

HM SENDS GREETINGS TO LITHUANIA

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to Dr. Gitanas Nauseda, President of the Republic of Lithuania on his country's National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere wishes of success to the president in leading his country to achieving the aspirations of his people for stable and prosperous life. His Majesty the Sultan also wished further close relations between the two countries and more investment in various sectors. - **ONA**



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GCC STATES STRIVE TO ACHIEVE REGIONAL, INTERNATIONAL PEACE



GCC committed to mitigate the sufferings of those affected by wars and crisis

MUSCAT: The GCC Secretary General, Jassim Al Budaiwi, re-affirmed the commitment of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to mitigate the sufferings of those affected by wars and crisis. The Secretariat General of the GCC was speaking to Amy Pope, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on the sidelines of his participation in the 61st Munich Security Conference (MSC) in Munich city, Germany.

The two sides discussed the developments in the region and reviewed enhancement of coordination between the influential parties to ensure the relief/support reaches those affected with the wars and crisis. Meanwhile, the GCC Secretary General met with Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, Chair of the NATO Military Committee. The two sides reviewed the latest regional and international developments, including the con-

ditions in the region, notably the situation in Gaza. The GCC Secretary General stressed intensifying the international efforts for putting an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people by ensuring the humanitarian relief reaches its target. He also reaffirmed the stance of the GCC for regional stability and the international efforts for resolving the humanitarian crises. Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, Chair of the NATO Military Committee, stressed the significance of the role the GCC States play in preserving the security and regional and international stability. He also hailed the appreciable presence of the GCC States in the regional and international arena. - **ONA**

CAMEL RACE

New equestrian field will be ready by the year end: Sayyid Asa'ad

ADAM: His Highness Sayyid Asa'ad bin Tariq Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs and Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan, said that Al Bashayer Camel Racing Festival is an annual event that is developing continuously. He said that the event receives constant support of His Majesty the Sultan for its continuity and it showcases something new every year for the benefit of citizens. He also hoped that the new equestrian ground would be ready by end of the current year.

The statements were given by His Highness Sayyid Asa'ad on the conclusion of the 8th edition of the annual Al Bashayer Camel Racing Festival on Saturday. The festival was held under the patronage of His Highness at Al Bashayer racecourse in the Wilayat of Adam. The six-day event saw the participation of a number of owners of camels and camel breeders from the governorates of the Sultanate of Oman and the GCC States.



The conclusion of the event saw four rounds. The first round was designated for Al Thanaya camels (for establishments). Camel "Hamlolah", owned by Sultan Mohammed Al Wahaibi of the United Arab Emirates secured the first place in the first round while a camel from the UAE Presidential Camel Unit, owned by Mohammed bin Hamdan bin Muroshid came second. Camel Huzba for Manie Ali Al

Shamsi secured the first place in the second round designated for Al Thanaya category (General) which was followed by Camel Aram for Mubarak bin Said Al Mekhaini in the second place and Camel Awayid for Atiq Mattar Al Qubaisi came third. The third round was designated for Al Houli (general) category and the prize for which was the silver sword and a car. **>A4**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN
Indian Ocean meet begins today

1 The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will host the 8th edition of the Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) today under the theme "Journey towards New Horizons of Maritime Partnership", which will last for two days. **>A5**

OMAN
Karwa Motors hikes local purchases

2 The total value of local purchases by Karwa Motors has exceeded OMR 2.5 million since the start of its commercial operations, demonstrating its commitment to enhancing local supply chains and creating a competitive business environment. **>A4**

WORLD
Emir of Qatar to visit India

3 Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, will pay a state visit to India on February 17-18 at the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The statement noted that the Emir will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including Ministers, senior officials. **>A6**

CELESTIAL EVENT

Planet Venus to shine bright across Oman skies today

MUSCAT: Oman's sky will witness a prominent celestial event on Sunday after Venus attains its maximum brightness, which will be visible in the western horizon after sunset. Wisal bint Salim Al Hinai, Deputy Head of the Community Outreach Committee at the Oman Astronomy and Space Society, explained that Venus is the third brightest celestial object after the sun and moon, with a brightness of -4.52 apparent magnitude, making it approximately 30 times brighter than Sirius, the brightest star in the sky after the sun. Al Hinai stated, "Venus will reach its peak brightness during this cycle, appearing in a crescent phase, reflecting a significant amount of sunlight due to the angle formed by the sun relative to Earth



and Venus. During this period, Venus will be at its closest point to Earth, making it even brighter and clearer, especially when observed through telescopes that will reveal the surface features covered with thick clouds." She confirmed that Venus will

remain visible in the evening sky until mid-March, gradually fading to March 16, to reappear in the eastern horizon as the "Morning Star" by the end of the same month. This period is considered a golden opportunity for astronomy

enthusiasts to observe one of the most beautiful celestial sights, either with the naked eye or using telescopes that will reveal details of the crescent phase Venus is undergoing. Al Hinai explained that Venus is classified an inner planet as it moves inside Earth's orbit around the sun, making it the second closest planet to the sun after Mercury. Due to its proximity to the sun, it cannot be seen all night like the outer planets but appears either before sunrise in the eastern horizon or after sunset in the western horizon. During these periods, it is far enough from the sun's glare to appear bright and clear to the naked eye. Al Hinai added that Venus has been associated with ancient civi-

lizations, known to the Greeks and Romans as the "Morning Star" and "Evening Star" due to its frequent appearance at specific times of the day, making it an important symbol in many cultures. She noted that Venus features a thick and dense atmosphere primarily composed of carbon dioxide, with amounts of nitrogen and sulphuric acid, reflecting 75% of sunlight, one of the main factors giving it this exceptional glow. However, this atmosphere also causes a massive greenhouse effect, making Venus the hottest planet in the solar system, with surface temperatures reaching 467 degrees Celsius, enough to melt lead, and atmospheric pressure 92 times that of Earth, equivalent to diving 900 metres below the sea surface on Earth.



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PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....	12:26pm
Asr.....	3:42pm
Maghrib.....	6:08pm
Isha.....	7:19pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	5:22am

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Development Bank inks pacts to fund projects in Musandam

The Governor of Musandam commended the Development Bank's efforts in financing developmental projects across Oman

Times News Service

KHASAB: The Development Bank signed two agreements and two memoranda of cooperation on Saturday to provide developmental financing for projects in the fisheries and tourism sectors and to launch the Economic Horticulture Initiative.

This initiative aims to promote entrepreneurship in various economic activities and support accommodation facilities as part of the bank's efforts to boost economic development in Musandam Governorate and encourage investment in productive and service sectors.



The first memorandum of cooperation, signed between the Development Bank, the Office of the Governor of Musandam, Omran Group, and Oman Tourism College, focuses on financing the establishment of eco-lodges on existing farms in Musandam to enhance the hospitality sector in the governorate.

The memorandum was signed by Ibrahim bin Said Al Busaidi, Governor of Musandam, while it was signed on behalf of the Development Bank by Mahmood bin Abdullah Al Aweini, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Finance and Chairman of the Bank's Board of Directors.

The second memorandum of cooperation, signed between the Development Bank, the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry's

Musandam branch, and a local investment company, aims to implement the Economic Horticulture Initiative, designed to stimulate local economic growth by supporting and developing medium-sized enterprises. The initiative covers tourism, fisheries, agriculture, manufacturing, and logistics sectors.

The memorandum was signed by Hussein bin Ali Al Lawati, CEO of the Development Bank, Raed bin

Mohammed Al Shehhi, Chairman of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Musandam, and Abdulrazzaq bin Abdulwahid Al Balushi, CEO of Musandam Global Investment Company.

The first agreement, signed between the Development Bank and an aquaculture company, involves financing a OMR4 million project to establish a fish farming facility with an annual production capacity of 7,000 metric tonnes in the maritime port of Khasab.

The project will meet local market demands and export fish to international markets, contributing to food security and aligning with Oman Vision 2040 by supporting economic diversification and sustainable development.

The agreement was signed by Hussein bin Ali Al Lawati, CEO of the Development Bank, and Abdulrazzaq bin Abdulwahid Al Balushi, CEO of Musandam Global Investment Company.

The second agreement, signed between the Development Bank and Ras Al Amoud Company, involves financing the construction of a luxury tourist resort in Khasab valued at OMR5 million.

The resort will feature 32 private villas built to 7-star standards and a

health club, contributing to the development of Musandam's tourism sector. The agreement was signed by Hussein bin Ali Al Lawati, CEO of the Development Bank, and Saleh bin Abdullah Al Dhahouri, representing the company.

Ibrahim Al Busaidi, Governor of Musandam, commended the Development Bank's efforts in financing developmental projects across Oman, particularly in Musandam Governorate, to support economic diversification policies in line with Oman Vision 2040. He emphasized the importance of investing in key economic sectors that contribute to local content enrichment, self-sufficiency, and the localization of national industries.

H.E. Mahmood bin Abdullah Al Aweini, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Finance and Chairman of the Development Bank, expressed appreciation for the Office of the Governor of Musandam's dedication to developing the governorate through targeted developmental financing programs that support various economic sectors. He reaffirmed the bank's commitment to financing economic projects and supporting initiatives that enhance local added value and drive economic growth.

AT AIRPORT

Three held for jewellery theft

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Muscat Police Command apprehended three persons of Asian nationality at Muscat International Airport while they were attempting to flee the country.

The suspects were involved in the theft of gold jewellery from a store in the Wilayat of Mutrah.

The police successfully inter-



cepted the suspects at the airport and took them into custody. Legal procedures are being completed against them.

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

Researchers to gather at SQU for the Fourth Arab Forum

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Department of Mass Communication at the College of Arts and Social Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University, in collaboration with the Arab Media and Communication Network, are organising the Fourth Arab Forum for Graduate Students in Media and Communication Sciences.

The event is co-organised with the Institute of Journalism and News Sciences at Manouba University, Tunisia, and Abdelhamid Ben Badis University, Mostaganem, Algeria.

The forum will take place from February 17 to 19 at Sultan Qaboos University.

The first day of the forum will



feature a main session titled 'Arab Scientific Research in Media and Communication Sciences: Perspectives of Critical Schools', chaired by Professor Nouredine Miladi from Sultan Qaboos University.

The session will include insights from distinguished scholars, starting with Professor Jamel Zaran from Manouba University.

sity in Tunisia, who will present a critical analysis of Arab intellectual approaches in media and communication sciences.

This will be followed by a presentation by Dr. Hosni Nasr from Sultan Qaboos University, offering a critical perspective on Arab intellectual schools in media studies.

Additionally, Dr. Hanadi Dweikat from the Arab American University in Jenin, Palestine, will discuss strategies to overcome challenges in Arab scientific research in the field of media and communication.

The first day will also include several concurrent scientific sessions and research workshops designed to foster discussion and collaboration among graduate students and scholars.

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Royal Cavalry horse comes 1st in Dubai Racing Carnival

DUBAI: Horse 'Salb' of the Royal Cavalry secured the first place in the competitions of the first round designated for thoroughbred Arabian horses for 2,000 metres in Dubai Racing Carnival.

Horse 'Salb' (Horse rider Hamad Al Busaidi and under supervision of horse-trainer Ibrahim Al Hadhrami) secured the first place in the race organised by Dubai Horse Racing Club at its horse racecourse.

The race saw the participation of 113 horses, competing in eight rounds. -ONA



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Campaign held to create awareness on risk of obesity

The event witnessed great interaction from different age groups, as attendees learned about the causes of obesity and ways to prevent it

MUSCAT: With focus on following a balanced diet, practising sports activities, and avoiding harmful habits, the Oman Medical Specialty Board (OMSB) on Friday organised an awareness event on combating obesity, targeting all segments of society, to provide medical consultations and health advice on obesity.

The event was attended by a group of resident physicians from the general surgery, internal medicine, psychiatry, and pediatrics programs at the Oman Medical Specialty Board, who provided specialised consultations covering various



ious aspects of obesity, including treatment and preventive options.

The event, which was held at City Centre Muscat, aimed to raise awareness on the risks of obesity and its health causes, focus on the psychological factors associated with it and the importance of therapeutic support, in addition to encouraging the community to adopt a healthy lifestyle that includes balanced nutrition and exercise.

The event witnessed great interaction from different age groups, as attendees learned about the causes of obesity and ways to prevent it, and individual and group consultations were provided to help participants adopt healthy habits to reduce weight gain.

Physical activity

World Obesity Day highlights the importance of raising awareness of the risks of obesity and ways to prevent it, and encouraging individuals to engage in physical activity and apply appropriate treatment strategies – whether through medical or surgical interventions when necessary – to ensure safe and healthy weight loss.

Obesity is a growing health problem worldwide, which requires concerted community and health efforts to confront it and raise awareness of the importance of prevention and early treatment to maintain the health of individuals and society. The world celebrates World Obesity Day on March 4 of every year.

