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5% TAX ON HIGH EARNERS

Individuals earning more than RO42,000 yearly to be taxed

Our Correspondent Muscat

Oman will introduce a 5% personal income tax on high-income earners starting January 2028, marking a major step in the sultanate's fiscal reform plans to diversify revenue and reduce reliance on oil.

Under the Personal Income Tax Law issued via Royal Decree No 56/2025, the tax will apply to individuals earning more than RO42,000 annually.

Tax Authority stated that the new tax aligns with Oman's economic and social context and supports the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 by expanding income sources and enhancing fiscal sustainability. It also aims to promote wealth redistribution and finance part of the social protection system.

Officials stressed that the tax framework was developed follo-

Royal Decree promulgates Personal Income Tax Law

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik issued Royal Decree No 56/2025 on Sunday promulgating the Personal Income Tax Law after the same was presented before the Council of Oman.

Article 1 states that the Personal Income Tax Law, attached to this decree, will be enforced.

Article 2 stipulates that the Chairman of Tax Authority will issue the Executive Regulation of the law attached to this decree within one year of the date of publication of the same in the Official Gazette. The Chairman of Tax Authority will also issue the decisions necessary for implementation of the law's provisions.

Article 3 cancels Clause 1 of Article 18-bis of the Income Tax Law issued via Royal Decree No 28/2009. It also cancels all that contradicts the attached law or contravenes its provisions.

Article 4 states that this decree will be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from January 1, 2028.

ONA



The Tax Authority has developed an electronic system to encourage voluntary compliance and ensure accurate income verification in coordination with relevant departments

KARIMA MUBARAK AL SAADI



wing a detailed study of its potential economic and social effects, based on income data from various government entities. The findings showed that about 99% of citizens will not be affected due to the high exemption threshold and the modest 5% rate.

The law also provides deductions and exemptions for social factors, covering areas such as education, healthcare, primary housing, inheritance, zakat and donations.

Karima Mubarak al Saadi, Director of Personal Income Tax Project, confirmed that all requirements for implementing the tax are in place. Executive regulations will be issued within a year of publication in the Official Gazette.

She added that the Tax Authority has developed an electronic system to encourage voluntary compliance and ensure accurate income verification in coordination with relevant departments.

Introduction of the tax is part of Oman's broader strategy to strengthen public finances, enhance social justice and support sustainable economic growth.

H M discusses regional escalation with leaders

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik spoke with President Abdel Fattah el Sisi of Egypt, President Emmanuel Macron of France, Prime Minister Keir Starmer of the UK, and Prince Mohammed bin Salman al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, on Sunday.

The telephonic discussions addressed the dangerous escalation of the situation between Iran and Israel, including the increasing frequency of attacks and their devastating consequences on civilian infrastructure and populations. Concerns were raised over potential repercussions threatening the security and stability of the entire region.

The US military strikes in Iran were also discussed, with warnings that such action risk further tension and escalation.

During the calls, emphasis was placed on the importance of coordinated regional and international efforts to halt the cycle of escalation and spare the region additional destruction and humanitarian suffering. Particular attention was paid to potential environmental hazards and radiological consequences, and the shared objective of safeguarding civilian lives and preserving regional security and stability.

03

OIA posts RO1.6bn profit, ramps up local investment

09

'US dropped 6 bunker buster bombs on Iran nuke facility'

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NATURE - ULTIMATE ADVENTURE



YOUR SAY

In keeping with efforts to develop ecotourism in the sultanate, Environment Authority recently signed nine investment agreements worth more than RO44mn for projects in seven reserves. In terms of facilities in Oman’s 31 nature reserves, what is it that the public seeks for a fulfilling experience of the sultanate’s natural beauty? Here is what *Muscat Daily* readers said -

- Salim al Amri**
Photographer

I'd love to see observation towers and guided photography trails. Quiet zones for birdwatching and shaded resting spots would attract nature lovers. Eco-lodges constructed using sustainable materials would be amazing for overnight stays while respecting the habitat.

Aisha al Abri
Student

Educational programmes for children and interactive visitor centres would be great. Virtual reality zones showcasing rare species and Omani ecosystems can make learning fun. These reserves should connect us with nature, not just entertain.

Khalid al Mahrooqi
Tour guide

Proper trekking routes, shaded picnic areas and safe cycling paths should be included. We need eco-friendly camping zones and clear signboards in Arabic and English. It'll help locals and tourists enjoy Oman's natural beauty more.

Fatma al Balushi
Homemaker

I'd like to see family-friendly zones with eco-playgrounds for children and small nature cafes serving local food. Reserves should feel peaceful and accessible, especially for older people who enjoy nature but need comfort.

Neha Joshi
School teacher

Interactive science stations, plant nurseries and butterfly gardens would be lovely. Children need hands-on experiences to connect with nature. Nature reserves can be perfect weekend destinations for families and schools alike..

Ramesh Nair
Engineer

Instal solar-powered walking paths, information kiosks and clean public restrooms. Safety is key, so proper fencing and emergency facilities must be incorporated.

NEXT ON YOUR SAY

With schools now closed for summer, how can students be engaged meaningfully during the holidays? Is there need for more summer activities for children and teenagers?

The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by *Muscat Daily*. If you feel strongly about the issues discussed here, you can email your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om You can also log on to our Facebook page or tweet us your comments on the issue.

SEND YOUR COMMENTS

Share your comments in not more than 50 words along with your full name and profession before next Sunday, 10am, via WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram or muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by *Muscat Daily*.

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Interior wilayats see heavy rain as Muscat swelters



Our Correspondent Muscat

Muscat continues to endure extreme temperatures reaching up to 46°C, but several interior regions of the sultanate witnessed rain between June 19 and 21, bringing temporary relief and causing wadis to flow.

Data from monitoring stations under Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources showed the highest rainfall was recorded in the

wilayat of Al Qabil with 31mm, followed by Yanqul (24mm) and Mudhaibi (22mm). Jabal Akhdar recorded 20mm, while Suhar and Al Hamra both received 17mm. Other readings included Dima Wa al Taien (11mm), Izki (10mm), Nizwa (8mm), Bahla (7mm), Bidiyah (6mm), and Samail and Rustaq (5mm each).

In North Sharqiyah, Ibra experienced heavy to moderate showers in the villages of Al Haima, Waqfiyah, Al Khanadeq,

Al Yahmadi, Al Safala and Al Alayyah, resulting in Wadi al Raki and nearby wadis beginning to flow. Mudhaibi witnessed rain in Samad al Shan, Al Rawdah, Al Wariyah and the Wadi Andam area, triggering Wadi Andam and other streams to flow.

In Dakhliyah, villages in the wilayat of Nizwa including Tanuf, Kummah, Al Rahba, Birkat al Mouz and Sumait witnessed rain, which resulted in Wadi al Rahba and surrounding

streams to flow. Yanqul in Dhahirah recorded heavy to moderate rain with thunderstorms and hail in mountain villages such as Al Waqbah, Al Arshi, Al Masarra, Baiha, Wadi al Hareem, Wal and Al Ma'eeden. This led to Wadi al Ma'eeden and Wadi al Arshi to flow. Despite the precipitation inland, Muscat residents continue to face scorching temperatures with no immediate relief forecast for the capital.

Two more Royal Cavalry riders qualify for World Endurance Cup in 2026

Our Correspondent Muscat

Riders Saleh bin Salem al Balushi and Hussein bin Ali al Farsi from Royal Cavalry have secured places in the 2026 World Endurance Cup to be held in Al Ula, Saudi Arabia.

Balushi, riding Astik, and Farsi, on Finshdor, qualified after successfully completing the 160km Compiègne race in France organised by International Equestrian Federation. The race, held over six stages - 32km, 30km, 28km, 21km, 28km and a final stretch of 21km - witnessed fierce competition with participants from around the world.

Two Royal Cavalry riders have already qualified for the world event - Mahmoud bin Marhoon al Fori on Electra and Hisham bin Saleh al Farsi on Pleximia.

With the latest results, Oman will now be represented by four Royal Cavalry riders at the World Endurance Cup in 2026.

OADC moves to improve mango supply chain



Our Correspondent Muscat

In an effort to enhance the sultanate's agricultural sector and support local farmers, Oman Agricultural Development Company (OADC) has announced that it will begin receiving the 2025 harvest of local mangoes at its dedicated collection centre in Silal Fruit and Vegetable Central Market. Under the new programme, eligible Omani mango producers are invited to deliver their harvest according to agreed quality, quantity and variety standards. These criteria will be set jointly by OADC and participating farmers ahead of delivery.

Farmers interested in joining the programme can register and coordinate by calling 92253973 or 99568300. The deadline to deliver mango consignments is July 15.

In a statement, OADC said the programme aims to

strengthen the value chain for Omani mangoes by acting as a central hub for collection and marketing. This is expected to improve market access for farmers and help ensure that high-quality local mangoes reach consumers in Oman and regional markets. OADC's focus on quality-driven harvests aligns with broader national efforts to improve food security and promote agribusiness, complementing initiatives of Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources to modernise production and raise smallholder incomes. The collection drive follows the recent Mango Season Exhibition held in Muscat from June 19 to 21, which brought together farmers and specialists to discuss crop propagation, cultivation methods, variety development and marketing, highlighting the increasing value of mangoes in Oman's horticultural sector.

MEM signs agreement for salt production project in Al Wusta

Muscat - The Ministry of Energy and Minerals (MEM) on Sunday signed a mining concession agreement with Global Integrated Engineering LLC to develop a large-scale natural salt production project in Al Wusta governorate.

The concession, located in area I-51, spans 15sqkm and aims to raise Oman's total salt output to approximately 1.2mn tonnes annually.

The agreement was signed by H E Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, and Sheikh Ali bin Salim al Jenaibi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Global Integrated Engineering.

The project will utilise solar and wind energy to extract salt through the natural evaporation of seawater, followed by drying, refining, and packaging processes. The total investment value of the project is estimated at RO200mn.

Speaking on the occasion, H E Aufi described the initiative as a strategic step towards diversifying Oman's sources of national income and maximising the



added value of natural resources. He noted that the project is expected to generate both direct and indirect employment oppor-

tunities for Omani citizens and support industries related to salt and its derivatives.

"This is the third concession

agreement signed by MEM for sea salt production as part of ongoing efforts to advance the mining sector and enhance its

The RO200mn project will utilise solar and wind energy to extract salt through the natural evaporation of seawater, followed by drying, refining, and packaging processes

contribution to GDP," he added.

Sheikh Jenaibi stated that securing the rights to develop concession area (I-51) aligns with the company's strategy to expand the production capacity of its existing facility to one million tonnes annually. The output will serve the needs of local markets and various processing industries, including those in the food, animal feed, and pharmaceutical sectors.

He also underscored the project's alignment with the government's vision to localise industries, promote self-sufficiency, and SMEs.



Oman LNG, Japan's Kanadevia sign pact for sustainable methane pilot plant

Our Correspondent
Muscat

able methane fuel.

The initiative will also integrate advanced carbon capture and reuse (CCR) technology to convert carbon emissions into usable fuel, aligning with Oman LNG's broader efforts to incorporate clean energy into its existing operations. The first phase will include detailed engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) design and cost estimation studies.

Oman LNG has signed a strategic agreement with Japanese firm Kanadevia Corporation to carry out a detailed preliminary study for a pilot plant designed to produce sustainable methane. The agreement also includes the development of a comprehensive plan for a future commercial-scale facility. This partnership represents a major milestone in Oman LNG's ongoing drive toward innovative and environmentally responsible energy solutions. The proposed commercial facility is expected to produce up to 18,000 standard cubic meters of sustainable methane per hour, while the pilot plant will initially generate 1,200 cubic meters per hour.

The pilot project comprises three core components: a seawater desalination unit, equipment for producing hydrogen via water electrolysis, and a methane system that synthesizes hydrogen and captured carbon dioxide into sustain-

Commenting on the agreement, Hamad bin Mohammed al Naamani, CEO of Oman LNG, stated, "This project is a prime example of turning environmental challenges into industrial opportunities by capturing and converting waste carbon dioxide into valuable methane. The technology incorporates the latest advancements in carbon reuse and catalytic processes, seamlessly integrating with LNG operations."

The agreement builds on a memorandum of understanding signed in March 2024, which outlines broader energy cooperation between Oman and Japan.

Global renewable energy capacity up 377% in 10 years

Istanbul, Türkiye - Global renewable energy capacity has increased 377% over the past 10 years, reaching 4.44 terawatts, driven by falling equipment and installation costs and strong policy support.

The surge in capacity is being highlighted this week as the world marks World REnew Day, an annual event established in 2019 to promote the transition away from fossil fuels and raise awareness of renewable energy's global potential.



According to information, global renewable energy capacity is expected to surpass 11 ter-

awatts by 2035. Growing awareness of climate change and global warming, combined with

lower costs for wind and solar equipment and robust policy incentives, helped boost global renewable capacity from 0.93 terawatts in 2015 to 4.44 terawatts in 2024.

Despite gains, an estimated 675mn people worldwide do not have access to electricity, and 2.3bn people rely on harmful fuels for cooking. Capacity expansions have made 2024 a turning point in the energy transition. By the end of last year, hydropower capacity exceeded

1,270 gigawatts. Solar power reached 1,419 gigawatts, while wind power hit 1,017 gigawatts. Biomass and geothermal capacity stood at 171 and 14 gigawatts, respectively.

Still, the pace of change remains insufficient to meet the goal of tripling renewable capacity by 2030. Despite the progress seen in 2024, experts caution that current efforts fall short of what's needed to complete the energy transition by 2035.

Anadolu Agency

UAE builds model maritime sector with smart tech and clean fuels

Abu Dhabi, UAE - The UAE has become a leading global maritime hub, building on a strong record of achievements, progressive legislation, and strategic investments that have made it a model in maritime sustainability, advanced infrastructure, and sound governance.

Thanks to its strategic geographic location at the heart of global trade routes, the UAE has become a pivotal logistics hub connecting Eastern and Western markets.

The UAE has also played an active role in shaping international maritime policies, contributing strategic proposals to update the legal maritime framework - particularly regarding the prevention of illegal practices related to fraudulent ship registration. The country has taken a leading role in drafting regulatory best practices for autonomous maritime vessels.

The UAE boasts one of the most advanced maritime infrastructures in the region. In 2023, the country's ports handled around 21 million TEUs, setting record figures in facilitating trade and the flow of goods.

The maritime sector contributed approximately AED135bn to the national GDP, reflecting the vital economic importance of this sector.

