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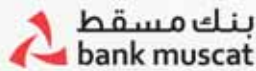
HM CONGRATULATES EMIR OF QATAR

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar on the occasion of the anniversary of his ascension to the throne. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments along with his best wishes of good health, wellbeing and a long life to Sheikh Tamim, praying to the Almighty Allah for the return of this and similar occasions on him to achieve aspirations of progress and prosperity for the people of Qatar. — **ONA**



Founded 1975 · Volume 49 No. 80 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group

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SHURA COUNCIL

Big jump in enrolment of students, more scholarships to study abroad

MUSCAT: The Shura Council on Monday held its 10th regular session of the first annual convening during the 10th term.

During the session, the Council hosted Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, to discuss the Ministry's statement which covered policies, programmes, strategies and five-year plans pertaining to developing higher education, vocational training, research and innovation.

The session was attended by Khalid bin Hilal Al Maawali, Chairman of the Council.

Dr. Rahma said that an observable rise in enrolment rates in higher education institutions in Oman was coupled with stronger ties of cooperation with corresponding institutions in Arab and friendly countries.

The outcome was the allocation of more scholarships for Om-



ani students to study abroad. The scholarships include 206 annual scholarships for study in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 50 annual scholarships for study in the Republic of Hungary and 22 annual scholarships for Omani students to study in the French Republic.

The minister added that three private higher education institu-

tions in the Sultanate of Oman received scholarships funded by "Erasmus Plus" student exchange programme for European Union countries for the first time.

She noted that institutions were those of "Al Buraimi University", the "German University of Technology (GUtech Oman)" and "Dhofar University".

The minister pointed out that the education-based training programme (Eidad), first launched in academic year 2020/2021, benefited students in the penultimate year of graduation.

She explained that, during academic year 2022/2023, the yearlong programme was extended to 17 higher education

institutions, 202 private institutions and 205 students.

Review curricula

Dr. Rahma added that a joint working team formed to review curricula for educational institutions comprised members from the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Education, the Sultan

Qaboos University (SQU) and the University of Technology and Applied Sciences.

The team embarked on identifying areas that needed changes and priorities. Once the team accomplishes its mission, a charter that frames all these programmes in Oman would be devised, the minister affirmed. **>A5**

GAZA DEATH TOLL
as of June 24, 2024



Deaths
37,626
Injured
86,098

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Sayyid Badr meets Palestinian official

1 Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister met with senior Palestinian official. **>A3**

WORLD

20 bodies found at Seoul battery plant fire

2 20 bodies were found at the site of a lithium battery plant fire in Hwaseong, Seoul yesterday. **>A6**

SPORTS

SA beat West Indies by three wickets

3 South Africa beat West Indies by three wickets and entered the semifinals at Antigua on Monday. **>A8**



48.9°C
Hamra Ad Duru station in Al Dhahirah Governorate recorded 48.9 degrees Celsius, the highest temperature among all the weather stations in the Sultanate of Oman in the last 24 hours

DOCTORS URGE PRECAUTIONS AS TEMPERATURE SOARS

Outdoor activities during midday when temperatures peak, should be limited

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Office-goers faced searing heat after they went to office following the nine-day Eid break. The scorching sun showed no mercy, marking yet another day of intense heat that has gripped the Sultanate of Oman in recent days.

Temperatures have soared to nearly 50 degrees Celsius in some parts of Oman. Doctors have urged people to take precautions

against the heat wave, as there has been a rise in patients reporting symptoms of heat exhaustion and dehydration at hospitals and health clinics.

"I've never seen this sort of high temperature over the years in June," said Abdulaziz Al Sagri, 58, a government employee. "We usually never get the brunt of all this heat and humidity because we are in Muscat as compared to the interior regions of the Sultanate. Just how hot it is, that is all

everyone is talking about, but imagine the people living in the desert and working in the oilfields," he added.

As Oman braces for the full force of summer, residents and visitors alike are urged to take precautions against the intense heat. Staying hydrated, seeking shade, and avoiding prolonged exposure to direct sunlight are essential.

The rising temperatures highlight the region's challenging climate during the summer months, necessitating adjustments in daily routines and outdoor activities to stay safe and cool.

The onset of such high temperatures has practical implications for daily life in Oman.

Outdoor activities, especially during midday when tempera-

tures peak, should be limited or conducted with caution. It is recommended to schedule outdoor tasks early in the morning or late in the evening when the heat is less intense.

Beyond health concerns, the extreme heat poses challenges to various sectors of the economy.

Industries reliant on outdoor labour, such as construction and agriculture, implement strict guidelines to protect workers. Employers provide shaded rest areas and frequent hydration breaks to mitigate the risks associated with high temperatures.

Doctors in Oman have noticed an increase in the number of patients seeking medical care as temperatures have risen significantly compared to the previous month. **>A3**

Sultanate simmers under heat

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman is sweltering under intense heat as temperature touched nearly 50 degrees Celsius in Hamra Ad Duru station in Al Dhahirah Governorate on Sunday, 23, 2024.

According to the data by Oman Meteorology, Hamra Ad Duru station in Al Dhahirah Governorate recorded 48.9 degrees Celsius, the highest temperature among all the weather stations in Oman in the last 24 hours, followed by Sunaynah station in Al Buraimi Governorate with 48.6 degrees Celsius and Fahud station in Al Wusta Governorate recorded 48.1 degrees Celsius.

While Al Buraimi station in Al Buraimi Governorate recorded 47.7 degrees Celsius, Ibri station in Al Dhahirah Governorate recorded 47.4 degrees Celsius and 47.1 degrees Celsius in Zamaim.

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RAM launches 2nd version of public policy and planning programme

The programme aims to empower national leaders to design, formulate, and implement public policies and strategic plans that enhance national competitiveness



MUSCAT: The Royal Academy of Management (RAM) on Monday launched the second version of the Public Policy and Strategic Planning Programme. This programme targets under-secretaries and their equivalents in the government sector. The programme aims to empower national leaders to design, formulate, and implement public policies and strategic plans that enhance national competitiveness. It is implemented in cooperation with Singapore's Kiwani University and the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom (UK).

Prof. Mahad Said Baawain, Minister of Labour and Member of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Academy of Management, stated in his speech: "The launch of the Public Policy and Strategic Planning Programme - The Path of the Undersecretaries, in its second version, epitomizes its alignment with the directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to enable national leaders to develop robust public policies and strategic plans to bolster Oman's economy. This initiative advances the mission of the Royal Academy of Management and aims to effectively develop public policies to achieve the ambitious goals of

Oman Vision 2040." He added that, "The programme had achieved remarkable successes in its previous version, including the strengthening of institutional ties, the advancement and effective communication of public policies, the optimisation of governmental procedures and institutional interactions, and the strategic alignment of the government sector towards sustainability and economic growth". In his turn, Dr. Ali Qasim Al Lawati, President of the Royal Academy of Management, emphasised the importance of the Public Policy and Strategic Planning Programme in uniting policy and

decision-makers within government agencies. This programme is designed to enhance cooperation across various units of the state's administrative apparatus to meet the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. Participants will gain insights into global trends, advancements in strategic thinking and planning, and the complexities of crafting and implementing public policies. The programme is developed in partnership with leading global institutions, focusing on the local context and how global trends and developments impact the Sultanate of Oman, aligning with its na-

tional priorities in public policy development and implementation. Al Lawati said that the programme aims to equip participating national leaders with strategic solutions by the end of its five-month duration, concluding in October 2024. Throughout the programme, participants will engage in analytical readings of qualitative data, which will contribute to the formulation of public policies. The curriculum features training and learning modules, alongside dialogues and methodologies designed to enhance the development of dynamic strategies and strategic planning policies based

on evidence and data, utilising modern technologies in their formulation. This approach is intended to generate decisions with a strategic dimension. RAM works closely with a range of strategic partners to implement its varied programmes and initiatives, focusing on executive and administrative innovation. A significant collaboration is with Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. Furthermore, the Academy also partners with the Judge Business School at the University of Cambridge, recognised as one of the top 20 global centres for business education. -OMA

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF OMANI-KOREAN CULTURAL TIES

Oman to be a 'distinguished guest' at Seoul book fair

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman will be a 'distinguished guest' at the Seoul International Book Fair 2024, which will be held from June 26 to 30 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Omani-Korean cultural relations. The 2024 Seoul International Book Fair chose Oman to be a special guest at the exhibition. This will represent an opportunity and a milestone to celebrate the golden jubilee of the existing relations between the Sultanate of Oman and Korea, and to honour every writer, publisher and institution who contributed to shaping the Omani cultural scene locally, regionally and globally, and to consolidate the concept of knowledge as a basis for development, progress and openness that confirms its commitment to enhancing communication and interaction between all cultures.