Architecture Revival Initiative to kick off on February 19

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Architecture Revival Initiative, organised by the Office of His Highness Sayyid Bilarab bin Haitham Al Said, will kick off on Wednesday and run until February 22 at the Oman Across Ages Museum in the Wilayat of Manah.

The Architecture Revival Initiative comes as a continuation of the journey of the first and second cycles of the Bilarab bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design, and the competition to design the Sultanate of Oman Pavilion at Expo Japan 2025, and to enrich the architectural field in the Sultanate of Oman.

It aims to enrich the architectural field in Oman and targets various community segments interested in architectural design, including professionals, experts, and students studying this field.

The initiative aims to raise awareness about the value of architecture as an integral part of national identity. It encourages the community to explore Omani architecture and understand its cultural, social, and economic impact.

The initiative highlights innovation in architecture by showcasing the methods used by Omanis throughout different eras, advanced design and construction techniques, and encouraging their use to enhance architectural heritage.

Environment for creativity

It also aims to engage various community segments in discussions and debates about architecture, provide a supportive environment for creativity and entrepreneurship, and enhance opportunities for architectural professionals in the Omani job market.

Over three days, the initiative will discuss three main pillars aimed at serving and reviving the architectural field in Oman: continuous education, innovation, and market readiness.

Those interested in architectural design will have the opportunity to attend and benefit from the initiative's activities.



Recall

Recall Date: 16/02/2025

Porsche 911 (992)

Brand of Commodity	Year of Production	Number of Affected Commodities
Porsche 911 (992)	2020 – 2025	20 Cars

Recall Consequence

As part of the regular checks, it was found that the front and rear windowpanes may not have been manufactured according to the specifications, which could impair bonding to the body. In some cases, a partial loosening of the lightweight glass pane can occur over the vehicle's service life. Under certain circumstances this can lead to water ingress and noise. However, in the event of an accident, the fault pattern can also negatively affect the use of the front airbags. This could increase the risk of injury in the event of an accident.

Recall Action

Check the windscreen and rear window and replace if necessary.

To check the Serial Numbers of the affected commodities, please visit the website for Recalls & Warnings: <http://recall.pacp.gov.om>



Service Department
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Tender Notice

Oman Water & Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) hereby announces the following Tenders:-

Tender Notice	Description	Eligibility	Tender Fee (RO)	Last Date of Sale Tender Documents	Bid Submission Date
T/2687058/2025	Construction of Water Distribution Network and House Connections in Ibra Wilayat (2) in North Ash Sharqiyah Governorate	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	R.O 500/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	27/2/2025	24/3/2025
T/2686059/2025	Transporting Distributing and Uploading of (90.90M3) water from Saham - AL Khabourah Main Tanker Filling stations to Tanks available at Auqar Alabrien and Hishai villages in Saham in North Batina Governorate	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	25/2/2025	10/3/2025
Refloat T/2541957-2/2024	Enhancing the SCADA Communication Systems in Muscat, Dakhliya, Batina & Dahira Governorate	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	500/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	27/2/2025	17/3/2025
T/2686054/2025	Supply and Delivery of HDPE Pipe Size 315 mm to Main Warehouse	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	27/2/2025	17/3/2025
T/2681053/2025	Supply of sewage pump for CPS	Local Companies registered with Government Tender Board and specialized in the works mentioned	50/- (Plus 5% VAT) Non-refundable	27/2/2025	17/3/2025

- The tender documents can be obtained from the e-tendering page (Supplier Login) from this announcement date. The applicants shall pay the tender fee by logging into their (I-supplier Page).
- Applicants who are not registered shall register through the following link: <https://owwsc.nama.om/Business-with-Us/> Vendor-Registration in order to receive the login credentials of the Supplier portal.
- All applicants who have paid the tender fee shall have access to the Tender Documents through Nama Water Services e-tendering page (Supplier Login <https://nws.nama.om/en-us/Business-with-Us/Supplierlogin>). All participating companies shall submit a Bid Bond of 1% of the bid value in a sealed envelope. Bid Bonds must be obtained from a local Bank registered in the Sultanate of Oman addressed to Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) Chairman of Tender Committee not later than 2:00 pm on the bid submission date.
- The bid along with all required documents shall be uploaded through Oman Water and Wastewater Services Company (Nama Water Services) e-tendering page not later than 2:00 pm on the date specified above. For more details refer to Tender Page of our website www.owwsc.nama.om & in case of general queries you may contact us through the email ID of tender@owwsc.nama.om



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CAMEL RACING FESTIVAL

Sayyid Asa’ad patronises Al Bashayer Camel Racing Festival



< FROM A1 Camel Al Anoud for Ali bin Khalifa Al Ramli secured the first place, followed by Camel Ghazala for Mohammed Al Niyadi and Camel Shaheen for Maktoum bin Saad Al Ramly, respectively. Camel Al Faydha for Mohammed Atiq Al Mehairi secured the first place (the gold sword) and a car in the fourth round (the main round of the festival) designated for Al Houli category. Camel Muthira for Mohammed Atiq Al Mehairi secured the second place and Camel Al Haba for Faran Mohammed Al Mahri secured the third place.

At the conclusion of the festival, His Highness honoured the establishments supporting the event and handed over the prizes to the winners of the first places in the four rounds.

The festival was attended by a number of Their Highnesses, ministers, undersecretaries, sheikhs and dignitaries and lovers of camel racing from the various governorates and abroad. -OMA

Karwa Motors enhances opportunities for SMEs

The total value of local purchases by the company exceeded OMR2.5 million since the start of its commercial operations



MUSCAT: With the aim of localising industrial operations within Oman, Karwa Motors plans to expand opportunities available to the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in manufacturing fields and services related to the automotive industry in the country.

The total value of local purchases by Karwa Motors has exceeded OMR 2.5 million since the start of its commercial operations, demonstrating its commitment to enhancing local supply chains and creating a competitive business environment that enables Omani companies to integrate into manufacturing industries.

In 2024 alone, Karwa Motors awarded business opportunities worth over OMR1.1 million to 93 small and medium-sized local enterprises.

This is part of the company's strategy to increase reliance on local suppliers, reduce dependency on imports, and ensure the continuous logistical flow of materials and services related to the automotive industry in Oman.

Dr. Ibrahim bin Ali Al Balushi, CEO of Karwa Motors, emphasised the importance of investing in local suppliers and its impact on enhancing industrial sustainability in Oman.

He noted that the company has focused on supporting local businesses by awarding contracts and job opportunities to these entities since its inception.

He stated that collaboration with local entities contributes to the development of Oman's industrial sector and offers several benefits.

These include reducing import costs by sourcing materials and services from local suppliers, improving supply speed, reducing operational risks associated with global supply chain delays, and ensuring faster availability of spare parts and services.

This enhances production continuity, improves service quality, and builds long-term relationships with local suppliers to boost operational efficiency and achieve sustainability.

Regarding future plans, Dr. Al Balushi mentioned that Karwa Motors aims to increase the volume of local purchases in the coming years, given the expansion of its business scope and the rising number of commercial contracts it executes.

Additionally, Karwa Motors will launch training programmes for local suppliers to enhance their competitiveness and enable them to meet quality and global standards. This will open new horizons for them in both local and regional markets.



BLUEBERRY TREES SUCCESSFULLY GROWN IN JABAL AL AKHDAR

JABAL AL AKHDAR: The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources has successfully grown blueberry trees in the Wilayat of Jabal Al Akhdar in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate.

This initiative is part of the ministry's efforts for investment in agricultural crops of economic value, mainly in the cold mountainous areas.

The blueberry trees are being grown on an area of 1,000 sq. metres and the fruits of each plant ranges between 3 kilograms to 5 kilograms.

Engineer Mohannad bin Al Khatab Al Hinai, owner of the blueberry trees, said that the project includes some 500 plants of blueberry of four different species of Southern Highbush brought from the Republic of Georgia as the first trial project under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources. This type of blueberry trees requires between 200 to 400 cold hours (the hours wherein the temperature is less than 7 °C) which makes Al Jabal Al Akhdar suitable in terms of climate.

He said the fruits picking season starts from May to end of June every year and the tree is grown on a soil with hydrogen number of 4.5 to 5.5. He said that the project follows sustainable practices and methods including modern methods of irrigation and periodic spray on the leaves of the plant with liquefied organic fertilizer.

The project contributes to diversification of crops and boosting the sustainable agricultural systems, he said, adding that the project provides the citizens and visitors of the wilayat with the opportunity of picking the fruits of blueberry.

Dr. Masaud bin Sulaiman Al Azri, Director General of Agricultural and Fisheries Marketing at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, said that the ministry directly contributes to minimising the challenges facing investors and farmers besides its contribution in improving the productivity of plants. The ministry also offers guidance and agricultural services through the research centres and guidance departments.



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FOREIGN MINISTRY

Indian Ocean meet begins today

Timrs News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will host the 8th edition of the Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) today under the theme “Journey towards New Horizons of Maritime Partnership”, which will last for two days.

The conference aims to enhance cooperation in various economic and security aspects between the countries bordering the Indian Ocean, in addition to the countries that have interests in this ocean.

The conference seeks to inform countries and participants about the advantages enjoyed by the Sultanate of Oman in various aspects, including infrastructure and ports, which enhance the Sultanate of Oman as an attractive investment destination.

The eighth edition of the conference discusses ways to enhance maritime partnerships, improve trade links, support sustainable development and issues related to maritime security, ensure freedom of navigation, and benefit from modern technology to enhance port security and

governance.

The Sultanate of Oman's hosting of the conference, with the participation of a number of ministers and officials representing 60 countries and international organisations from the countries bordering the Indian Ocean, reflects the interest in enhancing maritime security in the Indian Ocean, supporting sustainable trade, developing cooperation mechanisms between countries, enhancing economic interests, sustaining ocean resources, and improving transportation and maritime security capabilities.

NCSI

Over 1.7mn vehicles registered by the end of December 2024

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The number of registered vehicles in the Sultanate of Oman by the end of December 2024 amounted to about 1,753,872 vehicles, of which private licencing accounted for 79.6 percent, with a number of 1,396,117 vehicles.

The most common vehicles were those with engine capacities between 1,500 and 3,000 cc, accounting for 54.4 percent, or



954,137 vehicles, while the white colour accounted for 42.5 percent, or 745,196 vehicles.

Statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) indicated that com-

mercially licenced vehicles accounted for 14.5 percent, with a number of 253,895 vehicles, while the number of rental vehicles amounted to 39,919, representing 2.3 percent, and the number of tax- is amounted to 28,239, representing 1.6 percent.

In terms of vehicle weights, the number of vehicles weighing less than 3 tonnes reached 1,591,234, representing 90.7 percent of the total vehicles registered in the Sultanate of Oman.

SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN

Brand-new pop-up store opened at Mall of Muscat

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Al Futtaim IKEA, the world's leading home furnishing brand, is bringing its signature Scandinavian design, affordability, and smart home solutions even closer to customers with the launch of its brand-new pop-up store at Mall of Muscat.

This innovative retail concept is designed to offer an engaging, immersive experience for shoppers in Al Mabellah and surrounding areas.

Strategically located in one of Muscat's most popular shopping destinations, Al Futtaim IKEA pop-up store offers a carefully curated selection of stylish furniture, home accessories, and space-saving solutions, making it easier than ever for customers to refresh their living spaces with affordable and functional designs.

Visitors can explore inspiring room setups, expert styling tips, and smart storage ideas that cater to modern living needs.

“We are excited to introduce

Al Futtaim IKEA pop-up store at Mall of Muscat, providing an interactive and inspiring way for customers to experience IKEA's well-designed and affordable home solutions,” said Mohammed Al Kurdi, Country Market Manager, Al-Futtaim IKEA Oman.

“This initiative reflects our commitment to bringing IKEA closer to the community, offering convenience, inspiration, and innovative solutions that improve everyday life in the Sultanate.”

In line with Al Futtaim IKEA's

sustainability vision, the pop-up store incorporates energy-efficient lighting and eco-friendly materials, reinforcing the brand's dedication to a better everyday life for people and the planet.

Shoppers can also take advantage of home delivery services and expert home furnishing advice to bring their ideas to life with ease.

Visit the Al Futtaim IKEA pop-up store at Mall of Muscat today and discover a world of stylish, functional, and affordable home inspiration!





AL SUWADI POWER COMPANY SAOG
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Al Suwadi Power Company SAOG (the "Company"), I have the pleasure to present the Annual Report of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2024.

