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MUSCAT TAAFI CENTRE

Specialised facility for rehabilitation of addicts inaugurated in Al Amerat

MUSCAT: A specialised facility to provide treatment and rehabilitation services for individuals recovering from addiction was inaugurated in Oman on Sunday.

Muscat Taafi Centre was officially opened under the auspices of Sayyid Saud Hilal Al Busaidi, Governor of Muscat, in the Wilayat of Al Amerat.

The project is part of Petroleum Development Oman's (PDO) social investment initiatives, implemented in partnership with Al Jisr Foundation and the Ministry of Health, and aligned with national efforts to strengthen mental health and infrastructure. The Centre delivers integrated care across three core stages: detoxification, rehabilitation and aftercare.

The initiative is considered one of PDO's most significant community health contributions.

PDO not only provided financial support amounting to OMR2.5 million, but also oversaw the project through its Project Management Consultancy team to ensure its delivery to the highest standards, on time and within the approved budget.

With a total capacity of 130 beds, the facility includes 96 beds for men and 34 for women. It houses



a detoxification unit, outpatient clinic, forensic medicine department, pharmacy, and administrative offices.

The Centre also features a multipurpose hall, vocational training and craft workshops, and recreational facilities of physiotherapy programme such as a swimming pool and a fitness centre.

In his speech, Dr. Yousef Al Farsi, Director General of Muscat Health, stated that the centre represents a significant, advanced step towards enhancing the mental and social healthcare system in Oman.

It focuses on providing an integrated package of specialised treatment and rehabilitation services for addiction recovery.

The centre offers a safe therapeutic environment and comprehensive programmes based on a rigorous scientific approach aimed at building the individual's capacity for positive change.

Al Farsi explained that the centre's programmes utilise the latest global methods and technologies and recovery through a graduated treatment plan.

This begins with a medically supervised detoxification phase, followed by a short-term rehabilitation phase focused on psychological support and strengthening self-stability.

Finally, there is a long-term rehabilitation phase aimed at rebuilding a healthy and stable lifestyle, enabling individuals to inte-

grate positively and effectively into the fabric of society.

"This approach seeks to provide real opportunities for a return to a normal, healthy life, thereby directly contributing to enhancing community safety and the psychological stability of society's members," he concluded.

Eng. Mohammed Ali Al Aghbari, PDO's External Affairs, Government Relations and Communications Manager stated, "The launch of the Muscat Rehabilitation Centre represents an important step in advancing mental and behavioural healthcare services in Oman. We are proud of our partnership with the Ministry of Health and Al Jisr Foundation to deliver such an iconic project that supports the community while fulfilling our national responsibility and corporate values. PDO has worked to ensure the Centre meets national expectations and delivers meaningful social impact, in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040."

The Centre is expected to promote collaboration among government, private and community sectors, and to improve access to specialized mental health and addiction rehabilitation services across Oman. -ONA

NCEM

National efforts in management of emergency reviewed



MUSCAT: The National Committee for Emergency Management (NCEM) held its first meeting of the year on Monday at the Police General Command under the chairmanship of Lt.Gen Hassan Mohsen Al Shuraiqi, Inspector General of Police and Customs and Chairman of the NCEM.

The meeting reviewed national efforts in emergency management, the level of coordination among all relevant sectors, and measures to enhance emergency response procedures.

During the meeting, the electronic emergency management system platform was launched. The platform aims to improve and streamline the National Committee's work in managing

and exchanging information and data related to handling emergencies across various stages, including monitoring, early warning, preparedness, and response.

The electronic system will link all sectors of the Emergency Management Committee, subcommittees in the governorates, operation centers, and relevant entities involved in emergency management.

The Inspector General of Police and Customs, stressed the importance of continuous training and preparedness, emphasizing the community's role in enhancing prevention and reducing risks. He lauded the efforts of the National Committee, subcommittees, and relevant sectors in managing emergencies. -ONA

Oman Air joins oneworld alliance, unlocking global travel access

Oman Air's oneworld membership opens up seamless booking options, priority benefits, and frequent flyer reciprocity with other alliance members



For Oman Air, it signals the culmination of a bold transformation strategy — one that positions the carrier firmly among the world's top-tier airlines, offering seamless access to over 900 destinations across 170 countries through a network of 2,700 aircraft.

But beyond the numbers lies a deeper story: one of ambition, precision, and strategic alignment. Oman Air, once a regional player, is now poised to leverage the power of global partnerships, turbocharge its loyalty offering, and reshape the way Oman connects with the world.

"This is a proud day not only for Oman Air but for the nation of Oman," said Con Korfiatis, CEO of Oman Air.

"Joining oneworld is more than a commercial decision — it's a strategic alignment, a meeting

of minds, and a major leap forward for our global ambitions. It strengthens our Sindbad loyalty programme, enhances our network footprint, and gives our guests seamless travel options and world-class benefits."

A strategic step for a mid-sized airline

Describing Oman Air's entry as "transformative," Korfiatis emphasised the smart strategy behind joining a global alliance instead of expanding unilaterally.

"As a mid-sized airline surrounded by some of the largest carriers in the world, we couldn't — and shouldn't — try to fly everywhere ourselves. oneworld gives us immediate access to a global footprint in a single strategic step. This is about commercial strength, systems integration, and deliver-

ing on Oman's Vision 2040," Korfiatis added.

Oman Air's oneworld membership opens up seamless booking options, priority benefits, and frequent flyer reciprocity with other alliance members.

Guests can now accrue and redeem miles across the network and enjoy nearly 700 premium lounges worldwide, including new flagship lounges at Schiphol (Amsterdam) and Incheon (Seoul).

"From today, travellers from the US, Japan, Australia and beyond can enjoy smooth connections into Oman," said Michael Rutter, Chief Commercial Officer of Oman Air. "Our 42 direct routes across 22 countries are now connected to 900 global destinations. This is not just a symbolic moment — it's a business milestone. We dated many alliances, but oneworld was clearly the best fit."

Rutter highlighted enhanced connectivity to Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and North America, adding that the alliance would support Oman's inbound tourism and economic diversification goals.

"This partnership means transformational access to the Far East and the Americas. Oman Air today is a different airline from two years ago — fighting fit, commercially focused, and ready to compete globally."

The airline also reaffirmed that its upcoming non-stop Muscat-Amsterdam route (launching 1 July 2025) and expanded double-

daily Muscat-London service align with oneworld's seamless connectivity goals.

One alliance, one vision

Nat Pieper, CEO of oneworld, joined virtually from Dallas, congratulating Oman Air on its successful integration and praising its strategic value.

"Oman Air brings both award-winning service and unique geography to the oneworld table," Pieper said. "Global alliances are especially crucial for mid-sized airlines looking to spread their wings. We are proud to welcome Oman Air as our 15th member — and the right fit."

Pieper emphasised the alliance's philosophy of "quality over quantity".

"Some alliances have more members, but oneworld's 15 airlines cover 94% of global air travel demand. That's because we focus on performance, alignment, and value — not just numbers. With 15 members, we have just the right balance for meaningful collaboration and customer benefit."

The addition of Oman Air comes with renewed commitment to regional cooperation, especially with fellow oneworld members Qatar Airways and Royal Jordanian.

"This isn't about competition. It's about smart, cooperative growth," Pieper noted. "oneworld is a permissive alliance. Our members are free to work with non-al-

liance partners too. We encourage what's best for airlines, customers and profitability."

Korfiatis echoed this sentiment, highlighting the complementary roles of Oman Air and its regional peers.

"Our differentiation is Oman itself. While others offer hub transits, we offer direct access to one of the world's most stunning and welcoming destinations."

The alignment with oneworld will also enhance Oman Air's Sindbad loyalty programme, which will now offer reciprocal benefits with other oneworld carriers under Emerald, Sapphire, and Ruby tiers.

"This strengthens Sindbad, making it a truly global programme," Korfiatis confirmed. "In the next six months, expect to see even more enhancements rolled out."

Rutter also announced the launch of a new digital stopover programme, which has already sold 8,000 packages, allowing travellers to explore Oman before continuing their journeys.

"We're investing in adventure tourism, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Exhibitions), and stopovers as a key economic driver. Oman Air is working with Visit Oman and global operators to bring the world to Oman in new ways," Rutter said.

"This isn't just a celebration — it's the beginning of a journey," said Korfiatis. "We're ready to fly farther, smarter, and together."

NORTH AL BATINAH

Summer programme launched for school students

SOHAR: The activities of the 2025 summer program for school students in North Al Batinah Governorate commenced on Monday across the governorate's wilayats.

Organised by the Ministry of Education under the slogan "My Summer: Connection and Growth," the programme involves 600 male and female students

from various wilayats, distributed across six summer centers.

Issa Saif Al Shamsi, head of the local committee for the summer program in North Al Batinah, stated that this year's programme includes activities aligned with its key objectives, most notably making productive use of students' summer break.

The initiative aims to nurture a capable generation that contributes to realising the aspirations of "Oman 2040" vision while developing students' personalities and talents through carefully selected workshops tailored to participants' interests and needs.

He added that the programme offers a wide variety of training

workshops, totaling 72 training hours per summer center. These workshops, he explained, cover multiple fields including arts, culture, science, sports, and social activities, all designed to enhance students' capabilities, develop their skills, and enrich their personal and cognitive experiences during the summer break.

He pointed out that the summer programme goes beyond entertainment, serving as a non-classroom educational space that promotes life skills, social interaction, creativity, and teamwork. This year's summer centers for the governorate's students include one center in each wilayat, with activities continuing until 10 July. -ONA





Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre to host sports activities during the summer

Following the overwhelming success of last year's edition, Sports Spark 2025 returns with an even broader offering

MUSCAT: The Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC) is bringing back Sports Spark, its annual indoor sports event, running from 18 July to 16 August in Exhibition Halls 1 and 2.

Following the overwhelming success of last year's edition, which attracted over 30,000 participants and sold out entirely, Sports Spark 2025 returns with an even broader offering. The event aims to promote fitness and wellbeing during the hot summer months by providing the community with access to high-quality, air-conditioned facilities and a wide variety of sports.

