign of his career to help put Manchester City within reach of their fourth consecutive league title.

Foden has scored 17 goals and grabbed eight assists in 34 league games this season playing centrally as well as on the wing when needed. He has 25 goals and 11 assists in all competitions.

Overall, I've been very happy with the way I have played this season and really pleased that I have been able to contribute with the goals and assists throughout the season

PHIL FODEN

Heading into the final day of the season, City are two points ahead of Arsenal and should Pep Guardiola's side lift the title, Foden will become the youngest player ever to have won six Premier League trophies.

"To win this award is an achievement that I am extremely proud of," said Foden. "The Premier League is acknowledged as the greatest league in the world, and it is a pleasure to have been nominated with so many other great players who have all enjoyed special seasons for their clubs."

Only Erling Haaland (27) has



Phil Foden

scored more league goals than Foden for City, who will secure a record fourth straight title if they beat West Ham on Sunday.

"Overall, I've been very happy with the way I have played this season and really pleased that I have been able to contribute with the goals and assists throughout

the season," Foden added.

"I'd like to thank all of the City staff, coaches and especially my team-mates because without them this wouldn't be possible. And I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who voted for me as the award means a lot."

Foden topped an eight-man shortlist which also included Erling Haaland, Alexander Isak, Martin Odegaard, Cole Palmer, Declan Rice, Virgil van Dijk and Ollie Watkins.

City players have now won the award five years in a row as Foden joins Ruben Dias, Haaland

and two-time winner Kevin De Bruyne in winning the prize.

The last player not from City to win the award was Liverpool's Van Dijk in the 2018-19 season.

England international Foden also won the Football Writers' Association's player of the year award earlier this month.



Massimiliano Allegri

Juve fire coach Allegri for misbehaviour

Milan, Italy - Juventus sacked coach Massimiliano Allegri over his behaviour during and after this week's Coppa Italia final in which he was sent off, the Italian Serie A club said on Friday.

Juventus beat Atalanta 1-0 to win a record-extending 15th Coppa Italia on Wednesday, their first trophy in three years.

Allegri was sent off towards the end of the game for his fierce protests over refereeing decisions.

After the game, the 56-year-old clashed with match officials, Juventus staff and a newspaper director, Italian media reported.

"Juventus announces that it has relieved Massimiliano Allegri of his position as head coach of the men's first team," the club said in a statement.

"The dismissal follows certain behaviour during and after the Coppa Italia final that

the club deemed incompatible with the values of Juventus and the behaviour that those who represent it should have."

The Italian football federation is looking into the events during the Cup final.

"We can confirm that an investigation on incident (that) happened during the Coppa Italia Final, in which ... Allegri and Tuttosport newspaper's director Guido Vacago were involved, is in due course amongst the FIGC's Prosecutor Office," FIGC said in a statement sent to Reuters.

Allegri first became the Turin club's coach in 2014 and led the team for five seasons, before returning in 2021 after taking two years away from management.

During his first spell, Juve won five consecutive Serie A titles and four Italian Cups.

They also finished as Champions League runners-up twice in 2014-15 and 2016-17.

Antonelli showing 'metronomic pace' in testing with Mercedes

Imola, Italy - Italy's Kimi Antonelli has shown 'metronomic pace' in testing with Mercedes, the team's technical director James Allison said on Friday after Lewis Hamilton endorsed the 17-year-old to replace him next year.

Hamilton is moving to Ferrari and Mercedes' protege Antonelli is a candidate to take the seven-times world champion's place alongside George Russell despite his lack of experience.

Asked at the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix how Antonelli's recent test in an older car had gone, Allison said the engineers had spoken highly of the youngster who is currently competing in Formula Two.

"Just a young, enthusiastic driver, very, very fast, metronomic in his pace. Has not been in an F1 car until recently, but made it look like he'd been in one for ages within a lap or two," said Allison.

"He came at this generation of cars, the ground effect cars, with an open mind. Yeah, he feels all the same things that you'd expect him to feel.

"But he's not sort of polluted by the previous cars.

"So he just takes them as they are and tells us what he is feeling



Kimi Antonelli

as weaknesses and strengths. And lets the engineers work to try to improve those things. But he looks like a very promising young driver."

Hamilton said on Thursday he would take a gamble on the Italian, if it were his call.

"Honestly, I have no idea what (team boss) Toto (Wolff's) plans are but I think, for me, taking on a youngster would be...if it was my job, if it was my role...I'd probably take on Kimi," he said.