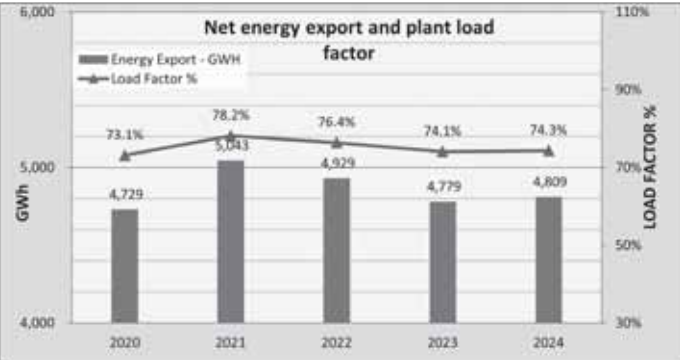
Corporate Governance

The Company has complied with the Code of Corporate Governance and applicable circulars issued from time to time by the Financial Services Authority (FSA).

Operational Results

The operational performance of the plant during the year was excellent.

The consistently high plant's reliability and technologically superior fuel-efficient operations of the plant continues to place it at the higher end of the merit order list for dispatch and, as such, the plant continues to be dispatched at a high plant load. Following graph highlights the consistent high plant load and the energy generated by the Company over the last five years:



Net energy export and plant load factor

Year	Energy Export - GWh	Load Factor %
2020	4,729	73.1%
2021	5,043	78.2%
2022	4,929	76.4%
2023	4,779	74.1%
2024	4,809	74.3%



Total Revenue & Reliability

Year	Total Revenue in Million RO	Reliability %
2020	18,100	98.3
2021	19,100	98.3
2022	19,100	98.3
2023	19,100	98.3
2024	19,100	98.3

The Company has seen growth in its revenue over the past years. Revenue includes capacity income and energy income. The plant reliability was the highest in the history and achieved 100% reliability during the summer. The following graph depicts the growth in the gross revenue and good reliability highlighting the Company's sustained importance in the Oman's power grid:

The Company continues to experience thermal heat rate loss at high generation levels and at operating configurations that are inherently unfavorable. However, over the past year, the Company has successfully reduced heat rate losses by continuous efforts to identify and implement corrective solutions.

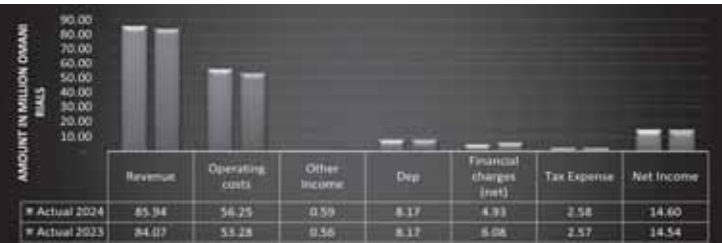
The operating equipment and the balance of plant equipment were serviced as per the agreed annual maintenance program. The following major maintenances were carried out in November and December: Gas Turbine 12 extended Hot Gas Path Inspection, and its Generator Medium Inspection, Steam Turbine 12 years control measures, and its Generator Major Inspection. The level of high plant availability is a testament of efficient and timely plant upkeep and periodic maintenance as per the equipment suppliers' manual and 'condition-based' monitoring.

The plant operated for 4930 days without any lost time accident. This was the result of sustained focus on excellence in Health, Safety, Environment and Quality Management at the plant. For this excellent performance, we acknowledge the efforts of the dedicated and diligent team of STOMO; the operation and maintenance contractor.

The Company duly met all the stringent environment permit conditions promulgated by Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs. The cyber security for the plant has also been strengthened in association with STOMO. The Company has strived to adhere to the cyber security regulations issued by the Authority for Public Services Regulation and other regulations promulgated by the FSA.

Financial Results

The following graph depicts the Company's financial performance as compared to the previous year:



Financial Performance Comparison

Category	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
Revenue	85.94	84.07
Operating costs	54.25	53.28
Other Income	0.59	0.56
Dep	8.17	8.17
Financial charges (net)	4.93	6.08
Tax Expense	2.58	2.57
Net Income	14.60	14.54

The net income for 2024 was 0.5% higher than 2023 despite increased O&M costs due to major maintenance during the year. The annual gas price increase and indexation contributed to higher revenue as well as higher costs for 2024. Additionally, high reliability increased revenue, while major maintenance increased operating costs. On a positive note, the scheduled repayment of project loans led to lower finance costs, and higher interest income further supported an increase in net profit.

During 2024, Nama Power and Water Procurement Company (PWP) duly settled all invoices including payments for gas charges.

The Company has duly met all its commitments under the term loan agreements.

Finally, the Company has declared and paid dividend of 13.0 Baizas per share in 2024 in comparison to no dividend in 2023 due to the cash sweep mechanism, which was eliminated on refinancing in January 2024.

The share price stood at 65 Baizas per share at the close of 2024.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Company takes its role as a responsible corporate citizen seriously. During the year, the Company completed the pending CSR initiatives which were commenced in 2023: (i) Street Lighting Project in Wilayat Barka for improving street lighting(ii) Aquaponics farming system to implement an Aquaponics farming system for the Maoula bin shams basic education school situated in the South Al Batinah governorate (iii) Installation of Solar Panels to operate the Aquaponics systems (iv) Provide three-dimensional printers to students in government schools under the MOE program.

Within its CSR initiative for 2024, the Company contributed 20% of its CSR budget to Oman Charitable Organisation based on the Ministerial Decision No. (205/2021) issued by Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion. The Company simultaneously completed several other projects (i) the Green Schools project for educating students with essential knowledge on the circular economy and sustainability (ii) Creating a unified environment to enhance communication and interaction skills for students across special education categories. (iii) furnish and set up interactive screens within the classrooms of public schools in the Sultanate of Oman(iv) conduct competition between universities students for finding best solutions of Power plants challenges. All the above projects were completed and their allocated amounts were utilized in the year.

A total amount of RO 52,058 was spent on the Company's CSR activities in 2024, out of which RO 23,908 pertains to projects that began in 2023 and were completed in 2024.

Medium term Outlook

Refinancing and removal of Cash sweep

The company successfully completed the refinancing of its Commercial loan facility on 31 January 2024 thereby eliminating the Cash Sweep mechanism which was active from 30 April 2023. As a result of this refinancing, the Company will be able to make future dividend distributions subject to the availability of cash and fulfillment of other covenants agreed within the Finance Documents.

Others

PWP launched the Spot Market project in 2015. The Company has participated in the trial run of spot market operation. Effective January 2022, the spot market has gone 'live' and the Company has been successfully participating on a daily basis in offering our bid. All costs incurred by the Company for participating in the spot market process is being claimed from PWP under the Change of Law protection agreed within the PPA. The Company's Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with PWP expires in March 2028. Consequently, as the Company's PPA expires, the spot market process will have no impact on the revenue stream of our Company until the expiry of the PPA.

The Company continuously endeavors to identify and implement areas of improvement in plant operations. All reasonable measures have been taken by the management to ensure that we maintain excellent plant's operational performance in the coming years. The financial performance of the Company is mainly derived from plant's availability and reliability and as such, plant's operation and maintenance will continue to be accorded highest priority and consideration.

The Company and STOMO have strived to steadily increase the Omanisation in the staff members while ensuring smooth and reliable operation of the plant.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish to express gratitude to Nama Power and Water Procurement Company, the Authority for Public Services Regulation, the Financial Services Authority and other governmental and non-governmental bodies for their guidance and support. I would also like to thank all personnel associated with the operation of the plant and the staff of the Company for their hard work and dedication, and also to those others such as our contractors, whose expertise has assisted us in achieving these excellent results.

Finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I heartily extend our best wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq Bin Taimur Al Said. We thank the Government of Oman for creating an environment that allows us to participate effectively in the growth of the Sultanate's economy. We commit our efforts to the building of a strong Oman.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 RO'000s	2024 USD'000s	2023 RO'000s	2023 USD'000s
ASSETS				
Non-Current Assets				
Property, Plant And Equipment	225,535	586,568	233,547	607,405
Right-Of-Use Assets	503	1,304	648	1,682
Derivative Instruments	764	1,988	1,542	4,010
	226,802	589,860	235,737	613,097
Current Assets				
Inventories	2,644	6,877	2,672	6,951
Trade And Other Receivables	6,564	17,072	5,456	14,192
Cash And Cash Equivalents	2,619	6,811	6,958	18,095
	11,827	30,760	15,086	39,238
	238,629	620,620	250,823	652,335
TOTAL ASSETS				
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Equity				
Share Capital	71,441	185,801	71,441	185,801
Legal Reserve	12,791	33,265	11,331	29,467
Retained Earnings	51,354	133,561	47,499	123,536
Equity Before Hedging Reserve	135,586	352,627	130,271	338,804
Hedging Reserve	(528)	(1,371)	283	733
Total Equity	135,058	351,256	130,554	339,537
LIABILITIES				
Non-Current Liabilities				
Term Loans	42,298	110,008	60,969	158,570
Lease Liabilities	499	1,299	663	1,724
Derivative Instruments	1,385	3,601	1,210	3,147
Deferred Tax Liability	26,857	69,851	26,993	70,208
Asset Retirement Obligation	346	900	391	1,018
	71,385	185,659	90,226	234,667
Current Liabilities				
Current Tax Liabilities	2,572	6,689	2,360	6,137
Trade And Other Payables	8,222	21,380	8,511	22,132
Lease Liabilities - Current	164	426	153	399
Short Term Borrowings	2,230	5,800	100	260
Term Loans - Current	18,998	49,410	18,919	49,203
	32,186	83,705	30,043	78,131
Total Liabilities	103,571	269,364	120,269	312,798
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	238,629	620,620	250,823	652,335
Net Assets Per Share (Baizas / Cents) - Adjusted	189.79	493.59	182.35	474.25

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 RO'000s	2024 USD'000s	2023 RO'000s	2023 USD'000s
Revenues	85,944	223,521	84,072	218,652
Direct costs	(63,555)	(165,296)	(60,633)	(157,696)
GROSS PROFIT	22,389	58,225	23,439	60,956
Other income	589	1,531	561	1,459
General and administrative expenses	(866)	(2,252)	(818)	(2,128)
OPERATING PROFIT	22,112	57,504	23,182	60,287
Finance costs	(5,173)	(13,451)	(6,295)	(16,369)
Finance income	241	628	214	557
PROFIT BEFORE TAX	17,180	44,681	17,101	44,475
Tax expense	(2,578)	(6,704)	(2,566)	(6,672)
PROFIT FOR THE YEAR	14,602	37,977	14,535	37,803
Earning per share	20.44	53.16	20.35	52.92
Basic and diluted earnings per share (Baizas / cents)				

Hamas hands over three more hostages to Israel

The three were released in what is the sixth hostage-prisoner swap between Israel and Hamas under the terms of a January 19 ceasefire deal



GAZA: After a standoff between Hamas and Israel earlier this week, Hamas handed over three hostages on Saturday as part of the ceasefire deal signed last month. Israeli-American Sagui Dekel-Chen, Israeli-Russian Sasha Trupanov and Israeli-Argentine Yair Horn were led over the stage in Khan Younis before being handed over to the Red Cross, which had earlier sent vehicles to the site. Israel has said three hostages were returned after being handed over to the Red Cross in the

Gaza Strip. The three were released in what is the sixth hostage-prisoner swap between Israel and Hamas under the terms of a January 19 ceasefire deal. The men — Iair Horn; Sagui Dekel-Chen; and Alexander (Sasha) Troufanov, who holds Israeli and Russian citizenship — were kidnapped from Kibbutz Nir Oz, one of the communities near the Gaza Strip that was targeted in the Hamas-led terror attacks on October 7, 2023.

Israel says it has released all 369 Palestinian prisoners as planned The Israeli Prison Service confirmed on Saturday that it had freed 369 prisoners from the Ofer prison, near Ramallah in the occupied West Bank, and the Kziot prison near Gaza, after first transferring them “from several prisons across the country.” Most were transported to Gaza but some also to the occupied West Bank. Among those released in Ramallah on Saturday was Amir Abu

Radaha, who had spent more than three decades in jail. Radaha’s sister told the French AFP news agency she had not slept in the night, as she had “kept thinking about whether Amir would be released this time or not.” Radaha himself said his release marked “a new birthday” for him. Thirty-six of the prisoners released had been serving life sentences, and 24 who had committed very serious crimes were to be transferred abroad under the terms of the truce deal. — **AW**

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83 MUNICIPALITIES AFFECTED

Death toll from rains rises to 28 in Bolivia

LA PAZ: The death toll due to heavy rains in Bolivia since November last year has risen to 28, said Juan Carlos Calvimontes, vice civil defence minister, on Friday.

Administrative divisions The rains have affected eight of the country’s nine Administrative divisions. “We are talking about 83 municipalities affected, and I am sure that within a week many of them will declare themselves in disaster,” the official told a press conference. So far, 27 municipalities have declared themselves in a state of emergency, of which 22 be-

long to La Paz, the Administrative division hardest hit by the climate. According to the government the deaths were caused by floods in the departments of Chuquisaca (south), La Paz (west), Tarija (south), Cochabamba (centre), Santa Cruz (east), and Potosi (southwest). In addition, four people remain missing, three of them in the north of La Paz and one in Chuquisaca. The National Meteorology and Hydrology Service predicted that the rains will persist in the coming weeks, possibly extending until March and April.

