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H M to visit Spain

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik will set off on a state visit to the Kingdom of Spain this Tuesday.

Diwan of Royal Court issued a statement to this effect reading as follows:

'In a reflection of the ties and friendship between the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Spain, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik will go on a state visit to Spain from May 20 to 22.

'The visit, which is in response to an invitation received by His Majesty from King Felipe VI of Spain, aims to boost relations and cooperation between the two countries and push these towards wider horizons.

'His Majesty's visit to Spain is within the context of elevating cooperation between the two countries in various spheres to serve joint interests and meet their current and future aspirations. It will also address regional and international developments.'

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Making a style statement with Studio Omana

Shura, Council of Ministers pledge closer coordination

Muscat - The Council of Ministers and Majlis A'Shura held a joint meeting on Sunday to enhance cooperation and align efforts in implementing public policies in line with the Basic Law of the State and Council of Oman Law.

Chaired by H H Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Council of Ministers, the meeting was attended by members of the council, H E Khalid bin Hilal al Maawali, Chairman of shura, and senior shura members.

H H Sayyid Fahd highlighted the importance of coordination between the shura and the government in supporting Oman's comprehensive development efforts. He emphasised the need for ongoing collaboration to ensure the efficient delivery of public services and address the evolving needs of citizens.

The meeting also underscored the Council of Ministers' commitment to engaging with the shura as a partner in the nation-building process. It noted that serving ministers regularly respond to shura requests to provide ministerial statements detailing government projects and initiatives. Proposals and opinions of shura members are



H H Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud al Said and H E Khalid bin Hilal al Maawali on Sunday (ONA)

studied and incorporated into economic and social plans and programmes.

Discussions during the meeting included proposals for improving community awareness programmes and enhancing the role of the Coordination Committee, which acts as a bridge between the council and the shura.

The chairman and members of the shura office appreciated the joint meeting, describing it as a vital step towards reinforcing collaboration. They acknowledged the government's ongoing support and pledged to enhance their efforts in the next phase of Oman's development.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to further enhance coordination to preserve the gains made so far and to ensure sustained progress in the coming years.

Oman unveils policy for safe, ethical use of AI

Our Correspondent Muscat

Oman has presented a document - Public Policy for the Safe and Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence Systems - setting a comprehensive regulatory framework for responsible development and deployment of AI technologies.

Announced by Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT), the policy aims to ensure the secure and ethical use of AI while fostering innovation and enhancing the sultanate's global competitiveness.

In a statement, the ministry said the policy integrates technical safeguards and ethical guidelines to build public trust in AI systems. It applies to all government entities and private sector institutions regulated by relevant authorities that develop or use AI technologies.

The policy covers critical areas, including systems security, ethical compliance, transparency in AI decision-making and robust data privacy protection. It also outlines legal responsibilities of stakeholders involved in AI development and deployment, and promotes fairness by guarding against bias and discrimination. Additionally, it encourages sustainable innovation that benefits society and the environment.

In parallel, MTCIT is advancing a national programme aimed at positioning the digital economy as a key driver of economic growth and competitiveness. This initiative seeks to attract foreign investment, expand digital industries and localise cutting-edge technologies in Oman.

As part of this effort, the ministry has secured several high-impact ICT projects that contribute to economic diversification and generate employment for Omani professionals and opportunities for startups.

H E Dr Ali bin Amer al Shidhani, Undersecretary in MTCIT, announced that Dhofar now hosts multiple data centre projects, representing foreign investments of up to RO80mn. These centres focus on data processing, blockchain technologies and cryptocurrency mining - areas aligned with Oman's broader digital transformation goals. The projects have led to over 25 contracts of value exceeding RO22mn being awarded to local companies.

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TIME TO SHINE, IT'S SUMMER TIME

As the mercury rises, residents look for creative ways to beat the heat. While the searing sun keeps most people indoors during the day, the evenings often spark a desire to venture out. This has raised the question: Does Oman need more summer-friendly recreational options? If so, what kind of activities would keep people active and engaged without compromising comfort? Here's what *Muscat Daily* readers said -



Maryam al Balushi
Student

The heat keeps us indoors most of the day, but evenings stir a restlessness. We need more shaded parks, indoor botanical gardens and climate-controlled walking spaces. An open-air cinema with mist fans could be a hit.

Our lifestyle is changing and we need recreational options that let us stay active and social without risking heat exhaustion.

Anjali Menon
Private sector employee

The heat can be quite stifling, espe-

cially for children. More air-conditioned educational zones, like discovery centres or creative workshops, could really help. Evening storytelling sessions in shaded areas and musical nights in malls would also work. I think Oman has the space and charm - now we just need the right climate-conscious creativity to make it enjoyable.

Huda al Riyami
Homemaker

Summers in Oman are challenging with children at home. We need more indoor family zones - like trampoline parks, swimming pools or storytelling libraries. Evening bazaars with safe, shaded play areas would encourage

families to go out. I'd love to see more interactive science or art hubs where children can learn new things.

Salim al Habsi
Engineer

Oman has great potential for summer-friendly recreation. We could intro-

duce indoor sports arenas, cultural centres or late-night art exhibitions. Activities after sunset would be most suitable - like shaded waterfronts with food trucks or light shows. The key is to adapt to our climate while offering meaningful engagement, especially for youth who otherwise stay glued to screens all summer.

Rashid al Balushi
SME business owner

Absolutely! We tend to stay indoors, but people still crave fresh air. Summer-friendly activities like night-time hiking, rooftop cafés with cooling systems and community fitness events after dark would help. More events near water bodies, like beach yoga at dawn or evening kayak races, can combine nature with comfort.

Rahul Verma
IT professional

We feel confined during the day, especially on weekends. There's definitely a need for more summer budget-friendly spaces. Indoor climbing walls, VR stalls and bowling alleys could attract young adults. For families, weekend indoor food markets or film marathons would be fun.

 **NEXT ON YOUR SAY**

Muscat Municipality is planning to redevelop Qurum Beach and Qurum Park to transform these iconic areas into sustainable and community-centric spaces. What changes/amenities would you like in these places?

The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by *Muscat Daily*. If you feel strongly about the issues discussed here, you can email your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om You can also log on to our Facebook page or tweet us your comments on the issue.

SEND YOUR COMMENTS

Share your comments in not more than 50 words along with your full name and profession before next Sunday, 10am, via WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram or muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om

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MoL launches campaign on dangers of heat stress for outdoor workers

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Represented by its Occupational Safety and Health Department, Ministry of Labour (MoL) has launched its annual 'Safe Summer' campaign to raise awareness on the dangers of heat stress and promote preventive measures for outdoor workers.

The campaign aims to educate both employers and employees on the health risks posed by high temperatures during the summer months. It also emphasises compliance with the midday work ban, which prohibits outdoor work between 12.30pm and 3.30pm in June, July and August.



In line with Article 16, Clause 2 of the Occupational Safety and Health Regulations, MoL has reiterated that no work should be carried out at construction sites or in areas directly exposed to sunlight during these hours.

The ministry urged all private sector establishments to cooperate with safety regulations, stating that the campaign is part of its broader efforts to ensure safe working environments and reduce incidents of heat-related illness and injury.

MoSD's 'Skills without Barriers' to empower persons with disabilities

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) launched a two-day forum - Skills without Barriers - on Sunday as part of its ongoing efforts to support people with disabilities. It aims to promote vocational integration and targets school and university students, as well as firms employing or training individuals with disabilities.

An MoSD official stated that the forum seeks to enhance collaboration between rehabilitation centres, educational institutions, and employers to create training opportunities and a more inclusive work environment. It also aims to showcase the talent and capabilities of persons with disabilities, foster their professional and social integration, and develop their practical skills through interactive workshops.



"Skills without Barriers is designed to provide a supportive platform for creativity, knowledge-sharing and skill-building," the official said.

The opening day featured a series of hands-on workshops, including leatherwork, hand-weaving and various traditional crafts. An exhibition running alongside the forum is showcasing products made by disabled individuals, alongside awareness sessions being conducted for participants and visitors.

Activities will continue on Monday, with workshops on carpentry and woodwork design, agriculture and landscaping, metalwork, and paper recycling.

According to the latest data released by National Centre for Statistics and Information, 69,000 persons with disabilities were registered in the sultanate in September 2024.

Air connectivity boosted with new flights

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and Oman Airports have approved new international flight routes this month as part of efforts to boost air traffic and attract more tourists to the sultanate.

In a statement, CAA confirmed that it has granted Red Wings Airlines approval to operate a weekly flight between Muscat and the Russian resort city of Sochi, starting from June 22.

Oman Airports welcomed the move, describing it as a strategic step to attract international car-



riers, expand its network of global destinations, and support both economic and tourism growth.

'We extend our sincere thanks to CAA for issuing the

necessary permits for the operation of Russian airline Red Wings,' Oman Airports said. 'The addition to our network is a significant milestone that enhances air connectivity and



opens new avenues for international cooperation.'

In a separate announcement, Oman Airports also confirmed the launch of a new route by Indian low-cost carrier IndiGo,

which has commenced direct flights between Kannur in Kerala, India, and Muscat. The new service, launched last week, will operate three times a week, offering more travel options for

passengers and strengthening connections between Oman and the southern Indian state.

The launch of these new routes aligns with Oman Airports' broader strategy to boost economic and tourism activity by promoting direct international connections.

Airports in Oman reported an 8.5% fall in passenger numbers in March 2025, with 3.54mn passengers passing through the country's terminals, down from 3.84mn in March 2024.

Muscat International Airport remains the main driver, with 3.18mn passenger passing through it till March this year.

Indian firm to train 80 engineers in semiconductor industry push

Muscat - Oman has signed a strategic collaboration programme with India's Kaynes Semicon to establish a company specialising in very-large-scale integrated (VLSI) circuit design, as part of its broader push to position itself as a regional hub for advanced technologies.

The agreement, facilitated by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT) and the Ministry of Labour, aims to promote semiconductor design innovation and develop local expertise in the sector.

Under the programme, Kaynes Semicon will run a 12-month qualification programme, funded by the Ministry of Labour, to train 80 Omani engineers in semiconductor design techniques. This initiative is expected to equip local engineers with specialised skills, aligning them with global industry standards and preparing them for the evolving demands of the digital economy.

The partnership is part of MTCIT's National Programme for Digital Economy, which seeks to attract international technology projects, localise critical technologies. It also aims to strengthen Oman's digital infrastructure and enhance the semiconductor ecosystem. The agreement was signed by H E Dr Ali Amer al Shidhani, Undersecretary for Communications and Information Technology in MTCIT; H E Salim Musallam al Busaidi, Undersecretary for Human Resources at the Ministry of Labour; and Raju Panicker, CEO of Kaynes Semicon.



Manah hosts global museum conference to boost tourism

Our Correspondent
Manah

The Oman Across Ages Museum, in collaboration with the National Records and Archives Authority (NRAA) and the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, inaugurated the international conference 'Museums and Their Role in Tourism Development' on Sunday at its premises in Manah, Dakhliyah.

Held under the patronage of H E Salim bin Mohammed al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism, the three-day conference has brought together over 42 researchers, academics, and experts from 21 countries. The event aims to highlight the role of museums in driving tourism, preserving cultural identity, and fostering investment in the cultural economy. It also seeks to explore how academic partnerships and digital technologies can enhance the visitor experience and position muse-

ums as vibrant educational and cultural hubs.

Dr Hamad bin Mohammed al Dhuyani, Chairman of NRAA, said the conference aims to establish strategic partnerships between public and private institutions in Oman's museum sector. "This event promotes international collaboration through peer-reviewed scientific papers and paves the way for future conferences that will highlight integrated work across the cultural, scientific, and intellectual domains," he said. An exhibition showcasing the role of Omani museum institutions is also being held alongside the conference.

Eng Al Yaqzan bin Abdullah al Harthy, Director General of the Oman Across Ages Museum, noted that museums today are key players in sustainable development. "They serve as mirrors of national identity, promote intercultural dialogue, and contribute significantly to the creative economy by making his-

tory an immersive and interactive experience," he said.

The conference features six specialised workshops covering critical topics, including digital technologies, museum management, community engagement, and the development of cultural content. These sessions aim to facilitate both intellectual exchange and practical learning.

The agenda addresses several key themes, including the role of museums in tourism, the impact of archaeological missions, legislation protecting national heritage, and the involvement of international organisations. Discussions will also focus on how museums contribute to economic growth, resource management, tourism promotion, and sustainable investment.

Additionally, the conference will explore the cultural and educational functions of museums, their collaboration with educational institutions and support for scientific research.

Dhofar Municipality warns against unlicensed events during khareef

Our Correspondent
Dhofar

With the much-anticipated khareef season approaching, Dhofar Municipality has issued a public advisory urging residents and visitors to exercise caution when responding to advertisements for commercial events, activities, and trade fairs.

The warning follows a surge in promotional campaigns by companies and establishments - some of which may be operating without official licenses.

As part of broader efforts to showcase Dhofar's tourism potential, authorities are intensifying infrastructure upgrades and international outreach initiatives. In a recent promotional push, the Omani Embassy in



Kuwait - working in coordination with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism and Dhofar Municipality - hosted a press conference to highlight Dhofar's rich tourism offerings.

Dhofar Municipality is also implementing a series of infrastructure and urban development projects in partnership

with public and private stakeholders. These include road enhancements and upgrades to key tourist sites, aimed at improving the overall experience for both visitors and residents.

The 2024 khareef season saw over 1mn visitors to Dhofar, marking a 9% increase compared to the previous year.

Recall



2024 (JL) Jeep® Wrangler

Recall Date: 19 May 2025

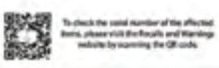
Brand of Commodity	Year of Production	Number of Affected Commodities
2024 (JL) Jeep® Wrangler	2024	23

Recall consequence

The rear fog lamps on about 996 of the above Built-Up Export (BUX) vehicles may have an intermittent electrical connection. The molding process for the fog lamp electrical connector created connector cavities which were too large, leading to a loose connection between the fog lamp and the electrical harness. Improperly functioning rear fog lamps may reduce the visibility of the vehicle to surrounding drivers in certain conditions.

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Bank Name & Account NumberBank Muscat (0423005687760617)

The Conditions:

- Collection of Tenders:** Interested, specialized companies and establishments registered under grade 3 and above (in C.R) with minimum of 3 years' experience in the same field. Bidders can collect the tender documents from the procurement department by sending a copy of the payment slip to procurement@almaha.com.om The tender may be collected on any working day between 08:00 AM – 03:00 PM.
- Bank Guarantee:** The bidder should enclose a bank guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for an amount equivalent to (1%) of the tender value, with a validity of (90) Days from the last date of submission and addressed to Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company SAOG.
- Offer Submission:** Tender bid should be submitted a sealed envelope and addressed to the Chairman of Tender Committee, Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing SAOG marked with tender number and subject. Other marks or any reference must not be printed outside the envelope. The exterior of the envelope containing the tender document must not reveal the identity of the bidder.
- Submission Location:** The bid should be deposited in the tender box at Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing SAOG head office located in Ghala before 01:00 PM on the submission date.
- Any bid received after the specified date or if it does not meet the conditions will not be considered.
- Each bid shall be signed and stamped with the signature of the authorized person.
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BRIEFS

Oil prices post weekly gain on US-China trade truce

Oil prices posted a second consecutive weekly gain as easing trade tensions between the US and China support market sentiment.

