

Oman to develop world's first liquid hydrogen corridor

Muscat - Oman has signed an agreement to pave the way for development of the world's first commercial scale liquid hydrogen corridor. The corridor will facilitate the export of green hydrogen produced in Oman to the Netherlands and onwards to Europe, leveraging the sultanate's abundant natural resources and strategic geographical location.

The Ministry of Energy and Minerals and Hydrogen Oman (Hydrom) signed a joint study agreement on Sunday with Port of Amsterdam, Zenith Energy Terminals and GasLog to collaborate on the development of a liquid hydrogen route to market green hydrogen produced in Oman.

The agreement underscores the clear ambitions of the partners to make the world's first commercial scale liquid hydrogen corridor a reality. The agreement was signed at the Omani Pavilion during COP28 in Dubai with H E Salim bin Nasser al Afi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, and Prince Jaime de Bourbon de Parme, Climate Envoy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, as official witnesses.

The agreement entails conducting a detailed assessment of



The agreement was signed at the Omani Pavilion during COP28 in Dubai with H E Salim bin Nasser al Afi an official witness

the requirements to develop an open-access hydrogen liquefaction, storage and export facility in Oman, along with the provision of specialised vessels for the

transportation of liquid hydrogen, currently under development by GasLog.

The primary aim of the agreement is to establish a green hydrogen corridor between Oman and the Netherlands, with the terminal of Zenith Energy as the destination for import, regasification and further distribution of the Oman-produced hydrogen to both local offtakers within the port of Amsterdam, as well as large industries in the European hinterland.

The open-access liquefaction

facility will also enable the government of Oman to explore cost effective hydrogen export corridors to other global markets.

"As countries around the world race to achieve a hydrogen-based economy, the fundamental challenges of storing and transporting hydrogen on large scale remain open," said Abdulaziz al Shidhani, Managing Director of Hydrom.

"Oman is building an economically sustainable future by establishing a fully integrated hydrogen ecosystem. This joining of efforts

with the Port of Amsterdam, Zenith Energy Terminals and GasLog will help bring us one step closer to our shared goal."

Dorine Bosman, Chief Investment Officer at Port of Amsterdam, said, "Both Oman and the Netherlands are clearly the vanguards in the development of the global hydrogen market. Oman's natural blessings and the passionate leadership of H E Afi on green hydrogen mean that the Omani Ministry of Energy and Minerals and Hydrom are fitting partners."



Sayyid Theyazin signs agreement for RO147.8mn OCC

Muscat - H H Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, signed an agreement worth RO147.8mn for the construction of the main building of Oman Cultural Complex (OCC) on Sunday.

The agreement was signed with Oman-based construction company Saif Salim Essa al Harasi (SAH) and Turkey-based contractor Sembol Construction (SML).

The project, which will be completed within a maximum of three years, will be spread over 400,000sqm. It will accommodate the National Theatre, the National Library and the National Records and Archives Authority.

The complex will constitute a modern landmark and an edifice

featuring the country's civilisation, culture, scholarly accomplishments and institutional entity.

It will contribute to the advancement of cultural, literary, theatrical and research activities and support the organisation of cultural programmes and events.

The SAH-SML joint venture was awarded the contract for development of the complex in September by the Tender Board.

As per the tender documents, the National Theatre will have a 1,000-seat capacity main auditorium and an additional hall to seat 250 people. The National Library will be a 20,000sqm five-storey building, while the National Archives, partially open to the public, will include nearly 20km of shelf space.



Oman signs oil supply deal with ITOCHU

Gaza most dangerous place for children in the world, says Unicef director

New York, USA - The United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) has called the Gaza Strip as the "most dangerous place in the world for children".

Catherine Russell, Executive Director of Unicef, made the remark on the resumption of fighting in Gaza. "After seven days of

respite from horrific violence, fighting has resumed. More children will surely die as a result," she said.

Before the pause, more than 5,300 Palestinian children were reportedly killed in 48 days of relentless bombing - a figure that does not include many children

still missing and presumed to be buried under rubble.

"Should violence return to this scale and intensity, we can assume that hundreds more children will be killed and injured every day. And if we are not able to get water, food, medical supplies, blankets and warm clothes

to those in need, we will face a humanitarian catastrophe."

She added that "it does not have to be this way - for seven days, there was a glimmer of hope for children amidst this horrific nightmare".

More than 30 children held hostage in Gaza were safely re-

leased and reunited with their families, she informed. And the humanitarian pause enabled an increase in the delivery of lifesaving supplies into and across Gaza.

Unicef and its partners were able to significantly scale up operations and programmes. "And we were able to begin connecting

separated children with their families."

She added that this however was not nearly enough to meet the scale of the humanitarian needs, but it was a start, and called on all parties to ensure that children are protected and assisted.



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HOLIDAY LITTER



Littering during long holidays is increasingly becoming a concern. The challenge of littering in public spaces becomes more evident during holidays posing significant environmental concerns, highlighting the need for effective measures to combat this menace. What measures should be taken to reduce this phenomenon? Have you encountered such irresponsible behaviour recently? Here's what *Muscat Daily* readers said –

Christopher Lobo
Facility management COO

I think people have taken it for granted that there are people who will come and collect litter at the end of the day. There should be monitoring, and people should be warned and fined on the spot. When they are caught, I'm sure they will warn others too.

Manish Solanki
Club manager

It's really important to tackle the issue of littering during long holidays in Oman. To re-

duce this phenomenon, we can start by increasing public awareness through educational campaigns and advertisements. It would be great to have more trash bins in public places. Additionally, organising community clean-up events and involving schools and local organisations can help instill a sense of responsibility. When it comes to spreading awareness about clean-up events, there are some creative ways we can do it! We can use social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and X to create catchy posts and share them with our friends and followers. We can also create eye-catching posters and flyers to put up in community

centres, schools and local businesses. Another idea is to collaborate with local influencers or celebrities who can help promote the event to a wider audience. Let's get creative and make sure everyone knows about the clean-up event and takes pride in keeping Oman clean. Let's work together to make a positive change.

Nurgul Rakhimova
Housewife

To deal with littering, especially during holidays, the city's municipality needs to take measures to double the litter-collecting work at public places in advance. We often underestimate the importance of litter-collecting companies, but their part in our daily life is huge. They need constant support from the government to expand their service with the latest technologies and qualified staff.

Chaamu Balaji
Fitness and nutrition specialist

Learning about cleanliness starts from home, and we are here to protect our environment as we take care of our family and relatives. Imagine taking beautiful sunrise or sunset photos where we see the image with plastic bags and bottles... nature surrounded by wastage. We, humans, value life, but our life is far from environmental cleanliness.

Ahsan Jabbar
Entrepreneur

We need bigger bins to begin with, as the holidaying population has grown significantly during the last decade. I witnessed overflowing waste bins at Sarooj Beach (Grand Hyatt/Waterfront area). Communicate with adults and children through social media platforms to respect and help the pickers, and not treat them as low-grade beings.

Ofelia V Hassan
Lecturer

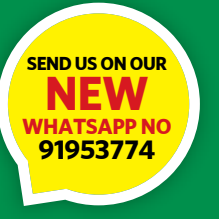
This is so true. This boils down to early training in the home and in schools. Let us display slogans that are appealing to read.

**NEXT ON YOUR SAY**

With the world's attention on the environment as COP28 continues to discuss tackling climate change, what measures can you adopt in your individual capacity to reduce pollution?

The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by *Muscat Daily*. If you feel strongly about the issues discussed here, you can email your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

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

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Oil spill response drill in Sohar Port

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Environment Authority (EA), in collaboration with National Emergency Management Committee, is set to conduct a national exercise called Nawras 2023 to combat oil pollution. The drill will take place in Sohar Port on Monday and Tuesday.

Numerous entities will join the initiative, including Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, Ministry of Energy and Minerals, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, the Maritime Security Centre, Royal Navy of Oman, Civil Aviation Authority, Royal Air Force of Oman, Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority, Royal Oman Police, Authority for Public Services Regulation, Petroleum Development Oman, and be'ah.



The primary objective of Nawras 2023 is to test and reinforce the national plan for emergency situations involving oil spills, ensuring the readiness of both the government and private sectors in joint anti-pollution operations. A key focus is to ascertain the preparedness of relevant authorities as per the national plan to combat oil pollution.

The exercise will also serve as a training platform for personnel involved in oil spill response, enabling exchange of knowledge and technical expertise among Omani authorities and draw on regional and international expertise, a statement said.

The drill will simulate an oil spill at Sohar Port to assess de-

tection and response capabilities using advanced marine and aerial equipment. EA will deploy rubber barriers to contain the simulated spill and utilise suction equipment for oil removal from the sea. Additionally, Royal Air Force of Oman will demonstrate aerial spraying techniques using aircraft equipped with modern oil spill response tools.

Exhibition showcasing Faiha Village's archaeological riches open till Dec 7

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT) has organised an exhibition to showcase recent archaeological finds of Faiha village in Samail, Dakhliyah. It opened on Sunday and will run till December 7, 8am to 1pm.

The exhibition, hosted at the Governor's Office in Samail, is part of MHT's initiative to raise awareness on Oman's rich cultural heritage and the importance of preserving archaeological sites.

According to an MHT official, the exhibition aims to familiarise the public with the archaeological discoveries in Dakhliyah. It features a variety of artefacts unearthed during recent excavations displayed in a multipurpose hall. These items are a



window into the life and times of the 1st millennium BC in the region.

The exhibition is a result of archaeological excavations conducted by MHT experts in September this year at Faiha village, the official informed. "The focus was on exploring underground cemeteries, revealing both oval and rectangular-

shaped chambers with stone-lined internal walls. These burial sites offer a unique insight into the funerary practices and architectural knowledge of the era."

Among the treasures unearthed were a diverse array of earthen vessels, including jars, bowls, flasks and glazed pottery linked to Sindh and the Parthian Empire in Iran.

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11 projects to boost food sector in Dhofar

Our Correspondent
Salalah

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MAFWR) has initiated 11 investment projects for 2024 for cultivation of wheat, soybeans and vegetables in Dhofar.

Rashid bin Saeed al Ghafri, Director General of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in Dhofar, highlighted the continued growth of the agriculture, livestock, fisheries and water resource sectors in the governorate.

The new projects include an extensive agriculture plan covering 5mn sqm in the wilayat of Al Mazyouna, alongside several other ventures in wheat and soybean cultivation, and vegetable production.

The Food Security Laboratory held in Dhofar led to 37 usufruct contracts signed for wheat cultivation. Currently, 51 projects are underway in the agriculture sector, including the distribution of 30 tonnes of wheat kernels to farmers in Thumrait.

Ghafri informed that 3,865



A total of 3,865 coconut seedlings have been distributed in Salalah and Taqah, and 2,950 date seedlings in Thumrait in efforts aimed to expand date palm cultivation

RASHID BIN SAEED AL GHAFRI

coconut seedlings have been distributed in Salalah and Taqah, and 2,950 date



(Supplied photos)

seedlings in Thumrait in efforts aimed to expand date palm cultivation. Additionally, 14,763

seedlings of various fruit trees have been distributed across the governorate.

The Directorate of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources has successfully

cultivated turmeric for two seasons and distributed 21 beehives under a development pro-

gramme, while a programme supporting rural women growing seasonal crops started this month.

In the livestock sector, Dhofar imported 829,408 sheep and 61,198 cows this year. The directorate signed nine livestock projects following the Food Security Laboratory - including three investment opportunities through the Tatwir platform - and two more slated for 2024.

