



JANUARY 2025

The number of title deeds issued by the end of January 2025 fell by 0.1% to reach 20,588. - **ONA**

Sayyid Saud bin Hilal Al  
Busaidi, Governor of Muscat

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** Muscat Governorate has successfully digitised 24 key municipal services, earning

The services successfully digitised and streamlined in 2024 include: building permit issuance, certificate of completion for ex-

### Top four entities

The achievement places Muscat among the top four entities out of 49 government organisations assessed for their progress in digital transformation.

The recognition follows the successful digitisation of key municipal services, making govern-

ment interactions smoother and more accessible for residents and businesses

The services successfully digitised and streamlined in 2024 include: building permit issuance, certificate of completion for ex-

request for street lighting in residential areas, permit issuance to commence construction, security deposit refund, request for a building completion certificate, permit for additional work inside a commercial establishment, burial services, registration and cancellation of lease agreements,

request to host events at municipal-owned venues and auditing of modern building systems.

It also includes tree planting services outside plot boundaries, registration of requests with the customer service department, address update services, soil transportation services, requests for additional copies of blue prints, 'Eitimid' platform, electronic authentication of leases, contracts, 'Baladiati' mobile application, renewal of building permits, registration of consulting offices, homogeneous activities service and complaint service for scrap sales. **➤A5**



**FOUR PAGES SPECIAL  
SUPPLEMENT ON  
'AHLAN RAMADAN'  
WITH THIS EDITION**

### TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

**1** The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources has said that 289,089 heads of livestock were made available to consumers during January and February 2025, of those 267,213 are heads of sheep and goats and 21,876 cows. Local market needs for red meat rises during the holy month of Ramadan and Eid Al Fitr. **>A3**

**2** The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs has released a report marking International Women's Day, shedding light on the severe and widespread effects of Israeli military aggression on Palestinian women in Gaza. So far 12,298 women having lost their lives due to Israeli airstrikes and military attacks. **>A7**



**3** As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance direct and effective communication with the public, and provide integrated electronic services that facilitate access to information and resolve issues faced by consumers, the Financial Services Authority (FSA) has announced its annual statistics for consumer protection services in 2024. The FSA also received 35 complaints related to public joint-stock companies. **►B1**

## ANALYSING TEMPERATURE VARIATIONS

# Omani develops innovative technique to detect breast cancer

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** For early detection of breast cancer, an Omani national has developed an innovative technique that analyses temperature variations between layers to spot the disease.

Led by Dr Mohammed Abdullah Salim Al Husaini, Assistant Professor at Arab Open University in Oman, the research team developed a numerical simulation model using COMSOL software to investigate breast thermophysical properties.

It focuses on how tumour size, depth, blood perfusion, and thermal conductivity affect heat distribution in breasts.

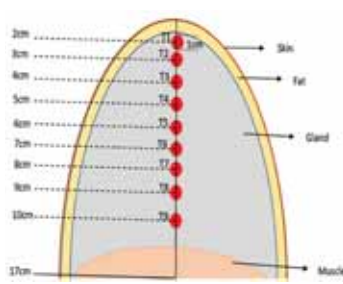
Among many innovative research projects of the 11th Nation-

al Research Award organised by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, “Influence of Tissue Thermophysical Characteristics and Situ-Cooling on the Detection of Breast Cancer” was awarded in the PhD category.

The objective is to enhance the accuracy of breast cancer detection by analysing temperature variations influenced by tumour properties and cooling techniques.

As for the main findings, Dr. Mohammed said that the tumours located deeper or smaller in size are harder to detect due to minimal temperature variation, with the highest skin temperature differences between tumour- and non-tumour-affected breasts could range from 2.58°C to 0.274°C.

Moreover, larger breast sizes re-



duce thermal contrast, while small breast sizes may have difficulty in detecting tumours smaller than 0.5 cm, as those located at greater depths in the breast layers do not produce significant temperature differences.

The results further showed that applying situ-cooling gel improves thermal contrast, particularly for

deeper tumours. For example, for a tumour located at a depth of 10 cm, a thermal difference of 6°C could be achieved using local cooling gel, an achievement that was not possible with the simulation model alone.

Through this study, Dr. Mohammed recommended that further clinical studies are required to validate these findings, and that situ-cooling can be integrated as a complementary approach in thermography-based cancer detection.

This research project was published in Applied Sciences in 2023. The research team consisted of Dr. Mohammed Al Husaini, Prof. Mohamed Hadi Habaebi (International Islamic University Malaysia), Dr. F. M. Suliman (King Khalid University), Prof. Md

Rafiqul Islam (International Islamic University Malaysia), Dr. Elfatih A. A. Elsheikh (King Khalid University), and Dr. Naser A. Muhaissen (International Islamic University Malaysia).

Regarding his award, Dr. Mohammed Al Husaini said that it was a great honour and recognition of our research work. It highlights the significance of improving breast cancer detection using non-invasive thermography techniques and situ-cooling, he said.

This recognition gives us the motivation and determination to continue our research, pushing the boundaries of innovation and striving to make a meaningful impact in early breast cancer detection and patient care," he added.



# RAMADAN Staycation

## WITH BREAKFAST

|                  |      |           |
|------------------|------|-----------|
| <i>Al Bandar</i> | from | OMR 65++  |
| <i>Al Waha</i>   | from | OMR 75++  |
| <i>Al Husn</i>   | from | OMR 110++ |

## WITH IFTAR & SUHOOR\*

|  |      |           |
|--|------|-----------|
|  | from | OMR 84++  |
|  | from | OMR 95++  |
|  | from | OMR 120++ |

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|                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| Dhuhr.....           | 12:22pm |
| Asr.....             | 3:46pm  |
| Maghrib.....         | 6:19pm  |
| Isha.....            | 7:29pm  |
| Fajr (Tomorrow)..... | 5:05am  |

# Agreement inked for integration of smart solutions

The signing ceremony was attended by the Governor of North Al Batinah

**SOHAR:** The North Al Batinah Governor's Office on Sunday signed a cooperation agreement to integrate smart technology into public life in the governorate with



Huawei Oman and MENA Invest Company. The agreement aims to integrate smart solutions and AI in various service and development sectors in the governorate in a manner that contributes to enhancing public services and

boosting sustainable development, as well as augmenting the operational performance of government units. The signing ceremony was attended by Mohammed Sulaiman Al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah. -**ONA**

WILAYAT OF NAKHAL

## Development work of Wakan village reviewed

**MUSCAT:** The Committee for the development of Wakan village (located in Wadi Mustal in the Wilayat of Nakhal) held a meeting on Sunday, chaired by Eng. Masoud Said Al Hashimi, Governor of South Al Batinah, to review the latest developments in the project, including the road route, water supplies, and tourism projects such as guest houses and mountain trails.

Wakan village has received attention of tourism department due to its unique natural features and picturesque views, making it a distinctive tourist destination that attracts visitors from inside and outside the Sultanate.

The village of Wakan is located



in Wadi Mustal in the Wilayat of Nakhal at an altitude of approximately 2,000 metres above sea level, and is about 150 kilometres from Muscat.

The road leading to it is characterised by valleys, which requires the use of four-wheel drive vehicles to reach it.

The development project aims to enhance the village's tourism infrastructure, improve access to it, and support eco-hospitality projects and mountain trails, thus enhancing its position as an integrated eco-tourism destination that contributes to supporting the local tourism sector. -**ONA**

MOMENTOUS GATHERING

## Philippine School Oman marks 35th Founding Anniversary

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Colours burst to life, and cultural diversity took centre stage as Philippine School Oman (PSO) celebrated its grandest 35th Founding Anniversary on February 21, 2025. This year's theme, "Celebrating Milestones and Envisioning the Future," highlighted the school's 35 years of commitment to delivering quality education in the Sultanate of Oman.

Raul Hernandez, Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to the Sultanate of Oman, graced the event as the guest of honour and keynote speaker.

He was accompanied by his wife, Madame Ana Algabre Hernandez, who generously presented PSO with her masterpiece painting, "Kasarinlan," from her Iwatawat Mo series.

The celebration was a momentous gathering, attended by key figures in the school's history, including former Board of Trustees (BOT) and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) chairpersons, as well as past educators who played vital roles in shaping PSO's legacy. Among them were Mrs. Carmelita de Jesus, Ms. Maria Carolina Layog, and Mrs. Ma. Eloisa San Jose, who traveled from the Philippines to commemorate the school's milestone.

**A cultural display unfolds**  
The festivities began with an electrifying performance by the Grade 11 Marching Band, followed by Grade 6 students' grand opening number to Galing Natin Ito. Each grade level showcased vibrant performances, celebrating Philippine and global heritage.

A highlight was the Parade of Nations, where Kindergarten 1 and 2 students dazzled in traditional attire. Grade 10 paid tribute to the Maranao tribe with Singkil, while Grade 5 brought the energy of Bacolod's MassKara Festival. Grade 4 honored Baguio's Panagbenga, Grade 3 embodied Bukidnon's Kaamulan Festival, and Grade 2 celebrated Omani culture through dance.

Adding to the spectacle, Grade 7 performed a Festival of Nations dance, Grade 8 and 9 impressed



with a speech choir titled Our School, Our Future, and Grade 12 captivated the audience with a Shadow Dance narrating the school's history and the journey of OFWs.

The celebration ended on a heartfelt note with Grade 1's song performance, followed by the community song and alma mater, leaving a lasting impression.

### A tribute to hard work and dedication

The 35th Foundation Day celebration was spearheaded by Mr. Mark Anthony Badion, alongside Mrs. Magnolia V. Gabrielle and the PSO Day core committee. Planning and preparations for the grand event began as early as April 2024, ensuring a seamless and memorable celebration. With the steadfast support of the PS Board of Trustees, led by Ms. Cherry Ann Cuntapay Ballard, the Parent-Teacher Association, under the leadership of Mrs. Joanne Asma Tubo, and the Faculty and Staff, headed by School Principal Mr. Michael B. Joves, the vision for this momentous occasion became a reality.

### A legacy of excellence

The Philippine School's roots can be traced back to 1989 when it was founded by Filipino Overseas Workers with the support of His Excellency Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali, the Philippine Honorary Consul General. This initiative was undertaken in cooperation



with the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) and the Department of Labour and Employment (DOLE), to ensure that the children of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) had access to quality education.

The school's first location was in Al Wattayah, where it was inaugurated in February 1989 under the name Philippine Community School (PCS), initially catering to 38 students in multi-level classes. After consistently meeting the prescribed standards of instruction and complying with the regulations set by the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports (DECS) in the Philippines, as well as adhering to the Ministry of Education's policies in Oman, PCS received government recognition on January 31, 1995.

KR SHIPPING

## Costa Smeralda's trip reinforces Oman as a cruise destination



Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Khimji Ramdas Shipping LLC (KR Shipping), an integrated shipping and multimodal logistics service provider in Oman, successfully facilitated the maiden season of Costa Smeralda in the Sultanate, reinforcing its role as a key player in the region's cruise industry.

The vessel, a flagship of the Costa fleet, made its first visit to Oman on December 19, 2024, after circumnavigating Africa from the Mediterranean before commencing its scheduled operations in the Arabian Gulf.

Throughout the season, Costa Smeralda operated one-week round-trip cruises from Dubai, with scheduled stops in Muscat (Oman), Doha (Qatar), and Abu Dhabi (UAE).

On March 3, 2025, the vessel departed from Muscat, embarking on a 37-day voyage back to the Mediterranean. En-route to its final destination in Genoa, Italy, scheduled for April 7, 2025, the ship will make calls in Mauritius, South Africa, Namibia, the Canary Islands, Morocco, Spain, and France (Corsica).

KR Shipping played an instrumental role in managing the ship's operations, ensuring efficient port services and smooth logistical support for each call at Port Sultan Qaboos in Muscat.

Malvika Khimji, Director of Khimji Ramdas, remarked: "The



successful conclusion of Costa Smeralda's maiden season in Oman reinforces the Sultanate's growing appeal as a global cruise tourism destination. As Oman's cruise industry continues to expand, Khimji Ramdas Shipping remains committed to contributing to its diversification. Our well-trained national staff managed Costa Smeralda's port call, ensuring a seamless experience for the passengers aboard. We are honoured to have handled the port operations for this prestigious vessel during its scheduled calls to Muscat."

Costa Smeralda is the largest ship ever commissioned by Costa Crociere and a true celebration of Italian design, culture, and craftsmanship. As part of the Carnival Corporation & plc, the world's largest cruise group, the ship has set new standards in maritime innovation.

Built in 2019 by shipbuilder Meyer Turku in Finland, Costa Smeralda is the first LNG-pow-

ered cruise ship in the Costa Cruises fleet, underscoring the company's commitment to sustainable cruising.

With a capacity for approximately 6,600 passengers and 1,678 crew members, the ship spans 323.6 metres in length and 37.2 metres in width.

It offers 1,550 cabins, a variety of entertainment events, two swimming pools, a health club, and 11 diverse restaurants, ensuring a luxurious and immersive experience for its guests.

As a leading integrated shipping and multimodal logistics service provider in Oman, KR Shipping played a vital role in facilitating Costa Smeralda's operations during its visit and 11 subsequent calls to Port Sultan Qaboos in Muscat.

The company's expertise and seamless execution have positioned it as a key contributor to Oman's cruise industry growth, handling 35 of the 66 cruise ships in the 2024/25 season - over 50% of the total cruise traffic in Muscat.

staff, supported by 23 dedicated non-teaching personnel.

Beyond its part in education, PSO continues to play a vital role in the socioeconomic and cultural landscape of Oman in the following sectors:

### Socio-economic

PSO supports Filipino professionals in Oman by ensuring quality education for their children, allowing parents to focus on their careers. This helps retain skilled workers in key sectors such as healthcare, construction, and engineering.

The school also generates employment by hiring teachers, staff, and administrators, contributing to both the Filipino community and Oman's economy.

Moreover, PSO alumni may later engage in business or trade between the Philippines and Oman, strengthening economic ties between the two nations.

### Cultural

PSO actively preserves Filipino heritage through events like Independence Day celebrations, traditional dance performances, and food festivals, fostering cultural appreciation within Oman's diverse society.

The school also promotes inclusivity by bringing together students from various backgrounds, encouraging intercultural understanding and harmony.