Regarding this participation, Sayyid Saeed bin Sultan Al Busaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for Culture, said: "The participation of the Sultanate, represented by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, in the Seoul International Book Fair 2024, along with a group of other government institutions such as the Ministry of Informa-

tion and the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, will open horizons of knowledge and exchange of experiences between the two countries, especially since the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of South Korea have close relations at all levels, and that the cultural aspect has witnessed remarkable development. "Participation is also embodied

in many images that reflect the culture and civilisation of the Sultanate of Oman and its knowledge, literary, artistic and cultural stock in general and convey a vivid image that is important. It came on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries." Al Busaidi added: "Participation enhances communication and interaction with all cultures, in addition to realising the ministry's visions and aspirations through its cultural strategy and achieving the goals of Oman Vision 2040 in establishing the principles of a society that is proud of its identity, citizenship and culture, documenting and disseminating it globally. "We look forward to this participation strengthening communication frameworks in the cultural, civilisational and cognitive aspects, in confirmation of the efforts made by the Ministry in promoting the creative and cultural

movement and confirming its pioneering role in spreading knowledge and interest in the Omani intellectual." In this event, Oman will present a group of distinguished cultural programmes and events targeting Omani-Korean relations through dialogue sessions for some Omani writers, others for specialists on Omani-Korean relations, and an exhibition of precious manuscripts, to be presented to the Korean public. It also worked to provide its pavilion with a selection of various publications, including a group of translated publications, including two books in the Korean language, one of which is a translation of the novel by the Omani writer Jokha Al-Harithi (Ladies of the Moon), and the second is about Omani-Korean rerelements. The Sultanate's pavilion at the exhibition also includes a group of corners, which are the "Omani

Publications Corner represented by government institutions and civil society institutions (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Cultural Club and Society of Writers), and Arabic Calligraphy Corner (live display), the Omani Manuscripts Corner, and the Omani Majlis Corner, which provides Omani hospitality and through which the visitor learns about Omani customs and traditions. In addition to displaying some of the Omani cultural vocabulary registered in the UNESCO World List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (the art of the Bura'ah - the Omani dagger - cultural spaces - drinking Omani coffee), during which the visitor can experience and live these cultural vocabulary through VR technology. Visual presentations will also be presented about cultural and tourist sites in the Sultanate of Oman.

MARITIME SECTOR

Oman marks International Seafarer Day

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, on Monday marked the International Seafarer Day. The celebration was participated by entities related to maritime transport and security, such as Oman Royal Police (ROP), Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) and ASYAD Group. The event was held under the auspices of Dr. Mohammed Nasser Al Zaabi, Secretary General at the Ministry of Defence. Moreover, during the event, the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology launched the service of electronic renewal of various maritime certificates. Eng. Said Hamoud Al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology pointed out that registering vessels witnessed a steady in-



crease over the past years. The Minister added that this sector attracts businesses and contributes to boosting the skills of Omani workers. Before the end of 2024, Al Maawali noted, there will be several decisions issued to

encourage Omanis to work in this sector and to allocate some jobs for Omanis only. Meanwhile, during the exhibition held on the sidelines of the event, the Coast Guard Police showcased its role in maintaining

maritime security and its latest rescue and search equipment. It is worth noting that the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) designated 25 June as an annual occasion to celebrate the Day of the Seafarer. -OMA

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MEETING

Sayyid Badr praises the resolve of Palestinians in the face of challenges

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister received at the headquarters of the Foreign Ministry in Muscat on Monday Lt.Gen Jibril Rajoub, Secretary General of Fatah's Central Committee and President of Palestine Olympic Committee.

The meeting dealt with the current situation in Palestine, and the ongoing efforts to achieve national reconciliation for the sake of the justice of the Palestinian cause and the independence of the Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital in accordance with the 1967 borders, which is the only way to end the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The two sides affirmed that the international community has to shoulder its responsibilities to stop the Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip, alleviate the suffering of its residents, and open all crossings for the humanitarian and relief aid.

Sayyid Badr praised the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in the face of the challenges. He also underlined the Sultanate of Oman's firm stance in support of



DISCUSSION: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister meets with Lt.Gen Jibril Rajoub, Secretary General of Fatah's Central Committee and President of Palestine Olympic Committee, at the headquarters of the Foreign Ministry in Muscat on Monday. -ONA

the Palestinian cause.

In his turn, Lt.Gen Jibril Rajoub expressed his appreciation for the great efforts made by the Sultanate of Oman in supporting the Palestinian cause. He valued Oman's stances in support of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian

people, and its tireless pursuit of achieving just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

-ONA

CABLES

HM the Sultan sends greetings



MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Zoran Milanovic of the Republic of Croatia on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Milanovic and the people of his country.

Slovenia

His Majesty the Sultan has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr. Natasa Pirc Musar of the Republic of Slovenia on her country's Independence Anniversary.

In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Musar and the Slovenian people.

Mozambique

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Filipe Nyusi of the Republic of Mozambique on his country's Independence Anniversary.

In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Nyusi and the people of Mozambique. -ONA

About 8,000 sickle cell patients in Oman

About 6 percent of the Omani population carries the sickle cell gene and between 0.2 and 0.3 percent of the population are infected with this disease



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Sickle cell is a hereditary disorder that is transmitted from their parents to the children and remains with patients for their life, said Dr. Salam Al Kindi, Professor and Consultant Hematologist at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, Oman during a meeting titled 'SHAPE' in Muscat recently.

"About 6 percent of the Omani population carries the sickle cell gene and between 0.2 and 0.3 percent of the population are infected with this disease. Patients infected with this ailment are also found in other GCC countries and the Mediterranean, in fact, many countries have higher percentages compared to Oman.

"There are about 8,000 cases of sickle cell anaemia patients in Oman and between 100 and 120

children are born every year with this disease across the country," said Dr Al Kindi.

While talking about steps being taken to control this ailment, he said: "Apart from monitoring, people are being told to go for early testing before the marriage to check the chances of disease and if the patient is suffering from this disorder, we give a choice for the selection of embryo so that a healthy and normal child is born."

Praising the government, he said that the selection of embryo procedure is supported by the government in Oman and the parents have the freedom to do it either in Oman or outside.

"We have the Oman Hereditary Blood Disorder Association to create awareness among the public on how to avoid hereditary blood disorders and provide a wide range of services.

"We have specialised clinics in Muscat, Nizwa, Sohar which directly deal with sickle cell cases. There is also an early detection programme at the SQUH during birth, which the hospital has been doing for the last 20 years. If detected, parents are informed about the case and directly referred to the physician for treatment," said Dr Al Kindi.

Praising the awareness programme, he said that it seems the message is reaching every region of the country as more and more people are coming for tests before their wedding, particularly the governorates of Al Sharqiyah and Al Dakhiliyah having the highest prevalence of the disease.

"We hope that there will be a national survey soon in this regard. We are working on a national registry where everyone would be captured with their national ID. The Ministry of Health has launched a new mobile application Shifa, for monitoring personal health. The application displays the patient's health data in various health institutions in a smooth and simple way. It is a special electronic application for individuals that saves all medical information and is a platform for exchanging medical information between the patient and the treating doctor, he added.

June 19 is officially designated as World Sickle Cell Awareness Day with the goal to increase public knowledge and an understanding of sickle cell disease, and the challenges experienced by patients and their families and caregivers



Dr. Dilip Singhvi, Specialist in Internal Medicine and Diabetes at Burjeel Hospital.

Dr. Sanjay Dalal, General Practitioner at Lama Polyclinic Al Khuwair.

<FROM A1 There has been a rise in the incidence of people falling ill, with symptoms such as high-grade fever, headaches, and heat exhaustion.

Heat wave

Speaking to *Times of Oman*, Dr. Dilip Singhvi, Specialist in Internal Medicine and Diabetes at Burjeel Hospital, said: "It is summer season and we have already started to experience temperatures nearing 50 degrees. The heat wave will affect everyone adversely and one needs to take precautions to avoid having heat exhaustion or heat stroke."

Peak time

He added: "People should avoid going out during peak time between 12 pm and 4 pm. They should venture out only if it's essential. They should cover the head and have ample amounts of water and fluids."

Dr. Singhvi advised blue-collar workers to "take rest in shade and work on either side of peak hours while maintaining good hydration."

He emphasised that "in case of symptoms like body aches, dizziness, tiredness, shivering, fever, loose motions, or vomiting, the patient should consult a doctor immediately as timely intervention can prevent further loss of

water and electrolytes from the body and hasten recovery."

Dr. Sanjay Dalal, General Practitioner at Lama Polyclinic Al Khuwair, said: "We have observed a significant increase in the number of patients visiting our clinic recently. This appears to be correlated with the heat wave we are experiencing in Oman."

Severe dehydration

"The patients are mostly construction workers, gardeners, and cleaners, who work in scorching heat and suffer due to severe dehydration. They also complain of severe headaches and dizziness. Cooling their body temperature in an air-conditioned room and intravenous therapy (IV drips) are the solution. We also advise regularly taking ORS."

Allergic reactions

Dr. Dalal added: "Dust storms are common during the summer in the desert. These storms, which accompany powerful gusts of wind, trigger allergic reactions and affect the respiratory tract, causing asthma and allergic bronchitis in vulnerable people, including children. This may also cause viral or bacterial infections. People are more prone to respiratory infections, worsened asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and other related conditions."

ROP

Expat held for murder in Jaalan Bani Bu Ali

Times News Service

MUSCAT: An expat has been arrested for killing his fellow countryman, in the Wilayat of Jaalan Bani Bu Ali, South Al Sharqiyah Governorate, the ROP said.

A statement by the ROP said:

"The South Al Sharqiyah Governorate Police Command arrested an expatriate of Asian nationality on charges of committing the murder of a person of the same nationality in the Wilayat of Jaalan Bani Bu Ali due to personal dispute. The legal procedures are completed

against him."

Emergency surgery

The Ministry of Health (MoH) transported an Omani patient to Türkiye during Eid Al Adha for an emergency surgery. The MoH said that the air medical transport

team at the Emergency Case Management Centre coordinated with the National Organ Transplant Programme and the Department of Treatment Abroad to transport an Omani patient to Türkiye during Eid Al Adha for an urgent liver transplant surgery.



Development projects to boost local community and enrich Masirah tourism sector



The projects aim to tap the potentials of Masirah Island and generate value for this vital sector

MASIRAH: The Wilayat of Masirah in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate is executing a number of development projects in various sectors to boost the local community and enrich the tourism sector.

The projects aim to tap the potentials of Masirah Island and generate value for this vital sector.

Sheikh Abdullah Ba'awain , Wali of Masirah, said that Masirah is expecting the award of a tender for the construction of development projects, including the multi-purpose port project.

The projects to be executed include linking of the wilayat of Masirah to the main network of Oman Electricity Transmission Company through a sea cable and overhead electricity transmission lines from Mahut Station to the Station of Masirah.