He (Antonelli) has not been in an F1 car until recently, but made it look like he'd been in one for ages within a lap or two

JAMES ALLISON

Hamilton made his Formula One debut at McLaren in 2007 at the age of 22, the most successful driver in the history of the sport finishing on the podium in his first race in Australia.

Red Bull's triple world champion Max Verstappen debuted at the age of 17 in 2015.

Al Attiyah romps to Jordan Rally victory as accident forces Al Rawahi to retire early

Dead Sea, Jordan - Nasser Saleh al Attiyah and Giovanni Bernacchini finished the Jordan Rally in cruise control to kick-start the defence of the Qatari's regional rally championship title at the Dead Sea on Saturday.

On the 233rd event in the history of the FIA Middle East Rally Championship (MERC), Al Attiyah claimed his 85th career victory and a record-breaking 16th in Jordan since 2003. His Autotek Motorsport-prepared Škoda Fabia RS never missed a beat and he was able to try out different suspension settings over the closing stages on his way to a winning margin of 5min 31.6sec on his first appearance in the new car. Bernacchini duly claimed his fifth victory in Jordan with Al Attiyah and his first since 2014. A 26th MERC success moved the Italian ahead of Chris Patterson into an outright third in the MERC Co-drivers' Hall of Fame for most wins behind Ronan Morgan (41) and Mathieu Baumel (32).

Defending champion Abdullah al Rawahi of Oman, teaming up with local codriver Ata al Hmoud, led in his Škoda Fabia after two stages on Friday, but suffered radiator and engine damage after an accident on the first pass



Oman's Abdullah al Rawahi led in his Škoda Fabia after two stages on Friday, but suffered radiator and engine damage after an accident on the first pass through the Baptism Site stage and could not start the final day

through the Baptism Site stage and was unable start the final day.

Al Attiyah, who claimed a clean sweep of eight stage wins on Saturday, said: "I am really so happy to win here in Jordan. It is my favourite race. It is the most difficult race in the Middle East. To come back strong with the new car, we learn a lot. Thanks to the team and the organisation. They always make this rally strong. To win 16 times here is amazing. Lebanon is a different

race and we need to be clever there as well."

Abdulaziz al Kuwari is now tackling a full programme of MERC events in a QMMF-backed Škoda Fabia and second place to add to the fourth he achieved on his home event means the Qatari is the new leader of the regional championship. Briton Marshall Clarke was his co-driver on this occasion. A puncture and subsequent tyre change was the only real

issue for the duo after a polished performance.

Shaker Jweihan delighted home fans with the final place on the podium: he and Lebanese co-driver Carlos Hanna dominated the MERC2 category from start-to-finish and the Mitsubishi driver claimed a second maximum haul of points towards the championship's secondary category. Jweihan also moved into second place in the Drivers' Championship behind Al Kuwari.

Jarry to meet Zverev in Italian Open final

Rome, Italy - Chilean 21st seed Nicolas Jarry outclassed American Tommy Paul 6-3 6-7(3) 6-3 to reach the Italian Open on Friday as former champion Alexander Zverev recovered from a slow start to beat Chilean Alejandro Tabilo 1-6 7-6(4) 6-2.

Jarry produced relentless power from the baseline, hitting

13 aces and 35 winners to reach his first ATP Masters 1000 final in two hours and 44 minutes.

Jarry took a 5-3 lead in the opener, relying on his service before closing out the set with a brilliant ace.

Paul, the 14th seed, refused to go quietly in the second, pegging back the Chilean's 4-2 lead

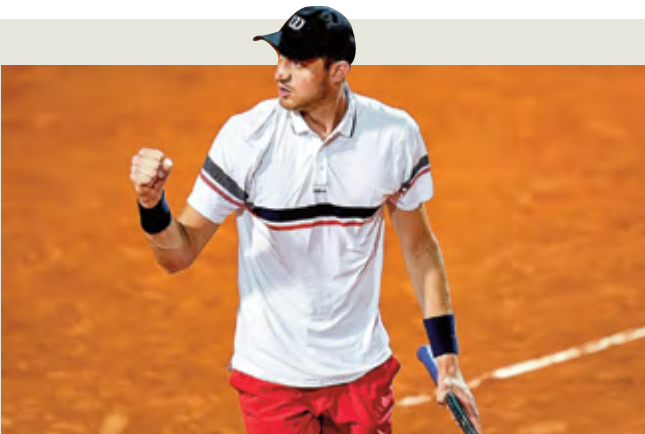
to force a tiebreak, which the American won to take the match to a decider.