Additionally, its language and

arts programs enhance Oman's linguistic and artistic diversity, helping students develop multilingual skills and creative expression.

### Education

PSO ensures academic continuity by aligning with the Philippine curriculum, allowing students to transition smoothly if they return home or pursue further studies abroad.

Beyond academics, the school engages with the community through outreach programs and collaborations with local institutions, fostering knowledge-sharing and stronger social connections.

### A future rooted in excellence

As Philippine School celebrates 35 years of commitment to education, cultural exchange, and community service, it continues to uphold its mission of providing quality education while serving as a beacon of Filipino heritage in Oman.

The 35th Foundation Day not only honored the school's past achievements but also reaffirmed its commitment to excellence in shaping the minds and characters of future generations and strengthening the ties between the Philippines and Oman in the years to come.

Truly, Philippine School stands as the Blue Star in the Arabian Sky. May its legacy continue to shine for years to come. Happy 35th Founding Anniversary, Philippine School Oman!



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AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

# Cyber Security Week kicks off in South Al Batinah

**RUSTAQ:** Activities of the Cyber Security Week organised by the Directorate General of Education in South Al Batinah Governorate began on Sunday.

The event, which will last until 13 March 2025, includes public awareness campaigns and exhibitions in all schools of the governorate about basic principles of cyber security and the protection of data and personal information. It also covers the areas of electronic hacking, artificial intelligence (AI) and safe applications of social media. Sultan bin Hamad

Al Hashemi, Director of the Information Technology Department at the South Al Batinah Education Department, said that the aim is to enhance awareness of cyber security threats facing society in light of wide use of social media and electronic transactions, and to enhance response to electronic security risks, in addition to achieving the safe use of AI applications.

He stressed the importance of these activities in instilling the principles, values and concepts of security among the school students. -ONA

# Over 289,000 livestock available for consumers

Local market needs for red meat rises during the holy month of Ramadan and Eid Al Fitr, prompting higher demand for livestock imports



**PERMITS ISSUED:** The total number of livestock allowed to be imported stood at 359,150, said Eng. Khalfan Mattar Al Sharji, Director General of Livestock. - ONA

**MUSCAT:** The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources has said that 289,089 heads of livestock were made available to consumers during January and February 2025, of those 267,213 are heads of sheep and goats and 21,876 cows.

Eng. Khalfan Mattar Al Sharji, Director General of Livestock, said that the Ministry is acting in coordination with livestock import companies to meet local market needs for livestock and red meat over the forthcoming period.

For this purpose, a total of 129 permits have so far been issued for the firms to make the imports, he added.

Al Sharji pointed out that the total number of livestock allowed to be imported stood at 359,150. He added that the number included 332,700 goats and sheep and 26,450 heads of cattle.

He explained that local market needs for red meat rises during the holy month of Ramadan and Eid Al Fitr, prompting higher demand for livestock imports.

Al Sharji affirmed that, to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, epidemics or common livestock diseases in the Sultanate of Oman, the veterinary quarantine personnel are now set in full action round the clock, conducting necessary health checks on all livestock imports. -ONA



## 5-Gallon Oman Oasis

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» WORDS OF WISDOM

“ALLAH DOES NOT BURDEN A SOUL BEYOND THAT IT CAN BEAR” [QURAN 2:286]

When feeling overwhelmed by struggle, pain, or certain obstacles in life, it is important to remember that Allah only tests those with as much as they can specifically handle and overcome. By understanding that each hardship is created specifically for you to overcome, it becomes empowering to know that Allah understands your strength more than you sometimes understand yourself.



» FASTING HEALTH TIP

REDUCE CAFFEINE INTAKE

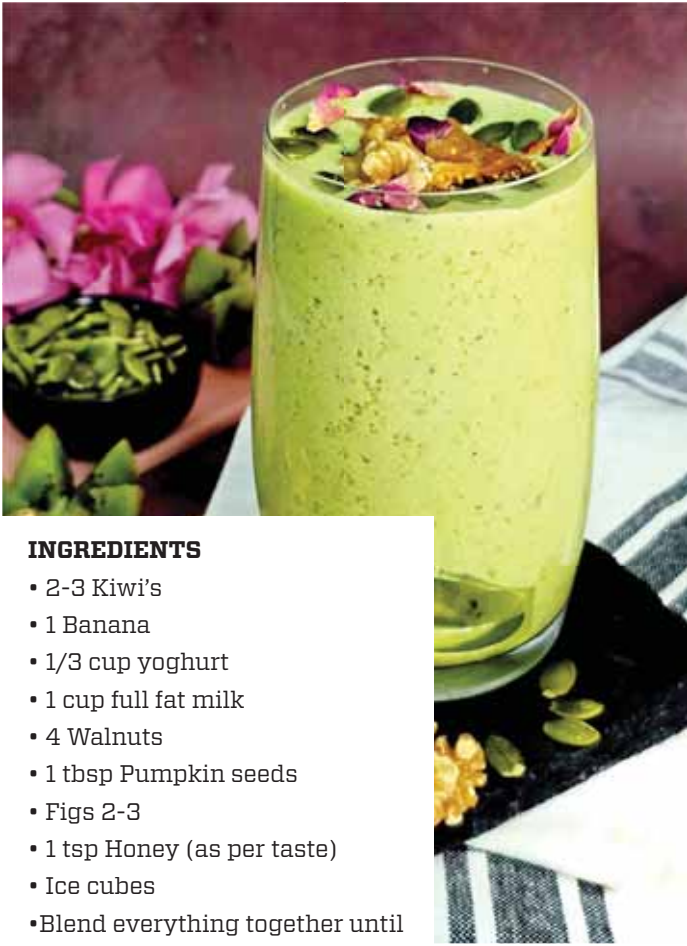


While it is important to drink plenty of water during non-fasting hours, Ramadan is the perfect time to curtail or stop drinking caffeinated drinks. Drinking coffee right after breaking fast can significantly increase a person’s gastric acid. Also it can disturb your sleep pattern.

» IFTAR DRINK

Samreen Hamid

KIWI WALNUTS SMOOTHIE WITH PUMPKIN SEEDS



**INGREDIENTS**

- 2-3 Kiwi’s
- 1 Banana
- 1/3 cup yoghurt
- 1 cup full fat milk
- 4 Walnuts
- 1 tbsp Pumpkin seeds
- Figs 2-3
- 1 tsp Honey (as per taste)
- Ice cubes

•Blend everything together until well combined. Pour into a glass, top with Pumpkin seeds and serve immediately.

» GOOD DEEDS

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF RAMADAN

Daily habits in the holy month of Ramadan change when many people alter their routines to adapt with rituals that they don’t normally perform in other months.

But Ramadan is not just to stay hungry the whole day and eat uncontrollable during the evening. In other words, it is not about fasting or refraining from eating food during the day. It is our deeds and performances during the day and night that count.

It is the belief in our actions that are vital in this month. The belief that we need to be better humans, by helping others around us, is the true spirit of Ramadan. It is also not what you don’t digest during the day in your stomach but what you digest in your mind the whole 30 days of the month, which is important.

How we conduct ourselves, not only socially but spiritually, is also the focus here. But many



SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

people think Ramadan is about certain sets of rules. This is where they go wrong and they go wrong in many ways. To do good deeds, or show kindness to all, have no rules. For example, to be supportive to your family comes first.

Second, is to be helpful to

your local community by devoting your time with them. There are many ways you can engage yourself that way. Charity work like raising money for the less fortunate is most important, not just giving them food.

But if you are not able to go into that path, there are other ways of being charitable in Ramadan. One example comes to mind. We see a lot of gatherings in the evenings of Ramadan, not just in mosques, but in other public areas. These gatherings are not just for preaching but they have one thing in common.

For people in all walks of life to be together and share their happiness and problems at the same time. Some people, even the wealthiest, need to be listened to. Being supportive by just being attentive, when someone pours out their feelings, is very important. That’s the reason why these sittings are important during the Ramadan.

These sittings are also, in a

loose term, is about ‘spiritual networking’ with different people and some, you may not have met before. Just being there is important even if you no money in the bank to share it with others. In this context, no one has nothing to give, like many would like to think when they say they have no spare cash. Your time with them is part of giving.

You could also try to forgive someone who did you wrong in the past. When you have disagreements, find out a way for reconciliation. It may be hard but the rewards are high. All these actions are about spiritual cleansing while fasting is about biologically scrubbing your body with unwanted fats. So we get both in the same month.

So embracing the spirit of Ramadan has many advantages. It is spiritual healing for yourself and being compassionate to your family, neighbours and the community, at the same time.



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NORTH AL SHARQIYAH

Al Nama Hospital project on track

Times News Service

**IBRA:** Construction work of the Al Nama Hospital project in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate is continuing, with the completion rate reaching more than 15 percent by the beginning of March.

The hospital is being built on an area of 428,000 square metres, at a total cost of more than OMR56 million.

The Director General of Projects and Engineering Services at the Ministry of Health, said that work of the Al Nama Hospital project in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate is progressing at a good pace, with work beginning in April of last year.

He pointed out that the hospital project, which is being built on an area of 428,000 square metres out of the total area allocated for the project, which is 720,000 square

metres, has been built according to modern specifications, following the international design style.

The project includes more than 150 beds distributed across the surgical, paediatric, and paediatric intensive care wards, a premature infant ward, an adult intensive care ward, a gynaecology and obstetrics ward, and an internal medicine ward, in addition to an accident and emergency unit, a cardiac care unit.

MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Seamless transactions

**<FROM A1** By eliminating the need for physical visits, the initiative has significantly improved service efficiency, allowing beneficiaries to complete transactions seamlessly from anywhere.

**Digital evolution**

Sayyid Saud bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Governor of Muscat, hailed this as a major milestone in the governorate's digital evolution.

"This accomplishment aligns with Oman Vision 2040's commitment to leveraging technology for efficient governance. We are proud to set a benchmark in digital service delivery, ensuring a smooth and accessible experience for all beneficiaries. We extend our gratitude to the digital transformation team and Muscat Municipality for their dedication in making this vision a reality. Our goal is to set a benchmark for digital service delivery in Oman," he said.



OMAN CRICKET CLUB (OCC)

Invitation to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Club for the year 2025

The Board of Management of the Oman Cricket Club (OCC) will be holding its Annual General Meeting of the club for the year 2025. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, 9th April, 2025 commencing at 6.00 pm at the Oman Cricket Academy. All Members wishing to attend this meeting and whose membership may have expired are requested to proceed with renewal of the membership with effect from the date of this announcement. The last date for renewal of membership is Monday, 31st March, 2025 before 5.00 pm.

As per Article No.29 of the Statute of the Sports Clubs No 124/2008, the meeting will be considered valid in the presence of an absolute majority of members of the club who are entitled to attend (half + one). If the required number of members are unavailable at 6.30 pm., the meeting could be postponed to another date within 15 days from the date of the first meeting, or be held on the same day at 7.00 pm.

The second meeting held on the same day will be considered valid in the presence of (quarter) of working members. Agenda will be available at OCC office before 7 days of the scheduled meeting.

**Secretary of the Club**  
**Chairman of the Board of Directors**



الشركة العامة للتنمية الزراعية (ش.م.ع.م)  
**OMAN AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (S.A.O.C.)**  
P.O. BOX 2398, PC 130 Al Ghubra, Sultanate of Oman, Head Office Tel: 24591677, Fax: 24592099

Unclaimed dividends for the year ended 30 April 2024

Oman Agriculture Development Company SAOC would like to inform its Shareholders that the unclaimed dividends for the year ended 30 April 2024, approved at the Annual General Meeting held on 18 July 2024, have been deposited with the Investors Trust Fund – Financial Services Authority (FSA).

Shareholders who have not yet claimed their dividends are requested to visit the Muscat Clearing and Depository SAOC office located at Ruwi, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. Shareholders should bring their identification documents to update their personal details and collect their unclaimed dividends.

A copy of the standard form for collecting unclaimed funds can be accessed on the following website: **www.mcd.om**

For further details regarding the procedure for collecting unclaimed dividends, Shareholders may contact:

Address:

Muscat Clearing and Depository Company SAOC Building, Ruwi Area,  
P O Box 952, Muscat, Oman (Postal code 112)  
Phone: (+968) 2482 2222  
Email: mail@mcd.om  
Website: www.mcd.om



شركة أوكيو للصناعات الاساسية (المنطقة الحرة بصلالة) ش.م.ع.ع  
**OQ Basic Industries Corporation (Salalah Free Zone) SAOG**

NOTICE AND INVITATION TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & EXTRA ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SFZ) SAOG ( the "Company") has the pleasure to invite the shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting & Extra Ordinary General Meeting , which will be held on Sunday at 07:00 PM on 23/03/2025, via the electronic platform which can be accessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.om) . If the quorum requirement for holding the Annual General Meeting is not fulfilled, a second Annual General Meeting & Extra Ordinary General Meeting General Meeting shall be held on Tuesday at 07:00 PM on 25/03/2025, via the electronic platform which can be accessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.om) to discuss the following agenda:

Annual Ordinary General Meeting Agendas :

- To consider and approve the Board of Director's Report for the financial year ended 31 December 2024
- To consider and approve the Corporate Governance Report for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.
- To consider the Auditor's Report and approve the Financial Statements (Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account) of the Company for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.
- To notify the General Assembly of the transactions carried out by the company with related parties during the financial year ended 31 December 2024
- To consider and approve the proposed cash dividend to the shareholders, as on the date of the meeting, amounting to 2.37 baisa for each share for the financial year ended 31 December 2024
- To consider the amounts allocated and spent for the company's social responsibilities for the year ended on 31/12/2024 (as per the Annexure).
- To discuss and approve the proposed allocation of RO 877,266 (Equivalent to USD 2,278,496) to fulfil the Company's Corporate Social responsibilities for the year ending on 31 December 2025.
- To consider and approve the proposal of distributing the total sum of RO 93,750 as remuneration for the Board of Directors of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2024.
- To elect two new Members of the Board of Directors of the Company. Any person who wishes to be nominated to the Board of Directors of the Company is required to fill in a Director's Nomination Form and send it by email to (umaima.alwahaibi@oq.com). The completed Form should be delivered to the Company at least five (5) days prior to the date of the Annual Ordinary General Meeting of the Company (no later than the end of business day Sunday, 16 March 2025). Nomination forms received after such date will not be accepted. The

candidate must satisfy the company's board membership requirements.

