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HIS MAJESTY DISCUSSES IRAN-US TALKS WITH IRANIAN LEADER, WISHES EQUITABLE AGREEMENT



HM gives audience to Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik gave an audience at Al Barakah Palace yesterday to Dr. Ali Larijani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the audience, the guest conveyed greetings and best wishes of President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian of the Islamic Republic of Iran to His Majesty the Sultan. The Iranian President also

wished the people of Oman further progress and prosperity. In his turn, His Majesty asked the guest to convey his greetings to President Pezeshkian, wishing Iran further stability and prosperity. The audience discussed the latest developments of the Iranian-American negotiations. It also addressed pathways toward achieving a balanced and equitable agreement for all parties. It also underscored the critical importance of resuming dialogue and returning to the negotiating table to bridge perspectives and resolve outstanding differences through peaceful means. Such efforts are fundamental to promoting and sustaining peace and security both in the region and the world at large. The audience was attended by Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office. — **ONA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN
Joint session of State and Shura Councils
1 The State Council and Shura Council held on Tuesday the first joint session of the third sitting of the eighth term of the Council of Oman. **>A2**

OMAN
Blikra's big leap on stage 4 of Tour of Oman
2 Norwegian rider Erlend Blikra of Uno-X Mobility delivered an outstanding show to claim a decisive victory on Tuesday in Sohar. **>A6**

SPORTS
New Zealand thrash UAE by 10 wickets
3 New Zealand dominated the UAE in match 11 of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup held at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Tuesday. **>B5**

AL BARAKAH PALACE

HM receives credentials of several ambassadors

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik yesterday received at Al Barakah Palace the credentials of several ambassadors of countries appointed to the Sultanate of Oman. His Majesty accepted the credentials of the following:

- Charles Kingston, Ambassador of Cindy Kiro, Governor-General of New Zealand to the Sultanate of Oman.
- Yevgeny Sobolevsky, Ambassador of President Aleksandr Lukashenko of the Republic of Belarus to the Sultanate of Oman.
- Hoang Huu Anh, Ambassador of President Luong Cuong of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the Sultanate of Oman.
- Miguel Porto Parga, Ambassador of President Miguel Diaz-Canel of the Republic of Cuba to the Sultanate of Oman.
- Kjersti Tromsdal, Ambassador of King Harald V of the Kingdom of Norway to the Sultanate of Oman.
- Miles Armitage, Ambassador of Sam Mostyn, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia to the Sultanate of Oman.



- Andy Rodriguez Duran, Ambassador of President Luis Abinader of the Dominican Republic to the Sultanate of Oman.
- Shebba Shumbayawonda, Ambassador of President Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the Sultanate of Oman.

- Pavel Kafka, Ambassador of President Petr Pavel of the Czech Republic to the Sultanate of Oman.
- Zuraidah Binte Abdullah, Ambassador of President Tharman Shanmugaratnam of the Republic of Singapore to the Sultanate of Oman.
- Ekaterini Fafarioutou, Ambassador of President Konstantinos Tasoulas of the Hellenic Republic to the Sultanate of Oman.

During the audiences with His Majesty the Sultan, the ambassadors conveyed the greetings of their countries' leaders and their sincere wishes to His Majesty for continued success. They also

wished the Omani people further progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Majesty. They emphasised their dedication to strengthening the relations of partnership and cooperation between their respective countries and the Sultanate of Oman across various fields, contributing to the support of shared aspirations and mutual interests. On his part, His Majesty the Sultan welcomed the ambassadors, expressing his thanks and appreciation to the leaders of their countries for their greetings and kind wishes. He assured them that they would receive all the support and assistance from His Majesty, the Government, and the Omani people, thereby facilitating their duties and the advancement of joint cooperation. The credentials presentation ceremony was attended by the Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, the Foreign Minister, the Commander of the Royal Guard of Oman, the Head of Royal Protocols and the Military aides to His Majesty. — **ONA** • **See also >A4**

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

Shortened working hours announced during Ramadan

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Labour has formally issued the official working schedule for the blessed month of Ramadan, 1447 AH, applying to both the civil units of the State's Administrative Apparatus and private sector establishments.

The guidelines are as follows:

I. Civil Units of the State's Administrative Apparatus:

A- Official Working Hours: The standard daily schedule is set at five consecutive hours, from 9 am to 2 pm.

B- Flexible Working Arrangements: Unit heads are authorized

to implement a flexible schedule. Employee start and end times may be adjusted to suit operational needs within a designated window from 7 am to 3 pm.

Working hours will be calculated from individual arrival to departure, in accordance with each unit's established procedures.

C- Remote Work: Unit heads may implement remote work for roles where duties permit, provided it does not disrupt workflow. A minimum of 50% of the unit's total staff must be physically present at the workplace at all times.

II. Private Sector Establishments: The working day for Muslim em-



ployees in the private sector is reduced to a maximum of six hours per day, not exceeding a total of thirty hours per week.

The Ministry further encour-

aged private sector entities to adopt modern working methods, including flexible schedules and remote work where feasible.

This approach aims to enhance

productivity while respecting the distinctive spiritual character of the holy month.

The holy month of Ramadan 1447 AH is expected to begin on Thursday, February 19, 2026, based on astronomical calculations.

However, the official start of Ramadan in the Sultanate of Oman will be confirmed only after the sighting of the crescent moon by the country's authorised moon-sighting committee. Oman's Main Committee for Sighting the Crescent Moon plays a vital role each year in determining the beginning of Ramadan and other Islamic months. — **ONA**



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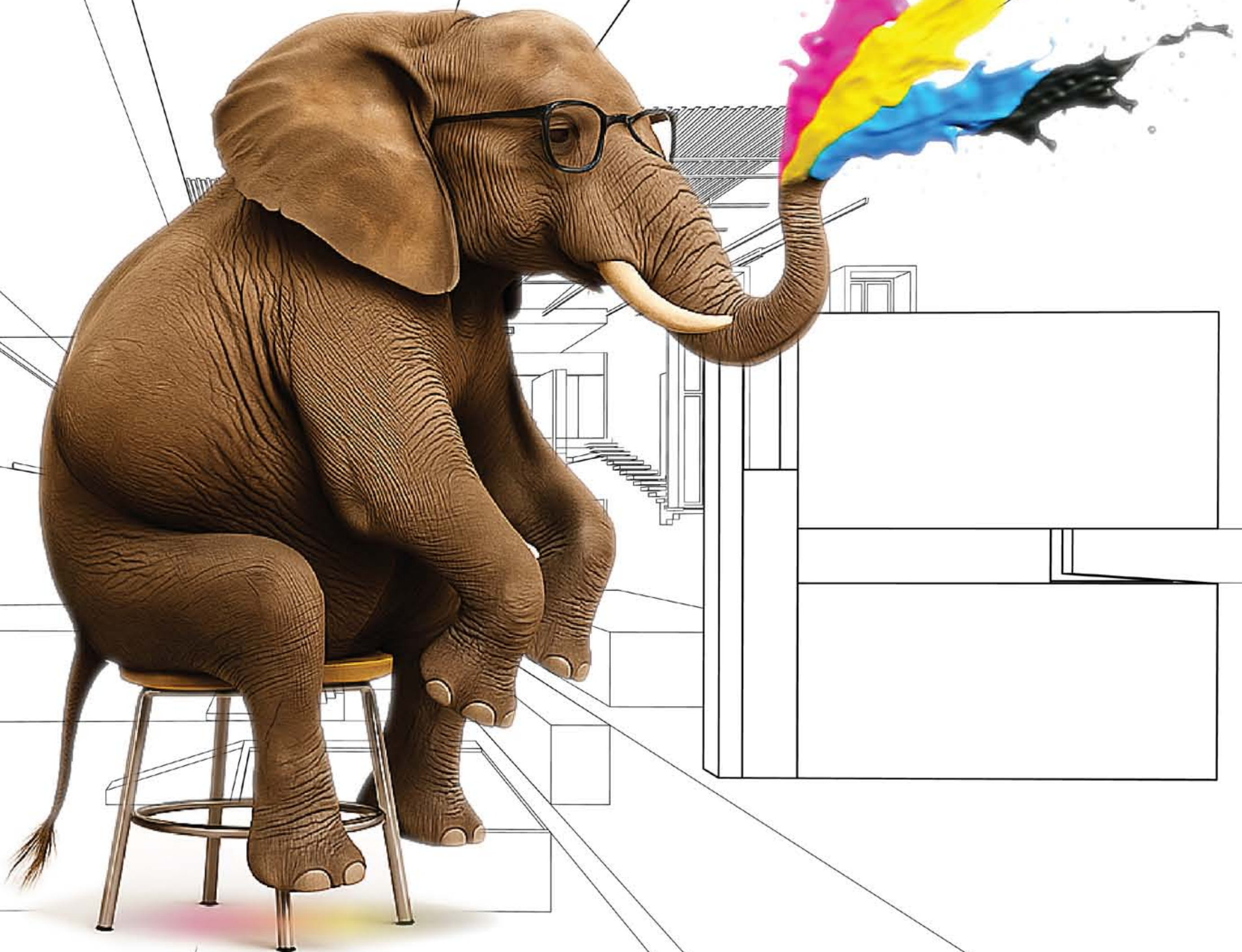
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Oman marks inclusion of people with global impact in UNESCO list

Omani institutions are working to highlight cultural elements and symbols in international forums and cement its cultural and civilisational standing globally

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman on Tuesday celebrated the globally influential Omani personalities included in UNESCO programmes and the efforts made by relevant cultural institutions in collecting and documenting Omani literature and works authored by prominent Omani figures whose stars have shone over hundreds of years.

This celebration also reflects the fruit of continuous national efforts in documenting Omani cultural heritage and highlighting it in international forums, enhancing the Sultanate of Oman's presence in the Organisation's programmes and initiatives, and the commitment of Omani National Commission for Education, Culture and Science to continue working to highlight Omani cultural elements and symbols in international forums and cement Oman's cultural and civilisational standing globally.

In this context, Sayyid Said Sultan Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for Culture, stated that the Sultanate of Oman has documented over 30 Omani personalities to date, encompassing biographies and in-depth studies of their intellectual and cultural output. Of these, 9 personalities have been included in UNESCO's programme for commemorating the centennial or semicentennial of important historical events and globally influential personalities.

He added that this achievement is the fruit of dedicated institutional work involving conducting specialised research and studies in cultural fields and organising in-depth scientific seminars addressing Omani personalities with a lasting impact throughout history, in addition to fruitful cooperation between concerned institutions that contributed to expanding the reach of these works locally, regionally, and internationally.

He affirmed that cementing the global presence of these personalities through various UNESCO programmes enhances intellectual and moral solidarity among humankind, in harmony with UNESCO's founding charter.

It also opens broader horizons for exchanging knowledge and cultural dialogue with different peoples of the world and confirms that our common humanity is broader than

areas of difference, he furthered. For his part, Dr. Mahmoud Abdullah Al Abri, Secretary-General of Omani National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, on the occasion of celebrating the Omani personalities registered with UNESCO, said: "The Sultanate of Oman has successfully included a constellation of its luminaries, whose impact transcended the limits of place and time, in UNESCO's programme for commemorating the semicentennial or centennial of important historical events and globally influential personalities; in appreciation of their intellectual, scientific, and cultural contributions to serving humanity.

This celebration embodies an authentic Omani approach that believes culture and knowledge are bridges for communication between peoples, and that civilizational heritage is a shared responsibility to preserve and highlight for generations."

In the same context, the College of Sharia Sciences in Muscat organised a symposium titled "Highlights from the Intellectual and Linguistic Output of Omani Linguistic Personalities Included in UNESCO," with the participation of a number of specialists and researchers in the historical, literary, and intellectual context. -ONA



ELEVATE COMPETITIVE SPIRIT

Joint session discusses articles of dispute between State Council and Shura Council

MUSCAT: The State Council and Shura Council held on Tuesday the first joint session of the third sitting of the eighth term of the Council of Oman, chaired by Sheikh Abdulmalik Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council.

The joint session involved discussing and voting on the articles of disagreement between the two councils in 7 draft laws.

These include draft laws concerning the Real Estate Register, Civil Society Institutions, Combating Information Technology Crimes, Amending Some Provisions of the Cultural Heritage Law, Sports Entities, Amending Some Provisions of the Arbitration Law in Civil and Commercial Disputes, and National Geospatial Data and Information.

In a speech, Sheikh Abdulmalik Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council, stated that the convening of the joint session comes in implementation of the provisions of Article (49) of the Council of Oman Law, which affirms the importance of consolidating the principle of coordination and integration between the two councils by holding joint sessions in case of disagreement and divergence of opinion on draft laws referred by the government, in order to produce a unified, consolidated vision that embodies joint work.

He also emphasised, within the same framework, the harmony of work between the two councils and the Council of Ministers in serving the public interest, fostering constructive cooperation, and advancing the comprehensive development march under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq.

He added that the State Council and Shura Council had previously discussed a number of draft laws, including: the draft Real Estate Register Law, the draft Civil Society Institutions Law, the draft Law amending some provisions of the Arbitration Law in Civil and Commercial Disputes, the draft Combating Information Technology Crimes Law, the draft law amending some provisions of the Cultural Heritage Law, the draft National Geospatial Data and Information



Law, in addition to the draft Sports Entities Law.

Al Khalili noted that the deliberations of the two councils led to consensus on a large number of articles in those draft laws, alongside divergence on some articles. The two councils formed joint committees comprising a number of members to discuss the points of disagreement between the councils. These committees reached agreement on all those articles.

He explained that the work of yesterday's joint session includes discussing the reports of the joint committees regarding the aforementioned draft laws, in accordance with the rules and procedures for holding joint sessions between the State Council, Shura Council.

For his part, Dr. Mohammed Said Al Hajri, Member of the State Council and Member of the Social and Cultural Committee, clarified that the joint session discussed a number of articles of divergence and disagreement regarding several draft laws and legislative amendments. Among these is the draft Civil Society Institutions Law, which aims for a legislative treatment to be more comprehensive by including a group of institutions for which regulations were issued, specifically by merging them into one law encompassing all civil society institutions.

