

Times

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CABLES

## His Majesty the Sultan greets Governor-General of Jamaica, President of Bolivia

**MUSCAT** His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to Dr. Patrick Linton Allen, Governor-General of Jamaica, on his country's Independence Anniversary.

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to the Governor-General.

His Majesty also wished the

people of Jamaica further progress and prosperity.

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik also sent a cable of greetings to President Luis Alberto Arce of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, on his country's Independence Anniversary.

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan wished Bolivia permanent stability and further progress. **-ONA**

JOINT COOPERATION

## Omani team visits UAE to explore ties in space sector

**ABU DHABI:** An Omani delegation visited the UAE Space Agency and some other facilities related to the space sector on Tuesday to explore opportunities for cooperation and gain expertise in this strategic field.

Led by Dr. Ali Amer Al Shidhani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology, the visit aimed to enhance joint cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and the UAE and view the accomplishments and successful experiences of the UAE in developing this strategic sector.

It also sought to explore opportunities for cooperation and partnerships between academic institutions and specialised companies in the two countries.

The visit embodies the Ministry's commitment to enhance the Sultanate of Oman's presence on the arena of the space sector, notably by establishing strategic partnerships and exchanging expertise with leading countries in a manner that contributes to the development of national capabilities and the realisation of an ambitious future vision.

Oman boasts an ideal location for space vehicle launches, with its proximity to the equator reducing fuel consumption for spacecraft as they launch in alignment with Earth's rotation.

Oman's coastal launch sites overlooking the Indian Ocean and distance from populated areas have attracted international space companies seeking optimal launch locations. **-Agencies**



THREAT TO MARINE LIFE

## Ropes suffocate whale to death, EA takes steps to dispose of mammal at Al Ashkharah Beach



Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Specialists at the Environment Authority in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate responded to the death of a whale that washed ashore on Al Ashkharah Beach. Relevant teams immediately began their work, and took necessary measures to deal with such cases.

Initial examinations revealed that the cause of the whale's death was suffocation due to ropes wrapped around its body, restricting its movement and preventing it from breathing.

This reflects the negative effects

of marine debris, especially discarded fishing nets, on marine life.

These incidents underscore the importance of environmental awareness among fishermen and beachgoers, calling for the safe disposal of fishing gear and not throwing waste into the sea to preserve marine life and maintain ecological balance.

The EA continues its efforts to monitor and address marine strandings, in addition to implementing awareness campaigns and periodic monitoring to mitigate threats to the marine environment in the Sultanate of Oman.

# NEARLY 13,000 OMANIS GOT JOBS IN FIRST HALF OF 2025



2,316

OUT OF THE TOTAL, THE PUBLIC SECTOR PROVIDED 2,316 JOBS

10,620

THE PRIVATE SECTOR PROVIDED 10,620 JOBS, THUS ACHIEVING 38% OF THE TARGET RATE.

4,292

THE MINISTRY EXPLAINED THAT THE TOTAL NUMBER OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES COUPLED WITH EMPLOYMENT STOOD AT 4,292 (ACHIEVING 39% OF THE TARGET RATE)

The private sector had a lion share by providing 10,620 jobs, while the public sector employed 2,316 citizens

**MUSCAT:** As many as 12,936 Omani citizens got jobs as part of an employment and expatriate replacement programme in the government and private sectors during the first half of 2025.

Out of the total, the public sector

provided 2,316 jobs, while the private sector provided 10,620 jobs, thus achieving 38 percent of the target rate. The ministry explained that the total number of training opportunities coupled with employment stood at 4,292 (achieving 39 percent of the target rate).

Of those, the government sector offered 473 training opportunities, while the private sector offered 3,819 training opportunities.

The ministry noted that the total number of employment and training opportunities reached 17,228, achieving 38.28% of the target.

Meanwhile, total employment (including both first-time workers and those with prior work experience) stood at 35,807 jobs—comprising 17,228 first-time employment opportunities and 18,579 for individuals with previous work experience.

Earlier this year, Ministry of Labour had announced its operational plan for 2025, which aimed to create 45,000 job opportunities.

The plan included 11,000 training and qualification opportunities for job seekers, approximately 10,000 job opportunities within the government sector, and 24,000 job opportunities in the private sector.

The total employment target for 2024 reached 36,615 individuals, surpassing the initial target of 35,000 job opportunities.

The number of job security active beneficiaries reached 17,215 individuals by the end of 2024.

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES



### OMAN Notification for admission issued

**1** The HEAC announced the list of students selected to undergo admission tests, interviews, and medical examinations for academic programmes requiring these assessments. **>A2**

### OMAN Job security benefit for laid-off workers

**2** The Youth and Human Resources Committee at the Shura Council held a meeting on Tuesday to discuss the implications of suspending the job security benefit granted to laid-off workers. **>A3**

### MARKET A'Suwaiq Port handles record cargo

**3** A'Suwaiq Port in North Al Batinah Governorate handled 399,615,000 tonnes of cargo during the first half of 2025, compared to 374,168,000 tonnes during the same period in 2024. **>B1**



Death toll from Israeli aggression in Gaza rises to 61,020

A7



PRAYER  
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....12:18pm  
Asr.....3:42pm  
Maghrib.....6:52pm  
Isha.....8:08pm  
Fajr (Tomorrow).....4:18am

FUTURE OF WORK

# Forum discusses issues related to work environment

**SALALAH:** A two-day forum titled “Future of Work” concluded at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Compound for Culture and Entertainment in Salalah on Tuesday.

The forum, organised by the Ministry of Labour, saw a large turnout of experts and specialists from the Sultanate of Oman and abroad.

The second day of the forum included two dialogue sessions on key issues related to the work environment and the importance of social dialogue in shaping sustainable labour markets.

The first dialogue session was titled “Establishing a motivating work environment and the attracting talents”.

It included four working papers on “The role of social protection in supporting the labour market”; “Career guidance as a means to empower the workforce”; “Effective public-private sector partnerships” and “The role of occupational health and safety systems in influencing work environments”.

The second dialogue session, titled “Social dialogue and the future of labour markets”, saw expanded discussion among researchers who discussed major challenges and solutions about labour issues.

The participants laid emphasis on the significance of devising effective social dialogue models that contribute to the development of labour policies and the realization of balance among parties to production.

Meanwhile, an ongoing “Student Projects Exhibition” continues to showcase the talents of students from vocational colleges. The exhibition today hosted a workshop titled “Psychological and professional resilience as a core skill in modern work establishments”. The exhibition runs until 7 August 2025. -ONA



# List of candidates for admission, interview notified

The HEAC contacted 6,367 male and female students via SMS to notify them of the programmes they have been shortlisted



**MUSCAT:** The Higher Education Admission Centre (HEAC) at the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation on Tuesday announced the list of students selected to undergo admission tests, personal interviews, and medical examinations for 123 academic programmes requiring these assessments for the 2025/2026 academic year.

The centre contacted 6,367 male and female students via SMS to notify them of the programmes they have been shortlisted for and to provide them with necessary guidelines and information for this stage. The total number of available seats across these programs is 2,617.

The centre clarified that being

shortlisted does not guarantee admission into a programme. Final acceptance depends on the results of interviews, tests, or medical examinations as determined by the educational institution, the number of available seats, and the student's competitive scores compared to other successful candidates.

Additionally, failure to attend the interview or test—whether due to travel or other reasons—will be considered a withdrawal from the selection process for these programmes.

The preference modification phase for the 2025/2026 academic year concluded last Thursday, with a total of 43,060 successful applicants registered—20,081 male and 22,979 female students.

The centre will announce the results of the initial sorting on the evening of Tuesday, 19 August 2025. Students will then have until 12:00 PM on Sunday, 25 August to complete their registration procedures at higher education institutions. -ONA

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NCSI

# Registered vehicles in Oman increase by 5.5%

**MUSCAT:** The total number of registered vehicles in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 5.5% by the end of June 2025, reaching 1,798,062 vehicles compared to June of the previous year.

According to data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information, private vehicles accounted for the largest share of registered vehicles in Oman, making up 79.3% with a total of 1,425,308 vehicles.

Commercial vehicles followed at 14.7% with 264,913 vehicles, while rental vehicles constituted 2.3% with 41,386 vehicles. The remaining percentages were distributed among taxis, government vehicles, and others.

In terms of colours, white vehicles topped the list of the most registered colours at 42.3%, totaling 761,358 vehicles. Silver came



next at 12.9% with 231,822 vehicles, followed by gray vehicles at 181,140.

Regarding engine capacity, vehicles with engines between 1500cc and 3000cc recorded the highest proportion among registered vehicles at 54.5%, amounting to 979,300 vehicles. This was

followed by engines between 3001cc and 4500cc at 22.2%, totaling 399,770 vehicles.

The statistics also revealed that vehicles weighing less than 3 tons constituted the largest share of registered vehicles, accounting for 90.7% with 1,631,392 vehicles. -ONA

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ضمان المصنع ٦ سنوات / ٢٥٠,٠٠٠ كلم\* (تحقيق الشروط والأحكام)

أقساط شهرية ١,٠٩٠ ر.ع. لمدة ٦ سنوات

عجلات المنيوم  
بطلاء مزدوج ١٨ بوصة

شاشة وسطية LCD ١٣,٢ بوصة

مقاعد بتصميم رياضي

فتحة سقف بانورامية

تحذير من الاصطدام الأمامي

نظام مثبت سرعة تكيفي للفرملة والتسارع الأوتوماتيكي

\*يتم احتساب القسط الشهري المؤسّر بناءً على دفعة مقدّمة ٢٪ فترة سداد ٦ سنوات للفرض، خاضع لموافقات الائتمان من البنوك فقط، قد تختلف المواصفات من طراز لأخر، للزبد من المعلومات، يرجى زيارة معرض سيارات شانجان.

صالات العرض:  
الفرم ٩٤٦٤١٠٠، الموالح ٩٧٨٨٨١٨٠، نزوى ٩١١٢٨٩٤٠  
صهار ٩٥٣٥١٢٠، صلالة ٩١١٢٩٠٠، عبرى ٩١١٢٩٠٠  
بركاء ٩١١٢٩٠٠، صور ٩١١٢٩٠٠

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SUR

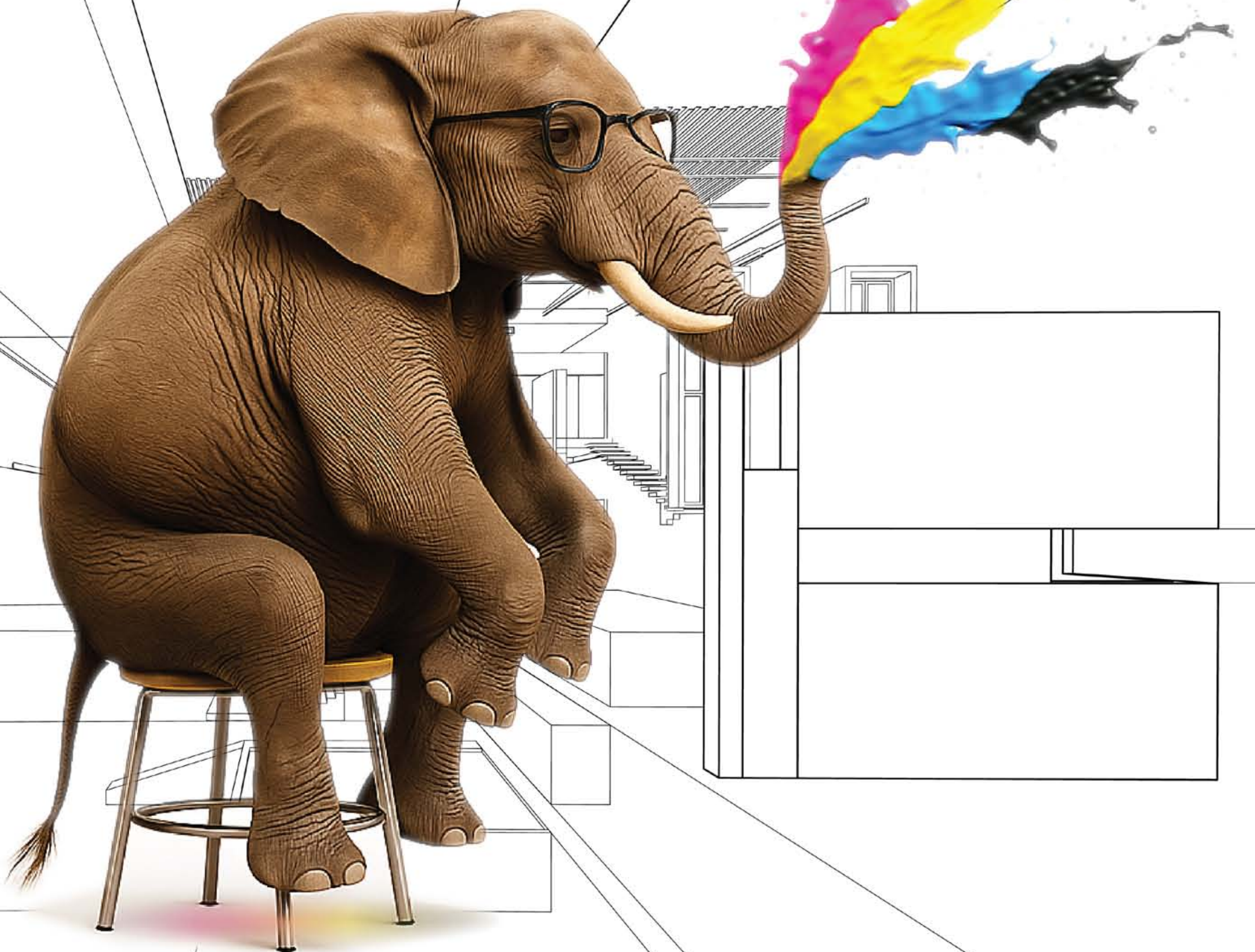
# Preliminary qualifiers for Holy Quran contest held

**SUR:** The preliminary qualifiers for the 33rd annual Holy Quran memorisation competition, organised by the Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science at the Diwan of Royal Court, were held on Tuesday at the Sultan Qaboos Mosque in Sur, South Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

A total of 76 male and female contestants are participating in the two-day event, divided into seven age-based categories, namely full Quran memorization, the memorisation of 24 consecutive parts, the memorisation of 18 consecutive parts, the memorisation of 12 consecutive parts, the memorisation of 6 consecutive parts, the memorisation of 4 consecutive parts and the memorisation of 2 consecutive parts. -ONA



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# Discussion on impact of halting job security benefit to laid-off workers

The Shura committee called for immediate practical steps from the relevant authorities to resolve the issue

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** The Youth and Human Resources Committee at the Shura Council held a meeting on Tuesday, chaired by Younis Al-Mandhari, to discuss the implications of suspending the job security benefit granted to laid-off workers. Discussions focused on the social and economic impact of halt-



ing the benefit provided by the Social Protection Fund, particularly to individuals whose living conditions have deteriorated as a result. The committee members emphasised the urgent need to resume

the disbursement of this benefit to alleviate hardship and ensure psychological and social stability for affected citizens. The committee called for immediate practical steps from the

relevant authorities to resolve the issue. This includes involving local governorates in the process and promoting decentralisation in employment decisions and redun-

dancy-related matters—allowing for faster, region-specific solutions aligned with local needs.