- To approve the sitting fees paid to the board of directors and its subcommittees during the financial year ended 31 December 2024, and determine the sitting fees for the financial year 2025 (as per the annexure)
- To appoint the auditors for the financial year ending 31 December 2025 and approve their fees
- To appoint an independent entity to evaluate the performance of the Board of directors for the fiscal year ending on December 31, 2025, and determine their fees.

EXTRA ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING AGENDAS:

- To approve the amendment of Article (6) of the Articles of Association of the Company (as per the annexure) According to the Company's Articles of Association and the controls for holding General Meetings using modern technology issued by the capital market authority , we would like to draw your attention to the following:
  - Legal person, exclusively, has the right to delegate a natural person to attend the General Meeting and vote on its behalf through technical means, provided that this natural person has an investor number in MCDC.
  - Voting on any of the agenda items begins no more than three days before the date of the General Meeting until the voting process ends on the day of the General Meeting. If the shareholder's shares are increased or decreased, the voting process will be canceled, and the shareholder will have to vote again on the day of the General Meeting.

For further information please contact on telephone no. 91428959 or email: umaima.alwahaibi@oq.com

| OQBI Board Chairman                 | Legal Advisor                       | External Auditor |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Engineer Ali bin Mohammed Al Lawati | AlMamary and Alabri Advocates Legal | KPMG LLC         |

**Ramadan Iftar Program**



The Prophet (ﷺ) said "Whoever breaks the fast for a fasting person, will have a reward similar to his reward, however, nothing is detracted from the reward of a fasting person" .

The Oman Charitable Organization is pleased to announce that it will receive donations for Ramadan Iftar Program in Sultanate of Oman for the year 1446 AH AD 2025

You can donate through the following means:

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# Greenland elections to be closely watched by the world

The supporters of independence for Greenland hope the ballot may result in a strong mandate for Greenland’s complete separation from Denmark



**NUUK:** In normal times, this election probably wouldn’t be of too much interest to the rest of the world. Around 40,000 voters will choose just 31 parliamentarians, and it will all take place on an island that isn’t even fully autonomous.

But these are not normal times and this election is in Greenland, which means it could prove a starting point for further geopolitical upheaval in the Northern Hemisphere. Firstly, because supporters of independence for Greenland hope the ballot may result in a strong mandate for Greenland’s complete separation from Denmark. Currently Greenland, a former Danish colony, is a self-governing territory of the latter. And secondly, and probably most importantly, because US President Donald Trump has been talking about making Greenland part of the US ever since he was elected last November.

**Greenland’s mineral wealth** Trump has frequently spoken of how it would be in the interests of US security to control Greenland. Since the 1950s, the US has run the Pituffik Space Base, in the north-west of Greenland. It is the Americans’ northernmost post and plays a key role in



missile warnings and space surveillance. Previously, during the Cold War, it was called the Thule Air Base and was there to send early warnings and initiate defense against potential Soviet attacks. Other than security issues, economics might also play a part in Trump’s claims on Greenland. In the south of Greenland, there are thought to be valuable deposits of oil, gas, gold, uranium and zinc. Thanks to climate change, which is thawing Greenland’s ground out, mining these deposits will eventually become easier. During his first term in office, in 2019, Trump offered to buy Greenland. The government in Denmark swiftly rejected that. But this term, Trump has continued to express expansionist

intentions, over Canada, the Panama Canal and Gaza, as well as Greenland. Even before he took up office in January, Trump sent his son, Donald Trump Jr., to Greenland — although officially he was there as a tourist. A few weeks later, a poll was published showing that only 6% of Greenlanders wanted their island to become part of the US, while 85% opposed to the idea. In his speech to Congress early in March, President Trump addressed his desire again, directing his comments to the people of Greenland. “We strongly support your right to determine your own future,” Trump said. But just two sentences later, he seemed to renege on

that, stating, “I think we’re going to get it [Greenland] — one way or the other, we’re going to get it.”

**Foreign interference?** Given this and upcoming elections, Greenland has had to deal with the possibility that there could be external attempts to influence the country’s vote — for instance, from Russia or China, both of whom are also pursuing their own security agendas in the Arctic. Denmark’s national security and intelligence service, PET, warned of Russian disinformation in particular. “In the weeks preceding the Greenlandic elections’ date announcement, several cases of fake profiles were observed on social media, including profiles masquerading as Danish and Greenlandic politicians, which contributed to a polarisation of public opinion,” PET stated, although it did not link those accounts to any specific country. Johan Farkas, an assistant professor in media studies at the University of Copenhagen, is familiar with these kinds of posts as they also circulate in Russian media. But he doesn’t think they’d have much impact on Greenland’s elections because, besides Danish, most locals speak Greenlandic, an Inuit language. — DW



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Deputy Editor-in-Chief: **Anees bin Essa Al Zedjali**  
Chief Executive Officer: **Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali**

**EDITORIAL:** Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24813153, E-mail: [editor@timesofoman.com](mailto:editor@timesofoman.com)  
**ADVERTISING:** Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24812624, E-mail: [advertising@timesofoman.com](mailto:advertising@timesofoman.com)  
**CIRCULATION:** Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: [circulation@timesofoman.com](mailto:circulation@timesofoman.com)

## Donald Trump wants to revisit US-Canada border treaty: Report

**WASHINGTON DC:** Amid the ongoing tariff war between the two countries, US President Donald Trump, during his conversation with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, raised the point that he did not believe in the border demarcation treaty between them and wants to revise the boundary, according to media report.



The report, which cited four people with firsthand knowledge of their content, on the condition of anonymity, also noted that Trump, in an early February call, challenged the border treaty between the two countries and told Trudeau he didn’t like their shared water agreements. Recently, Justin Trudeau made an extraordinary statement that was largely lost in the fray of the moment, as per NYT. “The excuse that he’s giving for these tariffs today of fentanyl is completely bogus, completely unjustified, completely false,” Trudeau told the news media in Ottawa. “What he wants is to see a total collapse of the Canadian economy, because that’ll make it easier to annex us,” he added. The conversation between Washington and Ottawa on February 3 not only included dis-

cussions on staving off tariffs on Canadian exports but Trump also laid out a long list of grievances he had with the trade relationship between the two countries, including Canada’s protected dairy sector, the difficulty American banks face in doing business in Canada and Canadian consumption taxes that Trump deems unfair because they make American goods more expensive. Notably, the border treaty that Trump referred to was established in 1908 and finalized the international boundary between Canada, then a British dominion, and the United States, as reported by NYT. Trump also mentioned revisiting the sharing of lakes and rivers between the two nations, which is regulated by a number of treaties, a topic he’s expressed interest in in the past. — ANI



**Muscat Gases Company SAOG**  
PO Box 11, PC 124, Rusayl, Sultanate of Oman.  
Tel: 22526900, Email: [info@muscatgas.com](mailto:info@muscatgas.com)

### COMPANY REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2024

**Respected Shareholders,**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all on behalf of my colleagues and the Board of Directors of Muscat Gases Company SAOG to the 35th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the company.

A summary of the results of the company performance for the year ending 31 st December 2024 is presented below.

**Operating Performance:**

**Revenue:**

Total revenue for the year ended 31st December 2024 in the parent Company was OMR 17,240,760 and the total revenue in the group Companies was RO 18,217,504 compared with total revenue of OMR 18,709,433 in the parent Company and the total revenue of OMR 19,195,288 in the group Companies for the year ended 31 st December 2023.

**Net Profit:**

Net Loss after tax for year ended 31 st December 2024 in the parent Company was OMR (150,995) and OMR (265,171) in the group Companies, compared with Net Profit after tax figure of OMR 835,820 in the parent Company and OMR 738,879 in the group Companies for the year ended 31 st Dec 2023.

Earnings per share (EPS) in the parent Company is OMR (0.005) and OMR (0.009) in the group Companies, for the year ended 31 st December 2024 compared with OMR 0.028 in the parent Company and OMR 0.025 in the group Companies for the year ended 31 st December 2023.

The board also reviewed the related party transactions as mentioned in note-26 which are within the normal business relationship.

**Investment in Subsidiary Companies:**

Muscat Gases Company SAOG acquired 100% of the shares of the LPG Filling Company with Alaman Industrial and House Gases Company LLC on January 6, 2021.

Muscat Gases Company SAOG holds 99.99% of the shares of the company with its subsidiary Muscat Power Pioneer LLC in addition to 99% of the shares of the subsidiary with United Marketing Solutions LLC.

During 2023, Muscat Gases Company SAOG established and expanded its activities and launched a new subsidiary in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where it holds 100% of the shares of its subsidiary called Muscat Power Solutions LLC.

**Market Share:**

The company has a significant share in the local LPG market in several diversified areas such as Cylinder Bottling, Bulk Gas Delivery, MGAP [Deodorized Gas] and export. The company plans to achieve sustainable growth by expanding its product and service portfolio, in addition to opening new sales channels. The company has been and will remain fully committed to its national role in serving consumers and meeting their LPG

needs. The company also continues to focus on enhancing operational efficiency and improving customer service.

**Human Resources**

Human Resources plays an important strategic role in the continuous development of MGC and employees are our key assets in this journey to success.

**Omanization**

Omanization and continuous development of National workforce has been given top priority.

Majority of the functions and divisions are being headed by Omanis. The company achieved 45.83% Omanization and we believe that the Omanization will be adding more value to the Company.

**Health Safety & Environment**

Muscat Gases Company is committed to high HSE standards and promotes HSE culture among its employees and distributors.

**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):**

As part of its ongoing commitment to support the society and environment, Muscat Gases has embarked on number of CSR initiatives and programs related to its mandate and operating field as part of its commitment to protect the safety and foster convenience of customers. During the year 2024, the Company spent OMR 200 for the CSR Programme.

**Future Outlook:**

**LPG:** The Company formulated a 5-year growth strategy in different areas to increase the Company’s performance in coming years.

The Management’s total focus on the LPG business has started yielding better results and the Company is committed to put all its efforts to maximize the shareholders return.

**Thanks, and Appreciation.**

On behalf of the Board of Directors and employees, we are honored to express our gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq Bin Taimur Al Said for his wise leadership and pray to Almighty Allah to grant him good health and wellness in leading the country on the path of sustainable development.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to our shareholders and customers for their continued support, which has played a major role in achieving the desired results. We are confident that Muscat Gases Company SAOG will overcome the challenges and will be able to reach new levels of excellence and innovation.

**Engr. Omar Ahmed Salim Qatan**  
Chairman

### SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

|                                      | Parent Company    |                   | Group             |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                      | 31 Dec 2024       | 31 Dec 2023       | 31 Dec 2024       | 31 Dec 2023       |
| <b>ASSETS</b>                        |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| <b>Non-current assets</b>            |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Property, plant and equipment        | 2,629,232         | 2,839,693         | 2,952,407         | 3,133,647         |
| Goodwill                             | -                 | -                 | 996,800           | 996,800           |
| Investment in subsidiaries           | 2,004,118         | 2,004,118         | -                 | -                 |
| Right-of-use assets                  | 203,894           | 218,293           | 203,894           | 218,293           |
| <b>Total non-current assets</b>      | <b>4,837,244</b>  | <b>5,062,104</b>  | <b>4,153,101</b>  | <b>4,348,740</b>  |
| <b>Current assets</b>                |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Inventories                          | 3,019,215         | 978,958           | 3,169,323         | 1,089,816         |
| Trade and other receivables          | 4,072,716         | 5,012,388         | 3,998,884         | 4,265,087         |
| Cash and bank balances               | 1,015,809         | 1,693,432         | 1,219,674         | 1,758,595         |
| <b>Total current assets</b>          | <b>8,107,740</b>  | <b>7,684,778</b>  | <b>8,387,880</b>  | <b>7,113,498</b>  |
| <b>Total assets</b>                  | <b>12,944,984</b> | <b>12,746,882</b> | <b>12,540,981</b> | <b>11,462,238</b> |
| <b>EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>        |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| <b>Capital and reserves</b>          |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Share capital                        | 3,000,000         | 3,000,000         | 3,000,000         | 3,000,000         |
| Legal reserve                        | 1,000,000         | 1,000,000         | 1,013,094         | 1,013,094         |
| Special reserve                      | 1,457,067         | 1,457,067         | 1,457,067         | 1,457,067         |
| Revaluation reserve                  | 807,666           | 807,666           | 807,666           | 807,666           |
| Accumulated losses                   | (392,237)         | (241,242)         | (540,224)         | (275,053)         |
| <b>Total capital and reserves</b>    | <b>5,872,496</b>  | <b>6,023,491</b>  | <b>5,737,603</b>  | <b>6,002,774</b>  |
| <b>Non-current liabilities</b>       |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Lease liabilities                    | 255,093           | 253,115           | 255,093           | 253,115           |
| Employees’ end of service benefits   | 117,977           | 126,533           | 142,432           | 134,641           |
| Deferred tax liabilities - net       | 106,778           | 133,189           | 108,621           | 139,691           |
| <b>Total non-current liabilities</b> | <b>479,848</b>    | <b>512,837</b>    | <b>506,146</b>    | <b>527,447</b>    |
| <b>Current liabilities</b>           |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Term loans                           | -                 | 181,051           | -                 | 181,051           |
| Bank overdraft                       | 235,937           | 491,553           | 235,937           | 491,553           |
| Lease liabilities                    | 5,323             | 9,287             | 5,323             | 9,287             |
| Trade and other payables             | 6,331,162         | 5,495,855         | 6,035,754         | 4,216,328         |
| Income tax payable                   | 20,218            | 32,808            | 20,218            | 33,798            |
| <b>Total current liabilities</b>     | <b>6,592,640</b>  | <b>6,210,554</b>  | <b>6,297,232</b>  | <b>4,932,017</b>  |
| <b>Total liabilities</b>             | <b>7,072,488</b>  | <b>6,723,391</b>  | <b>6,803,378</b>  | <b>5,459,464</b>  |
| <b>Total equity and liabilities</b>  | <b>12,944,984</b> | <b>12,746,882</b> | <b>12,540,981</b> | <b>11,462,238</b> |
| <b>Net assets per share</b>          | <b>0.196</b>      | <b>0.201</b>      | <b>0.191</b>      | <b>0.200</b>      |

### SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

|                                                                                             | Parent Company         |                        | Group                  |                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|                                                                                             | 31 Dec year ended 2024 | 31 Dec year ended 2023 | 31 Dec year ended 2024 | 31 Dec year ended 2023 |
| Revenue                                                                                     | 17,240,760             | 18,709,433             | 18,217,504             | 19,195,288             |
| Direct costs                                                                                | (16,482,258)           | (16,790,526)           | (17,290,913)           | (17,212,860)           |
| <b>Gross profit</b>                                                                         | <b>758,502</b>         | <b>1,918,907</b>       | <b>926,591</b>         | <b>1,982,428</b>       |
| Other income                                                                                | 39,791                 | 50,276                 | 30,234                 | 47,830                 |
| Allowance for expected credit losses on trade receivables                                   | 5,200                  | (265,945)              | 5,200                  | (265,945)              |
| Administrative and general expenses                                                         | (972,077)              | (872,769)              | (1,246,240)            | (1,019,880)            |
| <b>(Loss) / profit from operations</b>                                                      | <b>(168,584)</b>       | <b>830,469</b>         | <b>(284,215)</b>       | <b>744,433</b>         |
| Finance income                                                                              | 37,490                 | 67,030                 | 37,490                 | 67,030                 |
| Finance costs                                                                               | (46,312)               | (63,049)               | (49,516)               | (64,008)               |
| <b>(Loss) / profit before tax for the Year</b>                                              | <b>(177,406)</b>       | <b>834,450</b>         | <b>(296,241)</b>       | <b>747,455</b>         |
| Income tax                                                                                  | 26,411                 | 1,370                  | 31,070                 | (8,576)                |
| <b>Net and total Comprehensive (loss) / profit for the year (Loss) / earnings per share</b> | <b>(150,995)</b>       | <b>835,820</b>         | <b>(265,171)</b>       | <b>738,879</b>         |
|                                                                                             | (0.005)                | 0.028                  | (0.009)                | 0.025                  |



SPORTS

# INDIA ARE CHAMPIONS

Rohit Sharma & Co beat New Zealand by four wickets to clinch the Champions Trophy for the third time

**DUBAI:** India won the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 Final in Dubai, beating New Zealand by four wickets on Sunday. Chasing 252 to win, India made 254/6, with KL Rahul (34\*) and Ravindra Jadeja (9\*) seeing the innings home with one over to spare, after New Zealand had earlier made 251/7. India won the Champions Trophy for the third time. And this surely has to be the most comprehensive. Unbeaten all through the tournament and have rarely been challenged at any stage. Jadeja hit the winning runs as he pulled past deep square leg and into the fence. This is also the second straight ICC title for India following their ICC T20 World Cup title in West Indies.

The match was in the balance for a good proportion of the India innings as the Black Caps took a series of quick wickets. The openers Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill put together a great first-wicket stand of 105, making the result look a foregone conclusion, but once again it was Glenn Phillips who produced something special. He took a tremendous catch, leaping to his right to remove Gill for 31, from the bowling of Mitchell Santner. Michael Bracewell trapped new batter Virat Kohli lbw four balls later for just 1. And Rachin Ravindra brought Rohit's impressive day to an end, luring him down the track to be stumped by Tom Latham for 76. Ravindra took another good



catch to remove Shreyas Iyer on 48, with Axar Patel following three overs later, caught by Will O'Rourke off Michael Bracewell. Hardik Pandya made a breezy run-a-ball cameo for 18, caught and bowled by Kyle Jamieson in the 48th over. It was then left to Rahul and Jadeja to steer the team home. The Black Caps - already without the injured Matt Henry, the tournament's leading wicket-taker - also missed Kane Williamson in the field, who sustained a quad injury while batting. Earlier, India put a stranglehold on New Zealand as their spinners took control in the middle of the game with Varun Chakaravathy and Kuldeep Yadav both taking two wickets. They managed to restrict New Zealand to a run-rate of



3.30 in overs 11 to 30. But a late resurgence saw the Black Caps put on 50 runs in the last five overs to boost their score. New Zealand had made a quick start, with Will Young and Ravindra both riding their luck as India missed a few chances for early

wickets. But Varun eventually made the breakthrough, taking out Young lbw in the eighth over. Ravindra's promising start was cut short for 37 runs off 29 balls, bowled by Kuldeep, who then caught-and-bowled Kane Williamson two overs later. Latham was trapped lbw by Ravindra Jadeja for 14, Glenn Phillips put in a valuable 34 off 52 balls, hitting two fours and a six before being bowled by Varun, and Daryl Mitchell's 63 from 101 balls was also useful, but included only three boundaries. Captain Mitchell Santner was run out as his side pushed for more runs in the penultimate over, and Michael Bracewell reached his half-century with one ball of the innings left, to give himself and the rest of the bowlers a target to work with.

At the post-match presentation ceremony, India skipper Rohit said: "It is very satisfying win. Right from the beginning our spinners never disappointed. It helped them and we used that to our advantage. "We were very consistent with our bowling. The overall batsmanship shown by all the batters was special. Very grateful for the fans. We really appreciate their support. It may not be seen as useful but when they come out, it makes a difference." **Brief scores:** New Zealand: 251/7 (Ravindra 37, Mitchell 63, Bracewell 53, Phillips 34; Varun 2/45, Kuldeep 2/40) lost to India 254/6 in 49 overs (Rohit 76, Gull 31, Iyer 48, Axar 29, KL Rahul 34\*, Pandya 18; Santner 2/46, Bracewell 2/28). - Agencies

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Scheme Period: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 to 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025  
Reliable International Automotive LLC. C.R. No. 1707183, Wattayah: 24579846/47; Al Mawelah: 93204360; Barka: 93201347; Nizwa: 99874368; Sohar: 92837722; Sur: 25546190/93204360; Rustaq: 92869449; Salalah: 23211460/99884217. Saturday Showroom Timing: Muscat, Al Mawelah, Barka, Sohar & Salalah from 9.00 AM to 1.00 PM

<sup>#</sup> VAT will be adjusted in the deal through a VAT Gift, equivalent to 5% of the vehicle price. This VAT gift is in addition to normal Cash Gift offer applicable on the model. VAT gift on select models such as K3, K5 PE (24MY), K8, Sonet, Seltos, Sportage 1.6T SMK & Sportage L. <sup>##</sup> 1 EV6 Earth (24MY) Winnings are through Raffle coupons only. Raffle coupons to customers will be provided only after the finalization & approval of their standard deal by their FC companies/Banks. Raffle Date : 07/05/25 at the end of campaign. Subject to full payment of purchased car. The handover of the Raffle prize will be done after 15th May 2025 upon completion of all legal & financial documents towards purchase of new vehicle such as formal delivery note & invoice and new vehicle ROP Registration. <sup>@</sup> 1 year insurance & 1 year registration (as applicable) would be given on all models except Picanto to the extent of a private vehicle. Additional premium as per insurance norm would have to be paid by the buyer. For models where insurance is offered as a benefit, additional cash gift can be availed by customer in lieu of insurance. <sup>\*\*</sup> Total applicable Service benefit will be from 5 Years/50,000Kms to 10 years/100,000Kms whichever is earlier: 50,000 Kms/ 5 years. On Picanto: K3, K5 PE (24MY), K8, Sonet (24MY), Seltos (25MY), all Sportage models, Sportage PE (25MY) & Carnival PE. 100,000Kms/ 10 years on Pegas, Cerato, iS PE (25MY), Sonet (24MY) & Seltos (24MY), Telluride & Carens. The Service Benefit offer for EV vehicles is 105,000Kms/5 years whichever is earlier. <sup>§</sup> The film tinting will be of 3M colour stable (Side Glasses & Rr. Windscreen) & will be installed only in Sportage in 1.6T SMK & Sportage L. Trims only after the delivery & completion of invoicing of the vehicle. All the above benefits are not applicable on Ministry, Bulk fleet, Corporate & RAC deals. Scheme Period: 23/02/2025 to 23/04/2025 Vehicles may also include some Dealer Installed Accessories. Pictures & Colors are indicative. For further details, please visit your nearest Kia showroom.

MINISTRY SIGNS PACT

Represented by the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO), the Ministry of Defence signed an agreement for emergency air support with OQ Exploration and Production Company (OQEP) for the offshore concession area of Bukha Platforms in Musandam Governorate.

MARKET  
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,420.35 points, up by 0.57% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.22% at 402.05 points. OIFC Bonds, up 11.11%, was the top gainer while Aman REIT, down 4.40%, was the top loser.

# FSA registered 2,627 insurance complaints

The data shows that the total number of requests received by the FSA amounted to 22,544, which were distributed across inquiries, reports, and complaints of various types



Regarding complaints, the statistics show that 2,627 insurance complaints were recorded; this indicates heightened consumer awareness of their insurance rights and their pursuit of the services provided by the FSA. The FSA also received 35 complaints related to public joint-stock companies, 35 complaints against companies operating in the field of securities and 18 complaints directed against the FSA itself. These complaints were handled in accordance with the applicable regulations and legislation to ensure the rights of all concerned parties. The data shows that the total number of requests received

by the FSA amounted to 22,544, which were distributed across inquiries, reports, and complaints of various types. This reinforces the role of the FSA in protecting consumer rights and promoting a more transparent and equitable financial environment. These statistics reflect the level of interaction with inquiries and complaints from individuals and companies operating across various financial sectors, highlighting the FSA's commitment to delivering quick and effective responses to consumer needs. The statistics also revealed that inquiries represented the largest share of requests, with a total of

19,665 inquiries. This indicates an increasing level of awareness among the public about the importance of engaging with the FSA to obtain accurate information regarding financial laws and regulations. Additionally, the FSA received 164 reports, (whistle-blowing) a service that allows individuals to report illegal violations or unethical activities that may harm companies, shareholders or the public. This service can also be used to report activities or the provision of services or products related to the capital market or insurance sector without the required license or approval from the FSA. It is worth noting that the FSA previously launched the "Consumer Protection Statistics in the Capital Market and Insurance Sectors" electronic service. This service is an online page that is automatically updated based on the movement and activity of the systems and electronic services related to communication with individuals and institutions in these two sectors via the FSA's website. The page includes indicators and data on the details of inquiries and complaints submitted to the FSA, along with the status of their resolution.

LEADING TRAVEL TRADE SHOW



## Omran strengthens Oman's tourism presence on global stage at ITB Berlin

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance direct and effective communication with the public, and provide integrated electronic services that facilitate access to information and resolve issues faced by consumers, the Financial Services Authority (FSA) has announced its annual statistics for consumer protection services in 2024.

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran Group) successfully wrapped up its participation at ITB Berlin 2025, the world's leading travel trade show, reinforcing Oman's position as a premier global tourism destination. Held from March 4 to 6, ITB Berlin welcomed representatives from over 170 countries, and 5,800 exhibitors. The event provided an ideal opportunity to connect with key industry players, explore investment prospects, and foster partnerships that contribute to advancing tourism growth in Oman. Omran Group's participation in the exhibition reflected its commitment to supporting the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism's efforts to showcase Oman's rich tourism offerings and enhance its global appeal. As part of this presence, the National Travel Operator – Visit Oman, a subsidiary of Omran Group, signed several agreements with leading international

travel tech companies (OTAs) to expand Oman's footprint in key tourism markets. Additionally, several of the Group's hotel assets took part, highlighting the country's exceptional hospitality experiences that seamlessly blend modern luxury with authentic Omani hospitality. Commenting on the participation, Shabib Mohammed Al Maamari, Managing Director of Visit Oman, stated: "ITB Berlin serves as a prestigious global platform that strengthens Oman's position in international markets. Through our participation as part of Omran Group, we are committed to establishing and enhancing relationships with key tourism industry stakeholders, to explore new avenues for collaboration and drive the digital growth of Oman's vast travel offerings. Agreements with leading travel tech companies, including Trip.com Group and Expedia, demonstrate our commitment to empowering local tourism providers and accelerating their global digital integration through scaled distribution."

RBI DATA

## India's foreign exchange reserves fall to \$639bn

**NEW DELHI:** India's foreign exchange reserves slumped in the week that ended on February 28, as per latest RBI data. In the week under consideration, the foreign exchange reserves declined by \$1.781 billion to \$638.698 billion. Forex reserves had slumped for about four months, recently hitting an 11-month low. Then followed the latest rollercoaster movement, with gains some weeks and declines the next. Forex reserves started falling

after touching an all-time high of \$704.89 billion in September. They are now about 10 percent lower from their peak. **RBI intervention** The decline in reserves is most likely due to RBI intervention, aimed at preventing a sharp depreciation of the Rupee. The Indian Rupee is now at or near its all-time low against the US dollar. The latest RBI data showed that India's foreign currency assets (FCA), the largest component

of forex reserves, stood at USD 543.350 billion. Gold reserves currently amount to \$73.272 billion, according to RBI data. Estimates suggest that India's foreign exchange reserves are sufficient to cover approximately 10-11 months of projected imports. In 2023, India added around \$58 billion to its foreign exchange reserves, contrasting with a cumulative decline of \$71 billion in 2022. In 2024, the reserves rose by a little over \$20 billion. – ANI



WORLD GOLD COUNCIL



## Global gold ETFs saw continued inflows in February

**New Delhi:** Global gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) saw continued inflows during February as holdings across all regions grew, data made available by the World Gold Council (WGC) showed. Investors in Asia in par bought gold ETFs aggressively in February, totalling \$2.3 billion. Amid uncertainty in stock markets, wealthy investors are parking their money in gold ETFs rather than buying physical gold. The year 2025 saw a strong interest in gold ETFs, marked by unprecedented inflows by far. According to the Council, Indian investors maintained healthy gold ETFs inflows, albeit at a reduced pace compared to January's record levels. China led the inflows in February, data showed. "Despite positive equity market sentiment - particularly around AI stocks amid the DeepSeek frenzy - the surging local gold price was attention-grabbing. In fact, the Baidu Search Index of the keyword "gold" rocketed to its highest since 2013," WGC wrote in its monthly Gold ETF Commentary.