In a statement to Oman News Agency, he explained that this comprehensive legislative treatment empowers all civil society institutions, along with addressing funding and sustainability. He indicated that with this, the draft law has become clearer and more detailed regarding the investment of these institutions' funds, which

will positively reflect on the activities and programs they provide.

Regarding the draft law amending some provisions of the Cultural Heritage Law, he clarified that the legislative amendment in the law aligned with the sectoral separation between tangible heritage, which the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism is now responsible for, and intangible heritage, which the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth is now responsible for. He affirmed that this separation will be reflected in the draft law.

He added that there is an important legislative separation, which is an addition to the draft law, related to geological heritage. He expressed his hope that today's session would move to approve what the joint committees between the two councils proposed regarding the articles of divergence and disagreement in the draft laws.

For his part, Younis Ali Al Mandhari, Member of the Shura Council and Chairman of the Youth and Human Resources Committee, stated that the Council began studying the draft Sports Entities Law last May and hosted all parties related to the draft law through the competent committee.

All parties related to the draft law were hosted, whether from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, as well as sports clubs and federations, to take their opinions on the articles of the law, which comprised 69 articles. He indicated that the Council amended some articles and added 3 new articles.

In a statement to Oman News Agency, he added that the draft law included divergence on some articles, including 4 articles present in the draft law and articles added by



the Shura Council.

He noted that through the joint committee between the two councils, agreement was reached on all articles, and during the joint session, the draft Sports Entities Law was approved.

He affirmed that the draft law is a significant addition to the sports aspect, whether for federations, clubs, or committees. He expressed his hope that Omani sports would be elevated, both in terms of its practice and investment in this sector through private sector sponsorship of existing sports entities.

The joint committee between the State Council and Shura Council stated that the "draft Real Estate Register Law" aims to enhance legal protection for owners and beneficiaries, regulate registration procedures and real estate transactions, and enable digital documentation in line with the national direction towards digital transformation.

It reported that the "draft Civil Society Institutions Law" comes within the framework of the Sultanate of Oman's endeavour to enhance the environment for civil work, regulate the establishment of associations and their funding mechanisms, enabling them to perform their developmental and societal role efficiently, and achieve integration between civil society institutions and state institutions.

Meanwhile, the draft law amending some provisions of the Arbitration Law in Civil and Commercial Disputes (issued by Royal Decree No. 47/97)" sought to enhance the effectiveness of arbitration procedures to achieve speed

and justice, in addition to supporting Oman's efforts in adopting best international practices in dispute settlement. The "draft Combating Information Technology Crimes Law" aimed to enhance protection from cybercrimes, deter attacks on information systems and data, and criminalise defamation, extortion, and electronic fraud.

As for the "draft law amending some provisions of the Cultural Heritage Law," it will work to enhance the protection and management of archaeological and heritage sites according to advanced standards and activate the role of the community and private sector in preserving heritage through sustainable development projects, in line with the priorities of Oman Vision 2040.

The committee affirmed that the "draft National Geospatial Data and Information Law" aims to regulate the collection, production, and circulation of spatial data to serve sustainable development planning. Meanwhile, the "draft Sports Entities Law" seeks to establish an organised and balanced legislative framework that provides an attractive and stimulating sports environment for discovering and nurturing national talents, building a solid sports foundation that supports local and international sports presence, and contributes to achieving the societal and economic dimensions of sustainable development.

The session was attended by Khalid Hilal Al Maawali, Chairman of the Shura Council, the members of the State Council and the Shura Council, and the Secretaries-General of both councils. -ONA

104TH REGULAR SESSION

Enhancing media support for Palestinian cause discussed



KUWAIT: The Sultanate of Oman participated in the meeting of the 104th regular session of the Arab Permanent Information Committee, which was held in the State of Kuwait.

The Sultanate of Oman's delegation was headed by Mohammed Said Al Balushi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information.

The meeting discussed a number of important topics, including enhancing media support for the Palestinian cause, following up on the implementation of the Arab Media Action Plan Abroad, as well as the executive plan for the joint Arab media strategy to combat terrorism, and the executive programme for the Arab Media Map for Sustainable Development 2030.

The meeting also addressed developing a unified strategy for dealing with international media companies, encouraging quality and professional excellence in media work, and building the capacities of Arab media professionals, content producers, and influencers.

Additionally, it reviewed follow-ups on implementing the Arab Strategy for Media and Information Literacy, examining the recommendations of the expert team concerned with the Arab Plan for Media Engagement on Environmental Issues, and the role of media in elevating Arab character and culture.

The meeting also discussed leveraging artificial intelligence technologies in Arab media and their impact on the human element. -ONA

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Global market for unmanned aerial vehicles increasing

The opening of the conference was held under the auspices of Sheikh Dr. Ali Masoud Al Sunaidi, Advisor at the Diwan of Royal Court

MUSCAT: The activities of the Third International Conference on Unmanned Vehicle Systems (UVS-Oman 2026) commenced on Tuesday at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU). The opening of the conference was held under the auspices of Sheikh Dr. Ali Masoud Al Sunaidi, Advisor at the Diwan of Royal Court. In his opening speech, Dr. Nabil Zahran Al Rawahi, Dean of the College of Engineering, explained that the third edition of the conference has expanded to include interactive educational workshops focus-



ing on key industrial applications, alongside dedicated competitions for school and university students designed to refine their skills and qualify them to work with the associated technologies in this field. Dr. Hadj Bourdoucen delivered the conference committee's speech, noting that the global market for aerial, land, and maritime unmanned vehicles is experiencing increasing expansion due to the need for smarter and more ef-

ficient solutions. He clarified that these technologies face significant challenges, including enhancing security and surveillance, developing collision avoidance capabilities, improving reliable communication in complex environments, and increasing operational capacity and endurance. The conference activities will span three consecutive days, beginning with three specialised workshops addressing core pillars

operations, and case studies. The conference features two main keynote presentations. The first addresses changing cyber-security requirements in the era of autonomous systems and the progress toward reaching Level 5 autonomy (full automation). The second keynote covers the design, control, and applications of bio-inspired aircraft. Furthermore, the conference includes presentations on ten industrial applications for unmanned vehicle systems in Omani industry, focusing on aerial robots for inspection, surveillance, and environmental protection, as well as autonomous systems for safety, inspection, and operations. This is accompanied by six parallel scientific sessions presenting peer-reviewed research papers. Organized on the sidelines of the conference are several competitions at the national level, including a pipeline robotics competition for college and university students, an autonomous car competition for public and private school students, and the Oman AI-Enhanced Drone Competition, organised by the College of Engineering in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology. -OMA

NATIONAL DAY

HM greets Iran President Pezeshkian

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian of the Islamic Republic of Iran on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere wishes for Iran to achieve further accomplishments. His Majesty also wished the relations of cooperation and partnership to grow and expand across various sectors in a manner that serves the interests of both countries. -OMA

CABLES

HM sends greetings to Vatican, Portugal

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to Pope Leo XIV, Head of State of Vatican City, on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his heartfelt sentiments to Pope Leo XIV and the people of his country, wishing them further progress and prosperity.

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ROP

3 expats held with alcoholic beverages

Times News Service **MUSCAT:** The Royal Oman Police (ROP), has arrested three expats with large quantities of alcoholic beverages in the Wilayat of Khasab, Musandam Governorate. According to the ROP, Coast Guard boats of Musandam Gov-

ernorate Police Command, intercepted a boat carrying three individuals of Asian nationality with large quantities of alcoholic beverages in Khasab. In another incident, the ROP arrested a smuggler upon her arrival at Muscat International Airport with marijuana.

President-elect António José His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President-elect António José Seguro on winning the presidential elections in the Republic of Portugal. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his best wishes to President-elect António in successfully leading the people of his country and realising their aspirations. His Majesty also expressed his hope for the growth and development of the relations between the two countries across various levels. -OMA

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IN PICTURES

His Majesty the Sultan receives credentials of several Ambassadors



Project launched to boost efficiency of national cadres

The programme also aims to develop project and contract management skills in line with modern practices



MUSCAT: The Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority, in cooperation with the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (Riyada), today launched a programme named “Imkan Plus”.

This is one of the developmental initiatives aimed at raising the efficiency of national cadres in the projects and construction sector, specifically engineers working in contracting and engineering consultancy firms registered with Riyada.

The programme also aims to develop project and contract management skills in line with modern practices, contributing to improving implementation quality, enhancing spending efficiency in projects, and reducing change orders. It will run for 5 months, with 6 weeks allocated for each group.

The programme complements the training programmes launched by the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority in previous periods to qualify national cadres in government projects and contracts.

It introduces blended learning methodologies, combining theoretical and practical aspects, and



focuses on developing the technical and cognitive skills of engineers in executing and monitoring projects and contracts.

This will enable them to efficiently deal with challenges related to the project cycle and apply what they learn to ongoing national projects.

Eng. Abdullah Saif Al Hosni, Programme Manager of “Imkan Plus” at stated that the program targets national companies operating in the fields of contracting, civil and architectural engineering, and engineering consultancy. Statistics have shown that the number of companies registered with the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority in the construction and engineering consultancy sector exceeded 7,200 companies in 2025.

Within the programme, 1,380 companies specialised in the construction sector have been targeted, representing approximately 19% of the total companies operating in these activities, reflecting the size of the sector and the importance of investing in human resource development, he added.

He pointed out that the program includes a comprehensive assessment to measure the knowledge and skill impact on participants.

The results of previous programmes have shown high performance indicators, including achieving a final success rate of 89%, which reflects the program's effectiveness in combining theoretical knowledge and practical application.

For his part, Eng. Ahmed Hamed Al Asmi, Director of the Local Value-Added Department at the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (Riyada), said that the program reflects the partnership between Riyada and the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority towards developing the project management system through investing in national cadres as the fundamental pillar for the success and sustainability of projects. -ONA

MEETING

Iranian official commends Oman for mediation efforts

MUSCAT: General Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office received on Tuesday in his office Dr. Ali Larijani, Secretary General of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran and his accompanying delegation.

During the meeting, Al Nu'amani underscored the depth of bilateral relation between Oman and Iran.

The two sides discussed several matters of mutual interest.

Dr. Ali Larijani, Secretary General of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran expressed his appreciation for the Sultanate of Oman's stances regarding several



regional and international files.

He also lauded Oman's active role in bridging points of views and its calling for constructive dia-

logue between related parties.

The meeting was attended by the ambassador of Iran to Oman.

-ONA

EXCHANGED VIEWS

Sayyid Badr meets Iran leader

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, met on Tuesday with Dr. Ali Larijani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The two sides exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interest, emphasizing the importance of dialogue and cooperation in supporting regional security and stability.





Ministry of Defence

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

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NCSI NOVEMBER 2025 DATA

Domestic liquidity in Oman rises by 6.4%

MUSCAT: Domestic liquidity in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 6.4 percent by the end of November 2025, reaching OMR26.41 billion, compared to OMR24.82 billion during the same period in 2024.

Preliminary data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) indicated that the total currency issued by the end of November 2025 rose to OMR1,529.2 million, recording an increase of 1.6 percent compared to the same period in 2024, when it stood at OMR1,505.200.

Narrow money supply (M1) witnessed a 12.2 percent increase,



reaching OMR7,904.4 million, compared to OMR7,046.3 million during the same period of 2024.

Regarding foreign assets, the total reached OMR7,563.7 million, an increase of 7.4 percent over the same period in 2024,

when foreign assets stood at

OMR7,041.8 million.

On the credit front, private sector deposits in local banks by the end of last November recorded a 9.9 percent increase to reach OMR22,675.9 million, compared to OMR20,639 million during the same period in 2024.

Total loans and financing granted by commercial banks and Islamic windows also rose by 8.8 percent to reach OMR35,007.8 million by the end of November 2025, compared to OMR32,165.1 million during the same period in 2024. Conversely, the average interest rate on total loans decreased by 3.9 percent, recording 5.446 percent by the end of November 2025 compared to 5.667 percent during the same period in 2024.

The effective exchange rate index for the Omani Rial recorded a slight increase of 0.1 percent, reaching 114.3 points by the end of November 2025. — **ONA**

ELEVATE COMPETITIVE SPIRIT

Oman Bowling Committee charts out ambitious growth path

MUSCAT: Said bin Rashid Al Qatabi, Chairman of the Oman Bowling Committee, has affirmed the body's ongoing commitment to cultivating the sport of bowling and solidifying its standing within the Sultanate of Oman.

This drive is being realised through the implementation of robust technical and organisational initiatives designed to broaden participation and elevate competitive standards both domestically and internationally.

In a statement to the Oman News Agency (ONA), Al Qatabi revealed that the Committee's development programs have successfully engaged approximately 250 registered male and female bowlers across all age categories.

This grassroots growth has been supported by a competitive calendar featuring 15 official domestic tournaments, supplemented by a series of promotional events specifically designed to scout and hone new talent.

Highlighting the sport's rising international profile, Al Qatabi noted that Omani national teams have competed in three prestigious Asian championships over the past two years, including tournaments sanctioned by the Asian



Bowling Federation.

This commitment to high-level competition has borne significant fruit, with national athlete Musab Al Adawi securing a landmark victory at the Singapore International Championship in the youth category.

Al Adawi further underscored his rising stature by clinching the title at the Muscat International Bowling Nights Championship in 2025, achievements that collectively signal the sport's accelerating technical advancement in Oman.

He affirmed that the Committee is placing a strong emphasis on the long-term development of its national athletes. A key component

of this strategy was a specialized training camp conducted this year at the Athletes Preparation Center for Bowling in Malaysia, focusing on junior talent.

Looking ahead, Al Qatabi outlined an ambitious agenda for the current year, which includes organizing ten local championships across general, youth, and junior divisions. The centerpiece of this domestic circuit will be the highly anticipated General League Championship for Oman's Bowling Clubs.