Jarry started the third strongly and opened a 5-2 lead, winning 13 points at the net before securing victory when a Paul backhand went wide.

Earlier on Friday, Zverev, who won the title in 2017 and

reached the final the following year, looked in real danger when 29th seed Tabilo raced away with the opening set.

The 26-year-old, who beat world number one Novak Djokovic in the third round, was playing in his first ATP Masters 1000 semi-final, but did not look fazed as he broke Zverev twice



Nicolas Jarry celebrates after his victory against Tommy Paul

in the first set.

Tabilo won five games in a row in taking the opener, but the second was much closer. The Chilean did force the only break point of the set, but Zverev held and went on to win the tiebreak.

German Zverev raised his game in the deciding set, breaking twice, and was never threatened again en route to his first final of the year.



Mumbai finish bottom



Nicholas Pooran's 29-ball 75 was the key to Lucknow Super Giants' victory against Mumbai Indians

Lucknow fail to make playoffs despite Pooran-inspired win

Mumbai, India - On a bittersweet evening for Mumbai Indians (MI) fans at the Wankhede Stadium, a high-octane Rohit Sharma fifty gave them something to be happy about, but they also saw their side slump to their tenth defeat of the season to finish bottom of the points table.

The victors, Lucknow Super Giants (LSG), too, were left with a what-could-have-been feeling as their seventh win of the season took them to the important landmark of 14 points, but a straggling net run-rate of -0.667 left them just outside the top four. In any

case, despite scoring 214 batting first, LSG needed an impossible margin of victory to get their NRR where it would have been useful.

On the night, it was Nicholas Pooran who rescued LSG from a familiar situation. With their top order struggling again, his 29-ball 75 brought life to a sluggish innings against an inexperienced MI attack that played without Jasprit Bumrah, Arjun Tendulkar his replacement.

MI began the chase in dazzling fashion on the back of Rohit's barrage of boundaries on either side of a short rain delay, but they

slid from 88 for no loss to 120 for 5 in the middle overs, effectively ending their chances of putting up a realistic fight.

The result meant MI, under new captain Hardik Pandya, finished last for the second time in three seasons. LSG will end up missing the playoffs for the first time in their three-season history.

LSG gave Devdutt Padikkal another go this season at the top. But he finished the way he had started, with a duck.

Nuwan Thushara got the new ball to sling into Padikkal, and Tendulkar too troubled No. 3 Marcus Stoinis early with the swinging delivery. Piyush Chawla also kept LSG quiet enough to prise out Stoinis and Deepak Hooda in quick succession, and

at 69 for 3 in the tenth over, LSG's innings was moving without direction.

But Pooran changed that, even masking KL Rahul's inability to get quick runs. As Rahul moved to only 40 in his first 33 balls, Pooran bashed 22 runs off Anshul Kamboj's 12th over, and then hit consecutive sixes off Hardik in the 13th.

He saved his best for the 14th when Tendulkar's first two balls went for 12, and after an injury forced the bowler to leave the field, replacement bowler Naman Dhir got pummelled for two sixes. That over went for 29.

Not all of Pooran's shots were pretty, but he rode his luck. Even though he and Rahul fell as part of three wickets in three balls,

TODAYS MATCHES

MATCH 69

2 PM

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD VS PUNJAB KINGS

MATCH 70

6 PM

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS VS RAJASTHAN ROYALS

their partnership and the late assault from Ayush Badoni (22 in ten balls) gave LSG 214 for 6.

Rohit came into the match with scores of 6, 8, 4, 11, 4 and 19. Among India's batters for the T20 World Cup, he was the most out of form. But, on his way out of the season, Rohit batted the way he was expected to when captaincy was taken away from him at the start of IPL 2024.

But MI and Rohit found themselves in a squeeze as the LSG spinners came on. Krunal Pandya and Ravi Bishnoi, occasional boundaries aside, made an impact with tidy spells to slow MI down. The two of them also took sharp outfield catches to help LSG's cause.

After holding on to a spectacular sliding catch at long-off to dismiss Brevin in the ninth over off Naveen, Krunal got Suryakumar Yadav sweeping to deep third for a three-ball duck in the tenth over. Bishnoi, who took the tough juggling catch for that Suryakumar dismissal, then had Rohit slicing to Mohsin at short third in the 11th.

Hardik couldn't do much, and Nehal Wadhwa then became Bishnoi's second victim.