Organised by the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre, this year's programme includes football, basketball, pickleball, badminton, cricket, and fast-growing activities like e-gaming among many others. The initiative reflects OCEC's ongoing commitment to encouraging healthy lifestyles and making sport accessible to all.

Teams, individuals and clubs will be able to book facilities starting from just OMR2 per hour, with multiple time slots available throughout the day. Parents can also register their children for a summer camp with early bird rates available until 5 July. Corporates can take advantage of the special packages to offer employees access to the facilities, encouraging fitness and wellbeing in the workplace.

Commenting on the launch of the third edition, Eng. Said Al Shanfari, CEO of OCEC, said: "To us, this isn't just about trans-

Teams, individuals and clubs will be able to book facilities starting from just OMR2 per hour, with multiple time slots available throughout the day. Corporates can also take advantage of the special packages

forming our exhibition halls into a sports haven, it's about encouraging summer activity and promoting fitness across all age groups. For one whole month, the OCEC becomes a place for people to play, move, and connect, with summer camps for kids, corporate challenges, tournaments, and more. It's not just about staging an event: it's about building habits, creating access, and showing what sport can do for your body, mind, and community. I invite everyone to discover the best that Sports Spark has to offer."

Tournaments and competitions will also be held throughout the month, including on the opening weekend, with more announcements to follow soon.



SUMMIT OF SAMHAN MOUNTAIN

EA implements Metal Compass Project

SALALAH: The Environment Authority in Dhofar Governorate, in cooperation with the National Survey Authority and the Royal Air Force of Oman, yesterday implemented the Metal Compass Project at the summit of Samhan Mountain.

The project aims to document the highest elevation point in Dhofar Governorate and transform it into a prominent environmental landmark on Oman's tourism and environmental map. Implemented within the Samhan Mountain Nature Reserve, the project provides valuable data about the reserve's characteristics to enhance environmental, tourism, and cultural awareness.

A concrete monument topped with a metal compass structure marking the four cardinal directions and nearby environmen-



tal/tourism landmarks has been installed at "Moden" summit to highlight the reserve's cultural and natural identity. Standing at 1,757.6 meters above sea level, Moden summit represents one of Oman's most distinctive natural locations and the country's second-highest mountain peak.

Engineer Zahran Ahmed Al Abdulsalam, Director General of Environment in Dhofar Governorate, stated: "This project establishes Samhan Mountain summit as a promising environmental, tourism and cultural landmark offering unique experiences for both visitors and local communities."

The project enhances the reserve's status as a premier ecotourism destination while preserving its rich natural resources and authentic cultural values.

Al Abdulsalam added that it invites enthusiasts to explore the reserve's natural, geological and biological aspects, which will expand fundamental knowledge for deeper understanding of its unique ecosystem and guide conservation efforts. The Samhan Mountain Compass Project incorporates scientific, environmental, tourism and cultural dimensions.

It provides crucial data about various aspects of the reserve's ecosystem, encourages preservation of natural resources, and boosts the tourism appeal of Samhan Mountain and its nature reserve. -ONA

TWO WEEKS



South Al Batinah Governorate launches summer programme

A'RUSTAQ:The activities of the summer programme for male and female students in the schools of South Al Batinah Governorate commenced yesterday across the governorate's wilayats.

Organised by the Directorate General of Education in South Al Batinah, this year's programme is held under the slogan "My Summer: Connection and Growth" and includes diverse scientific, technical, artistic, literary, social, sports, entrepreneurial, scouting, and media training programmes.

Amna Mohammed Al Balushi, Director of the Vocational Guidance and Student Counseling Department and head of the summer programme's planning and organising committee in South Al Batinah, stated that the programme will run for two weeks with the participation of students from various schools across the governorate.

She explained that the initiative aims to make productive use of the summer vacation by benefiting participants, instilling values of citizenship, equipping them with scientific and practical skills, nurturing talents, expanding their knowledge, and enhancing their cognitive, intellectual, creative, and life skills. Additionally, it seeks to reinforce national identity, loyalty to the nation and the Sultan, promote ethical and social values, and strengthen students' skills in information technology, scientific innovation, and entrepreneurship. The program also trains participants in sci-

entific thinking, innovation, and creativity across multiple fields.

Al Balushi added that the summer programme also aims to foster cooperation, teamwork, self-confidence, and self-esteem while creating greater opportunities to discover and refine student talents. It supports their experiences and develops various skills by nurturing and embracing their ideas. Furthermore, it enhances collaboration and partnerships among institutions and highlights heritage and tourism aspects.

She noted that this year's program will feature a range of skill-based activities in cultural, literary, artistic, sports, economic, tourism, and media fields. These include artificial intelligence applications, virtual reality, mental arithmetic, 3D printing, robotics, modern technologies, mountain adventures, climbing, swimming, various sports activities, first aid, drone and smartphone photography basics, debates, cultural competitions, acting, and diverse games. Additionally, the program will cover green schools, recycling, palm frond crafts, pottery, ceramics, drawing, and more.

These objectives will be achieved through the programme's four main pillars: values and cultural enrichment, applied sciences, awareness and guidance, and student activities—all fundamental components in shaping students' personalities and emphasizing the importance of values in their lives. -ONA

INTELLECTUAL HERITAGE

Preservation of rare Omani manuscripts

MUSCAT: The documentation and preservation of rare Omani manuscripts stand as one of the most significant national projects showcasing Oman's intellectual heritage.

These manuscripts hold a rich cultural treasure that revives the history of ancestors and chronicles the stories that shaped Oman's identity and ancient legacy across different eras.

In an interview with Oman News Agency (ONA), Nasr Nasser Al Busaidi, Head of the Documentation and Inventory Department at the Directorate of Manuscripts in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, emphasised that the preservation, printing, and dissemination of Omani manuscripts are among the most vital national projects highlighting Oman's intellectual heritage.

"This effort is not confined to Oman's borders but extends worldwide," he said.

He noted that several influential Omani figures have been recognised by UNESCO, including the linguist Al-Khalil bin Ahmad Al-Farahidi (inscribed in 2005)



and the physician and pharmacist Rashid bin Umaira Al-Rustaqi (inscribed in 2013).

Al Busaidi explained that the manuscript preservation process at the ministry's Directorate of Manuscripts is meticulous and labor-intensive, aiming to restore the original text as written by authors centuries ago.

Manuscripts undergo multiple stages before being fully documented: upon receipt, they are sterilized to protect handlers from potential hazards caused by fungi, age, and humidity. They are then

manually restored, reinforced, cataloged, and digitally scanned to prevent loss. Digital copies facilitate access for researchers while the originals are stored in specialized climate-controlled archives to ensure long-term preservation, he pointed out.

He stressed that Oman's intellectual heritage must be safeguarded for future generations.

With advanced technology, the directorate has successfully documented and published a vast number of manuscripts and encouraged researchers to contribute.

The ministry adopts qualifying works for publication based on the manuscript's significance and the quality of its documentation. Since the directorate's establishment in 1976, nearly 400 titles have been published, and over 6,000 manuscripts across various fields have been archived, he noted.

Al Busaidi highlighted that all departments within the directorate collaborate on this monumental national project to preserve, promote, and globalize Oman's intellectual heritage, underscoring its role in Islamic civilization. This is achieved through international exhibitions and widespread dissemination. Oman possesses its oldest manuscript, dating back over 900 years, containing jurisprudential correspondences and biographies of Omani scholars, set for release at the next Muscat International Book Fair. Another notable work, the "Encyclopedia of Bayan Al-Shara", a landmark Omani jurisprudential compendium, took over five years to document and reflects Oman's contributions to Islamic legal sciences. -ONA



HONGQI





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Shura committee discusses Unified Industrial Regulation Law of GCC

The ministry’s representatives affirmed that the draft law aims to regulate the industrial sector, promote development and boost investment

Times News Service

MUSCAT: As part of its discussion on the draft Unified Industrial Regulation Law for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States, the Economic and Financial Committee of the Shura Council hosted on Monday, several specialists from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

The draft law was referred by the government to the Council for study. The ministry’s representatives affirmed that the draft law aims to regulate the industrial sector, promote industrial development, encourage industrial investment, and increase the sector’s contribution to national income. It also seeks to strengthen industrial integration and the inter-



connection of economic activities among the GCC states.

Related to industrialisation
The law is expected to support the alignment of economic policies related to industrialisation, meet the requirements of economic development plans and programmes, foster innovation, and adopt and localise advanced technologies to enhance the competitiveness of the industrial sector.

Members of the committee emphasised the importance of ensuring that the provisions of the draft law take into account the specific characteristics of the local industrial sector and align with existing laws and regulations governing industry in Oman.

The discussion took place during the Committee’s fifteenth meeting of the second annual session (2024–2025) of the tenth term of the Council, chaired by

Ahmed bin Saeed Al Sharqi, Chair of the Committee, and attended by its members.

During the meeting, the committee also reviewed and approved the final report on the expressed desire regarding the assessment of the current state of local industries in Oman. The report aims to analyse the industrial landscape in terms of challenges, opportunities, and readiness to contribute to the goals of the industrial strategy and Oman Vision 2040.

The report concluded with a number of findings and recommendations aimed at supporting the growth of the industrial sector, most notably the need to align policies with the national industrial strategy and provide a package of incentives and facilitations.

Additionally, the committee approved the final report on the

expressed desire concerning the evaluation of the competitiveness and attractiveness of Oman’s business environment. This discussion reflects the committee’s ongoing efforts to support economic development and enhance the business climate in line with the aspirations of Oman Vision 2040, and to contribute to attracting investments and diversifying sources of national income.

The report outlined key challenges facing the business sector and presented recommendations to enhance its competitiveness and appeal to foreign investors.

It is worth noting that, as part of its study of the expressed desires, the committee held several meetings and hosted experts from relevant economic and industrial authorities to gather their opinions and observations.

EMBASSY OF JAPAN IN MUSCAT



Manga Hokusai Manga Exhibition

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Embassy of Japan in Muscat, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, will be hosting the travelling exhibition “Manga Hokusai Manga” which includes manga drawings by the Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai dating back to the 19th century.