The international benchmark Brent crude increased to \$63.99 per barrel on Friday, marking a rise of around 0.38% from previous week's closing price of \$63.75. Similarly, the US benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) stood at \$61.35 per barrel, up approximately 1.05% from previous weekly close of \$60.71.

Prices started the week on a positive note following reports of significant progress in US-China trade negotiations aimed at easing long-standing tariff and economic tensions.

The market responded positively to progress made over the last weekend in Switzerland, where the US and China agreed to temporarily suspend additional tariffs for a 90-day period.

However, concerns about oversupply continue to weigh on the market. On Thursday, both benchmarks fell by more than 2% after a selloff triggered by a surprise build in US crude oil inventories and renewed prospects for an Iranian nuclear deal.

Agreements signed for phase 2 and 3 of ACME's hydrogen project in Duqm

Our Correspondent Muscat

Hydrom, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), and ACME Group on Sunday signed a project development agreement and usufruct agreement for the incorporation of Phase 2 and 3 of ACME's green hydrogen and ammonia project in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD).

The agreements mark the formal onboarding of one of the sultanate's earliest hydrogen initiatives into Hydrom's portfolio, concluding the consolidation of all commercial hydrogen developments under a single national structure.

The agreements were signed by H E Eng Salim bin Nasser al Afi, Minister of Energy and Minerals and Hydrom's Chairman along with H E Sheikh Dr Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidy, Chairman of OPAZ, and Gursharan Jassal, Country Manager for ACME.

The two new phases span a combined area of 80 sqkm and are projected to produce around 71,000 tonnes of green hydrogen and 400,000 tonnes of green ammonia annually per phase. This expansion follows the commencement of construction for ACME's Phase 1 with an



The two new phases span a combined area of 80 sqkm and are projected to produce around 71,000 tonnes of green hydrogen and 400,000 tonnes of green ammonia annually per phase

output of 100,000 tonnes of green ammonia annually. With all phases completed, ACME aims to reach an annual production capacity of 0.9mn tonnes of green ammonia.

Eng Abdulaziz al Shidhani, Managing Director of Hydrom, said, "The formal integration of ACME's project into Hydrom's

framework marks a significant milestone in Oman's green hydrogen journey. This step not only consolidates Oman's early initiatives but also demonstrates our commitment to structured and scalable development. By unifying all major projects under a cohesive national strategy, we are boosting investor confidence

and reaffirming Oman's position as a competitive player in the global green hydrogen market."

The agreements comes as Hydrom advances its third land auction round, highlighting the sustained momentum of Oman's hydrogen strategy. With a complete portfolio now in place and the regulatory, infrastructure and

human capital enablers progressing as planned, the sector is moving forward with the clarity and coordination needed to meet global offtake demand and realize Oman's long-term ambition to become a leading global exporter of green hydrogen.

Gursharan Jassal said, "We are honoured to sign this landmark agreement for the development of the next phase of the green ammonia project in Duqm - a pivotal step in advancing Oman's transition to a sustain-

able energy future. This milestone reflects our shared commitment to achieving Oman Vision 2040 and reinforces the sultanate's growing role in the global green hydrogen economy."

With this signing, Hydrom's awarded portfolio of large-scale green hydrogen projects in the governorates of Al Wusta and Dhofar rises to nine, representing over \$50bn in expected investment commitments and a combined production capacity of nearly 1.5mn tonnes of green hydrogen per annum by 2030. Enabled by nearly 35 GW of renewable energy, these projects are coordinated within a single national framework designed to deliver at scale and aligned with global demand. Through this structured portfolio, Hydrom continues to advance Oman's positioning as one of the most advanced and investment-ready hydrogen ecosystems globally.

As global markets move from hydrogen ambition to action, Oman is delivering a credible platform that enables scale, certainty, and long-term offtake. With legacy developments now integrated, new projects underway, and Round 3 in progress, the Sultanate offers a complete value chain, from resource to infrastructure to export.



Oman extends concession agreement with Occidental for Block 53 until 2050

Our Correspondent Muscat

Oman's Ministry of Energy and Minerals on Sunday signed an agreement with Occidental Oman (Oxy Oman) and its partners to extend the exploration and production sharing agreement for Concession Block 53 in Mukhaizna until 2050.

Oxy Oman's partners in the Mukhaizna field include OQ Exploration and Production, Indian Oil Corporation Liwa, and PTT Exploration and Production.

The agreement was signed under the patronage of H E Salim bin Nasser al Afi, Minister of Energy and Minerals.

The extended agreement provides for continued investment

The extended agreement provides for continued investment totalling approximately \$30bn over the concession period until 2050

totalling approximately \$30bn over the concession period. This includes capital and operational expenditure aimed at improving production efficiency and implementing the latest extraction technologies to maximise utilisation of the region's available resources.

"This strategic step is part of the ministry's efforts to ensure the continued operation of the Mukhaizna field and enhance oil production through the application of advanced steam injection technology and the development of the Thulaylat reservoir," the Ministry of Energy and Minerals said in a press statement.

The Mukhaizna field has served as a successful model of collaboration between operators and has, over the years, led to tangible improvements in production levels - currently recording the highest daily crude oil output among the sultanate's fields.

"These major investments are expected to support the sustainability of the supply chain and as-

sociated operational contracts, which will positively impact economic activity and generate new employment opportunities in the oil and gas sector and its supporting industries," the ministry added.

Commenting on the agreement, H E Afi said, "The extension of the concession agreement for Block 53 represents a pivotal step towards ensuring the continued contribution of this vital field to the national economy. The anticipated investment will support production development and enhance the added value of the energy sector in Oman. We remain committed to working with our partners to fully realise the potential of Block 53."

Oman LNG signs deal with Vitol Asia to optimise gas supply

Our Correspondent Muscat

Oman LNG on Sunday announced the signing of an agreement with Vitol Asia Pte Ltd to optimise its LNG supply portfolio, marking another significant step in strengthening its global partnerships. The agreement was signed under the patronage of H E Eng Salim bin Nasser al Afi, Minister of Energy and Minerals.

The agreement, commencing in 2026, entails optimising up to 0.8mn metric tonnes per annum (MTPA) of liquefied natural gas (LNG) with Vitol on a Delivered Ex-Ship (DES) basis. This collaboration builds upon Oman LNG's strategic portfolio and leverages the flexibility from its DES commitments, particularly aligning with evolving market demands.

In a press statement, Hamed al Naamany, Chief Executive Officer of Oman LNG, said, "This agreement with Vitol reflects our agility and continuous adaptation to market dynamics. We are pleased to see continued positive market response to Oman's strategy in gas and LNG. Vitol is



a key portfolio trader and a trusted partner, and we are pleased to extend our cooperation through this deal which supports our long-term growth and value delivery."

Mahmoud al Baloushi, Chief Commercial Officer of Oman LNG, added, "This optimisation agreement with Vitol is a testament to our proactive commercial strategy, enhancing our portfolio's adaptability and responsiveness to global market shifts. It allows us to further capitalize on our established reputation and experience to unlock new value."

The signing ceremony for the

agreement was held in Muscat, reflecting the continued support of the Omani government in advancing the nation's strategic energy objectives.

Oman LNG is a leading producer and exporter of liquefied natural gas based in Sur. The company delivers clean energy to global markets while maximising value for the sultanate and its people. Oman LNG is committed to operational excellence, sustainability, and social responsibility, making significant contributions to the national economy and local communities through its world-class plant and integrated stakeholder approach.

OQGN, Fluxys to develop hydrogen transportation network in Oman

Our Correspondent Muscat

OQ Gas Networks (OQGN), the exclusive owner and operator of Oman's natural gas transmission network, announced the signing of a term sheet cooperation agreement with Fluxys, the Belgian-based global energy infrastructure group, to jointly develop the hydrogen transportation infrastructure in Oman, where Fluxys, alongside OQGN, intends to own and operate the hydrogen network as a minority shareholder.

OQGN and Fluxys share similar vision in leading energy tran-

sition activities, and with complementary infrastructure and aspirations, they are well positioned to enable rapid and efficient development of hydrogen infrastructure to cater to Oman's need in line with Oman's vision 2040 and hydrogen production targets.

This cooperation agreement solidifies the partnership between Fluxys and OQGN following the signing in September 2023 of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two organisations to strategically collaborate in the hydrogen and CO2 network developments in Oman, as well as Fluxys' acquisi-



tion of a 4.9% stake in OQGN as an anchor investor as part of the initial public offering of OQGN.

The partnership highlights

OQGN's commitment in enabling the timely development of decarbonisation infrastructure in Oman, as well as Fluxys' strategy

in connecting and investing in new low-carbon energy value chains with high renewable potential countries to Belgium and Europe and also reflects their intention to exchange knowledge derived from their experiences and prior learnings.

The agreement was signed by Eng Mansoor bin Ali al Abdali, OQGN CEO, and Pascal De Buck, Managing Director and CEO of Fluxys, at a ceremony held at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Muscat. The event was held under the patronage of H E Salim bin Nasser al Afi, Minister of Energy and Minerals.

In a press statement, Abdali

said, "We are very excited to work with Fluxys in jointly developing the Hydrogen transportation network in Oman, and supporting Oman's green hydrogen and decarbonisation initiatives. This cooperation is a clear signal of our commitment as the national energy infrastructure company in leading the development and deployment of green hydrogen infrastructure to support Oman's energy transition goals and aspirations. Together with Fluxys, we will leverage our considerable joint experience and capabilities meeting Oman's requirements for hydrogen transport infrastructure and real-

izing the national agenda in a cost-effective manner."

Pascal De Buck added, "We are delighted to partner with OQGN in developing a new hydrogen transportation network in Oman. As a shareholder of OQGN, this collaboration is a pivotal step in our strategy to accelerating the energy transition and creating new value chains. By harnessing our combined expertise, we aim to bring renewable hydrogen to Belgium and Europe, while also significantly contributing to Oman's sustainable energy goals. Together, we are committed to creating a brighter, greener energy future."

Syria poised for investment boom as US sanctions eased after 14 years of isolation

Nik Martin and Miray Aljarah

During a visit to Saudi Arabia, US President Donald Trump on Tuesday announced plans to lift crippling sanctions on Syria, marking a major policy shift by Washington after 14 years of civil war.

The country has been isolated by United States and European Union sanctions over the conflict, a 1979 designation as a state sponsor of terrorism and close ties between Damascus and Iran.

These curbs blocked exports, froze assets and restricted access to global payment systems, which further decimated an economy wracked by war. The sanctions also exacerbated humanitarian crises that the UN estimates pushed 90% of Syrians below the poverty line.

Trump agreed to lift the sanctions despite reported opposition from Israel on national security grounds regarding concerns over Syria's past ties to Iran and Hezbollah.

Trump said Syria has a new government "that will hopefully succeed in stabilising the country and keeping peace." Therefore, he would be "ordering the cessation of sanctions against Syria in order to give them a chance at greatness."

Speaking during a three-day visit to Gulf Arab states, the US president said it was the war-ravaged country's "time to shine," before calling on the new leadership in Damascus to "show us something very special."

Trump said the sanctions had served their purpose, but it was time for the country to move



Syria's Latakia port has been attacked several times, including by Israel in December 2024

forward.

On hearing the news, ordinary Syrians cheered in the streets of several cities and let off fireworks to celebrate.

How will lifting the sanctions help?

Along with Iran, North Korea and Cuba, Syria is one of the most economically restricted countries. The new leadership faces the daunting task of rebuilding the country, large parts of which have been left in ruins.

Devastated infrastructure, including roads, hospitals, and power grids, hampers the provision of basic services.

Economic recovery will require massive investment to revive industries, while the millions

of people displaced by the conflict at home and abroad will need to be resettled.

The scale of the challenge is immense, with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) warning earlier this year that the Syrian economy had lost \$800bn during the war.

In January, a report by the Middle East Council on Global Affairs cited a need for \$400bn to \$600bn to fund reconstruction, while others have put the figure at close to \$1 trillion.

Sanction lifting will allow aid agencies to speed up their deliveries of food, medicine and other vital supplies to those who need it most. It will also smooth the way for wealthy neighbors Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United

UNDP warned earlier this year that the Syrian economy had lost \$800bn during the war. Economic recovery will require massive investment to revive industries, while the millions of people displaced by the conflict at home and abroad will need to be resettled

Arab Emirates, to make large investments, fostering economic recovery that could stabilize the region.

Natasha Hall, a senior fellow for the Middle East at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, said several countries had been nervous of the US reaction to doing business with the new Syrian leadership and had been

areas of northern Syria under its influence.

Before the war, Germany, through its state-owned investment and development bank KfW, helped finance infrastructure projects and set up the Syria Recovery Trust Fund (SRTF) during the conflict.

France already has a long-term deal to modernise and operate the port of Latakia, Syria's main maritime gateway, with other investments now likely.

It's unclear whether the US and the EU will also announce plans to invest. However, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has indicated its readiness to assist Syria's reconstruction. The UN and World Bank are also expected to lead funding efforts for housing, health care, education, and utilities.

The role of the Syrian diaspora, which will contribute significantly through remittances, funding community projects, and returning expertise, including doctors and engineers, will also be critical.

Anwar al-Qassem, an economic analyst at the Financial Times business daily, believes that even in the most optimistic scenario, the Syrian economy would need a miracle to recover.

"It would not be an exaggeration to say that the Syrian economy, which has lost 85% of its value, will likely need between 20 and 25 years to return to half of its pre-war level," Qassem told DW.

How quickly will the sanctions be unwound?

Trump's announcement was the

easy part. US officials will now need to determine which sanctions can be lifted quickly and which ones may be subject to conditions placed on Syria's new leadership.

Hall from CSIS noted that "multiple layers of sanctions" were imposed on the Assad regime as well as "terrorism designations" and predicted that not all of them would be lifted immediately.

"It will take time," she told DW, adding that "the devil will be in the details."

Ziad Ayoub Arabash, a Syrian academic, consultant, and professor at the Faculty of Economics at Damascus University, believes the US Treasury Department would now decide the scope of the suspension.

He told DW that it's unclear whether sanctions relief would be limited to specific sectors and the work of aid groups, or whether it would include lifting financial curbs to enable the Syrian Central Bank to work again with international banks.

Arabash said Syria's chances would be further helped if the EU quickly lifted its sanctions. At the same time, he warned that corruption and weak government institutions would now be the biggest challenges to the reconstruction effort.

A study by the Istanbul-based Jusoor Center for Studies and Development predicted that Syria's economy would rebound significantly without sanctions, predicting a revitalisation of the oil and gas, raw materials, communications, and technology sectors.

DW



Japan's GDP shrinks in Q1 amid weak spending

Tokyo, Japan - Japan's economy contracted by an annualised real 0.7% in the January-March period, marking the first decline in a year, according to government data. The figures highlight sluggish domestic demand, even before higher US tariffs fully came into effect.

In the first quarter of 2025, real gross domestic product (GDP), adjusted for inflation, fell 0.2% from the October-December period. Growth was weighed down by weak consumer spending amid persistent inflation and rising import costs, the Cabinet Office reported.