ESPNcricinfo



Hardik Pandya

Pandya's misery sums up Mumbai Indians' woeful IPL campaign

Mumbai, India - Five-time champions Mumbai Indians finished their woeful season with yet another defeat on Friday, with captain Hardik Pandya's own performance a reflection of their struggles in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Mumbai are one of the two teams to have won five IPL titles, all of them under Rohit Sharma, who was replaced by all-rounder Pandya in a shock leadership change this year.

As the team hurtled from one defeat to another, fans started booing Pandya, who led Gujarat Titans in the last two seasons, even in their home matches at the Wankhede Stadium. Pandya, who is expected to play a key role in India's T20 World Cup campaign next month as the team's preferred seam-bowling all-rounder, finished the IPL season with 216 runs at an average of 18 and 11 wickets.

The 30-year-old was jeered again on Friday as Mumbai signed off their campaign with their 10th loss to finish at the bottom of the 10-team league.

"It wasn't great hearing all the boos," Mumbai Indians head coach Mark Boucher said. "I felt sorry for Hardik... It's never nice to go through

something like that. So yeah, there are certain things we need to address. And we are going to address them."

Pandya's uninspiring captaincy also drew criticism, which, Boucher said, might have affected the all-rounder.

"I think that if (Pandya) was here, he'd also be disappointed in his performances," he said.

"From a captain's perspective, I thought he had some good games. There's a lot of stuff going on around him that maybe clouded his thoughts every now and again, which I said is tough for him as a leader as well."

Pandya will miss the first match next season, regardless of which team he represents, after Mumbai's slow over rate on Friday, third such offence this year, earned him a one-match suspension.

Speculation is rife that India captain Rohit would move to a new franchise. Boucher did not provide any clarity. "To be honest, there hasn't been many conversations about Rohit's future," the South African said. "For me, he is the master of his own destiny. It's a big auction next season, who knows what's going to happen? We'll just have to take each day as it comes."

CLASSIFIEDS

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 | Salalah 9429 9325
www.orbit-oman.com

- Fleet of 2,000 vehicles
- Choose from a wide range of brands & models
- PDO, OXY and BP spec vehicles available
- Attractive rates for short-term & long-term lease

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

عيادة فصول السنة للطب الهندي التقليدي
ALL SEASON AYURVEDA CLINIC

The most efficient and authentic Ayurvedic Treatment & Medicine, Yoga, Kalari, Panchakarma, Massage, Dhara etc... Rehabilitation, Beauty therapy & post Delivery Care

Zaher Building, 1st Floor, Flat 8A, Al Khuwair Service Road, near Al Zawawi Mosque & Burger-king Tel:24475280, GSM: 95371664 , 92504980 , Website:www.siddhayur.com

SEND YOUR REQUEST FOR

BIRTHDAY/ ANNIVERSARY wishes to
wish@apexmedia.co.om
with your resident card copy
(It's free of cost)

mai alkaline

pH 9.1 to 9.5
Alkaline Ionized Drinking Water

OmanOasis OmanOasisOfficial OmanOasisWater

HYDRATE SMARTLY

- ✓ Ultra-hydrating
- ✓ Revitalizing
- ✓ Energizing
- ✓ Electrolytes

oman OASIS

800 71 222 9275 5522

06 7399452

SOLO EXHIBITION

For the first time in Oman, a solo exhibition by ceramic artist **Shima Amia** on the theme of narcissism is being held at Stal Gallery - opening today (May 19) evening. Enter at your own peril...



Monsters are Beautiful

Hubert Vaz

Mental health is a favourite subject of artists - from anxiety and depression to paranoia and schizophrenia, a range of themes have often found their way on canvases, sculptures and multi-dimensional artworks in solo and group exhibitions the world over... The relationship between narcissism and creativity, however, is a rare phenomenon which has inspired interesting debates for decades.

While narcissism is sometimes considered a by-product of creative talent (as artists often get so absorbed in solitude that it gives off vibes of narcissistic behaviour), narcissist personality traits involving grandiose self-views and superiority tend to link it with creativity. This

relationship between narcissism and creativity currently attracts much academic attention and is gaining ground in the psychological field.

Shima Amia, an Iranian ceramic sculptor in Oman, has now pulled out a rabbit from her own hat in this regard with her solo exhibition - Monsters are Beautiful - dealing with narcissism. The exhibition, curated by Javid Ramezani, art critic, opens at Stal Gallery today.

