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Times OF OMAN

GOLDEN JUBILEE

50 YEARS OF LEGACY

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FDI IN OMAN EXCEEDS OMR30.6 BILLION

Oil and gas sector accounted for 81% of total foreign direct investment valued at OMR24.70bn

MUSCAT: Foreign direct investment (FDI) in Oman has seen a massive surge reaching OMR30.61 billion by the end of the first quarter of 2025, while inward FDI flows totalled OMR5.22 billion, a significant rise compared to OMR4.11 billion in the first quarter of 2024.

Preliminary data from the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) indicates that the oil and gas sector accounted for 81 percent of the total FDI, valued at OMR24.70 billion, with cash flows reaching OMR4.8 billion.

The statistics further reveal that FDI in the converting industries sector stood at OMR2.74 billion by the end of Q1 2025, with cash flows of OMR592.30 million. In the financial intermediary sector, FDI reached OMR1.30 billion, with cash flows of OMR217.80 million.

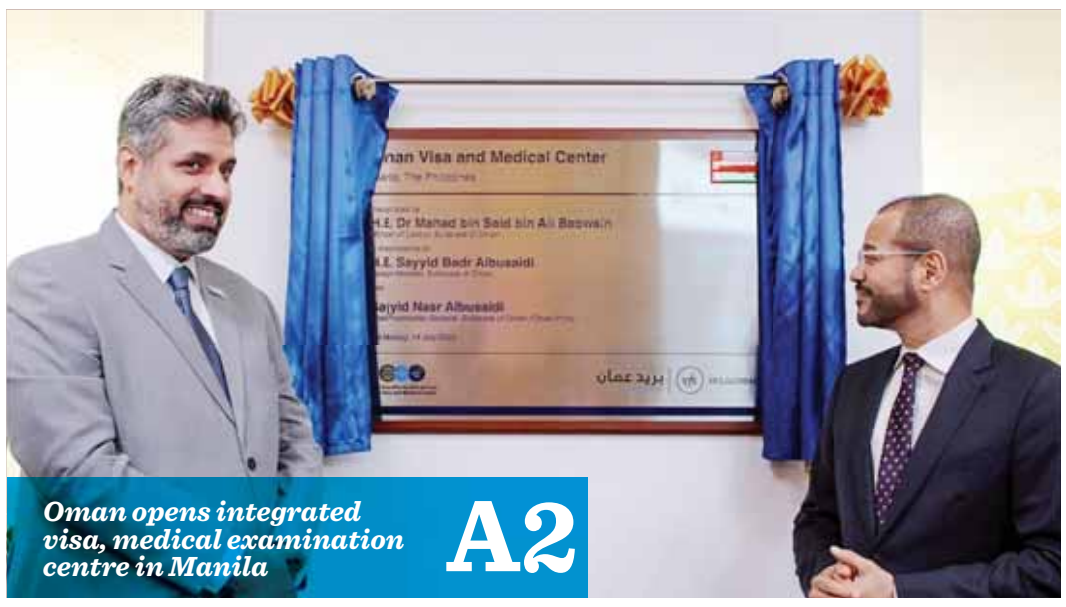
Investments in the real estate, rental, and commercial activities sector amounted to OMR653.10 million, marking a 36.8 percent decrease compared to the same quarter in 2024.

Meanwhile, total FDI in the transport, storage, and communications sector was valued at OMR357.90 million, with flows of OMR3.20 million. The electricity and water sector saw investments totalling OMR292 million, an 11 percent decrease compared to the corresponding quarter in 2024. The trade sector recorded total investments of OMR262 million, with flows of OMR14.50 million.

Total investment in the hotels and restaurants sector by the end of the first quarter of the current year reached OMR116.60 million, a 0.5 percent decrease in value compared to the same period in 2024.

The total value in the construction sector was OMR88.50 million, experiencing a decrease in flows estimated at OMR4.9 million. The total value in other activities reached OMR89.90 million, with flows of OMR7.30 million.

The United Kingdom led in total FDI by the end of the first quarter of the current year, accounting for 50.9 percent of the total, valued at OMR15.57 billion. >A2



Oman opens integrated visa, medical examination centre in Manila **A2**

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Health alert: Children at risk of 'electronic addiction'

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Health (MOH) has issued a public advisory warning parents against the overuse of electronic devices by children during the summer vacation, citing the growing risk of what it terms 'electronic addiction' — a condition that can severely impact a child's emotional, mental, and social development.

As families settle into the school break, the Ministry is calling on parents to be vigilant and proactive, emphasising that excessive screen time can lead to long-term behavioural and psychological issues.

"Devices were not created to raise our children," the Ministry said in its statement.

"A child does not need a screen to light up his world, but rather an eye that loves him, a voice that answers him, and a heart that pays attention to him. Do not buy him false comfort at the price of a true childhood."

According to the advisory, signs of potential electronic addiction in children include noticeable mood changes, excessive use of devices such as smartphones, tablets, or gaming consoles, and an inability to control or limit time spent on screens. Children may also begin to withdraw from social interactions, neglect school responsibilities or household tasks, and display anxiety, anger, or agitation when access to devices is restricted. Other symptoms include compulsively checking notifications or messages, losing interest in activities not involving the internet, experiencing sleep disturbances, and showing signs of constant stress or depression.

Health professionals warn that while digital devices have become a part of daily life — particularly for learning and entertainment — unregulated and unsupervised use can be harmful.

The Ministry is urging parents to create a balanced environment by setting clear screen-time limits, encouraging outdoor play and family interaction, promoting hobbies and creative activities, and ensuring there are device-free zones and times at home. >A6

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Sixth phase of Eidaad programme launched

1 The Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Innovation and Petroleum Development Oman, launched the sixth phase of the National Programme for Training University Students at the Arab Open University in Seeb. >A2

OMAN

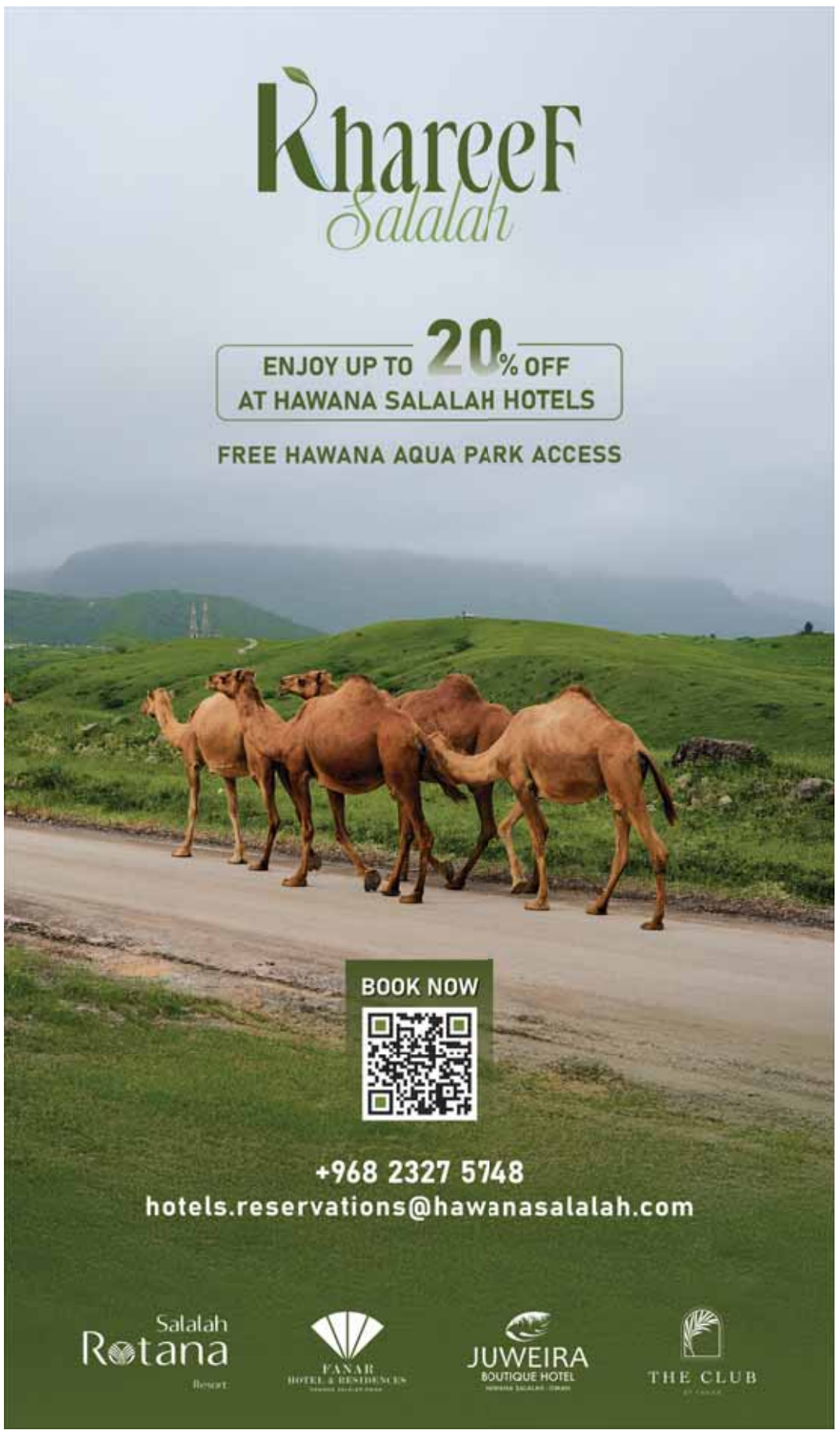
Adding changes for new academic year

2 The preference modification phase for registration and admission for 2025/2026 academic year will begin on Tuesday and continue until 31 July. >A3

WORLD

Bangladesh: 19 dead in Dhaka jet crash

3 At least nineteen people were killed and over 100 others injured after a Bangladesh Air Force training aircraft crashed into Milestone School and College in Dhaka's Uttara area on Monday, according to media report. >A7



OMAN

PRAYER TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....12:18pm
Asr.....3:40pm
Maghrib.....6:59pm
Isha.....8:19pm
Fajr (Tomorrow)..... 4:09am

Oman inaugurates integrated visa and medical examination centre in Manila

The centre offers a comprehensive, one-stop service experience, including biometric fingerprint registration, medical examinations, document and employment contract attestation, and other value-added services

MANILA: Oman Visa and Medical Examination Centre was inaugurated in the Philippine capital, Manila, as part of a strategic initiative by the Sultanate of Oman to streamline and regulate work visa procedures in accordance with employment contracts approved under Omani labour law.

The opening ceremony was held under the patronage of Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and Dr. Mahad bin Said Ba'awin, Minister of Labour. This project marks the culmination of the investment forum held earlier this month between the two countries in Cebu, Philippines.

The centre offers a comprehensive, one-stop service experience, including biometric fingerprint registration, medical examinations, document and employment contract attestation, and other value-added services.

Designed to enhance efficiency, protect both workers and employers, and reduce reliance on unregulated intermediaries, the centre enables employers to verify skills and qualifications to ensure they match job requirements.

Additionally, the centre provides services such as issuing Omani phone numbers and opening bank accounts in the Sultanate of Oman's. It also features a dedicated application information centre and conducts awareness sessions on workers' rights and obligations. These measures ensure that workers receive the necessary information and support throughout the employment process, facilitating a smooth pre-departure experience.

The Omani delegation held official talks with the Philippine Department of Migrant Workers, where both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to protecting workers and employers while promoting ethical employment practices. The two sides agreed to cooperate closely to ensure the success of this initiative in line with their mutual objectives.

The Manila centre is the first in a series of similar facilities Oman plans to establish in key labour-exporting countries, with additional centres expected to open in the near future. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to enhance labour mobility frameworks and safeguard the rights of workers and employers in accordance with Omani labour law.

The project reflects the Omani government's steadfast commitment to providing high-quality, secure services for citizens and residents, ensuring business sustainability and promoting professional employment practices. The event was attended by Eng. Nasser bin Said Al Manwari, Oman's Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines, along with several officials from both sides. – ONA

IN AL WUSTA GOVERNORATE

Follow-up, implementation of urban strategy reviewed

HAIMA: A workshop focusing on the follow-up and implementation of the urban strategy in Al Wusta Governorate was held on Monday in the Wilayat of Haima.

The workshop was a collaborative effort between the Al Wusta Governor's Office and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning.

Primary objective

The primary objective of the workshop was to assess the progress of the urban strategy's implementation within the governorate. It also aimed to clarify tasks to enhance the achievement of strategic goals and directly monitor projects and data.

The workshop included a detailed presentation on project classification. Additionally, a joint working mechanism was agreed upon between the Governor's office and the Directorate of Housing to ensure coordinated efforts.

Emphasis was placed on the importance of effective communication with relevant authorities to update projects and guarantee integrated roles.

Discussions also covered key challenges related to data updating and proposed practical solutions to address them.

The workshop was attended by Sheikh Mohammed Ali Al Ghafaili, Wali of Haima, and several officials from Al Wusta Governorate. – ONA

NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR TRAINING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Sixth phase of Eidaad programme launched

AL SEEB: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, acting in collaboration with Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), yesterday launched the 6th phase of the National Programme for Training University Students, titled Eidaad'.

The ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. It was held at the Arab Open University in the Wilayat of A'Seeb.

Eidaad programme covers a whole academic year and targets penultimate-year students studying at public and private higher education institutions in the Sultanate of Oman. It seeks to empower students with basic skills by making them witness scenarios of the work environment and its requirements.

The programme constitutes part of efforts to enhance cooperation between the industrial and academic sectors. It provides the participants with the technical expertise, knowledge and skills necessary for meeting the requirements of the labour market.

The 6th edition of Eidaad programme brings together participants from 28 higher education institutions (both public and private) and 41 sponsoring companies and institutions from the industrial and private sectors. More than 1,000 male and female students graduated from the programme since its inception in 2020.

The launch ceremony saw the signing of 12 agreements (cooperation protocols) between industrial and academic sectors. The agreements were signed by Dr. Rahma Ibrahim Al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and Farid Khalfan Al Harthy, Executive Director of Corporate Support at PDO, and representatives of the industrial and private sector institutions concerned. – ONA

NCSI DATA

< FROM A1

Foreign direct investments from US to Oman touch OMR7.82bn

It was followed by the United States with a total investment of OMR7.82 billion, Kuwait with OMR1.22 billion, the People's Republic of China with OMR894.9 million, the United Arab Emirates with OMR753 million, Qatar with OMR669.30 million, Bahrain with OMR462.40 million, the Netherlands with OMR364.10 million, India with OMR306 million and Switzerland with OMR301.3 million. Other countries contributed OMR2.23 billion. - ONA

Modification phase for new academic year registration to commence today

The results of the initial sorting will be announced on the evening of Tuesday, 19 August, while accepted students will have the opportunity to complete their procedures starting from 19 August until noon on Sunday, 24 August

MUSCAT: The preference modification phase for registration and admission for the 2025/2026 academic year will begin on Tuesday and continue until Thursday 31 July.

The results of the initial sorting will be announced on the evening of Tuesday, 19 August, while accepted students will have the opportunity to complete their procedures starting from 19 August until noon on Sunday 24 August.

Ahmed Mohammed Al Azri, Director General of the Higher Education Admission Centre (HEAC) at the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, stated that the number of available seats received from government higher education institutions, domestic scholarships, private sector grants for private higher education institutions, and external scholarships and grants from Arab countries for the 2025/2026 academic year has reached 29,252 seats.

Of these, 16,884 seats are in various government higher education institutions, 607 are for external scholarships and grants, while the number of domestic scholarships and grants for study at private universities and colleges in the Sultanate of Oman stands at 11,761.

He added that the preference modification phase is one of the most critical stages of registration, allowing students to finalize their program choices in the system for the initial sorting competition. He noted that the updates this year focus on two main aspects, namely admission procedures and academic programs.

Regarding admission procedures, the center will launch this year a self-funded admission system, regulating student admissions at Sultan Qaboos University on a self-financed basis, in addition to educational specialisation programmes at private higher education institutions within Oman (Sohar University, Nizwa University, Dhofar University, and the University of Al Sharqiyah).

The centre has issued a student guide detailing all information related to this system, coinciding with the preference modification phase. Registration under this system will open after the initial sorting. Additionally, he noted that updates to the Unified Admission System include the launch of a complaint submission service on the Unified Government Services Portal, reinforcing government efforts to facilitate access to e-services and streamline transactions through a single platform.

As for academic programme updates, he pointed out that higher education institutions (scholarship providers) have aligned programs with labour market demands.

New domestic scholarship programs for bachelor's degrees include Emergency Medical Services Science, Environmental Management and Practices, and Human Medicine at Dhofar University. Domestic scholarships have also been introduced for students with learning difficulties to study at private higher education institutions.

Al Azri further added that new external scholarships have been introduced for specializations overseen by the External Scholarships Department at the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, such as Healthcare, Health Planning, Health Risk Management, Therapeutic Nutrition, Law, and Actuarial Studies.

He said that the ministry, represented by the Domestic Scholarships Department, has also directed scholarships toward high-demand specializations in the labour market, including Process Engineering, Production Operations, Occupational Health and Safety, Welding, Mining, Renewable Energy, Quality Control Management, Tourism and Hospitality Management, and Legal Assistant Studies. Additionally, new professional diploma scholarships for Air Transport Pilot Licenses have been introduced at the Oman Aviation Academy.

He noted that government higher education institutions have expanded their programmes and specialisations. The Military Technological College has increased its capacity this year, opening admissions for female students alongside males in various engineering disciplines (bearing in mind that these are not coupled with employment).

The University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS) has added a new engineering specialization at its branch in Musandam Governorate. The university has also introduced a an advantage for social security family students, allowing them to apply without allocated seats in engineering programs; upon acceptance, they may choose the nearest branch of the university to their residence.

He explained that the Higher Education Admission Centre had earlier announced the trial sorting results this month, noting some common errors among applicants. Al Azri emphasized that students can avoid these issues, which negatively impact their admission chances—particularly high-achieving students.

The trial sorting results showed that 1,936 students with an 80% grade or higher did not receive a preliminary program offer. 76% of them had listed too few preferences, focusing on highly competitive, limited specializations.

Additionally, 247 students with a 90% grade or higher did not receive a preliminary offer, with 84% of them listing fewer than 30 preferences. This highlights the need for students to include more program options and diversify their choices across institutions and disciplines.

In conclusion, Al Azri urged students to maximize their program selections (meeting admission requirements) and prioritise them by preference to enhance their chances of securing a seat. He also stressed the importance of diversifying choices across institutions and specialisations and encouraged following the center's website for updates on registration and admission stages. - ONA

SHUSHA GLOBAL MEDIA FORUM

ONA participates in global media forum in Azerbaijan

BAKU: Oman News Agency (ONA) participated in the third edition of the Shusha Global Media Forum, held in the city of Shusha, the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Current media challenges

The forum aims to enhance international media cooperation and discuss current challenges facing the media amidst rapid technological advancements.

It also seeks to explore the prospects of digital transformation and ways to combat rumours while boosting media credibility.

Forum sessions also include discussions on press freedom, the evolution of artificial intelligence in newsrooms, and the importance of media in building bridges of cultural understanding among peoples.

The event facilitates the exchange of expertise among various international media institutions.

Approximately 140 media experts and specialists from 52 countries are participating in the forum.

This includes representatives from over 30 news agencies, seven international organisations, and nearly 80 media institutions, alongside Azerbaijani media officials and representatives. - ONA

EASY ACCESS

SGIVS Global starts operations for Indian passport, visa services

Times News Service

MUSCAT: SGIVS Global has begun providing consular, passport and visa, services at Al Raid Business Centre, Qurum in Oman.

The centre was inaugurated in the presence of Indian ambassador to Oman G V Srinivas on Sunday.

The company said it plans to open branches in other parts of Oman to offer easy access to passport and visa services.

In Oman, SGIVS will offer visa Services (Tourist, Business, Entry, etc.), Indian Passport Services (reissue, new passport), Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) applications, surrender certificate services, attestation services, police clearance certificate, and apostille services. All applicants are requested to book appointments online at https://sgivsglobal-oman.com.

E-PLATFORM

Second package of services on Khuta platform launched

MUSCAT: The National Employment Programme has launched the second package of services on the "Khuta Career Guidance Platform", the first comprehensive national e-platform specialised in career counselling and professional orientation in the Sultanate of Oman.

The second package introduces a suite of smart tools designed to enhance career guidance experiences, empowering users to build career plans aligned with their personal aspirations and labour market demands.

Among the new services is the "Study Plan", which provides school students—particularly those in Grade 10—with a clear vision of their academic pathways. By selecting a study plan based on their interests, capabilities, and university admission requirements, students can identify suitable specializations and explore labour market demands for each field.

The platform also unveiled the "Entrepreneurial Traits Assessment", a scientifically validated tool tailored to Oman's environment.

It helps students evaluate their readiness for entrepreneurship and discover their potential based on behavioural and attitudinal analysis.

Additionally, the "Khuta AI Assistant" leverages user data analysis to recommend specialisations and careers matching their skills and ambitions.

In a step reflecting the platform's commitment to equal opportunities, the "Career Interests Assessment for Visually Impaired Individuals" was introduced—the first of its kind in Oman—helping this group explore suitable academic and career options based on their abilities and interests.

The launch marks a milestone in developing career guidance in Oman, equipping Omani youth with tools to make informed career decisions and enhancing their readiness for the job market. This aligns with Oman Vision 2040 goals to build a knowledge-based economy and foster sustainable development of the national workforce.

The new services are part of an integrated strategy to empower youth in making calculated academic and career choices, preparing them for future skills and economic transformations while supporting digital transition initiatives.

Since its launch, the platform has seen growing demand, with over 26,300 users by the end of June this year.

It now features 861 academic programmes, 263 professional certifications and 100 training courses offered in partnership with Coursera platform, benefiting 2,465 young Omanis.

Dr. Badr Hamood Al Kharousi, Advisor and Head of Capacity Building at the National Employment Programme and General Supervisor of the platform, emphasised that career guidance is pivotal to employment system success and bridging the gap between education outputs and labour market needs.

He noted that Khuta represents a model of cross-sector integration, developed through public-private partnerships with input from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, government higher education institutions, and private sector entities.

The platform has garnered local and international recognition, including praise in the World Economic Forum's Skills Report (January 2025) for its role in empowering youth with future-ready skills. - ONA

OMAN

Oman's circular economy gap across various sectors reviewed at workshop

The workshop presented preliminary models illustrating the impact of applying circular economy policies on environmental and economic indicators

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Economy on Monday organised the second workshop on the "Circularity Gap Report - Oman." This initiative aims to develop a national roadmap for the circular economy.

Dr. Nasser Rashid Al Maawali, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy, clarified that the project to calculate the circular economy gap in Oman is the first of its kind in the Middle East and North Africa. This underscores Oman's commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

In a press statement, the Minister explained that this crucial national project has three main objectives: establishing a national baseline to measure the circular economy gap and compare it with other countries, designing a circular economy roadmap for Oman, and empowering and enhancing national capabilities in the circular economy sector for both public and private entities.

Al Maawali affirmed that the project will foster sustainable, low-carbon economic development and create new investment opportunities in renewable areas related to alternative energy and the green economy.

Earlier in the workshop, Ahmed Said Al Siyabi, Director General of Economic Policies and Programmes at the Ministry of Economy, delivered a speech. He emphasised that the workshop aimed to review and discuss the preliminary results of calculating the baseline for the circular economy gap across various sectors.

He added that the workshop also introduced accompanying initiatives, such as training programs and a proposed interactive platform to showcase project results and outputs. Furthermore, the workshop presented preliminary models illustrating the impact of applying circular economy policies on environmental and economic indicators, including employment opportunities.

During the workshop, visual presentations showcased developments in the study to calculate the circular economy gap in Oman, along with a presentation and discussion of the project's preliminary results.

Attendees also participated in group discussions to present and analyse models and scenarios for measuring the impact of implementing circular economy strategies and policies on environmental impact and job opportunities. The significance of the circular economy lies in its pivotal role in promoting sustainability, efficient resource utilisation, waste reduction, and recycling as a sustainable model, moving away from the traditional resource-depleting model. — ONA

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS AND YOUTH

Dialogue session highlights culture, library sciences and sustainable development

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth yesterday organised a dialogue session titled "Culture, Library Sciences, and Sustainable Development" as part of the "Civilizational Horizons" program.

The session addressed the challenges libraries face in the wake of the digital revolution and the widespread use of the internet, exploring how libraries have adapted to these transformations to provide reliable information beyond geographical constraints. It also highlighted their growing role in supporting education, scientific research, and innovation.

The discussion touched on the strong connection between culture, library sciences, and information, emphasizing the role of libraries as cultural institutions that have historically enriched human civilization while promoting values of pluralism, tolerance, and freedom of expression.

The session also shed light on the vital role libraries play in achieving sustainable development goals by organizing knowledge and managing vast intellectual output through smart systems that keep pace with technological advancements.

Additionally, the session explored how libraries contribute to advancing artificial intelligence models, leveraging their extensive databases, and their role in training users to utilise these technologies to produce reliable and well-researched content.

Discussions also covered the state of library and information sciences in the Sultanate of Oman, the national information strategy, and digital transformation under "Oman Vision 2040", along with key challenges facing the library sector in the country.

The session further reviewed investment opportunities in cultural and creative industries and the role of libraries in this field. — ONA

MILITARY MUSIC SHOWS

Royal Guard of Oman Band concludes participation in Basel Tattoo in Switzerland

BASEL: The Royal Guard of Oman Band concluded its participation in the 2025 Basel Tattoo festival, held in Basel, the Swiss Confederation.

The festival is considered one of the most prestigious and largest military music shows globally, annually attracting elite bands representing numerous countries with rich military traditions.

The Royal Guard of Oman Band delivered musical performances and field displays that garnered the admiration of the audience and the appreciation of the organisers.