These drawings will be presented through the lens of contemporary Japanese comics, giving visitors the opportunity to experience the essence and depth of the Japanese culture and life in all its details through these drawings.

The exhibition will be held at the Omani Society for Arts in Ghala from July 3 to 22, 2025, and entry is free.

SULTAN’S ARMED FORCES



SAF Chief of Staff, military personnel inspect exercise

MUSCAT: Rear Admiral Abdullah Khamis Al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (SAF), along with SAF commanders and several senior officers, followed up on Monday at the Joint Command and Staff College a part of the “Al-Hazm” exercise.

The exercise is being conducted by participants of the 38th course, representing various military and security services as well as several friendly nations.

Attendees were briefed by the college’s faculty on the progress of the exercise, while the partici-

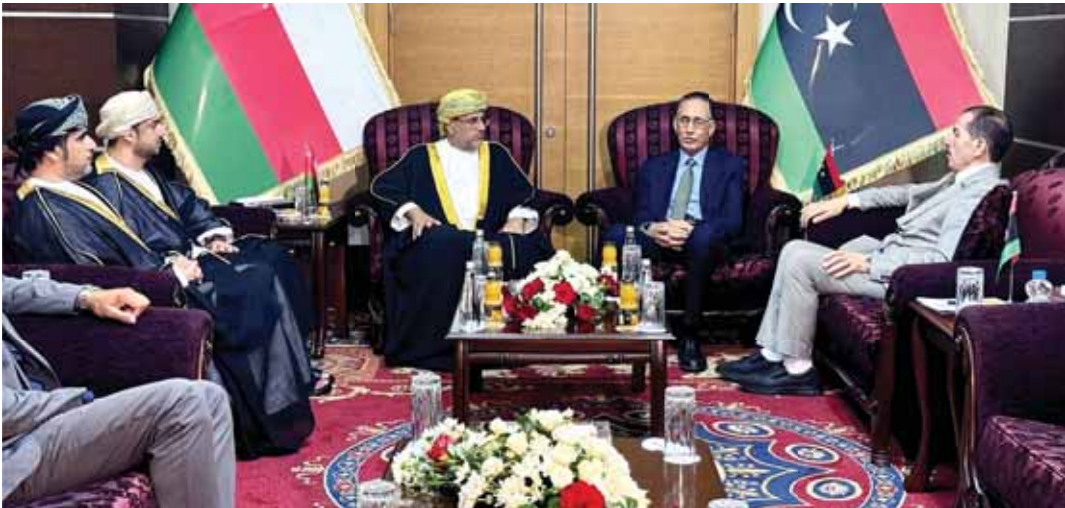
pants provided an explanation of their engagement with the exercise scenarios and the proposed solutions to the hypothetical challenges across its various stages and activities.

The “Al-Hazm” exercise, running from 23 June to 2 July, forms part of the course’s general curriculum and serves as the culmination of a series of exercises undertaken by the Joint Command and Staff College students.

It aims to achieve the intended training objectives while aligning with the requirements of joint military operations. —ONA

Oman chairs annual meeting of API’s Board of Trustees in Tripoli

The meeting also discussed approaches for implementing the Institute’s 2025-2030 strategy approved at the API’s meeting held in Kuwait



TRIPOLI: The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Planning Institute (API) was held in Tripoli, Libya, under the chairmanship of Dr. Said Mohammed Al Saqri, Minister of Economy.

The meeting discussed approaches for implementing the Institute’s 2025-2030 strategy approved at the API’s meeting held in Kuwait in January 2025. Kuwait meeting focused on sup-

porting efforts to promote sustainable development in Arab countries.

Monday’s meeting laid emphasis on ways to launch the second phase of a development index titled “Government Spending Efficiency Index in Arab Countries”. The index aims to enhance transparency and efficiency in the management of government resources.

The meeting was held in pursuance of the institute’s expansion of its training activities.

The API annually organises more than 25 virtual training sessions on relevant topics like decentralisation, local development policies, digital transition, the management of small and medium enterprise (SMEs) and sustainable and ‘green growth’ (environment-based economic development).

On the sidelines of the meeting, Dr. Said bin Mohammed Al Saqri conferred with two Libyan ministers: Mohammed Al Zaidani, Minister of Planning, and Mohammed

Al Huweij, Minister of Economy and Trade.

The meeting stressed the importance of activating the provisions of the Omani-Libyan Joint Committee and a scheme for private sector cooperation between Oman and Libya, with a view to investing in the reconstruction of Libya.

The two sides also discussed ways of boosting economic cooperation and exchanging expertise in the fields of planning and sustainable development. —ONA

DUSITD2 NASEEM RESORT

Adventure Park in Jabal Al Akhdar welcomes travellers to experience mountain mist

Times News Service

MUSCAT: As the Khareef season transforms Oman’s south into a lush green oasis, dusitD2 Naseem Resort, Jabal Al Akhdar invites road trippers en route to Salalah to experience a high-altitude retreat complete with cool weather, gracious service, and Oman’s first and only mountain Adventure Park.

Just a two-hour drive from Muscat and perched 2,000 metres above sea level, the resort offers a scenic and strategic mid-journey pause for families, couples, and solo adventurers heading toward Salalah’s monsoon-drenched coast.



“The drive to Salalah during Khareef is beautiful but long,” says Jagdeep Thakral, General Manager. “We offer travellers the opportunity to make their journey part of the adventure—by discovering Jabal Akhdar and recharging both body and mind along the way.”

The crown jewel of dusitD2 Na-

seem is its 8,000-square-metre Adventure Park, a one-of-a-kind attraction in Jabal Akhdar that turns a quick stopover into an unforgettable family experience. Guests can challenge themselves on the three-level ropes course, take in the views from the 107-metre zipline, and scale the 10-metre outdoor climbing wall or simply enjoy the green space, walking trails, and open-air fun.

Perfect for children, teens, and the young-at-heart, the park encourages families to stretch their legs and create shared memories before continuing their drive.

Additional resort highlights include: Naturally cool weather and

mountain mist—especially refreshing during summer months; all-day dining and light refreshments for guests on the go, and wellness offerings for profound relaxation, including spa services. With convenient parking, direct access to the park, and a welcoming atmosphere, dusitD2 Naseem Resort is fast becoming a favourite destination for domestic travellers exploring Oman’s varied landscapes.

Located atop the majestic Green Mountain of Oman, dusitD2 Naseem Resort Jabal Akhdar offers a blend of contemporary comforts, heartfelt hospitality, and a commitment to sustainability.



OMAN

Pakistan School Muscat signs landmark pact for Mabela Campus project

Valued at nearly OMR3 million, the Mabela Project is a flagship educational initiative aimed at establishing a purpose-built campus on an 8,000-square metre plot



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Pakistan School Muscat has officially signed an agreement for the construction of its state-of-the-art Mabela Campus, marking a major milestone in the institution's 50-year journey of educational excellence in the Sultanate of Oman.

The signing ceremony was held in the presence of Syed Naveed Safdar Bokhari, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Sultanate of Oman.

The agreement was signed between Ameer Hamza, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Pakistan Schools Oman, and Syed Haris Ali, owner of AZ Engineering, the appointed contractor for the project.

AZ Engineering is a well-established firm recognised for delivering high-quality infrastructure projects across the Sultanate. Project consultancy will be overseen by the firm Tameer, led by

Manzoor Ahmed, known for its expertise in large-scale educational developments.

Valued at nearly OMR3 million, the Mabela Project is a flagship educational initiative aimed at establishing a purpose-built campus on an 8,000-square-metre plot.

Designed to accommodate over 3,000 students, the campus will feature modern academic and recreational facilities that meet international standards, responding to the growing educational needs of the Pakistani community in the Mabela area and surrounding regions.

The project is scheduled for completion by December 2026. On this significant occasion, the Board of Directors and the Pakistan School System expressed their sincere appreciation to the Ministry of Education and the Govern-

ment of Oman for their continued support and encouragement in promoting quality education.

Special acknowledgment was given to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for his visionary leadership and for generously granting the land for this project—underscoring the Sultanate's enduring commitment to the educational development of expatriate communities in Oman.

This project aligns with Oman Vision 2040 which emphasises innovation, inclusivity, and investment in human capital.

Pakistan School Muscat, which currently caters to students from more than 20 nationalities, continues to play a significant role in enriching the multicultural educational landscape of Oman.

The signing was witnessed by the Ambassador and Chaudhry

Muhammad Ashraf, reflecting the strong diplomatic and community support behind the initiative. The ceremony was also attended by members of the Board of Directors, including Ifthikhar, Director of Maintenance and Construction, school leadership, and prominent figures from the Pakistani business and professional community in Oman, including: Dr. Tauqeer Rizvi, Asif Mehmood (Country Manager, NESPAK), Country Manager of Air Sial, Muhammad Asif (CEO, Nasim ul Batinah), Chaudhry Kashif, Ahmed Ghuman, Qamar Riaz, Emran Fazal, Waseem Gul, Ziaul Haq Siddiquie, and Atif.

The presence of a large number of community members reaffirmed the shared vision to enhance educational infrastructure and opportunities for the Pakistani diaspora in the Sultanate.

This landmark initiative reflects the commitment of Pakistan School Muscat to delivering accessible, high-quality education while fostering a culture of academic excellence, innovation, and global citizenship—fully aligned with the broader aspirations of both Pakistan and Oman.



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LITERARY FORUM HALL

Symposium organised

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth on Monday organised a symposium titled “Culture, Sciences (Educational Sciences) and Sustainable Development” at the Literary Forum Hall in Muscat Governorate.

The symposium featured Dr. Saif Nasser Al Maamari, Professor of Curriculum and Teaching Methods at Sultan Qaboos University's College of Education, with Dr. Huda bint Nasser Al Bunsaidi moderating the event.

Held as part of the “Civilizational Horizons” programme – one of the Literary Forum’s initiatives aimed at promoting cultural and intellectual discourse – the symposium provided a platform for discussion and exchange of expertise among intellectuals and cultural stakeholders in Oman.