He pointed out that to ensure sustainable growth, the Committee is actively expanding the sport's footprint within the national sports club network.

Bowling has already been successfully integrated into 18 clubs, with a strategic plan to increase this number significantly. This expansion will be bolstered by comprehensive technical and administrative support, alongside targeted introductory and training programmes delivered in partnership with the clubs.

Addressing the path forward, Al Qatabi identified key challenges, emphasizing the need for enhanced infrastructure, including more certified bowling alleys, and the continued expansion of the player base.

He stressed that achieving these critical objectives will rely heavily on the sustained support and partnership of relevant government authorities and the private sector.

In concluding his remarks, Al Qatabi expressed the Committee's resolute ambition to orchestrate a qualitative transformation for bowling in Oman in the years to come.

He extended a call to clubs and the nation's youth to embrace the sport actively, inviting them to contribute to a new era of achievements that will mirror the broader ascendancy of Omani athletics. — **ONA**

WILAYAT OF BAHLA

Restoration of Al Wadi Al A'la mosque in Bahla completed

BAHLA: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism has completed the restoration works of Al Wadi Al A'la Mosque in the Wilayat of Bahla, the Governorate of Al Dhakhliah.

This effort is part of the Ministry's ongoing initiatives to preserve historical mosques, safeguard their architectural value, and enhance their sustainability as civilisational landmarks of historical importance.

The restoration works began last year, encompassing comprehensive treatment of the

mosque's architectural and structural aspects in accordance with approved technical standards, ensuring the building's safety and continued usability.

Historical landmarks

The implementation of this project falls within the Ministry's plan aimed at rehabilitating and maintaining historical landmarks, contributing to the preservation of the authentic architectural character of historical mosques and strengthening their presence within the urban landscape. — **ONA**



ENVIRONMENT AUTHORITY

Forum on limiting risks of chemicals

IBRA: The Environment Authority's department in North A'Sharqiyah Governorate yesterday organised an event titled "Institutions Forum for Controlling Risks of Chemical Substances". The forum saw the participation of specialists in the field of chemical safety and representatives of authorities concerned.

The forum included the presentation of two working papers. The first dealt with the efforts made by the Environment Authority in regulating and supporting the waste recycling sector.

The second working paper outlined the efforts of the Sultanate

of Oman in achieving sound management of chemicals. It explained that such measures were realised through the promulgation of a national legislation for the management of hazardous chemicals, and the issuance of a safety data card for parties that possess hazardous chemicals and mechanisms for dealing with such substance in a safe manner.

The forum included a panel discussion on major challenges related to the management of chemicals. A number of recommendations were made on ways to enhance chemical safety and institutional integration. — **ONA**

UNO-X MOBILITY

Blikra's big leap on stage four of Tour of Oman

MUSCAT: Norwegian rider Erlend Blikra of Uno-X Mobility delivered an outstanding show to claim a decisive victory on Tuesday in Sohar in the penultimate stage of the 15th edition of the Tour of Oman 2026 which is setting the stage for a thrilling finale as four teams emerge as strong contenders for the overall title.

Blikra powered to victory over the 146.8 km coastal stage which started from Al Sawadi Beach in Wilayat Barka and concluded at the Sohar Corniche. This triumph meant, the overall leadership remained with Swiss rider Mauro Schmid of Team Jayco AlUla, who retained the red jersey. The golden jersey for the most aggressive rider went once again to Poland's Patryk Goszczurny of Team Visma Bike, while the green jersey for the points classification was claimed by French rider Baptiste Veistroffer of Lotto-Intermarché. The white jersey for Best Under-23 Rider was awarded to Norwegian cyclist Martin Tjøtta of Uno-X Mobility.

The Stage Four awards ceremony was held under the patronage of



HE Sheikh Saud bin Mohammed al Hinai, Wali of Sohar. The Tour of Oman is organized by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, in cooperation with the Oman Cycling Association and several government and private entities will conclude on Wednesday.

Speaking after his victory, Blikra expressed pride in his performance. "I feel extremely happy and proud to win such an important stage of Tour of Oman. The competition was intense from the



very first kilometres and the stage required high concentration and tactical discipline. The support of my teammates was decisive in achieving this result." He added

"The Tour of Oman is exceptional in terms of organization, diverse routes, and stunning natural scenery. It provides riders with a true test of both physical and technical readiness. This win gives me extra motivation and we look forward to a strong finish that reflects the teamwork we

have shown throughout the race." He ended

Stage Four featured a fast and tactical coastal route, starting from Al Sawadi Beach, passing through Al Musanna Roundabout, Al Tharmad, Barceló Al Mussanah Resort, Wadam Al Sahil, Suwaiq Fort, and continuing along Sultan Qaboos Road towards Sohar, via Al Khabourah and Saham. The route passed key landmarks in Sohar, including Bahjat Al Anzar Farm and the Sultan Qaboos Mosque, before



turning near the North Al Batinah Governor's Office and concluding at the Sohar Corniche.

Green Mountains stage

All the eyes now turn to Wednesday's fifth and final stage, a 156-kilometre decisive showdown starting from Nizwa Fort and concluding at Jabal Al Akhdar (Green Mountain). The stage will combine speed, tactical intelligence, and endurance, passing historic landmarks and open roads before

the demanding mountain finish determines the champion of the 2026 Tour of Oman.

With margins tight and competition fierce, the final stage represents the last opportunity for teams and riders to reshape the standings and claim overall glory. The complexity of the route, combined with wind conditions, team coordination, and pace control, makes it one of the most decisive and technically demanding stages of the Tour.

BLATANT AGGRESSION

Macron warns Europe faces political and economic crisis



PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron said in remarks published on Tuesday that Europe is facing a serious political and economic crisis.

Speaking to several newspapers ahead of a European Union (EU) leaders meeting on Thursday, the French president said the bloc risks being “swept aside” in the face of competition from the United States and China.

“We have the Chinese tsunami on the trade front, and we have minute-by-minute instability on the American side. These two crises amount to a profound shock, a rupture for Europeans,” he said.

Macron said he would urge EU leaders to seize what he called “the Greenland moment,” a wake-up call about external threats, to finally push through economic reforms and cut reliance on the US and China.

Further tensions with the Trump administration

Macron said the EU should not be lured into a false sense of security because of a lull in tensions with the US after recent clashes over Greenland, technology and trade.

“There are threats and intimidation. And then, suddenly, Washington backs down. And we think it’s

over. But don’t believe it for a second. Every day, there are threats against pharmaceuticals, digital technology...” he said.

He specifically warned of potential US import tariffs from President Donald Trump should the EU use its Digital Services Act to control tech companies.

“When there is blatant aggression... we must not bow down or try to reach a settlement,” he said,

adding “We tried this strategy for months, and it’s not working. But above all, it strategically leads Europe to increase its dependence.”

‘Made in Europe’ strategy

Thursday’s summit will discuss France’s proposal for a “Made in Europe” strategy that would require minimum levels of European-made content in locally produced goods. —**pw**

UNITED STATES

Meta, YouTube on trial over kids’ social media addiction

LOS ANGELES: Several landmark trials in the US this year are seeking to hold social media companies liable for alleged harm to children.

On Monday, Instagram’s owner Meta and Google-owned YouTube went on trial in Los Angeles County Superior Court in one of the first US jury cases accusing the platforms of deliberately designing addictive products that damage young users’ mental health.

TikTok and Snap, which were initially named in the case, settled earlier for undisclosed sums.

The case is being treated as a bellwether that could shape hundreds of similar lawsuits nationwide.



trial which is expected to last several weeks.

Tech companies deny the allegations, citing safeguards for young users. They are also arguing that they are protected from liability under US law.

The verdict could have far-reaching implications for how social media platforms are regulated and designed for children.

Debates rage over restrictions on social media for children

Meanwhile, opening statements began on Monday in a New Mexico trial alleging that Meta failed to protect young users from sexual exploitation.

In June, a bellwether trial will begin in Oakland, California, where school districts are suing social media platforms over the harm they have caused children.

What are Meta, YouTube accused of?

Mark Lanier, the lawyer representing 20-year-old plaintiff identified by her initials “KGM” told jurors the companies “engineered addiction in children’s brains,” citing internal documents and research.

The plaintiff KGM contends that she suffered severe mental harm after she became addicted to social media as a child.

According to Lanier, she began using YouTube at six and Instagram at nine, posting 284 YouTube videos before finishing elementary school.

How did Meta, YouTube defend themselves?

Lawyers for Meta countered that there is no scientific consensus on social media addiction and argued the plaintiff’s mental health struggles stemmed from family issues, emotional abuse, body image issues and bullying, and not platform use.

Jose Castaneda, a YouTube spokesperson, said “the allegations in these complaints are simply not true.”

Executives including Meta head Mark Zuckerberg and Instagram boss Adam Mosseri are expected to testify during the



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Nama Dhofar Services invites the specialized companies to participate and submit their offers for the below said tenders:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Last Date for Collection of Tender Documents	Time & Last Date for Proposal Submission	Tender Fee (OMR) Including VAT (5%)
DISC/2026/014	UTILITY NETWORK EXTENSION – LOT – 01B/2026	25- FEB-2026	03- March-2026	52.500
DISC/2026/016	ENTERPRISE GATEWAY INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE	25- FEB-2026	03- March-2026	52.500
DISC/2025/155-2	RE-TENDER: 11KV & LV NETWORK IMPROVEMENT WORKS (NIW) - 2025 (LOT-11)	25- FEB-2026	03- March-2026	52.500
DISC/2025/156-2	RE-TENDER: 11KV & LV Network Improvement Works (NIW) - 2024 (LOT-15)	25- FEB-2026	03- March-2026	52.500

- To purchase the tender document website via the link or the Barcode below:
https://isupplier.nama.om:4443/OA_HTML/OA.jsp?OAFunc=XXTEN_TENDER_FLOAT_DISC_F
- Every company wishing to participate in this tender must attach with its bid a bid bond in the form of a bank guarantee from one of the banks operating in the Sultanate of Oman. Any bid that does not contain the bid bond will be disqualified.
- The original bid bond must be submitted in an envelope sealed with red wax and addressed to the chairperson of the minor tender committee and written on outside the Tender name and the Tender number and it should be placed in the tender box in Nama Dhofar Services in Salalah before 03:00 pm of the last day for submitting Bids.
- Bids shall be submitted online through using “isupplier portal”. No hard copies are accepted.
- The Tender fees are not refundable. However, Tenderers who are holding “Riyada” card issued from public authority for SME development will be exempted from providing the tender fee and the Bid bond.
- The company is not obliged to accept the lowest or any other bid.
- In the event of receipt of the tender document on behalf of another company, the interested purchasers in the above tender document should provide details of the person’s name and the company details.



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INAUGURATION TODAY LULU HYPERMARKET

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OMAN OIL PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by April 2026 reaching \$68, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by \$1.23 from the price of Monday, which was which was \$66.77. -ONA

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 6,892.43 points, up by 1.94% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 1.44% at 615.61 points. Salalah Mills, up 10.00%, was the top gainer while, Oman Refreshment, down 3.57%, was the top loser.

Hotel revenues for 3-5 star category exceed OMR297mn

Statistical data for the tourism sector in Oman through the end of December 2025 showed a 10.8 percent increase in the number of guests at 3 to 5-star hotels, totalling 2,376,955 guests compared to the same period in 2024

MUSCAT: Revenues for hotels classified within the 3 to 5-star category in the Sultanate of Oman rose by 22.2 percent by the end of December 2025, reaching approximately OMR297,316,000 compared to the same period in 2024. Hotel occupancy rates also increased to 56.7 percent, up from 49.9 percent during the corresponding period in 2024.

Statistical data for the tourism sector in the Sultanate of Oman through the end of December 2025 showed a 10.8 percent increase in the number of guests at 3 to 5-star hotels, totalling 2,376,955 guests compared to the same period in 2024. Data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information indicated that the number of

Omani guests grew by 6.6 percent to reach 857,481, while the number of guests from GCC countries rose by 7.2 percent to 212,798. Conversely, the number of guests from other Arab countries decreased by 1.6 percent to 101,377. The number of hotel guests from the Asian continent recorded an 11 percent growth, reaching 345,526, while guests from the African continent increased by 20.2 percent to 15,321. The number of guests from the European continent rose by 22.3 percent to 659,571, while guests from the American continent saw a 28.6 percent growth to reach 79,420. Additionally, the number of guests from Oceania increased by 25.2 percent to 41,386 by the end of December 2025. These indicators reflect the positive performance of the hotel sector in the Sultanate of Oman, supported by the growth of tourism activity. -ONA



MINOR ACCOUNT

BankDhofar expands financial inclusion with secure savings account for minors

MUSCAT: As part of its ongoing commitment to nurturing a culture of saving among the younger generation, BankDhofar continues to promote financial literacy through its dedicated Minor Account, designed to help minors develop sound money management skills and make informed financial decisions from an early age.

The account encourages healthy saving habits by offering a flexible and secure banking environment that introduces minors to the fundamentals of financial planning, goal-setting, and responsible money management—laying the groundwork for a confident journey toward financial independence.

Tailored specifically to the needs of young customers, parents or legal guardians can open a Minor Account for children aged 13 to 18 with no minimum balance requirement, allowing minors to start saving without financial pressure. It also includes a dedicated ATM card, enabling secure and convenient daily banking transactions such as cash withdrawals and electronic payments, further supporting long-term financial stability and future planning.

Ashraf bin Khalid Al-Batashi, Head of Products, Cards, and Bancassurance at BankDhofar, said:



“In an era marked by rapid economic change and technological advancement, equipping young people with the tools and knowledge to make informed financial decisions has become essential. The Minor Account provides a comprehensive educational experience that instills financial discipline from an early age.”

He added: “At BankDhofar, we aspire to cultivate a financially capable generation empowered with confidence and the skills needed to achieve their ambitions. This account reflects our commitment to supporting minors and enabling them to build a bright and secure future.”

Through this offering, BankDhofar delivers modern banking solutions aligned with the expectations of digitally savvy minors, while also supporting parents in teaching their children the importance of saving and responsible financial management.