Their performances were distinguished by precision in execution and harmony in movement, alongside a diverse repertoire that blended classical military pieces with Omani heritage compositions, reflecting the national cultural identity within a global framework. — ONA

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

Treasury bills worth OMR21.7mn issued

MUSCAT: Oman's central bank raised OMR21.7 million by way of allotting Treasury Bills on Monday.

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to OMR0.2 million, for a maturity period of 28 days. The average accepted price reached OMR99.700 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR99.700 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 3.91071% and 3.92248%, respectively.

Additionally, OMR10.5 million was alloted for a maturity period of 91 days. The average accepted price reached OMR98.936 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR98.935 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.26884% and 4.31476%, respectively.

Also, another OMR0.5 million was allotted for a maturity period of 182 days. The average accepted price reached OMR97.900 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR97.900 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.21154% and 4.30188%, respectively.

On the other hand, another treasury bill worth OMR10.5 million was allotted for a maturity period of 364 days. The average accepted price reached OMR95.798 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR95.780 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.21393% and 4.39885%, respectively.

Treasury Bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds.

The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) acts as the Issue Manager and provides theadded advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 5.00% while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 5.50%.

Furthermore, Treasury Bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the Government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures. — ONA

524 INSPECTION VISITS

65 agricultural and water violations recorded in Al Dhahirah in 2025 first half

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Control Department at the General Directorate of Agricultural Wealth and Water Resources in Al Dhahirah Governorate conducted 524 inspection visits during the first half of 2025. These visits resulted in the detection of 65 violations in the agricultural, livestock, and water resources sectors and necessary legal measures were immediately taken in this regard.

The inspection tours included a number of farms, facilities, and agricultural shops, including plant and animal production farms and poultry breeding, in addition to nurseries, veterinary clinics, animal feed and grass outlets, and dams supervised by the Ministry.

Sulaiman bin Saeed Al Mandhari, Director of the Control Department at the General Directorate of Agricultural Wealth and Water Resources in Al Dhahirah Governorate, said, "The department's commitment to overseeing the implementation of laws, regulations, and systems to preserve agricultural and animal wealth and water resources for their sustainability and to remove related encroachments. These visits and inspection campaigns also aim to spread awareness and enhance the supervisory role to preserve the health and safety of consumers and natural resources.

"The most notable violations included the confiscation of some expired pesticides and veterinary medicines, the failure to obtain administrative licenses, and the seizure of a number of illegal wells," he further added.

"In addition to taking legal action, we are continuing our inspection campaigns and are working on awareness and guidance programs for farm and facility owners on the importance of adhering to the rules and regulations in force in each sector and obtaining the necessary licenses," he said.

Al-Manzari further explained the risks associated with these violations, saying, "The sale and trade of expired pesticides and veterinary medicines is not merely a procedural violation; it poses a direct threat to the health of consumers and harms the quality of agricultural crops and animal products. Unlicensed wells can significantly contribute to the uncontrolled depletion of groundwater, which reduces the replenishment of water resources."

MUSCAT GOVERNORATE
MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. 22/2025

Muscat Municipality invites interested companies to the following biddings :

Sl No.	Bidding No.	Bidding description	Document fee	Deadline for obtaining bidding docs.	Deadline for inquires submission	Deadline for submission
1	2F/2025	Design, Implementation & Management of various Events & Activities - Muscat Nights 2026	R.O. 25/	10/08/2025	20/8/2025	31/8/2025
2	3F/2025	Design, Construction, Production & sale of Omani Halwa at the Muscat Nights' Different locations	R.O. 25/	10/08/2025	20/8/2025	31/8/2025
3	4F/2025	Implementation & Mmanagement of Inflatable Games - Muscat Nights 2026	R.O. 25/	10/08/2025	20/8/2025	31/8/2025
4	5F/2025	Design & Construction of Horror City - Muscat Nights 2026	R.O. 25/	10/08/2025	20/8/2025	31/8/2025

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

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

BANK MUSCAT 0423010702710024

3. A copy of the transaction's receipt MUST be send to the following e-mail **(SQ.QS@mm.gov.om),** provided with the company data (name and bid number, delegate name,office phone number, mobile number, email address approved by the company and commerical registration number of the company).
4. The tender document will be provided to the company via email.
5. 2:00 PM on the above mentioned dates, is the last timing for obtaining Bidding Documents.
6. Documents must be enclosed in a plain closed envelope (without any company information) and place in the box located in bulding (A) in Muscat Municipality, Head Office, Darsait.

NOTES:

1. Companies which are not registed in Muscat Municipality or their registeration has been expaired shall register through the municipality's website **(www.mm.gov.om).**
2. For technical support, please contact Muscat Municpality throngh this email **(crm@mm.gov.om).**
3. If the bidders have any inquiries regarding the scope of the work, they have to sent their inquiries through the following e-mail **(mais.h.alnofli@mm.gov.om)**
4. **10:00 AM** on the above submission mentioned dates, is the last timing for receving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & time shall not be accepted for any reason.
5. Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason.

Website: www.mm.gov.om

شركة عُمان للمرطبات ش.م.ع.ع

OMAN REFRESHMENT COMPANY SAOG

P.O. Box 30, C.P.O. A'Seeb P.C. 111, Sultanate of Oman, Tel. 24589000, 24589100, Fax : 24589099
e-mail : info@pepsioman.com, Website: www.pepsioman.com

UNAUDITED SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

	Parent Company		Group	
	HI 2025 RO	HI 2024 RO	HI 2025 RO	HI 2025 RO
ASSETS				
Non-current assets				
Property, plant and equipment	25,729,395	28,542,912	56,014,980	57,963,800
Intangible assets	-	-	1,451,012	1,426,782
Right-of-use assets	-	-	229,374	18,725
Investment in subsidiaries	24,471,200	730,715	-	-
Other investments	-	-	6,720	7,279
Deferred tax asset (net)	412,852	-	1,393,255	904,650
Financial assets at amortised cost	2,841,645	3,260,658	2,841,645	3,260,721
Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income	712,315	-	712,315	-
Total non-current assets	**54,167,407**	**32,534,285**	**62,649,301**	**63,581,957**
Current assets				
Inventories	6,836,811	7,471,873	12,495,400	14,104,157
Trade and other receivables	10,167,952	11,207,753	12,111,954	12,700,469
Loan to a subsidiary	-	23,741,163	-	-
Term deposits	18,000,000	19,000,000	18,000,000	19,000,000
Cash and cash equivalents	4,223,723	1,835,112	7,379,211	3,913,788
	39,228,486	**63,255,901**	**49,986,565**	**49,718,414**
Total assets	**93,395,893**	**95,790,186**	**112,635,866**	**113,300,371**
Equity and liabilities				
Equity				
Share capital	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
Legal reserve	1,666,667	1,666,667	1,696,167	1,696,167
Foreign currency translation reserve	-	-	1,241,294	605,422
General reserve	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000
Retained earnings	68,003,420	69,110,938	68,855,896	69,067,983
Total equity	**77,170,087**	**78,277,605**	**79,293,357**	**78,869,572**
Liabilities				
Non-current liabilities				
Term loans	-	5,166,729	3,144,986	5,689,896
Lease liabilities	-	-	136,633	9,648
Deferred tax liabilities (net)	-	346,133	131	360,879
Other Provisions	-	-	8,305	
Employees' end of service benefits	1,329,811	1,577,285	1,345,883	1,607,615
Total non-current liabilities	**1,329,811**	**7,090,147**	**4,635,938**	**7,668,038**
Current liabilities				
Term loans	5,149,386	-	13,516,057	8,653,483
Lease liabilities	-	-	104,595	12,228
Trade and other payables	9,723,209	10,374,034	15,052,498	17,981,960
Provision for income tax	23,400	48,400	33,421	115,090
Total current liabilities	**14,895,995**	**10,422,434**	**28,706,571**	**26,762,761**
Total liabilities	**16,225,806**	**17,512,581**	**33,342,509**	**34,430,799**
Total equity and liabilities	**93,395,893**	**95,790,186**	**112,635,866**	**113,300,371**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the unaudited results on the performance of the Company for the six-month period ended on 30th June 2025.

The Company (ORC Group) has reported a net profit after tax of OMR 1.102 million on a turnover of OMR 32.96 million during the six months period ended on 30th June 2025, compared to a net loss after tax of OMR (1.46) million on a turnover of OMR 32.53 million for the corresponding period of last year.

Revenue increased by 1.3% during the six months period ended on 30th June 2025, and loss after tax reported in the corresponding period of last year has improved to a profit after tax therefore improvement of 175.5%. We are optimistic about the prospects for the next Quarter. Our focus remains on driving sustainable growth, further improving our efficiencies & exploring new opportunities for expansion.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I take this opportunity to extend our sincere appreciation to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and his Government for their wise leadership, guidance and direction which continue to motivate and inspire us towards greater participation in the development and service of Oman.

We pray to the Almighty Allah to bestow His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq with the best of health and bless him with long life to lead the Sultanate of Oman on the path of prosperity.

Buti Obaid Al Mulla
(Chairman)

UNAUDITED SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOMEFOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	Parent Company		Group	
	HI 2025 RO	HI 2024 RO	HI 2025 RO	HI 2025 RO
Revenue	22,120,593	20,388,403	32,962,561	32,525,994
Cost of sales	(14,815,925)	(14,573,817)	(22,689,674)	(23,086,406)
Gross Profit	**7,304,668**	**5,814,586**	**10,272,887**	**9,439,588**
Selling and distribution expenses	(5,727,511)	(7,130,179)	(7,207,189)	(8,886,422)
General and administrative Expenses	(1,548,652)	(1,779,730)	(2,157,427)	(2,441,544)
Other income	21,654	259,219	89,500	272,986
Finance income (net)	501,819	514,466	171,562	226,898
Loss before income tax	**551,978**	**(2,321,638)**	**1,169,333**	**(1,388,494)**
Income tax	-	(5,226)	(66,950)	(71,916)
Loss after tax	**551,978**	**(2,326,864)**	**1,102,382**	**(1,460,410)**
Other comprehensive income				
Items that will be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss				
Foreign exchange difference on translation of goodwill			42,580	(3,201)
Foreign exchange differences on translation of foreign operations			534,633	(78,478)
Total comprehensive income for the year	**551,978**	**(2,326,864)**	**1,679,595**	**(1,542,089)**

Notes:The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder, who requests them either in Arabic or English, within 7 days of receipt of such request. The address to which the shareholder should send his/her request is as follows
Oman Refreshment Company SAOG, P.O. Box 30, CPO Airport, PC 111, Sultante of Oman

OMAN/WORLD

UPPER HOUSE

Prime Minister Ishiba faces major setback after an electoral defeat

TOKYO: Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba has faced a major setback following a significant electoral defeat on Monday in the upper house of Japan's parliament as his coalition failed to attain a majority, reported Kyodo News.

Last year, the ruling coalition also lost the majority in the lower house of the parliament.

Despite this major setback, which led to his ruling coalition losing its majority in both houses of Japan's parliament, Ishiba vowed that he would remain in office as the country's Prime Minister to avert a "political stalemate".

Voter turnout reached 58.51 per cent, an increase from the 52.05 per cent recorded in the 2022 upper house election, with a record 26 million early votes cast during the holiday weekend.

According to Kyodo News, unlike members of the lower house, who are subject to dissolution by the Prime Minister, members of the upper chamber have fixed six-year terms. To prevent a total turnover, half of the upper house seats are up for election every three years.

According to Kyodo News, Ishiba, who leads the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), ruled out stepping down to 'avoid a political deadlock' and to maintain leadership during what he described as a "national crisis", as households struggle with rising costs and Japan faces looming US tariffs set to begin from August 1.

The LDP experienced one of its worst performances in years in the House of Councillors election held on Sunday, triggering internal party criticism and renewed pressure from a strengthened opposition.

Some LDP members, including veteran Shoji Nishida, openly called for Ishiba's resignation, accusing him of disregarding the public's verdict, Kyodo News reported.

Despite acknowledging his "heavy responsibility" for the outcome, Ishiba ruled out stepping down and stressed his commitment to the public.

"The path ahead is a thorny one. I will conduct state affairs by deepening discussions with other parties even more carefully than before... We are facing a severe situation that can be described as a national crisis. In that environment, what is most important is to avoid a political stalemate... I will fulfil my responsibility for the people," Ishiba said as quoted by Kyodo News.

The ruling LDP-Komeito coalition dropped from 141 to 122 seats in the 248-member upper house, falling short of a simple majority. Though less powerful than the lower house, the upper house remains critical for passing legislation.

Asked whether he would consider expanding the coalition to include opposition parties, Ishiba said there were no such plans "for now" but expressed openness to broader political dialogue, Kyodo News reported. -ANI

CABLE

HM greets King of the Belgians

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to King Phillippe Leopold Louis Marie, King of the Belgians on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan lauded the depth of bilateral relations and cooperation, wishing the Kingdom of Belgium progress, prosperity and the realisation of further achievements. — ONA

ROYAL OMAN POLICE

ROP thwarts drug smuggling

MUSCAT: The Royal Oman Police (ROP) has foiled an attempt to smuggle more than 550 kilograms of drugs into Oman. "The Coast Guard Police under Dhofar Governorate Police Command and in cooperation with the General Directorate for Combating Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, thwarted an attempt to smuggle more than 550 kilograms of drugs. The operation involved three individuals of Yemeni nationality who illegally entered Omani territorial waters aboard a fishing boat," the ROP said.

