



HOSPITALITY CHAMPIONS 2024 ANNOUNCED
Service excellence feted

The Omani Hospitality Champions 2024 were announced at a ceremony jointly hosted by National Hospitality Institute and Apex Media at Sheraton Oman on Monday. Winners were awarded in 27 categories, including lifetime achievement which was presented to Ali al Wahaibi of Al Bustan Palace - A Ritz Carlton Hotel for his dedicated service in training Omani staff for the past 30 years. The awards were presented by chief guest Sulaiman al Harthi, CEO of Oman Arab Bank, under the patronage of H H Sayyid Tarik bin Shabib al Said, Director of Renaissance Services

Audit highlights convictions in public sector corruption cases

Our Correspondent
Muscat

State Audit Institution (SAI) has announced that 115 cases involving misuse of public funds were addressed in 2023. Convictions in these cases included prison sentences ranging from one month to ten years and fines of up to RO63,000.

The cases primarily involved violations such as bribery, forgery, embezzlement, abuse of office and conflicts of interest. According to the 2023 SAI Community Brief, of the total, 28 cases were referred to the Public Prosecution, while 22 are under investigation and 65 cases are pending from previous years.

Among the notable cases, the marketing and sales manager of

Oman Fisheries Company was convicted for money laundering and illegally benefiting from his position. He accepted bribes amounting to US\$5,400 and US\$794 from foreign companies, in addition to laundering US\$6,194 outside Oman. The manager was sentenced to ten years in prison and fined RO50,000, among other penalties, including deportation after serving his prison sentence.

The finance director of Oman Dates Production and Packaging Company embezzled RO63,535 for which the court sentenced him to one-year imprisonment, restitution of embezzled funds and additional fines. His co-conspirators were punished for participating in the embezzlement and received varying degrees of



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imprisonment and financial penalties.

A case at the former Public Authority for Social Insurance (now Social Protection Fund) involved forgery of an official document. A staff member forged a signature to transfer RO7,000 to his account for which he was sentenced to four years in prison.

In another significant case, a consulting company involved in the Al Batinah Expressway project facilitated illegal subcontracting, benefiting its owner and Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology employees. The conflict of interest and use of public positions for personal gain resulted in imprisonment, removal from office and confiscation of funds.

Additionally, a case at Muscat

Municipality involved an employee accepting a bribe of RO21,551 to register lease contracts with undervalued rates and bypass technical inspections for companies. The employee and co-conspirators were slapped with hefty fines, removed from office and imprisoned. Several accomplices were also convicted for their roles in forgery, bribery and misuse of public funds.

SAI's efforts in 2023 reflect continuing crackdown on corruption and misuse of public funds across government and private entities. The punitive actions highlight the importance of transparency and accountability in public office, sending a clear message that violations will be met with strict legal consequences.

EA's Thuraya al Sariri wins Arab Woman Excellence Award

Muscat - Dr Thuraya bint Saeed al Sariri, Assistant Director-General of Conservation at Environment Authority (EA), has been honoured with the prestigious Arab Woman Excellence Award.

The award recognises her significant contributions to environmental conservation across Arab countries and her dedicated efforts to promote sustainability.

Thuraya's work has earned her respect both in Oman and internationally. She has represented Oman in various global forums, including the International Coor-



dinating Council of the Man and Biosphere Programme of Unesco and the Unesco World Heritage Committee. She also serves as chair of the Specialised Group of Plant Experts for the Arabian Peninsula under the International Union for Conservation of Nature.



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You Are the Energy: New women award launched

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In recognition of the contributions of Omani women to the oil and gas sector, the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, in partnership with the Oman Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL) and leading energy companies, has launched the ‘You Are the Energy Award’.

The award will honour the innovations and achievements of women in the industry, particularly in advancing sustainability and clean energy initiatives.

The launch took place during the ministry’s celebration of Omani Women’s Day, held under the patronage of H H Sayyida Dr Mona bint Fahd bin Mahmoud al Said. The event was attended by H E Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, alongside senior officials and CEOs from



major companies in the oil and gas sector.

At the event, the role of women in the industry was highlighted, with a focus on the approximately 3,000 Omani women employed in various ca-

pacities, including 243 in leadership and supervisory roles. Women in the sector have excelled in both administrative and technical positions, with some leading operations in oil fields and power stations.

The event also recognised Omani women’s participation in leadership programmes such as the National CEO Programme 2024, underscoring the country’s commitment to preparing women for key leadership roles.

Omani women have been instrumental in driving national energy projects, including renewable energy ventures and innovations in gas exploration techniques. They have contributed to the development of refinery and petro-

The launch event saw participation from major energy companies, including PDO, OQ Group, Oman LNG, Occidental Oman, BP Oman, and others

chemical projects and the implementation of systems like the Change Management System and Advanced Radial Pump Monitoring.

Omani women’s achievements extend beyond national borders, with recognition in international forums and prestigious awards, including the Pioneering Women in Energy Award. Initiatives like the Shell Oman Women’s Network, the

Sidra National Youth Development Programme, and the Tasmu Initiative for Developing Leadership Competencies continue to support and empower women in the sector.

The event saw participation from major energy companies, including Petroleum Development Oman, OQ Group, Oman LNG, Occidental Oman, BP Oman, and others, highlighting a collaborative effort to promote women’s roles in the industry.

Discussion sessions were also held, focusing on women’s leadership in the oil and gas sector. Participants shared their experiences, addressing challenges related to career progression, work-life balance, and the importance of mentorship. The conversations emphasised the need for diversity and inclusion to ensure a sustainable future for women in the industry.

UTAS introduces new master’s programmes to support scientific research and innovation

Muscat - The University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS) has announced the launch of seven master’s programmes as part of its academic plan for 2024-25, aimed at strengthening its academic offerings and fostering a conducive environment for scientific research and innovation. The new programmes will be available from February 2025, with applications open to both Omani and international students.

Dr Saeed bin Hamad al Rubaie, President of UTAS, expressed optimism about the programmes, noting their alignment

with technological advancements and Oman Vision 2040. “By introducing these specialised programmes, we aim to adapt to evolving knowledge paradigms, foster research and innovation skills, and enhance leadership and communication abilities.”

UTAS will offer tuition-free scholarships for various master’s programmes, ensuring access to higher education for aspiring students from Oman and abroad.

Dr Fatima bint Abdullah al Muqbali, Dean of Graduate Studies at UTAS, highlighted the university’s commitment to enhancing educational quality.

She explained that the new graduate programmes are designed to foster scientific research, strengthen research capabilities, and prepare graduates to meet the demands of labour markets.

The university will launch six master’s programmes in February 2025, with another planned for the 2025-26 academic year. These programmes include Master’s in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages with specialisations in English for Academic and Special Purposes and Master’s in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages with Digital Education in the

Knowledge Society at the College of Education in Rustaq.

The College of Economics and Business Administration will offer Master’s of Business Administration in Leadership and Innovation, as well as Master’s of Science in Customs and Taxation. The College of Computer and Information Sciences will offer Master’s of Science in Digital Transformation and Innovation. The College of Engineering and Technology will provide Technical Master’s in Mining Operations Engineering and a Technical Master’s in Reliability and Maintainability Engineering.



RAM launches programme to develop govt leaders in GCC

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Royal Academy of Management (RAM) has announced a new programme, the ‘Future of Work in Government in GCC Countries’, aimed at enhancing leadership skills among the mid-level government professionals in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

This initiative has been taken to strengthen administrative practices and foster regional collaboration to achieve shared strategic goals.

Each of the six GCC countries will select ten participants for the programme, which seeks to prepare leaders for the evolving demands of governance, focusing on sustainability, human resource development, and innovative governance. The

programme aligns with the long-term visions of the Gulf nations, promoting regional cooperation in economic and administrative fields.

Dr Ali bin Qassim al Lawati, President of RAM, shared that the programme was developed in partnership with the GCC Secretariat General and the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford, following discussions at the 21st meeting of Directors General of Public Administration Institutes in the GCC. He added that the programme is based on a comprehensive study of the needs of mid-level leaders in the region and aims to equip them with the tools to implement national strategies.

“The programme reflects the GCC’s commitment to fostering cooperation across the region, focusing on shared economic and

administrative objectives,” Dr Lawati said. He emphasised the importance of the mid-level leaders in translating national strategies into practical outcomes and underscored the academy’s goal of becoming a leading centre for executive leadership and management in the Gulf.

The 15-week programme will offer both remote and in-person learning opportunities, including interactive workshops, field visits, and discussions with experts. It comprises ten modules tailored to address the specific needs and challenges faced by mid-level government managers. Participants will bring their experience from the public sector and contribute to the development of regional leadership, ensuring that government initiatives are effectively implemented and the national objectives are met.

إعلان مناقصة

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

SOHAR Port and Freezone invites National Companies and SMEs to the following tender

تدعو شركة ميناء صحر والمنطقة الحرة الشركات الوطنية العمالية والمؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة للمشاركة في المناقصة أدناه

No رقم	Tender Ref الرقم المناقصة	Tender Title عنوان المناقصة	Tender Fee OMR الرسوم
1	SIPC 2024 - 020	Provision of Services for the Supply, Manning, Management, Operation, and Maintenance of Pilot Boats at SOHAR Port	1050,000

• The above-mentioned tender fees including the VAT 5%.

• Tenderers can request to receive the electronic tender documents from 9:00 am on Sunday, 20/10/2024 until 4:00 pm on Sunday 13/11/2024.

• Last date for bid submission is on Sunday, 01/12/2024 (4:00 pm)

• Tenderers to follow the below procedures and steps to obtain the electronic tender documents:

Step 1: Interested Tenderers should remit the stated tender fees as per the below bank details:

Account Name اسم الحساب	SOHAR Industrial Port Co شركة ميناء صحر الصناعي
Account Number رقم الحساب	3101-007970-500
Bank Name اسم البنك	Oman Arab bank S.A.O.C - Main Br بنك عمان العربي، فرع صحر - فرع الرئيسي
SWIFT رمز المراسلة	OMABOMRUXXX

Note: Bank transfers is the only mode of payment accepted
ملاحظة: التحويل البنكي، هي الطريقة الوحيدة المقبولة للدفع

الخطوة الأولى: يجب على مقدمي العطاءات سداد رسوم المناقصة وفقاً للتفاصيل البنكية أدناه.

• تشمل رسوم المناقصة المذكورة أعلاه ضريبة القيمة المضافة وقدرها 5%.

• بإمكان مقدمي العطاءات طلب استلام وثائق المناقصة إلكترونياً ابتداءً من يوم الأحد الموافق 20/10/2024م (الساعة 9:00 صباحاً) وحتى يوم الأحد الموافق 13/11/2024م (الساعة 4:00 مساءً).

• آخر موعد لتقديم العطاءات يوم الأحد 01/12/2024م (الساعة 4:00 مساءً).

• على مقدمي العطاءات اتباع الإجراءات والخطوات التالية للحصول على مستندات المناقصة إلكترونياً.

الخطوة الثانية: يتعين على مقدمي العطاءات تقديم المستندات التالية:

- طلب الحصول على النسخة الإلكترونية من مستندات المناقصة
- نسخة من إيصالي التحويل البنكي
- أوراق تسجيل الشركة للشركة
- على أن يتم إرسالها إلى: sipc_procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

الخطوة الثالثة: سوف يستلم مقدمي العطاءات نسخة إلكترونية من مستندات المناقصة عبر البريد الإلكتروني.

- يحق لشركة ميناء صحر والمنطقة الحرة قبول أو رفض أي مورد دون إعطاء أسباب.
- يتوجب على جميع المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة تقديم بطاقة يادة إلى جانب مستندات الشركة أثناء استلامها من الرسوم.
- في حال وجود أي أسئلة أو استفسارات تتعلق بالمناقصة الرجاء التواصل معنا عبر البريد الإلكتروني: sipc_procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

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Nizwa transport hub set to boost tourism

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Dakhliyah took a major step to improve its transport infrastructure and boost tourism with the signing of investment agreements worth over RO7mn on Monday. Among the key projects is development of a modern transport hub in Nizwa, aimed at enhancing both commercial and tourist movement throughout the governorate.

The agreements were signed under the patronage of H E Saeed bin Hamood al Mawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, and are part of a broader strategy to promote economic growth and improve commercial services in the governorate. The agreements aim to foster public-private partnerships, attract investments and create job



(Supplied image)

opportunities for citizens.

The new public transport station, to be located in Nizwa's Farq area, will serve as a key infrastructure project combining a bus and taxi station, two business centres, a commercial cen-

tre and a secondary station for local transport. The station's design will blend modern functionality with traditional architectural elements, contributing to the area's unique character.

Sheikh Hilal bin Saeed al Hajri,

Governor of Dakhliyah, highlighted the project's potential to enhance the governorate's infrastructure, boost tourism and improve the overall quality of life for residents. He emphasised the government's focus on strength-

RO15mn for road infrastructure

Nizwa - Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology signed two agreements for road infrastructure development worth nearly RO15mn on Monday.

The first agreement is for completion of the Saih Qatna Road project in Jabal Akhdar at a cost of RO4mn, while the second agreement involves restoration of the Bidbid-Nizwa Road at an estimated cost of RO10.5mn.

The agreements were formalised by H E Saeed bin Hamood al Mawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, with CEOs of implementing companies.

On the occasion, H E Mawali highlighted the fact that these agreements are a result of cooperative efforts involving the Governorate of Dakhliyah, Oman Investment Authority and his ministry.

safe transport services that connect Dakhliyah with other governorates and support economic development.

The transport hub is expected to operate intercity bus routes in partnership with local operators, improving connectivity and facilitating more efficient movement of tourists and goods.

In addition to the transport hub, the agreements include leasing of sites for advertising platforms in key locations across the wilayats of Nizwa, Samail, Al Hamra, Manah, Adam, Bidbid, Izki, Jabal Akhdar and Bahla for a duration of five years.

Governor Hajri also stressed the importance of tapping into Dakhliyah's cultural and geographical diversity to create an appealing environment for investment and innovation in alignment with Oman Vision 2040.

Municipality to undertake safety audit of Amerat-Bausher Road

Muscat - Muscat Municipality has floated a tender for consultancy services to conduct a comprehensive road safety audit of Amerat-Bausher Road, addressing persistent safety concerns that have plagued the mountain pass, especially during heavy rains.

The road safety audit is expected to provide an in-depth study and help implement advanced traffic safety measures, improve road geometry and surface drainage, and incorporate effective traffic control devices.

The audit is crucial considering the road is frequently damaged during inclement weather, leading to temporary closure for safety reasons. Commuters have expressed frustration over this recurring problem and called for a permanent solution, such as construction of a tunnel to connect the two wilayats of Amerat and Bausher.



Royal Oman Police has been proactive in ensuring safety by closing the road during adverse weather conditions and following accidents. However, these closures lead to significant traffic congestion on alternative routes, including Amerat-Wadi Adai Road, highlighting the urgent need for an effective solution.

The tender, categorised under urban engineering and civil engineering consultancy, aims to attract first- and second-grade vendors to propose strategies that will enhance road safety and improve overall traffic management. Tender documents can be purchased until November 7, with bids due by November 26.

MHT invites bids for management of Barka Castle

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT) has floated a tender for the management and operations of Barka Castle in South Batinah.

The strategic location of the governorate along the Sea of Oman and its significant population make it a key area in Oman's overall development process.

A prominent tourist attraction, Barka Castle was constructed in the mid-17th century during the reigns of Saif bin Sultan al Yarubi and Hamad bin Saeed al Busaidi. Bait al Nuaman Fort, another historical landmark in Barka, also dates back to the 17th century.



'The ministry is looking for partnerships with private sector companies for the development and management of the heritage site,' MHT said in a statement.

The ministry informed that participating companies should submit a study that includes ways to market the site commercially and culturally, suggest

ideas for cultural workshops and artistic events, and activities to revive the heritage site.

Participating companies must also highlight the architectural uniqueness of the castle and involve the local community in cultural and social events, the ministry added. Deadline for submission of bids is December 19.



صندوق غراس الوقفي للاستثماري
Gheras Endowment Investment Fund



Capital
الغراس كابيتال

**The Chairman's Report
For the Period ending September 30th, 2024**

The primary objective of the fund is to achieve capital appreciation and protection through a diversified, low-risk portfolio through investments in fixed income instruments and Sharia-compliant stocks at GCC Markets and MENA region.