US President Donald Trump began imposing steep tariffs on Japanese goods in April, raising concerns that Japan's export-reliant economy could face a sharper downturn, potentially denting both household and business confidence.

The GDP result was worse than the average forecast of a 0.19% annualised contraction among 37 economists surveyed by the Japan Center for Economic Research. GDP represents the total value of goods and ser-

vices produced within a country.

The release of the latest GDP data comes as Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's minority government prepares to compile an economic stimulus package aimed at softening the effects of inflation and US tariffs ahead of this summer's House of Councilors election.

Exports declined 0.6%, the first drop in four quarters, affected by a decrease in charges for intellectual property use and research and development services

Quarter-on-quarter, private consumption - which accounts for more than half of the economy - rose for the fourth consecutive quarter, inching up 0.04%, although inflation continued to outpace wage growth.

Exports declined 0.6%, the first drop in four quarters, af-

ected by a decrease in charges for intellectual property use and research and development services.

Meanwhile, imports - which exert a negative impact on GDP when they rise - expanded by 2.9%, driven by aircraft purchases and payments for online advertising.

Economists warn that Japan's growth is likely to slow further in the April-June quarter or beyond, depending on the outcome of negotiations with the United States aimed at reducing President Trump's substantial tariffs.

Shinichiro Kobayashi, principal economist at Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting, said the contraction reflected weak consumer spending, which was unable to offset declining external demand.

"Surging prices have forced consumers to spend more, but private consumption has not increased in real terms for around half a year," Kobayashi noted, pointing out that consumer spending had grown by just 0.1% in the previous quarter.

Kyodo News

Eurozone GDP grows 0.3% in Q1

Piero Cingari

The eurozone economy expanded by 0.3% in the first quarter of 2025 on a quarter-over-quarter basis, according to a second estimate released by Eurostat.

This marks a slight acceleration from the 0.2% growth recorded in the final quarter of 2024, but represents a minor downward revision from the initial flash estimate of 0.4%.

On an annual basis, the euro area's gross domestic product (GDP) rose by 1.2%, consistent with earlier readings and in line with economist expectations.

Among member states for which data is available, Ireland posted the highest quarterly growth rate at 3.2%. Spain again proved resilient among major economies with 0.6% growth, ahead of Italy (0.3%), Germany (0.2%) and France (0.1%).

By contrast, economic contraction was recorded in Portugal (-0.5%) and Slovenia (-0.8%).

Industrial production grows

Labour market conditions appear to be improving, with eurozone employment rising by 0.3% quarter-on-quarter in the first three months of the year.

This surpassed both expectations and the previous quarter's 0.1% gain. On an annual basis, employment was up 0.8%, matching consensus forecasts.

A strong performance in industrial output added to signs



EU unlikely to get rid of all US tariffs

The European Commission is preparing minds for a trade deal with the US which sees tariffs maintained on EU goods.

"With these tariffs the US thinks it has evened the playing field," EU official Matthias Jørgensen told MEPs at the European Parliament on Thursday, "It's very possible that we do not get rid of all the tariffs, then we might have to rebalance on our side."

Since mid-March, the Trump administration has imposed 25% tariffs on EU steel and aluminium, 25% on EU cars and 10% on all EU imports.

"It is clear from our discussions with the Commission that it will be difficult to go below 10% US tariffs," a European diplomat told Euronews as the 27 EU trade ministers met on Thursday.

"We would have a very hard time in the council with 10% tariffs," Michal Baranowski, Polish economic undersecretary of state, predicted.

A member state's official said France and Germany will be least happy with such an outcome while Hungary, Ireland, Italy would be less concerned.

After several weeks of deadlock in the trade negotiations, some movement is now evident.

"What is encouraging is that we are engaging actively both at expert and political levels," EU Trade Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič said, adding that he'd had a "constructive" call with US trade secretary Howard Lutnick on Wednesday, and that both agreed to intensify the talks at technical level.

Euronews.com

of economic momentum. In March, eurozone industrial production jumped by 2.6% on

a month-over-month basis, marking the sharpest one-month gain since November

2020. The figure beat expectations of a 1.8% rise and followed a revised 1.1% gain in February.

Eurostat data revealed robust monthly increases in capital goods (3.2%), durable consumer goods (3.1%) and non-durable consumer goods (2.3%). Intermediate goods saw a more modest rise of 0.6%, while energy production dipped 0.5%.

Among member states, Ireland led industrial output growth with a 14.6% surge, followed by Malta (4.4%) and Finland (3.5%). Meanwhile, output fell in Luxembourg (-6.3%), Denmark and Greece (both -4.6%), and Portugal (-4.0%).

On an annual basis, eurozone industrial production rose by 3.6%, its highest rate since 2022.

The March industrial rebound can be attributed to two key factors: the announcement of an 800bn euro German fiscal stimulus focused on defence and manufacturing, and a pre-emptive surge in European exports to the United States ahead of anticipated tariff hikes under Donald Trump's proposed trade policy.

The euro rallied on Thursday's economic data, with the euro-dollar exchange rate climbing above 1.12, recouping earlier weekly losses.

Bond markets remained stable, with German 10-year Bund yields hovering at 2.67% and two-year Schatz yields slipping slightly to 1.91%.

(Source: Euronews.com)



Golfers Andrew More, Josh Armstrong secure spot in Audi Quattro Cup Final

The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort proudly marked the successful conclusion of the 2025 Audi quattro Cup Qualifier.

Following an intense and closely contested competition, Andrew More and Josh Armstrong emerged victorious, securing the opportunity to represent Oman at the Audi Quattro World Cup to be held at Al Mouj Golf from November 22 to 24.

This global event annually attracts approximately 70,000 golfers from 38 countries, underscoring the qualifier's significance at an international level.

The winning team was celebrated during an elegant prize ceremony luncheon at The St Regis, where they received premium awards from Audi and The St Regis. The ceremony also recognised outstanding performances with honors for nearest the pin, longest drive, and an exciting hole-in-one challenge. Additional raffle prizes further enhanced the excitement of the event.

"Hosting this event highlights our resort's dedication to luxury, precision, and excellence," remarked Wassim Daageh, General Manager of The St Regis Al

Mouj Muscat Resort. "We were delighted to offer our renowned hospitality to golfers and guests alike, creating an unforgettable experience for all."

Christian Nehme, General Manager of Premium Motors, added, "The Audi Quattro Cup represents the perfect fusion of precision and passion, values closely shared with our partners, The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort and Al Mouj Golf. We are proud to host an event that unites sporting excellence with exceptional hospitality."

Scott McCaw, General Manager of Al Mouj Golf, stated, "Our

championship course, designed by Greg Norman, challenged the competitors while offering breathtaking views of the Sea of Oman. We look forward to seeing the winning team represent Oman on the world stage."

The tournament, a seamless collaboration between Audi, The St Regis, and Al Mouj Golf, brought together over 90 skilled amateur golfers competing in teams of two under the Green-somes Stableford format, delivering a day defined by exceptional sportsmanship, thrilling competition, and exquisite hospitality. With its

world-class golfing facilities, luxurious accommodations, and stunning natural beauty, Oman continues to establish itself as a premier destination for international events.

The Audi Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the premium and luxury segment. The brands Audi, Bentley, Lamborghini, and Ducati produce at 21 locations across 12 countries.

In 2024, the Audi Group delivered over 1.7mn vehicles, generating 64.5bn in revenue and achieving an operating profit of

3.9bn euros.

AUDI AG's commitment to the region was reaffirmed with the establishment of its fully owned subsidiary, Audi Middle East, in 2005. Covering Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, Audi Middle East continues its journey towards becoming a provider of sustainable, premium mobility.

Premium Motors is the official Audi importer in Oman since 2020. With its strong reputation Premium Motors has become a trusted distributor for Audi vehicles in Oman Offering the best-

in-class customer service and a wide range of Audi models, Premium Motors also offers an array of services, including comprehensive after-sales support such as maintenance, repairs, and genuine Audi parts.

Operating in the city of Muscat in Oman, Premium Motors ensures that the Audi experience is easily accessible to valued customers.

The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort, located in Oman's capital, is a prime example of exquisite living, reflecting the local culture and the brand's legendary Rituals.



Lexus NX enhances on-road experience

The Lexus NX seamlessly blends luxury, style, and cutting-edge technology to elevate the driving experience to unprecedented heights. The luxury crossover, combines modern intelligence with premium features and high-performance, meeting the diversified needs of today's new-age customers.

A visually stunning innovation, the Lexus NX is a true head-turner. With bold curves, a dynamic waistline, eye-catching 3-eye LED headlights, and striking 20-inch wheels, it makes a

powerful statement on the road and creates an unforgettable driving journey from every angle.

Across the NX lineup of luxury SUVs, you can choose between two powertrain options. The first is a 2.4-litre, 4-cylinder turbocharged engine that delivers 275hp and 430Nm of torque, paired with an 8-speed Direct-Shift Automatic Transmission (8AT). Redefining luxury with sustainability, the second option is a hybrid-electric model powered by a 2.5-litre petrol engine and two electric motors.

BankDhofar unveils 'Intilaqa' digital account

In a significant step towards enhancing customer convenience and supporting Oman's digital transformation agenda, BankDhofar has launched the new and improved version of its widely-used Intilaqa Digital Onboarding App.

This upgraded platform marks a new era in account opening by offering a 100% digital, fully paperless process that redefines how customers begin their banking journey.

The enhanced Intilaqa app enables customers to open a Savings Account, Children's Account, or High-Yield Account completely online, without visiting a branch or submitting physical documents. From identity verification to receiving the debit card, every step is digital.

The process is completed through a secure video call, allowing real-time Know Your Customer (KYC) verification -



one of the first such implementations in the Sultanate of Oman.

The new digital journey is integrated seamlessly with Mala'a, Oman's Credit and Financial Information Centre operating under the Central Bank of Oman. This ensures that customer onboarding is not only fast and convenient but also fully compliant

with national regulatory standards, offering both speed and security.

This transformation underscores BankDhofar's commitment to putting customers at the heart of innovation. Whether it's a young professional looking to manage finances on-the-go, a father opening an account for their child, or a resident in a remote area seeking accessible services, Intilaqa delivers a smart, intuitive, and frictionless banking experience to all.

Customers who complete their onboarding receive their debit cards delivered directly to their doorstep, eliminating the need for branch visits entirely.

The onboarding process has been streamlined to take only a few minutes, offering the kind of speed and simplicity that aligns with the needs of today's fast-paced, digital-first world.



Alizz Islamic ties up with Supreme Judicial Council

Alizz Islamic Bank, represented by the CEO of the bank Mr. Ali Al Mani, recently participated in the 'International Summit of the Use of Artificial Intelligence in the Judicial Sector' that was held under the patronage of Sheikh Ghosn bin Hilal al Alawi, Chairman of the State Financial and Administrative Audit Institution.

The summit sought to explore the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI) within judicial systems, focusing on innovation, sustainability and future applications. Key topics of discussion included the legal, technical and ethical challenges associated with integrating AI into judiciary practices. The summit brought together government ministers, dignitaries, legal professionals, AI experts academics and private sector representatives to foster dialogue and collaboration.

Touching on the summit, Ali al Mani, CEO of Alizz Islamic Bank, said, "At Alizz Islamic Bank we believe in partnering with the government on their projects and community initiatives, in order to give back to society. We are confident that Islamic banks

are making strides towards the required contribution by working hand in hand with our partners to achieve the desired outcomes. Our strategy focuses on investing in sustainable initiatives as they are the decisive element in creating a brighter future for the country and its people."

As part of Alizz Islamic Bank's broader strategic vision, it aims to strengthen collaboration between the government and the private sector. The bank's strategy extends beyond just banking. 'It's about creating sustainable synergy across various sectors in Oman, including partnerships with public and private entities enabling the bank to play a key role in building economy in the Sultanate of Oman,' the bank stated.

Alizz Islamic Bank has embarked on many projects that have a positive impact on society and with the goal being to strive to provide a better life for the people beyond their banking needs. Accompanied by a belief that investing in sustainable initiatives is the decisive element in creating a brighter future for the country and its people.

Gulf College wins college badminton championship

Gulf College, secured the championship trophy in both men's singles and doubles categories in the badminton championship for higher education students.

While, Sultan Qaboos University won the championship trophy in the women's singles and doubles events.

The tournament was held as part of the Omani Committee for University Sports' Championships for the academic year 2024-25 and hosted by Gulf College under the supervision of the Committee and in collaboration with the Omani Racket Games Committee at Gulf College's sports hall.

Ten higher education institutions participated in this event are: Gulf College, Sultan Qaboos University, University of Tech-



nology and Applied Sciences - Ibri, University of Technology and Applied Sciences - Rustaq College of Education, National University, Sohar University, Majan University College, Al Buraimi University College, Muscat

College and Military Technological College.

The event was sponsored by Muscat Pharmacy, Chef Hassoun Restaurant, Jazeeraat Al Arab Restaurant, Souls Café, Gulf Specialized Hospital, and

Max Massage (Al Seeb).

Dr. Khaled Abou Zayed, Head of the department of Business and Management studies at Gulf College, officially announced the start of the competitions.

Matches were played in a

group stage followed by a knock-out system, with the following results:

Women's Singles
1st Place: Aisha Khalaf al Ibri (Sultan Qaboos University)
2nd Place: Du'a Mohammed al Adawi (Sultan Qaboos University)
3rd Place: Ozma Mohammed Saif (Gulf College)

Women's Doubles
1st Place: Badriya Mahmoud al Jabri and Sara Khalaf al Ibri (Sultan Qaboos University)
2nd Place: Amal Bukhit al Husaini and Ikram Nasser al Hinai (Muscat College)
3rd Place: Raghad Hamoud al Qasimi and Hoor Hamad al Masrori (Gulf College)

The women's events concluded with an awards ceremony.

Indian School students excel in CBSE

Students of Classes X and XII from Indian Schools in Oman have once again demonstrated academic brilliance in the recently declared results of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) for the year 2025.

Surpassing previous records, this year's performance marks an unprecedented achievement, with a significantly higher proportion of students emerging as top achievers - a testament to the resilience, determination, and collective efforts of the entire school community.

The outstanding results reflect the commitment of Indian Schools in Oman to academic excellence, inclusive education, and continuous improvement. Across all streams - Science, Commerce, and Humanities, students have excelled, setting new benchmarks for scholastic distinction.

The 2025 results of the CBSE Board have set an all-time record for the Indian Schools in Oman with an increased percentage of high achievers as compared to previous years, thereby setting another benchmark of excellence in academics.

Syed Ahmad Salman, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Indian Schools in Oman, extended heartfelt congratulations to the students, their parents, principals, and teachers for their exceptional accomplishments.

"Our vision is driven by the

CLASS X TOPPERS			
FIRST POSITION	SECOND POSITION	THIRD POSITION	
			
Angela Maiam Jacob 99%	Samhitha Sush 98.9%	Gouri Reghu 98.8%	Shashwat Singh 98.8%
FOURTH POSITION			
			
Dhanya Krishnaji 98.6%	Goutham Radhakrishnan 98.6%	Shaurya Saraswat 98.6%	Shilok Joshi 98.6%

tenets of equity, excellence, innovation, and integrity. We are transitioning into a future-ready educational ecosystem, strategically aligned with global best practices, national priorities, and the evolving aspirations of the In-

dian diaspora in Oman," Salman said, adding that these remarkable results are a reflection of the synergy between educators, students, parents, and school leadership, all working together to nurture success.