Moving on to Japan, another key market, it saw inflows again -- for the fifth consecutive month. Funds in other regions added \$159 million, their third consecutive monthly inflow. Australia once again dominated demand--experiencing its strongest month since September 2024--and South Africa also registered gains. The sustained weakness in the equity markets has also been driving flows into gold ETFs, with investors pulling back from equities in favour of the safe-haven appeal of gold. "We have now seen three consecutive months of strong global inflows which, combined an upward trending gold price, have lifted total assets under management (AUM) to \$306 billion," WGC said. On the contrary, the UK saw mild outflows, while Germany and Switzerland continued to book gains. A Gold ETF is an exchange-traded fund (ETF) that aims to track the domestic physical gold price. They are passive investment instruments that are based on gold prices. – ANI

PROTIVITI REPORT

## 40% of executives see economic risks as top concern for the next 2-3 years

**NEW DELHI:** As geopolitical tensions evolve into new forms, 40 per cent of board members and C-suite executives are now identifying economic conditions as the most significant risk factor for their organisations over the next two to three years, according to a report by Protiviti. The 2025 edition of Executive Perspectives on Top Risks report says that with inflationary pressures and global market shifts threatening growth opportunities and profit margins, business leaders worldwide are increasingly focused on navigating the uncertainties shaping the future of the global economy. The report added that economic conditions, including inflation, deglobalisation, and geopolitical tensions, have emerged as the number one risk globally for business leaders. This concern reflects the collective fatigue resulting from the uncertainty that has plagued global markets since the COVID-19 pandemic.



The threat of protectionism, supply chain disruptions, and volatile fiscal and monetary policies have compounded these challenges, particularly as many economies outside the U.S. have yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels. Interestingly, while the risk of economic volatility dominates, business leaders are increasingly optimistic about their organizations' ability to handle future disruptions. The survey finds that board members and executives believe their companies are better equipped to manage change, demonstrating improved resilience, agility, and preparedness in comparison to previous years. This optimism is reflected in the growing confidence that organizations are now more adept at navigating crises, from cybersecurity threats to emerging technologies and shifting market conditions, the report added. According to the report, one of the top emerging risks identified is the rapid pace of disruptive innovations driven by new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). These innovations, which were

ranked 13th in 2024 and 19th in 2023 as a near-term concern, now occupy the 8th position for the upcoming two-to-three-year horizon. However, concerns around external risks such as economic volatility and cyber threats remain critical. Cybersecurity, ranked second in near-term risks, is particularly pressing as cybercriminals exploit advancements in AI to launch more sophisticated attacks. Growing complexities of regulatory risk is another noteworthy finding of the report as it added that with regulations rapidly evolving, especially in light of increasing scrutiny on data privacy and AI deployment, business leaders are faced with navigating an unpredictable legal landscape. According to the report, talent-related risks are also top of mind for executives, particularly as organizations struggle to attract, retain, and upskill workers to keep pace with technological advancements. – ANI

PEOPLE'S BANK OF CHINA DATA

## China's foreign exchange reserves rise

**BEIJING:** China's foreign exchange reserves reached nearly \$3.23 trillion at the end of February, up by \$18.2 billion, or 0.57 percent, compared to the end of January, official data showed on Friday. The US dollar index fell last month, and global financial asset prices were mixed, influenced by macroeconomic policies and data from major economies as well as monetary policies and expectations of key central banks, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange said in a statement. **Increased in February** China's foreign exchange reserves increased in February due to a combination of factors, including currency translation and changes in asset prices, according to the statement. The country's economy has a solid foundation, enjoys multiple

advantages, and exhibits strong resilience and great potential, all of which have contributed to the general stability of foreign exchange reserves, the administration said. According to data released Friday by the People's Bank of China, the country's gold reserves increased to 73.61 million ounces at the end of February, up from 73.45 million ounces at the end of January. – Xinhua



MARKET

MSX index ends higher

OIFC Bonds, up 11.11%, was the top gainer while, Aman REIT, down 4.40%, was the top loser



**MUSCAT:** The MSX index closed at 4,420.35 points, up by 0.57% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.22% at 402.05 points. OIFC Bonds, up 11.11%, was the top gainer while, Aman REIT, down 4.40%, was the top loser. Shares of Phoenix Power were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while OQEP were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 689 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO1.63 million, with more than 9.28 million shares changing hands. Out of 48 traded securities, 13 advanced, 14 declined, and 21 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 64K while domestic investors were net sellers for RO 61K, followed by foreign investors for RO 3K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,720.39 points, up 0.82%. Pric-

es of Ahli Bank, National Bank Oman, Al Anwar Investment, Muscat Insurance, OMINVEST were up by 5.39%, 2.14%, 1.43%, 0.31%, 0.30% respectively. Prices of Al Sharqia Investment were down by 1.33% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,793.33 points, up 0.17%.

Prices of Oman Flour Mills, Oman Cement, Al Maha Ceramics were up by 1.38%, 1.22%, 0.82% respectively. Prices of Raysut Cement, Oman Cables Industry were down by 4.00%, 1.44% respectively.

Services Index was up by 0.09% before closing at 1,619.42 points. Prices of Phoenix Power, Ooredoo, Oman Telecom, SMN Power Holding were up by 1.70%, 1.55%, 1.12%, 0.59% respectively. Prices of Al Batinah Power, Sharqiyah Desalination, Al Suwadi Power, National Gas, Muscat Gases were down by 2.99%, 2.94%, 1.54%, 1.28%, 1.25% respectively

— United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

| Index              | High     | Low      | Value    | Prev. Value | Diff  | Diff% |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------|-------|
| MSX 30 INDEX       | 4,420.62 | 4,388.31 | 4,420.35 | 4,395.51    | 24.84 | 0.57  |
| FINANCIAL INDEX    | 7,723.94 | 7,657.48 | 7,720.39 | 7,657.48    | 62.92 | 0.82  |
| Industry Index     | 5,793.33 | 5,780.94 | 5,793.33 | 5,783.25    | 10.08 | 0.17  |
| Services Index     | 1,621.37 | 1,613.38 | 1,619.42 | 1,618.04    | 1.39  | 0.09  |
| MSX Shariah Index  | 404.79   | 401.88   | 402.05   | 402.92      | -0.87 | -0.22 |
| MSX TR INDEX       | 6,193.24 | 6,147.97 | 6,192.86 | 6,158.06    | 34.81 | 0.57  |
| FINANCIAL TR IDIX  | 8,775.19 | 8,699.68 | 8,771.16 | 8,699.68    | 71.48 | 0.82  |
| INDUSTRIAL TR IDIX | 6,684.12 | 6,669.83 | 6,684.12 | 6,672.50    | 11.63 | 0.17  |
| SERVICES TR IDIX   | 1,944.45 | 1,934.87 | 1,942.12 | 1,940.46    | 1.67  | 0.09  |
| FIXED INCOME INDEX | 1,166.89 | 1,166.89 | 1,166.89 | 1,166.89    | 0.00  | 0.00  |

Trading Summary

|           |       |           |       |        |       |                |       |    |       |      |       |       |       |             |       |
|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|----------------|-------|----|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|-------|
| Volume    | ..... | Turnover  | ..... | Trades | ..... | Market Cap     | ..... | Up | ..... | Down | ..... | Equal | ..... | Sec. Traded | ..... |
| 9,289,733 | ..... | 1,634,127 | ..... | 689    | ..... | 27,207,017,723 | ..... | 13 | ..... | 14   | ..... | 21    | ..... | 48          | ..... |

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 9

ISIN

SECURITY NAME

VOLUME

TURNOVER

TRADES

OPEN PRICE

HIGH

LOW

CLOSE PR

PREV. CLOSE

DIFF (RU)

DIFF %

LAST PR

LAST BID

LAST OFFER

PREV. VALUE

MARKET CAP

REGULAR MARKET

|              |                                 |           |         |     |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |       |       |       |       |               |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------|
| OM0000001483 | NATIONAL BANK OMAN              | 9,000     | 2,574   | 1   | 0.286 | 0.286 | 0.286 | 0.286 | 0.280 | 0.006  | 2.143  | 0.286 | 0.280 | 0.300 | 0.100 | 465,020,658   |
| OM0000003968 | OOREDOO                         | 4,817     | 941     | 8   | 0.195 | 0.200 | 0.195 | 0.196 | 0.193 | 0.003  | 1.554  | 0.196 | 0.195 | 0.198 | 0.100 | 127,585,069   |
| OM0000001749 | OMAN CEMENT                     | 1,971     | 982     | 4   | 0.498 | 0.498 | 0.498 | 0.498 | 0.492 | 0.006  | 1.220  | 0.498 | 0.495 | 0.498 | 0.100 | 164,774,610   |
| OM0000003026 | OMAN TELECOM                    | 246,490   | 198,552 | 50  | 0.800 | 0.820 | 0.800 | 0.815 | 0.806 | 0.009  | 1,117  | 0.815 | 0.815 | 0.815 | 0.100 | 611,250,000   |
| OM0000001533 | OMINVEST                        | 82,394    | 27,591  | 30  | 0.335 | 0.336 | 0.330 | 0.336 | 0.335 | 0.001  | 0.299  | 0.336 | 0.336 | 0.336 | 0.100 | 224,570,783   |
| OM0000002176 | JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS          | 8,500     | 3,400   | 2   | 0.400 | 0.400 | 0.400 | 0.400 | 0.400 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.400 | 0.395 | 0.400 | 0.100 | 49,595,184    |
| OM0000002374 | UNITED FINANCE                  | 350,000   | 21,000  | 11  | 0.060 | 0.060 | 0.060 | 0.060 | 0.060 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.060 | 0.060 | 0.061 | 0.100 | 21,367,638    |
| OM0000002796 | BANK MUSCAT                     | 533,028   | 136,977 | 32  | 0.257 | 0.258 | 0.256 | 0.257 | 0.257 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.257 | 0.257 | 0.258 | 0.100 | 1,928,144,045 |
| OM0000003125 | GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO. | 328,973   | 28,951  | 24  | 0.088 | 0.089 | 0.088 | 0.088 | 0.088 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.088 | 0.088 | 0.088 | 0.100 | 17,600,000    |
| OM0000003224 | RENAISSANCE SERVICES            | 79,500    | 27,278  | 9   | 0.345 | 0.345 | 0.342 | 0.345 | 0.345 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.345 | 0.344 | 0.345 | 0.100 | 91,561,450    |
| OM0000003398 | SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK        | 479,531   | 60,900  | 24  | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.127 | 0.122 | 0.127 | 0.100 | 840,390,276   |
| OM0000004735 | SEMOB CORP SALALAH              | 52,766    | 4,737   | 10  | 0.089 | 0.090 | 0.089 | 0.090 | 0.090 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.090 | 0.089 | 0.090 | 0.100 | 85,911,476    |
| OM0000004768 | MADINA TAKAFUL                  | 10,000    | 850     | 1   | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.085 | 0.084 | 0.085 | 0.100 | 14,875,000    |
| OM0000004894 | ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES           | 783,187   | 192,251 | 49  | 0.247 | 0.247 | 0.244 | 0.246 | 0.246 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.246 | 0.245 | 0.246 | 0.100 | 188,668,200   |
| OM0000009072 | OQ GAS NETWORKS                 | 1,023,190 | 131,965 | 86  | 0.130 | 0.130 | 0.128 | 0.129 | 0.130 | -0.001 | -0.079 | 0.129 | 0.124 | 0.129 | 0.100 | 558,650,486   |
| OM0000002440 | AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO.       | 15,000    | 1,110   | 1   | 0.074 | 0.074 | 0.074 | 0.074 | 0.075 | -0.001 | -1.333 | 0.074 | 0.074 | 0.075 | 0.100 | 6,660,000     |
| OM0000004933 | AL SUWADI POWER                 | 123,370   | 7,896   | 7   | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.065 | -0.001 | -1.538 | 0.064 | 0.062 | 0.064 | 0.100 | 45,722,006    |
| OM0000004925 | ALBATINAH POWER                 | 173,000   | 11,288  | 15  | 0.066 | 0.066 | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.067 | -0.002 | -2.985 | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.100 | 43,867,883    |
| Total        | 18                              | 4,304,627 | 859,152 | 364 |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |       |       |       |       |               |

