



INDUSTRIAL SECTOR LEADS OMAN'S ECONOMIC GROWTH

The industrial sector in the Sultanate of Oman has achieved a remarkable economic growth in the first quarter of 2024, positioning itself as a key driver for sustainable development and economic diversification under Oman Vision 2040. **>A5**



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OMAN STREAMLINES INVESTORS' JOURNEY



Oman rated one of world's best to do business

Oman's impressive standing is a testament to its commitment to Oman Vision 2040

MUSCAT Oman has been ranked 21st globally in the prestigious list of the World's Best Countries to Invest In or Do Business for 2024, according to a new report.

This recognition underscores Oman's strategic efforts to foster a business-friendly environment and highlights the initiatives that have positioned the country as a prime destination for international investment.

Oman's impressive standing is a testament to its commitment to Oman Vision 2040, which aims to diversify the national economy, re-

duce dependency on oil revenues, and create a sustainable, innovation-driven future.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) has been instrumental in driving these reforms, providing a solid framework for enhancing economic growth, promoting the private sector, and boosting investor confidence.

Through Invest Oman, the government's dedicated arm for large-scale investments, Oman continues to streamline the investor journey, offering a comprehensive

suite of services that guide investors from inquiry to project realization.

The report from CEOWORLD magazine highlights key metrics contributing to Oman's success. The country has an economic stability score of 92.12, and received commendable ratings for its government policies (92.36) and skilled labour force (92.75). These factors, coupled with Oman's institutional framework rating of 92.34, underscore its attractiveness for foreign investment and entrepreneurship.

In addition, Oman's infrastructure development—from free zones to special economic zones, such as Duqm and Sohar—further enhances its ability to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). These developments have bolstered trade across the region, making Oman a vital gateway for

international markets in the Gulf and beyond. The government's focus on free trade agreements with key markets in Asia and Europe continues to open new avenues for bilateral trade and investment.

Oman's recognition as one of the top investment destinations globally is also attributed to its proactive stance on digital transformation. The government has implemented initiatives that focus on enhancing technological readiness, including the promotion of tech-driven businesses and innovation hubs, aligning with global trends toward economic diversification and sustainability.

As Oman continues to rise in global rankings, its ability to adapt to shifting economic dynamics and provide innovative investment solutions will remain a key factor in maintaining and expanding its appeal to international investors.

Investment opportunities showcased in United States



NEW YORK: Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, and his accompanying delegation on Wednesday met with the officials of the United States Administration and Congress, as well as representatives of US companies specialised in energy, health, information technology and tourism sectors.

The two sides discussed ways to develop investment and trade partnerships between Oman and the United States. The Omani side showcased investment opportunities available in the country with the objective of realising the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

The two sides also looked into measures to make optimum use of the Oman-US free trade agreement (FTA).

During the visit, Al Yousef also met with Omani students studying in the states of New York, Washington and Arizona. His delegation toured a number of American cities.

On the sidelines of the visit, the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman to the United States of America



organised a reception at the Sultan Qaboos Cultural Centre in Washington. In a speech on the occasion, Al Yousef outlined the objectives of the visit and its desired outcomes.

For his part, the Vice President of the US Export-Import Bank spoke about the strong bonds between Oman and the United States. She expressed appreciation for Oman's efforts to enhance joint economic cooperation. The visiting delegation toured the Sultan Qaboos Cultural Centre where it was briefed about efforts to spotlight Omani culture and ancient history, as well as Omani heritage valuables collected by the Centre. **-ONA**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Palestine makes history in UN

NEW YORK: The 79th session of the UN General Assembly kicked off in New York with the presence of the representatives of Palestine, which have been given a seat in the General Assembly Hall next to the UN member states.

Palestine is not a full member of the 193 member UN body. The Palestinian Authority's envoy to the United Nations, Riyad Mansour, took his place on Tuesday afternoon at a table marked "State of Palestine" between Sri Lanka and Sudan. Palestine's Permanent Mission

GAZA DEATH TOLL

as of Sept 11, 2024

Deaths
41,084
Injured
95,029

to the UN posted a clip on social media on the intervention by Ambassador of Egypt and President of General Assembly confirming the new

seating of the State of Palestine.

The representative of Egypt raised a point of order to ask the President to confirm that the necessary arrangements have been made. "This is not merely a procedural matter. This is a historic moment for us," said Egyptian Ambassador Osama Mahmoud Abdelkhalek Mahmoud.

The UNGA President replied: "I have been informed that all arrangements have been made to have Palestine seated where it is supposed to sit." **-ANI**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Over 55,000 visit Daymaniyat Islands Reserve

1 More than 55,000 people visited the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve from the beginning of this year until the end of August. The nature reserve comprises nine islands off the coast of the wilayats of Seeb and Barka. **>A2**

OMAN

Nama to install over 400,000 water meters

2 Nama Water Services on Wednesday began implementing the second phase of the digital transition project for water meters in North Al Batinah Governorate. **>A3**

WORLD

Typhoon Yagi death toll rises to 141

3 A total of 141 people died and 59 others were missing after Typhoon Yagi caused landslides and floods in northern Vietnam, said Vietnamese local authorities. **>A7**



ALGERIAN CYCLIST WINS

Algerian cyclist Yassin Hamza from the Madar team claimed victory in the final stage of Salalah International Cycling Tour. Hamza covered 133 kms from Al Mughsayl to Darbat Falls in the fourth edition of the Salalah International Cycling Tour on Wednesday. Organised by Dhofar Municipality in collaboration with the Oman Cycling Federation and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, the event saw participation from 90 cyclists.



HOLIDAY NOTICE

There will be no edition of Times of Oman on Sunday, September 15, due to Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) birth anniversary.



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name of the Cyclone
in 2021?

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the group of
chemical elements
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"Salt producers".
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them.

Can you match wits
with the participants?



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Over 55,000 people visit picturesque Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve



This nature reserve has beautiful scenery due to the islands with physical features of limestone rocks and ancient coral reefs

Times News Service

BARKA: More than 55,000 people visited the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve from the beginning of this year until the end of August.

The nature reserves includes an archipelago of nine islands off the coast of the Wilayats of Seeb in the Governorate of Muscat and Barka in the Governorate of South Al Batinah.

It is distinguished by its nature and beautiful scenery due to the islands of limestone rocks and ancient coral reefs.

Eng Salem bin Saeed al Maskari, Director of the South Batinah Environment Department, said that the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve includes nine main islands, namely: (Al Dimaniya - Hayut - Qafsiya - Al Jabal Al Kabir - Al Ghorfa - Al Lomiya - Qasma - Awlad Lajoun and Lajoun), and its total area is 203 square kilometers,



including the land and the surrounding marine area.

He added to the Oman News Agency that the Environment Authority has allocated the islands of Al Jabal Al Kabir and Lajoun for overnight stay and camping for visitors from the beginning of November to the end of April only, while from the beginning of May to the end of October, landing is not permitted on any of the beaches of the islands of the reserve, in order to protect migratory birds whose nests are spread on the beaches

and flats of the islands, stressing that the reserve is an incubator for these birds and their young during the nesting season.

He said that during May, an underwater museum was opened near the reserve, which is the first of its kind in the Sultanate of Oman. It aims to rehabilitate and increase the areas of coral reefs and compensate for those lost due to natural and human impacts, and to create a new ecosystem that matches natural coral reefs. It is expected that this museum will

contribute to attracting many marine creatures of various sizes.

He pointed out that the museum is an innovative idea to establish an underwater military equipment museum and support eco-tourism by creating a distinctive and innovative tourist attraction for tourists and diving enthusiasts that supports tourism in the Sultanate of Oman in general, and reduces the density of visitors to the natural coral reef sites in the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve.

For his part, Hamoud bin

Khamis Al-Nairy, an environmental specialist and supervisor of the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve, said: "The Environment Authority issues an electronic permit for visitors to enter the reserve through the authority's portal, enter data and obtain the permit electronically, stressing that there are efforts to preserve the reserve, represented by enacting laws and legislation that would regulate the reserve and provide a supervisory cadre that works around the clock according to the prepared programme.

The environmental specialist said that the beaches of the Daymaniyat Islands are visited by two types of turtles: the sharp and the green, as the reserve is a safe haven for turtles, as they nest due to the calm atmosphere at the site.

The reserve is also visited by marine mammals such as whales, dolphins and whale sharks.

He added that the Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve is the natural habitat for a large group of wildlife species, including a diverse group of plants, up to 15 species on the land and a group of algae and marine plants in the marine part. There are also many different types of birds that take refuge in the reserve due to the availability of food and the shallow nature of the islands' waters.

He added that the islands are an important station for migratory birds such as the osprey and the peregrine falcon, and the island turns into a wonderful panorama when thousands of seabirds migrate during the breeding season.

Sea turtles also use the reserve as a nesting station and lay eggs there every year. In the marine part, we find a diversity of marine organisms and coral reefs, as the reserve contains a number of species of marine mammals and fish.

27TH SESSION

GCC Supreme Council holds meeting

MUSCAT: The Advisory Authority of the GCC Supreme Council held the 4th meeting of its 27th session in Muscat yesterday.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Mohammed Saleh Al Sada, Chairman of the Advisory Authority of the GCC Supreme Council during the current session.

The meeting discussed the project of draft reports to be filed by committees entrusted with studying the security of energy in the Gulf region (with



emphasis on technical alternatives), a strategy to protect GCC youth from the risks of drug addiction and ways to safeguard the growth of emerging markets and protect them from repercussions affecting the global economy.

The meeting reviewed the topics proposed for the 28th session, which will be submitted to the GCC Supreme Council's leaders at their upcoming summit in the State of Kuwait. -ONA

SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AT DUQM

Training programme held to boost employees' capabilities in attracting foreign investments

Times News Services

MUSCAT: The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) launched a training programme focused on attracting and developing strategic foreign direct investment (FDI).

The programme is being implemented by the Institutional Transformation Team at the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz), in cooperation with a world-renowned Irish consultancy specialising in this field.

The programme aims to achieve excellence in attracting investors to the Special Economic Zone at



Duqm by providing supportive facilities for investment attraction and post-investment care for investors.

The training focuses on several key issues, particularly the importance of FDI in economic growth,

creating job opportunities, and increasing the gross domestic product (GDP).

It also highlights the role of proactive strategies in attracting FDI. Additionally, the programme covers how to develop and build compelling value propositions for investors, methods and strategies to target investors, and how to manage current foreign investors with the goal of business expansion and maximising growth.

Emphasis is placed on ensuring the smooth and efficient provision of competitive and distinguished services to investors, ensuring their satisfaction, meeting their expectations, and supporting the

sustainability of their projects.

The programme includes the presentation of various statistics and indicators related to FDI projects globally, along with an overview of best international practices in attracting and localising foreign investors, as well as how to provide post-service care.

This initiative is part of the Institutional Transformation Program carried out by the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, aiming to activate the Authority's role in transferring knowledge and empowering its employees to attract more local and global investments.