This is in addition to other projects in the fields of communication and potable water projects and a project for the construction of a multi-purpose centre which will be financed by Oman –India Fertilizer Company, he added.

Other projects include road construction, lighting, landscaping, development of seafronts, parks, he said. He said that the Masirah Summer Forum will be held in August which will be organised by the Office of the Governor of South Al Sharqiyah in cooperation with the Office of the Wali of Masirah. -ONA



WRITTEN MESSAGE RECEIVED

Oman and Bulgaria discuss ways of enhancing bilateral ties

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister received a written message from Dimitar Glavchev, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria dealing with bilateral relations.

This took place when Sayyid Badr received Nevyana Miteva and Maria Anguelieva, Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed areas of joint co-operation, especially in fields of economy, culture, energy, renewable energy, maritime transport and technology.

The two sides also exchanged views on regional and interna-

tional issues, notably the tragic humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip as a result of the Israeli aggression.

They also stressed the necessity of achieving justice for the Palestinian people, providing them with all types of relief and humanitarian aid and establishing their independent state in accordance with international law and the two-state solution. The meeting was attended by Humaid Ali Al Maani, Head of the Global Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry and Rumen Petrov, Bulgaria's Director of the Middle East and Africa Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. — OMA



National Guideline for Medical, Surgical Sterilisation launched

The Ministry of Health also reviewed the importance of sterilisation services for medical and surgical instruments used in health institutions and their effective role in protecting all patients

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Health on Monday launched the first edition of the “National Guideline for Medical and Surgical Sterilisation”. The ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr. Hilal Ali Al Sabti, Minister of Health.

The ceremony included a visual presentation on the history of sterilisation in the Sultanate of Oman, its stages of development and the achievements made in this field.

Latest international standards

It also outlined the steps made to Omani health workers in accordance with the latest international standards.

Dr. Amal bint Saif Al-Maani, Director General of Disease Surveillance and Control at the Ministry of Health, reviewed the importance

of sterilisation services for medical and surgical instruments used in health institutions and their effective role in protecting all patients.

Dr. Abdullah bin Salem Al-Quyoudi, Director of the Prevention and Infection Control Department at the Ministry of Health, gave a visual presentation on the most important stages of development of sterilisation services in the Sultanate of Oman and the Ministry of Health's interest in sterilisation to be a section of the Prevention and Infection Control Department, for providing education and training to raise the quality of services and patients' safety.

He reviewed the most important achievements during the past period, including the start of a diploma programme for sterilisation technicians in cooperation



with the Ministry of Labour. The issuance of the National Guide for Medical and Surgical Sterilisation is also one of the most important building blocks of the sterilisation programme in the Sultanate of Oman.

The head of the Sterilisation Services Department at the Ministry of Health, presented an interactive session using artificial intelligence technology for a virtual character.

This technology was developed for the first time in the Ministry of Health to be used as a research tool in the national directory, for medical and surgical sterilisation. — OMA



NORTH AL BATINAH MUNICIPAL COUNCIL HOLDS MEETING

The Municipal Council of the Governorate of North Al Batinah on Monday held its 6th meeting for 2024 under the chairmanship of Mohammed Sulaiman Al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah. The council discussed several matters related to social and development aspects in the governorate, as well as exploring means of enhancing municipal services, among other topics. — OMA



MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Number of scholarships to study abroad stands at 535

<FROM A1 The minister explained that the number of study seats made available through foreign missions in the last two academic years stood at 550 per annum. She added that, during the academic year 2023-2024, the number of scholarships for study abroad rose to 535, compared to 312 in academic year 2021-2022.

“There is a programme that provides scholarship opportunities for international students to study for a Bachelor's degree at Omani higher education institutions. The opportunities include 100 full scholarships for study at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences, allocated exclusively to students residing in



Oman, as well as 75 full scholarships for international students who are not resident in Oman,” Dr. Rahma added.

The minister confirmed that the Ministry seeks to enact laws that punish holders of forged educational qualifications, in addition to an edict that criminalises obtaining certificates issued by fake universities. In this respect,

she said that the number of fake qualifications decreased to 10 in the year 2023, compared to 44 fake certificates in 2019.

Dr. Rahma explained that 18 private universities and colleges in Oman were able to obtain institutional accreditation from the Omani Authority for Academic Accreditation and Educational Quality Assurance. — OMA

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Fire in South Korean battery plant kills 20

The fire erupted at an Aricell factory in Seoul, following a series of battery cell explosions in a warehouse



SEOUL: Twenty bodies were found following a fire at a lithium battery manufacturing plant in South Korea, officials and local media said on Monday.

The fire erupted at 10:30 a.m. (0130 GMT) at an Aricell factory in Hwaseong, south of the capital Seoul, following a series of battery cell explosions in a warehouse.

The fire broke out on a floor where lithium-ion batteries are inspected and packaged. Some 35,000 units were being stored in the building at the time.

manufacturer, we determined that spraying water will not extinguish the fire, so we are currently using dry sand."

Kim said the blaze was under control, while rescue workers continued to pull bodies from the building. Of the injured, two were in critical condition, Kim said.

Broadcast images showed that part of the top level of the building had collapsed and that large chunks appeared to have been blown into the street.

In a televised briefing, the official said 23 people, including Chinese nationals, were reported missing. South Korean media said about 67 people were working at the factory before the fire occurred.

Hwaseong city authorities sent out a series of alerts to residents warning them to stay inside. — DW



Printed and published by:
Muscat Media Group
Post Box: 770,
Postal Code: 112

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CIRCULATION: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

LOK SABHA

Indian Parliament adjourned amid protests

NEW DELHI: The Lok Sabha has been adjourned and will meet again at 11am on Tuesday.

The first session of the Lok Sabha began with various prominent leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, taking oaths as Members of Parliament.

Union Ministers G. Kishan Reddy, Chirag Paswan, Kiren Rijju, Nitin Gadkari, and Mansukh Mandaviya took oaths as members of the 18th Lok Sabha, amongst others.

Union Ministers Bhupender Yadav, Giriraj Singh, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, JD(U) MP Rajiv Ranjan (Lalan) Singh, BJP MP Piyush Goyal, and Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also took oaths as members of the 18th Lok Sabha.

Earlier on Monday, seven-time BJP MP Mahtab was on Monday sworn in as the pro-tem Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha. The oath was administered by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Meanwhile, the opposition MPs of the INDIA bloc protested against the appointment of Mahtab as the pro-tem speaker saying that the appointment by the BJP deviates from the traditional practice of appointing the senior member.

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi along with INDIA bloc leaders staged a protest in front of the Gandhi statue in Parliament holding copies of the Constitution against the appointment of the BJP MP as the pro-tem speaker.

On June 26, the Lok Sabha Speaker will be elected. On June 27, President Murmu is scheduled to address the joint sitting of both houses of Parliament.

Earlier, while addressing media persons outside the new Parliament building, PM Modi congratulated all the newly elected members and said that the new government will always strive to take everyone along and build consensus to serve the country.

"Today is a proud day in parliamentary democracy; it is a day of glory. For the first time since independence, this oath ceremony is taking place in our new Parliament. Till now, this process used to take place in the old house. On this important day, I heartily welcome all the newly elected MPs, congratulate them all, and wish them all the best," PM Modi said.

The Prime Minister thanked the people of the country for their support and for giving him a mandate to lead the country for a third consecutive time. — ANI

SHARK KILLS 'PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN' ACTOR IN HAWAII

The surfer, lifeguard and actor Tamayo Perry was attacked and killed by a shark off the Hawaiian island of Oahu. Perry, 49, died while surfing near Oahu's North Shore, said Kurt Lager of the city of Honolulu's Ocean Safety Division. Perry appeared in the 2002 surf film "Blue Crush" with Kate Bosworth. He also had a small role in the fourth installment of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" series. First responders brought him by jet ski to Mālaekahana Beach, where he was pronounced dead. — ONA



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BRIEFS

Boeing 777 returns to Amsterdam over tech issue



AMSTERDAM: A Boeing 777 aircraft, intended to reach Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, turned around and landed back in Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport shortly after takeoff on Sunday, reporting an unspecified technical issue. Flight KLM705, operated by Dutch airline KLM, landed safely. A spokesperson for Dutch air traffic control said the plane requested to land as a precaution and turned around over Belgium some 40 minutes after takeoff. The nature of the technical problem was undisclosed. The airline said the safety of passengers and crew were never at risk. The passengers would be flown to Rio de Janeiro on another aircraft on Sunday. The incident comes at a time when the US aviation giant Boeing is experiencing a series of safety issues, with its CEO Dave Calhoun announcing he will step down by the end of the year.

2mn people in Bangladesh stranded in heavy rains

DHAKA: About 1.8 million people in northeast Bangladesh are stranded due to extensive flooding after weeks of heavy rains that have submerged homes and devastated farmland, CNN reported citing state media and humanitarian agencies. The video clip shows large areas of Sylhet city and nearby Sunamganj are underwater, marking the second wave of flooding in less than a month, state-run news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) reported Saturday. Prolonged torrential rains and runoff from upstream hilly regions on the Indian border caused four rivers to swell beyond their danger levels, the Water Development Board said last week. Villagers in the hardest-hit low-lying areas of Sylhet could be seen wading through chest-deep water and heaping their belongings into piles to protect them from the muddy waters.



US: 10 people injured in shooting incident in Ohio

OHIO: As many as 10 people were injured in a shooting incident in Columbus, Ohio on Sunday morning (local time), USA Today reported. Police reached the site of the shooting in the Short North area of the city at 2:28 am (local time). The police found six victims at the site. Later, they were informed that four other people were taken to hospitals, USA Today reported, citing a press release from the Columbus Police Department. — Agencies

About 21,000 children missing in Gaza Strip

Approximately 4,000 children are likely missing under the rubble, with an unknown number also in mass graves, humanitarian group Save the Children said on Monday



RAMALLAH: Up to 21,000 children are estimated to be missing after nearly 9 months of Israel's assault on the Gaza Strip, many trapped beneath rubble, detained, buried in unmarked graves, or lost from their families, said Save the Children.