Discussions focused on the interrelationships between culture, science, and sustainable human development concepts, tracing their evolution across various

cultural and social contexts. Particular emphasis was placed on Oman's experience over the past five decades and the role of natural, social, and human sciences in achieving sustainable human development goals.

The symposium specifically examined educational sciences, analysing their modern integration into Oman's context, their interaction with local values and knowledge systems, and their contribution to sustainable human development efforts.

Discussions highlighted education's priority status in "Oman Vision 2040" and related sectoral strategies, while exploring the influence of local culture on education and scientific research in Oman.

Notably, the Civilizational Horizons programme supports scientific research, creativity, innovation, and knowledge economy development, aligning with objectives of the 2021-2040 Cultural Strategy.— **ONA**

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At least 49 Palestinians killed in Israeli attacks across Gaza Strip

A spokesperson for the Civil Defence said that Israeli forces had intensified air and artillery attacks on multiple locations, hitting homes, tents, schools sheltering displaced people, and public gatherings

GAZA: At least 49 Palestinians were killed on Monday in Israeli airstrikes and gunfire across the Gaza Strip, according to the Civil Defence agency in the coastal enclave.

Mahmoud Basal, a spokesperson for the Civil Defence, told Xin-



hua that Israeli forces had intensified air and artillery attacks on multiple locations, hitting homes, tents, schools sheltering displaced people, and public gatherings.

Five people were killed in an airstrike on a crowd in al-Shati refugee camp west of Gaza City, and another four died in a similar strike in Jabalia, in the north of the enclave, Basal said.

He added that 15 others, including a woman, were killed when Israeli drones struck a group of people near an aid distribution point in Gaza City's southern Zeitoun district.

In Khan Younis, in the south of the territory, rescue teams recovered the bodies of 10 people killed in Israeli air and artillery bombardment, according to the Civil Defence.

Basal also said at least 15 people were killed while waiting for food near two US-backed aid distribution centers in central and southern Gaza.

Palestinian security sources and eyewitnesses said Israeli artillery had been shelling the eastern, northern, and southern outskirts of Gaza City since early morning. They reported that Israeli ground

forces advanced into the Zeitoun and Tuffah neighbourhoods under heavy gunfire, forcing residents to flee.

The Israeli military did not immediately comment on the attacks.

Israel resumed major military operations in Gaza on March 18. Gaza's health authorities said on Sunday that at least 6,175 Palestinians have been killed and 21,378 others wounded since then, bringing the overall death toll since the war began in October 2023 to 56,500, with 133,419 others injured.

International Sociological Association suspends Israel's membership over silence on Gaza crisis

The International Sociological Association (ISA) has suspended the collective membership of the Israeli Sociological Society, citing its failure to clearly condemn the dramatic situation in Gaza.

In a statement, ISA said: "We regret that the Israeli Sociological Society has not taken a clear position condemning the dramatic situation in Gaza. In a decision that reflects the extraordinary gravity of the current situation, the Executive Committee has decided to suspend the collective membership of the Israeli Sociological Society (ISS)."

ISA reiterated its declaration that, as part of its public stance against the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza, it has no institutional relationships with Israeli public institutions.

The decision comes amid widespread opposition from academics and human rights advocates to Israel's participation in the Association's international forum scheduled for next month.

Last Wednesday, the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) called on scholars in solidar-

ity with the Palestinian people to pressure ISA to cancel the participation of Israeli academics.

In a public statement, PACBI urged researchers to end all forms of academic, economic, and institutional cooperation with Israel, which it says reinforces its illegal presence and apartheid regime in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Palestinian Church Affairs Committee urges global church leaders to speak out against Israeli violations

The Higher Presidential Committee for Church Affairs in Palestine, led by Ramzi Khoury, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), has called on church leaders worldwide to take a clear and public stance against the crimes and violations committed by Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people.

In an official letter, accompanied by a report documenting grave human rights violations, the committee highlighted the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip, which has resulted in mass destruction and catastrophic human loss, amid what it described as disturbing international silence. — *Agencies*

STATE OF MERIDA

Heavy rains continue to lash western Venezuela

CARACAS: Heavy rains continued to lash western Venezuela, with rivers overflowing in several states and hundreds of homes damaged, authorities said late on Sunday.

In the western state of Merida, Governor Arnaldo Sanchez said at least 370 homes have been affected by the rains and flooding, with 103 houses destroyed.

Sanchez said on social media that at least 2 tonnes of supplies have been distributed to affected communities in the Andean highlands, adding security forces and Civil Protection members rushed to provide

assistance.

In the northwestern state of Zulia, Governor Luis Caldera told state-run Venezolana de Television that officials are helping 16 communities affected by flooding from the overflowing Chama River.

He said residents in the affected areas are receiving food, drinking water, tents and other essential supplies.

Meanwhile, in Apure state, Mayor Jackson Barbosa said access to communities in the town of Andres Eloy Blanco has been cut off after two rivers overflowed their banks. — *Xinhua*

INDIA

12 killed in chemical factory blast in Telangana

SANGAREDDY: The death toll in the explosion at a chemical factory in Telangana's Sangareddy district rose to 12 after State Minister Vivek Venkatswamy said that four more bodies were recovered from the accident site on Monday.

Telangana Ministers Venkatswamy and Damodar Raja Narasimha visited the site, where a blast occurred earlier in the day.

Speaking to the media, Venkatswamy said that currently, 12 people are in critical condition, whose treatment is underway.

"Nearly 63 people reported for work at this factory this morning. Initially, it was said that a reactor blast had occurred in the factory. We have just visited the site, and we now know that it was not a re-



actor blast," he said.

"The factory incharge also lost his life in the accident. There is no one here who can tell what exactly happened out of the 63 people who reported here in the morning. We have learned that eight people have died. Right now, four more bodies have been recovered.

Twelve people are critical with burn injuries. The remaining 22 people have 20-25% burns and are receiving treatment. We will get more clarity in the next one or two hours," he added.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed sorrow over the loss of lives in the explosion

and announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakhs for the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund.

In a social media post on X, the Prime Minister's Office wrote, 'Anguished by the loss of lives due to a fire tragedy at a factory in Sangareddy, Telangana. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon. An ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000.'

Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, also expressed his condolences over the deaths in the explosion. — *ANI*

LANCET GLOBAL HEALTH STUDY

Nearly 20% of cancer drugs defective in 4 African nations

BERLIN: An alarming number of people across Africa may be taking cancer drugs that don't contain the vital ingredients needed to contain or reduce their disease.

It's a concerning finding with roots in a complex problem: how to regulate a range of therapeutics across the continent.

A US and pan-African research group published the findings this week in The Lancet Global Health. The researchers had collected dosage information, sometimes covertly, from a dozen hospitals and 25 pharmacies across Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Cameroon.

They tested nearly 200 unique products across several brands. Around 17% — roughly one in six — were found to have incorrect active ingredient levels, including products used in major hospitals.

Patients who receive insufficient dosages of these ingredients could see their tumors keep growing, and possibly even spread.

Similar numbers of substandard antibiotics, antimalarial and tuberculosis drugs have been reported in the past, but this is the first time that such a study has found high levels of falsified or defective anticancer drugs in circulation.

"I was not surprised by these results," said Lutz Heide, a pharmacist at the University of Tübingen in Germany who has previously worked for the Somali Health Ministry and has spent the past decade researching substandard and falsified medicines.

Heide was not part of the investigative group, but said the report shed light on a problem not previously measured. "I was delighted that, finally, someone published such a systemic report," he said. "That is a first, really significant systematic study of this area."

"There are many possible causes for bad-quality products," Marya Lieberman of the University of Notre Dame in the US, the investiga-



tion's senior researcher, told DW.

Those causes can include faults in the manufacturing process or product decay due to poor storage conditions. But some drugs are also counterfeit, and that increases the risk of discrepancies between what's on the product label and the actual medicine within.

Spotting substandard and falsified products can be difficult. Usually, a medical professional or patient is only able to perform a visual inspection — literally checking a label for discrepancies or pills and syringes for colour differences — to spot falsified products.

But that's not a reliable method. In the study, barely a quarter of the substandard products were identified through visual inspection. Laboratory testing identified the rest. Fixing the problem, Lieberman said, will require improving regulation and providing screening technologies and training



where they're needed.

"If you can't test it, you can't regulate it," she said. "The cancer medications are difficult to handle and analyze because they're very toxic, and so many labs don't want to do that. And that's a core problem for the sub-Saharan countries where we worked. Even though several of those countries have quite good labs, they don't have the facilities that are needed for safe handling of the chemo

drugs established."

Not only cancer treatments are affected

Nearly a decade ago, the World Health Organization (WHO) found around one in 10 medicines used in low and middle-income countries were substandard or falsified. Independent research conducted since has backed those figures up, sometimes finding rates that are potentially twice as high.

"This could lead to treatment failure, adverse reactions, disease progression," health economist Sachiko Ozawa told DW. Ozawa contributed to the investigation on anticancer drugs and has separately researched other cases of defective medicines. "For the community, there's also economic losses in terms of wasted resources," she said. "So countries may be spending a lot of money on medications that are not going to be effective."

While high-income countries can monitor supply chains and have stringent regulatory systems in place to identify and withdraw suspect products, the infrastructure to do that is far from common in other regions.

In those places, poor access to affordable medication often drives patients to less-regulated marketplaces. Inadequate governance and regulation, as well as a scarcity of surveillance and diagnostic equipment to test pharmaceuticals, are all contributing to the problem in Africa.

"In high-income countries, I think there's a much more secure supply chain where you know the manufacturers are vetted, it has to go through very stringent regulatory processes to get approval... it gets tested more frequently," said Ozawa.

The WHO told DW that following the report's findings, it was

working with the four affected countries to address the problem.

"We are concerned with the findings the article has highlighted. WHO is in contact with national authorities of four impacted countries and obtaining relevant data," it said in a statement. "We expect to assess full information to evaluate the situation, which often takes time and capacity. But we're committed to address these issues working with the relevant countries and partners."

The WHO also reiterated its ongoing call for countries to improve their regulatory frameworks to "prevent incidents of substandard and falsified medicines, including in settings of cancer programmes."