FEBRUARY 17-18

Qatar’s Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani to visit India



NEW DELHI: Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, will pay a state visit to India on February 17-18 at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced on Saturday. The statement noted that the Emir will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including Ministers, senior officials, and a

business delegation. This will be his second visit to India, the first being in March 2015. The Emir will be accorded a ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhawan on February 18. During his visit, he will hold discussions with President Droupadi Murmu, who will also host a banquet in his honour. He will also

hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, covering bilateral relations, trade, investment, energy, and regional issues, the MEA mentioned. India and Qatar have deep-rooted historical ties of friendship, trust and mutual respect. Earlier this year, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Doha for his first diplomatic

engagement of 2025, where he met Qatar’s Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. Following the meeting in a post on X, Jaishankar said, “I am Delighted to meet PM and FM Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani in Doha today. This is my first diplomatic engagement in 2025. We will have a productive

review of our bilateral cooperation and a wide-ranging discussion on recent regional and global developments.” In recent years, the ties between the two countries including in the areas of trade, investment, energy, technology, culture and people-to-people ties have continued to strengthen, the MEA noted. — **ANI**

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Investment Manager Report

On behalf of the Fund Management Board, I am pleased to present the audited financial results of ahli Global Equity Fund for the year ended 31st December 2024:

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED	Dec-24	Dec-23
Number of units	3,796,157	3,410,000
Net asset value (RO)	3,263,897	2,730,741
Net asset value per unit (RO)	0.860	0.801
Dividend Paid Per Unit (RO)	-	-
Net profit/(loss)	283,590	391,722

The Ahli Global Equity Fund recorded a gain of +0.2% for the quarter, bringing our impressive YTD performance to +10.6%, outperforming the benchmark by 5.6%. Our proactive management strategy continues to drive strong performance, focusing on high-quality companies and strategic entry points amidst ongoing economic uncertainties. As we wrap up Q4 2024, our commitment to sustained growth and value for investors remains resolute. We've increased our U.S. exposure to capture gains in technology stocks, while also maintaining a significant allocation to GCC markets, supported by favorable oil prices. As we adapt to the evolving market conditions in Q4, we've focused on identifying key opportunities that support our long-term growth objectives. Our U.S. tech holdings, including Nvidia and Vertiv, have delivered strong performance, while our regional strategy continues to benefit from ongoing GCC reforms and stable oil prices. UAE-based EMAAR and Emirates NBD in Dubai have made significant contributions to our performance, reinforcing our positive outlook for the region. This approach allows us to navigate market fluctuations while positioning for sustained growth.

Markets Performance

In Q4 2024, global markets continued to show resilience, with notable momentum in U.S. equities and mixed performance in the GCC region. The U.S. equity market saw positive but modest growth, with the S&P 500 posting a 2.1% gain, while the Nasdaq outperformed, rising by 4.7%. The solid performance in U.S. tech stocks, such as Nvidia and Vertiv, continued to drive investor optimism, although the broader market faced some headwinds from ongoing macroeconomic uncertainties. During the quarter, China's market showed resilience despite broader challenges. While investor concerns over trade tariffs weighed on the market, momentum-driven stocks, particularly in tech and financials, outperformed. In the GCC, the market performance was more subdued, with the GCC index rising by just 0.6% for the quarter, ending the year with a modest 2.5% gain. However, Dubai remained a standout performer, driven by strong gains in its real estate and financial sectors. The city's dynamic economic environment continued to attract both domestic and international investments. Saudi Arabia showed resilience, supported by robust corporate earnings and steady growth in its non-oil GDP, reflecting ongoing diversification efforts. Oman remained stable, benefiting from its recent upgrade to investment grade, which bolstered investor confidence in the country's economic prospects

*As of December 31st 2024

Market Outlook

As we look ahead to 2025, the U.S. economy enters the new year on solid footing following the Federal Reserve's recent 50 basis point rate cut. This move underscores confidence in the economy's stability and its ability to continue managing inflationary pressures. With inflation trending downward, the environment is ripe for investment opportunities, especially in high-quality stocks and bonds with low debt, strong margins, and consistent cash flow. The likelihood of a soft landing for the economy suggests that stock performance will remain robust, supporting ongoing corporate earnings growth. Despite potential volatility from the upcoming U.S. presidential elections, strong fundamentals offer a favorable outlook. Corporate earnings for the S&P 500 are expected to grow by 15% in 2025, further reinforcing optimism. Historically, markets often reach record highs following successful economic soft landings, and with these positive indicators, we believe the outlook for the market in 2025 is bright, positioning investors for sustained growth. The outlook for the GCC region remains positive, driven by strong government spending, sustained oil prices, and economic reforms. Oman's recent investment-grade upgrade boosts the region's appeal, while a strong IPO pipeline in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Oman signals growth potential. Notably, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are making significant strides in diversifying away from oil. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 is driving growth in sectors like technology and renewable energy, while the UAE continues to expand in fintech, real estate, and green energy. These efforts enhance the region's investment appeal and present exciting opportunities for growth.

ahliGLOBAL equityfund

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024	2023
	RO	RO
ASSETS		
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	3,253,867	2,726,946
Cash and cash equivalents	19,969	13,640
Amount due from brokers	3,577	3,577
Total assets	3,277,413	2,744,163
LIABILITIES		
Accruals and other payables	12,897	12,906
Amount due to unitholders	619	516
Total liabilities	13,516	13,422
Net assets attributable to the unitholders	3,263,897	2,730,741
Total liabilities and net assets attributable to the unitholders	3,277,413	2,744,163
Net assets per unit attributable to the unitholders	0.860	0.801
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024	2024	2023
Income	RO	RO
Dividend income	128,074	90,618
Net unrealised gain on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	97,089	215,873
Net realised gain on sale of financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	141,564	161,985
Net investment income	366,727	468,476
Expenses		
Management fees	(39,078)	(31,359)
Custody fees	(6,400)	(7,648)
General and administrative expenses	(37,659)	(37,747)
Total expenses	(83,137)	(76,754)
Profit and total comprehensive income and increase in net assets attributable to unit holders for the year	283,590	391,722
Profit per unit	0.078	0.117

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SPORTS

Latham, Mitchell fifties power New Zealand to tri-series title

O'Rourke took four wickets, while Santner and Bracewell got two each to guide to an easy five-wicket win

KARACHI: New Zealand clinched the tri-series title on Friday and sounded out a warning to the hosts, five days before they meet again in the Champions Trophy opener at the same venue.

NZ's Will O'Rourke picked a four-wicket haul, while the spinners, led by Mitchell Santner, straightjacketed Pakistan in the middle overs, limiting them to 242.

The batters then completed the demolition job on a two-paced surface, chasing the target with 28 balls and five wickets to spare. After Devon Conway and Kane Williamson set the platform with a 71-run partnership for the second wicket, Daryl Mitchell launched from there in the middle overs, befuddling Pakistan's spinners with his variety of sweeps - including the reverse. He struck up an 87-run stand with Tom Latham, which highlighted New Zealand's dominance in the middle overs, before Michael Bracewell and Glenn Phillips sealed the deal.

It was Phillips who had kicked off the tri-series with an unbeaten



106 off 74 balls, his maiden ODI century, against Pakistan, before Kane Williamson reminded the world of his genius with an unbeaten century of his own in New Zealand's second game of the tri-series against South Africa. Having bagged ducks in those two games - and also against Sri Lanka in Auckland last month - Latham made a timely return to form, and re-established himself as New Zealand's first-choice wicketkeeper-batter with his 56 off 64 balls.

Latham had benefited from multiple reprieves - he was dropped by Shaheen Shah Afridi off his own bowling on 15, and then by Saud Shakeel at square leg on 29. Earlier, when he was on 13, legspinner Abrar Ahmed pinged him on his pad and wasn't given out lbw. Pakistan missed a trick by not going for a review, with ball-tracking indicating that it had pitched in line and would have crashed into the stumps.

Abrar, Pakistan's specialist

spinner, lacked penetration, and was taken for 67 in his ten overs. In stark contrast, New Zealand's premier spinner Santner was unhittable, coming away with his most economical ten-over spell in ODI cricket. Forty of his 60 balls were dots as Santner varied his pace from the mid-70s kph range to mid-90s kph with remarkable control. Bracewell also kept things tight, finishing with 2 for 38 in his ten overs.

Babar Azam then brought the

Karachi crowd alive when he laced Jacob Duffy through the covers for four, and became the joint fastest to 6000 ODI runs in his 123rd innings, alongside Hashim Amla. Nathan Smith, the seam-bowling allrounder, though spoiled the party when he had Babar spooning a return catch for 29 off 34 balls in his first over.

Pakistan captain Mohammad Rizwan needed 13 balls to get off the mark, and then four more balls to find the boundary. Salman Agha

was more fluent at the other end, wedging the ball into the gaps as the pair forged an 88-run partnership for the fourth wicket.

The stand, however, ended when O'Rourke returned to the attack and had Rizwan chopping on with a cross-seamer, which stopped on him, for 46 off 76 balls. After hitting hard lengths and the splice of batters with high pace and bounce in the early exchanges, O'Rourke proved that he could be just as effective with the older ball. Almost five overs later, Bracewell had Agha miscuing a reverse sweep to short third to leave Pakistan at 161 for 5 in the 37th over.

Tayyab Tahir then gave the innings a leg-up with his 38 off 33 balls, but his innings was cut short by Duffy in the 42nd over. In the last eight overs, New Zealand conceded just four boundaries, keeping Pakistan to 242.

The experienced pair of Conway and Williamson absorbed all of that pressure, and once the ball became older and softer, they picked away Pakistan's spinners. Williamson carted Agha's offspin over mid-off while Conway played Abrar and Khushdil Shah through the covers. When Williamson tried to pop Agha over the infield once again, he caused the ball to dip and turn to castle him for 34 off 49 balls. Conway then departed two short of his half-century, but the depth in skill in New Zealand's middle order was too much to overcome for Pakistan.

Brief scores: New Zealand 243 for 5 (Mitchell 57, Latham 56, Naseem 2-43) beat Pakistan 242 (Rizwan 46, Agha 45, O'Rourke 4-43, Santner 2-20) by five wickets. -Agencies

EIGHT-TEAM TOURNAMENT

ICC announces prize money for winner of Champions Trophy

DUBAI: The return of the Champions Trophy for the first time since 2017 will see the winners of the eight-team tournament earn USD 2.24 million, as well as the trophy they will lift on March 9, as stated in a release from ICC.

The runners-up will receive USD 1.12 million, while the losing semi-finalists walk away with USD 560,000 each, from the total prize pot of USD 6.9 million, a 53 percent increase from the 2017 edition, the release added.

Every match counts at the Champions Trophy and each group match win is worth more than USD 34,000 to the victorious team. Teams that finished fifth or sixth will each earn USD 350,000 while the seventh and eighth-placed sides take home USD 140,000.

In addition, all eight teams are assured of USD 125,000 each for competing in the Champions Trophy 2025. The first global cricket tournament to be hosted in Pakistan since 1996 promises to be a thrilling two-week competition, with matches played in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi.

ICC Chair Jay Shah said the upcoming tournament represents a pivotal moment for cricket.

"The ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 represents a pivotal moment for cricket, reviving a tournament that highlights the pinnacle of ODI talent, where



every match is critical. The substantial prize pot underscores the ICC's ongoing commitment to investing in the sport and maintaining the global prestige of our events. Beyond the financial incentive, this tournament ignites fierce competition, captivates fans worldwide, and plays a vital role in fostering the growth and long-term sustainability of cricket for future generations," Jay Shah was quoted in a release from ICC as saying.

The format of this year's tournament sees the eight teams divided into two groups of four, with the top two teams in each group progressing to the semi-finals. The ICC Men's Champions Trophy will take place every four years with the world's top eight ODI teams, with the Women's Champions Trophy launching in 2027 in a T20 format. -Agencies

INJURY-HIT WORLD CHAMPIONS

Sri Lanka thrash Australia in final ODI before Champions Trophy

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka hammered Australia by 174 runs in their final one-day international (ODI) before their Champions Trophy opener against England on Friday.

The injury-hit world champions were bowled out for 107 in pursuit of 281 in Colombo, sealing a sorry 2-0 series defeat against a side who did not qualify for the tournament in Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates.

After Travis Head, Matt Short and Jake Fraser-McGurk fell to seamer Asitha Fernando inside seven overs, Australia reached 79-3 before losing their final seven wickets for 28 runs - all to Sri Lanka's spinners on a slow, turning pitch.

Left-arm spinner Dunith Wellalage initiated the collapse by bowling Josh Inglis for 22 and ended with figures of 4-35.