STOCK MARKET PERFORMANCE

Trump credits record market, national security gains to ‘great tariffs’

WASHINGTON DC: US President Donald Trump on Sunday claimed credit for the US stock market performance and gains in American national security—calling it driven by tariffs. He also predicted the Dow to touch a record 100,000 by the end of his term.

In a post on Truth Social, the US President said, “Record Stock Market, and National Security, driven by our Great TARIFFS. I am predicting 100,000 on the Dow by the end of my Term. REMEMBER, TRUMP WAS RIGHT ABOUT EVERYTHING! I hope the United States Supreme Court is watching.”

Trump’s remark comes after key US stock market indices—Dow Jones Futures, S&P 500 and Nasdaq showed positive ratings according to CNN Business.

The National Security Strategy Document released in November 2025 called economic security fundamental to national security—with the focus of Washington on balanced trade, trade deals, securing access to critical supply



chains and materials, reindustrialisation and energy dominance.

The document boasted US of world’s leading financial and capital markets, calling them “pillars of American influence that policymakers significant leverage and tools to advance America’s national security priorities.”

Trump’s invocation of Supreme Court comes amid ongoing legal challenges to his tariff policies.

Earlier in January, he addressed them during a campaign-style stop in Clive, Iowa, expressing hope that the Supreme Court

would ultimately rule in favour of his administration, even as lower courts have declared his sweeping tariff regime illegal.

Referring to the pending legal challenge, Trump criticised judicial decisions blocking his tariffs and portrayed them as being favourable to China. “I hope we win the Supreme Court case,” Trump said. “You know, we have people that are China-oriented, people literally that [are] very China-oriented and foreign-country-oriented trying to stop that.”

Trump warned that even an adverse ruling from the Supreme Court would not deter him from pursuing wide-ranging tariffs, insisting his administration would find alternative ways to implement them.

“We’ll get it done. One way or the other, we’re going to do it. If we have to do it a different way, we’ll do it,” he said.

Defending his trade approach, Trump claimed his policies were generating massive revenue for the United States. -ANI

OIA

OMR57.7mn pact to boost food security in Oman

MUSCAT: Oman Food Capital, a subsidiary of Oman Investment Authority (OIA), has signed a strategic partnership with Brazil’s JBS, one of the world’s largest food companies.

The partnership will see JBS operate new facilities in the Sultanate of Oman for the local production of red meat and poultry and establish a regional export hub for global markets, with a total investment of OMR57.7 million (USD 150 million).

This partnership translates the strategy of Oman Investment Authority, which aims to build an integrated national food ecosystem and maximise the benefits of agricultural and food value chains. It also reflects OIA’s direction to attract global partners and transfer advanced knowledge and technologies to the Omani market, thereby enhancing manufacturing industries and increasing the added value of national products.

Under this strategic partnership, JBS will build its largest investment in the Middle East in the meat and poultry sector. This includes completing the construction of the integrated poultry facility of A’Namaa Poultry in the Wilayat of Ibri, in addition to the slaughter and processing facility for beef and mutton belonging to Al Bashayer Meat in the Wilayat of Thumrait.

The total fixed industrial production capacity upon completion is expected to reach approximately 300,000 tonnes annually, comprising 77,000 tonnes of beef, 20,000 tonnes of mutton, and 208,000 tonnes of poultry. This



will contribute to enhancing food security in the Sultanate of Oman and solidify Oman’s position as a platform for producing ready-to-export halal food to regional and global markets.

The partnership is also expected to generate over 3,000 direct jobs in Oman over the next five years across various stages of the production chain, enhancing local economic development, raising workforce efficiency, and supporting the growth of the food and agricultural industries sector in the Sultanate of Oman.

Abdulsalam Mohammed Al Murshidi, Chairman of Oman Investment Authority (OIA) stated that this strategic partnership with a global leader in protein production will transition Oman from a protein-importing country to a protein-exporting one within the next three years.

In a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA), he added that the project will commence actual red meat production this year,

followed by white meat production by the end of the same year. He expects the project to provide around 3,000 job opportunities in both upstream and downstream food industries.

He explained that Oman aims to become a regional hub for “halal” meat, benefiting from the global distribution network of its partner company, which operates in 26 countries and markets its products in 180 countries worldwide. He indicated that the target production capacity exceeds local market needs, opening broad prospects for exporting Omani protein products (white and red meat) to international markets.

For his part, Muneer Ali Al Muneeri, Deputy Chairman of Oman Investment Authority for Operations and Board Chairman of Oman Food Capital, stated that the partnership is a result of the principles established by the Authority to ensure the sustainability and efficiency of its investment assets within the national

development portfolio. This, he said, enables attracting strategic partnerships that add value to the economy, generate new job opportunities, enhance supply chains, contribute to the global spread of products, and embody the priorities of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan within Oman Vision 2040.

Gilberto Tomazoni, Global CEO of JBS Brazil, clarified that having the initial stages of supply chains in the region has become a strategic necessity for the next phase, given the region’s large and growing market. He affirmed that this solid base in Oman will enable the company to access nearby regional markets and enhance its presence in the area.

Meanwhile, Abdullah Mohammed Al Rashdi, CEO of Oman Food Capital, emphasized that the partnership is a pivotal step in the company’s journey towards building an integrated and sustainable food sector based on innovation, international partnerships, and achieving economic and social impact. It also marks a new phase in the journey of Oman’s food sector, establishing an effective model for strategic partnerships capable of transforming investment opportunities into integrated production platforms with tangible economic and social impact, he added.

This strategic partnership marks JBS’s first entry into the initial stages of supply chains in the Middle East region. JBS is a leading global food company with a diversified portfolio of high-quality products including poultry, beef, lamb, fish, and plant-based proteins. -ONA

RECOGNITION

Lulu Hypermarket bags ‘Oman’s Most Trusted Brand 2025’ title

MUSCAT: Lulu Hypermarket became the recipient of the prestigious ‘Oman’s Most Trusted Brand Awards 2025 in the Hypermarkets category for setting a new benchmark in the retail industry. The award is a recognition of Lulu’s unwavering commitment to quality and service excellence and a symbol of consumer confidence and trust.

The ninth edition of the OMTB Award was held on January 21, 2026, at Kempinski Hotel Muscat under the patronage of Pankaj Khimji, Advisor of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion. Also present at the event were Lulu’s senior delegates and executives, as well as top management and business leaders from leading brands across Oman.

Expressing joy over winning the award, Shabeer K.A., Director of Lulu Hypermarkets – Oman, said, “We at Lulu are proud to be recognized as Oman’s Most Trusted Brand in Retail. This recognition is driven by customer trust, and we



extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who voted for us and chose us as the Most Trusted Brand in Oman. The award reflects our commitment to enriching the shopping experience across the Sultanate. By embracing innovation and digital transformation, we continue to make everyday essentials more accessible, convenient, and reliable. Listening closely to our customers, we place their needs at the center of every decision through seamless omni-channel services and enhanced in-store experiences. Our goal is simple: to build lasting

trust and set new standards in retail excellence.”

“Being a customer-centric Group, Lulu promises to be Oman’s most trusted retail destination—delivering value, convenience, and innovation. By placing customers at the center of every experience, we strive to make essentials more accessible, build lasting trust, and set new standards in retail excellence. We are also committed to delivering the best prices and unmatched value, ensuring every household can shop with confidence and convenience,” he added.

MARKET

Bank Muscat takes part in Al Bashayer Festival 2026

Bank Muscat's participation comes as part of its ongoing efforts to support heritage, arts, and sports

MUSCAT: As part of its strategy to promote and preserve Oman's rich cultural, historical, and her-itage identity across all governo-rates, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, participated in supporting the activities and events of the 9th Al Bashayer Camel Racing Festival, held from 2 to 7 February at Al Bashayer Arena in Al Dakhiliyah.

The closing ceremony was held under the patronage of Sheikh AbdulMalik bin Abdullah Al Khallili, Chairman of the State Council, during which the Bank was honoured. The recognition was received on behalf of Bank Muscat by Taya bin EidBait Sa-beea, Deputy General Manager Interior Regions, who accepted the award.

Bank Muscat's participation comes as part of its ongoing ef-forts to support heritage, arts, and sports, in addition to empowering young talents, home-based busi-nesses, and entrepreneurs.

These events provide an im-portant platform to showcase and market local products linked to Omani heritage, such as handi-crafts and traditional foods, thereby contributing to the local economy, enhancing the sustain-ability of cultural heritage, and transforming it into an added economic value.

Commenting on the occasion,



Taya Sabeea said: "We are de-lighted to be part of this national event that celebrates authentic Omani heritage and provides an important platform to support young talents and entrepreneurs. As the nation's leading financial institution, our participation reflects our commitment to sup-porting community events that contribute to the development of governorates, empower youth, and stimulate the local economy. This aligns with Oman Vision 2040 and the Sustainable De-velopment Goals. Such engage-ments also offer a valuable op-portunity to reinforce the Bank's presence within the community and highlight our pioneering role in supporting cultural, sporting, and heritage-related initiatives that strengthen social cohesion and preserve Omani identity."

Bank Muscat remains com-mitted to supporting national events and community-focused initiatives that promote Omani identity and preserve the nation's heritage.

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE													
INDICES													
Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%							
MSX 30 INDEX	6,892.43	6,761.34	6,892.43	6,761.10	131.34	1.94							
FINANCIAL INDEX	11,761.73	11,593.11	11,757.22	11,593.11	164.11	1.42							
Industry Index	9,249.72	9,185.53	9,241.81	9,181.31	60.50	0.66							
Services Index	2,693.99	2,655.02	2,691.08	2,655.02	36.06	1.36							
MSX Shariah Index	615.61	607.17	615.61	606.89	8.72	1.44							
MSX TR INDEX	10,359.71	10,162.66	10,359.71	10,162.31	197.41	1.94							
FINANCIAL TR IDX	13,973.34	13,773.02	13,967.99	13,773.02	194.97	1.42							
INDUSTRIAL TRIDX	11,404.10	11,324.97	11,394.36	11,319.77	74.59	0.66							
SERVICES TR IDX	3,513.16	3,462.34	3,509.37	3,462.34	47.03	1.36							
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,206.85	1,206.85	1,206.85	1,206.85	0.00	0.00							
Trading Summary													
Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded						
226,807,861	58,893,837	7,454	34,924,594,502	36	17	21	74						

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST RD	LAST OFFER	P/B VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET															
SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	55,106,331	11,214,105	1,317	0.198	0.210	0.198	0.210	0.197	0.013	6.599	0.210	0.209	0.210	0.100	1,389,621,717
QO GAS NETWORKS	14,997,290	3,348,823	763	0.219	0.229	0.218	0.229	0.218	0.011	5.046	0.229	0.228	0.233	0.100	991,712,878
ASAFRA FOODS	29,820	21,905	13	0.740	0.740	0.720	0.735	0.700	0.035	5.000	0.735	0.720	0.735	0.100	88,200,000
GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	467,553	128,106	26	0.269	0.280	0.269	0.280	0.270	0.010	3.704	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.100	56,000,000
RENAISSANCE SERVICES	1,887,471	633,743	163	0.332	0.343	0.332	0.342	0.332	0.010	3.012	0.342	0.342	0.342	0.100	80,852,220
OOREDOO	1,006,683	322,666	42	0.318	0.327	0.318	0.326	0.317	0.009	2.839	0.326	0.326	0.335	0.100	212,207,819
BANK MUSCAT	25,872,094	10,353,216	473	0.397	0.403	0.394	0.403	0.396	0.007	1.768	0.403	0.403	0.403	0.100	102,025,016
OMINVEST	286,541	112,005	25	0.390	0.395	0.390	0.395	0.389	0.006	1.542	0.393	0.393	0.394	0.100	369,606,080
ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	2,780,283	1,117,523	302	0.400	0.403	0.399	0.403	0.398	0.005	1.256	0.403	0.403	0.403	0.100	130,390,600
AL ANWAR CERAMIC	175,869	34,778	30	0.198	0.198	0.195	0.198	0.197	0.001	0.508	0.197	0.197	0.197	0.100	43,560,000
JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	3,031	2,628	4	0.966	0.966	0.966	0.966	0.966	0.000	0.000	0.966	0.966	0.966	0.100	120,651,429
ALJAZEERA SERVICES	126,025	25,325	26	0.204	0.204	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.198	0.201	0.100	8,568,598
UNITED FINANCE	1,000,324	91,033	48	0.091	0.092	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.090	0.094	0.100	3,051,457
AL SHARGIYA INVESTMENT HO	191,200	22,865	24	0.120	0.123	0.119	0.120	0.120	0.000	0.000	0.120	0.118	0.120	0.100	10,800,000
VOLTAMP ENERGY	24,100	42,419	11	1.770	1.770	1.760	1.760	1.760	0.000	0.000	1.760	1.727	1.760	0.100	164,753,165
MADINA TAKAFUL	1,388,425	176,218	93	0.128	0.128	0.126	0.128	0.128	0.000	0.000	0.128	0.126	0.128	0.100	22,400,000
OMAN TELECOM	5,062,890	6,064,530	261	1.199	1.201	1.186	1.199	1.200	-0.001	-0.083	1.199	1.199	1.199	0.100	899,250,000
OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	42,081	113,184	23	2.680	2.700	2.680	2.690	2.688	-0.008	-0.297	2.690	2.690	2.698	0.100	241,293,000
ALBATRAH POWER	109,606	18,443	25	0.169	0.169	0.168	0.168	0.169	-0.001	-0.592	0.168	0.168	0.168	0.100	113,381,088
AL SUWADI POWER	105,552	17,773	23	0.169	0.169	0.168	0.168	0.169	-0.001	-0.592	0.168	0.168	0.168	0.100	120,020,265
BANK NIZWA	963,936	126,318	69	0.131	0.132	0.130	0.130	0.131	-0.001	-0.763	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.100	280,803,894
NATIONAL BANK OMAN	508,110	201,546	219	0.397	0.397	0.396	0.396	0.400	-0.004	-1.000	0.396	0.396	0.398	0.100	643,874,757
OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	79,520	31,856	6	0.404	0.404	0.400	0.400	0.405	-0.005	-1.235	0.400	0.400	0.400	0.100	40,000,000
Total	112,223,715	34,203,289	3,886												