**Employment opportunities**  
Members also stressed the importance of providing employment opportunities that match the qualifications and professional experience of laid-off workers. They highlighted the need for programmes that support their requalification and reintegration into the labour market in a way that preserves dignity and secures financial and emotional well-being. Additionally, the committee underscored the necessity of building a comprehensive, up-to-date database of job seekers and laid-off individuals to guide the development of future policies and national employment strategies. As part of potential solutions, the committee explored amending existing legislation or introducing new legal proposals to en-

hance protections for the national workforce. They also discussed allocating specific vacancies within government institutions and state-owned enterprises for laid-off workers. The discussion included the importance of accelerating the implementation of the Omanisation policy by replacing expatriate-held roles with qualified national personnel, as well as raising the cost of hiring foreign workers in the private sector to incentivise employers to recruit Omanis. In conclusion, the committee stressed the need for a comprehensive and long-term approach to address the issue of workforce layoffs, starting with tackling the root causes rather than merely responding to consequences. This includes overcoming legal and administrative barriers and establishing a national action plan that ensures social justice and employment stability for all citizens.

## PRESS CONFERENCE

# Hajj Mission reports 96% satisfaction services in Mina, Arafat camps

**MUSCAT:** The Omani Hajj Mission for 1446 AH confirmed that the satisfaction rate with this year's Hajj season, in terms of overall services provided in the Mina and Arafat camps, reached 96%, compared to 89% in the 1445 AH season. This was announced during a press conference held by Ahmed Saleh Al Rashdi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs and head of the Hajj Mission for 1446 AH. During the press conference, held at the ministry, he stated that the satisfaction rate among pilgrims regarding the performance of Hajj and Umrah companies in Makkah Al-Mukarramah and Al



Madinah Al Munawwarah—covering awareness campaigns, guidance, logistical services, and catering—reached 98%. Meanwhile, satisfaction with

security services stood at 100%, and healthcare services at 99% during the 1446 AH Hajj season. He added that satisfaction with the electronic registration system

for Omani pilgrims reached 99%, while satisfaction with entry and exit services through land and air ports was 97.6%. He noted that 5,122 pilgrims traveled via the land route, while 8,878 used air travel, achieving a 100% fulfillment rate with a total of 14,000 pilgrims. He also highlighted several key initiatives during the 1446 AH Hajj season, including the "Endowment for the House of Ribat" initiative, which benefited over 150 pilgrims with a total amount exceeding RO 150,000. Additionally, the mobile cart initiative to assist elderly and disabled pilgrims in performing Tawaf and Sa'i served 450 pilgrims. -ONA

## RISK REDUCTION

# Oman's emergency management centre



**MUSCAT:** The National Emergency Management Centre on Tuesday received a delegation from the Regional Office for Arab States for Disaster Risk Reduction. The delegation was briefed on

Oman's emergency management system and the centre's role in coordinating efforts and ensuring integration within the framework of the National Committee for Emergency Management. -ONA

## NCSI

# Public satisfaction with radio contents reaches 76%, TV 73%



**MUSCAT:** Public satisfaction with the programming content of Oman Radio and TV reached 76% for radio channels and 73% for TV channels, according to a public opinion survey conducted from 18 May 2025 to 18 June 2025, by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) in collaboration with the Ministry of Information. Satisfaction with TV content covering national occasions, religious events, and weather conditions reached approximately 88%, while content related to raising awareness, government and tourism projects,

social issues, and children's programs scored around 69%. Omani viewers primarily engaged with Oman TV's religious and cultural programmes such as "Matoun", "Dhifaf" and "Al Fahras" as well as talk shows like "Al-Bayt" (The House) and "Kunna Huna" (We Were Here), and Ramadhan drama series such as "Al Waqeed" and "Al-Madyoonir". For radio content, satisfaction levels stood at 88% for coverage of national occasions, religious events, and weather conditions, and around 74% for government and tourism projects, social issues,



and children's programs. Omanis showed the highest interest in religious programs, Ramadhan talk shows like "Layali Ramadhan" (Ramadhan Nights), and radio drama series such as "Sawalif Al Jadd Hameed", "Qala'ed Al-Yasmin", "Dalshad" and "Rihla Shaqqa". At the governorate level, South Al Sharqiyah recorded the highest satisfaction with radio content at 84%. Satisfaction was equal between genders at 74%, while the age group 30-49 registered 78%. For TV content, South Al Sharqiyah and Al Dakhiliyah governorates recorded the highest satisfaction

at 76%, with equal satisfaction between genders at 74%. The survey aimed to strengthen communication between the Ministry of Information and the public by involving citizens in media evaluation, contributing to content development, and measuring satisfaction with the quality and diversity of programming on Oman Radio and TV. It also sought to identify audience preferences regarding programme types and media content, ensuring alignment with the aspirations and needs of various age and social groups. -ONA

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Promotion available only in selected outlets in Oman. Images shown for illustrative purposes only.



# Housing ministry offers 14 investment opportunities

The sale of investment prospectuses for these opportunities began on Tuesday, with some prospectuses set to be available starting 14 August

**IBRA:** The “Tatweer” platform of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has launched 14 agricultural and commercial investment opportunities across several wilayats in North A’Sharqiyah Governorate.

These opportunities are available for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, and the North A’Sharqiyah Governor’s Office, covering agriculture, real estate development and commercial investment.

The sale of investment prospectuses for these opportunities has begun today, with some prospectuses set to be available starting 14 August.

Eng. Hamad Rashid Al-Sawaei, Assistant Director-General of Agriculture and Water Resources in North A’Sharqiyah, explained that the investment opportunities are



designed to enable private sector institutions and companies to benefit from diverse prospects in agriculture and commerce. The agricultural opportunities aim to adopt modern farming techniques by establishing advanced projects for cultivating various crops, including figs, onions, garlic, potatoes, and date palms.

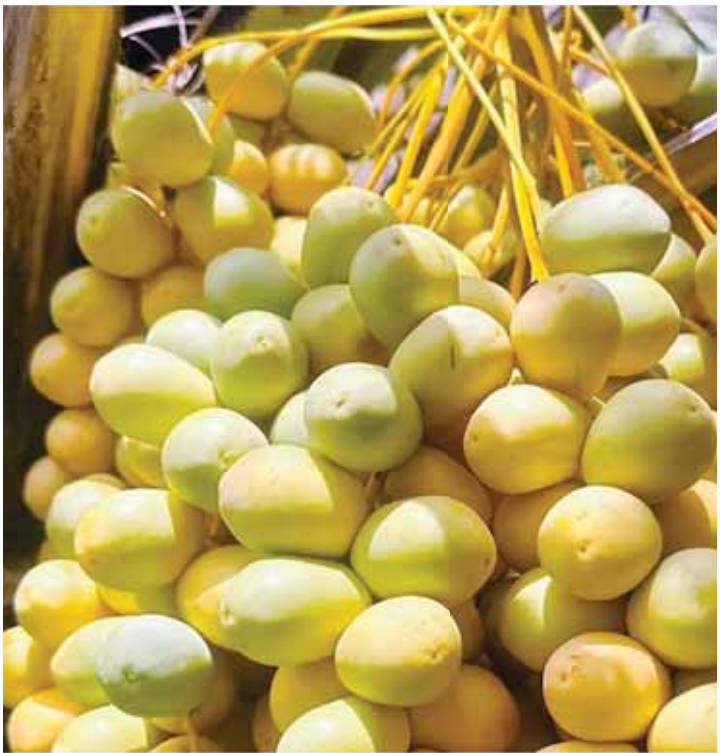
He added that these projects will adopt integrated production systems, leveraging modern technologies in farming, irrigation, and post-harvest processes to ensure sustainability, high product quality, and enhanced competitiveness in regional and global mar-

kets. Meanwhile, the commercial investment opportunities allow investors to establish strategic business projects aligned with the proposed requirements.

Al Sawaei noted that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources has offered 12 agricultural investment opportunities across the wilayats of Ibra, Al Mudhaibi, Al Qabil, Sinaw, Bidiyah, and Dima wa Al-Ta’een. Key opportunities include: 5 investment opportunities for a fig cultivation and production project in the village of Al-Quway’ah, Sinaw, covering 20 acres; An investment opportunity for a veg-

etable farming project (green-houses and open fields) in Misrun, Ibra, spanning 8 acres; An opportunity to establish a date production factory in the industrial zone of Dima wa Al-Ta’een, covering \*\*2,135 square meters.

Additionally, there is an opportunity for a date palm cultivation and “Bisur” (young date) production project in Al-Ghubbi, Bidiyah, spanning 100 acres, as well as projects for potato farming (6.3 acres), garlic cultivation (6.3 acres), and onion farming (6.3 acres) in Barzman, Sinaw. Another opportunity involves garlic and onion farming in Maghsar, Al



Qabil, covering 6 acres.

On his turn, Badr Ahmed Al Habsi, Director of Planning and Investment at the North A’Sharqiyah Governorate, commented on the investment opportunities offered by the Governor’s Office through the Tatweer platform, stating: “The most prominent opportunity is the strategic commercial investment in Ibra, aligned with Oman Vision 2040 and the goals of the sustainable development, which focus on diversifying national income sources, boosting local economies, and providing quality, sustainable job opportunities for Omani citizens.”

He added that there is another investment opportunity for establishing custom industrial shops based on investor proposals—a project in Al Mudhaibi on a 2,565-square-meter plot. This initiative, he said, aims to create and operate multi-purpose industrial shops catering to small and medium enterprises (SMEs), strengthening the local business environment and generating sustainable employment. The investment contract will be valid for 10 years, with a one-year grace period for preparation and setup from the contract’s effective date, he pointed out. -ONA

OMAN FILM SOCIETY

## Oman participates in Arab Film Festival in Korea



**SEOUL:** Oman Film Society participated in the Arab Film Festival in South Korea, showcasing two Omani films: “Al-Manjour” by director Mohammed Abdullah Al Ajmi and “You Won’t Sink Alone” by director Fahd Ramadan Al Maimani. The event, organized by the Korea-Arab Society, marked its 14th edition with the participation of 12 Arab countries.

The films were screened in several Korean cities, including the capital Seoul at the Momo Art House, Busan at the Busan Cinema Center and Gwangju at the Asia Culture Center. Additionally, they were made available for digital streaming on Korea’s Naver TV platform, broadening access for audiences interested in Arab cinema.

This participation aligns with the Oman Film Society’s efforts to strengthen the presence of Omani cinema in international forums, highlighting national productions that reflect Omani societal identity and present stories with cultural and humanitarian depth.

This participation reflects Oman Film Society’s vision of supporting Omani filmmakers and bringing their work to international audiences through platforms that celebrate artistic diversity and cultural exchange. -ONA







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 Azaiba

# Egypt Ambassador to Oman launches a unique legal encyclopedia on aircraft leasing

The Ambassador said that this encyclopedia will make an important contribution to the aviation sectors in Egypt, Oman, and the broader Arab world

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** In a move that reflects the depth of cultural and scientific cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Embassy of Egypt accredited to the Sultanate of Oman hosted, on Tuesday, the launch ceremony of a pioneering legal encyclopedia titled: “Aircraft Leasing Encyclopedia: Between Practice and Law”, under the patronage of His Excellency Ambassador Khaled Radi, the Ambassador of



the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Sultanate of Oman. The launch ceremony was attended by Counsellor Mohamed Abdel Moneim, Political Counsellor at the Egyptian Embassy in Oman, Counsellor Ahmed Abouzeid Shouaib, Deputy Head of Mission, and a distinguished group of officials, diplomats, and legal professionals, in an event that reaffirms Egypt’s strong cultural and intellectual presence abroad. His Excellency Ambassador Khaled Radi stated: “We are pleased today to launch this highly specialised encyclopaedic work in a very important sector—aviation. We take pride in the fact that this work was produced by a member of the Egyptian community residing in the sisterly Sultanate of Oman. The Egyptian community

in Oman is distinguished by its diversity and includes all social and professional segments. It is a select community comprising doctors, engineers, legal experts, media professionals, teachers, and many others. This community reflects the strong bonds of brotherhood, love, and connection between Egypt and Oman. Over my nearly four years of service in Oman, I have felt that every Egyptian here considers himself to be in his beloved homeland, Egypt.” Ambassador Radi emphasised that what distinguishes this encyclopedic work—“Aircraft Leasing Encyclopedia: Between Practice and Law” by prominent Counsellor Hussam El Hadidy—is that it fills a significant gap in its field. He noted that the author has been a long-time resident in Oman and



that this encyclopedia will make an important contribution to the aviation sectors in Egypt, Oman, and the broader Arab world. **Strategic relations** He further noted that Egyptian-Omani relations, although deeply rooted and consistently strong, are currently witnessing their most flourishing era, having evolved into strategic relations marked by continuous growth and development across all sectors—thanks to the constant support and guidance of the leaderships of both countries: President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. This encyclopedia is the latest publication by prominent Legal Counsellor Hussam El Hadidy, one of the most renowned legal experts in aviation law in the Arab world

and the author of the acclaimed “Aviation Contracts Encyclopedia”, which marked a significant leap in its field and opened new horizons for researchers and practitioners in the aviation industry across the region. “Aircraft Leasing Encyclopedia: Between Practice and Law” serves as a comprehensive legal reference that delves deeply into the contracts and regulations governing aircraft leasing, offering practical and professional solutions to legal challenges faced by professionals in this vital sector. The encyclopedia draws on more than thirty years of specialised legal experience acquired by Advisor Hussam El Hadidy through his diploma in air law from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in the United Kingdom,

as well as advanced training in aircraft financing, insurance, and leasing in Switzerland and the UK. The significance of the encyclopedia lies in it being the largest of its kind to date, featuring over 119 specialised reference sources and 129 international court rulings related to aircraft leasing. It addresses complex legal topics such as termination clauses under force majeure, the doctrine of frustration under English law, insolvency, non-compliance with regulatory frameworks, and the legal interpretation of “hell or high water” clauses. Advisor Hussam El Hadidy is well known for his instrumental role in resolving major legal crises for regional and international airlines—particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic—during which he successfully terminated aircraft leasing contracts through landmark international legal cases. He also annulled aircraft purchase agreements with global companies due to contractual breaches, saving millions of dollars. This release represents a valuable addition to both Arab and international legal libraries, serving as an indispensable reference for lawyers, legal advisors, and decision-makers in the aviation sector.

