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Oman improves workers' rights ranking

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman has improved its standing in the 2025 ITUC Global Rights Index, moving from a rating of 4 to 3 - a development described as significant by labour observers.

Released by International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) during the International Labour Conference in Geneva being held from June 2 to 13, the index assesses workers' rights across 151 countries.

The rise in Oman's rating resulted from a series of recent labour reforms, particularly establishment of a tripartite dialogue mechanism involving representatives from the government, employers and workers. The mechanism is led by General Federation of Oman Workers (GFW) and aims to enhance social dialogue and ensure more inclusive policymaking.



Oman is one of only three countries that improved their ratings this year, alongside Australia and Moldova. In contrast, seven countries - Argentina, Costa Rica, Georgia, Italy, Mauritania, Niger and Panama - saw their ratings worsen

'These reforms have paved the way for constructive engagement on employment issues and more efficient mechanisms for resolving labour disputes,' the ITUC re-

port stated. The tripartite committee now plays a key role in drafting, reviewing and amending labour legislation. The reforms have also

improved workers' access to justice and promoted fairer dispute resolution processes. The Global Rights Index measures countries against 97 indica-

tors based on International Labour Organization (ILO) standards, covering the right to strike, freedom of association, collective bargaining, protection from vio-

lence and freedom of expression for trade unionists. Ratings range from 1 (best) to 5 (worst).

Oman's progress contrasts with broader regional trends. The Middle East and North Africa remains the lowest-ranked region globally, with an average score of 4.68 in 2025, slightly better than its lowest-ever score of 4.74 in 2024. The report stated, 'This indicates that most workers are subject to systematic violations or have no guarantee of basic labour rights.'

It noted that workers in Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates continue to face bans or restrictions on freedom of association and the right to organise. These limitations particularly affect migrant workers, who make up a large portion of the workforce in those countries.

'Oman offered a glimmer of progress, improving its rating from 4 to 3 in 2025, due to a se-

ries of progressive labour reforms aimed at strengthening social dialogue and dispute resolution,' the report added.

Oman is one of only three countries that improved their ratings this year, alongside Australia and Moldova. In contrast, seven countries - Argentina, Costa Rica, Georgia, Italy, Mauritania, Niger and Panama - saw their ratings worsen.

The ten worst countries for workers in 2025 were listed as Bangladesh, Belarus, Ecuador, Egypt, Eswatini, Myanmar, Nigeria, the Philippines, Tunisia and Türkiye.

ITUC said this year's report revealed a worsening crisis for workers and unions globally, with average ratings deteriorating in three out of five world regions. Europe and the Americas recorded their worst scores since the index was launched in 2014. Only seven countries received the top-tier rating in 2025.

NEWS BRIEF

GAZA REDUCED TO HERDED ANIMALS IN PENS: UNRWA

Gaza - The acting director of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has described the recent killings at the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's aid distribution points and the situation in the enclave as "horrific".

"What's happened over the last couple of days in a war... that we thought couldn't plumb to new depths and things couldn't get any worse, we're seeing a new side of that," Sam Rose told Al Jazeera from Oxford, UK. "This is what people have been reduced to, literally to herded animals in pens."

Rose warned that if "these scenes" did not prompt action from those "that have the influence to take action, then we're lost".

New app 'Naqi' offers real-time air pollution updates across Oman

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In a step towards enhancing environmental awareness and public health, Environment Authority (EA) has launched a new mobile application - Naqi - designed to provide real-time air quality updates across Oman. The app was officially unveiled on Monday in the lead-up to World Environment Day observed annually on June 5.

Available on both iOS and Android platforms in Arabic and English, Naqi offers a user-friendly interface and a host of advanced features that allow residents, commuters and health-conscious users to monitor air quality with precision. It also supports access via web browsers, broadening its availability on all digital platforms.

One of the standout features of Naqi is its interactive map, which displays real-time air qual-



ity indicators based on users' geographic location. It offers comprehensive reports on key air pollutants, including PM2.5, PM10, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide, among others.

To help users make informed decisions, the app employs a colour-coded alert system - ranging from green (indicating good air quality) to red (indicating hazardous conditions). This intuitive visual guide simplifies understanding for users of all ages.

In addition to pollution data, Naqi integrates live weather information, offering a holistic view of environmental conditions. This combination enhances the app's utility for daily planning, particularly for those with respiratory conditions, outdoor workers and athletes.

The launch aligns with Oman's national efforts towards digital transformation, environmental sustainability and meeting the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

EA officials emphasised the fact that the app will play a vital role in raising environmental awareness and providing reliable and up-to-date information to improve quality of life.

With air quality increasingly recognised as a key determinant of public health, especially in urban areas like Muscat, the roll-out of Naqi marks a forward-thinking approach to environmental monitoring in the sultanate.

Firms not meeting Omanisation targets to lose govt contracts

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In a move aimed at bolstering employment opportunities for Omani nationals, the Secretariat General of Tender Board has issued a circular directing all government entities to stop awarding contracts to private companies that fail to meet government-approved Omanisation levels.

'All entities subject to the provisions of the Tender Law must refrain from contracting with companies that do not comply with the Omanisation rates approved by the government,' the circular stated.

To ensure effective implementation, the circular mandates that all government tender documents must now include a clause requiring compliance with Omanisation targets and the employment of Omani nationals, following a standard format.

Prior to issuing any tender, government entities must verify that companies meet the stipulated Omanisation levels. This verification process will be carried out through the Isnad electronic tendering system, which is directly integrated with Ministry of Labour data.

The circular extends these compliance requirements to foreign companies participating in international tenders. Although not registered in Oman, such companies must still adhere to local Omanisation commitments. Their compliance will be monitored after contracts are awarded and throughout the duration of project implementation in line with the broader local content plan.

The directive reinforces the government's long-standing policy to enhance participation of Omanis in the private sector workforce.



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Organ transplants increase as public participation grows



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Safety tips for bikers on World Bicycle Day

Oman's first copper recycling facility costing RO41mn launched

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) officially inaugurated Oman's first facility dedicated to recycling copper from mining waste on Monday, marking a significant development in the sultanate's green industrial efforts. The RO41mn plant is located in Suhar.

Developed by Green Tech Mining and Services, the facility uses sustainable technologies to process legacy mining waste into copper cathodes. It is the first of its kind in Oman and aims to support the sultanate's transition to-



wards a green economy. The opening was held under the patronage of H E Qais bin Mohammed al Youssef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, and at-

tended by senior officials and industry representatives. The project forms part of wider goals under Oman Vision 2040 and the Oman Industrial Strategy 2040, which aim to in-

crease the added value of local resources, localise industries and enhance competitiveness of the sultanate's industrial base. The integrated complex was developed through a partnership be-

tween BPG Group and Oman Mining Company, with direct support from MoCIIP.

Production is scheduled to begin in June 2025, with an initial output of 60 tonnes of copper cathodes per year. The capacity is expected to increase to 12,000 tonnes annually by December 2026, making Oman a regional player in sustainable mining.

H E Dr Saleh bin Saeed Masan, Undersecretary for Commerce and Industry in MoCIIP, said the facility represents a "qualitative leap" in building an innovated and sustainable industrial sector. "This project is a practical example of clean technology in action, and a testament to the

government's commitment to integrating sustainability into industrial development," he said.

Khalid bin Salim al Qasabi, Director General of Industry in MoCIIP, stated that the facility supports the ministry's aim to promote industrial projects that meet global environmental and technical standards.

Imran Shaikh, Managing Director of Green Tech Mining and Services, said the project is the result of a long-term partnership that began in 2018. "Launching the first phase of production using renewable energy is a strong reflection of our commitment to sustainability and Oman's green economy."

Livestock supply ensured for Eid celebrations

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Authorities in Oman have confirmed sufficient livestock supplies and stable market prices across the country ahead of Eid al Adha, in a move aimed at ensuring consumer confidence during the festival.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MAFWR), in coordination with the Consumer Protection Authority (CPA), has taken steps to maintain smooth supply chains and prevent any price manipulation.

Dr Masoud bin Suleiman al Azri, Director General of Agricultural and Fisheries Marketing at the ministry, said that around 318,000 goats and sheep, and 25,000 cattle are currently available in markets across all governorates. He added that a further 50,000 sheep are expected to



arrive in the coming days.