Prevention, detection and response

In 2017, the WHO's review of substandard and falsified medicines offered three solutions based around prevention, detection and response.

Stopping the manufacture and sale of those medicines is the primary preventative measure, but where defective products make it to market, surveillance and response programs can prevent poor quality medicines from reaching patients. But regulatory reform sought by experts and authorities takes time. More immediate solutions are being developed in the form of better screening technologies. Lieberman is working on a "paper lab" — a type of test that can be used by trained professionals to chemically test the quality of a product before it's administered to a patient. Other laboratory technologies are also under development.

One comforting point is that while a significant proportion of the medication circulating in medical facilities in the four African countries was defective, the majority of the products tested met required standards. — *DW*

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by August 2025 reaching \$68.61, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 14 cents from the price of Friday, which was \$68.47. - OMA

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,500.87 points, down by 0.14% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.70% at 436.20 points. Musandam Power, up 9.69%, was the top gainer while Ooredoo, down 5.05%, was the top loser.

Treasury bills worth OMR39mn issued

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds



MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman OMR39 million by a way of allotting treasury bills on Monday. The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR 4 million, for a maturity period of 28 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 99.705 for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 99.705 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 3.84554 per cent and 3.85691 per cent, respectively. While, the value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR3

million, for a maturity period of 91 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 98.930 for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 98.930 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.29176% and 4.33818 per cent, respectively. Whereas, the value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR32 million, for a maturity period of 182 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 97.847 for every OMR 100, and the mini-

mum accepted price arrived at OMR 97.845 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.31714 per cent and 4.41212 per cent, respectively. Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and

repurchase facilities (Repo). It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 5.00 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 5.50 per cent. Furthermore, treasury bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures. -OMA

GCC inflation eases to 1.7% in 2024 from 2.2% in 2023

MUSCAT: The average inflation rate in the GCC countries stood at 1.7% in 2024, compared to 2.2% in 2023, according to the latest data released by the GCC-Stat. The data show a noticeable variation in the rates of change across the main groups, with the housing group recording the highest increase at 5.7%, followed by restaurants and hotels and culture and entertainment, both at 1.8%. This was followed by education at 1.7%, food and beverages at 1.5%, and goods and services at 1.1%. Meanwhile, the health group recorded a slight decline of 0.2%, followed by clothing and footwear at 0.7%, communications at 1.0%, tobacco at 1.1%, and furniture at 1.6%, while the transport group registered the largest drop at 2.0%. According to recent data, price levels in the GCC experienced moderate fluctuations between 2020 and 2024. The region's inflation rate stood at 1.7% in 2020, rising to 2.4% in 2021 and reaching its peak at 3.1% in 2022. It then eased to 2.2% in 2023, continuing its downward trajectory to settle at 1.7% in 2024. These figures reflect the success of the economic policies adopted by GCC countries in containing inflationary pressures, particularly following the notable increase in 2022. They also indicate a state of relative stability in the region compared to the fluctuations seen in global markets. In 2024, the GCC inflation rate remained notably lower than that of several major trading partners, underscoring the region's economic resilience. Inflation stood at 4.4% in Brazil, 3.8% in India, 3.3% in the United Kingdom, 2.9% in the United States, and 2.7% in Japan. Meanwhile, South Korea and Germany reported rates of 2.3%, with France recording 2.0%. The inflation rate in both China and Italy was lower than the GCC rate, recording 0.2% and 1.0% respectively, while the rate in the European Union stood at 2.6%. -OMA

FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

FSA issues directive to ensure insurance coverage for EVs

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Financial Services Authority (FSA) has issued a circular to all chief executive officers and general managers of insurance and Takaful companies stressing the importance of compliance with the Motor Vehicle Insurance Law in that they may not refuse insuring electric vehicles or renewal as far as the vehicle satisfies the stipulations stated in the Traffic Law. The move comes in view of observations the FSA received about the refusal of some insurance companies to provide insurance coverage for electric vehicles which is breach of Article (2) (b) of the Motor Vehicles Insurance Law promulgated by Royal Decree No. 34/94, which provides that insurers may not refuse insuring or renewing the insurance for vehicles satisfying

the stipulations of the Traffic Law. FSA emphasized that the compulsory insurance includes all vehicles including electric vehicles with no exclusion and urged the companies to address the technical issues such as availability of spare parts through underwriting and pricing policies without prejudice to the beneficiary's right to obtain insurance coverage and may resort to cash compensation in the event of lack of spare parts and specialized garages for such type of vehicles. The circular was issued within the context of FSA's role in protecting the rights of policyholders and enhancing transparency and compliance in the insurance market as well as coping with the global trends in the transport and energy industry and insurance sustainability.



ACHIEVEMENT

Sohar Port and Freezone recognised for safety excellence with second consecutive RoSPA Gold award

MUSCAT: In recognition of its commitment to the highest health and safety standards, Sohar Port and Freezone has been awarded the RoSPA Gold Sector Award for Health and Safety for the full year of 2025, marking its second consecutive win. This achievement, presented by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), the UK's largest and most respected safety awards program now in its 68th year, highlights Sohar's dedication to fostering a safe, efficient, and sustainability-driven operational culture. The awards attract nearly 2,000 entries annually from over 50 countries, impacting over seven million employees worldwide, underscoring the significance of this achievement. Commenting on the recognition, Eng. Batti Al Shibli, Harbour Master at Sohar Port and Freezone, stated: "We are proud to receive the RoSPA Award for the second year in a row, a reflection of the strong partnerships we have built with our tenants, operators,



and stakeholders across the port and freezone. "This international recognition is a tangible outcome of our shared commitment to upholding world-class health and safety standards, while fostering an operational environment rooted in sustainability and efficiency. We remain focused on this path, working together to create a safer workplace that re-

flects our long-term vision of institutional excellence." This award aligns with Sohar's strategic direction to build a world-class operational ecosystem, driven by a deeply embedded safety culture and long-term partnerships that continue to strengthen the port's competitiveness as a leading industrial and logistics hub in the region.

DEDICATED FINANCIAL SOLUTION

BankDhofar highlights benefits of Education Saving Plan for children's future

MUSCAT: BankDhofar is underscoring the benefits of its time-tested Education Saving Plan, a dedicated financial solution to empower parents in building a secure financial foundation for their children's higher education. Designed for both Omani nationals and expatriate residents, the Education Saving Plan allows parents or guardians to start building a dedicated fund for their child's education with flexible features and attractive returns. The BankDhofar Education Saving Plan offers an impressive opportunity for parents to start a higher education fund for their children, with the deposit tenure extending until the beneficiary reaches the age of 18. Parents can initiate their savings journey with an accessible monthly minimum deposit of RO 10. This tailored approach allows customers to earn returns of up to 60% over the full tenure, with interest rates of up to 5%, depending on the duration of the deposit. The



plan also offers the opportunity to invest through the Social Protection Fund, making it accessible to families across income brackets. Commenting on the importance of financial preparedness for education, Chief Retail Banking Officer of BankDhofar, stated: "We firmly believe in nurturing the future of Oman, and that begins with investing in our children's education. Our Education Saving Plan is structured to inculcate savings habit from a very young age, while supporting parents to secure their children's academic ambitions. It's about providing peace of mind, know-

ing that a solid financial base is being built, allowing them to pursue higher learning opportunities without financial constraints." Parents can apply for the plan by submitting basic identification documents, including a Civil ID, passport copy, or birth certificate for the child. For expatriates, a valid resident ID and passport copy are required. While the plan expects to drive long-term commitment, it also includes a clear policy for early withdrawals, where a 1% penalty is applied and interest is recalculated based on the actual duration the deposit was maintained at the prevailing market rate. BankDhofar remains committed to offering smart, customer-centric financial solutions that support the aspirations of families across Oman. It encourages all parents to explore the benefits of its Education Savings Plan as a proactive step towards securing a bright and educated future for their children.

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Musandam Power, up 9.69%, was the top gainer while Ooredoo, down 5.05%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,500.87 points, down by 0.14% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.70% at 436.20 points. Musandam Power, up 9.69%, was the top gainer while Ooredoo, down 5.05%, was the top loser. Shares of OQBI were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover. A total number of 1812 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 12.83 million, with more than 81.89 million shares changing hands. Out of 67 traded securities, 30 advanced, 10 declined, and 27 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for RO 674K while domestic investors were net buyers for RO 516K, followed by foreign investors for RO 157K worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 7,849.63 points, down 0.11%. Prices of Takaful Oman, Al Madina Investments, Al Omaniya Financial Services, Liva Group, and

Sohar International Bank were up by 9.09%, 4.44%, 3.85%, 2.00%, and 1.44% respectively. Prices of Ahli Bank, Bank Nizwa, and Global Financial Investments were down by 1.90%, 0.99%, and 0.96% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 6,468.93 points, up 1.66%. Prices of A'Saffa Foods, Al Anwar Ceramics, Jazeera Steel Products, Al Maha Ceramics, and Oman Flour Mills were up by 9.50%, 5.20%, 2.67%, 2.43%, and 1.95% respectively. Prices of Gulf International Chemicals, and Oman Cement were down by 1.41%, and 1.04% respectively. Services Index was down by 0.01% before closing at 1,599.43 points. Prices of Musandam Power, Barka Water & Power Company, Muscat Desalination, Sharqiyah Desalination, and Phoenix Power were up by 9.69%, 4.71%, 4.48%, 3.85%, and 2.86% respectively. Prices of Ooredoo, National Gas, and OQ Gas Networks were down by 5.05%, 3.37%, and 1.30% respectively.