He commended the unwavering commitment of school principals and managements who adopted innovative academic strategies, remedial frameworks, and student support initiatives to ensure optimal outcomes. "The

efforts of teachers through continuous mentoring and academic reinforcement, supported by the parental ecosystem, have created a conducive environment for our students to thrive," Salman added.

The Oman toppers in Class XII Science stream are as follows: The first position is claimed by Sabyasachi Choudhury of Indian School Al Ghubra with 98.4%. Navaneet Gopalan of Indian School Al Maabela has claimed the second position with 98.2% marks. The third place is claimed by Aman Ikbal of Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir with 97.4% marks.

In the Commerce Stream, Sanghvi Anand of Indian School Muscat (97.8%), Sanjana Kuzhivayalil Praveen of Indian School Al Ghubra (97.4%) and the third position is claimed by three students with 97.2 % of marks, Nidha Villarrvatom Reji of Indian School Al Ghubra, Purva Vimal Kakkad and Tarnjot Kaur of Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir.

The three positions in the Humanities stream are as follows: The first position is claimed by two students with 98.4% of marks, Israa Mohammed Sadique Shaikh of Indian School Al Ghubra and Sakina Jariwala of Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir; Saira Catherine.A of Indian School Al Seeb has claimed the second position with 98%; and Keyuri Prashant Buranpur of Indian School Muscat secured the third position with 97.8% marks.

Class X results of Indian Schools have been phenomenal; the toppers in Oman are as follows: The first position is claimed

by Angela Mariam Jacob of Indian School Al Ghubra with 99%. Gouri Reghu (Indian School Al Ghubra), Shashwat Singh (Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir) and Samhitha Sushil (Indian School Al Seeb) have claimed the second position with 98.9% marks. The third place is claimed by four students with 98.6% marks: Dhanya Krishnaji of Indian School Al Ghubra, Goutham Radhakrishnan, Shaurya Saraswat and Shilok Joshi of Indian School Muscat.

Indian Schools in Oman continue to uphold an open-admission policy, ensuring that every child seeking education in the Sultanate of Oman is welcomed. The schools provide robust support mechanisms, including remedial classes, virtual learning environments, and a common pre-board examination framework, to promote academic well-being and inclusive progress.

As the academic vision of Indian Schools in Oman evolves, it remains aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of India and the transformational goals of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), India. The focus is on nurturing lifelong learners equipped with 21st-century skills, global competencies, and strong ethical values shaping future-ready citizens for a dynamic world.

Muscat Governorate hosts training workshop on strategic management

Muscat Governorate conducted a training workshop entitled 'Strategic Management Between Theory and Application in the Work Environment' on Wednesday within the 'Knowledge Ambassadors' initiative. Salim bin Saif bin Duwaim al Shuaili, Assistant Head of the Muscat Governor's Office delivered this workshop. It targeted various administrative departments in the governorate and the Municipal Council within the governorate's efforts to develop administrative efficiencies and staff skills in strategic management and its practical applications in the governmental work environment.

This workshop highlighted several important topics, including the conceptual framework of strategic management, the tasks and characteristics of strategic management and its role in human resources development. As well as, drafting the organisa-



The workshop 'Strategic Management Between Theory and Application in the Work Environment' aimed to provide employees with strategic planning and analysis skills

tion's philosophy and aspects regarding the SWOT analysis, besides discussing the most

remarkable difficulties and challenges facing the implementation of strategic management in

institutions.

This workshop aimed to provide employees with strategic planning and analysis skills and enhance efficiency to deal with the institutional work variables. Thus, contributing to improving performance and efficiency of the administrative work in the governorate.

Hisham al Adwani attends Olympic forum in Greece

Hisham Salem al Adwani, an accredited lecturer in the Olympic Values Program, took part in the 18th International Forum for Representatives of National Olympic Committees and Olympic Academies, organised by the International Olympic Academy.

The forum was held from May 10 to 15 in the historic city of Olympia, Greece.

The event witnessed broad international participation, with over 150 delegates representing 96 countries from various continents. Held under the overarching theme 'The Future of Sport', the forum focused on the central topic 'Olympic Education and Artificial Intelligence: A Process of Transformation', aiming to promote Olympic values while addressing the rapid advancements in technology.

The scientific programme of the forum featured a series of specialised lectures delivered by



a group of distinguished academics and international experts. These sessions explored the intersection between Olympic education and modern technologies, highlighting the opportunities and challenges posed by artificial intelligence in shaping the future of sport.

Participants were divided into daily working groups to discuss key themes and synthesize their insights into final presentations delivered on the last day of the

forum. In addition to the academic sessions, the forum included cultural activities and field visits, including a tour of the archaeological site of the ancient Olympic Stadium, which hosted the Olympic Games in the pre-Christian era, as well as a visit to the Olympic Archaeological Museum. These visits offered participants a unique opportunity to connect with the rich Olympic heritage in the birthplace of the Games.

KAS Falcons wins MOCL trophy

KAS Falcons lifted the fourth MOCL Friday Afternoon League by defeating Bravos XI by 11 runs at the Grand finale.

The magnificent match was held at MIS ground in Misfa. It was the most thrilling moment for the spectators. The winners were given Trophy and RO250 and runners up with trophy and RO175.

Bravos XI won the toss and elected to field. KAS Falcons scored 160 runs in 16 overs. In return, Bravos could make only 149/8 in 16 overs. It was a great fight from both teams till the last ball. Tamraiz from KAS Falcons was awarded the best bowler of the tournament.

JW Marriott Hotel Muscat appoints Samir Messaoudi as GM

JW Marriott Hotel Muscat has announced the appointment of Samir Messaoudi as its new General Manager, bringing with him over two decades of global hospitality expertise and a transformative leadership style that has shaped some of the most iconic properties.

Known for his exceptional operational acumen, strategic foresight, and commitment to excellence, Samir steps into this role poised to further elevate the hotel's positioning as the city's premier luxury urban resort.

A visionary leader in luxury hospitality, Samir consistently redefined standards of performance, innovation, and sustainability within Oman's tourism landscape. Over the past decade, his leadership has driven measurable success across financial performance, guest experience, and associate engagement.

Samir began his journey with

Marriott International in 2006 at The Ritz-Carlton, Half Moon Bay in California. After holding several operational roles in the United States, he moved to the Middle East in 2009, where he built a robust foundation in F&B operations at Sharq Village & Spa, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Doha. His professional experience through Dubai, Jakarta, Doha, and Muscat, has enhanced his ability to navigate diverse markets and cultural nuances.

Notably, Samir has led key leadership roles at flagship properties, including Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Oman, where he served as Hotel Manager, and JW Marriott Marquis City Center Doha, where he was Acting General Manager. In 2020, he was appointed General Manager of Sheraton Oman Hotel. There, he achieved remarkable milestones, from mar-



ket-leading RevPAR (revenue per available room) and record-setting revenue, to significant improvements in guest satisfaction

and operational efficiency. Beyond hotel operations, Samir has participated in initiatives aimed at enhancing the

hospitality sector in Oman. In 2025, he was appointed Chairperson of the Marriott Business Council Oman, to spearhead growth initiatives and innovation across the portfolio of Marriott International in The Sultanate.

His reappointment for a second term as a Board Member for Oman American Business Council (AmCham) and the Chair of the Tourism Committee further reflects his commitment to strengthening diplomatic and business ties between Oman and the US, while bridging the gap between tourism authorities and the travel industry through strategic endeavours.

Samir has also played a pivotal role in promoting Oman as a world-class destination on the international stage. In 2024 and 2025, he was featured in several high-profile media interviews across Tunisian television and radio, reinforcing Oman's posi-

tion as a must-visit tourism hub. His contributions have earned him regional acclaim, including being named General Manager of the Year - Oman by Hotelier Middle East in 2024, a recognition that follows three consecutive appearances on their prestigious GM Power List. He is currently shortlisted for the 2025 accolade.

Reflecting on his appointment, Samir shared: "It is an honour to lead the exceptional team at JW Marriott Hotel Muscat. As the city's leading luxury urban resort, we are committed to offering a sanctuary of calm and comfort, delivering personalized service for guests of all ages, from international travellers to local families and little guests at Family by JW. Together, we will continue to raise the bar for hospitality in Oman, with an unwavering focus on innovation, authenticity, and guest satisfaction."

Why criminalise climate defenders?

Climate activists are facing massive compensation claims from fossil fuel companies for disruptions

London, UK - In late 2024, in the industrial city of Newcastle on Australia's east coast, a flotilla of kayaks paddled into the harbour shipping lane to block a massive coal ship from docking.

The 'climate defenders' gathered by activist group Rising Tide aimed to temporarily blockade the world's largest coal port and bring attention to a climate crisis caused primarily by burning fossil fuels. It also called for an end to new coal, oil and gas projects.

The New South Wales (NSW) state government and the police had attempted to stop the blockade in the courts. But after a judge lifted an order creating an exclusion zone at the port, the protesters held up the coal tanker for over 30 hours. Some 170 activists were arrested for alleged crimes, including the disruption of a major facility. Most could face fines of up to 22,000 Australian dollars or two years in jail, under a 2022 anti-protest bill.

The law criminalises public assemblies that disrupt major public infrastructure such as roads, tunnels and ports, and was a response to past blockades by climate protesters. The then-NSW attorney general said that prior laws did not sufficiently penalise the 'major inconvenience that incidents like these cause to the community', along with 'severe financial impacts' due to 'lost productivity'.

Zack Schofield, a spokesperson for Rising Tide who was also arrested, said the NSW law is being 'used to target climate protesters almost exclusively'.

Australia is getting tough

A young climate activist who blockaded a lane on Sydney Harbour Bridge in 2022 was the first to be charged under the NSW



In the UK, protesters blockaded a fuel terminal in 2022 and were the target of new laws criminalising nonviolent environmental protest

law and was initially given a 15-month sentence.

Sue Higginson, a member for the Greens Party in NSW, called the imprisonment of the nonviolent protester 'undemocratic', adding that people should not be punished for 'engaging in legitimate forms of dissent and civil disobedience'.

One in five climate and environment protesters are arrested in Australia, which is the highest rate in the democratic world, according to a 2024 study on climate protest criminalisation by researchers at the University of Bristol in the UK.

Harsh anti-protest laws have been passed across the country, the world's third-largest fossil fuel exporter. That includes the island state of Tasmania, where protests at sites of old growth

forest logging can incur a US\$13,000 fine or a two-year prison sentence.

Crackdown goes global

Similar punitive anti-protest laws have been enacted across Europe and US.

In the UK, recent amendments to the Public Order Act give police increased power to act on 'serious disruption' from public protests.

Five Just Stop Oil activists were charged under the revised act for organising the blockade of a UK motorway in 2022.

Charged with conspiracy to create a 'public nuisance', the protesters were sentenced to prison terms of between four and five years in 2024 before their sentences were slightly reduced.

Said to be the longest sentences for a nonviolent protest in British legal history, they were almost on par with the five-year maximum sentence for aggravated assault, noted Global Witness, UK-based campaigners monitoring the criminalisation and killing of environmental defenders.

The UK law has been used against climate and environmental protest 95% of the time, said Oscar Berglund, a senior lecturer in international public and social policy at the University of Bristol, who co-authored the 2024 report 'Criminalisation and Repression of Climate and Environmental Protests'.

In Germany, members of the nonviolent climate action group Letzte Generation (Last Generation) were charged in May 2024

with 'forming a criminal organisation', said Berglund.

The law is typically used against mafia organisations, and has never been applied to a non-violent activist group, said the researcher.

Meanwhile, anti-terror laws and military action have been used to suppress climate actions, including a blockade of a highway in The Hague, Netherlands, in 2023. This was in contravention of statute law, according to an Amnesty International study that described a 'sweeping pattern of systematic attacks' that 'undermine peaceful protest' across 21 European countries.

Protesters face litigation cases

In addition to anti-protest laws passed by governments, climate

activists are facing massive compensation claims from fossil fuel companies for disruptions caused during actions.

Known as strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP), the anti-protest litigation peaked in March 2025 when a jury in the US state of North Dakota found Greenpeace liable for more than US\$660mn for its role in an oil pipeline blockade.

The action was bought by oil major, Energy Transfer, which has faced years-long resistance to an oil pipeline running through North Dakota - especially from the local Sioux Tribe, who set up

being targeted because they are a threat to fossil fuel profits."

He added that in the UK, anti-protest laws were drafted in consultation with a right-wing think tank, Policy Exchange, which has openly promoted the oil and gas lobby.

But for Luke McNamara, a professor at the Faculty of Law and Justice at the University of New South Wales, these 'punitive actions' also reflect 'growing intolerance' for the disruption caused by climate protesters resorting to peaceful civil disobedience.

"Australian politicians regu-

Climate and environmental protest is rising in line with increasing global temperatures. But new draconian penalties are putting people who rally against climate pollution in jail

a protest at the Standing Rock Reservation that gained international attention.

"It's part of a renewed push by corporations to weaponise our courts to silence dissent," said Sushma Raman, interim executive director of Greenpeace USA, of the compensation that could force the organisation to shut down its US operations.

Beyond the threat of arrest and litigation, some 2,000 environmental defenders were murdered between 2012 and 2023, with 401 cases reported in Brazil and 298 in the Philippines, according to the Bristol University report on the criminalisation and suppression of climate and environmental protest.

"You don't have to dig very deep," said Berglund of the influence of oil, gas and coal interests on harsher anti-protest laws and policing. "The protesters are

lary share their great affection for the right to protest," he said in reference to new local anti-protest laws. However, this principle 'tends to crumble each time an innovative climate protest garners attention', he told DW.

Back in Newcastle, some 130 Rising Tide protesters who pleaded not guilty remain uncertain about the severity of potential fines or imprisonment when their trial begins later this month.

"If the penalties are disproportionate, we will appeal," said spokesperson Zack Schofield of what could become a test case for judicial willingness to criminalise environmental dissent in Australia - and beyond.