"These quantities are sufficient to meet demand during the Eid season," Dr Azri said. "The

increased supply will not affect market prices or availability."

MAFWR and CPA are jointly monitoring the markets to en-

sure livestock are sold at fair prices and meet acceptable quality standards throughout the country.

To protect public health, consumers have been advised to verify the health of animals before purchase and ensure they

show no visible signs of disease. Authorities strongly recommend using approved municipal slaughterhouses, which follow hygiene protocols and ensure safe disposal of waste.

The ministry has reminded the public to take necessary pre-

open areas, poses risks of disease transmission. The ministry has also issued a warning about zoonotic diseases, particularly Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF), a viral infection transmitted by ticks with a high fatality rate. Transmission can

Around 318,000 goats and sheep, and 25,000 cattle are currently available in markets across all governorates

DR MASOUD BIN SULEIMAN AL AZRI

cautions during the slaughter process. Livestock should be inspected for parasites such as ticks, though their presence is not always an indication of disease. Those handling the animals should be in good health, free from open wounds, and wear protective clothing.

Improper disposal of slaughter waste, such as dumping in

occur through skin contact, inhalation, ingestion, or via insects such as mosquitoes and fleas.

These measures are part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to raise awareness and ensure public safety during the Eid season. The ministry urged all citizens and residents to adhere strictly to the guidelines for a safe and healthy celebration.

Jobseekers invited to take part in Ajwa al Ashkhara Festival 2025

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Governorate of South Sharqiyah, through the office of the wali of Jaalan Bani Bu Ali, has opened registration for jobseekers in the Al Ashkhara area to participate in the organisation and management of the upcoming Ajwa al Ashkhara Festival 2025.

Now in its third edition, the Al Ashkhara festival has become one of the governorate's most anticipated annual events. It continues to attract growing numbers of visitors, residents, and tourists with its vibrant mix of cultural, recreational, and heritage-based programmes.

The event, to be held later in the month, plays a key role in promoting domestic tourism and celebrating the unique identity of this coastal town.

This initiative forms part of a wider strategy to empower local youth by involving them in the planning and execution of major tourism and community-focused events.

Organisers say the forum also offers participants hands-on ex-



perience in event management, hospitality, and teamwork - skills that are increasingly valued in Oman's expanding tourism sector.

Registration is open exclusively to jobseekers residing in Al Ashkhara and will remain open until June 4, officials informed.

Interested applicants can register online at the following link: <https://arcg.is/19fXSy0>.

Officials are encouraging early registration, noting that selected participants will receive orientation and training ahead of the event to ensure its smooth and professional delivery.

The second edition of the Ajwa al Ashkhara Festival attracted more than 300,000 visitors, underscoring its growing popularity and potential as a key driver of local tourism.

Endangered vulture rehabilitated at Wadi Sireen Nature Reserve

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In a move aimed at strengthening avian conservation, the Environment Authority, in collaboration with the Environment Society of Oman, has released a lappet-faced vulture (Torgos tracheliotos) into the wild at Wadi Sireen Nature Reserve in South Batinah.

The bird, listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), was rehabilitated following an intensive care programme. It has now been fitted with a satellite tracking device to monitor its movement, nesting behaviour and habitat preferences. The data will help researchers understand the species' ecological needs and accordingly contribute to long-term conservation planning.

Ali Nasser al Rasbi, an environmental specialist, said, "There are more than 38 species of birds in the sultanate, and the lappet-faced vulture is the largest among them. Monitoring its behaviour in the wild provides crucial insights into the overall health of our ecosystems."

Once widespread across Africa and parts of the Arabian Peninsula, populations of the lappet-faced vulture have declined sharply due to poisoning, persecution and habitat loss. Only a small and rapidly shrinking pop-



There are more than 38 species of birds in the sultanate, and the lappet-faced vulture is the largest among them

ALI NASSER AL RASBI

ulation remains, making conservation initiatives in Oman and elsewhere vital to the species' survival.

The reintroduction forms part of a broader strategy by the Environment Authority to protect endangered and vulnerable bird species across Oman. The programme aims to support biodiversity, maintain ecological balance, and raise awareness

about the critical role vultures play as natural scavengers.

Wadi Sireen Nature Reserve, about 45km south of Muscat in the eastern Al Hajar Mountains, was chosen for the release due to its protected status and biodiversity. It is also home to endangered Arabian tahr, among other rare wildlife, making it a key site for ongoing and future conservation efforts.

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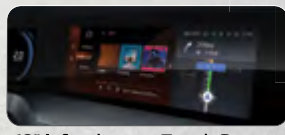
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FSQC issues warning on Haribo gummies over cannabis concerns

Our Correspondent
Muscat



The Food Safety and Quality Centre (FSQC) has urged consumers in Oman to exercise caution regarding a batch of cola-flavoured gummies under the Haribo brand, following concerns of possible cannabis contamination.

The advisory, issued in coordination with a warning from the Dutch food authority, pertains to the Happy Candy Cola Fizz gummies manufactured by Haribo GmbH & Co in Germany. According to FSQC, the affected product is being sold in 1,000gm packages with a batch number L341-

4002307906 and an expiry date of January 2026.

The warning comes amid reports suggesting the possible presence of a narcotic substance in the product. Authorities have advised consumers to avoid consuming the identified batch and to report any related health concerns.

Madayn facilitates jobs for persons with disabilities

Suhar - Suhar Industrial City, operating under the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), signed nine employment contracts for persons with disabilities in cooperation with several entities in North Batinah governorate.

The opportunities were made available through investing companies within the industrial city and other private sector partners. The contracts were formalised during an event held in Suhar on Monday, which focused on supporting the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the labour market.

The event was held under the patronage of H E Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed al Shamsi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development. It included exhibitions, traditional performances, and literary contributions by persons with disabilities.

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Omani businesses expand franchise footprint in Iraq

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Six Omani brands signed franchise and marketing agreements in Iraq during the second edition of Iraq Franchise Exhibition held in Baghdad from May 30 to June 2.

The Omani delegation was led by Hamoud bin Salem al Saadi, Second Deputy Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and Chairman of its Franchise Programme. The participation was supported by OCCI through its Franchise Centre.

Among the deals signed, Brothers of Silver, owned by Mohammed Qasim al Maamari, granted a franchise to Ibrahim Abdulhussein Yassin in Karbala. Seven Fries, owned by Issa bin Salih al Aghbari, signed with Mohammed Yawuz Mohammed in Kirkuk. Impasti, owned by Hajid bin Sulaiman al Khinjari, granted a franchise to Moamen Mohammed Al Khiayat in Mosul.



The agreements reflect continued efforts to expand Omani brands into regional markets, with Iraq seen as a promising destination

HAMOUD BIN SALEM AL SAADI

Burger Gelato, owned by Haitham bin Saif al Habsi, signed two agreements - one with Saeed Tareq al Tai in Mosul and the other with Laith Sahib in Najaf.

Thor & Forno, owned by Ammar bin Mahmood al Dhahli, signed with Abdulghafour al Abdali in Baghdad. Additionally, Abdullah bin Ha-

muod al Mahrouqi, owner of Chain, signed a marketing agreement in Oman for Iraqi brand Pizza Station with Samer al Hassami. Saadi said the agreements reflect continued efforts to expand Omani brands into regional markets, with Iraq seen as a promising destination. "We are proud of what our brands have achieved and their readiness to grow regionally in line with international franchise standards."

He added that the expansion aligns with OCCI and its Franchise Centre's strategy to empower entrepreneurs, promote investment and facilitate market access. "These agreements reflect increasing confidence in the quality of Omani products," he said, affirming continued support for the franchise programme as part of national efforts to strengthen the economy and support the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

Organ transplants increase as public participation grows

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The National Organ Transplant Programme has achieved a significant milestone with 23 organs successfully transplanted from 11 brain-dead donors between January 2023 and May 2025, according to Ministry of Health (MoH).

In a statement, the ministry said that during the same period, more than 20,000 individuals registered as organ donors through the Shifa app. The programme's dedicated hotline also handled over 1,000 calls and messages from the public, reflecting growing awareness and engagement.