The organisation stated in a statement that the number of children separated from their families has increased due to the escalating Israeli attacks on the city of Rafah in the south of the Gaza Strip, and that those who protect unprotected children are under pressure. It is almost impossible to collect and verify information under the current conditions in Gaza, but at least 17,000 children are believed to be unaccompanied and separated and approximately 4,000 children are likely missing under the rubble, with an unknown number also in mass graves.

It added that other children have been forcibly 'disappeared', including an unknown number detained and transferred out of the Strip, their whereabouts unknown to their families amidst reports of ill-treatment and torture.

The organisation also pointed out that the bodies of those who were buried under the rubble or burned to death in tents during the Israeli attacks have become difficult to identify.

In turn, the organisation's regional director in the Middle East, Jeremy Stoner, said, "Many parents do not know the whereabouts of their loved ones, and no parent should dig in rubble or mass graves to find his child, nor should any child remain alone and unprotected in a war zone."

He stressed the need for an urgent ceasefire to find the missing children and reunite them with their families if they are alive.

Every person you meet in Gaza has a horrific story Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa on Monday briefed the Swiss envoy to the Middle East and North Africa, Wolfgang Amadeus Brulhart, and the Norway's Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process Hilde Haraldstad, separately, on the latest developments in the Palestinian Territory.

This came in the presence of the representative of Switzerland to the State of Palestine, Anne-Lise Henin, and the representative of Norway to the State of Palestine, Torne Veste.

"One million women and girls have lost their dignity, their homes, their families, their memories," she said following a recent visit to the war-torn Strip.

"You can see destruction everywhere in Gaza," she said, adding that during her visit to the Strip, she saw vast areas of tents for displaced persons, while some chose to live in devastated buildings amid the struggle to access food and water.

Prime Minister Mustafa briefs Swiss and Norwegian envoys

Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa on Monday briefed the Swiss envoy to the Middle East and North Africa, Wolfgang Amadeus Brulhart, and the Norway's Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process Hilde Haraldstad, separately, on the latest developments in the Palestinian Territory.

This came in the presence of the representative of Switzerland to the State of Palestine, Anne-Lise Henin, and the representative of Norway to the State of Palestine, Torne Veste.

Mustafa stressed the necessity of continuing international pressure on Israel in order to stop its aggression against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and to release the withholding Palestinian funds and stop all deductions from them.

He stressed that Israel's continued withholding of Palestinian funds threatens the government's ability to fulfill its obligations, and also places it in danger of collapse as a result of the deteriorating economic conditions due to the ongoing onslaught waged against the Palestinian people.

Regarding the government's return to work in the Gaza Strip, Mustafa said: "We did not leave the Gaza Strip for a day. The government is responsible for providing all services in the Strip from the establishment of the National Authority until today through various ministries and bodies."

He further said that the government is the only body capable of managing the Gaza Strip. The priority today is to stop the aggression.

— Wafa

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A TIMES OF OMAN PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

سلطنة عُمان
وزارة النقل والاتصالات وتقنية المعلومات
Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology

إعلان مناقصة
Tender Notice

The Internal Tenders Committee at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology invites for the Following Tender:

TENDER NUMBER	TENDER NAME	DATE OF PUBLISHING	LAST DATE TO PURCHASE TENDER DOCUMENT	SUBMISSION DATE	COMPANIES WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS TENDER	DOCUMENT PRICE
MTCIT 45/2024 Recall - 1	REPAIR DAMAGED AREAS OF EXISTING AL HAIAL/MADLI ASPHALT ROAD IN WILAYAT IBRI (AL DAHIRAH GOVERNORATE)	25-06-2024	10-07-2024	07-08-2024	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (FIRST & SECOND)	(40/-) FOURTY OMANI RIAL FOR LOCAL COMPANIES (10/-) TEN OMANI RIAL (FOR SME) NON-REFUNDABL

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CORRESPONDANCE:
1. Tender Inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at e-Tendering System. (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
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SPORTS

ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

England rout USA to seal last 4 place



BRIDGETOWN: England marched into the semi-finals of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup with a ruthless 10-wicket thrashing of the USA on Sunday.

Chris Jordan took a hat-trick - England's first in men's T20s - as the USA were dismissed for just 115 in Barbados.

And defending champions England chased their target in just 9.4 overs meaning they are guaranteed to progress because of their excellent net run-rate.

Captain Jos Buttler ended on a brutal 83 not out - a knock which included five sixes in one Harmeet Singh over which cost 31.

Earlier Jordan's hat-trick was part of a run of five wickets in six balls, four taken by the 35-year-old on the island of his birth as he returned figures of 4-10.

After Jordan's delight, Buttler put two sixes onto the roof of the famous Worrell, Weekes and Walcott Stand as he found form with England's fastest fifty of the tournament and his first half-century since arriving in the Caribbean.

Phil Salt was able to admire from the non-striker's end with an unbeaten 25.

Earlier Reece Topley had Andries Gous caught at deep-mid-wicket for eight, Steven Taylor was taken at backward point by Moen Ali to give Sam Curran a 50th T20 wicket for England and from there Rashid spun his web.

USA's scoring ground to a halt as Aaron Jones and Nitish Kumar were both bowled by Rashid googlies.

Corey Anderson, USA's for-

mer New Zealand international, made a slow rebuild with 29 from 28 balls but became Jordan's first victim by hitting the Barbados-born seamer to long-on - a ball after Curran ended his over by having Harmeet Singh snaffled in the same position for 21.

After that Jordan took centre stage as Ali Khan missed his first ball but then had his off stump sent cartwheeling, Nosthush Kenjige was trapped plumb in front and Saurabh Netravalkar was also spectacularly bowled.

Jordan beamed as he ran away in celebration in a special moment that sends England onto the last four.

England captain Jos Buttler said: "We paid USA a lot of respect, but we talked a lot about our intensity and if we thought if we took it on the field we'd be too good.

"You have to got to earn the right to begin with, start well and once we got through a few overs we decided to target this side with the wind."

USA captain Aaron Jones said: "It is a hard game to take in. We weren't as disciplined as we should be to be honest. It was similar to the last game and something we will have to talk about. Have we run out of steam? I guess you could say that."

He added: "We didn't have a good last two games and we can talk about that for sure. That's how it goes sometimes. We really enjoyed the World Cup."

Brief scores: USA 115 in 18.5 overs (Jordan 4-10, Rashid 2-13) lost to England 117/0 in 9.4 overs (Buttler 83*). - Agencies

SA edge past WI to reach semi-finals

Proteas post a nervy three-wicket win over the co-hosts on DLS method

ANTIGUA: South Africa held their nerves to reach the ICC Men's T20 World Cup semi-finals after a tense three-wicket win on the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern (DLS) method over co-hosts West Indies in a winner-takes-all Super 8s match on Sunday.

After England secured their place in the last four on Sunday, the game in Antigua was essentially a quarter-final to decide the other side to progress from Group 2.

Chasing a DLS revised target of 123, South Africa wobbled at times but ultimately withstood the pressure and Marco Jansen thumped a six to seal the win with five balls to spare. Having restricted West Indies to 135/8, the Proteas appeared in control but Andre Russell struck twice in the second over of the chase to leave them 15-2.

The Windies' momentum was halted immediately, though, by a sudden downpour that kept the players off the field for 75 minutes.

South Africa returned with a new target from 17 overs and a flurry of boundaries quickly put them back in the ascendency.

But with a raucous crowd at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium urging them on, the West Indies kept fighting with Roston Chase, who made 52 with the bat, taking three wickets.

As the game headed towards a nervy conclusion with South Africa needing nine from seven balls, Kagiso Rabada hit a glorious cover drive for four and Jansen finished the job at the start of the last over.

Earlier, it was South Africa's spinners who did the damage with the ball with Tabraiz Shamsi taking 3/28. The Proteas go through top of the group, with England second, and will face the runners-up in Group 1.



Spinners lead the way for Proteas

South Africa remain unbeaten at this World Cup after a seventh straight win.

They have been involved in a number of extremely tight games but keep getting over the line with different players stepping up at crucial times.

In North Sound, it was the turn of the spinners with captain Aiden Markram the first to make an impact, removing the dangerous Nicholas Pooran as West Indies slipped to 5-2 early on.

The skipper, who is better than a part-time off-spinner but by no means a genuine all-rounder,

bowled his four overs in succession for just 28 runs.

Shamsi took over in the middle overs, breaking a key 81-run partnership between Chase and Kyle Mayers and eventually dismissed both, as well as Sherfane Rutherford.

Keshav Maharaj played his part, too, dismissing Windies skipper Rovman Powell with a beautiful delivery that dipped late and gripped to turn past the bat, leading to a stumping.

The effectiveness of the Proteas spinners was such that fast bowler Rabada was not introduced to the attack until the 18th over.

West Indies' powerful batting

line-up was negated and, despite more than a few sticky moments with the bat, South Africa got over the line to reach their first T20 World Cup semi-final in 10 years.

South Africa captain Aiden Markram said: "A lot of relief to get through to the semi-final.

"But I'm not going to be brainwashed by that, we'd have liked to be a lot more convincing in getting the job done.

"It's been the story of our competition to get ourselves into tricky situations then by hook or by crook, get over the line."

West Indies captain Rovman Powell said: "Credit to the boys, they fought to the very end. As a batting group, best to forget, the middle overs especially.

