

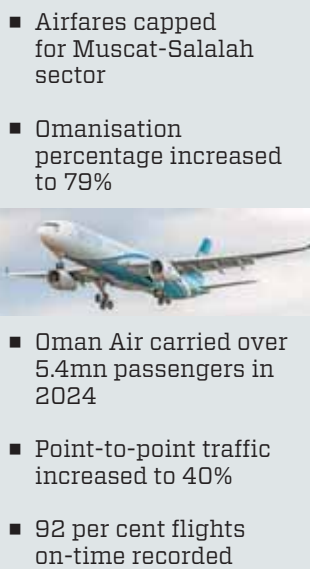
TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

3 US President Donald Trump affirmed his support for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the victims of terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on Tuesday. Trump said he stood with India in its fight against terrorism. **►A6**

Held under the patronage of Eng. Said bin Hamoud Al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and Chairman of both companies, the event spotlighted 2024 milestones while outlining bold reforms set to redefine the Sultanate's aviation landscape.

Speaking at the event, Eng. Al Maawali highlighted the strategic collaboration between Oman Air and Oman Airports, calling it a model of national integration aligned with Oman Vision 2040.

"This united vision is not just about business transformation—it is about positioning Oman as a



MEETING



MUSCAT: Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion, met yesterday in Muscat, with Bryant Trick, Assistant US Trade Representative (AUSTR) for Europe and the Middle East and Jason Pontin, Director of European and Middle Eastern Affairs at the Office of the US Trade Representative. The meeting aimed to enhance economic and trade relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the United States of America.

During the meeting, discussions focused on ways to develop trade and investment cooperation between the two countries, as well as exploring promising

opportunities across various sectors, in line with the priorities of Oman Vision 2040 and the economic diversification strategies of the Sultanate of Oman.

Free trade agreements

The discussions also addressed ways to benefit from the free trade agreements between the two countries, mechanisms to facilitate trade, boost exports, and encourage high-value investments that enhance the competitiveness of the Omani market at both regional and international levels.

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Free trade agreements

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Qais Al Yousef emphasised the depth of the Omani-American partnership and Oman's keenness to develop its trade relations with

the United States. He welcomed increased engagement from the US private sector in the Omani market and highlighted the investment advantages offered by the Sultanate of Oman. He also stressed the importance of continued dialogue to expand cooperation in trade and investment.

This meeting is part of a series of bilateral engagements aimed at strengthening communication, exchanging expertise, and supporting sustainable economic partnerships that serve the mutual interests of both countries.

The meeting was attended by Ana Escroguima, Ambassador of the United States of America to the Sultanate of Oman. — **ONA**

MINISTRY OF HERITAGE AND TOURISM

SHINAS: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism has completed restoration and maintenance work for several heritage and archaeological sites in the village of Mirir in the Wilayat of Shinas, located in the North Al Batinah Governorate.

These include Mirir Tower and Al Murabba Tower, as part of ongoing efforts to preserve Oman's architectural and historical heritage.

The initiative aims to safeguard these landmarks and highlight their cultural value, ensuring they remain a living legacy and a testament to the nation's history.

Hassan Sulaiman Al Jabri, Direc-

tor of the Heritage and Tourism Department in North Al Batinah Governorate, stated that the restoration of Mirir and Al Murabba Towers in Shinas was completed through community efforts under the ministry's supervision. The project involved providing sarooj (traditional mortar) and other materials, along with technical support, he added.

He explained that Al Murabba Tower is located in Mirir Al Matariyah village, west of the coastal road. The square-shaped structure measures approximately 4.5 metres in length, 3.3 metres in width, and 7 metres in height. Built on an

tor of the Heritage and Tourism Department in North Al Batinah Governorate, stated that the restoration of Mirir and Al Murabba Towers in Shinas was completed through community efforts under the ministry's supervision. The project involved providing saroj (traditional mortar) and other materials, along with technical support, he added.

He explained that Al Murabba Tower is located in Mirir Al Matariish village, west of the coastal road. The square-shaped structure measures approximately 4.5 metres in length, 3.3 metres in width, and 7 meters in height. Built on an

elevated hill, the tower is bordered by a water channel (wadi) to the south and was constructed using mud and stone.

Meanwhile, Mirir Tower is situated on coastal land in Mirir Al Matarish village, east of the coastal road, overlooking the Sea of Oman. The cylindrical structure, built with mud and gravel, has multiple openings and stands 6 metres in diameter and about 10 metres tall.

The Wilayat of Shinas is home to numerous historic forts, castles, and watchtowers, including Shinas Fort, Rasat Al Milh Fort, Khidrawain Fort, Ajeeb Fort and Al Asrar Fort. — **UNA**





OMAN

COMPLETED IN RECORD TIME

Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre and TotalEnergies officially commission a landmark solar PV rooftop project



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) based in Muscat, in collaboration with TotalEnergies Renewables Distributed Generation Middle East & Africa and with the support of OMRAN Group, has officially commissioned its solar rooftop project, now fully operational and powering the venue with clean solar energy since early 2025.

The project agreement was signed in March 2024, with construction commencing immediately thereafter. Completed in record time, the installation comprises 8,300 state-of-the-art solar photovoltaic (PV) modules spanning 16,600 square metres across the OCEC's Atrium and Exhibition Halls rooftops. For perspective, this area is equivalent to 63 tennis courts, or two full-sized football pitches now covered with high-efficiency solar panels.

Designed to significantly reduce the venue's carbon footprint, the system is expected to avoid approximately 3,300 tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually amounting to over 72,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions avoided over the project's lifetime. In addition to generating around 25% of OCEB's total energy needs, the PV modules offer added benefits such as lowering indoor temperatures by providing shade and protecting the roof from direct UV and rain exposure, contributing to further energy savings.

This initiative represents a ma-



for step in OCEC's wider sustainability journey, in line with Oman's national Net Zero 2050 ambitions. It complements a range of ongoing efforts, including the venue's LEED Gold certification, the development of a biodiverse garden, regular food donations, a robust waste recycling program, and close collaboration with local suppliers and SMEs to implement further sustainable solutions.

Commenting on the launch, Eng. Said Al Shanfari, CEO of Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, said: "This project is a major milestone in our ambition to become a more sustainable venue. It's not only a positive step for our local environment, but also a strategic move to meet the growing demand from international event organizers seeking green and future ready destinations. It also reflects the strength of partnerships: our collaboration with TotalEnergies Renewables Distributed Genera-

tion Middle East & Africa enabled us to deliver a highly efficient, high-impact solution tailored to our venue's needs."

Completed by Hamady SY, Managing Director of TotalEnergies Renewables Distributed Generation Middle East & Africa: "We are honored to provide clean energy to major exhibition centers such as OCEC, contributing to a more sustainable future in the Sultanate of Oman. This collaboration represents another step forward in accelerating the adoption of renewable energy in the region."

The system has already begun reducing emissions and supplying green power to events hosted at the Centre. Many events taking place at the OCEC will be benefiting from this new initiative, including the upcoming beneficiaries is Oman Sustainability Week, set to take place from 12-15 May 2025, which will be partly powered by this renewable energy source.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Sayyid Badr and Turkish counterpart discuss means of boosting cooperation

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and Hakan Fidan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye explored means of boosting cooperation between Oman and Türkiye in various areas, in a manner that serves the joint interests.

During a phone call made between the two ministers on Wednesday, both sides exchanged views on several regional and international issues, underscoring the importance of dialogue and diplomacy in addressing challenges and promoting security and stability.

Sayyid Badr expressed his sympathy and solidarity with Türkiye following the earthquake that struck Istanbul earlier on



Wednesday.

The Turkish Minister conveyed his country's appreciation for Oman's efforts in facilitating talks between the Islamic

Republic of Iran and the United States of America (USA) to reach a just and lasting agreement that serves the security and stability of the region. — **UNA**

WINNING RESEARCH

Two Omani students excel in Global Environmental Research programme's competition

MUSCAT: Omani students who contested the 2025 edition of GLOBE Environmental Programme's Competition won first place globally.

Two Omani students won first place globally and on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in GLOBE's International Virtual Science Symposium (IVSS).

They were Khalfan Issa Al Hussein and Elias Walid Al Suleimani—from “Said bin Nasser Al-Kindi Basic Education School” in Muscat Governorate. Their research was titled “Investigating GLOBE students’ 10-year record of temperatures, compared to readings of the meteorological station in the Wilayat of Al-Amerat.”

The winning research focused on collecting data on daily tem-

peratures from 2015 to 2024 in the Wilayat of Al Amerat, using GLOBE protocols and comparing findings with temperatures registered by the Meteorological Department.

The research sought to study the consistency of registered temperatures, analyse the differences and explore the factors that may influence these differences.

Research results showed a slight variation between the data observed by the students and the data registered by the weather station, when compared to corresponding months in previous years. The research showed that differences in the locations and devices (used to monitor data) may lead to differences in the observed temperatures from one location to another.

It is worth noting that the Sultanate of Oman signed a memorandum of understanding for environmental cooperation in December 2009 with GLOBE Global Environmental Programme, supervised by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The global educational programme, which started in 1994, deals with environmental science and education.

The programme seeks to raise student awareness of issues affecting the global environment, support the progress made by students in the fields of science, mathematics and geography and enhance cooperation on international monitoring, in favour of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). — **UNA**



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On behalf of the Government of the Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank of Oman announces the 74th issue of Government Development Bonds (GDBs) to be auctioned. The 74th issue of GDBs will be issued on Thursday, 01st of May 2025, carrying a coupon rate of 4.6% per annum for a maturity period of 5 years (maturing on 01st of May 2030). These Bonds will be auctioned and priced on Tuesday, 29th of April 2025. Investors may apply for these Bonds through licensed commercial banks by completing the application form.

Security of Capital

The GDBs are direct and unconditional obligations of the Government of the Sultanate of Oman.

Steady Returns

Interest shall accrue from the date of issue, and will be paid semi-annually on the 01st of May and 01st of November of every year until maturity. The first payment will be made on 01st November 2025. Interest payments will cease once the Bond matures.

Liquidity

The bonds will be listed and can be traded before maturity in the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) at the prevailing market price.

Collateral Advantage

The Bonds can be used as a collateral security to obtain loans from any licensed commercial bank.

Who Can Invest?

The 74th issue of GDBs is offered to all categories of investors, residents and non-residents (irrespective of their nationalities).

How to buy the bonds?

Investors may obtain bonds through any licensed commercial bank operating in the Sultanate of Oman, upon the submission of an eligible application form. Investors must provide their MCD Investor Code in the application form.

Bank Account Details

The investor must provide the same Bank Account details registered with Muscat Clearing and Depository Co. S.A.O.C. (MCD).

MCD Investor Code

Anyone without an MCD Investor Code can obtain it from MCD's website (www.mcd.gov.om) or via the Oman Stocks app at least one day before applying through the commercial bank.