The UAE is considered the leading destination for commercial vessels in the region, thanks



The UAE is considered the leading destination for commercial vessels in the region, thanks to its comprehensive services, high operational capabilities, and advanced digital systems

to its comprehensive services, high operational capabilities, and advanced digital systems that enhance the efficiency of logistics operations. The country has prioritised the development of human capital in the maritime sector, and through the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure and maritime administration experts, has organised specialised training workshops in cooperation with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

Between 2020 and 2025, six

regional workshops were held, in addition to participating in audit missions for several countries, including Egypt, Greece, Malta, and Thailand.

The UAE has also established several maritime academies, such as the Sharjah Maritime Academy and the Abu Dhabi Maritime Academy, alongside training programmes at the Higher Colleges of Technology. These institutions have graduated approximately 497 marine officers and engineers, including

100 female officers and engineers - a step that underscores the country's commitment to supporting women's roles in this vital sector.

As part of its environmental commitment, the UAE has announced its Net Zero 2050 Strategy and has been a pioneer in implementing sustainable solutions within the maritime sector. Fujairah Port stands as a regional model for supplying ships with low-sulphur clean fuel and also offers liquefied natural gas bunkering services, in alignment with the MARPOL Convention to prevent air pollution from ships. Moreover, the UAE has joined the Global Ports Hydrogen Coalition and the Green Shipping Corridors Alliance.

WAM

Trump's airstrikes on Iran leave oil market poised for surge

Cairo, Egypt - The oil market has been wrestling for days with Donald Trump's next act in an escalating Middle East conflict. Now American jets have struck Iran's three main nuclear sites, a move that leaves traders preparing for a price surge - but still guessing where the crisis goes from here.

In a wild week, Brent futures have jumped 11% since Israel attacked its nemesis, but with sharp moves up and down from one day to the next. That rise is expected to restart on Monday, after the US assault - which targeted sites at Fordow, Natanz, and Esfahan - dramatically raised the stakes in a region that accounts for a third of global oil output.

From frenzied options markets, to soaring freight and diesel pricing, to a radical re-drawing of crude's pivotal forward curve, all of that volatility is expected to intensify in the week ahead.

"Much depends on how Iran responds in the coming hours and days - but this could set us on a path toward US\$100 oil, if Iran responds as they have previously threatened to," said Saul Kavonic, an energy analyst at MST Marquee. "This US attack could see a conflagration of the conflict to include Iran responding by targeting regional American interests that include Gulf oil infrastructure in places such



as Iraq, or harassing passage through the Strait of Hormuz."

The maritime chokepoint at the mouth of the Persian Gulf is a vital conduit for not just Iranian shipments, but also for those from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait and other members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Central to everything is the Trump administration's ultimate intention in Iran, having joined Israel's attack.

At one stage last week, it appeared more a question of when than if. That then changed late

Thursday, when Trump said he'd mull his decision for two weeks. Then in the early hours of Sunday, Iranian time, he announced that Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan were struck, and described a 'payload of BOMBS' dropped on Fordow, a key location of uranium enrichment.

Hours later, in a televised address to the nation, the US president said the strikes had 'totally obliterated' the trio of targets, while also threatening further military action if Tehran did not make peace with Israel. (Through Yahoo News)



Nissan's all-new LEAF EV comes at a critical time for automaker

Japan - Nissan has revealed the all-new 2026 LEAF EV, a big update to one of the original mainstream EVs offered in America. But the updated, compact EV comes at a precarious time for the automaker.

The new LEAF features a more standard design, an update to the prior-generation LEAF that looked like a hatchback version of the entry-level Versa.

Nissan went more upmarket with the LEAF, giving it a desirable crossover compact SUV form factor, along with looks inspired by its big brother, the Ariya EV.

Though the car features a new design, Nissan wanted to maintain the original LEAF's low pricing. "We have not released final pricing on the vehicle, but fair to assume early on that [it will be in] the very low \$30's [thousands]," with higher trims reaching \$40,000, said Ponz Pandikuthria, senior vice president and chief planning officer for Nissan Americas.

While that's a bit more than the current LEAF, which starts at \$28,140, Pandikuthria believes what's most important is maintaining a similar monthly pay-

ment, a metric Nissan will try to maintain when the LEAF goes on sale later this year.

Pandikuthria, whose role includes defining Nissan's future product portfolio and profitability, believes the new LEAF is a much-improved update to a car that's sold 700,000 units since its 2010 debut but "never won any beauty pageants," he said.

The LEAF will come in a front-wheel-drive-only configuration, with one electric motor driving the front wheels, but that means higher efficiency, translating to an estimated 303-mile range from its 75-kWh battery pack, a huge jump from the 212-mile range of the current LEAF SV Plus.

The new LEAF will also come with Tesla's NACS inlet port built in, providing easy access to Tesla's ubiquitous Supercharger network.

Speaking of Tesla (TSLA), the EV king is one of the brands Nissan is targeting, with the automaker shooting for a 70% conquest rate, Pandikuthria said. With the cheapest Model 3 coming in at around \$42,500, there is an opportunity.

(Yahoo Finance)

Energy in Europe is at stake as Israel-Iran conflict escalates

Doloresz Katanich

As the Israel-Iran conflict escalates further, there is a mounting fear that natural gas fields are going to be targeted. Europe's liquefied natural gas supply would be seriously impacted, along with its economies.

Rising European energy prices are among the many risks of the current geopolitical crisis, which threatens to block one of the world's most important fuel shipping routes. Coupled with the trade war sparked by US tariffs, there are fears that the crisis may also drag down the global economy.

The World Bank is expecting 2.3% growth for this year, after a 2.8% reading in 2024.

Since Israel launched airstrikes against Iran's military and nuclear infrastructure on 13 June, oil prices have surged by more than 10% globally. High prices and supply disruptions, coupled with the implications of the trade war, are threatening to lower production globally.

Markets are pricing in risks to the global oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply.

Iran is controlling the highly strategic Strait of Hormuz, through which a third of global seaborne oil and a fifth of global LNG shipments travel. If that gets blocked, prices could skyrocket beyond \$100. Currently, a barrel of crude oil is traded for more than \$75, and international Brent is around \$77.

"I do not expect that the strait is going to be closed," Dr. Yousef Alshammari, President of the London College of Energy Economics, said to Euronews Business. He added, "It is simply



The largest LNG importing countries in the EU include France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium. If shipments from Qatar are impacted, Belgium, Italy and Poland are the most impacted, as the country supplies 38-45% of their LNG imports

because Iran needs the Strait of Hormuz open for ships to go through for its clients, India and China."

However, even when it is not closed, the passage has already impacted prices due to the risks associated with the crisis. Some oil tankers have refused to go through. According to the FT, the world's largest publicly listed oil tanker company Frontline said it would turn down new contracts to sail through the Strait of Hormuz.

Meanwhile, "insurance companies are likely to charge more currently, while Qatar is trying to delay its LNG shipments going through the Strait," added Alshammari.

Natural gas fields in the region

are also attracting attention. Iran shares the largest natural gas field in the world, the South Pars field, with Qatar. The liquefied natural gas (LNG) coming from this region is vital for the rest of the world, including Europe.

Inflation and businesses: How Europe is impacted

Though the EU has adequate supplies of LNG at the moment, the bloc's dependence on global LNG makes it vulnerable to geopolitical shocks as it is lowering its dependence on Russian gas.

As the market weighed the recent risk of supply disruptions, European gas prices climbed significantly. The primary bench-

mark for European gas prices, the Dutch TTF (Title Transfer Facility) rose to a three-month high, nearing 41/MWh Friday at midday in Europe.

Europe's imports from Qatar are providing nearly 10% of its LNG needs. Other countries in the region, including Egypt, also export LNG to Europe. However, after the 7 October 2023 Hamas attack, Israel closed down part of its own production, forcing Egypt to stop LNG shipments and prompting a spike in European natural-gas prices.

Europe currently has a number of natural gas suppliers. Norway was the top supplier of gas to the EU in 2024, providing over 33% of all gas imports. Other suppliers included the United

States, Algeria, Qatar, the UK, Azerbaijan and Russia.

The largest LNG importing countries in the EU include France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium.

If shipments from Qatar are impacted, Belgium, Italy and Poland are the most impacted, as the country supplies 38-45% of their LNG imports, according to the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.

The good news is that demand for gas is usually at its lowest level in Europe at this time of the year. Even so, the hotter-than-usual weather across the bloc is boosting demand for cooling, which could increase the need for energy in the coming weeks.

"Spikes in energy prices push up inflation, and can have a knock-on effect on the central bank's policy," Alshammari said.

Central banks, including the US Fed and the Bank of England, have stopped short on cutting interest rates as the uncertainty is rising. If they see that inflation is more persistent in the near term, and that — in the case of the ECB and the BoE — the 2% target is floating away, further monetary tightening could squeeze the economy with higher costs for borrowing and investment.

"As a result of the Ukraine War, there was a pivot from the EU in particular to get their liquefied natural gas, their LNG gas, not from Russia but from producers including Qatar," Marco Forgiore, Director General of the Chartered Institute of Export and International Trade, told Euronews.

(Euronews)

Highest-paying jobs in Germany: Official data and job postings reveal top salaries

Servet Yanatma

Germany is the world's third-largest economy, with a projected GDP of US\$4.74tn (4.12tn) in 2025. According to IMF estimates from April of this year, it ranks among the top 20 countries in GDP per capita, with its total standing at US\$55,911 (47,206).

Germany is also the top EU destination for immigrants in total - combining arrivals from both within and outside the bloc, according to Eurostat. Some of them are highly skilled and dream of finding good, well-paid jobs.

So, what are the highest-paying positions in Germany, and what are the average annual earnings for these roles?

According to Destatis, aviation is the top-paying sector in Germany, with a median gross annual salary of 336,000. Me-

Sector-wise median annual salary bands in Germany (April 2024)		
Sector	Highest median (€/yr)	Median range (€/yr)
Aviation	336,000	132,000-336,000
Healthcare	156,000	108,000-156,000
Legal & Judiciary	~144,000	84,000-144,000
Academia & Research	~128,400	72,000-120,000
IT & Engineering	~114,000	72,000-114,000
Public Sector	~114,000	60,000-114,000
Skilled Trades	~48,000	33,600-60,000
Arts & Culture	~54,000	36,000-54,000
Retail & Services	~36,000	30,000-42,000

dian earnings in this field typically start from 132,000.

In the healthcare industry, median annual earnings range between 108,000 and 156,000, followed by the legal and judiciary sector, where salaries fall between 84,000 and 144,000.

In academia and research, median salaries range from 72,000 to 120,000, closely fol-

lowed by the IT and engineering sector, where salaries fall between 72,000 and 114,000. Public sector employees are also well paid, with median salaries ranging from 60,000 to 114,000.

Retail and services represent the lowest-paid sector, with median annual earnings ranging from 30,000 to 42,000.

Pilots have the highest me-

dian annual gross earnings in Germany, with salaries varying based on experience and specific roles. Those in highly complex aviation roles earn a median salary of 342,072, and an average of around 337,152.

Flying instructors in complex roles have a median annual salary of 281,592, ranking them second in terms of median earnings. Among the top 50 highest-paying jobs, four additional aviation roles are also featured: air traffic surveillance and control (complex) at 147,996 (5th), airline and aircraft pilots (complex) at 139,524 (6th), aircraft pilots at 122,484 (12th), and technical air traffic control (complex) at 109,188 (20th).

Healthcare occupations dominate the list of highest-paying jobs in Germany, with 11 roles included in the top 50.

(Euronews Business)

World Bank: Fundamental changes needed in debt transparency practices

Washington, DC, US - The World Bank said in a report Friday that more developing economies are turning to off-budget and more complex borrowing arrangements, noting that the situation makes it difficult to fully assess public debt risks.

The report, "Radical Debt Transparency," recommended fundamental changes in the way debtor and creditor countries report and disclose their debts to address the issues, including expanding the scope of reporting and providing more detailed disclosures on a loan-by-loan basis.

It noted that although the rate of publication of some debt data by low-income countries has risen from below 60% in 2020 to above 75%, only 25% disclose information at the loan



The increasing use of complex and often non-transparent financing arrangements, such as special allocations and central bank swaps further complicates reporting

level regarding newly incurred debt.

The World Bank's report also noted that the increasing use of complex and often non-transparent financing arrangements, such as special allocations, central bank swaps and collateralized transactions, further complicates reporting.

Anadolu News Agency

One of America's oldest cheesemakers on sale

New York, US - One of America's oldest small businesses is up for sale. It could be yours - if you have enough cheddar.

Crowley Cheese, based in Healdville, Vt., has been around for more than 200 years, and the property of Galen Jones and his wife Jill Jones for the past 16. Now the company is on the block, with Galen, who is 68, ready to step away from the business of churning out hand-crafted artisanal American

cheese. "I'm an old man, and I'm ready to retire," he said.

The asking price, US\$2.5mn, would get a buyer the factory, about 16 acres of surrounding land, cheesemaking equipment, the brand, and some 50,000 pounds of aged cheese. The business, which employs five people, is 'growing and profitable', according to Galen Jones.

A buyer would also get the recipe for Crowley's cheese, de-

scribed as having yogurt-like qualities that distinguish it from other cheddars. It sells in blocks and wheels; an 8-ounce block starts at \$10, while a 2.5 pound wheels starts at \$50.

Making Cheese 'Is Not For Everyone'

The Crowley facility, which is considered Vermont's oldest active cheese factory and one of the oldest in the country, produces 30,000 to 40,000 pounds of aged cheddar cheese

annually using a recipe that hasn't changed since 1824. Its cheese is shipped nationwide from Healdville, about a 150-mile drive northwest of Boston.

The Joneses bought Crowley Cheese in 2009. Galen Jones knew people who were part of the previous investor group, he said, and happened to cross paths with the lead investor while working in digital media. (He declined to disclose the purchase price.) Reminded of

the business, he looked it up online. "We had a pretty terrible economy in 2009, and Crowley Cheese was also struggling," Jones said. Unable to stop thinking about it, he reached out to the owners and soon visited the factory.

"Six weeks after that, my wife and I were operating this singular business, which was a simple factory in the middle of the countryside," he said.

(Investopedia)

إعلان فقدان سند ملكية

أفيد بأنني قد فقدت سند ملكية لقطعة الأرض رقم (١٣٦) الواقعة في ولاية بوش، حي/ القرية: الخوير، بالتصريح رقم: ١٣٨، والمخصصة للاستعمال السكني، بمساحة قدرها (٨٩٤) متر مربع، والمسجلة باسم: شخبة بنت جمعة بن عدي المغيرة.

فعلى من يعثر عليه تسليمه إلى أقرب مركز للشرطة أو وزارة الإسكان والتخطيط العمراني.

للتواصل: +968 98885541+ نشكر لكم تعاونكم.

Oman Sail's SailFree para sailing team triumphs at Hansa tourney

Oman Sail's SailFree national para sailing team, which comes as part of the SailFree programme, in partnership with BP Oman, has achieved remarkable success at the Hansa UK National Championship in Weymouth, securing second and third placements on the podium against international competition.

