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TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....12:12pm

Asr.....3:39pm

Maghrib.....6:30pm

Isha.....7:42pm

Fajr (Tomorrow).....4:32am

MoCIIP launches

Golden Residency and Elite Companies initiative, inks strategic pacts to boost construction sector under ‘Sustainable Business Environment’

SALALAH: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) hosted on Sunday, 31 August 2025, at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex for Culture and Entertainment in Salalah, an event under the theme ‘Sustainable Business Environment’. The event was held under the patronage of H.H. Sayyid Marwan bin Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar, and attended by H.E. Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, along with a number of ministers, dignitaries, investors and officials from both the public and private sectors.

The event witnessed the launch of three pivotal programmes that mark a qualitative shift in Oman’s investment landscape. The Ministry introduced the Golden Residency programme for investors, announced the ‘Elite Companies’ initiative, and inaugurated the Commercial Registration Ownership Transfer service via e-authentication on the Oman Business Platform, in addition to signing strategic cooperation agreements aimed at developing the construction sector.

H.E. Ibtisam bint Ahmed Al Farooji, Undersecretary of the MoCIIP for Investment Promotion, affirmed in her speech on the occasion that “the launch of today’s strategic initiatives and landmark programmes comes within the framework of national directions to enhance the investment environment in the Sultanate of Oman and equip it to be more sustainable and competitive. The Golden Residency programme for investors, the Elite Companies initiative, digital transformation services via the Oman Business Platform, as well as agreements and partnerships signed in the construction and energy sectors, all represent key pillars in building a diversified economy based on knowledge and innovation in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.”

She further explained that these efforts are not limited to attracting foreign investments, but also aim to empower the Omani private sector and reinforce its role as a strategic partner in driving economic development. This includes creating quality job opportunities, localising modern technologies, and strengthening local content. “With these steps, we move forward confidently towards consolidating the Sultanate of Oman’s position as a preferred destination for regional and global investment, opening broad horizons for growth and prosperity in a way that serves the nation and investors alike,” she added.

Golden Residency: A Decade of Promising Opportunities

The launch of the Golden Residency programme for investors aims to strengthen the Sultanate of Oman’s position as a leading destination for long-term investment in the region. The programme grants renewable residency in Oman for a period of ten years, providing a new gateway for investors and their families to settle and grow in a safe, stable, and opportunity-rich environment.

The programme includes several pathways for obtaining residency, such as property ownership in Integrated Tourism Complexes, establishing companies registered in Oman, purchasing government development bonds or shares in the Omani market, as well as fixed bank deposits. Another pathway involves establishing companies that create fifty job opportunities for Omani citizens, or nomination by foreign investment law-compliant companies for their partners and key employees.

The scope of the programme extends to the investor’s family members, ensuring them a stable and holistic living experience. Investors also receive direct support through the Invest in Oman platform, which provides unified services covering all stages of the investment journey—from



establishment to operation and expansion.

Nasima bint Yahya Al Balushi, Director General of the Investors Services Centre at MoCIIP, said, “The Golden Residency is not merely a residence permit; it is Oman’s commitment to creating a balanced environment for investors that combines quality opportunities, long-term stability, and a lifestyle experience that reflects Oman’s authentic hospitality. Through this programme, we open Oman’s doors to investors from around the world to become true partners in our growth and development journey. Oman was ranked fourth globally in the Quality of Life Index for 2024, which reflects its ability to combine professional success with a balanced lifestyle, surrounded by breathtaking nature and an authentic culture.”

Elite Companies Initiative: A Platform for Global Expansion

During the event, and in cooperation with its partners, the Ministry of Labour, the Tax Authority, the Royal Oman Police, and the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry launched the Elite Companies initiative. The essence of this initiative is to recognise and support companies that represent the backbone of the national economy and highlight their contribution to growth. It also aims to empower high-performing Omani companies to expand locally and globally through an integrated package of incentives and facilities, while adhering to strict standards to ensure sustainable performance, innovation, and competitiveness. The initiative focuses on supporting companies that actively contribute to the national economy by employing Omani talent and delivering high-quality products and services, in



line with Oman Vision 2040’s goal of building a diversified, knowledge-based economy.

Tariq bin Nasser Al Harrasi, Project Manager of the Elite Companies initiative and Director of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion in South Al Batinah, explained that the project was developed to support companies that demonstrate excellence in institutional, financial, and administrative performance. He noted that precise criteria have been established to classify companies into three categories (A, B, C), with each classification criteria: company age, revenue category, export activity, Omanisation rate, and number of branches/markets served.

Al Harrasi added that three basic conditions must be met to qualify for the Elite Companies list, the company must be registered and active in Oman, compliant with laws and regulations, and employ at least one Omani national. In addition, companies must meet at least three out of five further criteria: company age, revenue category, export activity, Omanisation rate, and number of branches/markets served.

He stressed that elite companies will benefit from a range of incentives and advantages linked

to their category, such as involvement in regulatory decision-making, customs facilitation, and enhanced credibility with local and international stakeholders. “Through this project, we aim to create a positive competitive environment that encourages continuous development, fosters a culture of quality and innovation in the private sector, and serves as a national platform to celebrate and support elite companies, highlighting their achievements and presenting them as role models for other private sector institutions,” he said.

Aman Consultancy and Technology, the company managing the electronic evaluation system for the initiative, delivered a presentation during the launch outlining the expected objectives, the importance of the initiative, the mechanism for assessing companies’ performance against the set standards, and the categories of benefits and incentives provided through the electronic system.

CR Ownership Transfer Service to Enhance Digital Transformation

As part of the Sustainable Business Environment event, the Ministry launched the commercial registration ownership transfer

service through electronic authentication on the Oman Business Platform. In its first phase, the service covers one-person companies and sole proprietorships, aiming to enhance transparency and streamline business operations. This represents a pioneering step towards transforming all commercial transactions into a fully digital environment, reducing time and costs for investors, strengthening stakeholder confidence, and providing a smooth and secure experience aligned with international best practices in digital transformation.

Said bin Juma Al Salmani, Commercial Register at MoCIIP, said that the launch of the service marks a qualitative leap in the digital transformation of Oman’s business sector. He emphasised that the Ministry is committed to simplifying procedures and delivering modern services that meet investor needs. The service’s first phase covers one-person companies and sole proprietorships, making ownership transfers secure, transparent, and fully electronic. He added that the Ministry is pressing ahead with its plans to digitise all commercial transactions, thereby enhancing Oman’s investment appeal and supporting efforts to build a sustainable and flexible business environment in line with Oman Vision 2040.

Partnerships to Develop Construction Sector Cooperation Programme with Oman Energy Association (OPAL)

On the institutional cooperation front, the Ministry signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Oman Energy Association (OPAL) to advance professional standards in the construction sector. Areas of cooperation include occupational health and safety, local content,

professional accreditation systems, and training and qualification of national talent. The agreement covers sharing expertise in professional accreditation, supporting training centres, issuing work permits, developing health and safety standards, and organising professional and specialised training programmes to raise performance and skills in Oman’s energy and construction sector.

Cooperation Programme with Sultan Qaboos University (SQU)

A strategic cooperation agreement was signed with Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) to develop the construction sector through the adoption of the latest smart and sustainable building technologies, in addition to supporting research, training, and national capacity-building. The programme includes the implementation of pilot projects, preparation of technical and economic feasibility studies, and provision of specialised consultancy, thereby enhancing sector competitiveness and supporting Oman Vision 2040.

Cooperation Programme with German University of Technology in Oman (GÜtech)

The Ministry also signed a cooperation programme with the German University of Technology in Oman (GÜtech) to strengthen collaboration in adopting modern technologies in the construction sector. Areas of focus include building scientific and training capacities for graduates, providing technical and engineering consultancy, conducting market studies and research, and supporting green and sustainable infrastructure projects. The programme also focuses on creating pilot projects and introducing new technologies to drive sustainable development, employment and entrepreneurship in the future construction sector.

Cooperation Programme with eBinaa Professional Services

The Ministry signed another cooperation programme with eBinaa Professional Services LLC to adopt eBinaa integrated digital platform for tenders, and for the registration of contractors, consultants, and suppliers. This initiative enhances digital transformation and governance in the construction sector, enabling automation of processes, conversion of operational data into measurable policies, and supporting SMEs while boosting transparency and efficiency in the sector.

Shahswar Al Balushi, Advisor to the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Construction and Engineering Services, said that these strategic partnerships with academic institutions, professional bodies, and leading companies represent a pivotal step in developing Oman’s construction sector and strengthening its competitiveness in line with Oman Vision 2040.

He noted that the cooperation with OPAL, Sultan Qaboos University, and GÜtech will raise professional standards, promote smart and sustainable construction technologies, and support research and skills development.

He added that the cooperation with eBinaa Professional Services via eBinaa platform will accelerate digital transformation, governance and transparency in the sector, while supporting SMEs and creating a more efficient and innovative business environment.

Economic Vision Initiatives

The MoCIIP affirmed that these initiatives and agreements are part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen the business environment, attract quality investments, empower national companies, and lay the foundations for a diversified, knowledge-based economy built on innovation, thereby reinforcing sustainable development in the Sultanate of Oman.



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COMMENTARY

The lightning in my head



SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

Something went “sweesh” in my mind when I woke up this morning and everything was as bright as the midday sun even though all the curtains were closed. I shook my head several times but the light that descended from nowhere could not go away. It took more than a minute for the unexplained brightness to go away. I struggled out of bed and every step was a careful one until I completed the usual waking up routine. As I was having my breakfast, I wondered what it was. I could not think of anything that would trigger the unexplained occurrence. Since I did not have any rational explanation, I thought the sun

decided to rise in my head first before it made its climb out from the horizon. I also decided to continue with my morning routine as usual not letting the strange phenomenon takes effect on me. I went for coffee to clear my head and the strong smell of caffeine that wafted from the cafe helped clear my head. But the thought never left my mind. Minutes later, as the caffeine streamed through my system, I decided to rationalize what happened to me that morning. Was it a mental lightning that exploded in my brains? If it was, then why? Perhaps there was a storm in my mind that wanted to break away from the usual routine in my thoughts. If it was then again, why? As I try to reason out, my thoughts drifted to all the turmoil that were in my subconscious. It was their way of demanding attention. In other words, the lightning was a mental explosion that told me to get my routine back in track. Perhaps my expectations were out of order and I had too many of them and threatened to explode. The coffee tamed and straightened out my thoughts. From that moment, I decided to take a different course of

my routine. I would not let my judgments boil over and overflow. Sometimes, even a simple decision, if we let it unresolved then it can lead to unpredictability. With that in my mind, I decided to take a long walk on the beach to unwind all the knotted feelings. While passing through the rolling waves, I looked at the sun that was descending and made its way down the horizon. Its light was fading but it was spreading golden streaks on the sky above it. While looking at it, the skyline reflected what was in my mind. Or rather, what should be in my mind, instead of that blinding flash I had in the morning. The walk did the world of good for me. When I finished, I walked back to my car. Before driving off, I took the last look of the horizon. The sun was already buried at a spot between the land and the sky but the golden light was still there having the last fling with the horizon. I went back home and tried to recap the events of the day. The lightning in my head that woke me up early in the morning had a message for me. The message was clear. It was asking me to stay away from unnecessary stress that has no connection with the reality.