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Nama to install over 400,000 water meters as part of digital campaign

The project’s second phase includes the installation of more than 115,000 meters in the governorate’s wilayats

SOHAR: Nama Water Services company on Wednesday began implementing the second phase of the digital transition project for water meters in North Al Batinah Governorate.

The project’s second phase includes the installation of more than 115,000 meters in the governorate’s wilayats.

This was unveiled at a meeting organized by Nama Water Services under the auspices of Mohamed Sulaiman Al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah. The project provides for the installation of more than 400,000 meters as part of the company’s plan to bolster the services it offers

to beneficiaries in the governorate.

The subscriber can choose between the two types of digital meters, prepaid (through the balance recharge system) or postpaid (through the billing system), without paying fees and free of charge.

During the meeting, the distinctive features of these meters were reviewed, as they provide continuous and daily readings, in addition to these meters with prepaid and postpaid facilities.

Reading the meters remotely facilitates the company’s issuance of electronic invoice, which improves the billing process by relying on real (not estimated) readings that reflect actual consumption.

This represents a shift in calculating the water consumption bill, which reaches the subscriber via e-mail or his account on the electronic services portal on the “Namaa Water Services” website, where subscribers’ data can be updated via the company’s electronic portal.

The installation of digital meters contributes to rationalising consumption, as the subscriber obtains consumption information.

The new system updates the amount of consumption every hour, which enables the subscriber to compare consumption and detect internal leakages, by alerting him through notifications, which allows for their rapid processing.

This will limit subscribers’ complaints regarding the high consumption bill. Digital meters help the company cut down water loss by calculating the amount of water distributed by the main meter for a specific area, as against the total volume of water received at home meters in that area. In the event of differences, leaks are identified and water loss points are detected and treated. **-OMA**

8TH ANNIVERSARY

OCEC attracted over 50,000 global delegates

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC) marked its 8th anniversary on 9 September 2024, celebrating its evolution into Oman’s leading events and exhibitions hub.

Over the past eight years, the OCEC has solidified its position as the Sultanate’s premier venue, hosting over 250 international and local events annually and welcoming thousands of delegates from around the world.

To commemorate this milestone, a series of staff activities were organised at the OCEC this week.

As a subsidiary of the OMRAN Group, OCEC has played a pivotal role in the development of the Madinat Al Irfan area.

With JW Marriott and Crowne Plaza OCEC hotels nearby, the venue has become a business-oriented complex, perfectly positioned for hosting major events, thanks to its proximity to the airport, world-class accommodation, and state-of-the-art facilities.

The OCEC has been a key player in Oman’s economic diversification, particularly in the business events sector.

Over the last eight years, it has attracted more than 50,000 international delegates to Oman, creating a platform for critical discussions on the country’s future.

Moreover, the OCEC has generated significant economic impact, driving investment and fostering growth across various business sectors.

Through its strong collaboration with OMRAN Group, the Ministry of Heritage & Tourism, the Oman Convention Bureau,

and other key governmental stakeholders, the OCEC remains committed to generating positive economic outcomes for Oman.

The OCEC’s impact extends to the business events industry itself, having created thousands of jobs over the past eight years. With a commitment to employing local talent, the OCEC has maintained an Omanisation rate of over 90 percent, focusing on providing opportunities for Omani graduates to develop their skills in this growing industry.

In addition, the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre has offered valuable work experience to over 500 interns in the past few years, preparing the next generation of professionals in the field of business events.

The venue has also prioritised the career development and long-term training of its staff, with many senior executives and managers participating in national training programmes to enhance their skills.

Reflecting on the OCEC’s journey, CEO Eng. Said Al Shanfari stated, “The OCEC is more than just a venue; it is a space where meaningful conversations about our country take place. Whether the topic is green hydrogen, technology, social care, or education, we facilitate actions and discussions between private and public stakeholders at both local and international levels. I am proud to work with a motivated and talented team, including many Omanis who are just starting out in the field.”

Looking ahead, the award-winning venue is poised for even greater achievements. Eng. Said Al Shanfari added, “This year, the OCEC received a regional award for its latest sustainable initiative—a solar rooftop panel project that will help offset our carbon emissions and provide greater incentives for event organisers to choose our green venue. In 2023, we were also recognised as one of the best venues in the Middle East, a testament to our ambition to position OCEC at the forefront of the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) industry and to promote Oman as a leading international destination.”

Innovation, digitalisation, and sustainability remain at the core of the OCEC’s mission, with a strong emphasis on working with local SMEs to drive economic growth.

Within just eight years, the OCEC has become a leading venue in the region, attracting high-profile events such as the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists World Congress in October 2024, among many other significant events planned for the Sultanate this year.

WEATHER UPDATE

Sweltering heat likely to continue in Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Temperature is expected to touch 47 degrees Celsius in the coming days in the Sultanate of Oman.

Oman Meteorology said in a statement that temperatures are expected to rise and last until Friday, September 13, 2024, ranging between the early forties (40-44) degrees Celsius on the coasts of the Sea of Oman and the mid-forties (44-47) degrees Celsius in the desert areas and west of the Al Hajar Mountains.

Al Sunaynah station in Al Buraimi Governorate has recorded the highest temperature during the last 24 hours in the Sultanate of Oman which was 46.1 degree Celsius followed by Ibri station in Al Dhahirah Governorate with 45.7 degree Celsius and then Bidiyyah station in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate with 45.4 degrees Celsius.

While Al Qabil station in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate and Al Buraimi station in Al Buraimi Governorate have recorded 45.1 degree Celsius for each and 45 degree Celsius in Nizwa station in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate.





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Industrial sector leads Oman’s GDP growth in 2024 first quarter

The industrial productivity increased from OMR871 million to OMR951 million in all industrial activities, representing 10% of the GDP at the fixed price

MUSCAT: The industrial sector has secured the highest growth in the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) during the first quarter of 2024 compared to other sectors to become one of the strongest pillars of economic diversification of Oman Vision 2040.

The latest statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) showed that the industrial sector achieved a growth rate of 9.2% during the first quarter of 2024 at the current price compared to the same period in 2023.

The industrial productivity also increased from OMR871 million to OMR951 million in all industrial activities, representing 10% of the GDP at the fixed price.

The basic petrochemical industries results increased by 6.4% from OMR317.8 million to OMR338.2 million.

Dr. Saleh bin Said Masan, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, said that the growth rate of the industrial sector is higher than the world growth.

The latest reports of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) showed that the world industrial productivity registered a moderate growth of 0.9% during the first quarter in 2024, despite the challenges faced by the global economy such as the increase in the rate of inflation, the fluctuation in prices of energy and the impacts of the



The growth rate of the industrial sector in Oman is higher than the world growth, according to MoCIIP

regional conflicts.

Expressing satisfaction over the qualitative shifts and the continued improvement in the industrial sector, Dr. Masan hailed the remarkable efforts accorded by industrialists and the various government establishments for development of the industrial

sector.

He also said that the Sultanate has achieved the 53rd place at the world level and 4th at the regional level in the competitive industrial performance index 2024, issued by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO). — OMA



FARM SECTOR

Women in Al Dhahirah play a vital role in rural economy



IBRI: Rural women in Al Dhahirah Governorate play a vital role in agricultural and commercial activities. They work on agricultural fields and keep livestock to supply the local market.

The head of the Rural Development Department at the General Directorate of Agricultural Wealth, said that the department provides necessary support to rural women through guidance and the provision of modern equipment and technologies to improve the quality of products and as well as facilitate coordination between rural women and financing agencies.

They are provided knowledge about modern methods of agricultural production for promising economic returns.

31 beneficiaries from the Wilayat of Ibri were supported by providing equipment, and training

programmes in the presence of officials and private institutions to support the activities and projects of rural women.

These partnerships include providing the funding for projects, facilitating access to local markets and providing various modern equipment.

The owner of the vegetable oil extraction project and one of the beneficiaries of the rural women support programmes, indicated that the support came at the right time, as she obtained the necessary equipment to extract oils from local plants such as sesame seeds, apricot seeds, mustard seeds, coconut seeds and almonds.

She explained that she now sells natural oil products in the local market, stressing that this project provided her with an opportunity to develop her skills and branch

out into producing various high-quality products.

She added that rural women participate in agricultural exhibitions at the governorate level to display and sell their agricultural products, which contributes to diversifying marketing channels to reach wider segments of consumers.

It is worth noting that rural women in Al Dhahirah Governorate have proven their ability to contribute to the local economy through their agricultural and livestock projects.

Many women have been able to achieve financial independence and improved their standard of living as a result of these efforts, which represent an important step towards enhancing the role of rural women in society and achieving sustainable development.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Forum highlights importance of financial literacy in schools

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Financial Culture Symposium, organised by the Ministry of Education, represented by the Khazna Project, kicked off start at Kempinski Al Mouj Hotel under the slogan “Towards School Students Awareness of Financial Culture Principles.”

The official opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr. Said bin Mohammed Al Saqri, Minister of Economy, in the presence of Dr. Madiha bint Ahmed Al Shaibaniyah, Minister of Education, and a number of Their Highnesses, excellencies, honourees, as well as the Directors-General of the Ministry’s General Diwan and the educational directorates in the governorates.

The symposium is held with wide participation of experts and specialists from international and Arab organisations, the Central Bank of Oman (CBO), banking sector institutions, and other relevant ministries and institutions, with the aim of highlighting the role of education in developing awareness of financial culture among school students, and benefiting from international and regional experiences that have adopted financial culture to support sustainable development in building a clear strategy for financial education in the Sultanate of Oman, in line with Oman Vision 2040, which stressed the need to focus on spreading awareness about financial culture among school students, and preparing a generation capable of keeping pace with current economic developments, and adapting to them in the future.

The ceremony began with the



Ministry’s speech delivered by Dr. Suleiman bin Abdullah Al-Jamoudi, Director-General of the Directorate-General of Curriculum Development, in which he stressed that the symposium comes as a continuation of the Ministry’s efforts to spread financial culture since the Ministerial Resolution No. (67/2023) was issued to establish a project to instill the principles of financial culture among school students (Khazna Project) in cooperation with banks operating in the Sultanate of Oman and under the umbrella of the CBO and related financial institutions.

The project aims to achieve many goals, including spreading awareness among school students in everything related to financial culture.

The attendees then watched a visual presentation on the Ministry’s efforts in financial culture, and a presentation of the “Financial Harvests” of the “Maliyat”

Academy programme is implemented by the project in cooperation with Bank Muscat.

The keynote speaker of the symposium, Andreas Schleicher, Director of Learning and Skills at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), presented a working

paper in which he highlighted the importance of financial culture, reviewing the results of the international study to evaluate student outcomes in the (PISA Programme), which measures the extent of students’ knowledge of financial basics. The paper discussed the statistical analyses in detail, explaining the importance of financial culture among students, and stressed that financial skills are not an option, but rather a necessity that students need to achieve their successes in life.

Majid bin Said Al Bahri, Undersecretary of the Ministry for Administrative and Financial Affairs, stressed on the importance of implementing the symposium, which stems from the importance of instilling the principles of financial culture among school students, and the Ministry of Education’s keenness to raise awareness of it as one of the requirements of sustainable development in its various social and economic aspects; which is followed by reaching the highest level of productive, cultural and educational efficiency in school education, and in line with Oman Vision 2040, which stressed the need to focus on spreading awareness about financial culture among school students.