## SPOTLIGHTING YOUTH TALENT

# Over 400 participants attend Oman REFCO Esports Championship

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** The Oman REFCO Esports Championship concluded on August 1, drawing more than 400 participants from governorates across the country and marking the largest event of its kind in Oman. Organised by Oman REFCO and Omani Gaming & Esports Committee in partnership with Active Oman, E-sports Arena and Oman Automobile Association, the two-day event represented a key step in empowering youth and advancing digital talent nationwide. Held at Active Oman Centre, the championship aimed to empower Omani youth in digital media and competitive gaming, in



line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 to build a digital society and knowledge-based economy. Saba Al Busaidi, Head of the Omani Gaming & Esports Committee, said: “Public-private partnerships are vital to nurturing young talent and developing their skills across diverse sectors. This collaboration serves

as a strong model for how we can support young Omanis. Through the Oman REFCO Esports Championship, we are offering youth a meaningful opportunity to hone their skills within the esports ecosystem. Our joint effort directly supports the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 and our shared ambition of building an advanced digital society.”



MUSCAT GAS

VEHICLES FOR SALE

Muscat Gases Company SAOG announces the sale of Vehilces in its branch located in Rusayl Industrial Area @ Street No. 16 as follows

| S.N | Item                              | Model |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1.  | Scania Prime Mover -Plat No 2338  | 2011  |
| 2.  | LPG Cylinder Trailer Plat No 2345 | 1986  |
| 5.  | Truck 10T - Plat No 3009          | 2002  |

Those wishing to buy must visit the company’s branch and submit bids according to the company’s document in a sealed envelope with red wax. The value of the document is 15 OMR.

Fees to be deposit to company account OAB : 3117-802000-300

Customers can submit their bids to buy all the supplies or individually.

Bids are deposited in a closed box located at the head office.

The deadline for receiving bids is on Aug 18, 2025 at 4 pm.

The bids will be sorted on Aug 21, 2025.

For serious buyers, please call 22526900/93846148

during official working days from 8 am in until 4 pm.



MUSCAT GOVERNORATE  
MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. 26/2024

IN REFERENCE TO ADVERTISEMENT NO (20 /2025), MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY INFORMS YOU OF THE MODIFICATION OF THE DATES RELATED TO THE BIDS AS FOLLOWS:

| Sl. No | Tender Number | Bidding description                                                                                                                  | Document fee | Deadline for obtaining bidding docs. | Deadline for inquires submission | Deadline for submission |
|--------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1      | 5/2025        | Construction, implementation, and operation of a café on plot No. (1542), Block (M/1), in Sur Al- Hadeed, Wilayat Al-Seeb.           | 25/- OMR     | 14/8/2025                            | 18/8/2025                        | 21/8/2025               |
| 2      | 6/2025        | Investment of plot No. (590), Block (M/1), in the Al-Khoud area, Wilayat Al-Seeb, with an area of (16,279 m²).                       | 35/- OMR     | 14/8/2025                            | 18/8/2025                        | 21/8/2025               |
| 3      | 7/2025        | Investment of plot No. (787), Block (M/4), in the Al-Khoud area, Wilayat Al-Seeb, with an area of (80,000 m²).                       | 90/- OMR     | 14/8/2025                            | 18/8/2025                        | 21/8/2025               |
| 4      | 8/2025        | Investment of plot No. (2137) in the Bimmah area, Wilayat Quriyat, with an area of (3,373m²).                                        | 25/- OMR     | 14/8/2025                            | 18/8/2025                        | 21/8/2025               |
| 5      | 9/2025        | Establishment, management, and operation of a café at Al-Rabea Walkway in Wilayat Al-Amerat.                                         | 25/- OMR     | 14/8/2025                            | 18/8/2025                        | 21/8/2025               |
| 6      | 10/2025       | Establishment, management, and operation of a slaughterhouse on plot No. (967), Block (M/2), in the Al-Misfah area, Wilayat Bousher. | 650/- OMR    | 14/8/2025                            | 18/8/2025                        | 21/8/2025               |
| 7      | 11/2025       | Investment of plot No. (1578), Block (M/3), in the Al-Misfah area, Wilayat Bousher, designated for truck parking.                    | 228/- OMR    | 14/8/2025                            | 18/8/2025                        | 21/8/2025               |

Registered companies with Muscat Municipality which are Specialized in above bids are invited to participate as per the following procedures:

1. Company registration with Muscat Municipality must be valid to obtain the bid document.

2. Pay the specified document fee for the requested bid via bank deposit to Muscat Municipality's Bank account as follows:

Bank Muscat

0423010702710024

3. A copy of the transaction's receipt MUST be send to the following e-mail (SQ.QS@mm.gov.om), provided with the company data (name and bid number, delegate name,office phone number, mobile number, email address approved by the company and commercial registration number of the company).

4. The tender document will be provided to the company via email.

5. 2:00 PM on the above mentioned dates, is the last timing for obtaining Bidding Documents.

6. Documents must be enclosed in a plain closed envelope (without any company information) and place in the box located in bulding (A) in Muscat Municipality, Head Office, Darsait.

NOTES:

1. Companies which are not registered in Muscat Municipality or their registration has been expired shall register through the municipality's website ([www.mm.gov.om](http://www.mm.gov.om)).

2. For technical support, please contact Muscat Municipality through this email ([crm@mm.gov.om](mailto:crm@mm.gov.om)).

3. If the bidders have any inquiries regarding the scope of the work, they have to sent their inquiries through the following e-mail ([mais.h.alnofli@mm.gov.om](mailto:mais.h.alnofli@mm.gov.om))

4. 10:00 AM on the above submission mentioned dates, is the last timing for receving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & time shall not be accepted for any reason.

5. Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason.



# OMAN/WORLD

BILATERAL RELATIONS

## Pakistan President receives Oman’s Ambassador

**ISLAMABAD:** President Asif Ali Zardari of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan received at the Presidential Palace in the capital, Islamabad, on Tuesday Fahd Suleiman Al Kharousi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

During the meeting, Ambassador Al Kharousi conveyed the greetings of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to President Zardari, along with His Majesty's best wishes of good health and happiness to him. His Majesty also wished the government and people of Pakistan continued progress and prosperity.

President Zardari asked Ambassador Al Kharousi to convey his sincere greetings and best wishes to His Majesty the Sultan and the people of Oman.

The meeting underscored the advanced relations between the two countries and the shared commitment to push the joint cooperation towards wider horizon in a manner that serves the mutual interests of both nations. — **ONA**



STAFF TRAINING INITIATIVE

## From care to comfort: Apollo Hospital Oman reinvents the patient journey

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Apollo Hospital, Sultanate of Oman, has ushered in a new chapter in the Nation's healthcare journey with the launch of a pioneering staff training initiative that places patient experience at the heart of care delivery. Titled “You Are the Experience: From Workers to Care Ambassadors,” the programme marks a transformative step towards human-centered healthcare and positioning patient experience as a structured capability.

More than a training module, the initiative signals a strategic shift-moving beyond clinical procedures to embrace empathy, cultural sensitivity, and meaningful communication throughout the patient journey.

“Every team member, from the front desk to nursing, was reminded that they're not just performing tasks. They're guiding, healing, building trust, and touching lives,” said KP Shobha, Director-Operations at Apollo Hospitals, Oman. “More than training, it was a mindset shift.”

The programme's strength lies in its alignment with traditional Omani values like hospitality, harmony and dignity, ensuring culturally respectful care. Staff were trained to reflect these values in subtle but powerful ways: their



tone of voice, choice of words, and how they greet patients, handle delays, and conclude interactions.

Conducted over three days, the sessions were led by Vaishali Rajpara, renowned patient experience strategist and coach known for her practical and culturally grounded approach.

Through scenario-based learning, live roleplays, and guided reflection, staff learned how to handle difficult moments with presence, empathy, and professionalism. Staff feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many describing the programme as deeply transformative.

“I learned how to stay kind even when I'm stressed and how just a

few words can help a patient feel safe,” said one participant. Others noted that the training equipped them with tools to balance empathy and efficiency in daily hospital interactions.

“At Apollo, we believe our people are our promise,” said VT. Saileswaran, CEO & Managing Director. Investing in our team's emotional intelligence and cultural fluency translates directly into safer, more trusted, and world-class care..

A key insight from the training emphasised that meaningful transformation in patient experience does not require a massive systems overhaul. Instead, consistent, conscious changes in

tone, language, and intention can make a lasting impact.

s Vaishali explained, “Patient experience is not a global template. It must be locally relevant. What we built here respects Omani values while aligning with international standards.”

By pioneering this initiative, Apollo Hospital Oman sets a compelling precedent for integrating clinical excellence with compassionate care, aligning itself with Oman's evolving healthcare vision of delivering people-first, high-quality service.

Apollo's proactive approach signals a strong commitment to redefining patient care through empathy, trust, and cultural integ-



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## SHABAB OMAN II ARRIVES AT PORT OF ESBJERG IN DENMARK

The Royal Navy of Oman's vessel Shabab Oman II docked on Tuesday at the port of Esbjerg in the Kingdom of Denmark as part of its seventh international voyage, Glories of the Seas, to participate in the 2025 Tall Ships Races final festival. Shabab Oman II seeks to convey its message of strengthening bonds of friendship between the Sultanate of Oman and nations across the globe by introducing Omani heritage and culture at its various international stops.. — **Credit**



UNDER NEW NATO SCHEME

## Netherlands to buy US arms for Ukraine

**AMSTERDAM:** The Dutch Defence Ministry announced that it would make the first purchase of US weapons for Ukraine under a new NATO mechanism.

The scheme is for NATO allies to fund US defense systems and munitions that would then be shipped to Ukraine.

### NATO allies

Other NATO allies had pledged to join the initiative, but the Netherlands is the first to announce transferring funds.

The announcement comes as Russia continues to attack Ukraine. At least three people were reportedly killed in strikes in Ukraine's east on Tuesday.

The Netherlands said it was buying US arms for €500 million (\$577 million). The package includes US Patriot missile parts and other systems to support Ukraine on the frontlines.

Dutch Defence Minister Ru-

ben Brekelmans said the Netherlands “is now taking the lead” in supplying military equipment to Ukraine under the new scheme.

“By supporting Ukraine with determination, we are increasing the pressure on Russia to negotiate,” Brekelmans said on X.

Brekelmans warned that Russia's advance into Ukrainian territory could pose a broader threat to Europe. “The more Russia dominates Ukraine, the greater the danger to the Netherlands and our NATO allies,” he said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof for the contribution. “This will definitely help protect the lives of our people!” Zelenskyy said.

US President Donald Trump and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte announced the so-called Prioritised Ukraine Requirements List (PURL) scheme last month. — **bw**

BILATERAL RELATIONS

## India, Philippines ink 14 pacts across various sectors

**NEW DELHI:** India and the Philippines signed and exchanged 14 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) on Tuesday, looking to increase cooperation across sectors, including sharing the terms of reference for the negotiations for the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA).

The multiple MoUs were exchanged in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Philippines President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr. today boosting ties between both the nations and enhancing their trade relations. Notably, this is President Marcos' first state visit, with both countries celebrating 75 years of strong diplomatic relations.

The MoUs include cooperation in digital technologies, space, science, and tourism, and also increased cooperation between the armed forces and the coast guard, External Affairs Secretary (East) P Kumaran said in MEA media briefing in the national capital.

There was adoption of Terms of Reference for the negotiations on a Preferential Trade Agreement between India and the Philippines.

Incidentally, Indian and Philippine navies wrapped up their maritime cooperative activity (MCA) in the South China Sea, the first joint patrol of India and the Philippines in the waters contested by multiple countries, including China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan, among others. Three Indian naval vessels- involved three Indian naval vessels - a guided missile destroyer



INS Delhi (D-61), and an anti-submarine corvette INS Kiltan (P-30) and the fleet replenishment tanker INS Shakti (A-57).

The MoUs also include mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, a treaty on transfer of sentenced persons, and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

“Several MoUs were concluded and exchanged during this visit, there were 14 of them, these include mutual legal assistance treaty in criminal matters, a treaty on transfer of sentence persons, terms of reference on negotiations for India-Philippines Preferential Trade Agreement, terms of reference for service staff talks, Army, Air Force, and Navy, enhanced cooperation between

coast guards,” MEA secretary Kumaran said during the ministry's special briefing.