Salalah symposium seeks optimal use of national resources

The symposium's opening was held under the auspices of HH Sayyid Marwan Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar.



SALALAH: An awareness symposium titled “Governance and Its Role in Protecting Public Funds and Enhancing Transparency” was held yesterday in the Wilayat of Salalah, Dhofar Governorate. The event was organised by the State Audit Institution at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Compound for Culture and Entertainment. The symposium's opening was held under the auspices of HH Sayyid Marwan Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar. Sheikh Ghosn Hilal Al Alawi, Chairman of the State Audit Institution, delivered a speech in which he highlighted the symposium's importance in solidifying the principles of the state of law and institutions, and in enhancing transparency and protecting public funds. He stressed that governance is

a fundamental pillar for regulating relationships among parties and ensuring the optimal use of national resources, and that everyone is a partner in this national responsibility. **Oman Vision 2040** Al Alawi explained that the symposium is an opportunity to exchange visions, expertise, and to learn about best practices and successful experiences, in alignment with the National Integrity Promotion Plan 2022-2030 and Oman Vision 2040. The symposium's agenda included the presentation of four working papers that covered various aspects of governance. The symposium aimed to focus on the fundamental concepts of governance, raise awareness

of its importance and role in improving institutional performance and protecting public funds, and review best practices implemented by the participating entities. This will help build an institutional environment characterised by efficiency and transparency and contribute to the protection of public funds. The symposium is part of the State Audit Institution's efforts to enhance partnership and institutional integration among different bodies. This contributes to the exchange of expertise and the unification of efforts towards applying best practices in solidifying a culture of governance and promoting transparency and oversight awareness in the Sultanate of Oman. -ONA

DONATION CAMPAIGNS

A'Rustaq Hospital Blood Bank sees rise in donors



A'RUSTAQ: The Blood Bank at A'Rustaq Hospital in South Al Batinah Governorate recorded a notable increase in blood donors during the first half of 2025 compared to the same period last year. The total number of donors from January to June 2025 reached 2,201, reflecting an increase of 176 donors over the same period in 2024, which recorded 2,025 donors. **Omani nationals led the donor list** Statistics released by the Blood Bank indicate that male donors numbered 2,021, while female donors totalled 180 in 2025. The data shows that Omani nationals led the donor list with 1,974 donors, while non-Omani donors accounted for 227. In comparison with 2024 figures, male donors numbered 1,841 and female donors 178, while Omani national donors reached



1,850 and non-Omani donors 169. These numbers reflect increased awareness efforts and donation campaigns organised by the hospital in cooperation with various entities. External donation campaigns played a vital role in achieving these numbers, with 10 campaigns organized across various wilayats of South Al Batinah Governorate during the first half of 2025, compared to eight campaigns during the same period in 2024. This expansion helped broaden the donor base and facilitate the donation process for citizens and residents. The report notes that 239 individuals presented themselves for donation in 2025 but were deferred or rejected for health or social reasons, compared to 178 in 2024. Regarding blood types, O+ was the most donated blood type, followed by A+. -ONA

CDAA

Safety steps highlighted as new school year begins

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA) has marked the start of the new academic year by welcoming students back to classrooms with souvenirs and safety reminders, reaffirming its commitment to fostering a culture of awareness from an early age. A total of 854,540 students commenced the 2025/2026 academic year yesterday, attending classes in 1,303 schools across the Sultanate of Oman. The figure includes 430,461 male students and 424,079 female students, distributed among the educational directorates in the governorates. The Authority called on schools, students, and teaching staff to strictly follow safety protocols. Key measures include coordinating with the CDAA to conduct evacuation drills, familiarising students and staff with emergency exits and assembly points, keeping corridors free of obstructions, switching off electrical devices before leaving the premises, and wearing protective gear in laboratories. The CDAA stressed the importance of conducting regular inspections.



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SQU begins new academic year, welcomes over 3,100 students



The event, held at the Grand Hall of the Cultural Centre, featured a welcoming short film and an introductory presentation on SQU, its colleges, and student services.

MUSCAT: The Sultan Qaboos University marked the beginning of the new academic year (2025/2026) on Sunday by welcoming 3,132 students admitted to undergraduate studies as part of its 40th intake.

The reception formed part of the University's annual orientation programme, designed to prepare students for the start of their academic journey.

At the opening of the ceremony, His Highness Sayyid Dr. Fahd bin Al Julanda Al Said, the Vice-Chancellor, welcomed the new students, stressing that university life represents a pivotal role in enhancing both academic and personal growth.

He highlighted the importance of adopting a forward-looking perspective that enables students to



shape their academic and professional paths with awareness and responsibility.

His Highness further underlined the need for a balance between academic study and extracurricular engagement, which provides opportunities to develop skills, foster initiative and teamwork, and acquire essential competencies required in today's competitive and fast-paced world.

The event, held at the Grand Hall of the Cultural Centre, featured a welcoming short film and an introductory presentation on SQU, its colleges, and student services.

Sessions were organised with the Deanship of Student Affairs and the Centre for Preparatory

Studies, offering students insights into academic programmes, the advisory system, healthcare and psychological services, as well as extracurricular and volunteer opportunities that enrich the student experience.

New students were also introduced to the digital platforms and academic regulations, ensuring a

smooth transition into university life from day one.

New students expressed that the orientation programme helped ease their anxieties, offered clarity on academic and administrative matters, and gave them a sense of belonging to a larger family.

From the organisational side,

the programme's success was attributed to the collaborative efforts of various university units, with student volunteers emphasising the pride and responsibility they felt in ensuring their peers received full support from the moment they arrived on campus.

The orientation was preceded on Saturday, 30 August, by the allocation of student housing.

A total of 1,026 male students were accommodated in Al-Raha residential complexes, 939 female students in on-campus housing, and 18 students with disabilities were provided with specialised facilities.

The Deanship of Student Affairs oversaw the housing process to ensure smooth integration before the orientation began.

Several other units, including the Deanship of Admissions and Registration and the colleges, contributed by offering advisory and support sessions to provide students with essential information for their academic journey.

This year's orientation continues the University's tradition of welcoming new cohorts by strengthening institutional belonging, instilling academic responsibility, and equipping students with the knowledge and tools to pursue their aspirations with confidence.

Reports from previous years have shown that such programmes enhance student satisfaction and help ease their integration into the university environment, an approach that SQU is keen to build upon with every new academic year.

WORLD-CLASS TOURISM

Musandam Dive Exploration Centre gets PADI 5-Star Dive Resort certification

KHASAB: The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) has awarded the Musandam Dive Exploration Center a 5-Star Dive Resort certification, recognising its commitment to the highest standards of professionalism in dive education and the delivery of world-class tourism services.

This achievement marks a qualitative leap for the centre, elevating its specialised diving training and education programmes while reflecting its dedication to sustainability in the diving industry and enhancing the tourism experience in Musandam Governorate—a leading destination for adventure tourism and marine activities in the Sultanate of Oman.

PADI is the world's largest diving training organisation, with over 6,600 dive centres and resorts and more than 128,000 certified instructors across 186 countries and regions.

The organisation is renowned for its high-standard educational programmes, enabling millions of people annually to learn diving and participate in ocean and marine life conservation activities.

Sayyid Ibrahim Said Al Busaidi, Governor of Musandam, stated: "The certification of the Musandam Dive Exploration Centre as a PADI 5-Star Dive Resort solidifies the governorate's position on the international tourism map. This accomplishment builds on Musandam's successive achieve-



ments in the tourism sector, including the remarkable success of the Musandam International Diving Festival, which garnered significant local and international attention. Such milestones high-

light the governorate's unique offerings and reflect the integrated efforts to promote sustainable tourism development in line with Oman Vision 2040."

In his turn, Badr Mohammed Al

Shehi, Director of the Musandam Dive Exploration Center, said: "Receiving the PADI 5-Star Dive Resort certification is the culmination of years of hard work and adherence to global standards. We are proud to join the global PADI network and aim to deliver exceptional diving experiences that showcase Musandam's unique natural and marine attractions. We also reaffirm our commitment to contributing to marine conservation and promoting sustainable tourism in Oman."

PADI emphasized that the inclusion of the Musandam Dive Exploration Centre in its global network of dive centers and resorts reinforces its status as a preferred destination for diving enthusiasts from around the world.

CHAMONIX, FRANCE

Oman's runners take part in UTMB Alpine annual race



MUSCAT: Five Omani runners have successfully completed the Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc (UTMB), an annual race held in Chamonix, France, that draws thousands of runners from around the world.

Khalid Sulaiman Al Hatmi and Khusaif Marhoon Al Zakwani finished the longest distance of 175 km, ascending over 10,000 metres across a route that spans France, Italy, and Switzerland before returning to Chamonix.

Meanwhile, runners Yaqoub Khalfan Al Nadabi, Talal Hilal Al Mahrouqi, and Khalid Al Farsi completed the 100 km race, which featured an elevation gain of over 6,000 metres.

The race stages were marked



by challenging weather, including heavy rain, strong winds, and temperatures dropping to around 4 degrees Celsius. These conditions compounded the difficulty of the rugged mountain terrain, turning trails into muddy streams and treacherous slopes.

Indian rupee plunges to all-time low, crosses Rs228 per Omani Rial

R. Madhusoodanan, a financial expert based in Muscat said that this was the after-effect of the additional tariff imposed by the Trump administration against India



Times News Service

MUSCAT: First time in history, the Indian Rupee hit a new record low of 88.29 against the US dollar, surpassing its prior record of 87.95, set in February. The Rupee on Friday had opened at 87.65 and closed at 88.18 by the end of the trading session.