OMAN/WORLD

VIENNA

Oman signs technical pact with IAEA

VIENNA: The Sultanate of Oman and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) signed in Vienna the Technical Cooperation Framework document for the period 2024-2029.

The cooperation framework, the third document signed by Oman, comprises cooperation programmes in the fields of radiation safety, agriculture, food safety, hu-

man health, water resources, environment and cultural heritage. The step reflects keenness to meet the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. The document was signed by Yousef Ahmed Al Jabri, Permanent Representative of Oman to the International Atomic Energy Agency, and Hua Liu, Deputy Director General of the IAEA Technical Cooperation. -ONA



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Kamala Harris and Donald Trump clash over issues on inflation, tax

Amid discontent in the US over the state of the economy, both candidates dished out blame for inflation and outlined some of their core economic policies

WASHINGTON DC: If anyone was in doubt about the key issue in the US presidential election, the opening 15 minutes of Tuesday night's debate between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris laid it bare.

Amid discontent in the US over the state of the economy, both candidates dished out blame for inflation and outlined some of their core economic policies.

Harris opened the debate by describing plans to "build up the middle class", something she repeatedly returned to. She revisited pledges she has signaled in her campaign, such as aid and tax relief for home buyers, childcare and small businesses.

Within seconds of speaking, Trump mentioned China, lauding the tariffs he leveled against Beijing during his first term and vowing to beef them up if re-elected.



He fiercely attacked the Biden administration for its economic record. "We've had a terrible economy," he said, claiming the inflation crisis was the "worst ever" in the country's history.

Inflation — the central issue? Trump attempted to tap into possible voter nostalgia for the pre-Covid economy of 2019, when he was in office. "I created one of the greatest economies in the history of our country and we're going to do it again," he boasted.

However, Harris countered Trump's accusations that the Biden administration was to blame for the inflation crisis that struck much of the developed world in 2021 and 2022. "What we have done is clean up Donald

Trump's mess," she said.

The state of the US economy and which candidate voters believe is better equipped to manage it is a crucial question in the 2024 election.

Polls show that a clear majority of Americans are unhappy with the economy; inflation in particular remains a dominant theme. A YouGov/The Economist poll in July found that the issue of price rises is by far the most important for US voters.

Inflation has been falling, and while it has been difficult to tame in 2024, some experts believe the issue remains potent due to the shock of its dramatic rise in the aftermath of the pandemic.

"It's one of these odd issues where I think public opinion has

not caught up with economic reality," William Reinsch from the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington told DW ahead of the debate.

"The public is very concerned about inflation. All the indicators suggest that inflation is declining and has declined significantly. Not all prices, and certainly not all food prices, have gone down. But the public still seems to be in the mode of 'this is all terrible,' when objectively it isn't."

Adam Posen, president of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, says while "in some cosmic sense" it may be unfair that Harris is held responsible for past inflation, it's only to be expected. "If you're a president or you're part of the administration, you're

always going to be judged by what the inflation and growth overall conditions are," he told DW.

Tax and trade

Posen says there are five key areas where the candidates' economic differences matter most — namely on taxation, tariffs, migration, regulation and the role of the Federal Reserve.

While Harris has pledged tax cuts for the middle class, Trump's tax cut promises are to extend the cuts he made for businesses when he was president in 2017.

"Harris seems to be much more focused on policies that will help the poor and the middle class," says Reinsch. "Trump's tax credits primarily benefit the wealthy."

Trump mentioned China several times during the debate. He has vowed to increase the tariffs introduced in his first term significantly but economists say those plans would see costs passed on to consumers.

"If Trump does what he says he wants to do and further restricts trade with China, it will be inflationary, it will be bad for productivity growth, it will distort all kinds of things and lead to blowback from around the world," says Posen.

However, the Biden administration largely carried on with Trump's protectionist trade policy and Harris, if elected, is likely to maintain existing tariffs.

"If Harris leaves in place the tariffs that already exist, which she would do unfortunately, and at least draws the line at no more general tariffs and limits it to tariffs on China, the damage is a fraction of what Trump would

do," says Posen.

Immigration

On the topic of immigration, which Trump repeatedly returned to, Posen says there is a huge difference in how the candidates' approach would impact the economy.

He says Trump's plans to deport millions of migrants would be "stagflationary for the US" as the country's economy is so dependent on foreign labor. "It would probably cause a recession in select sectors of manufacturing, agriculture, hospitality, and retail, residential construction, while raising inflation significantly," he said.

While regulation did not feature heavily in the debate, Posen says Trump's plans to heavily deregulate sectors such as antitrust, compared with Harris' plans to intervene on price controls, point to sharp policy differences.

On the Federal Reserve, Posen says Trump has made clear that he would put more pressure on the US central bank to take certain actions on the dollar or on interest rates, whereas Harris has spoken of the importance of respecting the Federal Reserve's independence.

Both Reinsch and Posen say that the clearest evidence of the difference between the two candidates' visions for the economy can be seen in how their policies would impact the US budget deficit.

While last night's debate moved on to issues such as abortion, the Israel-Hamas war and the war in Ukraine, the importance both candidates — Trump in particular — placed on the economy was clear. -DW

AVIATION MINISTER

India will have three international aviation hubs in next 10 years

NEW DELHI: Indian Union Minister for Communications and Development Jyotiraditya Scindia expressed confidence that India is on track to establish at least three international business hubs within the next decade, underscoring India's rapid growth across key sectors.

As Aviation Minister in Modi 2.0, Scindia emphasised, "I am confident that in the next decade, you will see not one international hub in India, but at least three international hubs being created in India."

Scindia, alongside Jitin Prasada, Minister of State for Commerce, Industry, Electronics, and IT, addressed the 51st National Management Convention on the theme "India's Ascent: Navigating Global Uncertainty" in New Delhi, on Wednesday.

159 airports

Scindia said, "India today is the second largest producer of mobile phones in the world. We have tripled the number of kilometres that we build of highways per day from 11 to 33 kilometres. In my past portfolio, going from 74 airports in India in 2014 to 159 airports at the last count in 2024."

He added, "The fact that we have Delhi today as the second largest capacity airport in the world at 109 million. We need to move the international business hubs for air traffic from our eastern and western neighbours back into India."

In terms of social development, Scindia pointed out India's successful poverty alleviation efforts, stating, "When you look at social development, the fact that we have



raised 25 crore of our people, our brothers and sisters, from poverty. Public health, what could not have been dreamt of before."

He added, "Under the Ayushman Kaur Yojana, 28 and a half crore people today have health insurance cover of up to five lakh rupees per annum. Something that we could not comprehend."

Uplifting women through the Ujjwala Yojana has also been a priority, with 10 crore women receiving free LPG connections, improving household energy access.

He said, "10 crores of our sisters and mothers who are covered under Ujjwala Yojana. And all of this has not happened in 75 years. All of this in the last one decade of India's progress. If you look at the number of broadband users in our country, from 60 million, we have gone to 940 million."

Scindia also showcased the digital revolution in India, noting, "Internet connectivity growing from 25 crore to 94 crore. At the same time, the cost of voice dropping from 50 paise to 3 paise per minute today. The cost of data per GB dropping from 280 rupees to 12.8 rupees today, a 95 per cent drop in cost." -ANI

INTERIOR MINISTER

Germany risks European Union 'chain reaction' with its new border checks

BRUSSELS: Theoretically, seamless internal borders and unhindered travel are what the European Union's Schengen Area is all about. That is, unless you're Germany's centre-left federal coalition government, shaken by two historic state election results for the far right and a terrorist stabbing by a suspected failed asylum seeker.

"Until we achieve stronger border protection with the joint European asylum system, we must further protect our national borders," Interior Minister Nancy Faeser of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) said on Monday in the German capital.

According to Faeser, stricter border rules would allow for a "massive step-up in rejections" of asylum seekers and help deal with terrorism and serious cross-border crime.

The announcement comes after weeks of intense debate sparked by a knife attack that killed three people in Solingen, a town just north of Düsseldorf in western Germany. The suspect is a 26-year-old Syrian man due for deportation and with links to the so-called "Islamic State" group, which claimed responsibility for the attack.

Less than a week after the attack, the far-right, anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) party made big gains in state elections in eastern Germany, finishing first in Turingian and second in Saxony. The results have put pressure on Chancellor Olaf Scholz's embattled coalition government as more Germans want the country to get tougher on immigration and border controls.



What exactly is Germany planning?

As of next Monday, Germany will introduce more systematic land border checks for six months on people arriving by bus, train or car from Schengen zone neighbours Belgium, France, Denmark, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

The country introduced similar controls in October 2023 on its borders with Poland, the Czech Republic and non-EU country Switzerland, and controls have been in place much longer at its Austrian border. Those measures have seen more than 30,000 people turned away since, according to the Interior Ministry.

What's the big deal for Germany's neighbours?

Bordered by nine countries, Germany is at the geographic and economic heart of the EU. Travelers from those countries will now be subjected to increased vigilance and potentially time-consuming checks, which could snarl traffic at borders, slow transit and even affect the economy. According to the German Federal Employ-

ment Agency, some 240,000 people from neighbouring countries commute into the country for work.

On Tuesday, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk slammed the announcement as "unacceptable" and said his government would call urgent consultations with other affected countries.

"What Poland needs is not an increase in controls at our border but greater involvement of countries such as Germany in guarding and securing the EU's external borders," Tusk said in comments reported by the German news agency DPA.

There is also the question of what happens to people turned away from German borders. On Monday, Austria's conservative interior minister, Gerhard Karner, vowed that his country would not take in any rejected asylum seekers or migrants.

"There's no room for negotiation here. It's the law. I have therefore instructed the director of the Federal Police not to carry out any transfers," Karner told Bild, a German tabloid.

What does it mean for people seeking protection in Germany?

The German government's intention is to turn more people away and reduce irregular migration. According to Alberto-Horst Neidhardt of the European Policy Center think tank, the result could be a backlog of people stranded as Germany refuses to take people in and neighbours refuse to take them back.

"Chaotic scenes of camps could come to mark some of the most [congested] entry points," Neidhardt told DW.

However, the EU migration policy expert didn't think that was very likely. "I doubt that Germany has sufficient capacity and well-trained border forces to efficiently guard all its land borders."