Parallel Market

|              |                                  |           |         |     |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |       |       |       |       |                   |
|--------------|----------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| OM0000002200 | AHLI BANK                        | 756       | 131     | 4   | 0.168 | 0.176 | 0.168 | 0.176 | 0.167 | 0.009  | 5.389  | 0.176 | 0.167 | 0.176 | 0.100 | 413,539,714       |
| OM0000005963 | PHOENIX POWER                    | 2,146,820 | 128,782 | 11  | 0.059 | 0.060 | 0.059 | 0.060 | 0.059 | 0.001  | 1.695  | 0.060 | 0.058 | 0.060 | 0.100 | 97,756,088        |
| OM0000001772 | ALANWAR INVESTMENT               | 273,692   | 18,419  | 15  | 0.070 | 0.072 | 0.070 | 0.071 | 0.070 | 0.001  | 1.429  | 0.071 | 0.070 | 0.071 | 0.100 | 20,528,318        |
| OM0000001400 | OMAN FLOUR MILLS                 | 14,100    | 6,172   | 9   | 0.435 | 0.440 | 0.430 | 0.440 | 0.434 | 0.006  | 1.382  | 0.440 | 0.440 | 0.440 | 0.100 | 69,300,000        |
| OM0000005005 | ALMAHA CERAMICS                  | 295       | 36      | 1   | 0.123 | 0.123 | 0.123 | 0.123 | 0.122 | 0.001  | 0.820  | 0.123 | 0.121 | 0.125 | 0.100 | 6,765,000         |
| OM0000004248 | SMN POWER HOLDING                | 22,338    | 7,612   | 7   | 0.343 | 0.343 | 0.340 | 0.340 | 0.338 | 0.002  | 0.592  | 0.340 | 0.340 | 0.340 | 0.100 | 67,876,104        |
| OM0000001506 | MUSCAT INSURANCE                 | 7,640     | 2,452   | 2   | 0.321 | 0.321 | 0.321 | 0.321 | 0.320 | 0.001  | 0.313  | 0.321 | 0.328 | 0.352 | 0.100 | 3,530,000         |
| OM0000001368 | CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES | 992       | 79      | 1   | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.082 | 0.100 | 5,000,000         |
| OM0000001897 | MAJAN COLLEGE                    | 5,000     | 540     | 1   | 0.108 | 0.108 | 0.108 | 0.108 | 0.108 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.108 | 0.107 | 0.114 | 0.100 | 9,720,000         |
| OM0000002028 | GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS     | 56,595    | 4,221   | 11  | 0.074 | 0.075 | 0.074 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.075 | 0.073 | 0.075 | 0.100 | 1,575,000         |
| OM0000002267 | GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS           | 14,302    | 3,438   | 5   | 0.241 | 0.241 | 0.240 | 0.240 | 0.240 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.240 | 0.240 | 0.240 | 0.100 | 10,983,792        |
| OM0000003341 | BARAKA WATER AND POWER           | 2,008     | 541     | 2   | 0.267 | 0.267 | 0.267 | 0.266 | 0.266 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.267 | 0.267 | 0.267 | 0.100 | 47,360,000        |
| OM0000003521 | GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING | 2,100     | 158     | 1   | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.077 | 0.100 | 15,223,983        |
| OM0000004420 | BANK NIZWA                       | 9,001     | 900     | 5   | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.100 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.100 | 0.098 | 0.102 | 0.100 | 223,695,303       |
| OM0000005280 | OMAN ARAB BANK                   | 3,232     | 436     | 1   | 0.135 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.135 | 0.137 | 0.138 | 0.100 | 225,370,350       |
| OM0000007084 | MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION         | 500       | 34      | 1   | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.068 | 0.063 | 0.068 | 0.100 | 10,577,427        |
| OM0000008868 | THE PEARL REIF                   | 94,766    | 11,381  | 8   | 0.121 | 0.121 | 0.120 | 0.120 | 0.120 | 0.000  | 0.000  | 0.120 | 0.118 | 0.122 | 0.100 | 70,972,426        |
| OM0000009759 | OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION    | 1,620,834 | 516,023 | 153 | 0.320 | 0.322 | 0.316 | 0.319 | 0.320 | -0.001 | -0.313 | 0.319 | 0.318 | 0.320 | 0.100 | 2,002,552,000,000 |
| OM0000009908 | OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SFZ)         | 375,195   | 38,172  | 42  | 0.102 | 0.102 | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.000  | -0.080 | 0.102 | 0.101 | 0.102 | 0.100 | 349,408,576       |
| OM0000001178 | MUSCAT GASES                     | 39,400    | 3,150   | 5   | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.079 | 0.079 | 0.079 | 0.000  | -1.250 | 0.079 | 0.079 | 0.079 | 0.100 | 2,370,000         |
| OM0000001160 | NATIONAL GAS                     | 7,285     | 975     | 2   | 0.078 | 0.078 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.078 | 0.001  | 1.282  | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.078 | 0.100 | 6,545,000         |
| OM0000008447 | OMAN REIT FUND                   | 46,754    | 3,487   | 14  | 0.078 | 0.078 | 0.074 | 0.074 | 0.075 | -0.001 | -1.333 | 0.074 | 0.073 | 0.075 | 0.100 | 37,638,716        |
| OM0000001707 | OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY             | 300       | 720     | 2   | 2.400 | 2.400 | 2.400 | 2.400 | 2.435 | -0.035 | -1.437 | 2.400 | 2.370 | 2.400 | 0.100 | 215,280,000       |
| OM0000004689 | SHARQIYAH DESALINATION           | 87,000    | 11,631  | 6   | 0.138 | 0.138 | 0.132 | 0.132 | 0.136 | -0.004 | -2.941 | 0.132 | 0.132 | 0.135 | 0.100 | 12,909,885        |
| OM0000007910 | AMAN REAL ESTATE                 | 13,100    | 1,146   | 5   | 0.091 | 0.091 | 0.087 | 0.087 | 0.091 | -0.004 | -4.396 | 0.087 | 0.086 | 0.088 | 0.100 | 17,400,000        |
| Total        | 25                               | 4,844,065 | 761,237 | 314 |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |       |       |       |       |                   |

GCC-STAT

GCC inflation stood at 1.7% by end of October

**DUBAI:** The data released by the Statistical Centre for the Co-operation Council for the Arab Countries of the Gulf (GCC-Stat) indicates that the overall inflation rate in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries rose by 1.7 percent at the end of October 2024 compared to the rate recorded during the same month of the previous

year, according to consumer price data for the GCC countries.

The increase in the annual overall inflation rate in the GCC countries is mainly attributed to the increase in the prices of the housing group by 6.4 percent, the goods and services group by 3 percent, the restaurants and hotels group by 1.7 percent, the culture and en-

tertainment group by 1.4 percent, the education group by 1.2 percent, and the food and beverages group by 0.8 percent.

This was offset by a decrease in prices in the transportation group by 3.6 percent, the furniture and household equipment group by 1.9 percent, tobacco by 1.1 percent, the communications group by 0.9 per-

cent, and the clothing and footwear group by 0.4 percent, while the prices of the health group remained stable at their previous levels.

The overall inflation rate in the GCC countries was also lower than the European Union's inflation rate of 2.3 percent, and lower than many of the GCC's main trading partners in total merchandise imports. -WAM

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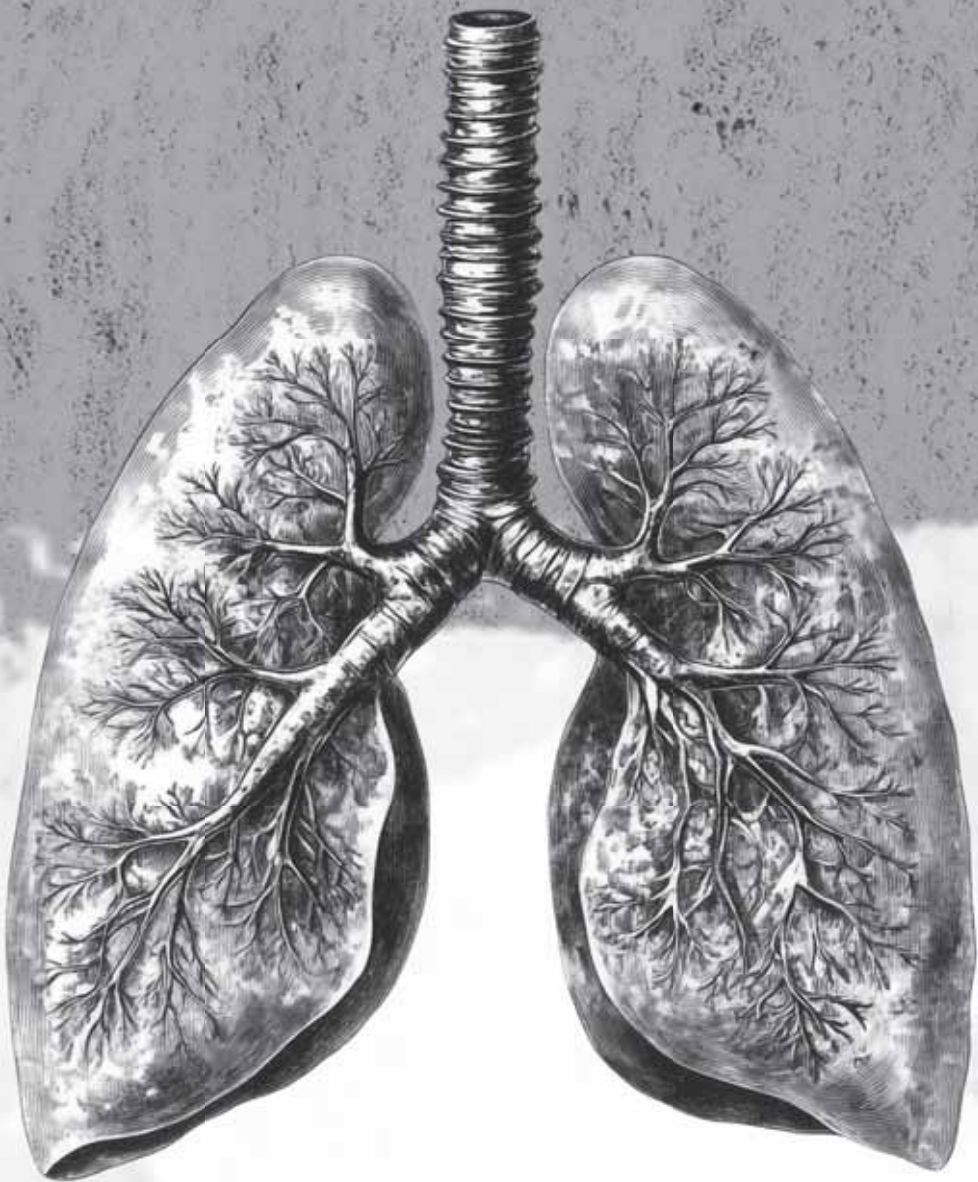
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# LIFESTYLE

Over a century ago, three mechanisms that can change the size of the pupil were known: the amount of light, focus distance, and cognitive factors such as emotion or mental effort. Now, scientists have discovered a fourth: breathing

# BREATHING CAN BE LINKED WITH VISION: STUDY



Researchers have discovered a fundamental mechanism that affects pupil size: breathing. The study shows that the pupil is smallest during inhalation and largest during exhalation, which could affect vision.

Researchers at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden have discovered a fundamental mechanism. The study was published in The Journal of Physiology.

Like the aperture in a camera, the pupil controls how much light reaches the eye. Therefore, it is fundamental to vision and how we perceive our surroundings.

Over a century ago, three mechanisms that can change the size of the pupil were known: the amount of light, focus distance, and cognitive factors such as emotion or mental effort.

Now, scientists have discovered a fourth: breathing. The pupil is smallest around inhalation onset and largest during exhalation.

“This mechanism is unique in that it is cyclical, ever-present and requires no external stimulus,” explains Artin Arshamian, associate professor at the Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institutet, who led the research.

“Since breathing affects brain activity and cognitive functions,

the discovery may contribute to a better understanding of how our vision and attention are regulated.”

The researchers conducted five experiments with over 200 participants, examining how breathing affects pupil size under different conditions. The results showed that the effect persisted whether participants breathed quickly or slowly, through their nose or mouth, if lighting conditions or fixation distance varied if they were resting or performing visual tasks.

The difference in pupil size between inhalation and exhalation was large enough to theoretically affect vision.

The researchers are now investigating whether changes in pupil size during breathing also affect vision. Previous research shows that smaller pupils make it easier to see details, while larger pupils help us find hard-to-see objects.

“Our results suggest that our vision may switch between optimising for distinguishing small details when we inhale and detecting faint objects when we exhale, all within a single breathing cycle,” says Martin Schaefer, a postdoctoral researcher at the same department at Karolinska Institutet and the study’s first author.

There may also be clinical applications, according to the researchers. - ANI

SPORTS

# OGA President Sayyid Azzan opens Oman’s first-ever indoor golf facility

Young national team golfers, who earned medals at regional level, were also honoured during the launch ceremony of The Golf Lounge

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** A new chapter in Oman's golfing history was written with the grand opening of The Golf Lounge, the country's first-ever indoor golf facility, held recently.

Located at the Active Oman Indoor Arena at the Oman Automobile Association (OAA), the facility promises to transform the golfing experience in the Sultanate, offering year-round access to cutting-edge technology and a welcoming climate-controlled environment for players of all skill levels.

The launch of The Golf Lounge marks a significant step toward growing the sport of golf in Oman. The venue is equipped with advanced Trackman technology, providing state-of-the-art simulation and data analysis tools for golfers.

The facility, the brainchild of visionary entrepreneurs Mazin Al Athnawi and Sabri Al Manthari, reflects their shared passion for golf and a desire to raise the sport's profile in Oman.

The venue features eight regular bays and two premium bays, designed to accommodate everyone from casual players to seasoned professionals.

HH Sayyid Azzan bin Kais Al Said, Oman Golf Association (OGA) President, inaugurated the facility in the presence of OGA Vice Chairman Faiz Mohammad Riaz, OGA board members Ahmed Al Jhdhmy, Nikhil Sampat, and other dignitaries. Speaking after the inauguration, Sayyid Azzan, an avid golfer himself, expressed



his pride in the new addition to Oman's sports infrastructure.

He emphasised the importance of The Golf Lounge in providing a year-round platform for both novice and advanced golfers.

"This is a historic moment for the golf community in Oman," Sayyid Azzan remarked.

"The opening of this state-of-the-art facility will play a crucial role in nurturing young talent and providing a space for Omani golfers to refine their skills. Our national teams have shown remarkable promise, and I am confident that The Golf Lounge will further their development."

**National teams felicitated**

The opening ceremony also recognised the success of Oman's national golf teams, who have shown impressive results on the regional stage. Notably, the national U18 team members who triumphed at the recently-concluded GCC Golf Championship in Jeddah and other medal winners at regional age-group events were felicitated during the event.

Faiz Mohammad Riaz, Vice Chairman of OGA, spoke about the significance of these laurels on the occasion.

"Our young golfers demonstrated exceptional skill and dedication in Jeddah, making history by winning the first-ever GCC U18 team gold," he said.



"The recent successes of our teams reflect the strength and future of golf in Oman. The Golf Lounge will serve as a key training hub for these young athletes."

Among the honoured golfers was Adam Al Barwani, who, alongside his teammates, brought home the gold medal for the Under-18 category.

He also claimed a silver medal in the individual category at the championship. "It's an honour to be recognised alongside my teammates," said Al Barwani.

"We've put in a lot of hard work, and it's exciting to see Omani golf being supported in such a major way. The Golf Lounge will be an incredible place for all of us to continue our development."

Mahir Sampat, another member of the U18 gold-winning team, said, "It feels great to be part of

this new chapter for golf in Oman. Having a facility like this [The Golf Lounge] will provide all of us with the tools we need to improve. I'm excited for the future and look forward to making the most of what The Golf Lounge has to offer."

The Golf Lounge, the nation's premier indoor golf facility, isn't just about training; it also aims to bring together the golfing community in Oman.

The venue offers a relaxed and friendly atmosphere where both beginners and experienced golfers can connect, share tips, and enjoy the game in a welcoming environment.

One participant who recently visited the lounge shared the excitement. "It's an amazing space - fun, chill, and perfect for spending time with friends or improving your game. We've had a great time



here, and I'm looking forward to coming back."