MoH reported that transplant teams made over 800 visits to intensive care units and a total of 229 reports of suspected brain death were received from ICUs across the

sultanate. Of these, 88 cases were confirmed as brain dead, and 72 families were offered the option of organ donation.

Between January 2023 and May 2025, 18 kidneys, four livers and one heart were successfully transplanted, the last of which was performed on April 14, 2025. In addition, 116 corneas were transplanted since September 2023.



Alongside these medical achievements, MoH organised more than 100 community awareness events to promote the importance of organ donation and encourage greater public participation. The ministry expressed its appreciation to healthcare professionals, donor families and all contributors to the programme's success, reaffirming its commitment to further developing transplant services in Oman.



Dialogue session promotes women's role in governance

Our Correspondent
Muscat

A dialogue session held in Muscat on Monday brought together 70 Omani women from the State Council, Majlis A'Shura, municipal councils, government institutions and women's associations to discuss ways to enhance female leadership and political participation.

Organised by Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), the event aimed to enhance women's presence in leadership and decision-making roles, particularly within electoral bodies. It also sought to raise public awareness on the importance of women's involvement in governance and build confidence among aspiring female leaders.

Participants discussed a range of tools - legal, economic and media-related - to support women in leadership, and reviewed the role of civil society in empowering women to engage

more actively in political processes.

Suad al Yazidi, Director of Women's Affairs Department at MoSD, said the ministry continues to implement targeted programmes to support female leadership. "We have introduced several initiatives and training programmes, including meetings with female leaders and capacity-building efforts for women interested in serving in the shura and municipal councils," she said.

Among the ministry's flagship initiatives is 'Tasmu', launched in partnership with Royal Academy of Administration, which is training 50 Omani women for leadership positions across various sectors.

The dialogue featured two sessions. The first addressed strategies for success and included working papers on leadership, strategic communication, the role of women in the private sector, and legal frameworks that support their participation in

elections.

The second session focused on contributions of civil society and the media in promoting women's political engagement. Discussions included the experience of Omani women in Majlis A'Shura and examined how organisations and the media can help raise awareness and support female candidates.

Quds bint Abdullah al Riyami, a political science student at Sultan Qaboos University and former member of the Arab Parliament for Children, spoke about her early exposure to parliamentary work. "My experience as the youngest member of the Arab Parliament for Children gave me the confidence and tools to aspire to leadership roles," she said.

The event was part of Oman's wider efforts to build a supportive environment for women's advancement and to ensure their effective contribution to national development and governance.

MHT launches hotel reception, front office operations training in Dhofar

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT) signed a partnership agreement on Monday to finance and implement a hotel reception training programme across several establishments in Dhofar.

The initiative is part of ongoing efforts to prepare Omani youth for careers in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

The three-month programme will be carried out in cooperation with Muscat Hospitality Academy, under the umbrella of the internationally accredited Business and Hotel Management School of Switzerland. It aims to qualify national cadres for roles in



hotel reception and front office operations, improving the standard of tourism services in line with industry developments.

MHT described the agreement as a model of public-private

cooperation and reaffirmed its commitment to sustainable development of Oman's tourism sector through targeted training for young Omanis.

The programme is part of a

broader series of initiatives launched by the ministry to develop local talent and promote long-term growth in tourism as a contributor to the national economy.

GEN NU'AMANI RECEIVES AMBASSADOR OF RUSSIA



H E Gen Sultan Mohammed al Nu'amani, Minister of Royal Office, received H E Oleg Vladimirovich Levin, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Sultanate of Oman, in his office on Monday. The ambassador expressed his appreciation for Oman's role in enhancing mutual cooperation. During the meeting, the two sides explored ways of boosting bilateral relations in several spheres (ONA)

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Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

Australia weighs taking Trump tariffs to WTO

Australia is considering whether to challenge the US at the World Trade Organization (WTO) over President Donald Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs, local media reported Monday.

Trump has announced a plan to double tariffs on steel and aluminum imports to 50% starting Wednesday.

Australian goods are already subject to a 10% baseline tariff, local broadcaster SBS News reported, without elaborating on Canberra's strategy to challenge Trump's latest move at the WTO.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese is expected to meet with Trump on the sidelines of the G7 summit in Canada later this month.

Albanese said he will be making Australia's position very clear through a "variety of channels."

"This is an act of economic self-harm by the United States. It will increase costs for consumers in the United States because it is supplied across the board," said SBS.

Oman's industrial exports rise 8.6% to RO1.6bn in Q1

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's industrial sector exports recorded a notable increase of 8.6% in the first quarter of 2025, reaching RO1.618bn, compared to RO1.49bn during the same period in 2024, according to data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Industrial exports accounted for 28% of Oman's total exports, indicating the growing contribution of the industrial sector to the national economy and its role in promoting economic diversification.

This growth is attributed to strong performances across several industrial segments, particularly the electrical machinery and equipment manufacturing sector, which posted an exceptional 141% increase in export value. Exports from this sector rose to RO128mn, compared to RO53mn in Q1 2024, the NCSI data showed.

This was followed by metal products, with exports increasing by 14.1% to RO462mn, supported by growing international demand for high-quality Omani goods.

In a statement to the Oman News Agency, Eng Khalid bin Salim al Qassabi, Director General of Industry at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said that the positive results reflect the strength and diversity of Oman's industrial base. He noted that the ministry continues to implement integrated industrial poli-



cies aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of Omani products in regional and international markets, while driving export growth.

"The electrical machinery and equipment sector is experiencing rapid growth, spurred by rising demand locally and regionally, and linked to the ex-

dustrial Strategy 2040, due to its role in developing supply chains, enhancing the added value of the national economy, supporting entrepreneurship, and facilitating the localisation of advanced technologies.

Eng Jassim bin Saif al Jadidi, Technical Director at the Office of the Undersecretary of the

He explained that these efforts involve launching a series of qualitative initiatives aimed at improving the efficiency and quality of national products. This includes supporting local manufacturers in meeting the highest technical standards and international specifications, thereby enhancing competitiveness and consumer confidence in Omani goods.

He added that the ministry, in coordination with relevant authorities, is working to open new markets for Omani exports by activating regional and international trade agreements, participating in exhibitions and trade missions, and providing incentives and support for Omani exporters. The ministry is also encouraging the growth of knowledge-based industries and the adoption of advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence and Fourth Industrial Revolution tools.

Industrial sector exports accounted for 28% of Oman's total exports, indicating the growing contribution of industrial sector to the national economy and its role in promoting economic diversification

pansion of infrastructure projects, including electricity networks, public utilities, and the development of new cities. This growth is also supported by increased investment in industries related to renewable energy," said Qassabi.

He emphasised that the sector is a priority under Oman's In-

Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, stressed the continuation of efforts to expand the presence of Omani products in both regional and global markets. This goal is central to the Industrial Strategy and a key pillar of Oman Vision 2040.

OETC completes RO4mn FCLR project to enhance national grid reliability

Muscat - Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) has announced the successful completion of all construction and commissioning works for the Fault Current Limiter (FCLR) project on the 132kV transmission network in the Muscat Governorate.

The project, with a total investment exceeding RO4mn, involved the installation of Fault Current Limiters (FCLs) designed to restrict fault currents to safe levels without interrupting the circuit. This technology protects transformers, circuit breakers, cables, and other infrastructure from excessive thermal and mechanical stress.

In addition, FCLs help avoid costly equipment upgrades when fault levels surpass design ratings due to network expansion or new interconnections, thereby ensuring the overall stability, safety, and reliability of the electricity grid while maintaining uninterrupted power supply to other areas.

This initiative forms part of



OETC is fully committed to continuous development, cost-effective investments, and adoption of high-standard systems to maintain a reliable and sustainable power transmission network

ENG MASOUD BIN SALAM AL RIYAMI

OETC's ongoing efforts to bolster the sustainability and resilience of the national transmission network, aligning with the company's strategic objectives to enhance efficiency, reduce system failures, and ensure rapid emergency response through the use of advanced smart technologies and international best practices.

Eng Masoud bin Salam al Riyami, Chief Operations Officer at OETC, said, "This project marks a significant milestone in improving operational efficiency and the quality of power supply. It reflects our commitment to investing in smart infrastructure that ensures optimal grid performance and supports national en-

ergy development goals."