A summary of financial results is as follows:

Figure 1	For the Period ending June 30th, 2024 (OMR)	For the Period ending Sept 30th, 2024 (OMR)
Total Income	108,003	128,063
Total Expenses	(23,395)	(38,183)
Profit (Loss) for the Year/Period	84,608	89,900
Basic profit (loss) per unit	0.059	0.063
Profit (Loss) per Unit for the /Period	1.059	1.063

Fund Performance:
For the period ending September 30th, 2024 the performance of Gheras Fund is as follows:

Figure 2:	For the Period ending June 30th, 2024	For the Period ending Sept 30th, 2024
Net Asset Value (OMR)	1,510,588	1,532,432
Number of Outstanding Units	1,425,980	1,441,709
Net Asset Value per Unit	1.059	1.063
Gheras Performance for the Year/Period	5.93%	6.29%
Benchmark* Performance for the /Period	0.28-%	4.58%

*The blended benchmark index comprises of a 70% weight given to S&P GCC Sukuk index during the period and 30% weight for the performance of the S&P GCC Shariah Index (for equities).

Gheras Fund achieved a 6.29% return, as of 30th September 2024, resulting in a NAV of RO 1.063 per unit. This compares with an increase in the blended benchmark index, for the fund, comprising of S&P GCC Shariah Index (for equities) and S&P GCC Sukuk Index, equating to 4.58% and resulting in an outperformance of 1.71%.

Market Performance
Figure A: Index Returns

Index	September 30th, 2024 (OMR)
Boursa Kuwait	4.7%
Dubai Financial Market	10.9%
Saudi Stock Exchange (Tadawul)	2.2%
Bahrain Bourse	2.1%
Muscat Stock Exchange	4.3%
S&P GCC SHARIAH Index	0.91%
S&P GCC SUKUK INDEX	3.67%
BLENDED BENCHMARK INDEX	4.58%
Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange	-1.6%
Qatar Exchange	-2%

Economy and Markets

The third quarter of 2024 experienced significant fluctuations in regional markets due to volatility in oil prices and geopolitical tensions. Additionally, the Federal Reserve reduced the interest rate by 50 basis points in a single move, as the probability of further rate cuts by 25 basis points each during the November and December 2024 meetings diminished due to inflation concerns. Furthermore, recent economic data and Chinese economic stimulus have been the driving forces behind the rise in global commodity prices. Moreover, escalating regional geopolitical tensions have led to an upward shift in the oil futures curve.

In the GCC, there is a possibility of scaling back some large mega projects which are likely to impact staffing services firms. However, reconstruction activities in Riyadh and Jeddah will cushion the impact of this scale back. The non-oil sectors across various Middle Eastern economies are showing promising signs of growth beyond initial economic forecasts. In particular, Saudi Arabia's non-oil GDP is poised for acceleration driven by robust Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) readings. This uptick is expected to be supported by heightened activities within the wholesale and retail trade sectors as well as in construction and transportation throughout the fourth quarter. Similarly, the UAE's non-oil GDP is anticipated to experience modest expansion with key contributions from its financial services sector alongside advancements in logistics and technology industries. Meanwhile, Qatar's non-oil GDP growth is projected to maintain a steady pace

predominantly fueled by its financial sector which will likely be complemented by gains across manufacturing, service industries, real estate ventures, tourism initiatives as well as wholesale and retail operations. Lastly, Kuwait's non-oil GDP indicates signs of resurgence with new export orders on an upward trajectory coupled with a surge in construction activities related to the Silk City project which has led to increased demand for machinery, building materials and labor.

From an overall perspective, risk aversion owing to geo-political perspective is likely to drive sentiments in the regional and global stock markets as the geopolitical escalation remains a concern.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Fund Management Body, I extend my thanks to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq bin Taimur for his government's progressive policies and constant encouragement to the financial services sector.

I also take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, FSA, MSX & MCD for their support and cooperation, our valued unitholders, members of the Fund Management Body for their valuable time and guidance, for your continued support and trust and the fund manager and service providers for their efforts.

On behalf of the Fund Management Body
Chairman
Gheras Endowment Investment Fund
Rabi Al Thanhi 14th, 1446AH - October 17th, 2024

Statement of financial position As 30 September 2024

	30 September 2024
INCOME	
Dividend income	11,093
Net realized gain on investments at:	
fair value through profit or loss	66,164
Fair value changes in investments at:	
fair value through profit or loss	6,500
Profit from wakala call account	42,306
	128,063
Expenses	
Brokerage commission	7,475
Management fee	9,792
Administration and custodian service fee	3,661
General and administration	17,255
	38,183
Net profit and total comprehensive income for the period	89,900
Net profit per unit	0.063

**Statement of profit or loss for the period ended
30 September 2024**

	30 September 2024
ASSETS	
Investments at fair value through profit or loss	1,162,400
Cash and cash equivalents	374,705
Receivables	10,406
Total assets	1,567,511
LIABILITIES	
Current liabilities	
Accruals and other payables	35,079
Total liabilities	35,079
Total net assets attributable to the Unitholders	1,532,432
Net asset value per unit	1.063

For more information please contact:
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24949043/014, Fax: +968 24949099, Email: gheras@u-capital.net, Web: www.u-capital.net

MARKET WATCH

MSX30	4,799.89
Sensex	81,151.27

FOREX RATES

(RO1 equals)	
India	218.40
Pakistan	721.92
Bangladesh	310.34
Philippines	149.71
Sri Lanka	761.43

*Rates as on October 21
Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

Italy looking to become hydrogen hub

Italy is aiming to produce hydrogen but, "above all" to become a low-carbon hydrogen hub for its transfer from North Africa to Europe, Environment Minister Gilberto Fratin told an international energy conference.

"We are working to become not only producers, but, above all a point of reference for the transfer of hydrogen from North Africa to Europe," said Gilberto Fratin, who addressed the Venice Hydrogen Forum 2024: The Mediterranean Forum on Hydrogen at the weekend.

According to the Adnkronos news agency, the Forum was organised by the Venice Capital of the World Sustainability Foundation (VSF) and the Green Hydrogen Organisation.

Lulu to sell 25% stake in Abu Dhabi IPO

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Lulu Retail Holdings, the largest and fastest-growing pan-GCC full-line retailer, announced its intention on Monday to proceed with an initial public offering (IPO) of 25% of its total issued shares, to be listed on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX).

In the IPO, a total of 2,582,226,338 ordinary shares, each with a nominal value of \$0.014 (equivalent to AED0.051), will be sold by Lulu Retail's sole shareholder, Lulu International Holdings Limited, according to a public announcement made by the group. The final offer price will be determined through a book-building process.

The IPO will comprise three tranches. The offering will be made available to UAE retail investors, including eligible employees of the Lulu Group, as part of the UAE retail offering; to professional investors as part of the qualified investor offering; and to eligible senior executives of the group as part of the senior executives offering.

The subscription period will open on October 28 and close on November 5 for UAE retail investors, professional investors, and eligible senior executives. Admission of Lulu Retail shares to trading on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange is expected to take place on or



IPO subscription period will open on October 28 and close on November 5. Admission of Lulu Retail shares to trading on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange is expected to take place on or around November 14

around November 14.

Commenting on the offering, Yusuffali MA, Chairperson of Lulu Retail, said, "It's with immense pride that we announce the planned IPO of Lulu Retail on ADX, bringing to market the largest pan-GCC full-line retailer by selling space, sales, and number of stores. We founded Lulu in 1974 with the ambition to introduce and embed organised retail in the UAE and a commitment to create a shopping experience

that customers would love and remain loyal to. We have exceeded our own expectations, and today Lulu operates more than 240 stores across six GCC countries. Integral to our growth is the vision and ambition of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and the other GCC nations, where strong national leadership is enabling positive demographic and consumption trends and driving impressive economic growth. We look forward to welcoming

new shareholders to Lulu and are sure they will share our passion for the company and excitement for the future."

Saifee Rupawala, CEO of Lulu Retail, said, "Lulu is a brand synonymous with retail in the GCC, and we're incredibly proud to launch our IPO. Over the past 50 years, we have grown from one store in Abu Dhabi to the largest pan-GCC retailer by market share and the fastest-growing player of scale in Saudi Arabia.

Every day, Lulu serves more than 600,000 shoppers, enabled by our unmatched international sourcing network across 85 countries, ensuring we are deeply rooted in all GCC markets.

"Our scale is combined with a track record of delivering robust revenue growth, attractive profit margins, and a well-defined growth strategy built around enhancing and delivering greater value from our existing stores, expanding our store network, delivering operational efficiencies, and growing our high-value private label and loyalty programs."

Lulu Retail is targeting a total dividend payout ratio of 75% of annual distributable profits after tax, paid semi-annually. The

company anticipates that a dividend for the six months ended December 31, 2024, will be paid in the first half of 2025.

Lulu Retail, together with its subsidiaries, operates more than 240 hypermarket, express, and mini-market stores across the six GCC countries. The group holds the top position in modern offline grocery retail in the GCC region, capturing a 13.5% share of the GCC modern offline grocery market in 2023. It had a total selling space of approximately 1.3mn sqm as of December 31, 2023, which is approximately three times larger than the average selling space of Lulu's publicly listed competitors in the GCC region.



MoU signed to explore joint projects between Duqm, Jordan's Aqaba Zone

Duqm - In a bid to enhance cooperation between Oman and Jordan in various economic fields, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority of Jordan. The signing ceremony took place in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD).

The MoU was signed on behalf of the OPAZ by H E Ahmed bin Hassan al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of the OPAZ, while H E Nayef Hamidi al Fayez, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority, signed on behalf of the Jordanian side.

The MoU covers cooperation in several areas of mutual economic interest, including attracting investments to special economic zones and exchanging knowledge and expertise regarding the laws, regulations, and procedures associated with the management, operation, and development of special economic zones in both countries.

Both parties will explore the possibility of establishing joint projects to enhance and develop cooperation between

them, in addition to working together to create an international institutional framework for the zones in both countries, aiming to enhance their competitiveness and cooperation across various fields.

The MoU stipulates the exchange of experiences between both countries in managing, operating, and de-

MoU covers cooperation in several areas of mutual economic interest, including attracting investments to special economic zones and exchanging knowledge and expertise

veloping special economic zones in areas such as urban planning, facilities management, and the investment environment, including smart city applications and their potential implementation in the zones overseen by each party, while benefiting from each other's expertise in this regard.

Moreover, the MoU aims to

collaborate on data and information exchange relevant to the management, financing, execution, and operation of infrastructure projects according to the applicable investment regulations in both countries.

It also encompasses areas of cooperation in implementing joint promotional programmes and coordinating regional and international conferences and seminars related to investment activities in special economic zones, along with exchanging experiences and practices in training employees within these zones and sharing studies and research on the experiences of special economic zones.

In the logistics sector, the MoU specifies the direct and indirect coordination to utilise transportation, storage, and distribution facilities to open new export channels and increase the volume of exports from the special economic zones of both countries to regional and international markets at the lowest possible costs.

On the sidelines of the MoU signing, the Jordanian delegation visited prominent existing projects in the SEZAD, such as Duqm Port, the dry dock, and the Karwa automotive factory.

CBO raises RO55mn via treasury bills

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Central Bank of Oman (CBO), on behalf of the Ministry of Finance, has raised RO55.4mn by issuing four tenders of government treasury bills this week.

The value of treasury bills allocated for a maturity period of 28 days amounted to RO10mn. The average accepted price and minimum accepted price both reached RO99.660 per RO100 bill. The average discount rate and average return were 4.43214% and 4.44726%, respectively.

The value of treasury bills allocated for a maturity period of 91 days amounted to RO1mn. The average accepted price and minimum accepted price both reached RO98.845 for each RO100 bill. The average discount rate and average return were



4.63269% and 4.68683%, respectively.

Moreover, the value of treasury bills allocated for a maturity period of 182 days amounted to RO29.4mn. The average accepted price reached RO97.643, while the minimum accepted price was RO97.640 per RO100 bill. The average discount rate and average return for this tender were 4.72615% and

4.84021%, respectively.

On the other hand, the value of the treasury bills allocated for a maturity period of 364 days amounted to RO15mn, with an average accepted price and minimum accepted price of RO95.390 for each RO100 bill. For this tender, the average discount rate and average return rate were 4.62266% and 4.84607%, respectively.

The statement issued by the Central Bank of Oman indicated that the interest rate on repo operations with the central bank for these treasury bills is 5.50%, while the repo rate with CBO's discounting facility is 6.00%.

Treasury bills are short-term guaranteed financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance to provide investment outlets for licensed commercial banks, with the Central Bank of Oman acting as the issuance manager for these bills.

Licensed commercial banks can also conduct repo operations among themselves on treasury bills in the interbank market. In addition, treasury bills contribute to creating a yield curve for short-term interest rates in the local financial market, and the government can utilize them to finance some of its expenses in a smooth and flexible manner.

Oil prices increase after 7% weekly loss amid growing Middle East tensions

Muscat - After nearly 7% decline during last week, oil prices increased on Monday amid news reports that Israel is preparing a major attack on Iran in response to Tehran's missile attack on October 1.

The international oil benchmark of Brent crude increased 0.4% to \$73.13 per barrel in morning trade in London, up from the previous session's close of \$72.87. The US benchmark West Texas Intermediate also rose by 0.5% to \$69.09 per barrel, compared to \$68.78 at the prior session's close.

Tension between Israel and Iran soared after recent attacks, pushing prices higher.

According to Israeli state television KAN, an Israeli official whose name was not disclosed revealed that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant will decide in a Security Cabinet



meeting later in the day on when and how the attack will take place.

Also, the US obtained leaked classified documents about Israel's retaliation plans against Iran. US President Joe Biden said Friday that he knows how and when Israel will carry out its attack on Iran as Tehran warns it will respond "decisively."

According to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) monthly report,

Iran increased its oil production by 21,000 barrels per day to 3.31mn barrels, which was the highest increase among OPEC members in September.

The possibility of Israel attacking the country supported the upward price movement, feeding the supply concerns among market players.

In addition, analysts expect the contraction in the real estate sector and housing market in China, the world's biggest oil im-

porter, to lessen.

Oil prices were nursing their worst week since early-September, as concerns over slowing demand, especially in top importer China, weighed on sentiment.

China announced its most targeted stimulus measures yet in the past month. But the measures inspired middling confidence among traders, given that Beijing did not provide details on the scale and timing of the planned measures.

The People's Bank of China cut its benchmark loan prime rate slightly more than expected on Monday, although the move appeared to have provided little confidence to markets.

Data on Friday showed China's economy grew at its slowest pace since early-2023 during the third quarter, keeping concerns over a demand slowdown squarely in play.

Agencies

Tina Teng

Precious metals, particularly gold and silver, have surged to new record highs as demand for safe havens increased due to global economic uncertainties, the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, and a tight race in the US elections.

Meanwhile, major central banks worldwide have largely begun easing monetary policy and cutting interest rates, with gold responding strongly to decisions by the US's Federal Reserve. On Monday, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) cut its benchmark mortgage rates by more than expected in a bid to boost the economy, driving commodity prices, including gold and silver, higher.

The spot gold price rose by 0.32% to \$2,730 per ounce, while gold futures on the Comex climbed 0.59% to \$2,746 per ounce on Monday, both reaching new record highs for the fourth consecutive trading day. Silver futures soared by 3.12% to \$34.30 per ounce, also hitting a new record.

China lowered its 1-year and 5-year Loan Prime Rates (LPR) by 0.25% to record lows of 3.10% and 3.60%, respectively, in an effort to revive its economy as a part of stimulus measures announced roughly a month ago. Although the cuts were widely anticipated, the depth of the reduction, slightly exceeding the expected



0.2%, took markets by surprise. Metal prices may have reacted to the decision and rose further following the news.

In fact, both gold and silver prices surged on Friday when PBOC Governor Pan Gongsheng spoke at a financial forum, indicating that the benchmark lending rates would be reduced by 0.2% to 0.25%. He also noted that the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) - the amount of cash banks must hold - would be lowered by a further 0.25% to 0.5% by the end of the year.

Precious metal prices do not typically respond to China's

monetary policy. However, the movements may suggest that investors tend to react to any banks' rate-cutting decisions as falling interest rates make it less costly to invest in precious metals during times of uncertainty.