All-rounder Aaron Hardie was caught at slip off leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga for a four-ball duck in the next over and Glenn Maxwell was bowled for one by a turning Wellalage five balls later.

Hasaranga added the wicket of Australia captain Steve Smith, lbw for 29, and finished with 3-23.

Only a final-wicket partnership of 13 between Adam Zampa and Tanveer Sangha ensured Australia reached three figures.

It was Australia's heaviest defeat against Sri Lanka in terms of runs and their fifth-heaviest against any opposition.

Kusal Mendis hit 101 from 115 runs and Charith Asalanka 78 not out from 66 in Sri Lanka's 281-4.

"We have been outplayed but



used a lot of players and got a lot out of it," said Smith, who is standing in as skipper for injured bowler Pat Cummins.

"It was a fine bowling performance by Sri Lanka and not a great batting performance.

"We will keep moving forward. Credit to Sri Lanka."

Australia's build-up for the Champions Trophy has been hit by injuries to Cummins, bowler Josh Hazlewood and all-rounder Mitchell Marsh, plus Marcus Stoinis' retirement and Mitchell Starc opting to miss the tournament.

Their first match is against England, who go into the match on the

back of their 3-0 series defeat by India, on 22 February.

South Africa and Afghanistan are also in the four-team group.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka 281-4 (50 overs): K Mendis 101, Asalanka 78 beat Australia 107 (24.2 overs): Smith 29; Wellalage 4-35, Hasaranga 3-23. -Agencies

PAKISTAN'S STAR BATTER

Babar equals Amla's record, completes 6,000 ODI runs

KARACHI: Pakistan's star batter Babar Azam levelled Hashim Amla's world record to become the joint-fastest player to complete 6,000 runs in ODI cricket.

He completed the 6,000-run mark in 123 innings, the same number of innings taken by Amla. In 126 ODIs, Babar has made 6,019 runs at an average of 55.73, a strike rate of 88.13. 19 centuries and 34 fifties have come out of his bat, with the best score of 158.

Babar reached this milestone during the final of the tri-nation

series against New Zealand at Karachi.

During the innings after Pakistan won the toss and opted to bat first, Babar looked fluent in his 34-ball knock of 29 runs. His knock had four boundaries and a six and runs came at a strike rate of 85.29. But like most of his recent knocks, he could not carry on for long and gifted his wicket to Nathan Smith in a soft dismissal. He has not been able to hit an ODI ton, matter of fact, an international ton since August 2023 when he smashed 151

against Nepal in Asia Cup. In this series, he has not been able to hit a half-century.

Earlier, Pakistan captain Mohammad Rizwan won the toss and opted to bat against New Zealand in the ODI tri-nation series final.

It will be a rehearsal for both sides before squaring off against each other in the Champions Trophy tournament opener on Wednesday. Winning the tri-nation would certainly lift the morale of the players before fighting for

the mega prize from next week.

Pakistan (Playing XI): Fakhar Zaman, Babar Azam, Saud Shakeel, Mohammad Rizwan(w/c), Salman Agha, Tayyab Tahir, Khushdil Shah, Faheem Ashraf, Shaheen Afridi, Naseem Shah, Abrar Ahmed.

New Zealand (Playing XI): Will Young, Devon Conway, Kane Williamson, Daryl Mitchell, Tom Latham(w), Glenn Phillips, Michael Bracewell, Mitchell Santner(c), Nathan Smith, Jacob Duffy, William O'Rourke. -Agencies



GLOBAL ELECTRICITY DEMAND
The world's electricity consumption is forecast to rise at its fastest pace in recent years, growing at close to 4% annually through 2027 as power use climbs in a range of sectors across the economy, according to a new International Energy Agency report released.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



GCC LEADS ENERGY SECTOR
GCC countries ranked first in global energy indicators and first in crude oil production, crude oil reserves, crude oil exports and natural gas reserves. Additionally, the GCC countries ranked second worldwide in natural gas exports and third in marketed natural gas production.

Financing agreement inked for direct grid connection with Oman

This agreement paves the way for a transformative direct grid connection project linking the GCCIA network with the Sultanate of Oman, the total cost of which exceeds \$700 million

MUSCAT: The Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) and the Qatar Development Fund (QDF) formalised their partnership in a landmark financing agreement to the tune of \$100 million.

The event took place in a ceremony held in Muscat under the patronage of Eng. Salim Nassir Al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals.

This agreement paves the way for a transformative direct grid connection project linking the GCCIA network with the Sultanate of Oman, the total cost of which exceeds \$700 million.

The agreement was duly executed by Eng. Ahmed Ali Al-Ebrahim, CEO, on behalf of the GCCIA, and Fahad Hamad Al Sulaiti, Director General, on behalf of the Qatar Fund for Development.

The project involves the construction of two 400 kV overhead transmission lines connecting the GCCIA's Al Sila station in the United Arab Emirates to the Ibri station, which the GCCIA will construct in the Sultanate of Oman.

The total length of the lines will be 530 kilometers. The project also



includes the construction of two 400 kV substations, one in Ibri and the other in Al Baynunah. These substations will be equipped with advanced control, protection, and communication systems to ensure reliability, efficiency, and safety. A dynamic compensator station will also be installed to bolster grid stability and increase transmission capacity. This interconnection project will provide a total transmission capacity of 1,700 MW, with a net transfer capacity of 1,200 MW.

This project marks a pivotal stride toward the seamless integration of Gulf power grids, a vital strategic initiative designed to fortify regional energy network connectivity and bolster the reliability and sustainability of the region's electricity systems. It resonates with global imperatives for energy infrastructure development and the pursuit of sustainable development goals.

This project promises a wealth of advantages for both the Sultanate of Oman and the GCC nations. By unlocking hundreds of megawatts of additional generation capacity, it significantly reduces the imperative for costly new power plant construction. Furthermore,

it will streamline and amplify electricity exchange between the GCC countries and Oman, fostering greater flexibility and resilience within regional power systems.

Operational costs will also see a marked decrease, as the interconnected network reduces the operational expenditures of participating nations, leading to substantial annual financial savings. Critically, this initiative will contribute significantly to the reduction of carbon emissions, directly supporting global environmental conservation efforts.

Eng. Salim Nassir Al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, underscored the strategic significance of this agreement, positioning it as a key element within the framework of Gulf integration policies in the energy sector. He highlighted the project's role in bolstering energy security and sustainability, noting its synergy with GCC initiatives to develop a high-performing and dependable energy infrastructure.

He lauded the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA) as a driving force behind the implementation of collaborative interconnection strategies. He stressed that this project will

not only strengthen the resilience of regional power grids but also pave the way for fully integrated energy markets across the GCC. He further acknowledged the Qatar Development Fund's contribution, highlighting the crucial role of such partnerships in funding vital energy projects that are essential for sustainable development and a more resilient regional electricity system.

On his turn, Mohsen Hamad Al Hadrami, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority (GCCIA), affirmed that the electrical interconnection project stands as a cornerstone among the vital infrastructure initiatives endorsed by the leaders of the GCC states. Launched in 2009, the shared Gulf network has seamlessly connected the electricity systems of the GCC nations. Its core mission has been to ensure the uninterrupted flow of energy for GCC states, achieving peak levels of reliability, dependability, and efficiency.

The GCCIA's interconnection network has proven its mettle, preventing over 2,800 electrical

outages in member states through the instantaneous transmission of required power across the interconnection network. Since the commencement of operations, the network has been a bulwark against power disruptions.

He further stated that the GCCIA is committed to ensuring that the electrical interconnection network keeps pace with the growing demands of power grids across all GCC member states. To this end, the Authority has prioritized the expansion and modernization of electrical linkages both within and between member states, culminating in the implementation of several key network expansion projects, including the direct connection with the Sultanate of Oman. These endeavors will augment the capacity of the GCC-wide electrical interconnection network, thereby bolstering the ability of member states to manage power contingencies.

Al Hadhrami further emphasized that this project constitutes a strategic step towards the integration of Gulf energy networks. Moreover, it serves as a vital strategic initiative aimed at strengthening the integration of regional energy networks, enhancing the reliability and sustainability of electricity systems across the region, and responding to global trends that advocate for the development of energy infrastructure and the pursuit of sustainable development goals.

Meanwhile, Eng. Ahmed Al-Ebrahim, CEO of the GCCIA, highlighted the project's transformative potential, noting that its construction is slated to begin in the second half of 2025, with commissioning planned for the first half of 2027. He emphasized that it will significantly bolster grid stability, reducing the disruptive effects of major outages and ensuring uninterrupted power supply under various conditions.

"This project is not only about meeting current demands but also

about preparing for the future," he explained. "It will enable our networks to handle increasing loads and support future expansion, while also seamlessly integrating renewable energy sources like solar and wind power, aligning with the GCC's environmental vision. Furthermore, it will significantly increase the volume of energy exchange and trade among GCC nations, opening up opportunities for electricity trade, particularly for the Sultanate, with the Republic of Iraq."

He further emphasized that this financing agreement solidifies the strong partnership between the Authority and the Fund as they jointly pursue the expansion of the electrical interconnection network, building upon the foundation laid by the South Iraq connection project. Three landmark projects are in progress to forge stronger links with Kuwait, the UAE, and Oman, representing a combined investment exceeding USD 1 billion.

Al-Ebrahim celebrated the productive collaboration between the Authority and the Fund, recognizing its pivotal role in financing essential infrastructure projects throughout the GCC, thereby advancing the shared vision of sustainable development.

Fahad Hamad Al Sulaiti, General Manager of the Qatar Development Fund, highlighted the agreement as a testament to the Fund's commitment to driving economic growth in Arab and developing countries through targeted financing and loans for development initiatives. Rooted in a shared understanding of regional cooperation's vital role, this initiative recognizes energy as a linchpin of stability and socio-economic advancement.

This project embodies the Qatar Development Fund's enduring dedication to forging regional partnerships and spearheading sustainable development efforts, paving the way for a brighter future. -OHA

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

MSX declines 1.88% amid global economic headwinds and mixed sector performance

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Omani stock market suffered a sharp downturn this week by 1.88%, reversing last week's positive performance, and bringing values back to levels not seen since late last year, according to an industry expert.

"The decline eliminated all the positive gains built up earlier this year following the fourth-quarter results. It was influenced by various external factors affecting regional markets, particularly the ongoing trade war led by US President Donald Trump," said Ahmed Negm, Head of Market Research MENA at XS.com.

"His decisions on additional tariffs have created further uncertainty regarding economic stability and trade relations. Additionally, geopolitical developments in the region have potentially impacted investor sentiment," he further added.

Oil prices demonstrated significant volatility this week, failing to recover despite several attempts, which further weighed on the market. Another significant factor was the US inflation data, which showed an unexpected jump, increasing the likelihood that interest rates could stay high for longer. The outlook was reinforced by Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell's speech this week, where he emphasised that the Fed remains data-dependent and will continue monitoring inflation and labour market data before deciding on potential rate cuts this year. Markets are currently pricing in one rate cut by the Fed this year, fewer than pre-



viously anticipated. Additionally, market performance was affected by corporate board meetings and their subsequent dividend distribution announcements.

Performances on the sector level were mixed this week. The Services sector demonstrated a negative performance this week, declining by 1.60%. Within this sector, several key companies faced downward pressure: OQ Gas Networks experienced a decline of 2.27%, followed by Oman Telecom which fell by 1.89%, while OQ Exploration and Production decreased by 1.58%.

The Financial sector also posted negative returns, dropping by 1.13% for the week. Among the major banking institutions, Sohar International Bank recorded the largest decline of 3.60%, while Bank Nizwa fell by 1.92%. Muscat Bank declined by 0.78%.

In contrast to other sectors, the Industrial sector emerged as a bright spot, advancing by 3.16%. The standout performer was Jazeera Steel Products, which surged by 20.63% following its dividend announcement of 43 Baiza per share. Other notable gains within the sector included Voltamp Energy, which rose by 8.61%, and Oman Cement, which appreciated by 2.53%.

EXCHANGE OF EXPERTISE

Marafiq delegation explores regional collaboration in Saudi Arabia



Times News Service

MUSCAT: A delegation from Marafiq, led by Engineer Abdulrahman bin Khamees Al Kharusi, Acting Deputy Managing Director, along with several executives from the company's management, visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as part of the company's plans to review the experiences of regional and global companies operating in the same sector.

During the visit, the delegation met with Prof. Dr. Fadi Al Fayyad, Acting CEO of the Royal Commission for Jubail, where they discussed several topics of mutual interest. The delegation also visited the Visitors Centre, where they were briefed on the city's industrial growth and its advanced infrastructure.

Additionally, the Marafiq delegation visited Marafiq Saudi and met with Eng. Mohammed bin Barki Al-Zu'bi, CEO of Marafiq Saudi. The meeting focused on



potential future cooperation between the two companies and the exchange of expertise. The delegation also conducted field visits to MASA for Operations and Maintenance Services and Jubail Water and Power Company (JWAP).