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74th

issue

Open: Tuesday, April 22nd, 2025

Close: Monday, April 28th, 2025

Auction: Tuesday, April 29th, 2025

The minimum subscription amount

RO 100

To view the prospectus of the 74th issue of GDBs, please visit the following websites:

Ministry of Finance | www.mof.gov.om

Central Bank of Oman | www.cbo.gov.om

Contact the Central Bank of Oman (Market Operations Department) or any commercial licensed bank for details.

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Oman hosts 48th ADFIAP annual meeting under the theme ‘Economic Gardening and Development Impact’



H.E. Mahmood bin Abdullah Al Aweini: Economic gardening aligns with Oman Vision 2040, which serves as a roadmap for sustainable growth, innovation and local community empowerment.



Hussein bin Ali Al Lawati: Development finance institutions, with the tools and capabilities they possess, contribute to directing capital towards sectors that reinforce social cohesion.



H.E. Dr. Kao Thach: Strengthening ecosystems that enable local enterprises and innovations to thrive is a powerful lever to address global development challenges.



MUSCAT: The 48th Annual Meeting of the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP) took place today in Muscat, hosted by the Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Development Bank (DB). The meeting, held from 23 to 25 April 2025 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, focuses on community economic empowerment, development impact in Oman, entrepreneurship ecosystems, aligning capital with development goals, and building sustainable economies.

The event was officially inaugurated under the theme ‘Economic Gardening and Development Impact’ by H.E. Eng. Saeed bin Hamoud Al Mawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology. The meeting highlights the pivotal role of development finance in supporting national economic growth and has attracted around 300 participants from over 40 countries, including policymakers, experts, and stakeholders in finance and development from Oman and abroad.

H.E. Mahmood bin Abdullah Al Aweini, Chairman of the Development Bank, expressed pride in hosting the 48th ADFIAP meetings, calling the organisation a vital driver of national and regional development. “Through enhanced cooperation, knowledge exchange, and innovative financing, ADFIAP enables its members to tackle key challenges such as SME growth, sustainable finance, and inclusive economic development,” he said.

He added that the meeting theme of economic gardening aligns closely with Oman Vision 2040, which serves as a roadmap for sustainable growth, innovation, and the empowerment of local communities under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, may Allah protect and preserve him. He also reaffirmed Oman’s commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. “Oman has established the Oman Sustainability Centre for Renewable Energy Projects and set ambitious targets for green hydrogen production, goals that can only be realised with the support of development finance institutions like those represented here today,” he noted.

He further highlighted the Development Bank’s commitment to inclusive opportunity and social progress through financing diverse projects, fostering local value crea-



tion, and building an entrepreneurial ecosystem that empowers youth, women, and communities through targeted finance, training, and strong public-private partnerships.

Hussein bin Ali Al Lawati, CEO of the Development Bank, underlined the evolving role of development finance institutions. “With their tools and capabilities, these institutions stand at a crossroads where public policy meets entrepreneurship, guiding capital towards sectors that reinforce social cohesion and open new growth opportunities in underserved environments,” he said.

Al Lawati explained that choosing economic gardening as this year’s theme reflects a shift in the development mindset, from importing ready-made solutions to nurturing local potential, from looking outward to enabling internal capabilities, and from relying on traditional resources to investing in human, knowledge, and community capital.

He stressed that supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), especially during their growth phases, is an investment in stability, innovation, and

social cohesion, ultimately ensuring intergenerational growth continuity.

The meeting programme features sessions on green banking initiatives, sustainable lending practices, environmental risk management, innovative green financing tools, climate resilience strategies, and international co-operation for building adaptive capacities. It also addresses the critical role of second-tier institutions in advancing local economic growth and sustainability.

H.E. Dr Kao Thach, Chairman of the ADFIAP, expressed his honour that the organisation’s annual meeting is being held in Muscat, a city that skilfully blends rich cultural heritage with modern infrastructure, providing an inspiring, vibrant, and welcoming environment. He noted that this year’s meetings, held under the theme ‘Economic Gardening and Development Impact’, are both timely and inspiring. “Under this theme,” he said, “we encourage a reimagining of development as a process rooted in local strength, one that grows from within and starts at the grassroots.”

ADFIAP signs MoUs and partnerships at annual meeting

MUSCAT: The Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP) signed several agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with regional financial and technology institutions, aimed at enhancing cooperation to support financial inclusion and develop banking infrastructure. The signings took place on the sidelines of ADFIAP’s annual meetings, hosted by the Sultanate of Oman and represented by the Development Bank (DB).

One of the key MoUs was signed with the New Rural Bank of San Leonardo in the Philippines, aiming to establish a collaborative framework for implementing an integrated banking system that enhances operational efficiency and expands financial services in rural areas.

Two partnership agreements were also signed between Invivox IT Solutions

Ltd. from the Philippines and Synapsys Ltd. from Sri Lanka, to foster collaboration in developing advanced digital infrastructure for banking systems, supporting financial innovation and enhancing service delivery efficiency.

Additionally, a MoU was signed between ADFIAP and the Agricultural and Rural Development Bank (ARDB) in Cambodia to launch a pilot project aimed at strengthening agricultural value chains, improving market access for small-scale farmers, and supporting efforts toward sustainable rural development.

These agreements and MoUs reflect ADFIAP’s role in promoting sustainable development by leveraging finance to enhance expertise, build institutional capacity, improve human capital, and support innovation in financial and administrative governance across development finance institutions.

and peer learning on how best to empower communities and achieve sustainable development. It includes important discussions on green finance and the role of development finance institutions in addressing climate challenges, all of which contribute to building economic resilience and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Hamad bin Salim Al Harthy, Chief MSME & Portfolio Management at DB and General Supervisor of the Meeting, emphasised the significance of the event in reinforcing effective partnerships, empowering communities, and promoting sustainable economic growth through the sharing of ideas and successful practices. He added that the meeting is a unique opportunity to examine the challenges facing financing institutions and how they can be addressed through international cooperation. Oman’s hosting of the event, he explained, stems from its active engagement as a member of the organisation.

Al Harthy noted that Oman’s membership in ADFIAP has enabled the Sultanate to benefit from valuable studies, field experiences, and exchange visits with development banks such as those in Malaysia. It also paved the way for the signing of several memoranda of understanding with banks in member countries and provided opportunities for training workshops targeting Development Bank employees. The meeting programme includes the signing of new MoUs with regional and international development institutions to enhance collaboration in the financing sector. In addition, interactive sessions are being held throughout the event. On the final day, participants will join a cultural tour of Nizwa in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, offering international guests a deeper insight into Oman’s rich heritage and the opportunity to engage directly with the local community.

Hosting the ADFIAP meetings in Muscat reflects Oman’s growing role in development finance, entrepreneurship, and SME support. It also represents an opportunity to strengthen international cooperation and share best practices in the sector, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Oman aspires to enhance its position as a regional hub for finance and development, in line with the strategic priorities of Oman Vision 2040.

He explained that at its core, economic development challenges us to nurture local entrepreneurs, invest in communities, and strengthen ecosystems that allow businesses and innovations to flourish. These elements, he added, are powerful levers for addressing global development challenges while supporting inclusive and resilient local economic growth. Through this year’s sessions, participants will explore critical topics such as community economic empowerment, the role of second-tier companies, entrepreneurship ecosystems, goal-aligned financing, financial resilience, and green and sustainable finance, all of which are foundational to inclusive development across the Asia-Pacific region.

He stressed that a focus on local enterprises and community-based growth remains essential, even in

an increasingly interconnected world. As globalisation slows under rising protectionism and broader economic instability, it has deepened the fragility of many local communities, particularly those with low investment and underdeveloped infrastructure. These vulnerabilities leave societies more exposed to external shocks such as supply chain disruptions, climate disasters, geopolitical tensions, trade policy shifts, and global pandemics. In this context, economic gardening offers a timely and complementary response to globalisation by promoting investment in local entrepreneurs, particularly second-stage businesses, fostering a strong entrepreneurial environment, enhancing skills development, and linking businesses to accessible and flexible finance.

The meeting aims to serve as a platform for knowledge exchange



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Duqm’s Saay Commercial District internal roads almost completed

At a cost of OMR13.1 million, the road network project, is part of an ambitious plan aimed at enhancing the quality of life in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm

DUQM: The completion rate of the internal roads project in the new Saay Commercial District within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) rose to 93 percent in April. All core works have been completed, making the area ready for traffic flow.

The new Saay Commercial District is a modern investment and tourism destination within Sezad. Two years ago, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) launched a development plan for the district, which includes several model facilities and services.

Among them is a 13.65-kilometre internal road network, featuring 4.25 kilometres of dual carriageways with two lanes in each direction, and 9.4 kilometres of

as, as well as dedicated, safe, and smooth pathways for bicycles and e-scooters.

All traffic signals in the district will be equipped with smart sensors to enable efficient traffic flow management.

He added that the total number of completed projects in the district stands at 53, with another 24 under construction, a reflection of the significant attention given to the district as a model integrated zone.

Eng. Al Hakamani expects the internal roads network to be fully completed in the second half of this year.

The project is anticipated to attract more investments to Sezad and support its strategy to improve the quality of life in Duqm by providing facilities that meet the aspirations of residents, citizens, and tourists alike. – ONA

U.S. TRADE REPRESENTATIVES

Meeting in Muscat discusses Oman-US Free Trade Agreement

MUSCAT: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) yesterday hosted a meeting in Muscat with U.S. trade representatives to discuss the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Oman and the United States of America.

The session focused on identifying key challenges hindering Omani private sector exporters and importers from optimally implementing the agreement's provisions.

Discussions addressed U.S. imposed tariffs and the Omani private sector's aspirations for reconsideration of these tariffs on Omani exports.

The meeting emphasized the importance of establishing Oman's forthcoming commercial office in the United States, expected to commence operations soon. This office is anticipated to enhance Omani exports to the U.S. market while encouraging American exports and investments into Oman.

A parallel workshop convened between Omani and American exporters, importers, and investors to examine obstacles affecting their trade and investment activities.

Faisal Abdullah Al Rowas, Chairman of OCCI's Board of Directors,

affirmed that the FTA serves as a strategic tool to bolster the economy and expand market access for Omani products in the United States. He stressed the necessity of collaborative efforts between government entities and the private sector to maximize the agreement's benefits.

Al Rowas noted that OCCI continues to analyze challenges facing Omani private sector companies in accessing global markets, including the U.S., while evaluating solutions to facilitate the unimpeded flow of goods and services in accordance with international standards.

The meeting was attended by the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Europe and the Middle East, as well as the Director for European and Middle Eastern Affairs at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. – ONA

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT

RAM launches programme aimed to empower heads of govt departments

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Royal Academy of Management (RAM) has launched the Executive Leadership Programme for Heads of Departments. With the aim of empowering heads of government departments in Oman to make more impactful contributions to their organisations, the inaugural executive learning programme is designed to elevate their leadership skills and strategic-decision making competencies.

The landmark new programme is guided by the impetus of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, to equip leaders in Oman with refreshed capabilities and empowerment skills, and aligns with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. The Executive Leadership Programme for Heads of Departments is part of a series of RAM's strategic initiatives and programmes running this year to develop and enhance effective leadership and innovation traits of heads of departments in the government sector, expanding their ability to become more impactful leaders.