Furthermore, three fisheries sector projects are in progress, including a wholesale market in Shuwaimiya, maintenance of Mirbat fish market, and an aquaculture project in Raysut, Salalah, 80% of which is complete.

MAFWR plans to float tenders for developing fishing ports in Raysut, Salalah and Mirbat, and designing fish landing sites in Al Fazayah, Rakhut and Hadbeen in Sadah. These initiatives represent Dhofar's commitment to bolstering its agriculture and fisheries sectors and contributing to Oman's broader food security and economic growth objectives.

MoHERI launches 'We are Oman' award for excellence in higher education

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MoHERI) announced an award called 'We are Oman' for the academic year 2023/2024 on Sunday. The award aims to empower and educate students in higher education.

This initiative, part of a national project, is designed to guide students to effectively utilise their talent in various scientific, social, industrial, humanitarian and environmental spheres.

Inaugurated by Dr Khamis bin Saif al Jabri, head of Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit, and H E Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, the award launch ceremony underscored the importance of higher education in shaping conscious and capable individuals.

Dr Maryam bint Belarab al



(Supplied photo)

Nabhani, Director General of Private Universities and Colleges, informed that the award aligns with the Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and focuses on instill-

ing national pride and reinforcing Omani identity and values.

The 'We are Oman' award encourages active student participation through interactions, exchange of ideas and skill development in adherence to

Oman Vision 2040. It aims to harness and direct the capabilities and aspirations of university students, contribute to national service and build well-

round individuals, while preserving Omani identity and culture.

The annual competition, supervised by MoHERI, targets higher education institutions and students in Oman, recognising the importance of student activities in honing skills and fostering success at various levels. The award encourages competition among institutions in organising student events and activities, adhering to the 'We are Oman' programme's recommendations.

The award spans multiple categories, including the best higher education institution for implementing the award programme and the 'We are Oman' award for students, covering literary, artistic, media creativity, innovation, volunteer work, Sustainable Development Goals and more fields. The award not only emphasises academic excellence but also instills national pride and identity, originality and creativity among higher education students.

Lab to develop services for disabled kicks off

Our Correspondent
Muscat

A laboratory for the development of services and programmes for persons with disabilities kicked off on Wednesday to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

The lab's theme focuses on the need of unity in action to achieve Sustainable Development Goals for persons with disabilities.

The lab's launch event was held under the patronage of Sheikh Al Fadhli Mohammed al Harthy, Secretary General of Council of Ministers.

The event has been organised by the Ministry of Social Development in cooperation with Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour, private sector establishments, civil society institutions and personnel and organisations working in fields related to persons with disabilities.



The laboratory's theme focuses on the need of unity in action to achieve Sustainable Development Goals for persons with disabilities

The lab, which will continue till the end of December, aims to align services and programmes for persons with disabilities with Oman Vision 2040.

Over 7mn mobile phone subscriptions in Q3 2023: TRA

Muscat - Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has released data for the third quarter of 2023, covering fixed and mobile phones, fixed and mobile broadband, and international calls.

Oman's total mobile phone subscriptions at the end of the third quarter of 2023 exceeded 7,157,000, an increase of 1.94% compared to the same period of 2022, with average usage of 86.2 minutes per subscription.

The total fixed phone subscriptions were over 575,100, an increase of 2.12% compared to the same period of 2022, with average usage of 20.2 minutes per subscription.

Total subscriptions of mobile broadband crossed 6,130,000, up 3.36% compared to the second quarter of this year. Average usage per subscription was of 7.7GB.

Total subscriptions of fixed broadband exceeded 556,300,



an increase of 2.98%, with average usage of 551.1GB per subscription.

Oman's total international outgoing minutes during the third quarter of 2023 amounted to 176.5mn minutes, a decrease of 6.54% from the second quarter of the year, which amounted to 188.8mn minutes.

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Oman signs oil supply deal with ITOCHU

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's Ministry of Energy and Minerals has signed crude oil sales and purchase agreement for 2024 with ITOCHU Corporation, a leading Japanese trading and investment company.

The agreement was signed on November 29 on the sidelines of ITOCHU's 50th anniversary celebrations for its long-term business relationship with the sultanate.

Since the first contract year of 1974, ITOCHU has consistently been the Ministry of Energy and Minerals' one of the longest private off-takers, responsible for lifting Oman crude.

The 50th sales and purchase agreement for the year 2024 was signed by H E Salim al Auli, Ministry of Energy and Minerals, and Masaya Tanaka, President of Energy and Chemicals Company, Executive Officer of ITOCHU Corporation, at a gala event held at InterContinental Hotel.

The ceremony was attended by several dignitaries including H E Nasser al Jashmi, Secretary General of the Ministry of Finance, H E Mohsin al Hadhrami, Undersecretary of Ministry of Energy and Minerals and H E



Jota Yamamoto, Ambassador of Japan to Oman.

Tetsuya Yamada, Chief Operating Officer of ITOCHU Corporation's Energy Division, emphasised the significant growth of ITOCHU's operations in Oman spanning five decades.

ITOCHU plans to extend its reach into Oman's low-carbon energy sectors, specifically hydrogen/ammonia, as well as renewable energy business, including energy derived from waste. These are aimed at making substantial contributions to

the In-Country Value (ICV) initiative in the forthcoming years.

In addition to its involvement in Oman's energy sector, ITOCHU is also a shareholder of both Oman LNG and Qalhat LNG and has been lifting liquefied natural gas (LNG) since 2006, in addition to its crude oil contract.

The company is also the largest shareholder of Barka Desalination Company, which started its commercial operations in June 2018 as the largest desalination plant in Oman.

ITOCHU also imports Mazda

cars and purified terephthalic acid (PTA) to Oman and exports French beans from Oman to Japan.

With approximately 90 offices in 61 countries, ITOCHU is engaging in domestic trading, import-export, and overseas trading of various products such as textiles, machinery, metals, minerals, energy, chemicals, food, general products, realty, information and communications technology, and finance, as well as business investment in Japan and overseas.

Sohar International, Bank Nizwa halt merger talks

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Sohar International Bank and Bank Nizwa have decided to halt their discussions on the proposed merger between two banks.

The boards of directors of both banks have opted to discontinue merger talks 'for the time being', according to disclosures filed with the Muscat Stock Exchange.

The merger talks between Sohar International Bank and Bank Nizwa were first initiated in November 2021.

'The board of directors of Sohar International decided to discontinue discussions of the proposed merger with the board of Bank Nizwa for the time being,' Sohar International said in its disclosure to the Muscat Stock Exchange.

In a separate disclosure to the local bourse, Bank Nizwa also confirmed that its board of directors has decided to discontinue discussions of the proposed merger with the board of Sohar International for the time being.

Both banks emphasised their commitment to keeping the market and shareholders informed of any significant developments in a timely manner,



Sohar International Bank and Bank Nizwa both emphasised their commitment to keeping the market and shareholders informed of any significant developments in a timely manner, adhering to applicable regulations

adhering to applicable regulations.

In January 2022, Sohar International Bank and Bank Nizwa had received the approvals from the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) to start the due diligence process with respect to the proposed merger between two entities.

In August this year, Sohar International Bank marked a historic moment in its journey by successfully completing the merger of HSBC Bank Oman with Sohar International.



OBFA hosts roundtable on business environment, investment opportunities

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To enhance collaboration between investors and authorities, and explore potential avenues for foreign investment, the Omani British Friendship Association (OBFA) recently organised a roundtable discussion focused on the business environment and investment opportunities within Oman.

The event, held at the residence of the British Ambassador to Oman, brought together OBFA directors and members, distinguished Omani business

leaders, and foreign investors who are actively engaged in Oman's dynamic economic landscape. H E Dr Liane Saunders OBE, the UK Ambassador to Oman, Saleh al Zakwani, Chairman of OBFA, Haifa al Khaifi, Secretary-General of OBFA, and Abdul Redha Sultan, Board Director of OBFA, were present during the roundtable discussion.

Moderated by two senior officials, Cristiano Rizzi and Szabolcs Markovszky from Boston Consulting Group (BCG), the session featured a presentation highlighting key findings from BCG's research on Oman's business

and investment environment. Drawing on their extensive research, the BCG representatives presented major themes that outlined the strengths and areas of opportunity in Oman's business landscape.

The panel discussion saw active participation from all attendees, including OBFA directors and members, prominent businesspersons, and investors from the UK. The panel delved into diverse topics, including Oman's logistics and transportation infrastructure, investment incentives, energy transition, renewable energy initiatives, and ambitious

green hydrogen projects. The participants also addressed crucial topics such as labour policies, Omanisation, and presented valuable insights and recommendations aimed at fortifying the sultanate's business environment.

The roundtable discussion aimed at identifying areas for enhancement in Oman's business climate, ease of doing business, and strategies for communicating investment opportunities and procedures effectively to the world. The open exchange of ideas culminated in a consensus that Oman has already estab-

lished world-class infrastructure and business-friendly policies and incentives, effectively attracting foreign direct investment.

The insights and recommendations from this OBFA roundtable meeting will be documented and shared with relevant government authorities. Some of the recommendations include strategies to refine Oman's business environment, streamline investment procedures, and effectively communicate investment opportunities and processes to potential investors.

FDO to showcase products at Oman AgroFood Exhibition and Conference

Muscat - Fisheries Development Oman (FDO), the investment arm of Oman Investment Authority (OIA) in the fisheries sector, is set to participate in the highly anticipated 5th Oman AgroFood Exhibition and Conference.

Taking place from December 4 to 6, 2023, at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC), the event aligns with FDO's commitment to sustainable growth and supporting the economic diversification goals outlined in Oman Vision 2040.

FDO, along with its subsidiary companies Blue Waters, Natural Shrimp Aquaculture Company (NSA), and Oriental Shrimp Aquaculture Company (ORA), will showcase a range of products, including White Pacific Shrimp and Seabream, demonstrating its dedication to quality and innovation.

Representatives will be available for discussions, explaining the product range to visitors. Other FDO subsidiaries that will also be present at the event are Blue Waters, which specialises in finfish operations, and Shrimp Aquaculture Company, which focuses on developing shrimp aquaculture projects and processing facilities.

Live cooking sessions during the event will provide visitors with a taste of fresh Omani seafood products, fostering engagement and exploring business expansion opportunities with suppliers and distributors.

Under the patronage of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Water Resources, the 5th Oman AgroFood Exhibition and Conference brings together key decision-makers, thought leaders, and technology providers.

The event highlights Oman's stable economy, robust infrastructure, and commitment to expanding non-oil sectors in line with Vision 2040.

As an investment and development group, FDO actively contributes to Oman's economic landscape through diversified investments and infrastructure development. FDO and its subsidiaries engage in fishing fresh Horse Mackerel and a local mackerel species in the Arabian Sea area. FDO's participation in the event aims to introduce fresh catch to the Omani market, catering to both retail and businesses.

Khalid al Balushi, sales manager at Natural Shrimp Aquaculture Company (NSA), an FDO subsidiary, emphasised the significance of their participation, stating, "Our involvement in the Oman AgroFood Exhibition and Conference is crucial as it provides an opportunity to engage with local traders, enhance FDO's standing in regional and global markets, and cultivate collaborations. Our primary goal is to finalise significant deals and draw investments into the fisheries and aquaculture sector, in addition to popularizing fresh catch in the local market."