The SailFree squad demonstrated exceptional skill with Ali Said al Ghusaini and Sami Salim al Sulaimi claiming second place, while Hasan Haidar al Lawati and Adil Salim al Siyabi earned third place honours, a press release said.

Four Omani crews participated in the event, including Sultan Mohammed al Wahabi, AlMuthana Hamed al Maamari, Zaher Khalfan al Atbi, and Raiyan Abdullah al Mujaini, showcasing the nation's growing para sailing talent. The team was led by Nasser Salim al Maashari, with coaching support from Haitham Saif al Wahabi and Akram Adaiyam al Wahabi.

Khamis al Anbori, acting commercial director of Oman Sail, commented, "This outstanding performance reflects the dedication of our sailors and the strength of our development programme. These athletes cot-



The team's success follows the recent launch of SailFree's second edition this year, which continues the programme's pioneering role as the Middle East's first para sailing initiative

IBRAHIM AL HINAI

inue to prove that sailing is a sport for all, and we're proud to see them representing Oman on the international stage."

Ibrahim al Hinaï, social investment manager at BP Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar further said, "The team's success follows the recent launch of SailFree's second edition this year, which continues the programme's pioneering role as the Middle East's first para sailing initiative.

The programme was first established in 2019 and since then SailFree has become a regional model for inclusive sports development, having already introduced over 200 athletes with disabilities to competitive sailing.

The SailFree team will compete in several major events including the Oman Sailing Championship, Mussanah Race Week and the inaugural World Inclusion Sailing Championships.



NBO named Best Retail Bank by MEED

The National Bank of Oman (NBO) has been named as the Best Retail Bank in Oman 2025 at the MEED's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Banking Excellence Awards.

The prestigious recognition celebrates the bank's continuous strive to invest in innovative financial services and solutions that deliver a seamless and enhanced customer experience, a press release said.

Focused on convenience and trust, NBO offers a comprehensive range of retail products and services tailored to meet the diverse needs of its customers – from children and youth to high-net-worth individuals. These include Private Banking, Sadara Priority Banking, Privilege Banking, alongside Current, Savings and Deposit Accounts. In addition, the bank also provides exclusive lending solutions and a broad selection of Credit, Debit, and Badeel Prepaid Cards.

To enhance customer experience, NBO's award-winning app empowers customers to manage their accounts, payments and transactions digitally. It features account opening services, loan top-ups, as well as bill payments.

Through the app, customers can also apply for a credit card digitally through Oman's first fully digital credit card application facility. With the integration of Electronic Know Your Customer (E-KYC) technology, customers can update personal details while enjoying a fully digital onboarding journey, eliminating the need for physical paperwork or in-person verification.

Six Senses Zighy Bay gets two wellness awards

Six Senses Zighy Bay has been awarded Middle East's Best Luxury Resort Spa and Best Luxury Spa & Wellness Centre in Oman at the International Spa & Beauty Awards 2025.

This double recognition further cements the resort's reputation as a leading destination for transformative wellness experiences in the region, a press release said.

Located in Oman's breathtaking Musandam Peninsula, just a scenic two-hour drive from Dubai, the resort offers an immersive escape where nature, intentional living and science-backed wellbeing converge. Set between rugged Hajar Mountains and the tranquil Gulf of Oman, guests are invited to



discover a slower pace of life, wandering barefoot along sandy paths, reconnecting with nature, and cultivating balance through purposeful rituals.

Led by director of Wellbeing Alexandru Ciprian Mosnegutu,

the resort's spa presents a deeply integrative approach – ranging from gut-health-focused nutrition and movement programmes to energy healing, advanced facials and mindfulness practices. Guests are invited to

surrender to the healing hands of skilled therapists through specialty Omani treatments and personalised journeys designed to restore balance and bliss. Natural and ethically produced products, combined with

time-honoured, locally inspired rituals, ensure a holistic experience that nurtures from the inside out, and outside in.

Commenting on the win, Diletta Guarino, general manager of Six Senses Zighy Bay,

said, "We're immensely proud to be recognised by the International Spa and Beauty Awards, which celebrate excellence across more than 100 global categories. These accolades are a testament not only to the incredible dedication of our team, but also to our continued commitment to helping guests reconnect with themselves and the world around them. From the warmth of traditional hammam rituals to the stillness of guided meditation, every detail is crafted to encourage a deeper sense of wellbeing."

The International Spa & Beauty Awards honour the very best in luxury wellness, as voted for by spa professionals and the public.



Sohar University enhances QS ranking

Sohar University, the first private university in Oman to achieve a QS world ranking last year, has further strengthened its global academic standing by improving its position for a second year.

In the QS World University Rankings 2026, Sohar University has been placed in the 951-1000 band, reflecting its continued progress and commitment to excellence, a press release said.

This remarkable achieve-

ment stands as a testament to the unwavering dedication of the university's faculty and staff, whose efforts in delivering quality education and advancing impactful research, with the continued support from the Board of Directors, the Board of Governors and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation have positioned Sohar University among the world's finest emerging academic institutions.

Sohar International, Sohar Islamic tie with SalamAir

In a move to drive cross-sector collaboration and enhance customer experience, Sohar International, together with its Islamic banking window Sohar Islamic, has partnered with SalamAir, Oman's low-cost airline, to offer exclusive discounts on domestic travel for their customers.

As part of this strategic alliance, credit cardholders will benefit from a 40% discount, while debit cardholders will receive a 15% discount on the price of all SalamAir domestic flights. The offer, valid for travel between July 1 and August 31, is available exclusively to Sohar International and Sohar Islamic cardholders. Bookings must be made online via SalamAir's official website using the promo codes provided by Sohar International and Sohar Islamic for both their debit and credit card holders, subject to the offer's terms and conditions, a press release said.

The partnership was formally signed during a signing ceremony held on June 17 at Sohar International's head office. The joint initiative reflects both entities' commitment to delivering



integrated lifestyle benefits and enriching customer value, and to Oman's national development objectives by promoting domestic tourism and enhancing air travel accessibility.

Abdul Qadir Al Sumali, chief retail and premier banking officer of Sohar International, stated, "Today, banking is no longer just transactional, it must be trans-

formative. At Sohar International, our strategy is rooted in a clear and impactful philosophy—to enrich the lives of those we serve by building integrated ecosystems where finance intersects seamlessly with lifestyle. Our partnership with SalamAir, a leading national low-cost carrier that caters to the travel needs of a broad and diverse customer

base, brings this vision to life—delivering everyday value through enhanced convenience, satisfaction, and integrated experiences. More than just a customer offer, this initiative contributes to stimulating domestic air travel, supporting local tourism, and reinforcing our role in advancing Oman's economic diversification agenda in line with Oman Vision 2040."

Reiterating this sentiment, Steven Allen, chief commercial officer of SalamAir, added, "We are proud to collaborate with Sohar International on this meaningful initiative. SalamAir

remains deeply committed to supporting the local economy, infrastructure, and financial ecosystem of Oman. This partnership not only reinforces our dedication to making travel more accessible and affordable for the people of Oman but also strengthens domestic tourism, particularly to destinations like Salalah, which play a vital role in the country's tourism sector. By extending this offer to all Sohar International and Sohar Islamic debit and credit cardholders, we aim to promote inclusive travel, encourage local exploration, and contribute to Oman's long-term development goals in line with Oman's Vision 2040."

Through this strategic collaboration, Sohar International and SalamAir reinforce their commitment to building cross-sector partnerships that enhance customer value and expand beyond traditional boundaries. By aligning financial solutions with evolving travel lifestyle needs, both parties continue to lead with a forward-looking approach that integrates relevance, innovation, and impact into its service.

Omantel renews sponsorship with Omani freediver Omar

Omantel, the leading telecommunications company in the Sultanate of Oman, has renewed its sponsorship of Omani freediver Omar Al Ghailani, holder of the national record in open-water freediving at a depth of 110m.

This renewed partnership underscores Omantel's ongoing commitment to supporting national talents and strengthening their presence on the international stage, a press release said.

The sponsorship renewal was marked by the presence of Eng Aladdin Bait Fadhil, chief commercial officer at Omantel, who emphasised that this partnership falls within the company's broader efforts to support Omani sports and athletes representing the sultanate in global arenas. He further highlighted that such support contributes to raising awareness of the sport locally and promoting Oman's name on international podiums.

This sponsorship represents a continuation of Omantel's support since 2021, which has played a significant role in enhancing Ghailani's participation and distinguished representation of Oman in various international competitions. Furthermore, his outstanding achievements have positioned him as one of the most prominent figures in the field of freed-



This sponsorship represents a continuation of Omantel's support since 2021, which has played a significant role in enhancing Ghailani's participation

iving in the region. Ghailani expressed his profound gratitude saying, "The support I have received from Omantel has been a fundamental part of my journey and has greatly contributed to my professional growth and progress. I

will continue to work with unwavering dedication to represent Oman in the best possible way, proudly wearing the Omantel emblem in the depths of the sea."

By integrating its operations with extensive expertise in telecommunications and digital technology, Omantel has firmly established itself as the leading telecommunications provider in Oman and beyond. Leveraging innovative approaches, the company delivers cutting-edge solutions tailored to diverse customer segments and business sectors. Committed to excellence, Omantel consistently strives to provide an unparalleled customer experience that exceeds expectations.

Al Madina Takaful secures Category A license

Al Madina Takaful, Oman's pioneering Shariah-compliant insurance provider, announced its attainment of the Category 'A' Health Insurance License under the sultanate's newly established regulatory framework.

This significant milestone, granted by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), empowers Al Madina Takaful to independently underwrite and manage health insurance policies, positioning the company at the forefront of Oman's evolving healthcare insurance landscape, a press release said.

This sponsorship represents a continuation of Omantel's support since 2021, which has played a significant role in enhancing Al Ghailani's participation and distinguished representation of Oman in various international competitions. Al Madina Takaful's early adoption of this license underscores its commitment to aligning with national objectives and delivering superior, Shariah-compliant health insurance solutions to its clients.

"Securing the Category 'A' license is a testament to our unwavering dedication to excellence and our proactive approach in embracing regulatory advancements," said Usama al Barwani, CEO of Al Madina Takaful.

"This achievement enables us to offer comprehensive health insurance services that cater to the diverse needs of our policyholders, all within the framework of Islamic principles."

Al Madina Takaful is poised to play a pivotal role in the sultanate's health insurance sector. The company's robust infrastructure, experienced team, and customer-centric approach ensure that it is well-equipped to meet the growing demand for quality health insurance services.

Al Madina Takaful's early adoption of this license underscores its commitment to aligning with its national objectives

OBG assesses Oman's shift towards sustainability

Oman's strides in economic diversification, sustainability and private sector expansion under Vision 2040 form the core of The Report: Oman 2025 - the latest research publication by global advisory and research firm Oxford Business Group (OBG).

The report charts the country's progress in reducing its reliance on hydrocarbons, with non-oil sectors now contributing over two-thirds of GDP. Key areas of growth include manufacturing, logistics, tourism and green energy. The launch of the US\$5.2bn Future Fund Oman is positioned as a major development aimed at attracting targeted foreign direct investment, particularly in high-growth industries, a press release said.

A dedicated chapter on Trade and Investment - a first for the publication - underscores Oman's efforts to expand its global trade footprint and enhance its appeal to international investors. The report examines new initiatives designed to streamline business procedures, including the establishment of



the Invest in Oman lounge, which serves as a one-stop facility to support incoming investment.

The report also presents data on rising FDI inflows, robust export performance and sector-specific momentum in areas such as green energy, manufacturing and logistics. Oman's expanding network of trade agreements and its increasing engagement in multilateral trade forums are assessed, with particular focus on strategic partnerships, including deepening commercial ties with the US, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other key regional players.

Strategic infrastructure developments, such as the expansion of broadband access and transport networks, are also covered in detail, alongside the role of multiple free trade economic zones such as Sohar, Salalah and Al Mazunah and SEZAD, the special economic zone to Duqm, in strengthening Oman's regional trade position. The report explores fiscal and regulatory reforms introduced to improve the business environment, from the implementation of VAT to labour law amendments.

Digital transformation efforts are given significant attention, with insights into the country's strategy to bridge the digital divide and leverage technology.

Sohar Aluminium and Athar sign MoU for health projects

Sohar Aluminium signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Health Endowment Foundation (Athar), aimed at streamlining efforts to support high-priority health initiatives and projects in the Sultanate of Oman.

This partnership reflects both parties' commitment to enhancing the sustainability of health services and projects, and to contributing effectively to the development of the healthcare sector in the country, a press release said.

The MoU was signed by Ahmed bin Mohammed al Kharusi, general manager of HR and Corporate Affairs at Sohar Aluminium, and Ali bin Hassan al Lawati, deputy executive director of Athar.

The MoU aims to establish a framework for cooperation between the two entities by channeling offered donations and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions to support sustainable healthcare projects. This will be based on clear criteria of need, ensuring the optimal use of available resources to serve the national priorities in the health sector.

The MoU stipulates that both Sohar Aluminium and the Health Endowment Foundation (Athar) will evaluate applications submitted by various healthcare entities based on well-defined standards to assess the level of need and priority. They will also jointly monitor the implementa-



tion of approved projects and collaborate on conducting studies to assess their social impact and measure the effectiveness of these healthcare initiatives and their influence on the national health system.

Commenting on this agreement, Kharusi affirmed that supporting the healthcare sector is one of the most vital areas of focus for the company as part of its social and national responsibility to support government efforts across the various sectors. He noted that signing this agreement reflects Sohar Aluminium's commitment to achieving sustainable development and enhancing its partnership with the Ministry of Health. It also builds on the company's history of supporting various initiatives and projects implemented across hospitals and health centres in several governorates.

The International Series to promote golf events across MENA region

Rising stars from the MENA region will have the chance to compete against some of the biggest names in world golf, with 40 players from the Arab Golf Federation set to battle it out for two coveted spots at International Series Morocco in July over back-to-back events on the Asian Development Tour (ADT) this June.

The Morocco Rising Stars Marrakech tournaments took place at Marrakech Samanah Golf Club between June 19-22, and will be held at Marrakech Al Maaden Golf Resort from June 26-29, with the 132-strong fields featuring 40 AGF players, 70 from the ADT and invites, a press release said.



The two leading players, not otherwise exempt, with the best aggregate from the two US\$125,000 tournaments will earn a place on International Series Morocco, the fourth of 10 elevated events on the Asian Tour, which will be held from July 3-6 at Royal Golf Dar Es Salam's Red Course in Rabat.

With world-class conditions and professional-level operations, the Morocco Rising Stars Marrakech events are set to deliver a transformative experience for talented golfers across MENA and the wider Asian region, aligning with efforts by The International Series to grow the game and provide elite-level playing opportunities for emerg-

ing talent.