He further highlighted the company's strategic five-year plans to assess network conditions and implement both current and future projects aimed at developing a world-class smart grid capable of adapting to rising demand and sectoral transformation.

"OETC is fully committed to continuous development, cost-effective investments, and the adoption of high-standard systems to maintain a reliable and sustainable power transmission network. The FCLR system represents a key step in that journey," Riyami added.

OETC, a member of the Nama Group, is the sole entity responsible for the transmission and control of electricity across the sultanate's network. Electricity is transmitted from production stations to distributed load centres across the governorates. The transmission network operates at a voltage of 132kV and above, covering all governorates in the sultanate.

MSX, Ominvest host MEIRA Oman Chapter meeting

Muscat - The Middle East Investor Relations Association's (MEIRA) Oman Chapter meeting was held in Muscat recently, supported by the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) and hosted by Oman International Development and Investment Company (Ominvest).

The event brought together a distinguished group of investor relations professionals, market experts, and representatives from MSX-listed companies to discuss best practices in investor communications and corporate transparency.

The meeting featured two in-depth workshops led by regional and international experts. Frederic Cornet, Head of Capital Markets at APCO Worldwide, led the first session, which focused on mastering earnings calls.

His workshop highlighted the importance of conducting well-prepared, strategic earnings calls that align senior leadership messaging with investor expect-



Sohar International, Al Mouj sign RO63mn credit facility deal

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Sohar International and Al Mouj Muscat have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a strategic credit facility agreement valued at RO63mn to Al Mouj Muscat.

Structured as a combination of term and revolving loan facilities, the agreement provides Al Mouj Muscat with the financial flexibility to accelerate ongoing and future developments, enhance operational efficiency, and pursue strategic expansion.

This support will not only strengthen Al Mouj's diverse portfolio of residential, commercial, and hospitality assets but also enable the delivery of elevated experiences that meet the evolving expectations of its community, investors, and partners.

In a press statement, Abdulwahid al Murshidi, Chief Executive Officer of Sohar International, said, "At Sohar International, we take great pride in actively contributing to the sultanate's infrastructure development, which is central to Oman's broader national growth agenda.

Our support for Al Mouj Muscat visionary project through this strategic credit facility reflects our commitment to empowering landmark initiatives that drive economic diversification and position Oman as a leading destination for investment and tourism."

Nasser al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat, said, "Since the inception of Al Mouj Muscat in 2006, we have shouldered a great responsibility to become Omans' premier waterfront development and also a benchmark project for integrated mix-use developments. This agreement with Sohar International is a testament to the strength of our financial position and a clear vote of confidence in our vision for the future of the project."

The credit facility also underscores the strength and maturity of Oman's banking sector, highlighting the power of national institutional collaboration in advancing economic diversification. With this agreement, Al Mouj Muscat reinforces its foundation to create long-term value and solidify its position as a dynamic hub for lifestyle, leisure, and investment in the sultanate.



tations while strengthening market confidence. He also emphasised how companies can leverage the outcomes of such calls to enhance future communication strategies.

The second workshop, led by Julian Smith, Managing Director of BRR Media Limited, explored the use of multimedia - specifically video and animation - as tools to deliver a compelling equity story. Smith underlined how visual storytelling can simplify complex business strategies, increase engagement with in-

vestors, and ultimately support capital attraction. Real-world case studies were presented to demonstrate how companies are successfully applying these tools to build investor trust.

A third workshop was delivered by Giles Coffey, General Manager of Corporate Finance and Advisory at Oman Investment Bank. It discussed the role investment banks play in helping companies navigate the challenges they face in investor relations.

OPEC+ expected to end output hikes after August, says Goldman Sachs

Irina Slav

Goldman Sachs expects OPEC+ to implement its final production increase in August, maintaining the now-standard level of 411,000 barrels per day.

"Relatively tight spot oil fundamentals, stronger-than-expected global activity data, and seasonal summer support for oil demand suggest that the anticipated slowdown in demand

is unlikely to be sharp enough to prevent a further production increase when deciding on August output levels on July 6," the bank said in a note, as cited by Reuters.

OPEC+ announced on Saturday another 411,000-barrels-per-day boost to its overall output for July, following identical increases in May and June. The market's response to the announcement was largely



muted, as escalating tensions between Russia and Ukraine shifted traders' focus to geopo-

litical risks and supply security, ultimately pushing oil prices higher.

Speculation that OPEC+ might add more than the agreed 411,000 barrels per day in July also contributed to the lack of a significant market reaction.

In addition to its forecast that OPEC+ will halt supply increases after August, Goldman's commodities analysis team also predicted that non-OPEC+ oil production will begin to rise later this year, even as global economic growth slows.

This would exert downward pressure on oil prices.

Goldman Sachs is maintaining its forecast for Brent crude at \$60 per barrel this year, and West Texas Intermediate (WTI) at \$56 per barrel. At present, Brent is trading above \$64 per barrel, while WTI is changing hands at over \$62 per barrel.

Some analysts see the OPEC+ production increases as

an effort by Saudi Arabia to curry favour with President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly called for lower oil prices. Others, however, have highlighted Riyadh's frustration with Iraq and Kazakhstan, whose ongoing overproduction may have prompted the decision to raise supply, thereby impacting those two OPEC+ members' oil revenues.

(Source: Oilprice.com)

China accuses US of breaching trade deal

China’s Ministry of Commerce said that if the US insists on going its own way and continues to damage China’s interests, China will continue to take resolute and forceful measures to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests

Washington, US – China has responded to US President Donald Trump’s recent remarks by accusing the United States of breaching their trade agreement and has vowed to defend its interests. The escalation makes it increasingly unlikely that Trump will receive the leadership phone call he hopes will restart trade negotiations.

“If the US insists on going its own way and continues to damage China’s interests, China will continue to take resolute and forceful measures to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests,” said the Chinese Ministry of Commerce.

Beijing accused the US of implementing discriminatory restrictions, including new guidelines on artificial intelligence chip export controls and the revocation of Chinese student visas.

On Friday, Trump took to Truth Social to criticise China, claiming it had “violated” its trade agreement with the United States.

“The bad news is that China,

perhaps not surprisingly to some, has totally violated its agreement with us. So much for being Mr NICE GUY!” Trump wrote. Later, speaking from the Oval Office, he suggested he intended to speak with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Trump did not specify how he believes China breached the agreement. In an interview with CNBC, US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer claimed the Chinese were “slow rolling their compliance”.

The latest tension comes as the fragile détente between the two countries – reached earlier this month with a mutual easing of steep tariffs – now appears under strain due to both trade-related and broader geopolitical issues.

Speaking at a rally in Pennsylvania on Friday, President Trump announced plans to double tariffs on steel imports from 25% to 50%. The increase, he said, would “further secure the steel industry in the United States”.

Meanwhile, a federal appeals court allowed the tariffs to tem-



porarily remain in effect, just one day after the US Court of International Trade had blocked them, declaring the process used to impose them “unlawful”.

This means Trump’s tariff policy remains in place, though uncertain, amid an ongoing legal battle. Trump expressed confidence on Friday that he would ultimately “win”.

The White House has pledged to take the case to the Supreme Court if necessary. Administra-

tion officials have also indicated that court rulings will not necessarily be the final word. Yahoo Finance’s Ben Werschul has outlined other strategies Trump could pursue.

Trump awaits call with Xi Jinping

A flurry of accusations and counter-accusations over the weekend between the US and China has raised the stakes for a much-anticipated call between

the two leaders, as relations deteriorate further over tariffs and other contentious matters.

President Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping face several key issues, from critical minerals to semiconductor supply chains, which have led to increasingly hostile rhetoric on both sides. Their recently agreed 90-day tariff truce is now looking increasingly precarious.

On Sunday, National Economic Council Director Kevin

Hassett told ABC that trade talks with other nations were being delayed due to the wait for the Trump-Xi call.

He explained that previous predictions of imminent deals had not come to fruition because “the trade team has been focused 100% like a laser beam on the China matter.” Once the call with Xi takes place and that matter is addressed, he added, “then we’re going to take [other] deals into the Oval.”