For Berglund, such prosecutions confirm the increasing impact of the climate movement. "Protesters are targeted when they are successful," he said. DW

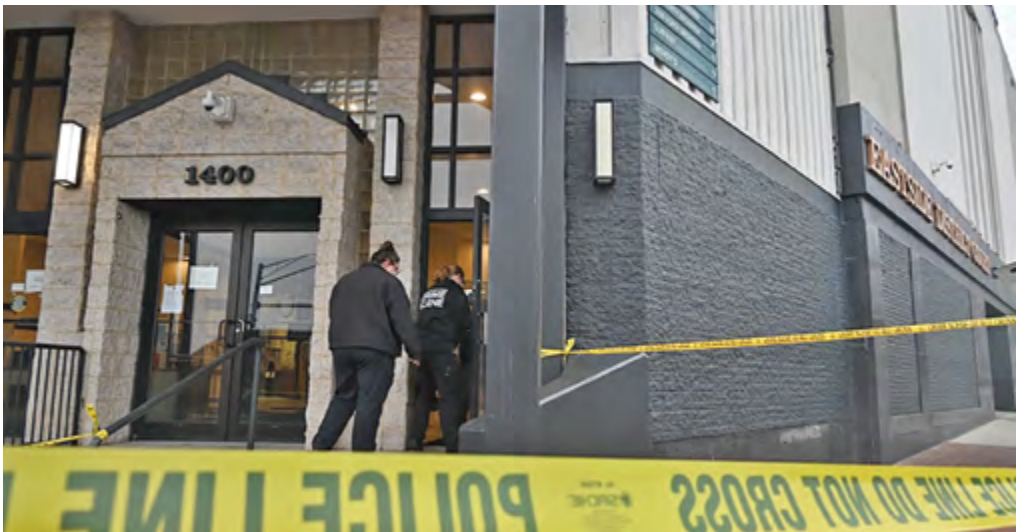
California fertility clinic explosion an 'intentional act of terrorism'

California, US - An explosion outside a fertility clinic in Palm Springs, southern California on Saturday was declared 'an intentional act of terrorism' by the FBI.

The blast, which occurred just before 11am local time (1800GMT) at the American Reproductive Centers on North Indian Canyon Drive, killed one person and injured four others.

The victim, killed in a vehicle explosion, has not yet been publicly identified. None of the injured are believed to be clinic staff.

"This is an intentional act of terrorism," Akil Davis, assistant director of the FBI's Los Angeles division, told a press conference. "Probably one of the largest bombing investigations we've



had in Southern California," he added.

Palm Springs police chief Andy Mills confirmed the explo-

sion originated from a vehicle and caused widespread damage. "Terrorism came knocking on the door of Palm Springs," Mills

said during the same press conference. "We survived ... this city will rise." Anadolu Agency

CONNECTING WITH TEA TRADITIONS



People taste tea during the 2025 Garden Tea Festival in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on Saturday. The event offered tea enthusiasts a platform to learn the rich traditions and culture of tea (Xinhua)

US: Two people killed, 19 injured after ship crashes into Brooklyn Bridge

New York, US - At least two people were killed and 19 others injured after a Mexican Navy training sailing ship collided with the iconic Brooklyn Bridge during a promotional tour on Saturday, New York City Mayor Eric Adams said.

"At this time, of the 277 on board, 19 sustained injuries, 2 of which remain in critical condition, and 2 more have sadly passed away from their injuries," Adams posted on X.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum also expressed sadness on social media at the 'loss of two crew members of the

Cuauhtemoc Training Ship'.

The tops of the Cuauhtemoc's three masts struck the city's landmark bridge, partially collapsing as the vessel moved along the East River.

Adams said the 142-year-old Brooklyn Bridge was spared major damage.

The New York transport department posted on X that there were no signs of any structural damage to the bridge.

The cause of the collision is under investigation.

Multiple eyewitness videos captured the masts snapping and partially collapsing as they



A massive Mexican navy sailing ship making a festive visit to New York hit the Brooklyn Bridge on Saturday evening

New York transport department posted on X that there were no signs of any structural damage to the bridge

crashed into the bridge's deck. Videos showed heavy traffic on the bridge at the time of the collision. The vessel then drifted toward the river's edge as onlookers scrambled away from the shore. Sailors could be seen aloft in the rigging on the dam-

aged masts.

The New York Post reported that victims were rushed to local hospitals.

Nick Corso, a witness, told AFP that it looked like there was a lot of panic aboard the vessel with 'lots of screaming' and 'some sailors hanging from the masts'.

The Cuauhtemoc, a barque built in 1982 with a mast height of 48.2 metres (158 feet) had been on a training manoeuvre at the time and was damaged in the 'mishap', a statement posted by the Mexican Navy on X said. DW

At least 153 Palestinians killed as Israel intensifies airstrikes across Gaza Strip

Gaza City/Istanbul - At least 153 Palestinians were killed in intensified Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip in the last 24 hours, a Health Ministry official said on Sunday.

"Relentless Israeli strikes claimed the lives of 153 people across the enclave," Munir al-Bursh, the director-general of Gaza's Health Ministry, told Anadolu. He said Israeli warplanes stepped up airstrikes since Sunday dawn, leaving 106 people dead.

"The Israeli army is practicing the most brutal forms of ethnic cleansing and genocide" against Palestinian civilians, he added.

The rising death toll came as Israeli drones shelled the Indonesian Hospital in Jabalia in northern Gaza.

"The (Israeli) occupation is besieging the hospital with drones and shooting at anyone who moves," hospital director Marwan Sultan said in a statement. He said one patient was injured by Israeli fire in the hospital's vicinity.

Separately, Israeli drones struck 10 houses around the Al-Awda Hospital in Jabalia, causing material damage to the hospital's critical facilities, the hospital director, Mohammed Salha, told Anadolu.

He said the hospital has not received any medical supplies for over 80 days.

"No fuel shipment was also allowed to the hospital for more



The Israeli army intensified air assaults on the Gaza Strip in the last five days, coinciding with US President Donald Trump's Gulf tour that included Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE

than 35 days now," he added.

The Gaza Civil Defence, meanwhile, warned that its vehicles will stop within 72 hours due to the lack of fuel.

"Our teams will not be able to perform their humanitarian missions due to fuel shortages and scarcity of resources," it said in a statement.

The Israeli army intensified air assaults on the Gaza Strip in the last five days, coinciding with US President Donald Trump's Gulf tour that included Saudi Arabia,

Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. At least 378 Palestinians were killed and scores injured in the onslaught, according to the Health Ministry.

Death toll rises to 53,339

At least 53,339 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's genocidal war since October 2023, the

Health Ministry said on Sunday.

A ministry statement said that 67 bodies were brought to hospitals in the last 24 hours, while 360 people were injured, taking the number of injuries to 121,034 in the Israeli onslaught.

"Many victims are still trapped under the rubble and on the roads as rescuers are unable to reach them," it added.

The Israeli army resumed its assaults on the Gaza Strip on March 18 and has since killed 3,193 people and injured 8,993 others, shattering a ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreement that took hold in January.

Hamas chief's brother killed?

Meanwhile, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz claimed on Sunday that the army likely killed Mohammed Sinwar, a Hamas commander and the brother of slain Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar.

"All indications show that Sinwar was killed," Katz said at a meeting of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

"There is no official confirmation yet from the Israeli army, but indications show that Sinwar had been eliminated," he added.

The Israeli public broadcaster KAN earlier reported that Sinwar's body was found in an underground tunnel in the southern city of Khan Younis.

KAN said the bodies of 10 of his aides were also found with him. Israeli media claimed that Sinwar and his aide were killed in Israeli airstrikes near the European Hospital in Khan Younis on Tuesday.

However, the Israeli daily *Maariv*, citing an unnamed military source, denied reports that Sinwar's body had been found in a tunnel.

Anadolu Agency



Pope Leo XIV

Pope says children and families in Gaza reduced to starvation

Vatican City - "Children, families, and the elderly in Gaza were reduced to starvation," noted Pope Leo XIV on Sunday in his inauguration mass in Vatican's St Peter's Square.

Thanking some 200,000 people and numerous delegations representing states, royal families, and other Christian churches, the pontiff added: "In the joy of faith and communion, we cannot forget our brothers and sisters who are suffering because of war," according to the Vatican News Agency.

Particularly on Ukraine, Leo underlined the importance of the negotiations to bring a just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

Following the mass, the pontiff met privately with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, according to the agency.

Meanwhile, US Senator Chris Van Hollen demanded an immediate end to Israel's food blockade of the Gaza Strip on Saturday, warning that children are already dying from starvation as aid deliveries remain blocked at border crossings.

"Let food into Gaza NOW! Netanyahu & his govt are starving 2M civilians," the senator from the state of Maryland wrote on X, citing a World Food Programme report that warned of famine risk across Gaza.

Van Hollen emphasised that

the blockade has been going on for 76 days. "Trucks with food are waiting to get in but are blocked."

He added that children have already died from food shortages, as he accused the US of being 'complicit in this gross violation of international law'.

Meanwhile, illegal Israeli settlers continued their assaults against Palestinians on Sunday, burning farmlands and establishing a settlement outpost in the occupied West Bank.

Illegal settlers set ablaze hundreds of dunums of farmland, including olive trees, in Duma town, south of Nablus in the northern West Bank, municipal chief Suleiman Dawabsheh said in statements carried by the official news agency Wafa. "Palestinians and their properties are coming under repeated settler attacks in the town," he said. Illegal settlers established a settlement outpost in the Bedouin community of Deir Dibwan, east of Ramallah, Al-Baidar Organization for the Defence of Bedouin Rights said in a statement.

The group said the area is subjected to repeated attacks by illegal settlers and the Israeli army.

"These attacks and illegal settlements exacerbate the humanitarian situation in the area and hinder the right of residents to live in dignity on their lands," it added.

Continued Israeli violations against Syria threaten regional stability: FM

Damascus, Syria - Syrian Foreign Minister Assad al-Shaibani said on Saturday that Israel's violations against his country's sovereignty pose a 'threat to regional stability', while praising the 'effective mediation' efforts by Türkiye and Saudi Arabia to lift US sanctions on Syria.

Speaking at the 34th Arab League Summit in Baghdad, Shaibani expressed Damascus' hope for 'a unified Arab position' in support of Syria's right to regain full sovereignty over all its territory.

He described Israel's threats and violations in southern Syria as 'a blatant breach of international law and the basic principles of the UN Charter, and a threat to regional stability'.

Shaibani reaffirmed Damascus' commitment to the 1974 Disengagement Agreement with Israel, which he said 'ensures the



minimal stability in that volatile region'.

After the fall of the Bashar al-Assad regime in December, Israel expanded its occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights by seizing the demilitarised buffer zone, a move that violated a 1974 disengagement agreement with Syria.

Shaibani described US Presi-

dent Donald Trump's decision to lift sanctions on Damascus as 'an important step toward national recovery and reconstruction, reflecting an earnest Arab diplomatic effort that has yielded tangible results'.

He extended gratitude to Saudi Arabia and Türkiye 'for their effective mediation at a historic turning point', and thanked

Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, all Gulf Cooperation Council countries, and every Arab nation that stood by Syria 'during this critical phase'.

Trump announced his intention on Tuesday to lift sanctions on Syria during a Saudi-US Investment Forum 2025 in Riyadh.

Unified Syria

Regarding domestic affairs, Shaibani asserted that 'any project aimed at weakening or dividing the Syrian state under any pretext is categorically condemned and rejected by the Syrian state and people in all their diversity'.

He added that Syria still faces 'multiple challenges, including remnants of ISIS (DAESH), which certain external forces are attempting to exploit as a tool for political blackmail and security

pressure'.

Shaibani revealed that the government is 'finalising preparations for the launch of a national parliament that represents the full spectrum of Syrian society, and a permanent constitution that guarantees rights, protects sovereignty, and establishes a state of law - not a state of chaos'.

Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa signed a constitutional declaration in March, setting a five-year transitional phase for the country.

Bashar Assad, Syria's leader for nearly 25 years, fled to Russia on December 8, ending the Baath Party regime, which had been in power since 1963.

Al-Sharaa, who led anti-regime forces to oust Assad, was declared president for a transitional period in late January.

Anadolu Agency

Flights resume at Sanaa airport: Houthis

Sanaa, Yemen - The Yemeni Houthi group announced on Saturday the resumption of flights at the Sanaa International Airport, 10 days after Israeli airstrikes forced a suspension of operations. "Sanaa International Airport resumed civil flights today via Yemen Airways after a ten-day halt due to blatant Israeli aggression," said the Houthi-run SABA News Agency.

The report said a Yemen Airways flight arrived at the airport from the Queen Alia International Airport in Jordan with 138 passengers, and departed with 144 passengers bound for Amman.

Yahya Al-Sayani, deputy minister of transport and public works in the Houthi government, said the resumption of flights



sends 'a message of Yemen's resilience and steadfastness in the face of brutal aggression'.

He added that the airport is operating at full technical and operational capacity, providing navigation and ground services in line with international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization

(ICAO).

Humanitarian flights via the airport resumed on Thursday, with the Houthis reporting the takeoff and landing of 10 UN-operated flights.

The Houthi group announced on May 7 the suspension of all UN and humanitarian flights through Sanaa following Israeli

airstrikes on the airport.

The Israeli military launched extensive attacks on May 6 on the Yemeni capital, including strikes on the Sanaa International Airport, central power stations and a cement factory, one day after it said it hit the Port of Al Hudaydah in western Yemen with a series of airstrikes.

The Houthi group previously said the strikes caused 'massive destruction' at the airport, halting all activity, including UN and humanitarian flights, and estimated the damage at nearly half a billion dollars.

In recent weeks, the Houthi group has stepped up missile and drone attacks against Israeli targets in response to the Israeli onslaught against the Gaza.

Anadolu Agency

3 sentenced to death over Iran shrine attacks

Tehran, Iran - Iran has sentenced three people to death for aiding deadly attacks claimed by the Islamic State (IS) on the Shah Cheragh shrine in Shiraz in 2022 and 2023, the judiciary's Mizan news agency reported on Sunday.

The three were convicted of providing logistical support, including weapons and ammunition, for the twin assaults that left 13 people dead in October 2022 and two more in August 2023, Mizan said.

Xinhua

India: Eight children among 17 killed in fire in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, India - A total of 17 people lost their lives in the fire incident that broke out at a building at Hyderabad's Gulzar House near Charminar on Sunday morning, as per Telangana Fire Disaster Response Emergency and Civil Defence.

The department has released the list of the deceased.

Telangana Disaster Response and Fire Services DG, Y Nagi Reddy said: "There was a fire incident in Krishna Pearls shop and the residential complex in Gulzar House area. The Fire department received the call at 6:16am and dispatched 11 fire engines with sufficient staff by 6:17am... The fire department used breathing operators and oxygen masks to rescue the people... The information is that 17 people could not survive... The preliminary examination shows that the cause was a short circuit..."

"There was no deficiency in the fire department fighting the fire and rescuing the people... The building had only one entry-way of two metres, like a tunnel. There is only one staircase of one metre to access the first and second floors. This made the escape and rescue operation very difficult. By 9am, the fire was under control... A total of 21 people were inside the building... The cause of death is smoke inhalation; nobody had burn injuries," the fire official said.

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy expressed deep shock over the mishap and instructed top officials to take all necessary measures to save the families trapped in the fire accident. He issued orders to shift the injured to nearby hospitals and provide better medical treatment.

The CM spoke to Minister Ponnampalapati about the fire incident on the phone and ordered to intensify rescue opera-



A view of the charred remains after a fire broke out at the Gulzar House near Charminar, in Hyderabad on Sunday (ANI)

According to a fire department official, they received a call at around 6.30am and rushed to the spot. People were found unconscious and shifted to various hospitals

tions. He also inquired about the steps being taken for rescue and relief operations by the Police and Fire Service wings, as per a statement by the Telangana Chief Minister's office.

CM Reddy expressed condolences to the victim's families on the phone and assured them of all assistance from the government. Director General of Disaster Management and Fire Services Nagi Reddy has been asked to closely monitor relief operations, the statement read.