The European Central Bank (ECB) also implemented its widely expected third rate cut of the year last month. Investors have been piling up safe-haven assets, especially gold, as a means of preserving value amid rising geopolitical tensions. Silver typically follows gold's trend, albeit with more volatility.

Financial markets are closely monitoring the potential for fur-

ther escalation in the conflict between Israel and the Iran-backed Lebanese group. Meanwhile, the US presidential election on November 5 is shaping up to be a close race between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, according to recent polls.

Kelvin Wong, senior market analyst at Oanda, believes gold's uptrend has been "reinforced indirectly" by "rising odds of Trump winning the election".

A Trump victory could introduce further uncertainty into the global economy, with implications for US tariffs on goods from China and Europe, the ongoing war in Ukraine, and surging US government debt.

Wong commented: "Given that Trump's 'generous' corpo-

rate tax cut proposal (from 21% to 15%) will likely further widen the US federal deficit, the market may begin to question the creditworthiness of the US government, potentially eroding confidence in US Treasuries and strengthening gold."

However, a potential Trump win may also strengthen the US dollar and cap gold gains due to the negative correlation between the dollar and gold prices.

Dilin Wu, research strategist from Peperstone, told Euronews: "With Trump now significantly ahead of Harris in betting markets, the 'Trump trade' - often associated with a stronger dollar - continues to weigh on gold's upside potential."



Dubai, UAE – Emirates has placed a firm order for five more Boeing 777 freighters to be delivered from 2025-2026. Together with its previous orders, Emirates now has 14 Boeing 777Fs pending delivery from Boeing from now until end 2026.

In addition, Emirates has signed a multi-year lease extension with Dubai Aerospace Enterprise for four Boeing 777Fs in its existing fleet. Based on these investments, by December 2026, Emirates SkyCargo expects to operate a fleet of 21 production-built Boeing 777 freighters, significantly expanding its current fleet of 11 units.

Emirates also remains invested in converting 10 passenger Boeing 777-300ERs into freighters for further capacity and fleet growth.

Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, said, "We're investing in new freighter aircraft to meet surging demand and provide our customers around the world with even more flexibility, connectivity, and options to leverage market



إعلان طرح مناقصة

تعلن الشركة العمانية لنقل الكهرباء ش.م.ع.م عن طرح المناق: التالية:

Participation	Interested Companies may obtain Tender Document with the necessity Apply on E-Tendering
Buying the Tender	By E-Tendering System.
Fees	Against non-refundable payment as mentioned above against each set of document. (Payment Through Bank Transfer), SMEs are exempted from tender's fees.
The deadline for clarification	Before (21) Days from bid submission date.
Submission	The submission of hard copy will be only for Bid Bond & other documents by E-Tendering
Terms and conditions	- Specifying the name of the Company or whatever refers to in the Bid Guarantee Envelope. - The bid should be valid for not less than (90) days from bid submission date. - The Tenderers should enclose a bank guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of 1% of the bid value and should be valid for (90) days from bid submission date, addressed to Oman Electricity Transmission Company (SAOC). Small & Medium Enterprises are exempted from the submission of 1% of the bid bond. - Any bid not comply with the required guarantee will not be accepted. - OETC is not bound to accept the lowest or any other offers.
Offer	The bid bond should be submitted in Tender Box No. (1) at the company's building before 11:00 am on the assigned date for submission of the Tenders.
Company Address	Muscat - Al Mawaleh Road No: 2153 - Building No. 423 0 Block No: 321 Contact Details: 91491551
Email Website	tenders@omangrid.com www.omangrid.com / link of E-Tendering System https://www.omangrid.com/en/Pages/Services.aspx

الاشتراك الإلكتروني	يمكن للشركات والمؤسسات المتخصصة الحصول على مستندات المناقصة بعد تقديم الطلب عن طريق نظام المنافص الإلكتروني
طريقة الشراء	من خلال نظام التنافص الإلكتروني.
الرسوم	مفيل دفع المبلغ المحدد أعلاه للنسخة الواحدة ، لا ترد. (الدفع عن طريق التحويل البنكي،) تُعفى المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة من دفع ثمن الوثيقة.
آخر موعد للاستفسارات	قبل (٢١) يوم من تاريخ آخر موعد لتقديم العطاءات
تقديم العرض	يتم تسليم النسخة الأصلية فقط من الضمان البنكي للعطاء في الصندوق، أما العرض فيتم تسليمه من خلال نظام المنافص الإلكتروني.
الشروط والضمائم	• تحديد اسم صاحب العطاء أو ما يشير إليه على المظروف. • أن تكون العروض سارية المفعول لمدة لا تقل عن (٩٠) يوما من تاريخ تقديم العطاء. • إرفاق تأمين في صورة ضمان مصرفي من أحد البنوك العاملة في البلاد قدره (١١) من قيمة العطاء ساري لمدة (٩٠) يوما من تاريخ تقديم العطاء. ومعتمداً باسم الشركة المعنية لنقل الكهرباء، تُعفى المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة من تسليم الضمان المصرفي. • كل عطاء لا يستوفي التأمين المطلوب لن ينظر فيه. • الشركة المعنية لنقل الكهرباء غير مقيدة بقبول أقل العروض أو أي عطاء آخر.
العرض المقدم	يجب وضع الضمان البنكي للعطاء فقط في صندوق المناقصات رقم (١) بمبنى الشركة قبل الساعة ١١ صباحاً من التاريخ المحدد لتقديم العطاءات
عنوان الشركة	عنوان الشركة، محافظة مسقط - الموالح رقم السكة ٢١٥٣، مبنى رقم، ٤٢٣ رقم التواص: ٩١٤٩١٥٥١
البريد الإلكتروني والموقع الإلكتروني	tenders@omangrid.com www.omangrid.com / Link of E-Tendering System https://www.omangrid.com/en/Pages/Services.aspx

MHD ITICS launches realme C61 with up to 24GB RAM, massive battery life

MHD ITICS - the authorised distributor of realme, a rapidly expanding global brand in the smartphone space - recently launched the cutting-edge realme C61 model across the Oman market.

This robust and elegant smartphone boasts an industry-best battery life, with an industry leading 24 months warranty on the device.

realme C61 is designed to empower you to live life to the fullest, allowing you to take stunning photos while enjoying smooth, responsive productivity, games, and media - all in a slim, fashionable, and affordable phone.

Designed for the youth and other dynamic users, the realme 61 is one of the most durable mobile; with an IP54 dust and water resistance rating, it can weather the numerous challenges of a hectic lifestyle. "It's a device you can trust, no matter where you are or what you're doing."

Battery life: The C61 comes with an innovative long-term battery, ensuring that it retains a significant portion of its original capacity, even after four years of regular use and it can also power through two full days on a single charge.

The screen: It is designed for pleasing eye comfort, providing a crisp display that enhances re-



sponsiveness to scrolling, animations, and transitions, making it suitable for various activities such as watching series, gaming, or browsing social feeds.

The camera: The C61's 50MP camera sensor is a high-resolution device that captures detailed, sharp images with rich colours and excellent dynamic

range. It allows for vivid video and photo capture for preserving memories and easily sharing them on social media.

Innovative features: realme C61 improves your user experience through a variety of innovative artificial intelligence capabilities and technology. With the Air Gestures control function, you

can answer and mute calls or switch between video streams on social media without touching your device, which is ideal when both hands are occupied.

AI noise reduction: It intelligently detects, isolates, and suppresses background noise, improving call quality in noisy environments like wind, traffic, or chatter.

AI boost engine: The AI boost engine dynamically optimizes the performance of your phone based on what you're doing at any given time. Smooth Boost and Game Boost optimise the system's resources to match the needs of various workloads.

realme C61, which comes in dazzling gold and dark green,

makes a dramatic fashion statement. Premium materials and sophisticated production techniques work together to create a device that is both visually appealing and tactilely satisfying.

Harsh Vardhan Shukla, realme Country Manager for Oman, said, "C61 is a smartphone that will be your compan-

ion for many years, offering plenty of storage for your media, an unprecedented battery guarantee, and the performance you need to multitask across your favourite personal and work apps. All this power comes packed into a phone thinner than 10 credit cards stacked together."

BankDhofar opens 4 varsity branches

BankDhofar continues its strategic plan to expand its branch network in order to provide the best banking services and establish a close relationship with its customers.

Following this practice, the bank recently opened new branches in four different universities, namely Al Sharqiyah University, Nizwa University, Sohar University and Al Buraimi University.

These branches serve a large number of students and employees on campus, saving them time and effort in light of university life and its many demands, as BankDhofar offers special accounts for women and youth that provide comprehensive banking solutions, exclusive offers at many stores, and various digital services. A vertical purple card has also been designed exclusively for women.

The branch of Al Sharqiyah University in Ibra was opened under the patronage of Profes-



sor Fouad Shadid, President of Al Sharqiyah University, while the branch of Sohar University was opened under the patronage of Dr Hamdan bin Suleiman al Fazari, President of Sohar University. Hamdan bin Suleiman al Fazari, President of Sohar University, while the opening of the branch of Nizwa University was

sponsored by Professor Ahmed bin Khalfan al Rawahi, President of Nizwa University, while the branch of Al Buraimi University was opened under the patronage of Yousef bin Abdul Rahim al Farsi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al Buraimi University.

Al Sharqiyah University is one

of the most important universities in Oman, with about 8,000 students in 2024 enrolled in various majors such as Engineering, Applied Health Sciences, Business Administration and Literature, Humanitarian Sciences, Law and others.

Sohar University is the first private university in the Sul-

tanate of Oman and was established in September 2001. It includes five faculties: Business Administration, Computer and Information Technology, Education and Arts, Engineering, Language Studies, and Law.

Nizwa University received its first batch of students in October 2004, and the university includes 66 specialisations at diploma, bachelor and master levels. As for Al Buraimi University, it was established in 2010 and includes various academic programs at the diploma, higher diploma, bachelor and master levels.

Talib Mohammed al Hajri, AGM Interior Branches at BankDhofar, said, "The opening of these branches is an important step in the bank's strategy to strengthen its branch network and equip them with various modern technologies in line with the international banking standards." He said the bank will open more branches in different locations across Oman.



Omantel's Extended Reality Bootcamp ignites innovations among tech talents

Omantel successfully concluded its highly anticipated Extended Reality Bootcamp, a five-day event that brought together some of the brightest youth tech minds from across Oman.

Delivered by the Omantel Innovation Labs, Omantel's startup support arm, the bootcamp was held at Omantel HQ from October 6 to October 10, with the aim to foster innovation and cultivate a thriving community of Extended Reality (XR) enthusiasts.

Omantel's Extended Reality Bootcamp was a hands-on immersion into the exciting world of Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and Mixed Reality (MR). After an extensive selection process, 37 participants were selected to take part in an intensive learning experience, designed to introduce innovative spatial computing technologies and their applications across multiple industries.

"Omantel is proud to lead the way in empowering our local tech community. This bootcamp is part of our contribution towards positioning Oman as a hub for digital innovation," said H H Al

Sayidda Ghada al Said, Senior Manager at Omantel Innovation Labs. "By offering opportunities like this, we aim to bridge the gap between emerging technologies and our talented innovators, propelling Oman into a future driven by immersive tech."

Participants explored the tools and technologies behind AR, VR, and MR, creating early prototype concepts and interacting directly with industry experts. Among the featured speakers were Jawdat Shammass, a digital pioneer with over 25 years of experience in spatial computing, Tolgay Hickiran, a Unity-certified AR/VR professional, and Juan Gabriel Gomila Salas, a global leader in AR/VR education, along with other distinguished innovators. Their sessions offered in-depth knowledge and real-world insights into the future of immersive technologies.

By equipping participants with essential XR skills, Omantel is laying the foundation for Omani tech entrepreneurs to shape the future across industries such as gaming, education, and healthcare.

South Korean embassy to organise taekwondo cup

The 4th Taekwondo Championship for the Korean Ambassador's Cup - to be co-hosted by the South Korean embassy and the Oman Taekwondo Committee (OTC) - will take place at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex on October 25 and 26.

According to the OTC, Omani taekwondo players and clubs are showing great enthusiasm for this year's event as it has resumed after the postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the committee expects over 200 players from various clubs of Oman.

Al Khaboura college team visits Zubair EDC

The Zubair Enterprises Development Centre (Zubair EDC), a social initiative by The Zubair Corporation recently welcomed a distinguished delegation from Al Khaboura Vocational College, comprising of both students and faculty members, for an educational and insightful visit aimed at fostering entrepreneurial growth and knowledge exchange.

The event commenced with a detailed presentation by Zubair EDC, highlighting the centre's key services and its ongoing commitment to nurturing entrepreneurship in Oman. The presentation provided an overview of Zubair EDC's entrepreneurship development programmes and support initiatives - aligned with Oman Vision 2040 to promote innovation and sustainable business growth.

During the session, particular



emphasis was placed on the essential traits needed to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset. Zubair EDC reinforced its mission to empower aspiring entrepreneurs, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to succeed in an evolving business landscape.

"The Zubair Enterprises Development Centre is dedicated to

empowering the next generation of Omani entrepreneurs," said Maryam al Busaidi, Customer Service Officer at Zubair EDC.

"By creating opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaboration, we are actively contributing to the growth of a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem, in line with Oman's Vision 2040. The visit from Al Khaboura Voca-

tional College exemplifies our commitment to supporting young talent and fostering innovation in the sultanate."

As part of the visit, the delegation was given an exclusive tour of Oasis Water, a subsidiary of The Zubair Corporation. A representative from Oasis Water guided the group through the production line.

OMANI WOMEN'S DAY



Sohar Aluminium holds 'A Work-Life Harmony' workshop

Sohar Aluminium Company (SA) celebrated the annual Omani Women's Day, under the theme 'Glorious, Successful and Brilliant', reflecting the company's commitment to recognising the vital role that women employees play in the business development and success story of SA over the past 20 years since its inception.

Believing in the importance of women's professional development, SA organised 'A Work-Life Harmony' workshop along with other activities during the event. The workshop, conducted by a professional coach, aimed to equip the company's women employees with the key skills to manage their work and personal life effectively.

Likewise, it highlighted the importance of having work-life harmony, which eventually impacts personal satisfaction, self-confidence and career development.

On the other hand, the workshop served as an opportunity for the female employees to address their different work-life balance challenges and propose

potential solutions. With the support of the professional coach, they used the SWOT analysis approach to brainstorm the difficulties and turn them into possibilities.

Organising this event was one of the activities of SA's Mulhima Committee, which was formed a year back, representing all female employees in the company. The committee provides an official platform for discussion with the management, to bring employees concerns, and provide opportunities for female employees to collaborate, learn, and inspire.

SA spares no efforts to ensure that every woman at the company has the opportunity to thrive, to pursue her dreams without barriers, and to contribute her unique expertise towards the organisation's collective progress.

SA is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that not only supports women employees, but also empowers them to shoulder more responsibility and take on leadership roles, the company added.

National Museum's special event lauds contribution of women

In recognition of the role of Omani women, The National Museum, represented by the General Directorate of Museums Affairs, organised an event on Sunday to celebrate Omani Women's Day.

The programme was held in collaboration with al-Zahra Primary School (Grades 1-9), under the patronage of H H Sayyida Aliya bint Thuwaini al Said.

The event began with a speech by Zaeema bint Abdullah al Kindi, head of al-Zahra Primary School. She noted that Omani women received great attention since the beginning of the Blessed Renaissance, which equipped them with all means to prosper in various fields.

According to her, they contributed comprehensively into Omani development, and confirmed their responsibilities and presence in countless activities.

"The achievements that Omani women have attained and the rights they have gained within the policies established by the Blessed Renaissance are evidence of their important role, demonstrating their capability to engage in labour and support the development of our beloved country."

Dr Fatima bint Mohammed al Balushi, General Director of Museums Affairs at the National Museum, delivered a speech after Zaeema.

Dr Fatima asserted that celebrating Omani Women's Day is a renewed reminder of Omani women achievements at all lev-



els and in various sectors.

Underling that the National Museum is a cultural edifice that reflects the identity of this nation, she lauded the museum for being a significant contributor to preserving all treasures of Omani culture, where female employees constitute 50% of the total number of employees.