A more realistic concern, Neidhardt warned, is that the move could set off a "chain reaction, with countries such as France or the Netherlands where coalition partners were elected on anti-immigration platform following suit." -DW

Humanitarian operations become more difficult to carry out in Gaza

The increased violence is ‘choking WFP’s efforts to prevent famine in Gaza’, where half a million people are in catastrophic and famine-like conditions

GAZA: Regional Director for the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe at the World Food Programme (WFP) Corinne Fleischer stressed that humanitarian operations have become ever more difficult to carry out in Gaza. In a press conference held in New York, Fleischer said that the increased violence is “choking our efforts to prevent famine in Gaza”, where half a million people are in catastrophic and famine-like con-



ditions. Aid workers spend “endless hours” waiting for movement authorisations, Fleischer said, pointing out that roads are already destroyed, and the upcoming winter season will make them even more impassable. She stated that some two million Palestinians are crammed into ever-decreasing space. Fleis-

cher said that since she left Gaza, humanitarians have seen more Israeli evacuation orders and the massive deterioration of the security environment, which have affected their activities. “WFP lost access to its third warehouse and last operational warehouse in Gaza in the Middle Area under evacuation order. We

lost five WFP-supported community kitchens that had to be evacuated, and we lost close to 20 distribution points across the Strip,” she said. Fleischer appealed for more crossing points, streamlined operations so humanitarians can carry out their tasks, and the restoration of law and order so that they can

safely reach people in need. “And we also need cash to come back to Gaza so that people can start buying again in the shops,” she said. Ending Israeli aggression must be gateway for just settlement of Palestinian issue

Ending Israeli aggression must be gateway for just settlement of Palestinian issue Rabat: Members of the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC) underlined that ending the Israeli aggression on the Palestinian people must be an entryway to reaching a final and just settlement of the Palestinian issue. In the “Rabat Declaration” issued at the conclusion of the 52nd Meeting of the PUIC Executive Committee, the participants denounced the brutal killings carried out by the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, as well as in the West Bank. They also strongly condemned the practices of extremist settlers who tamper with the property of the Palestinian citizens in the West Bank. The Rabat Declaration called on the international community, especially the influential powers

in the international resolution and the United Nations, to work to stop the aggression immediately, lift the siege on the Palestinian territories, enable the residents of Gaza to obtain food and medicine, and provide international protection for the Palestinian people. It also urged action by multi-lateral parliamentary organisations and national parliaments in various world countries to force the Israeli occupation to stop its aggression against the Palestinian people, and to immediately exchange captives between the two parties; warning against any infringement on the status quo in Jerusalem.

South Africa is set to submit evidence proving that Israel is committing crime of genocide in Gaza South Africa has announced its intention to submit a memorandum to the International Court of Justice next month, including evidence proving that Israel is committing the “crime of genocide” in Palestine. It said in a statement published on its website last night, “South Africa will submit its memorandum to the International Court of Justice next month.” — Agencies

BILATERAL RELATIONS

India, Germany discuss Ukraine, Gaza, Indo-Pacific region

BERLIN: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, who is in Germany on the second leg of a three-nation tour, met with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock in Berlin on Tuesday and exchanged views on Ukraine, Gaza and the Indo-Pacific region. Jaishankar shared some pictures on X of his meeting with Baerbock and stated that he looks forward to welcoming her in India for the 7th Intergovernmental Consultations. “Held wide-ranging discussions with FM @ABaerbock in Berlin today. Took stock of India - Germany Strategic Partnership, with a focus on trade and investment, green & sustainable development, skilled workers’ mobility, technology and defence



& security. Exchanged views on Ukraine, Gaza and the Indo - Pacific region. Look forward to welcoming her in India for the 7th Intergovernmental Consultations,” EAM said on X. During his press address alongside the meeting on Tuesday, Jaishankar stated, “We discussed PM

Modi’s recent visit to Ukraine. We talked about the situation in West Asia/Middle East, especially the Gaza conflict and its ramifications.” “I touched briefly on our cooperation with the European Union. With the incoming Commission, we hope to move faster on the

Free Trade Agreement, and other agreements and we count on Germany’s support for that. Also, we would like to hold an early meeting of the Trade and Technology Council,” he added. Further, Jaishankar highlighted India-Germany’s increased interactions and joint exercises, citing both nations’ first-ever air exercises this year. “Our interactions in defence and security have also increased. We held the first-ever air exercises this year. And we hope to welcome your naval ships in Goa next month. Our policy and other exchanges have been mutually beneficial. And we would like to explore how our defence industries can cooperate more closely,” said Jaishankar.

Highlighting PM Modi’s 100-day agenda, Jaishankar stated that India has included creating 12 new industrial zones across the country as part of its 100-day agenda. “Now, about our bilateral relationship, again let me revert to the 100-day agenda. At home, that has included a decision to create 12 new industrial zones across the country, initiate a much bigger skilling programme, and expand our logistics infrastructure. There is a strong focus on new and emerging technologies, including semiconductors, electric mobility, renewables, etc. We believe that this can constitute new opportunities for India-Germany cooperation.” Jaishankar said during his address in Berlin. — ANI

Bridge collapses into Elbe river

DRESDEN: A piece of the Carola Bridge in the inner city of Dresden collapsed early in the morning on Wednesday, local authorities reported. The bridge is one of four crossing the Elbe river in downtown Dresden and the incident is likely to cause major traffic chaos in the eastern German city. City officials said that due to the early hour, no one had been on the bridge and thus no one was hurt in the collapse, but that both car and ship traffic on the key waterway would have to be stopped for an undetermined amount of time. Two Dresden tram lines that also used the bridge will be running a reduced service, they added. — DW

WEATHER AUTHORITIES

Death toll tops 150 after Typhoon Yagi hits Vietnam

HANOI: Thousands of people were evacuated from Vietnam’s capital, Hanoi, on Wednesday as the death toll from Typhoon Yagi passed 150. Weather authorities said Hanoi’s Red River had reached its highest level in 20 years, threatening residents along the swollen banks. “We are bringing them to public buildings turned into temporary shelters or they can stay with relatives. There has been so much rain and the water is rising quickly,” a Hanoi police officer told the AFP news agency. Yagi also caused a landslide that engulfed the remote mountain village of Lang Nu in Lao Cai province, state media reported on Wednesday. The landslide, which occurred on Tuesday, killed at least 22 people in the village that was home to around 35 families. “Authorities are mobilizing forces to approach the landslide area to continue the search for survivors,” district party chief Hoang Quoc Bao said. The government estimated around 140 people were still missing nationwide.

Floods across parts of Southeast Asia Typhoon Yagi also brought torrential rains and floods to areas of northern Thailand, Laos and Myanmar. Damage was also reported in China. At least two people were killed in Thailand and hundreds more were left stranded across two provinces. Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra said around 9,000 households had been impacted. “Water currents are still strong,” she told reporters. “All agencies are prepared and when the current eases, they will go in immediately.” — DW



SPORTS

Sri Lanka players rise in ICC's Test Rankings

Sri Lanka produced their first Test win over England away from home in the third Test in England

NEW DELHI [INDIA]: Six Sri Lankan players have obtained new career-high ratings on the latest ICC Men's Test Rankings following their victory over England in the third Test match at The Oval.

Sri Lanka produced their first Test win over England away from home in the third Test of their recently-completed series, with the likes of skipper Dhananajaya de Silva, middle-order performer Kamindu Mendis and opener Pathum Nissanka leading the way with the bat for the island nation. It was De Silva who top-scored for Sri Lanka in the first innings of the Test with a stylish 69 and that helped the right-hander obtain a new career-best rating and gain three places to move to 13th overall on the Test rankings for batters to now be the leading player on the list from his team. Mendis and Nissanka also found their new career-best ratings on the list for Test batters, with the former gaining six places to im-



prove to 19th overall following a half-century of his own against England and the latter jumping a whopping 42 spots to 39th after an innings of 64 and 127*. England's Joe Root holds on to his spot as the No. 1 ranked Test batter despite scores of just 13 and 12 at The Oval, although the right-hander saw his rating fall from 922 rating points to 899 and allows the likes of New Zealand duo Kane Williamson and Daryl Mitchell and Australia's Steve Smith to draw closer. It's a similar story for England's Harry Brook, with the right-hander falling seven places to 12th after scores of 19 and three against Sri Lanka.

It's not all bad news for England though, with stand-in skipper Ollie Pope gaining seven places and improving to equal 27th following a century in the first innings against Sri Lanka and keeper Jamie Smith jumps six spots to equal 30th after a quickfire half-century in the second innings. There's more gains and further career-best ratings for a trio of Sri Lanka players on the latest Test bowler rankings, with Vishwa Fernando leading the way by gaining 13 spots to move to equal 31st following five wickets during the Test against England. Teammates Lahiru Kumara (up 10 runs to 32nd) and Milan Rathnayake (up 26 spots to equal 84th)

also make some ground, while England quick Olly Stone (up 13 places to 74th) improves on the back of his three scalps in the first innings of the Test. There is also some movement on the latest T20I rankings following Australia's series sweep over Scotland, with skipper Mitch Marsh (up two spots to equal 17th) and keeper Josh Inglis (up 28 places to 23rd) the biggest eye-catchers as they improve up the list for T20I batters. Spinner Adam Zampa gains one place to move to seventh on the T20I rankings for bowlers, while Scotland will be buoyed by the vast improvement from Bradley Currie after he gained 20 spots to improve to 49th on the same list. **-ANI**

Bangladesh batter Litton Das wary of India's SG balls ahead of Test series

NEW DELHI : Bangladesh batter Litton Das revealed that the team is trying to get used to the SG balls and the way they behave ahead of their upcoming two-match Test series against India. Looking to build on their recent historic Test success in Pakistan, Bangladesh will engage in a two-match red-ball series against India, kicking off next week in Chennai. It will be a different challenge for Bangladesh as they break one norm. Bangladesh played with Kookaburra ball in their home internationals and their recently concluded Test series against Pakistan. However, India use an SG ball, which is very different from Kookaburra and brings a different set of challenges with it. One of the prominent differences between the two is the seam. SG ball has a prominent seam, but the same can't be said for Kookaburra. "The ball will be a different one in India. It is a little harder to play against the SG ball. The Kookaburra ball is easier to play when it gets old. It is the opposite with the SG ball. It is harder to get away against the old ball when it's the SG," Litton said, as quoted from ESPNcricinfo. In Bangladesh's first Test series whitewash over Pakistan, the 29-year-old batter played a crucial role in the second match. He rescued Bangladesh after the visitors were reduced to 26/6 in the first inning. Litton



(138) forged a 165-run partnership with Mehidy Hasan Miraz to pull Bangladesh out of a peculiar situation. He pointed out the need to move forward from their past laurels against Pakistan and focus on what lies ahead of the team. "We played good cricket against Pakistan, but it is already in the past. It is important for us to look forward. We will need your (media's) help. It would be helpful if you don't talk about the Pakistan series. As a player, it is already in the past for me," Litton added. The opening Test will begin in Chennai on September 19, and the second Test will be played in Kanpur from September 27. **-ANI**

MEETING

OOC Board of Directors reviews letter received from Olympic Council of Asia



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Board of Directors of Oman Olympic Committee (OOC) held the 3rd meeting this year on Wednesday. Meeting was headed by Khalid bin Mohammed Al Zubair, OOC Chairman, where a number of items on the agenda during the next stage were discussed; including the approval of the minutes of the 2nd Board of Directors meeting held on July 21, 2024, reviewing the decisions and recommendations and latest developments in the draft amendments to the OOC statute. The attendees also reviewed the letter received from the Olympic Council of Asia regarding the cancellation of the 6th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, which were supposed to be held in Thailand from November 21 to 30, 2024. The latest developments in

the OOC Museum project were also reviewed, which aims to document the history of Olympic sports in Oman, highlight the achievements of Omani athletes in various sports events, and provide an educational and interactive experience for visitors. It was noted that the museum is proceeding according to the planned schedule, with an expected opening by the end of this year. The letter received from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth regarding the approved financial allocation for international participations for the current year was also reviewed and its contents were taken into account, and the auditor's report for the second quarter of this year was approved. The meeting concluded with a review of the reports and letters received and a discussion of the topics included in the item.