Parallel Market

OM0000001889	SALALAH MILLS	23,752	10,594	13	0.442	0.495	0.442	0.485	0.450	0.045	10.000	0.495	0.450	0.470	0.100	30,919,217
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FINANCIAL SERVICES	481,708	82,604	40	0.165	0.179	0.165	0.179	0.163	0.016	9.816	0.179	0.178	0.179	0.100	56,459,644
OM0000001384	FINANCIAL SERVICES	146,973	11,669	12	0.075	0.082	0.075	0.082	0.075	0.007	9.333	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.100	1,640,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	3,651,494	296,419	154	0.078	0.083	0.077	0.081	0.078	0.003	3.846	0.081	0.081	0.082	0.100	24,878,852
OM00000010120	ASTAD SHIPPING	15,928,533	3,288,468	535	0.203	0.209	0.202	0.209	0.202	0.007	3.465	0.209	0.209	0.210	0.000	1,088,627,555
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	31,489	6,291	11	0.198	0.205	0.198	0.205	0.200	0.005	2.500	0.205	0.200	0.220	0.100	121,244,560
OM0000009908	QO BASE INDUSTRIES (SF2)	53,816,139	11,005,834	1,434	0.202	0.207	0.202	0.207	0.202	0.005	2.475	0.207	0.207	0.207	0.040	716,114,606
OM0000009569	JARAL REIF	11,220,975	1,122,332	18	0.102	0.103	0.100	0.103	0.101	0.002	1.980	0.103	0.097	0.103	0.100	17,922,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENG & INVESTMENT	224,256	35,793	31	0.158	0.162	0.156	0.160	0.157	0.003	1.911	0.161	0.161	0.161	0.100	24,000,000
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	59,875	13,163	9	0.215	0.221	0.215	0.219	0.215	0.004	1.860	0.219	0.219	0.221	0.100	133,179,712
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	132,460	28,966	17	0.221	0.221	0.218	0.220	0.217	0.003	1.382	0.220	0.215	0.220	0.100	43,919,832
OM0000002287	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	90,253	36,889	50	0.404	0.410	0.404	0.409	0.404	0.005	1.238	0.409	0.400	0.409	0.100	18,718,211
OM0000005290	OMAN ARAB BANK	67,928	12,010	3	0.176	0.177	0.176	0.177	0.175	0.002	1.143	0.177	0.170	0.179	0.100	354,485,570
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	300	247	2	0.825	0.825	0.824	0.824	0.815	0.009	1.104	0.824	0.800	0.822	0.100	78,280,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	510,942	48,551	44	0.092	0.097	0.092	0.095	0.094	0.001	1.964	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.100	8,075,000
OM0000000549	BANK DHOFAR	615,422	116,844	291	0.188	0.192	0.188	0.190	0.188	0.002	1.964	0.190	0.190	0.191	0.100	577,561,721
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	550,262	105,130	15	0.190	0.192	0.190	0.192	0.190	0.002	1.053	0.192	0.191	0.192	0.100	519,705,662
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	4,000	512	1	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.127	0.001	0.787	0.128	0.122	0.128	0.100	12,672,000
OM0000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	268,490	34,365	8	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.127	0.001	0.787	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.100	35,740,571
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	3,500	1,134	3	0.324	0.324	0.324	0.324	0.322	0.002	0.621	0.324	0.322	0.324	0.100	22,906,360
OM0000002036	MUSCAT THREAD MILLS	65,222	14,150	17	0.217	0.219	0.216	0.217	0.216	0.001	0.463	0.217	0.216	0.217	0.100	3,824,335
OM0000009759	QO EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	16,211,088	6,734,909	246	0.415	0.417	0.414	0.416	0.415	0.001	0.241	0.416	0.416	0.416	0.010	328,000,000
OM0000001095	DHOFAIR INSURANCE	2,000	502	2	0.251	0.251	0.251	0.251	0.251	0.000	0.000	0.251	0.251	0.275	0.100	29,204,098
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	5,500	743	1	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.000	0.000	0.135	0.132	0.135	0.100	4,050,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	1,280	610	2	0.484	0.484	0.484	0.484	0.484	0.000	0.000	0.484	0.487	0.484	0.100	80,041,500



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DOCUMENT CONTROLLER

Experienced document controller seeking immediate placement in Oman. QA/QC, project coordination, skilled in EDMS, sharepoint, Aconex, and administrative support.

Contact: +971 585841339
Email: bajifazil@gmail.com

SALES & MARKETING

Seeking a suitable position in Sales & Marketing having 16 yrs of rich experience in Oman and 2 yrs in Africa in the field of Infrastructure, Construction, Building material and Industrial products having good contacts with clients /consultants. BE Mechanical Engineering, PGDM in Management. Holding Valid Omani D/L.

Contact: 94976056

MANAGER

Project Manager-MEP / Coordinator, seeking suitable placement. Electrical Engineering background having 25 yrs experience (Oman 18 yrs) in the construction field and tender estimation.

Mobile : 97007489

DOCTOR

Indian female BDS Doctor, with 2 years experience in Insurance pre-authorization and medical approvals seeking suitable placement.

Contact : 97607069
Email : carolinelizabethjohn@gmail.com

MEDICAL

Pharmacist with 16 yrs exp. in retail & hospital pharmacy in Muscat & India. Previously registered with MOH, Oman with work License, NOC with D/L, currently in Muscat

Contact: 77336141
Email: confession.mercy@gmail.com

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What's app: 0096895392251
Gmail: regil.lukose@gmail.com

BUSINESS HEAD

Accomplished Indian management professional (Engg+MBA). Extensive Marketing & Sales experience in consumer durables industry. Well networked with all channels /corporates of Oman seeking senior management opportunities.

Contact No.: 7708 8859

OFFICER

Banking - Credit & Risk

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Senior Management Accountant/ Finance Manager

Indian male, MBA Finance, 20+ yrs Gulf experience in Accounting, Auditing, Oman VAT, Tax Assessment. Valid Oman Driving License. Available immediately.

Contact: 96987261 (Oman), +917418469385 (India)
Email: nrajan19742003@gmail.com

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Email: gm.seekers.2025@gmail.com

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JOB VACANCY

ENGINEER

Urgently required for a leading engineering consultancy firm resident civil engineers having min. 5 yrs experience in Gulf/ Oman.email CV to info@abdullamukadam.com

JOB WANTED

ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

Cost Accountant, B.Com with 15 yrs exp in Oman. Can join urgently, Contact: 7733 6141

Indian (M), 28, Accountant with overall exp. 3 yrs valid D/L. Contact: 78624277

Indian male Accountant. 10 yrs in muscat. D/L and NOC available. 79774800

Sri Lankan Accountant, reading CA. 3+ yrs of experience. Expertise in accounting, audit, bookkeeping, VAT, finalization. Contact: +968 76297279

Indian male, M.com (finance) 12 years accounting and office administration experience in Oman,looking for suitable position. NOC & D/L available Contact: 99859141,

Finance Manager, Indian, 26Yrs of experience, looking Job Change, Contact:- 98006226

M.com with 4 yrs of experience in the Accounting, admin executive. Seeks suitable job. Presently in Oman & can join immediately. Available Omani D/L. Contact: +96878585714 Email: sifath774@gmail.com

Indian male, 26yrs, Accounts executive with 4yrs experience in accounts, receivable, payable. Contact: 79580859 Email : jawad1724khan@gmail.com

Bachelor's of Business management (B.B.M) cashier,sales, marketing, business developer. Contact: 79720951

JOB WANTED

ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

Accountant, Indian male, having M.Com (Finance) total 10 yrs of GCC experience, ready to join immediately , Contact 99447957 Email ID tanveer ahmedgd@gmail.com

Looking for an accounts job with hands-on knowledge of tally and excel. dedicated and detail-oriented.Contact +96896246456

Indian male Sr. Accountant (M.com with Finance) 17+ yrs exp. in Oman with valid D/L. Contact: 91314540

Seeking a job opportunity with solid background of finance and accounts for more than 20 yrs of experience in Oman.Contact 92824146 / 94953826

Management, accounting operations & MIS reporting. Seeking a suitable managerial or senior accounting position. Contact: 78581435

Indian male, Bcom, MBA finance, 14 yrs of Oman and Indian experience, seeking suitable jobs in accounts. Have valid Oman D/L. Contact:97436925. Email : sandeep_as@yahoo.com

B.Com, CA Articleship completed 28yrs experience in Muscat Oman. Expert in book keeping, vendor & bank reconciliation, seeking job. Contact : 99072361

Accountant looking for job. Contact: 75024166

Highly skilled chief accountant looking for suitable position. Contact: 79888153

Indian male, MBA, 17 years experienced in key accounts, project sales, business development looking for suitable opportunities. Contact: 92790532

MBA Finance Senior accountant, 13-yrs GCC experience looking for a job upto finalization. Contact: 98869499

ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

Accountant available immediate joiner, Indian male, B.Com, 10+ yrs exp (4 yrs Oman) Expert in Tally & Accounts Contact: 91417133

Indian male MBA, Senior accountant, admin having 10 yrs experience. Contact: 95416322, Email: aabynarayan@gmail.com

ADMINISTRATION

Experienced insurance operations 6 yrs specialist with strengths in policy support, documentation, underwriting and claim management. Contact:95202160

Indian (M) 29 yrs, MBA graduate with 4 yrs experience in operations, stores management, office administration, yard management, accounts, finance, and graphic designing. Looking for suitable job. Contact: 78439875

Indian female, M.Sc. (Computer Science), overall 13+ yrs of experience in different administrative as well as project roles looking for suitable placement. Contact: 79166904/97498882

ARCHITECT

Architect, Interior Designer having more than 8+ yrs of experience with design and engineering consultants. Contact: 95759832, Email: ar.ahmedfaizal@gmail.com

IT

IT Support Engineer with more than 10 years of Oman experience looking for IT related jobs,holds valid Oman driving license. Mobile number:91640716.

MCA graduate seeking a suitable job opportunity in Oman. Available in Muscat. Contact: 91488059

ENGINEER

Civil foreman Indian 14 yrs experience valid Oman D/L seeks job Contact :94255966

Diploma in Electrical Engineering looking for Fire Fighting site supervisor/suitable job. Contact: 95933453, Email: haquefaizan3786@gmail.com

Experienced Biomedical Engineer seeking opportunities in Oman. Presently in Oman & available for immediate joining. Email: asmathalipvi@gmail.com Contact: +968 72031225

ENGINEER

Project Manager (Civil) Indian, 18 yr GCC experience, valid D/L and transferable visa, can join immediately. Contact: 97723786

Project Manager Civil seasoned professional with strong consultancy and construction expertise. Open for suitable opportunities. Contact: 93455363 | WA +966 56 373 2589 (WhatsApp)

Female software Engineer full stack developer also expert in digital marketing with 7 yrs experience. Contact 74102443

BE Civil Engr. Indian male, 11yrs experience in Oman D/L seeks placement. Contact: 93867573, Email: pineasdhas@gmail.com

Btech Civil Engineer Indian female, looking for job. experience in AutoCad & quantity measurements. Contact: 90109372/91358740, email:anuvikraman9812@gmail.com

Indian male, B.E mechanical with 4+ yrs automotive CFD experience (underhood thermal, ANSA), senior CFD engineer at Alten India. immediate joiner. Contact: 9080451226 | +96896008574 | maheshbabuv1799@gmail.com

ENGINEER

Software Engineer / full-stack developer B.Tech computer science with experience at Google strong in Python, Java, Go, Cloud & AI systems. Contact: +968 91950661 | anaswer.impulse@gmail.com

DRIVER

Qualified pickup light driver available, valid PDO documents available, speaks English and Hindi, Contact 97681676

DRIVER

Looking for driver job. Contact: 72852929.

Looking for driver job experience 4 yrs Contact 94981482/ 76303505

LOGISTICS

PDO-approved professional with 25+ yrs in oil & gas/ manufacturing, seeking senior leadership in procurement, logistics, or contracts. Contact: "79011679"

Indian male Graduate with 25 yrs of proven experience in Car rental, fleet Management & logistics. Currently seeking for Senior/ middle management position. Contact: 92152334.

Logistics Operations executive with 8 yrs experience, seeking a suitable position in Oman, Contact: 97869393

MANAGER

Finance manager, Indian 26 yrs of experience, looking Job Change, Contact:- 98006226

Accounting manager, Indian (M), 43 yrs, 18+ yrs in Oman, D/L & NOC. Contact: 76432203

Indian male, MBA 12 yrs of experience as (branch manager & key accounts executive) looking for suitable position. Contact: 98132055

PURCHASE/ PROCUREMENT

Indian male procurement executive with 11 yrs of experience in Oman, holding Oman D/L available in Muscat for immediate joining. Contact: 92345877

PURCHASE/ PROCUREMENT

Procurement engineer 19 yrs experience construction and trading. whatsapp:+96895839964

SALES/MARKETING

28 years of experience in sales & marketing in Oman within the consumer durables and FMCG. Indian MBA. seeking a senior managerial position. Contact: 93340457

Indian male, 15+ yrs Sales exp. (IT/Software). Open to Sales/BD roles in any industry. Valid Oman D/L. Contact: 94110178

Indian, MBA, 20yrs of experience in Sales(FMCG/retail) with D/L seeks suitable placement. Contact: 95548480

Indian male, 08 yrs experience having Oman D/L looking for suitable placement in Sales and Marketing. Contact: 94566786

27 yrs Indian male holding MBA (UK) looking for Job in sales & marketing, Mob:77198066

Indian male 15 yrs experience having Oman D/L Looking for suitable placement in sales & marketing- Contact - 9169 3829

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TO SUPPORT UKRAINE

Japan mulls joining NATO initiative

TOKYO: Japan is considering closer cooperation with NATO to support Ukraine by providing essential non-lethal defence equipment, according to a report by Japan's public broadcaster NHK.