The programme aims to increase the understanding of institutional innovation, promote sustainability, and enables participants to proactively adapt to rapidly unfolding in today's and tomorrow's public sector.

Programme content

The programme will consist of five learning modules covering diverse topics, including self-leadership and team leadership, leading organisations, motivational leadership and negotiation skills, creative thinking, and adaptive leadership.

Participants will also navigate financial planning and government investment strategies, project management, and risk management. The programme will include field visits, presentations of technological simulation experiences, as well as mentoring sessions, and a hackathon.

Learning outcomes

It is anticipated that participants in the programme will achieve several key outcomes, particularly the ability to embody creative thinking in leadership, which will equip them to take an innovative

approach to problem-solving. The participants will be able to apply innovation in the workplace, build effective teams and develop innovative solutions, and will be able to focus on enhancing confidence and developing impactful communication skills.

Who should enroll

The Executive Leadership Programme for Heads of Departments will run for 30 participants, including heads of departments and those holding equivalent positions within the units of the State Administrative Apparatus,

including civilian and military units. Eligible candidates will have practical experience of not less than two years and are not older than 40 years of age.

Timeline for applications

The first round of applications for the programme will be open shortly to eligible heads of departments and through the registration platform for programmes and initiatives of the Royal Academy of Management. Applications should arrive between Sunday, 27 April 2025 until Sunday, 11 May 2025.

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SHURA COUNCIL'S ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL COMMITTEE

Recommendations to improve business ecosystem reviewed



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Economic and Financial Committee of the Shura Council held its ninth meeting on Wednesday as part of the second annual session (2024-2025) of the tenth term (2023-2027). The meeting was chaired by Ahmed Saeed Al-Sharqi, head of the Committee, and in the presence of their Excellencies members of the committee. The session hosted representatives from the Oman Economic Association to discuss a submitted proposal regarding the "Assessment of the Attractiveness and Competitiveness of Oman's Business Environment." During the meeting, the Oman Economic Association presented two visual briefings. The first focused on evaluating the competitiveness of Oman's

business climate, highlighting key challenges facing the investment environment. It also included several recommendations aimed at improving the business ecosystem, such as streamlining procedures, activating the unified investment window, and expanding the scope of digital government services. The second presentation addressed economic development in the Sultanate, with an overview of key components of "Oman Vision 2040," the five-year development plans, national economic performance, labour market structure, and associated challenges. It also shed light on opportunities in vital sectors including logistics, services, and economic and industrial cities. The session witnessed an extensive discussion among committee members, covering critical

issues related to the business environment. These included export challenges, business infrastructure, mechanisms to attract foreign investment, the impact of external customs policies on Omani exports, and the importance of enhancing public-private partnerships. The role of legislation and regulations in supporting market competitiveness was also emphasised. Members also explored the readiness of Oman's institutional and legislative frameworks to support investment, as well as key factors influencing the attractiveness of the business environment, such as the speed of procedures and the cost of starting economic activities. Discussions extended to incentives and facilities offered to investors and their effectiveness in

overcoming obstacles. The meeting concluded with a strong emphasis on the need for greater coordination among legislative, executive, and private sector institutions to build a more efficient and attractive business environment. This effort aims to enhance Oman's regional and international competitiveness in alignment with the goals of the national vision and to reflect the state's commitment to fostering a sustainable and dynamic economic climate. The session comes as part of the Economic and Financial Committee's ongoing efforts to support economic development and improve the business environment in line with the ambitions of "Oman Vision 2040," thereby contributing to attracting investment and diversifying national income sources.

PRESS CONFERENCE



Oman Airports: Digitally driven, nationally focused

< FROM A1 In mid-2024, Oman Airports launched a digital transformation plan aimed at boosting efficiency and enhancing passenger experience. This includes self-service baggage drop systems, advanced crowd management tools, and a centralised digital operations dashboard. The operator posted its strongest EBITDA since inception, up 43%, and recorded a net profit of OMR 23.5 million—a 15% rise from the previous year. Total group revenue reached OMR 142.6 million, with Muscat International Airport welcoming 12.9 million passengers (+2% vs. 2023). Salalah Airport outperformed pre-pandemic levels, surpassing its 2019 figures by 17.3%, alongside a 33% increase in shareholder equity. Oman Airports' Omanisation efforts were also noteworthy. A total of 357 nationals were recruited across airport contracts to replace expatriates, with 71 former Oman Air employees absorbed following the airline's restructuring. An additional 67 Omanis were employed to manage Muscat airport parking oper-

ations after the company brought this service in-house. Following the exit of a ground handling operator from the local market, Oman Airports also secured the jobs of 227 Omanis. Despite operational challenges such as high emergency maintenance costs and underutilised land assets, officials expressed confidence in returning to pre-COVID transit passenger levels by 2026, supported by a rising number of tourist visa holders and direct flights into Salalah from Europe. Both entities reaffirmed their shared commitment to sustainable growth, innovation, and strategic partnerships that strengthen Oman's global aviation standing. **Airfares to be fixed during Khareef** In a move welcomed by travellers, Oman Air confirmed that airfares on the Salalah-Muscat route will be capped during the upcoming Khareef season. The measure aims to make domestic air travel more affordable and encourage inbound tourism to the Dhofar region, particularly during the high-demand monsoon months.

SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE

Salalah Port welcomes eco-friendly container vessels

SALALAH: Salalah Port has received five modern dual-fuel methanol-powered container vessels from Maersk's fleet, marking a significant milestone in the port's infrastructure development and readiness to accommodate the latest environmentally friendly ships. The arrival of these advanced vessels demonstrates Salalah Port's adaptability to rapid transformations in the maritime industry, particularly regarding

environmental standards and emission reductions. This event also highlights the ongoing partnership between the port and Maersk, underscoring Salalah Port's pivotal role in supporting sustainable supply chains at regional and global levels. The port continues to strengthen its position as an advanced logistics hub that meets modern environmental sustainability requirements.

FOREIGN MINISTRY



Oman condemns attack targeting tourists in India

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has expressed its condemnation and denunciation of the attack that targeted tourists at Pahalgalam in Jammu and Kashmir in the Republic of India on Tuesday. Oman extended its sincere condolences to the government and people of India and to the families of the victims, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. In a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry yesterday, Oman reaffirmed its firm stance in rejecting all forms of violence and terrorism, regardless of motives or justifications.

— ONA



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Ministry of Health

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Health (Ibri Regional Hospital) invites specialized companies to participate in following Tender:

Tender Ref.	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Closing Time/ Day/ Date	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
561/ 2025	Retrofit of Bathrooms at Ibri Regional Hospital	15/05/2025	Before 9.00 Am on Sunday 01/06/2025	Specialized Companies registered with Tender Board	• SME: 10 R.O • LO: 25 R.O

Notes:

- All Specialized and interested Companies registered with Tender Board may obtain Tender documents from the E.Tendering website : <http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non- refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document .
- Regional Ibri Hospital is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accept or reject any tender .

(<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)

Any Clarification, you may contact via Telephone: 24402200, Email id: etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om

Condolences pour in from the world leaders as India mourns terror attack

Indian Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday chaired a high-level security meeting with all the agencies following the Pahalgam terror attack



LONDON: Leaders from around the world offered condolences to India following a terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on Tuesday.

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer called the terrorist attack in Kashmir "utterly devastating" and said that his thoughts were with those affected by the attack and the people of India.

"The horrific terrorist attack in Kashmir today is utterly devastating. My thoughts are with those affected, their loved ones, and the people of India," Starmer posted on X.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz condemned the terrorist attack against tourists in Pahalgam. He offered condolences to the people of India and wished speedy recovery for all the people injured in the attack.

In a post on X, Scholz wrote, "We strongly condemn the heinous terrorist attack against tourists in Pahalgam. Our thoughts are with the families of the victims and we

wish a speedy recovery for all the injured. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the people of India."

The Danish Prime Minister, Mette Frederiksen, offered support to India and condemned all acts of terrorism. She also extended condolences to the victims of the attack and their families.

"PM Mette Frederiksen: "Terrible news from Pahalgam. Denmark stands with India and strongly condemns all acts of terrorism. Our condolences to the victims of the attack and their families and loved ones," Denmark PM's office wrote on X.

Guyana President Irfaan Ali expressed sadness to learn about the terrorist attack in Kashmir. He condemned the brutal attack and stressed that the "heinous act of violence" is a tragic reminder of the devastating impact of extremism. He expressed confidence that those behind the attack will be brought to justice.

"I am deeply saddened to learn

about the recent terrorist attack in Kashmir that has left scores dead and many more injured. This heinous act of violence is a tragic reminder of the devastating impact of extremism.

"I unequivocally condemn this brutal attack, which serves no purpose other than to instill fear and suffering. Violence is never a solution; it only perpetuates a cycle of pain and loss. We must strive for peace and understanding, working together to build a future free from such atrocities," Irfaan Ali posted on X.

"Please convey my heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of those who have lost their lives in this tragedy. They are in my thoughts during this incredibly difficult time. Let us all stand together against such acts of violence and commit ourselves to fostering a culture of peace and compassion. I am confident that those responsible for this horrific attack will be brought to justice.

With deepest sympathy," he added.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen expressed Europe's support for India. She expressed confidence that the spirit of India is "unbreakable" and will stand strong in this ordeal.

"The vile terror attack in Pahalgam today stole so many innocent lives. My deepest condolences to @narendramodi and every Indian heart grieving today.

"Yet I know that India's spirit is unbreakable. You will stand strong in this ordeal. And Europe will stand with you," Ursula von der Leyen posted on X.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese condemned the terrorist attack on civilians in Jammu and Kashmir and said that there is no justification for violence.

In a post on X, Albanese wrote, "I am shocked by the horrific terror attack on innocent civilians in Jammu and Kashmir overnight. There is no justification for this

violence and Australia condemns it. Our hearts go out to the injured, to those mourning loved ones and to everyone in Australia touched by this terrible news."

In a post on X, Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong stated, "My thoughts are with all those affected by the horrific terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir."

Indian-origin entrepreneur and Republican leader Vivek Ramaswamy offered condolences to the families of the victims.

In a post on X, he stated, "This was a horrific attack. We extend our condolences to the families of those who died & our prayers for those who were injured to recover quickly."

New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Winston Peters, condemned the terrorist attack in Kashmir and offered support to India at this difficult time.

"New Zealand strongly condemns the terrorist attack in Kashmir. We send our deepest condolences to the victims, their families, and to the Indian people. We stand with our Indian friends at this difficult time," Peters posted on X.

Estonia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Margus Tsahkna, condemned the terrorist attack in Pahalgam. He stated that Estonia stands against all forms of terrorism & violence against innocent civilians.

"Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir and expressed full solidarity with the people of India.

Taking to X, the Cyprus Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated, "Cyprus unequivocally condemns the heinous #Pahalgamterroristattack in #Jammu and #Kashmir. We ex-

press our full solidarity to the Government and the people of #India. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims and all those injured."