"When you look on a large scale, we haven't reached the semis. But the cricket we've played in the last 12 months is commendable. To move from No.9 to No.3 in the world, there's a lot of buzz in West Indies cricket.

"When we hear the anthem play we hear something, we're heading in the right direction."

Brief scores: West Indies 135/8 (Chase 52 (42); Shamsi 3-27) lost to South Africa 124-7 in 16.1 overs (Stubbs 29 (27); Chase 3-12). South Africa won by three wickets (DLS method). - Agencies

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OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS
The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by August 2024 reaching \$84.51, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 27 cents from the price of Tuesday, which was \$84.78. - **ONA**

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER
The MSX index closed at 4,622.23 points, down by 0.75 per cent from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.07 per cent at 454.09 points. Barka Desalination, up 5.00 per cent, was the top gainer while Dhofar Beverages, down 9.66 per cent, was the top loser.

National initiative showcases innovative business endeavours



The National Equal Opportunities initiative focuses on the growth of the business environment in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz), in cooperation with the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries and Water Resources, and the economic, free and industrial zones supervised by the Authority, organised the second edition of the 'National Equal Op-



portunities' initiative. The event, held at Opaz's headquarters in Muscat, showcased 11 innovative business endeavours from Omani entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The business endeavours brought in by the initiative, is indicative of the expansion of Oman's business environment in general and of special economic zones, free zones, and industrial cities in particular. A public exhibition was held in conjunction

with the endeavour to allow participating SMEs to display their innovative goods and services. Through networking, knowledge-sharing, and experience-sharing with officials and personnel, this show aided SMEs in selling their goods and services. "The primary objectives of Opaz are to plan and develop, organise and supervise, facilitate and provide post-service care, market and attract investment, operate and accelerate and achieve institutional excellence," stated Saleh bin Hamoud Al-Hassani, an advisor to the chairman of Opaz, during his visual presentation. He continued, "This initiative aims to create a fair and equal business environment that expands the role of the private sector in sustainable development, encourages innovation and entrepreneurship, boosts investment and economic growth in special economic zones and free zones, and helps build a supportive and encouraging business environment for SMEs." Hussam bin Salam Al-Kharusi, a senior official at the Oman Future Fund, said that 10% of the fund's capital has been allocated to investments that fall within the umbrella of small and medium enterprises and venture capital. He added that the fund targets various investment sectors with the exception of the oil and gas sectors and the real estate sector. It is noteworthy to mention that, this year, the second phase of the initiative was successfully co-organised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), the Salalah Free Zone, the Sohar Free Zone, Khazaen Economic City, Al Mazunah Free Zone, Oman Development Bank, Future Fund Oman, and the General Directorate of Agricultural and Animal Research.

MAY PRODUCTION

Tethys oil production reaches 232,491 barrels

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Tethys Oil's share of the production, before government take, from Blocks 3&4 onshore the Sultanate of Oman, in May 2024 amounted to 232,491 barrels of oil, corresponding to 7,500 barrels of oil per day. The May production was impacted by the extreme weather conditions in April with heavy rain and floods. As of the middle of May, production and exports have resumed on all fields. The Official Selling Price (OSP) for Oman Export Blend Crude Oil for the month of May 2024 was \$84.14 per barrel. The OSP, as published by the Sultanate of Oman's Ministry of Energy and Minerals,

is the benchmark price for Tethys Oil's monthly oil sales excluding trading and quality adjustments. Tethys Oil, through its wholly owned subsidiary Tethys Oil Block 3 & 4, has a 30 percent interest in Blocks 3&4. Partners are Mitsui E&P Middle East with 20 percent and the operator CC Energy Development (Oman branch) holding the remaining 50 percent. Tethys Oil is an oil exploration and production company with focus on onshore areas with known oil discoveries. The company's core area is the Sultanate of Oman, where it holds interests in Blocks 3&4, Block 49, Block 56 and Block 58. Tethys Oil has net working interest 2P reserves of 21.7 mmbb.



FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

FSA fines firm for violating customer fund rules

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Financial Services Authority has issued administrative decision No. 5/2024 imposing a fine on Fincorp (SAOG) for violating the rules for segregation of customer funds under Article 157 of the Executive Regulation of the Capital Market Law issued vide Decision No. 1/2009. The decision obliged the company to immediately segregate customer funds from company funds and cover the deficit in the customer account that resulted from the violation within 60 days and take the required procedures

to protect customer funds in accordance with specific rules in that customer funds must be deposited and kept in one or more separate accounts from the company's accounts titled "customer account". Such funds include the amounts received from the customer for their purchases and the amounts received from intermediaries to settle the sales and dividends received on their account. The company must use such amounts in the customer account to settle the obligations due to the stock exchange and other brokers resulting from the purchases made for the account of the customer.



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MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Barka Desalination, up 5.00 per cent, was the top gainer while Dhofar Beverages, down 9.66 per cent, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,622.23 points, down by 0.75% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.07% at 454.09 points. Barka Desalination, up 5.00%, was the top gainer while Dhofar Beverages, down 9.66%, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 1099 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 2.68 million, with more than 12.59 million shares changing hands. Out of 53 traded securities, 8 advanced, 26 declined, and 19 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for RO 590K while foreign investors were net sellers for RO 329K, followed by GCC & Arab investors for RO 261K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,637.49 points, down 0.76%. Prices of Global Financial In-

vestments, Oman United Insurance were up by 1.47%, 1.20% respectively. Prices of Al Sharqia Investment, Oman & Emirates Investment, Ominvest, Sohar International Bank, Takaful Oman were down by 5.00%, 3.57%, 3.49%, 2.21%, 2.08% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,991.91 points, up 0.04%. Prices of Construction Materials, Oman Cables Industry were up by 1.92%, 1.77% respectively. Prices of Dhofar Beverages, Raysut Cement, Al Anwar Ceramics, Muscat Thread Mill, Galfar Engineering were down by 9.66%, 2.22%, 1.05%, 1.00%, 0.60% respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.58% before closing at 1,762.22 points. Prices of Barka Desalination, Sharqiyah Desalination were up by 5.00%, 3.85% respectively. Prices of Dhofar Generating, Majan College, National Gas, Al Batinah Power, Musandam Power were down by 5.63%, 4.55%, 4.43%, 2.78%, 2.00% respectively—United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
Industry Index	6,008.14	5,983.77	5,991.91	5,989.33	2.58	0.04
Services Index	1,773.59	1,761.78	1,762.22	1,772.42	-10.20	-0.58
FINANCIAL TRIDX	8,734.20	8,657.77	8,657.77	8,723.98	-66.21	-0.76
SERVICES TR IDX	2,056.83	2,043.13	2,043.64	2,055.47	-11.83	-0.58
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	0.00	0.00
MSX Shariah Index	456.25	454.09	454.09	454.42	-0.33	-0.07
MSX TR INDEX	6,471.53	6,418.33	6,418.33	6,466.97	-48.64	-0.75
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,704.91	7,637.49	7,637.49	7,695.89	-58.41	-0.76
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,931.96	6,903.85	6,913.24	6,910.27	2.98	0.04
MSX 30 INDEX	4,660.55	4,622.23	4,622.23	4,657.26	-35.03	-0.75

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
12,590,171	2,680,912	1,099	24,217,339,399	8	26	19	53

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, JUNE 24

ISINSECURITY NAMEVOLUMETURNOVERTRADESOPEN PRICEHIGHLOWCLOSE PRPREV. CLOSEDIFF. RDIF. %LAST PDLAST BDLAST OFFERPREV. VALUEMARKET CAP

REGULAR MARKET

OM0000000325	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	50,250	3,467	3	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.068	0.001	1,471	0.069	0.068	0.069	0.100	13,800,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	3,250	822	1	0.253	0.253	0.253	0.253	0.250	0.003	1,200	0.253	0.244	0.253	0.100	25,300,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	71,510	8,295	9	0.116	0.116	0.116	0.116	0.116	0.000	0.000	0.116	0.110	0.116	0.100	17,400,000
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	110,049	28,062	59	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.000	0.000	0.255	0.255	0.270	0.100	414,616,321
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	9,096	3,429	8	0.380	0.382	0.380	0.380	0.380	0.000	0.000	0.380	0.380	0.382	0.100	125,731,630
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	7,000	1,960	2	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.000	0.000	0.280	0.270	0.280	0.100	34,971,429
OM0000002274	UNITED FINANCE	1,000	665	4	0.060	0.061	0.060	0.061	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.061	0.060	0.060	0.100	21,723,765
OM0000004735	SEMO CORP SALLAH	292,000	28,101	21	0.097	0.097	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.000	0.000	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.100	91,638,907
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	277,145	20,229	18	0.073	0.074	0.072	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.071	0.074	0.100	52,866,069
OM0000008072	QO GAS NETWORKS	1,938,153	274,445	200	0.142	0.142	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.000	0.000	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.100	610,617,973
OM0000008988	QOREDOO	98,059	27,616	68	0.290	0.290	0.289	0.289	0.290	-0.001	-0.345	0.289	0.289	0.290	0.100	118,122,582
OM0000009326	OMAN TELECOM	85,000	86,132	72	1.016	1.016	1.010	1.010	1.014	-0.004	-0.394	1.010	1.010	1.014	0.100	757,500,000
OM0000009796	BANK MUSCAT	3,689,690	920,783	108	0.250	0.250	0.247	0.249	0.250	-0.001	-0.400	0.249	0.249	0.249	0.100	1,869,092,868
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	276,619	81,812	128	0.296	0.297	0.294	0.294	0.296	-0.002	-0.676	0.294	0.294	0.295	0.100	226,438,800
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	24,880	4,694	9	0.190	0.190	0.187	0.188	0.190	-0.002	-1.053	0.188	0.188	0.187	0.100	41,260,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	151,610	55,359	69	0.366	0.367	0.361	0.362	0.366	-0.004	-1.093	0.362	0.362	0.364	0.100	85,580,420
OM0000004788	MADINA TAKAFUL	22,358	1,749	5	0.079	0.079	0.078	0.078	0.079	-0.001	-1.266	0.078	0.074	0.085	0.100	13,860,000
OM0000007611	MUSANDAM POWER	20,261	4,994	8	0.245	0.245	0.245	0.245	0.250	-0.005	-2.000	0.245	0.245	0.245	0.100	17,245,550
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	2,071,692	277,028	34	0.135	0.135	0.133	0.133	0.136	-0.003	-2.206	0.133	0.123	0.133	0.100	741,773,754
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	144,468	10,113	19	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.072	-0.002	-2.778	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.100	47,242,120
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	20,200	7,272	6	0.360	0.360	0.360	0.360	0.373	-0.013	-3.485	0.360	0.365	0.360	0.100	240,611,553
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	198,344	16,431	16	0.084	0.084	0.081	0.081	0.084	-0.003	-3.571	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.100	9,871,875
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO.	208,500	15,866	14	0.076	0.077	0.076	0.076	0.080	-0.004	-5.000	0.076	0.072	0.076	0.100	6,840,000
Total	23	9,789,044	1,879,506	881												