United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

OMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,512.22	4,483.14	4,500.87	4,507.03	-6.16	-0.14
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,876.51	7,813.65	7,849.63	7,858.51	-8.89	-0.11
Industry Index	6,469.84	6,363.23	6,468.93	6,363.23	105.70	1.66
Services Index	1,602.11	1,590.08	1,599.43	1,599.57	-0.14	-0.01
MSX Shariah Index	436.25	432.69	436.20	433.15	3.05	0.70
MSX TR INDEX	6,674.61	6,631.61	6,657.84	6,666.94	-9.11	-0.14
FINANCIAL TR INDEX	9,357.57	9,282.89	9,325.63	9,336.19	-10.56	-0.11
INDUSTRIAL TR INDEX	7,950.46	7,819.45	7,949.34	7,819.45	129.89	1.66
SERVICES TR INDEX	2,043.07	2,027.73	2,039.65	2,039.83	-0.18	-0.01
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,204.48	1,204.48	1,204.48	1,204.48	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
81,898,267	12,833,756	1,812	28,270,402,893	30	10	27	67

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, JUNE 30

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PREV. VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	85,999	24,553	17	0.379	0.416	0.379	0.415	0.379	0.036	9.499	0.415	0.380	0.415	0.100	49,800,000
OM0000002188	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	876,359	157,484	79	0.174	0.183	0.174	0.182	0.173	0.009	5,202	0.182	0.178	0.182	0.100	40,400,000
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	100,000	38,625	3	0.390	0.390	0.385	0.385	0.375	0.010	2,667	0.385	0.385	0.390	0.100	45,085,715
OM0000002524	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	365,022	104,971	40	0.278	0.286	0.278	0.287	0.280	0.007	2,500	0.287	0.287	0.288	0.100	67,849,670
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	144,308	26,831	20	0.182	0.187	0.182	0.186	0.182	0.004	2,188	0.186	0.184	0.187	0.100	7,988,786
OM0000003388	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	15,003,372	2,113,459	132	0.138	0.141	0.138	0.141	0.139	0.002	1,438	0.141	0.142	0.141	0.100	93,561,724
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	265,376	10,061	15	0.071	0.072	0.071	0.072	0.071	0.001	1,408	0.072	0.071	0.072	0.100	51,437,256
OM0000001987	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	21,550	4,956	7	0.228	0.235	0.228	0.229	0.227	0.002	0.881	0.229	0.225	0.229	0.100	22,900,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	4,378,884	1,074,799	126	0.245	0.248	0.244	0.247	0.245	0.002	0.816	0.247	0.246	0.247	0.100	180,239,400
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	162,254	136,827	21	0.844	0.844	0.840	0.842	0.840	0.002	0.238	0.842	0.840	0.842	0.100	631,500,000
OM0000001482	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	150,000	46,980	3	0.300	0.300	0.286	0.300	0.300	0.000	0.000	0.300	0.295	0.300	0.100	487,783,807
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	10,215	2,240	4	0.220	0.220	0.219	0.219	0.219	0.000	0.000	0.219	0.219	0.220	0.100	204,920,840
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	22,100	1,401	4	0.061	0.061	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.062	0.100	21,367,638
OM0000002786	BANK MUSCAT	4,515,395	1,246,044	107	0.275	0.278	0.275	0.275	0.275	0.000	0.000	0.275	0.281	0.275	0.100	2,064,238,192
OM0000003681	VOLTAM ENERGY	44,221	30,958	6	0.701	0.701	0.700	0.700	0.700	0.000	0.000	0.701	0.701	0.730	0.100	65,529,213
OM0000004708	MADINA TAKAFUL	103,026	8,345	9	0.080	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.100	14,000,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	288,222	20,802	10	0.072	0.073	0.071	0.071	0.071	0.000	0.000	0.071	0.071	0.078	0.100	47,917,008
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	25,000	3,372	6	0.104	0.104	0.103	0.104	0.104	-0.001	-0.962	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.100	20,600,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	4,953	497	3	0.100	0.101	0.100	0.100	0.101	-0.001	-0.990	0.100	0.100	0.103	0.100	223,695,303
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	8,469,386	1,444,153	208	0.153	0.154	0.151	0.152	0.154	-0.002	-1.299	0.152	0.155	0.152	0.100	688,254,836
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	442,647	84,904	82	0.196	0.196	0.186	0.188	0.198	-0.010	-5.051	0.188	0.188	0.188	0.100	122,377,515
Total		21	36,573,599	6,604,158	902											
Parallel Market																
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	31,030	8,594	7	0.271	0.283	0.271	0.283	0.258	0.025	9.690	0.283	0.262	0.283	0.100	19,920,370
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	395,877	18,740	27	0.043	0.048	0.043	0.048	0.044	0.004	9,091	0.048	0.044	0.048	0.100	12,000,000
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	137,684	384,077	186	0.183	0.207	0.180	0.200	0.181	0.019	4,712	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.100	32,000,000
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	5,000	350	1	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.067	0.003	4,478	0.070	0.067	0.070	0.100	10,888,528
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	17,953	844	4	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.000	4,444	0.047	0.045	0.048	0.100	3,995,000
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FINANCIAL SERVICES	10,000	1,350	1	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.130	0.005	3,846	0.135	0.000	0.135	0.100	42,581,295
OM0000004689	SHARQIYAH DESALINATION	2,178	294	1	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.130	0.005	3,846	0.135	0.130	0.138	0.100	13,202,282
OM0000005865	PHOENIX POWER	170,309	12,117	17	0.070	0.072	0.070	0.072	0.070	0.002	2,857	0.072	0.071	0.075	0.100	105,307,205
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	15,757	1,322	8	0.082	0.084	0.082	0.084	0.082	0.002	2,439	0.084	0.080	0.084	0.100	54,481,587
OM0000005005	AL MAHA CERAMICS	31,888	9,317	8	0.291	0.291	0.285	0.288	0.287	0.002	2,431	0.288	0.285	0.296	0.100	16,222,000
OM0000007910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	19,690	1,771	4	0.090	0.090	0.089	0.089	0.087	0.002	2,299	0.089	0.088	0.089	0.100	17,800,000
OM0000007043	LIVA GROUP	36,300	8,344	2	0.245	0.250	0.245	0.250	0.250	0.000	2,800	0.250	0.245	0.250	0.100	101,585,457
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	7,881	6,675	2	0.461	0.470	0.461	0.470	0.461	0.009	1,952	0.470	0.470	0.470	0.100	7,729,250
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	1,401	797	3	0.550	0.570	0.550	0.570	0.560	0.010	1,786	0.570	0.561	0.600	0.100	54,150,000
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIT	2,187,330	189,238	60	0.087	0.088	0.084	0.088	0.087	0.001	1,148	0.088	0.083	0.089	0.100	22,362,171
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	10,100	1,090	3	0.101	0.108	0.101	0.108	0.107	0.001	0.835	0.108	0.102	0.108	0.100	7,720,000
OM0000009759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	2,350,746	755,309	135	0.321	0.322	0.319	0.321	0.320	0.001	0.313	0.321	0.321	0.323	0.010	658,000,000
OM0000001095	DHOFAH INSURANCE	5,000	1,075	1	0.215	0.215	0.197	0.197	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.100	22,921,145
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INV.	16,000	1,889	3	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.000	0.000	0.118	0.115	0.118	0.100	17,700,000
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	1,290	147	2	0.110	0.115	0.110	0.115	0.115	0.000	0.000	0.115	0.115	0.119	0.100	3,450,000
OM0000001385	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	100	7	1	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.063	0.070	0.100	4,575,000
OM0000001580	MUSCAT FINANCE	268,009	13,668	6	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.000	0.000	0.051	0.050	0.056	0.100	15,664,463
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	23,000	1,587	5	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.000	0.069	0.065	0.071	0.100	3,408,375	
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	11,500	2,528	6	0.219	0.220	0.219	0.220	0.220	0.000	0.000	0.220	0.198	0.221	0.100	10,068,476
OM0000002749	BANK DHOFA	55,236	7,035	3	0.127	0.129	0.127	0.129	0.129	0.000	0.000	0.129	0.128	0.129	0.100	392,134,011
OM0000003772	OMAN OIL MARKETING	3,484	445	884	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.000	0.000	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.100	36,872,073
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	43,497	5,133	2	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.118	0.000	0.000	0.118	0.117	0.118	0.100	71,758,931
OM0000002620	AL BAKRA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS/MARKETING	2,000	2,000	4	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.100	364,000,000
OM0000002381	TAAQEER FINANCE	20,000	2,000	3	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.103	0.102	0.103	0.100	28,759,991
OM0000005699	AL BAKRA POWER HOLDING	16,748	1,674	4	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.199	0.200	0.100	39,927,120
OM0000005699	JARAL REIT	151,839	151,364	1	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.101	0.102	0.100	17,400,000
OM0000000908	OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SFZ)	18,513,643	2,340,484	197	0.124	0.125	0.122	0.125	0.126	-0.001	-0.794	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.040	432,436,336
OM0000003772	OMAN OIL MARKETING	21,425	2,425	1	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.000	0.000	0.485	0.485	0.485	0.100	36,872,073
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	13,000	4,200	5	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.071	-0.001	-1.408	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.100	1,470,000
OM0000002620	AL BAKRA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS/MARKETING	2,000	2,000	4	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.100	364,000,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	23,275	2,004	4	0.089	0.089	0.086	0.089	0.089	-0.003	-3.371	0.086	0.086	0.092	0.100	7,310,000
OM0000001120	ASYAD SHIPPING	16,023,824	1,992,985	125	0.128	0.128	0.123	0.123	0.128	-0.005	-3.906	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.000	64,067,675
Total		38	44,881,447	6,046,174	874											


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“I, **Abhishek Kumar** (holder of Indian Passport No. N0407299) son of Kalamattathil Luka Sebastian having permanent residence in Kalamattathil House, Vakkad PO, Monipally, Kottayam, Kerala – 686636 (complete postal address in India) and presently residing in Po Box 3609, PC 112, Ruwi , Oman (complete postal address in Oman) intend to change my name **from Abhishek Kumar (old name) to Abhishek Kumar Sebastian (new name)** for all practical purpose. Any objection towards my name change may please be communicated to Embassy of India, Muscat, Diplomatic Quarters, Al Khuwair, P.Box No. 1727, Postal Code 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman.

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A new method for enhancing the accuracy of interpreting blood pressure measurements taken at the ankle may be critical for patients who are unable to have their arm blood pressure monitored.

New research from the University of Exeter Medical School, analysed data from over 33,000 people to create a personalised predictive model for more accurately estimating arm blood pressure from ankle readings - when compared to previously available methods. The team has developed an online calculator for healthcare professionals and patients to interpret these readings effectively.