The Ukrainian Embassy in India expressed concern over the attack on tourists in Pahalgam and said that the perpetrators should be held accountable.

"Ukraine is deeply concerned over the attack on tourists at Pahalgam, J&K. . We endure the loss of life from terrorism daily and firmly condemn terrorism in all its forms.

"When innocent people are murdered, it brings unbearable pain. The perpetrators should be held accountable," the Ukrainian Embassy posted on X.

UAE's Ambassador to India, Abdunnasser Alshaali, offered condolences to the victims of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam and prayed for the swift recovery of those injured in the attack

"My most sincere condolences to the victims of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. My thoughts are with the people of India. I pray for the swift and full recovery of the injured," Alshaali said in a post on X.

Sri Lanka's Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the terrorist attack in Pahalgam and offered condolences to the families of the victims.

It expressed solidarity with Government and people of India in the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday chaired a high-level security meeting with all the agencies following the Pahalgam terror attack. Home Minister reached Srinagar in the evening for the security review meeting. -ANI

PAHALGAM

Deeply disturbing: Trump affirms US support to India

WASHINGTON DC : US President Donald Trump affirmed his support for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the victims of terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on Tuesday.

Trump said he stood with India in its fight against terrorism.

In a post on Truth Social, he said, "Deeply disturbing news out of Kashmir. The United States stands strong with India against Terrorism. We pray for the souls of those lost, and for the recovery of the injured. Prime Minister Modi, and the incredible people of India, have our full support and deepest sympathies. Our hearts are with you all!"

US President Donald Trump held a telephonic conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday and offered his condolences at the loss of lives in a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir. Trump condemned the terror attack in Pahalgam and expressed full support to India to



bring to justice the perpetrators of this "heinous attack."

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday affirmed the US support for India.

In a post on X, Rubio stated, "The United States stands with India". The State Department Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs stated that it was monitoring the situation and called for perpetra-

tors to be held accountable.

In a post on X it said, "The United States strongly condemns the terrorist attack in Kashmir. Nothing can justify such a heinous act killing tourists and civilians. Our thoughts are with those who have lost their loved ones. We continue to monitor the situation and call for perpetrators to be held accountable." -ANI

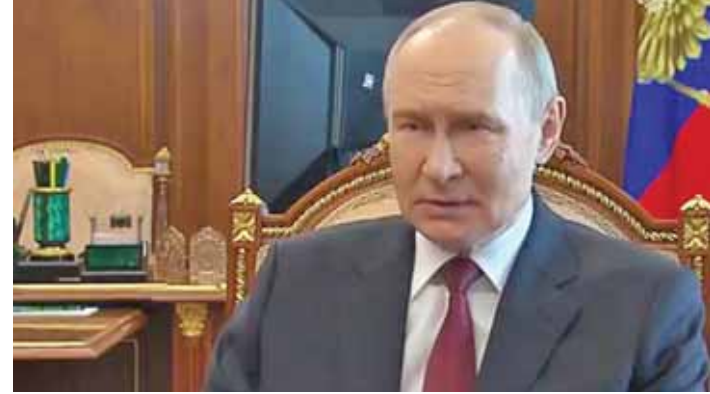
CONDOLENCES

Organisers, perpetrators will face punishment, says Putin

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday extended condolences to President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the tragic consequences of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir.

Putin said, "Esteemed Mrs President, Esteemed Mr Prime Minister, Kindly accept the sincere condolences over the tragic consequences of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, whose victims were civilians -- citizens of various countries."

"This brutal crime has no justification whatsoever. We expect that its organisers and perpetrators will face deserved punishment. I would like to reiterate our commitment to further increasing cooperation with Indian partners in fighting terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Please convey words of sincere sympathy and support to the near and dear ones of the deceased, as well as wishes for a speedy recovery of



all injured," he added.

Further, Denis Alipov, Russian Ambassador to India, extended deepest condolences to the people and government of India, stating that "Russia resolutely stands with India."

Russian Ambassador to India, Denis Alipov, said, "deepest condolences to the people and the Government of India over the heinous terror attack against tourists

in Pahalgam. Russia resolutely stands with India."

Ambassador of France to India, Thierry Mathou condemned the dastardly attack in Jammu and Kashmir. "Strong condemnation of the dastardly attack in J& K. My thoughts are with the victims and their families. France stands in solidarity with India in the fight against terrorism. #Pahalgam," he posted on X. -ANI

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Are electric motors the future of shipping industry?

BERLIN: The two-minute trip across the Rhine on the Mondorf ferry used to be accompanied by clouds of sooty smoke and the constant cough of a combustion motor. But since February, the ferry's chugging diesel engine has been replaced with one run entirely on electricity.

To power through its 14-hour day, the ship needs a 1,000 kilowatt (kWh)-hour battery — equivalent to about 14 electric car batteries. At night, the ferry recharges with renewable energy while docked at the pier.

Converting the 60-year-old ferry to run on renewable energy was possible thanks to federal funds, which covered up to 80% of the cost. "Without the subsidy, it would have been too expensive," said Elmar Miebach-Oedekoven, managing director of the ship-building company Lux Werft und Schifffahrt. His company has already converted some 20 passenger ships to electric propulsion, including several that operate along the Rhine in and around Bonn.

Compared with diesel engines, electric motors require less main-



tenance. As a result, said Miebach-Oedekoven, running the ferry on a battery will "probably be cheaper in the long run," even with Germany's high electricity prices. And that's not the only environmental advantage, added operations manager Ingo Schneider-Lux. An electric motor means "no flammable diesel on the ship, no risk of spills when refueling — the technology is simpler and safer."

Schneider-Lux told DW that the ferries and passenger ships plying the waters of Germany's lakes and rivers were increasingly going electric. That's also the case

worldwide: A conservative estimate from the Maritime Battery Forum nonprofit in Norway shows that more than 1,000 ships are already operating with fully electric or hybrid engines, and at least 460 additional electric ships are under construction.

Norway leads the way in electric ships

Norway is the world leader when it comes to battery-powered ships. For the last decade, the government has introduced stricter regulations and supported the electric technology for ferries, cargo ships,

fishing boats, cruise ships and maintenance ships for maritime industries, which in future will be able to recharge directly from offshore wind turbines.

It's all part of Norway's goal to drastically reduce CO2 emissions in the shipping industry by 2030. Starting next January, tourist ships and smaller ferries sailing in the western fjords will have to comply with new zero-emissions requirements. Today, more than 40% of the region's 199 ferries — a key transportation link along the 1,800-kilometre (1,100-mile) coastline — are already fully electric.

One of country's largest battery-powered ferries, with space for some 200 cars and 600 passengers, has been shuttling between two communities south of Oslo since 2020. And the world's largest battery-powered ship, a lightweight high-speed catamaran, is set to launch in May. It will transport 2,100 passengers and 225 cars across the wide, muddy waters of the Rio de la Plata between Argentina and Uruguay, a distance of some 50 kilometres.

Inland shipping turning to battery power

While electric motors are useful for shorter distances, longer journeys remain a challenge. That's why some electric ships also have a traditional engine on board, powered by diesel, liquefied natural gas (LNG) or biodiesel.

The hybrid vessel Saint-Malo, which has been making the 260-kilometer journey across the English Channel twice a day since February, primarily uses its battery along the coast and while in harbor, reducing emissions and noise pollution. For the rest of the trip, it relies on an LNG-powered motor.

But electric ships can cover much longer distances if they swap out batteries while en route. Two small e-freighters, which regularly sail the 300 kilometers along the Yangtze, China's longest river, between Nanjing and the port of Yangshan in Shanghai, are powered by 36 battery containers. They provide up to 57,000 kWh of power, and when depleted are switched for freshly charged batteries at the next stop.

That technology is also being used in two smaller barges in the Netherlands, at the port in Rotterdam. The battery exchange system, which takes only 15 minutes, was built in part with support from the European Union. The bloc's aim is to significantly reduce emissions from inland waterway shipping between the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Germany by mid-century.

The maritime shipping sector is responsible for about 2.8% of the world's CO2 emissions; it's even higher in the EU, where shipping represents between 3 and 4% of the bloc's total emissions.

Making the switch to electric motors could help cut back those planet-heating gases, and significantly improve local air quality. It also makes economic sense: Battery-powered ships are already overtaking traditional barges on shorter routes, when all costs are factored in.

Roger Holm, president of Hel-sinki-based ship engine supplier Wartsila Marine, said the outlook for the electric shipping industry was positive. -DW

PM Modi invites Saudi Crown Prince to India

The two leaders exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest and the ongoing India-Saudi Arabia cooperation under the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor

JEDDAH: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman held talks and co-chaired the second India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council (SPC) in Jeddah on Tuesday. PM Modi invited Mohammed bin Salman to visit India for the third meeting of the Strategic Partnership Council.

The two leaders reviewed the progress of the work under the SPC framework and discussed ways to strengthen cooperation. The two leaders exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest and the ongoing India-Saudi Arabia cooperation under the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC).

Mohammed bin Salman condemned the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam and expressed his condolences on the innocent lives lost in the attack. PM Modi and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince vowed to combat terrorism tooth and nail.

In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated,



"HRH Crown Prince strongly condemned the ghastly terror attack in Pahalgam and offered deepest condolences on the innocent lives lost. The two leaders resolved to combat terrorism tooth and nail."

The two leaders reviewed the progress under the Council since their last meeting in September 2023 in New Delhi.

The leaders noted with appreciation the intensification in bilateral engagement and the large number of high-level visits across various Ministries that have built trust and mutual understanding on both sides.

In a post on X, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated, "PM @narendramodi and Crown Prince HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman held extensive talks & co-chaired the 2nd India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council (SPC) in Jeddah at the Royal Palace. HRH Crown Prince strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack & expressed his deepest condolences on the innocent lives lost."

"Discussions focused on exploring avenues across domains including defence, trade, investment, energy and people to people ties, to further deepen the multi-faceted India - Saudi Arabia bilateral relations. They also

exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest & the ongoing India - Saudi Arabia cooperation under the IMEEC initiative. The two leaders reviewed the progress of the work under the SPC framework & discussed ways to strengthen the strategic partnership. They welcomed the expansion of the SPC with the addition of two new Ministerial Committees - on Defence Cooperation & Tourism and Culture Cooperation," he added.

PM Modi thanked Mohammed bin Salman for the support and welfare extended to the Indian community in Saudi Arabia. He also appreciated the support provided by the Saudi government for the Indian Hajj pilgrims.

In a statement, MEA stated, "The leaders welcomed the signing of 4 bilateral MoUs and agreements in the fields of Space, Health, Sports (Anti-Doping) and postal cooperation on the occasion of the visit. [List of Outcomes. Prime Minister invited His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman to visit India for the third meeting of the Strategic Partnership Council."

The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the outcomes of the work of the two Ministerial Committees under the Council, namely: the Committee on Political,

Security, Social and Cultural Cooperation and its subcommittees, and the Committee on Economy and Investments and its Joint Working Groups.