Exchange Houses in Oman are offering up to 228 for one Omani Rial.

Speaking to Times of Oman, R. Madhusoodanan, a financial expert based in Muscat said that this was the after-effect of the additional tariff imposed by the Trump administration against India. The additional tariff on Indian goods imported to the US has created turbulence on India's export to the US. Undoubtedly, large sectors are worried about the additional tariff which made Indian goods less competitive to others in the US

The above has created negative sentiments in foreign investors and the Indian stocks witnessed

outflows to the tune of more than Rs32,000 crore in August 2025 itself. This has put pressure on the Indian Rupee. Coupled with this, the month-end pressure on banks accelerated the fall. The RBI intervention helped the market to restrict the fall and finally it closed at 88.12 levels.

Impact on Indian economy

India spends a sizable amount of forex on crude imports, gold, electronic goods among other items. Rupee depreciation makes imports costlier besides widening the trade deficit. This will also fuel the inflation in the country. The RBI, which has paused the rate cuts, may either continue the status quo or increase the rates, if the inflation data go above the comfort level.

This may again adversely affect the flow of affordable credit to needy sectors particularly manufacturing, pharma, housing, agri etc. The Q1 (April-June) growth for 2024-25 is at 7.8 percent which beats the estimates. To continue the growth, several measures needed to boost domestic production at globally competitive rates to face the uncertainty created by the tariff turmoil. The government's assurance to stand firm with the affected sectors may be taken at face value.

Government to explore the pos-

sibility of regulating the import of items like gold etc., to preserve the forex in the current situation. \$58 billion was spent in 2024-25 for gold imports. The government had reduced the basic customs duty (BCD) of gold from 15 per cent to 6 percent last year. The forex reserve of the country has dropped to \$4.38 billion and stood at \$690.72 billion as on 22/8/2025. The plus point is that rupee depreciation may result into increased foreign inward remittance by NRIs.

Outlook

In the short term, rupee is likely to continue the pressure due to the export concerns to the US and the stock outflows. It is a fact that the rupee has depreciated by 3 per cent during the current year. Though the depreciation has been slightly above compared to the peers in the Asian region, there is nothing much to worry.

India has since started initiatives to reduce the dependence on the US dollar in international trade. The local currency settlements have begun to reduce the vulnerabilities. The present tariff is not going to be the final one in view of multiple reasons. The INR movement is expected to be range bound, higher volatility is expected in the short term, R. Madhusoodanan said.

His Majesty sends greetings to Uzbekistan and Slovakia

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev of the Republic of Uzbekistan on his country's Independence Anniversary.

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes of success to President Dr. Shavkat in realizing further achievements and aspirations that serve the people of his country. His Majesty also wished the bilateral relations of cooperation and partnership further expansion and growth on all spheres.

Furthermore, His Majesty the Sultan sent a cable of greetings to President Peter Pellegrini of the Slovak Republic on his country's National Day. In this cable, His Majesty the Sultan wished the Slovak Republic continued stability and growth. **-OMA**



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GOVERNORATE OF MUSCAT
MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY
Advertisement No. 30/2025

Announcement

In reference to **Advertisement No (26/2025), Muscat Municipality** informs you of the modification of the dates related to the Bid as follows:

Sl. No	Bidding No.	Bidding description	Document fee	Deadline for obtaining docs.	Deadline for inquires	Deadline for submission
1	11/2025	Investment of plot No. (1578), Block (M/3), in the Al-Misfah area, Wilayat Bousher, designated for truck parking.	228/- OMR	01/9/2025	03/9/2025	07/9/2025

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

- Company registration with Muscat Municipality must be valid to obtain the bid document.
- Pay the specified document fee for the requested bid via bank deposit to Muscat Municipality's Bank account as follows:

Bank Muscat

0423010702710024

- A copy of the transaction's receipt MUST be send to the following e-mail (**SQ.QS@mm.gov.om**), provided with the company data (name and bid number, delegate name,office phone number, mobile number, email address approved by the company and commercial registration number of the company).
- The tender document will be provided to the company via email.
- 2:00 PM** on the above mentioned dates, is the last timing for obtaining Bidding Documents.
- Documents must be enclosed in a plain closed envelope (without any company information) and place in the box located in On the first floor of the Quantity Survey and Contracts Department building (A) in Muscat Municipality, Head Office, Darsait.

NOTES:

- Companies which are not registered in Muscat Municipality or their registration has been expired shall register through the municipality's website (**www.mm.gov.om**).
- For technical support, please contact Muscat Municipality through this email (**crm@mm.gov.om**).
- If the bidders have any inquiries regarding the scope of the work, they have to sent their inquiries through the following e-mail (**SQ.QS@mm.gov.om**)
- 10:00 AM** on the above submission mentioned dates, is the last timing for receiving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & time shall not be accepted for any reason.
- Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason.

www.mosd.gov.om



GOVERNORATE OF MUSCAT
MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY
Advertisement No. 31/2025

Announcement

In reference to **Advertisement No (22/2025), Muscat Municipality** informs you of the modification of the dates related to the Bid as follows:

Sl. No	Bidding No.	Bidding description	Document fee	Deadline for obtaining docs.	Deadline for inquires	Deadline for submission
1	2/2025	Design, implementation, and management of various events and activities accompanying Muscat Festival 2026	25/- OMR	01/09/2025	04/09/2025	11/09/2025
2	3/2025	Design and construction of Omani sweets for the production and sale at the Muscat Festival 2026	25/- OMR	01/09/2025	04/09/2025	11/09/2025
3	4/2025	Implementation and management of inflatable games at Al Amerat Public Park for the Muscat Festival 2026	25/- OMR	01/09/2025	04/09/2025	11/09/2025
4	5/2025	Design and construction of Horror City, Al Naseem Park, Al Amerat, Muscat Festival 2026	25/- OMR	01/09/2025	04/09/2025	11/09/2025

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- The tender document will be provided to the company via email.
- 2:00 PM** on the above mentioned dates, is the last timing for obtaining Bidding Documents.
- Documents must be enclosed in a plain closed envelope (without any company information) and place in the box located in On the first floor of the Quantity Survey and Contracts Department building (A) in Muscat Municipality, Head Office, Darsait.

NOTES:

- Companies which are not registered in Muscat Municipality or their registration has been expired shall register through the municipality's website (**www.mm.gov.om**).
- For technical support, please contact Muscat Municipality through this email (**crm@mm.gov.om**).
- If the bidders have any inquiries regarding the scope of the work, they have to sent their inquiries through the following e-mail (**SQ.QS@mm.gov.om**)
- 10:00 AM** on the above submission mentioned dates, is the last timing for receiving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & time shall not be accepted for any reason.
- Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason.

www.mosd.gov.om

2025/2026 REHABILITATION YEAR

Over 8,000 individuals enroll in centres for people with disabilities



MUSCAT: Government, private, and civil rehabilitation centers and units for people with disabilities across the Sultanate of Oman have welcomed 8,941 enrollees at the start of the new 2025/2026 rehabilitation year.

Rehabilitation services

Comprehensive preparations are in place to provide advanced rehabilitation services and programs aimed at empowering ben-

eficiaries and integrating them into society.

The distribution of enrollees includes 3,586 in government rehabilitation centres and units, 4,756 in private rehabilitation centres, and 599 in civil rehabilitation centres.

Oman's rehabilitation system comprises 126 centres, including 43 government centres and units such as Al Wafa Rehabilitation Centers for People with Disabili-

ties, the National Autism Center in Muscat Governorate, the Early Intervention Center, the Intellectual Disability and Down Syndrome Center, the Cerebral Palsy and Physical Disabilities Center, the Vocational Rehabilitation Center, and mobile rehabilitation units, alongside 72 private centers and 11 civil centers.

A total of 1,417 technical specialists are dedicated to rehabilitating people with disabilities, distrib-

uted as follows: 406 specialists in government rehabilitation centres and units, 928 in private centers, and 83 in civil centers.

They provide comprehensive rehabilitation services and programs in special education, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, psychological and behavioural rehabilitation, hydrotherapy, as well as workshops, training activities, sports, arts, and family counseling. -ONA



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Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zedjali
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TOPICS OF MUTUAL INTEREST



Transport Minister meets with Bahraini, Iraqi and Algerian counterparts

Salalah: Eng. Said Hamoud Al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, met separately on Sunday in the Wilayat of Salalah with Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Bahrain's Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications; Razzaq Muhaibas Al Saadawi, Iraq's Minister of Transport; and Said Saoud, Algeria's Minister of Transport.

The meetings focused on several topics of mutual interest, most notably the development of transport and logistics infrastructure, strengthening integration between ports and airports, and enhancing cooperation in digital transformation and modern communications applications.

A number of officials attended the meetings.

- ONA

TRAINING OF TRAINERS



UNICEF Oman hosts workshop

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Social Development, in collaboration with UNICEF Oman, is hosting a five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop, which began on Sunday until 4 September, 2025 to strengthen the implementation of Oman's updated Child Protection Manual.

The training brings together more than 50 child protection specialists and practitioners from key sectors, including the Ministries of Social Development, Education, and Health, the Royal Oman Police, Child Protection Committee members, and the Public Prosecution. The ToT focuses on hands-on learning, giving participants the chance to practice using the manual in real-life scenarios, with work groups and exercises designed to help them apply procedures for case management, referrals, and reporting, and to understand how to coordinate effectively to protect children.

The updated Child Protection Manual, launched by the Ministry of Social Development in June 2025, provides a comprehensive framework for identifying, reporting, and responding to cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Its guidance is aligned with international and national commitments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Oman's Child Law and Vision 2040, ensuring that child protection efforts support both global and national priorities. The manual outlines clear referral pathways, defines the roles of each relevant entity, and sets specific timelines for follow-up and case closure, all necessary to safeguard the most vulnerable

children.

Sayyida Maani bint Abdullah Al-Busaidi, Director General of Family Development and Head of the Child Protection Committee at the Ministry of Social Development said: "This training will help ensure that the Child Protection Manual is fully understood and applied in a consistent manner across all relevant institutions. By focusing on practical exercises and real-life cases, we aim to equip participants with the skills to protect children effectively and coordinate seamlessly. Our shared goal is to strengthen coordination and ensure that no child in Oman is left without the protection they deserve."

UNICEF Representative to the Sultanate of Oman, H.E. Sumaira Chowdhury, added: "When a child is at risk, the speed, accuracy, and compassion of the response can change the course of their life. This training will help embed a unified approach across all entities, reinforcing our collective responsibility to protect every child, everywhere."