"Their contribution reflects the culture of this generous country. We - at the National

Museum - believe that women hold a pivotal role that continues to grow and increase, that are proved by their accomplishments that everyone acknowledges," she added.

The event featured various performances by a group of female students from Al-Zahra Primary School, including a welcoming performance and another titled "Majidat Oman," which depicted Omani women

who have contributed to the fields of science and literature since ancient times. The event also featured a discussion session with Ms. Ameera bint Abdulaziz al-Kindi, the first Omani teacher at al-Zahra Primary School, who spoke about the beginning of her journey in education and her most significant achievements since the beginning of the Blessed Renaissance. The students also presented a

musical performance titled "As Beautiful as She is."

The sultanate celebrates Omani Women's Day on October 17 every year, in appreciation of the efforts made by women to enhance the national development across various sectors. This event aimed to promote Omani women participation and highlight their contributions, particularly in the education sector.

Kaldi 850 Coffee honours strength, resilience, progress

Kaldi 850 Coffee joined the nation in celebrating Omani Women's Day, honouring the incredible contributions and achievements of Omani women across all sectors of society.

This special occasion recognises the pivotal role Omani women continue to play in shaping the future of the sultanate, from business and education to science, technology, and the arts.

'At Kaldi 850, we believe in the power of diversity and inclusivity, values that Omani women exemplify. Through their unwavering dedication, leadership, and innovation, they inspire us to continually push boundaries and create products that serve and unite our community. We recognise that the journey of every successful



woman is fueled by determination and passion, much like the care and precision we pour into every cup of Kaldi 850 coffee,' a release from Kaldi Coffee stated.

"As we celebrate Omani Women's Day, we reaffirm our

commitment to creating opportunities for women to lead, innovate, and succeed," said Paul Biswajit, GM of Kaldi 850 Coffee. "We are inspired by the remarkable contributions Omani women make every day."

OAB 'empowers' women leaders

Under the patronage of H H Sayyida Meyyan bint Shihab al Said, Oman Arab Bank (OAB) organised a joyful celebration at the St Regis Hotel, under the theme 'Empowering Omani Women: Leadership, Faith, and Innovation'.

The event was attended by a large number of successful women, including the bank's executive leaders, employees, clients, and women entrepreneurs.

The event included various activities, such as visual presentations highlighting the royal attention given to empowering Omani women and shedding light on their honourable roles and contributions in all fields.

Also, the 'Women's Leadership Development Programme' was launched as a new initiative by OAB to nurture national female leaders and enhance women's participation in the



sustainable growth of Oman, in line with Oman Vision 2040.

The programme is being implemented in collaboration with Springboard and Aspire Institute, two prestigious international organizations in the field of training and development, adhering to the highest global standards.

A panel discussion was held on the topic of women's em-

powerment and their inspiring success stories in various fields. The discussion featured the participation of Lamyia al Haj, Associate Professor at Sultan Qaboos University; Samra al Harthy, Director of Economic and Investment Research at the Oman Investment Authority; and Abeer Sultan, Executive Director, the Office of the Managing Director.

"The celebration of Omani Women's Day is a recognition of their contributions and inspiring creativity in all fields. We are all proud of the positive role Omani women play in raising generations with genuine Omani values and their significant contribution to the comprehensive development of this beloved nation," said Sulaiman al Harthy, Chief Executive Officer.

Bank Muscat honours women customers, employees in celebration

Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, organised a special event to celebrate the Omani Women's Day.

The event was attended by Ilham Murtadha al Hamaid, General Manager - Corporate Banking, and a number of women customers and employees. During the event, Rehab Sharif, Human Development and Self-awareness Consultant, delivered a seminar titled 'A Joyful Life', which focused on the importance of promoting awareness, understanding the changing dynamics of the world and the tools of sustainable happiness and how to best in-



corporate them to bring joy into one's life.

In her opening speech, Hamaid referred to the 'great growth in women's empowerment', which the sultanate witnessed during the previous few years, with more opportunities



and leadership roles reflecting our country's enlightened vision.

In this context, she said that

her bank prioritises Omani women's personal and professional development, acknowl-

edging that women have played a vital role in the bank's journey, contributing significantly to the

Bank's prosperity over the last 40 years. "We have also exerted our efforts to provide a diverse range of banking facilities and services to our women customers. We are proud of the important contribution that our women employees play in the bank's different departments and divisions," she added.

Ilham al Hamaid commended Omani women on this day, wishing them well and success in their efforts to support the sultanate's development goals. She emphasised the importance of Omani women as a fundamental part of society, stating: "Their success benefits the entire community. We hope

that this occasion will continue to serve as a foundation for future successes and accomplishments."

Women assume various leadership positions at Bank Muscat and have built successful careers. During its march spanning four decades, the Bank has been keen since its inception to empower Omani women by providing them with various career, training and study opportunities. Bank Muscat is dedicated to delivering services and benefits specifically designed for women, well-received and valued by customers for their alignment with diverse banking requirements.

Brazil’s President Lula da Silva to skip BRICS Summit in Kazan

Brasilia, Brazil - Brazil President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will skip the BRICS Summit in Kazan, which is scheduled to be held from Tuesday, due to medical advice, citing a temporary restriction on long-haul flights.

Instead, he'll join the conference via video link.

The Brazilian President office in a statement said: "President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, on medical advice, will not travel to the BRICS Summit in Kazan, due to a temporary ban on long-haul air travel."

The statement added: "The

president will participate in the BRICS Summit via videoconference and will have a normal work schedule this week in Brasilia, at the Planalto Palace."

Meanwhile, Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira will lead the Brazilian delegation at the BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia, filling in for President Lula da Silva.

Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said: "Minister Mauro Vieira has been appointed to lead the Brazilian delegation that will participate in the BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia. The



Brazil President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva

Brazilian FM Mauro Vieira will lead the Brazilian delegation at the BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia, filling in for the president

Minister will travel tonight to participate in the meeting."

"President Lula will participate virtually in the session of

heads of state of the member countries," it added.

Notably, the leaders of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) countries met for the first time in St Petersburg, Russia in 2006. After a series of high-level meetings, the first BRIC summit was held in Russia's Yekaterinburg in 2009.

BRIC group was renamed as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) after South Africa was accepted as a full member at the BRIC Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York in September 2010.

On January 1 this year, BRICS admitted four new members: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit Russia at the invitation of President Vladimir Putin from October Tuesday to attend the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan.

This will be the second visit of PM Modi to Russia this year. He had earlier visited the Russian Federation in July, in his first bilateral visit since assuming office for the third term.

ANI

US election: Harris, Trump in tight race as swing states remain in play

Vice President Kamala Harris holds a narrow lead over former President Donald Trump in national polling averages

Washington, D.C., US - As the 2024 US presidential election approaches, Vice President Kamala Harris holds a narrow lead over former President Donald Trump in national polling averages.

With election day set for November 5, Harris is polling at 48.2%, while Trump follows closely at 46.4%, according to recent data from ABC News and 538.

However, the national numbers do not tell the full story. The race remains fiercely competitive in key battleground states, where the election will likely be decided.

Both candidates are locked in a virtual tie in Pennsylvania,



Kamala Harris leads nationally at 48.2%, Donald Trump follows close behind at 46.4% ahead of election day, showed 538/ABC News poll



tightest contests, with 11 electoral votes. The state, which voted for Biden in 2020, will be a significant bellwether for both parties, with Trump ahead at 48.6%, while Harris at 46.7%.

After flipping blue in 2020, Georgia has become a critical state for Democrats to defend in 2024. With 16 electoral votes, Trump has a slim advantage in Georgia, leading with 48.7% to Harris's 46.9%.

North Carolina remains a battleground, having leaned towards Republicans in recent cycles, but Democrats are hopeful to make gains this year. With 16 electoral votes, Trump holds a narrow lead in North Carolina at 48%, with

The tight margins underscore the unpredictability of the race, with both candidates vying for the 270 electoral votes needed to secure the presidency.

Though Harris has seen a steady lead since Joe Biden's withdrawal from the race in July, the contest remains too close to call in crucial swing states.

If Trump holds onto his leads in Georgia, Arizona, and North Carolina, while flipping Pennsylvania, he could secure the 270 electoral votes needed for victory. Conversely, if Harris can maintain her lead in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Nevada, while regaining ground in Pennsylvania, she would be on course to become

However, the national numbers do not tell the full story. The race remains fiercely competitive in key battleground states, where the election will likely be decided

Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Trump, who won these states in 2016 but lost them in 2020, hopes to reclaim them, while Harris aims to maintain her slim edge.

Pennsylvania, with the highest number of electoral votes among

the swing states, is critical for both campaigns. With 19 electoral votes, Harris and Trump are in a statistical tie in Pennsylvania, with Trump slightly ahead at 47.9% to Harris's 47.5%. Winning this state could heavily tilt the election in either candidate's

favour.

Michigan, which flipped back to the Democrats in 2020 after Trump's 2016 win, is another key state Harris needs to retain. With 15 electoral votes, Harris holds a narrow lead, polling at 47.4% compared to Trump's 47.2%.

Wisconsin has been a battleground since 2016, and both candidates are vying to win this pivotal Midwest state. With 10 electoral votes, Harris is ahead in Wisconsin, with 47.8% compared to Trump's 47.6%.

Arizona remains one of the

Harris polling at 47.5%.

With 6 electoral votes, Harris is slightly ahead in Nevada, with 47.6% compared to Trump's 47.1%. This small but crucial swing state remains a key target for both campaigns as they compete for its electoral votes.

the nation's first woman president. With swing states holding the balance, the 2024 election is shaping up to be another closely contested race, with both candidates battling for every vote in the final days before November 5.

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The new Cabinet lineup draws members from professional as well as political backgrounds

Indonesia: President swears in 109 officials

Jakarta, Indonesia - Newly-elected Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto swore in on Monday 109 officials as part of his administration for the next five years.

After taking oath office on Sunday, Prabowo at the State Palace in the capital Jakarta named his 'Red and White' Cabinet - Merah Putih - inspired by the colours of the national flag.

The new Cabinet lineup draws members from professional as well as political backgrounds and also includes names from former Joko Widodo administration.

It has seven coordinating ministers, 41 ministers, the attorney

general, the head of the State Intelligence Agency, the Cabinet secretary, the presidential chief of staff and the head of the Presidential Communication Bureau.

"With the full support of our coalition party leaders, we have chosen to call this the Red and White Cabinet," Prabowo told a ceremony at the palace on Sunday night, highlighting the unity and national spirit behind the selections. The officials include Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin as defence minister, and Tito Karnavian remains the home affairs minister.

Sugiono, who goes by only one name, will serve as foreign minister, with Sri Mulyani contin-

uing as finance minister.

A well-respected economist, Mulyani is the first woman finance chief of the Southeast Asian powerhouse. She earlier served as managing director of the World Bank.

A graduate of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in the US, Mulyani has no political affiliation but will face a tough challenge to increase revenue generation to fund Prabowo's ambitious free meals for children programme.

Sugiono, 45, retired from the military in 2004 but continued as secretary of Prabowo and joined his Gerindra party.

Anadolu Agency

Moldova split on referendum to join EU

Chisinau, Moldova - A referendum in Moldova on joining the European Union appeared too close to call early on Monday morning, with 98% of the count showing the 'yes' vote at 50.03% and the 'no' vote coming in at 49.97%, according to the country's election commission.

Earlier, Moldovans appeared to have had rejected plans for the former Soviet republic to add its goal of joining the EU to the constitution, preliminary results from 70% of ballots in the country's referendum showed on Sunday evening.

However, ballots from Moldovans living abroad were counted towards the end, giving the 'yes' camp a last-minute push.

A largely agricultural country of around 2.5mn people, Moldova has sought to cut ties with Moscow and move closer to the EU since Russia's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine in 2022.

The former Soviet republic began EU membership talks in June.

Ahead of the referendum, surveys showed around 55% of Moldovans would support the move, while 34% were against it.

The turnout was close to 50%, far higher than the 33% needed for the result to be valid. Pro-Russian parties had urged



Moldovan authorities said they had uncovered a massive vote-buying scheme allegedly involving millions of dollars from Russia

Moldova has faced an unprecedented assault on our country's freedom and democracy, both today and in recent months

MAIA SANDU

people to vote 'no' or boycott the vote altogether.

'Vote-buying' scheme Responding to the results, Moldova's pro-EU president, Maia Sandu, accused 'criminal groups' of engaging in voting fraud.

"Moldova has faced an unprecedented assault on our country's freedom and democracy, both today and in recent months," Sandu told supporters in the capital, Chisinau.

She said that these groups backed by foreign forces had tried to 'undermine (the) democratic process' by trying to buy up to 300,000 votes.

"We are waiting for the final results, and we will respond with firm decisions," she said in a separate written statement.

Meanwhile, Sandu was closer to a second term in office, after she came ahead in the first round of presidential elections.

With more than 90% of the ballot counted, Sandu was short of an absolute majority at around

39% of the vote.

If the result is confirmed, the vote will go to a runoff in two weeks.

Her closest competitor Alexandr Stoiianoglo came second, seeming to receive 28% of the vote.

Turnout for the presidential election stood at more than 51%.

Pro-Western Sandu competed against 10 other presidential candidates - including some advocating closer ties with Russia.

Although the 52-year-old was the clear favourite to win, recent polls suggest she only has around 36% support.

Stoiianoglo, a 57-year-old former prosecutor supported by the pro-Russian Socialists, polled at just 9% ahead of the vote.

Renato Usatii, a 45-year-old former mayor of Moldova's second-largest city Balti, was predicted to win 6.4% of the vote, polls conducted before the election said.

Should no candidate win a majority, the vote will head to a second round on November 3.

Ahead of Sunday's election, Moldovan authorities said they had uncovered a massive vote-buying scheme allegedly involving millions of dollars from Russia.

DW

At least 29 killed as Israel intensifies its onslaught in northern Gaza Strip

Gaza City, Palestine - At least 29 people were killed in intensified Israeli attacks in the northern Gaza Strip on Monday, according to medical sources.

Artillery shelling targeted a school sheltering displaced civilians near Birket Abu Rashid in Jabalia, killing seven people and injuring dozens, a medical source said.

According to witnesses, civilians gathered upon Israeli military orders at the UN-run Kreism School when an Israeli tank fired a shell towards them.

Six people were also killed when an Israeli airstrike targeted a group of civilians filling water containers in Jabalia al-Balad in northern Gaza, paramedics said.

Four more Palestinians lost their lives when an Israeli drone strike targeted civilians near Al-Yemen Al-Saeed Hospital in Jabalia camp, another medical source said.

Three people were also killed and several others injured in an Israeli strike on al-Shawa School housing displaced civilians in the northern city of Beit Hanoun, the source added.

In Gaza City, nine Palestinians lost their lives and dozens were injured in Israeli shelling of a home near Birket Sheikh Radwan in the northern part of the city, according to witnesses.

The Israeli army has continued a massive offensive, now in its 17th day, in northern Gaza amid a suffocating siege on the area.

The onslaught was the latest episode in Israel's brutal on-



Palestinians continue to live among the rubble of houses destroyed in the Israeli attacks in Gaza as there are almost no solid structures left in the city

slaught that has killed more than 42,600 people, mostly women and children, and injured 99,800 others since last year following a Hamas attack.

Military raids in West Bank

The Israeli army rounded up 18 more Palestinians in military raids in the occupied West Bank on Monday, according to prisoners' affairs groups.

Two children were among the detainees in the raids that tar-

India reiterates call for ceasefire

New Delhi, India - India on Monday reiterated the call for a ceasefire in the ongoing conflict in Gaza.

"Our stance on West Asia has been consistent and firm over a long period of time. We have explicitly condemned acts of terrorism and at the same time, as the conflict has

grown and, in a sense, expanded, we have called for a ceasefire, and release of hostages," Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri told reporters in New Delhi.

He noted there is a 'particularly serious humanitarian situation which has developed, and we have accordingly called for

a humanitarian corridor for access to humanitarian aid'.

"Also for guarding against an expansion of the conflict that would pull more and more actors and make the issue more complicated to resolve, it is important to get back to dialogue and diplomacy," he added.

Anadolu Agency

geted several cities in the occupied territory, the Commission of Detainees' Affairs and the Palestinian Prisoner Society said in a joint statement.

"The arrests were marked by abuse, threats against detainees and their families, and acts of vandalism and destruction on citizens' homes," the statement said.