In a statement, MEA stated, "Both leaders appreciated the progress in the discussions in the High-Level Task Force on Investment. They welcomed the understanding reached by the Task Force in multiple areas, which builds on the earlier commitment of Saudi Arabia to invest USD 100 billion in India across multiple sectors including energy, petrochemicals, infrastructure, technology, fintech, digital infrastructure, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, and health."

"In this context, they particularly welcomed the agreement to collaborate on establishing two oil refineries in India, as well as the progress achieved on taxation issues. Prime Minister proposed that to further strengthen economic ties both countries could work for connecting payment gateways and trade settlement in local currencies," it added.

Welfare programmes

India appreciated the Saudi Arabian side for continuing their welfare programmes for almost 3 million nationals living in the region.

The Indian side said the act showed strong people-to-people bonds between both the nations and goodwill.

"The Indian side expressed its appreciation to the Saudi side for the continuing welfare of around 2.7 million Indian nationals residing in the Kingdom, reflecting the strong people- to-people bonds and immense goodwill that exists between the two nations," a statement by the Ministry of External Affairs said.

The statement added that India congratulated Saudi Arabia for successfully holding the Haj pilgrimage in 2024. -ANI



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Hope Saudi-India ties will get a boost: Lulu Group Chairman

JEDDAH: On the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Saudi Arabia, Lulu Group International Chairman, Yusuf Ali expressed delight on behalf of the business community and said that the visit by the Prime Minister would boost the bonhomie between the two leaders, thereby strengthening the ties further.

The Prime Minister was on an official visit to the Kingdom at the invitation of the Crown Prince and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman.

While speaking to ANI, Yusuf Ali said, "We, the business community, are very happy and as our country is going to become a USD



5 trillion economy, Saudi Arabia will contribute a lot to the growth of our country."

He added, "The relations between the two countries will strengthen and the personal relation between the two leaders and the leadership is great and we hope the relation between the two countries will further strengthen". -ANI

US to eliminate over 100 bureaus, offices

NEW YORK: Secretary of State Marco Rubio unveiled an overhaul of the US State Department on Tuesday.

As part of the Trump administration's "America First" mandate, the department is set to reduce its staff by 15% as it closes and consolidates more than 100 offices and bureaus worldwide.

According to an internal memo

seen by Reuters and the Associated Press, the plan - of which Congress has been informed - would eliminate 132 of the State Department's 734 bureaus and offices.

A further 137 offices will be transitioned to another location within the department to "increase efficiency," the AP reported, citing a fact sheet it had obtained. -DW



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OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by June 2025 reaching \$69.95, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by \$1.14 from the price of Tuesday, which was \$68.81. - **ONA**

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,289.79 points, down by 0.01% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.42% at 394.85 points. Jazeera Steel Products, up 7.25%, was the top gainer while Majan College, down 4.55%, was the top loser.

Oman summit targets boost to green hydrogen economy

Green Hydrogen Summit Oman (GHSO 2025) will bring together a wide range of participants from government bodies, private sector stakeholders, and international renewable energy organisations

MUSCAT: The fourth edition of the Green Hydrogen Summit Oman (GHSO 2025) will be held from December 1-3.

As one of the most prominent regional events in the clean energy sector, the summit will be held under the auspices of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, in strategic partnership with Hydrogen Oman (Hydrom)—the national entity responsible for advancing the green hydrogen sector in the Sultan-



ate of Oman—and is organised by Birba Energy Services. The event will bring together a wide range of participants from government bodies, private sector stakeholders, and international renewable energy organisations.

Details of the summit were announced at a press conference held in Muscat yesterday with participation from Dr. Firas Ali Al Abdwani, Director General of Renewable Energy and Hydrogen at the Ministry of Energy and Minerals and Eng. Abdulaziz Al Shidhani, Managing Director of Hydrom. Both emphasized the importance

of the fourth edition in advancing national efforts to develop the green hydrogen sector through international collaboration, attracting high-value investments, and accelerating the development of a sustainable ecosystem for this promising industry.

Dr. Firas Ali Al Abdwani said that hosting the summit reflects Oman's deep commitment to carbon neutrality and the pivotal role that low-emission hydrogen—especially green hydrogen—will undertake in achieving this vision. He pointed out that Oman is well-positioned for success, with over

50,000 square kilometers allocated for hydrogen development, comprehensive infrastructure including ports, and a strategic location linking global markets. Organising this summit is part of the Sultanate of Oman's broader commitment to advancing the hydrogen agenda both locally and internationally. He also emphasised the summit's goal of transforming challenges into opportunities through international collaboration and strategic partnerships, driving the localisation of hydrogen-related industries and opening up significant economic prospects.

Al Abdwani further stated that Oman is progressing with an ambitious roadmap to build an integrated green hydrogen economy. This roadmap is anchored in five main goals: contributing to global and domestic energy security, diversifying the economy and expanding associated supply chains and industries, reducing carbon emissions, building a competitive and cost-effective sector, and fostering innovation and national capacity-building. He noted that eight green hydrogen projects have already been awarded in Duqm and Dhofar.

For his part, Eng. Abdulaziz Al Shidhani said, "The Green Hydrogen Summit Oman is a vital platform to support the sector's growth and foster international dialogue on the future of energy. Hydrom's strategic partnership this year reflects our long-term commitment to ensuring that the summit serves as a knowledge hub, an integrative force, and a direct contributor to the sector's national objectives." He added: "We do not view the summit as a standalone event, but rather as part of a broader system that enhances our readiness, expands our global partnerships, and creates a supportive environment for investment and innovation. This is central to Oman's vision of leading not only in project development but also in shaping the global green hydrogen narrative."

The summit is expected to attract over 3,000 participants from across the globe, including decision-makers, developers, investors, and research institutions—reflecting the growing global interest in hydrogen and reinforcing Oman's position as a regional hub for clean energy exports.

This year's summit will be held under the theme "Hydrogen Management: Closing Gaps, Accelerating Action," underscoring Oman's shift from planning to implementation. The theme highlights key priorities for the next phase, including overcoming regulatory barriers, unlocking financing, addressing offtake challenges, and enhancing infrastructure readiness—through practical solutions and impactful partnerships.

The summit's agenda will focus on critical topics such as local manufacturing, strategic component localization, local content development, capacity building, and increasing in-country value. These discussions aim to support the creation of a robust, inclusive hydrogen economy that delivers long-term social and economic benefits for Oman.

GHSO 2025 enjoys broad support from governmental and sectoral institutions, reaffirming the Sultanate of Oman's commitment to its development goals and its leadership position in the global clean energy landscape. -**ONA**

NATIONAL HOUSING SCHEME

Muzn signs MoUs with top developers to offer Sharia-compliant housing finance

MUSCAT: NBO Muzn Islamic Banking has announced signing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with three leading real estate developers to facilitate Sharia-compliant housing finance solutions for Omanis under Oman's national housing scheme.

The agreements were signed by Abdullah Zahran Al Hinai, Chief Executive Officer of NBO, Faisal Al Wahaibi, General Manager & Chief Retail and Digital Banking Officer at NBO, Mundhir Abdullah Al Hammadi, Chief Executive Officer of Al Daham Real Estate, Ahmed Hamed Al Sabhi, Chairman of Al Masa Real Estate, and Dr. Thomas Alexander- Chief Executive Officer of Adrak Developers, at NBO Head Office in Azaiba. The signings reflect Muzn Islamic Banking's commitment to enable affordable home ownership through strategic partnerships and Sharia compliant financial solutions.

The MOUs were signed with Al Masa Real Estate for the development of the Hayy Al Azm Project, with Al Daham Real Estate for the Hay Al Sumu Project, and with Adrak Developers for two projects the Yenaier and Hai Al Naseem.

These projects are part of integrated mixed-use developments



under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning's Sorouh initiative. The initiative aims to support national housing policies by reducing land demand and offering eligible citizens high-quality, affordable residential alternatives.

Salima Al Marzooqi, Assistant General Manager & Chief Islamic Banking Officer at NBO Muzn Is-

lamic Banking commented, "Our support for the Sorouh initiative reflects Muzn Islamic Banking's continued commitment to advancing national development goals. These partnerships aim to empowering citizens with housing solutions while adhering to our core values of trust, transparency and Sharia compliance."

Through these partnerships,

Muzn Islamic Banking will provide eligible Omani citizens with streamlined access to housing finance that is fully compliant with Sharia principles. The agreements ensure the rights of all stakeholders, including the bank, developer and customer, are protected and offer a transparent structure to support end-to-end financing.

GLOBAL ECONOMIC WEAKNESS

World Bank lowers India growth forecast for 2025-26 by 40 basis points to 6.3%

NEW DELHI: The World Bank has lowered India's growth forecast for 2025-26 by 40 basis points to 6.3 per cent, over global economic weakness and policy uncertainty.

In India, growth is expected to slow from 6.5 per cent in 2024-25 to 6.3 per cent in 2025-26 as the benefits to private investment from monetary easing and regulatory streamlining are expected to be offset by global economic weakness and policy uncertainty.

For 2024-25, India's growth forecast has been lowered by 50 basis points to 6.5 per cent.

The Reserve Bank of India also recently lowered the growth forecast for the current fiscal 2025-26 to 6.5 per cent from 6.7 per cent, amid uncertainties arising from trade wars following the reciprocal tariffs announced by the US.

"Amid increasing uncertainty in the global economy, South Asia's growth prospects have weakened, with projections downgraded in most countries in the region," the World Bank said in its latest "South Asia Development Update".

Stepping up domestic revenue mobilisation could help the region strengthen fragile fiscal positions and increase resilience against future shocks, said the World Bank in its twice-yearly regional outlook.

World Bank projects regional growth to slow to 5.8 per cent in 2025--0.4 percentage points below October projections--before ticking up to 6.1 per cent in 2026.

This outlook is subject to heightened risks, including from a highly uncertain global landscape, combined with domestic vulnerabilities, including constrained fiscal space, the World Bank said.

"Multiple shocks over the past decade have left South Asian countries with limited buffers to withstand an increasingly challenging global environment," said Martin Raiser, World Bank Vice President for South Asia. "The region needs targeted reforms to address vulnerabilities such as fragile fiscal positions, backward agricultural sectors, and the impact of climate-related shocks." -**ANI**

POSTAL PROSPERITY ZONE INITIATIVE

Data harmonisation, multimodal logistics, customs integration discussed

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman Post, part of ASYAD Group, has announced its official participation in the Postal Prosperity Zone (PPZ) initiative, a strategic step toward enhancing cross-border e-commerce through integrated digital logistics.

The announcement was made during a high-level roundtable event held in Muscat on 23 April, part of the UPU-Consultative Committee's official visit to Oman from April 22--24. The roundtable convened global postal leaders and logistics experts to explore next-generation solutions for cross-border delivery, customs, and transport integration.

Dr. Ali Al Shidhani, Undersecretary for Communications and Information Technology at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT), delivered the keynote, emphasizing digital transforma-



tion and collaborative frameworks in boosting the competitiveness of national postal systems.