The ToT is the first step in a broader plan to strengthen child protection across the Sultanate. The trainers who complete this programme will share their knowledge with other child protection specialists nationwide, aiming to reach 200 practitioners during this initial phase. This initiative is part of the Ministry of Social Development and UNICEF's joint efforts to institutionalise child protection mechanisms nationwide. It follows extensive consultation with stakeholders to align the manual's guidance with existing structures in ministries and to explore future digital solutions for case management.

Honouring Social Impact Champions Empowering Communities.

جوائز بسمة Jawa'iz Basma **17th September 2025**
St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort

The Jawa'iz Basma 2025 is a prestigious awards night dedicated to recognizing and celebrating individuals, organizations and initiatives that have significantly contributed to improving the social, environmental and economic well-being of communities across Oman.

This event will highlight impactful contributions that drive positive social change and sustainable development. It serves as a platform to encourage innovation and inspires both the corporate and social sectors to engage in meaningful community transformation.



Nominations close on 7th September!
To submit your nominations.
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For partnership or nomination inquiries, contact:
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- Community Healthcare Initiative
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- Women Empowerment Initiative
- Financial Inclusion Initiative
- SMEs Development Initiative
- Community Development & Empowerment Initiative
- Public-Private Partnership for Community Development
- Public Engagement Initiative
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiative
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- Outstanding Omanisation Achievement
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- Leadership in Sustainable Business Practice
- Leadership in ESG
- Leadership in ICV
- Leadership in CSR
- Social Impact Leader of the Year



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Gaza death toll surges to 63,459 amid ongoing Israeli genocide

Emergency services are still unable to reach many casualties and dead bodies trapped under the rubble or scattered on roads in the war-torn enclave

GAZA: At least 88 Palestinians were killed and 421 others were injured in the Gaza Strip over the last 24 hours as a result of the ongoing Israeli genocide in the region, according to medical sources.

Local health authorities confirmed that the Palestinian death toll from the Israeli onslaught since October 2023 has risen to 63,459 fatalities, with an additional 160,256 people sustaining injuries. The majority of the victims are women and children.



According to the same sources, the death toll since Israel's resumption of the genocide on March 18 after a two-month truce has also climbed to 11,328, in addition to 48,215 others injured.

Emergency services are still unable to reach many casualties and dead bodies trapped under the rubble or scattered on roads across the war-torn enclave, as Israeli occupation forces continue to

target ambulance and civil defense crews, according to the health authorities.

Israel's genocidal onslaught continues undeterred despite calls from the United Nations Security Council for an immediate ceasefire and directives from the International Court of Justice urging measures to prevent genocide and alleviate the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Seven more die of starvation in Gaza

Seven Palestinians have died from starvation and malnutrition in Gaza over the past 24 hours, amid a total Israeli blockade on the region, according to medical sources, raising the total number of malnutrition-related deaths to 339, including 124 children. Since the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) declared fam-

ine in Gaza on August 22, 61 deaths have been recorded, including nine children, due to extreme hunger.

The international IPC assessment, involving the United Nations and partner organisations, has confirmed famine conditions in Gaza and warned that it is expected to spread to Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis governorates by the end of September.

The IPC report indicates that over 500,000 people in Gaza are facing catastrophic conditions—the fifth and most severe phase—characterized by extreme hunger, death, destitution, and critically high rates of acute malnutrition.

Additionally, 1.07 million people (54% of the population) are experiencing phase four, classified as emergency-level food insecurity, while 396,000 people (20%) are in phase three, defined as crisis-level food insecurity.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification is a global initiative that includes UN agencies, regional partners, and relief organizations, ranking food insecurity in five phases, with famine as the most severe fifth stage.

The Arab League has called for urgent Arab humanitarian and social support for Palestine, stressing that such support is no longer a choice but an urgent necessity that must top the priorities of joint Arab action.

The call came during the meeting of the Social Committee of the Economic and Social Council in its 116th regular session, held at the League's headquarters in Cairo, with the participation of member states' delegations and several specialised organisations.

The League emphasised the importance of the social issues on the agenda, foremost among them two proposals submitted by the State of Palestine focusing on providing social care for the most vulnerable groups amid the worsening humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territories due to Israeli practices. The meeting stressed the need to formulate practical recommendations to be presented to the senior officials' meeting and subsequently to the ministerial meeting, in order to strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council in advancing Arab social action towards greater inclusivity and sustainability. — Wafa

PM Modi, Xi Jinping Bilateral Meeting

Role of India-China's economies to stabilise world trade recognised

TIANJIN: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping, during the bilateral meeting in Tianjin, recognised the role of India and China's economies in stabilising the world trade, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement on Sunday.

The statement comes as the world is grappling with US President Donald Trump's tariffs, which the US Appeals Court has itself ruled as "illegal."

On April 2, President Donald Trump announced tariffs targeting around 60 countries or trade blocs with significant trade deficits with the United States, marking the largest US tariff hike in almost 100 years. He called the occasion "Liberation Day".

The US imposed a 50 per cent tariff on New Delhi, including the additional 25 per cent for purchasing oil from Russia.

The US had imposed a levy of 30 per cent on China but later paused it for 90 days as the both nation are negotiating a trade deal, earlier Washington and Beijing jumped into a tariff war, reaching as high as 245 per cent.

The bilateral meeting between PM Modi and Xi Jinping comes ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit.

According to MEA, both leaders also focused on strengthening "people-to-people" ties through



direct flights, visa facilitation and resumption of Kailash Manasarovar Yatra, during the bilateral meeting, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement on Sunday.

"The two leaders noted the need to strengthen people-to-people ties through direct flights and visa facilitation, building on the resumption of Kailash Manasarovar Yatra and tourist visa. On economic and trade relations, they recognised the role of their two economies in stabilising world trade. They underlined the need to proceed from a political and strategic direction to expand bilateral trade and investment ties and reduce trade deficit," MEA said in the statement.

During the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visit on August 18-19, both sides had agreed to resume direct flight connectivity between the Chinese mainland and India at the earliest, and finalise an updated Air Services Agreement. They also agreed on the facilitation of visas to tourists,

businesses, media and other visitors in both directions.

India and China have also resumed the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra this year, a decision which EAM Jaishankar appreciated during his meeting with Chinese Vice President Han Zheng in Beijing.

Additionally, during the bilateral meeting, PM Modi noted that India and China both pursue strategic autonomy, and their relations should not be seen through a third country lens. The two leaders deemed it necessary to expand common ground on bilateral, regional, and global issues and challenges, like terrorism and fair trade in multilateral platforms, MEA said.

PM Modi will also hold a bilateral meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the SCO Summit.

The SCO comprises 10 members. In addition to India, they include Belarus, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. There are also several dialogue partners and observers. India has been a member of the SCO since 2017, having been an observer since 2005. During its membership period, India has held the chair of the SCO Council of Heads of Government in 2020 and of the SCO Council of Heads of State from 2022 to 2023. — ANI

Online Speculation

Trump dispels health rumours, hits golf course in Virginia

VIRGINIA: President Donald Trump spent part of Saturday on the golf course, dispelling speculation that health concerns had kept him away from public view for the past few days, according to media report.

The US President was seen at Trump National Golf Club in Sterling, Virginia, following several days without any public appearances on his official schedule. The gap prompted speculation online, which was further fuelled after a photo showing bruises on his hand at a recent White House Cabinet meeting went viral.

Veteran journalist Laura Rozen has been tracking Trump's visibil-



ity in recent days through posts on social platform X, sparking public discussion on his absence from media interactions. On Saturday, she shared fresh images of him at his Virginia golf club, The Hill reported.

Vice President JD Vance earlier this week also reignited the health debate during an interview. He emphasised that while he is ready to step in if needed, he believes the president remains in "incredibly good health."

"Yes, terrible tragedies happen," Vance said. "But I feel very confident the president of the United States is in good shape, is going to serve out the remainder of his term and do great things for the American people."

He further added, "And if, God forbid, there's a terrible tragedy, I can't think of better on-the-job training than what I've gotten over the last 200 days." — ANI

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FIRST ODI

Sri Lanka defeat Zimbabwe by 7 runs



HARARE [ZIMBABWE]: Sri Lanka were fined five per cent of their match fees for maintaining a slow over-rate in the first ODI against Zimbabwe in Harare, according to the ICC website.

Pacer Dilshan Madushanka's hat-trick proved decisive as Sri Lanka narrowly beat Zimbabwe by seven runs. Despite half-centuries from Ben Curran, skipper Sean Williams, and Sikandar Raza, Zimbabwe fell short. Sri Lanka now leads the two-match series 1-0.

The sanction was imposed by Jeff Crowe of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees after Sri Lanka were found one over short of the target, accounting for time allowances. Under Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct,

players are fined five per cent of their match fee for each over not bowled in the allotted time.

Skipper Charith Asalanka pleaded guilty and accepted the proposed sanction, so no formal hearing was needed.

Zimbabwe won the toss and opted to field first. Three half-centuries from Pathum Nissanka (76 in 92 balls, with 12 fours), Janith Liyanage (70* in 47 balls, with six fours and three sixes) and Kamindu Mendis (57* in 36 balls, with four boundaries and two sixes) took Sri Lanka to 298/6 in 50 overs.

During the run-chase, Zimbabwe lost Brian Bennett and a returning Brendan Taylor for ducks, reduced to 0/2 in the first over. -ANI

Defending champions advance as Zverev exits at US Open

Top seed Sinner rallied from a set down to overcome Denis Shapovalov 5-7, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3, extending his hard-court Grand Slam winning streak to 24 matches

WASHINGTON: The round of 16 lineups at the 2025 US Open were finalized on Saturday, with defending champions Jannik Sinner and Iga Swiatek advancing smoothly, while third seed Alexander Zverev suffered a surprise exit.

Top seed Sinner rallied from a set down to overcome Denis Shapovalov 5-7, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3, extending his hard-court Grand Slam winning streak to 24 matches.



"It was a very, very tough match today," said Sinner. "I knew I would have to play at a high level." The Italian will next face No. 23 seed Alexander Bublik.

Third-seeded Zverev was eliminated by Felix Auger-Aliassime 4-6, 7-6(7), 6-4, 6-4. The Canadian saved a set point in the second-set tiebreak and secured his first Top 5 victory at a major.