In addition to showcasing current endeavours, Balushi shared plans for growth, including exploring opportunities in aquaculture projects and expanding into modern boats and coastal fleets in the fisheries sector. Exciting projects on the horizon include Oyster farming and sea cucumber farming, highlighting FDO's commitment to innovation and diversification.



Saudi Arabia leads adoption of AI in financial services

Dubai, UAE - Finastra's annual global survey reveals that despite economic constraints, financial institutions in the UAE and Saudi Arabia are among the global leaders in investment in artificial intelligence (AI), Banking as a Service (BaaS) and embedded finance.

The 'Financial Services: State of the Nation Survey 2023' finds that nearly 9 in 10 (87%) institutions in the UAE and nearly two thirds (64%) in Saudi Arabia say the economic climate has con-

strained their technology investments. Compared to the global average of 78%, the UAE has felt the pinch particularly hard, yet sentiment in both countries remains positive.

78% of firms in the UAE and 72% in Saudi Arabia expect investments to return in full before the end of H1 2024, both higher than the global average (69%).

Despite this, the survey reveals that both regions have emerged as global leaders in AI. 55% of respondents in Saudi

Arabia, the highest globally, and 45% in the UAE, the second highest, say they have deployed or improved AI in the last 12 months. The UAE shows a significant uptick in AI adoption from 25% in 2022, and both regions are notably above the global average of 37%.

Financial institutions are setting their sights on generative AI (Gen AI) in particular. 88% of decision-makers in Saudi Arabia and 86% in the UAE say they are interested in the technology,

with 27% and 34% respectively having already incorporated it in some form, both higher than the global average of 26%.

Respondents have differing views about the priority use cases for Gen AI. In the UAE, institutions state automating manual or repetitive tasks, such as document checking or documenting code functionality, as the top benefit (43%), followed by collecting, processing or analyzing data for environmental, social and governance (ESG),

such as to make investment or lending decisions (40%). The latter is the top benefit for 47% of firms in Saudi Arabia, followed by enhancing IT operations, such as process automation or infrastructure optimization (36%).

The research, conducted from August to September 2023, canvassed the opinions of 956 professionals at financial institutions across France, Germany, Hong Kong, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, UK, US and Vietnam.

COP28: Oil decarbonisation charter launched to accelerate climate action

Dubai, UAE – The COP28 Presidency and Saudi Arabia Sunday launched the landmark Oil and Gas Decarbonisation Charter (OGDC), a global industry charter dedicated to speeding up climate action and achieving high-scale impact across the oil and gas sectors.

To date, 50 companies, representing more than 40% of global oil production have signed on to the OGDC, with National Oil Companies representing over 60 percent of signatories – the largest-ever number of NOCs to commit to a decarbonisation initiative.

COP28 President Dr Sultan al Jaber said, “The launch of the OGDC is a great first step - and whilst many national oil companies have adopted net-zero 2050 targets for the first time, I know that they and others, can and need to do more. We need the entire industry to keep 1.5C within reach and set even stronger ambitions for decarbonisation.”

Signatories have committed to net-zero operations by 2050 at the latest, and ending routine flaring by 2030, and near-zero upstream methane emissions.

They agree to continue to work towards industry best practices in emission reductions



The launch of the OGDC is a great first step - and whilst many national oil companies have adopted net-zero 2050 targets for the first time, I know that they and others, can and need to do more

DR SULTAN AL JABER

and a number of key actions, including: Investing in the energy system of the future including renewables, low-carbon fuels

and negative emissions technologies; increasing transparency, including enhancing measurement, monitoring, re-

porting and independent verification of greenhouse gas emissions and their performance and progress in reducing emissions; increasing alignment with broader industry best practices to accelerate decarbonisation of operations and aspire to implement current best practices by 2030 to collectively reduce emission intensity; and reducing energy poverty and providing secure and affordable energy to support the development of all

economies.

Dr Jaber said of the Charter, “I am committed to both inclusivity and transparency. If we want to accelerate progress across the climate agenda, we must bring everyone in to be accountable and responsible for climate action. We must all focus on reducing emissions and apply a positive can-do vision to drive climate action and get everyone to take action. We need a clear action plan, and I

am determined to deliver one.”

The OGDC recognises that climate change is “a collective challenge that requires strong and focused action from producers and consumers of energy, fundamental changes across society and the energy sector, as well as international collaboration, to advance the energy transition and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from oil and gas.”

Beyond decarbonisation, signatories recognise it is essential for the oil and gas industry to increase actions, including engaging with customers, investing in the energy system of the future, and increasing transparency in measurement, reporting and independent verification.

The OGDC is a key initiative under the Global Decarbonisation Accelerator (GDA), which was launched at the World Climate Action Summit today. The GDA is focused on three key pillars: rapidly scaling the energy system of tomorrow; decarbonising the energy system of today; and targeting methane and other non-CO2 greenhouse gases. It is a comprehensive plan for system-wide change, addressing the demand and the supply of energy at the same time.

WAM

Oil prices mixed after OPEC+ supply cuts

Muscat – Oil prices were searching for direction last week amid demand uncertainty ahead of the much-anticipated OPEC+ meeting on Thursday.

Oil prices declined in the first half of the week, with demand worries intensified by low output data from the US, the world's biggest oil consumer.

International benchmark Brent crude traded at \$80.77 per barrel on Friday, rising by about 0.36% relative to the closing price of \$80.48 a barrel on Friday previous week.

West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the US benchmark, traded at \$75.94 a barrel at the same time on Friday, for an increase of around 0.53% from last Friday's session that closed at \$75.54 per barrel.

Reports of disagreements about production quotas for next year between the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its partners, known as OPEC+, contributed to increased supply uncertainty and a rise in oil prices.

Agencies



The agreements between Masdar and PLN Group were exchanged at COP28 in Dubai (WAM)

UAE’s Masdar plans floating solar plant in Indonesia

Dubai, UAE – Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company (Masdar) has signed agreements to collaborate with Indonesia's state-owned utility company, PLN, to move ahead with major development plans for Southeast Asia's largest floating solar power plant and explore green hydrogen opportunities.

The development at the UN's climate change conference COP28 in the UAE, builds on years of successful collaboration between Masdar and PLN. The partnership has already resulted in the launch of Southeast Asia's largest floating solar power plant, the innovative 145 megawatt (MWac) Cirata project.

Located on the Cirata reservoir in West Java, Indonesia, the plant was inaugurated earlier this month and generates enough renewable energy to power 50,000 homes, while displacing

214,000 tonnes of carbon emissions per year.

The latest agreements were exchanged at COP28 and witnessed by Suhail bin Mohammed al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, and the UAE Ambassador to Indonesia, ASEAN and Timor Leste, Abdullah Al Dhaheri. The agreements were signed by Masdar's Chief Executive Officer, Mohamed Jameel al Ramahi, Chief Executive Officer of PLN Group, Darmawan Prasodjo, and President Director of PLN NP, Ruly Firmansyah.

They included a framework agreement for a joint study into the tripling of Cirata's capacity to up to 500MW. The companies also agreed to explore renewable energy options around the world and the prospect of developing green hydrogen, which has huge potential for decarbonising hard-

to-abate industries, including steelmaking, construction, transportation, and aviation.

With abundant solar resources, the UAE and Indonesia are in prime position to become green hydrogen production hubs. Both countries have bold net-zero targets which the deepening cooperation between Masdar and PLN will help to support.

Ramahi said, “Masdar looks forward to expanding its pioneering clean energy work with PLN. We were extremely proud to inaugurate the 145MW (192MWp) floating solar power plant with our valued partners earlier this month. The Cirata project shows how innovation can be used to meet multiple needs at once. The plant powers homes, cuts emissions, has created jobs and reduced land use because it is built on water.”

WAM

Accelerated energy transition can add 40mn energy sector jobs by 2050: Report

Abu Dhabi, UAE – Progressive policies are critical to boost the socio-economic benefits of the energy transition and spread them broadly across the world, a new report released by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) during the UN Climate Conference COP28 in Dubai finds.

Volume 2 of IRENA's World Energy Transitions Outlook 2023, looks at the socio-economic impacts of the energy transition and shows that the world could witness an average annual increase in GDP of 1.5% by 2050 under the 1.5°C pathway compliant with the Paris Agreement, when compared to the Planned Energy Scenario.

The energy transition is also expected to create 40mn additional jobs in the energy sector by 2050, with 18mn more jobs globally in renewables alone.

Volume 1 of the Outlook released earlier this year presented a pathway to achieve the 1.5°C target, positioning electrification and efficiency as key transition drivers, enabled by renewables, clean hydrogen. It warned that the energy transition is off-track, demanding urgent and radical action including a tripling of installed renewable energy capacity by 2030.

Today's report outlines the



socio-economic impacts of IRENA's 1.5°C Scenario. It provides policymakers with insights into how economic activity, employment and human welfare will be affected by 1.5°C and thereby assist governments to design policies that maximise the benefits of the transition.

IRENA Director-General Francesco La Camera said, “I echo the COP28 Presidency's call for a global renewable energy target as a practical step to implement the Paris Agreement. But policymakers have predominantly concentrated on the technological facets of the energy transition, often overlooking its socio-economic implications.”

He added, “The energy transition holds great promise for boosting the global economy, but we must address persistent inequality. Bridging gaps in climate policy ambition and fostering essential structural changes places unprecedented demands on policymakers. We must facilitate positive transition outcomes while ensuring that these opportunities are equitably distributed across regions and countries.”

IRENA's socio-economic analysis finds that the impacts of the transition vary across regions and countries, highlighting disparities in economic development and underscoring the need for inclusive economic strategies.

Although the renewable sector employment is expected to triple by 2050 overall, jobs are unevenly distributed across regions. Asia is expected to hold 55% of global renewable jobs by 2050, followed by Europe at 14% and the Americas at 13%. Only 9% of the jobs would be in Sub-Saharan Africa.

And while Africa's per capita GDP is set to double, the continent's resource-rich countries will likely see faster growth, exacerbating regional inequalities. Yet, emerging economies like India and China are poised for significant growth, potentially reshaping the global economic landscape.

Global investors eyeing opportunities in China's green energy transition

Beijing, China – Given China's unwavering commitment to carbon neutrality and renewable energy, global firms are eyeing potential investments that align with the country's green development drive.

At the ongoing China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE), participants from around the world expressed optimism about China's green transition, clearly indicating their desire to capitalize on the vast opportunities the country has to offer.

Honeywell, a US industrial conglomerate, is showcasing their latest technologies and solutions regarding sustainable development and green energy shift at the expo.

The CISCE is the latest platform aimed at facilitating China's establishment of a new development paradigm and promoting high-level opening-up, said William Yu, President of Honeywell China, at the expo.

“We aspire to showcase our mature solutions and innovative technologies for clean energy



transition at the expo, and we will collaborate with industry partners to develop and benefit from a supply chain that is more resilient, flexible and sustainable,” he said.

As China progresses toward a more sustainable and eco-friendly development path, the country has announced its commitment to peaking carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2060.

“Our company's primary focus lies on automation, future

aviation and energy transition, aligning closely with the demands of the Chinese market and our Chinese clientele,” Yu said. “We will cooperate with our partners to assist China in achieving its carbon reduction objectives and promote the sustainable development of the global industrial chain.”

Yu noted that his company is currently constructing two projects, one in east China's Jiangsu and the other in southwest China's Sichuan, which are aimed at converting waste cooking oil

into sustainable aviation fuel.