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MINISTRY OF HEALTH

MOH continues its focus on child development

< FROM A1

The MOH campaign comes at a time when many children spend prolonged hours indoors due to the summer heat, increasing the temptation to stay glued to screens. Officials stress that while technology can be a useful tool, it should never substitute real human connection, physical activity, or the nurturing presence of caregivers.

The advisory is part of a wider initiative to promote mental well-being and support healthier family dynamics in an increasingly digital world. Parents are encouraged to lead by example in how they manage their own screen time and to prioritise quality time that strengthens bonds and reinforces positive habits.

As Oman continues its focus on preventive health and child development, the Ministry's message is clear: the cost of convenience should never come at the expense of a child's childhood.

US President slams WSJ report, denies being warned against firing Fed chief

Trump called the story "typically untruthful" and said no one had to explain to him what impact firing Powell would have on financial markets

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has strongly criticised a Wall Street Journal (WSJ) report that claimed Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent had tried to stop him from firing Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, The Hill reported.

In a post on Truth Social on Sunday, Trump called the story "typically untruthful" and said no one had to explain to him what impact firing Powell would have on financial markets.

"The Wall Street Journal ran a typically untruthful story today by saying that Secretary of the Treasury, Scott Bessent, explained to me that firing Jerome 'Too Late' Powell, the Worst Federal Reserve Chairman in History, would be bad for the Market," Trump wrote.

"Nobody had to explain that to me. I know better than anybody what's good for the Market, and what's good for the U.S.A," he added. "If it weren't for me, the Market wouldn't be at Record Highs right now, it probably would have CRASHED! So, get your information CORRECT. People don't explain to me, I explain to them!"

According to The Hill, Trump has been pushing to remove Powell over his handling of interest rates. However, legal experts believe the president does not have the direct authority to fire the Fed chair. News of Trump's efforts to do so has reportedly caused concern on Wall Street.

The Federal Reserve, when contacted, said it had "nothing to share" on the matter, The Hill reported.

Meanwhile, Trump has also filed a defamation lawsuit against the Wall Street Journal. The legal action comes after the newspaper published a story that included a birthday message Trump had allegedly sent to Jeffrey Epstein, a convicted sex offender who died in jail in 2019.

The message, reportedly typed inside the outline of a naked woman and signed by Trump, said, "A pal is a wonderful thing. Happy Birthday -- and may every day be another wonderful secret," according to The Hill.

In the lawsuit, Trump claimed that the report had caused him "overwhelming financial and reputational harm" and demanded billions of dollars in damages.

"Defendants concocted this story to malign President Trump's character and integrity and deceptively portray him in a false light," the lawsuit said. -DW

When you butcher civilians, you don't get a pass: Trump backs TRF terror designation

WASHINGTON: The US House Foreign Affairs Committee Majority on Saturday said President Donald Trump strongly backed the administration's decision to designate The Resistance Front (TRF) as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation, calling it a deserved move against those responsible for killing civilians in India.

"President Trump calls it like it is. The Resistance Front is a foreign terrorist organisation and deserves the designation. When you butcher civilians, you don't get a pass--you get JUSTICE," the Committee posted on X.

The Resistance Front, a proxy group of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT), had claimed responsibility for the April 22 terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam area that killed 26 civilians.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar welcomed the move, calling it a strong step in the global fight against terrorism.

S. Jaishankar said the action reflected growing India-US counter-terrorism cooperation.

In a statement, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the decision to designate TRF under US anti-terrorism laws was based on its direct involvement in the Pahalgam attack and its known links with LeT.

The United States noted that the Pahalgam incident was the deadliest civilian attack in India since the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which were also carried out by LeT. The US State Department further stated that TRF has been involved in multiple attacks on Indian security forces, including in 2024.

The move, the US government said, reinforced the Trump administration's long-standing commitment to global counter-terrorism and signalled a message that terrorist proxies will not be spared. -ANI

BOMB ATTACK IN 2006

12 acquitted in Mumbai train blasts case

MUMBAI: The Bombay High Court, in the Indian city of Mumbai, on Monday acquitted all 12 accused of carrying out the Mumbai train bomb attack in 2006.

The decision overturned a decade-old ruling by a special court that had issued the death penalty to five, and life sentences to seven of the accused.

The individuals were sentenced in 2015, but have been in jail for over 18 years.

A two-judge panel observed that "the prosecution has utterly failed to prove the case against the accused. It is hard to believe that the accused committed the crime."

"Hence, their conviction is quashed and set aside," the panel said on Monday, as per several local media outlets, including NDTV.

What happened during the attack and in the earlier judgement?

On July 11, 2006, seven bombs rocked crowded Mumbai local trains during the evening rush hour, killing 189 people and injuring over 800.

On September 2015, a special trial court under the state's organized crime law awarded the death penalty to five of the defendants for planting the bombs and life sentences to seven others for other involvement.

Another accused was acquitted by the trial court but only after he spent nine years in jail.

This judgment was then referred to the high court for confirmation of the death penalty, while the accused also appealed the matter.

Pending in the High Court since 2015, a special bench was constituted in July 2024 to arbitrate the matter.

Meanwhile, one of the accused passed away in prison in 2021 due to a COVID-19 infection.

What did the high court say?

While the detailed hearing judgment is yet to be released, legal news outlet Bar and Bench reported that the High Court bench found nearly all of the state's witnesses unreliable.

"According to the Court, there was no reason for the taxi drivers or people in the train to remember the accused after almost 100 days," the website reported.

Even the recovery of bombs, guns, maps, etc. submitted as crucial evidence by the prosecution was immaterial to the case and did not clearly tie those accused to the attacks, the court said.

The remaining 11 accused will now be released from prison after having spent nearly two decades in prison for crimes the court believes they did not commit.

India's judiciary has long been overburdened. A 2025 India Justice Report showed over 50 million pending cases across high courts and subordinate courts since the end of 2024.

Meanwhile, the courts work with less than the prescribed number of judges, who often get only minutes to decide on a case. -DW

GERMANY

Car crashes into trampoline

BERLIN: A hole in a hedge, a smashed up trampoline, branches ripped off trees, tiles torn off roofs, and a car lodged in the roof of a barn.

The small town of Bohmte near the city of Osnabrück in the northwestern German state of Lower Saxony was the scene of a spectacular accident on Saturday evening which has left two people seriously injured, including a seven-year-old boy.

For as yet unknown reasons, local police reported on Sunday, the car appears to have come off the road at high speed before colliding with a parked vehicle and crashing through a hedge.

On the other side of the hedge, the car then fell around 1.5 meters (five feet) into a lower-lying back garden where it appears to have landed on a trampoline, hitting and injuring the child who was playing on it.

Then, either as a result of the topography of the area or of bouncing off the trampoline, or both, it appears to have been flung further through the air, eventually crashing into the attic of a barn about 3 meters off the ground.

"There was a massive clatter and we just thought: Help! What has happened?" said a local resident. "Then we ran outside and saw the car in the roof."

The driver of the car, a 42-year-old man, sustained only light injuries, as did three boys aged 11, 12 and 13 in the back seat. A 43-year-old woman in the passenger seat was seriously injured, as was the little boy on the trampoline, who police said was in a life-threatening condition.

Dozens of emergency service personnel attended the scene, including firefighters, police, technical relief staff, 12 ambulance crews and emergency pastoral carers, while two rescue helicopters circled overhead. -DW

KM BARCELONA 5

Indonesian ferry fire kills several, over 200 rescued

JAKARTA: An Indonesian passenger ferry fire killed at least five people and injured hundreds more on Sunday, the country's coast guard said. More than 280 others were saved, with many jumping overboard to flee the inferno.

The KM Barcelona 5 was en route to Manado, the capital of North Sulawesi province, from Talaud — an island district in the province — when it caught fire in waters near Talise, the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency said.

The incident occurred just weeks after at least 19 people were killed when a ferry sank off the popular resort island of Bali.

"Five people were reported dead, two of whom have yet to be identified. Meanwhile, 284 people have been evacuated safely," the agency, also known as Bakamla, said in a statement.

Rescuers retrieved five bodies, including a pregnant woman but there were no immediate details on other injuries, and no exact figures of passengers and crew members on board the ferry.

Photos and videos released by the National Search and Rescue Agency showed terrified passengers, mostly wearing life jackets, jumping into the sea as flames and black smoke billowed from the burning vessel.

The fire broke out at the ferry's stern, forcing some passengers jump overboard with life jackets, the Bakamla statement added.

Fishermen aided rescue operation

Several fishermen also helped evacuate the victims to nearby islands, according to the statement. The injured were taken to the nearest health facility.

Marine incidents occur frequently in the Southeast Asian archipelago of around 17,000 islands, in part due to questionable safety standards or bad weather.

The ferry sinking en route to Bali in July was attributed to bad weather while in March, a boat carrying 16 people capsized in rough waters off Bali, killing an Australian woman and injuring another. In 2018, more than 150 people drowned when a ferry sank in one of the world's deepest lakes on Sumatra island. -DW

BANGLADESH

19 dead, more than 100 injured in Dhaka jet crash

DHAKA: At least nineteen people were killed and over 100 others injured after a Bangladesh Air Force training aircraft crashed into Milestone School and College in Dhaka's Uttara area on Monday, according to media report.

Another victim died after being brought to the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, taking the confirmed death toll to nineteen. Dr Abhijit, told The Daily Star that more than 50 burn victims had arrived for treatment.

A sixth-grade student was also brought dead to Dhaka Medical College (DMC) Hospital, said Prof Bidhan Sarker, head of Burn and Plastic Surgery at the hospital,The Daily Star reported.

"After providing primary treatment, around 60 injured were referred to the burn institute, while 25 with minor injuries are receiving treatment here," said Dr Bazlur from Uttara Adhunik Hospital.

Md Nasiruddin, Director of the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, said, "We have 30 beds at the emergency department. As they filled up quickly, we are sending some patients to other departments, " as per The Daily Star.

The aircraft, identified as an 'F-7 BGI' training jet, took off around 1:06 pm (local time), according to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). Moments later, it crashed into the school premises and burst into flames.

The crash triggered a massive fire and widespread panic as rescue visuals showed thick black smoke billowing over the school and emergency teams rushing in to evacuate the injured. Fire service personnel and Air Force officials quickly launched a rescue operation that is still underway.

Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Mohammad Yunus expressed deep sorrow over the tragic Air Force jet crash, calling it a moment of "profound pain for the nation."

"I express my deep grief and sorrow over the tragic incident of casualties caused by the crash of a Bangladesh Air Force F-7 BGI training aircraft at the Milestone School and College campus in the Diabari area of the capital today," Yunus said in a statement posted on X.

"The loss suffered by the Air Force, the students, parents, teachers, and staff of Milestone School and College, as well as others affected by this accident, is irreparable. This is a moment of profound pain for the nation," he added.

Yunus also directed hospitals and concerned departments to give full attention to the injured. "I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured and direct all concerned authorities, including hospitals, to address the situation with the utmost priority. The government will take necessary measures to investigate the cause of the accident and ensure all forms of assistance."

Fire service teams reached the site quickly, and videos from the scene showed rescue personnel running, thick black smoke rising over the school, and panicked students being moved to safety. – ANI

SPORTS

ANDERSON-TENDULKAR TROPHY

Bumrah set to play fourth Test, injured Reddy out of series

MANCHESTER: India pacer Mohammed Siraj on Monday cleared the uncertainty around a big question for India ahead of the fourth Test against England by confirming that their pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah will play at Old Trafford, according to an *ESPNcricinfo* report.

"So far, we only know that Jassi [Bumrah] bhai will play," Siraj said in Manchester on Monday when asked about India's pace attack, which looked likely to be disrupted with injuries to Akash Deep and Arshdeep Singh.

India are trailing 2-1 in the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy, after losing the first Test at Headingley and the third at Lord's.

Apart from Bumrah's availability, the other good news for India two days before the Test was that Rishabh Pant, who had suffered a finger injury at Lord's, came through a training session that lasted over two hours. India are still sweating on Akash Deep's groin niggle and will give him time to recover.

With all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy, who played the second and third Tests and impressed at Lord's as the fourth seamer, now ruled out of the series with knee injury, specialist batter Sai Sudharsan is likely to return to the XI. If Sudharsan returns, India could replace Washington Sundar with Shardul Thakur if the conditions warrant a fourth seamer instead of a second spinner.

Akash Deep's fitness remains the big question. He bowled at the training session on Monday, but only into bowling coach Morne Morkel's mitt. The medical staff and decision-makers will monitor him over the next two days to decide if he is fit and can last the duration of a Test match.

India have added uncapped Haryana seam bowler Anshul Kamboj to the squad and he has joined the squad in Manchester.

Bumrah has so far played in two of the three Tests, at Leeds and Lord's, and missed the one in Birmingham, which India won by 336 runs to level the series at the time. The fourth Test starts from July 23.