Parallel Market

OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	36,530	4,430	3	0.121	0.126	0.121	0.126	0.120	0.006	5.000	0.126	0.118	0.132	0.100	9,515,772
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALINATION	2,223	300	1	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.130	0.005	3.846	0.135	0.000	0.135	0.100	13,203,292
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	100	6	1	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.052	0.001	1.923	0.053	0.052	0.053	0.100	3,312,500
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	124,000	302,880	9	2.880	2.880	2.880	2.880	2.880	0.000	1.787	2.880	2.776	2.876	0.100	258,336,000
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	26,700	3,177	8	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.118	0.001	0.847	0.119	0.118	0.119	0.100	60,464,322
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	19,600	941	2	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.000	0.000	0.048	0.048	0.050	0.100	14,743,024
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	96,541	5,848	7	0.088	0.088	0.087	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.087	0.088	0.100	15,128,500
OM0000002029	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	5,200	456	2	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.082	0.088	0.100	1,848,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	17,510	4,115	3	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.000	0.000	0.235	0.222	0.250	0.100	14,383,004
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	885,782	91,257	49	0.105	0.105	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.100	230,406,162
OM0000005006	ALMAHA CERAMICS	45,350	8,254	4	0.182	0.182	0.182	0.182	0.182	0.000	0.000	0.182	0.182	0.190	0.100	10,010,000
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	13,510	2,015	5	0.149	0.150	0.149	0.150	0.150	0.000	0.000	0.150	0.138	0.153	0.100	250,411,500
OM0000007910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	49,470	4,493	6	0.091	0.091	0.090	0.091	0.091	0.000	0.000	0.091	0.090	0.091	0.100	18,200,000
OM0000009981	VOLTAMP ENERGY	92,164	19,444	16	0.313	0.313	0.313	0.313	0.313	0.000	0.000	0.313	0.306	0.313	0.100	25,560,464
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	742,124	124,900	34	0.170	0.171	0.167	0.167	0.168	-0.001	-0.595	0.167	0.165	0.167	0.100	33,898,736
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	17,000	5,321	4	0.313	0.313	0.313	0.313	0.316	-0.003	-0.949	0.313	0.313	0.313	0.100	62,485,943
OM0000002036	MUSCAT THREAD MILLS	306	39	1	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.100	-0.001	-1.000	0.099	0.099	0.099	0.100	1,823,016
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	86,220	4,958	12	0.059	0.059	0.058	0.058	0.059	-0.001	-1.695	0.058	0.058	0.058	0.100	84,830,885
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	20,000	940	2	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.048	-0.001	-2.083	0.047	0.047	0.048	0.100	11,750,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	240,100	26,343	21	0.107	0.112	0.107	0.108	0.113	-0.005	-4.425	0.108	0.108	0.108	0.100	9,180,000
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	50	3	1	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.110	-0.005	-4.545	0.105	0.105	0.106	0.100	9,450,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	25,000	1,800	3	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.076	-0.004	-5.263	0.072	0.072	0.076	0.100	35,340,220
OM0000007407	DHOFAH GENERATING	50,660	3,397	2	0.068	0.068	0.067	0.067	0.071	-0.004	-5.834	0.067	0.067	0.078	0.100	14,890,080
OM0000001251	DHOFAH BEVERAGES	1,702	321	2	0.190	0.190	0.187	0.187	0.207	-0.020	-9.662	0.187	0.187	0.000	0.100	3,740,000
Total	24	2,534,292	615,680	191												

EXTREME WEATHER events influenced by climate change are causing ever greater destruction, forcing insurers to increase their premiums where they can.

What does this mean for the future?

“Basically, if there is more damage, someone has to pay for it,” said Ernst Rauch, a climate expert with Munich Re, a major reinsurance company. Either insurance companies, the state, or the person who suffered the damage must foot the bill.

The logic behind insurance is that many people sign up, but only a few suffer losses and receive compensation. If a growing number of people are hit by losses, however, insurance companies will pass on the risk and increase premiums for insurance holders.

As some previous extreme events have proven too costly to cover, insurance companies have in turn passed on some of their risk to what are known as reinsurers. Munich Re is one of these companies. It has been studying the effects of climate change for around 50 years with regard to their consequences for their own business.

A shrinking field of insurance companies

What happens when climate change creates such great risks that insurers no longer want to insure certain parts of the world, or they have to raise premiums to such an extent that no one is willing to pay them?

One such example is State Farm. The major insurance company has stopped selling insurance policies in California, citing the growing risk of catastrophes, steep construction costs and a challenging reinsurance market.

In California, insurance companies had to cover between \$1 to \$3 billion (€935 million to €2.8 billion) in damages annually over the past decades, Rauch told DW. These days, however, annual insurance claims have jumped to well over \$10 billion, he added.

Global damages totaling a hundred billion dollars

Other parts of the world have also been hit by increasingly extreme weather events that cause serious destruction, and Germany is no exception. It experiences floods, storms, droughts and fires. The German Meteorological Service warns that such extreme events will grow more frequent, resulting in even greater destruction, affecting more and more people.

“The amount of insured damage resulting from natural disasters now annually totals around \$100 billion worldwide,” Rauch told DW. “Eighty to 90% of these damages are weather-related.”

Damage can be minimised

The increasing amount of damage is only partly the result of more frequent extreme weather events, Rauch says, explaining that socio-economic factors play a greater role. The value of buildings and infrastructure is increasing, populations are growing, and construction is still taking place in particularly vulnerable areas such as coastal regions or near rivers.

The actual amount of damage caused is much greater, however, as not everything is covered by insurance. In fact, only half of all the world’s natural disasters are covered at all, Rauch says. Even in Germany, for example, only about half of all buildings are insured against flooding, he points out.

Extreme weather events in Germany, such as the exceptionally hot and dry summers of recent years and the devastating flood of 2021, have caused more than €80 billion in damage, says Germany’s Environment Ministry. This figure includes damage caused to buildings and infrastructure, harvest losses and damaged forestry, as well as indirect losses, for instance due to reduced labor productivity.



LIFESTYLE

**WILL
CLIMATE
CHANGE
MAKE
INSURANCE
TOO
EXPENSIVE?**

THE AMOUNT OF INSURED DAMAGE RESULTING FROM NATURAL DISASTERS NOW ANNUALLY TOTALS AROUND \$100 BILLION WORLDWIDE, EIGHTY TO 90% OF THESE DAMAGES ARE WEATHER-RELATED.

Premiums must match risk

Does Rauch believe Germany may one day find itself in a similar situation to California, where insurers like State Farm have stopped issuing policies? He explains that US supervisory authorities, called insurance commissioners, do not allow insurers to increase premiums to reflect growing risks. This, he said, is the reason State Farm withdrew from California.

In the long term, however, Rauch believes that certain regions may find it impossible to get insurance coverage even in those parts of the world where insurers can charge what they want. He does not think this could happen in the next five to 10 years, with the exception of some smaller regions.

The overall economic costs wrought by climate change will increase enormously in Germany in the coming years, the German government has found. Depending on how rapidly the planet heats up, this could cause damages in the range of €280 to €900 billion by 2050. This estimate excludes the impact of deaths, diminished quality of life, animal and plant species going extinct and damage to the water supply system.

Damage prevention ever more important

When it comes to controlling costs, damage prevention plays a key role alongside attempts to limit climate change. According to Rauch, these are the most important measures that can be taken in areas where the climate risks become so high that insurance companies can no longer offer affordable policies. Possible examples in the public realm include building levees; private individuals can secure their heating oil tanks, tile their basements and make sure no valuable possessions are stored there.

Flood protection measures improved greatly in Germany after significant flooding occurred along the country’s major rivers in 2002 and 2013, Rauch says, adding that similar measures must be implemented along coastlines around the world.

The German Insurance Association (GDV) has also called for action: “The top priority should be climate-adapted planning, construction and renovation.” No new building should take place in areas prone to flooding, the association says, and natural surfaces must be restored.

No time to waste

The industry group believes fast action is required. “If we fail to systematically institute preventive measures and adapt to the climate, our estimates show that premiums for homeowners insurance will double in Germany within the next 10 years due to climate damage alone,” Jörg Asmussen, the chief executive officer of the German Insurance Association, warned more than a year ago.

Europe as a whole is also too slow when it comes to prevention, the European Environment Agency (EEA) concluded in its first European Climate Risk Assessment. The EEA’s executive director, Leena Ylä-Mononen, has called on the responsible European and national political authorities to act now, saying the only way to minimize climate risks is by quickly reducing emissions, adopting ambitious adjustment strategies and undertaking the necessary related measures. -aw

SPORTS

Germany survive Switzerland scare to draw and top Group A

Fullkrug scores a late equaliser for the hosts as they escape with a 1-1 draw at Euro 2024

FRANKFURT: Substitute Nicolas Fullkrug scored a late equaliser for Germany as they rescued a 1-1 draw with Switzerland to top Group A on Sunday.