“Cooperation in space, cooperation programme, cooperation in programme of science and technology, MoU for cooperation in digital technologies, and an implementation programme for tourist cooperation,” he added.

Prime Minister Modi and President Marcos also issued a commemorative stamp, themed on national flowers, Lotus for India and Sampaguita, a variety of jasmine for the Philippines.

The MEA secretary has said that both countries have adopted a plan of action for 2025-2029, to guide bilateral cooperation under the elevated strategic partnerships

across sectors.

“During the visit both PM Modi and President Marcos have agreed to elevate India-Philippine Strategic Partnership aimed at further our engagement including political cooperation, defence, maritime cooperation, trade and investment cooperation, health and pharma, cooperation in science and technology, space, connectivity, digital economy, fin tech, consular matter, culture, tourism and people to people exchanges and closer cooperation in regional multilateral and international issues at mutual interest. Adopted a plan of action for the period of 2025 to 2029 to guide our cooperation under the elevated strategic partnership,” Kumaran said. — **ANI**

## Direct flight from Delhi to Manila to begin from Oct 1

**NEW DELHI:** In a significant step towards enhancing regional connectivity between India and the Philippines, direct flights from Delhi to Manila are expected to commence operations from October 1 this year, the Ministry of External Affairs stated on Tuesday.

During a special press briefing on the occasion of the state visit of the President of the Philippines, Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr, to India, the MEA indicated that the two countries are exploring possibilities of expanding air links to additional destinations shortly to provide a strong impetus to tourism, business, and people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

“Direct Air India flight connectivity from Delhi to Manila will be operational from the 1st of October to the Philippines, hopefully. Further discussions on destinations and how to expand will be further,” the MEA stated.

Earlier, during the joint press statement, President Marcos announced visa-free entry privileges for Indian tourists, while PM Modi reciprocated with a similar scheme for Filipino tourists.

“I reiterated our introduction of visa-free entry privileges and extended our invitation for more Indian tourists to visit the Philippines. I thank Prime Minister Modi in turn for the introduction of a scheme to grant visas free of charge to Filipino tourists travelling to India. We welcome the resumption of direct flights from October this year and have renewed our commitment to sustaining and expanding such direct air connectivity,” he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed the decision, noting that India has also agreed to offer free e-visas to tourists from the Philippines.

The Philippines' President is on a five-day visit to India from August 4 to August 8.

— **ANI**





## Bangladesh begins celebrations of uprising anniversary

**DHAKA:** Thousands of people on Tuesday started to gather at Manik Mia Avenue, a major street in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka, that forms the south boundary of the National Parliament House Complex, to celebrate the first uprising day, the one-year anniversary of the overthrow of the previous Sheikh Hasina government, amid high security.

The interim government of the South Asian country of 170 million people have organised the mega-event after declaring the day a national holiday.

The government has arranged to bring people from all over the country to this event by hiring eight pairs of trains. Garment factories have been closed so that workers can also attend the event.

Officials of various banks have also been asked to attend the event. The day-long festival kicked off with a performance by the country's major musical bands and popular cultural artists.

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus is expected to unveil formally the 'July declaration', an official declaration of the July Mass Uprising of 2024 in Bangladesh, later today. The declaration reportedly outlines 26 political, constitutional and governance issues.

He will also address the nation this evening via state radio and television. Various political parties have organised various programs. Jamat-E-Islami, the largest Islamic political party in the country, held a procession with their

election symbol, Dari Palla (measurement scale). Jamaat-E-Islami opposed Bangladesh's independence during the liberation against Pakistan in 1971.

"It was on this very day, one year ago, that the July Uprising reached its triumph, liberating our beloved nation from the grip of long-standing fascist rule", Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus said in a message.

"The interim government is committed to restoring the state power to the people through a peaceful, fair, and transparent election, as part of a sustainable political solution", he added.

However, Human Rights Watch (HRW) criticised the interim Bangladesh government of Mohammad Yunus for falling short in implementing its challenging human rights agenda, a year since tens of thousands of people took to the streets to depose Sheikh Hasina's government.

"The hope of the thousands who braved lethal violence a year ago when they opposed Sheikh Hasina's abusive rule to build a rights-respecting democracy remains unfulfilled", said Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy Asia director at HRW.

"The interim government appears stuck, juggling an unreformed security sector, sometimes violent religious hardliners, and political groups that seem more focused on extracting vengeance on Hasina's supporters than protecting Bangladeshis' rights", she added. — **ANI**

# Gaza death toll surpasses 61,020 since start of Israeli aggression in October 2023

This toll remains incomplete, as many victims remain trapped under rubble, inaccessible to ambulance and rescue crews, medical sources confirmed



**GAZA:** The death toll in the Gaza Strip has reached 61,020, the majority of whom were women and children, since the beginning of the Israeli aggression in October 2023. At least 150,671 others have also been injured.

This toll remains incomplete, as many victims remain trapped under rubble, inaccessible to ambulance and rescue crews.

Medical sources confirmed that of the total casualties, 9,519 civilians have been killed and 38,630 have been injured since March 18, 2025, when the Israeli occupation resumed its aggression on the Gaza Strip after breaking the ceasefire agreement.

Sources stated that 87 bodies, including eight bodies that were covered from under rubble, and 644 injured individuals were brought to hospitals in Gaza during the past 24 hours. In the past 24 hours, 52 aid seekers who were killed and 352 who were injured were brought to hospitals, bringing the total number of aid seekers brought to hospitals to 1,568 killed and 11,230 injured.

**UN experts demand immediate closure of Gaza Humanitarian Foundation**

UN experts on Tuesday expressed deep concern over the operations of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, a so-called relief organisation created by Israel and backed by the United States.

The experts warned that Palestinians are paying the ultimate price for the international community's legal, political, and moral failure.

They affirmed that under international humanitarian law, Israel, as the occupying power, has binding obligations towards the population under its control. According to the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Regulations, civilians in occupied territories must be protected and provided with essential services. Humanitarian relief operations must also be protected and facilitated, with strict adherence to the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

The Gaza Humanitarian Relief

Foundation, a non-governmental organization established by Israel in February 2025, with US support, to distribute alleged aid in Gaza, is a deeply disturbing example of how humanitarian relief is being exploited to further covert military and geopolitical agendas, in serious violation of international law.

They added, "The entanglement of Israeli intelligence, US contractors, and shadowy non-state actors highlights the urgent need for strict international oversight and robust international action under the auspices of the United Nations."

**Crimes against humanity**

They continued, "Under any circumstances, when you turn a blind eye to war crimes in exchange for temporary relief, impunity can become the norm. However, in this case, we are leaving a state accused of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity responsible for feeding a population affected by genocide unchecked and unpunished. This

overt hypocrisy is alarming."

The experts also affirmed that Israeli forces and foreign military contractors continue to indiscriminately fire on aid seekers at so-called 'distribution sites' run by the Global Humanitarian Relief Foundation (GHRF), established to take over functions previously performed by UN agencies, most notably the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

Nearly 1,400 people have been killed and more than 4,000 injured as they search for food." At least 859 people have been killed around World Humanitarian Relief sites since the organisation began operations in late May 2025.

These sites are particularly difficult to access for the most vulnerable groups, such as women, children, people with disabilities, and the elderly. Experts said that describing them as "humanitarian" only adds to Israel's humanitarian obfuscation and is an affront to humanitarian institutions and standards. — **WAPA**



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- Digital Transformation Leader of the Year
- Sports Icon of the Year
- Health & Wellness Icon of the Year
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SPORTS

ENTHRALLING SERIES

We take back great memories...: Bumrah following India’s series draw against England



**NEW DELHI [INDIA]:** Following Team India’s series draw against England, Indian pace spearhead took to social media, expressing his happiness on what was a “competitive and enthralling” series.

With skipper Shubman Gill and Mohammed Siraj leading the batting and wicket-taking charts, Team India secured a memorable six-run win at The Oval to end the series on a 2-2 draw.

Taking to Instagram, Bumrah posted, “We take back great memories from a highly competitive and enthralling test series! Looking forward to what’s next.”

Bumrah was the joint-fourth highest wicket-taker in the series, with 14 scalps in three matches at an average of 26.00, with best figures of 5/74. He also took a total of five-wicket hauls. He played only three Tests due to workload management, returning to Test cricket after a 18-wicket Indian Premier League (IPL) season with Mumbai Indians (MI), using the competition to prepare himself for the tour following an injury lay-off, sustaining a back fracture during a 32-wicket Border-Gavaskar-Series against Australia. **-ANI**

# ‘Our aim is to qualify for 2026 World Cup’

The veteran Portuguese coach pointed out that the challenges ahead are not easy, but they are not impossible either

**MUSCAT:** Portuguese coach Carlos Queiroz, head coach of the Oman national football team, expressed his happiness at taking over the task of coaching the national team.

He stressed his full commitment to serving Omani football and will make efforts to achieve the aspirations of the fans in the coming period, most notably qualifying for the 2026 World Cup.

During the introductory press conference held on Tuesday at the Oman Football Association headquarters, Queiroz said: “It is a pleasure to be here today. From the moment I arrived, we began working hard. I believe that our job is not only technical, but also to make the fans happy and instill a sense of pride and belonging, and we will do everything in our power to achieve that.”



The veteran Portuguese coach pointed out that the challenges ahead are not easy, but they are not impossible either, stressing that smart work on the field and full co-operation off it are the key to success in achieving this great goal.

Queiroz revealed the outlines of his preparatory plan for the next phase, which begins with a thorough study of the team and players, covering all physical and technical aspects.

He emphasised that he closely monitors the performance of professional players abroad, has watched all of the national team’s recent matches, and has a clear

picture of the team’s strengths and weaknesses.

He explained that the first stage of preparation will be a training camp in Türkiye, in the absence of Al-Seeb players due to their commitment to the AFC Champions League 2 competition. This will be followed by participation in the Central Asian Championship, which will be hosted by Uzbekistan later.

Queiroz emphasised that technical work alone is not enough, but must be accompanied by a strong commitment from all parties, saying, “We need the cooperation of the fans, the players, and the federation. Discipline, positive behaviour, and work ethic are the foundations upon which we will build our project.”

Referring to the upcoming qualifying matches in Group A, Queiroz said: “I know the Qatari and Emirati teams well. We have talented players, and we have a great opportunity that we must take advantage of.”

He concluded his remarks with a message to the Omani fans, urging them to continue their unwavering support: “You are our 12th player. Your presence behind us gives us strong motivation, and we promise to live up to the responsibility.” **-ONA**

DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

## Barcelona-Ter Stegen rift deepens amid medical report

**MADRID:** The relationship between FC Barcelona and goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen continues to worsen, with the club opening disciplinary proceedings against the goalkeeper.

Barca has taken the move after Ter Stegen reportedly refused to sign a medical report the club was going to send to La Liga’s Medical Commission over the 33-year-old’s back injury.

Ter Stegen had an operation on his back last week, with the goalkeeper posting on social media

that he expected to be out of action for around three months. However, Barcelona’s medical report estimates he will be sidelined for five months.

The difference is vital to Barcelona, because if La Liga accepts Ter Stegen will be out of action for over four months, the club would be able to drop him from its first-team squad and use 80 percent of his salary to register new players under La Liga’s financial fair play rules.

Currently, Barcelona is unable to register new signings



Joan Garcia, Rooney Bardghji and Marcus Rashford in its squad. Wojciech Szczesny and Gerard Martin are also unregistered following new contracts, with Martin promoted from the B-team.

With other avenues of income still to supply the necessary funds, Barcelona needs the money from Ter Stegen’s salary to register at least some of the five before its La Liga opener against Mallorca on August 16. However, for the moment, Ter Stegen is unwilling to back down, knowing that if he does

so, he has no chance of playing until January, even if he is fit at the end of October.

The problem for Barca is worse as Ter Stegen and Inaki Pena are currently only two registered goalkeepers, with Pena not part of coach Hansi Flick’s plan. That makes it more vital than ever that the club finds some way of registering Garcia and Szczesny, but the pressure on a goalkeeper who has played 422 times for the club is creating a conflict that shows no signs of ending. **-Xinhua**

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OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by October 2025 reaching \$70.36, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 80 cents from the price of Monday, which was \$71.16. - ONA

MARKET  
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,817.01 points, up by 0.36% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.39% at 469.60 points. Oman Refreshment, up 9.65%, was the top gainer while Muscat Insurance, down 9.92%, was the top loser.

# Al Suwaiq Port handles over 399mn tonnes of cargo in first half of 2025

The port has seen significant growth in cargo movement and vessel traffic due to enhanced unloading and loading operations, workflow optimisation, and the introduction of advanced handling equipment, including high-capacity cranes



The port received 429 vessels, up from 408 ships in the first half of last year.

Statistics revealed that dry bulk cargo handling reached 243,359 tonnes in the first half of 2025, compared to 286,278 tonnes in the corresponding period of 2024. Meanwhile, food commodities,



vegetables, fruits, and other goods totalled 54,401 tonnes, up from 47,291 tonnes in the same period last year.

Eng. Sameer Ghulam Al Balushi, Director of Al Suwaiq Port, confirmed to Oman News Agency (ONA) that the port has seen significant growth in cargo movement

and vessel traffic due to enhanced unloading and loading operations, workflow optimisation, and the introduction of advanced handling equipment, including high-capacity cranes, which have accelerated cargo processing.

He noted that foodstuffs, vegetables, fruits, and livestock are

among the key commodities handled at the port, alongside construction materials, equipment, and other general goods.

Al Balushi added that development work on the port's operational area is ongoing, including the reorganization of internal yards, preliminary expansion project

preparations, and upgrades to inspection, surveillance, safety, and electronic operating systems. Initial studies for the expansion project are nearing completion, with administrative procedures underway to commence implementation soon, aligning with growth aspirations and boosting port efficiency.