Minister Prabhakar stated

that the fire department had arrived immediately upon receiving information of the blaze.

President Droupadi Murmu expressed grief and offered her condolences to the families of the victims who lost their lives.

"The death of several people, including women and children, in a fire accident in Hyderabad is deeply distressing. My thoughts are with those who have lost their loved ones. I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured," posted President Murmu on X.

Meanwhile, Telangana

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu announced a Rs 5 lakh ex gratia for the families of the victims who lost their lives in the fire incident.

Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu said the fire may have been caused by a short circuit or a gas cylinder blast. He added that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is closely monitoring the situation.

The list of the 17 deceased released by the Telangana Fire Disaster Response Emergency and Civil Defence includes the names of eight children under the age of 10.

The youngest in the list was identified as one-and-a-half-year-old Prathan. The seven other children have been identified as Hamay (7), Priyansh (4), Iraaj (2), Arushi (3), Rishabh (4), Anujan (3) and Iddu (4).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was 'deeply anguished' by the loss of lives in the fire.

The PM also announced an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh and Rs 50,000 to those injured in the mishap, from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund, to the kin of the deceased as per the Prime Minister's Office.

In a post on X, the Prime Minister's Office wrote: "Deeply anguished by the loss of lives due to a fire tragedy in Hyderabad, Telangana. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon. An ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs 50,000."

ANI



North Korean leader Kim Jong-un

North Korean leader urges army to achieve a 'radical turn'

Istanbul, Turkey - North Korean leader Kim Jong-un urged his army to achieve a 'radical turn' in preparing for war, state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on Saturday.

Kim 'called upon all the units of the entire army to bring about a radical turn in making preparations for war in constant readiness while remaining on full alert', while observing the flying group of the Guards 1st Air Wing on Thursday.

The drills included anti-air missile sub-units, radar sub-units and electronic warfare sub-units, a new-type long-range precision guided glide bomb and a drill of a raid on targets.

The international community should 'reject' the US decision to re-designate Pyongyang as an uncooperative state in the fight against terrorism, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on Friday in a statement that was published on Saturday by KCNA.

The US re-designated Py-

ongyang as an uncooperative state in combating terrorism on Tuesday alongside Cuba, Iran, Syria and Venezuela.

"Such unilateral and malicious designating campaign staged by the US every year should be duly denounced and rejected by the international community as it is a smear stratagem to brand the independent sovereign states as 'state sponsor of terrorism' and make them targets of international criticism", said the Foreign Ministry, which called the US 'anti-terrorism' advocacy 'nothing but an excuse to justify interference in internal affairs of other countries'.

"No one has asked the US to lead international anti-terrorist efforts, nor has anyone invested it with such power," it said, adding that Pyongyang 'resolutely' opposes 'all forms of terrorism threatening international peace and security'.

Anadolu Agency

Bangladesh actress Nusraat Faria arrested at Dhaka airport

Dhaka, Bangladesh - Bangladeshi actress Nusraat Faria, known for her portrayal of Sheikh Hasina in the Bangabandhu biopic, *Mujib: The Making of a Nation*, has been arrested at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, local media outlets reported on Sunday.

The *Dhaka Tribune* reported that Nusraat was arrested for her alleged involvement in an attempted murder case linked to anti-government protests.

A case was filed against 17 actors, including Nusraat, for the alleged attempted murder of a student in the capital's Vatara area during the July uprising last year, according to *Dhaka Tribune*.

Inspector Sujana Haque of Vatara Police Station said she was arrested this afternoon, as reported by bdnews24.com.

"Our team went to the airport to get her based on information from Immigration Police," he said. "A few days ago, a court approved an attempted murder case against her. She has been shown arrested in that case," as per the outlet. The case was filed at the police station during the Anti-discrimination Student Movement's protests in 2024, the police said, according to bdnews24.com.

The website of the local news outlet Prothom Alo re-



Nusraat Faria

Nusraat was arrested at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal Airport for her alleged involvement in an attempted murder case linked to anti-government protests

ported that the actress was arrested at the immigration checkpoint at the airport this morning as she was about to travel to Thailand.

Nusrat made her acting debut with the film *Aashiqui*

(2015), where she played the lead role opposite Ankush Hazra. The film was a commercial success. She also worked in several other hits such as *Hero 420* (2016), *Badsha - The Don* (2016), *Premi O Premi* (2017) and *Boss 2: Back to Rule* (2017).

She essayed the role of Sheikh Hasina in *Mujib: The Making of a Nation*, which was released in 2023. It was based on the life of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding father and first president of Bangladesh, who is popularly known as Bangabandhu. It was a co-production between Bangladesh and India, the film was directed by Shyam Benegal and stars Arifin Shuvoo in the titular role.

According to bdnews24.com, Faria said at the time that she could not believe she had the opportunity to portray the Awami League leader.

The actress said: "When I learnt of it, I felt like the luckiest person in my country. Because, no one has ever played her role onscreen before. I don't know if anyone will do it in the future."

"I feel that even if I never act again in the future, I have got the opportunity to play this role, which is the ultimate achievement for me," as per the bdnews24.com.

ANI

Finland: No survivors after copters collide

Helsinki, Finland - Two civilian helicopters collided on Saturday in Finland, with no survivors reported, according to officials.

Estonian public broadcaster, ERR, reported that the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed the deaths of all on board the helicopters.

Police said five people were on board - two in one helicopter, three in the other, according to Yle news.

Authorities indicated they are still working to identify the passengers in the crash.

The helicopters, found about 100 metres (328 feet) apart in a forested area, were en route from Tallinn in Estonia, to Piikajärvi Airfield in Kokemäki.

The passengers were Estonian businessmen, according to



the Estonian news outlet, Postimees.

Estonian businessmen Oleg Sonajalg, Priit Jaagant, and Jaagant's wife, Lilit, were among

the victims, according to media reports.

Jaagant's construction company confirmed the couple's deaths in a statement.

Flightradar24 data showed two Robinson R44 Raven helicopters, which had taken off from Tallinn, were flying near Eura in southwest Finland when the crash occurred.

A nearby aviation club chairman said the passengers were en route to an air show at Piikajärvi Airfield when the collision happened.

A witness reported seeing the two helicopters flying near each other before one suddenly 'dropped like a stone'.

The Finnish National Bureau of Investigation is leading the initial inquiry into the crash.

On-duty fire chief Tuomas Kiskola said the situation is still unfolding and details are being confirmed.

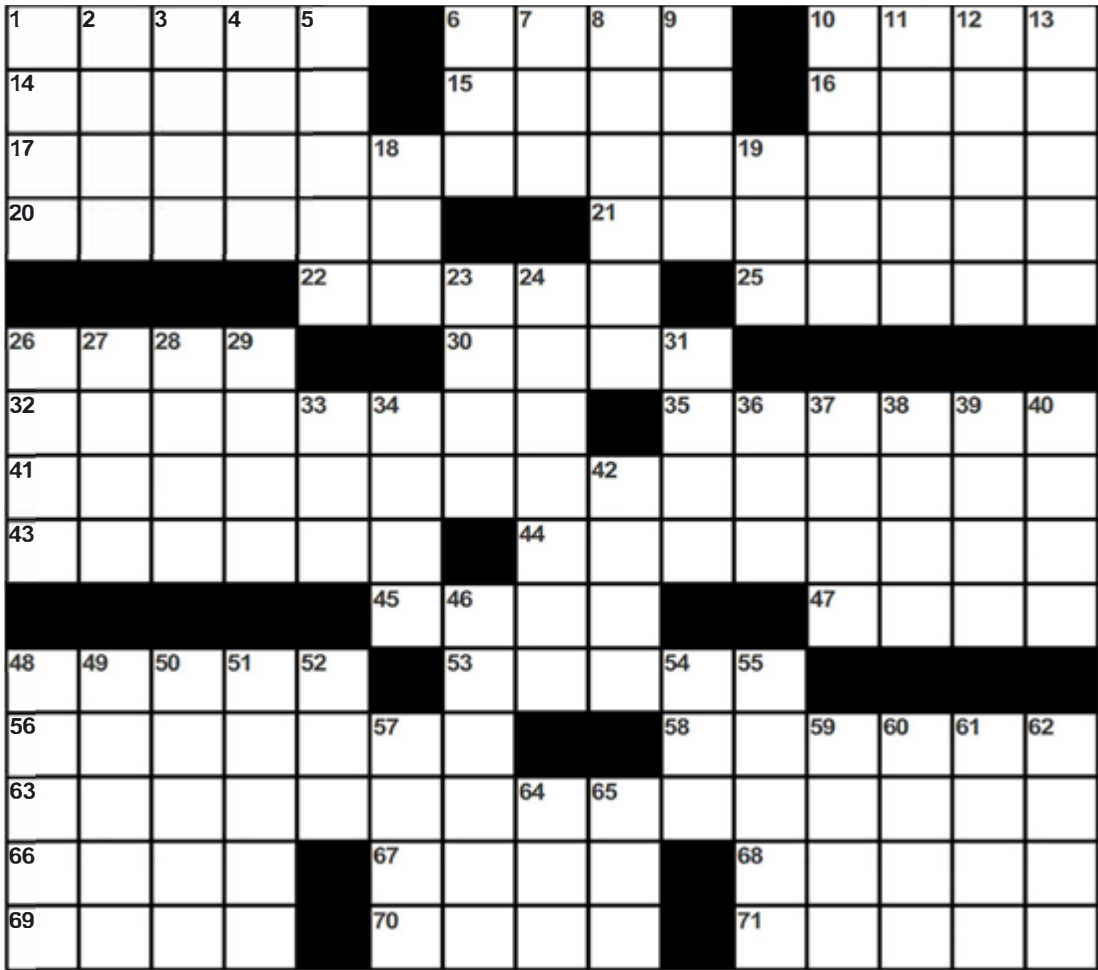
Anadolu Agency



AWAITING PILGRIMS AFTER A FIVE-YEAR HIATUS

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra in India will resume via Nathula Pass in East Sikkim from June after a five-year suspension caused by the Doklam standoff and the COVID-19 pandemic (ANI)

DAILY CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 1) Eight ball's rebound
 - 6) Shower with affection (with "on")
 - 10) Dillon on "Gunsmoke"
 - 14) Long way from slim
 - 15) Dress, as in one's Sunday best
 - 16) Miscellaneous collection
 - 17) Cope
 - 20) Nice leisurely walk
 - 21) Like some positions
 - 22) "To your health!"
 - 25) Took a stab at
 - 26) Common '70s hairstyle
 - 30) Common one of ancient Rome
 - 32) Type of trial or diagnosis
 - 35) Rub the wrong way
 - 41) Coroner
 - 43) Resurrection Day
 - 44) Makes larger in stature
 - 45) "Normal" starter
 - 47) Ushers do it
 - 48) Papas' counterparts
 - 53) Aquatic South American rodent
 - 56) Paper-folding art
 - 58) Like a proper march-

- ing band
 - 63) Certain crime solver
 - 66) Features
 - 67) Brother of La Toya
 - 68) Laptop instruments of yore
 - 69) Saucy or spirited
 - 70) Dental woe
 - 71) Exercise, as influence
- DOWN**
- 1) Oft-filleted fishes
 - 2) Help in the wrong way
 - 3) Caboose place
 - 4) Norway's biggest city
 - 5) Cries weakly
 - 6) Banned insecticide's letters
 - 7) Sound of admiration
 - 8) Aquarium reptile
 - 9) Certain sword
 - 10) Wisdom tooth, e.g.
 - 11) It can keep you out of jail
 - 12) What every film has
 - 13) Monkeyed around (with)
 - 18) Sort or type
 - 19) Red, carpenter or velvet
 - 23) Certain gem
 - 24) Quickly, musically
 - 26) Cartoon coyote's favorite company

- 27) Circus bug
- 28) Frees (of)
- 29) Tending to a problem
- 31) Hillside, to the Scottish
- 33) Rocks in a glass
- 34) Bellyache
- 36) Anti-smoking org.
- 37) Picky criticisms
- 38) You can get down on one
- 39) Chanteuse Home
- 40) Formerly, in days of yore
- 42) Revealing photo?
- 46) Like vinegar
- 48) Finish a wet, messy job
- 49) Ceased lying?
- 50) Athlete running 5,280 feet
- 51) Feed livestock
- 52)_ fly (RBI source)
- 54) A la mode item, sometimes
- 55) Family man
- 57) Prefix with "physical"
- 59) Underworld river
- 60) Spare item
- 61) Lasting starter?
- 62) Mosquito, gnat or fly
- 64) Bible verb ending
- 65) Stocking stuffer?

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19
All you need to do today is hit the ground running. If you do, you're sure to get a huge jump on the competition. In this race, what counts isn't how quickly you end up at the finish line, but how long you can keep up the punishing pace. Remember to ration your energy when necessary. If you feel yourself starting to tire, take a quick time-out. Recover for a moment and then jump back in and give it all you've got.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22
You are all about innovation, and that's why you've become the go-to person for solving problems among your crew. The current situation that has everyone all buzzing might be a toughie, but don't give up. It shouldn't stump you for long. Bouncing your ideas off a trusted friend or colleague is exactly what the doctor ordered. Lots of input should take your ideas from start to finish.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21
Lay the groundwork for something really huge. On days like today, which are relatively easygoing for you, it's a good idea for you to start thinking about your larger goals and hopes and how you can go about achieving them. Rome wasn't built in a day, but you have quite a few days ahead of you to build almost anything your heart can imagine!



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20
How long has it been since you just had a long, lovely day all to yourself? Go for it as soon as you can! If you can't just drop everything right this minute, then at the very least you should get out your calendar and pick a day in the very near future that is strictly for you. Start planning what you want to do on this day of total rest and relaxation. You should start to feel better already.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22
You should get a gold medal in the diplomatic Olympics, and with hardly any real work on your part too. The Universe has amplified your already significant charisma, and it's attracting the right kind of attention. Wherever you go people stop to admire you. If you've been desiring greater influence at work or somewhere else, now is the time to go for it.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19
Get a fresh start today. You can leave the small stuff for later. For now, try to focus on getting your plans off the ground and getting to know the people who share your goals and might be able to help you later down the road. Go for broad strokes and general outlines. Write down all the details that you need to take care of later, and then your conscience should be clear.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21
You need to work some of that magic you're so well known for, especially when it comes to love. Whether you're just checking someone out or looking for a way to light a fire under your current romance, the remedy you need is well within reach. Bring everything you've got in terms of charm and persuasiveness. Those qualities run deeply in you, so don't be shy about using them to your advantage right now.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22
Every now and then your heart opens up much wider than usual and lets almost everyone in. Your emotional energy is urging you to let go of any fears and hesitations and just try one more time to lure someone closer, most likely someone you've been working so hard getting to know that you're starting to wonder if you might be obsessed. Give it one more shot!