The company is also partnering with Chinese firms in sectors such as chemical engineering, electricity, cement and steel to advance the latest technologies for carbon capture, utilization and storage in China.

Official data showed that China's newly installed capacity of renewable energy reached 152mn kilowatts in 2022, accounting for 76.2% of the country's newly installed power generation capacity.

Xinhua

National Heart Center organises Annual Research Day in Muscat

The Ministry of Health (MoH), represented by the National Heart Center in the Royal Hospital, organised the fifth Annual Research Day under the auspices of H E Dr Hilal bin Ali al Sabti, Minister of Health, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Muscat on Saturday.

The Research Day aimed to discuss and display the scientific research carried out by the National Heart Center under the supervision of an expert judging panel.

The Research Day gathered a number of global experts including Prof Zuhair al Hassan, an expert in genetics from King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center in Saudi Arabia; and Prof Alawi al Sheikh Ali, Chief Academic Officer of Dubai Health in the United Arab Emirates.

More than 30 scientific research and posters for various



specialists were discussed during the event. In addition, the event highlighted the scientific research that have been published in the leading scientific journals last year.

Furthermore, the Annual Research Day addressed many critical issues including cardiovascular complications in patients with systemic lupus erythematosus, demographics, clinical features and genetics of inherited arrhythmias in Oman; roles and interventions of clinical pharmacists in the coronary care unit and intermediate care ward at the National Heart Center; advancements in cardiovascular medicine and surgery; practical and innovative solutions in dyslipidemia management etc.

At the end of the event, H E Dr Sabti launched the private version of the Sultan Qaboos University Medical Journal.



Sun Siyam Pasikudah reopens in Sri Lanka

Sun Siyam Pasikudah in Sri Lanka, a proud member of the boutique collection under Sun Siyam Resorts, reopened after having undergone an extensive transformation and renovation and now offering guests a breath-taking experience that combines affordable luxury with the cultural richness of Sri Lanka.

Arshed Refai, general manager at Sun Siyam Pasikudah, expressed his enthusiasm as the resort reopens its doors to the public. He emphasised their strong commitment to supporting and providing opportunities to local communities, particularly in the fields of woodwork and carpentry.

Arshed highlighted their extensive use of locally made and sourced products, showcasing their collaboration with local artisans and communities to create bespoke furniture, chandeliers and joinery items.

Despite significant changes, everything about the resort has been transformed, from colour concepts and equipment to fittings and offerings, while preserving the property's original structure. This reopening marks a new chapter in Sun Siyam Pasikudah's dedication to offering unforgettable experiences rooted in the beauty of Sri Lanka.

Originally launched in 2014 as Sun Aqua Pasikudah, the property underwent a rebranding in 2020, becoming part of the Sun Siyam Resorts collection and adopting the name Sun Siyam Pasikudah.

Deepak Booneady, CEO of Sun Siyam Resorts, commented, "The resort's temporary closure and its subsequent hiatus during the global pandemic, allowed us the valuable opportunity to embark on a comprehensive journey of rebranding and property enhancement. Collaborating with Studio Sixty7, we meticulously redesigned the entire property, preserving its structural integrity while elevating every facet."

ahlibank discusses Q3 of 2023 success strategies and future outcomes



ahlibank's robust third quarter performance for the year 2023 received a gratifying response at its recently concluded branch managers' meeting.

Held to discuss the bank's performance for the three months ending in September, the meeting focused on the strategies implemented to achieve this success, and new ways to enhance the customer experience.

At the meeting, Muneer al Balushi, AGM - Head of Retail Distribution, gave the welcome address, followed by a word from head of branches, Qais al Hasni.

The gathering highlighted key points such as branches operations, central operations, and wealth management. Branch managers highlighted their joint efforts and explored how to enhance customer experience through the bank's network of branches established around the country.

Our exemplary performance will set the tone for the remainder of the year, as we expect to make good on our initiatives and plans

MUNEER AL BALUSHI

During the gathering, Muneer al Balushi brought to the forefront the role played by the teams working in the branches and commended their efforts in the third quarter, saying, "Our exemplary performance will set the tone for the remainder of the year, as we expect to make good on our initiatives and plans. The vast network of ahlibank branches, helmed by our team of professionals, has recorded resounding success.

Evidently, he said, "we have set the standard and enhanced presence throughout our

branches. The workforce has been diligent in engaging and implementing ahlibank's mission of exceeding customer expectations and delivering outstanding shareholder value through a suite of retail, commercial, and investment banking solutions."

The meeting concluded with a round of awards for outstanding and top performing branches. The culmination of the several ahlibank teams' united efforts is a success in its own right, having been active and scored several achievements throughout their remarkable careers at ahlibank.

Prestigious jewellery exhibition MIJEX to be held at OCEC

Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC) is organising the 12th edition of Muscat International Jewellery Exhibition (MIJEX) - the GCC's most prestigious luxury good events, from Tuesday.

'The Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC), in partnership with Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran) and VEGA Inter Trade Exhibitions, is proud to host a diverse range of local and regional luxury brands, featuring a captivating showcase of stunning examples of jewellery, authentic gemstones and pearls, diamonds and gold ornaments,' a release stated.

The five-day exhibition will feature a total of 45 exhibitors from over ten countries, showcasing renowned brands like Bhasker Devji Jewellery, Kriedy Jewellery Blue Diamond and Demanto Jewellery. Each exhibitor will present their latest collections for the season, along with a display of iconic designs and timeless classics.

"Over the five days of this prestigious exhibition, jewellery enthusiasts will have a chance to view and purchase a truly splendid array of the finest jewellery and luxury goods from leading brands in the region," said Said al Shanfari, OCEC Chief Executive Officer. "At the same time, visitors will have unprecedented access to designers, influencers and brands who are setting new trends in this ever-changing industry. Together with Omran and VEGA Intertrade and Exhibitions,



Over the five days of this prestigious exhibition, jewellery enthusiasts will have a chance to view and purchase a truly splendid array of the finest jewellery and luxury goods from leading brands in the region

SAID AL SHANFARI

we look forward to welcoming visitors to this unique and prestigious exhibition," he added.

Akavut Tangsiluksonwong

(Tony), Managing Director of VEGA Intertrade and Exhibitions LLC stated that exhibitors at MIJEX can look forward to displaying and selling products to high net-worth consumers, while reinforcing their brand's position in the regional market, expanding their networks, and tapping into the growing demand for fashionable jewellery and luxury accessories.

This year's Muscat International Jewellery Exhibition is one of the final events in the OCEC's successful 2023 calendar.

The MIJEX exhibition will also coincide with Oman Agro Food 2023 and The National Olympiad for Student Scientific Innovations. In the next few weeks, the OCEC is also set to host the Green Hydrogen Summit, a leading event discussing Oman's energy transition which will happening a few days after COP28 in the UAE.

Driving the Future: GWM showcases new models, technology at Auto Guangzhou

Great Wall Motor Co (GWM) - a Chinese automobile manufacturer headquartered in Baoding, Hebei - showcased its latest electrification technology and new energy models at the Auto Guangzhou on November 17.

The company also debut two new models - the GWM TANK 700 Hi4-T Limited Launch Edition and the GWM POER Shanghai 2023 Performance Edition.

The 21st Guangzhou International Automobile Exhibition is a comprehensive event covering the entire automotive industry chain with a commitment to "high quality, internationalisation, and comprehensiveness".

Also themed as GWM NEV Day, Great Wall Motors showcased its five badges sitting



under the master brand, including GWM Haval, GWM WEY, GWM Ora, GWM Tank, and GWM POER. Fourteen stunning models, such as Haval Xiaolong, GWM WEY Gaoshan, GWM Ora 03, GWM TANK 400 Hi4-T, and GWM POER Shanghai PHEV, made a significant impact, signalling GWM's strong commitment to new energy, intelligence, and high-end developments in 2023.

At the auto show, the GWM TANK 700 Hi4-T Limited Launch Edition debuted with a limited first edition release of 70 units. Its robust, mech-inspired style, featuring a visually stable design, creates a commanding presence. The interior is expected to adopt a layout with

a large screen and physical buttons. Speculations suggest it may be powered by the latest addition of 3.0T engine and a plug-in hybrid system under Hi4 T dedicated platform for off road performance. GWM POER Shanghai 2023 Performance Edition, built on the globally leading intelligent professional off-road tank platform, represents another heavyweight addition to the GWM POER 2.0 era of lifestyle vehicles. The design includes adjustments such as shortened rear overhang, increased wheelbase, widened track, and optimised shock absorber placement, ensuring not only a harmonious body proportion but also enhanced interior comfort.

GWM's showcased models

exemplify their mastery in advancing new energy four-wheel-drive technology. The Hi4 T hybrid technology, a recent breakthrough, employs front and rear dual motors in a series-parallel hybrid setup, providing an affordable, efficient, and enjoyable four-wheel-drive experience at the cost of two-wheel drive.

Now, with the support of technology and positive reviews, GWM is accelerating the deployment of intelligent new energy products in 2023, achieving significant leaps in both technology and brand positioning. The substantial increase in single-vehicle prices and the adjustment of the sales structure are driving the brand towards a higher market segment.

ICC urges Israel, Hamas to respect law

ICC prosecutor called to adhere to international law and to allow delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza

The Hague, Netherlands - The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) on Sunday called on both sides of the war between Israel and Hamas to adhere to international law, and to allow humanitarian aid to be delivered to the besieged Gaza Strip.

“On humanitarian access, the law does not allow for doubt,” ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan said after a four-day visit to the sites of the October 7 Hamas attacks in Israel and to the Palestinian Authority in the occupied West Bank.

“Civilians must have access to basic food, water and desperately needed medical supplies, without further delay, and at pace and at scale,” Khan said, adding that Hamas must not misuse such aid.

“All actors must comply with international humanitarian law. If you do not do so, do not complain when my office is required to act.”

Scientist Sufyan Tayeh killed

An Israeli air strike targeting the neighbourhood of Al-Faluja, located 30km (18 miles) northeast of Gaza City, has killed prominent Palestinian scientist Sufyan Tayeh and his family, the Palestinian higher education ministry announced on Saturday. Tayeh, who was president of the Islamic University of Gaza, was a leading researcher in physics and applied mathematics.



A view of the Hamad Town in Khan Yunis, Gaza, bombed by the Israeli forces, on Saturday (Wafa)

Pope calls for new ceasefire

Pope Francis on Sunday said it was ‘painful’ to see that the truce between Israel and Hamas had been broken and called on all

parties involved to reach a new ceasefire agreement as soon as possible.

He also said he was thinking about the people still being held hostage in Gaza and the lack of

Pope Francis said it was painful to see that the truce between Israel and Hamas had been broken and called for a new ceasefire agreement

basic necessities in the Palestinian territory.

Francis, who is suffering from a lung inflammation, had his words read by an aide during his Sunday Angelus message, which

he delivered indoors from his Vatican residence rather than by a window overlooking St Peter’s Square.

Hamas tunnels below Gaza

Israeli forces have found some 800 shafts leading to a subterranean Hamas network of tunnels and bunkers since a Gaza ground operation began on October 27, and have destroyed more than half of them, the military said on Sunday.

The Palestinian group said before the now eight-week-old war in the Gaza Strip that it had hundreds of kilometres of tunnels – a network comparable in size to the New York subway system – to protect and serve as operational bases.

That has made the tunnels prime targets for Israeli air strikes with penetrating munitions and army engineers using mapping robots and exploding gel that can be poured into the passages.