A'Suwaiq Port specializes in small and medium-sized vessels with a capacity of up to 10,000 tons. Its strategic location between Muscat Governorate and Sohar Port, coupled with proximity to the land-based Khazaen Dry Port, positions it as a vital hub connecting regional ports and facilitating the flow of goods to local and regional markets, including the Indian sub-continent and the Horn of Africa.

Asyad Group, through its ports and free zones, is enhancing A'Suwaiq Port's role by improving service quality, intensifying local and regional marketing efforts, and streamlining procedures in coordination with relevant authorities. The group is also implementing strategies to provide integrated logistics services and link the port to national and global supply chains, supporting value-added growth and the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

OPENS NEWLY RESTRUCTURED BRANCH



## Oman Housing Bank disburses OMR220mn in housing loans in Al Dakhiliyah governorate

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** In line with its strategic vision to modernise services and expand its institutional presence, Oman Housing Bank (OHB) inaugurated its newly restructured branch in the Wilayat of Nizwa. The inauguration ceremony was held under the patronage of Sheikh Hilal bin Said Al Hajri, Governor of Al Dakhiliyah, in the presence of Arif bin Maqbool Al Zaabi, General Manager of OHB, along with several dignitaries, sheikhs, and senior officials from the Governorate.

The inauguration of the Nizwa branch marks a key milestone in the bank's journey, as it aligns with OHB's broader plans to modernize its institutional framework and enhance operational capabilities to serve citizens across Al Dakhiliyah Governorate better. The branch will act as a central hub to meet the growing demand for subsidized housing loans in the region.

On this occasion, OHB announced that since its establishment until the end of last year, the Nizwa branch has provided 6,814 housing loans with a total value exceeding OMR 220,236,252, underscoring the Bank's significant role in advancing urban development and supporting Omani families across the Governorate.

In a press statement, Aref bin Maqbool Al Zaabi, General Manager of Oman Housing Bank, highlighted that the restructuring of the Nizwa branch comes at a time when the Bank is undergoing a qualitative transformation in its digital services and banking products, in alignment with current requirements and Oman Vision 2040. He stated:

"Through the more than OMR 220 million in housing loans extended in Al-Dakhiliyah Governorate, Oman Housing Bank has

empowered thousands of Omani families to own homes and achieve social stability. Al Zaabi further explained that the Bank's contribution in Al-Dakhiliyah extends beyond housing loans, as it has become a vital enabler of urban growth and economic activity. The financing provided by the Bank has stimulated the real estate sector and supported related industries such as construction, building materials, and contracting, thereby contributing to the broader economic development of the region.

He added that the Bank is committed to continuing its modernization plans across all branches, integrating advanced banking systems that focus on digital transformation and operational flexibility. This ensures reduced waiting periods and faster, more efficient services for citizens. OHB will also continue working with various real estate developers to provide a wide range of housing options tailored to the needs of Omani families.

Serving all wilayats of Al Dakhiliyah – including Nizwa, Bahla, Adam, Al Hamra, Manah, Izki, Samail, and Bidbid – the Nizwa branch stands as a key partner in empowering citizens of the Governorate to achieve homeownership and enhancing overall quality of life.

Concluding his remarks, Al Zaabi said: "The mission of Oman Housing Bank is rooted in the belief that the well-being of the Omani citizen is the cornerstone of development, and that family housing stability is a solid foundation for building a productive and prosperous society. We remain committed to our national role in financing housing projects and offering flexible housing solutions, thereby contributing to the achievement of Oman Vision 2040, which places the citizen at the heart of sustainable development."

ENHANCING BILATERAL TIES

## Omani-French Joint Business Council explores deeper ties across key sectors



Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** The Omani-French Joint Business Council convened at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, under the chairmanship of Jamil bin Ali Sultan. The meeting focused on enhancing bilateral ties between the two friendly countries and underlined the importance of enhancing trade and investment in sustainable and innovative sectors, in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

Members emphasised the Council's role as a strategic platform to support the growing economic relationship between Oman and France. They reaffirmed their commitment to fostering commercial partnerships in future-oriented sectors such as renewable energy and sustainable technologies. With strong fundamentals for growth in bilateral trade, and amid a global shift towards green economies, the Council aims to build direct connections between business communities, address challenges facing joint initiatives and support national economic diversification efforts.

The meeting also reviewed the Council's structure and strategic direction, with an emphasis on expanding Omani membership and forming specialised working groups in priority sectors. Proposals included the creation of teams focusing on energy, information technology, and trade, encouraging the participation of businesses with interest in partnerships with France. It was also agreed to prepare a comprehensive report on investment and trade opportunities, and to update bilateral trade and investment data to support performance tracking.

A proposal was discussed to host an Omani-French Investment Forum, providing a platform to explore business opportunities, address existing challenges, and enhance engagement with the Chamber. The forum would also highlight franchise opportunities and explore avenues of collaboration between the Business Council and the Oman-France Friendship Association.

The members expressed appreciation for the French representatives' active engagement and interest in enhancing cooperation, noting that the discussions reflected a shared commitment to supporting business communities in both countries.

SEZAD

## Duqm Summer Series launched with focus on AI-driven business innovation

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Sezad kicked off the Duqm Summer Series on Tuesday, spotlighting AI and automation as key drivers of local business innovation. The inaugural session, featuring Saeed Abdul Ghafoor, CEO, Star Drones offered practical insights into successfully integrating AI into operations.

Abdul Ghafoor, whose company built TARIQ, Oman's first locally manufactured drone, emphasised the transformative potential of AI-driven innovation. "Integrating AI isn't just about deploying technology it's about creating a new mindset," Abdul Ghafoor remarked. "At Star Drones, we've seen AI-driven automation cut operational downtime by 40% and improve yield accuracy by nearly 30 per cent. This isn't just innovation for innovation's sake, it genuinely enhances productivity."

Eng. Ahmed Akaak, CEO, Sezad, highlighted the urgency of adopting AI more broadly in manufacturing and related sectors. "Companies globally are seeing unprecedented benefits from AI and Duqm is perfectly positioned to replicate and even exceed these successes," Akaak noted. "Today, the focus isn't merely on theoretical applications but on practical strategies that deliver tangible outcomes for businesses."

International data supports this. According to McKinsey & Company's 2024 research, manufacturers deploying AI see, on average, productivity increases of up

to 45%, alongside cost reductions nearing 20%. Moreover, the World Economic Forum reports that advanced AI adopters in its Global Lighthouse Network achieve reductions in material waste by 30% and emissions by as much as 50%.

"AI adoption is no longer optional, it's a fundamental element of competitive advantage," Akaak added. "Through the Duqm Summer Series, we're ensuring our local business leaders can effectively translate global lessons into local successes."

The next session in the Duqm Summer Series will address workforce development 1:00pm Tuesday 12 August, led by Development Bank's Auf Al Aufi, continuing Sezad's commitment to practical, impactful discussion.





MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Oman Refreshment, up 9.65%, was the top gainer while Muscat Insurance, down 9.92%, was the top loser



**MUSCAT:** The MSX index closed at 4,817.01 points, up by 0.36% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.39% at 469.60 points. Oman Refreshment, up 9.65%, was the top gainer while Muscat Insurance, down 9.92%, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 1868 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 23.48 million, with more than 112.2 million shares changing hands. Out of 62 traded securities, 28 advanced, 19 declined, and 15 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for RO 189K while GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for RO 157K, followed by foreign investors for RO 32K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 8,111.72 points, up 0.27%. Prices of Bank Muscat, DIDIC, Al Sharqia Investment, Al Madina Investments, Oman & Emirates Investment were up by 3.72%, 3.45%, 2.44%, 2.33%, 1.45% re-

spectively. Prices of Muscat Insurance, Bank Nizwa, Taageer Finance, Sohar International Bank, Oman United Insurance were down by 9.92%, 1.92%, 0.86%, 0.71%, 0.42% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 7,148.45 points, up 1.04%. Prices of Oman Refreshment, A'Saffa Foods, Oman Cement, Al Anwar Ceramics, Jazeera Steel Products were up by 9.65%, 6.81%, 3.91%, 2.73%, 1.24% respectively. Prices of Oman Chlorine, Oman Packaging, Construction Materials, Voltamp Energy, Galfar Engineering were down by 4.17%, 3.55%, 2.86%, 1.69%, 1.49% respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.18% before closing at 1,819.24 points. Prices of Al Jazeera Services, Oman Oil Marketing, Shell Oman Marketing, Muscat Desalination, National Gas were up by 2.76%, 2.06%, 1.61%, 1.39%, 1.22% respectively. Prices of Sembcorp Salalah, Dhofar Generating, Ooredoo, Renaissance Services, OQ Gas Networks were down by 2.53%, 1.27%, 1.24%, 0.71%, 0.65% respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

| Index              | High     | Low      | Value    | Prev. Value | Diff  | Diff % |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------|--------|
| MSX 30 INDEX       | 4,817.01 | 4,781.16 | 4,817.01 | 4,799.87    | 17.14 | 0.36   |
| FINANCIAL INDEX    | 8,114.02 | 8,068.64 | 8,111.72 | 8,089.81    | 21.92 | 0.27   |
| Industry Index     | 7,150.38 | 7,097.03 | 7,148.45 | 7,074.97    | 73.47 | 1.04   |
| Services Index     | 1,829.81 | 1,812.33 | 1,819.24 | 1,822.48    | -3.25 | -0.18  |
| MSX Shariah Index  | 470.13   | 466.78   | 469.60   | 467.76      | 1.84  | 0.39   |
| MSX TR INDEX       | 7,128.93 | 7,075.88 | 7,128.93 | 7,103.57    | 25.36 | 0.36   |
| FINANCIAL TR IDX   | 9,637.01 | 9,585.83 | 9,637.01 | 9,610.97    | 26.04 | 0.27   |
| INDUSTRIAL TR IDX  | 8,786.74 | 8,721.19 | 8,784.37 | 8,694.08    | 90.29 | 1.04   |
| SERVICES TR IDX    | 2,340.32 | 2,317.96 | 2,326.80 | 2,330.95    | -4.15 | -0.18  |
| 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 |
|-------------|------------|--------|----------------|----|------|-------|-------------|
| 112,201,107 | 23,483,011 | 1,868  | 29,305,615,476 | 28 | 19   | 15    | 62          |

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, AUGUST 5

REGULAR MARKET

| SEC. NAME    | VOLUME                    | TURNOVER   | TRADES     | OPEN PRICE | HIGH  | LOW   | CLOSE PR. | PREV. CLOSE | DIFF  | DIFF % | LAST PR. | LAST BID | LAST OFFER | PREV. VALUE | MARKET CAP |               |
|--------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------|-------|-----------|-------------|-------|--------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| OM0000002804 | ASAFFA FOODS              | 110        | 60         | 1          | 0.549 | 0.549 | 0.549     | 0.514       | 0.035 | 6.809  | 0.549    | 0.482    | 0.550      | 0.100       | 65,880,000 |               |
| OM0000002796 | BANK MUSCAT               | 34,392,090 | 10,247,636 | 291        | 0.295 | 0.307 | 0.294     | 0.307       | 0.296 | 0.011  | 3.716    | 0.307    | 0.308      | 0.307       | 0.100      | 2,304,463,898 |
| OM0000002226 | ALJAZEERA SERVICES        | 143,585    | 26,470     | 18         | 0.182 | 0.186 | 0.182     | 0.186       | 0.181 | 0.005  | 2.762    | 0.186    | 0.188      | 0.190       | 0.100      | 1,968,796     |
| OM0000002188 | AL ANWAR CERAMIC          | 708,142    | 131,030    | 36         | 0.183 | 0.190 | 0.183     | 0.188       | 0.183 | 0.005  | 2.732    | 0.188    | 0.188      | 0.190       | 0.100      | 41,360,000    |
| OM0000002440 | AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO. | 242,865    | 20,213     | 14         | 0.083 | 0.084 | 0.083     | 0.084       | 0.082 | 0.002  | 2.439    | 0.084    | 0.084      | 0.084       | 0.100      | 7,560,000     |
| OM0000002176 | JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS    | 200        | 1          | 1          | 0.484 | 0.484 | 0.480     | 0.484       | 0.484 | 0.000  | 1.240    | 0.480    | 0.480      | 0.485       | 0.100      | 3,950,000     |
| OM0000004925 | ALBATINAH POWER           | 440,500    | 41,809     | 28         | 0.097 | 0.097 | 0.094     | 0.095       | 0.094 | 0.001  | 1.064    | 0.095    | 0.095      | 0.095       | 0.100      | 64,114,306    |
| OM0000004853 | AL SUWADI POWER           | 794,527    | 75,802     | 44         | 0.096 | 0.097 | 0.095     | 0.095       | 0.094 | 0.001  | 1.064    | 0.095    | 0.095      | 0.100       | 0.100      | 67,868,602    |
| OM0000003626 | OMAN TELECOM              | 262,694    | 232,024    | 24         | 0.882 | 0.887 | 0.882     | 0.886       | 0.882 | 0.004  | 0.454    | 0.886    | 0.880      | 0.886       | 0.100      | 664,200,000   |
| OM0000001533 | OMINVEST                  | 162,473    | 36,500     | 28         | 0.226 | 0.227 | 0.223     | 0.226       | 0.225 | 0.001  | 0.444    | 0.226    | 0.225      | 0.226       | 0.100      | 21,470,821    |
| OM0000008834 | ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES     | 690,082    | 263,406    | 38         | 0.265 | 0.267 | 0.265     | 0.266       | 0.265 | 0.001  | 0.477    | 0.266    | 0.265      | 0.271       | 0.100      | 204,874,200   |
| OM0000001707 | OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY      | 425        | 976        | 4          | 2.293 | 2.300 | 2.293     | 2.295       | 2.290 | 0.005  | 0.218    | 2.295    | 2.250      | 2.295       | 0.100      | 205,861,500   |
| OM0000001483 | NATIONAL BANK OMAN        | 30,000     | 9,300      | 1          | 0.310 | 0.310 | 0.310     | 0.310       | 0.300 | 0.000  | 0.000    | 0.310    | 0.300      | 0.310       | 0.100      | 504,043,370   |
| OM0000002274 | UNITED FINANCE            | 12,460     | 810        | 3          | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.065     | 0.065       | 0.065 | 0.000  | 0.000    | 0.065    | 0.065      | 0.066       | 0.100      | 23,148,274    |
| OM0000004788 | MADINA TAKAFUL            | 155,000    | 12,885     | 18         | 0.084 | 0.084 | 0.083     | 0.083       | 0.083 | 0.000  | 0.000    | 0.083    | 0.083      | 0.086       | 0.100      | 14,525,000    |
| OM0000001087 | OMAN UNITED INSURANCE     | 4,989      | 1,670      | 3          | 0.239 | 0.239 | 0.239     | 0.239       | 0.240 | -0.001 | -0.417   | 0.239    | 0.238      | 0.239       | 0.100      | 23,900,000    |
| OM0000008072 | OQ GAS NETWORKS           | 15,234,863 | 2,310,682  | 202        | 0.152 | 0.153 | 0.151     | 0.152       | 0.153 | -0.001 | -0.654   | 0.152    | 0.151      | 0.152       | 0.100      | 658,254,836   |
| OM0000003224 | RENAISSANCE SERVICES      | 1,282,910  | 352,284    | 25         | 0.283 | 0.283 | 0.280     | 0.281       | 0.283 | -0.002 | -0.707   | 0.281    | 0.281      | 0.281       | 0.100      | 66,431,210    |
| OM0000003398 | SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK  | 18,383,746 | 2,571,797  | 144        | 0.140 | 0.141 | 0.139     | 0.140       | 0.141 | -0.001 | -0.709   | 0.140    | 0.135      | 0.140       | 0.100      | 926,414,678   |
| OM0000003968 | OOREDOO                   | 201,000    | 48,293     | 11         | 0.243 | 0.243 | 0.240     | 0.240       | 0.243 | -0.003 | -1.235   | 0.240    | 0.240      | 0.243       | 0.100      | 156,226,615   |
| OM0000003661 | VOLTAMP ENERGY            | 8,016      | 5,661      | 17         | 0.828 | 0.829 | 0.815     | 0.815       | 0.829 | -0.014 | -1.689   | 0.815    | 0.815      | 0.815       | 0.100      | 76,284,727    |
| OM0000004420 | BANK NIZWA                | 205,621    | 21,176     | 7          | 0.103 | 0.103 | 0.102     | 0.102       | 0.104 | -0.002 | -1.923   | 0.102    | 0.102      | 0.104       | 0.100      | 228,169,209   |
| Total        | 22                        | 73,656,288 | 16,418,453 | 1,007      |       |       |           |             |       |        |          |          |            |             |            |               |