Several NATO officials told NHK that Tokyo is expected to formally announce its participation in the alliance's Ukraine support framework in the near future, marking another step in Japan's growing security engagement with Europe.

The move comes amid continued international efforts to sustain Ukraine's defence against Russia, more than three years after Moscow launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022. The war itself has its roots in long-standing tensions between the two countries, dating back to Ukraine's independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Relations deteriorated sharply after Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its backing of separatists in eastern Ukraine. These events culminated in the 2022 invasion, which Russia described as a "special military operation" but which Ukraine and its allies condemned as a violation of international law.

In July 2025, NATO and the United States established a new mechanism to coordinate the purchase and delivery of US-manufactured munitions and military equipment to Ukraine. — **ANI**

‘BRICS crucial for building greater Eurasian partnership’

In an interview with TV BRICS, the Russian Foreign Minister noted that assessing the outcomes of Russia's foreign policy is ultimately the responsibility of the country's leadership

MOSCOW: Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov outlined the growing importance of the BRICS forum in global affairs as well as the bloc's future direction and the priorities expected from the grouping under India's Chairmanship for 2026.

In an interview with TV BRICS, the Russian Foreign Minister noted that assessing the outcomes of Russia's foreign policy is ultimately



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Special focus is placed on regional frameworks, including the CIS, the Eurasian Economic Union, the CSTO, and the broader post-Soviet region

Sergey Lavrov
Russia's Foreign Minister

mately the responsibility of the country's leadership, particularly the Russian President, who determines strategic priorities under the Constitution.

The current Foreign Policy Concept, adopted in March 2023, reflects deep and lasting global shifts that continue to shape Russia's diplomatic and economic engagement, as reported by TV

BRICS.

He explained that Russia works closely with partner nations through concrete agreements reached at the highest political levels. These include expanding trade and investment, strengthening scientific cooperation, and coordinating positions in international institutions such as the United Nations. Special focus is

placed on regional frameworks, including the CIS, the Eurasian Economic Union, the CSTO, and the broader post-Soviet region.

Such long-term, systematic collaboration is designed to ensure practical and shared benefits, TV BRICS reported.

The minister emphasised that the world is undergoing a decisive transition toward multipolarity.

Unlike the Cold War's bipolar structure or the brief period of Western-led unipolar dominance, today's international system is marked by several emerging centres of influence.

Countries such as China, India, and Brazil are gaining prominence, while African states are increasingly working to retain control over their resources and industrial development. These developments are reshaping global power, finance, and politics amid heightened competition.

He argued that Western nations are reluctant to surrender their former dominance, often resorting to restrictive measures to contain rivals. Under the Trump administration, such policies became more explicit, including sanctions targeting Russian energy companies and efforts to limit Moscow's trade and defence ties with partners such as India and other BRICS members.

Lavrov highlighted India's focus on food and energy security, as well as digital and ICT safeguards. He welcomed India's initiative to host an upcoming artificial intelligence summit, emphasising the need to establish international norms for AI, particularly in security and military contexts. While transparency is necessary, BRICS nations will resist any curbs on their sovereignty. — **ANI**

HIGH-LEVEL TALKS



Uzbekistan and Pakistan boost bilateral relations

ISLAMABAD: The state visit by Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Pakistan marks a pivotal moment, elevating bilateral relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership.

Packed with high-level talks, massive investment pledges, and over 30 agreements, the trip signals a new era of connectivity between Central and South Asia amid global challenges like supply chain disruptions and geopolitical tensions.

The visit kicked off with the inaugural session of the High-Level Strategic Partnership Council, launched during Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's 2025 trip to Uzbekistan, First Deputy Director, and Institute for Strategic and Interregional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Akramjon Ne'matov said in an article published by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Islamabad.

President Mirziyoyev held key meetings with President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir, underscoring deep political trust on security, trade, and regional stability.

Economic boom

As the economic boom takes Centre stage, trade between the nations skyrocketed from \$30 million in 2017 to nearly \$500 million by 2025, a 15-fold increase.

The leaders set a bold target of \$2 billion in bilateral trade, backed by a five-year roadmap and a joint working group.

New trade preferences cover over 40 product categories each way, plus expanded phytosanitary permits, diversifying exports in textiles, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and more.

Pakistani investments in Uzbekistan hit \$70 million in 2025 alone, up from \$33 million in 2024, fueling 230 joint ventures in sectors like textiles, pharma, and banking.

A business forum, co-chaired by Mirziyoyev and Sharif, unveiled a \$3.5 billion project

portfolio.

Meetings with giants like Engro Group, Gohar Textile, and HRL Group promised tech transfers and market access.

To lock it in, the Uzbekistan-Pakistan Business Council was established.

With connectivity and infrastructure leap forward, transport topped the agenda, with major progress on the Trans-Afghan railway.

This corridor could slash Uzbekistan-Pakistan cargo times from 35 days to 3-5 days, cut costs by 30-40%, and handle 3 million tons annually at launch, scaling to 15-20 million.

Multimodal routes like Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan-China-Pakistan and new direct flights to Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi round out the push.

Industrial ties expand in textiles, pharma, and digital tech, including Information Technology (IT) clusters and Artificial Intelligence (AI) exchanges.

Cultural bonds shine too, Pakistani students in Uzbekistan rose to 1,600 by 2025, tourists hit 10,000 (up 2.5x since 2023), and plans include Uzbek Culture Weeks, cinema days, and a Lahore cultural centre honouring the Baburids.

From regions to Think Tanks, agreements span 30 major areas, from security to ecology.

New regional forums link Termez-Peshawar and Samarkand-Islamabad; universities like Tashkent State Oriental Studies and Peshawar partner up. An Uzbek-Pakistani Expert Council will guide policy.

President of Uzbekistan Mirziyoyev received Pakistan's top honour, Nishan-e-Pakistan, plus honorary degrees from the National University of Sciences and Technology.

Symbolic nods include Tashkent Street and Babur Park in Islamabad.

This visit doesn't just deepen ties but it positions Uzbek-Pakistani cooperation as a stability anchor for the macro-region, driving jobs, growth, and resilience. — **AFP**

PM SECRETARIAT

Nepal interim Prime Minister thanks India for March election support

KATHMANDU: Nepal's interim Prime Minister Sushila Karki invited Indian Ambassador Naveen Srivastava for a meeting at Singha Durbar and thanked India for providing technical support and materials to ensure the smooth conduct of the March parliamentary elections.

The PM Secretariat stated, "Prime Minister Sushila Karki has thanked neighbouring and friendly country India for its support for the elections. Prime Minister Karki called Indian Ambassador to Nepal Naveen Srivastava at Singha Durbar and thanked him for providing various materials, including vehicles, to conduct the elections smoothly in the country's special situation."

In response, the Indian Ambassador expressed commitment to Nepal's democratic journey. The PM Secretariat further stated, "In response, Indian Ambassador Srivastava said that it is his duty to always support Nepal's democratic process and provide support as a friendly neighbour. He also said that the democratic and constitutional stability that Nepal achieves after the elections will be important for India as well."

Amid these bilateral exchanges highlighting India's support for Nepal's electoral process, the Election Commission of Nepal on



Monday began dispatching ballot boxes to remote districts as the nation prepares for the parliamentary elections next month.

At the Election Commission's head office in Kathmandu, ballot boxes are being piled up, counted, and dispatched to various districts to ensure smooth polling.

As the Himalayan nation gears up for the elections, the electoral body has also expedited the printing of ballot papers.

Over 10.9 million ballot papers have been printed so far for the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) category of Nepal's House of Representatives.

Kul Bahadur GC, Assistant Spokesperson at the Election Commission, told ANI over the phone that printing of more than 10.9 million (10,963,000) ballot papers has been completed for 88 constituencies across 37 districts so far.

"Altogether, 20.32 million (20,323,000) ballot papers are required for the House of Representatives' FPTP category for all 165 constituencies across the country," GC said.

"We have also completed packing of printed ballot papers for 37 districts," he added.

These districts include Dolpa, Mugu, Jumla, Kalikot, Humla, Jajarkot, Dailekh, Rukum (Paschim), Salyan and Surkhet. Printing has also been completed for Bajura, Achham, Bajhang, Doti, Dadeldhura, Darchula, Baitadi, Kailali and Kanchanpur.

Furthermore, printing and packing have been completed for Panchthar, Ilam, Tehrathum, Bhojpur, Okhaldhunga, Sunsari, Taplejung, Sankhuwasabha, Solukhumbu, Khotang, and Dhankuta.

The remaining districts for which ballot papers have been printed and packed include Ba-

glung, Gulmi, Jhapa, Gorkha, Myagdi, Parbat, Bardaghat, Susta Paschim, and Nawalparasi.

According to the Election Commission, printing of ballot papers for constituencies in the remaining districts is currently underway at the Janak Education Materials Centre in Sano Thimi, Bhaktapur.

Ballot papers for both the Proportional Representation (PR) and FPTP categories are being printed at the state-owned printing entity.

Printing of ballot papers under the FPTP electoral system began on January 6. More than one million sample ballot papers were printed and dispatched to various districts in the first phase, the EC said.

Printing under the PR system began on January 10, and by January 27, more than 20.83 million ballot papers had been printed, verified, and prepared for dispatch, the EC reported. — **ANI**

AFGHANISTAN

World Bank-funded water networks launched in drought-hit Ghazni to benefit 1,000 families

GHAZNI: Construction has started on three clean drinking water supply networks in Ghazni province with funding from the World Bank, according to Tolo News.

The initiatives are underway in the Ab Band, Khogyani and Zankhan districts at a total cost of 20 million Afghanis. Upon completion, the projects are expected to provide clean drinking water to approximately 1,000 families in the region. Saeed-ur-Rahman Saeed, head of project implementation at the Ghazni Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, said, "The construction of three water supply networks has been launched in the Khogyani, Ab Band and Zankhan districts of Ghazni. The cost of these projects is 20 million Afghanis, and 1,000 families will benefit from them."

Local residents have described severe challenges in accessing drinking water following prolonged droughts, which have caused many wells to dry up. They



expressed appreciation for the new projects and urged continued support for similar efforts.

Ezatullah, a resident of Ab Band district in Ghazni, said, "Out of 300 households in our village, 90 per cent have no water, and the remaining 10 per cent bring water by car and motorcycle from distant areas."

Another resident of Ab Band, Mohammad Dawood, said, "We are facing severe water shortages. When someone starts a pump to draw water from a borewell, everyone gathers around that single well. We are very grateful that our water problem is being addressed."

Tolo News reported that, according to the Ghazni Department

of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, 10 clean drinking water supply networks have already been completed across various districts of the province this year with World Bank assistance, at a cost exceeding 55 million Afghanis.

These schemes have delivered clean water to nearly 4,000 families. — **ANI**

‘The start hurt us’: Sufyan laments Oman’s early collapse

Zimbabwe’s pacers, Muzarabani, Ngarava and Brad Evans, shared 9 wickets for just 51 runs

ASHOK PUROHIT

COLOMBO: In cricket, as in life, beginnings often decide outcomes, and on Monday Zimbabwe ensured theirs was decisive in their Group B clash of the ICC T20 World Cup. Oman, on the receiving end of early and telling blows from the pacers, were unable to recover from a top-order collapse and slipped to a heavy eight-wicket defeat at the Sinhalese Sports Club (SSC) in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Struck early by Zimbabwe’s tall seamers, Oman found themselves chasing the contest almost immediately, a position from which they never truly emerged as they slid to 17 for 4 and were bowled out for 103.

All-rounder Sufyan Mehmood, one of the few Oman players to impress on the day, admitted the damage done at the top proved fatal.

“We could not recover from the early fall of our top four batters,” he said, pinpointing the phase that defined the contest.

“The tall pacers from Zimbabwe exploited the conditions very well as the pitch provided extra bounce.”

Bowled out in 19.5 overs, Oman were left defending a total that offered little room for error.

“It was a small target to defend,” Sufyan said. “Had we got around 140–150, we could have taken the game close.”

He added that the surface behaved differently from what the side had encountered in their preparations.

“The wicket here at the SSC provided extra bounce and both Blessing Muzarabani and Richard Ngarava used their height effectively to get our batters in trouble inside the powerplay.”

For the record, Zimbabwe’s three tall pacers, Muzarabani, Ngarava and Brad Evans, shared nine wickets for just 51 runs.

Despite the scale of the defeat, Sufyan struck a defiant tone, insisting Oman would approach the remainder of the tournament with belief rather than regret. “We are



positive despite the defeat as we have nothing to lose in the upcoming games. We will fight.”

Skipper Jatinder rues batting failure

Oman captain Jatinder Singh echoed the sentiment that his side’s troubles stemmed squarely from their batting. “We were asked to bat first, and I don’t think we put enough runs on the board. It’s too much to ask the bowlers to defend 104; as a batting unit, we simply didn’t click.”

While acknowledging the challenges posed by the surface, Jatinder was clear that conditions alone could not explain the result.

“The bounce on this particular pitch was a bit more than we ex-

perienced in the practice matches. You need around 160 or 170 to give your bowlers a total they can actually fight with.”

Still, the Oman skipper drew encouragement from individual performances and the team’s overall effort in the field. “Sufyan Mehmood bowled really well, as did Faisal Shah. Our fielding was also quite good, so we can carry those things forward.”

In the immediate aftermath of the defeat, Jatinder said the message in the dressing room was one of resilience rather than despair.

“I told them not to let their heads drop. It’s only the start of the tournament. You have to keep believing because miracles can happen. We are the ones who have to make the

difference; we have to be warriors out there.”

From the other side, Zimbabwe captain Sikandar Raza was satisfied with how decisively his team seized the initiative. “I thought we bowled exceptionally well. We read the pitch correctly and executed our plans perfectly. This was about as clinical as we can be.”