"This feels good, this feels good!" Auger-Aliassime exclaimed after the match. He will meet 15th seed

Andrey Rublev in the next round.

Wimbledon champion Swiatek fought back from 1-5 down in the first set to defeat Anna Kalinskaya 7-6(2), 6-4.

"I didn't notice that my service percentage was low," Swiatek remarked after the match. The Pole will next face 13th seed Ekaterina Alexandrova, who reached the US Open round of 16 for the first time.

Two-time US Open champion Naomi Osaka edged Daria Kasatkina 6-0, 4-6, 6-3 to set up a clash

with Coco Gauff, who dominated Magdalena Frech 6-3, 6-1. Gauff currently leads their head-to-head 3-2.

In doubles, Chinese pairs advanced as Xu Yifan/Yang Zhaoxuan beat Guo Hanyu/Alexandra Panova 6-2, 6-7(3), 6-3, while Wang Yafan/Shuko Aoyama cruised past Viktorija Golubic/Ann Li 6-1, 6-3. Venus Williams, partnering Leylah Fernandez, defeated Ulrikke Eikeri/Eri Hozumi 7-6(1), 6-1 to reach the last 16. -Xinhua



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MIDDLE EASTERN AIRLINES

Middle Eastern carriers saw a 5.3% year-on-year increase in demand with capacity rising by 5.6% year-on-year, and the load factor up by 84.1%, according to a new IATA report.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 5,029.89 points, down by -0.65% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.01% at 475.04 points. Oman National Engineering, up 0.03%, was the top gainer while Oman Oil Marketing, down 0.06%, was the top loser.

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Musannah sewage network project '78 percent complete

The total cost of the project is OMR9.877 million, covering all its facilities and components



MUSCAT: The execution rate of the project to complete the sewage network, treatment plant, and irrigation pipeline in the Wilayat of Al Musannah, South Al Batinah Governorate, has reached 78%.

The total cost of the project is OMR9.877 million, covering all its facilities and components.

Nama Water Services affirmed that the project sites are witnessing significant progress across various stages, in line with the company's vision to enhance sewage treatment capacity and keep pace with demographic and urban growth in regional governorates.

Eng. Hassan Abdullah Al Farsi, Senior Projects Manager for Regional Governorates at Nama

Water Services, told ONA that the project aims to serve the community by connecting approximately 2,000 residential units in the area, as per the plans. The project covers the Al Shu'aibah and Al Tareef areas in the Wilayat of Al Musannah.

The project began in November 2023 and is progressing according to the prepared timeline, with full completion and handover expected in May 2026. -ONA



CAREEDGE REPORT

Passenger traffic at Indian airports to grow at 7% CAGR

NEW DELHI: Passenger traffic at Indian airports is projected to grow at a CAGR of 7 per cent over 2024-25-2026-27, normalising from the earlier pre-COVID estimates of 9 per cent, according to CareEdge Ratings.

A slight moderation in growth is expected due to the delayed delivery of wide-bodied aircraft, heightened global safety concerns, and lingering geopolitical disruptions, the rating agency said in a report this week.

Outlook for airports

According to CareEdge Ratings, the outlook for airports in India remains positive, albeit with some near-term moderation.

CareEdge Ratings notes that despite near-term headwinds, the long-term growth outlook remains robust, owing to favourable demographics, conducive regulations, rising non-aero revenues per passenger, and increasing airport city-side development.

It expects passenger traffic to expand from 412 million in 2024-25 to 470 million by 2026-27.

India is the third-largest aviation market after the US and China, and Indian airports continue to handle a steady share of global traffic.

- ANI

TRADE DELEGATION

Omani and Thai business people discuss means of enhancing trade cooperation



MUSCAT: A trade delegation from the Kingdom of Thailand, comprising representatives of Thai companies operating in the fields of food security, healthcare, perfumes, and cosmetics, is currently visiting the Sultanate of Oman.

Faisal Abdullah Al Rowas, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), received the members of the Thai trade delegation in the presence of Warunee Pan Krajang, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Sultanate of Oman.

The meeting emphasised expanding the scope of trade and investment exchange between the two countries. During bilateral meetings, business people from Oman and Thailand discussed means of enhancing cooperation in trade and investment, as well as



exploring opportunities in sectors including food security, healthcare, perfumes, and cosmetics.

These meetings stem from the Chamber's strategic directions aligned with Oman Vision 2040,

aimed at improving the business environment and broadening economic diversification by enabling the Omani private sector to establish partnerships with counterparts abroad. -ONA

4TH EDITION OF SALALAH FORUM

Engineering forum discusses ways to develop logistics sector

SALALAH: The 4th edition of Salalah Engineering Forum kicked off yesterday in Salalah, Dhofar Governorate. The 2-day forum is organised by Oman Society of Engineers (OSE) in co-operation with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology.

The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Eng. Said Hamoud Al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology.

Attended by experts, engineers and specialists in the fields of engineering, logistics and supply chains, the forum reflects OSE's efforts to promote cooperation with the public and private sectors. It also seeks to review challenges and explore innovative solutions for modernizing the logistics engineering system in the Sultanate of Oman.

The first day of the forum included 18 working papers on introducing applicable solutions and global practices and international experiences that can benefit Oman's logistics centres.

The participants discussed resilience in operating logistic networks as a means to address challenges and deal with crises. They studied models to protect the environment against the impacts of carbon footprint and reviewed the skills needed to develop the human capital in a manner that empowers national competencies and infrastructure operational efficiency in supply chains.

The forum focuses on the vital role of the logistics sector as a key driver in diversifying the national economy and enhancing the process of integrating engineering and innovation with logistics services to improve supply chains and cut down costs.

The forum also aims to upgrade



the Sultanate of Oman's competitiveness in regional and global markets through the development of ports, airports and free

zones - with the prime objective of developing Oman as a strategic gateway linking the GCC with East Africa and Asia. -ONA

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Oman National Engineering, up 0.03%, was the top gainer while, Oman Oil Marketing, down 0.06%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 5,029.89 points, down by -0.65% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.01% at 475.04 points. Oman National Engineering, up 0.03%, was the top gainer while, Oman Oil Marketing, down 0.06%, was the top loser. Shares of Asyad Shipping were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover. A total number of 3091 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 11.71 million, with more than 65.06 million shares changing hands. Out of 54 traded securities, 21 advanced, 11 declined, and 22 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for RO 365K while domestic investors were net buyers for RO 238K, followed by foreign investors for RO 127K worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 8,372.13 points, up 0.03%. Prices of Al Sharqia Investment, Na-

tional Finance, Takaful Oman, National Bank Oman, Bank Nizwa were up by 2.35%, 2.29%, 1.92%, 1.21%, 0.94% respectively. Prices of Al Madina Investments, Sohar International Bank, Ominvest were down by 2.38%, 1.36%, 0.87% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 7,009.74 points, up 0.07%. Prices of Voltamp Energy, A'Saffa Foods, Gulf Mushroom Products, Oman Cables Industry were up by 1.31%, 1.01%, 0.85%, 0.47% respectively. Prices of Gulf International Chemicals, Al Anwar Ceramics were down by 1.41%, 0.56% respectively. Services Index was down by -0.34% before closing at 1,958.31 points. Prices of Oman National Engineering, Dhofar Generating, Phoenix Power, Al Maha Marketing, Al Batinah Power were up by 3.33%, 2.56%, 2.04%, 1.11%, 1.01% respectively. Prices of Oman Oil Marketing, Abraj Energy, OQ Gas Networks, Oman Telecom were down by 6.00%, 1.45%, 1.22%, 0.20% respectively. - United Securities

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INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	5,063.19	5,026.09	5,029.89	5,062.79	-32.90	-0.65
FINANCIAL INDEX	8,379.16	8,354.59	8,372.13	8,369.63	2.50	0.03
Industry Index	7,024.54	6,944.54	7,009.74	7,004.95	4.79	0.07
Services Index	1,968.01	1,953.36	1,958.31	1,965.06	-6.75	-0.34
MSX Shariah Index	476.08	471.77	475.04	474.99	0.05	0.01
MSX TR INDEX	7,523.31	7,468.19	7,473.84	7,492.68	-18.84	-0.25
FINANCIAL TR IDX	9,954.73	9,925.54	9,946.38	9,943.41	2.97	0.03
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	8,632.11	8,533.79	8,613.92	8,608.04	5.89	0.07
SERVICES TR IDX	2,526.32	2,507.51	2,513.87	2,513.30	0.57	0.02
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,204.64	1,204.64	1,204.64	1,204.64	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
65,063,710	11,710,774	3,091	29,815,514.872	21	11	22	54