The PPZ initiative is a global innovation programme designed to support UPU member countries and their Designated Postal Op-

erators (DOs). Based on the UPU Abidjan Strategy and fully aligned with UPU and WCO standards and regulations, this global digital and operational transformation programme streamlines collaboration between government institutions.

It modernizes the DO through modular and rapid integration with the global ecommerce ecosystem, upgrading its digital and operational capabilities and creating postal logistics & customs infrastructure which serves as a gate-

way for cross-border ecommerce. The initiative fosters cooperation between national postal operators and private-sector logistics providers to enhance cross-border e-commerce performance. By integrating digital processes and interoperable networks, the PPZ provides a framework for seamless first-to-last mile delivery across international markets.

The announcement of Oman Post's participation in the PPZ initiative supports the strategic goals of Oman Vision 2040 which identifies logistics as a key engine of economic diversification and regional competitiveness and strengthens its role as a cross-border logistics enabler, aligned with Asyad Group's vision. The PPZ project will strengthen this logistics ecosystem by enabling full digital connectivity between Oman Post and international ecommerce platforms, optimized customs infrastructure, and com-

petitive global transit capabilities. Oman Post's participation in the PPZ initiative marks a strategic step in advancing Oman's digital economy and trade ambitions.

The project which will be implemented in May 2025, will include real-time data sharing between postal and customs systems, standardized labeling and tracking, and optimized transport flows across air, sea, rail, and road networks.

During the three-day visit, the delegates including UPU CC members, representatives from the UPU, World Customs Organization (WCO), government institutions, and global ecommerce stakeholders, toured several of Asyad Group's integrated logistics facilities, including ports, free zones, and multimodal transport hubs. These site visits offered firsthand insights into Oman's growing role as a global logistics hub, supported by advanced infrastructure and smart trade facilitation systems.

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Jazeera Steel Products, up 7.25%, was the top gainer while, Majan College, down 4.55%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,289.79 points, down by 0.01% from previous close. The Shariah Index ended down by 0.42% at 394.85 points. Jazeera Steel Products, up 7.25%, was the top gainer while, Majan College, down 4.55%, was the top loser. Shares of Oman Arab Bank 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 RO 2.33 million, with more than 13.06 million shares changing hands. Out of 50 traded securities, 7 advanced, 17 declined, and 26 remained unchanged. At the session close, foreign investors were net sellers for RO 288K while GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 154K, followed by domestic investors for RO 134K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at

7,528.40 points, down 0.24%. Prices of Al Anwar Investment, National Bank Oman were up by 1.28%, 0.69% respectively. Prices of United Finance, Oman Arab Bank, Al Madina Takaful, Bank Nizwa, Ominvest were down by 1.75%, 1.48%, 1.30%, 1.01%, 0.44% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,777.60 points, up 0.95%. Prices of Jazeera Steel Products, Oman Flour Mills, Al Maha Ceramics were up by 7.25%, 2.84%, 1.21% respectively. Prices of Voltamp Energy, Gulf Mushroom Products were down by 0.75%, 0.46% respectively.

Services Index was up by 0.12% before closing at 1,544.21 points. Prices of Sembcorp Salalah, Abraj Energy were up by 3.23%, 0.44% respectively. Prices of Majan College, Al Suwadi Power, Ooredoo, Sharqiyah Desalination, Al Jazeera Services were down by 4.55%, 1.43%, 1.18%, 0.75%, 0.65% respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

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STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,292.80	4,277.40	4,289.79	4,290.39	-0.60	-0.01
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,551.01	7,517.10	7,528.40	7,546.83	-18.43	-0.24
Industry Index	5,777.94	5,718.93	5,777.60	5,723.25	54.34	0.95
Services Index	1,544.42	1,533.07	1,544.21	1,542.31	1.90	0.12
MSX Shariah Index	396.74	394.85	394.85	396.53	-1.68	-0.42
MSX TR INDEX	6,345.40	6,322.63	6,340.95	6,342.60	-1.66	-0.03
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,948.89	8,908.71	8,922.09	8,943.93	-21.84	-0.24
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	7,100.22	7,027.71	7,099.80	7,033.02	66.78	0.95
SERVICES TR IDX	1,963.78	1,949.35	1,963.51	1,961.10	2.41	0.12
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
13,061,194	2,328,076	689	27,100,293,482	7	17	26	50

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (IND)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PUR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	800	296	2	0.370	0.370	0.370	0.370	0.345	0.025	7.246	0.370	0.350	0.370	0.100	46,212,245
OM0000004735	SEMBORP SALALAH	100	10	1	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.093	0.003	3.226	0.096	0.092	0.096	0.100	91,638,907
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	28,290	8,543	4	0.280	0.282	0.280	0.282	0.290	0.002	0.690	0.292	0.292	0.292	0.100	474,776,336
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	1,751,174	397,552	41	0.228	0.228	0.226	0.228	0.227	0.001	0.441	0.228	0.228	0.230	0.100	175,605,600
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	18,428	923	2	0.064	0.064	0.064	0.064	0.064	0.000	0.000	0.064	0.062	0.065	0.100	7,800,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	127,775	16,241	15	0.128	0.129	0.127	0.129	0.129	0.000	0.000	0.129	0.120	0.129	0.100	28,380,000
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	2,756	1,536	6	0.545	0.572	0.545	0.572	0.572	0.000	0.000	0.572	0.545	0.582	0.100	54,340,000
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	30,733	2,152	7	0.070	0.071	0.070	0.071	0.071	0.000	0.000	0.071	0.069	0.071	0.100	5,380,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	692,945	173,222	24	0.251	0.251	0.249	0.250	0.250	0.000	0.000	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.100	1876,599,266
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	1,028,209	133,628	19	0.130	0.130	0.129	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.100	860,242,015
OM0000004825	ALBATINAH POWER	45,563	3,174	6	0.070	0.070	0.069	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.068	0.070	0.100	47,242,120
OM0000008072	QO GAS NETWORKS	688,556	88,066	50	0.128	0.128	0.127	0.128	0.128	0.000	0.000	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.100	554,319,862
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	255,846	208,470	37	0.816	0.818	0.812	0.816	0.817	-0.001	-0.122	0.816	0.800	0.816	0.100	612,000,000
OM0000003234	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	73,362	21,129	8	0.288	0.289	0.288	0.288	0.289	-0.001	-0.346	0.288	0.288	0.289	0.100	68,086,080
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	183,848	41,201	17	0.226	0.226	0.223	0.225	0.226	-0.001	-0.442	0.225	0.220	0.225	0.100	210,535,109
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	157,858	36,317	11	0.170	0.170	0.167	0.167	0.169	-0.002	-1.183	0.167	0.165	0.168	0.100	108,707,686
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	198,130	15,063	18	0.076	0.077	0.076	0.076	0.077	-0.001	-1.299	0.076	0.076	0.077	0.100	13,300,000
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	75,127	5,179	10	0.070	0.070	0.068	0.069	0.070	-0.001	-1.429	0.069	0.068	0.069	0.100	49,294,037
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	6,506	364	2	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.057	-0.001	-1.754	0.056	0.054	0.058	0.100	19,943,129
Total	19	5,363,024	1,143,286	280												
Parallel Market																
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	6,344	2,679	5	0.420	0.435	0.420	0.435	0.423	0.012	2.837	0.435	0.422	0.435	0.100	71,938,125
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	64,000	5,088	7	0.079	0.080	0.079	0.079	0.078	0.001	1.282	0.079	0.077	0.079	0.100	22,678,540
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	7,500	1,246	7	0.165	0.167	0.165	0.167	0.165	0.002	1.212	0.167	0.160	0.166	0.100	9,185,000
OM0000001030	OMAN CHROMITE	100	300	1	3.000	3.000	3.000	3.000	3.000	0.000	0.000	3.000	3.000	3.000	1.000	9,900,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	10,000	720	1	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.000	0.000	0.072	0.071	0.077	0.100	6,120,000
OM0000002333	SALALAH PORT SERVICES	230	54	2	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.000	0.000	0.235	0.000	0.235	0.100	42,261,789
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	660	98	2	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.000	0.000	0.148	0.000	0.148	0.100	449,890,183
OM0000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	60,000	6,240	2	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.104	0.105	0.100	29,039,214
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENG & CONTRACTING	20,000	1,380	2	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.000	0.000	0.069	0.068	0.070	0.100	14,006,065
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	11,200	2,311	5	0.209	0.210	0.210	0.209	0.209	0.000	0.000	0.209	0.222	0.233	0.100	45,714,552
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	70,000	4,131	2	0.060	0.060	0.059	0.059	0.059	0.000	0.000	0.059	0.059	0.062	0.100	86,293,486
OM0000007407	DHOFAH GENERATING	71,320	3,780	5	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.000	0.000	0.053	0.052	0.053	0.100	11,778,720
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	10,594	816	4	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.000	0.000	0.077	0.070	0.077	0.100	39,164,610
OM0000008908	QO BASE INDUSTRIES (SP2)	1,021,000	102,221	24	0.100	0.101	0.100	0.101	0.101	0.000	0.000	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.040	349,408,576
OM0000009759	QO EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	1,697,540	471,071	196	0.278	0.279	0.276	0.278	0.279	-0.001	-0.358	0.278	0.277	0.278	0.010	224,000,000
OM0000002287	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	10,380	2,259	2	0.220	0.220	0.218	0.218	0.219	-0.001	-0.457	0.218	0.215	0.219	0.100	8,978,944
OM0000002236	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	12,000	1,824	3	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.153	-0.001	-0.654	0.152	0.151	0.152	0.100	6,512,135
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	77,382	51,377	25	0.665	0.665	0.664	0.665	0.670	-0.005	-0.746	0.665	0.650	0.665	0.100	62,232,753
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALINATION	16,000	2,112	3	0.132	0.132	0.132	0.132	0.133	-0.001	-0.752	0.132	0.120	0.131	0.100	12,909,885
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	988,209	97,626	15	0.099	0.099	0.098	0.098	0.099	-0.001	-1.010	0.098	0.096	0.099	0.100	219,221,397
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	2,165,214	288,258	31	0.135	0.136	0.132	0.133	0.135	-0.002	-1.481	0.133	0.132	0.136	0.100	222,031,530
OM0000001020	ASVAD SHIPPING	1,023,550	109,324	46	0.109	0.109	0.106	0.106	0.108	-0.002	-1.852	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.000	562,129,044
OM0000003609	JABAL REIF	1,000	100	1	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.103	-0.003	-2.913	0.100	0.100	0.103	0.100	17,400,000
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	6,000	630	1	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.110	-0.005	-4.545	0.105	0.105	0.110	0.100	9,450,000
Total	24	7,348,183	1,155,844	392												

THIRD EDITION

Seminar on expanding insurance coverage in Mena

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman, represented by the Capital Market Authority, is hosting the third edition of the regional seminar titled: "Expanding Insurance Coverage in the Middle East and North Africa: Key Challenges and Market Development Opportunities." The event is held

in collaboration with the Moroccan Supervisory



A SYMPHONY OF ELEGANCE IN THE CITY OF CANALS: INSIDE NOLINSKI VENEZIA

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Venice—an enchanting blend of architectural splendour, winding canals, cobbled streets, and gondolas that glide effortlessly under ancient bridges—is truly a city like no other. For years, I had dreamt of visiting this floating masterpiece, captivated by YouTube vlogs and images of crumbling palazzi, Venetian cuisine, and a cityscape that seems to defy time.