“The tunnel shafts were located in civilian areas, many of which were near or inside civilian buildings and structures, such as schools, kindergartens, mosques and playgrounds,” the military said in a statement on Sunday.

Of the approximately 800 shafts discovered, the military said, 500 had been destroyed using a variety of operational methods, including by ‘detonation and by sealing off’.

Agencies

NATO should be ready for bad news from Ukraine: Stoltenberg

Berlin, Germany - NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said NATO should be ready for bad news from Ukraine, TASS reported, citing his interview with ARD television.

“We should also be prepared for bad news,” he said, when asked if he feared that the situation in Ukraine would worsen in the future. “Wars develop in phases. But we have to support Ukraine in both good and bad times.”

Stoltenberg stressed the importance of enhancing ammunition production, acknowledging the inability of NATO countries to meet the rising demand. He noted Ukraine’s current ‘critical situation’ but refrained from suggesting specific actions for Kyiv to take, as reported by TASS.

“I will leave it to the Ukrainians and military commanders to make these difficult operational decisions,” Stoltenberg said.

He also spoke on the challenges faced by the European



We should also be prepared for bad news. Wars develop in phases. But we have to support Ukraine in both good and bad times

JENS STOLTENBERG

defence industry.

“One of the issues we should address is the fragmentation of the European defence industry,” he said.

The NATO chief also highlighted that promoting increased ammunition production is in the best interest of Europe and contributes to job growth in the industry. He emphasised the importance of preventing a surge in ammunition prices following the rise in demand.

Stoltenberg mentioned that there haven’t been any noteworthy developments on the battlefield in recent months and refrained from providing a forecast for future events.

“Wars are inherently unpredictable,” the official said. “But we know that the more we support Ukraine, the faster the war will end,” TASS reported.

Putin’s decree was released by the Kremlin and took force immediately. It brings the strength of the armed forces to 1.32mn service personnel and increases the overall number of Russian military personnel to about 2.2mn, Al Jazeera reported.

ANI

Brazil’s Lula points to UNSC’s failures in causing bombardment of Gaza

Istanbul, Turkey - Criticising the UN Security Council, the president of Brazil has said the body’s failure to enforce ‘respect’ for its decisions is part of the cause for the ongoing bombardment of the Gaza Strip.

“What we’re lacking is sanity and authority on the part of the leadership that are part of the UN Security Council,” Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said in an interview with Al Jazeera on Friday.

“If we had true leaders, if we had a body that makes a decision that would be respected and complied (with) - and that should be the body of UNSC (UN Security Council) - we would not have this war,” he stressed.

Referring to the thousands of casualties, including children, and the bombing of hospitals in the Gaza Strip, Lula described the situation as ‘madness’.

He emphasised that Israel has the right to self-defense but criticised the unnecessary killing of innocent women and children.



Brazil’s President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva

He called for peaceful coexistence between the states of Palestine and Israel.

Urging a diplomatic solution to the conflict, Lula criticised US President Joe Biden for lacking the ‘sensitivity’ to call for a halt to the fighting, pointing out Washington’s influence over Israel.

Lula also criticised Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, describing him as a leader with low sensitivity to humanitarian issues, emphasising

the need for respect towards the Palestinian people.

Protests held

Thousands took to the streets in European capitals on Saturday to protest Israeli attacks and demand a cease-fire in the Gaza Strip. Demonstrators once again held a number of protests to urge their governments to pressure Israel in the face of an ongoing dire humanitarian situation in the besieged enclave.

In France, protesters held rallies across the country, including in Toulouse, Nice as well as Paris in support of Palestine.

Gathering at the Republic Square in Paris, the crowd held a march toward the Bastille Square chanting pro-Palestinian slogans.

French rapper Kery James, La France insoumise (LFI) MPs Thomas Portes, Louis Boyard, Mathilde Panot, Carlos Martens Bilango, former French Presidential candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon were among attendees.

Portes told Anadolu that Israel started the ‘massacre in Gaza’ again after a short period.

Mentioning the killings of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, he noted that illegal settlements are killing children and Israel is committing ‘ethnic cleansing’. Portes criticised the international community and the French government for remaining silent against what is happening in Gaza.

Anadolu Agency

India assembly polls: BJP wins three states, Congress takes Telangana

New Delhi, India - Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday hailed the Bharatiya Janata Party’s victories in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh assembly polls and said the results are showing that people have faith only in the politics of ‘development and good governance’ and on the BJP.

He also thanked the voters, especially the women voters and youth, for their affection and blessings on the BJP.

The Prime Minister said the people are moving forward with the aim of making India a developed country and ‘we have today taken together a strong step in that direction’.

He said the BJP will continue

to work hard for the welfare of the people.

“We bow to people. The results in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh are telling that faith of people of India is only on the politics of good governance and development, they have faith on BJP,” the prime minister said in a post on X.

“For showering their affection, faith and blessings on BJP, I thank from my heart ‘parviar-jans’, specially mothers-sisters-daughters and our young voters. I assure that we will continue to work hard for your welfare,” he added.

The Prime Minister also lauded the BJP workers for taking the central government’s



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders and supporters celebrate at the party headquarters in New Delhi on Sunday (ANI)

schemes to the people.

“A special thanks to the hard-working party workers. You all have set an excellent example. The way you have taken development and poor-oriented welfare policies of the BJP to people, the more it is praised the less it will be,” he said.

“We are moving ahead with the goal of a developed India. We do not have to stop or get tired. We have to make India victorious. Today we have together taken a strong step in that direction,” he added.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi conceded the party’s defeat in the Assembly elections of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, but

he said that the party’s battle of ideology would continue.

“We humbly accept the mandate of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan - the battle of ideology will continue,” Rahul Gandhi posted on X.

In Telangana where the Congress is set to form the next government, dethroning BRS’s 10-year rule, he said that his party will fulfil the promise of making ‘Prajalu Telangana’.

“I am very thankful to the people of Telangana - we will fulfil the promise of making Prajalu Telangana. Heartfelt thanks to all the workers for their hard work and support,” the Wayanad MP posted on X.

ANI

COP28 marks a history with debut of pavilions in Dubai

The Pavilion features representation from 54 countries and over 70 organisations

Dubai, UAE - The 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) marked a historic moment with the debut of pavilions, a first in the history of global COP conferences. This underscores a commitment to adopting a comprehensive and integrated approach to address climate change, leveraging the participation of all stakeholders and sectors to devise innovative and practical solutions to this challenge.

For the first time in the history of a COP, the Ministry of Education hosted a specialised pavilion focused on the education sector, titled 'Legacy from the Land of Zayed', with broad participation from various educational institutions. This Pavilion's inauguration symbolises the collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), coinciding with the announcement of the 'Greening Education Partnership' before COP28.

The Pavilion emphasises the crucial role of the education sec-



For the first time in the history of a COP, the Ministry of Education hosted a specialised pavilion focused on the education sector - 'Legacy from the Land of Zayed'

tor and educational institutions in raising awareness about climate challenges among future generations.

The Ministry of Education announced the organisation of approximately 46 dialogue sessions in collaboration with over 40 global partners. Over 30 events and projects on education and climate issues will be organised throughout the climate con-

ference. Also present at COP28 is the Trade House Pavilion, marking the first time that trade has been incorporated into the official programme of the global climate conference.

Held under the COP28 Presidency and in collaboration with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the International Trade Centre (ITC)

and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Trade House Pavilion is set to host a number of vital conversations in COP28's Blue Zone on the role of trade in achieving the Paris climate accords, featuring an extensive and influential group of policymakers, NGOs and trade professionals.

The Trade House Pavilion will feature more than 40 sessions throughout the conference, covering a range of topics aligned with the official COP28 Presidency's thematic days. Session topics include waste management, circular economy, border carbon fees, food systems, zero-emission maritime and stock ex-

changes.

The first-of-its-kind Faith Pavilion continues its diverse activities with prominent participation from various religious leaders, offering a global platform for dialogue among religious leaders and their representatives. The Pavilion features representatives from 54 countries and over 70 organisations worldwide, including universities, youth organisations, religious institutions, indigenous peoples' organisations, governmental and non-governmental international entities, women's institutions, and humanitarian aid organisations.

WAM



220 migrants apprehended in Turkey: Police

Istanbul, Turkey - A total of 220 irregular migrants were apprehended on Saturday in operations in Edirne, Kırklareli, Izmir, Mugla, Antalya, and Balıkesir provinces of Turkey.

Northwestern Edirne Provincial Police Department teams apprehended 17 migrants who were detected entering the country through illegal means.

The migrants, identified during inspections in the city centre and districts, were sent to the Provincial Directorate of Immigration after due procedures.

The northwestern Kırklareli Provincial Gendarmerie Command and the Provincial Police Department teams captured 41 foreign nationals who entered the country illegally.

In operations carried out in seven regions, the migrants were handed over to the Pehlivanbey Repatriation Center after necessary procedures.

Additionally, a suspect involved in migrant smuggling was detained in the same operation.

In the waters off the coastal province of Izmir, 11 migrants, who requested assistance due to a motor malfunction, were res-

cued by Coast Guard teams.

Simultaneously, 34 irregular migrants on a moving rubber boat in the same area were apprehended.

In the waters off western Mugla province, 14 migrants on a rubber boat pushed into Turkish territorial waters by Greek elements were rescued by Coast Guard teams.

In the waters off Antalya, 17 migrants on a rubber boat were identified and captured by Coast Guard teams.

Additionally, five migrants were apprehended in the district as a result of follow-up by the District Gendarmerie Command.

Meanwhile, in the waters off Ayvalık in western Balıkesir province, 95 migrants attempting to reach the Greek island of Lesbos through illegal means were captured and rescued.

Coast Guard teams identified rubber boats carrying migrants during operations, rescuing and apprehending them. Following humanitarian aid, all irregular migrants were sent to the Provincial Directorate of Immigration upon completion of procedures.

Anadolu Agency

Philippines President condemns bombing attack on Mindanao State University

Manila, Philippines - Philippines President Bongbong Marcos has condemned the attack on Mindanao State University (MSU) in Marawi City, which claimed the lives of four people and injured several others.

Taking to X, Marcos stated: "I condemn in the strongest possible terms the senseless and most heinous acts perpetrated by foreign terrorists upon the Mindanao State University (MSU) and Marawi communities early this Sunday morning. Extremists who wield violence against the innocent will always be regarded as enemies to our society."

His statement comes after four people were killed and several others were wounded after a bombing attack on a university gymnasium in the southern Philippines, Al Jazeera reported. The explosion took place at a gymnasium at Mindanao State



Police investigators and soldiers are seen at the site of an explosion in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur province, the Philippines on Sunday (Xinhua)

University in Marawi City during a Catholic mass service on Sunday morning.

Bongbong Marcos said that he has directed the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to ensure the protection

and safety of civilians and the security of affected and vulnerable communities. He further said that additional security personnel are also being deployed.

He offered condolences to the victims and their loved ones who had been targeted in the attack.

Marcos vowed to bring perpetrators to justice.

"We are in close coordination with the regional government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and the concerned Local Government Units. I thank them for their swift and immediate response to the incident and for their ready support to the victims," Marcos said. He asked people to remain calm and circumspect in the Philippines' collective efforts to ensure that the horrific events of this morning are not further compounded by 'inaccurate, unvetted, and unofficial information'.

Earlier, Lanao del Sur province Governor Mamintal Alonto Adiong Jr condemned the bombing. He stressed that terrorist attacks on educational institutions must be condemned.