Parallel Market

|              |                                     |            |           |     |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |       |       |       |       |             |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
| OM0000001426 | OMAN REFRESHMENT                    | 400        | 400       | 3   | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 | 1.000 | 0.912 | 0.088  | 9.649  | 1.000 | 0.900 | 1.000 | 0.100 | 50,000,000  |
| OM0000001749 | OMAN CEMENT                         | 2,180      | 1,040     | 5   | 0.480 | 0.480 | 0.465 | 0.478 | 0.460 | 0.018  | 3.913  | 0.478 | 0.465 | 0.478 | 0.100 | 158,157,155 |
| OM0000001509 | DHOFAH INTERNATIONAL DEV. & INV.    | 100,000    | 29,725    | 15  | 0.289 | 0.300 | 0.289 | 0.300 | 0.290 | 0.010  | 3.448  | 0.300 | 0.273 | 0.300 | 0.100 | 148,816,842 |
| OM0000001962 | AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING        | 70,000     | 3,080     | 4   | 0.044 | 0.044 | 0.044 | 0.044 | 0.043 | 0.001  | 2.326  | 0.044 | 0.042 | 0.044 | 0.100 | 3,740,000   |
| OM0000009789 | OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION       | 8,693,697  | 2,970,014 | 286 | 0.335 | 0.345 | 0.334 | 0.342 | 0.335 | 0.007  | 2.090  | 0.342 | 0.333 | 0.342 | 0.010 | 78,000,000  |
| OM0000002572 | OMAN OIL MARKETING                  | 200        | 149       | 2   | 0.745 | 0.745 | 0.745 | 0.745 | 0.730 | 0.015  | 2.055  | 0.745 | 0.735 | 0.745 | 0.100 | 45,649,875  |
| OM0000002275 | SHELL OMAN MARKETING                | 1,501      | 945       | 3   | 0.620 | 0.630 | 0.620 | 0.630 | 0.620 | 0.010  | 1.613  | 0.630 | 0.630 | 0.681 | 0.100 | 59,850,000  |
| OM0000001681 | OMAN EMIRATES HO.                   | 458,268    | 30,800    | 31  | 0.069 | 0.071 | 0.069 | 0.070 | 0.069 | 0.001  | 1.448  | 0.070 | 0.071 | 0.070 | 0.100 | 8,311,250   |
| OM0000007084 | MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION            | 2,000      | 146       | 1   | 0.073 | 0.073 | 0.073 | 0.073 | 0.072 | 0.001  | 1.389  | 0.073 | 0.072 | 0.073 | 0.100 | 11,353,179  |
| OM0000001160 | NATIONAL GAS                        | 14,800     | 1,226     | 6   | 0.084 | 0.084 | 0.083 | 0.082 | 0.081 | 0.002  | 1.220  | 0.083 | 0.083 | 0.087 | 0.100 | 7,955,000   |
| OM0000001772 | ALANWAR INVESTMENT                  | 31,890     | 2,707     | 7   | 0.086 | 0.086 | 0.085 | 0.086 | 0.085 | 0.001  | 1.176  | 0.086 | 0.083 | 0.086 | 0.100 | 25,675,520  |
| OM0000004447 | OMAN RETI FUND                      | 270,194    | 23,509    | 24  | 0.088 | 0.088 | 0.087 | 0.087 | 0.086 | 0.001  | 1.163  | 0.087 | 0.087 | 0.089 | 0.100 | 56,427,358  |
| OM0000005862 | PHOENIX POWER                       | 263,155    | 20,445    | 26  | 0.092 | 0.092 | 0.090 | 0.091 | 0.090 | 0.001  | 1.111  | 0.091 | 0.090 | 0.094 | 0.100 | 133,066,733 |
| OM0000004248 | SMN POWER HOLDING                   | 16,549     | 3,282     | 8   | 0.199 | 0.200 | 0.194 | 0.200 | 0.198 | 0.002  | 1.010  | 0.200 | 0.194 | 0.210 | 0.100 | 39,927,120  |
| OM0000002036 | MUSCAT THREAD MILLS                 | 2,691      | 471       | 1   | 0.175 | 0.175 | 0.175 | 0.174 | 0.174 | 0.001  | 0.575  | 0.175 | 0.175 | 0.175 | 0.100 | 10,984,141  |
| OM0000001590 | MUSCAT FINANCE                      | 82,000     | 4,428     | 5   | 0.054 | 0.054 | 0.054 | 0.054 | 0.054 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.054 | 0.054 | 0.059 | 0.100 | 16,585,902  |
| OM0000002077 | AL OMANIYA FINANCIAL SERVICES       | 8,553      | 852       | 2   | 0.130 | 0.130 | 0.130 | 0.130 | 0.130 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.130 | 0.130 | 0.130 | 0.100 | 41,004,210  |
| OM0000002200 | AHLI BANK                           | 448,046    | 66,311    | 7   | 0.148 | 0.148 | 0.148 | 0.148 | 0.148 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.148 | 0.148 | 0.148 | 0.100 | 400,605,448 |
| OM0000002333 | SALALAH PORT SERVICES               | 10         | 27        | 1   | 0.247 | 0.247 | 0.247 | 0.247 | 0.247 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.247 | 0.223 | 0.247 | 0.100 | 44,419,838  |
| OM0000002549 | BANK DHOFAH                         | 10,000     | 1,270     | 2   | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.127 | 0.123 | 0.127 | 0.100 | 386,054,414 |
| OM0000003000 | ALMAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING | 2,014      | 1,813     | 4   | 0.900 | 0.901 | 0.900 | 0.900 | 0.900 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.900 | 0.891 | 0.908 | 0.100 | 62,100,000  |
| OM0000005005 | ALMAHA CERAMICS                     | 12,450     | 3,996     | 8   | 0.321 | 0.321 | 0.321 | 0.321 | 0.320 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.321 | 0.321 | 0.321 | 0.100 | 17,555,000  |
| OM0000008868 | THE PEARL REEF                      | 214,549    | 3,093     | 9   | 0.138 | 0.138 | 0.138 | 0.138 | 0.138 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.138 | 0.138 | 0.138 | 0.100 | 74,521,047  |
| OM0000009908 | OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SF2)            | 22,302,961 | 3,180,654 | 257 | 0.144 | 0.144 | 0.142 | 0.144 | 0.144 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.144 | 0.142 | 0.144 | 0.040 | 498,166,882 |
| OM0000002    | CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES    | 2,500      | 170       | 1   | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.068 | -0.002 | -1.287 | 0.124 | 0.124 | 0.124 | 0.000 | 4,250,000   |
| OM0000003141 | BARKA WATER AND POWER               | 5,193      | 929       | 4   | 0.179 | 0.180 | 0.173 | 0.173 | 0.174 | -0.001 | -0.575 | 0.173 | 0.173 | 0.180 | 0.100 | 27,800,000  |
| OM0000003281 | TAQAFAH FINANCE                     | 1,027      | 718       | 1   | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.100 | 1,000,000   |
| OM0000004077 | DHOFAH GENERATING                   | 13,123     | 1,023     | 4   | 0.078 | 0.078 | 0.077 | 0.078 | 0.079 | 0.001  | 1.266  | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.100 | 17,334,720  |
| OM0000002028 | GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS        | 10,300     | 773       | 5   | 0.078 | 0.078 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.076 | 0.001  | 1.318  | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.077 | 0.100 | 1,575,000   |
| OM0000002513 | AL AMAL HOLDING                     | 1,500      | 69,007    | 66  | 0.114 | 0.113 | 0.113 | 0.114 | 0.116 | -0.002 | -1.887 | 0.114 | 0.114 | 0.124 | 0.100 | 16,884,884  |
| OM0000004735 | SEMBOCORP SALALAH                   | 132,000    | 20,362    | 26  | 0.158 | 0.158 | 0.152 | 0.154 | 0.158 | -0.004 | -2.532 | 0.153 | 0.153 | 0.153 | 0.100 | 147,004,080 |
| OM0000002046 | ALMAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING | 2,014      | 1,813     | 4   | 0.900 | 0.901 | 0.900 | 0.900 | 0.900 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.900 | 0.891 | 0.908 | 0.100 | 62,100,000  |
| OM0000001808 | OMAN PACKAGING                      | 8,740      | 1,193     | 2   | 0.140 | 0.140 | 0.136 | 0.136 | 0.141 | -0.005 | -3.546 | 0.136 | 0.136 | 0.140 | 0.100 | 41,121,277  |
| OM0000002341 | OMAN CHLORINE                       | 369        | 85        | 1   | 0.230 | 0.230 | 0.230 | 0.230 | 0.240 | -0.010 | -4.167 | 0.230 | 0.230 | 0.240 | 0.100 | 16,447,033  |
| OM0000001806 | MUSCAT INSURANCE                    | 1,660      | 1,179     | 3   | 0.777 | 0.777 | 0.776 | 0.776 | 0.776 | -0.002 | -9.924 | 0.776 | 0.708 | 0.708 | 1.000 | 7,805,733   |
| Total        | 35                                  | 38,329,606 | 7,044,439 | 839 |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |       |       |       |       |             |





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The deaths of former presidents Muhammadu Buhari and Edgar Lungu in foreign medical facilities have again sparked debate on whether African leaders trust their countries' health care systems

Choosing where to seek medical help is a deeply private decision. But the numerous occasions African leaders have sought treatment abroad have thrown the spotlight on local health care investment. To a large extent, leaders are responsible for the development of proper health care for the citizens of their countries.

The deaths of former leaders Muhammadu Buhariof Nigeria and Edgar Lungu of Zambia in foreign medical facilities have not calmed accusations that African leaders neglect public health systems in their own countries.

"The state of health care in Nigeria is deeply concerning. The biggest problem is infrastructure. There are no drugs and functional medical equipment," Jamila Atiku, a researcher on public health in Nigeria, told DW.

**Low investment in public health**

Reasons for medical tourism include a lack of specialised treatment available locally, poorly equipped hospitals and security fears for politicians.

Another factor, according to Zimbabwean health rights advocate Chamunorwa Mashoko, is an over-reliance on foreign aid.

"Among African countries, over 32 out of 54 countries are not allocating significant budgets to health. This is motivated by over-dependency on donor aid," he told DW.

"Africa is failing to realise that foreign funding in health is just for diplomacy. Those assisting us

with all that aid really has nothing to do with our health challenges," Mashoko added.

African countries receive more than \$60 billion (€52 billion) in health funding, representing just a fraction of the total health financing needed for the continent.

Under the 2001 Abuja Declaration, African Union (AU) member states committed to end the continent's health financing crisis by pledging to allocate 15% of their annual national budgets to health care.

But over two decades later, only three countries, Rwanda, Botswana, and Cape Verde, have consistently met or exceeded the target.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that over 30 AU member states allocate less than 10% of their budget to health care, with some allocating as little as 5-7%.

"Nigeria has been fluctuating between 4-6% of the annual budget," said Atiku, adding that politicians are only concerned about other infrastructure development projects like roads.

"Doctors and health care professionals are always going on strike because they are underpaid."

Inadequate public financing of health has resulted in poorly run, underperforming health systems across many African countries.

"Over-reliance on external funding is highly unsustainable and inconsistent with achieving Universal Health Coverage," said Itai Rusike, of the Zimbabwe-based Community Working Group on Health.