According to the statement, the Israeli army interrogated dozens of residents in the town of Deir Abu Masha'al, west of

Ramallah.

The new arrests brought the total number of Palestinians detained by the Israeli army in the West Bank since October last year to over 11,400, including those who were released after being arrested, according to Palestinian figures.

The figure, however, does not include detainees from the Gaza Strip whose numbers are esti-

At least seven people were killed when Israeli tank fired shell at displaced civilians gathering at UN-run school upon military orders, according to witnesses

mated to be in the thousands.

Over the past few years, the Israeli military has conducted regular raids in the West Bank, which have escalated with the beginning of the war on Gaza on October 7, 2023. Palestinians have also been violently attacked by illegal Israeli settlers.

At least 759 Palestinians have since been killed and over 6,250 others injured by Israeli army fire in the occupied territory, according to the Health Ministry.

The escalation follows a landmark opinion last July by the International Court of Justice that declared Israel's decades-long occupation of Palestinian land 'illegal' and demanded the evacuation of all existing settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

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Storm Ashley hits parts of UK amid weather warnings

London, UK - Ferry, flight, and train services have been disrupted amid amber and yellow weather warnings as Storm Ashley brought high winds and flood alerts across parts of the UK.

The UK's weather agency, Met Office, issued warnings on Sunday for across the UK as the first named storm of the season, Ashley, swept in, according to media reports.

BBC reported that an injured passenger was airlifted from a ferry between Aberdeen and Orkney in Scotland on Sunday evening after falling on board in rough conditions.

Police also said earlier on Sunday that a man, woman, and young boy were taken to hospital after getting into difficulties in



the sea at Aberdeen Beach.

Western Ferries, which operates the Dunoon-Gourock route, also suspended services on Sunday evening.

Many flights were also cancelled at Northern Ireland's Belfast City Airport and Ireland's Dublin Airport.

Video footage also shows planes struggling to land at Dublin Airport in high winds as the Met Office warned that the storm will likely create a danger to life with winds of up to 80 miles per hour (128.7kph) in some areas of the country.

Anadolu Agency

Israel preparing to launch major attack on Iran: Official

Jerusalem - Israel is preparing to launch a 'major attack' against Iran in response to October 1 ballistic missile attack against Tel Aviv, an Israeli official said.

Iran launched around 180 ballistic missiles on Israel in what Tehran said was a retaliation for the assassinations of Hezbollah and Hamas leaders and a Revolutionary Guard commander.

"Israel is preparing to conduct a major attack against Iran, with preparations including fortifying defences in anticipation of any potential Iranian response," the unnamed official said in statements carried by the public broadcaster KAN late on Sunday.

The source, however, did not provide any details about the list of targets expected to be hit in



Israelis inspect debris of Iranian missile after it falls in Arad

the Israeli attack.

Since the Iranian strike, Israel has been engaged in intensive consultations with its key ally, the US, to determine potential targets and its defensive needs to counter any Iranian retaliation.

On Saturday, the Israeli army

said that the US had deployed a THAAD air defence battery in Israel, designed to intercept long-range ballistic missiles, in preparation for possible Iranian strikes.

Before the arrival of THAAD, Israel's air defence relied on

three systems: Arrow for long-range missile interceptions, David's Sling for mid-range, and the Iron Dome for short-range. All three systems had struggled to intercept many of the Iranian missiles.

Anadolu Agency

Israeli drone strike kills 6 people from same family in eastern Lebanon

Beirut, Lebanon - Six women and children from the same family were killed and eight others injured in an Israeli drone attack on the Nabi Anam neighbourhood in Baalbek, eastern Lebanon, according to Lebanese media reports on Monday.

The state-run National News Agency said Israeli warplanes carried out the strike at 5.50am local time (0250GMT), targeting a home in a densely populated residential area.

The strike destroyed the building and damaged nearby homes, resulting in the deaths of six women and children from the same family, with eight other residents sustaining injuries ranging from critical to minor, the news agency said.

The injured were transported



Israel has mounted a huge air campaign in Lebanon since September 23 against what it says are Hezbollah targets

to hospitals for treatment, it added.

The agency reported that local civil defence teams worked to extinguish fires at the targeted

home and assisted in rescue operations, recovering the bodies from under the rubble.

Volunteers from the Islamic Health Authority, the Lebanese

Red Cross, and the Palestinian Shifa Association also participated in the search and rescue efforts, it added.

Israeli warplanes also hit a

building in the central commercial district of Baalbek on Sunday evening, causing extensive damage to nearby buildings, shops, and institutions, according to the broadcaster.

In another airstrike early on Monday, Israeli warplanes targeted the town of Hazzine in the same region. No details were provided about injuries or damage. Israeli artillery shelling and airstrikes were also reported in the towns of Khiam, Jabal Abu Rached, Wadi al-Sarira and Ansar in southern Lebanon.

Israel has mounted a huge air campaign in Lebanon since September 23 against what it says are Hezbollah targets, in an escalation from a year of cross-border warfare between Israel and the Lebanese group since

the start of Israel's brutal offensive on Gaza.

Nearly 2,500 people have been killed and more than 11,500 others injured in Israeli attacks since last year, according to Lebanese health authorities.

Israel expanded the conflict on October 1 this year by launching a ground assault into southern Lebanon.

Call for medical aid to Lebanon

Meanwhile, EU commissioners on Monday called on member states to 'urgently' deliver the requested medical aid to Lebanon as the situation in the country requires 'utmost urgency'.

"Together with (EU commissioner for humanitarian aid and crisis management) Janez Lenar-

cic we call for urgent and swift support to the Lebanese authorities that have requested medical aid from the European Union," Stella Kyriakides, the EU commissioner for health and food safety, said on X.

"Lebanon is in immediate need of vital medical equipment and we count on Team Europe to deliver," Kyriakides added.

In a letter addressing the health and civil protection ministers, the commissioners underlined that the healthcare system in Lebanon is 'unable to cope' with the growing number of casualties as many patients are in urgent need of specialised medical treatment that is not available due to the destruction of the healthcare system.

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Pakistan: PTI banking on Trump's victory

Islamabad, Pakistan - When Imran Khan was ousted from power two years ago, he was quick to blame the United States for his downfall.

Khan was removed from premiership in 2022 through a no-confidence vote in the Pakistani parliament. He was handed a 10-year prison sentence for corruption in January this, weeks before Pakistan's general election in February.

However, the former cricket player-turned-politician alleged that his country's powerful military generals and Washington orchestrated his removal from power. The claim was unsubstantiated, but his supporters firmly believe it. "Historically, the US has had an influence on Pakistan's foreign and security policies, and there is a widely held belief among many Pakistanis that Washington can influence Pakistani politics," Raza Rumi, a US-based Pakistani analyst, told DW.

Khan's supporters, however, are only critical of the US Democratic Party, President Joe Biden in particular, who they say didn't want Khan at the helm. They believe Khan's troubles started with Republican Donald Trump's defeat in the 2020.

"It is true that Biden never called Khan when he was prime minister. The Biden administration ignored Khan, and many (in Khan's administration) appealed to him to get in touch," Rumi said.

Mutual liking

During his presidency, Trump maintained good ties with Khan. The two leaders met in Washington and exchanged compliments during their meeting.

Trump and Khan share a similar leadership style. Both are populist politicians and are considered 'political outsiders' in



Imran Khan's supporters are critical of the US Democratic Party, President Joe Biden in particular, who they say didn't want Khan at the helm

There is an exaggerated view of Trump being pro-Khan because he welcomed Khan to the White House and later praised him in one of his speeches

RAZA RUMI

their respective countries.

"The PTI supporters are banking on Donald Trump's victory on November 5 and believe that he would pressurise Pakistan's military to change its approach towards Imran Khan. There is an exaggerated view of Trump being pro-Khan because he welcomed Imran Khan to the White House and later praised Khan in one of his speeches," said Rumi.

Supporters of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, founded by Khan in the 1990s, believe that the Khan-Trump alignment was disrupted by Biden's ascent to power. Now, they hope that Trump's potential return to the White House would ease matters for their imprisoned leader. "The general perception in Pakistan is that Donald Trump is quite close to Imran Khan. Trump

has expressed this in his interactions with the Pakistani American community and elsewhere. He developed a good relationship with Khan," Jimmy Virk, a Middle East-based Khan supporter and journalist, told DW. "Trump likes strong leaders."

Last week, the Pakistani-American Public Affairs Committee in the US endorsed Trump for president, claiming that a 'legislative coup' under Biden led to Khan's ousting. The Biden administration has repeatedly denied the allegation.

Can Trump really help Khan?

Virk said that the 'Washington establishment' has its own priori-

ties, but 'the president can influence policies like Trump did during his term'.

One of the reasons behind Washington's proactive engagement with Islamabad during Trump's presidency was the protracted conflict in Afghanistan. The US wanted to end its involvement in the war-ravaged country after spending two decades and billions of dollars there. Pakistan, which had a considerable influence on the Afghan Taliban, was essential to make this happen. Khan, at the helm at the time, was needed to deliver on this.

But if Trump comes back to power, would he still need Pakistan and Khan? "When it comes to Pakistan's domestic affairs, the

US role is exaggerated," Rumi, the US-based analyst, told DW. "There is no direct military aid flowing into Pakistan, unlike the past decades when the country was a frontline state in the US-led war on terror or the special agreements that Islamabad entered during the Cold War.

"Now, the US has indirect leverage in the form of its power on the boards of Bretton Woods institutions, notably the IMF and the World Bank, which are important for Pakistan's fragile economy. Whether Trump will use these levers if elected president remains to be seen."

Virk, the Khan supporter, is optimistic that Trump will prefer Khan over other Pakistani politi-

cians if he becomes president again.

"The vibrant Pakistani American community in the US has developed close ties with the Trump campaign and has promised to support Trump instead of the Democratic candidate, Kamala Harris. Trump follows a non-interventionist and anti-war policy, and he is against 'regime change operations' on foreign lands."

Maria Sultan, an Islamabad-based security analyst, pointed out that the US-Pakistan ties tend to be more stable under a Republican administration.

"At the end of the day, US elections are dealt with by the US public. Because the Republicans have had a more stable Pakistan-US relations than the Democrats, Pakistanis are hopeful that Trump will bring in a new era of stability between the two countries," she told DW. Regardless of who sits in the White House, the US has historically developed and maintained close ties with Pakistan due to its geopolitical goals and security objectives in a region that includes Afghanistan, China, India and Iran.

The volatile situation in the Middle East and the conflict between Iran and Israel could mean the security dynamics in Pakistan's neighbourhood have once again become crucial for the international community. For that reason, analysts say, the role of the Pakistani military establishment is now more important for the US than Khan or any other politician. "Apparently the (military) apparatus in Pakistan has had extraordinary engagements with Saudi Arabia, especially after the conflict in the Middle East escalated," said UAE-based security analyst and journalist Ali K Chishti. DW

US Secretary of Defence Austin arrives in Ukraine

Kyiv, Ukraine - US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin arrived in Ukraine amid ongoing tensions with Russia, reaffirming America's commitment to Ukraine's security.

During his visit, Austin will engage in high-level talks with Ukrainian leaders, focusing on bolstering security assistance.

Sharing a post on X, Austin wrote: "I'm back in Ukraine for the fourth time as Secretary of Defence, demonstrating that the United States, alongside the international community, continues to stand by Ukraine."

The Pentagon in a statement said: "Secretary of Defence Lloyd J Austin III arrived in Ukraine today to meet with Ukrainian leaders and reiterate the support of the United States for Ukraine's fight for freedom. This is the Secretary's fourth visit to Ukraine as Secretary of Defence."

The statement further said that during his engagements, the Secretary will meet with Ukrainian leadership and underscore the US commitment to providing Ukraine with the security assistance it needs to defend itself from Russian aggression on the battlefield.

"At the conclusion of his visit, the Secretary will deliver a speech that will highlight how Ukraine has skillfully fought back against Putin's war of choice, US commitment to ensuring Ukraine's armed forces have the battlefield capabilities they need, and why Ukraine's fight matters for US security," the release added.

Notably, the visit comes after Ukrainian President Volodymyr



US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin

During his visit, Austin will engage in high-level talks with Ukrainian leaders, focusing on bolstering security assistance

Zelensky expressed concerns about the growing 'malign' alliance between Russia and North Korea, which could potentially escalate the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia.

Earlier, sharing a post on X, Zelensky wrote: "A new threat has emerged - the malign alliance between Russia and North Korea. I am grateful to the leaders and representatives of nations who refuse to turn a blind eye and speak openly about this dangerous collaboration aimed at increasing the scale of the war. About the supply of weapons from North Korea to Russia.

About how Russia might repay Pyongyang for this assistance."

He further revealed that North Korea is supplying military personnel to Russia and stressed that the Ukrainian government expects a 'fair response' from its international partners to address this escalating threat.

"Unfortunately, the instability and threats could increase significantly once North Korea learns the tactics of modern warfare. We have clear data showing that people are being supplied to Russia from North Korea, and these are not just workers for production, but also military personnel. We expect a proper and fair response from our partners on this matter," Zelensky said.

Citing South Korea's National Intelligence Service, CNN on Saturday reported that North Korea has sent 1,500 soldiers to Russia for training, marking its first military involvement in Moscow's war against Ukraine. ANI

India, China agree on border patrolling deal

New Delhi, India - The governments of India and China have agreed to a patrolling arrangement along the disputed border area in the Himalayas, New Delhi's top diplomat said on Monday.

Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said that a border area pact could lead to disengagement and resolution of tensions that sparked a deadly confrontation in 2020.

Series of talks

Misri said diplomatic and military negotiators from the two countries have held rounds of talks over the past few weeks.

The dialogue, Misri said, resulted in consensus on 'patrolling arrangements along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas leading to disengagement and a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020'.



Misri did not provide any further details on what the patrolling arrangements would entail.

News of the pact comes ahead of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Russia for the BRICS summit where he

could hold sideline talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Troops from both sides have adhered to long-standing protocols to avoid the use of firearms along the frontier, known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The LAC separates Chinese

and Indian-held territories from Ladakh in the west to Arunachal Pradesh. However, in 2020, clashes involving troops from both sides resulted in the deaths of at least 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers. DW

Charles 'not king' for Australian lawmaker

Sydney, Australia - British King Charles III faced protest by an Indigenous lawmaker in Australia on Monday, telling the monarch the southern Pacific nation was 'not' his land.

Clad in a fur cloak, Senator Lidia Thorpe raised her voice to make Charles listen to her statement after the monarch delivered his speech in the Australian parliament. Secret services were seen walking towards and pushing the lawmaker out of the room, who accused the British monarch of committing genocide against the indigenous peoples.

"This is not your land. You are not my king. You are not our king,"



British King Charles III

Thorpe is heard saying in a video.

Charles and his wife Queen Camilla arrived in Sydney on Friday, on their first visit to Australia since ascending the throne.

They will spend five days in the region, including attending a meeting of the Commonwealth heads of government in Samoa.

"Treaty now," Thorpe said, addressing the King.

The outspoken lawmaker has long demanded a treaty between Australia and First Nations peoples that would mean formally recognising their sovereignty.