India squad: Shubman Gill (capt), Rishabh Pant (vice-capt & wk), Yashasvi Jaiswal, KL Rahul, Sai Sudharsan, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Karun Nair, Ravindra Jadeja, Dhruv Jurel (wk), Washington Sundar, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Akash Deep, Kuldeep Yadav, Anshul Kamboj. - Agencies

OFFICIAL SIGNING

Queiroz inks one-year deal to lead Oman football team

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman Football Association (OFA) on Monday signed a one-year contract with Portuguese coach Carlos Queiroz to take charge of the national football team, marking the start of a new chapter ahead of a critical phase in the Asian qualifiers for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The signing ceremony took place at the OFA's headquarters. Sayyid Sulaiman bin Hamoud bin Ali Al Busaidi, OFA chairman, signed the contract on behalf of the association.

Although Queiroz's appointment was confirmed last week, Monday's signing formalises the agreement, positioning the vastly experienced coach at the helm of the national side for the coming year.

With a coaching career that includes high-profile stints with Portugal, Iran, Colombia, Egypt, and Qatar, the former Real Madrid manager brings a wealth of international experience and is expected to elevate Oman's competitive standing in the region.

The OFA and Queiroz have expressed a shared ambition to guide the team through the fourth round of the Asian qualifiers and beyond, with a focus on consistency, tactical discipline, and youth development.

A press conference is scheduled for August 5, where Queiroz will outline his roadmap and vision for the team. The OFA described the partnership as a move aimed at strengthening the national squad's technical foundation and international competitiveness.

Oman have been clubbed along with hosts Qatar and UAE in the fourth round Group A playoffs for Road to 26, which will be held in October.

Owen's dream debut in Australia's victory

The visitors defeated West Indies by three wickets with seven balls to spare in the first T20I at Sabina Park in Kingston

KINGSTON: On a day that marked Andre Russell's penultimate international appearance, it was a debutant who stole the show on Sunday at the Sabina Park in Kingston. Mitchell Owen delivered a stunning all-round performance as Australia edged West Indies by three wickets with seven balls to spare in the first T20I, taking a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

Owen's impact was immediate — first with the ball, where he claimed the key wicket of Shai Hope, then with the bat, smashing a fearless 50 off just 27 balls. His innings, studded with six towering sixes, came under pressure and turned the tide after Australia were tottering at 78 for 4 chasing 190.

Owen's composure was matched by Cameron Green, who struck a 26-ball 51 in an 80-run partnership that wrested control from the hosts. Green hit five sixes and two boundaries in his blitz, absorbing the early pressure before shifting gears with clinical precision.

Despite late jitters after both Green and Owen fell with the finish line in sight, Australia crossed the target with seven balls to spare, aided by nervy West Indies fielding in the final overs.

Earlier, West Indies looked poised for a massive total after being sent in. Hope (55 off 39), Roston Chase (60 off 32), and Shimron Hetmyer (38 off 19) set a strong platform at 123 for 1 by the 13th over. But the innings lost momentum dramatically as Australia's death bowlers — Ben Dwarshuis (4 for 36) and Nathan Ellis (1 for 31) — ripped through the lower order.

The hosts managed just 66 runs in the final seven overs, including a collapse of 6 for 30. Russell, who has announced he will retire from international cricket after Tuesday's second T20I, made only eight.

Australia's reply started poorly, with Jake Fraser-McGurk misfiring yet again and Mitchell Marsh falling inside the powerplay. Glenn Maxwell and Josh Inglis also failed to make an impact, but the middle-order firepower of Green and Owen ensured the visitors pulled off a thrilling win.

Brief scores: West Indies 189/8 (Chase 60, Hope 55, Hetmyer 38; Dwarshuis 4-36, Ellis 1-31) lost to Australia 190/7 in 18.5 overs (Green 51, Owen 50; Gudakesh Motie 2-29, Jason Holder 2-32, Alzarri Joseph 2-39). - Agencies

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE

OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by September 2025 reaching $70.98, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 27 cents from the price of Friday, which was $71.25. - ONA

MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,743.23 points, up by 1.47% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.96% at 452.56 points. Majan Glass, up 16.67%, was the top gainer while Salalah Mills, down 7.31%, was the top loser.

Oman's transport sector advances sustainable trade, connectivity goals

A new video examines how infrastructure upgrades and sustainability initiatives are reinforcing Oman's role as a strategic trade and logistics hub

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's transport and logistics sector is playing a central role in the country's economic transformation under Vision 2040, supported by large-scale investment, policy development and digital integration.

A new growth perspectives video produced by Oxford Business Group (OBG), in partnership with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT), examines how infrastructure upgrades and sustainability initiatives are reinforcing Oman's role as a strategic trade and logistics hub.

The video, titled Oman's transport sector seeks to drive sustainable trade, highlights the sector's contribution of 7% to GDP in 2023, with aims to surpass 10% by 2040. Backed by OMR2.5 billion in targeted investment from 2021 to 2025, Oman is enhancing efficiency, boosting non-oil exports and improving multimodal connectivity.

Particular focus is placed on the role of the country's deepwater ports — Sohar, Duqm and Salalah — which are positioned to support industrial development, energy production and international trans-shipment. These ports, together with improved road and airport access, are enabling Oman to expand its logistics footprint regionally and globally.

The video also outlines the country's efforts to advance green and digital logistics solutions in support of its target of net-zero emissions by 2050. New initiatives include incentives for electric vehicles, adoption of blockchain and e-seal technologies, and the development of green trade corridors.

The Oman Logistics Centre, a directorate under MTCIT, is leading the National Logistics Strategy and overseeing the sector's digital transformation. Key projects include Customs streamlining, last-mile delivery improvements and measures to increase transparency and efficiency across the logistics value chain.

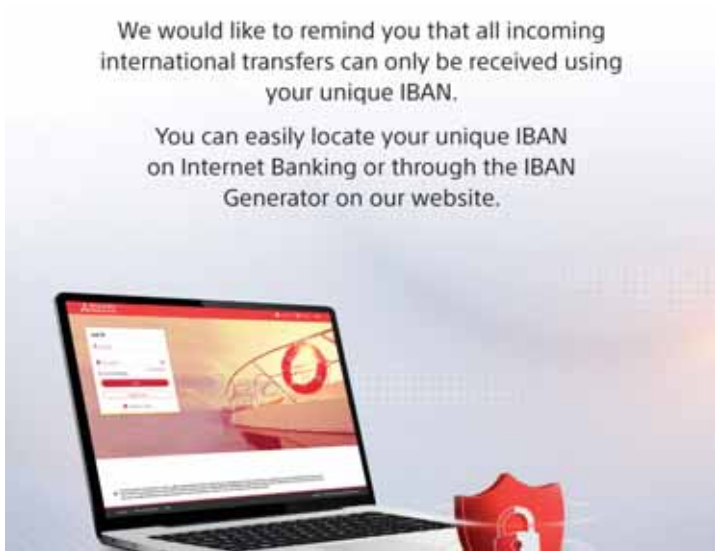
Eng Said bin Hamoud Al Ma'awali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, said Oman's investment in infrastructure and innovation is enabling the country to strengthen its position as a regional gateway for trade.

"The transport and logistics sector is a vital enabler of Oman Vision 2040. Through integrated planning, policy development and advanced infrastructure, we are supporting economic growth while aligning with the country's broader sustainability objectives."

Dana Carmen Agarbicean, OBG's Country Director for Oman, said the sector's performance reflects Oman's ability to align long-term strategic goals with implementation. "Oman's logistics sector is making significant strides in infrastructure development, trade facilitation and digitalisation. These efforts are establishing a foundation for sustainable growth and enhancing the country's competitiveness as a trade and investment destination."

INTERNATIONAL BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER

Bank Muscat enables IBAN service for fund transfers across borders



MUSCAT: In a commitment to enhance payment system efficiency and align with international standards for improved customer experience, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has begun to support the International Bank Account Number (IBAN) for fund transfers across borders starting July 1. This initiative, in accordance with directives from the Central Bank of Oman (CBO), aims to reduce operational errors and speed up financial transactions between individuals and businesses, ultimately providing beneficiaries with safer and smoother transfers.

As part of these directives, cross-border transfers that do not utilize the IBAN will no longer be accepted as of July 1, 2025. The IBAN will be a prerequisite to receive all fund transfers to Oman, while domestic transfers will still have the option to use either the IBAN or the traditional account number.

Zuwaina Abdullah Al Sharji, Assistant General Manager of Central Operations & Change Management at Bank Muscat, stated, "The bank is committed to complying with international standards and implementing best banking practices. The decision to adopt the IBAN is intended to accelerate bank transfers (STP), standardize account coordination among all banks, reduce human errors in account entry, and adhere to international standards like the SWIFT system. This will significantly enhance the security and speed of transaction processing."Al Sharji emphasized Bank Muscat's dedication to integrating the latest banking systems to facilitate the swift completion of transactions for individual and corporate customers, ensuring an exceptional banking experience that meets contemporary local and international standards. She encouraged customers to include a valid IBAN from their account information and to follow the issued guidelines to avoid any complications during transfer operations.

Customers can easily obtain their IBAN through various channels, including Internet Banking, Mobile Banking, visiting a branch, calling customer service, or accessing the dedicated page. The IBAN is also typically displayed next to the account number on bank statements.

Bank Muscat is committed to excellence in managing its operations and services, striving to apply the highest efficiency standards in fund transfers and transactions with minimal manual intervention. This dedication enhances transaction quality and minimizes payment delays. The bank offers a variety of money transfer services accessible through multiple channels, including branches across the governorates, Internet Banking, and Mobile Banking. Customers can also benefit from swift transfer options to countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka.

OLYMPIC MEDALIST

CFI welcomes Maria Sharapova as Global Brand Ambassador

DUBAI: CFI, a global leading online trading provider, is proud to announce a landmark partnership with Maria Sharapova. The five-time Grand Slam champion, Olympic medalist, and globally respected entrepreneur will serve as the Group's new Global Brand Ambassador, alongside Lewis Hamilton. Sharapova joins CFI in a multi-year agreement that reflects a shared dedication to excellence, discipline, and international impact.

Renowned for her achievements on the court and her expansive success beyond it, including business, fashion, media, wellness, and recently interior design, Sharapova embodies a mindset rooted in precision, vision, and resilience, qualities that closely mirror CFI's values.

Her transition from elite athlete to influential investor and entrepreneur aligns naturally with the brand's mission to empower individuals through innovation, insight, and world-class platforms. As CFI continues to champion greater inclusion and inspire more women to explore opportunities in the financial world, her multifaceted career presents an encouraging and aspirational path. In her new role, Sharapova will engage with CFI's audience through various high-impact campaigns and media activities. Her involvement will include strategic appearances and brand campaigns designed to inspire and connect with global audiences.

Through its partnership with Sharapova, CFI aims to deepen its emotional resonance with clients and strengthen its position as a purpose-driven, globally trusted provider of trading and investment solutions with a clear sense of purpose.

Maria Sharapova commented, "CFI's focus on innovation, education, and empowering individuals resonated with me. Whether in sport or business, success comes down to being intentional, prepared, and willing to learn. I've always believed in the importance of staying curious, adapting to change, and leading with purpose, and those values have continued to guide me beyond the court. I'm proud to be CFI's Global Brand Ambassador and support the Group's global mission to inform, inspire, and connect with individuals who are pursuing their own paths to growth."

Ziad Melhem, CEO of CFI Financial Group, added, "Maria Sharapova is a symbol of elite performance, long-term vision, and unwavering resilience. Her journey reflects the mindset we champion at CFI, where ambition, preparation, emotional intelligence, and the ability to adapt are all essential traits of smart traders and investors. As we expand globally, her voice will strengthen our mission to make global financial opportunities accessible and empowering. This partnership goes beyond branding; it's about shared purpose and global impact. We are proud to welcome her to the CFI family."

This announcement marks another significant step in CFI's evolution as a purpose- driven global brand, one that combines world-class financial expertise with partnerships that inspire. The collaboration with Sharapova underscores CFI's ambition to lead not only through technology and service but also through relationships with individuals who define excellence on a global scale. She joins seven-time Formula 1™ world champion Lewis Hamilton, CFI's current Global Brand Ambassador, reinforcing the brand's highly selective approach to aligning with iconic figures who embody performance, purpose, and global impact.

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Majan Glass, up 16.67%, was the top gainer while, Salalah Mills, down 7.31%, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,743.23 points, up by 1.47% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.96% at 452.56 points. Majan Glass, up 16.67%, was the top gainer while, Salalah Mills, down 7.31%, was the top loser. Shares of OQBI were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 2701 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 25.31 million, with more than 145.29 million shares changing hands. Out of 64 traded securities, 32 advanced, 13 declined, and 19 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for RO 357K while foreign investors were net buyers for RO 310K, followed by domestic investors for RO 47K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 8,130.91 points, up 0.83%. Prices of Bank Muscat, Al Madina Investments, Ominvest, Al Sharqia Investment, Oman & Emirates Investment were up by 5.63%, 4.88%, 2.67%, 2.50%, 1.43% respectively. Prices of Muscat Finance, Oman Arab Bank, Oman United Insurance, Bank Dhofar were down by 1.85%, 1.36%, 1.25%, 0.78% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 6,718.90 points, down 0.11%. Prices of Majan Glass, Oman Packaging, Gulf Mushroom Products, Jazeera Steel Products, A'Saffa Foods were up by 16.67%, 3.68%, 1.31%, 0.48%, 0.23% respectively. Prices of Salalah Mills, National Biscuits, Oman Chromite, Al Maha Ceramics, Al Anwar Ceramics were down by 7.31%, 7.03%, 1.79%, 0.98%, 0.58% respectively.