BOWLING COACH



He has pace, swing, ability to move ball both ways: Aaqib Javed

LONDON : Sri Lankan bowling coach Aaqib Javed expressed that pacer Asitha Fernando has potential to be the "greatest-ever fast bowler" for his country following his heroics on the tour to England. Though Sri Lanka offered its moments of fight and resilience, they lost the three-match Test series to England 2-1, but not without handing the hosts a painful eight-run loss at The Oval on Monday, their first-ever to the Island nation in 10 years at home and just fourth against them at home. Asitha was one of the brightest spots for Sri Lanka in the series, ending as the leading wicket-taker with 17 scalps in six innings across three matches at an average of 24.64 and an economy rate of 4.23, with the best bowling figures of 5/102. **-ANI**

MOQI

Pakistan register 2-1 win

MOQI: Pakistan played valiantly to register their first victory in the Asian Champions Trophy by beating Japan 2-1 at the Moqi Hockey Training Base in Hulun Buir on Wednesday. Goals were scored by Ahmad Nadeem (10') and Sufyan Khan (21') while Raiki Fujishima (28') scored the lone goal for Japan. With this win, Pakistan is placed second in the pool standings with five points behind India on the top. Opening quarter witnessed Pakistan's intent to stay ahead of Japan in this game. Though they have remained unbeaten in the tournament so far with 2-2 draw against Malaysia and 2-2 draw against Korea, they needed a win to stay in contention for the title. The strikers put Pakistan's intent on display with three early forays into the striking circle but could not put it past the Japanese goalie Takumi Kitagawa. Meanwhile, they did well to deny Japan their first big opportunity through a PC in the sixth minute with a good video referral. After a couple of early attempts, Pakistan was finally able to draw first blood with a brilliant field goal by Ahmad Nadeem. It was Ghazanfar Ali who set up the attack by assisting in-form Hannan Shahid who played a clever tackle in the top of the circle to beat Japanese defenders and assist the Nadeem. They built on the momentum in the second quarter to extend the



lead to 2-0 when they earned a PC in the 21st minute. Sufyan Khan was on target, picked up the injection well to drive it past Japan's goalie Yosei Oba. Behind two goals, Japan had to make amends for a poor start. They tried to hold on to the ball possession and create chances in Pakistan's circle but could not beat their defence. However, an infringement by a Pakistani defender gave away a PC in the 27th minute of the match. Though Japan messed up the execution in their first attempt, another foot foul in the following minute saw them being awarded another PC. This time, they made no mistake in execution, with their Captain Raiki Fujishima driving the ball past Pakistan's goalkeeper Ishtiaq Abdullah Khan. Following the half-time break, both teams shifted gears as they

pushed for goals. While Pakistan made as many as seven circle entries, Japan made six. Only two minutes into the third quarter, a good referral for back stick saw Japan win a PC but poor execution denied them a goal. Meanwhile, Pakistan too created four PCs in this quarter but could not convert any. Pakistan's defence was put to test in the final quarter with Japan winning as many as 12 PCs. They made desperate attempts to find an equaliser but Pakistan held their nerves, defended with all their might. Their goalie Abdullah Khan was also up to the task, padded away a couple of PCs to keep his team in the lead. The last six minutes remained tense, with Japan dominating the ball possession but Pakistan fought hard to seal the match with three points. **-ANI**

ASIAN CHAMPIONS TROPHY

India crush Malaysia 8-1 in Asian Championship Trophy

MOQI [CHINA]: Rajkumar Pal's sensational hat-trick helped the Indian Men's Hockey Team beat Malaysia comprehensively by an 8-1 margin in their third match of the Asian Champions Trophy in Moqi, China, on Wednesday. Besides Rajkumar Pal (3', 25', 33'), Arajjeet Singh Hundal (6', 39') Jugraj Singh (7'), Captain Harmanpreet Singh (22') and Uttam Singh (40') also contributed to India's third consecutive win of the tournament. With this win, they have consolidated their lead at the top of the points table, with nine points in three matches. Meanwhile, for Malaysia, Akhimullah Anuar (34') scored the lone goal. Riding high on momentum after back-to-back wins, India started the game aggressively. They put Malaysia on the back foot in no time, as they scored as many as three goals in the opening seven

minutes of the match. The first goal came from Rajkumar Pal (3'), who showcased remarkable stickwork. The second was scored by Arajjeet Singh Hundal (6'), who found the top corner from the far post, shooting past the left shoulder of the Malaysian goalie, while the third goal came through Jugraj Singh's powerful drag-flick during a penalty corner routine in the next minute of the opening quarter. Malaysia, on the other hand, took time to settle in. They survived multiple penalty corners in the following minutes of the opening quarter and began the next quarter on a positive note. They earned their first penalty corner of the match in the 18th minute, but Suraj Karkera, who was under the bar, made an easy save. India launched an immediate counterattack and earned yet another pen-



alty corner, but the Malaysian first rusher averted the danger. India continued to make attacking forays into the Malaysian half. They earned a series of penalty corners, with the last one being converted by Captain Harmanpreet Singh, making it 4-0 by the

22nd minute. Rajkumar added a second goal to his name in the 25th minute, finding the back of the net on a rebound off the Malaysian goalie after a shot taken by Uttam Singh inside the circle. While Malaysia made errors in defence, India were clinical

in their attack, thus ending the first half with a dominant 5-0 lead. The third quarter continued in a similar fashion, with the Indian team maintaining control of the game through relentless attacks. Rajkumar went on to complete his hat-trick as he scored on a rebound off Malaysian goalkeeper Adrian, who had blocked Vivek Sagar Prasad's initial shot in an open play. Meanwhile, Malaysia sneaked into India's circle and pulled a goal back through Akhimullah Anuar (34') in the next minute. However, India went on to add two more goals to their tally as Hundal scored his second goal in the 39th minute, while Uttam slotted the ball home after a chaotic penalty corner routine in the 40th minute, ending the third quarter with a massive 8-1 scoreline. It was a quiet final quarter as

India slowed their tempo, and Malaysia could not capitalise on the opportunity. With about six seconds remaining, India requested a video referral for a penalty corner but was unsuccessful, thus, no further goals were scored in the final quarter. Expressing delight over India's third consecutive win, Hero of the Match, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, said, "We want to go all through in every game, we have to win every game, that is what we plan in team meetings. We are here to win. Personally, the last two games were not up to mark, but I am really happy that I scored today. I am getting my confidence back day by day, and I will do much better for India in the upcoming games." India will take on Korea in their fourth match of the tournament on Thursday, 12th September 2024 at 1315 hrs IST. **-ANI**

OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by November 2024 reaching \$70.85, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 99 cents from the price of Tuesday, which was \$71.84. - **ONA**

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,724.76 points, down by 0.5% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.64% at 431.99 points. Voltamp Energy, up 5.56%, was the top gainer while Construction Materials, down 6.67%, was the top loser.

OQ reviews challenges, risks in energy sector

The seminar, organised in collaboration with the National Centre for Emergency Management, focuses on major incidents faced by the energy sector in Oman



MUSCAT: OQ, the integrated global energy group, organised a seminar on emergency management in collaboration with the National Centre for Emergency Management. The event was attended by representatives from various sectors of the national system, including specialists in emergency management from

different institutions. This initiative aligns with OQ's commitment to health, safety, security, and the environment, which are pivotal strategies in its investments, operations, and facilities. OQ acknowledges the critical role of the oil and gas sector in the national economy and aims to strengthen national efforts by addressing risk challenges, prevention methods, and response strategies. Eng. Ali Mohamed Al Lawati,

Chief Executive Officer of People, Technology, and Culture at OQ, delivered a keynote address, stating: "This seminar, organised in collaboration with the National Centre for Emergency Management, focuses on major incidents faced by the energy sector in Oman. It is of great importance for enhancing preparedness and response to emergencies, and for improving coordination and planning with the National Centre for Emergency

Management and other agencies." He further explained that the seminar aims to achieve several objectives, including evaluating risks in the energy sector, studying major incidents, and developing joint coordination mechanisms with national sectors for emergency management. It also seeks to support the business continuity of critical energy sector operations. The seminar's first session covered the assessment and manage-

ment of energy sector risks, integration in emergency management between the national system and the energy sector, and emergency management strategies specific to the energy sector. The second session highlighted the role of medical response in handling injuries in the oil and gas sector, the handling of hazardous materials in oil and gas incidents and the importance of business continuity in the energy sector. - **ONA**

SEMICON INDIA 2024

India sets \$500 billion target for electronic industry by 2030

GREATER NOIDA (UTTAR PRADESH): Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set an ambitious \$500 billion target for the country's electronics sector. At present, the electronics manufacturing sector is estimated to be about \$150 billion, growing at a rapid pace over the past decade. "Look at how far we have come. Today, India's electronics sector is worth more than \$150 billion. And now our target is even bigger. By the end of this decade, we want to take our electronics sector to \$500 billion. This will create about 6 million or 60 lakh jobs for the youth of India," PM Modi said on Wednesday, addressing the inaugural session of three-day 'Semicon India 2024' event in Greater Noida. "Our goal is that 100 per cent of electronic manufacturing should happen in India. India will make semiconductor chips and the finished product too," PM Modi added. The three-day conference will showcase India's semiconductor strategy and policy which envisions making India a global hub for semiconductors. - **ANI**

INTEGRATED APPROACH

Oman Flour Mills enhances sustainability strategies and expands its production

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Flour Mills Company (OFM) focuses on enhancing sustainability practices in its production operations, to ensure meeting local and international demand in an environmentally responsible manner, while OFM adopts an integrated approach that includes effective management of natural resources, reducing the carbon footprint, and reducing waste as sustainability is an essential part of the company's strategy. Meanwhile, OFM relies on advanced technologies in water and energy management, including drip irrigation systems and modern irrigation in its agricultural operations that contributes to reduce water consumption and preserves vital resources for future generations. OFM also adopted an environmentally friendly production system to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, via using renewable energy sources, which will contribute to decline greenhouse gas emissions. In terms of waste treatment, OFM has developed programmes to recycle waste of production operations, as the organic waste is used as natural fertiliser to improve agricultural soil to enhance



the efficiency of agricultural production and decreases the need for chemical fertilisers. The company also plans to expand its production range by developing new production lines to include new healthy and nutritious products that meet the growing market demands, and strengthening the national economy in line with the global trend towards healthy foods. As a part of its exerted efforts to explore new market opportunities,

OFM plans to expand its exports to new markets in Asia and Africa, with a focus on strengthening its presence in its existing markets by offering innovative products that match tastes of each targeted market.