"The theme of my solo exhibition is about mental health and specifically about narcissistic personality," says Shima, adding that on display will be 17 sculptures and 3 installations, all made by clay, some of which are fully glazed and some with just a touch of glaze. She has been working on this collection for almost a year and all the works on display

are totally new.

To a query, whether she has experienced how narcissistic personalities negatively impact the lives of others, prompting the creation of this collection, Shima said, "Yes, the idea for this exhibition is born from my personal experience with a narcissistic personality. And I decided to share my experience and story through my art and sculptures with people, to show how they can affect your life and other people around them in so many different aspects - how mental health is so important."

She drew attention to the fact that society places immense emphasis on superficial appearances. This fixation on fleeting beauty diminishes the importance of deeper qualities, fostering a culture where outward appearance reigns supreme.

"The narrative of the exhibition 'Monsters are Beautiful' is the voice of pain, defeat, and the reflection of the suffering of those who have fallen into the trap of their own narcissism, lies, and hypocrisy," she said, explaining, "My works are divided into two categories, one includes individuals who have been influenced by these people and the other consists of the narcissistic individuals themselves."

The message through this exhibition for those who are victims of narcissistic abuse is, that they are not alone, and no matter how difficult and painful the relationship with them may be, in the end, we are the ones who can save ourselves and transform our pain into awareness and light.

It depends what draws you...

How easy or difficult was it to deal with this theme through artistic expression?
It was not easy. It was full of emotions, pain, suffering and sometimes even tears.

Do all exhibits reveal pain, anguish or is there any brighter side?
No. The exhibition is divided into two parts. One part shows pain and anguish and the other depicts light, finding liberation, salvation and hope.

Have you dealt with similar themes before?
No, this is totally a new idea and collection.

Will the negative expressions in the exhibits deter buyers?
I don't think so. I can't say they are negative as I tried to show different aspects of all emotions - happiness, sadness, brightness, darkness, love, hate, hope, liberations, strength. So, it depends on what draws each person. I believe, in the end, light will be a winner not darkness.

How do you justify the contradiction in the title?
I chose this title to show that the beauty of monsters tend to make us blind, to forget what the horrible person can be behind the beautiful mask. Often the beauty of appearance prevents us from going deeper to see the reality.



WE EXCHANGE TRUST



WORLD WIDE REMITTANCE



WE BUY & SELL GOLD & SILVER

1 gm to 1kg 24ct gold bars available at best international rate.

PURSHOTTAM KANJI EXCHANGE

شركة پرشوتام کانجی

کانجی لتراڈنگ

Download & Install

www.pkexchange.com

BRIDGING NATIONS

COLOURS OF CONCERN

SEVENTEEN YOUNG TALENTS ILLUMINATE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS WITH VIBRANT ARTISTRY AT THE BRIDGING NATIONS INITIATIVE IN OMAN

Anirban Ray

As one steps into a realm of vibrant colours and imaginative landscapes at an art exhibition showcasing masterpieces by children along with their mentors, the urge to express love for mother Earth looms large...

The little strokes of childhood innocence, however, bring forth a more serious message for the world - about the essence of our natural environment, its beauty, fragility, and the urgent need for conserving it at all costs. With creativity depicting the plight of lush green forests as well as crystal-clear oceans teeming with colourful life, the young artists have presented a collective call for action.

In an endeavour to empower young talents with special needs, foster global understanding, and raise awareness about the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an initiative led by Madeleine ImKey, in collaboration with the French Academic Society Arts-Sciences-Lettres, unfolded in Oman last week.

Established in 1915, the Academic Society Arts-Sciences-Lettres, headquartered in Paris, France, is dedicated to promoting artists, scholars, and scientists worldwide.

Entitled 'Bridging Nations with Interculturality, Inclusivity, and SDGs,' the event, proudly sponsored by Oxy Oman, marked a historic milestone as the Academy's first international cultural endeavor outside France in its 109-year legacy, showcasing Oman's global cultural significance.

Under Madeleine ImKey's guidance, the initiative united 17 children and young adults with special needs and skills, each bringing forth unique talents and backgrounds. Over three immersive days, these participants collaborated with 17 seasoned Omani artists and international artists based in Oman, infusing their creations with inspiration drawn from the 17 SDGs from the United Nations.

The pairs were selected at the opening ceremony by the chief guest, H H Sayyid Dr Kamil Fahad al Said, held at the Kempinski Hotel. In his statement, H H Sayyid Kamil hailed the innovative approach of the initiative, emphasising its role in showcasing diverse talents and promoting inclusivity within society.