When I finally made the journey recently, Venice proved to be even more spellbinding in person. It is a place of infinite charm and art, steeped in history, laced with romance, and brimming with soul. And at the very heart of my experience was Noliniski Venezia.

A timeless retreat

There are hotels that impress, and then there are those that enchant. Noliniski Venezia belongs to the latter. Just five minutes from St Mark's Square and within a short stroll of the Rialto Bridge and La Fenice opera house, the hotel blends seamlessly into the historic soul of Venice, yet rises majestically as a beacon of elegance.

Surrounded by Venice's most iconic luxury boutiques, just two canals away from Piazza San Marco and over a bridge from La Fenice, its elaborate façade compels passersby to look up in admiration. With mythological ornamentation inspired by the sea, its windows and balconies echo the city's maritime legacy. It's easy to imagine merchants of the past commissioning such symbols to grace the former Stock Exchange building this hotel now occupies.

The reinforced concrete structure—pioneering for its time—was completed in 1929 and remains one of the tallest in Venice, surpassed only by the campanile and the dome of San Marco Basilica. Designed by Umberto Bellotto, the building's composite architectural style bravely merges Art Nouveau, Stile Liberty, and Modernism.

Protected under Venice's Historic Monuments law, it showcases exquisite examples of wrought iron craftsmanship, uniquely Venetian. Climbing the grand



staircase, one's hand naturally traces the ornate balustrades—each step a quiet celebration of detail. Inside, the original terrazzo floors and stucco marmorino walls have been lovingly restored, a tribute to the traditional artisanship of Venice. These noble materials offer a feast for the eye, and in harmony with the building's preserved historic elements, the interiors achieve a rare synthesis: contemporary yet timeless, bold yet respectful of the past.

Designed by Lecoadic & Scotto, the interiors reflect a meticulous fusion of Venetian opulence and modern grace. Across five floors, contrasting textures—mango wood panelling against classical stucco, modern art placed near antique accents—surprise and delight in equal measure.

“Art and noble materials reign

supreme here,” says Piero Pastore, General Manager of Noliniski Venezia.

The hotel houses 43 rooms, including 13 one-of-a-kind suites, and every corner—from the Library Bar with its 4,000 books and ceiling fresco by Simon Buret to the rooftop pool adorned in golden mosaic—conveys a sense of refined wonder and feels both intimate and expansive.

From the Ottoman-inspired spa to the rooftop pool with its golden mosaic and panoramic skyline views, every space is curated to evoke serenity and wonder.

The hotel's beating heart lies in its immersive spaces: Il Caffè, a quiet courtyard for morning espresso; the Library Bar; the grand yet intimate lobby; and the Palais Royal Restaurant Venezia, set in a theatrical auditorium.



Surrounded by Venice's most iconic luxury boutiques, just two canals away from Piazza San Marco and over a bridge from La Fenice, its elaborate façade compels passersby to look up in admiration.

What truly makes Noliniski stand apart is how seamlessly it merges the past with the present. Original terrazzo floors and stucco walls restored to their historic brilliance coexist with sleek,

contemporary touches. Even the grand staircase—with its intricate wrought iron balustrade—invites admiration at every step.

Look closely, and you'll find delightful surprises: a mosaic octopus with outstretched arms greeting guests in each bathroom, an architectural flourish echoing the building's maritime themes, and a design ethos that is both bold and respectful of tradition. Guests can enjoy moments of private calm, a quiet reminder that every detail at Noliniski carries both elegance and intention.

Gastronomy with soul

Noliniski's culinary journey is as refined as its setting. Chef Philip Chronopoulos helms both Il Caffè and the fine-dining Palais Royal Restaurant.

Drawing from French techniques and flavours from Italy and Greece, his creations are a reflection of cultural harmony and elevated taste.

Whether it's a leisurely breakfast in the courtyard or a gourmet dinner beneath the restaurant's domed ceiling, dining at Noliniski is an immersive experience in itself.



A sky-high sanctuary

Crowning the hotel is the rooftop spa and pool—Venice's only one of its kind.

Here, amidst golden tiles and warm waters, guests can enjoy an uninterrupted 360° view of the Venetian skyline. The gilded waters reflect the Venetian skies, inviting guests to unwind while gazing at domes and bell towers in the distance.

From the campanile of St Mark's to the shimmering rooftops of La Serenissima, it's a vista that soothes and stuns in equal measure.

In an age where luxury is less about opulence and more about authenticity, privacy, and meaningful experiences, Noliniski Venezia rises to the occasion. It offers not just impeccable service, but an atmosphere that feels like home—if home were a Venetian place where time pauses for art, history and serenity.

For travellers seeking a hotel that honours Venice's soul while providing modern indulgence, Noliniski is not just a place to stay. It is an unforgettable part of the Venetian experience.

SPORTS

SPANISH LA LIGA



Barca extend lead at the top

BARCELONA: Dani Olmo scored the decisive goal as Barcelona beat Mallorca 1-0 to extend their lead at the top of La Liga on Tuesday. The Spain midfielder scored 41 seconds into the second half after Barcelona failed to score with any of the 24 shots they took in the first half. Mallorca goalkeeper Leo Roman produced fine saves to deny Lamine Yamal and Ferran Torres before the break, as the visitors hung on under suffocating Barcelona pressure. In one surreal passage of play, Roman and his defenders denied Barca from inside the penalty area four times in the space of 15 seconds. Though the Balearic side only had 22% possession in the first half, they did get in behind Barcelona's high defensive line on three occasions and were denied an opener by the offside flag. Barcelona were whistled off

at half-time, but Olmo eased the growing anxiety inside the Estadi Olímpic Lluís Companys with a cool left-footed finish. Hansi Flick - who made seven changes to his side with an eye to Saturday's Copa del Rey final against Real Madrid - introduced Raphinha and Fermin Lopez after the break as Barca searched for a second goal, but Roman produced 11 saves in total to keep his side in it. Barcelona took 40 shots - the most any La Liga side has attempted this season - while Mallorca failed to register an effort on target. Barcelona now hold a seven-point lead at the top of the table, with closest challengers Real Madrid playing Getafe late on Wednesday. Europa League-chasing Mallorca remain seventh with 44 points, one ahead of Celta Vigo who have played one game fewer. - Agencies

PREMIER LEAGUE

Nunes sends Man City third with late winner against Villa

LONDON: Matheus Nunes scored in the 94th minute to give Manchester City a priceless 2-1 victory over fellow top-five contenders Aston Villa at Etihad Stadium on Tuesday and move third in the battle for a Champions League place. What could be a preview of next month's FA Cup final looked set to end level as City struggled to find a way through the Villa defence after Marcus Rashford cancelled out Bernardo Silva's early opener from the penalty spot. But, in the fourth minute of five added on, substitute Jeremy Doku skipped past Axel Disasi down the left, then delivered a brilliant low cross with the outside of his right boot which rolled perfectly through the six-yard box for Nunes, who drilled his first Premier League goal of the season into



the bottom corner. It was a familiar feeling for Villa, who have now lost an incredible 15 successive league games at Manchester City. The importance of the goal was shown in the celebrations of manager Pep Guardiola at full-time,

who hugged Nunes in delight, then made his way round the rest of his squad before saluting the home fans. Man City are now third in the table, four points clear of Villa and Chelsea, who have a game in hand and remain just outside the top five. - Agencies

WISDEN CRICKETER OF THE YEAR IN 1973

Former Australia opener Keith Stackpole dies aged 84

SYDNEY: Former Australia opener Keith Stackpole, who played 43 Tests and scored seven centuries, has died aged 84. Stackpole made his debut against England in 1966 as a middle-order player who bowled leg-spin, but in early 1969 was elevated to opening where he partnered Bill Lawry. The right-handed opener from Victoria played Tests between 1966 and 1974, scoring 2,807 runs at an average of 37.42, including seven centuries. Stackpole also played in the first ever one-day international, pick-

ing up three wickets with his leg-spin against England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in 1971. He is perhaps best remembered for his highest Test score, making 207 against England at the Gabba during the 1970-71 Ashes. Stackpole scored his maiden Test century against South Africa in Cape Town. He had an especially impressive record against England with an average of 55.21 including three of his centuries. In the 1972 Ashes, where he was Ian Chappell's vice-captain, he topped the run-scoring with 485 at 53.88. He



was named Wisden Cricketer of the Year in 1973. "Keith was one of the great contributors to the game of cricket and his legacy will live long into the future," Cricket Australia chair Mike Baird said. "Not only was he an outstanding player for Australia and Victoria, his work in the media, radio and TV commentary and as a mentor to many players who followed in his footsteps demonstrated his enduring passion and influence in the game." His Test career ended with a pair against New Zealand at Auck-

land in 1974 which included falling to a full toss on the first ball of the game. "I only saw it a yard away from my head," he later wrote. "I pulled out of the way, but the ball flicked the end of the bat and flew to first slip. Maybe it was the first time in Test cricket that a fellow was out first ball without the ball ever touching the ground!" He was awarded an MBE in 1974 for services to cricket. Overall in first-class cricket he scored 10,100 runs and claimed 148 wickets. He went on to become a prominent TV and radio commentator. - Agencies

Mukesh, Rahul power DC to eight-wicket victory



Delhi Capitals now trail table toppers Gujarat Titans only on net run-rate after defeating Lucknow Super Giants

LUCKNOW: A superb bowling performance from Mukesh Kumar (4/33) followed by composed half-centuries from KL Rahul (57*) and Abishek Porel (51) helped Delhi Capitals (DC) ease past Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) by eight wickets in their IPL 2025 clash on Tuesday. The win not only consolidated DC's top-two position on the points table but also brought them level with Gujarat Titans, separated only by net run rate. Chasing 160, DC made light work of the target, reaching 161 for 2 in 17.5 overs.

Rahul, playing his first game against his former franchise since parting ways with LSG last season, led the chase with an assured 57 not out off 42 balls. He stitched a crucial 69-run stand with young opener Abishek Porel, who notched up his maiden half-century of the season with a fluent 51 off 36.

Earlier, DC's bowlers staged a dramatic fightback after LSG flew off the blocks with a 87-run opening partnership inside 10 overs. Mukesh Kumar was the architect of the turnaround, picking up a career-best 4 for 33, as LSG were restricted to 159 for 6—despite being 87 for no loss at the halfway mark.