Another participant, who recently visited The Golf Lounge with family, shared her experience: "As first-timers, we were a bit nervous about getting the hang of golf, but the staff was friendly and incredibly helpful. They were always around to give us tips, which made the whole experience more enjoyable. We even had a competition between us, which turned out to be hilarious and filled with lots of laughs. I can't wait to go back."

With its world-class facilities, The Golf Lounge is poised to play a vital role in the growth of golf in Oman. The venue is not just about leisure; it's also about development, with plans to host tournaments, coaching sessions, and social events.

Sayyid Azzan reaffirmed the

support of the OGA and spoke about the facility's long-term potential. "This is just the beginning for The Golf Lounge. With the support of the Oman Golf Association and our dedicated partners, we are confident that this facility will help us achieve our vision for golf in Oman."

The opening of the doors of The Golf Lounge is a game-changer for the sport in Oman. Whether you're looking to improve your swing, compete at the highest levels, or simply enjoy a fun day with friends, the indoor facility offers something for everyone.

The national age-group golfers felicitated at The Golf Lounge were Adam Al Barwani, Mahir Sampat, Pransh Jagwani, Faris Al Busaidi, Yousef Al Rumhi, Taimour Al Busaidi, Miraeeri Sampat, and Yasmin Al Kathiri.

PREMIER LEAGUE

## Liverpool beat Saints, go 16 points clear

**LONDON:** Mohamed Salah scored two penalties as Liverpool came from behind to beat rock-bottom Southampton 3-1 for the second time this season and move 16 points clear at the top of the Premier League on Saturday.

The Reds were miles below their best after their energy-draining late win at Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday - but all that matters at this stage of the season is results.

This takes them one step closer to the title and leaves Saints still in danger of the lowest Premier League points total ever.

The visitors allowed themselves to dream when Will Smallbone took advantage of a huge mix-up between Virgil van Dijk and Alisson to slot in from a tight angle.

But Reds boss Arne Slot made a triple substitution at half-time and Liverpool were much improved.

Darwin Nunez, perhaps fortunate not to be one of the ones replaced at the break, slotted in from Luis Diaz's cutback. And then the Uruguayan striker was fouled by Smallbone for a penalty, which



Mohamed Salah predictably dispatched with style. Salah also netted another spot-kick late on, for his 27th goal of the season, after the video assistant referee spotted a Yukinari Sugawara handball.

Both sides made six substitutes as Southampton lost captain Jan Bednarek to an early head injury - with football laws allowed the opposing team to also make an extra substitution during the game.

There were 58 points between the sides coming into this game,

the biggest gap between teams since Liverpool beat Aston Villa in July 2020.

And Liverpool - with Slot in the stands because of a touchline ban - started brightly with Curtis Jones having an early shot blocked and then shooting wide.

That matched their total shot count in the 1-0 smash-and-grab win in Paris in midweek. But perhaps the energy expended in that game was taking its toll here.

Southampton created several

chances before grabbing the lead following a hugely uncharacteristic mix-up between two of their stars.

Van Dijk tried to hold off Smallbone to let the ball run to Alisson, but the keeper did not come out quickly enough and moments later the Saints midfielder was scoring.

But Liverpool improved in the second half after making their substitutions - with Slot allowed in the dressing room at the break - including the introduction of Harvey Elliott.

The Reds had a good grip on the game by then with Uruguay striker Nunez - who could have been sent off in the first half for a bad foul on Kyle Walker-Peters - scoring after good play by Diaz and then winning the penalty for Salah's winner. Salah had a shot saved and Elliott fired wide as they tried to add a game-clinching third, which eventually came in the form of another penalty by Liverpool's icon.

This is the champions elect's only Premier League game in March. - Agencies

HUDSON-ODOI NETS WINNER



## Forest stun Man City

**LONDON:** Callum Hudson-Odoi scored late in the second half to earn Nottingham Forest a crucial Premier League 1-0 victory over fellow Champions League hopefuls Manchester City at the City Ground on Saturday.

With seven minutes of an otherwise uneventful contest remaining, Hudson-Odoi collected a magnificent Morgan Gibbs-White pass in his stride before beating City goalkeeper Ederson at his near post to send the home fans into ecstasy.

In a game billed as crucial in the race to earn a spot in Europe's premier club competition next season, City had the better opportunities before the interval but lacked the pace or ingenuity to breach the home side's dogged defence.

A powerful Nico Gonzalez effort which struck the outside of Matz Sels' right-hand post was the high point of a drab first half, and there were few signs of improvement early in the second period despite Forest's greater urgency.

After Nico Dominguez volleyed an Anthony Elanga cross straight at Ederson within seconds of the restart, Hudson-Odoi had a low effort tipped on to the post by the Brazilian midway through the second half.

Pep Guardiola introduced Kevin de Bruyne and Omar Marmoush with 20 minutes remaining but there was little in the way

of goalmouth action in the latter stages until Hudson-Odoi's moment of inspiration.

Guardiola and his players can have few complaints with the outcome as they slipped to a ninth league defeat of a tumultuous season - their joint-most in a single campaign under the Spaniard.

Third-placed Forest move four points clear of City, who stay fourth but could be overtaken by Chelsea if the Blues beat struggling Leicester City on Sunday.

SPANISH LA LIGA

## Barcelona match postponed after death of team doctor

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona's La Liga match against Osasuna on Saturday night was postponed following the death of the Catalan club's first-team doctor Carles Minarro Garcia.

The game was scheduled to start at 20:00 GMT but was called off about 20 minutes before kick-off.

Fans had already arrived at Barcelona's Olympic Stadium as Hansi Flick's side prepared to extend their one-point lead at the top of La Liga against their 11th-placed visitors, before news of the postponement was announced on the big screen. "FC Barcelona is deeply saddened to announce the passing of first-team doctor Carles Minarro Garcia this evening," the



club said in a statement.

"For this reason, the match between FC Barcelona and CA Osasuna has been postponed to a later date. "The FC Barcelona board

of directors and all staff extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends during this difficult time."

Barcelona president Joan

Laporta paid tribute to Minarro Garcia on the club website. "He was a man very much loved by everyone, who passed away this afternoon at the team hotel," he said.

"There was an overwhelming sense of sadness because he was loved by all of us. He travelled to every match to take care of the players, the coaching staff, everyone. He never said no to anyone. He was a great professional and a great doctor.

"It has left us devastated and in a sense of shock because it was so sudden. We got in touch with his mother and his wife to offer our condolences and to support them. Carles leaves behind two children Gerard and Anna. - Agencies

ROUND-UP

Exclusive benefits on BYD’s powerful Atto 3

BYD brings a great opportunity for customers to own a BYD Atto 3 at unbeatable prices



**MUSCAT:** This Ramadan, get ready to embark on a new journey of your life with BYD’s powerful fully electric SUV Atto 3. Crafted using high standards of luxury, advanced innovations, and world-class safety features, the BYD Atto 3 makes every trip memorable. BYD, the world’s #1 leader in new energy vehicle manufacturing, brings a great opportunity for customers to own a BYD Atto 3 at unbeatable prices. Starting at OMR 9,990, BYD offers service perks of up to 5 years/100,000 km,

first-year free insurance, along with a chance to win a Qin Plus Classic in the grand raffle. Head over to BYD showrooms in Wattayah, Al Mouj, and Mall of Oman to unlock unmatched value for money before the offer ends on April 24. Drawing inspiration from the Chinese dragon, the Atto 3’s design embodies strength and elegance. The BYD Atto 3 is an absolute dream to own, accelerating with 201 horsepower. It reaches 0 to 100 km/h in just 7.3 seconds, making it

the fastest SUV in its segment. Recharge and explore the city with a range of 420 km on a full charge. The ATTO 3 offers a smooth, fun, and efficient urban ride. Designed to appeal to a younger, more energetic crowd, its gym-themed cockpit ignite excitement through innovation. The ATTO 3 boasts a dynamic waistline and 18-inch alloy wheels, ensuring excellent road handling with the exhilarating performance of the Blade Battery. Seamlessly integrated into the

dashboard, BYD’s revolutionary 12.8-inch rotatable touchscreen is a great companion on every journey. The sporty cockpit features dumbbell-shaped vertical AC vents, rhythmic interactive ambient lighting, and ergonomic seats, making every ride fun, engaging, and stress-free. Emphasizing utility and spaciousness, the ATTO 3 offers a double-layered storage compartment and a smart power tailgate with sensors for convenient luggage loading. Also equipped with two front and rear cameras, parking radars, and displays panoramic images of the road to mitigate risks of collision and avoid life-threatening situations. The BYD Atto 3 is a testament to BYD’s commitment to ‘technological innovations for a better life’. The Blade Battery, compared to conventional battery packs, provides enhanced energy efficiency, an extended range, and an impressive lifecycle of approximately 5,000 charge cycles. In Oman, BYD vehicles are distributed by World Auto Business.

Sohar Islamic recognised as ‘Most Innovative Islamic Bank in Oman’



**MUSCAT:** Sohar Islamic, the Islamic banking window of Sohar International, has been recognised as the ‘Most Innovative Islamic Bank in Oman’ by Malaysia-based Islamic Finance News at its awards ceremony held in Dubai, UAE. This accolade underscores the bank’s unwavering commitment to driving innovation in Sharia-compliant financial solutions, further reinforcing its leadership in the evolving landscape of Islamic banking. The award is a testament to Sohar Islamic’s excellence in digital transformation, product innovation, and customer-centric services, setting new benchmarks in the industry. Representing Sohar Islamic at the event were Fahad Akbar Al Zadjali, Head of Islamic

Banking, and Dr. Al Muatasim Al Mutairi, Vice President & Head of Investment Islamic Banking. Fahad Akbar Al Zadjali stated: “Innovation is integral to the evolution of Sharia-compliant banking, ensuring that we meet the dynamic financial needs of a diverse clientele. At Sohar Islamic, we continuously push the boundaries by integrating advanced financial technologies with Sharia-based principles, offering solutions that are both ethically grounded and future-ready. By embracing digital transformation and maintaining a customer-centric approach, we deliver sophisticated and adaptable financial products that align with modern financial aspirations while upholding Islamic values.”

ENHANCING SAFETY

bp Oman, eMushrif launch ‘Aman’ for safe school transportation in Al Dhahirah

**MUSCAT:** In partnership with bp Oman and in collaboration with the Directorate General of Education in Al Dhahirah Governorate, eMushrif has launched “Aman” initiative to transform regular school buses into smart buses. This initiative aimed at enhancing the safety and efficiency of school transportation. Through converting traditional school buses into “smart buses,” Aman initiative is set to improve the daily transportation experience for students, ensuring their safety and provid-

ing peace of mind for parents and school administrators. Aman initiative has made significant strides in enhancing school transportation safety across Al Dhahirah Governorate by targeting 300 buses and 30 schools, benefiting more than 18,000 students. The project implements advanced technology specifically designed to prevent incidents where children are left behind in buses. Each bus is equipped with a multi-layered safety system, including a push-button mechanism installed

at the rear of the vehicle. This feature ensures that drivers perform a mandatory visual check inside the bus after every trip, should the driver forget, a small alarm sounds as a reminder. Additionally, motion sensors are activated for two hours after the bus has been vacated, adding an extra layer of security to ensure no child is left behind. Ibrahim Al Hinai, Social investment manager at bp Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar, commented: “At bp Oman, we are committed in investing in solutions that positively

impact the communities we serve. The Aman Project reflects our dedication to the safety and wellbeing of Oman’s children. By introducing innovative technologies like the visual check system and motion sensors, we are taking tangible steps to ensure that no child is left behind on a school bus. We are proud to support this initiative, which aligns with our broader vision of creating safer, smarter, and more sustainable communities.” Zuwaina Al Mazroui, General Manager of the Directorate of Ed-

ucation in Al Dhahirah Governorate, expressed her support for the Aman Project, stating: “The safety of our students is of the utmost importance, and the Aman Project is a critical step toward ensuring that. By integrating smart technologies into our school buses, we are confident that we are providing an extra layer of protection that will benefit both the students and their families. This initiative is setting a new standard for school transportation in the region, and we are proud to be part of it.”



STRATEGIC MOVE



Sayarti expands fleet with the all-new Mazda6

**MUSCAT:** In a strategic move reflecting its dedication to offering innovative and high-quality rental solutions, Sayarti has announced the expansion of its fleet with the addition of all-new Mazda 6 vehicles. This enhancement is made possible through a partnership with the Towell Group, the exclusive agent of Mazda in the Sultanate of Oman. The introduction of the Mazda6 aligns with Sayarti’s commitment to meeting the evolving needs of its diverse clientele, including individuals, government and private institutions, and key industry players in sectors such as oil and gas. The company continues to prioritise providing flexible rental options, ensuring an exceptional driving experience that adheres to the highest standards of quality, comfort, and reliability. Sohraab Hasnain, Head of Operations stated, “At Sayarti, we are dedicated to delivering the best transportation solutions to both individuals and institutions. Our ongoing efforts to modernise our fleet with the latest vehicles underline our commitment to offering high-performance and top-quality cars. The addition of the Mazda6 to our lineup is part of our broader strategy to meet the increasing market demand and provide our customers with a safe, comfortable, and premium driving experience. We are delighted to collaborate with the

Towell Group on this initiative and look forward to strengthening our partnership to serve our customers better.” Ranjit Rangan Manager Corporate Sales Towell Auto Centre also expressed enthusiasm for this collaboration stating, “We are proud to partner with Sayarti in supplying the latest Mazda6 models—vehicles that stand out in their class for performance, safety, and fuel efficiency. This partnership will enable Sayarti customers to experience the luxury, reliability, and advanced features of Mazda vehicles. At Towell, we remain committed to delivering the best automotive solutions, ensuring that Mazda cars come with top-tier specifications and exceptional after-sales services that meet customer expectations.” Sayarti and Towell Group are eager to continue building a successful partnership, offering innovative mobility solutions tailored to the needs of a wide customer base. Established in 1992 under the name ‘Zubair Leasing,’ Sayarti has solidified its reputation as Oman’s leading provider of vehicle rental services and used car sales. Committed to the highest industry standards, including compliance with the Oman Energy Association (OPAL) requirements, Sayarti remains a key player in the rental and used car sales sector.