"The Abuja target of 15% allocation to health has remained an elusive target. It is now outdated



given the population increase, huge disease burden and the levels of neglect of infrastructure and health worker retention," Rusike added.

**Which medical services are sought abroad**

A chronic lack of specialised treatment and facilities is driving many African patients to seek medical treatment abroad. The sectors affected include oncology, cardiology, neurology, orthopedics, organ transplants, fertility, and pediatrics for the management of rare genetic disorders.

Over 300,000 Africans travel to India annually for medical services, spending more than \$2 billion each year.

India is said to be generating more than \$6 billion each year from medical tourism.

Projections show the Asian country could get \$13 billion in medical tourism by 2026 under the "Heal in India" initiative.

According to the African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, Nigerians are estimated to spend \$1 billion annually on medical tourism. 60% of that amount is spent on oncology, orthopedics, nephrology, and cardiology. Additionally, the figure represents almost 20% of the annual public health expenditure that covers the salaries of health workers.

An estimated 5,000 Nigerians fly out of the country monthly for medical treatment, many traveling to India.

**What needs to be done**

Some African health authorities argue they are doing their best to improve healthcare for their countries.

"There is room for improvement to fund the health sector. We are targeting to ensure by 2027 at least 17,000 primary health care facilities are functional in Nigeria," Nigeria's Minister of State for Health

and Social Welfare, Iziaq Adekunle Salako, told DW.

"There is not a health system in the world that is 100%. We believe we are headed in the right direction in implementing solutions."

Health experts say African governments need to build modern health facilities to offer services currently being outsourced abroad.

"Looking up to politicians will not work. Communities need to come together and pull resources to create health care systems that work for them," health rights advocate Chamunorwa Mashoko told DW.

In 2016, the continental lender Afreximbank launched a support facility to build specialised health facilities across Africa to reduce outbound medical tourism.

The initial target would focus on establishing a centre of excellence for cancer patients. Tanzania, Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana were identified as suitable to host the facilities. -nw



# Questions for Alonso to resolve as Real Madrid return to work

Mbappe, who scored 38 goals in La Liga and the Champions League in his debut season, is certain to lead the attack. The main question is who will partner him

**MADRID:** After the squad reported for medical tests on Monday, Real Madrid will begin training on Tuesday with two weeks to prepare for its La Liga season opener. Coach Xabi Alonso will need to decide which forwards will remain in the squad and who may leave. Kylian Mbappe, who scored 38 goals in La Liga and the Champions League in his debut season, is certain to lead the attack. The main question is who will partner him. Vinicius Jr. appears the likely choice, although both players prefer to operate in similar positions



on the left, cutting inside at pace. The Brazilian is one of the club's key players but is currently in contract negotiations, which have stalled in recent weeks. Reports suggest the delay is linked to his request to become the highest-paid player in the squad. There has been no recent movement regarding speculation of an

offer from Saudi Arabia for Vinicius. His contract situation remains unresolved. On the pitch, he struggled for form at the Club World Cup and was unable to

consistently apply the high press Alonso requires from his forwards. By contrast, 21-year-old Gonzalo Garcia impressed in that tournament. Drafted in from the club's

B team to replace an ill Mbappe, he finished as the top scorer with four goals and one assist. A more traditional target forward, Gonzalo offers a different option to the pace-based styles of Vinicius, Mbappe and Rodrygo, and has shown a willingness to follow Alonso's tactical instructions. Local side Getafe are interested in signing him on loan, though he could stay at Madrid. Rodrygo's role is less certain. He played only 92 minutes in the Club World Cup and remains behind Mbappe and Vinicius in the pecking order. Liverpool, Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur are reportedly interested, with Tottenham viewing him as a potential replacement for Son Heung-min. While Rodrygo has expressed a desire to stay and compete for a place, a transfer remains possible. Brazilian teenager Endrick arrived last summer with a strong reputation and scored five goals in the Copa del Rey. However, competition from Mbappe, Vinicius and Rodrygo limited his opportunities in La Liga and the Champions League. With Gonzalo emerging as another attacking option, the club may consider loaning Endrick out for regular playing time. Any such decision is likely to come down to whether Madrid retains Gonzalo or Endrick for the coming season. -Xinhua

## SEEK ANSWERS



## England must sort out issues ahead of Ashes in Australia

**LONDON:** England need to seek answers ahead of the five-match Ashes series in Australia later this year. If they harbour aspirations of reaching the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) Final for the first time, then a positive result Down Under is crucial, as per the official website of the ICC. England showed plenty of good signs during their recent series with India, but still have some unanswered questions as they attempt to win back the Ashes from Australia for the first time since the start of 2018. England tried as many as six different fast bowlers across the five-match series against India, but they aren't all that much clearer about what their best pace line-up looks like. Whether Chris Woakes recovers from his shoulder ailment in time for the Ashes remains to be seen, while the ongoing fitness concerns for pace spearhead Jofra Archer are also sure to be monitored before the trip Down Under. England will also be hoping that Mark Wood will be fit to

make the trip to Australia as his pace will surely be an asset, with the likes of Josh Tongue, Brydon Carse, and Gus Atkinson all in consideration for selection too. While there is no doubting the class of Joe Root, the England veteran is yet to register a Test century on Australian shores, and this is probably the only thing missing from his bulky resume as he tries to hunt down Sachin Tendulkar's record for the most hundreds in Test cricket. If Root can break his century duck this time in Australia and lead England to an Ashes victory, then it will surely go down as one of the right-hander's biggest achievements during his illustrious international career. Youngster Shoaib Bashir appears to be the front-runner to be England's first-choice spin option during the Ashes, providing he recovers from his finger injury, but the 20-year-old is yet to set the world on fire and may be targeted by Australia's batting group. England could turn to the experience of Jack Leach or provide Liam Dawson another opportuni-

ty after he got a taste of it against India, or will Rehan Ahmed make a surprise return and be included in the touring party? Crawley was England's leading run-scorer during the most recent Ashes series in 2023, but the tall opener was somewhat disappointing on his inaugural visit to Australia when he managed just 166 runs from three Tests across the 2021/2022 series. Australia's experienced pace attack will fancy their chances against Crawley and the right-hander will be under pressure to perform well and get the side off to a good start alongside fellow opener Ben Duckett. Jamie Smith has made a superb start to his fledgling international Test career, and the comparisons with Australian great Adam Gilchrist seem somewhat justified, given his Test batting average currently sits close to 50. It will be a step up in class for Smith taking on Australia away from home and the Aussies are sure to try and intimidate the talented 25-year-old in his first tour Down Under. -ANI

## 2-2 DRAW

Best five-match test series I have ever been part of: McCullum



**LONDON:** England head coach Brendon McCullum expressed his thoughts on the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy 2025 played between the Three Lions and India, which ended in a 2-2 draw, saying that this is the "best five-match series" which he has been "part of" and "witnessed" Speaking about the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy 2025 between England and India, McCullum said, as quoted by Sky Sports, "That is the best five-match test series I have ever been a part of and witnessed. It just oscillated so much right throughout the six weeks, and I felt it had everything. I thought there was hostility at times, camaraderie at times, great cricket at times, there was some average cricket because of the pressure they were put under." **A cracking series** "We knew it was going to be hard coming into the series; we knew they were going to test us physically and mentally. I think it tested both teams more than we expected. It was a cracking series to be a part of and when Siraj took that final wicket, as much I was disappointed, I had admiration for him and the fight he has got as a cricketer and the way he was able to do what he did. I think 2-2 was a fair reflection," the 43-year-old added. -ANI

## WTC STANDINGS

Team India jumps up in WTC standings following six-run victory at The Oval



**LONDON :** Following a resilient win at The Oval to end the series with a 2-2 scoreline in England, Team India has moved to the third spot in the ICC World Test Championships (WTC) points table, with two wins, two losses and a draw during the ongoing cycle so far. The WTC standings have seen significant change after inspirational spells from Mohammed Siraj and Prasidh Krishna helped India seal a six-run win in a thrilling showdown at The Oval to level the series 2-2. While it is still early days in the WTC27 cycle, India managed to usurp England and move into third place in the ICC World Test Championship standings with their victory in the final Test, earning 12 crucial points. They now have 28 points on the board and a points percentage of 46.67 per cent, as per ICC. Despite having a similar number of wins and draws as India,

England sits fourth in the standings with 26 points and a points percentage of 43.33%. Their position was impacted by a two-point deduction for a slow over rate during the Lord's Test. Australia remain at the top of the table, having won all three matches they've played in this cycle so far. Their opponents in those matches, West Indies, are yet to register a point and sit sixth in the standings, only ahead of South Africa, New Zealand and Pakistan, all of whom are yet to play a game in this cycle. Sri Lanka currently sit second in the ICC World Test Championship standings, having registered a victory and a draw in their two matches so far, giving them a points percentage of 66.67 per cent. Meanwhile, Bangladesh are placed fifth, with just four points and a points percentage of 16.67 per cent. -ANI

## READY TO RETURN



## Neymar brace fires Santos past Juventude

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Neymar scored twice as Santos snapped a three-game winless run with a 3-1 home victory over Juventude in Brazil's Serie A on Monday. Santos took the lead in the 37th minute when Gabriel Veron's long-range effort was kept out by goalkeeper Eudes Carneiro and Neymar slotted home the rebound. Alvaro Barreal doubled the advantage three minutes later, showing deft control before volleying

home from inside the six-yard box. Venezuela international defender Wilker Angel pulled a goal back on the stroke of halftime with a towering header following Marcelo Hermes' corner. But Neymar put the result beyond doubt 10 minutes from time as he converted from the penalty spot after Luca Meirelles was dragged down by Caique Goncalves. "It's a good feeling to play well

and win again," Neymar said after the match. "We have to keep improving and to make sure we learn from our mistakes. We have a lot of work ahead of us." Neymar declared himself ready to return to Brazil's national team for World Cup qualifiers against Chile and Bolivia in September. The 33-year-old hasn't represented his country since October 2023, when he suffered a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament in a World

Cup qualifier against Uruguay. "Everyone knows what I'm capable of," the former Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain star said. "I'm available and I still feel good. So, it's up to them [Brazil's coaching staff]." The result leaves Santos 15th in the 20-team Brazilian top flight standings with 18 points from 17 games, seven points ahead of Juventude, which has a game in hand. -Xinhua



ROUND-UP

MHD Automobiles celebrates 2nd anniversary with exclusive offers

To mark the occasion, MHD Automobiles has introduced exclusive anniversary pricing across select models, bringing some of the most iconic and performance-driven vehicles within easier reach for customers in Oman

**MUSCAT:** MHD Automobiles, the official distributor of Jeep, RAM, Dodge, and Alfa Romeo in Oman, announces the launch of its 2nd anniversary celebration, marking two successful years of delivering premium vehicles, exceptional service, and a growing community of passionate drivers.

To mark the occasion, MHD Automobiles has introduced exclusive anniversary pricing across select models, bringing some of the most iconic and performance-driven vehicles within easier reach for customers in Oman. Among the highlights is the Jeep Wrangler Sport 2 Door, starting

from OMR 15,595, and the Wrangler Sahara 4 Door, from OMR 19,495—both engineered for off-road adventure and everyday reliability. The Wrangler Rubicon 392, delivering formidable V8 power, is now available from OMR 35,995, while the Jeep Grand Cherokee range starts from OMR 17,995, offering a balance of luxury, capability, and versatility. The RAM 1500 RHO, a bold and refined full-size pickup, is now available from OMR 37,995, combining strength and sophistication for drivers who demand more. From Alfa Romeo, the Tonale TI starts from OMR 13,295, delivering Italian performance and elegance in a compact, modern crossover. In addition to these spotlight models, anniversary pricing is available across a wider selection from the Jeep, RAM, and Alfa Romeo ranges, giving customers more ways to experience the craftsmanship and performance these brands are known for. Reflecting on the occasion, Mohsin Hani Al Bahrani, CEO of MHD Automobiles, said: “This anniversary marks more than just a timeline—it represents a growing connection with our customers and the trust they’ve placed in us. We are proud to bring world-class automotive brands to Oman and to continue evolving with the needs of the market. The anniversary pricing underscores our commitment to delivering greater value while maintaining the excellence these brands stand for.” The 2nd anniversary celebration is available for a limited time, with select models available while stocks last.



FINEST DANCE TALENT



DDA shines globally with 12 awards at Global Dance Open Championship in Birmingham

**MUSCAT:** DDA – The Dance Destination has once again elevated Oman’s cultural stature on the international stage by winning an impressive 12 awards and a cash prize at the prestigious Global Dance Open Championship 2025, held at the ICC, Birmingham. With over 250 institutions from 37 countries participating, the event showcased some of the finest dance talent from around the world – yet DDA stood out with its exceptional artistry and commitment. Among the most notable accolades was the title of “Highest Scorer in the Classical Gala”, with stunning performances scoring 95.83 and 95.17—the highest marks recorded across all classical, folklore, and ballet categories. These scores are a testament to DDA’s artistic excellence, discipline, and cultural depth. This year marks DDA’s third consecutive appearance at the Global Dance Open, following their strong showings in Spain (2023) and Netherlands (2024). Each year, the team has raised the bar, proudly representing Oman with passion and integrity. DDAites competed across 17

categories, including 4 group performances, 3 duets, and 10 solo acts, resulting in a distinguished medal tally: 4 Gold Medals, 2 Silver Medals, 2 Bronze Medals, 4 Consolation Prizes. A standout moment came from the Junior Sizzlers team, who received a cash award for being the Best Group in the Small Ensemble category, achieving a top score of 95.87. The achievements didn’t stop there. 8-year-old Ashutosh Arun Baba impressed the judges with his participation in 2 group and 2 solo performances, earning 3 Golds and 1 Bronze. Similarly, Merlyn Bobby Scaria delivered a stellar performance with 1 Gold, 1 Silver, and 1 Bronze, and clinched Second Place in the Hip Hop Solo category—competing against dancers from 23 countries. The DDA management extended heartfelt appreciation to the team, parents, and choreographers both in Oman and internationally. “Our journey is not merely about winning medals; it’s about promoting cultural dialogue, fostering artistic growth, and representing Oman with pride on a global platform,” they shared.