"We are deeply committed to building meaningful pathways in new regions, and North Africa is rich with emerging talent. International Series Morocco will give young players the chance to develop, gain experience, and dream big," said Rahul Singh, head of The International Series.

"The Asian Tour's Morocco Rising Stars events are about more than just competition, they are about creating opportunities, and The International Series is delighted to be playing an important role in this. These players will learn a lot about themselves as they perform under pressure, and have a wonderful opportunity to learn from the best."

US lawmakers slam Trump for strike on Iran sans congressional approval

Washington, D.C., US - US lawmakers blasted President Donald Trump's 'unilateral' action on Saturday to strike Iran without seeking congressional authorisation. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries said Trump 'failed to seek congressional authorisation for the use of military force and risks American entanglement in a potentially disastrous war in the Middle East'.

His statement came after Trump said American forces completed 'very successful' airstrikes on three Iranian nuclear sites - Fordo, Natanz and Esfahan - amid fears of a wider conflagration in the region.

Jeffries said Trump promised to bring peace to the Middle East, but he 'has failed to deliver on that promise'.

"Congress must be fully and immediately briefed in a classified setting," he said, adding that Trump shoulders 'complete and total' responsibility for any adverse consequences that flow from 'his unilateral military action'.

Senator Ed Markey said the attack was 'illegal and unconstitutional'. "This attack was not approved by Congress and hold dangers for all Americans. The American people do not want another endless war in the Middle East," Markey said, adding a diplomatic solution remains 'the best way' to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

"Trump's illegal action raise the risk of escalation into a wider regional war with grave risks for US troops and personnel and civilians in the region," he said, urging Trump to begin ceasefire talks with Iran and Israel. Senator Elizabeth Warren said the US should not wage



Lawmakers warned against risks of Trump's 'unconstitutional' strikes against Iranian nuclear sites

war against Iran, and that Trump's bombing Iran is 'unconstitutional'.

"Only Congress can declare war - and the Senate must vote immediately to prevent another endless war. This is a horrific war of choice," Warren wrote on X.

Senator Chris Van Hollen said Trump dragged Americans into war.

"His decision violates the Constitution, endangers American lives and risks unleashing dangerous forces we can't control," he said.

Senator Bernie Sanders said at a rally in the state of Oklahoma that Trump's move is 'so

UK backs US strikes on Iran

London, UK - US strikes on three Iranian nuclear facilities, aims to 'alleviate the threat that would pose to the global community', the British foreign secretary said on Sunday.

"Iran must never have a nuclear weapon. The US has taken action to alleviate the threat that would pose to the global community," David Lammy wrote in a post on X.

He noted that the UK did not participate in these strikes that targeted three Iranian nuclear facilities.

For his part, UK Defence Secretary John Healey said the safety of UK personnel and bases is his 'top priority'.

"Force protection is at its highest level and we deployed additional jets this week," he wrote on X.

grossly unconstitutional'.

"All of you know, that the only entity that can take this

country to war is the US Congress. The president does not have the right," Sanders told

the crowd.

'Clear grounds for impeachment'

Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said Trump's 'disastrous decision' to bomb Iran without authorisation is a 'grave violation' of the Constitution and Congressional War Powers.

"He has impulsively risked launching a war that may ensnare us for generations. It is absolutely and clearly grounds for impeachment," Ocasio-Cortez wrote on X.

Representative Pramila Jayapal said the authority to declare war belongs 'solely' to

Congress.

"Trump's unconstitutional and escalatory strikes risk drawing US troops and the American people - who are overwhelmingly opposed - into another forever war. Congress must immediately exercise our duty to restrain this President," she wrote on X.

Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib said Trump sending US troops to bomb Iran without the consent of Congress is a 'blatant violation' of the Constitution. "Instead of listening to the American people, Trump is listening to War Criminal Netanyahu, who lied about Iraq and is lying once again about

Iran," Tlaib said on X, urging Congress to act 'immediately' to stop the 'unconstitutional act of war'.

Several Republicans rallied behind Trump following the strike in Iran, with only a handful breaking rank.

"This is not Constitutional," Republican Representative Thomas Massie said on X.

Massie recently introduced a bipartisan resolution to prohibit the use of US Armed Forces in unauthorised hostilities against Iran.

Donald Trump warned Iran against retaliating against American strikes, saying it would face unprecedented 'tragedy' if it launches counter-attacks

Republican Warren Davidson, for his part, said: "While President Trump's decision may prove just, it's hard to conceive a rationale that's Constitutional. I look forward to his remarks tonight."

In nationally televised remarks, Trump warned Iran on Saturday against retaliating against the American strikes, saying it would face unprecedented 'tragedy' if it launches counter-attacks.

"Iran, the bully of the Middle East, must now make peace. If they do not, future attacks will be far greater and a lot easier," he said.

Anadolu Agency

Pakistan condemns US attacks on Iran

Islamabad, Pakistan - Pakistan on Sunday condemned the US airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, calling the escalation of the tension and violence 'deeply disturbing'.

In a statement, the Pakistani Foreign Ministry reiterated that these attacks violate all norms of international law and that Iran has the legitimate right to defend itself under the UN Charter.

"Pakistan condemns the US attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities which follow the series of attacks by Israel. We are gravely concerned at the possible further escalation of tensions in the region," the statement said.

Islamabad also urged all parties to adhere to international law, particularly international humanitarian law and resolve the crises through dialogue and diplomacy.

"We emphasise the imperative need to respect civilian lives and properties and immediately bring the conflict to end.

All parties must adhere to international law, particularly International Humanitarian Law," said the ministry.

Anadolu Agency

MARKING SUMMER SOLSTICE



Residents participate in the Wianki Festival celebration to mark the summer solstice in Warsaw, Poland on Saturday (Xinhua)

Cambodia shuts down two more border checkpoints with Thailand

Phnom Penh/Bangkok - Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said on Sunday that two more border crossings with Thailand were completely shut down amid an ongoing border dispute between the two ASEAN member states.

Hun Manet said the Thai army on Saturday night informed the governor of Cambodia's Oddar Meanchey province about its unilateral decision to close Choub Korki border checkpoint from Sunday on-

wards. "I agreed with the governor's response that we will also close that border checkpoint permanently," Hun Manet said in a post on his official social media platforms.

"I also ordered the governor to inform the Thai side that Cambodia has also decided to close another checkpoint at Choam, altogether with Choub Korki checkpoint from today onwards," he added.

The Cambodian prime minister said that since June 7, the

Thai army has unilaterally implemented closures of border checkpoints between Cambodia and Thailand without much consideration of its negative effects on the people of both countries.

"It has never been Cambodia's intention to cause difficulty for people in our both countries who need to use border checkpoints. Yet, if the Thai army continues to use this method to put pressure on Cambodia, Cambodia can answer accord-

ingly at any time," Hun Manet said.

The Thai army has announced the closure of the trade point at Chong Sai Taku in Buriram province, effective from Saturday. In a statement on Sunday, the Thai army said that it has implemented control measures for opening and closing all types of crossing points along the Thai-Cambodian border to comply with the security situation.

Xinhua

Belarus: Jailed opposition leader Siarhei Tsikhanouski released

Minsk, Belarus - Belarus' Nasha Niva newspaper on Saturday first reported that opposition leader Siarhei Tsikhanouski and 13 others had been released from prison, where he had been incarcerated since 2020.

Tsikhanouski, one of the leaders of the country's opposition movement, was pardoned, according to rights group Viasna.

A regime-critical blogger, Tsikhanouski intended to challenge Alexander Lukashenko for the presidency, but he was locked up by the strongman before the election.

Tsikhanouski's wife, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who ran against Lukashenko in her husband's place and has played a leading role in the Belarus opposition since, released a video of his re-



Siarhei Tsikhanouski's wife Sviatlana (centre) challenged Alexander Lukashenko in a Belarusian presidential election in her husband's place and became a leader of the country's opposition

lease on Saturday, thanking the US for its efforts.

"My husband is free. It's difficult to describe the joy in my heart," she said. However,

Tsikhanouskaya lamented that many others remain behind bars in Belarus and called for the release of a further 1,150 prisoners, writing on X: "We're not done."

Tsikhanouski's release coincided with a rare high-level visit to the country by US Special Envoy for Ukraine General Keith Kellogg.

Kellogg was in Minsk for talks with Lukashenko, a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, in an effort to facilitate an end to Moscow's ongoing war of aggression in Ukraine.

Refuge in Lithuania

All 14 released prisoners have been transferred to Lithuania, where they are receiving 'proper care', the neighbouring country's government said. Five Belarus nationals were released along with three Poles, two Latvians, two Japanese citizens and one Swede.

"Today, 14 political prisoners - including Sergei Tsikhanouski - who were imprisoned by the (Belarusian) regime, have been successfully released. They are now safe in Lithuania and are re-

ceiving proper care. The US role in the release has been critical," Lithuanian Foreign Minister Kestutis Budrys said on X.

Among those released by Belarus was Ihar Karnei, a former journalist at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, RFE/RL President and CEO Stephen Capus said in a statement, as he thanked US President Donald Trump and others.

"We thank Secretary Rubio and his team, the Lithuanian government, and the international community for their support of our imprisoned journalists," he added.

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul expressed his delight at Tsikhanouski's release from prison.

DW

‘US dropped 6 bunker buster bombs on Fordo nuke facility in Iran’

Washington, D.C., US - The US dropped six bunker-bunker bombs on the Fordo nuclear facility, and carried out dozens of submarine-based cruise missile attacks on two other sites, as it targeted Iran's nuclear programme, according to a report late on Saturday.

Fox News said Trump detailed the strikes to TV host Sean Hannity, saying that each of the bunker-bunker bombs weighed 15 tonnes, and were dropped from American B-2 stealth bombers. In all, 30 Tomahawk cruise missiles were fired from US submarines at the nuclear facilities at Natanz and Is-

fahan, it added.

Trump confirmed the strikes earlier on Saturday, and said a 'full payload of' bombs was dropped on the 'primary' Iranian nuclear site at Fordo, and additional strikes were conducted on facilities at Natanz and Esfahan. All American warplanes departed Iranian airspace, he said.

"All planes are safely on their way home. Congratulations to our great American Warriors. There is not another military in the World that could have done this," Trump wrote on social media. "Now is the time for peace! Thank you for your attention to this matter."



The Fordo nuclear facility is an underground uranium enrichment site near Qom - Iran's deepest and most fortified nuclear installation designed to withstand conventional airstrikes. Iran had strongly warned

Trump against involvement in the conflict with Israel, saying if the US directly entered the hostilities it would lead to 'irreparable consequences'.

Trump has repeatedly threatened to take military action against Tehran and maintained that the US would not allow Iran to obtain a nuclear weapon, something Iran has repeatedly denied that it seeks to acquire.

Meanwhile, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Sunday confirmed no increase in the off-site radiation levels reported as of this time after attacks on three nuclear sites in Iran, including Fordo.

"IAEA will provide further assessments on situation in Iran as more information becomes available," the agency said on X.

‘Not about regime change’

US strikes on Iran were not about the regime change, Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth said on Sunday.

"This mission was not and has not been about regime change," Hegseth said at a news conference along with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Air Force General Dan Caine.

His remarks came after US President Donald Trump announced that American forces carried out 'very successful' strikes on three Iranian nuclear sites in Fordo, Natanz, and Esfahan, amid growing fears of a broader conflict.

Hegseth said Trump authorised a 'precision operation to neutralise the threats to our national interests posed by the Iranian nuclear programme and the collective self-defence of our troops and our ally Israel'.

He added that the plan to strike Iran 'took months and weeks of positioning and preparation' to be ready when Trump called.

Anadolu Agency

US has crossed every red line, says Iran

The US coordinated with Israel in carrying out airstrikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, the Israeli military confirmed

Tehran/Tel Aviv - Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, during a press conference in Istanbul on Sunday, said the US has 'crossed every red line' with the latest attack on Iranian nuclear facilities, warning that diplomacy may no longer be possible.

The recent US strikes on Iran are 'outrageous, grave, and unprecedented violation of fundamental principles of the Charter of the UN and international law', Araghchi said.

"Iran condemns in the strongest terms the US brutal military aggression against Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities," Araghchi noted.

Araghchi stressed that Iran continues to defend its territory and sovereignty by all means, against not just 'US military aggression', but also 'Israel's unlawful actions'.

The Iranian foreign minister



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi underlined that calls for a return to diplomacy are 'irrelevant'

underlined that calls for a return to diplomacy are 'irrelevant', as talks were already ongoing when the US attacks happened.

"We were in the middle of talks with the US when Israelis blow it up. And again, we were in the middle of talks, and negotiations with Europeans happened only two days ago in Geneva.

This time, Americans decided to blow it up," he said.

"It's very unfortunate that Israel is doing - as the German chancellor called - a dirty job. ... They supported that dirty job, it's a shame," Araghchi noted.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) cannot protect Iran despite its full commitment,

Araghchi stressed, asking: "Why countries pursuing peaceful nuclear energy should rely on the treaty?"

Araghchi said he will travel to Moscow on Sunday afternoon, and meet with Russian President Putin on Monday to discuss the latest situation after the recent US attacks.

Asked if Tehran will retaliate at US bases or close the Strait of Hormuz, Araghchi said: "There are variety of options available to us, and that's it."

‘US coordinated with Israel’

The US coordinated with Israel in carrying out airstrikes on Iranian

nuclear facilities, the Israeli military confirmed on Sunday.

Army spokesperson Brigadier General Effie Defrin said that the US strikes targeting three nuclear sites in Iran were 'carried out in coordination with the Israeli military'. He noted that Israeli Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir has been 'in constant contact' with both the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff and the head of the US Central Command (CENTCOM) since the beginning of the military campaign against Iran.

"We are preparing for the

intercepted.

The Israeli army also claimed on Sunday that it had intercepted more than 500 Iranian drones since the outbreak of the current conflict on July 13.

In a statement on his X account, army spokesman Avichay Adraee said that nearly 30 drones were shot down by air defences last night.

In a separate statement, the army claimed to have neutralised eight of Iran's missile launchers, including six that were ready for immediate launch toward Israel

We were in the middle of talks with the US when Israelis blow it up. And again, we were in the middle of talks and negotiations with Europeans in Geneva. This time, Americans decided to blow it up

ABBAS ARAGHCHI

possibility that the battle will continue. We must be ready for every development, and we are determined to achieve the goals of this operation," he said.

Commenting on the Iranian missile salvos launched at central and northern Israel on Sunday morning, Defrin accused Tehran of continuing to target civilian areas despite being 'weakened'.

According to Defrin, over 20 missiles were launched during the morning attacks, with most

on early Sunday. The operators were also killed, army said.