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18
Connections can speak in the most unexpected places if you let them, so keep your eyes and ears open today. Someone quite different could come along soon, and they might enrich your life in ways that you didn't think possible. There's no way for you to predict who it is or what they're like before you meet them and the ball starts rolling



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22
You've been feeling conflicting emotions for quite a while now, and you may want to completely let go of control for once, even though you know you also need to keep things in order. Your dilemma can only end with a big decision, and you've got to make it alone (this time). If you don't completely trust whoever it is who might be taking charge of the steering wheel, grab the keys, both figuratively and literally.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21
Find a way to express what's in your heart without going overboard. The first thing you need to do is examine your motives. Are they entirely altruistic, or are there some hidden influences that should be uprooted before you speak your piece? If so, sit down and get some clarity before you start talking, or else your audience may need an intermission to make it all the way to the end.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20
You need to get rid of some heavy baggage before you can get a fresh start. It might be actual, physical stuff. Do you really need to keep every birthday card anyone ever sent you? Or maybe it's more ephemeral. That old flame might be weighing you down far more than you realize. In any case, get your virtual or real broom and vacuum and get started cleaning out all those dusty corners so you can make room for the new.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- 01. Where are the Tasaday people indigenous?**
- A. The highlands of Mindanao in the Philippines
 - B. Central Australia
 - C. The Darién Gap
 - D. Southern Mongolia
- 02. Between 1696 and 1851, the British government imposed a tax on what part of a house?**
- A. Number of chimneys
 - B. Roof area
 - C. Front door area
 - D. Number of windows
- 03. Which fermented liquid condiment used for flavouring, especially of grilled meats (and also used as an ingredient in cocktails and drinks) was first made by two dispensing chemists, John Wheeley Lea and William Henry Perrins?**
- A. Tomato sauce
 - B. Tabasco sauce
 - C. Worcestershire sauce
 - D. Mayonnaise

Answers: 1.A 2.D 3.C

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

C	V	E	T
R	G	O	R
K	S	A	E
O	G	A	H

Each game will present you with a matrix filled with letters. The objective is to form words by linking adjacent letters - to the left, right, on top, bottom, or diagonal to each other. The Boggler Classic game uses a 4 x 4 matrix. Words are valued at one point for each letter in excess of two letters. A three letter word is worth one point, a four letter word is worth two points, and so on. Valid words must be at least three letters long.

SOLUTION

20-25 words: Excellent,
15-20 words: Very good,
10-15 words: Good,
5-10 words: Average

DO YOU SUDOKU?

LEVEL EASY: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9 and only one instance of each number

4				1	5	3		6
						1		
1	7			2	6			
2		3	1		8			
9		7				2		8
			7		2	9		1
			5	3			6	9
		9						
8		5	2	7				3

WORD BUILDER



You have three minutes to find all the words contained in this word.

Rules: Words should be at least four letters long, proper nouns and duplicates don't count

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

3	1	4	6	7	2	8	9	8
5	2	7	1	8	9	6	4	3
6	9	8	4	5	3	1	2	7
1	3	6	2	5	7	4	8	9
8	5	2	9	4	7	1	6	3
7	4	9	8	6	1	3	5	2
4	6	5	9	2	8	7	1	3
2	8	1	7	4	6	9	3	5
9	7	3	5	1	8	2	6	4

EAGLES SOAR HIGH ABOVE CITY

Eze scores winner as Crystal Palace beat Man City to win FA Cup

London, England - Crystal Palace stunned Manchester City 1-0 in the FA Cup final on Saturday to win the first major trophy of their 164-year-old history thanks to a goal from local boy Eberechi Eze.

At a sun-baked Wembley in front of delirious Palace fans, local boy Eze volleyed home after 16 minutes against the run of play while goalkeeper Dean Henderson performed heroics in goal and City wasted a sack-load of chances including a penalty.

England forward Eze's goals in the last eight and semis had carried his team into the final for only the third time and after he struck again, Palace survived a City siege to spark a massive party for the south London fans.

"This is what dreams are made of, for me and this club. Who thought we could do it? We've made history," said Eze, who was rejected by Arsenal and other clubs as a youth.

City's second successive Cup final loss summed up a harrowing campaign in which they have been dethroned as the powerhouse of English football and will end without a domestic trophy for the first time since Pep Guardiola's first season in charge 2016-17.



Crystal Palace players celebrate with the FA Cup trophy on Saturday

"We will feel however we have to feel today, but tomorrow wake up strong and ready to go again," defender Ruben Dias said.

In the game's second decisive moment, Erling Haaland made way for Omar Marmoush to take a first-half penalty - but it was brilliantly tipped away by Henderson.

For Palace's massed ranks, it was third time lucky after defeats in their previous two FA Cup final appearances in 1990 and 2016.

Oliver Glasner took charge of

the club 15 months ago and had suffered a poor start to this campaign with Palace failing to win a Premier league game until late October.

Now he is the first Austrian coach to win the FA Cup.

Palace had heroes aplenty, none more so than Henderson though he was perhaps lucky not to have been sent off in the first half.

"Incredible. We had a feeling it would be our day today. We deserve this so much," he said.

"Haaland might have stepped up (for the penalty) but he gave it to Marmoush. I knew which way he was going. I knew I would save it."

City have been a pale imitation of the side that has dominated the English game for most of the past decade.

But the way they began at Wembley suggested Pep Guardiola's side were determined to prove that talk of their demise had been greatly exaggerated.

Having picked an ultra-attack-

Incredible. We had a feeling it would be our day today. We deserve this so much. I knew which way he (Marmoush) was going (with the penalty). I knew I would save it

DEAN HENDERSON, CRYSTAL PALACE GOALKEEPER

ing lineup shorn of defensive midfielders, City hemmed Palace deep inside their own half for the opening 15 minutes with Kevin de Bruyne pulling the strings on what was his last Wembley appearance in City colours.

His lofted ball picked out Haaland whose stretching effort at the far post was brilliantly saved by Henderson who shortly after-

wards beat out Josko Gvardiol's header.

When Palace finally got past the halfway, they ripped through City's lines to devastating effect.

Jean-Philippe Mateta played in Daniel Munoz and his cross was met by Eze who flashed a first-time volley past Stefan Ortega for his sixth goal in his last five games.

Ismaila Sarr nearly made it 2-0 but Ortega saved his close-range shot. Palace's hearts were in their mouths when Henderson clawed the ball away marginally outside his area under pressure from Haaland, but a VAR check spared him, to Guardiola's annoyance.

"The ball carried into my box and I knew it was fine - who cares?" England international Henderson said.

Palace defender Tyrick Mitchell was not so lucky when he tripped Bernardo Silva and referee Stuart Attwell pointed to the spot. Surprisingly, Haaland did not take it and instead Marmoush stepped forward for his first penalty since joining City in January, but Henderson dived to his right to save.

The inspired Henderson then made a flying save to keep out Jeremy Doku's curling effort as Palace reached halftime ahead despite having only 19% of possession.

Munoz thought he had made it 2-0 just past the hour mark but a lengthy VAR check ruled his effort out for offside.

Seven-time winners City swarmed forward and went close numerous times after the break with Henderson saving a deflected effort by Claudio Echeverri and his defenders throwing their bodies on the line to preserve Palace's lead.

A huge groan went up from the Palace fans at 10 minutes of stoppage time but after more close shaves and nail-biting the final whistle sounded and they could bellow the club's anthem Glad All Over around the stadium.



Eberechi Eze of Crystal Palace celebrates after scoring against Manchester City in the FA Cup final on Saturday

We wanted to write history, says Glasner after triumph

London, England - Crystal Palace's momentous FA Cup victory over Manchester City at Wembley on Saturday was a one-in-10 shot, according to Oliver Glasner who became the first manager in the London club's history to deliver major silverware.

Eberechi Eze's 16th-minute volley proved decisive as Palace, roared on by their success-starved fans, made up for two previous FA Cup final heartbreaks in 1990 and 2016.

Unlike their dominant display against Champions League quar-



We scored the first time we were in their half and then we defended with every single part of the body and a great goalkeeper, a great mentality and togetherness

OLIVER GLASNER

ter-finalists Aston Villa in the semi-final, Palace had only 21% possession against Pep Guardiola's City but defended incredibly to preserve the lead given to them by Eze's sweetly-struck effort from a Daniel Munoz cross.

"I can't really believe it. If you

play this game 10 times, we win it once and that happened today," said Glasner, who replaced Roy Hodgson 15 months ago and is the now the first Austrian coach to win the FA Cup.

"We scored the first time we were in their half and then we

defended with every single part of the body and a great goalkeeper, a great mentality and togetherness.

"I'm really proud of the team and the staff. Congratulations. All the credit goes to them."

Glasner, whose playing career

with Austrian club SV Ried was curtailed after he suffered a brain haemorrhage in 2011, took Eintracht Frankfurt to the Europa League title in 2022.

He will now lead Palace in the same competition next season, their first venture into a major European competition.

"I got this feeling during the season that you can achieve incredible things with this group of players," the 50-year-old said. "We wanted to write history. I think now we wrote really a big chapter in history. Next year, we start a new chapter."

No silver lining to Man City's terrible season

London, England - Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola was magnanimous in defeat after Saturday's FA Cup final defeat to Crystal Palace meant City's horrible season ended without a major trophy for only the second time of his otherwise glittering reign.

But Guardiola's irritation at his side's inability to convert their remarkable 78% possession against a spirited Palace rear-guard was not far from the surface, even as he was effusive in his praise for their opponents.

His frustration was writ large in the closing stages, gesticulating furiously as attacks fizzled out before exchanging words with Palace goalkeeper Dean Henderson after the final whistle condemned City to a second straight FA Cup final loss.

Guardiola bristled slightly when asked if Henderson ought to have seen red in the first half for handling the ball outside his area and denying Erling Haaland a goalscoring opportunity, which VAR checked and ultimately cleared.

"Don't ask me," he told reporters, with a rueful smile.



Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola and Crystal Palace goalkeeper Dean Henderson had an exchange of words after the final whistle

"Ask the referee and the VAR."

Henderson subsequently saved a penalty from Omar Marmoush, who was handed the ball by City's usual taker Haaland.

"I didn't speak to them. They made a decision. They decide," Guardiola said, refusing to agree that fate was against his side. "I didn't study about destiny and about the universe and this kind of thing, so I don't know."

Since City finished without a trophy in Guardiola's first season in 2016/17, they have collected major honours, including six Premier League titles, with astonishing regularity.

The wheels fell off earlier this term, though, as City lost nine out of 12 games in all competitions while conceding 27 goals between the end of October and Christmas, as their pursuit of a fourth straight league title collapsed in a heap.

City have recently shown glimpses of being back to their best, going unbeaten in 10 matches - two in the FA Cup en route to Saturday's final - as they close in on qualification for next season's Champions League.

Berkane take lead in first leg of African Confed Cup final

Berkane, Morocco - Morocco's Renaissance Berkane scored two early goals but failed to add any more as they beat Simba of Tanzania 2-0 in Saturday's first leg of the African Confederation Cup final to take the advantage into next week's return.

Berkane were heavily fancied going into their fifth Confederation Cup final in the past seven years and went ahead after eight minutes through Mamadou Camara, rising unmarked to head home from an inswinging corner.

A second goal from Oussama Lamlioui followed six minutes later in a blistering start that left the visitors looking shell-shocked and threatened a deluge of goals.

Champions PSG beat Auxerre as Ligue 1 ends

Paris, France - Paris St Germain winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia scored twice in the second half as the Ligue 1 champions came from behind to beat Auxerre 3-1 to end their season on a winning note after falling behind to a Lassine Sinayoko strike.

At the other end of the table, St Etienne were beaten 3-2 at home by Toulouse and will join already-relegated Montpellier in Ligue 2 next season after finishing second from bottom, while a late Paris St Germain players celebrate promotion/relegation playoff with the Ligue 1 trophy against FC Metz.

win over Strasbourg and 15th place, leaving Reims to finish 16th and a promotion/relegation play-off against FC Metz.

PSG finished on 84 points, 19 ahead of runners-up Olympique de Marseille and 23 ahead of third-placed AS Monaco, who both qualify directly for the Champions League group stage,

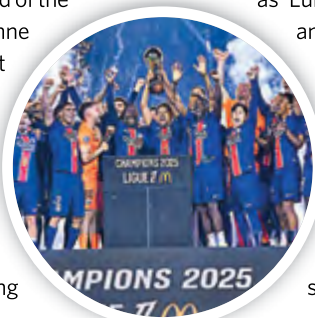
while OGC Nice thumped Brest 6-0 to finish fourth and enter that competition in the third qualifying round.

PSG may have won the title in early April with six games left to play, but there was still plenty of drama on the season's final day as European, relegation and playoff places were decided.

The biggest drama of the evening came at Strasbourg where a 2-2 draw would have sent visiting Le Havre to the relegation playoff against FC Metz.

However, a penalty deep into second-half stoppage time gave Le Havre a 3-2 win that saw them leapfrog LOSC Reims to 15th in the table and safety.

That left Reims, who lost 2-1 away to Lille as their hosts secured fifth place and a spot in next season's Europa League, to face a tricky playoff with Metz.





Borussia Dortmund's Serhou Guirassy celebrates his goal against Holstein Kiel on Saturday

Dortmund blank Kiel to snatch last Champions League spot

Dortmund, Germany - Borussia Dortmund cruised past relegated Holstein Kiel 3-0 on Saturday to finish fourth and snatch the last Champions League spot for next season, in the best comeback of the last seven matchdays in Bundesliga history.

Niko Kovac's Dortmund won six of their last seven matches to climb from 10th to fourth in the standings and finish on 57 points, two ahead of Freiburg who lost 3-1 at home to third-placed Eintracht Frankfurt.

Kovac had taken over in February with the team in 11th place after the departure of Nuri Sahin following a disappointing first half to the season.

No other Bundesliga team have managed such a comeback in the last seven matchdays.

"We are all happy but there is no reason to celebrate," Kovac told a press conference. "I am happy and we are all happy to have pushed this through, to have taken that last step which is sometime difficult to take."

Missing out on the lucrative Champions League would have been both a sporting and financial setback for the publicly-traded club.

"For a long time we were just passengers and on the final matchday we were in the driving seat and did it just in time," said the Croat.

"I did my job but I want to underline that you cannot achieve anything in football alone."

Dortmund players will now

go into a two-week break before returning in early June ahead of the Club World Cup in the United States.

Bayern Munich had already secured the title two weeks ago. They beat Hoffenheim 4-0 while Bayer Leverkusen, last season's champions who finished runners-up, drew 2-2 at Mainz 05 to set a league record with their 34th consecutive

I am happy and we are all happy to have pushed this through, to have taken that last step

NIKO KOVAC

utive away game without defeat.

Eintracht and Dortmund will join in the Champions League league phase while Freiburg go into the Europa League, with Mainz 05 in sixth spot qualifying for the Conference League.

With VfL Bochum and Kiel already relegated, Heidenheim finished in 16th to go into a relegation/promotion playoff.

Dortmund, needing three goals to be guaranteed a top four finish irrespective of results in the other games, got off to a dream start when Serhou Guirassy converted a third-minute penalty for the lead.

Guinea international Guirassy became the first Dortmund player to score 21 goals in his first season for the club.

MAX MASTERCLASS

Verstappen reignites title charge with dominant win at Imola

Imola, Italy - Max Verstappen took a dominant victory at Imola on Sunday to celebrate Red Bull's 400th grand prix and end Formula One leader Oscar Piastri's run of three wins in a row for McLaren.