This visit aligns with Marafiq's ambitious plans to benefit from

the experiences of similar projects and companies, further enhancing its successful journey.

Marafiq is one of the leading companies operating in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm in the infrastructure sector.

It manages several key projects, including the Duqm Integrated

Power and Water Plant, which supplies electricity and industrial cooling water to the Duqm Refinery, as well as electricity to oil storage facilities in RasMarkaz. Additionally, Marafiq oversees the drinking water sector in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD).

MARKET

GCC dominates global energy rankings: Report

Data indicate that the GCC countries' crude oil production in 2023 logged about 17 million barrels per day (mbpd), which accounted for 23.2% of the total global crude oil production, despite a 6.8% decrease in crude oil production in 2023 compared to the production recorded in 2022

DUBAI: GCC countries ranked first in global energy indicators and first in crude oil production, crude oil reserves, crude oil exports and natural gas reserves. Additionally, the GCC countries ranked second worldwide in natural gas exports and third in marketed natural gas production, according to data issued by the Statistical Centre for the Cooperation Council for the Arab Countries of the Gulf (GCC-Stat). Data indicate that the GCC countries' crude oil production in 2023 logged about 17 million barrels per day (mbpd), which accounted for 23.2% of the total global crude oil production, despite a 6.8% decrease in crude oil production in 2023 compared to the pro-



duction recorded in 2022. The GCC countries' crude oil reserves in 2023 reached about 511.9 billion barrels, which accounted for 32.6% of the total global crude oil reserves, recording an average annual growth rate of 0.3% during the period from 2014 to 2023. The GCC Countries' crude oil exports in 2023 logged about 12.4 mbpd, representing 28.2% of the total global crude oil exports, despite a decrease in exports in 2023 by 8.2% compared to the figures recorded in 2022. The GCC Countries' oil derivatives exports in 2023 reached about 1518.6 million barrels, which accounted for 13.4% of global oil derivatives exports, with an increase of 7.1% compared to the figures recorded in 2022. The GCC Countries ranked second globally in oil derivatives exports, while oil derivatives imports reached 212.3 million barrels, with an average annual growth rate of 0.1%. Gas oil/diesel production recorded the highest rate among petroleum derivatives in 2023, with a quantity of 660.4 million barrels, followed by gasoline with 336.2 million barrels, then kerosene and jet fuel with 319.4 million barrels. Fuel oil, naphtha and petroleum gases recorded production of 263.1, 221.6 and 103.3 million barrels, respectively. Gasoline consumption in the GCC countries in 2023 logged about 336.6 million barrels, while gas oil/diesel consumption reached 299.7 million barrels. The rest of the derivatives witnessed varying quantities between 34.8 and 268.3 million barrels. With regard to natural gas, the GCC countries' reserves in 2023 reached about 44.195 billion cubic meters, which represent 21.4% of the total global reserves of natural gas, with an increase in reserves of 0.2% compared to the figures recorded in 2022. The GCC countries' natural gas exports in 2023 logged about 180.9 billion cubic meters, which accounted for 13.1% of the total global natural gas exports, with an average annual growth rate in exports of 2.5% during the period from 2014 to 2023. The GCC countries' production of marketed natural gas in 2023 reached about 464.2 billion cubic meters, which represented 10.8%

of the total global production of marketed natural gas, with an increase of 1.4% compared to the figures recorded in 2022. In renewable energy indicators, the capacity of renewable energy stations in the GCC countries reached about 10,742 megawatts in 2023, recording an increase of 74.7% compared to the figures logged in 2022. The capacity increased, especially in recent years, in light of the Council's implementation of policies related to the use of renewable energy instead of fossil energy. The energy produced by the stations in 2023 reached about 14,403 gigawatt per hour, with an increase of 72.4% compared to the figures recorded in 2022. The GCC countries' electricity production in 2023 reached about 794.9 thousand gigawatt per hour, with an average growth rate of about 4.7% during the period from 2019 to 2023. These figures logged an increase of 1.2% compared to the figures of 2022, while consumption reached 732.5 gigawatt per hour, with an increase of 1.3% compared to the figures logged in 2022. -WAM

TRADE EXPERTS

Trump's reciprocal tariff may impact India if imposed on sectors: Experts

NEW DELHI: The impact of the proposed reciprocal tariffs by the United States on India will depend on how the policy is implemented - whether on a sectoral basis or a product-specific basis. Trade experts suggest that there is still no clarity on the rules and conditions of this tariff policy, which has been widely discussed since US President Donald Trump first mentioned it. One of the key questions is whether the Reciprocal Tariffs will apply only to products where the US has an interest or if it will be a broader, bilateral measure. This distinction is important, as it will determine how much India's exports will be affected. For example, if the US raises tariffs on pistachios to 10 per cent to match India's existing rate, it will have no impact on India since the country does not export pistachios. This situation applies to several other products as well. Additionally, for 75 per cent of US exports to India, the average tariff is already below 5 per cent, which means that selectively increasing tariffs may not be an effective strategy for the US. However, if the policy is applied sector-wide, the impact on India could be different. The US currently imposes high tariffs of 15-35 per cent on Indian labour-intensive exports such as textiles, garments, and footwear. Experts suggest that if India negotiates a tariff reduction agreement, it could benefit from lower US tariffs on these products, making Indian exports more competitive. Ajay Srivastava, Founder of the Global Trade Research Initiative, explained the situation to ANI, stating that if the US applies tariffs based on individual products, India may not face major

Trade experts suggest that there is still no clarity on the rules and conditions of this tariff policy, which has been widely discussed since US President Donald Trump first mentioned it

challenges since Indian and US exports do not directly compete. He gave an example: "If the US imposes high tariffs on Indian avocados in response to India's tariffs, it won't affect India, as India does not export avocados." However, he warned that if tariffs are imposed based on sector-wide averages, Indian exports could be impacted. While the US does not export many agricultural products to India, it could increase tariffs on Indian agricultural exports based on an average calculation. This move could harm multiple Indian products and force India to either cut its own tariffs or adopt retaliatory measures. He said, "US does not export many agricultural products to India, applying higher average tariffs on Indian agriculture exports could harm many products. This would force India to consider tariff cuts or a retaliation strategy. But, in labour-intensive industries, India might benefit from this approach". -ANI

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INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY

Growth in global electricity demand set to accelerate as power-hungry sectors expand

PARIS: The world's electricity consumption is forecast to rise at its fastest pace in recent years, growing at close to 4% annually through 2027 as power use climbs in a range of sectors across the economy, according to a new International Energy Agency (IEA) report released. Electricity 2025, the latest edition of the IEA's main market analysis of the sector, forecasts that the growth in global demand will be the equivalent of adding an amount greater than Japan's annual electricity consumption every year between now and 2027. The surge is primarily driven by robust growing use of electricity for industrial production, increased demand for air conditioning, accelerating electrification, led by the transport sector, and the rapid expansion of data centres. Most of the additional demand over the next three years will come from emerging and developing economies, which account for 85% of the demand growth. The trend is most pronounced in China where electricity demand has been growing faster than the overall economy since 2020. China's electricity consumption rose by 7% in 2024 and is expected to grow by an average of around 6% through 2027. The demand growth in China has been fuelled in part by the industrial sector, where alongside the traditional energy-intensive sectors, the rapidly expanding electricity-intensive manufacturing of solar panels, batteries, electric vehicles and associated materials played a significant role. Air conditioning, electric vehicle adoption, data centres and 5G networks are additional contributors. "The acceleration of global electricity demand highlights the significant changes taking place in energy systems around the world and the approach of a new Age of Electricity. But it also presents evolving challenges for governments in ensuring secure,

affordable and sustainable electricity supply," said IEA Director of Energy Markets and Security Keisuke Sadamori. "While emerging and developing economies are set to drive the large majority of the growth in global electricity demand in the coming years, consumption is also expected to increase in many advanced economies after a period of relative stagnation. Policy makers need to pay close attention to these shifting dynamics, which will be addressed at the international Summit on the Future of Energy Security that the IEA is hosting with the UK government in London in April." In the United States, a strong increase in electricity demand is expected to add the equivalent of California's current power consumption to the national total over the next three years. Electricity demand growth is forecast to be more modest in the European Union, only rising back to its 2021 levels by 2027, following the major declines in 2022 and 2023 triggered by the energy crisis. The new report forecasts that

growth in low-emissions sources – primarily renewables and nuclear – is sufficient, in aggregate, to cover all the growth in global electricity demand over the next three years. In particular, generation from solar PV is forecast to meet roughly half of global electricity demand growth through 2027, supported by continued cost reductions and policy support. Electricity generation from solar PV surpassed that from coal in the European Union in 2024, with solar's share of the power mix exceeding 10%. China, the United States and India are all expected to see solar PV's share of annual electricity generation reach 10% between now and 2027. At the same time, nuclear power is making a strong comeback, with its electricity generation on course to hit new highs every year from 2025 onward over the forecast period. As a result of these forecast trends, carbon dioxide emissions from global electricity generation are expected to plateau in the coming years after increasing by about 1% in 2024. -WAM

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Indian male 34, finance professional. MBA & PGDM in finance. 8 yrs of experience in Oman out of 14 yrs exp. Handled independently accounts finalization, IFRS, Vat & tax audit. Know oracle & tally. Contact: 71181096. Email: kansebalvant@gmail.com.

Senior accountant, chief accountant, accounts manager & finance professional with 20+ yrs of experience in group companies in Oman, seeking a suitable placement. Contact: 99219937

Experienced accounts manager seeks suitable senior level opportunity. Contact: 78581435

A skilled professional MBA (Finance & marketing) with more than 2 yrs experience in India seeks suitable accountant or sales positions. Contact: +91 6238349738 (WA), Email: thaha2255@gmail.com

Accounts Manager, 22 yrs of exp in accounts(20 yrs in Oman) until finalization (MIS, collections, handling inventory and payments and all related work). Contact: 91410602

Indian, male, Accountant, M.com (finance), 12 yrs experience in Oman. Handling accounts up to finalization independently, Noc & D/L available. Contact: 99859141

Indian, male, with 12 yrs of experience in accounts, sales coordinator, admin, printing media, and automotive fields is looking for a suitable job. Contact: 97474155.

Accounts manager, Ass. FM, Indian, male, B.com, MBA. More than 15yrs experience in accounting up to finalisation. Looking for immediate placement. Contact: 91469060

Sr. Accountant, accountant, 16 yrs of experience in Oman. Accounts up to finalisation and auditing. Contact: 94001764.

Junior accountant, Indian, male B.com graduate 2yrs experience in Oman seeking suitable job. Contact: 78047716

Highly skilled Chief accountant looking for suitable position. Contact: +968 79888153

Indian male, having 2.5 yrs of experience in Accounts, finance, admin looking for job. Contact: +968 79414996, Email: sajadzn29@gmail.com

Indian male with 4+ yrs exp. in Oman, worked as Accounts & admin executive Bachelor Degree in Management (BBA) with valid D/L, ready to join immediately. Contact: 93536020, Email: naseemtm24@gmail.com

ADMINISTRATION

Executive secretary with 20+ yrs of experience in India and Oman looking for suitable placement. NOC available. Contact: 97932277

Dynamic and well-experienced professional: 5 yrs of Dubai and 4.5 yrs of Muscat experience in operations management, business excellence or key account management looking for new challenges. Contact: 96766702, Email: ilyas3299@gmail.com

Female, Highly experienced candidate looking for a sutiable position in admin, accounts department & logistics, available in Oman to join immediate with valid D/L. Contact: 76452212

Indian (M), Oman experience in projects, corporate communications, CEO office. WhatsApp: +968 97457945.