SHARIA-COMPLIANT

Alizz Islamic Bank’s multi-currency prepaid card: Ideal travel companion

**MUSCAT:** The Sultanate of Oman’s first Sharia-compliant Multi-Currency Prepaid Card from Alizz Islamic Bank is a smart and seamless solution designed to meet the financial needs of today’s travellers. With the ability to hold and use multiple currencies on a single card, customers can enjoy secure, convenient and Shar’ah-compliant spending anywhere in the world. The card allows customers to load up to 6 different currencies—

sand manage their travel budget efficiently through the ‘Alizz X’ mobile banking application. It eliminates the need to carry large amounts of cash or juggle multiple cards or look for exchange houses, making it the ideal travel companion for both leisure and business traveller. The card currently allows customers to make transactions in Omani Rials, US Dollars, Euros, British Pounds, Emirati Dirhams & Saudi Rials. The card switches according to the destination of use

& can draw funds from another currency. The multi-currency card can be used abroad across ATMs, point of sale terminals as well as for online purchases. Alizz Islamic bank remains committed to “Personalising every experience through innovative and smart solutions”. The new multi-currency prepaid card is a reflection of the Bank’s strive for excellence and its growing range of digital solutions that enrich the daily lives of customers.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Ominvest partners with Outward Bound Oman for second edition of ‘Young Shapers’

**MUSCAT:** Oman International Development and Investment Company (Ominvest), a leading investment company in the region, announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Outward Bound Oman for the second edition of the “Ominvest Young Shapers” programme, as part of the company’s long-standing commitment to developing leadership capabilities among Omani youth. Outward Bound Oman, in collaboration with Global Shapers Muscat Hub, will deliver six comprehensive leadership courses benefiting 100 participants until the end of 2025. The programme will target job seekers, students, employees, and entrepreneurs from across Oman. The inaugural edition of the programme in 2024 trained 95 individuals through outdoor leadership experiences. The curriculum is specifically designed to align with key UN Goals (SDGs), focusing on quality education, leadership, digital skills, and climate awareness. Participants will be challenged to develop skills in a hands-on, real-world context across Oman’s diverse landscapes, including Salalah, Jabal Akhdar, and the Sharqiyah Sands. This immersive approach goes beyond traditional learning, building character, resili-



ence, and a deep appreciation for the country’s natural heritage. “Our core strategy at Ominvest is to create lasting value for all our stakeholders by fostering sustainable growth, and that starts with investing in people,” said Badar Awadh Al Shanfari, Chief Operating Officer of Ominvest. “The Young Shapers programme is a powerful example of this strat-

egy in action. By equipping young Omanis with critical leadership skills, we’re directly contributing to Oman Vision 2040’s goals of economic diversification and job creation. These are the future innovators and entrepreneurs who will drive progress and ensure the long-term prosperity of our nation.” Waleed Nasser Al Yarubi, Chief

People, Corporate Communication and Sustainability Officer, emphasized the program’s connection to Ominvest’s broader sustainability commitments. “This partnership with Outward Bound Oman is a cornerstone of our sustainability strategy, which is guided by our commitment to making a positive impact on society and the environment. By focusing the curriculum on UN SDGs like quality education and climate awareness, we are not only developing individual leaders but also empowering them to be agents of change. This initiative is a powerful demonstration of how we integrate social and environmental progress into our business objectives, creating shared value for our company, our communities, and the future of Oman.” Suleiman bin Masoud Al Harthy, Chairman of Outward Bound Oman, said: “We are delighted to renew our partnership with Ominvest and continue creating opportunities for young Omanis to develop essential life skills while connecting with their natural heritage. This programme goes beyond traditional classroom learning by immersing participants in Oman’s stunning landscapes, where they face real challenges that build character, resilience, and leadership capabilities.”

BANKING SERVICES

Bank Nizwa introduces Sharia-compliant financing solutions for Q3



**MUSCAT:** Reaffirming its commitment to delivering banking services that fulfill customer aspirations, Bank Nizwa – the leading and most-trusted Islamic bank in the Sultanate of Oman – has announced the launch of competitive, Sharia-compliant financing solutions for the third quarter of the year. **Diverse range** The offering includes a diverse range of financing products, including auto finance, personal finance, and home finance, reflecting the bank’s steadfast approach to providing financial solutions that empower customers to achieve their financial goals. Commenting on the launch,

Mohamed Al Ghassani, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Bank Nizwa, said: “At Bank Nizwa, we are dedicated to providing Sharia-compliant financing solutions at competitive profit rates that cater to the diverse financial needs of our customers. Through regular reviews of our profit rates, the bank not only stays aligned with evolving market dynamics but also strengthens its steadfast commitment to delivering purposeful, value-driven financial solutions that enable customers to realize their financial aspirations.” He added: “At the same time, we continue to enhance the value of our offerings for entrepreneurs through Sharia-compliant commercial financing solutions. “We provide competi-

tive profit rates for trade finance, auto finance, and real estate financing, supporting businesses and their growth ambitions.” **Competitive profit rates** As part of its commitment to providing financing solutions tailored to diverse needs, Bank Nizwa offers competitive profit rates starting from 3.49% across its retail financing portfolio, which includes auto finance, home finance, and personal finance. For auto finance, customers can benefit from a preferential rate to finance both new and used cars meanwhile it provides greater flexibility in their financial planning. For home finance, the bank provides comprehensive solutions

covering ready property purchases, land acquisition, construction, and buyouts – delivered through a progressive financing structure with adaptable repayment terms. Meanwhile, the bank’s personal finance solutions are designed to address everyday financial needs and provide essential liquidity through flexible repayment options and features aligned with customers’ financial aspirations. **Commercial finance** On the commercial front, Bank Nizwa continues to reinforce its support for the business sector by providing Sharia-compliant financing solutions at competitive rates through commercial finance for individuals which include com-

mercial autos and real estate. This underscores the bank’s ongoing commitment to empowering entrepreneurs and fostering sustainable economic growth throughout the nation. As the most trusted Islamic financial institution in the Sultanate, Bank Nizwa continues to provide transparent and fully Sharia-compliant financial solutions. This unwavering commitment strengthens the trust customers place in the bank, offering financial options that not only address their economic needs but also align with their values and beliefs. This approach enables customers to make informed and secure financial decisions within a trusted Sharia-compliant framework.



ROUND-UP

# Hawana Salalah: Luxurious hotel experience in the heart of nature

With the onset of the Khareef season, which transforms Salalah into a lush paradise and a refreshing haven for those escaping the summer heat, Hawana Salalah Hotels has announced exclusive offers for stays from August 24 to October 20, providing visitors with an unmissable opportunity to enjoy an exceptional vacation

**MUSCAT:** In the heart of Oman's Dhofar Governorate, specifically on the picturesque coast of Salalah, Hawana Salalah hotels – including Juweira Hotel, Fanar Hotel & Residences, Rotana Salalah Resort, and The Club by Fanar – are among the most prominent summer destinations attracting Omani, Gulf nationals and residents, offering a rare combination of luxurious accommodation, natural charm, and cool weather.

With the onset of the Khareef season, which transforms Salalah into a lush paradise and a refresh-



ing haven for those escaping the summer heat, Hawana Salalah Hotels has announced exclusive offers for stays from August 24 to October 20, providing visitors with an unmissable opportunity to enjoy an exceptional vacation. These offers are available for bookings made before August 15 and include all meal plans available at its hotels.

The basic offer includes a 20 per cent discount on the base rate, while members enjoy an additional 5 per cent discount, resulting in

a total savings of 25 per cent on the best room rates. This is in addition to offering a variety of accommodation options, upscale services, and recreational facilities suitable for families, couples, and even solo travellers.

Hawana Salalah offers more than just hotel accommodation; it allows its guests to immerse themselves in cultural experiences and natural adventures, ranging from lush green to rain-soaked mountains. These are experiences you do not want to miss!



LARGE-SIZE SUV

## Shine in bold and powerful Lexus LX600

**MUSCAT:** Make every experience extraordinary with a Lexus LX600, the bold, daring large-size SUV that is designed to enhance lifestyles. The LX600 surpasses all expectations in comfort with luxurious interiors, high-performance with its muscular appearance and captivating features. The SUV brings a new-paradigm of luxury for those who seek pure perfection.

Designed to impress and powered by a mighty 3.5L turbocharged 6-cylinder engine, the SUV delivers high performance with rugged capabilities at its core. Mated to a 10-speed automatic transmission, the Lexus LX600 is equipped with advanced safety features that include Active Height Control with Adaptive Variable Suspension,



Panoramic View Monitor, Multi-Terrain Mode with 4 Cameras, Blind Spot Monitor (BSM), for a balanced and smooth drive.

For an immersive driving experience, Inside the Lexus, it introduces the head-up display leather and wood wrapped steering wheel,

enabling better focus and clarity of the road ahead. The 25-Speaker Mark Levinson Audio system to lift the ride mood and the Kick Sensor for Hands-free backdoor opening when your hands are full. To make things more interesting, the built-in 11.6" Dual Rear Seat Entertainment Screens with 2 Headphones and heated/ventilated front and rear seats take comfort to the next level.

Moreover, the Lexus Safety Sense features the Pre-Collision System, Lane Departure Alert, Lane Tracing Assist, SRS Airbags for improved protection including Knee Airbags - Driver + Passenger, and a Tyre Pressure Warning System to thwart life-threatening situations. Every ride is a delight in the Lexus LX600.

FIVE-DAY INITIATIVE

## Zubair Corporation champions road safety through ROP Traffic Safety Exhibition

**MUSCAT:** The Zubair Corporation positively contributed to the Royal Oman Police's Traffic Awareness Exhibition, held from 30 July to 3 August at Salalah Gardens Mall. The five-day initiative, organised under the patronage of the Royal Oman Police, served as a vital platform for raising public awareness about road safety, responsible driving habits, and collaborative action towards ensuring safer roads in the Sultanate.

As part of the exhibition, The Zubair Corporation showcased its longstanding commitment to national safety efforts, engaging the public through informative content that underscored the importance of vigilance on the road. The timing of the event, aligning with the Khareef travel season, amplified its significance, with thousands of visitors gaining valuable insights into safe driving practices.

The Corporation's presence reflected its broader vision of promoting behavioural change through community engagement. By joining hands with government



entities, private organisations, and safety advocates, The Zubair Corporation contributed to a collective dialogue on improving traffic culture and fostering a safer road environment for all.

Rashid Al Hooti, Head of Corporate Affairs at The Zubair Corporation, said, "Safety is a shared

responsibility, and public engagement plays a crucial role in shaping a culture of accountability on our roads. At The Zubair Corporation, we believe that partnerships like these are essential to driving meaningful change. Our participation in this exhibition reaffirms our commitment to social respon-

sibility and the well-being of the communities we serve."

The event also exemplified the power of public-private collaboration, with The Zubair Corporation reinforcing its role as a socially responsible business entity committed to sustainable development and civic well-being.

RECOGNITION

## Meethaq Islamic Banking crowned Best Islamic Bank

**MUSCAT:** Reinforcing its leadership in Sharia-compliant banking and financial solutions across both retail and corporate customers, Meethaq Islamic Banking from Bank Muscat has been awarded as the "Best Islamic Bank in Oman 2025" title at the Euromoney Private Banking Awards. This accolade reflects Meethaq's significant role in offering innovative Sharia-compliant banking services and facilities tailored to the diverse needs of its customers.

On this occasion, Ali Ahmed Al Lawati, Assistant General Manager – Meethaq Corporate Banking, expressed his pride in the ongoing global recognition Meethaq continues to receive. He noted: "We are deeply honored by this recognition, which reflects Meethaq's pioneering role in the industry by offering comprehensive solutions that meet the varied requirements of customers. Meethaq has significantly contributed to reshaping the Islamic banking landscape in the Sultanate, evident in the trust and strong uptake from customers for the Meethaq's Sharia-compliant financial solutions, while maintaining a commitment to excellence and innovation. Meethaq will continue upholding its ongoing dedication to delivering distinguished and forward-thinking Islamic banking solutions aligned with customers' aspirations and financial goals."

Meethaq provides a full suite of Sharia-compliant banking products and financing solutions designed to serve the needs of individuals, SMEs, and corporate entities. All offerings are subject to the regulatory framework of the Central Bank of Oman and undergo thorough Sharia audit and supervision by Meethaq's Sharia Supervisory Board to ensure full compliance with Islamic jurisprudence. The Sharia-compliant offerings which Meethaq provides to its retail customers

include deposit products such as savings accounts, current accounts, children's savings accounts, and Meethaq's structured savings plans. On the financing offerings, Meethaq offers a range of Islamic finance facilities including personal finance, auto finance, home finance, and funding for travel, education, marriage, and personal purchases. For its SME and corporate customers, Meethaq provides a variety of commercial banking solutions including current accounts, project finance, short-term and long-term financing facilities, trade finance based on "Ijarah", and large-scale project financing.

Beyond product innovation, Meethaq has invested heavily in infrastructure and digital channels, operating the largest branch network in the Islamic banking sector in Oman, with 32 dedicated branches and over 50 dedicated ATMs/CDMs across the Sultanate of Oman, supplemented by access to Bank Muscat's wide network of 900 tough points (branches, service centers and digital channels), ensuring customers convenience and easy accessibility.

Reinforcing its pioneering role in developing Islamic capital markets, Meethaq has recently launched a sukuk programme for its individual and institutional customers, in addition to issuing the Meethaq Equity Fund to help them benefit from investments in the equity markets. Digital engagement is equally robust, with a rapidly growing base of customers using internet and mobile banking, and contactless debit and credit card services.

Meethaq's leadership has been repeatedly acknowledged by numerous regional and global accolades, including the Best Islamic Investment Bank Award from Islamic Finance News, Best Digital Islamic Bank and the Market Leadership Awards from Global Finance.





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