Despite the extra bounce, Oman head coach Duleep Mendis was critical of his batters’ selection of shots. “There were plenty of bad shots from our players. We were bounced out.”

Raza revealed that the extra bounce came as no surprise. “We watched the previous game closely. I looked at the history of this ground and the role the grass

plays. I knew that with our three tall bowlers, we would find bounce regardless.”

Managing his pace resources, particularly with Blessing Muzarabani returning from a back injury, was also part of Zimbabwe’s planning. “I wanted him to bowl three in the powerplay, but I also wanted to keep an over in reserve for the death just in case.”

Summing up his side’s effort, Raza praised the bowlers’ response whenever pressure was applied. “Every time I asked the boys to step up, they delivered, whether by taking a wicket or keeping things tight.”

For Oman, the lesson from their opening night was stark: the match was lost in the opening exchanges. With the tournament still young, correcting those early-innings lapses will be crucial if they are to keep their campaign alive.

Oman next play hosts Sri Lanka on February 12 at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Kandy, a good two and half hours drive from Colombo. On Tuesday, the team travelled to Kandy in the morning for a training session. The match on Thursday begins at 11am local time (9.30am, Oman time).

Oman then face Ireland at the SSC on February 14 before concluding their Group B engagements against former world champions Australia in Kandy on February 20.

MEN IN BLUE

Team India demands family to travel along with them during T20 World Cup, BCCI denies: Sources

NEW DELHI: The defending champions India are co-hosting the ongoing ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2026 with Sri Lanka and according to sources, the Suryakumar Yadav-led Indian T20 side has demanded that their family should be allowed to travel along with them throughout the tournament.

According to the sources, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has declined the demand but the official confirmation is yet to come from the Indian board.

Last year, the BCCI introduced a revised travel policy after the Indian team’s 1-3 defeat in Australia at the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, capping family members’ stay to two weeks’ maximum for tours longer than 45 days. For shorter tours, the duration was restricted to seven days.

Head coach Gautam Gambhir had also backed the BCCI’s directive to limit the presence of cricketers’ families during long overseas tours, saying players must realise they are not on vacation but on national duty.

“Families’ roles are important, but you’ve got to understand one thing. You are here for a purpose. It’s not a holiday. You’re here for a huge purpose. You’ve got very few people in that dressing room or in this tour who get this opportunity to make the country proud,” Gambhir had said in July, 2025.

In their first Group A fixture, Indian team defeated USA by 29 runs



where the skipper Suryakumar Yadav played a match-winning knock of unbeaten 84 runs off just 49 balls.

Now, the Men in Blue are in Delhi for their next clash against Namibia on February 12. They are then scheduled to play the much-anticipated World Cup match against Pakistan in Colombo on February 15, before travelling to Ahmedabad for their final group-stage clash against the Netherlands on February 18.

Ahead of their first match, Team India also played a warm-up fixture against South Africa at DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai. The T20 World Cup 2026 co-hosts defeated the Proteas by 30 runs after scoring 240 in the first innings.

Team India’s World Cup squad: Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, Sanju Samson, Shivam Dube, Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Varun Chakravathy, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Rinku Singh. **ANI**

T20 WORLD CUP 2026

Bas de Leede’s all-round heroics guide Netherlands to 7-wicket win over Namibia

NEW DELHI: Bas de Leede’s all-round heroics guided Netherlands to a convincing seven-wicket victory over Namibia in the 10th match of the ongoing ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2026, at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi on Tuesday.

Following a narrow opening-match defeat to Pakistan, the Netherlands reignited their T20 World Cup campaign with a dominant win over Namibia. Bas de Leede was the architect of the win, emerging as the most valuable player with both bat and ball for Netherlands.

He dismantled Namibia with the ball (2/20 in 3 overs) before steering a clinical run-chase with a brilliant unbeaten 72-run knock off 48 balls, including five boundaries and four sixes.

Opting to field first, the Dutch bowlers found immediate success as Aryan Dutt (1/13 in 3 overs) removed Namibia opener Louren Steenkamp early. Namibia struggled to find momentum in the Powerplay, reaching just 40/1 after 6 overs. Jan Nicol Loftie-Eaton (42 off 38) and Jan Frylinck (30 off 26) attempted to anchor the innings, but the Netherlands’ disciplined bowling kept the run rate in check.

The middle overs belonged to Bas de Leede and Logan van Beek (2/13 in 3 overs), who shared four wickets between them. De Leede accounted for the dangerous Gerhard Erasmus and JJ Smit. Namibia eventually finished on a competitive but below-par 156/8 in 20 overs.

The Dutch chase began with intent, despite losing Max O’Dowd



early to Bernard Scholtz. Michael Levitt (28 off 15) provided a quick burst before falling, leaving the Netherlands at 50/2 in the six overs.

From there, it was the Bas de Leede show.

Partnering with Colin Ackermann (32 off 28), De Leede anchored the innings with poise before shifting gears. He reached his fifty in just 38 balls.

Earlier, the UAE captain Muhammad Waseem won the toss and elected to bat first. Playing their first match of the World Cup, the UAE put up a spirited show with the bat, finishing at 173/6.

Despite losing Aryanash Sharma early, UAE motored to 50/1 in powerplay as captain Waseem and Alishan Sharafu relieved the pressure with some big hits.

They put on 107, which is the second-highest second-wicket partnership for the UAE in T20Is. The Kerala-born Sharafu scored 55 off just 47 balls, with the help of five fours and two sixes. New Zealand

pegged them back with two quick wickets. Captain Mitchell Santner dismissed Sharafu while Glenn Phillips sent back Harshit Kaushik within the space of 10 balls and five runs, reducing UAE to 124/3.

Despite the setback, Waseem continued to plunder runs. The UAE captain carried the bat through for an unbeaten 66 off 45 balls, slamming four fours and three sixes during the innings. Mayank Kumar also chipped in with a cameo of 21. Matt Henry snapped two wickets off the last two balls of the innings, while Jacob Duffy, Santner, Lockie Ferguson and Phillips claimed a wicket apiece.

Now, New Zealand will take on South Africa in their next Group D fixture at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on February 14. The UAE, on the other hand, will clash with Canada at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi on February 13. **ANI**

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MITCHELL SANTNER-LED SIDE



New Zealand thrash UAE by 10 wickets

CHENNAI: New Zealand dominated the United Arab Emirates in match 11 of the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2026 held at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Tuesday.

The Mitchell Santner-led side thumped the UAE by 10 wickets after successfully chasing a challenging target of 174 runs with 28 balls to spare. Tim Seifert (89 not out off 42 balls) and Finn Allen (84 not out off 50 balls) remained unbeaten and took the Blackcaps past the target in just 15.2 overs. They are unbeaten in this World Cup with two wins in as many matches.

While chasing the target, Allen hit five fours and as many sixes, whereas Seifert hit 12 fours and three sixes. The duo added 175 runs for the first wicket, which is also the highest partnership for any wicket in T20 World Cups.

Unbeaten in Chennai in any format since 2011, New Zealand flexed

their muscle in the chase. They hit fifth gear in the second over, and kept up the tempo almost all through. With Seifert and Allen in a punishing mood, New Zealand put on 78/0 in the first six overs, including 20 in the sixth over. It was just the start the Kiwis needed to thwart any hopes of an upset for the UAE.

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SPORTS

DEVELOP LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Oman Olympic Academy organises specialised course on sports leadership

MUSCAT: The Oman Olympic Academy, under Oman Olympic Committee, will be concluding a specialised Sports Leadership Course on Wednesday.

Organised in cooperation with International Olympic Solidarity, under the patronage of Dr. Marwan bin Jumaa Al Jumaa, Board Member of Oman Olympic Committee, the three-day course is being delivered by Dr. Ishaq bin Ahmed Al Balushi, Director of Oman Olympic Academy, with the participation of a number of professionals working across various sports institutions and organisations.

The course aims to develop leadership and administrative capabilities

of professionals in the sports sector, enhance modern management concepts to elevate institutional performance and achieve sustainability in sports operations, and prepare leaders capable of keeping pace with rapid transformations in management of sports institutions while adhering to best administrative practices and principles of good governance.

The significance of the course stems from its focus on building a comprehensive knowledge base in administrative and organizational aspects, linking theoretical concepts with practical application to enhance work efficiency within sports institutions and support



ongoing efforts to develop national sports system based on scientific and modern methodological foundations.

The programme covers several

key themes, including human resources management practices, strategic management and its stages, organisational management and institutional structuring, gov-

ernance of sports institutions and its challenges, financial management of sports organizations, and fundamentals of sports industry.

These topics are presented through an interactive approach reflecting realities and needs of sports sector.

Current challenges

The course has witnessed notable interaction from participants through open discussions, presentation of practical experiences, and exchange of expertise among attendees, in addition to contributions that enriched course topics and linked them to current challenges facing sports institutions.

This interaction reflects strong awareness of importance of continuous development and preparation of qualified leaders.

At conclusion of the course, participants emphasize importance of such specialised training programs in supporting administrative development pathways and strengthening institutional performance.

They expressed appreciation to Oman Olympic Academy for organising the course and praise scientific and practical content presented, which contributes to improving performance efficiency and achieving strategic objectives of sports sector.

VITAL ROLE

BCB assured of no penalty, Bangladesh to host an ICC event prior to 2031 World Cup

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC), Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) have concluded an open, constructive and congenial dialogue. This dialogue covered several matters, including but not limited to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 and the broader outlook for cricket in South Asia, according to an ICC release.

While reflecting on the Bangladesh cricket team's unfortunate absence from the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, the global governing body for cricket reaffirmed BCB's position as a valued Full Member, with a proud cricketing history and a vital role in the growth of the global game.

The ICC also reiterated its continued facilitation of growth in one of cricket's most vibrant markets, with more than 200 million passionate fans to ensure that the national team's non-participation in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup does not have any long-term effects on Cricket in the country.

The highlights of the dialogue reflect a forward-looking alignment reached in good faith and are intended to provide clarity on the current position of the stakeholders, the release said. They do not alter, qualify or detract from the ICC's constitutional autonomy, governance framework or established decision-making processes, all of which remain fully applicable, the release added.

It has been agreed that no fi-



nancial, sporting or administrative penalty will be imposed on Bangladesh Cricket Board in relation to the current matter, the release said.

It was acknowledged that BCB retains the right to approach the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC), should it choose to do so. This right exists under current ICC regulations and remains intact.

The ICC's approach is guided by its principles of neutrality and fairness and reflects the shared objective of facilitative support rather than punishment, the release said.

It also mentioned hosting of an ICC Event between 2028 and 2031 in Bangladesh. The release said that as part of this understanding, an agreement has been reached that Bangladesh will host an ICC event prior to the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2031, subject to the usual ICC hosting processes, timelines and operational requirements. -ANI

This decision comes after PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi briefed PM Shehbaz Sharif on the outcomes of high-level talks



DUBAI: The dialogue between ICC and PCB took place as part of a broader engagement with both parties recognising the need for constructive dealings and being united, committed and purposeful in their aspirations to serve the best interests of the game with integrity, neutrality and co-operation.

According to the ICC, in that prevailing spirit, it was agreed that all members will respect their commitments as per the terms of participation for ICC events and do all that is necessary to ensure that the ongoing edition of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup is a success.

Earlier, the Government of Pakistan had directed their National Cricket Team to take the field on February 15, for its scheduled fixture against the defending champions India in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

This decision comes after Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chair-

man Mohsin Naqvi briefed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the outcomes of high-level talks between the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), the International Cricket Council (ICC), and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

Pakistan had earlier decided not to play against arch-rival India in solidarity with Bangladesh, who were removed from the tournament for citing security concerns.

Pakistan's Prime Minister spoke with Sri Lanka's President Anura Kumara Dissanayake to discuss the country's support during tough times. Following discussions with the ICC and other countries, Pakistan's government has directed its cricket team to play the T20 World Cup

match against India.

"This evening, the Prime Minister held a telephone call with Anura Kumara Dissanayake. The President of Sri Lanka, during their warm and friendly conversation, recalled that Pakistan and Sri Lanka had always stood shoulder to shoulder, especially during challenging times. The Sri Lankan President requested the Prime Minister to accord serious consideration to resolving the current impasse amicably.

"In view of the outcomes achieved in multilateral discussions as well as the request of friendly countries, the Government of Pakistan hereby directs the Pakistan National Cricket Team to take the field on February 15, 2026, for its scheduled fix-

ture in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup," as an official statement from Government of Pakistan.

"Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday formally briefed by the Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Mohsin Naqvi, regarding the outcomes of high-level deliberations held between the PCB representatives of the International Cricket Council (ICC) and the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)," the statement added.

After ICC held a meeting with the PCB and the BCB at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium on Sunday to discuss Pakistan's decision to boycott the T20 World Cup 2026 match with India in Colombo, BCB president Aminul Islam Bulbul on Monday also urged Pakistan to play their February 15 ICC Men's T20 World Cup clash against India.

"The Government of Pakistan has reviewed the formal requests extended to the PCB by the Bangladesh Cricket Board as well as the supporting communications from Sri Lanka, the United Arab Emirates and other member nations. These correspondences sought Pakistan's leadership in securing a viable solution to recent challenges. The Government further noted the statement by BCB President Amin ul Islam. The profound gratitude expressed by our brotherly nation is received with great warmth. Pakistan reaffirms that it stands shoulder to shoulder with Bangladesh," the statement further added. -ANI

BUNDESLIGA



Kane opens crunch time for Bayern's title hunt

BERLIN: Bayern Munich's emphatic 5-1 win over Hoffenheim has taken the Bavarians into what striker Harry Kane described as the decisive phase of the 2025/26 season. Kane scored twice and has now netted 24 goals in 21 Bundesliga appearances, along with seven assists, setting the tone for what promises to be a demanding stretch across all competitions.

"From now on, it counts," the 32-year-old said after Sunday's three points, with Bayern preparing for a German Cup quarterfinal against RB Leipzig on Wednesday and the knockout stage of the UEFA Champions League in mid-March. After two winless league matches, Bayern restored a six-point lead at the top, underlining the importance of building momentum as the season moves into its decisive weeks.