Services Index was up by 2.87% before closing at 1,786.03 points. Prices of Sembcorp Salalah, Ooredoo, Al Suwadi Power, Al Batinah Power, Muscat Desalination were up by 9.60%, 7.14%, 6.02%, 3.57%, 2.90% respectively. Prices of Muscat Gases, Oman National Engineering, OQ Gas Networks were down by 1.89%, 0.83%, 0.67% respectively.

— United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,747.49	4,668.36	4,743.23	4,674.40	68.84	1.47
FINANCIAL INDEX	8,130.91	8,055.97	8,130.91	8,064.13	66.78	0.83
Industry Index	6,734.51	6,705.23	6,718.90	6,726.31	-7.41	-0.11
Services Index	1,787.09	1,735.75	1,786.03	1,736.25	49.78	2.87
MSX Shariah Index	453.24	448.25	452.56	448.25	4.32	0.96
MSX TR INDEX	7,022.63	6,905.58	7,016.34	6,914.51	101.82	1.47
FINANCIAL TR IDX	9,659.80	9,570.77	9,659.80	9,580.47	79.34	0.83
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	8,275.70	8,239.72	8,256.52	8,265.63	-9.11	-0.11
SERVICES TR IDX	2,278.97	2,213.50	2,277.62	2,214.14	63.48	2.87
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,204.48	1,204.48	1,204.48	1,204.48	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
145,290,467	25,312,955	2,701	28,967,278,659	32	13	19	64

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, JULY 21

REGULAR MARKET

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	539,053	123,043	89	0.224	0.240	0.224	0.240	0.224	0.016	7.143	0.240	0.235	0.242	0.100	156,226,615
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	1,085,645	92,955	62	0.083	0.088	0.083	0.088	0.083	0.005	6.024	0.088	0.088	0.089	0.100	62,867,758
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	22,563,649	6,592,508	381	0.284	0.300	0.284	0.300	0.284	0.016	5.634	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.100	2,251,919,119
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	785,428	67,616	68	0.084	0.088	0.084	0.087	0.084	0.003	3.571	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.100	58,715,206
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	1,297,607	297,093	77	0.227	0.232	0.225	0.231	0.225	0.006	2.667	0.231	0.230	0.231	0.100	216,149,379
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	60,000	4,845	4	0.080	0.082	0.080	0.082	0.080	0.002	2.500	0.082	0.079	0.088	0.100	7,380,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	967,774	291,258	83	0.300	0.309	0.298	0.305	0.300	0.005	1.667	0.305	0.305	0.305	0.100	72,105,050
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	55,556	4,481	9	0.080	0.082	0.080	0.081	0.080	0.001	1.250	0.081	0.080	0.082	0.100	14,175,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	1,963,748	520,809	97	0.262	0.268	0.262	0.265	0.262	0.003	1.145	0.265	0.265	0.268	0.100	204,103,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	269,668	241,745	30	0.889	0.902	0.889	0.900	0.890	0.010	1.124	0.900	0.899	0.946	0.100	675,000,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	481,521	48,602	15	0.100	0.101	0.100	0.101	0.100	0.001	1.000	0.101	0.100	0.102	0.100	225,932,256
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	11,117,209	1,535,168	97	0.138	0.139	0.137	0.139	0.138	0.001	0.725	0.139	0.137	0.139	0.100	919,797,232
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	27,460	11,397	6	0.415	0.417	0.415	0.417	0.415	0.002	0.482	0.417	0.415	0.417	0.100	52,082,449
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	120,601	51,385	4	0.435	0.435	0.426	0.435	0.434	0.001	0.230	0.435	0.428	0.435	0.100	52,200,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	5,699	1,030	3	0.180	0.183	0.180	0.183	0.183	0.000	0.000	0.183	0.180	0.183	0.100	7,840,267
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	8,485	6,961	7	0.825	0.825	0.820	0.825	0.825	0.000	0.000	0.825	0.820	0.825	0.100	77,230,859
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	48,747	8,385	19	0.175	0.175	0.171	0.172	0.173	-0.001	-0.578	0.172	0.172	0.172	0.100	37,840,000
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	12,068,508	1,791,536	306	0.149	0.150	0.148	0.148	0.149	-0.001	-0.671	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.100	640,932,340
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	100,000	23,700	3	0.237	0.237	0.237	0.237	0.240	-0.003	-1.250	0.237	0.232	0.237	0.100	23,700,000
Total	19	53,566,358	11,714,518	1,360												

Parallel Market

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	1,292,940	166,221	60	0.125	0.137	0.125	0.137	0.125	0.012	9.600	0.137	0.125	0.137	0.100	130,776,357
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	47,759	2,010	10	0.041	0.043	0.041	0.043	0.041	0.002	4.878	0.043	0.041	0.043	0.100	3,655,000
OM0000001608	OMAN PACKAGING	18	3	1	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.136	0.005	3.676	0.141	0.141	0.000	0.100	4,573,456
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	11,300	796	4	0.070	0.071	0.070	0.071	0.069	0.002	2.899	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.100	11,044,078
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	126,060	25,711	14	0.205	0.205	0.203	0.204	0.199	0.005	2.513	0.204	0.202	0.204	0.100	32,640,000
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	226,047	20,210	21	0.088	0.090	0.088	0.090	0.088	0.002	2.273	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.100	131,634,131
OM0000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	520,878	31,290	35	0.060	0.061	0.059	0.060	0.059	0.001	1.695	0.060	0.059	0.061	0.100	13,334,400
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	184,100	12,987	14	0.070	0.072	0.070	0.071	0.070	0.001	1.429	0.071	0.068	0.071	0.100	8,653,125
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	6,000	1,397	2	0.233	0.233	0.232	0.232	0.229	0.003	1.310	0.232	0.228	0.231	0.100	10,617,665
OM0000009759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	7,976,781	2,741,964	540	0.340	0.345	0.340	0.345	0.341	0.004	1.173	0.345	0.345	0.352	0.010	2,760,000,000
OM0000003281	TAAGEER FINANCE	40,946	4,494	4	0.109	0.110	0.109	0.110	0.109	0.001	0.917	0.110	0.111	0.110	0.100	30,714,553
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	114,341	14,171	23	0.123	0.125	0.123	0.123	0.122	0.001	0.820	0.123	0.122	0.126	0.100	72,746,736
OM0000010120	ASYAD SHIPPING	11,961,556	1,463,774	115	0.122	0.123	0.122	0.123	0.122	0.001	0.820	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.000	640,675,546
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	700	528	1	0.754	0.754	0.754	0.754	0.750	0.004	0.533	0.754	0.745	0.754	0.100	46,201,350
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	108,708	21,395	18	0.195	0.199	0.193	0.199	0.198	0.001	0.505	0.199	0.200	0.199	0.100	39,727,484
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	11,000	5,115	4	0.465	0.465	0.465	0.465	0.464	0.001	0.216	0.465	0.455	0.465	0.100	76,899,375
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	20,020	1,612	4	0.080	0.081	0.080	0.081	0.081	0.000	0.000	0.081	0.080	0.081	0.100	6,885,000
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	452,104	38,629	16	0.088	0.088	0.085	0.087	0.087	0.000	0.000	0.087	0.087	0.087	0.100	25,974,105
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	1,000	73	1	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.000	0.000	0.073	0.072	0.073	0.100	1,533,000
OM0000002036	MUSCAT THREAD MILLS	10,000	1,710	3	0.171	0.171	0.171	0.171	0.171	0.000	0.000	0.171	0.171	0.175	0.100	3,013,646
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	428	261	1	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.000	0.000	0.610	0.610	0.610	0.100	57,950,000
OM0000003000	Al MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	33,107	29,796	10	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.900	0.901	0.949	0.100	62,100,000
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	75,000	3,825	4	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.051	0.000	0.000	0.051	0.049	0.051	0.100	12,750,000
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	5,000	1,450	1	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.000	0.000	0.290	0.290	0.296	0.100	20,413,100
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	40,976	3,458	12	0.084	0.089	0.083	0.085	0.085	0.000	0.000	0.083	0.083	0.087	0.100	55,130,177
OM0000009569	JABAL REIF	100	10	1	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.000	0.104	0.100	18,096,000
OM0000009908	OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SFZ)	67,627,255	8,929,645	350	0.132	0.134	0.131	0.133	0.133	0.000	0.000	0.133	0.133	0.134	0.040	460,112,283
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	2,410	1,170	4	0.485	0.486	0.485	0.486	0.487	-0.001	-0.205	0.486	0.486	0.490	0.100	160,804,137
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	299,500	38,336	8	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.129	-0.001	-0.775	0.128	0.127	0.128	0.100	389,094,212
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INV.	20,000	2,380	4	0.117	0.120	0.117	0.120	0.121	-0.001	-0.826	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.100	18,000,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	20,121	6,073	7	0.301	0.302	0.301	0.302	0.305	-0.003	-0.984	0.302	0.302	0.315	0.100	16,610,000
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	27,266	3,974	4	0.146	0.146	0.145	0.145	0.147	-0.002	-1.361	0.145	0.145	0.146	0.100	242,064,450
OM0000001020	OMAN CHROMITE	100	413	1	4.125	4.125	4.125	4.125	4.200	-0.075	-1.786	4.125	4.125	4.200	1.000	13,612,500
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	79,000	4,187	5	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.054	-0.001	-1.852	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.100	16,278,755
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	2,000	208	2	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.106	-0.002	-1.887	0.104	0.102	0.104	0.100	3,120,000
OM0000001186	NATIONAL BISCUIT INDUSTRIES LIMITED	103	464	1	4.500	4.500	4.500	4.500	4.840	-0.340	-7.025	4.500	4.500	4.500	1.000	4,500,000
OM0000001889	SALALAH MILLS	33	14	1	0.431	0.431	0.431	0.431	0.465	-0.034	-7.312	0.431	0.429	0.000	0.100	26,921,581
Total	37	91,344,657	13,579,754	1,306												

FUEL DEMAND

Oil prices steady amid sanctions, economic growth concerns

SINGAPORE: Oil prices were little changed as traders assessed the potential impact of new European sanctions on Russian oil supply, alongside growing concerns over the fuel demand outlook as tariffs weighed on global economic growth.

Brent crude futures rose 5 cents to $69.33 a barrel, after settling 0.35% lower on Friday.

US West Texas Intermediate crude was at $67.36 a barrel, up 2 cents, following a 0.30% decline in the previous session.

The European Union approved on Friday the 18th package of sanctions against Russia over the conflict in Ukraine.

Meanwhile, US tariffs on imports from the European Union (EU) are set to kick in on 1 August 2025.

Gold prices hold steady in early Asian trade

Gold prices held steady in early Asian trade, as markets closely monitored developments in US trade talks and anticipated the European Central Bank's upcoming policy decision.

Spot gold edged up 0.1% to $3,353.81 per ounce.

US gold futures were steady at $3,360.50.

Among other precious metals, spot silver rose 0.2% to $38.24 per ounce, platinum added 0.4% to $1,427.05, and palladium gained 0.6% to $1,248.50. -ONA

RAISING AWARENESS ON ISLAMIC BANKING

Alizz Islamic Bank hosts delegation from Tanzania bank to showcase Oman's Islamic banking success

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank recently hosted a delegation from Amana Bank in Tanzania who were on a visit to the Sultanate of Oman to learn about the success of Islamic banking in Oman.

The delegation was received by senior officials of the Bank headed by the Chief Executive Officer, Ali Al Mani. During the visit growth and development of Islamic banking in both countries were discussed as well as current developments. In addition promotion of Islamic values as a lifestyle was also highlighted.

Amana Bank is Tanzania's first fully Sharia-compliant bank and was established in 2011. The bank is wholly owned by a diverse group of Tanzanian businessmen committed to its success. Amana Bank operates under Shari'a compliance, offering financial solutions that adhere to Islamic banking principles. The bank's vision is to be the leading provider of Shari'a-compliant financial solutions in its markets, and its mission is to provide innovative and ethical financial solutions driven by technology.

The delegation's visits reinforces Alizz Islamic Bank's role as a market leader. The bank plays an important role in raising awareness on Islamic banking products and how they work and these kinds of exchanges of experiences lead to the development of Islamic Banking locally & regionally. The growth of the Islamic banking industry growth is highlighted by the increasing demand for Shari'a-compliant products not only from specialists and experts but also from investors and customers all over the world, which makes Islamic banking a global financial industry.