According to the military statement, two F-5 fighter jets for the Iranian army were hit at the Dezful Airport in southern Iran, in addition to the military infrastructure sites at the Isfahan airport.

"Over 20 fighter jets struck dozens of military targets in Iran, including a military site containing components to produce explosive materials," the army said.

Anadolu Agency

Pope urges for peace in Mideast

Vatican City, Vatican - Pope Leo XIV on Sunday made an urgent appeal for peace in the Middle East, warning of the risk of uncontrollable escalation following recent US strikes on Iranian nuclear sites and Tehran's retaliatory missile attacks on Israeli cities.

Speaking from the window of the Apostolic Palace after the Angelus prayer, the pontiff said: "We must stop the tragedy of war before it becomes an irreparable abyss," according to a Vatican statement.

He described the situation as 'alarming' and 'dramatic', cautioning that the suffering of civilians, particularly in Gaza Strip and other conflict zones, risks being forgotten amid the escalation.

"Today more than ever, humanity cries out and pleads for peace," he said, adding that this cry must be answered with 'responsibility and reason', rather than being 'drowned out by the roar of weapons and rhetoric inciting conflict'.

The Pope warned that continued violence could lead to a



Pope Leo XIV

point of no return. "There are no distant wars when human dignity is at stake," he said.

"War does not solve problems; it amplifies them and inflicts deep wounds in the history of peoples - wounds that take generations to heal."

He emphasised that no military victory can outweigh the pain of grieving mothers, the fear in children, and the stolen futures of youth. "Let diplomacy silence the weapons," he urged.

"Let nations chart their future through acts of peace, not violence and bloody conflict."

Anadolu Agency

China condemns US attack on Iran, urges dialogue

Beijing, China - China on Sunday 'strongly' condemned the US for its attacks on nuclear sites in Iran, urging all sides to engage in dialogue and put an end to hostilities.

"China strongly condemns the US attacks on Iran and bombing of nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency)," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement from Beijing.

"The actions of the US seriously violate the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law, and have exacerbated tensions in the Middle East," the ministry added.

Beijing urged all parties involved in the conflict, 'Israel in particular', to agree to a ceasefire promptly, protect civilians, and to engage in dialogue and negotiations.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry also expressed deep concern on Sunday over the US strike on Iran's nuclear facilities, warning it could escalate the regional conflict into a global crisis.

"The US attack on the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear sites on June 22 has maximised the risk we repeatedly highlighted,



the escalation of conflict and destabilisation of the security environment," the ministry said in a statement.

Ankara said it is 'deeply concerned' about the possible consequences of the operation targeting Iran's nuclear facilities.

"These developments may lead the regional dispute to a global level. We do not want to see such a disastrous scenario unfold," the statement added.

Türkiye called on all parties involved to act responsibly and 'immediately halt reciprocal attacks' to avoid further casualties and destruction.

"The only way to resolve the dispute over Iran's nuclear programme is through negotiations," the ministry emphasised, urging the international community to support diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful solution.

"Türkiye stands ready to fulfil its responsibilities and make constructive contributions," the statement concluded.

Major escalation

Meanwhile, a major escalation unfolded early on Sunday morning as Iran launched a large-scale missile barrage targeting multiple locations across Israel

following a US strike on its nuclear facilities.

According to the daily Israel Hayom, Iran launched at least 40 missiles in a heavy barrage that struck targets in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and multiple other locations across Israel's coastal and central regions.

The Israeli public broadcaster KAN reported that Iranian missiles landed in at least 10 separate sites inside the country.

Israeli Channel 14 confirmed that five Iranian missiles hit Israeli territory, three in the Haifa area and two in central Israel, while Israeli Channel 12 re-

ported 'an unusual event' in Haifa accompanied by multiple explosions.

Alarms sounded across northern and central Israel, including Haifa, where no prior warnings had sounded during earlier strikes, it added.

According to the daily Yedioth Ahronoth, heavy structural damage occurred in Haifa, with additional damage reported in the Shephelah region and the Dan Bloc, which includes Tel Aviv and its suburbs.

A building in Greater Tel Aviv suffered direct impact, and numerous buildings were destroyed along the coastal region due to Iranian missile strikes, according to KAN.

The Israeli emergency service Magen David Adom reported that its teams responded to multiple impact sites. It reported 11 initial injuries, including one person in moderate condition.

Later reports from Channel 13 stated that the number of injured rose to 16, and Yedioth Ahronoth confirmed at least 23 casualties, mostly minor, with one person remaining in moderate condition.

Anadolu Agency

INDIA

DGCA launches a comprehensive audit to strengthen aviation safety

New Delhi - In a move to enhance India's aviation safety framework, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has launched a comprehensive special audit initiative under General Safety Circular 01 of 2025, announcing the rollout of a Comprehensive Special Audit initiative aimed at providing a 360-degree assessment of the nation's aviation ecosystem.

The initiative reflects a strategic shift from the conventional silo-based oversight system to an integrated, risk-informed, performance-driven model of regulatory auditing & DGCA's commitment to fostering a safe, efficient, and sustainable aviation environment, as per a DGCA document.

By integrating global best practices - including those from the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP), and India's National Aviation Safety Plan - the audits will assess compliance, operational performance, and system resilience across all facets of the aviation industry.

This audit will proactively identify systemic vulnerabilities and strengthen resilience across India's aviation sector.

Unlike routine checks, the special audits will apply to a



This file photo shows a fire officer standing next to the crashed Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner aircraft in Ahmedabad on June 13

broad spectrum of stakeholders, ranging from scheduled and private air operators to maintenance firms, training institutions, air navigation providers, and ground handlers. Even supporting elements such as emergency systems and technology vendors fall within its scope, underlining DGCA's

ambition for a truly end-to-end evaluation.

The document reads: "The special audit applies to all primary aviation entities, including scheduled, non-scheduled, and private air operators, maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) organisations, Approved Training Organisations

(ATOs), Flying Training Organisations (FTOs), Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP), Aerodrome Operators, and Ground Handling Agencies (GHAs).

Additionally, it encompasses supporting elements such as technology providers, emergency response systems, supply chain networks, and regulatory

coordination bodies. This broad scope ensures a holistic evaluation of the interconnected components that define the aviation ecosystem.

Audits will be carried out by multidisciplinary teams led by senior DGCA officials and supported by subject-matter experts from various aviation

Unlike routine checks, the special audits will apply to a broad spectrum of stakeholders, ranging from scheduled and private air operators to maintenance firms, training institutions, air navigation providers, and ground handlers

domains. The assessment will include document reviews, on-site inspections, staff interviews, and analysis of safety data trends. Findings will be classified by severity, with deadlines for corrective action ranging from seven to 90 days. Entities will be required to submit a corrective action plan within 15 days of the audit's conclusion, and failure to comply could lead to escalating enforcement, from warnings and fines to suspension of licenses.

The audit process is divided into three phases. The Pre-Audit Phase (5-7 days) involves intelligence gathering, stakeholder consultation, risk profiling, and audit plan development. The on-site audit phase (3-5 days) includes an opening meeting to clarify objectives, followed by document reviews, inspections, interviews, process observations, and daily debriefs to discuss preliminary findings. The post-audit phase (10-15 days)

encompasses finding validation, risk assessment, final report preparation, and publication.

This structured process ensures transparency and stakeholder engagement throughout, as mentioned in the document.

The audits may be triggered by critical incidents, regulatory violations, or international findings, but they will also be scheduled proactively, including annual ecosystem-wide reviews. The DGCA has committed to transparency, confidentiality, and due process throughout the audit lifecycle, including provisions for appeal, according to DGCA statement.

With this new framework now in immediate effect, DGCA aims not only to meet international standards but to set them. The agency sees this initiative as central to building a world-class aviation infrastructure that is resilient, accountable, and future-ready, the DGCA said.

ANI

Defence delegation to visit Kenya, Madagascar

New Delhi - An Indian delegation led by Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth will visit Kenya and Madagascar from June 23 to 26, according to an official statement from the Ministry of Defence.

In the first leg, the MoS Defence will visit Kenya for the joint unveiling of the Commemorative Pillar (War Memorial honouring the fallen soldiers of India and Kenya) at Taita-Taveta County on Monday.

The second leg would see the minister visiting Madagascar on June 26 to celebrate the 65th Anniversary of Madagascar's Independence and the creation of the Malagasy Armed Forces at Antananarivo.

OFF THE HOOK



A fisherman displays his first catch after the end of the 61-day annual fishing ban, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, on Sunday (ANI)

70mn to be screened for sickle cell disease

Chandrapur, Maharashtra - As part of the National Sickle Cell Elimination Mission under the National Health Mission (NHM), the government aims to screen 70mn (seven crore) people under the age of 40 for sickle cell disease by 2025-26 across 17 states, with a primary focus on tribal populations.

The list of these states includes Maharashtra, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Speaking to ANI about the National Sickle Cell Elimination Mission 2047 programme, Dr Manisha Madkaikar, Director of ICMR-CRHCM, Nagpur, said: "The National Sickle Cell Elimination Mission has given the guidelines. The first is universal screening - in areas with

a very high prevalence of sickle cell disease, the entire population under the age of 40 is screened. Currently, the plan is to screen nearly seven crore individuals for sickle cell disease."

She also highlighted the importance of newborn screening. "We can test for sickle cell

Regarding antenatal screening, she said: "In antenatal screening, the first visit is an ideal time to screen a pregnant woman. If she is found to be a carrier or affected, we can test her partner. If both are carriers for sickle cell disease, we can counsel them about testing the

solely to the patients and their family."

Commenting on the advancements in testing kits for sickle cell disease, she said there is a growing need for large-scale, reliable tools.

"India has seen a lot of advancement in the development of diagnostic kits. We have developed indigenously made point-of-care tests in the past two to three years. ICMR-NIH and CRHCM have tested around 35 such kits, identifying those suitable for use in screening. These include point-of-care tests, simple molecular diagnostic tools, and solubility tests, all of which are now validated and made available under the programme," she said.

ANI

Government aims to screen 70mn people under the age of 40 for sickle cell disease by 2025-26 across 17 states, with a primary focus on tribal population

disease as soon as a newborn is born. Newborn screening is important because if you diagnose newborns early, you can give them effective treatment," she explained.

foetus before 20 weeks' gestational age. If the foetus is affected, the couple can consider options regarding sickle cell disease and the decision about pregnancy termination is left

Navy set to commission its latest stealth frigate 'Tamal' in Russia

New Delhi - The Navy is all set to commission its latest stealth multi-role frigate on July 1, at Kaliningrad, Russia, an official statement said on Sunday.

The ceremony will be presided over by Vice Admiral Sanjay J Singh, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, as the chief guest, in the presence of many high-ranking Indian and Russian government and defence officials.

The ship is christened as *Tamal* and is the eighth of the series of Krivak class frigates inducted from Russia over the past two decades, with *Tamal* itself being the second ship of the Tushil Class, which are the upgraded versions of their predecessors, Talwar and Teg classes, having three ships each.

"India as part of the broader contract for Tushil class is also building two similar frigates called the Tripud class at Goa Shipyard Limited with transfer of technology and design assistance from the Russian Side," read an official statement.

When the series of ships finishes building, the Indian Navy will be operating ten ships with similar capabilities and commonality in equipment, weapon and sensor fit over four different classes. *Tamal's* construction was closely overseen by an Indian team of specialists from the Warship Overseeing Team stationed at Kaliningrad, under the aegis of the Embassy of India, Moscow.

"At Naval Headquarters, the project was steered by the Directorate of Ship Production



under the Controller of Warship Production and Acquisition," the statement added.

The statement mentioned that *Tamal* has been built at Yantar Shipyard in Kaliningrad,

Russia, and is the last warship to be inducted from a foreign source, while still being in line with the Centre's impetus on 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make in India' initiatives.

"The ship has 26 per cent of indigenous components, including the BrahMos long-range cruise missile for targeting both at sea and land. The ship has significant upgrades in its arse-

nal in comparison to its predecessors, such as vertical launched surface-to-air missiles, improved 100 MM gun, new age EO/IR system in addition to the standard 30 MM CIWS, heavyweight torpedoes, urgent-attack anti-submarine rockets, and a host of surveillance and fire control radars and systems," the statement added.

Force multipliers include air early warning and multi role helicopters, which can operate from the deck of *Tamal*. The combat capability of the ship is augmented by a host of network centric warfare capabilities and an advanced electronic warfare suite. *Tamal* punches well above its weight with a very high tonnage to firepower ratio, extended endurance, and a top speed of over 30 knots.

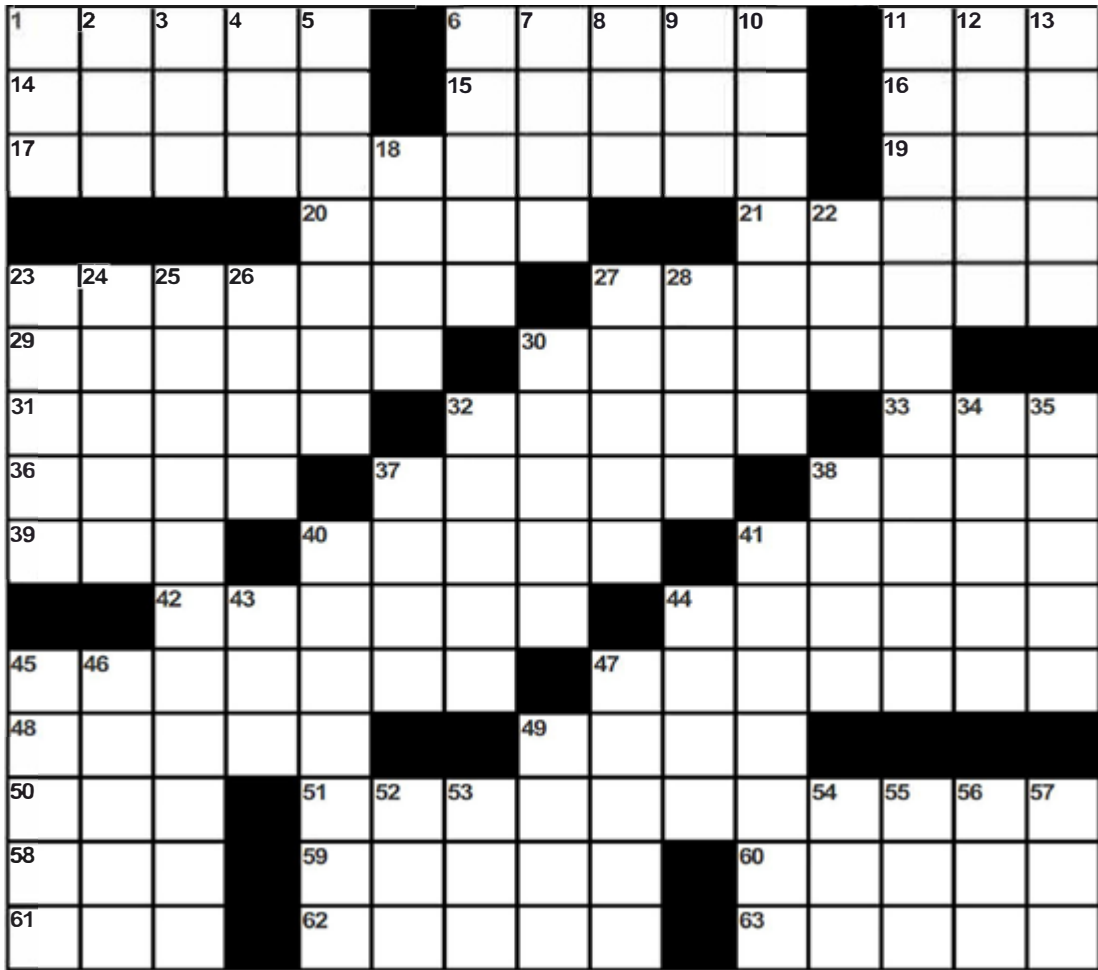
The frigate's crew comprises over 250 personnel who have undergone rigorous ashore as well as afloat training in extremely challenging winter conditions of St Petersburg and Kaliningrad, Russia, the statement read.