However, it remains unclear whether a call between the two leaders – who reportedly haven’t spoken since before Trump’s inauguration – can resolve the deepening tensions. Despite repeated assurances over the past few weeks that a conversation was imminent, no date has been confirmed.

Pressed over the weekend, several Trump officials offered vague responses. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said on CBS that he was hopeful for “something very soon”, while Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick told Fox News that Trump is “going to go work it out”, without providing a timeline.

Hassett also said he was hoping for a call this week, but noted, “you never know in international relations.”

Complicated issues on both sides

When the call eventually takes place, the two nations will face a series of complex issues, with the dispute over critical minerals likely topping the agenda.

Trump and his administration allege that China has already breached the 90-day truce by failing to lift restrictions on key raw materials essential for products ranging from computers and electric vehicle batteries to jet engines and medical equipment.

China holds a dominant position in global reserves of many of these minerals, as well as in the facilities required to refine them. (Source: Yahoo Finance)

Global airline profits set to rise 11% in 2025 despite uncertainties: IATA

Geneva, Switzerland – Global airline profits are projected to increase to \$36bn in 2025, representing an 11.1% rise year-on-year, despite continuing trade tensions, geopolitical instability, and broader economic uncertainties, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

In its latest Global Outlook for Air Transport report, released on Monday, the IATA forecasts that total airline revenues will reach an unprecedented \$979bn in 2025. At the same time, overall industry expenses are expected to total \$913bn. As a result, the net profit margin for airlines is anticipated to improve to 3.7%, up from an estimated 3.4% in 2024.

Passenger numbers are also on track to hit an all-time high, with nearly 4.99bn people expected to travel by air in 2025 – a 4% increase over the previous year. Meanwhile, global air cargo volumes are set to expand at a more modest pace, rising by 0.6% to reach 69mn tonnes.

However, despite this broadly optimistic outlook, IATA has issued a cautionary note regarding



IATA forecasts that total airline revenues will reach an unprecedented \$979bn in 2025. At the same time, overall industry expenses are expected to total \$913bn

a number of persistent threats facing the aviation sector. These include the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, intensifying global trade disputes, political fragmentation in key markets, and fluctuations in oil prices.

The report also highlighted that potential shifts in United States trade policy under a possi-

ble new Trump administration could cause delays in corporate decision-making, thereby weighing on demand for air freight and business-related travel.

Willie Walsh, Director General of IATA, acknowledged the considerable headwinds confronting the industry, but stressed that the latest data suggest 2025 will still be a stronger year overall

compared to 2024.

“The first half of 2025 has already brought with it significant levels of uncertainty across global markets,” said Walsh. “Nonetheless, when measured by various indicators – including net profitability – the year ahead looks set to be an improvement on 2024, albeit slightly below our earlier projections.”

He identified falling jet fuel prices as a key contributing factor to the improved outlook, noting that prices have declined by 13% compared with 2024 and are now tracking around 1% lower than previous forecasts.

Oil prices jump as Ukraine strikes Russian air bases

London, UK – Oil prices climbed on Monday amid rising tensions after Ukraine targeted several military air bases in Russia, as Kyiv and Moscow prepared for peace talks in Istanbul.

International benchmark Brent crude increased by around 2.61%, trading at \$64.24 per barrel at 0726 GMT, up from \$62.60 at the previous session’s close. Similarly, US benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) rose by about 2.88%, reaching \$62.02 per barrel, compared to \$60.28 in the prior session.

Prices increased as Ukraine’s Security Service (SBU) on Sunday claimed to have destroyed 34% of Russian strategic bombers capable of carrying strategic cruise missiles during attacks on military air bases in Russia.

Ukrainian forces attacked Russia’s military airfields with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), the SBU said in a statement.

The SBU carried out a spe-

cial operation called “Spider Web,” causing \$7bn in damage to Russia’s strategic aviation, the statement said.

As fighting escalates in the Russia-Ukraine war, attention has shifted to talks between the



two sides set for today in Istanbul. The last negotiations between the two sides were held on May 16 at Istanbul’s Dolmabahce Palace.

The prospect of new US sanctions against Russia if no agreement is reached with Ukraine soon is deepening supply concerns and driving prices higher. Last week, international

media reported that US President Donald Trump was expected to move forward with additional sanctions on Russia.

Meanwhile, eight countries in the OPEC+ alliance, made up of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allied non-OPEC producers, agreed to raise supply by 411,000 barrels per day in July.

The decision, made by Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria, and Oman, was in line with expectations and is easing concerns about oversupply and downward pressure on prices.

Elsewhere, developments related to US tariffs on its trading partners continue to drive price volatility. President Trump said during a Friday press conference in the Oval Office that China had violated its trade agreement with the US, adding that he would speak with Chinese President Xi Jinping and hoped to resolve the issue.

Anadolu Agency

China’s AI boom: Core artificial intelligence industry valued at \$83bn

Tianjin, China – China has developed a relatively comprehensive and integrated artificial intelligence (AI) industrial system, with the value of its core sector reaching close to 600bn yuan (approximately \$83.4bn) as of April 2025, according to the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

These insights were shared by NDRC official Huang Ru during a presentation on the country’s AI development at the China-Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Forum. The event took place on May 29 in Tianjin Municipality, located in northern

China, and brought together officials and experts from across the SCO region to explore avenues for collaboration in AI.

Huang revealed that China’s patent applications in the AI sector have now surpassed 1.5mn, making up nearly 40% of the global total. This remarkable figure reflects China’s rapid progress in AI research and intellectual property, reinforcing its role as a major contributor to global AI advancements.

According to Huang, China has made significant, wide-ranging progress in fostering an AI-friendly environment, with robust government support, infrastruc-



ture, and talent development initiatives. The country now boasts over 400 “little giant” enterprises

– a term used to describe specialised small and medium-sized companies that excel in specific

technological niches. These firms play a critical role in the AI sector, with notable examples such as

DeepSeek, a prominent AI innovator, helping to drive forward technological breakthroughs.

The SCO, which includes countries across Eurasia, is the largest regional cooperation body in terms of landmass and population. Its members benefit from vast data resources and a diverse range of potential AI applications across sectors such as healthcare, transport, energy, and public services.

Huang emphasised that deepening cooperation in AI technology and practical applications within the SCO framework will provide fresh impetus for the region’s economic and social devel-

opment. Enhanced collaboration is expected to support more inclusive and sustainable global development and help bridge the widening global digital divide.

China, Huang added, is fully committed to working alongside fellow SCO member states to uphold the “Shanghai Spirit” – a principle based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for cultural diversity, and the pursuit of common development. Through these joint efforts, China hopes to promote AI that is not only innovative and secure but also fair, inclusive, and beneficial for all.

Xinhua

Khimji Ramdas special project delivers world-class indoor shooting range

Inaugurated under the esteemed patronage of H H Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports, and Youth recently, 'Action Point' has been engineered to cater to a wide audience - from hobby shooters and competitive marksmen to private security agencies and government entities - in a controlled, immersive, and highly secure environment.

The Special Projects Division of Khimji Ramdas LLC has successfully completed and handed over a state-of-the-art Indoor Shooting Range 'Action Point', a one-of-its-kind world-class sporting facility designed to elevate Oman's standing in shooting sports and tactical training.

'Action Point's - Indoor Shooting Ranges' has been developed by the Special Projects Division of Khimji Ramdas LLC in collaboration with Cubic Technologies Singapore PTE LTD - global leaders in defense training systems. The state-of-the-art Indoor Shooting Range, represents a one-of-its-kind, fully equipped facility that delivers an unparalleled live-fire experience. Located at the Active Oman Centre (Oman Automobile Association), it combines international expertise with local execution, showcasing the Sultanate's commitment to advanced sports infrastructure and youth engagement.

The facility features six specialised shooting ranges: Two 25-metre pistol ranges with re-



Action Point is more than just a facility... Our partnership with Khimji Ramdas and Cubic Defence has enabled us to bring international-level shooting disciplines to Oman

COL (RETD) NASSER BIN ALI AL AMRI

trievable targets for 9mm pistols; one 50-meter tactical range featuring LOMAH (Location of Miss and Hit) target systems; one 100-meter rifle range with retrievable targets for 5.56mm calibre rifles; a globally unique indoor shotgun (skeet/trap) range; an air gun range (currently under development).