ANI

AWARENESS RALLY



Artists take part in an awareness rally on Thalassemia and AIDS, in Kolkata, India on Sunday (ANI)

Former US President Donald Trump calls Biden 'destroyer of American democracy'

Washington DC, US - Former US President Donald Trump has called US President Joe Biden a 'destroyer of American democracy', *The Washington Post* reported. While addressing thousands of supporters in Iowa, Trump said: "Biden and his radical left allies like to pose as defenders of democracy."

He said: "But Joe Biden is not the defender of American democracy. Joe Biden is the destroyer of American democracy. ... This campaign is a righteous crusade to liberate our republic from Biden and the criminals and the Biden admin-

istration," *The Washington Post* reported.

In his address, Trump tried to play down the criminal charges that he tried to overturn the 2020 election and from his own commitments to take revenge on his opponents if he returns to the White House, seeking to parry warnings that he poses a danger to democracy.

In his address, he said that the investigations into his presidency, like the special counsel probe of Russian interference in the 2016 election and his first impeachment for pressuring Ukraine to disparage Biden,



Former US president and Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump

Joe Biden is not the defender of American democracy... This campaign is a righteous crusade to liberate our republic from the criminals and the Biden administration

DONALD TRUMP

amounted to an effort to 'overthrow the duly elected President'.

As candidates ramp up appearances in Iowa ahead of the caucuses on January 15, Trump, who refused to accept his 2020 election loss, compared Biden to a fascist tyrant and the campaign distributed signs reading 'Biden attacks democracy'.

He accused Biden 'and his band of Marxists, Communists and Fascists' of trying 'to crush free speech, censor their critics', and 'criminalise dissent', according to *The Washington Post* report.

Donald Trump said: "They've

been waging an all-out war on American democracy."

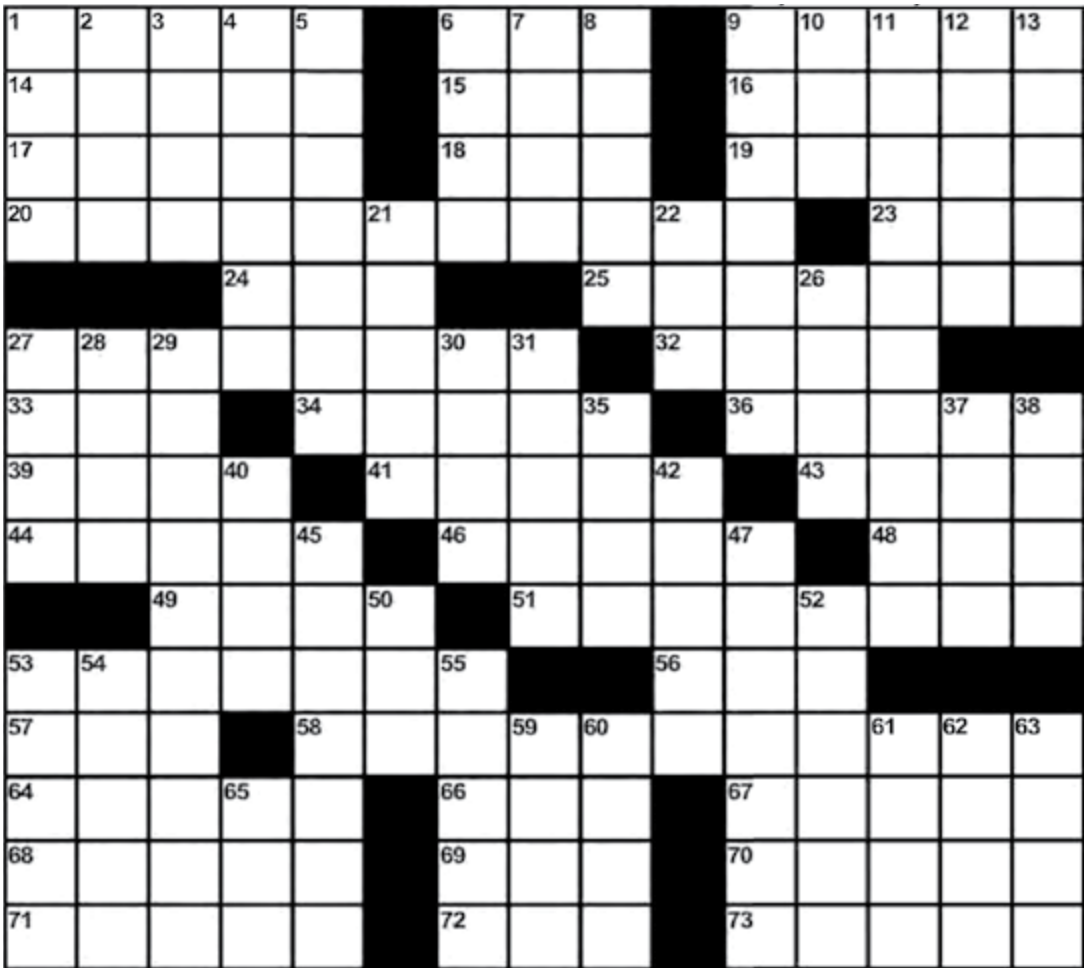
"And becoming more and more extreme and repressive."

"If you put me back in the White House, that reign will be over and America will be a free nation once again," he added.

Jennifer Mercieca, a historian of American political rhetoric at Texas A&M University, said that Trump's speech showed that US President Joe Biden's framing of the 2024 election as democracy versus authoritarianism is resonating with voters.

ANI

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) Eyeglasses, informally
- 6) Impressive degree
- 9) Turkish generals
- 14) Artistic stand
- 15) Word from a finger-pointing chooser
- 16) Constructed
- 17) Jungle vine
- 18) Affirmative action?
- 19) "Tomorrow" musical
- 20) Aggravation at a lack of progress
- 23) Type of modern testing
- 24) Airplane passenger's concern
- 25) Addressed a waiter
- 27) Pronged weapons
- 32) _fide
- 33) It may be right above a knee
- 34) Down's partner
- 36) The time being
- 39) Knocks on a door
- 41) Begets
- 43) Gulf War missile
- 44) Stand on its head
- 46) Jack's nemesis
- 48) .0000001 joule

DOWN

- 1) "To thine own _ be true"
- 2) Au_
- 3) Jacob's twin
- 4) Used a thurible
- 5) Like proper venetian blinds
- 6) Bird that repeats (var.)
- 7) Cowboy's pride
- 8) Part of a TV feed
- 9) Leave high and dry
- 10) Big bang creator
- 11) Things that get in the way

- 12) Type of skirt that flares outward
- 13) "Farm" or "home" attachment
- 21) Some members of Indian royalty
- 22) Kingly sphere
- 26) "The Dukes of Hazzard" spin-off
- 27) By way of, briefly
- 28) Acquire in the field
- 29) Roadblock
- 30) H.S. math subject
- 31) Bacon bit
- 35) "Awright!"
- 37) Be a good doctor
- 38) Competitive advantage
- 40) Quick haircut
- 42) Big mess
- 45) Coup participant
- 47) John Deere product
- 50) Belle of the ball, briefly
- 52) One of these days
- 53) La_ (Milan opera house)
- 54) Type of base
- 55) Autocrats no more
- 59) Common test answer
- 60) Lease
- 61) Agenda unit

- 62) Legendary gymnast Korbut
- 63) Tide type
- 65) Former electronics giant

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

It's time for you to start thinking about how you can get more physically active. Going to the gym a few days a month or going for a jog every other morning is great, but you'll have a lot more fun with it if you can integrate your physical exercise and your free time. Pick up a sport. Start learning how to roller skate with a friend! There are all sorts of ways to burn calories and get your heart beating faster. You've got the creativity to figure out how to do it. Use it.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

The Universe is sending you a huge amount of positive energy, which means that you can have fun doing anything right now, so bring on the adventures! Even your regular routine will offer you some fun surprises here and there, from an unexpected meeting with a charming friend to a funny coincidence that bonds you with a group of strangers. This is one of those days when you feel as one with the world around you. It's a great day for making new friends.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

You aren't feeling totally in sync with your friends right now, which could cause some social awkwardness. One person in particular is causing some tension, and you just don't have the patience for it. Dealing with all of the insecurities of someone who is always fishing for compliments isn't fun. It's tiring. Take a vacation from this person and try spending time alone for a while. You can get a lot done, and you'll have more fun doing it by yourself.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. What is the stapes bone known as?

- A. Anklebone
- B. Stirrup
- C. Jaw
- D. Funnybone

02. The 2008 British film "Slumdog Millionaire" directed by Danny Boyle is an adaptation of what 2005 novel?

- A. "The God of Small Things" by Arundhati Roy
- B. "Q & A" by Vikas Swarup
- C. "Kim" by Rudyard Kipling
- D. "Baumgartner's Bombay" by Anita Desai

03. Dodge Morgan, who became famous in 1986 at age 54 when he sailed solo around the globe without stops in 150 days (breaking the record of 292 days), had become a millionaire by operating a company that manufactured what from 1971 to 1983?

- A. Hula Hoops
- B. Frisbees
- C. Radar detectors
- D. Turbochargers

Answers: 1.B 2.B 3.C



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Just because you're desperate to go out and have some fun doesn't mean that you aren't allowed to be choosy about what you end up doing. So don't just hop on board any bandwagon headed for funtown. Make sure that whatever new adventure you embark on today will be something that you really enjoy. Your time is precious, so don't waste it doing something just for the sake of being busy. If the perfect plan doesn't come together, you'd be better off just taking a nap.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Your high-spirited attitude will enable you to challenge someone in a constructive and positive way today, so don't be shy about objecting to someone's silly or illogical statements. While a lesser person might jump down someone's throat for this, you know that it is much wiser to focus on the good in what they have to say, not the bad. When you help lift people up, you will get a lot more cooperation, and your popularity will stay just as high as it always has been.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

You've been interested in getting more involved with your community but concerned that it will take over your life. Don't worry. Getting involved doesn't have to turn your entire life on its ear and take up valuable social time. Just be honest with yourself about what you want out of this experience, and try not to overcommit yourself just because you know it will make you look good. There's no point in helping out unless you're doing it to help others, not to help yourself.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

The acquaintances you make today will be with you for a long time, so it would be in your best interests to be completely genuine from the moment you make eye contact. It can be tempting to hide behind standard social roles and nonthreatening small talk, but it's not the right move for you to make today. Engage with other people. Unless you make an effort to really know who they are, why would they make an effort to really know who you are?