SPONSORS



Dhofar Islamic reinforces commitment to Islamic finance at IFN Oman Forum

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Dhofar Islamic, a leading Islamic financial window in the Sultanate of Oman, sponsored the IFN Oman Forum 2024, a prominent event showcasing the growth and development of Islamic finance in the region. The forum was organised by RED money in partnership with the Financial Services Authority, where it provided a platform for industry experts, regulators, and financial institutions to discuss key trends, challenges, and opportunities in the Islamic finance sector. Mohsin Shaik Mohamed, Head of Investment Banking & Capital Markets at Dhofar Islamic, represented Dhofar Islamic at the forum. He contributed as a moderator on a session entitled "Building on Oman's Growing Position as a Center for Islamic Capital Markets" discussing the influence of the new bond and Sukuk regulations on the Islamic capital market, the role of flourishing equity and IPO market play as part of a broader divestment program and the meaning of the new Virtual Assets Regulatory Framework for digital assets in Oman.

The IFN Forum 2024 brought together the brightest minds in the Islamic finance space to discuss essential developments and the ethical impact of Sharia compliant banking practices. Attended by key dignitaries, industry experts and potential investors, the forum highlighted a selection of fundamental topics, including; Sharia Compliant Funds and Collective Investment Schemes in Oman, Islamic Structured Finance and Capital Markets in Oman and Sharia Compliant Marketplace Financing and Digital Initiatives in Oman among other discussions. Dhofar Islamic's participation

Mohsin Shaik Mohamed, Head of Investment Banking & Capital Markets at Dhofar Islamic, represented Dhofar Islamic at the forum

reaffirms the commitment to promoting responsible and sustainable Islamic banking practices in the Sultanate of Oman. Over the years, Dhofar Islamic has maintained a prominent position as a leading financial service provider in Oman. The Islamic banking window of Bank Dhofar maintains standards of corporate governance, research and development, corporate social responsibility and customer service. Dhofar Islamic aims to distinguish itself with outstanding customer experience, investing in Fintech, developing innovative products and launching state-of-the-art financial solutions. Earlier this year Dhofar Islamic rebranded to mark its 10th anniversary and celebrate a decade of excellence. Our new logo represents Dhofar Islamic's evolution from a single star to a galaxy of enhanced capabilities. Each star in the constellation symbolises our core values, emphasising ethical banking, transparency, and customer-centricity. It reflects our commitment to our customers to offer the best in service and products.

THIRD MEETING

Sharia board of Alizz Islamic Bank discusses local economic performance

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sharia Supervisory Board (SSB) of Alizz Islamic Bank held its third meeting for the year 2024 at the bank's head office in the Wilayat of Bausher, in the presence of the Chairman of the Sharia Supervisory Board, Sheikh Dr Essam Al Enezi and the other members of the SBB as well as Ali bin Saif Al Mani, the bank's CEO, members of the executive management team and the Sharia Compliance & Audit Department. The meeting was also attended by scholars from the second batch of the 'Tamkeen', 'Empowering the Second line of Sharia Supervisory Board Members' programme, where they participated alongside members of the Sharia Supervisory Board for practical experience and direct vocational training. The meeting covered various topics including local economic performance, the bank's performance up to date during the third quarter of this year and the way forward during the coming period.



Moreover, the meeting discussed the Sharia Audit Report for the third quarter of the year and the Sharia Compliance and Risk Reports, as well as a number of issues of interest. It is worth noting that the Sharia Supervisory Board, through the reports submitted to it, monitors the Sharia performance of the bank,

which enables the board to evaluate the extent of compliance with Sharia directives and decisions. It also provides its recommendations and advice to create value-added products for the Islamic banking industry and providing financing solutions to meet customers' demand in the market. The Sharia Compliance and

Audit Department plays a very important role in monitoring the correct application of the Sharia Supervisory Board's instructions by overseeing mechanisms used to develop products and create product related documents, while examining the executed transactions and applying control and auditing tools.

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Voltamp Energy, up 5.56%, was the top gainer while Construction Materials, down 6.67%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,724.76 points, down by 0.5% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.64% at 431.99 points. Voltamp Energy, up 5.56%, was the top gainer while Construction Materials, down 6.67%, was the top loser. Shares of Voltamp Energy were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover. A total number of 543 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 549 million, with more than 26.94 million shares changing hands. Out of 49 traded securities, 7 advanced, 21 declined, and 21 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 220K while foreign investors were net sellers for RO 122K, followed by domestic investors for RO 98K worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 7,755.00 points, down 0.33%.

Prices of Bank Nizwa, Oman Arab Bank, National Bank Oman were up by 1.91%, 0.69%, 0.36% respectively. Prices of Sohar International Bank, Oman & Emirates Investment, Al Anwar Investment, United Finance, Global Financial Investments were down by 2.84%, 2.63%, 2.60%, 1.72%, 1.30% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 5,803.61 points, up 0.04%. Prices of Voltamp Energy were up by 5.56% respectively. Prices of Construction Materials, A'Saffa Foods, Galfar Engineering, Al Maha Ceramics were down by 6.67%, 2.60%, 2.24%, 1.27% respectively. Services Index was down by 0.8% before closing at 1,814.81 points. Prices of Barka Desalination were up by 4.88% respectively. Prices of Phoenix Power, Dhofar Generating, Ooredoo, Renaissance Services, Al Maha Marking were down by 3.51%, 2.99%, 2.08%, 1.50%, 0.94% respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,746.84	4,722.88	4,724.76	4,748.38	-23.62	-0.50
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,780.76	7,746.63	7,755.00	7,780.40	-25.40	-0.33
Industry Index	5,846.70	5,803.61	5,803.61	5,801.28	2.33	0.04
Services Index	1,831.08	1,814.81	1,814.81	1,829.51	-14.70	-0.80
MSX Shariah Index	435.24	431.54	431.99	434.79	-2.80	-0.64
MSX TR INDEX	6,597.36	6,564.06	6,566.66	6,599.50	-32.84	-0.50
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,839.74	8,800.97	8,810.47	8,839.33	-28.86	-0.33
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,745.70	6,695.98	6,695.98	6,693.30	2.69	0.04
SERVICES TR IDX	2,130.75	2,111.81	2,111.81	2,128.91	-17.10	-0.80
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	5,490,061	Trades	543	Market Cap	24,514,826,894	Up	7	Down	21	Equal	21	Sec. Traded	49
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26,946,209

5,490,061

543

24,514,826,894

7

21

21

49

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

ISIN

SECURITY NAME

VOLUME

TURNOVER

TRADES

OPEN PRICE

HIGH

LOW

CLOSE PR

PREV. CLOSE

DIFF (RD)

DIFF %

LAST PD

LAST BD

LAST OFFER

PRE VALUE

MARKET CAP

REGULAR MARKET

OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	1,020,000	285,600	2	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.279	0.001	0.358	0.280	0.280	0.290	0.100	455,264,979
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	21,515	2,410	5	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.000	0.000	0.112	0.112	0.114	0.100	16,800,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	17,673	6,981	5	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.000	0.000	0.395	0.390	0.395	0.100	130,694,720
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	32,484	2,371	5	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.000	0.000	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.100	6,570,000
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	16,848	1,330	8	0.079	0.080	0.078	0.079	0.079	0.000	0.000	0.079	0.079	0.079	0.100	13,825,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	76,900	5,691	6	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.100	49,941,670
OM0000004923	AL SUWADI POWER	70,000	5,250	2	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.077	0.100	53,580,476
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	181,427	182,229	27	1.005	1.005	1.001	1.001	1.004	-0.003	-0.299	1.001	0.999	1.010	0.100	750,750,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	347,617	103,245	15	0.298	0.298	0.296	0.296	0.297	-0.001	-0.337	0.297	0.297	0.297	0.100	227,979,200
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	470,705	122,092	8	0.260	0.261	0.259	0.259	0.260	-0.001	-0.385	0.259	0.258	0.260	0.100	1,944,156,839
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	145,687	52,438	25	0.364	0.364	0.358	0.363	0.365	-0.002	-0.548	0.363	0.359	0.363	0.100	242,616,650
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	3,975,636	565,809	149	0.143	0.144	0.142	0.142	0.143	-0.001	-0.699	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.100	614,948,597
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	254,359	19,346	12	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.077	-0.001	-1.299	0.076	0.076	0.076	0.100	15,200,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	81,557	32,304	14	0.400	0.400	0.394	0.394	0.400	-0.006	-1.500	0.394	0.390	0.394	0.100	93,145,540
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	858,796	48,961	16	0.057	0.058	0.057	0.057	0.058	-0.001	-1.724	0.058	0.057	0.059	0.100	20,399,256
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	19,000	5,378	2	0.284	0.284	0.283	0.283	0.289	-0.006	-2.076	0.283	0.284	0.288	0.100	184,217,217
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	21,245	7,967	7	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.375	0.385	-0.010	-2.597	0.375	0.370	0.375	0.100	45,000,000
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	277,419	20,533	21	0.074	0.075	0.074	0.074	0.076	-0.002	-2.632	0.074	0.074	0.075	0.100	9,018,750
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	5,127,789	710,988	73	0.140	0.140	0.137	0.137	0.141	-0.004	-2.837	0.137	0.132	0.141	0.100	1,882,029,339
Total	19	13,016,857	2,190,922	402												

Parallel Market

OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	6,650,812	2,527,299	6	0.370	0.390	0.370	0.380	0.390	0.020	5.556	0.380	0.362	0.375	0.100	30,923,045
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	2,500	323	1	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.123	0.006	4.878	0.129	0.123	0.129	0.100	9,742,338
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	5,674,948	606,496	18	0.106	0.107	0.105	0.107	0.105	0.002	1.905	0.107	0.100	0.107	0.100	239,353,870
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	50,000	7,300	8	0.146	0.146	0.146	0.146	0.145	0.001	0.690	0.146	0.146	0.150	0.100	243,733,860
OM0000001095	DHOFAR INSURANCE	56,500	12,430	3	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.000	0.000	0.220	0.210	0.220	0.100	24,805,567
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	16,000	720	1	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.000	0.000	0.045	0.045	0.000	0.100	13,821,585
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	100	280	1	2.795	2.795	2.795	2.795	2.795	0.000	0.000	2.795	0.000	3.000	0.100	250,711,500
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	10,786	2,253	5	0.209	0.209	0.208	0.209	0.209	0.000	0.000	0.209	0.190	0.209	0.100	12,791,693
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	66,340	10,482	1	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.000	0.000	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.100	473,423,527
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	19,500	2,633	1	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.000	0.000	0.135	0.000	0.140	0.100	77,450,078
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	1,000	67	1	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.067	0.066	0.067	0.100	32,886,038
OM0000003000	ALMAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	11,320	11,999	2	1.060	1.060	1.060	1.060	1.070	-0.010	-0.935	1.060	1.042	1.060	0.100	731,400,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	43,148	6,731	5	0.156	0.156	0.156	0.156	0.158	-0.002	-1.266	0.156	0.156	0.159	0.100	8,580,000
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	122,208	14,054	2	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.117	-0.002	-1.709	0.115	0.116	0.116	0.100	58,431,908
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	417,662	55,064	23	0.134	0.134	0.131	0.131	0.134	-0.003	-2.239	0.131	0.131	0.140	0.100	26,591,224
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	102,307	7,673	5	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.077	-0.002	-2.597	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.100	15,913,500
OM0000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	60,000	3,900	4	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.067	-0.002	-2.985	0.065	0.061	0.067	0.100	14,445,600
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	599,311	33,682	31	0.057	0.057	0.055	0.055	0.057	-0.002	-3.509	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.100	80,443,080
OM0000007910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	1,000	91	1	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.091	0.095	-0.004	-4.211	0.091	0.091	0.099	0.100	18,200,000
OM0000004368	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	235	10	1	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.045	-0.003	-6.867	0.042	0.042	0.041	0.100	2,625,000
Total	20	13,875,677	3,301,486	120												