All ranges are equipped with smart bullet traps that safely collect projectiles into designated channels, advanced electronic target systems for real-time feedback, and air purification

systems that ensure a healthy and safe environment by removing dust and gases generated by shooting.

The facility is designed to cater to a wide spectrum of users - ranging from first-time visitors and hobby shooters to competitive marksmen, private security agencies, and government entities. The experience begins with a comprehensive safety briefing at a dedicated reception and briefing area, followed by closely monitored sessions where each visitor is accompanied by a qual-

ified instructor who ensures safety and provides technical guidance throughout.

Col (Retd) Nasser bin Ali al Amri, General Manager - Action Point, stated: "Action Point was envisioned as more than just a facility - it is an experience that combines adrenaline, precision, and professionalism. Our partnership with Khimji Ramdas and Cubic Defence has enabled us to bring international-level shooting disciplines to Oman, while maintaining the highest standards of safety and supervision.

"We aim to nurture responsible firearms sportsmanship in an environment that inspires confidence and excellence. To ensure operational excellence, the training staff at Action Point was selected from national talents of both genders, in coordination with the Ministry of Labour, from among job seekers. They received intensive coaching from a global leader specialised in training instructors for indoor ranges, ensuring they deliver high levels of professional and technical performance."

Speaking about the project, Varun Pankaj Khimji, Director - Khimji Ramdas LLC, said: "This project reflects our commitment to delivering turnkey, high-performance solutions that support national training infrastructure and innovation. Partnering with Cubic Technologies has enabled us to incorporate some of the most advanced technologies in the world into this facility.



Pampers, Lulu wrap up joint promotion in Oman

Pampers, the world's leading diaper brand, has successfully concluded its first-ever exclusive partnership with Lulu Hypermarket in Oman - rewarding loyal shoppers and celebrating a new era of product innovation for families in the region.

Held from April 23 to May 21, the joint campaign gave Lulu customers the chance to win 3 iPhone 16 Pro and 5 iPads every week. Shoppers who purchased any Pampers product at Lulu outlets were automatically entered into the weekly raffle draw. The winners of the first and second draws were announced earlier in the campaign, with the final round of prizes handed out at Lulu Baushar on May 29.

This initiative is more than just a giveaway - it marks a pivotal milestone in Pampers' journey in Oman. In parallel with the campaign, Pampers proudly introduced its biggest product innovation in a decade: a new diaper range designed specifically for Gulf consumers, made locally

Shoppers who purchased any Pampers product at Lulu outlets were automatically entered into the weekly raffle draw to win 3 iPhone 16 Pro and 5 iPads

in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and tailored to the real needs of parents and babies in the region.

Speaking during the promotion, a spokesperson for Pampers stated, "At Pampers, we care about every baby's healthy development above anything else. We are extremely delighted to launch this campaign for parents who have trusted us for more than 50 years when it comes to the health, safety and well-being of their little ones. With a range of safe, high-quality and trusted products, we have always been

committed to our promise towards a baby's happiness and its healthy development."

The product upgrade is part of Pampers' ongoing mission to deliver newness and superiority in every pack - offering upgraded comfort, skin protection, and leakage prevention designed with regional insight and parent feedback in mind.

Commenting on the promotion, a Lulu official said, "We are glad to have tied up with Pampers to launch this promotion at all our outlets. Through this promotion, which was exclusively for Lulu customers, we were able to offer parents a chance to win iPhones and iPads every week. We congratulate all the winners and thank all those who were part of this promotion," he added.

With this successful partnership, Pampers and Lulu have set the stage for deeper collaboration - bringing even more value, innovation, and trust to families in Oman in the months to come.

OAB launches 'Eidiyah' cashback campaign to celebrate Eid

In the spirit of Eid al Adha, Oman Arab Bank (OAB) has announced the launch of its festive cashback initiative, 'Eidiyah from OAB', designed to reward customers during one of the most joyful times of the year.

This limited-time campaign offers credit cardholders a chance to win back RO20 when they spend RO200 or more from June 1 to June 5.

The promotion is open to all

OAB Visa Infinite, Platinum, Gold, and Classic credit cardholders and includes both local and international retail transactions. The first 250 eligible customers to meet the spend threshold will receive RO20 cashback, bringing a festive boost to their holiday spending.

"Eid is a time of generosity, connection, and celebration. We wanted to extend that spirit to our customers by giving some-



thing meaningful in return," said Juma al Fulaiti, Deputy Head of Retail Banking at Oman Arab Bank.

"With 'Eidiyah from OAB,' we're not only honouring tradition but also deepening our relationship with our cardholders by rewarding them in a simple and impactful way."

Unlike traditional giveaways or raffles, the campaign follows a first-come, first-rewarded

model. No registration is required - customers simply need to use their OAB Visa credit cards to make qualifying purchases across a wide range of categories, including grocery, fashion, dining and gifts.

The cashback will be credited directly to eligible customers' card accounts within 30 days after the campaign ends. It is worth noting that Apple Pay and Samsung Pay transactions are

excluded from the promotion.

Whether it's providing added value during special moments or simplifying everyday banking, OAB continues to shape its services around what matters most to its customers.

Additionally, this campaign is one of several seasonal initiatives by Oman Arab Bank aimed at enhancing customer engagement through tailored rewards and exclusive benefits.

Sohar University hosts DISCO workshop supported by NASA

As part of its commitment to advancing scientific research and environmental sustainability, Sohar University hosted a high-level workshop on Monday.

The workshop on 'Assessing the Impact of the Decision Support System for Coastal Waters (DISCO) on Stakeholders' was organised in collaboration with the Directorate General of Fisheries Research at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, and comes as part of the ongoing activities under the DISCO research project, which is strategically funded by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and receives a funding support from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The workshop commenced with a keynote address by Professor Kelvin Bwalya, Director of Research development at Sohar University. He began by warmly welcoming the delegates on behalf of Vice Chancellor Dr Ham-

dan al Fazari, quoting, "I extend a warm welcome to all the delegates to this prestigious event. Sohar University is always happy to host internationally recognized events to reaffirm our commitment to meaningful research that aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Oman Vision 2040."

Professor Bwalya further expressed pride in the university's collaboration on a NASA-funded research project alongside esteemed partners from the USA and Oman's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Water Resources.

Following this, Dr Dawood al Yahyai, Director General of Fisheries Research, delivered another keynote address. He emphasised the critical role of the DISCO system in advancing sustainable marine resource management and enabling data-driven environmental decision-making through cutting-edge monitoring technologies.

Special Eid al Adha offer at The St Regis Al Mouj

The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort is set to celebrate Eid al Adha with a collection of exclusive offerings designed to welcome the summer season in style and comfort.

Renowned for its bespoke service complemented by timeless and elegant ambiance, the resort continues to be the best address for those seeking a refined escape along the Arabian Sea.

The resort invites Omani nationals and local residents to indulge in a staycation that artfully balances relaxation and elegance amid the rising summer temperatures through a specially curated summer staycation offer, 'Rising Heat, Cool Retreat'.

Guests can enjoy a stay in a Deluxe Room, available with options for single or double occupancy. Families are warmly welcomed, with children under 12 benefiting from complimentary breakfast and an extra bed at no additional charge. To enhance the sense of leisure, the resort also provides a complimentary late check-out until 8pm, allowing guests to extend their time in the serene surroundings.



Throughout the day, families are also invited to unwind by the pool, where curated amenities include playful floaters and beach toys for the little ones. A thoughtfully selected array of culinary offerings will be available throughout the day from gourmet hot dogs, artisanal pizzas, and shawarmas to fresh detox juices, popcorn, cotton candy, and handcrafted ice creams, ensuring indulgence for every member of the family.

In addition to these experiences, The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort is preparing a range of culinary delights. At Zorba, guests can savour the traditional Greek delicacy 'Kleftiko Lamb' exclusively from June 6 to 9, between 6.30pm and 11.30pm.

This all-you-can-eat lamb kleftiko features slow-cooked lamb marinated in garlic and lemon, wrapped in parchment paper with vegetables for a tender and flavourful feast.