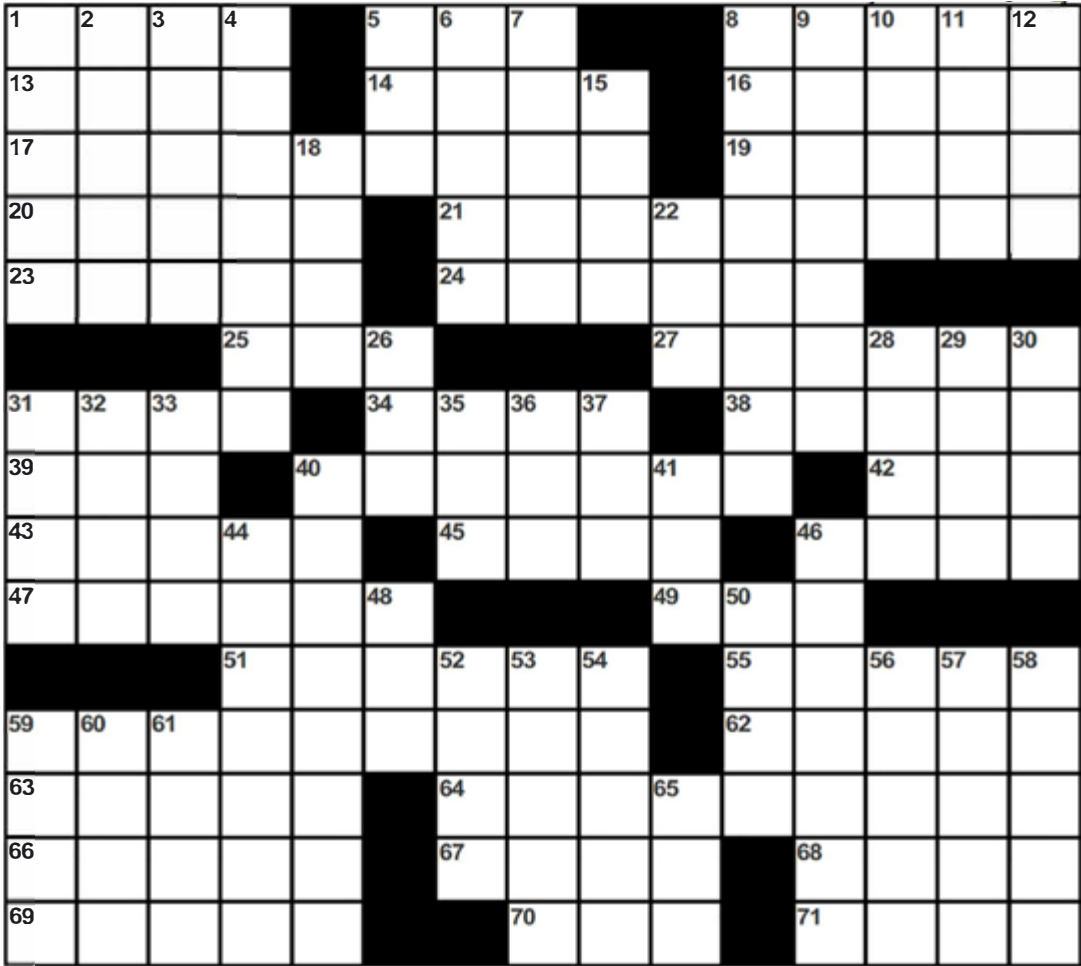
British began occupying parts of Australia in 1788 but made no agreements with First Nations people. "You committed genocide against our people. Give us our land back. Give us what you stole from us - our bones, our skulls, our babies, our people," Thorpe

shouted, addressing the British monarch, who was accompanied by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

"Give us a treaty, we want treaty..." a transcript of her statement released by ABC News read. Last year, the majority of Australians rejected a historic referendum to recognise the role of Aboriginal minorities in the Constitution.

Dubbed a 'Voice to Parliament', if passed, the Indigenous Australians would have received a constitutional right to advise parliament on policies related to them, for the first time in history. Anadolu Agency

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) Read quickly
- 5) Old IBM products
- 8) Compact Chevys of old
- 13) He sang of Alice
- 14) City near Buffalo
- 16) Fend off
- 17) Blowhard
- 19) Cathartic-yielding plant
- 20) Slip past
- 21) "Ahem!"
- 23) Projector units
- 24) Blows up
- 25) Sked posting
- 27) Obeys a triangular sign
- 31) Like worn tires
- 34) "... we forget ..."
- 38) Noticeably sad
- 39) Word said with right hand raised
- 40) Mardi Gras setting, with "the"
- 42) Any chess piece (even the queen!)
- 43) "Meet John Doe" director
- 45) Robin Williams title role
- 46) Unlikely to bite
- 47) Lipstick mishaps
- 49) It's inspired

- 51) Bra parts
- 55) Goldsmith's unit
- 59) Ones mummified in peat
- 62) Act the ham
- 63) "Not you...!"
- 64) Patio gadget
- 66) Pressed for
- 67) Pedometer unit
- 68) Grazing lands
- 69) Sweeties
- 70) End of some URLs
- 71) Art Deco master

DOWN

- 1) Cutlass kin
- 2) Really, really want
- 3) Pool gunk
- 4) Aimlessly tickled the ivories
- 5) Seat in St. Paul's
- 6) Baby beds
- 7) Bone-muscle connector
- 8) Twangy quality
- 9) Be in charge of
- 10) Sell in the stands
- 11) River to the Tyrrhenian Sea
- 12) Baseball's Musial
- 15) Leg up
- 18) Suffix with "slug" or "song"
- 22) Tissue layer
- 26) Three-time heavy-weight champ

- 28) Himalayan holy man
- 29) Tiny bit of liquor
- 30) 1/1 song word
- 31) Some pens and lighters
- 32) West who played Batman
- 33) Easy gait
- 35) Quiche ingredient
- 36) Washington's _-Tac Airport
- 37) La Brea gunk
- 40) Provides libations
- 41) Mani-pedi spot
- 44) More scratchy, as a voice
- 46) Crush underfoot
- 48) B'way sellout sign
- 50) Build-it-yourself chain
- 52) "Dragnet" radio alerts, briefly
- 53) Planet downgraded in 2006
- 54) "Like a Rock" singer
- 56) Rodeo participant
- 57) Bothered no end
- 58) Unlike a 17-Across
- 59) Modem speed unit
- 60) Shrek, for one
- 61) Totally smitten
- 65) Replacement fertility rate (Abbr.)

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

You might not believe that you have all the determination and ambition you need to make some major headway today, but you definitely do! Early in the morning, if you can devote some time to figuring out a few shortcuts, you will be able to free up valuable time in the afternoon to get more work done. Your brain will be sharper as the day goes on, so try to save complicated or detail-oriented work for the end of your day. In the morning, your mind will be creative but indecisive.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Your imagination is quite vivid right now, but try not to let it lead you too far into a fantasy world, particularly when you meet someone new. You need to keep your feet on the ground and base decisions only on the facts at hand. Drawing conclusions or making any type of assumption could take you a long way down the wrong path. But just because you have to keep it cool doesn't mean you can't have fun. Unleash your charm and you'll be the life of the party.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Strangers have the potential to be very inspiring right now, but you need to interact with them to uncover what they have to offer. Interactions and conversations don't have to be deep to be illuminating, so feel free to say things in passing to people you've never seen before (and may never see again). Do try to get more creative than simply commenting on the weather, but you may be amazed by the rewards a simple smile can bring today.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What city is the subject of "The Book of the City of Ladies" (finished 1405)?

- A. The perfect city between the clouds in "The Birds" by Aristophanes
- B. The city formed by the book itself
- C. Cockayne
- D. The Garden of the Hesperides

2. Someone is unsuccessfully trying to look well-dressed is said to be "dressed up like a" what?

- A. Budgie's dessert
- B. Elephant's breakfast
- C. Dog's dinner
- D. Gerbil's lunch

3. In 1577, Francis Drake embarked on a voyage around the world with 5 ships. After 3 years, which was the only one to return to England?

- A. The Endeavour
- B. Santa Maria
- C. The Golden Hind
- D. The Discovery

Answers: 1. B 2. C 3. C



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

You would be wise to give your buttoned-up, conservative side control today. Don't get involved with anything you're not totally sure of. Stay a bit cautious for the next several days and you'll be able to avoid some bad investments, unwise purchases, and friction-filled social events. You might think you can handle a greater amount of risk right now, but the stars say that now is not the time to push any limits.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Trial and error is a very effective way to learn, so remember that if a few of your experiments go awry today. They aren't failures. They are wonderful learning opportunities. There is a silver lining in every cloud that appears in your life, though some may be harder to find than others. Despite a failure here and there, you can't give up your quest to try new strategies and see how they turn out. This type of curiosity is a valuable asset that will yield amazing results soon.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Your actions will impress people today even though you may not completely understand why. Lately you've been pleasing people and making a major impact without even trying, and this type of oversized effect is going to continue for a few more days. So be mindful of the fact that your small actions can trigger big events. Beware of getting too friendly with new acquaintances. They may mistake your geniality for flirtatiousness.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

Solutions are easy to come by today, in part because your sixth sense is especially keen. Your strong ability to interpret signals and read subtext will come in handy today. Don't be afraid to follow your gut and take a few well-calculated risks. If possible, apply your intuition to your career too. Solving a few puzzles in this area will have a very beneficial impact on your financial health.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Hang on tight, because your creativity is about to skyrocket! Today, you'll be able to find multiple ways to add more fun, color, music, and beauty to your life with little (if any) effort. Pay attention to things that confuse you, because each one of them offers something you can use to create something new. Your mood will stay bright and positive throughout the day, and no one will be able to deter you once you have a goal in mind.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Don't be afraid to be compared with someone else today. You will come out on top every time, no matter what the judging criteria are. Your brilliance is exceptional today. Knowing and believing this will give you a strong sense of confidence that will carry you through the day and intimidate anyone who might contemplate trying to take you off your throne. You deserve to be there. You've worked hard for it.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Today, while working in a team environment, you'll need to work a little bit harder to come up with new ideas. It seems that group-think has taken over, and no one is able to think innovatively, including you. If no results are required today, then suggest a brainstorming session. But if you need fast results, you must go against your urge to keep quiet. Don't be shy about sharing your wildest ideas.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

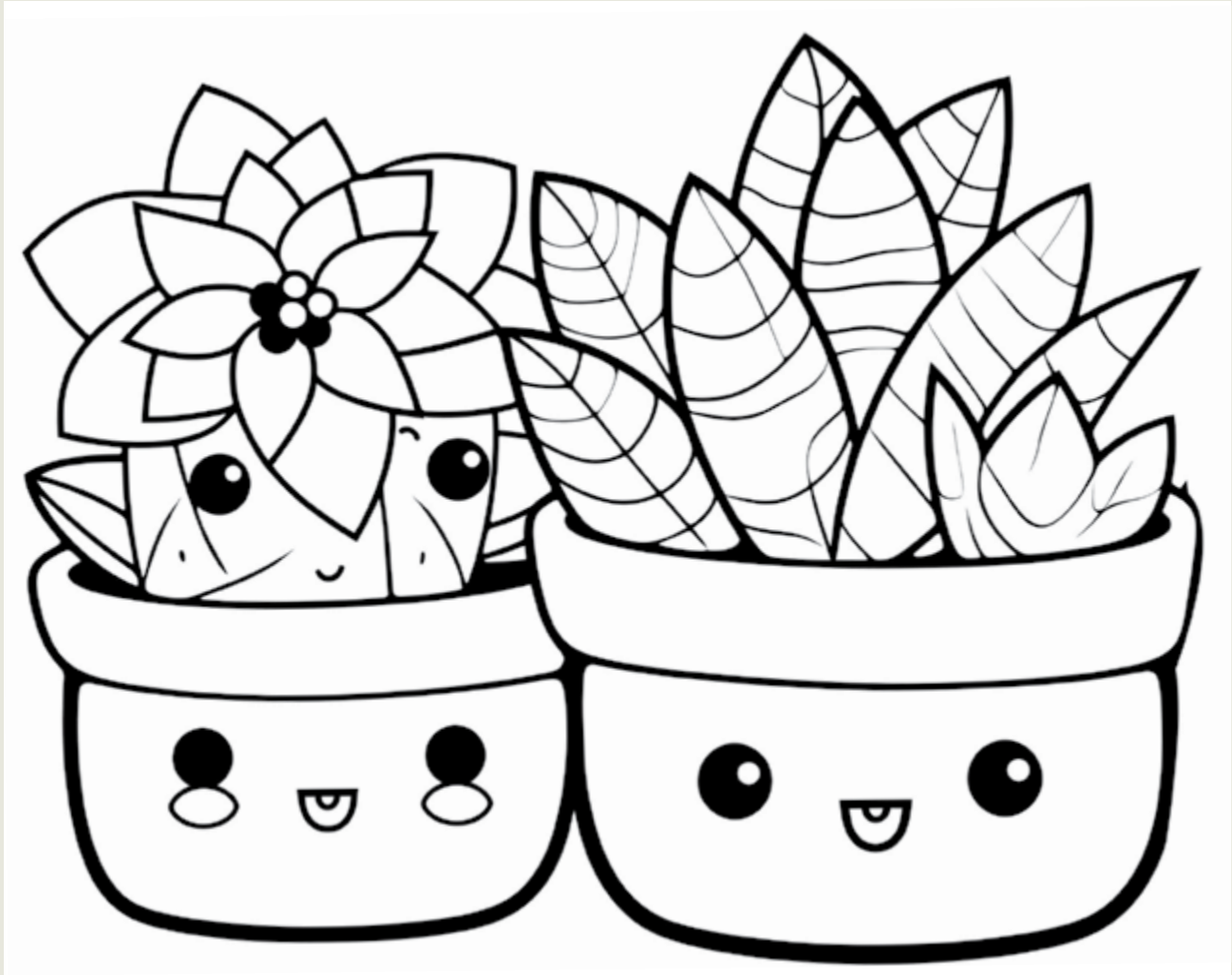
An idea you used to think of as quite radical will be proved to be the right strategy today, and you might be served up a piece of humble pie for doubting it. The good news is your self-esteem is riding high, and you won't let yourself get too depressed about your error. Mistakes happen, and assumptions are made from time to time. There's no harm in that. Take this as the Universe's suggestion that you open your mind and give things a chance before you turn them down.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Your dreams are trying to provide you with some important insight about a real-life dilemma, so pay attention to recurring images, and take note of the cast of characters that has been parading around your subconscious at night. Today, it's time to trust yourself and take a risk. Deep down inside you know you have everything you need to get what you want, and your inner self may be trying to communicate this. Don't you think it's time to listen?

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

Y	S	O	C
O	P	H	P
O	O	K	I
R	L	P	I

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 Boggles 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

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

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

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

REDS STAY ON TOP

Salah, Jones score as Liverpool edge Chelsea

Liverpool, England - Liverpool passed their biggest test of the season so far as Curtis Jones struck the winner in a 2-1 home victory over Chelsea to keep them top of the Premier League on Sunday.

The 23-year-old's first goal since January proved the difference in a tight battle as Liverpool won for the 10th time in 11 matches in all competitions under new boss Arne Slot.

Mohamed Salah's 29th-minute penalty put the hosts in front against the run of play but Chelsea levelled after the break as Nicolas Jackson was played through to score.

Chelsea were not level for long though as midfielder Jones got on the end of Salah's low cross to beat visiting keeper Robert Sanchez from close range.

It was never comfortable for Liverpool against a Chelsea side who came close to an equaliser several times in a strong finish and ended up with more attempts at goal.

But Slot's side dug deep to pass their sternest test in the Premier League so far this season. They have 21 points from eight games, one more than second-placed Manchester City who beat Wolverhampton



Wanderers 2-1 earlier. Chelsea stayed in sixth place with 14 points.

"Many other games were hard but this might have been the hardest because of the amount of quality players they have and the structure they have," Slot, whose side have con-

This might have been the hardest (game) because of the quality players they have and the structure they have. We had to fight really hard to get this one over the line.

ARNE SLOT

ceded only three league goals, said.

"We had to fight really hard to get this one over the line."

Liverpool's transition to a new era under Juergen Klopp's successor Slot has apparently been seamless but a visit from Enzo Maresca's buoyant Chelsea side was the first in a devilish run of

fixtures that continues at Arsenal next weekend.

They were under the cosh for long periods and Chelsea will feel aggrieved not to have taken a point back to London although Slot argued that Chelsea could have been down to 10 men in the opening minutes when a charging Diogo Jota was dragged down on the halfway line by Tosin Adarabioyo.

Maresca's side showed their intent from the start with some ambitious football and Jones did superbly to charge down Cole

Palmer's shot when he looked favourite to score.

But Liverpool took the lead when Jones was tripped in the area by Levi Colwill and Salah smashed away the penalty.

Liverpool were awarded another penalty on the stroke of halftime after Sanchez clumsily took down Jones although a VAR check showed the keeper had made slight contact with the ball before clattering Jones and referee John Brooks changed his mind.

Palmer shot over for Chelsea in first-half stoppage time but the visitors were rewarded three minutes after the break when Moises Caicedo's pass sent Jackson away and he slotted the ball past Caoimhin Kelleher only to be flagged offside. Again VAR intervened to Chelsea's benefit with Ibrahima Konate's outstretched leg shown to have played Jackson onside.

Chelsea were guilty of switching off though as three minutes later the outstanding Jones restored Liverpool's lead.