Tamal has successively completed extensive sea trials undertaken over three months to prove its systems, weapons and sensors.

According to the statement, the ship's name symbolises the mythical sword used for combat by 'Indra, the king of the gods'. The ship's mascot is inspired by the congruence of the 'Jambavan', the immortal bear king of Indian mythology, and the Russian national animal - the Eurasian brown bear.

ANI

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) Leonine tresses
- 6) More than hesitant
- 11) Bleat of a sheep
- 14) Drama set to music
- 15) Cold weather quarters
- 16) "30" to an editor
- 17) Some overhangs
- 19) Id's counterpart
- 20) Anger, so to speak
- 21) Read between the lines
- 23) Book store?
- 27) Belfry locale
- 29) Form in the mind
- 30) Ancient Greek city
- 31) Beth follows it
- 32) Speaks highly of
- 33) Tell a better joke than
- 36) Waiting room call
- 37) Antiseptic targets
- 38) Needle case
- 39) Cobra kin
- 40) Calif, on the range
- 41) Many sweaters
- 42) Onetime Missouri tribe
- 44) Make people look away
- 45) An American in Paris?
- 47) Pope's jurisdiction
- 48) Building used for sports

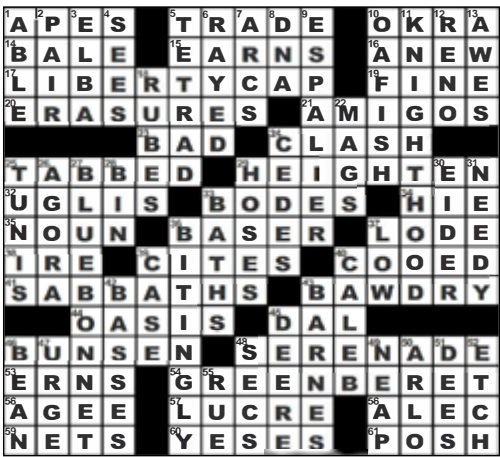
- 49) Window base
- 50) Kettle cover
- 51) Michael Keaton film
- 58) "To the max" indicator
- 59) Up to the point that
- 60) Gumbo pods
- 61) Even if, informally
- 62) Wal-Mart competitor
- 63) Irish poet William Butler

DOWN

- 1) Unlawful assembly
- 2) "Great" or "lesser" animal
- 3) Alumna bio word
- 4) Do the wrong thing
- 6) Pharmaceutical giant Eli
- 7) Give a lustful eyeful
- 8) Three-time Frazier foe
- 9) Type of digit
- 10) Stocking stockers
- 11) McDonald's supply
- 12) Broadway backer
- 13) Love greatly
- 18) Land o' the sha!mock
- 22) .com alternative
- 23) Tarzan's swing
- 24) Runs while standing still
- 25) Have experience with

- 26) Absorbed
- 27) Coastal spray
- 28) Small boys
- 30) Products of Indian looms
- 32) French cubist Fernand
- 34) Beyond the fringe
- 35) Downhill run
- 37) "Faster!"
- 38) "Green" emotion
- 40) Digital information carrier
- 41) Wet blanket
- 43) Immoral act
- 44) Big name in pineapples
- 45) Gentleman's gentleman
- 46) Type of whiskey or setter
- 47) Components of rolling landscapes
- 49) Cookbook direction
- 52) 67.5 degrees, to mariners
- 53) Airport info, initially
- 54) "Aloha Oe" accompaniment, briefly
- 55) Bank offering, for short
- 56) Persian, for one
- 57) Laser center?

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

You need to accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative. It's way too easy to get caught up in a nev-er-ending cycle of worrying about what could have been, so make sure that you don't start that kind of thinking in the first place. If others are busy spiraling downward, just ignore them and go your own way. Faith in yourself is the critical element to making sure that this situation comes out just right, so keep your spirits up!



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

It's hard to for you to let go of old relationships, whether it's a friend you've known since preschool or someone you see every day. However, if today's situation is getting uncomfortable, and you two are get-ting less and less enjoyment from each other's company, it's time to evaluate what's going on with a clear head. It's most likely nobody's fault. In fact, it's perfectly normal and harmless. You're just growing in different directions.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Someone who believes in your talent finds a way to help you reach a much broader audience. While it may be tempting to try and blend in once you get the eyes and ears of the crowd, try to stay true to your unique, boundary-crossing spirit, no matter what. Imitation really doesn't suit you anyway, so stick with it and soon others will start to adopt your style. Take it for the flattery that all can see it is.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

While working in tandem with someone else usually brings out your best side, right now it arouses a somewhat fiercer side. Cooperation can turn all too easily into a competition if aggressive impulses on all sides are left unchecked. This may not be entirely unwelcome, though. Passions are aroused in all areas and may spice up your life in new ways.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Different ideas don't make you a misfit. Far from it. In fact, you might actually be something of a vision-ary, especially if you have faith in the soundness of your beliefs. It's too easy to feel discouraged if people whose opinions you care about don't immediately support what you're telling them, but remember that no one believed that the world was round at first either. Keep on pushing and thinking long term.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Infuse your home with some new, stylish additions. Even if you aren't a big believer in feng shui, there are some principles that anyone can follow and make sense of. For example, a clean, pleasant, and orderly space is generally more pleasant to come home to and makes getting ready in the morning much easier. Even a quick paint job can make a major difference.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

A difference of opinion could turn into something far fiercer, but this could turn up the heat in your rela-tionship in a good way. Normally, you're not crazy about confrontation, but this is an issue that you just can't shut up about. There's no need for you to dread the talk either. Jump into it with the best intentions and you should see the best of results. This may be exactly the speak you need to take things to the next level.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

You may not be as brash an attention hog as some people, but you're hardly a recluse either. Make sure that the people who count understand that, especially if a colleague is trying to take advantage of your modest nature to take credit for a great idea that's all yours. You may be feeling more contemplative, but your ambition certainly isn't on the back burner. If you're in the presence of the bosses, let them hear you.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

You need to reconnect with some activity or topic that you once felt passionate about but drifted away from over the years. It might be time to rearrange matters to make room for it again. The fit is sure to be awkward at first, but you can find space for them to dovetail, and the payoff is a renewed sense of pur-pose and zest in your life. The search also leads to decisions that may change your life for the better.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

It's hard to for you to let go of old relationships, whether it's a friend you've known since preschool or someone you see every day. However, if today's situation is getting uncomfortable, and you two are get-ting less and less enjoyment from each other's company, it's time to evaluate what's going on with a clear head. It's most likely nobody's fault. In fact, it's perfectly normal and harmless. You're just growing in different directions.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Life becomes more demanding today, so pay attention and try to stay on your toes. Multitasking types (like you) rise to a challenge with aplomb. In fact, without one, you sometimes feel that you're not quite living life to its fullest. Remember to check in with your loved ones so you don't disappear off the map without a word of explanation, and don't go overboard when it comes to taking care of your to-do list.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

It's time for a makeover, though perhaps not of the extreme variety. A little sprucing up of your appear-ance is good (and fun), nonetheless. Your outward appearance might give the impression that you're more conservative than you really are. While this look is easy to maintain, it's just not the right fit for you. Go ahead and look like your true self. After all, people need to see the real you.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. In Rudyard Kipling's "The Jungle Book", what animal was Kaa?

- A. Wolf
- B. Snake
- C. Panther
- D. Elephant

02. In the UK TV series "Foyle's War" (2002-2015), what was Foyle's profession or occupation?

- A. Triangle and circle
- B. Brick and trowel
- C. Dog and gramophone
- D. Set square and compass

03. What type of geographical feature is an ox-bow?

- A. Forest
- B. Hill
- C. Lake
- D. Canyon

Answers: 1.B 2.D 3.C

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

O	V	O	T
R	Z	C	S
R	A	I	V
M	E	N	E

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

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

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

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

JOBE WELL BEGUN

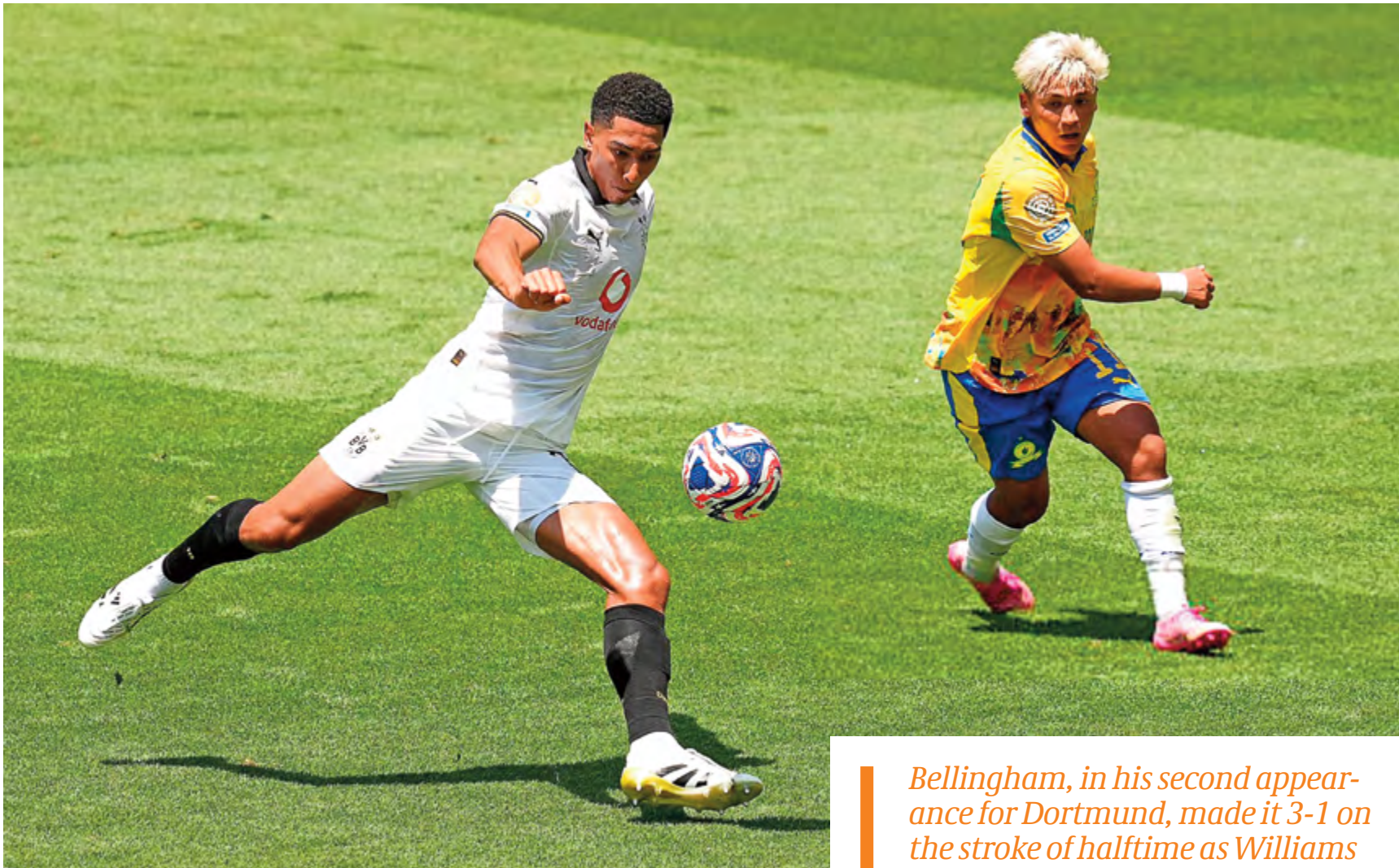
Dortmund hold off Sundowns fightback to close in on Club World Cup knockouts

Cincinnati, US - Borussia Dortmund held off a spirited comeback from South African champions Mamelodi Sundowns to secure a 4-3 victory on Saturday and move closer to the Club World Cup knockout stages.

Dortmund were behind after 11 minutes at the TQL Stadium but rallied to win their second game in Group F and move top of the standings with four points, one more than Sundowns.

Felix Nmecha, Serhou Guirassy and Jobe Bellingham scored for the Bundesliga club who also profited from an own goal.

Lucas Ribeiro had given Sundowns the lead while Iqraam Rayners and Lebo Mothiba scored in the second half as they looked to rally from 4-1 down in a competitive game played in blazing hot conditions with a mid-day kickoff. Ribeiro burst through a static Dortmund defence, picking up the ball on the halfway line and gliding past



Borussia Dortmund's Jobe Bellingham scores against Mamelodi Sundowns on Saturday

two opponents to score a shock opener.

But the lead last only five minutes before a calamitous error from Sundowns goalkeeper Ronwen Williams, who played a short pass to Nmecha who had an easy tap-in for the equaliser.

"We weren't surprised by Sundowns, we expected a strong start from them. but we

worked to impose ourselves on the game," Nmecha said.

Dortmund went ahead after a slick set of one-two passes between Julian Brandt and Guirassy who powered home with his head.

Bellingham, in his second appearance for Dortmund, made it 3-1 on the stroke of halftime as Williams parried Brandt's cross straight at him, and he delayed

shooting for a split second before wrong-footing the goalkeeper.

Rayners struck the woodwork for Sundowns 10 minutes into the second half but on the hour mark Daniel Svensson's cross from the left took a wicked deflection off Sundowns' full-back Khuliso Mudau as Dortmund extended their lead.