Oil prices rise amid supply disruption concerns

SINGAPORE: Oil prices climbed yesterday, paring some of the previous session, as concerns about US crude supply disruption outweighed worries about global demand. Brent crude futures climbed 34 cents, or 0.5%, to \$69.53 a barrel, while US crude futures were at \$66.10 a barrel, up 35 cents, or 0.5%. Both crude prices fell by about

\$3 on Tuesday, with Brent hitting its lowest level since December 2021, and WTI hitting its lowest since May 2023, after OPEC+ revised down its demand forecast for this year and 2025. Market sources quoted data from the American Petroleum Institute (API) on Tuesday that oil inventories in the United States

fell by 2.793 million barrels in the week ending 6 September 2024, while gasoline inventories fell by 513 thousand barrels. Gold prices steady ahead of US inflation data Gold prices steadied yesterday, as investors keenly awaited the US inflation data for hints on the size

of the Federal Reserve's potential interest rate cut next week. Spot gold held its ground at \$2,518.22 per ounce, while gold futures rose 0.2% to \$2,547.10. Among other metals, spot silver edged up 0.1% to \$28.40 per ounce, platinum gained 0.6% to \$943.10, and palladium was up by 0.9% to \$973.78. -OWA

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NINTH BELT AND ROAD SUMMIT

Summit gathers top business leaders from Belt and Road countries to explore commercial opportunities



HONG KONG: The Ninth Belt and Road Summit, organised by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government of the People's Republic of China and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, kicked off yesterday under the theme "Building a Connected, Innovative and Green Belt and Road". The two-day summit gathered over 80 top officials and business leaders from Belt and Road countries and regions to explore numerous commercial opportunities. This year's summit marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. The event, held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, serves as a leading platform for Hong Kong to promote the BRI



LIFESTYLE

HOPEFULNESS

OUTPERFORMS

MINDFULNESS

FOR STRESS

RESILIENCE:

STUDY

The study examined how hope versus mindfulness impacted work-related resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic

New research from North Carolina State University revealed that cultivating hopefulness may be more beneficial than mindfulness during periods of extreme stress.

The study, led by Kristin Scott and published in Stress and Health, examined how hope versus mindfulness impacted work-related resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study involved 247 participants and utilised a multiwave statistical model to assess the effects of hope and mindfulness on work engagement and psychological well-being.

Researchers discovered that a future-oriented mindset, characterized by hopefulness, significantly boosted resilience and motivation compared to mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs).

"Hope was linked to greater happiness and less distress, leading to better engagement at work," said Scott. "In contrast, mindfulness did not show the same connection to happiness."

The researchers suggest that while mindfulness has its benefits, hopefulness is particularly effective for overcoming prolonged periods of stress. - ONA

World Cup qualifiers: Colombia beat Argentina; Paraguay stun Brazil

James Rodriguez scored one goal and set up another as Colombia overcame Argentina 2-1

RIO DE JANEIRO: Colombia and Bolivia registered surprise victories while Brazil's faltering campaign hit another hurdle in South America's World Cup qualifiers on Tuesday.

In Barranquilla, James Rodriguez scored one goal and set up another as Colombia overcame reigning World Cup and Copa America champions Argentina 2-1.

Inch-perfect cross

Yerson Mosquera put the hosts ahead at Estadio Metropolitano with a close-range header after Rodriguez's inch-perfect cross from the left wing.

Nico Gonzalez equalised when



he intercepted an errant Rodriguez pass before dashing into the box and beating goalkeeper Camilo Vargas.

Rodriguez made amends for his earlier error by converting from the penalty spot after Daniel Munoz was brought down by Nicolas Otamendi.

"It was a great win against a team that has won everything," Rodriguez said after the match. "The conditions were tough. It was very hot but we coped well and I think it was a fair result."

The Rayo Vallecano playmaker has now scored or assisted 10 times in his past eight international appearances.

The result lifted Colombia to second in the 10-team South American zone standings with 16 points from eight qualifiers, two points behind leaders Argentina.

In Santiago, Carmelo Algaranaz and Miguel Terceros scored first half goals as Bolivia secured a 2-1 away victory over Chile.

The visitors opened the scoring at Estadio Nacional through Algaranaz, who finished coolly after Roberto Fernandez's pass on the counterattack.

The hosts dominated possession but struggled to find a way past Bolivia's low defensive line. That changed in the 39th minute when former Napoli and Valencia forward Eduardo Vargas capitalized on a slip from goalkeeper Carlos Lampe to slot the ball into an empty net.

But Bolivia quickly regained the lead through Terceros, who struck from close ranging after Roberto Fernandez's pass.

The visitors held on to secure their second consecutive victory and climb to eighth in the South American group with nine points from eight qualifiers, just a point behind fifth-placed Brazil.

Bolivia's victory was soured, however, by an Achilles tendon injury to Lampe, who was forced off the pitch just before halftime.

"We hoped to be able to get a point and knew that a victory would be difficult," Bolivia manager Oscar Villegas told a news conference.

"We're very happy with the outcome of the match but at the same time we're sad for Carlos [Lampe]. He will need surgery and will likely need a long recovery period."

The result marked Chile's third consecutive qualifying defeat as they slumped to ninth in the group with just five points so far.

In Asuncion, a stunning first-half strike from Diego Gomez gave Paraguay a 1-0 home victory over Brazil.

Inter Miami midfielder Gomez gave his side the lead from the edge of the 18-yard box by using the outside of his right foot to curl a 20-yard shot into the net off the far post.

Brazil controlled almost three quarters of the total possession and completed more than twice as many passes as the hosts.

But the visitors lacked incisiveness in the final third, despite the presence of Real Madrid attacking trio Vinicius Junior, Endrick and Rodrygo.

In other South American zone qualifiers on Tuesday, Ecuador edged to a 1-0 home victory over Peru and Venezuela were held to a goalless home draw by Uruguay. **Xinhua**

NOTABLE NAMES

Stokes returns, two uncapped players feature in England's 17-player squad for Pakistan Test

LONDON: The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced a 17-player squad for their Test tour of Pakistan in October.

Some of the notable names in the 17-player squad include two uncapped players, Durham's Brydon Carse and Essex's Jordan Cox. Experienced spinner Jack Leach returns for the first time since England toured India earlier this year. Test captain Ben Stokes, who missed England's home Test series against Sri Lanka due to a hamstring injury, is also in the mix.

Carse features as one of the six fast bowlers in England's squad, alongside the left-arm Josh Hull.

Hull has been picked for his maiden Test tour after he earned his maiden Test cap for England in the third Test against Sri Lanka. In his debut Test, the young seamer scythed three wickets at the Kia Oval.

His inclusion in England's Test setup comes in light of England's fastest bowler, Mark Wood, sustaining an elbow injury.

Notably, in May, Carse was suspended from all cricket for 16 months. He pleaded guilty to making a total of 303 bets on cricket matches, including Durham games that he did not play.

However, out of 16, 13 months were suspended. He returned to on-field action on August 29. He



slammed a century to mark his arrival for Durham against Somerset at Taunton.

Experienced all-rounder Chris Woakes has been called for his first overseas assignment since featuring in England's tour of the Caribbean in March 2022.

In the spin department, Leach will partner with Shoaib Bashir and legspinner Rehan Ahmed. In 2022, Rehan played a starring role for England during his Test debut in Karachi against Pakistan.

On the batting front, Dan Lawrence has been dropped following his underwhelming performance in the recently concluded Test series against Sri Lanka. While opening for the hosts, Lawrence

could only put in 120 runs at an average of 20 in six innings.

Opener Zak Crawley, who broke his right little finger, has returned to the squad in place of Lawrence.

The first of the three Tests will begin on October 7 in Multan. The second Test will be played in Karachi, beginning on October 15, and the third red-ball clash is in Rawalpindi on October 24.

England Test squad to tour Pakistan: Ben Stokes (captain), Rehan Ahmed, Gus Atkinson, Shoaib Bashir, Harry Brook, Brydon Carse, Jordan Cox, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Josh Hull, Jack Leach, Ollie Pope, Matthew Potts, Joe Root, Jamie Smith, Olly Stone, Chris Woakes. **ANI**

WORLD CUP ASIAN QUALIFIER

China lose to 10-man Saudi Arabia in World Cup qualifier



DALIAN: Hassan Kadish scored two headers, including a late winner, as 10-man Saudi Arabia came from behind to beat China 2-1 here on Tuesday in their 2026 FIFA World Cup Asian qualifier.

In the first round of matches last week, China had suffered a heavy 7-0 away defeat to Japan, while Saudi Arabia had drawn 1-1 at home to Indonesia.

"It was a tough game as we played with one man down for most of the time. I want to congratulate my players for getting this win," Saudi Arabia head coach Roberto Mancini said at the post-match conference.

In front of 48,628 home fans, China broke the deadlock in the 14th minute, when Jiang Shenglong's header forced an own goal from Ali Lajami, following a precise corner from Fei Nanduo.

Just five minutes later, Mohamed Kanno was given a straight red card for a violent foul on Jiang.

Despite being a player down,

Kadish equalized for Saudi Arabia with a header from a corner in the 39th minute.

China captain Wu Lei nearly put his team ahead in first-half stoppage time, but his header hit the crossbar.

In the 54th minute, substitute Wang Shangyuan thought his header had put China ahead, but the goal was ruled out for offside after a VAR review.

In the 81st minute, Mancini made three substitutes and controlled the rest of the game. "I wanted to win, so I brought on some offensive players," the Italian said of his changes.

With just seconds remaining in regular time, Kadish scored his second header from a corner, silencing the home fans and securing Saudi Arabia's first victory in Group C.

China head coach Branko Ivankovic denied that he would resign following two straight defeats. "The question shouldn't be

directed at me. We suffered a substantial loss in the first match, but we improved in the second. This group includes some strong opponents, and our goal is to reach the top four. We're working towards that, with eight matches still remaining," he stated.

The 70-year-old Croatian explained his decision to delay any substitutions until the 90th minute. "The team was well-organized on the pitch, so I decided not to make changes. The match was very complicated, so I needed some substitutes available to handle different situations."

In Tuesday's other action, Australia were held to a goalless draw by Indonesia, with Bahrain's match against Japan scheduled for later that evening.