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 31

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAID VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO	286,209	24,510	13	0.085	0.087	0.085	0.087	0.085	0.002	2.353	0.087	0.086	0.087	0.100	7,830,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	16,124	13,701	6	0.839	0.850	0.839	0.850	0.839	0.011	1.311	0.850	0.826	0.857	0.100	79,571,188
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	610,610	204,228	171	0.330	0.335	0.330	0.334	0.330	0.004	1.212	0.334	0.335	0.334	0.100	543,066,083
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	154,488	77,100	14	0.495	0.500	0.450	0.500	0.495	0.005	1.010	0.500	0.500	0.510	0.100	60,000,000
OM0000004805	ALBATINAH POWER	324,737	22,815	14	0.100	0.101	0.100	0.100	0.099	0.001	1.010	0.100	0.100	0.101	0.100	67,488,743
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	1,055,419	111,930	13	0.106	0.107	0.106	0.107	0.106	0.001	0.943	0.107	0.106	0.107	0.100	239,353,974
OM0000002226	ALIAZERA SERVICES	80,500	14,812	5	0.184	0.184	0.184	0.184	0.183	0.001	0.546	0.184	0.184	0.184	0.100	7,883,110
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	61,972	152,787	17	2.150	2.150	2.120	2.150	2.140	0.010	0.467	2.150	2.140	2.150	0.100	192,855,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	23,753	5,891	7	0.248	0.248	0.248	0.248	0.247	0.001	0.405	0.248	0.247	0.248	0.100	161,434,169
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	5,000	1,200	1	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.000	0.000	0.240	0.235	0.240	0.100	24,000,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	15,340	1,003	2	0.065	0.066	0.065	0.066	0.066	0.000	0.000	0.066	0.064	0.066	0.100	23,504,402
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	7,048,355	2,220,655	336	0.316	0.317	0.313	0.316	0.316	0.000	0.000	0.316	0.317	0.316	0.100	2,372,021,472
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	72,582	20,130	14	0.278	0.279	0.277	0.278	0.278	0.000	0.000	0.278	0.277	0.281	0.100	65,721,877
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	96,838	8,273	13	0.085	0.086	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.000	0.000	0.085	0.085	0.088	0.100	14,875,000
OM0000004903	AL SUWADI POWER	220,182	22,018	14	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.101	0.100	71,440,654
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	153,460	152,234	16	0.993	0.993	0.992	0.992	0.994	-0.002	-0.201	0.992	0.992	0.992	0.100	744,000,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	108,000	19,332	3	0.179	0.179	0.179	0.180	-0.001	-0.556	-0.179	0.179	0.179	0.179	0.100	39,380,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	112,865	25,769	13	0.229	0.230	0.228	0.228	0.230	-0.002	-0.870	0.228	0.228	0.229	0.100	213,342,244
OM0000000672	OQ GAS NETWORKS	8,287,673	1,508,431	437	0.163	0.163	0.160	0.162	0.164	-0.002	-1.220	0.162	0.162	0.162	0.100	701,561,075
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	8,503,897	1,237,340	324	0.147	0.147	0.145	0.145	0.147	-0.002	-1.361	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.100	995,500,709
OM0000000894	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	1,977,225	543,056	270	0.277	0.278	0.272	0.272	0.276	-0.004	-1.449	0.272	0.273	0.276	0.100	209,494,400
Total	21	30,266,189	6,376,895	1,703												
Parallel Market																
OM0000000569	JABAL REIF	8,510	885	1	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	-0.099	0.005	5.051	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.100	18,096,000
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INV	53,067	6,523	13	0.122	0.124	0.122	0.124	0.120	0.004	3.333	0.124	0.124	0.127	0.100	18,600,000
OM0000000740	DHOFAR GENERATING	662,974	52,757	66	0.076	0.081	0.076	0.080	-0.078	0.002	2.564	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.100	117,729,500
OM0000000548	NATIONAL FINANCE	25,000	3,350	1	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.134	0.131	0.003	2.290	0.134	0.130	0.134	0.100	61,488,956
OM0000000563	PHOENIX POWER	392,197	39,060	32	0.097	0.101	0.097	0.100	-0.098	0.002	2.041	0.100	0.100	0.103	0.100	146,260,146
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	53,395	2,694	8	0.051	0.053	0.050	0.053	0.052	0.001	1.923	0.053	0.051	0.053	0.100	13,250,000
OM00000007010	OMAN REAL ESTATE	17,380	1,445	6	0.083	0.084	0.083	0.084	0.083	0.001	1.205	0.084	0.083	0.084	0.100	16,880,000
OM0000000847	OMAN REIT FUND	14,418	1,269	6	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	-0.087	0.001	1.149	0.088	0.087	0.088	0.100	57,075,948
OM0000000300	ALIMAH PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	44,500	40,488	6	0.905	0.915	0.905	0.915	0.905	0.010	1.105	0.910	0.910	0.910	0.100	63,135,000
OM00000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	520	338	1	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.644	0.006	0.932	0.650	0.650	0.700	0.100	61,750,000
OM0000000267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	39,096	9,187	12	0.235	0.237	0.235	0.237	0.235	0.002	0.851	0.237	0.237	0.236	0.100	10,846,494
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	263,116	22,387	27	0.085	0.086	0.083	0.086	0.086	0.000	0.000	0.086	0.086	0.086	0.100	7,310,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	32,039	1,698	3	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.000	0.000	0.053	0.053	0.055	0.100	16,278,755
OM00000007010	OMAN EMIRATES HO	14,056	984	2	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.100	8,531,250
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	1,155,560	105,364	27	0.092	0.092	0.091	0.092	0.092	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.092	0.092	0.100	27,466,870
OM00000002549	BANK DHOFAR	30,780	3,968	3	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.000	0.000	0.129	0.129	0.130	0.100	392,134,011
OM0000004248	SAN POWER HOLDING	13,400	3,015	5	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.000	0.000	0.225	0.222	0.225	0.100	44,019,010
OM0000000469	SHARQIYAH DESALINATION	1,000	140	1	0.140	0.140	0.140	0.140	0.140	0.000	0.000	0.140	0.140	0.140	0.100	13,692,302
OM0000004735	SEMBOCOR SALALAH	7,200	1405	2	0.198	0.198	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.000	0.000	0.195	0.195	0.200	0.100	186,141,530
OM0000000505	ALMAHA CERAMICS	1,000	132	1	0.320	0.320	0.320	0.320	0.320	0.000	0.000	0.320	0.305	0.325	0.100	17,900,000
OM0000000869	THE PEARL REIF	27,680	3,139	1	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.000	0.000	0.138	0.138	0.138	0.100	16,618,888
OM0000001020	ASYAD SHIPPING	18,224,772	2,396,413	386	0.132	0.132	0.131	0.132	0.132	0.000	0.000	0.132	0.132	0.132	0.100	687,554,245
OM0000000908	QCBASE INDUSTRIES (SPZ)	962,195	1,375,502	427	0.144	0.144	0.142	0.144	0.144	-0.002	-1.389	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.040	491,247,701
OM0000000936	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	391,214	27,402	21	0.070	0.072	0.069	0.070	0.071	-0.001	-1.408	0.069	0.069	0.075	0.100	147,000,000
OM0000000962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	10,000	410	3	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.042	-0.001	-2.381	0.041	0.041	0.042	0.100	34,855,000
OM0000000759	QO EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	3,497,817	1,218,496	294	0.351	0.352	0.347	0.347	0.361	-0.014	-3.878	0.347	0.347	0.347	0.100	2,776,000,000
OM00000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	1,300	978	1	0.752	0.752	0.752	0.752	0.800	-0.048	-6.000	0.752	0.752	0.798	0.100	46,078,800
Total	27	34,610,726	5,319,992	1,390												

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LIFESTYLE

AFRICA:
A TENTATIVE
START IN
MASS VACCINE
PRODUCTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa's dependence on vaccines imported from abroad really came to light: While vaccines against the novel coronavirus were seen as an important milestone in containing the pandemic globally, they also were in short supply and due to unequal distribution mechanisms, only became available to lower-income African countries after significantly long delays. At that time, governments across the continent decided to ensure they had greater independence in the production of vaccines and medications in future years. But five years after the height of the pandemic, is Africa still headed in that direction?

COVID-19: the 'turning point' that revolutionised African pharma
"COVID was a turning point — we are on our way," says Lenias Hwenda, the founder of Medicines for Africa, a non-profit organisation that promotes healthcare across Africa.

"Before the pandemic, there was insufficient awareness of how vulnerable the continent was, as it was 99 percent dependent on vaccine imports, and over 90 percent dependent on drug imports," Hwenda told DW, adding that since then, "African leaders emerged from this crisis with a renewed political commitment to expand local production of drugs and vaccines."

A lot of change has indeed happened in the past five years: Not only are medical centers in Egypt producing their own drugs to treat diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure, but in other parts of the continent, local vaccine production is also becoming a reality.

In South Africa, companies such as Biovac and Afrigen are expanding their vaccine manufacturing capacities significantly; in Senegal, the Pasteur Institute is now producing vaccines against yellow fever.

Pharmaceutical production facilities are also being set up in Ghana, Nigeria, and Cote d'Ivoire, while Zambia is developing a cholera vaccines in collaboration with China.

In East Africa, the governments of Kenya and Rwanda are promoting the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sector in collaboration with Western partners: BioNTech, the German company behind the COVID-19 vaccine developed in cooperation with Pfizer, has built factories in Rwanda, with mRNA test production set to begin later this year.

This is being regarded as a flagship project for further mRNA-based vaccine production facilities elsewhere in Africa.

But there's still a long way to go: According to information from the international vaccine alliance Gavi, only 0.1 percent of all vaccines in the world currently are being produced in Africa — despite the fact that 20 percent of the world's population live on the continent.

Africa still dependent on imports
The push for expanding the pharmaceutical industry in Africa is by far no longer about the coronavirus vaccine, but is rather intended to expedite the distribution of vaccines against other diseases such as malaria, Mpox and potentially HIV in the future.



Since COVID, there've been growing initiatives in Africa to start producing vaccines and medicines locally, thus gaining greater independence from global supply chains. But are these schemes sustainable in the long run?

Despite these recent development and notable initiatives, the continent remains heavily dependent on imports — particularly from China and India.

According to Hwenda, regional organisations such as the East African Community (EAC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have put forward strategies on how research and manufacturing could better be implemented on the continent in the future.

But even in these ambitious strategies, consensus ultimately appears to be reached through compromise among the various stakeholders: Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, African heads of government could only commit to increasing the proportion of vaccines manufactured in Africa from just one percent before COVID to 60 percent by 2040.

That is the stated goal of the African Union.

Some cautious optimism

Above all, a lack of infrastructure and inadequate healthcare systems seem to be major hurdles on the path to reaching a sustainable rate of self-sufficiency for African nations.

Hwenda remains hopeful, citing the establishment of the African Medicines Agency (AMA) in Kigali in 2024 as a major step forward, among other things.

In the future, AMA will coordinate the harmonization of the regulation of medical devices in Africa, pool expertise and capacities together across borders, and also regulate selected medical devices.

Meanwhile in June 2024, the Global Forum for Vaccine Sovereignty also took an important step in helping African countries reach their goals by inaugurating the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator (AVMA) in Paris — a new funding system designed to promote vaccine production on the African continent.

AVMA says it seeks to purchase more than 800 million vaccine doses manufactured in Africa over the next ten years in collaboration with the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

The initiative will initially cushion the higher production costs of African manufacturers for this limited period of ten years, while the necessary production facilities are being set up.

This way, however, AVMA hopes to contribute to their competitiveness in the medium and long term once those facilities are fully up and running, especially against competitors from Asia. The EU announced meanwhile that it would support the initiative with more than €750 million.

More research — and funds — needed

But strengthening Africa's autonomy will be a long process spanning several decades, says Hwenda.

"Building a health infrastructure is very capital-intensive; funds must flow over the long term so that the goals now set can develop their full potential," she says.

"Now is the time to expand production capacity with sustainable investments, broaden the product range beyond medicines and vaccines to include diagnostics and medical devices, and ensure the long-term profitability of production projects that have already been initiated," Hwenda highlights.

Although governments are also part of these various initiatives, they need to invest more into healthcare and the production of appropriate medicines, says health expert Glenda Gray.