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

You are feeling the urge to start a new project right now, which is wonderful, but keep in mind that you have sole control over how things will turn out. It can be either great or awful, so just make sure you have the time you need to devote to this new task so that you can ensure its success. The amount of energy you put into it is directly proportional to the level of satisfaction you will get when it's finished, so don't start something unless you know you can finish it.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

There is a big discovery that you haven't made yet, and you are running the danger of this discovery giving up and going away. Today, you need to wake up your adventurous spirit and let it be in charge. Not only is it an important part of who you are, it's a valuable way to keep your life exciting. Follow any clues that pop up, and don't give up if the trail gets cold. Something is just beyond your vision, and you need to keep stabbing in the dark until you hit something.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

A dramatic incident today could give you an interesting insight into someone you don't know very well. You'll want to make sure you have some tissues handy, because they could react a lot more emotionally than you would have thought. You might not know what to make of this person's true colors, but you'll love discovering they aren't as perfect as you thought they were. You will be the strong one today. Everyone else will follow.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

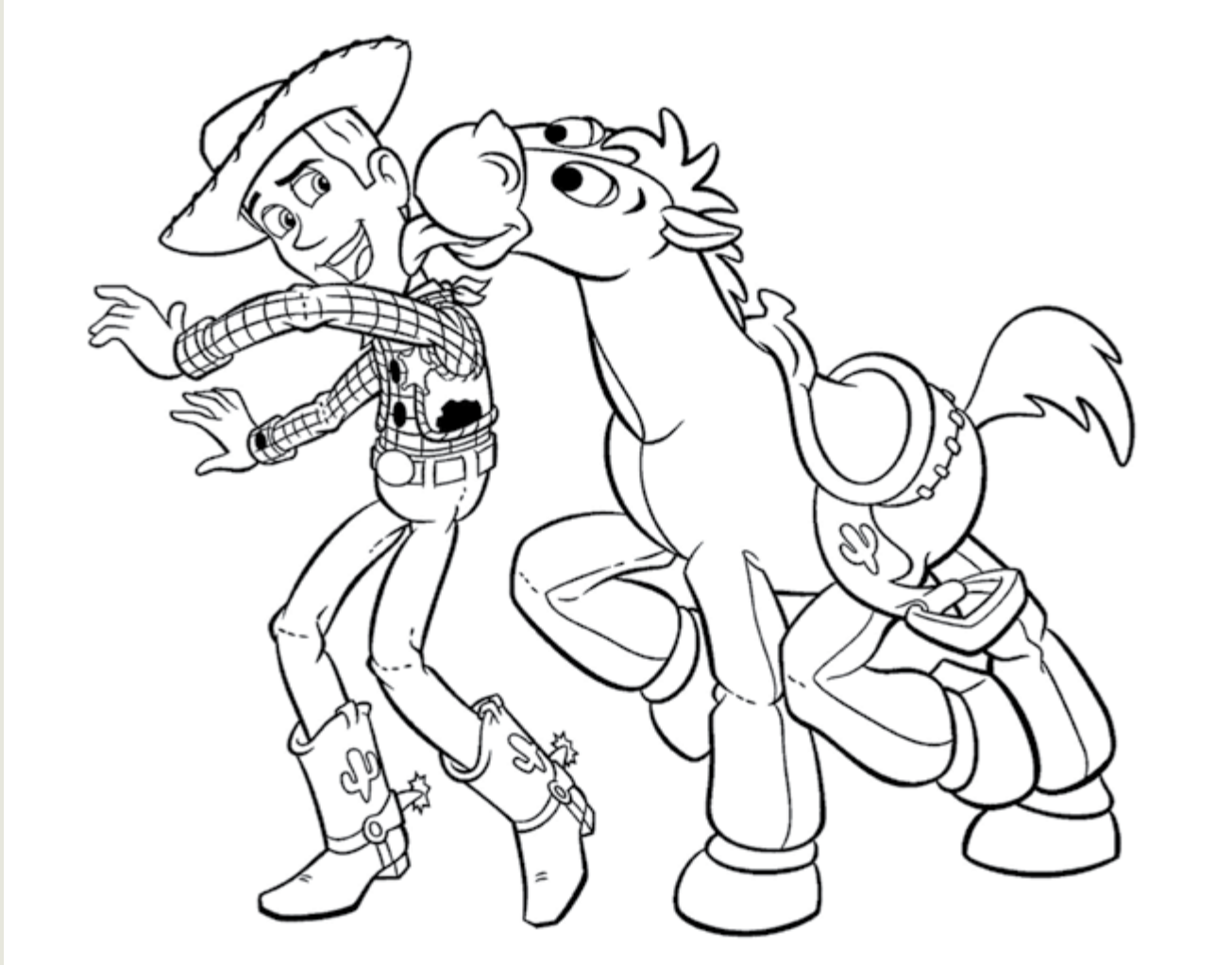
Someone needs some help today, and you should try to come to their rescue. Not only could acting selflessly create a greater gain for you later on down the road, it will strengthen your relationship with this person and put them in your debt, which could be extremely useful very soon. Your motivation doesn't have to be totally altruistic for it to be effective. It's okay to want there to be something in it for you. A win/win situation is a great situation.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Today, your vision of your future is clouded by wishful thinking and overly high hopes. It's good to be positive about where you want to take your life, but right now you might only be hearing what you want to hear, and that is a dangerous road to go down. Reach out for a reality check from a good friend or family member. They have an objective perspective and can help you wake up to what is realistic. They won't be raining on your parade. They'll just be clearing your vision.

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

A	G	E	G
E	S	A	N
W	T	O	Y
M	K	A	S

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

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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



Germany players celebrate on the podium after beating France in the U-17 World Cup final on Saturday

GERMANY CHAMPIONS

European winners beat France in shootout to bag FIFA U17 World Cup

Surakarta, Indonesia - Germany lifted the FIFA U-17 World Cup for the first time following a dramatic penalty shootout victory over France in Surakarta on Saturday.

Goals from Paris Brunner and Noah Darvich gave the Germans a 2-0 lead, but a quick-fire goal by Saimon Bouabre and a red card for Winners Osawe shifted the momentum in France's favour, with Mathis Amougou later turning home an 85th-minute equaliser. Germany would ultimately prevail, though, following a topsy-turvy 4-3 shootout win.

Goals from Paris Brunner and Noah Darvich gave the Germans a 2-0 lead, but a quick-fire goal by Saimon Bouabre and a red card for Winners Osawe shifted the momentum in France's favour

The European champions started the game in lightning-quick fashion and thought they had opened the scoring early on when Brunner rifled home from close-range, but the goal was ruled out by the assistant for an offside in the build-up.

Brunner wouldn't be denied for long, however. After some penalty-box pinball, Bilal Yalcinkaya nipped in front of Aymen Sadi whose outstretched leg brought down the forward. Following an on-field review, referee Espen Eskas awarded a spot-kick

which Brunner confidently stroked home just before the half-hour mark.

Germany didn't let up and would double their lead just after the break.

Max Moerstedt broke down the right and played a teasing ball looking for Brunner, and while it didn't reach its intended target, captain Darvich followed up to turn the ball home from a tight angle.

That goal seemingly sparked France into life and they found a route back into the game almost immediately. Bouabre skipped past a German challenge down

the left and arrowed a terrific strike into the bottom corner to halve the arrears barely two minutes later.

The momentum shift became all the more evident soon after, as Osawe was sent off for a second booking following a late challenge on Ismail Bouneb in the 69th minute.

France kept pushing and would eventually be rewarded five minutes from time. Tidiam Gomis broke away down the right after a nice one-two and laid the ball across for Amougou to turn home from close-range and send the game to a shootout.

Germany's Brunner wins Golden Ball



Paris Brunner

Surakarta, Indonesia - Germany's maiden title tilt was helped along the way by electric forward Paris Brunner. He strung together a string of exceptional performances and scored five goals at the tournament - including a brace in the semi-final and one in the showpiece match against France - to be crowned as the tournament's outstanding player.

Silverball winner Hamadou Makalou was terrific for Mali throughout the tournament, playing a crucial role in the middle of the park as the African nation took home the bronze medal. His starring moment came in the play-off for third place, as he nutmegged his way into the Argentina box, before side-stepping two further challenges and tapping home a stunning goal to confirm victory. Mathis Amougou, who finished third in the race, was the beating heart of France's final push He

netted the final goal of the tournament to bring the Europeans level in the final against Germany.

Agustin Ruberto of Argentina won the golden boot. He netted eight goals in total - the joint-most at the U-17 finals since Victor Osimhen's record-breaking tally of 10 in 2015. Mali captain Ibrahim Diarra scored five goals and four assists in seven games to lead by example. He was involved in nine of his side's 18 goals, and was particularly impressive in their quarter-final victory over Morocco and the third place play-off match against Argentina. Argentina captain Claudio Echeverri scored five goals and had two assists.

Meanwhile Paul Argney of France kept five consecutive clean sheets to win the golden glove. He conceded just three goals across the tournament, and saved two penalties in the shootout defeat to Germany.



Paul George was the star for Los Angeles Clippers with 25 points

George stars as Clippers comeback stuns Warriors

Los Angeles, United States - Paul George emerged as the hero with a game-deciding three-pointer as Los Angeles Clippers overcame a 22-point deficit to edge Golden State Warriors 113-112 on Saturday.

George's shot came after Moses Moody's late surge briefly tilted the score in favour of the Warriors. The win helped Clippers avenge their prior 120-114

loss to the Warriors.

George, the driving force for the Clippers, led the charge with an impressive 25 points, steering them to victory after their earlier setback against the Warriors.

On the opposing end, Stephen Curry showcased his prowess with 22 points and 11 assists for Warriors.

In another match, Oklahoma City Thunder weathered an as-

ounding 30-0 fourth-quarter surge from the short-handed Dallas Mavericks.

Despite the return of Luka Doncic after a one-game absence, Mavericks couldn't sustain their late-game push. Doncic delivered a breathtaking triple-double performance, amassing 36 points, 15 rebounds, and 18 assists. However, it wasn't enough to fend off the Thunder,

who were led by Jalen Williams' 23 points, securing a hard-fought 126-120 victory amidst Dallas' ferocious comeback attempt.

Another captivating clash featured Mikal Bridges, who exploded for 26 of his stunning 42 points in the first quarter.

His offensive brilliance guided Brooklyn Nets to halt Orlando Magic's impressive nine-game winning streak. Despite strong

efforts from Orlando's Franz Wagner and Cole Anthony, who combined for 40 points, Bridges' scoring outburst powered Nets to a commanding 129-101 triumph, halting Magic's historic winning streak.

Meanwhile, Cleveland Cavaliers added to Detroit Pistons' woes, handing them their franchise-record 17th consecutive loss.

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STYLISH GUNNERS SURVIVE LATE SCARE

Saka, Odegaard on target as Arsenal beat Wolves to consolidate lead

London, United Kingdom - Arsenal provisionally went four points clear at the top of the Premier League with an edgy 2-1 win against Wolves.

First-half goals from Bukayo Saka and Martin Odegaard were enough to see Arsenal through the match after a late goal by Matheus Cunha made it a nervy ending.

Arsenal kicked off with the one change to the starting line-up that beat Brentford the week before, as David Raya returned after being ineligible to start against his parent club.

Wolves made four changes to their starting line-up, bringing in Hugo Bueno, Tommy Doyle, Boubacar Traore and Craig Dawson, who returned from suspension.

Saka opened the scoring in the sixth minute. A quick one-two with Gabriel Jesus down the right split the Wolves defence. Saka took Takehiro Tomiyasu's layoff in his stride and after a deflection slotted it into the far corner.

Arsenal doubled the lead six minutes later with a superb 18-pass team goal. The Wolves defenders were left at a standstill as Oleksandr Zinchenko played a



Arsenal's Bukayo Saka celebrates after scoring against Wolves on Saturday

one-two with Jesus before cutting the ball back to captain Odegaard, whose sidefooted shot beat Jose Sa.

Gunners were fired up and in the hunt for a third as Sa was called into action by Leandro Trossard's shot in the six-yard box.

Shortly after, the Wolves 'keeper was substituted off with an injury and replaced by Dan Bentley, who was beaten by a curling strike from Gabriel Martinelli that struck the far post and went wide.

In the seventh minute of first-half stoppage time, Wolves were nearly back in the game. A mix-up between William Saliba and Zinchenko allowed for the ball to break for Hwang Hee-chan to go one-on-one with Raya, but the Arsenal goalkeeper got to the ball first and his defence cleared.