After two matches, China currently sit rock bottom of Group C with no points. "We will carefully analyze our opponents and strive for better results," Ivankovic added. **Xinhua**

ENGLAND HEAD COACH

McCullum lauds Buttler, calls him 'greatest white-ball player England ever had'

LONDON: England head coach Brendon McCullum showered praise on Jos Buttler and called him one of the greatest white-ball players the Three Lions ever had.

In the upcoming T20I series against Australia, Phil Salt will lead England as Jos Buttler has suffered a calf injury.

Buttler's injury also puts him in doubt for the five-game ODI series that follows.

Speaking to Sky Sports, McCullum said that Buttler had an unbelievable career. The head coach added that the 34-year-old has nothing to prove.

"I think Jos has had an unbelievable career. If he were to retire tomorrow, he goes down as arguably the greatest white-ball player England has ever had. He has nothing left to prove. I want him to get into a space in the next few years where he isn't trying to protect anything. He just goes out there and absolutely loves playing for England,

loves leading the white-ball side and is able to get the most out of the talent around him," McCullum was quoted by Sky Sports as saying.

McCullum added that it's his responsibility to keep pushing him towards that.

"That is my responsibility to keep pushing him towards that and keep reaffirming that message to him. Hopefully, he will be back from his injuries soon. The priority will be the Champions Trophy, so we are going to make sure he is ready for that," he added.

"It gives us some time to spark those conversations and formulate those structures and plans to marry up our beliefs and the language we are going to use with the team to get the most out of what sits in that dressing room," he added.

The first T20I match will be played in Southampton on September 11. The second match will be played on September 13 in Cardiff. The last match of the T20I series



will take place on September 15 in Manchester.

Moeen feels McCullum helps Buttler to bring best of him

Former England cricketer Moeen

Ali said that head coach Brendon McCullum would help white-ball skipper Jos Buttler bring out the best in him.

Moeen, who last played for England in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, announced his retire-

ment from the international game on Sunday.

Moeen believed that the time was right for him after understanding that he was no longer in consideration for the side's future assignments.

In the upcoming T20I series against Australia, Phil Salt will lead England as Jos Buttler has suffered a calf injury.

Buttler's injury also puts him in doubt for the five-game ODI series that follows.

Speaking to Sky Sports, Moeen said that McCullum can bring out the sort of energy that will help Buttler do more than anything.

"I think Brendon, it helps the fact he has been there, done it, and the way he played. I think it can be quite difficult if a coach says 'go do this', but they never did. Brendon brings that sort of energy and I think it will be great for Jos more than anything," Moeen was quoted by Sky Sports

as saying.

The former England batter added that Buttler has a lot of pressure with batting, wicketkeeping, captaining.

"Jos has so much on his plate with batting, wicketkeeping, captaining. I think Brendon will just take the pressure off and he can just play and captain on the field. Brendon will be more in control I think," he added.

The first T20I match will be played in Southampton on September 11. The second match will be played on September 13 in Cardiff. The last match of the T20I series will take place on September 15 in Manchester.

England T20I squad: Phil Salt (C), Jofra Archer, Jacob Bethell, Brydon Carse, Jordan Cox, Sam Curran, Josh Hull, Will Jacks, Liam Livingstone, Saqib Mahmood, Dan Mousley, Jamie Overton, Adil Rashid, Reece Topley, John Turner. **ANI**

IN PICTURES

IIFA Awards 2024: On September 10, Mumbai hosted a press conference for the upcoming 24th edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards 2024. Shah Rukh Khan and Karan Johar who attended the press conference are all set to host IIFA Awards in Abu Dhabi later this month.



Picture by Shibasish Dasgupta



'The Room Next Door' wins Golden Lion at 81st Venice Film Festival
Spanish director Pedro Almodovar kisses the Golden Lion Award for Best Film for the movie 'The Room Next Door' at the awards ceremony of the 81st Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy. [xinhua](#)



A woman displays folk costumes in Pulan County
A woman displays folk costumes in Kejia Village of Pulan County, southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region. [Xinhua](#)



Cast of film 'Disclaimer' poses for photocall during 2024 Toronto Int'l Film Festival
Actress Cate Blanchett (left) and director Alfonso Cuarón pose for photos as they attend the Canadian premiere of the United Kingdom film 'Disclaimer' during the 2024 Toronto International Film Festival in Toronto, Canada. [xinhua](#)



Gala evening held in Rabat, Morocco to celebrate the upcoming Mid-Autumn Festival
A Moroccan girl poses for photos with a moon-shaped installation before the opening of a Mid-Autumn Festival gala evening in Rabat, capital of Morocco. [xinhua](#)

Aftermath of slum area fire in Cavite, Philippines
An aerial drone picture shows charred homes a day after a slum area fire in Cavite Province, the Philippines. [Xinhua](#)



ROUND-UP

Own all-new Toyota Prado and enjoy exclusive Akeed benefits

The all-new Prado builds on its legacy of strength and reliability, blending the legendary Land Cruiser DNA with modern technologies to enhance both off-road and everyday performance

MUSCAT: Own the all-new Toyota Prado and enjoy exclusive Akeed benefits. Get Service from 2 Years / 20,000 kms up to 10 Years / 100,000 kms (whichever is earlier), Insurance 1 Year and chance to win 1 grand raffle – all-new Toyota Prado. The campaign is valid up to 31st October 2024 (Prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufactur-

ing year. Terms & Conditions apply. Customers can visit any Saud Bahwan Automotive showroom for exact details.) The Toyota Prado is a legend in its own right. Its legacy, which began over seven decades ago with the introduction of the Toyota BJ, is marked by outstanding rough-road driving performance and ruggedness, famously demonstrated by reaching Mount Fuji's sixth station at an altitude of 2,700 metres. Since then, the Prado has become synonymous with unparalleled off-road capability, inspiring performance, and legendary dependability. In Oman, its popularity continues to soar. With each new introduction, the Prado not only proves its prowess but also solidifies its place among true off-road enthusiasts. Today, the all-new Prado features a striking retro design, exhilarating performance and unmatched capability. The all-new Prado builds on its legacy of strength and reliability, blending the legendary Land Cruiser DNA with modern technologies to enhance both off-road and everyday performance. The vehicle continues to uphold Toyota's global reputation for providing dependable transportation capable of tackling the toughest conditions. Toyota's mission for the Prado

has been to ensure safety and reliability in even the harshest environments. Customer experiences worldwide have contributed to refining the Prado's reliability, durability, and rough-road capabilities. The all-new Prado retains its robust body-on-frame construction and adopts Toyota's GA-F platform, significantly enhancing off-road performance. It is also designed for easy manoeuvrability and comfort in conventional on-road driving, showcasing Toyota's commitment to practicality and customer needs. This is the first Prado to feature an electric power steering (EPS) system, reducing kickback on rough surfaces and providing smoother, more direct steering and easier manoeuvrability at all speeds. The all-new Prado will be available with a choice of 2.4 Litre Turbo Petrol and 2.8 Litre Turbo Diesel engines, paired with an 8-speed automatic transmission. The interior offers seven-seat configurations, designed to evoke the strength and functionality of a true off-roader. The all-new Prado is equipped with the latest Toyota Safety Sense systems within a comprehensive Toyota T-Mate package of advanced safety features and technologies, reducing the burden on the driver.



ATTRACTIVE PROFIT RATES



Sohar Islamic introduces Sharia-compliant house finance offer

MUSCAT: Sohar Islamic, Sohar International's Islamic Window, announces a new initiative to enhance homeownership opportunities through its fully Sharia-compliant housing finance offer. This programme features a compelling profit rate starting at just 4.25% and will be available until December 31. The initiative reinforces Sohar Islamic's commitment to providing market-leading financial solutions that blend competitive profit rates with flexible repayment options, ensuring accessible and efficient home financing while upholding the highest standards of financial integrity and customer satisfaction. Abdul Wahid Al Murshidi, Chief Islamic Banking Officer at Sohar International, commented, "Our primary focus at Sohar Islamic is to prioritize our customers by delivering solutions that are not only value-driven but also responsive to market needs. This new home financing offer reflects our profound understanding of customer expectations and the dynamic real estate market. As a pivotal player in Oman's financial ecosystem,

we are dedicated to supporting the real estate sector, which plays a critical role in the nation's economic growth. Through this initiative, we aim to facilitate homeownership, stimulate real estate demand, and contribute to the overall economic stability of the Sultanate. This underscores our commitment to fostering long-term prosperity and sustainable development across the region." The new home finance offer is available to individuals employed in the private sector, semi-government institutions, and government roles, with a minimum salary requirement of OMR300. The financing solutions come with flexible finance tenures of up to 25 years. Sohar Islamic has streamlined its application process to ensure a seamless experience from application to approval, backed by competitive finance terms and exceptional service from our expert team. By offering attractive profit rates, flexible terms, and extensive support, Sohar Islamic aims to significantly impact the local real estate market, reinforce its leadership in the financial sector, and drive positive socio-economic development.

TECHNICAL PARTNER

Omantel partners with Oman Science Festival to foster youth interest in STEM



MUSCAT: Omantel announced its role as a technical partner for the upcoming Oman Science Festival 2024, taking place from November 4 to 11. This partnership underscores Omantel's ongoing commitment to fostering interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) among youth, encouraging the development of their scientific and innovative capabilities. Aligned with the company's vision of leveraging digital technology to support education, Omantel will collaborate with the Ministry of Education to implement advanced technical programs tailored for students at various educational levels. The company will provide state-of-the-art technologies, including artificial intelligence, robotics, and virtual reality, to enhance students' learning experiences and open new avenues for scientific exploration. Talal bin Said Al Mamari, CEO of Omantel, emphasized the company's dedication to nurturing technical skills among young individuals, viewing this as a critical national investment in developing future talent and building capacity. "The Oman Science Festival offers an excellent platform to empower students and equip them with the skills needed to face future challenges," said Al Mamari. "Through our collaboration, we aim to inspire students to integrate science and technology into their educational journeys." These initiatives aim to cultivate a forward-thinking generation adept at innovation and pro-

ficient in utilizing technology to enhance various aspects of daily life. The partnership between Omantel and the Oman Science Festival is expected to significantly enrich the scientific knowledge of youth, inspiring them to delve deeper into the realms of science and technology through engaging and interactive activities. Omantel remains committed to contributing to the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 by investing in emerging technologies and providing cutting-edge ICT solutions to foster innovation and leadership in new and advanced technologies. Omantel has succeeded, through the integration of its operations, processes, and extensive expertise in the field of communications and digital technology, in establishing

its position as a leading telecommunications company within the Sultanate of Oman and beyond. The company's innovative approaches have contributed to providing state-of-the-art solutions to different consumer and business sectors. The company aims to deliver an unparalleled, exceptional experience to its customers and strives to always exceed their expectations. To achieve the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, Omantel invests in emerging technologies and provides cutting-edge ICT solutions, such as cloud solutions, AI, Smart solutions, cybersecurity, and much more, in addition to harnessing its technological capabilities to enhance innovation and leadership in new and advanced technologies.



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