The enriching workshops held at the Music Palace in Al Mouj provided a platform for artistic expression and cultural exchange. The workshops culminated in an award ceremony at the French Embassy, where 17 artworks created during the workshops were celebrated. Two standout creations received official gold and silver medals from the French Academy, recognising their exceptional contributions to promoting interculturality and the SDGs. The ceremony was held under the auspices of H E Veronique Aulagnon, who immediately embraced the project when approached by Madeleine.

In her visionary speech, H E Aulagnon emphasised the vital role of culture in promoting cooperation, highlighting France's strong contribution to cultural exchange and the ambassador's dedication to fostering cultural understanding and strengthening international relations through initiatives like Madeleine ImKey's.

The grand closing ceremony occurred at Muscat International Airport on Thursday, marking the public unveiling of the paintings in this iconic venue. Amidst the event's ambience, Maestro Alexey Botvinov's piano performance enraptured the audience, showcasing his unparalleled skill as a contemporary interpreter of Rachmaninov's compositions. The airport experienced a momentous occasion as it welcomed such a distinguished pianist to its midst for the

first time in Oman, adding a touch of grandeur and cultural enrichment to its ambience.

Following the closing event, the 17 art pieces were transported to the Kempinski Hotel for a two-week exhibition, currently underway. Subsequently, the artworks will be showcased in various locations across Oman, beginning with the Royal Opera House Muscat, The National Museum, and the Diplomatic Club. Finally, they will return to Muscat Airport, serving as a testament to Oman's cultural dedication to the SDGs and inclusivity for international visitors.

Madeleine's inspiration for the initiative struck after she received an award for her earthly-baroque inspired art in Paris last year. Reflecting on this, she recounted, "Upon my return to Oman in December, the idea to launch this project took hold. Following my participation in an exhibition at COP 28 in Dubai, I felt compelled to reconnect with like-minded individuals in Oman."

"In December '23, we hosted a dinner in Muscat for a delegation from Switzerland and Oman, during which I had the opportunity to meet a doctor specialised in genetic diseases, shedding light on the high prevalence of such illnesses in Oman. At that moment, I knew an action had to be taken. It was a deep, profound realisation. I started planning the Bridging Nations initiative immediately, driven by my willpower and strong vision."

She also shared that she had resided in Oman for a brief six-month period in 2019. During this time, she deeply connected with the soul, beauty, and hospitality of the Omani people, as well as the abundance of talent deserving international recognition.

"I am profoundly grateful to our sponsor, Oxy Oman, and to the numerous volunteers, individuals, and supporting institutions who immediately embraced my vision and spared no effort to ensure the success of this event in such a short timeframe," she said.

H H Sayyid Dr Kamil Fahad Mahmood al Said, secretary general in the General Secretariat for the Council of Ministers said, "As the chief guest at the launch of the 'Bridging Nations with Interculturality, Inclusivity, and SDGs' initiative, I am thrilled to witness a landmark moment in cultural collaboration hosted in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. The involvement of the venerable 109-year-old Academic Society Arts-Sciences-Lettres from France, known for promoting excellence in the arts and sciences, significantly enriches this initiative."

"This partnership not only highlights the global significance of Oman's cultural scene but also showcases the transformative power of art in bridging diverse cultures and fostering inclusivity. I am particularly inspired by the innovative approach of this initiative, which pairs children and young adults with special needs alongside seasoned Omani artists. Together, they are creating paintings that draw inspiration from the 17 Sustainable Development Goals."

Abdullah, one of the participants of the event who has been mentored by Elizabeth Davis, a veteran artist in Oman, said, "It has been a great experience being a part of this event and we have been number seven in rank. Our topic has been clean energy and I enjoyed being mentored by Elizabeth madam. This has inspired me, and I shall do more in the near future."

Fernand Girard, president of the Academic Society Arts-Sciences-Lettres, added, "Art unites people, and this is such a great opportunity for the world to know one another. This is the first time that such an event is happening beyond France and the response has been great with 17 incredible paintings from these children and their mentors."

(Read full story online)



In December '23, I met a doctor specialised in genetic diseases, shedding light on the high prevalence of such illnesses in Oman. At that moment, I started planning the Bridging Nations initiative.

MADELEINE IMKEY



Photos: V K Shafeer

taste the

NEW GOODNESS

طبيعي أطيب

NATURAL IMMUNITY BOOST

DISTRIBUTED BY

CONTACT NO.: +968 22060236 / 237