Liverpool had to withstand seven minutes of Chelsea pressure in stoppage time in which Christopher Nkunku was agonisingly close to equalising as he stretched to reach Pedro Neto's pass.

"We controlled most of the game. We had chances, we had possession," Maresca said after his side's first league defeat since the opening day of the season.

"We don't like to lose, but if we have to choose this is the way. The team was brave on and off the ball."



Pep Guardiola

We played the way we wanted to play: Guardiola

Wolverhampton, England - Manchester City's contentious last-minute winner against Wolverhampton Wanderers in the Premier League on Sunday was both correctly ruled and deserved reward for his players' patience, manager Pep Guardiola said.

With City seemingly heading to a frustrating 1-1 draw at Molineux despite their dominance of possession, John Stones headed a 95th-minute corner past Wolves goalkeeper Jose Sa.

Referee Chris Kavanagh first disallowed the goal as City midfielder Bernardo Silva was close to Sa, but the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) deemed he was not blocking the line of vision and Kavanagh rescinded his decision.

"Bernardo isn't disturbing the position ... Sa had the perfect vision. The taker from Phil (Foden) and the header were magnificent," said Guardiola, who wildly celebrated the 2-1 win that set a club record of 31 league games unbeaten.

Bernardo isn't disturbing the position ... Sa had the perfect vision. The taker from Phil (Foden) and the header were magnificent

PEP GUARDIOLA

"We are not used to winning games at the end, like (former

manager) Juergen Klopp at Liverpool where it happened many times. It is a good flavour for us," he told media.

Guardiola's team had 78% possession against a Wolves side fighting for their lives at the bottom of the table and desperate to hang on once they had taken an early lead.

"With 11 players in the penalty spot, literally it is so difficult," Guardiola said, recalling that his team had lost at Molineux last season. "But we were patient ..

We are who we are and that is so nice."

"We have been in that position, when you lose at the end. But this is the game," Guardiola said. "We played the way we want to play and it is a joy to be here, to score in the last 50 seconds and go top of the league."

With Sparta Prague up next in the Champions League on Wednesday, Guardiola said he did not think injured defender Kyle Walker or midfielder Kevin de Bruyne would be ready.

Martinez goal helps Inter edge Roma in Serie A

Rome, Italy - Inter Milan secured a 1-0 victory at AS Roma on Sunday, courtesy of a second-half goal from Lautaro Martinez in a tightly contested Serie A match.

Martinez made the breakthrough on the hour mark, controlling the ball on the edge of the area before firing it into the net.

Inter are now second in the table with 17 points, two behind leaders Napoli, while Roma are 10th with 10 points.

There were numerous chances for both sides to break the deadlock in the first half, but Roma keeper Mile Svilar and his Inter counterpart Yann Sommer made several impressive saves to keep an intense opening period goalless. Inter's Hakan Calhanoglu had to leave the field after 12 minutes with an apparent injury, and he was followed off shortly after by Italy international Francesco Acerbi. Following Martinez's goal, both sides battled to seize the momentum.

Svilar made a one-handed save to deny Inter's Denzel Dumfries, while Sommer dived to block a powerful snapshot from



Inter Milan's Lautaro Martinez celebrates his goal against AS Roma

Matias Soule in the dying moments of the match, securing all three points for Inter.

Roma coach Ivan Juric defended his team's performance despite the loss.

"I think we started too timid, I didn't like the first 15 minutes, but

after that we did really well until the goal. The goal was just an accident and you pay a heavy price for that at this level," he told DAZN. "We had a lot of chances, but we also made too many technical errors and that was a gift to Inter."

Ligue 1 condemns PSG fans' homophobic chants

Paris, France - Homophobic chants by Paris St Germain fans during their Ligue 1 match against Strasbourg were condemned on Sunday by the French football league's governing body (LFP) which will investigate the incident.

PSG won Saturday's game 4-2 but it was marred by the chanting of home fans targeting Olympique de Marseille midfielder Adrien Rabiot, who previously played for PSG.

Marseille and PSG play each other next weekend.

"These new discriminatory chants by Paris Saint-Germain fans are unacceptable even though the whole of professional football has been working for several seasons to ban homophobic behaviour and chants from stadiums," the LFP said.

While the chanting was happening, the stadium announcer at Parc des Princes twice asked for the chants to stop and was jeered.

I wasn't confident the VAR decision would go our way, says O'Neil

Wolverhampton, England - Wolverhampton Wanderers' loss to Manchester City on Sunday was a tough one to swallow for boss Gary O'Neil, who said the contentious injury time goal that left them bottom of the Premier League was similar to one that went against his team last season.

With Wolves on the verge of securing a much needed point by holding City to a 1-1 draw, John Stones headed in a 95th-minute corner to seal the champions a 2-1 win and condemn the hosts to their seventh defeat in eight league outings this season.

The last gasp goal was checked by the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) for a possible offside by Bernardo Silva in front of the goalkeeper. It was decided that Silva did not block keeper Jose Sa's line of vision.

"I am trying to remain calm," said O'Neil, who was livid on the touchline after the call. "I have been involved in a few of those and not had many go in our favour so was expecting that outcome."

"There is some grey area that can go either way and once it



Gary O'Neil

was like that, I wasn't confident it would go our way."

O'Neil said it was similar to an injury time goal Wolves had disallowed in a 2-1 loss to West Ham late last season.

"We sent an image to referees showing with proof that the West Ham keeper could see the ball, but the reason were given was the player was in close proximity."

"The same argument could be said here but we just have to ac-

cept it," O'Neil said.

"I would rather not discuss it because it will still sound like I am making excuses. Whatever decision they make, I respect," he added.

"We don't want to cross that line, but it did feel like a harsh one. I am proud of the players though. An unbelievable effort and we gave ourselves a great chance. I am gutted for the players that we had to leave with nothing."



Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski celebrates after scoring against Sevilla on Sunday

FIVE-STAR BARCELONA DEMOLISH SEVILLA

Lewandowski, Torre hit braces as Catalan giants go three points clear at the top of LaLiga

Barcelona, Spain - Robert Lewandowski and substitute Pablo Torre each scored twice to help leaders Barcelona thrash visitors Sevilla 5-1 in LaLiga on Sunday in a confidence boost for Hansi Flick's side ahead of key clashes against Bayern Munich and Real Madrid.

Barca were dominant throughout the encounter at the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium and effectively killed off the game with three goals in 15 first-half minutes starting with a Lewandowski penalty after Raphinha was fouled from behind in the 24th minute.

Pedri fired a bullet strike from the edge of the box into the top corner to double their lead four minutes later and Lewandowski slotted home a first-time effort from close range to net the third for Barca in the 39th minute.

It was another superb performance from Barca's attacking trio of Lamine Yamal, Lewandowski and captain Raphinha who have scored 21 of Barca's 33 LaLiga

Today we had to leave with more than just the three points, we needed that good feeling we got.

PEDRI

goals this season.

Polish striker Lewandowski has reached 12 league goals in 10 games, double the amount of Kylian Mbappe and Ayoze Perez who are the joint second highest scorers in LaLiga. In the second half, Torre climbed off the bench to score the fourth with a shot from inside the box in the 82nd minute and, right after Stanis Idumbo netted a consolation for Sevilla in the 87th, he wrapped up the scoring with a free kick into the far corner.

Barcelona are on top of the LaLiga standings on 27 points, three ahead Real Madrid in sec-

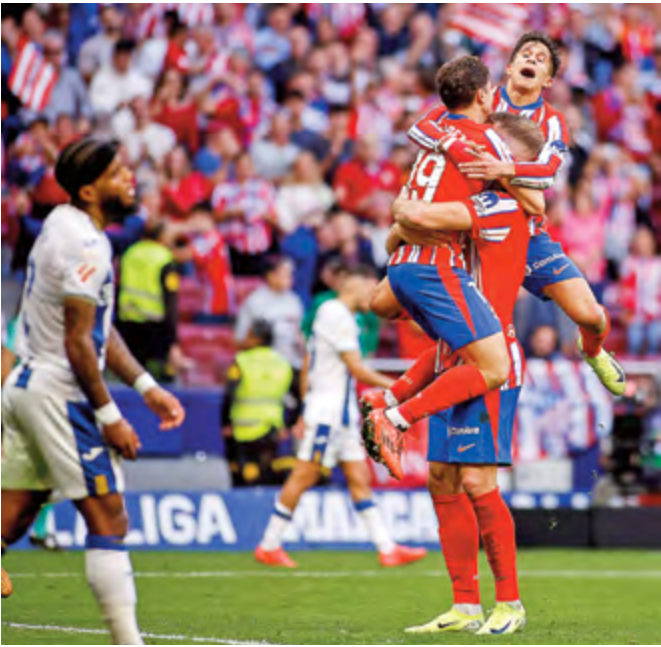
ond and seven clear of Atletico Madrid in third. Sevilla are 13th on 12 points.

"Winning like this is very important for the games to come," Pedri said. "Today we had to leave with more than just the three points, we needed that good feeling we got. The coach told us that there was going to be spaces at the edge of the box and we took advantage of that."

Following a disappointing first LaLiga defeat at Osasuna, Barca have earned back-to-back league wins.

Their victory over Sevilla was their ninth in 10 LaLiga games this season, as they prepare for a difficult week when they will host Bayern Munich in the Champions League on Wednesday before travelling to face rivals Real Madrid in LaLiga on Saturday.

They were missing several key players on Sunday who were sidelined by injuries, including Ronald Araujo, Andreas Christensen, Ferran Torres and Marc-Andre ter Stegen.



Atletico Madrid's Alexander Sorloth celebrates with teammates after scoring against Leganes

Sorloth strikes earn Atletico Madrid win against Leganes

Madrid, Spain - Atletico Madrid forward Alexander Sorloth scored twice in the second half as they fought back to earn a 3-1 victory against visitors Leganes in LaLiga on Sunday.

Winless in their previous three games in all competitions with a series of lacklustre performances, Atletico had to recover from a goal down after Cameroon midfielder Yvan Nyouke gave Leganes the lead in the 34th minute with a superb strike into the top corner.

Atletico's Metropolitano stadium was partially closed as a punishment after their Sept. 29 home match against Real Madrid was suspended due to items being thrown onto the pitch.

Atletico dominated possession throughout the match but were toothless as half-chances went begging for Rodrigo Riquelme, Angel Correa and Sorloth.

They were lucky Leganes did-

n't extend their lead as the visitors wasted two great opportunities from counters early in the second half, with Correa missing a sitter from close range in the 52nd minute, striking wide after a bad mistake by the Leganes defence.

Atletico boss Diego Simeone made five substitutions and that gave the home side the spark they seemed to be lacking.

As they piled on the pressure, Sorloth finally equalised with a cheeky back-heel from an Axel Witsel cross in the 69th minute before Antoine Griezmann cleverly chipped a cross past the goalkeeper into the back of the net 11 minutes later.

Rodrigo de Paul almost scored the third with a strike from inside the box in the 77th minute that was almost deflected over the goalline by a defender, but it was Sorloth who wrapped up the win with a close-range strike from a rebound deep in added time.



Alex Yee

Britain's Alex Yee wins triathlon world title

Torremolinos, Spain - British Olympic champion Alex Yee finished third after a barn-storming run in the men's triathlon World Championship Finals in Torremolinos, Spain on Sunday to win his first world title.

Yee, who won gold at this year's Paris Games, crossed the line in 01:43:50, over a minute behind the winner, Olympic silver medallist Hayden Wilde (01:42:22) of New Zealand.

France's Leo Bergere, the 2022 world champion, was second with a time of 01:43:24.

Yee, who had three Olympic-distance wins heading into the race, needed a top-six finish to ensure the world title.

The 26-year-old was 21 seconds off the lead heading into the first transition and fell further behind in the early stages of the bike section as a breakaway group surged ahead, but he stuck with the chasing pack and kept within touching distance.

"We always put on a show for the Grand Final, and fair play to the guys who made it a hell of a show," said Yee.

'I've been dreaming about this moment'

Barcelona, Spain - Barcelona midfielder Gavi said on Sunday he was thrilled to be back on the pitch after rupturing his anterior cruciate ligament 11 months ago.

The 20-year-old underwent surgery after suffering the injury in Spain's Euro 2024 qualifying win over Georgia last year, and missed the rest of the season, along with Spain's triumph at the Euros.

He made his return on Sunday, coming on as a substitute during Barcelona's 5-1 win over Sevilla in LaLiga, receiving a standing ovation from the crowd at the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium.

"I'm very happy to be back with the team. I've been dreaming about this moment for many months and I'm grateful to everyone because they've made it so much easier for me," an emotional Gavi told Movistar Plus.

"The worst thing during the



Gavi played for the first time after rupturing his anterior cruciate ligament 11 months ago

layoff is not playing with my team mates. Seeing the team from the outside is very hard and gives you a different perspective, you learn that you have to enjoy every moment and appreciate things.

"I feel very lucky to be here today, recovered, because this is my life and what I've been doing all my life and I've missed it a lot... When you see all the fans and teammates over there and they show you that they love you and appreciate you, you feel very lucky."

Barcelona are top of the LaLiga standings on 27 points, three ahead Real Madrid in second and seven clear of Atletico Madrid in third.

They will host Bayern Munich in the Champions League on Wednesday before travelling to the Spanish capital to face rivals Real Madrid in LaLiga on Saturday.

Sabalenka regains top spot in WTA rankings

Aryna Sabalenka's return to top spot in the WTA rankings after leapfrogging Iga Swiatek has set up a thrilling end to the season, with next month's WTA Finals in Saudi Arabia likely to prove decisive in the race to end the year as world number one.

Sabalenka has enjoyed a spectacular season, defending her Australian Open title in January and adding the U.S. Open trophy to her cabinet last month, as well as enjoying victories in Cincinnati and Wuhan.

Players are mandated to compete in six WTA 500 events but Swiatek's decision to skip the tour's Asian swing due to fatigue meant the French Open champion will only manage to play in two this season.

The penalties saw her drop



Aryna Sabalenka

below Poland's Sabalenka in the rankings.

Sabalenka spent eight weeks at the summit last year before Swiatek overtook her with a victory at the season-ending WTA Finals and the Belarusian hopes for a longer stay as 'N1'.

"N1... Let's see for how long this time," she posted on X on Monday after the latest rankings were released.

Sabalenka is also not in action this week after her Wuhan success and will lose points for only playing in four WTA 500 events. She currently has 9,706 points while Swiatek has 9,665 ahead of the Finals, which will offer 1,500.

The Finals will be held on hard courts in Riyadh from Nov. 2-9 and feature the top eight singles players and doubles teams.



New Zealand players celebrate with the Women's Twenty20 World Cup

New Zealand beat South Africa to win Women's T20 World Cup

Dubai, UAE - All-rounder Amelia Kerr starred with bat and ball as New Zealand beat South Africa by 32 runs to lift their maiden Women's Twenty20 World Cup on Sunday after runners-up finishes in 2009 and 2010.

South Africa managed only 126/9 in their 20 overs, with captain Laura Wolvaardt top-scoring for the Proteas with 33 runs off 27 balls.

Openers Wolvaardt and Tazmin Brits provided a strong start by forming a 51-run partnership before Fran Jonas dismissed Brits in the seventh over.

Despite suffering from cramps after her heroics with the bat, Kerr dismissed Wolvaardt and Anneke Bosch in the same over while Rosemary Mair also took three wickets.

Earlier, South Africa won the toss and chose to bowl, striking early as Georgia Plimmer was dismissed for nine in the second over. Following the early setback, New Zealand went on to post an impressive total of 158 runs - the second-highest in a Women's T20 World Cup final - scoring 73 runs in the last six overs.

Suzie Bates, playing in a women's record 334th international match, led the top order with 32 before being bowled by

Nonkululeko Mlaba in the eighth over. The White Ferns were under some pressure in the middle overs after losing captain Sophie Devine, but 24-year-old Kerr (43 off 38) and Brooke Halliday (38), added 57 runs to power them to 158.

"I'm a little bit speechless and I'm just so stoked to get the win, considering what this team's been through and yeah, it's what

I'm just so stoked to get the win, considering what this team's been through and yeah, it's what dreams are made of

AMELIA KERR

dreams are made of," Kerr said after winning both player-of-the-match as well as the player-of-the-tournament.