Two minutes later, the South

Bellingham, in his second appearance for Dortmund, made it 3-1 on the stroke of halftime as Williams parried Brandt's cross straight at him, and he delayed shooting before wrong-footing the goalkeeper

African side pulled one back as Teboho Mokoena's free kick was floated to Rayners, who struck the foot of the post but the rebound bounced back onto his head and he did not waste the second opportunity.

Mothiba struck in the 90th minute as Sundowns stole away

possession and the substitute scored from close range but they could not find an equaliser.

"We take away a feeling of disappointment but pride also because we were competitive. I think we earned a lot of respect," Sundowns coach Miguel Cardoso said.

First goal 'a little bit surreal' for new signing Bellingham

Cincinnati, US - Jobe Bellingham said his first goal for Borussia Dortmund was a surreal experience as the new signing from Sunderland made an immediate impact at the Club World Cup on Saturday.

Bellingham scored the third goal in Dortmund's 4-3 win over South Africa's Mamelodi Sundowns at the TQL Stadium and was named man-of-the-match at the end of the Group F encounter.

"It's a little bit surreal really when the ball hits in the net, it's just crazy," the 19-year-old said.

"Everything happened so slowly but yeah I'm really pleased."

It was a second run out, but first start, for Bellingham since his move from Sunderland to the Bundesliga giants, where he will look to follow in his elder brother Jude's footsteps.

Jobe's goal was smartly taken although the Sundowns goalkeeper palmed the ball straight at him. But Bellingham avoided an attempted block by a defender, and sent the keeper the wrong way, by cleverly holding his shot for a split second.

Bellingham said it had been a hard assignment in the midday sun in Ohio, where the temperature was 32 degrees Celsius (90°F).

Goalkeeper Andrada stars as Monterrey hold River Plate

Los Angeles, US - Monterrey held on to claim a 0-0 draw with River Plate in a prickly Group E clash at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena in the Club World Cup on Saturday as both clubs maintained their hopes of advancing to the knockout rounds.

Goalkeeper Esteban Andrada made vital second-half saves from Franco Mastantuono and Miguel Borja to secure a point for the Mexican side, who had drawn their opening game against Inter Milan on Tuesday.

River Plate's Kevin Castano was sent off in injury time for a second bookable offence as his side moved level on four points with the Italians at the top of standings. Monterrey sit two points behind the Argentinian side.

Amid a carnival atmosphere at the Rose Bowl, River Plate defender Paulo Diaz had an early sight of goal when he steered a header over the bar.

Sergio Canales' run from the halfway line ended with River Plate's Franco Armani making a save to his right, and Gerardo



Goalkeeper Esteban Andrada, with a handful of crucial saves, was the star of the show for Monterrey

Arteaga blasted over the target when the ball eventually landed at his feet on the edge of the area.

That was to prove a rare sight of the target for the Mexicans, with River Plate slicing their way through the Monterrey defence late in the half.

In a frantic end to an otherwise disjointed opening 45 minutes, Mastantuono played Castano into space inside the area and his cutback found Giuliano Galoppo, whose strike on goal was deflected wide.

Lucas Martinez Quarta should have put River Plate ahead from

the resulting corner, the central defender pushing his volley across the face of goal. Mastantuono then saw an attempt deflected wide.

Arteaga hacked Galoppo's effort off the line as the side from Buenos Aires increased the pressure in the early stages of the

River's Kevin Castano was sent off in injury time for a second bookable offence as his side moved level on four points with Inter at top of standings

second half, while Andrada was on hand to deny Mastantuono as the game approached the final quarter.

Enzo Perez slipped through the Monterrey midfield to feed the Real Madrid-bound winger on the right side of the area, but the goalkeeper read the 17-year-old's intentions and pushed his curling left-foot shot to safety.

Andrada then raced off his line to deny Borja 14 minutes from time, and the goalkeeper was in position again in the dying moments to block another attempt by the second half substitute.



Jhon Arias of Fluminense celebrates his goal against Ulsan HD

Fluminense storm back to send Ulsan out of Club World Cup

New York, US - Fluminense scored three second-half goals to beat Ulsan HD and earn all three points in a wildly entertaining affair at MetLife Stadium in New York New Jersey.

The loss eliminated Ulsan from the FIFA Club World Cup after they were also beaten in their opening encounter with Mamelodi Sundowns FC.

The match began with Fluminense dominating possession as Ulsan were content to sit back and defend. The Brazilian side finally broke through in the 27th minute, when Jhon Arias curled a free-kick from 24 yards into the top right corner to beat goalkeeper Jo Hyeonwoo for a 1-0 lead. It was the third free-kick goal of the tournament, with Arias joining CF Pachuca's Bryan Gonzalez and Inter Miami's Lionel Messi.

Ulsan equalised with the most surprising counter-attack. They capitalised on a Fluminense give-

away with surgical precision, with Um Wonsang making a long run and sending a hard cross to the far post to Lee Jinhyun, who beat goalkeeper Fabio from the sharpest of angles to make it 1-1. It was Ulsan's first shot of the game.

The Koreans struck again just before the break. After Fluminense failed to completely clear the ball out of their area, Lee swung a cross to Um, whose diving header in the box beat Fabio for a 2-1 lead.

Fluminense levelled in the 66th minute. Milosz Trojak tried to clear Keno's cross, but the ball stayed in the box and fell to Nonato, who calmly tucked his right-footed strike inside the right post to make it 2-2.

Fluminense regained the lead in the 83rd minute. Substitute German Cano drove a cross to Juan Freytes, whose first-time finish beat Jo for a 3-2 advantage.

River Plate's Gallardo optimistic about Inter match despite suspensions

Los Angeles, US - River Plate coach Marcelo Gallardo is confident he can still field a team capable of defeating Inter Milan in his side's final Group E game at the Club World Cup despite losing several players due to suspension.

Gallardo saw Kevin Castano sent off in the latter stages of Saturday's 0-0 draw at the Rose Bowl with Monterrey, while yellow cards for Enzo Perez and Giuliano Galoppo mean the pair will also miss the meeting with the Italians on Wednesday in Seattle.

"We have some players that we're going to be missing. We, of

course, had some yellow cards and there are several players who won't be able to play in the next game, so we will have to see how we organise that," said Gallardo.

"But I see the glass as half full because, if you look at the scores, every club, every team has had it's problems. It was hard for Inter to win, it was hard for Monterrey too, so for our third game we're going to go with the best we have and we're going to be optimistic.

"Today we deserved to win. Our level was better, and for the next game we will do the same," Gallardo said.



Marcelo Gallardo

River Plate, one of South America's most successful clubs, have won the Copa Libertadores on four occasions as well as the Intercontinental Cup in 1986.

Their draw with Monterrey means the Argentinians are level on four points with Inter Milan in Group E. The two teams are due to face off in their final group game on Wednesday.

Monterrey are third in the standings, two points behind Inter and River Plate, and a win over already-eliminated Urawa Red Diamonds from Japan could see the Mexican side climb into the qualification berths for the knockout rounds.

BEST OF THE LAUT!

Captain Lautaro Martinez’s stunning goal helps Inter beat Urawa in the Club World Cup

Seattle, US - Urawa Red Diamonds were cruelly dumped out of the FIFA Club World Cup by Italian giants Inter Milan after a pair of late goals denied them a famous result.

Ryoma Watanabe’s early strike looked like it was going to be enough to send shockwaves through the tournament but it was captain Lautaro Martinez who rode to Inter’s rescue with a stunning bicycle kick before substitute Valentin Carboni won it in stoppage time.

Despite dominating the opening ten minutes, the Nerazzurri found themselves behind early on in Seattle.

Watanabe had teammate Takuro Kaneko to thank for providing the opening goal on a plate. The winger produced some hypnotic footwork to go past two Inter players on the right before delivering a pinpoint cross for Watanabe to turn home via the aid of a slight deflection.

Watanabe said his team failed to make use of their chances.

“We had some good moments, but we couldn’t convert our chances into goals, myself in-



Inter Milan’s Lautaro Martinez celebrates after scoring against Urawa Red Diamonds in their Club World Cup match on Saturday

cluded. I think that made the difference,” said Watanabe.

As the coach told us before the match, we weren’t going to get three points unless we made the most of our few chances. It was good to score the first goal, but maybe something was missing on our side. I felt we could’ve had more of those good periods, and we should have. That’s an area we need to improve as a team. We still have one more game. We shouldn’t treat it like a dead rubber,” said the Urawa midfielder.

Inter rallied after the early suckerpunch and Martinez was a crossbar’s width away from netting an equalising header minutes later. The J-League outfit held firm in the face of constant probing in the second half as the UEFA Champions League final-

What mattered was winning... I didn’t even see my goal: when the ball came in from the corner, I thought, ‘this is my chance,’ and everything became easier from there

LAUTARO MARTINEZ

duced an acrobatic finish from a corner to level the score.

“What mattered was winning. We messed up the first match, and we knew today would be tough as well,” said Martinez.

“I come from South America, and I’ve seen how much heart players put in even in other continents — and today was no different. I didn’t even see my goal: when the ball came in from the corner, I thought, ‘this is my chance,’ and everything became

easier from there,” the Inter captain added.

With the match heading towards a draw it looked as though it would be all to play for in Group E heading into the final matches until substitute Valentin Carboni turned the ball home from a rebound in the second minute of stoppage time to break the Reds’ hearts and set his side on track for the Round of 16.

“The boys played a good match, a serious game. We tried in every possible way to score, to create some trouble for a well-organized team that defended very deep,” said Inter manager Cristian Chivu.

Bayern are one of the favourites, says keeper Neuer

Miami, US - Harry Kane and Michael Olise stole the headlines in Bayern Munich’s thrilling 2-1 victory over CA Boca Juniors at the Hard Rock Stadium to reach the knockout stages of the FIFA Club World Cup 2025.

But the first victory over a South American team in the global showpiece — at the 10th time of asking — can be credited in large part to the hands and feet of Bayern’s imperious goalkeeper Manuel Neuer.

Playing as a sweeper-keeper, Neuer showcased his multi-dimensional skills when he blocked a powerful effort from Kevin Zenon in the 34th minute with a strong right hand to maintain Bayern’s 1-0 lead. He then dazzled the crowd after the break as he rushed almost to the halfway line, to calmly keep the ball from Miguel Merentiel’s clutches and



Manuel Neuer once again was imperious in his role as a sweeper-keeper for Bayern Munich

start a possession in a dangerous position.

There was little Neuer could do about Merentiel’s stunning equaliser as he attacked the Bayern goal and found the perfect angle. Nonetheless, Neuer was proud of both his individual performance and that of the team.

“I think I played a good match in sweeper-keeping to make good build-up (play) with my defensive line,” Neuer told FIFA. “In the first half I made one important save with the 1v1 with the striker. And with the 1-1 situation in the second half it was very difficult because he had too much time and the angle was good.”

Following Bayern’s 10-0 demolition of Auckland City, Neuer was particularly delighted with the manner in which the Bundesliga giants ground out a narrow victory against far stronger

opposition to secure their passage to the knockout stages.

“It was not easy, we expected a very tough game. We faced a team from South America and it’s not so easy to face them. It’s a very tough game and it showed tonight,” Neuer added. “The Boca fans were very loud, especially the second half when they equalised.

“We are looking forward because I think we have a good team and we are one of the favourites of this tournament. We stay strong together.”

Bayern almost made it 3-1 when Konrad Laimer put the ball in the net in the 87th minute but the midfielder’s effort was ruled out for offside. Laimer noted how cool Bayern remained on a scorching hot evening in South Florida after Boca equalised to secure the victory.



Casper Ruud

Injured Ruud pulls out of Wimbledon

Oslo, Norway - Norway’s Casper Ruud has pulled out of Wimbledon as he is still struggling to recover from a knee injury, his management told local media on Saturday.

The world No. 16 and two-time French Open finalist suffered a shock second-round exit at the claycourt major last month, losing to unseeded Nuno Borges of Portugal.

Afterwards he said he had been struggling with a knee injury for some time and he has not been in action on the men’s tour since, withdrawing from the grasscourt event in Mallorca.

“He’s back on the court, and things are going well, but it looks like playing best-of-five sets is unfortunately a bit too soon. Gstaad will be next for Casper now,” manager Tina Falster told NTB.

Ruud’s best showing in the grass at Wimbledon is three second-round appearances.

Wimbledon starts on June 30, while the Swiss Open in Gstaad begins on July 14.

Cazorla shines at 40 to help Oviedo get back to LaLiga after 24 years

Oviedo, Spain - Santi Cazorla was on target as Real Oviedo sealed their return to La Liga after 24 years with a 3-2 aggregate victory over Mirandes.

Ilyas Chaira and Francisco Portillo also scored as Oviedo triumphed 3-1 in the promotion playoff at home on Saturday and overturned a first-leg deficit.

Cazorla started his career in Oviedo’s youth team, joining at the age of eight. A decade later he had to leave against his will amid a financial crisis at the club. He went on to star with Villarreal, Arsenal and Spain but returned to his boyhood club two years ago, vowing: “I would play for free but you’re not allowed.”

The club from the Principality of Asturias, in the northwest of Spain, will now join Levante and Elche in next season’s top tier, replacing relegated Leganes, Las Palmas and Valladolid.



Real Oviedo’s Santi Cazorla celebrates with his teammates

“There’s no way to describe what this means to us. These players are heroes, every single one of them. They deserve great recognition,” Oviedo coach Veljko Paunovic told LaLiga TV.

Referees in Italy to get more protection

Rome, Italy - Referees in Italy will now receive the same legal protection as police officers and other public officials, Sports Minister Andrea Abodi said, to help curb a rise in cases of assault in sports such as soccer.

A change to the penal code will mean much tougher penalties, include potentially jail, for acts of violence against match officials, including pushing, hitting, or threatening. The move follows months of discussions between the government and the Italian Soccer Referees Association.

The law, part of a decree approved by the Italian government late on Friday, extends protection to all officials responsible for ensuring sporting fixtures are conducted fairly.

Abuse towards match officials at all levels of Italian soccer has become a growing concern. In December, Serie A referees highlighted the issue by wearing



Italian referee Diego Alfonzetti, who was attacked during a lower division match, was invited by the Italian referees association to be part of the refereeing team for the Lazio-Roma match in April

black smudges on their cheeks during matches as a symbol of protest.

In one notorious example last season, 19-year-old referee Diego Alfonzetti was attacked when he took charge of a youth match in Sicily.

Alfonzetti was invited on to the pitch alongside the match officials before the Lazio-Rome

Serie A derby in April as an act of solidarity.

“Sport is loyalty and sharing. Those who do not accept it are warned: from tomorrow violent behaviour and aggression against referees will be punished without delay, even with prison,” said Senator Andrea Ostellari, a junior justice minister.