Head coach Vincent Kompany said the club is not prioritizing one competition over another.

"We don't see one title above the others," the former Manchester City defender said. "All are

important, and we want as many as possible."

Alongside Kane's brace, Luis Diaz scored three goals and added two assists as Bayern lifted their league total to 79 goals after 21 rounds.

For Kompany, the display was about more than attacking output. "They don't stop when things seem done; they continue until the final minutes," he said, describing the mindset required at this stage of the campaign.

The 39-year-old likened the run-in to "a tunnel you have to enter," adding that his playing career taught him what it takes "when you reach the final stages and have to win something."

With Stuttgart and Leverkusen already through to the German Cup semifinals, Bayern and Leipzig will decide the last remaining spot over the next two days, adding further pressure to an already congested schedule.

Off the pitch, Bayern have also moved to strengthen stability. The club recently extended wing-

er Serge Gnabry's contract until 2028, while negotiations with French defender Dayot Upamecano are nearing completion.

Although the contract has not yet been signed, chairman Jan-Christian Dreesen said a full agreement has been reached after months of talks. "If there is trust and a clear yes from both sides, the timing of the final signature doesn't really matter," Dreesen said. Media reports have cited figures of around 20 million euros per season, a signing bonus spread across the contract, and a potential exit clause in 2027.

Kompany said he remains relaxed about both sporting and contractual matters, noting that initial discussions have also taken place regarding Kane's longer-term future in Munich.

The message from Bayern's camp is clear: as the season enters its defining phase, the club intends to stay focused on all fronts, with the Bundesliga, the German Cup and the Champions League all firmly in view. -Xinhua

14-YEAR-OLD PRODIGY

Best player I've ever seen: Jos Buttler heaps praise on 14-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi

NEW DELHI: The England wicket-keeper batter Jos Buttler hailed the 14-year-old Indian cricketer Vaibhav Sooryavanshi as the best player he has ever seen. Buttler's remarks come after Sooryavanshi's record-shattering and match-winning 175 in 80 balls in the Under-19 World Cup 2026 final against India.

Speaking on the 'Love for Cricket' podcast, Buttler called Sooryavanshi the best player he has ever seen and added that if Sooryavanshi is producing such batting brilliance at the age of 14, it's exciting to imagine how good he could be at 16, 18, or 20. "My statement is he's the best player I've ever seen, 'cause I'm like, who else was doing this at 14 years old? If he's doing that at 14, what's he gonna be doing at 16, 18, 20?"

Mark Wood, who also appeared on the 'Love for Cricket' podcast, replied to Buttler, saying, "That's a pretty big statement from you", and further asked, "Do you see him being an absolute superstar, or do you think there's any way he gets derailed?" Buttler said it's hard to doubt Sooryavanshi's talent, noting that excelling at 14 is remarkable and adding that the youngster has already proven himself by scoring a century in the IPL.

"I don't see how he can't be, you know? To be playing the way he can at 14 years old, and if he hadn't played in the IPL, you'd say, 'Oh, he's only done it in an under-19 World Cup, and yes, it's amazing, but let's see when he steps up to senior cricket.' But he's already played... he's got a hundred in the IPL. He hit his first ball in the IPL for six."



Coming to Sooryavanshi's 175 against England in the U-19 World Cup final, Sooryavanshi's masterclass (175 in 80 balls, with 15 fours and 15 sixes) guided India to a massive 411/9, with the Men in Blue eventually winning the match by 100 runs and lifting their record-extending 6th U-19 World Cup.

Sooryavanshi also earned the Player of the Tournament award for his 439 runs in the tournament. Sooryavanshi rewrote multiple records during his 175 in the final, as he also became the batter to hit the most sixes in a single Under-19 World Cup innings. He smashed 15 sixes, breaking the previous record of 12 sixes held by Australia's Michael Hill. Batting at a blistering strike rate of 218.75, his innings included 15 fours and 15 sixes.

Remarkably, 150 of his runs came through boundaries alone.

Additionally, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's 2025 year was a relentless assault on the record books. The young cricket sensation was honoured with the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar after becoming the youngest player to earn an Indian Premier League (IPL) contract and the youngest centurion in T20 cricket with a 35-ball IPL century against the Gujarat Titans. He also scored the fastest century in U19 ODIs with a 52-ball 143, became the youngest centurion in Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy with a 61-ball 108 and became the youngest player to hit a century in men's List A cricket, among other achievements that marked the arrival of a generational talent. -ANI

Oman: A Stable and Attractive Tax Environment Boosting Foreign Investment

Tax Efficiency as a Key to Investment Appeal

In today's fiercely competitive global investment landscape, it is not merely the tax rate that determines a country's attractiveness to investors. Equally important is the efficiency and transparency of the tax system, and how effectively tax authorities interact with taxpayers.

The ease of tax compliance plays a pivotal role in investment decisions, directly affecting the time and cost of compliance and the confidence investors have in long-term financial planning.

International reports, such as the World Bank's Doing Business report, highlight that "paying taxes easily" is a **critical benchmark for evaluating the business climate." Investors who spend long hours navigating complex procedures are less likely to expand operations, whereas simplified and streamlined processes build trust and encourage investment.

In this context, the Sultanate of Oman stands out as an exemplary destination, offering low compliance time, moderate tax rates, advanced digitalization, and a transparent and effective tax system, making it highly competitive regionally.

Tax Compliance Time in Oman: Less Time, Higher Efficiency

Data indicates that medium-sized companies in Oman require approximately 68 hours annually to prepare, file, and pay taxes—equivalent to 5–6 hours per month. This is significantly lower than regional and global averages:

- MENA region average: over 200 hours annually
- Global average: 234 hours annually

When compared to neighboring countries:

- Qatar: 41 hours annually, despite low taxes
- Saudi Arabia: 104 hours
- UAE: 116 hours

In emerging Asian economies:

- Malaysia: 174 hours
- India: 252 hours annually

This comparison highlights that Oman minimizes time spent on routine tax procedures, enhancing operational efficiency and increasing the country's attractiveness to foreign investors.

Digitalization and E-Systems: Facilitating Investment Through Technology

Digitalization of the tax system is a key indicator of administrative efficiency. Globally, electronic filing and payment adoption has surged, with countries using digital systems increasing from 43 in 2004 to 106 by 2018.

Oman has made significant strides in digital tax services:

- Since March 2020, all taxpayers are required to submit tax returns and payments electronically through the official online portal.
- Value Added Tax (VAT), implemented in 2021 at 5%, is fully managed online, including registration, filing, and quarterly payments within 30 days of each quarter's end.
- The Tax Authority provides sector-specific digital guides, making voluntary compliance simpler for businesses.

Oman also emphasizes speed and responsiveness to taxpayer inquiries and complaints. Through an independent Tax Appeals Committee, Oman scored 85.3 out of 100 in the post-filing index, outperforming countries such as Saudi Arabia (32.2), UAE (55), and Malaysia (51), demonstrating efficient handling of claims and appeals.

VAT refund procedures are also swift: requests are processed within 30 days of complete documentation, with refunds paid within an additional 15 days, meaning businesses can expect a refund in approximately six weeks—well aligned with international stand-



إدارة الشبابة

Tax Digitalization in Oman: No paperwork, no queues, and no geographical limitations

In a world where investment attractiveness is measured by service speed and system intelligence,



Digital transformation in tax administration has become essential — not optional

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These are not temporary incentives

Rather, a stable, transparent, and simple tax policy gives the investor real certainty in financial planning.



Muscat and Al Baitan Dhofar

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إدارة الشبابة

Oman Where tax compliance doesn't burden investors it frees their time.

In a world where success is measured in time before money... Oman offers a real competitive advantage by giving time back to the investor



Muscat and Al Baitan Dhofar

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إدارة الشبابة

Tax transformation is not a race... it's a process of building

Oman is building, and challenges are a natural part of development.



Muscat and Al Baitan Dhofar

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إدارة الشبابة

Why do foreign investors choose Oman?

Because it guarantees them

Stability without tax surprises
Simplicity through a clear central system
Attractive global competitiveness rates



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إدارة الشبابة

When you request a tax refund in Oman

Speed and efficiency are not promises but measurable indicators.



The speed of refunds and the effectiveness of handling objections are among the most accurate indicators of the efficiency of tax administration.

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ards. This efficiency fosters investor confidence and reduces concerns over procedural complexities.

Tax Rates and Financial Impact: Clear Competitiveness

The corporate income tax rate of 15% in Oman is highly attractive, especially given that personal income tax is not levied.

The effective tax burden on companies is about 27.4% of gross profit, composed of:

- Income tax: ~14.4%
- Minor administrative fees, with no indirect taxes before 2021
- Even with the 5% VAT, Oman's overall tax burden remains among the lowest in the region, especially compared to neighboring and Asian economies:
 - Qatar: 11.3%
 - UAE: 15.9%
 - Saudi Arabia: 15.7%
 - Kuwait: 13%
 - Malaysia: 38.7%
 - India: 49.7%

maintains a moderate tax environment, allowing investors to retain more profit and achieve better long-term returns.

Oman in the Regional and Global Context

Oman is highly competitive in the Gulf region regarding tax compliance ease and efficiency:

- Previous annual tax payments: ~15, including social security contributions and annual returns
- Compliance time: 68 hours per

year, lower than Saudi Arabia (104), UAE (116), and Kuwait (98)

- Global rankings for paying taxes: 11th globally in Doing Business 2020, and 8th in GEM 2024, surpassing UAE (30), Saudi Arabia (57), Malaysia (80), and India (115), trailing only slightly behind Qatar (3) and Kuwait (6)

Oman also excels in tax dispute resolution and refund efficiency, providing stability and transparency highly valued by foreign investors.

International reports, such as the World Bank's Doing Business report, highlight that "paying taxes easily" is a **critical benchmark for evaluating the business climate." Investors who spend long hours navigating complex procedures are less likely to expand operations, whereas simplified and streamlined processes build trust and encourage investment.

Current Challenges in Tax Efficiency

Despite strong performance, Oman faces specific challenges:

- Preparing the annual corporate income tax return consumes ~56 hours out of 68, indicating potential complexity or the need for specialized accounting expertise.
- Foreign investors may struggle to understand exemptions and obligations under the 2017 Income Tax Law, potentially requiring external audit services.
- Integration of digital systems could be improved, linking tax platforms with corporate accounting systems to reduce manual data entry.
- Ensuring uniform understanding among tax officers to guarantee smooth, consistent implementation.

These challenges are common in emerging economies, and solutions lie in continuous review, procedural simplification, and enhanced guidance for investors.

Strengths and Opportunities for Foreign Investors

Oman's tax environment offers multiple opportunities for foreign investors:

- Clarity and stability: a single corporate income tax with no local taxes
 - Attractive rates: 15% on corporate profits, with an overall effective burden of ~27%
 - Low VAT: 5%, among the lowest globally
 - Exceptional incentives:
 - 10-year tax exemptions in special economic zones and free zones
 - Support for strategic sectors like manufacturing, technology, logistics, and renewable energy
- These features enable investors to focus on growth rather than administrative hurdles or tax disputes.

Conclusion: Balancing State Revenue and Investment Appeal

Overall, Oman offers a balanced, investment-friendly tax environment combining:

- Operational efficiency and low compliance time
 - Moderate tax rates and attractive incentives
 - Transparency, stability, and modern legal framework
- These advantages make Oman a promising destination for foreign investment, allowing investors to achieve substantial returns with minimal administrative burden, while ensuring the state receives stable revenue.
- Oman has successfully positioned itself as a leading investment destination in the region, offering a comprehensive model of economic growth, tax flexibility, and financial stability.



Block 10: The Development that Rewrote the Timeline

Built in Al Wusta Governorate and delivered through a strong partnership model, Block 10 shows what's possible when pace is matched with precision. It is not only a record-time development, it is a real-world proof point of smarter wells, safer delivery, stronger reliability and capability built in-country, raising the benchmark for how major energy projects are executed in Oman.

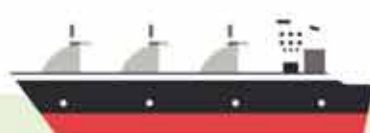
What sets Block 10 apart is the quality of the acceleration. Progress wasn't driven by speed alone, but by disciplined execution, field-ready innovation and outstanding collaboration with PDO. The development introduced new operational standards and practical "firsts" that improved how work is delivered on the ground, while embedding Omani capability at the centre of delivery. In doing so, Block 10 did more than bring gas online sooner: it built a replicable model for future projects, with measurable outcomes, stronger benchmarks and lasting in-country value.

Milestones that Matter



The place that powers the pace

Located in **Al Wusta Governorate**, around 400 km from Muscat, designed for efficient delivery in a demanding environment.



First gas, ahead of schedule

Achieved in **January 2023**, delivered four months early.



Drilling time, redefined

Performance improved from 90 days to 55 days through focused delivery discipline.

Availability you can count on



Operating at 99.6% off-plot availability (wells, RMS, flowlines, etc.), built on consistent, disciplined performance.



Concession secured

Signed in 2021, setting the foundation for accelerated gas development.



Four-year maturity, record mindset

Matured in 4 years compared to a typical 7–8-year timeline.



From single to multi-well pads

Shifted from single-well pads to multi ("triple") well pads to unlock efficiency and optimise infrastructure.



Engineering firsts, delivered in the field

Set national benchmarks: the deepest and longest horizontal well (7,450 m) and the first containerised control room, supported by a standardised Field Operations Base for Shell and contractors.



Built on partnership

Awarded by the Ministry of Energy and Minerals to Oman Shell with **OQ and Marsa Liquefied Natural Gas LLC** (JV between Total Energies and OQ).



Omanisation from day one

Omanisation exceeded 75% from day one, embedding local capability at the core.



Optimisation that adds up

Delivery improvements contributed an incremental 2,000 bbl/d as of 14 January 2026.



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BEYOND YOUR EXPECTATION



1.5L Engine, 103 hp | 7 Speed DCT

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