Karibu offers a special Eid set menu which will be available in June from 5 to 7, featuring a refined three-course meal. Beverages will be offered à-la-carte, while children may choose from the kids' menu, ensuring a dining experience that caters to all ages and tastes.

Additionally, the restaurant invites families to its 'Mommy and Me Masterclass' every Saturday in June from 4pm to 5pm. This hands-on session offers

mothers and their little chefs the chance to bond over flour and fun, learning to mix, shape, and cook delicious flatbreads together - a joyful experience designed for making cherished memories.

The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort remains dedicated to creating memorable experiences that combine the rich heritage of Oman with contemporary luxury. Complementing these offerings, the resort's Guerlain Spa offers signature packages designed to rejuvenate and pamper.

The 'A Day for You' experience provides a personalized spa journey tailored to individual wellness needs, while the 'Pamper & Tea for Four' package invites small groups to enjoy luxurious treatments followed by a refined tea ceremony.

These offerings reflect The St Regis commitment to delivering exceptional moments of indulgence and tranquility.

The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort, located in Oman's capital, is a prime example of exquisite living.

EXEED enters sultanate's market in partnership with Silver Lake Motors

Silver Lake Motors, one of the Middle East's leading business groups, has officially entered a new strategic partnership with EXEED, the premium automotive brand renowned for its innovation, advanced engineering, and modern luxury.

Under this agreement, EXEED will introduce its full range of electric, hybrid, and combustion-engine vehicles to the Sultanate of Oman, marking a major step forward in its Middle East expansion strategy.

This collaboration brings together EXEED's cutting-edge technology and design with Silver Lake Motors' strong local presence and market expertise. Together, the two companies aim to offer a new standard of premium mobility in Oman - one that blends performance, luxury, and sustainability with a deeply customer-centric approach.

This new agreement designates Silver Lake Motors as EXEED's exclusive distributor in Oman, extending a successful three-year partnership that began in Qatar. Since 2022, Silver Lake Motors has led EXEED's entry into the Qatari market, most notably with the opening of a flagship showroom in Doha at 'West Walk' - an architectural showcase for the brand's tech-



luxury vision.

The Oman partnership was formalised during a signing ceremony at EXEED's global headquarters in Wuhu, China, attended by top executives from both companies.

Ping Ding, Representative of Silver Lake Motors, said, "We are proud to announce our exclusive partnership with EXEED in Oman, a nation full of promise and opportunity. EXEED's presence in Oman marks a significant

milestone, as it is known for its premium craftsmanship, forward-thinking design, and commitment to innovation, EXEED brings a new standard of excellence that aligns perfectly with Oman's vision for progress and sustainable development. This partnership reflects our deep respect for Oman's growing economy and its ambitious outlook. Together with EXEED, we aim to offer Omani customers a new driving experience, one that

combines luxury, performance, and advanced technology."

"Aligning with Silver Lake Motors allows us to combine EXEED's innovation with their deep understanding of the regional market," said Qin, CEO of EXEED International. "Together, we're ready to redefine what premium automotive experiences look like across the GCC."

EXEED is the only luxury car manufacturer offering a full lineup across electric vehicles

(EV), range-extended electric vehicles (REEV), plug-in hybrids (PHEV), and internal combustion engine (ICE) models.

The brand is making headlines globally for its pioneering achievements, including the EXEED ES sedan, which recently set a Guinness World Record for 'Most moving vehicles weaved through in 30 seconds'.

In addition, EXEED's REEV models deliver an impressive range of over 1,000km on a sin-

gle charge and full tank, while the EXEED RX Plug-in Hybrid SUV - powered by EXEED's advanced Super Hybrid System - boasts a total range of 1,300 km, with real-world fuel efficiency as low as 1.2 litres per 100km.

EXEED is also globally acclaimed for its commitment to safety and engineering excellence. The brand's cage-style body structure and patented innovations have earned it 5-star global safety certifications.

In a demonstration of its commitment to rigorous standards, the EXEED ET successfully completed the world's first 31.9-metre free-fall collision test, while the RX Plug-in Hybrid has passed stringent electric vehicle crash tests - further proving its reliability in diverse conditions.

With plans to open flagship showrooms and establish a full-service network across Oman, EXEED and Silver Lake Motors are set to offer Omani drivers an entirely new level of sophistication, technology, and personalised care. EXEED is a premium automotive brand that blends the rich legacy of European automotive culture with the latest in intelligent manufacturing and innovation. Its vehicles are shaped by the expertise of designers and engineers who have worked with some of Europe's most renowned premium carmakers, bringing world-class craftsmanship and advanced engineering to every model.

EXEED is set to become a standout premium marque in the region, offering a complete lineup that includes internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, plug-in hybrids (PHEVs), fully electric vehicles (EVs), and range-extended electric vehicles (REEVs).

Consumers will shop more online: Study

Visa, a global leader in digital payments, today announced the findings of its 'Checkout Friction Report', which highlights strong consumer demand for a more secure and seamless eCommerce experience. Despite the widespread adoption of eCommerce and significant progress in growing Oman's digital economy, opportunity remains for retailers to enhance checkout experience and increase customer satisfaction.

The research is based on a survey of 2,016 online shoppers across the GCC, including Oman, and explored their experiences with eCommerce purchases. It examined common pain points during the checkout process that affect both consumer satisfaction and business outcomes.

Visa's 'Checkout Friction Report' shows that one in three respondents (32%) in Oman shops multiple times a week for groceries. For categories such as fashion, entertainment, and electronics, shopping frequency ranges from once to a few times a month.

According to 48% of respondents, the biggest frustrations with eCommerce checkouts are security concerns, followed by the hassle of entering card details manually (42%). By addressing these challenges, retailers can enhance the checkout experience which could lead to increased customer satisfaction.

"Today's consumers expect - and deserve - a more seamless and secure checkout experience. That's why Visa is working with partners to enable solutions like Click to Pay, which leverages biometrics and tokenisation to eliminate

key pain points and deliver a more convenient shopping experience. Improving these moments not only drives a better consumer experience but also builds on the Oman government's achievements in building a seamless, secure digital economy," said Ali Bailoun, Visa's Regional General Manager for Saudi Arabia, Oman and Bahrain.

Beyond the inconvenience of checkout, security remains a top priority for online shoppers. According to Visa's research, 72% of consumers surveyed are worried about the risk of fraud, while 59% expressed concerns about hacking when storing their card details on multiple websites. Additionally, one in three (32%) respondents has experienced fraud or security breaches.

Visa's 'Checkout Friction Report' also reveals a strong preference for a more streamlined checkout, with 64% of respondents supporting a single registration process for online payments across all participating merchants.

When the option of biometric authentication was proposed, two-thirds (66%) of respondents said they would use it to checkout, with 60% trusting biometric authentication (fingerprint/face ID) more than traditional payment methods (passwords/OTP).

Most respondents (70%) would shop online more frequently and be more likely to complete their purchases with a one-click checkout option. Almost two-thirds of the surveyed consumers (66%) show a high likelihood of using 'Click to Pay with Biometrics' if offered by online retailers.

BankDhofar wins 'Best MENA Bank Award 2025' from Gazet

In a major recognition of its regional leadership and commitment to excellence, BankDhofar has been awarded the prestigious title of 'Best Bank in the MENA Region 2025' by Gazet International, a globally respected Singapore-based business publication.

Presented at the annual Gazet International Global Awards, the accolade honors BankDhofar's outstanding contributions to the financial sector, with a particular focus on customer-centric innovation, digital transformation, and financial inclusion.

The win places BankDhofar at the forefront of the Middle East and North Africa's banking industry and reaffirms its position as Oman's leading financial institution. Gazet International's awards programme celebrates global excellence in business, finance, technology, and corporate leadership. Winners are selected based on criteria such as innovation, strategy, growth, and the ability to drive positive and last-



ing change in their sectors.

BankDhofar continues to reshape Oman's banking experience through cutting-edge digital solutions. Its mobile banking platform has redefined convenience and security for retail customers, while its corporate internet banking system delivers unparalleled functionality for businesses.

The bank is also leading the adoption of contactless and mobile payment systems - including Dhofar Pay, Apple Pay, and Samsung Pay - setting new standards

in digital financial services.