"There is political will," the scientific director of the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) told DW, explaining however that this does not necessarily translate into cashflow.

Furthermore, she believes there's another essential component also missing.

"We need our own discoveries and more technology transfer," says Gray, highlighting that this can include research into new drugs and therapies, or into new ways of understanding or combating disease.

The issue of Africa's vaccine production capabilities will also be on the agenda at the upcoming G20 summit, which will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, in November.

However, it is unlikely to be solved there and then. — dw

Real Madrid move to La Liga top with a 2-1 victory over Mallorca

Despite an early setback with Vedat Muriqi's goal for Mallorca in the 18th minute, which came against the run of play, Real Madrid quickly turned the match around with two rapid goals

MADRID: Real Madrid moved to the top of La Liga on Saturday night with a 2-1 win at home to Mallorca.

Despite an early setback with Vedat Muriqi's goal for Mallorca in the 18th minute, which came against the run of play, Real Madrid quickly turned the match around with two rapid goals.

Arda Guler scored from Dean Huijsen's knockdown in the 37th minute and a minute later Vinicius Jr. scored a low left-foot shot.

Although Kylian Mbappe had



two goals ruled out for offside and Guler had another effort ruled out for handball, Real Madrid remained comfortable with its narrow lead.

Atletico Madrid held to a draw

Meanwhile, Atletico Madrid's early-season struggles continued under Diego Simeone as they were

held to a 1-1 draw away to Alaves.

Giuliano Simeone put Atletico ahead in the seventh minute, but Carlos Vicente equalised with a penalty just seven minutes later. The match was temporarily halted for 15 minutes in the second half due to a medical emergency in the stands. The draw leaves Atletico seven points behind Real Madrid after just three matches.

Leander Dendoncker scored the only goal of the game as Oviedo won 1-0 at home against Real Sociedad, earning its first points since returning to the top-flight. Despite being under pressure from the visitors, who dominated possession, Oviedo held firm to claim victory.

Sevilla applied the pressure on Girona with a 2-0 win at Mon-



tilivi Stadium. Alfonso Gonzalez opened the scoring with his first goal since joining from Celta Vigo, and Isaac Romero sealed the win in the second half.

The result gives Sevilla its first win of the season, while Girona faces trouble with three consecutive defeats.

On Friday, Valencia claimed its first win of the campaign and ended

Getafe's perfect start with a 3-0 win thanks to goals from Mouctar Diakhaby, Arnaut Danjuma and Hugo Duro.

Elche triumphed in a clash between newly promoted sides, defeating Levante 2-0 at home with goals from Rafa Mir and Rodri Mendoza.

FC Barcelona visits Rayo Vallecano on Sunday night. **-xinhua**

REIGNING CHAMPIONS



Bayern Munich survive scare, secure hard-fought Bundesliga victory

MUNICH: Luis Diaz continued his fine goalscoring form with his second goal in as many Bundesliga games as Bayern Munich held on for a 3-2 victory away at Augsburg. While not the dominant display showcased against Leipzig last week, the reigning champions demonstrated resilience in seeing out a hard-earned three points.

After a slow start, Bayern gained the lead when Serge Gnabry powered home a precise header from a delivery by England captain Harry Kane. Diaz then doubled the advantage on the stroke of halftime, slotting home from close range after Konrad Laimer pulled the ball back across the box.

Though Augsburg created promising chances in the first period, their hopes were further dampened shortly after the break when Michael Olise calmly finished past goalkeeper Finn Dahmen to make it 3-0. The hosts refused to capitulate, however, as Kristijan Jakic volleyed past Manuel Neuer to pull one back. Mert Komur then expertly fired through traffic to bring Augsburg within a single goal and set up a tense finale.

Despite the spirited comeback, Bayern managed to stymie further attempts and saw out the victory, though they will feel they

should have extended their lead in the closing stages.

In other Bundesliga action, Erik ten Hag's difficult start as Bayer Leverkusen boss continued as his squad surrendered a three-goal lead to draw 3-3 with 10-man Werder Bremen. Leverkusen appeared in control before the hosts staged a stunning comeback with goals from Romano Schmid, Isaac Schmidt, and Karim Coulibaly.

João Neves' bicycle-kick inspires PSG victory

Paris St-Germain (PSG) continued their perfect start to the French Ligue 1 season with a thrilling victory over Toulouse in a match that featured spectacular goals and four penalties, all fueled by a breathtaking individual display from João Neves.

The 20-year-old Portuguese international scored two remarkable overhead kicks within a seven-minute span to set the tone for a dominant attacking performance. Neves opened the scoring with a stunning acrobatic finish into the top corner, before Bradley Barcola quickly doubled the lead. Neves then added a third with another spectacular effort, controlling Achraf Hakimi's cross before powering his finish past goalkeeper Guillaume Restes. **-DNA**

STAMFORD BRIDGE

Chelsea beat Fulham amid row

LONDON: Joao Pedro extended his fine scoring run as Chelsea claimed a 2-0 win over local rivals Fulham at Stamford Bridge, a result overshadowed by a series of controversial refereeing decisions.

The 55 million-pound summer signing from Brighton struck in first-half stoppage time, heading in Enzo Fernandez's corner to make it five goals in as many starts across all competitions. Fernandez then doubled the lead from the penalty spot after the break, but much of the post-match discussion centred on referee Robert Jones and VAR official Michael Salisbury.

Fulham thought they had taken the lead in the 21st minute through Josh King, only for the goal to be disallowed following a VAR review. Salisbury spotted Rodrigo Muniz stepping on Trevoh Chalobah in the build-up, and after consulting the pitchside monitor, Jones confirmed the foul. The decision looked harsh, with replays



showing only minimal contact as Muniz shielded the ball with his back to the goal.

Fulham, who had dominated much of the opening half, were punished on the stroke of half-time when Joao Pedro's header gave Chelsea the advantage. Their frustration deepened in the second period when Ryan Sessegnon was

adjudged to have handled inside the area, allowing Fernandez to convert from 12 yards.

The defeat left Fulham boss Marco Silva furious at the officiating, while Chelsea celebrated a valuable victory heading into the international break. The win was tempered slightly by an early injury blow, as striker Liam Delap limped

off with a hamstring problem.

Garnacho joins Chelsea in 40 million-pound deal

Chelsea has completed the signing of Argentina winger Alejandro Garnacho from Manchester United in a deal worth 40 million pounds.

The 21-year-old has penned a long-term contract at Stamford Bridge, committing his future to the club until 2032.

"It's an incredible moment for my family and I to join this great club," Garnacho told Chelsea's club website. "I can't wait to get started. I watched the Club World Cup and to join the world champions is special - we're the best team in the world!"

Garnacho becomes Chelsea's ninth signing of the summer and the fifth attacking recruit, following the arrivals of Joao Pedro, Liam Delap, Estevao, and Jamie Gittens. **-xinhua**

T20I TRI SERIES

Pakistan register second win on trot

SHARJAH : The UAE dished out a spirited show, but it blew away against Saim Ayub and Hasan Nawaz's firepower as Pakistan's hot form stayed intact with a 31-run victory in the ongoing T20I Tri-Series 2025 at Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

With a new match-winner this time around, Pakistan relished its second victory in as many days, serving as a massive boost just 10 days before the Asia Cup. After the coin once again spun in Pakistan's favour, they opted to bat like they did in their 39-run victory over Afghanistan on Friday.

Ayub, who appeared rustic in his last outing, finally put up a vintage show since his return from injury at the beginning of this year. His explosive 69 (38) and Nawaz's 56 (26) did the lion's share of the work



for Pakistan. Ayub freed himself from the shackles after a 22-run third over during which he carted a Junaid Siddique for two towering sixes and a four.

Once the fielding restrictions

were lifted after the power play, he hammered left-arm quick Muhammad Jawadullah for a six and a boundary. He raced to his fifty in 25 balls and eventually finished with 69 from 38 deliveries, laced with

seven boundaries and four sixes.

Mohammad Nawaz, with his 25 (15) and Faheem Ashraf's quick-fire 16 (10), towards the end turned out to be handy cameos that propelled Pakistan to a daunting 207-run total.

In reply, the UAE heavily depended on what skipper Muhammad Waseem could conjure up in the first six overs. He adopted a belligerent start and kept the hopes kindled by swiftly racing to 33(18). However, his time on the crease was cut short after a terrible mix-up towards the end of the powerplay.

UAE's middle order collapsed, but Asif Khan wasn't willing to go down without putting up a fight. In a brutal counterattack, he mauled Pakistan's experienced bowling unit. **-ANI**

INTERNATIONAL CHESS FEDERATION

FIDE updates dress code, allows jeans for Grand Swiss events



NEW DELHI [INDIA]: The International Chess Federation (FIDE) announced a new dress code for the FIDE Grand Swiss and FIDE Women's Grand Swiss, reflecting a modern and inclusive approach while preserving the elegance of our sport, as per the FIDE website.

Appropriate jeans are now permitted as part of the official dress code. This change offers players more comfort and freedom of choice, while ensuring that the overall appearance of the event re-

mains professional and respectful. Dress code guidelines: Men: Suit, Dark business casual trousers (including classic, non-distressed jeans in blue, black, and grey), Unicoloured shirt (with minor deviations allowed, e.g., checkered or striped), Dress shoes and loafers with closed toes, Unicoloured sneakers (soles can be a different colour).

Women: Skirt suit, pantsuit, dress suit, Dress, Dark business casual trousers (including classic,

non-distressed jeans in dark blue, black, and grey), Shirt/blouse, Dress shoes and loafers with closed toes, Unicoloured sneakers (soles can be a different colour).

FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich highlighted the spirit of the change and said, "FIDE took the decision to provide more flexibility in the dress code. It is still required to follow the official standards, but elegant, appropriate jeans are also allowed. FIDE, chess players, arbiters, and officials must collectively

strive to preserve the integrity of chess while also ensuring that the sport remains appealing to the audience and sponsors."

FIDE reaffirmed its commitment to both tradition and progress -- creating an environment where players feel comfortable and confident, while the game continues to shine on the world stage.

The upcoming FIDE World Cup 2025 will be held in Goa from October 30 to November 27, bringing together some of the biggest

names in chess for the marquee event on India's West Coast.