BANK MUSCAT

**MUSCAT:** Al Wathbah Ramadan souq, organized by Bank Muscat in cooperation with the SMEs Development Authority, has once again reported a remarkable turnout and vibrant atmosphere at this year’s event, held at the Bank’s headquarters in Airport Heights. This year’s souq featured the participation of a large number of entrepreneurs and home business owners, further reinforcing the Bank’s unwavering dedication to social responsibility and the development of the business sector. During a span of three days, the souq provided an invaluable platform for participants to present their diverse range of products, from fashion items, health and beauty products, home décor, accessories, culinary delights, heritage tools and perfumes, attracting a large number of visitors eager to support local enterprises. The event’s success was highlighted by the enthusiastic engagement of the public, who were treated to a unique shopping experience in preparation for Eid al-Fitr. The variety and quality of products on display demonstrated the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of the participants, drawing praise from visitors.



Ibrahim bin Khamis Al Balushi, Senior Assistant General Manager, SMEs, remarked: “The annual Al Wathbah Ramadan souq stands as a testament to our commitment to nurturing small and medium businesses, which are vital to the national economy. We are proud of the overwhelming response from the public this year which underscores the importance of such initiatives in empowering entrepreneurs and they not only fuel economic activity but also as platforms to strengthen social ties and promote cultural heritage through the displayed products. I would like to thank the participants, the

SMEs Authority and the customers for their trust and support.” One of the participating entrepreneurs, Zainab bint Abdullah Al Araimi, Owner of a female fashion outlet, expressed her gratitude, saying: “This souq provided an excellent opportunity for us to reach new customers and share our products with a wider audience. The support from Bank Muscat and the SME Development Authority has been instrumental in our growth. It has given us the confidence to expand our business and innovate further. So, would like to thank both institutions for these efforts” Ghaidaa bint Mohammed Al

Harthi, Owner of “Plant with Ghaidaa”, said: “Being part of Al Wathbah Ramadan souq allowed us to network with fellow entrepreneurs and gain valuable insights into the market. The exposure we’ve received has been incredible, and we really appreciate the efforts of the organizers of this annual important event. It has opened doors to new collaborations and inspired us to strive for excellence.” Abdullah bin Nasser Al Bemani, Owner of “Eamma” for male fashion outlet, said: “I am glad to be among so many inspiring Omani projects. This participation was an opportunity to exchange views with other entrepreneurs, and it is certainly an enriching experience being held at Bank Muscat. I appreciate these efforts and we hope that such initiatives will continue in the future.” Maimona bin Saud Al Ruqaishi, one of the visitors to the souq said: “the souq is large and diverse and it contains a number of corners that serve different tastes. Al Wathbah souq is featured that all projects are local and run by Omani entrepreneurs. So, it was important to come to support these young people and it is also an opportunity to shop for Eid al-Fitr.”

GAMING TOURNAMENT

Alizz Islamic Bank announces ‘Alizz GT’ champions

**MUSCAT:** With an ultimate experience that brought players and fans together at Mall of Oman for a weekend; Alizz Islamic Bank recently launched the ‘Alizz GT’ Gaming tournament that was organised in collaboration with the Omani Gaming Committee for Games and Electronic Sports from the Ministry of Culture, Sports & Youth from March 6 to March 8. Alizz Islamic Bank announced the winners of its ‘Alizz GT’ gaming tournament. After a series of intense rounds where 64 participants competed on the EA Sports FC 25 game, culminating in the finals on March 8th 2025, where the 1st place winner Hudhaifa Al Amri was awarded the grand prize of OMR 2,000, while Fahar Al Kindi was awarded a cash prize of OMR1,000 as the second place winner and the 3rd place winner Fahad Al Hasni received OMR 500. The 4th, 5th and 6th placed winners were each awarded with



a PS5. Each winner demonstrated their skills creatively and dedication throughout the competition. Their achievements showcased their personal talent within the gaming field. Speaking about the tournament Lina Al Abdulsalaam, Head of

Marketing & Communications of Alizz Islamic Bank, said: “As part of our ‘Sports for All’ campaign and through the first ‘Alizz GT’ Gaming tournament we were proud to have created a unique experience for the Omani gaming community. At Alizz Islamic Bank we want to

have interactive involvement with the youth of Oman and the genuine excitement that we witnessed from the esports community was refreshing to see. “Throughout the tournament, fans and gamers got to interact, speak and engage as a community. Youth is one of the most important customer segments at Alizz Islamic Bank, which is why we have tailored the Alizz Youth Value proposition to meet their needs and lifestyle, ultimately enhancing young adults’ financial literacy in preparation for a future of success and fulfillment” It is worth mentioning that the ‘Alizz Youth’ value proposition is designed specifically for the youth. This comprehensive program offers a wide range of attractive benefits and services designed to meet the unique needs of today’s youth, while also encouraging them to adapt to the culture of saving to help them secure their future.







mosaic



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- 1/4 cup coconut chunks
- 1 cup coconut water
- 1/4 cup rose syrup
- sugar as per taste
- crushed ice

1. In a high power blender, add musk melon, pineapple, coconut chunks, sugar, ice, and coconut water.
2. Blend until very smooth. In a serving glass, add rose syrup to the bottom and pour the mix.
3. Divide drink into 4 glasses. Stir well before serving.

Kempinski Hotel  
Muscat  
SULTANATE OF OMAN

ريحان على الساحل

RAMADAN BY THE COAST

Taking the overall title as Rihla, which translates to Journey, Kempinski Muscat, transforms into a haven of cultural immersion and gastronomic delight this Ramadan.

The Kitchen invites you on a culinary journey, with daily themed Iftars showcasing the diverse flavours of the Arabian world, Southeast Asia, and India.

Indulge in a one of a kind dining at Zale, under the starry skies, ocean front. Sahra at Zale, invites you to spend the beginning of your fasting journey, meanwhile Iftar Nujum at Zale, offers exquisite culinary offerings to gather with friends and family on your end of day's fast, with daily live entertainment.

RAMADAN ACROSS THE WORLD IN PICTURES



**DUBAI**

Ramadan embraces the spirit of unity, community, and togetherness



**DUBAI:** The city has transformed into a joyful season of wonderful moments for Ramadan in Dubai, bringing friends, families, and loved ones together until 30 March. Residents and visitors can create treasured memories with unique citywide experiences that are unlike anywhere else in the world, organised by Brand Dubai, the creative arm of the Government of Dubai Media Office (GDMO) in partnership with Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (DFRE) as well as public and private sectors.

DFRE has planned a vibrant programme this year, featuring spectacular fireworks, cultural performances, bustling night markets, immersive community iftars and suhoor gatherings, special offers across iconic hotels and attractions that will remain open as usual throughout the day, as well as exclusive shopping and gifting experiences with mall operating hours extended late into the night. Plus, the city's ideal outdoor weather creates the perfect backdrop this season, giving everyone across the city even more opportunities to share in the wonder of Ramadan and make it a month to remember.

Enthralling light shows, mesmerising fireworks, and cultural entertainment are lighting up the city this Ramadan. Al Zarooni Group is hosting a series of spectacular fireworks every Saturday, including at Al Seef on 8 March, followed by Dubai Festival City Mall on 15 March, and ending with Bluewaters and The Beach, JBR on 22 March. Visitors at Global Village can catch the dazzling displays every Friday and Saturday at 10pm. Stunning light and sound projections as part of Ramadan Reflections

have illuminated Al Seef, Dubai Festival City Mall, and Ahmed Al Habbai Mosque in Al Khawaneej, offering an enchanting experience that captures the essence of Ramadan. Adding to the festive atmosphere, enthralling cultural entertainment such as BuT-baila, as well as Oud and Qanoon performers, can be found every weekend at Al Seef, The Outlet Village, Bluewaters Island, Mir-dif City Centre, Mall of the Emirates, Dubai Festival City Mall, and Hatta Heritage Village.

Ramadan night markets promise to be the perfect destinations to discover amazing must-have items and exclusive gifts for loved ones this season. The first-ever Ramadan at the Park at Zabeel Park Amphitheatre from 6 to 23 March is bringing a curated iftar and suhoor experience from live stations and street food to Ramadan sweets and coffee shops, complemented by a daily Ramadan cannon by Dubai Police, retail pop-ups, immersive cultural showcases, mesmerising live performances, family-friendly entertainment, sports, games, special meet-and-greets with Modesh and Dana, and much more - all in a welcoming outdoor park setting. The Ramadan Street Food Festival is returning to Sheikh Hamdan Colony in Karama from 6 to 23 March with more than 55 participating food pop-ups spread across 5 sprawling zones. Other must-visit markets include Hai Ramadan at Expo City Dubai until 27 March, Ramadan Wonders at Global Village, Ramadan District Market at Jumeirah Emirates Towers Plaza Terrace from 8 to 23 March, and the ever-popular Ripe Market at Academy Park in Umm Suqeim every Saturday.

# رمضان مبارك

## RAMADAN MUBARAK



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## Ramadan diet: Balancing your meals during the holy month

It's sunnah to have dates at iftar as it provides essential nutrients to the body. Avoid added sugar juices for people with diabetes. Minimise use of fried foods, opt for baked or grill foods



Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** Ramadan is the best time to bring about balance in our health and spiritual life.

In an era when fruit and vegetables are being steadily replaced by fried food and fizzy drinks, it is up to all of us to be on the lookout for what we eat.

"Not doing so could have a pretty severe impact on our health, particularly during Ramadan, when many of us in Oman fast throughout the day," city doctors have warned.

Sumaira Fatima, Registered Dietitian at Apollo Hospital – Ruwi, said, "Diet plays an important role in enhancing trouble free fasting avoiding hypoglycemia (low blood sugar less than 70 mg/dl) or hyperglycemia (high blood sugar greater than 300 mg/dl) and other related complications."

She also encouraged the people breaking fast with dates, fruits and water. "It's sunnah to have dates at

iftar as it provides essential nutrients to the body. Avoid added sugar juices for people with diabetes. Minimise use of fried foods, opt for baked or grill foods," she said.

In general avoid eating late night meals, restricting last meal to immediate post taraweeh.

"A meal comprising carbohydrates, lean protein and healthy fats fulfills nutritional needs. Hydrate well from iftar to suhoor avoiding carbonated drinks and excess use of caffeine. Drinks like lemonade and flavoured water are better options to quench thirst," the dietitian said.

While eating greasy, fried food during other time of the year is to be avoided, indulging in them during the Holy Month is a definite no-no.

You have had nothing to eat since the break of dawn, and your stomach is looking for something simple to digest, after having been empty for more than 12 hours.

To feed yourself unhealthy food

will only shock your stomach into life – an action that could have untold negative consequences, both immediately and in the long-term.

In addition, a fitness trainer in Oman, also explained that during the Holy Month, it was important to eat foods that had a high amount of liquid content, such as cucumbers and watermelons, because they had enough fluids to keep you going throughout the day. This was particularly important when people broke their fast at the Iftar meal, traditionally had at sundown once the evening Maghrib prayers have concluded.

"We should not break our fast with a heavy meal. Always break your fast with a light meal such as dates and laban, some soup, something light for the stomach, so that you don't shock your body. Two hours later, you can start exercising, and then, before you sleep, if you want to eat a meal, have it maybe two hours minimum before you sleep. Not less than two hours, and

not more than two hours prior," he said.

He added: "The best thing is to stay hydrated, because Ramadan involves fasting during the summer for long hours, and your body needs water to function. We encourage people to be active, but not too active, because you need to conserve your energies. Having something decent and high with liquids. You are looking at healthy options – oats and grains – but if you want a heavy dinner, have it at least two hours before you sleep."

According to the World Health Organisation, a healthy Ramadan diet includes plenty of water and hydrating food, with plenty of liquids to be taken between the Iftar and Suhoor. In countries like Oman, where high temperatures can make you lose fluids through perspiration, people need to consume at least 10 glasses of water.

Doctors also advised: "The problem we have here is that people have a big Iftar, and that is a dis-

aster for the digestive system. It is going to stress your entire stomach, you will feel like you want to sleep, and that is when people fall into the pattern of wrong eating habits. You want to keep your activities medium to low during the day, and when you break the fast, do so with something light. Something like dates and water or dates and laban. This is something that has a medium amount of sugar, and is high in fibre, so this will help keep your stomach intact.

"Look for meals that are less processed," he explained. "One of the problems we have here is that people eat heavy amounts of fried food, and food that is high in salts and sugars. Ramadan is a time of fasting, and light food should be eaten when your break the fast. Your health must be taken into consideration. In the summer, always have food with high liquid content to stay hydrated during the day. Don't break your fast with a heavy meal. Always break with a

light meal such as dates and laban, some soup, something light for the stomach, so that you don't shock your body."

Pervez Mohammed is a cricket coach who works with players in Oman. He often gives advice on how those who play sports can continue to do so during Ramadan. Advice that can be followed for any sports one plays.

"We always tell people not to eat heavy food and come for practice," he revealed.

"There has to be at least a couple of hours' gap between the meal, and the practice. They should have a lot of liquid in their diets. During Ramadan, we do not keep any sessions during the fasting hours. We only keep it after 9pm. As a sportsperson, I always advise people to have small portions multiple times, instead of a heavy meal. Always avoid heavy fried foods and extremely starchy carbohydrates. We always advise them to eat more fruits and vegetables."

## JETOUR

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The offer is valid on all models from 24th February to 15th April, 2025. The prices mentioned are for base mode variants of CX-60 2.5L, Mazda 6 2L and base model variants of all other models & VAT extra. \* Free service is linjaz service package and applicable to all variants of MY 2024 Mazda6 2.5, CX-5, CX-60 & CX-90. #AAA roadside assistance is valid for the first 3 years from the date of retail purchase. Raffle draw is applicable for all customers purchase any Mazda model during this offer period from any of the authorized Mazda showrooms after completing the invoicing and registration formalities. Total of 4 raffle draws will be held and each winner will receive a Mazda 6 2.0L as the raffle gift. 1st Raffle on 16th March 2025, 2nd raffle on 23rd March 2025, 3rd raffle on 6th April 2025 and 4th raffle on 17th April 2025. The vehicles shown are for illustrative purposes only and specifications are subject to change without notice. Offer valid only for private vehicles and not applicable to fleet, Ministry, taxi, rental, or commercial car purchases.



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