Indian male MBA(HR) & B tech (Comp) with nearly 10 yrs of over all experience seeks job. Contact: +968 94168194, +91 9745020204, Email: gokulgopan91@hotmail.com

ARCHITECT

Qualified junior Architect with experience in software such as Auto- CAD, lumion, sketchUp, revit, 3Ds max etc. looking for job in Oman. Contact: +968 78902260, E-mail: ar.mohamedadhelka@gmail.com

Architect, Interior designer having more than 8+ yrs of experience with design and engineering consultants. Contact: 95759832, Email: ar.ahmedfaizal@gmail.com

Graduate Architect with valid Oman D/L. Proficient in various Design software. Looking for Architect, interior designer roles. Contact: 93249129, Email: psmenez2015@gmail.com

DESIGNER/ AUTOCAD DRAUGHTMAN

Electrical designer draftsman 12 yrs experience skilled in autocad MEP Microstation and electrical standards 8 yrs at ARAMCO currently with JES Oman. Available immediately. Contact: 98525863 Email: ijackcs@gmail.com

DRIVER

Looking for driving job with 15 yrs experience. Contact: 78037801

Looking for driving job have car. Contact: 98586920

Looking for driving job. Contact: +968 99532361

Looking for driving job with 2 yrs experience. Contact: 97995898

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Msc Chemistry graduate, Indian female, looking for jobs in Oman. Preferably in Sohar. Contact: 77198123, Email: deenafrancis75@gmail.com,

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Indian female, completed MCA and also having experience in teaching, available in Oman on family visa, looking for a suitable job. Contact: 79090343/94117967, Email: induchandran01@gmail.com

Chemistry teacher with 7 yrs experience of teaching IGCSE chemistry (Pakistani). Currently in Oman. Contact: +968 78684306

ENGINEER

Experienced Biomedical Engineers seeking opportunities in Oman. Presently in Oman & available for immediate joining. Email: asmathalipvl@gmail.com Contact: +968 72031225

Indian male with 10 yrs. Experience in Oman, have 3 yrs Electrical diploma, General maintenance, valid Oman D/L. Contact: 93220672

Diploma in Electrical Engineering looking for Fire Fighting site supervisor/suitable job. Contact: 95933453, Email: haquefaizan3786@gmail.com

Indian male (Mechanical Engineer) with Oman experience in Oil & Gas, BDM, procurement, logistic, inventory management & operations. Ready to join immediately. NOC & D/L available. Contact: 99189094, Email: ben.sdbmct@gmail.com

E & I Engineer 6 yrs exp in Oman in oil & gas construction , testing & commissioning. OQ approved QC inspector & PTWH. Looking for job Contact: 94971464

BE Civil Engineer (15+ yrs in procurement) seeking placement as Senior procurement manager, AGM, DGM procurement. Currently senior procurement manager in a reputed Oman-based construction company having skills to drive strategic sourcing initiatives and optimize procurement processes effectively. Contact: 77250106.

Bsc in civil engineer, looking suitable position,having 10 yrs experience in Oman and D/L. Contact: 93326947, Email: emsa5054@gmail.com

Civil engineer supervisor, 14 yrs experience civil & tower project with D/L & own visa. Contact: 78002980

BE Project engineer 12-13 yrs experience. Contact: 93850875, Email: abdulcivilco2015@gmail.com

Mechanical engineer with over 4 yrs experience in sales and operations having Oman D/L with MSc in Engineering management from UK available to join immediately. Contact: 96111283, Email: dobin.mathew@gmail.com.

BE Project engineer 12-13 yrs experience. Contact: 93850875, Email: abdulcivilco2015@gmail.com

B-Tech Civil Engineer with total 16yrs GCC experience include 11 yrs Oman experience, project manager job seeking. Contact: 97733497

IT

Indian male, data scientist & BSC computer science graduate,looking for job. Contact: 78026010, Email: vivekkrishnan2233@gmail.com

Female, software Engineer, full stack developer also expert in digital marketing with 5 yrs experience. Contact: 78462153.

LOGISTIC

Indian male, 22 yrs, BBA in Aviation & logistic management seeking for opportunities in logistic, management or administrative, sales, marketing or any suitable position. Contact: 79487865 Email: Official.abdulrazizq@gmail.com

Looking for a job (Indian male) Store keeper,documents controller,procurement Experience 6+yrs in GCC, (ERP system).Valid Qatar D/L Ready to join immediately>Contact+968-79366717 Email: sshahidmj@gmail.com

Indian male, 37 yrs , With 12 yrs experience in the Logistic and warehousing field in Oman, with D/L. looking for senior position. Contact: 97254050

Indian male, storekeeper, document controller 2+ yrs of experience in GCC, completed BCA ,ready to join immediately. Contact: +968 71818173, Email: swamierezhasouth@gmail.com

Sudanese Supply chain professional with CSCP certificate, MBA and 10 yrs experience in supply chain, logistics, procurement and project management. Contact: 95272472. Email: kemeir@hotmail.com

MECHANICAL/ TECHNICAL

Production supervisor in printing press with 7 yrs experience in Dubai seeks job. Contact: +968 79896168, Email: anvinsildon99@gmail.com

MANAGER

Finance manager with 15 yrs of experience in oil & gas multinational company looking for suitable placement. Contact: 95230609

Indian male, MBA. 12 yrs of experience as (branch Manager & key accounts executive) looking for suitable position. Contact : 98132055

MEDICAL

General practitioner doctor male with MOH licence, 30 yrs experience seeks locum or permanent job. Contact: 78559363

PROCUREMENT/ PURCHASE

Procurement officer, 15 yrs experience in construction, oil & gas & MEP materials looking for placement. D/L & local release available. ready to join immediately. Contact: 79563830. Email: rayancriston@gmail.com

27 yrs experience in Oman, Indian, looking for a manager position in purchase, sales, holding valid Omani D/L. Contact: 94338072 / 78177167.

Procurement engineer, Sudanese, 10yrs experience in Oman,MEP, firefighting, projects, D/L. Contact: 79027138 .

SALES/MARKETING

Indian, MBA, 20 yrs of experience in Sales. Previously held supervisory, managerial position with. D/L seeks suitable placement. Contact: 95548480

Sales & marketing manager, Indian MBA 25 yrs of experience in Oman in FMCG, consumer durables. Strong relationships with major retailers across the country. Seeking a suitable position. Contact: 93340457

Highly experienced Sales & Mktg professional is looking for a vacancy in Muscat, Sohar or UAE. Indian national, having D/L and NOC. Contact: 78501743

Experienced Sales and marketing manager is available for immediate placement. Indian, having DL and NOC. Contact: 78501743

Indian male with 14 yrs of sales & marketing experience. looking for suitable job with valid D/L. Contact: 95136784

Indian male, Sales executive (MBA in Marketing) with 10 yrs of experience in FMCG & automobile with strong communication skills, holding valid Oman. D/L. Contact: 92350798

Indian male MBA graduated specialized with Marketing & HR (fresher) . Looking for suitable positions . Currently in Muscat Oman. Contact: +968 71084371, Email: ccrashid9@gmail.com

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EARTH'S INNER CORE MAY HAVE CHANGED SHAPE, SAY SCIENTISTS

The change in shape could be happening where the edge of the solid inner core touches the extremely hot liquid metal outer core

The inner core of Earth may have changed shape in the past 20 years, according to a group of scientists.

The inner core is usually thought to be shaped like a ball, but its edges may actually have deformed by 100m or more in height in places, according to Prof John Vidale who led the research.

Earth's core is the beating heart of our planet as it produces a magnetic field that protects life from burning up in the Sun's radiation.

The inner core spins independently from the liquid outer core

and from the rest of the planet. Without this motion, Earth would die and become more like barren Mars which lost its magnetic field billions of years ago.

The change in shape could be happening where the edge of the solid inner core touches the extremely hot liquid metal outer core.

The research is published in the scientific journal Nature Geoscience. The scientists were originally trying to find out why the inner core may have slowed down to a slower pace than Earth's rotation before speeding back up again in 2010.

Understanding how the Earth's core works is essential to understanding the magnetic field that protects the planet, and whether that could weaken or stop.

The inside of our planet is an extremely mysterious place. The core is about 4,000 miles from the Earth's surface and, despite best efforts, scientists have so far been unable to reach it, BBC Earth reported.

So, to try to unlock its secrets, some researchers measure the shockwaves caused by earthquakes as they ripple through the planet.

The way the waves travel reveals

what type of material they moved through, including in the inner core, and help to paint a picture of what lies beneath our feet.

The new analysis looked at seismic wave patterns from earthquakes that repeated in the same location between 1991 and 2023. That helped to show how the inner core is changing over time.

Prof Vidale, an earth scientist at the University of Southern California, found more evidence to back up the theory that during those years the inner core slowed down around 2010. But his team also found evidence of the inner

core's changing shape.

It appears to be happening at the boundary of the inner and outer core, where the inner core is close to melting point. The liquid flow of the outer core as well as pull from an uneven gravity field may cause deformation.

Prof Hrvoje Tkalčić from Australian National University, who was not involved in the study, said the paper provides "an interesting concept that should be explored further".

He said it could allow scientists "to make more informed estimates of some important material prop-

erties, such as the viscosity of the inner core, which is one of the least known quantities in modern science".

Over time, the liquid outer core is freezing into the solid inner core, but it will be billions of years before it becomes completely solid.

It would almost certainly mean the end of life on Earth, but by then the planet is already likely to have been swallowed by the Sun.

Prof Vidale's work is part of investigations by experts around the world exploring and arguing over what happens in the core. - **ONA**

SPORTS

Brighton dominant in win against Chelsea, move to eighth in table

Japanese striker Mitoma scored a brilliant opener as Seagulls climb to eighth in Premier League table

LONDON: Kaoru Mitoma scored a superb opener as Brighton loosened Chelsea's grip on a place in the top four of the Premier League with their second victory (3-0) over the Blues inside a week.

The result means the Seagulls, who also knocked Enzo Maresca's side out of the FA Cup last Saturday, move up to eighth in the table, four points adrift of Manchester City in fifth.

City, Newcastle and Bournemouth, who all have a game in hand, have the opportunity to leapfrog Chelsea if they win their next match.

Japan forward Mitoma set the hosts on their way, superbly controlling goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen's long pass forward with a delicate touch, before cutting inside Trevoh Chalobah and curling a low effort past Filip Jorgensen into the right corner of the Chelsea net.

From that point on the result rarely looked in doubt as Brighton deservedly recorded their first home league win since 9 November.

Yankuba Minteh added their



second before the break with a low close-range effort after some excellent work from the impressive attacking duo of Danny Welbeck and Georginio Rutter.

While Chelsea controlled possession for long periods, they struggled to fashion many clear-cut opportunities against Fabian Hurlzeler's side aside from an early Cole Palmer effort that flashed wide and an Enzo Fernandez header that was disallowed for a push on home defender Joel Veltman.

Gambia forward Minteh round-

ed off the scoring for Brighton just after the hour mark, with Chelsea, who looked shaky in defence all evening, exposed down their left as the winger drove a low effort past Jorgensen at his near post.

Brighton came into this contest looking to avoid a third consecutive league defeat and the way they celebrated with their fans at the final whistle suggests that the humiliating 7-0 loss at Nottingham Forest has been quickly cast aside.

They were sharp in and out of possession and had a focal point up

front unlike Chelsea, with Nicolas Jackson's absence keenly felt as the visitors failed to muster a shot on target despite attempting 717 passes to Brighton's 320.

The hosts also showed greater intensity to win the ball back in key areas with Chalobah's rushed clearance contributing to their second goal, and Welbeck pressuring Levi Colwill into a mistake for the third.

While Chelsea were only narrowly beaten in the FA Cup, this was a far more humbling experience, with Veltman threatening to



add to their miserable trip to the south coast late on, when he hit the post.

On this evidence there are plenty of issues for Maresca to address, with the Italian labelling his team's display as their "worst" since he took the helm last summer.

"The performance is not one you want to offer so we are very upset and sorry for the fans that were here," Maresca said.

"They are completely right to be upset, especially in this moment of the season. To come here and play in the way we played, not on the

ball, in terms of desire, we probably need to show more."

Noni Madueke limped off early on to add to Chelsea's growing injury woes and Palmer, whose sparkling form has helped carry the club into a position to compete for a Champions League place, appeared out of sorts.

Marc Cucurella looked vulnerable down their left, with Madueke's replacement Jadon Sancho struggling to make any impact and the defensive errors that have underpinned their season were again evident to see. -Agencies

MERSEYSIDE DERBY

Everton, Liverpool and Slot charged after derby melee

LONDON: Everton, Liverpool and Arne Slot have been charged by the Football Association after the chaotic scenes at the end of Wednesday's Merseyside derby at Goodison Park.

The clubs have been charged with failing to ensure their players "did not behave in an improper and/or provocative way" after the final whistle.

Liverpool head coach Slot is charged with having acted "in an improper manner and/or used insulting and/or abusive words and/or behaviour" towards referee Michael Oliver and one of his assistants, which led to the Dutchman being red-carded.

Slot's assistant Sipke Hulshoff, who was also sent off, faces a similar charge for his behaviour both before and after he was dismissed.

The clubs, Slot and Hulshoff



have until Wednesday, 19 February to respond to the charges.

The late chaos began after James Tarkowski scored a dramatic 98th-minute equaliser for Everton, which was awarded after a video assistant referee (VAR) check.

Liverpool were adamant the goal should have been disallowed

because of a shove by Toffees striker Beto on Reds defender Ibrahim Konate in the build-up.

Everton midfielder Abdoulaye Doucoure celebrated in front of the Liverpool fans at the final whistle before being confronted by Reds midfielder Curtis Jones, with both players sent off for second yellow-card offences. -Agencies

MANCHESTER CITY DEFENDER

Akanji to undergo surgery and miss up to 10 weeks

LONDON: Manchester City defender Manuel Akanji will require surgery on a thigh injury and is expected to be absent for up to 10 weeks.