The Swiss thought they were going through to the last 16 as group winners after an early goal from Dan Ndoye until Fullkrug headed in the equaliser.

There was an outburst of celebration from home supporters behind the goal as Germany maintained their unbeaten start to Euro 2024.

It was a blow to Switzerland, who had defended resolutely for more than 90 minutes but they still progress to the knockout stages.

"At the end I think this point is well deserved. We risked a lot, as we could have conceded a second goal," said Germany boss Julian Nagelsmann.

"It was a very strong group and a very good match. I think if we had scored that first goal, it would have been very difficult for Switzerland."

Murat Yakin's Swiss side knew



victory would see them leapfrog Germany and they almost delivered in Frankfurt until pressure took its toll in stoppage time.

Germany, who had largely frustrated the home fans in the stands, created a flurry of chances late on and eventually did enough.

Earlier, Swiss fans were bouncing and singing in the stands after Ndoye had placed a first-time shot into the roof of the net from Remo



Freuler's dangerous cross.

Ndoye also had a goal ruled out for offside in the second half that would have made it 2-0 - the second to be crossed off after the video assistant referee (VAR) intervened for Germany's Robert Andrich.

Andrich curled a shot from the edge of the box under the arms of goalkeeper Yann Sommer, whose blushes were saved when referee Daniele Orsato overturned his decision after going to the pitchside monitor to see a foul from Jamal Musiala in the build-up.

By winning Group A, Germany face the team that finishes second in England's group next Saturday.

Kai Havertz headed over the bar twice and Ilkay Gundogan sliced a shot wide before Fullkrug finally broke the Swiss resistance.

"It's always important to have

players on the bench who can change games," said Germany manager Nagelsmann.

"We have players who can come in off the bench who are different. We need every player. They can be important for us in every situation.

"[Fullkrug] gives a good argument for both jobs - coming from the starting XI and off the bench. It's good luck and bad luck for him that he is so good in that role."

"I am very proud of the performance but it's rather sad for the team that we could not take the victory home," said Yakin.

"But there was a lot of pressure from the Germans so we can say we take the draw. I am happy we didn't take a defeat. It wasn't enough for first place [in the group] but I think the next opponent also has to watch out for us. We can be very happy." - Agencies

EURO 2024

Hungary knock out Scotland

STUTTGART: Scotland crashed out of Euro 2024 in the most heart-wrenching fashion as Kevin Csoboth's 100th-minute winner earned Hungary a stunning late 1-0 victory on Sunday.

The Scots, who could still have held faint hopes of the last 16 with a draw, were stung on the counter-attack to spark bedlam in the Stuttgart Arena.

It means Steve Clarke's side, who did not register a shot on target, finish on one point and once again fail to make it out of a group at a major tournament.

Hungary, who lost Barnabas Varga to a sickening injury, finish Group A in third and still have a chance of going through as one of the four best third-placed teams.

Despite the nerve-wracking tension, Scotland's fans would have started to believe late in this game.

In the closing moments and with a barrage of substitutes, opportunities opened up where before it had all been laboured.

Scotland's clearest chance fell to defender Grant Hanley moments before that Hungarian sucker punch, but his shot was too close to Peter Gulacsi and would not have counted regardless.

There were also strong shouts for a Stuart Armstrong penalty, instead it all led to cries of astonishment as no VAR check was forthcoming.

The Hungarian players, just moments after the final whistle, gathered in front of a euphoric sea



of red behind the goal.

The shirt of Varga was held aloft, as a nation united in celebration, when only minutes before they had done so in fear and hope after the Ferencvaros forward collided with Angus Gunn.

As painful as the blow will be

for the Scotland fans, the Hungarians always looked the more likely to score, especially when Csoboth struck a post in injury time before finding the winner.

Scotland head coach Steve Clarke: "The goal comes as a consequence of us trying to win the game. The goal is almost irrelevant.

"The moment for me was the penalty. It was 100% a penalty. Someone has to explain to me why it wasn't a penalty.

"I don't understand how VAR can look at that and say it's not a penalty."

Hungary head coach Marco Rossi: "We must wait for the other results. We did what was possible with a bit of luck in the final moments.

"The luck in football, like in life, is important. At the end the result is fair. We cannot say we didn't deserve to win." - Agencies

FIVE-MATCH SERIES

Gill to lead India for T20I series in Zimbabwe



MUMBAI: Shubman Gill was on Monday named captain of India's T20I squad for the five-match series in Zimbabwe that begins on July 6. The 15-man squad also includes Abhishek Sharma, Nitish Reddy, Riyan Parag and Tushar Deshpande, all of whom were impressive in IPL 2024.

Just two players from the main squad for the ongoing ICC Men's T20 World Cup: Yashasvi Jaiswal and Sanju Samson have been included. The team has two spin options in Ravi Bishnoi and Washington Sundar with the likes of Parag and Abhishek as part-time options.

Team: Shubman Gill (Captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Abhishek Sharma, Rinku Singh, Sanju Samson (WK), Dhruv Jurel (WK), Nitish Reddy, Riyan Parag, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan, Khaleel Ahmed, Mukesh Kumar, Tushar Deshpande. - Agencies

COPA AMERICA

Nunez scores as Uruguay thrash Panama in Miami

MIAMI: Darwin Nunez scored as Uruguay began their Copa America campaign with a 3-1 win over Panama in Miami, Florida on Sunday.

The Liverpool striker, 25, volleyed home at the near post with five minutes of normal time remaining to double Uruguay's lead after defender Ronald Araujo had opened the scoring after 16 minutes.

Left-back Matias Vina added a third in added time for the 15-time champions, before defender Michael Amir Murillo scored a consolation for Panama.

"When it comes to Uruguay's aspirations, we will see that and build it match by match," said Uruguay manager Marcelo Bielsa.

"My expectation is that each match will increasingly help us to improve on our level. Uruguay has players of a very good level and we need to see if I can build with those players."

Uruguay have been in fine form and have been tipped to impress at the Copa America after beating Argentina and Brazil in World Cup qualifiers over the past 12 months.

Group C's other game saw Christian Pulisic score one goal and set up another as the United



States beat Bolivia 2-0 in their tournament opener in Arlington, Texas.

The AC Milan frontman curled in a fine opener after three minutes before setting up Monaco striker Folarin Balogun, whose low left-footed finish added a second just before half-time. - Agencies

TENNIS ROUND-UP

Italy's Sinner clinches his first title as world No.1 in Halle

HALLE: Jannik Sinner claimed his first title as world No.1 with victory over Hubert Hurkacz at the Halle Open on Sunday.

Italy's Sinner won his first Grand Slam at the Australian Open in January and replaced Novak Djokovic at the top of the world rankings earlier in June.

He secured his first grass-court title with a 7-6 (10-8), 7-6 (7-2) victory against Poland's Hurkacz, who he also played doubles with in Germany.

Sinner has lost just three matches this season - falling twice to Carlos Alcaraz at the French Open and Indian Wells, and being beaten by Stefanos Tsitsipas in Monte Carlo.

He will be the top seed at Wimbledon, which begins on 1 July, as he looks to go one step further than

his semi-final showing from last year.

"I'm just looking forward to Wimbledon. Last year I made the semis, I played some good tennis, so let's see what's coming this year," the 22-year-old said.

"I'm more confident for sure. Obviously the grass might be a bit different from here and Wimbledon.

"But I have one week now to prepare, so hopefully it's going to be a good tournament."

Paul lifts Queen's crown
Elsewhere, Tommy Paul claimed the biggest title of his career so far with a 6-1, 7-6 (10-8) triumph over Lorenzo Musetti at Queen's on Sunday.

The American also became his nation's top-ranked men's player with victory, having moved to 12th



in the world rankings.

Paul is the first American to win the Queen's title since Sam Querrey in 2010.

Pegula claims Berlin Open
Jessica Pegula saved five championship points as she beat Anna Kalinskaya to win the Berlin Open

and confirm her status as a Wimbledon title contender.

American Pegula missed the European clay-court swing with injury and made her return to playing last week in the Netherlands.

She first completed her rain-delayed semi-final on Sunday against doubles partner and world No.2 Coco Gauff, quickly wrapping up a 7-5, 7-6 (7-2) win.

The world No.5 then had to find her way back against Russia's Kalinskaya, overturning a 4-1 third-set deficit to win 6-7 (0-7), 6-4, 7-6 (7-3).

It is Pegula's fifth WTA Tour title and her first on grass.

She reached the quarter-finals at Wimbledon last year, losing in three sets to eventual champion Marketa Vondrousova.

Crown for Putintseva
At the Birmingham Classic, Kazakhstan's Yulia Putintseva beat Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic 6-1, 7-6 (10-8) to win her first grass-court title on Sunday.

It was her first title for three years, with her past two triumphs coming on clay-courts.

"It's my first on grass and I don't even know how I'm feeling because I wasn't expecting this to happen at all," the 29-year-old said.

"It's amazing but also confusing because I usually play my best tennis on the clay, and now all of a sudden, I'm performing well on the grass - but I'll take it!"