New Zealand entered the tournament after 10 consecutive Twenty20 defeats but turned their fortunes around after thrashing India in their opening match and beating West Indies in the semifinals.

Rabada reaches 300 Test wickets as SA take lead against Bangladesh

Dhaka, Bangladesh - South African paceman Kagiso Rabada claimed a record-setting 300th test wicket as Bangladesh were bowled out for 106 in their opening innings on the first day of the first test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Monday.

Rabada became the fastest to 300 test wickets, achieving the

feat in 11,187 balls, and with a strike rate of 39.39, to break former Pakistan pacer Waqar Younis' record of 12,602 balls.

South Africa were 140-6 in reply when bad light stopped play, with a 34-run lead after a day of attrition for batsmen.

Kyle Verreynne (18 not out) and Wiaan Mulder (17 not out) will resume on Tuesday.

LECLERC WINS, FERRARI RULES

Verstappen finishes third in US GP to stretch overall lead

Austin, US - Charles Leclerc won the U.S. Grand Prix in a Ferrari one-two with Carlos Sainz on Sunday as Formula One championship leader Max Verstappen dealt Lando Norris a significant setback in their title battle.

The race at Austin's Circuit of the Americas saw a thrilling late duel between the championship contenders end in controversy, with McLaren's Norris overtaking his rival for third place but then being collecting a five-second penalty.

Verstappen's podium left him 57 points clear with five rounds remaining.

Norris had passed Verstappen four laps from the end, after hunting his Dutch rival down on fresher tyres, but was penalised for going off the track and gaining an advantage.

The overtake, and the stewards' reaction, provided a major talking point.

"It's a momentum killer. But we came in here with our mind open, not expecting to dominate or just win or anything," said Norris, who had started on pole position.

"The one guy I need to beat is



Ferrari's Charles Leclerc has an adoring look at the trophy after winning the US Grand Prix on Sunday

Max and that's the guy I didn't beat today. It was a non-successful weekend, all in all. But we gave it a good shot. I tried," he added.

"It wasn't good enough and we have work to do and I have work to do myself."

McLaren's Oscar Piastri was fifth with Mercedes' George Russell sixth and Sergio Perez seventh for Red Bull.

Nico Hulkenberg scored precious points for U.S.-owned Haas in eighth while New Zealander Liam Lawson got off to a great return with Red Bull-owned RB with ninth place despite starting at the back of the grid.

Argentine rookie Franco Colapinto also continued his stand-out form with the final point for Williams.

Leclerc's win, his third of the season after Monaco and Monza, ended Verstappen's run of three successive U.S. Grand Prix wins at Austin's Circuit of the Americas and left Ferrari only eight points adrift of Red Bull.

McLaren continued to lead the constructors' standings, their lead now 40 points.

"One-two for the team. We couldn't have dreamt for better," said Leclerc.

"We did a great job. The pace of the car was really good. That's thanks to the engineers. They have been working like crazy to bring upgrades that we had in Singapore and the last few races."

Pakistan A prove too strong for Oman

Muscat - Fancied Pakistan A bounced back from their opening game defeat against India to register a comprehensive 74-run win over hosts Oman in their Group B match of the ACC Men's T20 Emerging Teams Asia Cup at the Oman Cricket Academy ground on Monday.

It was the largest margin of win for Pakistan Shaheens as they picked up their first points in the tournament while Duleep Mendis' Team Red suffered their successive second defeat to almost put them out of contention of advancing to the semifinals.

Chasing a formidable 186 to win after Pakistan A registered their highest score of the event

so far with 185/5, Oman batters never were in hunt as they lost wickets at regular intervals with only skipper Jatinder and young Wasim Ali making decent scores of 24 and 28 respectively. Zaman Khan was the pick of Pakistan A bowlers with 2/17 while all the other bowlers in action picked a wicket apiece.

Oman could manage only 34 runs for the loss of one wicket in the powerplay and with Pakistan bowlers keeping a tight stranglehold, the chase was never there as the hosts could manage 100 in the 19th over.

Earlier, Pakistan successfully overcame an impressive display of bowling from Oman's



Wasim Ali top scored for Oman with 28

youngest player, Muzahir Raza, who struck early to dismiss both openers - skipper Mohammad Haris and Yasir Khan.

Omar Yousuf (25) helped stabilise the innings, partnering with top-scorer Qasim Akram (48) in a 72-run stand for the third wicket.

Brief scores: Pakistan A 185/5 in 20 overs (Omar Yousuf 25, Qasim Akram 48, Rohail Nasir 41 n.o., Arafat Minhas 31 n.o., Abdul Samad 20; Muzahir Raza 2/29, Wasim Ali 1/42, Samay Shrivastav 1/18, Sufyan Mehmood 1/20) beat Oman 111/7 in 20 overs (Jatinder Singh 24, Wasim Ali 28, Hammad Mirza 14; Zaman Khan 2/17).

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DIET DIARY

Get a 'nutritional punch'

For optimal health, science supports following a plant-based diet like the Mediterranean-DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet, and MIND (Mediterranean-DASH Diet Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay) diet.

Plant-based diets have been shown to have various health benefits and are linked with a lower risk of heart disease, cancer, and other chronic illnesses. With so many food options available with plant-based diets, there are many healthy recipes you can make.

While most foods in plant-based diets offer important health benefits, certain ones stand out. These 'superfoods' pack the biggest nutritional punch. People should try to eat some of these healthy foods every day or as often as possible. They include the following:

BERRIES - High in fibre, berries are naturally sweet, and their rich colours mean they are high in antioxidants and disease-fighting nutrients.

FATTY FISH - Fatty fish can be a good source of protein and Omega-3 fatty acids, which help prevent heart disease. Those with the highest Omega-3 content are salmon, mackerel, trout, anchovies, and sardines.

LEAFY GREENS - Dark, leafy greens are a good source of vitamin A, vitamin C, and

PLANT-BASED DIETS HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO HAVE VARIOUS HEALTH BENEFITS AND ARE LINKED WITH A LOWER RISK OF CHRONIC ILLNESSES. CONSIDER 'SUPERFOODS' AND DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS

calcium, as well as several phytochemicals (chemicals made by plants) that fight inflammation and protect cells from damage.

NUTS - Hazelnuts, walnuts, almonds, and pecans are good plant protein sources. They also contain monounsaturated fats, which may be a factor in reducing the risk of heart disease.

OLIVE OIL - Olive oil is a good source of vitamin E, polyphenols, and monounsaturated fatty acids, all of which help reduce the risk of heart disease.

WHOLE GRAINS - A good source of soluble and insoluble fibre, whole grains also contain several B vitamins and minerals. They have been shown to lower cholesterol and protect against heart disease and

diabetes.

YOGURT - A good source of calcium and protein, yogurt contains live cultures called probiotics. These "good bacteria" can protect the body from other harmful bacteria.

CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES - These include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, kohlrabi, mustard greens, radishes, and turnips. They are an excellent source of fibre, vitamins, and phytochemicals, which may help prevent some types of cancer.

LEGUMES - This broad category includes kidney, black, red, and garbanzo beans, soybeans, and peas. Legumes are an excellent source of fibre, folate, and protein; studies show they can help reduce the risk of heart disease.

What does a typical healthy meal from a plant-based diet look like? A great visual guide is the Harvard Healthy Eating Plate. It shows the proportions of the healthy foods you should eat. At most meals, try to fill half of your plate with vegetables and fruit, a quarter with whole grains, and the final quarter with lean protein.

Should you take daily vitamins?
'Dietary supplement' is an umbrella term. It includes individual vitamins, such as A, B, C, D, E, and K, and minerals like calcium, mul-

tivitamins (a product that contains 10 or more vitamins, minerals, or both), and specialised senior or gender-specific formulas that contain various combinations of vitamins, minerals, and other compounds.

Should you take a daily supplement?

Even though supplements are popular, there is limited evidence they offer significant health benefits or help protect against disease. For the average healthy adult, eating a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables provides all the essential vitamins and minerals.

However, there are situations when people may need a dietary supplement, such as those diagnosed with a vitamin deficiency that's been confirmed by a blood test, those who have trouble getting certain vitamins from foods, or those who suffer from conditions that require extra vitamins or minerals.

For example, strict vegans may not get enough vitamin B-12, which is found primarily in animal products. Low levels of vitamins B-12 and B-6 can stem from digestive disorders, such as Crohn's disease, celiac disease, and ulcerative colitis, conditions that make it difficult to absorb nutrients.

Adults diagnosed with osteoporosis may require extra vitamin D and calcium beyond what they get from their regular diet. Moreover, people who are lactose intolerant, and avoid dairy products, may not get enough vitamin D and calcium.

If you want to explore taking a supplement, first check with your doctor. He or she can advise whether they are needed and help choose the appropriate over-the-counter brand.

(Courtesy: health.harvard.edu.com)



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Diet for men and women over 50



There is no single way to eat for good health. While everyone needs carbohydrates, fat, and protein, there is no 'magic' ratio that you should strive for as long as you avoid extremes. In fact, recent studies have found that the quality of the food is more important than whether it's low-fat, low-carb, or somewhere in between.

While details may vary from diet to diet, all healthy eating plans have four basic principles in common - Lots of plants, adequate protein, minimally processed foods, and limited saturated fats, added sugars, and sodium.

Mind games

MENTAL HEALTH IN SPORTS

World Mental Health Day is observed across the globe on October 10 and many sporting organisations and teams around the world use the day to raise awareness and help people with their mental and psychological health

Raising awareness on mental health in sports is clearly a huge positive, and speaks to the trend of increasingly vocal and empowered modern athletes, many of whom competed at the Paris Olympics.

The IOC also launched an Olympic first at that Games, the 'Athlete 365 Mind Zone', which provided a dedicated space for athletes to access mental health support during competition.

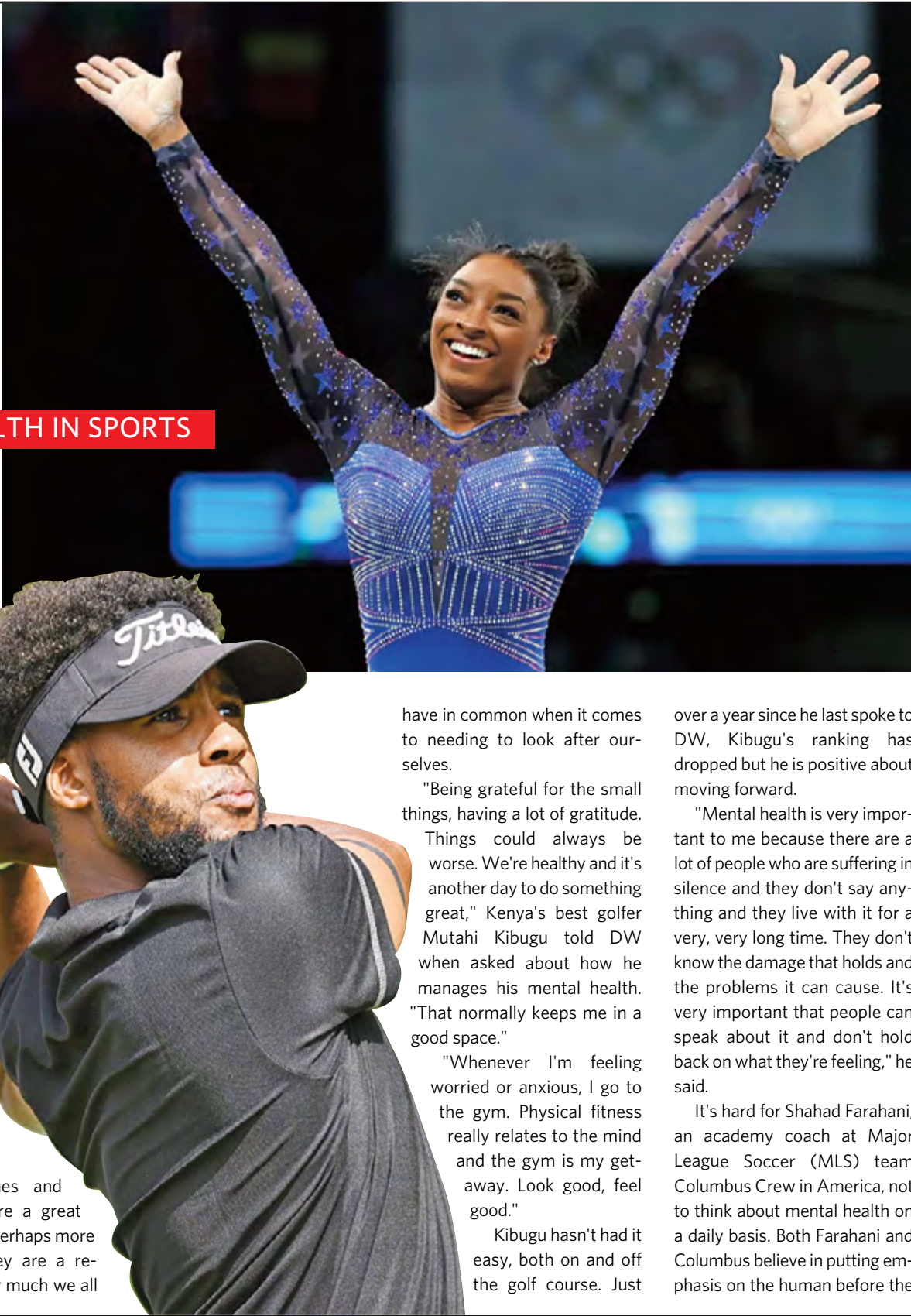
For the World Health Organisation, "embedding mental health promotion and support into sports at all levels is vital, as is encouraging more people to take up physical activity in order to support their mental health and wellbeing."

Julia Eyre, a sports psychologist working with the cycling and

cheerleading German national teams, is clear on the importance of marking a day for mental health. "Mental health awareness day is essentially, just like any other observance - Mother's Day, Father's Day. All of these days are not only where we memorialise and continue to see and hear all of those no longer with us because of this, but also to appreciate and see and hear and lend an extra ear and spend extra resources on the people who do struggle. I absolutely think it makes a difference and it's important because our deepest need is to be seen and

heard."

New approaches and campaign days are a great step forward, but perhaps more than anything they are a reminder of just how much we all



have in common when it comes to needing to look after ourselves.

"Being grateful for the small things, having a lot of gratitude. Things could always be worse. We're healthy and it's another day to do something great," Kenya's best golfer Mutahi Kibugu told DW when asked about how he manages his mental health. "That normally keeps me in a good space."

"Whenever I'm feeling worried or anxious, I go to the gym. Physical fitness really relates to the mind and the gym is my get-away. Look good, feel good."

Kibugu hasn't had it easy, both on and off the golf course. Just over a year since he last spoke to DW, Kibugu's ranking has dropped but he is positive about moving forward.

"Mental health is very important to me because there are a lot of people who are suffering in silence and they don't say anything and they live with it for a very, very long time. They don't know the damage that holds and the problems it can cause. It's very important that people can speak about it and don't hold back on what they're feeling," he said.

It's hard for Shahad Farahani, an academy coach at Major League Soccer (MLS) team Columbus Crew in America, not to think about mental health on a daily basis. Both Farahani and Columbus believe in putting emphasis on the human before the

player, which means Farahani is also raising awareness of his mental health through investing in the mental health of his players.

"Working in the reality of academy football, knowing that most players won't become professional players, it's an important responsibility as coaches to not just develop players for the first team but also positive people who can contribute to society. We try to do that on and off the field and hopefully it works," Farahani said modestly.

When it comes to proactively managing his own mental health, Farahani feels fortunate to be close to home.

"I use my time off to disconnect and spend some time with family. It puts things in perspective. I think we get so caught up with daily lives so time with my parents and my grandparents is a good reminder of what is important in life. It's also good to hear from people who have different life experiences."

The story is similar for Lily Agg, a professional footballer for Ireland and Birmingham City. "It's about finding what works for you and individually what means your brain is good to you. I'm quite harsh on myself so surrounding myself with good people to help is probably the best way I look after myself."

While each of these voices represents a unique perspective from Kenya, Germany and America respectively, there is an overarching reminder here that regular, proactive management of mental health is paramount to success in and outside of sport, wherever you are.

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Printed at Apex Printing Press, Jiffnain

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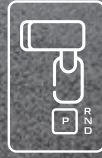


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