Marketa Vondrousova celebrates after defeating Chinese qualifier Wang Xinyu in the Berlin Open final on Sunday

Vondrousova wins Berlin Open

Berlin, England - Former Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova needed three sets to subdue Chinese qualifier Wang Xinyu on Sunday and win the Berlin Open title, completing an improbable run to her first trophy since her London triumph two years ago.

The 25-year-old Czech, who had dropped to 164th in the world after an injury-plagued 12 months, was playing her first final since winning Wimbledon in 2023.

She was made to work hard for a 7-6(10) 4-6 6-2 victory and even had to save six set points in the tight first-set tiebreak.

Her win comes a week before the start of Wimbledon where Vondrousova will now be a force to be reckoned with.

"Nice to see a full crowd. I really enjoyed the tennis week and the support," the Czech said after winning her third career title.

"Congrats on a great week, you played an amazing match," she said, addressing Wang. "It was an amazing week we had everything we needed."

"I feel like it could not have been better for us here. We were all working really hard. We came here to try and win the first match. So very happy," Vondrousova added.

Wang, who had to battle through the qualifying process and then beat four top-20 players to reach her first-ever tour final, kept causing problems with her pinpoint accuracy as she fired repeated baseline winners.

Vondrousova's serve looked unbreakable until Wang earned her first break point in the seventh game, breaking Vondrousova who slipped and hurt her ankle on that point.

But the Czech came back to snatch the tie-break after the 23-year-old Wang had wasted six set points.

BUTTERFINGERS!

India drop five catches as England make 465 in reply to India's 471

Leeds, England - Harry Brook fell agonisingly short of a fairytale century on his home ground when he was out for 99 as England capitalised on India's generosity in the field before they were dismissed for 465 on the third day of the opening test at Headingley on Sunday.

Resuming on 209-3 in reply to India's 471 all out, England were dealt an early blow when overnight centurion Ollie Pope perished for 106 while Brook fell in the second session when attempting to bring up his century with a six. Brook had got his eye in and steadied the ship with some crisp hitting, smashing 11 boundaries as he made India pay for dropped catches by bringing up his 12th test half-century.

He was given a third lifeline when he slashed at a wide ball to Yashasvi Jaiswal at fourth slip but the Indian opener fluffed the chance - his third dropped catch and India's fifth in the innings.

The Yorkshire-born batter looked set for a big score before his moment of heartbreak came when he attempted to reach three figures with a flourish, lofting Prasidh Krishna over fine leg only to find Shardul Thakur stationed at the boundary rope.

A dejected Brook threw his head back and put his hand up to his face before he trudged back to the pavilion as the Headingley crowd overcame their disap-



India were sloppy in the field on Sunday and it was Jasprit Bumrah who suffered the most, with three catches dropped off his bowling

England were dealt an early blow when Ollie Pope perished for 106 while Brook fell in the second session when attempting to bring up his century with a six

pointment to give him a standing ovation. Krishna had also dismissed Pope with a shorter delivery when he nicked it to Rishabh Pant behind the stumps.

A blustery day, which began with a moment of appreciation for former England speedster David "Syd" Lawrence who died aged 61, threatened to become frustrating for India when Ben Stokes hit Mohammed Siraj down the ground to bring up England's 250.

India were less than pleased with the shape of the old ball, highlighted when Pant petulantly threw it to the ground during a chat with umpire Paul Reiffel after Brook had audaciously charged Siraj and guided one over the slip cordon.

The tourists persevered and skipper Stokes was livid with himself when he fell for 20, drawn into an edge by Siraj, while Jamie Smith took a smart review and survived after initially being given out lbw off Thakur.

Smith and Brook then stitched together a 73-run partnership. But Smith fell on 40 when he hooked a short delivery to deep square leg where Ravindra Jadeja caught the ball and tossed it to Sai Sudharsan before he went over the rope.

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WHAT IS IT ABOUT CASTLES THAT FASCINATES SO MANY PEOPLE AROUND THE GLOBE – OLD ARCHITECTURE, HISTORY, FOLKLORE OR STANDING TESTIMONY TO A BYGONE ERA?

A lot of the allure derives from the history and human drama that played out within the walls, as well as the astonishing architecture that features on so many castles... But they're also romantic and somewhat mystical, places that spark our imagination and conjure visions of long-ago knights in shining armour and powerful warrior queens.

"Because they combine two functions, they are far more interesting than fortresses or palaces," says Marc Morris, author of 'Castles: Their History and Evolution in Medieval Britain'.

"What makes a castle a castle is that it combines the functions of defence and dwelling — it's a fortification and a stately home rolled into one. Creating a building which is both comfortable and defensible is difficult. The ingenious ways in which castle-designers reconciled this balance is always intriguing."

Although we normally associate castles with European history, it's actually an architectural form found around the world — in nations as varied as Japan and India, Morocco and Mexico.

Many are now hubs of living history where modern visitors can watch jousting and other ancient combat forms, listen to medieval music or watch artisans demonstrate the arts, crafts and everyday skills of a thousand years ago.

They also make great backdrops for outdoor concerts, films, theatre and military performances, or for the on-location filming of movies and television shows.

"With a castle you get not only the stories of sieges, but also stories of the domestic lives of the rich and famous," says Morris. "Castles are places where plots were hatched, marriages were consummated, murders carried out, royal babies born, and so on. With castles, you are never short of fascinating things to talk about."

Here are insights into some of the world's most beautiful castles:

Himeji Castle, Japan
Located about 30 minutes by bullet train west of Osaka and Kobe, Himeji rises above the Inland Sea and is considered the epitome of the Japanese feudal castle. Both a Japanese national treasure and World Heritage Site, the elegant whitewashed structure is also called 'White Heron Castle' because of its resemblance to a great bird taking flight.

Palace of the Grand Master of the Knights of Rhodes, Greece
This classic medieval castle towers above the island of Rhodes in the Aegean Sea. Originally built as a Byzantine citadel, it was reworked into its present Gothic form by the crusading Knights of St John when Rhodes served as the headquarters of their grand master. During the brief Italian occupation of the Dodecanese Islands, Benito Mussolini used the castle as a holiday home.

Neuschwanstein, Germany
Even though many people consider this Bavarian masterpiece the epitome of a German castle, it's a relatively new creation, erected in the late 1800s at the behest of King Ludwig II. The Bavarian monarch instructed his architects to design something that would reflect both the operas of Richard Wagner and the romantic ideals of the Middle Ages — as much a fantasy as Sleeping Beauty Castle at Disneyland, but with the snowcapped Alps as a backdrop and the Bavarian plains spread out beneath.

Alcázar of Segovia, Spain
One of the most striking castles in all of Europe,



the Alcázar rides a narrow, rocky promontory overlooking the plains of Old Castile in central Spain. Although it started life as a Roman fort, the structure evolved over hundreds of years into a prototypical medieval castle with a deep moat, drawbridge, round guard towers and a robust keep, as well as lavishly decorated royal chambers. Segovia Castle is most renowned as the home of Queen Isabella and powerful Phillip II before the royal court was moved to Madrid.

Pena Palace, Portugal
Another offspring of the Romantic movement that swept 19th-century Europe, Pena crowns a hilltop near Sintra, Portugal. Commissioned by King Ferdinand II on the site of a ruined monastery dedicated to the Virgin of Pena, the castle is a flamboyant blend of various historic styles including Gothic, Moorish and Renaissance details. The castle's vivid red-and-yellow colour pattern — and its flashy clock tower — endow Pena with a much more playful air than the somber castles found elsewhere in Europe.

Amber Fortress, India
Erected in the early 17th century by the Mughal ruler of Rajasthan, the Amber Fortress crowns a hilltop near Jaipur, its stout walls reflected in the waters of Maota Lake. The palace complex inside the walls revolves around courtyards flanked by exquisite examples of Rajput architecture like the Maharaja's Apartments, Sukh Niwas (Hall of Pleasure) and Diwan-i-Am (Royal Audience Hall).

Ksar of Ait-Ben-Haddou, Morocco
This massive mudbrick structure on the edge of the Sahara has starred in more than a dozen movies and television shows including Game of Thrones, Gladiator and The Man Who Would Be King. The complex features a fortified lower town along the Asif Ounila River — where people still reside — and a partially ruined hilltop citadel.

Kalmar Castle, Sweden
Founded in the waning years of the Viking Age, Kalmar Castle traces its roots to a 12th-century defensive tower overlooking the Kalmar Strait on the Baltic Sea. Four centuries later, King Gustav and his sons transformed Kalmar into a splendid royal residence that (with the help of renovation) looks much the same today as it did in 1592.

Castillo San Felipe del Morro, Puerto Rico
Guarding the entrance to San Juan Bay, this 16th-century Spanish citadel is one of the most impressive structures in the Caribbean. Protected by a moat (with a drawbridge), stone battlements and rugged sea cliffs, the castle has repelled numerous attacks including several assaults by French pirates and a 1595 strike by Sir Francis Drake. However, it surrendered to US forces after a fierce naval bombardment during the Spanish-American War.

Topkapi Sarayi, Turkey
Although it's officially called a palace, Istanbul's sprawling Topkapi compound bears all the features of a classic castle: defensible site, fortified walls, powerful gateways and a royal residence occupied by the Ottoman sultans from the late 15th century when it was originally constructed until the 1850s. Converted into a museum when the Ottoman Empire dissolved after World War I, the Topkapi offers extensive gardens, wall-top walks overlooking the Bosphorus, the Ottoman Imperial Harem and the Imperial Treasury with its famous emerald-encrusted golden dagger.

Edinburgh Castle, Scotland
Perched on an ancient volcanic outcrop at the end of the Royal Mile, Edinburgh Castle is considered the 'most besieged place' in Britain with at least 26 major attacks during its 1,100-year lifespan. From Mary Queen of Scots to Oliver Cromwell and Sir Walter Raleigh, many famous Britons are indelibly linked the ancient edifice. Britain's oldest crown jewels (the Honours of Scotland) are safeguarded inside a castle that also provides an incredibly fitting venue for the annual Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.





ISRAEL-IRAN CONFLICT

Flight rights

Major carriers including Emirates, Lufthansa, Air France, United, and Delta have suspended flights to the Middle East region. If you are slated to travel in the region, here's some advice on passenger rights and travel insurance cover

The current conflict between Israel and Iran has thrown air travel in the Middle East into chaos. Airspace across Iran, Iraq, Israel and Jordan has been subject to closures - some ongoing - and hundreds of flights have been cancelled or rerouted.

Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport is closed until further notice, and major carriers including Emirates, Lufthansa, Air France, United, and Delta have suspended flights to the region.

So, if you have a trip planned to affected countries, here's what you need to know about travel insurance and passenger rights.

The UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) issued a string of advisories on June 13, warning travellers visiting Middle Eastern and North African destinations about rising tensions in the region. It included popular tourist destinations such as Cyprus, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates.

"Ongoing hostilities in the region and between Israel and Iran could escalate quickly and pose security risks for the wider region," the UK FCDO said.

Warnings were also issued for Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Algeria, Lebanon, Libya, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar. Travellers have been told to 'monitor local and international media for the latest information and be vigilant and follow the instructions of local authorities'.

On Sunday, the UK FCDO advised against all travel to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories amid the ongoing missile attacks.

The FCDO also advises against all travel to Iran, warning that 'British and British-Iranian dual nationals are at significant risk of arrest, questioning or detention'.

Foreign ministries in other European countries, including France and Germany, have also issued similar warnings against travel to Israel and Iran.

Your flight rights

If you were planning to travel to the region, you do have some options to get your money back or reschedule your flight.

"For anyone who was hoping to travel to the region over the coming weeks and months, as it has been deemed unsafe to travel, it's likely that airlines will cancel the flight

and offer an alternative," says Ernesto Suarez, CEO of travel insurance provider Gigasure.

This usually means you can choose between travelling on a different flight or receiving a refund.

"However, passengers must be aware that as this is a disruption outside of the airline's control, they may not be entitled to any compensation," Suarez adds. The exception is if you receive less than 14 days' notice of cancellation, in which case

you may be able to claim compensation.

Travellers with adequate travel insurance should have financial protection if all, or part of, their trip is delayed, cancelled, or cut short due to the airstrikes.

"If the customer bought extended travel disruption cover, they should be covered for the abandonment of their trip and/or additional costs if they must move accommodation or extend their stay," Suarez

says. "Customers should check their policy wording for full details."

Travel insurance cover

Foreign offices warn that your travel insurance could be invalidated if you travel against their advice. This means going to areas where they have issued a 'no-go' warning or advise against all but essential travel. That currently covers both Iran and Israel.

If you do so, you are likely to be

left without coverage for incidents, including medical emergencies and evacuations. It may also mean that if you are arrested or put in detention, your country's embassy or officials have limited ability to help you.

If you have booked with a travel agent or tour operator, contact the company directly to understand your options.

Cancelled flight options

For travellers stranded overseas and looking for a way to return to Israel, the nation's flag carrier El Al is reportedly planning one-way 'recovery flights' from several destinations.

The airline said in a statement that it is finalising the list of destinations and the number of flights that it can operate.

"Currently, registration is open for customers whose flights to Israel are cancelled since the closure of Israeli airspace and who are currently abroad," it said, adding, "Once registration is approved, customers will be contacted via email or text message with updates, including instructions and flight assignments, subject to government approval to operate the flights."

The carrier added that recovery flights will be operated gradually.

"We recommend preparing for extended stays and keeping receipts for accommodation and related expenses," it advised. "Eligibility for reimbursement will be reviewed in accordance with legal guidelines."

Evacuations in Israel

Several European countries have been evacuating their citizens from Israel. Poland has said it will transport around 200 nationals by bus to Jordan, from where they will fly to Warsaw.

The Czech Foreign Ministry has advised citizens who are interested in repatriation to report to the embassy in Tel Aviv. According to Czech media, 70 nationals are already travelling to a neighbouring country to catch a flight home.

Lithuania's National Crisis Management Centre said citizen evacuations by land are scheduled to begin on Tuesday. Germany has said it will start evacuating its citizens from Israel via Jordan's capital, Amman, to board a chartered flight.

"Germans in Israel who are registered on the Elefant crisis preparedness list have been informed about this option and the details," a spokesperson said.

Cyprus has received requests to assist in the evacuation of citizens of Portugal and Slovakia, Cypriot Foreign Minister Constantinos Kombos said on Monday.

"There are two active requests," Kombos said, as reported by Reuters. "Obviously this very much depends on the access of their civilians to neighbouring countries by road."

"We have activated the Civil Protection Mechanism (CPM), and are assisting member states to evacuate their citizens who wish to leave," the EU's top diplomat, Kaja Kallas, said after a meeting of foreign ministers on Tuesday.

euronews.com

For anyone who was hoping to travel to the region over the coming weeks and months, as it has been deemed unsafe to travel, it's likely that airlines will cancel the flight and offer an alternative



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Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport saw a great rush last week and is now closed until further notice