NATIONAL BANK OF OMAN

NBO offers exclusive benefits for its Infinite credit cardholders

MUSCAT: The National Bank of Oman (NBO) offers a range of exciting features for its Infinite Credit Cardholders, tailored for individuals seeking a unique combination of convenience, exclusivity, and meaningful rewards. Such cards provide exclusive discounts, milestone rewards, and exceptional privileges designed to complement a modern lifestyle.

Commenting on the launch, Maha Al Raisi, Assistant General Manager and Head of Products at NBO, said: "We are dedicated to deliver exceptional value to our customers by catering to their needs, and offering rewards and lifestyle benefits that elevate their everyday experiences. Our infinite credit card features include a 50% discount on Talabat that equals a saving of OMR 3 twice a month, exclusive complimentary parking at the Mall of Oman, additional chauffeur-driven airport rides, and milestone rewards featuring Shell V-Power vouchers. The Infinite Credit Card also offers an outstanding range of premium benefits, including 1% cashback on spends, unlimited airport lounge access with one guest, and multi-trip travel insurance for added peace of mind. Cardholders can also enjoy 50% off VOX Cinema tickets, with up to six tickets per month, including two Gold Class tickets, as well as 2-for-1 offers on Xperience with Entertainer. These exciting offers further enhance the card's privileges, reinforcing our commitment to being a trusted financial partner."

The newly enhanced Infinite Credit Card combines luxury, convenience, and rewards reaffirming NBO's dedication to providing a superior banking experience that complements its customers lifestyle.

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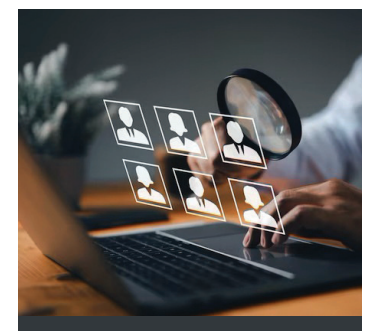
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LIFESTYLE

The initiative includes digitising non-English books and preparing hundreds of hours of audio recordings in several languages

MICROSOFT INTENDS TO PRODUCE DIGITAL DATA FOR AI MODELS IN OVER 12 LANGUAGES

Microsoft announced its plan to produce digital data for AI models in more than 12 languages, as part of its efforts to promote linguistic diversity in AI technologies.

The initiative includes digitising non-English books and preparing hundreds of hours of audio recordings in several languages.

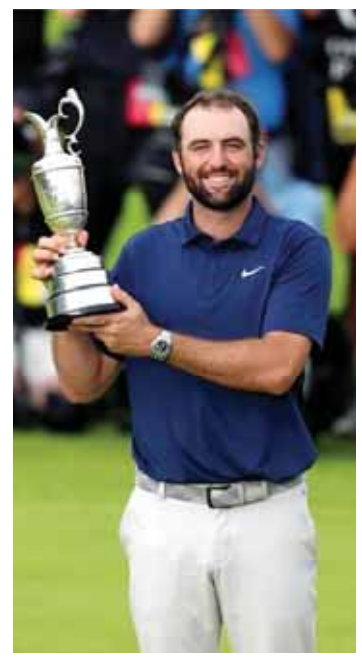
The tech giant plans to open new branches of its research centres in Strasbourg, eastern France, starting next September 2025, with the aim of expanding data availability in at least 10 of the 24 official languages of the European Union (EU).

Microsoft president, Brad Smith explained that most current AI databases are largely trained in English, making models less effective when used in languages where data is insufficient. He added that this could push users to switch to English instead of their native language. - ONA

SPORTS

Scheffler masterclass seals Open title at Royal Portrush

The American world No.1 anesthetised his rivals on the final day in Northern Ireland, with a composed exhibition of front-running to win comfortably by four shots



ROYAL PORTRUSH: Less than one hour after he teed off on Sunday afternoon, Scottie Scheffler had effectively won his first Open Championship title.

The world No.1 was only walking off the fourth green but the game was already up. A starting four-shot advantage over the field had grown to seven at a sun-kissed Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland.

A third birdie of the round, on the fifth, further underlined his dominance and the only question remaining was whether he would surpass Tiger Woods' modern record of an eight-shot win, achieved in 2000 at St Andrews.

In the end, the 29-year-old fell short of that but a three-under 68 meant he won on 17 under par - four shots clear of fellow American Harris English, who closed with a 66.

"I know I wasn't the fan favourite so I appreciate you guys coming out to support," said Scheffler, referring to world No.2 Rory McIlroy playing in his homeland.

"Overall it was a really fun week to be able to play in front of such a great crowd."

Last week's surprise Scottish Open winner Chris Gotterup finished five shots behind Scheffler after a 67 while England's Matt Fitzpatrick, who hovered around the top of the leaderboard all week, birdied two of the last three to join Wyndham Clark (65) and Li Haotong (70) in joint fourth on 11 under.

McIlroy looked emotional as he was welcomed onto the final green like the champion by thousands of adoring fans.

He tapped in for a par that meant he finished alongside Scotland's Robert MacIntyre and last year's winner Xander Schauffele on 10 under.

The new champion golfer of the year though is Scheffler and given his recent dominance the comparisons with Woods are only going to grow stronger.

"He is the bar that we're all trying to get to," McIlroy told BBC Sport.

This stat adds to that feeling. A total of 1,197 days elapsed between Woods' first major victory and his fourth (the 1997 Masters and 2000 Open). A total of 1,197 days have elapsed between Scheffler's first major victory and his fourth (the 2022 Masters and 2025 Open).

He is also only the fourth player, after Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus and Woods, to win the Masters, US PGA and The Open before he turns 30.

It is a second major title of the year for Scheffler, after winning May's US PGA Championship, and a fourth in total, adding to his two Masters.

He now only needs the US Open to become the seventh player to complete the career Grand Slam and he turns 30 on the final day of next June's event at Shinnecock Hills, New York.

Victory on the Antrim coast is the American's second title outside of his home country, after also claiming gold at last year's Olympics in Paris, France.

It is not bad for a man who spoke at the start of the week about how professional golf was "not a fulfilling life" and questioned "the point" of pursuing victories with such zeal.

The leaderboard pulsed in the jostle for the minor places. American names came to the fore as the Europeans largely failed to shine in the last global event before September's Ryder Cup.

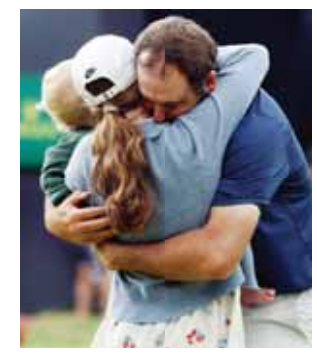
High finishes at majors earn big points as the race for one of the six automatic places in each 12-strong team heats up.

Two-time major winner Bryson DeChambeau closed with a 64 to reach nine under - although he must have been stewing over his opening seven-over 78 on Thursday.

Wyndham Clark hit a 65 to close on 11 under, Gotterup a 67 for -12 and English split the difference with a 66 to finish a shot better still in outright second. Defending champion Xander Schauffele was briefly in a tie for second before finishing on 10 under

Of others likely to be in Europe's team at Bethpage in New York, Tyrrell Hatton holed nothing as he finished back on seven under. That was the same score as his fellow Englishman Justin Rose. Sweden's Ludvig Aberg had a ruinous eight on the par-four 11th among seven birdies in a closing 70 that saw him finish on six under. - Agencies

Living dreams but more to life than golf, says champion



ROYAL PORTRUSH: Scottie Scheffler says he is "living out his dreams" after winning the Open Championship at Royal Portrush, but reiterated in his moment of triumph there is "more to life than playing golf".

The 29-year-old American world No.1 started this week by questioning why he even plays a sport that has earned him £65m in prize money alone. He said on Tuesday it was "not a fulfilling life" and the zealous pursuit of wins is "something I wrestle with on a daily basis".

Speaking in the aftermath of his Open success, he conceded that he perhaps did not make his point as well as he had hoped, but stood by his sentiments. "We live in a day and age where clickbait is what people look for and you can shorten a five-minute clip into three words," admitted Scheffler. "I think it underestimates what I was trying to communicate.

"I've worked my entire life to become good at this game and play for a living. It's one of the great joys of my life and to win The Open is a feeling that's hard to describe. Am I grateful for it? Do I enjoy it? Oh, my gosh, yes, this is a cool feeling. But having success in life is not what fulfils the deepest desires of your heart.

"Just because you win a golf tournament doesn't make you happy - but I'm pretty excited to celebrate this one."

Scheffler said he intends to leave for home in Texas and "celebrate with the people that have helped me along the way".

After he tapped in on the 18th an hour or so earlier - and the crowds offered their throaty approval - the first person he looked for was wife Meredith.

Belatedly spotting her, and 14-month-old son Bennett, who was toddling on to the green, Scheffler's typically muted response changed.

He hurled his hat into the sky, roared with delight, and lumbered with arms outstretched towards them.

The trio embraced before Scheffler retrieved his hat and left the green with a bemused Bennett nestled in the crook of his left arm.

"When I saw my family, that was a pretty special feeling," said Scheffler, who insisted earlier in the week that he would quit golf if it started to impact upon his family. - Agencies

PREMIER LEAGUE

Liverpool agree £69m fee for striker Ekitike

LONDON: Liverpool have agreed an initial £69m fee to sign Eintracht Frankfurt striker Hugo Ekitike, BBC Sport reported.

The 23-year-old Frenchman is expected to arrive in the UK on Tuesday before having a medical.

Frankfurt accepted a deal worth £79m, with £69m guaranteed and £10m in add-ons.

Ekitike is expected to sign a six-year contract and will fly out to join Liverpool's Asia tour later this week.

Newcastle had a £70m bid for Ekitike rejected this month, while Liverpool have shown an interest in Magpies striker Alexander Isak.

Ekitike scored 15 goals in 31 starts as Frankfurt finished third in the Bundesliga last season.

His arrival will push Liverpool's spending past £250m this summer.

They signed Florian Wirtz for a potential British record £116m, while defenders Milos Kerkez and Jeremie Frimpong arrived for a combined £70m. - Agencies

1986 WORLD CUP

Shilton shirt from 'Hand of God' clash to be sold

LONDON: The shirt worn by England goalkeeper Peter Shilton in the 'Hand of God' World Cup quarter-final against Argentina in 1986 is to be auctioned with an estimated sale price of up to £300,000.

One of the most famous games in the competition's history, it saw Diego Maradona use his left hand to lift the ball over the onrushing Shilton to put his country ahead.

Four minutes later, the South American side's captain scored what is widely regarded as one of the greatest goals of all time as he dribbled from his own half past several England players.

Maradona's No 10 shirt from the game fetched a then-record of £7.1m at auction in May 2022.

When asked whether he had cheated to score the opener, the midfielder said it was scored "a little with the head of Maradona and a little with the hand of God".

Shilton's shirt is being sold by a private collector from the UK as part of an auction expected to be held next July ahead of the 2026 World Cup final.

David Convery, of Graham Budd Auctions, said the jersey being auctioned had been verified through photo-matching, with tops from games earlier in the tournament having been discounted as part of the authentication process. - Agencies

2025 GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE

Al Zubair and Klingmann bounce back from crash to finish fourth in Misano

MUSCAT: Oman's Al Faisal Al Zubair and his German team-mate Jens Klingmann showed grit and determination to recover from a dramatic race one retirement and salvage fourth in the Gold Cup category during race two at the 2025 GT World Challenge Europe powered by AWS Sprint Series at Italy's Misano circuit on Sunday.

Driving the Al Manar Racing by Team WRT BMW M4 GT3 EVO, the duo had started the weekend with promising pace, setting the fastest time in Friday's free practice (1min 33.026sec) and topping the Gold Cup times again during pre-qualifying.

Klingmann then secured second place in the Gold Cup category – eighth overall – in Saturday's qualifying, just behind the Emil Frey Racing Ferrari of Chris Lulham.

But their challenge came to a premature end just minutes into the opening race. After a twilight start, Klingmann was involved in a turn six collision with Lulham and Maxime Martin, which damaged the BMW's rear suspension and forced retirement.

The first race saw major consequences for several Gold Cup contenders.

Lulham, starting on pole, was also eliminated in the incident, clearing the path for Louis Prette in the Garage 59 McLaren to claim Gold Cup honours after 36 laps, ahead of Gilles Magnus (Saintéloc Racing Audi) and Leonardo Moncini (Tresor Attempto Racing Audi). Ricky Collard also failed to finish, retiring the Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini after 11 laps.

With no points from race one, Al Zubair was tasked with salvaging the weekend during Sunday morning's second qualifying session. He put in a strong lap of 1min 32.952sec to secure fourth in Gold Cup.

However, a grid penalty – reduced from 10 places to five following a successful team appeal – meant the Omani had to start from P32 overall due to the repercussions of Saturday's collision.

Despite the setback, the second race delivered one of the most chaotic and unusual hours of racing in series history.

A major incident early on brought out the red flag and led to significant delays as track armco barriers required repair. When racing resumed over three hours later, it officially became the longest "one-hour" Sprint race ever, clocking in at 3hr 18min due to the lengthy stoppage.

Al Zubair managed to push the car up to P21 overall in his stint before handing over to Klingmann for the final 30 minutes.