Switzerland international Akanji, 29, sustained the injury in Tuesday's 3-2 Champions League knockout phase play-off defeat by Real Madrid at Etihad Stadium.

10 weeks out

"He has surgery on Saturday. Eight to 10 weeks out," manager Pep Guardiola said on Friday.

The groin injury suffered by Jack Grealish in the same first-leg match is less serious. However, Guardiola said he does not think the England international will be available for Saturday's Premier League home game against Newcastle United.

On Grealish, Guardiola said: "It's not as tough as what Manu [Akanji] has done, but I



don't know if he will be ready tomorrow.

"I don't think so, but we will assess him."

Akanji has started 20 of City's 24 Premier League games this season, among 30 appearances across all competitions.

City, who lost key defensive midfielder Rodri when he ruptured his anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in September, are fifth in the Premier League - with last season's champions 16 points adrift of leaders Liverpool.

Akanji's injury comes after fellow defenders John Stones, Nathan Ake and Ruben Dias only recently returned from absences.

"We only wish the best recovery for Manu [Akanji]. The effort he has done this season has been unbelievable," Guardiola said.

"Him and Nathan [Ake] have played in difficult conditions. Help the team in [an] emergency. Helped in right-back.

"In the end the body said enough is enough." -Agencies

WILLIAMS DRIVERS

Don't ban Formula 1 drivers for swearing: Sainz and Albon

LONDON: Williams drivers Carlos Sainz and Alex Albon have said it is wrong to threaten Formula 1 drivers with bans for swearing.

Sainz, who has moved to Williams from Ferrari, said he did not agree with the move by governing body the FIA to codify a system that can mean drivers are fined or suspended for swearing or criticising officials.

Albon, who is entering his fourth season with the team, added that the drivers had already spoken privately about how to respond to the move.

"There have definitely been discussions about it," Albon said. "It's still ongoing about how we want to set out what we say around it. It is a delicate matter and, of course, do we think it's right? Of course not."

Speaking at the launch of the new Williams F1 car, Sainz said he felt drivers should be able to control themselves sufficiently not to swear in news conferences and other public forums, but that in the car it was a different matter.

Sainz said: "What we say on the [car] radio, I don't agree with what is happening. I think you can not be too tough on these kinds of

things because you cannot understand the pressure and adrenaline and the way we feel in the car when we open the radio.

"And I feel for F1 it is good to have those moments because you see the real driver.

"We are already very constrained as F1 drivers to what we can tell you about our teams, about out situations. We already have a lot of media briefings. They already tell us what to say on the radio.

"But when you hear that passion, those words, even if sometimes we swear on the radio, for me that's a keeper in F1 and it is something we shouldn't get rid of."

The FIA has not explained how the new system will be applied, but last year president Mohammed Ben Sulayem said he wanted to stop drivers swearing while driving.

Sainz said the drivers have not had any clarification from the FIA.

He and Albon both drove Williams' new 2025 car as it was unveiled at Silverstone on Friday.

Sainz explained that his first impressions were "positive", and he said Williams' willingness to host a day for media and sponsors and



give the car its debut at the same time was indicative of the progress the team had made.

Last year, the team struggled at the start of the season as attempts to introduce new processes in the team delayed the car build. A

crash-strewn 2024 season has also impacted the team financially.

Sainz, whose seat at Ferrari was taken by Lewis Hamilton, said he wanted Williams to continue to show progress in 2025 as they build towards the new regulations

that will be introduced in F1 in 2026.

"It is important to keep the momentum up, keep the positive trend, the forward trajectory," Sainz said.

"And if we manage to keep that momentum going and riding the wave in a way, that for me is the most important because Williams' big opportunity comes more in '26 than '25."

Sainz shrugged off a question as to how he would feel when he sees Hamilton in a Ferrari for the first time by saying he had "been through that already" after seeing the seven-time champion's appearance at the Ferrari factory last month.

Spaniard Sainz won four grands prix for Ferrari in his four years with the team and said he was not sure how he would feel about his inevitable fall down the field.

"I don't know how much I am going to miss it, how much fun I am going to find it fighting for P7-P15," Sainz said. "Maybe you need to ask me later in the year how I am finding it.

"But what I can tell you is I'm very happy and motivated, I am ex-

cited, I feel supported. I feel a team full of good, positive energy and a team principal and team that fully trusts in my abilities and wants to listen to what I have to say and I have confidence in my ability to move forward."

Team boss James Vowles said the car was an "evolution" of last year's model but that the team's prime focus this year was to ensure it was best prepared for 2026, when new engine and chassis rules come on stream together for the first time in F1's modern era.

"Everyone is aligned, and that includes Carlos and Alex, that we want to be winning championships and for that we can't keep giving a little bit towards now because it looks better," Vowles said.

"If you put your focus on the following year you miss out on that long-term evolution. There are bits we're doing today that won't come on line until 2027."

"The fact we've gone from 700 people to 1,000 means you'll have low-hanging fruit of producing a better car with more performance added to it, but I consider that second to the long-term investment to get us where we need to be." -Agencies

IN PICTURES



Oil-paper umbrella making in Fenshuiling, China's Sichuan
Bi Liufu checks the quality of an oil-paper umbrella in Fenshuiling Town of Luzhou City, southwest China's Sichuan Province. *xinhua*



75th Berlin International Film Festival held in Germany
Cast members of feature film The Light pose for a group photo at the red carpet for the opening ceremony of the 75th Berlin International Film Festival in Berlin, Germany. *xinhua*



African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
This picture shows the buildings of the African Union (AU) Headquarters in Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia. *xinhua*



Bangladeshi people celebrate Pohela Falgun
Women attend the celebration of the Pohela Falgun in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Bangladeshi people Pohela Falgun, heralding the arrival of spring. *Xinhua*



Job fair held in Yinchuan, China's Ningxia
Job seekers attend a job fair held in Yinchuan, northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. The job fair kicked off here on Saturday. Over 200 enterprises from a variety of industries such as new energy, biotechnology, and e-commerce provide more than 4,000 openings to job seekers. *xinhua*



38th AU summit opens in Addis Ababa, focuses on justice, leadership elections
This picture shows the venue of the 38th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Assembly of the Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The summit, themed "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations", opened at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. *Xinhua*

ROUND-UP

BYD Qin Plus Plug-in Hybrid: Bold, futuristic and exciting sedan

It is set to redefine the driving experience, offering an unparalleled combination of performance, cost-effectiveness and sustainability

MUSCAT: The BYD Qin Plus Plug-in Hybrid Sedan, is a revolutionary blend of advanced hybrid technology, exceptional fuel efficiency and cutting-edge design. It is set to redefine the driving experience, offering an unparalleled combination of performance, cost-effectiveness and sustainability. At the heart of the Qin Plus is BYD's ground-breaking DM-i Super Hybrid System, designed to maximise fuel efficiency without compromising power. The intelligent hybrid system optimally balances electric and fuel-driven



power, allowing the sedan to achieve exceptional fuel economy as low as 3.8L/100km under standard driving conditions. This means fewer trips to the fuel station, lower running costs and a significantly reduced carbon footprint. The BYD Qin Plus is powered by a highly efficient 1.5L engine combined with an EHS electric motor, providing swift acceleration and seamless power delivery. Drivers

can experience instant torque, a smooth ride and enhanced handling, making every journey comfortable and exhilarating. With an electric-only range of up to 110 km (depending on the variant), the Qin Plus allows for zero-emission city commuting, while the hybrid mode extends total range capability, making it an ideal choice for long-distance travel. Owning the Qin Plus translates

to substantial savings on fuel and maintenance. Thanks to its advanced battery technology and energy regeneration system, the vehicle ensures reduced wear and tear on components like brakes and the engine. With lower fuel consumption, minimal maintenance costs and government incentives for hybrid vehicles, the Qin Plus stands out as a financially sound investment.

Designed to impress, the Qin Plus boasts an aerodynamic exterior with bold contours and a modern aesthetic, ensuring a striking presence on the road. The spacious and technology-rich cabin features an intuitive rotating touchscreen, intelligent voice command system and a digital cockpit, ensuring that connectivity and convenience are always within reach. Additionally, the Qin Plus is

equipped with BYD's advanced infotainment system, providing seamless smartphone integration, navigation and entertainment, all at the driver's fingertips. BYD prioritises safety and the Qin Plus is no exception. The sedan is equipped with a suite of intelligent safety features, including Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB), Lane Departure Warning (LDW) and Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC). Reinforced with a high-strength body structure, the Qin Plus ensures maximum protection for drivers and passengers alike. The Qin Plus stands out from the competition with its superior fuel efficiency, dynamic hybrid performance and cost-effective ownership. Whether for city commuting or long-distance driving, the Qin Plus delivers an unmatched driving experience that blends innovation with sustainability. With a rapidly expanding network of BYD showrooms and service centres, customers can expect seamless after-sales support and a worry-free ownership experience. Customers are invited to experience the Qin Plus Plug-in Hybrid at the BYD showrooms at Watayah, Al Mouj and Mall of Oman. In Oman, BYD vehicles are distributed by World Auto Business.

BRIEFS IS Muladha hosts first foundational sports fest



MUSCAT: Indian School Muladha organised its First Foundational Sports Fest on 6 February with immense enthusiasm and grandeur on the lush green grounds of the school campus. The event was attended by Chief Guest, Nasir Lamine, a distinguished Ghana National Team Player who represented Ghana in the 2004 Athens Olympics. His esteemed presence added prestige to the occasion. The highlight of the event was the spectacular Walk Past by the enthusiastic students of Class 2.

KG Sports Day at ISAM



MUSCAT: ISAM celebrated its annual Sports Day on 13 February where the mantra "True strength is not in winning every game but in never giving up on yourself" truly resonated. The event showcased not only athletic talent but also teamwork, perseverance, and the values of sportsmanship. The Chief Guest for the day was Dr. Atoom Al Khatri, Deputy Director, Human Sciences Curriculum Development of Foreign Languages and members of the School Management Committee (SMC), along with supportive parents who were in attendance to witness this momentous occasion.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Oman Air sponsors 22nd WTW Aviation Conference in Oman

MUSCAT: Oman Air sponsored the WTW Aviation Conference which wrapped up at the Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah. The 22nd annual conference and, with over 400 delegates, the largest one yet, was officially opened by Eng. Saeed Al Mawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and Chairman of Oman Air, who delivered a keynote speech. Con Korfiatis, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Air, joined a distinguished line-up of global aviation leaders, participating in a high-profile 'Fireside Chat' alongside several other senior airline executives from around the world. Con Korfiatis said, "We're delighted to host such a prestigious global event at our hub in Muscat. This year's WTW Aviation Conference places Oman at the heart of some of the industry's most critical discussions, underscoring the country's growing influence in the global aviation sector and its strategic position as a regional hub for air travel. It also provided a valuable opportunity to showcase Oman's aviation capabilities, infrastructure and investment potential to key global stakeholders."



James Coventry, Managing Director of Global Aviation and Space, added, "We at Willis, a WTW business, were truly honoured by the presence of His Excellency Eng. Saeed bin Hamoud bin Saeed Al Mawali, along with Con Korfiatis, as hosts for our Conference. For the first time in its history, we moved this event from Asia, which resulted in the largest-ever attendance with over 400 delegates and 45 airlines from around the world. Bringing the aviation community together to discuss the risks and opportunities of the

future is a critical element of our industry, and being able to create this engagement in the beautiful surroundings of Oman has certainly attracted more interest than we could have ever dreamed of." The WTW Aviation Conference is one of the most significant gatherings in the global aviation industry, bringing together airline executives, insurers, regulators, and key stakeholders to debate the breadth of risks facing the sector now and in the future. Organised by Willis Towers Watson (WTW), the conference serves as a vital

platform for industry leaders from around the world to discuss evolving risks facing the sector including geopolitical and cyber risks, data security, operational challenges, safety and analytics. Oman Air continues to play a pivotal role in advancing the country's aviation sector, firmly establishing it as a key player in global dialogue. Meanwhile, the airline remains a driving force in enhancing connectivity, promoting tourism and contributing to national economic diversification, in line with Oman's 2040 Vision.

ACADEMICS

IS Al Maabela organises graduation ceremony

MUSCAT: Indian School Al Maabela (ISAM) hosted its prestigious Graduation Ceremony 2024-25 with great joy and pride, marking the successful completion of the academic journey for Class 12 students on 6 February. The ceremony was a grand occasion, celebrating the hard work and achievements of the graduating batch, as they prepare to embark on new chapters in their lives. Ahmed Faisal Al Jahdhami, Secretary General of Oman Golf

Association, Former Director of marketing with ministry of sports & youth affairs, Oman, was the chief guest of the day with other guests including Syed Salman, Vice Chairman of The Board of Directors of Indian Schools in Oman, and key members of the School Management Committee, along with supportive parents who were in attendance to witness this momentous occasion. A highlight of the ceremony was the Blessing and Oath Taking Ceremony.



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