India has been a dominant force in chess for years. Last year, D Gukesh won the World Championship, while Indian teams took the top prize in the Chess Olympiad in both Open and Women's categories. In July of this year, Divya Deshmukh became the first Indian to win the Women's Chess World Cup, garnering national attention and hosting the Open World Cup in Goa. **-ANI**

IN PICTURES



HIGHLIGHT OF 2025 SYDNEY MARATHON: Participants run across the finish line at the Sydney Opera House during the 2025 Sydney Marathon in Sydney, Australia. — Xinhua



HIGHLIGHT OF 82ND VENICE FILM FESTIVAL: Main crew of the film "The Last Viking" pose for the photocall during the 82nd Venice Film Festival in Venice, Italy. — Xinhua



PEOPLE PARTICIPATE IN PROTEST IN VENICE, ITALY: People participate in a protest in Venice, Italy. About 5,000 demonstrators marched on Venice's Lido island during the Venice Film Festival, waving Palestinian flags and banners reading "Stop Genocide" and chanting "Free Palestine." — Xinhua



NUSHRRATT BHARUCCHA AT THE LAUNCH OF 100TH STORE OF KUSHAL'S FASHION AND SILVER JEWELLERY: Bollywood actress Nushratt Bharuccha poses for photos during the launch of the 100th store of Kushal's Fashion Jewellery, in Bengaluru. — ANI Photo



ENDANGERED RED PANDAS WIN HEARTS AT YANGON ZOO IN MYANMAR: Red pandas are seen at Yangon Zoological Garden in Yangon, Myanmar. — Xinhua



TRADITIONAL COSTUMES DISPLAYED AT THEME BLOCK IN NW CHINA: Actresses perform to display traditional costumes at a theme block in Xi'an, northwest China's Shaanxi Province. — Xinhua

MALAYSIA CELEBRATES 68TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE: People take photos of fireworks in celebration of Malaysia's 68th anniversary of independence near the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. — Xinhua



QUALIFYING SESSION OF 2025 FORMULA ONE DUTCH GRAND PRIX: McLaren's Australian driver Oscar Piastri competes during the qualifying session of the 2025 Formula One Dutch Grand Prix at the Zandvoort Circuit in Zandvoort, near Amsterdam, the Netherlands. — Xinhua

ROUND-UP

Changan CS35 Plus blends sportiness with smart innovation

The bold and dynamic compact SUV that blends style with intelligent design is available in two well-equipped versions, the Trend and the Limited

MUSCAT: The Changan CS35 Plus is a statement of style, agility, and intelligent design. Combining bold looks with cutting-edge features, it has quickly become a standout choice for drivers in Oman who want performance and technology in one sleek package.

The bold and dynamic compact SUV that blends style with intelligent design is available in two well-equipped versions, the Trend and



of power, clean and quiet, ensures the CS35 Plus provides efficient performance, low emissions, and a refined, enjoyable drive.

Sportiness is immediately evident in the CS35 Plus, with its athletic stance, bold grille, and sleek LED headlamps. The Trend model

sets the tone with 17-inch alloy wheels, roof rails, LED lighting, and body-coloured door handles for a clean, contemporary look. The Limited takes sportiness up a notch with 18-inch alloys and a panoramic sunroof, adding sophistication to its dynamic appearance.

Both variants of CS35 Plus feature leather seating, a 10-inch infotainment touchscreen, Bluetooth connectivity, and a digital instrument cluster to keep drivers connected and informed. The Limited adds an extra layer of intelligence with wireless phone charging, a 7-inch LCD instrument cluster, ambient lighting, and an electric tailgate, while the Trend focuses on practicality with features like keyless entry, remote engine start, and a push start button.

Performance is agile yet efficient, with the turbocharged engine providing lively acceleration for city driving while staying smooth and controlled on longer journeys. Thanks to Changan's Blue Core engineering, the CS35 Plus balances sporty performance with impressive fuel efficiency and quiet, refined operation.

Safety is another strength of the CS35 Plus. Both variants come with essentials such as ABS with EBD, electronic parking brake, hill hold control, and front airbags. The Limited further enhances driver confidence with adaptive cruise control, 360-degree view camera, forward collision warning, and curtain airbags, offering advanced protection from every angle.

With the Trend offering practicality and the Limited delivering premium touches and cutting-edge technology, the CS35 Plus stands out as a sporty, intelligent compact SUV built to elevate every journey.

EFFICIENT DIGITAL SOLUTION

INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES

Alizz Islamic Bank launches eMandate service for seamless payment authorisation



MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank has announced the official launch of its E-Mandate service, a secure and efficient digital solution that allows customers to electronically authorise recurring payments and direct debits from their accounts.

This new service is aligned with the Central Bank of Oman's digitalisation strategy and aims to enhance customer convenience while supporting corporate and retail clients with streamlined payment processes. The e-Mandate service eliminates the need for paper-based authorisation and manual processing, offering a fully digital, fast and secure experience.

Customers can now digitally authorise mandates for various recurring payments including utility bills, subscriptions, finance repayments and more, directly from their Alizz Islamic Bank accounts through a few simple steps.

Commenting on the launch, Khalid Al Hoqani, Head of Transformation at Alizz Islamic Bank said: "The launch of the E-Mandate service reflects Alizz Islamic Bank's commitment to embracing innovation and offering cutting-edge digital banking services. It provides our customers with enhanced control, security and ease when managing recurring payments. We believe that innovation is at the core of enhancing customer satisfaction, and the E-Mandate service will empower both individuals and businesses to manage recurring payments with ease and confidence".

The E-Mandate service is now available to Alizz Islamic Bank customers through the new 'Alizz X' Mobile Banking application and is expected to significantly reduce transaction time and administrative costs for businesses.



Customer first: BankDhofar's approach to service excellence

MUSCAT: BankDhofar, the second largest bank in the Sultanate by branch network size, has reaffirmed its steadfast commitment to placing customers at the heart of its operations. Through a series of innovative initiatives designed to enhance service quality, accessibility, and convenience, the Bank continues to set new benchmarks of customer experience in the Omani banking sector.

At the core of BankDhofar's customer-first promise is its unique "10-Minute Assurance Service", which ensures that customers are attended to within 10 minutes of requesting any branch. This initiative underscores Bank's dedication to efficiency, convenience, and respect for its customers' time. By monitoring service times and continuously training frontline staff, BankDhofar ensures a seamless experience for every customer interaction.

ing, and a wider suite of online services ranging from cardless cash withdrawals to real-time bill payments.

To further enhance customer access, BankDhofar has launched its "Bank on Wheels" project, a mobile bank branch that brings financial services to underserved communities, remote areas, and event locations. This initiative exemplifies Bank's commitment to reaching customers beyond traditional branches, ensuring that no one is left out of the financial system.

Equally innovative is BankDhofar's range of services at the customer's doorstep, where selected banking transactions are conducted at home or office locations for added convenience. This service model has been particularly valued by senior citizens, corporate clients, and busy professionals, highlighting the Bank's agility in adapting to diverse customer lifestyles and needs.

For high-net-worth clients, BankDhofar offers a bespoke concierge banking service, providing tailored financial solutions, lifestyle benefits, and priority access. This premium service reflects Bank's ability to combine personalized human interaction with advanced technology, delivering experiences that go beyond traditional banking.

BankDhofar's unwavering focus on its customers has been recognized with a number of prestigious industry awards, both locally and regionally. The accolades underscore Bank's leadership in service excellence, digital innovation, and customer engagement, affirming its position as one of Oman's most trusted financial institutions.

With these initiatives, BankDhofar continues to reinforce its position as a customer-centric institution committed to service excellence. The Bank remains focused on its long-term vision of combining personalized human interaction with advanced digital solutions to create a rewarding banking experience for its customers and community at large.

ENHANCING SPORTING SKILLS

Bank Muscat announces winners of Green Sports Programme for 2025

MUSCAT: Since its launch in 2012, the Green Sports Programme has demonstrated its pioneering role in enhancing the sporting skills of Omani talented youth and developing local sports teams.

With a positive record spanning 14 consecutive years, Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, announced the names of the 20 winning teams for this year's edition. The programme has so far benefitted 223 teams with over 77,000 members across Oman. Throughout the past years, the Bank consistently aimed to leave a meaningful impact in social responsibility and sustainability. By adopting clear strategies and implementing sustainable programmes and initiatives, the Bank seeks to create a positive effect on the community.

Twenty winners from different Governorates across the Sultanate will benefit from the Bank's flagship CSR programme this year. The winners in the lighting system category include: Izki Jernan Sports Team from Izki, Al Shati Sports Cultural Team from Al Suwaiq, Al Ahly Sports Cultural Team from Saham, Al Yarmouk Sports Cultural Team from Al Khaboora, Al Nahda Sports Cultural Team from Sohar, Al khaliq Sports Cultural Team from Shinas, Al Shala Sports and Cultural Team from Al Rustaq, Ithadh Hadra Sports Team from Jalan Bani Bu Hasan, Al Aruba Sport Team from Nizwa, Al Shuaiba Sports Cultural and Social Team from Al Musanaah, Al Qadisiyah Sports Team from Al Madaibi, and Al Bahri Sports and Cultural Team



from Liwa. In addition, Nujoom Blad Al Shahoum Sports Social and Cultural Team from Ibri, Al Mazzarra Sports Team from Quriyat, Al Sahwa Sports Team from Bidbid, AL Habil Sports and Cultural Team from Al Hamra, Al Ahly Sports and Cultural Team from Al Awabi, Al Zamalek Sports Team from Al Seeb, and AL Kor Sports Team from Bahla for natural turf category. Finally, Al Ahed Sports and Cultural Team from Sur won for artificial turf.

The Green Sports programme consistently attracts significant participation, establishing itself as a leading corporate responsibility initiative by the Bank. Since its launch, the programme has showcased positive examples from local sports teams, fostering skill development among members, promoting sports activities and social initiatives. These achievements stem from the programmes's investment in improving infrastructure for various local sports teams

across the country.

The Green Sports programme is one of the Bank's flagship CSR programs aiming at sporting skills of the Omani talented youth in the sports and cultural domains. The support provided by the program includes greening of football pitches, water desalination and lighting. This year, 94 teams have competed, thereby asserting the programme's success and popularity among Omani youth. The Bank ensures to strengthen cooperation and partnership with local sports teams through this leading programme and to work closely with the teams throughout the different stages of the project.

The Green Sports programme reaffirms the Bank's commitment to providing ample opportunities for young Omanis to develop their talents. It goes a long way in developing the sporting skills and talents of Omani youth, thereby leading to all-round development of the sport. It is worth mentioning that the football fields developed as part of the Green Sports programme serve as a gathering venue for social activities for children and youth.



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