Trossard had the chance to seal the game for the Gunners as he was put through on goal by Odegaard, but the forward was unable to score.

Cunha's 86th-minute strike gave Wolves a glimmer of hope and gave the Emirates Stadium a nervy finish. The forward pounced on a poor clearance by Zinchenko and curled a powerful shot past Raya.

Immediately after scoring Wolves were opened up by a disguised pass from Odegaard to substitute Eddie Nketiah, who found himself one-on-one with the rival keeper but struck the post.



Newcastle United's Anthony Gordon celebrates after scoring against Manchester United on Saturday

Gordon delivers as Newcastle go above Manchester United

Newcastle, United Kingdom - Newcastle United leapfrogged Manchester United to move to fifth in the Premier League table after a dominant display, albeit rewarded by a single goal, at St James' Park on Saturday.

Anthony Gordon was the hero, scoring in the 55th minute but after Newcastle had been in total control, an injury to goalkeeper Nick Pope led to a nervous finish for the home fans.

for the away side.

The closest that Newcastle came to taking a deserved first-half lead was through Kieran Trippier on 39 minutes. His free-kick from distance hit the underside of the bar but bounced on the wrong side of the goalline and into the grateful arms of Andre Onana.

The pattern of home domination continued in the second half and the deadlock was finally broken on 55 minutes and for the third time this season it was thanks to Gordon.

A neat passing move released Trippier down the right and he crossed to give Gordon a simple tap-in at the far post for the first goal conceded by Man Utd in 334 minutes of Premier League football. As St James' Park erupted in relief, Gordon celebrated his sixth Premier League goal of the season and Trippier a league-high seventh assist.

At that point every Newcastle outfield player had enjoyed a touch of the ball in the Man Utd box, while only two visitors had done so in Newcastle's.

Erik ten Hag's introduction of Rasmus Hojlund and Antony for Marcus Rashford and Martial on the hour did little to stem the Newcastle tide. Lewis Miley came close to his first senior goal but Aaron Wan-Bissaka did well to block the teenager's goalbound shot in the six-yard box in the 79th minute.

From Man Utd's first corner in the 82nd minute, they almost equalised as Sergio Reguilon's shot was brilliantly blocked by Fabian Schar. However, in diving for the ball, Pope hurt himself and had to go off, adding to Howe's long list of injured players.

Eddie Howe named an unchanged team from the one who valiantly drew 1-1 at PSG

Eddie Howe named an unchanged team from the one who valiantly drew 1-1 at Paris Saint-Germain on Tuesday in the UEFA Champions League.

Man Utd's travel plans had suffered a poor start when their flight to Newcastle was cancelled, forcing them to make the journey by coach.

Erik ten Hag put Anthony Martial up front but the Frenchman was largely anonymous as Newcastle bossed the opening half.

Man Utd's defence, with Luke Shaw alongside Harry Maguire at its centre, endured a tough start, with Alexander Isak twice going close as Newcastle enjoyed eight shots on Man Utd goal in the opening 20 minutes.

At the other end, Alejandro Garnacho did break away and force Pope into a save with his feet but that was a rare foray

Jovic helps Milan outclass Frosinone

Milan, Italy - AC Milan registered a 3-1 victory over Frosinone in a dominant display at San Siro, with Luka Jovic starring with a goal and an assist. The win marked Milan's second consecutive win, revitalising their Serie A campaign after a string of challenging matches.

Christian Pulisic and Fikayo Tomori also found the net for Milan while Frosinone's Marco Brescianini salvaged a goal from a free kick late in the game.

Coach Stefano Pioli expressed satisfaction with the team's performance, especially considering their recent struggles to secure back-to-back league victories. He emphasised the importance of consistency, acknowledging the challenges faced due to several absences, including the injured Rafael Leao.

Reflecting on Jovic's impactful display, Pioli praised the Serbian striker's abilities while urging him to push himself further. Jovic's first goal for Milan after a series of league games since his arrival



AC Milan's Luka Jovic celebrates with teammates after scoring against Frosinone on Saturday

from Fiorentina in September proved pivotal.

"I try to encourage him every day," Pioli said, highlighting Jovic's technical prowess and expressing hope for increased confidence and more telling contributions from the striker.

Pulisic's exceptional finish, connecting with a long pass from goalkeeper Mike Maignan, doubled Milan's advantage early in the second half. Jovic's assist to Tomori further solidified Milan's dominance, showcasing his versatility as a center forward.

While Frosinone displayed promise in the initial stages, Milan's late first-half goal by Jovic shifted the momentum in their favor, leading to a more confident and impactful second half.

With this win, Milan stands third in the Serie A standings, trailing leaders Juventus by four points and following closely behind second-placed Inter Milan.

In an earlier fixture, Lazio secured a 1-0 victory against Cagliari at home.



Vitor Roque set to join Barcelona in January

Barcelona, Spain - Barcelona will have a significant boost in their roster come January as Brazilian sensation Vitor Roque prepares to make his move from Athletico Paranaense.

This move was confirmed by Paranaense on Saturday, revealing that the 18-year-old's imminent departure will follow his final match against Santos on Sunday, marking his farewell to South American side before his venture into European terrain.

Diaz and Rodrygo on target as Real Madrid see off Granada

Madrid, Spain - Real Madrid secured a 2-0 victory over Granada in a match that didn't quite spark excitement at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. The win propelled Real to the top of La Liga with 38 points, ahead of Girona, who earlier triumphed 2-1 against Valencia, on goal difference.

Granada, second from bottom in the league, couldn't pose a threat to a Real Madrid side that, despite missing key players due to injuries, displayed dominance from the outset. With 71 per cent ball possession, the hosts controlled the game entirely, limiting Granada to no attempts on goal.

Brahim Diaz initiated the move before finishing it off to

score the opener in the 26th minute. He skillfully executed a one-two with Toni Kroos and beat the offside trap before slotting the ball past goalkeeper Raul Fernandez. Diaz's proactive play continued as he set up Rodrygo in the 57th minute, resulting in a spectacular goal, as Real extended their lead.

"It was almost a perfect game. We dominated and they created few chances. "If I remember correctly, they didn't shoot on goal. We were very focused and that's the work of the whole team," Diaz told DAZN, acknowledging the team's solid performance. He credited Kroos for his visionary pass, highlighting the German's

exceptional ability to find teammates on the field.

"My goal was a true striker finish, I'm happy, but credit to Toni, who sees the pass that no one else sees. You only have to see him on the pitch, how he looks for a team-mate - it's spectacular. In training we see him, and today I'd better shine his boots."

Rodrygo, who netted in his fifth consecutive game across all competitions, expressed gratitude for the team effort, especially Couto's role in setting up the winning goal.

Girona, meanwhile, clinched a 2-1 victory against Valencia, thanks to forward Cristhian Stu-



Real Madrid's Brahim Diaz celebrates after scoring against Granada on Saturday

ani's late brace to maintain their stunning surge in the league.

Valencia kept frustrating Girona and went in front in the 57th minute thanks to a clever Hugo Duro strike after he capitalised on defender David Lopez's blunder on the edge of the box.

Roared on by a packed Montilivi Stadium, Stuani latched on to Yan Couto's cross deep inside the box to fire in Girona's equaliser in the 83th minute.

Five minutes later the duo joined forces again as substitute Couto raced down the right channel before lofting a fine cross to Stuani, who netted the winning strike.

Voluntourism - as the name suggests - marries volunteering and tourism. This type of altruistic travel is growing in popularity as more people want to travel sustainably and give back to the places they visit rather than cause more harm.

Researchers have found these experiences to help increase the traveller's well-being and decrease stress and anxiety. If sincere, the effects can dive even deeper: The traveller's beliefs and perspectives are challenged, and their minds open up by these new connections. It can also help them find purpose.

However, the keyword for unlocking this inner transformation is authentic. Voluntourism has been criticised as problematic, compared to imperialism when the traveller drops in and exploits the host community just to make themselves feel better.

The impact of your volunteering depends on how a traveller approaches it - like the organisation they choose and how it works with the community, *USA Today* opines.

Located on Oahu's North Shore, Waimea Valley holds historic and cultural significance as a place where ancient Hawaiian high priests lived well before the 1700s. Hawaiians lost control of the land to Western hands in the late 1800s, and it was used for ranching and tourist activities - until 2003, when Hawaiian nonprofit Hiipaka was given the responsibility of stewarding the land to its original glory.

The lush valley continues to be a popular place for tourists, with up to 2,400 daily visitors wanting to witness its stunning waterfall and preserved cultural sites.

However, its volunteers get to experience something much more special.

"You really get to grasp all the work that needs to be done here in Hawaii and in other places," *USA Today* quoted Kimberly Anguiano, Assistant Executive Director of Support Services, as saying.

In Hawaiian, these values are

Voluntourism

WHEN TRAVELLERS CHOOSE TO TAKE TIME OUT OF THEIR VACATION TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE HOST COMMUNITY



If everybody did that when they travelled, it would take the burden off these nonprofits

BARDAL

malama or to 'take care of', kuleana or 'responsibility', and laulima or 'community', Anguiano pointed out.

At Waimea Valley, working side by side with its staff not only helps expedite their mission but also gives you "that connection, that experience of really getting to learn about where you're at and understanding the significance and importance of Hawaii, its history and really, what we're doing today for the future," she said.

That's a Hawaiian experience travellers can't get on Google or hanging out by the beach.

sacred areas. Think of it like ringing someone's doorbell.

It was then that the girls knew "this is serious and this is important," Bardal said. "The girls were invested right off the bat."

The volleyball group spent the morning clearing weeds from the botanical garden, which is home to over 5,000 species of tropical plants, including many that are endemic and native. "It's what Hawaiians were doing here for hundreds of years," said Anguiano.

The group was told to forgo gloves and "connect with the earth, connect with the soil," Bardal recalled.

Seeing peacocks freely roaming about and vibrant plants only found in the tropics also captured the group's attention. "There were all these things the girls don't normally see in Canada."

It's not the destination, it's the vibes what Americans want in their vacations now

The teenagers' hard work that day would have taken the four Waimea Valley conservation staff members an entire working week.

Bardal said the girls felt a sense of accomplishment at the end of their volunteer day. "I didn't hear one complaint," she said. Before the trip, she was worried the high schoolers wouldn't want to get their hands dirty and rather just hang out at the beach.

Although she's back in Canada, Bardal said that week in Hawaii introduced her to a different side of travel. She wants to instill these values of travelling and volunteering with her two-year-old daughter.

"If everybody did that when they travelled, it would take the burden off these nonprofits," she said.

What you can't learn in a museum

Juliana Colonna and Léo Parent-Jung made the trek from France to Honolulu for a conference for the Society of Social Sciences since Colonna is a PhD student. With some encouragement from the conference organizers, the couple sought ways to volunteer for their first time on the island.

"It's important to understand that Hawaii is really far from Europe, where I live, and I did not know much about its history," Parent-Jung said. Before the trip, he researched more about how colonisation tried to wipe out Hawaiian culture and how the effect is still felt today.

To him, volunteering would be like "a way to repair what was done or try to help to come back to what was there and did not ask to be destroyed."

Colonna chose Waimea Valley because she's done forest restoration work before and enjoyed it - and the couple wanted to check out the valley as tourists anyway. After their rewarding day, the couple wants to volunteer whenever they travel and even back home in France.



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