High blood pressure affects over

one billion people globally, increasing the risk of serious health issues like heart, brain, and kidney diseases. It's therefore very important to measure and interpret blood pressure readings as accurately as possible. While blood pressure is typically measured on the arm, sometimes this is not possible due to disability, missing limbs, or problems caused by conditions such as stroke.

Blood pressure can be measured at the ankle instead, but these readings are generally higher than arm values. Standard guidelines for treating blood pressure are based on arm readings only, which creates complications in making accurate estimations based on ankle measurements, potentially

leading to misdiagnoses.

Professor Chris Clark from the University of Exeter Medical School led the study and said: "Our new method will give a more accurate blood pressure reading for around two percent more people. This doesn't sound a big number but remember, around a third of adults have high blood pressure and once you get into your 60s it's more than half of the adults. The NHS Health Check Programme diagnoses 38,000 new cases annually in England alone, so two percent equates to 750 fewer potential misdiagnoses per year in England, and tens of thousands globally."

Researchers used statistical modelling on arm and ankle blood

pressure readings from 33,710 people (mean age 58 years, 45 per cent female) across the world to help describe the relationship between arm and ankle blood pressures, predict arm blood pressure using ankle blood pressure readings, and predict important health outcomes (such as risk of heart attacks) from ankle blood pressure readings.

This research could help address a health inequality by providing accurate and personalised blood pressure measurements for people who previously could not have their blood pressure measured accurately from their arm. It's estimated there are up to 10,000 adults currently living in the UK with upper limb loss, while 75 per-

cent of the country's 1.3 million stroke survivors have upper limb dysfunction, sometimes making it difficult to measure blood pressure from their arm.

Juliet Bouverie OBE, CEO of the Stroke Association, said: "Someone in the UK has a stroke every five minutes, with high blood pressure accounting for around half of those. Around two-thirds of stroke survivors will leave hospital with some form of disability, including paralysis in an arm, which can prevent getting accurate blood pressure readings from the affected limb. Many stroke survivors feel anxious about having another stroke, so receiving an accurate blood pressure reading in the

ankle will not only provide benefits in the primary prevention of stroke, but importantly in easing the minds of stroke survivors who are already dealing with the devastating impact of stroke."

Professor Kevin Munro, Director of NIHR's Research for Patient Benefit Programme, said: "This research has identified an ingenious solution to an important problem - finding a way to measure blood pressure for people who cannot have it monitored via the upper arm. Keeping track of blood pressure is a vital tool to help keep people healthy and this NIHR-funded research will help to spot high blood pressure and treat it even more widely." - **ANI**

Kane, Neves lead Bayern, PSG to Club World Cup quarters

The two European giants booked a mouth-watering quarter-final clash with wins over Inter Miami and Flamengo

NEW YORK: Bayern Munich and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) will meet in a tantalising FIFA Club World Cup quarter-final after winning their round-of-16 matches on Sunday.

In Miami, Harry Kane struck twice as Bayern Munich progressed with a 4-2 victory over a spirited Flamengo while Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) eliminated Lionel Messi's Inter Miami with a 4-0 rout in Atlanta.

Bayern went ahead early at Hard Rock Stadium courtesy of an Erick Pulgar own goal and Kane doubled the lead with a long-range effort after a turnover.

Gerson reduced the deficit by rifling home from 15 yards before Leon Goretzka controlled a defensive clearance with his chest and thumped a 25-yard drive past Agustin Rossi.

The Brazilian side continued to press and Jorginho converted from the penalty spot after a Michael Olise handball just before the hour.

'Ferocious intensity'

But the Bundesliga champions pulled away again through Kane, who slotted a low shot past Rossi after Kimmich's perfectly weighted pass.

"In the first 20 minutes we were playing well but the intensity of the game was ferocious," Bayern manager Vincent Kompany said.

"I'm thinking, 'Okay, in this heat, against this opponent, is this going to carry on?' To be fair, we grew into the game and I think it was a good game for the fans. We are really happy to go to the next round."

Kompany said his team would prioritise rest before turning its



focus to Saturday's clash with PSG in Atlanta.

"The main thing is we have to rest now, recover from this game, use every single day that we've got to rebuild our energy," the former Manchester City defender said.

"What more do you want? Top sides playing each other on the biggest stage. We'll be ready for that."

Earlier, Joao Neves scored twice as PSG netted four first-half goals en route to a comprehensive win over Inter Miami.

Portugal international Neves opened the scoring for the European champions by meeting a sumptuous free-kick from compatriot Vitinha to head home at the far post.

Neves then combined with Fabian Ruiz for an easy tap-in after Sergio Busquets gave the ball away in front of his own box.

Nothing went right for the MLS club and Tomas Aviles inadvertently chested the ball into his own net after Desire Doue's

cross from the right flank.

Moroccan right-back Achraf Hakimi fired home a fourth goal after his initial attempt from eight yards rebounded off the bar.

Eight-time Ballon d'Or winner Messi, playing against his former club, did his best to lift Inter Miami in the second half with a series of vintage dribbles and a near-miss with a header.

But his team could do little more than limit the damage as PSG showed the gulf in quality between

Europe's elite and the MLS.

"It's a great feeling. I think we started the match almost perfectly, controlling play and creating a lot of chances," PSG manager Luis Enrique said.

"The second half was different. We had less energy and they could have scored a goal, but I'm happy with all the players, with the mentality, with the attitude. We need to improve, like always because that's professional football, but I'm happy."

Inter Miami boss Javier Mascherano said he could not have asked for more from his players.

"In terms of the tournament, my take is that we have accomplished the goals we set for ourselves," the Argentine said. "We have met the expectations that were placed on us."

"It's difficult when it's 4-0 and you know you don't have many chances. You don't expect to change the result but it was important to show a good image to the people. The players did really well in the second half, they tried to do their best, this is the way we want to play."

The Inter Miami squad had a familiar look to PSG coach Luis Enrique, with five key figures from his time at Barcelona - Sergio Busquets, Jordi Alba, Luis Suarez and Messi - in the starting 11, and Javier Mascherano on the coaching staff.

The problem for Inter was age. Busquets and Alba are both 36, while Messi and Suarez are 38. Although their talent and legacy are unquestioned, against Europe's best, it wasn't enough. - **Xinhua**

CLUB WORLD CUP

Messi's magic flickers despite defeat

ATLANTA: It may well have been the last time we see Lionel Messi light up a global football stage. At 38, the legendary Argentine endured a tough outing as Inter Miami were soundly beaten 4-0 by his former club Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) in the Club World Cup last-16 match on Sunday.

The 38-year-old Argentine - quite possibly the greatest player in history - showed glimpses of Messi's magic and reminded fans why he is still a global phenomenon even in defeat.

"PSG are in great form, champions of everything, but people still pay for a ticket to see Leo Messi, even at 38 years old," said Inter Miami boss and former Argentina teammate Javier Mascherano after the match, which drew a crowd of 65,574.

For PSG's Lucas Beraldo, just sharing the pitch with Messi was unforgettable: "Leo is a unique person. I was a kid watching his magic on TV, so to play against



him is magnificent."

But as Messi walked off the field, a pressing question lingered in the air: Was this the last time we see him on such a prominent global platform?

Messi's contract with Inter Miami runs until the end of 2025, and while the 2026 FIFA World Cup - co-hosted by the US, Mexico, and Canada - beckons, nothing has been confirmed. Even those close to him, like Argentina teammate Nicolás Otamendi and Inter Miami striker Luis Suárez,

hope he will continue.

Yet according to Spanish journalist Guillem Balague, author of a recent biography on Messi, not even the man himself knows.

"Everyone involved wants to see him lead Argentina at the 2026 World Cup," Balague wrote. "But he has not indicated to anyone what his final decision is. Right now, he's taking it game by game, tournament by tournament."

Messi, who finally lifted the World Cup in 2022, has nothing left to prove. He remains the

all-time top scorer for Barcelona (672), Argentina (112), and Inter Miami (50). His vision and control still draw awe.

"He's so clever," said former Chelsea midfielder John Mikel Obi, covering the game for Dazn. "He walks around the pitch, but when the ball touches his feet, he just goes. He's like a player from a different planet."

Despite his enduring brilliance, time is catching up. His free-kick late in the match struck the wall - perhaps a metaphor for the limits of even a genius against age and elite opposition.

Messi faced PSG - his only former club - for the first time in his 1,109-game career, a poignant footnote given his underwhelming stint in Paris. It's likely Messi's final chapter will unfold in North America, away from the global limelight. Unless he surprises the world again in 2026, this may have been his last dance on the world stage. - **Agencies**

FORMER ALL-ROUNDER

Mahmood named acting head coach of Pakistan Test team

LAHORE: Azhar Mahmood has been appointed "the acting red-ball head coach" of the Pakistan men's national team. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said that Azhar will serve in the position "until the conclusion of his current contract", which will cover Pakistan's next Test-match assignments, against South Africa at home in October and against Sri Lanka at home in December-January. Azhar had been the national team's assistant coach since April last year.

He was the head coach in Pakistan's T20I series at home against New Zealand earlier that month.

The 50-year-old former all-rounder represented his country in 143 ODIs and 21 Tests over a 20-year period from 1996. He retired with 162 international wickets and three centuries.

"A seasoned cricketing mind, Azhar Mahmood steps into the role with an impressive portfolio of experience," the PCB said. "Having



served as the assistant head coach of the national side, Azhar has long been a pivotal part of the team's strategic core. His deep knowledge of the game, combined with hands-on international exposure and proven success in the English county circuit, make him exceptionally well-suited for this position.

Pakistan have not had a full-time head coach for their Test team since Jason Gillespie resigned six months into his stint in December 2024. Aaqib Javed then took over in an interim capacity for the two-Test tour to South Africa and the Test series against West Indies.

FORMULA ONE

Verstappen 'all fine' with Antonelli after collision at Austrian GP

SPIELBERG: Max Verstappen said "every driver has made a mistake like that" after he was torpedoed into retirement by Mercedes' Kimi Antonelli in the Austrian Grand Prix on Sunday.