Australian Piastri started on pole and finished third, overtaken by teammate Lando Norris on fresher tyres seven laps from the end, with his championship lead cut from 16 points to 13 after seven rounds.

The victory was the 65th of Verstappen's career, second of the season and the four-times world champion's fourth in a row at the Italian circuit near Bologna after wins in 2021, 2022 and 2024. There was no race in 2023 due to flooding.

"The start itself wasn't particularly great but I was still on the outside line, the normal line, so I was like 'well I'm going to try and send it around the outside' and it worked really well," said the Dutch driver.

"Of course, that unleashed our pace because when we were in the lead, the car was good. I could look after my tyres."

Piastri had started the Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix as favourite for a fourth win in a row, and fifth in seven races, but lost out as Verstappen went around the out-



Red Bull's Max Verstappen celebrates after winning at Imola on Sunday

side into turn one on the opening lap and pulled away. A virtual safety car halfway through the race also worked against him.

A late real safety car bunched up the field but Verstappen, now only nine points behind Norris, was never in any real danger from the McLarens and took the chequered flag 6.109 seconds clear of Norris.

"We had a good little battle at the end between Oscar and myself which was tense, but always good fun," said the Briton.

"A good race. For us as a team, second and third is great. Of course you would love to be up there fighting against Max but they were too good for us today."

Seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton finished a sur-

The start wasn't particularly great but I was still on the outside line, the normal line, so I was like 'well I'm going to try and send it around the outside' and it worked really well

MAX VERSTAPPEN

prising fourth in his first race in Italy for Ferrari after starting 12th following a qualifying nightmare.

Alex Albon was fifth for Williams with Charles Leclerc sixth for Ferrari. George Russell started third but ended up seventh while Carlos Sainz was

eighth on another great afternoon for resurgent Williams.

Racing Bulls rookie Isack Hadjar was ninth and Verstappen's teammate Yuki Tsunoda took the final point for Red Bull after starting in the pit lane following a big crash in Saturday's qualifying.

Champions Bayern end campaign with 4-0 thrashing of Hoffenheim

Sinsheim, Germany - Champions Bayern Munich crushed hosts Hoffenheim 4-0 in the Bundesliga finale on Saturday as record-breaking Harry Kane was crowned the league's top striker for a second straight season.

Bayern had already secured the title two weeks ago but were ready to finish their title-winning season in style ahead of Sunday's planned title celebrations in central Munich.

It was the first club title for 31-year-old Kane and the first as Bayern coach for Vincent Kompany in his first season in charge.

Even though his team suffered a German Cup round of 16 exit and were eliminated in the Champions League quarter-finals, reclaiming domestic dominance after Bayer Leverkusen's double last season was top priority for the Bavarians.

Bayern were in control from the start and France international

Michael Olise whipped in a fierce free kick for a 33rd minute lead. He then turned provider, feeding Joshua Kimmich to power in their second goal eight minutes after the restart.

It was Olise's 15th assist of the season to top the league standings.

Kane was initially on the bench but hit the post in the second half before providing Serge Gnabry with an assist for Bayern's third goal.

The England captain, for whom the Bundesliga trophy was the first major title of his career, did find the target in the

Bayern Munich's Harry Kane scored 26 goals to emerge as Bundesliga's top striker for the second straight season



86th minute, slotting in from close range for his 26th league goal of the season.

He became the first player in Bundesliga history to be crowned top scorer in both his first two seasons.

"I always try to improve," Kane said after being handed the top scorer trophy. "But without teammates this would not be possible. I am enjoying this."

"The perfect end to a brilliant season. Thank you for your brilliant support, tomorrow we celebrate this title together," Kane later wrote on social

media ahead of Sunday's title celebrations.

Another record for Alonso

Bayer Leverkusen came from a goal down to rescue a 2-2 draw at hosts Mainz 05 in the Bundesliga finale on Saturday and hand departing coach Xabi Alonso another record as they went two league seasons without an away defeat.

Alonso is leaving after two-and-a-half years in charge - including a sensational domestic league and Cup double last season without one defeat - with reports linking him to a move to Real Madrid.

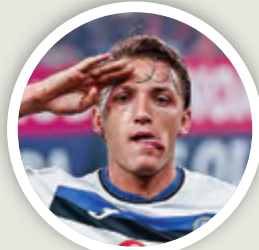
Mainz still managed a sixth place finish that gives them a berth in the Conference League.

Leverkusen have now gone without a league loss on the road for 34 consecutive games.

Retegui's last-gasp goal helps Atalanta edge Genoa

Genoa, Italy - A last-gasp goal by Mateo Retegui earned Atalanta a 3-2 win at Genoa in Serie A on Saturday as both teams played out an entertaining clash despite having nothing left to fight for.

Atalanta, who secured Champions League qualification when they beat AS Roma on Monday, are third on 74 points from 37 games, four points off leaders Napoli and three behind second-placed Inter Milan who both have a game in



Mateo Retegui

hand. Genoa sit 13th with 40 points.

Genoa took a surprise lead when striker Andrea Pinamonti nodded home in the 37th minute. Mattia Bani thought he had doubled the advantage for the hosts just before the break but VAR ruled the goal out for a handball.

Atalanta levelled after the interval through Ibrahim Sulemana, who shot from distance, before Pinamonti restored the lead for Genoa in the 58th minute with a low strike inside the near post.

Jasmine Paolini beats Gauff to win Italian Open

Rome, Italy - Jasmine Paolini became the first Italian woman to win the Italian Open in 40 years when she beat American world number three Coco Gauff 6-4 6-2 in the final on Saturday.

It was Paolini's biggest clay-court title and her second 1000-level crown, with the 29-year-old from Tuscany having won the Dubai Championships last year.

Triumph in Italy boosts Paolini as she prepares for the French Open, where she was runner-up last year. It starts on May 25.

Roared on by an adoring home crowd, Paolini became the first home player to win the women's title at the Italian Open after Raffaella Reggi in 1985.

"Congrats for the amazing



Jasmine Paolini celebrates with Italian Open trophy

week Coco. You reached finals so you're playing great. You are such a great player and a great person," Paolini said.

Gauff had won two of her previous three meetings with Paolini but the 2023 U.S. Open champion had no answers to the solid play of the Italian.

World number five Paolini came out all guns blazing to clinch a tight opening set in 54 minutes and then stepped up a gear to power ahead 3-0 in the next before sealing the win.

Gauff, who lost to world number one Aryna Sabalenka in the Madrid Open final earlier this month, racked up 55 unforced errors while a dominant Paolini won 76% of her first serves.

However, Gauff will still have lots of positives to take away from Rome, having knocked out China's Paris Olympic gold medallist Zheng Qinwen, Russian teenage sensation Mirra Andreeva and former U.S. Open champion Emma Raducanu on course to the final.

Paolini, meanwhile, can add another trophy to her cabinet when she plays the women's doubles final on Sunday alongside compatriot Sara Errani. The pair won doubles gold at the Paris Olympics.

"Congrats Jasmine on this incredible achievement. You're an incredible person and player. It's always tough playing you," Gauff said.



Royal Challengers Bengaluru fans had planned 'white' tribute to India batting great Virat Kohli, who announced his Test retirement last week, only for rain to play spoilsport

Rain dampens Bengaluru's tribute to Kohli as IPL returns

Bengaluru, India - The Indian Premier League match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Kolkata Knight Riders, which was to mark the tournament's resumption after the India-Pakistan ceasefire, was abandoned on Saturday due to rain without a ball being bowled.

With 12 matches left, the IPL was suspended on May 9 during conflict between India and Pakistan before a decision was taken to resume the tournament on Saturday following a ceasefire.

The final few matches will be played in Bengaluru, Jaipur, Delhi, Lucknow, Mumbai and Ahmedabad.

Rain left Bengaluru fans disappointed as they had planned to

transform the M Chinnaswamy Stadium into a sea of white to pay tribute to India batting great Virat Kohli, who announced his Test retirement last week.

Kohli, who brought down the curtain on a glorious 14-year career in the longest format, was set to make his first appearance since his retirement from red-ball cricket.

The washout gave Bengaluru one point, taking them back to the top of the table, but they have not yet guaranteed a play-off spot. Bengaluru will still need one more win from their remaining two games to seal a berth in the top four, while sixth-placed Kolkata have been eliminated from the tournament.

BRAR'S CALM HELPS KINGS BEAT ROYALS

Punjab close in on play off spot with win against Rajasthan

Jaipur, Rajasthan - The break in the IPL witnessed the departure of two huge pillars of Indian Test cricket. It resumed with a 23-year-old and a 14-year-old taking T20 batting to new heights. Yashasvi Jaiswal and Vaibhav Suryavanshi put on a 76-run opening partnership where 74 runs had come in boundaries. But even with that head start, it was heartbreak for Rajasthan Royals (RR) as they lost by 10 runs. Punjab Kings (PBKS) are now up to 17 points. They aren't assured of a playoffs spot just yet but it looks like a matter of time.

PBKS equalled an IPL record for most 200-plus totals in a season (6). They made 219 for 5. That it happened after they lost three wickets in the first 19 balls just added even more sheen to their achievement. The top-scorer Nehal Wadhwa (70 off 37) attended a mid-innings interview where he said his captain Shreyas Iyer had told him to keep hitting despite wickets falling and that mentality was the reason why they made the most of beautiful batting conditions.

Nobody was ready for how



Harpreet Brar (L) took three wickets for 22 runs to help Punjab Kings beat Rajasthan Royals

TODAY'S MATCH

MATCH 61

6 PM



LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS VS SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

the RR innings began. Jaiswal went 4, dot, 4, 4, 6, 4 in the very first over bowled by Arshdeep Singh. Suryavanshi wasn't lagging behind. From his place deep in his crease, and with the kind of power that doesn't really tally with his age, he found leverage to hit bowlers looking for his nose and his toes out of the park. RR were 51 for 0 in three overs. Fifty of those runs in fours and sixes. One run off a wide. RR put up

their highest powerplay total (89 for 1) in IPL history.

With the ball flying to all parts - and regular captain Shreyas Iyer subbed out to manage a finger injury - PBKS turned to Harpreet Brar (4-0-22-3) to see if pace off the ball would work. It did. Brar bowled one in the powerplay, got the benefit of a spread-out field after that, he still had to deal with a left-handed batter for most of his spell, noth-

ing fazed him. Because he was clear with what he wanted to do. If he went full, he was not going to give RR the chance to get under the ball. He offered no room either. If he went short, he bowled it quick and kept the stumps in play to deny the batter time to swing.

Riyan Parag found that out when the speed of his hands was no match for the skid of Brar's arm ball.

CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

Indian male with 20+ years of experience in FMCG(Food) in Oman and UAE looking for suitable position in Sales and Marketing. Qualification - MBA in Marketing and having Vaild D/L. Available to join immediately. Contact : 93649926

MEP Design Engineer with experience in Design Softwares and Calculations available on own visa. Contact: 99506977

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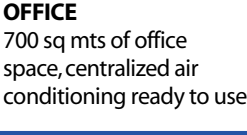




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STUDIO OMANA

STUDIO OMANA, IN JAWAHARAT AL SHATTI, IS AN INTERESTING OUTLET FOR UNIQUE, HANDCRAFTED DINNERWARE AND LIFESTYLE GOODS INTENDED FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN MAKING A STYLE STATEMENT



(Photos: V K Shaheen)

Dinner WINNERS

Hubert Vaz

An emerald green tea-set awaits a buyer who's hooked onto the benefits of emerald - luck and fortune - closely associated with the planet Mercury...translucent hand/mouth-blown vases hold on to tall stories that they have to share...a hand-painted tea cup with a little oriental man promises a mystical fancy for your morning cuppa... You have walked into a realm of experiences!

The store space is limited and what appears as a showroom window is ac-

Lunardon Monteiro, founder and creative director of Studio Omana.

"Our commitment to craftsmanship and attention to detail ensures that each space not only meets aesthetic standards but also enhances daily living. We believe that well-designed spaces have the potential to evoke emotions, stimulate creativity, and promote a sense of well-being," she explains.

In a free-wheeling chat, Theresa shares the essence of Studio Omana which focuses on providing human experiences rather than just household goods. Excerpts:



Living beautifully has always been a part of me, something I grew up with and hold dear

TERESA LUNARDON MONTEIRO

lery, luxurious table linens, and stunning vases, all designed to craft beautiful table settings. We are constantly seeking out new, heartwarming pieces that inspire us and resonate with the souls of our clients.

Who are your clients - upper crust of society or middleclass buyers?

Our boutique offers something for everyone. With a wide range of prices, our collection spans from more accessible treasures to luxurious pieces, ensuring there's something special for every taste and budget.

Are they any goods exclusive to your store that are not available elsewhere in Oman?

Most of our products are exclusive to our boutique, offering a unique selection that can't be found anywhere else in Oman.

Can you name some available brands?

Absolutely. Legle Limoges, Marie Daage, Lobmeyr, Kosta Boda, Orrefors and more.

Do you take bespoke orders?



tually the sum total of its existence. But, every item on display here has a story to tell, says the owner who insists that she sells 'experiences', not lifestyle goods.

Studio Omana, which opened in November 2023 in Jawaharat A'Shatti, features a stunning selection of homeware, particularly tableware, carefully sourced from around the globe. It has a distinctive range of products available for immediate purchase, while also curating items customised to suit clients' needs.

"Studio Omana strives to create environments that inspire and uplift. By blending artistic vision with functional design, we aim to enrich the lives of our clients and foster a deeper connection with their surroundings," says Theresa

What prompted you to start Studio Omana?

Studio Omana is a project that blooms from the depths of my heart and passion. Living beautifully has always been a part of me, something I grew up with and hold dear. To spread this vibrant way of life and inspire others to embrace it, feeling the transformative magic it brings, I founded the brand.

What defines your persona - are you creatively inclined, business-oriented or innovative, that it is manifest in your business?

I see myself as a creative spirit with a natural eye for beauty. When I seek out the perfect items or explore new products for the boutique, I'm always

led to the most stunning finds.

Did it all begin with a personal collection and a quest to look out for the best when travelling?

To be honest, travelling and the exposure that comes with it definitely influenced how I started the business, but living beautifully has been a part of my life since the day I was born.

What does the range of household goods on display comprise?

In our boutique, you'll discover a curated collection of treasures - from exquisite plates and delicate coffee cups to elegant glassware, stylish cut-

What makes your store different from other lifestyle stores around town?

The curated collection you see is entirely selected based on our personal taste, which is what gives it its unique character and charm.

Do you face stiff competition from the malls which score higher than you in logistics - procurement, display, after sales service?

While competition is always present, we choose to focus on what truly matters. We guide our business with our hearts and intuition, and it's this genuine, soulful approach that resonates deeply with our clients.

Yes, our product range gives us the flexibility to fully customise everything to our clients' needs and imaginations, creating bespoke table settings that are truly one-of-a-kind.

While we don't carry vintage items, we are always delighted to seek out bespoke pieces that are as unique and special as our clients' desires, creating a truly personalized experience.

How have you personally grown after starting this store?

The journey of building this business has been beautiful, filled with its fair share of challenges along the way. I would truly call it a path of self-development - one I embarked on from the very moment I started the business.