However, a delay in the pit stop cost them around seven seconds, which dropped the pairing out of podium contention in the Gold Cup category.

They eventually crossed the line fourth in class and 20th overall, behind class winners Emil Frey Racing's Ferrari, Saintéloc Racing's Audi, and Garage 59's McLaren.

"It was a long race and I think it was a bit difficult because we had a grid penalty to start," said Al Zubair.

"We started P32 but the car felt mega the whole race. We made it up to P21 in my stint but, unfortunately, we lost a bit of time in the pits — about seven seconds — and that dropped us out of P3 in Gold Cup. We finished P4. After collecting no points in the first race, it was difficult and not the best weekend for us. We hope to collect more points at the next one and continue the fight for the championship."

Reflecting on the crash in race one, he added: "There was a bit of contact at turn six between my team-mate Jens, Chris Lulham and Maxime Martin. We were out of the race but we also got a penalty, so to finish P4 today is a result we should be happy with. Having the car working so well all weekend made it even more frustrating."

The Al Manar Racing team now looks ahead to round four of the championship at Magny-Cours in France, scheduled for August 1–3, with hopes of returning to the podium and strengthening their position in the Gold Cup standings.

Omran Group and Ministry of Education celebrate closing of 1st Summer Camp for school students

Held over 10 days, the programme welcomed 50 students from grades 10 and 11, who participated in a series of immersive activities, including site visits to various Omran Group-affiliated entities across sectors such as hospitality, tourism experiences, and visitor services

MUSCAT: Oman Tourism Development Company (Omran Group), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education's Directorate of Career Guidance and Student Counselling, celebrated the successful conclusion of the first edition of the Summer Camp — a unique initiative aimed at introducing school students to real-world career opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sector.

The closing ceremony was held under the patronage of Professor Abdullah Khamis Ambusaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education for Education, and attended by Dr. Hashil Obaid Al Mahrouqi, CEO of Omran Group, along with a number of officials from both sides.

Held over 10 days, the programme welcomed 50 students from grades 10 and 11, who participated in a series of immersive activities, including site visits to various Omran Group-affiliated entities across sectors such as hospitality, tourism experiences, and visitor services. In addition, the students took part in interactive workshops and career guidance sessions, providing them with valuable exposure to professional work environments and deepening their understanding of the tourism industry.

Maha Al Farsi, HR Business Partner at Omran Group, said: "We're pleased with the success of the first edition of the summer camp, held in collaboration with the Ministry of Education's Vocational Guidance Centre. We were truly impressed by the students' enthusiasm and commitment throughout the program. The camp offered a practical learning experience that introduced participants to the key pillars and diverse fields of the tourism sector. We believe initiatives like this play a vital role in building early career awareness and inspiring youth to explore the sector's promising opportunities."

Zahran bin Nasser Al-Maghadri, Assistant Director of Studies and Entrepreneurship at the Vocational Guidance and Student Counseling Centre, Ministry of Education, stated:"The summer camp bridged the gap between education and the job market by offering students hands-on experience in the tourism sector. It raised their career awareness and strengthened key skills.This initiative supports our goal of preparing a capable generation that values national opportunities like tourism. We're proud to partner with Omran Group in this model of effective public-private collaboration."

Students also shared their reflections on the experience. Aya Sultan Al-Wahaibi, a student participant, said: "It was an inspiring and useful experience. I learned a lot from the workshops and visits and discovered new areas within tourism that I had never considered before. The camp helped me explore my interests and made me more excited to learn about the sector."

Mohammed Ali Al Maamari, another student, shared:"The program gave me the chance to see new sides of tourism and learn about the different roles behind the scenes. It was different from school – I felt like I was learning in a fun and practical way."

The Summer Camp is one of several initiatives under the broader #IAmTourism strategy led by Omran Group, which focuses on building a strong national talent pipeline for Oman's tourism sector. The strategy is built on four pillars: increasing awareness of tourism careers, attracting local talent, supporting retention, and fostering institutional partnerships. Through such efforts, Omran continues to position tourism as a valuable and accessible career path for Omani youth.

STRENGTHEN SPORTS GROWTH IN OMAN

Golf stakeholders meet at Europcar Oman & Bahrain HQ

MUSCAT: A group of individuals deeply involved in Oman's golfing community gathered this week at Europcar Oman & Bahrain's headquarters to explore ways of advancing the sport's development across the Sultanate and the wider region.

"This is a pivotal moment for golf in Oman," said Nitin Sapre, CEO of Europcar Oman & Bahrain. "By working together, we can create lasting impact—building a stronger community around the sport and inspiring the next generation of players."

Ahmed Al Jahdhami, Secretary General of the Oman Golf Association, added: "Partnerships like these are vital for nurturing talent and creating pathways for golfers at all levels. Together, we can strengthen Oman's golfing ecosystem."

Cristian Nannucci, General Manager of Lavie Golf Course and Tivoli Hotel, shared similar sentiments: "We see tremendous potential for growth in Oman's golfing scene. Collaboration across the community will be key to making the sport more accessible and attractive."

Attending the meeting were: Ahmed Al Jahdhami, Secretary General of the Oman Golf Association, Nitin Sapre, CEO of Europcar Oman & Bahrain, Cristian Nannucci, General Manager of Lavie Golf Course and Tivoli Hotel, whose facilities continue to attract golf enthusiasts, Debbie Nannucci, an advocate for enhancing ladies' participation in golf. and Jonathan Head Coach of Oman's National Golf Team.

The discussions focused on encouraging grassroots participation, creating inclusive opportunities for youth and ladies, and enhancing Oman's appeal as a golfing destination.

The meeting highlighted a shared commitment to supporting the sport's growth through collaborative initiatives that blend sports development, tourism, and community engagement.

COLLABORATION

Volkswagen signs MoU with Sohar International to offer flexible and attractive auto financing

MUSCAT: Volkswagen Oman, represented by Premium Motors, has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sohar International, ushering in a new era of flexible and competitive car financing solutions in Oman. The agreement offers preferential interest rates, quick approvals, and streamlined processing for customers purchasing new or certified pre-owned Volkswagen vehicles.

The MoU was signed by Christian Nehme, General Manager of Premium Motors, and Abdul Qader Al Sumali, Chief Retail and Premier Banking Officer at Sohar International.

This collaboration aims to enhance convenience and affordability, making Volkswagen ownership more accessible for individuals and families across Oman. Sohar International, known for its innovative retail banking approach, will offer customized financing packages tailored to a range of customer needs.

This partnership reflects our shared commitment to delivering greater value and peace of mind to car buyers," said Christian Nehme. "Volkswagen stands for quality and trust. With Sohar International's support, we are making the ownership journey even more attainable."

Volkswagen continues to strengthen its presence in Oman with a diverse vehicle lineup—from dynamic models like the Golf R and GTI to family-friendly SUVs such as the Teramont, Touareg, Tiguan and T-Roc. Through its Certified Used Cars program, the brand also delivers exceptional value with dealership-backed benefits.

WORLD RALLY TEAM

Toyota GAZOO Racing secures podium finish at Acropolis Rally Greece

MUSCAT: Toyota GAZOO Racing World Rally Team (TGR-WRT) has braved turbulent roads, twisting mountain trails and searing ambient temperatures to claim a hard-fought podium finish at Acropolis Rally Greece. Sébastien Ogier and co-driver Vincent Landais secured second place in their No. 17 Toyota GR YARIS Rally1, their performance helping the team maintain its drivers' championship lead and Toyota its 65-point manufacturers' championship advantage.

Greece's rough, rocky terrain and temperatures exceeding 40°C posed a significant challenge for TGR-WRT and the GR YARIS Rally. The early stages west of Athens were especially demanding, with loose stones and step-like bedrock testing the car's durability, while the narrow, twisting mountain roads in the final legs left no room for error. Ogier maintained a leading pace despite running second on the road during the first day, helping clear a racing line while still delivering competitive times.

Building on that performance, he and co-driver Landais began the final leg 43.6 seconds behind the leader and mounted a determined push, clocking the fastest times in both the penultimate test and the rally-ending Power Stage. The result saw them top the final-day classification and earn 10 bonus points, in addition to 17 for securing second place overall.

Over the years, Toyota has been participating in many different forms of motorsports, including Formula One, the World Endurance Championship (WEC) and the Nürburgring 24 Hours endurance race. Toyota's participation in these events was overseen by separate entities within the company until April 2015, when Toyota established TGR, to consolidate all of its motorsports activities under one in-house brand.

Representing Toyota's belief that 'the roads build the people and the people build the cars,' TGR highlights the role of motorsports as a fundamental pillar of Toyota's commitment to making 'ever-better' cars. Harnessing years of experience gained under the extreme conditions of various motorsports events, TGR aims to forge new technologies and solutions that bring the freedom, adventure and joy of driving to everyone.

ROUND-UP

Sohar International signs MoU to serve as main sponsor for Refill 3

Refill 3 stands out as a vibrant festival that blends culinary culture, entertainment, and entrepreneurship, aiming to celebrate Oman's creative spirit while boosting tourism and economic activity with an expected attendance of 150,000 visitors

MUSCAT: In line with its commitment to advancing socio-economic growth and supporting community-driven innovation, Sohar International has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to serve as the main sponsor – banking segment for Refill 3, a leading private-sector initiative taking place during Khareef Dhofar season.

Refill 3 stands out as a vibrant festival that blends culinary culture, entertainment, and entrepreneurship, aiming to celebrate Oman's creative spirit while boosting tourism and economic activity with an expected attendance of 150,000 visitors. Sohar International invites the public to engage with Refill 3, an impactful platform that embodies innovation, opportunity, and cultural vibrancy, reinforcing Salalah's position as a key destination during the Khareef season.

Commenting on the sponsorship, Abdul Qadir Al Sumali, Chief Retail & Premier Banking Officer at Sohar International said, "Partnering with Refill 3 aligns with our commitment to fostering community-driven initiatives. This festival is a vibrant celebration of culture and creativity—elements that play a vital role in advancing sustainable socio-economic growth. Through this exclusive sponsorship, we are proud to enhance visitor experiences and contribute to Khareef Dhofar's growing tourism sector. Our collaboration goes beyond sponsorship to deliver meaningful impact, ensuring financial accessibility and digital innovation are integrated throughout the event for the benefit of attendees and merchants alike."

This edition, Refill 3 offers a dynamic platform that blends creative expression, enterprise, and immersive entertainment. The curated marketplace features over 100 participants, including niche Omani and GCC brands, along with international FMCG companies entering Oman for the first time. Visitors can explore diverse culinary offerings, interactive activations, and a vibrant performance lineup by regional and local talent—all within a family-friendly environment that includes children's zones. Among the festival's key attractions is the region's only paintball experience during Khareef Dhofar, enhancing its appeal as a unique seasonal destination. Through its exclusive partnership, Sohar International supports the festival's broader impact by promoting youth engagement, enabling SME visibility, and contributing to Salalah's expanding tourism and economic landscape.

As part of the ongoing collaboration, Sohar International is actively implementing a series of targeted initiatives to enhance the visitor experience and support financial accessibility. These include exclusive coupon redemptions for the bank's customers across participating food vendors, QR code activations driving digital interaction, and the widespread use of Sohar International and Sohar Islamic POS solutions—ensuring seamless transactions while enabling local merchants to access modern financial infrastructure. A standout feature of the partnership is the Youth Wall, an interactive installation where young attendees are invited to share their aspirations, reaffirming the bank's commitment to nurturing the voices of Oman's youth and contributing to a more inclusive and aspirational national narrative.

DESTINATION FOR SPORTING EVENT

Registration opens for first international edition of Qatar's most challenging test of endurance Samla Race

MUSCAT: Registration is now open for the first-ever international edition of the Samla Race, Qatar's most challenging test of endurance, set to take place on January 24, 2026.

In partnership with Visit Qatar, the Samla Race is expanding to the global stage, inviting elite male and female athletes from around the world to compete in a uniquely challenging test of strength and stamina across Qatar's diverse landscapes.

The Samla International Race features four consecutive, high-impact disciplines: a 3-kilometre open-water swim, a 49-kilometre run, a 44-kilometre mountain biking trail, and a 4-kilometre kayaking course.

Athletes can register through the official race website, where they will find a detailed race guide outlining participation criteria, safety requirements, and all relevant rules and regulations. A prize pool of approximately USD 300,000 will be awarded to top finishers in both male and female categories.

Registration will be open from July 20 to August 9, participants will have a 20-day window to apply, providing them enough time to register. Submitting the registration form does not guarantee participation, as spots are limited. Confirmations will be sent via email after the official registration period closes, and only confirmed athletes will be required to pay a participation fee to secure their place.

With the launch of Samla International, Qatar continues to strengthen its reputation as a world-class destination for sporting events. As the race welcomes global competitors for the first time, it not only showcases the nation's distinctive landscape but also reflects Visit Qatar's ongoing commitment to advancing sports tourism and delivering exceptional, world-class experiences for athletes and fans from around the globe.

For more information on the 2026 Samla International Race, visit: https://visitqatar.com/intl-en/events-calendar/samla

To register, visit: https://samla.com.qa/samla100/2026

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