Antonelli misjudged the third corner of the race and smashed into Verstappen's Red Bull, taking both out of the race.

Verstappen said: "Kimi is a very big talent, so he learns from that, you know, and that's all fine."

Antonelli apologised to Verstappen immediately after the incident, and the Dutchman said: "It's, of course, very nice. But, for me, it was already a closed case anyway.



I saw what happened. No-one does these things for their own purpose. It can happen."

The Italian rookie has been given a three-place grid penalty for

next weekend's British Grand Prix for causing a collision.

Antonelli was caught unawares by cars braking in front of him and instead of going to the outside of



the track, he turned towards the inside, where hitting another car was always likely to happen. "I didn't brake necessarily too late, when I braked I locked the rears

and I lost the car and I lost the rear," the 18-year-old told **BBC Radio 5 Live**.

Verstappen's retirement, coupled with a one-two for McLaren

drivers Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri, was a significant blow to the Dutchman in the drivers' championship.

The world champion is 61 points behind Piastri, whose lead over Norris was cut to 15 points by the Briton with his third victory of the season. Verstappen said: "I was never thinking about that anyway. So, yeah, we just take it race by race. And we try to just find more performance with the car. Try to learn from all the things that we are doing. And then, we'll see what happens."

Verstappen had scored points in the previous 31 F1 races, and 74 of the past 75. - **Agencies**

IN PICTURES

Int'l Federation of Sport Climbing World Cup
Yoshida Satone of Japan competes during the men's lead final at the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) World Cup in Innsbruck, Austria. *Xinhua*



Celebration for giant panda's 35th birthday held in Mexico
A visitor holds a toy panda at the birthday party for Giant panda Xin Xin, at Chapultepec Zoo in Mexico City, capital of Mexico. *Xinhua*



Flamingos seen over Mogan Lake in Ankara, Türkiye
A flamboyance of flamingos are seen over Mogan Lake in Ankara, Türkiye. *Xinhua*



Cultural and tourism promotion event for China's Fujian held in Cairo
Artists stage a performance during a cultural and tourism promotion event for southeast China's Fujian Province, in Cairo, Egypt. *Xinhua*



Kung Fu dance drama captivates Romanian audience
A member of the Longyun Martial Arts Group performs during a special performance of the Chinese Kung Fu dance drama "11 Warriors" at Bucharest National Opera House in celebration of the International Day of Dialogue among Civilizations in Bucharest, Romania. *Xinhua*

Lao Rocket Festival fills sky with joy
People participate in the Rocket Festival in Vientiane Province, Laos. As the rainy season begins, people across Laos celebrate the annual Rocket Festival with cheers and rockets soaring into the sky -- a joyful gathering of friends and families embracing the green season and hoping for a rich harvest. *Xinhua*



ROUND-UP

All new Kia K4: Winner of 2024 Good Design Award unveiled in Oman

Now available at Kia showrooms across Oman in 2 trims, the all-new Kia K4 comes with a special summer offer

MUSCAT: Opening a bold, daring and progressive new chapter, Reliable International Automotive unveiled the much-anticipated, class-leading sedan, the Kia K4 in an exclusive event with customers from the public and private sectors. The dynamic sedan is now officially available for the Omani market.

Set at the Kia showroom in Wat-tayah, an official from Reliable International Automotive commented on the occasion, “We are excited to be able to present this progressive vehicle in front of our audience today. Kia, through K4 brings in the fastback profile, a high tech interior and a user-centric design that truly impresses. It is no surprise that Kia K4 is the winner of 2024 Good Design Award.”

The evening progressed with formal introductions of the Kia K4, discussing Kia’s change-inspired ideas, future plans and a detailed product presentation on the vehicle. Shortly after, the audience applauded the grand reveal of the dynamic K4, unveiling its attractive futuristic exterior.

Providing a deep insight into Kia’s design philosophy of Opposites United, the dynamic Kia K4, highlighted key features and performance attributes. “With precision crafted in every detail, the Kia K4 creates a fun-to-drive yet exhilarating driving experience. The 2.0 engine, paired with a six-speed automatic transmission, offers a maximum power of 150hp for an efficient yet responsive drive,” the presenter shared with the audience.

During his presentation, he highlighted the strengths of the Kia K4 and how it can be a powerful companion for daily commute. He shared that the extended 2,720 mm wheelbase projects a sporty, high-performance profile and the enhanced lowered seating position enhances presence, creating a dominating on-road profile. Complemented by generous space for passengers and their belongings, the K4 offers the best-in-class 508L luggage storage.”

Soon after the reveal, audience experienced the aesthetically pleasing K4, witnessing the bold statement it makes with its fastback and forward-looking profile. Built to impress and designed with the modern, young, bold and energetic drivers in mind, the Kia K4 offers an experience that goes beyond expectations.

Later in the evening, the first owner of the all-new K4 was felicitated, marking the beginning of a highly anticipated and growing base of K4 customers in Oman.

Now available at Kia show-



rooms across Oman in 2 trims, the all-new Kia K4 comes with a special summer offer. Customers can enjoy a welcome bonus of OMR 500 on purchase, along with complimentary first-year insurance, registration and service coverage for up to 100,000 km. Additionally, every Kia customer will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win an iPhone 15 (256 GB). This limited-time offer is valid until 16 July.

Built to form a deeper connection with your ride and cover meaningful journeys, the Kia K4’s luxurious interiors raise the bar for excellence. The centrepiece of the expansive cockpit features a leather wrapped steering wheel and integrated digital features such as the a keyless entry system and a smart key with button start for easy access. The integrated 12” cluster & the smart 12.3-inch audio display paired with a Bluetooth voice recognition system ensure seamless connectivity and rear AC vents delivers a smooth experience for all.

Intuitive technologies

The vehicle also features intuitive technologies and convenience and safety features to ensure absolute control once the driver gets behind the wheel. As part of Kia’s overall commitment to providing confidence, the higher grade of K4 features Front Thorax & Pelvis + Curtain Airbags, Electric Parking Brake with Auto Hold (EPB), Driver and Front Passenger Airbags, Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Stability Control (ESC), Hill Assist Control (HAC), Multi-Collision Brake (MCB), Manual Speed Limit Assist, Rear View Camera and Front and Rear Parking Assist System.

Reliable International Automotive (RIA), the official distributor of Kia in Oman, is committed to delivering an exceptional ownership experience.

PLATINUM AWARD

Bank Muscat honoured for exceptional mobile banking growth and innovation

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has proudly received the prestigious Platinum Award from Infosys Finnacle, recognising its significant increase in mobile banking application users.

This accolade highlights the Bank’s unwavering commitment to enhancing customer experience and delivering innovative services that adapt to the evolving needs of its clientele.

The mobile app boasts a user-friendly interface and introduces cutting-edge features, including biometric login options such as facial recognition and fingerprint authentication, ensuring secure and seamless access to banking services. The latest version of the app has undergone extensive enhancements, improving the design and functionality of over 200 banking services, all aimed at offering a cohesive and integrated user experience that underscores the bank’s dedication to innovation and excellence.

Customers can now enjoy a wide range of services, including card encoding through mobile banking, instant account openings for children, and the ability to create secure numbers for debit, credit, and prepaid cards. Other functionalities include opening a



“Themar” savings plan account, applying for a prepaid “Shukran” card, making payments via Quick Response (QR) codes, obtaining stamped account statements, and submitting requests for card delivery by courier. Additionally, users can easily manage checks, pay fines to the Royal Oman Police, and update their contact information for credit and prepaid cards.

The application also facilitates payment for utilities such as electricity, water, telecommunications, and school fees, as well as enabling quick international transfers to countries including India, the Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Egypt, and Bangladesh, covering over 70 countries in total.

Users can also access a Zakat calculator and donation services.

The application features a modern homepage designed to facilitate easy access to the latest services and products offered by the Bank. It enhances user convenience by displaying card options tailored to specific categories. Customers can enjoy greater privacy with the option to show or hide their account balance within the app interface, as well as share essential account details such as name, number, SWIFT, and IBAN. The updated version also includes a customizable control panel with a side menu that highlights customer preferences and frequently used options.

NEW DINING EXPERIENCE

Hakkasan Muscat unveils local culinary celebration with Cantonese Journey menu

MUSCAT: Hakkasan Muscat at The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort invites diners to embark on The Cantonese Journey, an exciting new dining experience that will be available through to the end of the year. This exclusive menu is a masterful ode to Oman’s extraordinary natural bounty, where the finest locally sourced ingredients are thoughtfully elevated through Hakkasan’s signature artistry and contemporary Cantonese flair.

At the heart of The Cantonese Journey lies a deep commitment to celebrating Oman’s rich culinary heritage and supporting the local community. By partnering with dedicated local fishermen, renowned for their sustainable seafood practices and local organic producers, Hakkasan Muscat ensures every ingredient tells a story of authenticity, sustainability and respect for the land and sea. This collaboration allows the kitchen to craft dishes that are not only vibrant and fresh but also deeply connected to the rhythms of the Sultanate’s seasons and traditions.

“This menu is a heartfelt tribute to the land and sea of Oman,” said Chef Leon Lee, Head Chef at Hakkasan Muscat. “By harnessing the freshest, seasonal produce and seafood from within the Sultanate, we have crafted a dining experience that is both deeply rooted in



place and unmistakably Hakkasan, designed to create unforgettable moments through refined, vibrant and authentic flavors.”

Under Chef Leon’s visionary guidance, The Cantonese Journey reinterprets classic Cantonese

cuisine through the prism of Omani local essence. Priced at OMR 18.8 per person, the 3-course menu offers an exquisite selection of eight meticulously curated dishes. The experience begins with an ethereal Wild Mushroom Soup, simmered with seasonal vegetables from local organic farms, followed by a delicate trio of steamed dim sum featuring Omani hamour, succulent shrimp and sweet crabmeat spruced from Matrah Fish Market. The palate is then awakened by the bold, textured Szechuan Beef Croquette, perfectly balanced with pickled radish. A dessert of Vanilla “Sider” Mirage rounds out the journey with notes of local honey, vanilla cream and date sponge layered beneath crispy honeycomb textures.

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