Tomljanovic was searching for her first WTA title, having lost her previous four finals. It was her first final since an injury-hit 2023. - Agencies

IN PICTURES



Ancient Syrian city of Bosra struggles to preserve precious heritage
Alaa Al-Salah, director of the Bosra Archaeological Site, introduces a Roman theater in the ancient city of Bosra, southern Syria. The ancient city in southern Syria, a testament to civilizations spanning millennia, is locked in a new battle -- preserving the precious heritage from the ravage of years-long war. **Xinhua**



Animals stay cool as heat waves hit Hainan
Brown bears enjoy a shower at Hainan Tropical Wildlife Park and Botanical Garden in Haikou, south China's Hainan Province. **Xinhua**



31st Pasadena Chalk Festival in Los Angeles
A child views paintings during Pasadena Chalk Festival in Pasadena, Los Angeles County, the United States. The festival saw over 500 skilled chalk artists participating in the event. **Xinhua**



Rekha attends the wedding reception of Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal
Bollywood actress Rekha poses for a picture during the wedding reception of actress Sonakshi Sinha and husband and actor Zaheer Iqbal, in Mumbai. **ANI Photo**



Venue of 2024 Summer Davos
An aerial drone picture shows the Dalian International Conference Centre, venue of the 2024 Summer Davos, in Dalian, northeast China's Liaoning Province. **Xinhua**



Highlight of Olympic Qualifier Series Budapest
Keegan Palmer of Australia competes during the men's park final of skateboarding at the Olympic Qualifier Series Budapest in Budapest, Hungary. **Xinhua**

ROUND-UP

Bank Muscat named Best Retail Bank in Oman

MENA Banking Awards from MEED recognise the leading banks in the retail banking sphere across the region



Best Retail Bank in Oman Award for the year 2024.

MUSCAT: In recognition of the bank's achievements underscoring its excellence in customer service through offering a full suite of banking products and facilities to customers, Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has recently received the prestigious

MENA Banking Awards from MEED recognise the leading banks in the retail banking sphere across the region and which stand out in terms of providing customers with innovative banking solutions aiming to enhance their banking experience. Bank Muscat emerged as a winner after an extensive selection process and consultations

with experts and analysts across the globe.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdulnasir Al Raisi, General Manager, Personal Banking, Bank Muscat, said: "We would like to thank MEED for recognising Muscat Bank as the best retail bank in the country. The constant recognition which the Bank continues to receive every year comes as a result of the stance of excellence which

the Bank is committed to upholding through the delivery of innovative banking services tailored to the recent needs of customers. The Bank remains dedicated to its customer-centric vision by introducing value-added banking services and products that meet the diverse needs of customers.

Abdulnasir Al Raisi added: "Bank Muscat is keen to contribute to the ongoing digital transformation of Oman, strategised as a part of Oman Vision 2040 and this is reflected in the continuous launch of a diverse range of products and services for different customer segments. We would like to extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to all our valued customers for their continuing trust and confidence in our services and products. The bank will continue its commitment to developing more innovative services in the future to fulfil customers' needs and aspirations."

EXPANSION



BankDhofar opens new branch in Ibri

MUSCAT: BankDhofar, a leading financial institution in the Sultanate of Oman - opened Al Murtafa branch in the Wilayat of Ibri in the Governorate of Al Dhahirah. This expansion is in line with the bank's strategy of getting closer to its customers.

The expansion process reflects the bank's commitment to enhance in-country value addition. It has, time and again, affirmed its intent to partner with the government in bringing to fruition the objectives of Oman Vision 2040,

while augmenting the Omanisation drive by offering employment opportunities to talented individuals. The new branch in the Wilayat of Ibri, will provide specialised services to the SME sector.

The bank is offering specialised Al Rifaa preferred banking, Al Riadah priority banking services. The branch was officially opened by His Excellency Najib bin Ali Al Rawas, Governor of Al Dhahirah, and in the presence of a number of bank officials.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

Alizz Islamic Bank kicks off second edition of 'ManahilAlizz'

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank announced the launch of second edition of the 'ManahilAlizz' internship programme.

The programme which is designed to empower and prepare third year university and college students and augment their capabilities by equipping them with the essential skills and knowledge required to successfully enter and thrive in the job market saw great success in its pilot programme last year; with the participants expressing gratitude to being part of such and an enriching programme that not only aims to enhance their leadership, personal development and project management skills but also teach them how to overcome challenges in the business sector and find suitable solutions.

The programme will broaden the students' perspectives and equip them with skills beyond

their academic specialisation. This holistic approach is demonstrated through a comprehensive range of lectures and classes encompassing topics such as Islamic economics, Islamic banking, endowment (Waqf), voluntary work, and other relevant disciplines.

Additionally, the 3-month program boasts a distinguished group of both internal and external experts, including specialised instructors well-versed in the principles and regulations of Islamic law as it pertains to Islamic banking. Alizz Islamic Bank's Learning and Development Department has meticulously crafted an integrated curriculum that seamlessly blends theoretical knowledge with practical training.

The second batch of the programme consists of 35 male and female students from various universities and colleges across



the Sultanate of Oman, regionally. The selection process involved nominations from their respective academic institutions, while Alizz Islamic bank has meticulously prepared a suitable framework, comprehensive curriculum and high-level classes and sessions to enhance their educational skills

using the latest modern techniques. This approach ensures that knowledge is accessible to all students, obtained flexibly and easily equips them to understand the corporate working environment, banking sector characteristics and fostering innovative thinking that enables them to become decision-

makers and effective initiators in addressing key industry needs.

Sumaya Al Nabhani, Head of Learning & Development at Alizz Islamic Bank, emphasised that the primary objective is to provide students with a thorough development plan that will assist them in their future careers. Students will benefit from a distinguished group of lecturers who will transfer knowledge and expertise to them. "We take pride in and value the significant praise and positive impact of the pilot edition of the ManahilAlizz programme and we place great importance on education, training and development, empowering future generations and equipping them with the skills and capabilities needed to contribute their creative potential towards serving their communities, meeting their requirements, and keeping up with the rapid changes

and transformations of our modern era. We are confident that the knowledge acquired by students through this programme will equip them with the necessary skills that prepare them to enter the job market and compete efficiently while possessing a deep understanding of the fundamentals of Islamic banking and services that comply with the principles of Islamic Sharia. We also extend our gratitude to the various colleges and universities for their valuable cooperation in ensuring the success of this programme," Al Nabhani said.

The Learning and Development department of the bank is dedicated to equipping staff and external participants with the essential skills and knowledge required for leadership roles at various levels. The department has implemented a diverse range of training programmes, both internally and externally.

PROMOTION

Win amazing gifts with Toyota's 'Summer Delights' campaign

MUSCAT: Buy the Toyota of your dreams this season to win exciting gifts by availing exclusive offers through the 'Toyota's Summer Delights' campaign.

Toyota offers its new customers the benefits of free service from 3 years/30000 km, 10 years/100,000 km (whichever is earlier), free 1st-year insurance or a cash gift up to OMR 450 in lieu. Also, grab the incredible opportunity for an EMI holiday for up to 3 months. All new customers will also be eligible to enter the grand raffle draw, where they will have the chance to win an all-inclusive trip to Turkiye (3 nights and 4 days) for a family of four and 10 iPhone 15 Pro max. The campaign begins on June 3 and runs until August 1. So head to your nearest Toyota showroom and take advantage of this amazing opportunity.

Toyota offers an impressive product line-up in Oman. Toyota is a popular household name known for its durability, reliability, and quality products.

Offering simple yet sophisticated designs, the Corolla is one of Toyota's most popular vehicles. It is powered by a 2.0-litre, four-cylinder Dynamic Force engine, which produces 168 hp and 20.39



kg/m of torque paired with a Direct Shift CVT transmission.

The Camry, with its stylish outlook, makes a fine impression. It is available with a choice of three powertrain options.

The legendary Toyota Land Cruiser is made to tackle tricky terrains and provide an off-roading experience of a lifetime. Powering the Land Cruiser is a choice of two powertrain options.

The all-new Toyota Yaris promises a dynamic driving experience thanks to its four-cylinder engine equipped with a 16-valve DOCH and dual VVT-I. The vehicle is available with a 1.5-litre capacity engine that delivers smooth ac-

celeration and a quick response, producing 105 horsepower and 138 Nm of torque with a fuel consumption of 20.5 km/l.

Exclusive to the Toyota Crown, the vehicle is built using the Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA-K) platform. The new Crown features two choices of environmentally friendly powertrains. The first hybrid electric powertrain consists of a front electric motor and Toyota's first-ever 2.4-litre inline four-cylinder turbo engine with All Wheel Drive, paired with a direct-shift six-speed automatic transmission with a combined power of 340 HP and 40.7kg/m of torque.

ACHIEVEMENT

JW Marriott Hotel Muscat recognised for sustainability efforts with Green Key certification

MUSCAT: JW Marriott Hotel Muscat announced that it has been awarded the esteemed Green Key certification, marking a significant step forward in the hotel's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

This achievement contributes to Marriott International's ongoing efforts to prioritize eco-conscious practices across its global portfolio.

The Green Key certification signifies JW Marriott Hotel Muscat's commitment to sustainability across various aspects of its operations. Through a rigorous evaluation of the hotel's sustainability initiatives, including energy efficiency, environmental practices, guest room recycling, waste management, community engagement, and associate education, JW Marriott Hotel Muscat has proven its dedication to driving positive change within local communities and reducing the impact of the global hospitality industry on the environment.

With sustainability at the forefront, JW Marriott Hotel Muscat actively engages both associates and guests in preserving and pro-



tecting the planet through a range of sustainability experiences. Building on the certification, the hotel will introduce additional eco-friendly practices that support sustainability, while providing guests with an immersive and authentic local experience.

"We are honoured to receive the Green Key certification, as it serves as a testament to our unwavering commitment to sustainability and responsible business practices,"

says Juliana Salla, General Manager of JW Marriott Hotel Muscat. "This recognition is a reflection of our ongoing dedication to preserving the environment and supporting our local community."

JW Marriott Hotel Muscat remains steadfast in its dedication to sustainability, leading positive change in the hospitality landscape while nurturing a more sustainable future for generations to come.



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