Aiden Markram, promoted to open, blazed away with a 33-ball 52, his innings laced with clean hits including two sixes in the powerplay. Partner Mitchell Marsh (45 off 36) gave him strong support, but once Markram holed out attempting to clear the cover boundary, the innings lost steam. DC's bowling depth came to the fore as they clawed their way back in the second half. Dushmantha Chameera, playing his first game of the season, removed Markram, while Kuldeep Yadav controlled the middle



overs, conceding just 33 off his four overs. But it was Mukesh's burst at the death that sealed LSG's fate—he removed Abdul Samad and Marsh in the 14th over, then returned to knock over Ayush Badoni and Rishabh Pant in the final over. Pant's bizarre demotion to No. 7 and his two-ball duck only compounded LSG's woes. Walking in with two balls left in the innings, the captain misjudged a reverse ramp and was bowled off his pad—his first duck of the season. Meanwhile, Nicholas Pooran fell

cheaply to Mitchell Starc for the fifth time in seven T20 meetings. LSG's inability to finish strong—managing only 72 runs in the final ten overs—proved decisive, especially after their blistering start. Impact Player Badoni's 36 off 21 provided late impetus, but not enough to mount a serious defence. In response, DC lost Karun Nair early but recovered quickly. Rahul took his time to get going but shifted gears with a slog-swept six off Ravi Bishnoi. He brought up his third fifty of the season

off 40 balls, and in the process, became the fastest to 5,000 IPL runs, reaching the landmark in his 130th innings. Axar Patel, who earlier bowled four economical overs for 29, continued his fine form with the bat, smashing 34* off just 20 balls to finish the job alongside Rahul. **Brief scores:** Delhi Capitals 161 for 2 in 17.5 overs (Rahul 57*, Porel 51, Axar 34*); Markram 2-30) beat Lucknow Super Giants 159 for 6 (Markram 52, Marsh 45, Badoni 36; Mukesh 4-33) by eight wickets. - Agencies

MOTORSPORT

Wilson nominated as FIA deputy president for sport

LONDON: Leading rally team boss Malcolm Wilson has been nominated as the new deputy president for sport at motorsport's governing body the FIA. The 69-year-old has been chosen by FIA president Mohammed Ben Sulayem to replace Robert Reid, who resigned two weeks ago. FIA members will vote on Wilson's nomination at the organisation's General Assembly in Macau in June. Wilson, a former British rally champion, is the managing director of M-Sport, which has run Ford's world rally championship programme since 1997. Ben Sulayem said of Wilson in an FIA statement: "Malcolm has had a distinguished career

in global motorsport. "For over 40 years he has competed at the highest level both as a driver and technical partner to teams. "This experience will be invaluable to the FIA and our member clubs as we continue to grow grassroots and professional motorsport, driving innovation in the sport to benefit fans, drivers and teams." Wilson was quoted in a statement saying that it was a "great honour" to be nominated for the role. "I look forward to working with the president for the duration of his current term of office, bringing our sport to new audiences and ensuring we deliver the very best championships for all our competitors." - Agencies



كاسابيل
casabella

سير سائل غسيل الأقمشة

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ROUND-UP

BankDhofar named Oman’s fastest growing bank by branch network



This award highlights the bank’s commitment to enhancing accessibility and delivering a comprehensive suite of banking services tailored to meet the evolving needs of its diverse customer base

MUSCAT: BankDhofar has been recognized as Oman’s Fastest Growing Bank in terms of branch network expansion by World Business Outlook magazine. This prestigious award highlights the bank’s commitment to

enhancing accessibility and delivering a comprehensive suite of banking services tailored to meet the evolving needs of its diverse customer base. In the past two years, BankDhofar expanded its footprint by

opening over 43 new branches, bringing its total to 131 branches across Oman, including 25 Dhofar Islamic branches. This achievement positions BankDhofar as the second-largest bank in the country in terms of branch network, with state-of-the-art facilities equipped with modern technology to enhance customer experience. BankDhofar continues to cater to a broad customer base, offering specialized banking solutions for women, youth, minors ,children, and high-income groups, particularly Al Riyada and Al Rifaa cardholders. High-net-worth individuals and their families also benefit from exclusive, confidential financial services designed to meet their unique needs. To support long-term financial planning, the

bank provides investment and savings solutions, including fixed and recurring deposit accounts, education savings plans to help parents secure their children’s higher education, and retirement savings accounts to assist employees in building long-term financial security. With customer experience at the heart of its operations, BankDhofar has taken proactive steps to enhance service quality, address customer feedback, and streamline banking processes. This has directly increased the onboarding of new customers through traditional and Islamic banking services in the last year, bringing the total number of customers to 600,000. Additionally, BankDhofar has strengthened its cybersecurity infrastructure, ensuring ro-

bust protection for customer data and banking operations. Reflecting its strong growth trajectory, BankDhofar reported a 12.5% increase in net profits, reaching OMR 43.6 million in 2024, compared to OMR 38.7 million in 2023. The bank also invested heavily in digital banking solutions, being among the first in Oman to introduce Apple Pay and Samsung Pay for seamless transactions, wholesale cash deposit machines to enhance business banking, and Easy Biz, a digital collections and settlement platform for enterprises. By prioritizing expansion, innovation, and customer satisfaction, BankDhofar continues to solidify its position as a leading financial institution in Oman.

COMPASSION AND GENEROSITY

70 national pilgrims embark on Umrah journey sponsored by Saud Bahwan Charitable Foundation

MUSCAT: A deeply moving spiritual journey unfolded as 70 national pilgrims from Al Noor Association for the Blind set out from Muscat for Umrah, carrying with them prayers, hopes and gratitude. This sacred pilgrimage was made possible through the support of Saud Bahwan Charitable Foundation, which fully sponsored the journey, ensuring that every pilgrim experienced comfort and peace of mind. The special package, designed by National Travel & Tourism (NTT) covered return airfares, accommodation, food and all essential arrangements for the Umrah rituals, allowing the pilgrims to focus solely on their spiritual aspirations. Since its inception in 2004, the Saud Bahwan Charitable Foundation has been a beacon of compassion and generosity in Oman. As the nation’s first charitable organisation, it has remained steadfast in its mission to uplift those in need, offering both financial and non-financial assistance to individuals and families facing



economic hardships. The foundation actively engages in various humanitarian initiatives across the country, working independently as well as in collaboration with Ministries and institutions to maximise its positive impact. This initiative extends beyond charity. It embodies the Foundation’s commitment to empowering people with disabilities by fostering inclusion, pride and equal opportunities. Through such meaningful endeavours, Saud Bahwan Charitable Foundation continues to illuminate lives, bringing hope and relief while upholding the

values of kindness, generosity and community support. National Travel & Tourism (NTT) played a pivotal role in orchestrating a smooth and enriching experience for the pilgrims. A spokesperson from NTT shared, “NTT has supported Saud Bahwan Charitable Foundation in making the sacred journey of Umrah a reality for members of Al Noor Association for the Blind. More than just a gesture of support, this initiative reaffirms the belief that every individual, regardless of circumstance, deserves the opportunity to fulfil their spiritual aspira-

tions. NTT also has special Umrah packages tailored for those seeking to reconnect spiritually, as well as those requiring special care, ensuring a truly personalised and fulfilling pilgrimage experience.” As the pilgrims embark on this sacred journey, they do so with the knowledge that they are embraced by a community that truly cares. This noble act stands as a testament to the power of collective compassion and the unwavering commitment of Saud Bahwan Charitable Foundation and NTT to making a difference in the lives of those in need.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT



Oman Oasis sponsors 7th International Conference on Food Safety and Quality

MUSCAT: Oman Oasis, the nation’s leading bottled water brand, sponsored the 7th International Conference on Food Safety and Quality. The event brought together experts, professionals, and organisations committed to advancing food safety standards and quality assurance across the region. As part of its sponsorship, Oman Oasis set up an engaging stand at the exhibition, where the company showcased its commitment to purity, innovation, and excellence in water production. The stand featured three flagship brands – Oman Oasis Balanced

Drinking Water, Sifr Zero-Sodium Water, and Mai Alkaline Water – displayed alongside selected laboratory equipment used in the quality control process. Moosa Al Hasni, Chief Operating Officer of Oman Oasis, stated, “Supporting this international platform reflects our commitment to promoting the highest standards of food safety and public health. At Oman Oasis, we believe in leading by example – not only through the quality of our water but through active engagement with initiatives that shape a healthier future for our communities.”

UNDER UNITED KINGDOM ACCREDITATION SERVICES

Zubair Automotive Group achieves ISO 9001:2015 QMS Certification

MUSCAT: In a testament to its commitment to international quality standards and operational excellence, Zubair Automotive Group, part of the Mobility and Equipment sector of The Zubair Corporation, has earned the prestigious ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System Certification. This recognition, granted by the United Registrar of Systems, highlights the group’s excellence in quality management and adherence to globally recognised standards. The certification was formally presented to Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Hooti, Director General of Government Relations at The Zubair Corporation, by Eng. Basheer Al Salem, Director General of URS, during a ceremony at The Zubair Corporation headquarters in Azaiba. The event was attended by prominent officials from The Zubair Corporation and Zubair Automotive Group. This accomplishment underlines Zubair Automotive Group’s dedication to achieving the highest international benchmarks across



its operations, enhancing service quality, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. Reflecting on this success, Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Hooti commended the group’s unwavering commitment to quality, stating, “This certification is not just an administrative milestone; it forms the foundation of our corporate culture. It represents our vision of integrating quality into every aspect of our business

to deliver exceptional customer experiences and create value.” Basheer Al Salem also lauded the group’s focus on institutional excellence, emphasizing, “Zubair Automotive Group’s achievement demonstrates its steadfast commitment to applying international standards and enhancing customer satisfaction. We look forward to supporting their journey toward greater success.”

GREEN SPORTS PROJECT

Bank Muscat participates in inauguration of synthetic turf project

MUSCAT: In line with its commitment to social responsibility, community development and the youth, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate, continues to hand over new “Green Sports” fields to sports teams across Oman. The bank recently participated in the inauguration of the synthetic turf project for Wadi Attayeen Sports and Cultural Team in the Wilayat of Dima Wattayeen at an event held under the patronage of Abdullah Ali Al Hamahami, Shura Council Member, Representative of Dima Wattayeen. The event was also attended by Bader Mohammed Al Hajri, Assistant Regional Manager - North Al Sharqiya, Bank Muscat and a number of team members. Bader Mohammed Al Hajri, Assistant Regional Manager - North Al Sharqiya, Bank Muscat, said: “We are pleased to congratulate Wadi Attayeen Sports and Cultural Team for the completion



of their project as part of “Green Sports” programme. This project will be a valuable addition to the team to make the best use of the facilities, including organising social and community events.” Omran Mubarak Al Habsi, Head of Wadi Attayeen Sports and Cultural Team, said: “We are very pleased with the completion of the project and I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the

Bank for its pioneering role in corporate social responsibility. The “Green Sports” programme plays a crucial role in enhancing the sports infrastructure for local teams across Oman. We are committed to developing and nurturing the talents of our members to support the sports sector in the Sultanate, and to continue organising diverse sports, cultural and social events.”

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