Advanced ATM and cash management solutions further reflect BankDhofar's commitment to efficiency, accessibility, and technological excellence. These innovations have not only enhanced the customer experience but also positioned the bank as a digital trailblazer in the region.

Sustainability is a cornerstone of BankDhofar's long-term strategy. In alignment with Oman's national commitment to a Net Zero economy by 2050, the bank is investing in green finance, energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction. These initiatives reflect its dedication to responsible banking and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

BankDhofar also continues to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, notably by launching initiatives that help increase female representation in leadership, and integrate individuals with disabilities into its workforce.

Al Madina Takaful secures Category 'A' insurance licence

Al Madina Takaful, Oman's pioneering sharia'a-compliant insurance provider, proudly announces its attainment of the Category 'A' health insurance licence under the sultanate's newly established regulatory framework.

This significant milestone, granted by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), empowers Al Madina Takaful to independently underwrite and manage health insurance policies, positioning the company at the forefront of Oman's evolving healthcare insurance landscape.

The introduction of the Category 'A' licensing framework by the FSA aims to enhance regulatory oversight, improve service quality, and increase premium retention within the sultanate.

Al Madina Takaful's early adoption of this licence under-

scores its commitment to aligning with national objectives and delivering superior, sharia'a-compliant health insurance solutions to its clients.

"Securing the Category 'A' licence is a testament to our unwavering dedication to excellence and our proactive approach in embracing regulatory advancements," said Usama al Barwani, CEO of Al Madina Takaful. "This achievement enables us to offer comprehensive health insurance services that cater to the diverse needs of our policyholders, all within the framework of Islamic principles."

As one of the licensed medical insurers in Oman, Al Madina Takaful is poised to play a pivotal role in the sultanate's health insurance sector. It remains committed to innovation, transparency, and excellence in service delivery.

Najahi business credit card seen significant uptake

Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, recently announced the launch of the Visa Platinum Business Credit Card for its 'Najahi' Business Banking customers, consisting of Micro, Small, Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs.

The new credit card has seen significant demand from customers who avail various features of the credit card that enable them to manage and complete their business purchase transactions efficiently.

The new credit card provides customers a card limit of up to RO5,000. The card comes with a range of benefits for customers, including a 0.5% cash-back on all purchases, access to



airport lounges worldwide, and various other business-related benefits and offers.

Furthermore, the card offers an interest-free repayment period, providing enhanced finan-

cial flexibility and reducing the financial burden on customers.

The Najahi Visa Platinum Business Credit Card is a significant addition to Bank Muscat's diverse portfolio of banking prod-

ucts and services.

It has been designed to enhance the banking experience of 'Najahi' customers by offering them innovative financial solutions to overcome market

challenges, hence, enabling them to complete transactions with ease and achieve their financial goals.

Along with Najahi Debit Card and Najahi Pre-Load Card, this product empowers entrepreneurs and MSMEs to benefit from exceptional features that enhance financial management and support their operations.

Bank Muscat places great emphasis on digital transformation and is committed to offering innovative digital banking solutions. This includes the online banking platform, which provides business customers with 24/7 access to manage their financial transactions, helping MSMEs control their finances and facilitating growth.

UK must prepare for conflict to deter conflict, says Prime Minister Starmer

The British PM unveiled defence spending review and outlined plans for a new generation of attack submarines

London, UK - British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Monday warned that Britain must prepare for the possibility of conflict in order to deter it, as he unveiled his government's defence spending review and outlined plans for a new generation of attack submarines.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Starmer said the world had entered 'a new era for defence and security' and that the UK must confront the growing instability and emerging threats, particularly from Russia.

"If you want to deter conflict, then the best way to do that is to prepare for conflict," Starmer told the BBC's Nick Robinson. "If the world has changed, then we need to be ready."



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said UK must confront the growing instability and emerging threats, particularly from Russia

The new defence spending plans include proposals for up to 12 new attack submarines, which the Ministry of Defence says will support 30,000 highly skilled jobs into the 2030s, alongside 30,000 apprenticeships and 14,000 graduate roles over the next decade.

Starmer laid out the core principles underpinning his defence strategy: 'Warfighting readiness', integrated armed forces, and a 'NATO-first approach'.

he said: "NATO has been the single most effective alliance for keeping the peace for 80 years, and our job is not just to celebrate that as we do, but to ask ourselves the searching question as I ask myself on a daily basis, which is, how do we ensure that NATO preserves the peace for decades to come for this generation?"

He added: "The threat of Russia cannot be ignored," and underlined that Britain must be 'ready and prepared'.

When asked about comments

order to make sure this isn't the case'.

Support for Ukraine

The prime minister reaffirmed the government's support for Ukraine, calling its right to self-defence 'absolute'.

"Every time he visits Ukraine, Starmer says he is 'completely taken by the courage and resilience', that means it is still fighting," he added. "It's a reminder that because of this conflict, Ukraine has become 'one of the strongest fighting forces in

NATO has been the single most effective alliance for keeping the peace for 80 years, and our job is... to ask ourselves ... how do we ensure that NATO preserves the peace for decades to come for this generation?

KEIR STARMER

made by the head of the British Army, who suggested the UK must be ready to fight a war within three years, Starmer said he hoped such a scenario would not materialise, but insisted preparation was essential.

"I very much hope not," he said when asked whether British troops might be sent to fight under his premiership, 'but the country needs to prepare in

Europe'."

On defence funding, Starmer confirmed the government is committed to increasing spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2027/28 - a level not seen since the last Labour government.

The prime minister reiterated Labour's ambition to eventually reach 3% of GDP on defence but declined to commit to a timeline.

Anadolu Agency

Karol Nawrocki wins Polish presidency by narrowly defeating Warsaw mayor

Warsaw, Poland - Karol Nawrocki has won Poland's presidential election with 50.9% of the vote, narrowly defeating Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski in a fiercely contested runoff, according to official results released by the country's Election Commission.

The second round of voting, held on Sunday, saw nearly 29mn registered voters choose between Trzaskowski and Nawrocki, a historian backed by the opposition conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party. The high-stakes election ended with Nawrocki securing a slim majority, while Trzaskowski, who had been slightly ahead in pre-election polls, finished with 49.1%.

Voter turnout stood at 71.63%.



'Karol Nawrocki won Poland's presidential election with 50.9% of vote

The runoff took place against a backdrop of intense political polarisation in Poland, highlighting the power struggle between Prime Minister Donald Tusk's

The second round of voting saw nearly 29mn voters choose between Trzaskowski and Nawrocki, a historian backed by the opposition PiS

ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Political analysts say Nawrocki, known for his Eurosceptic stance and admiration for US President Donald Trump's policies, may challenge Tusk's coalition government by exercising his presidential veto powers during his five-year term.

Anadolu Agency

'DOGE became whipping boy for US policy changes'

Washington, D.C., US - Tech billionaire Elon Musk claimed on Sunday that the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) 'became the whipping boy', for policy changes and budget cuts in the US.

"It's a bit unfair because DOGE became the whipping boy for everything," Musk told CBS News. "So, if there was some cut, real or imagined, everyone would blame DOGE. I've had people think that, like, somehow DOGE is gonna stop them from getting their Social Security check, which is completely untrue," he said.

Musk also criticised the growing size of the federal government, comparing it to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), which is known for its inefficiency.



Tech billionaire Elon Musk

Musk said that he is 'a proponent of smaller government, not bigger government', adding that those who favour expanded government programmes are fundamentally opposed to DOGE's cuts due to their belief that government should do more.

"But my frank opinion of the

government is that ... the government is just like the DMV that got big, okay? So, when you say like, 'Let's have the government do something', you should think, 'Do you want the DMV to do it?'" Musk said.

Musk noted that he does not always agree with US President Donald Trump but still respects much of the administration's work. "It's not like I agree with everything the administration does. I mean, I agree with much of what the administration does. But we have differences of opinion," Musk said.

"There are things that I don't entirely agree with. But it's difficult for me to bring that up in an interview because then it creates a bone of contention," he added.

Anadolu Agency



Japan hunts fin whales, first since exiting IWC

Tokyo, Japan - Japan has hunted at least 25 fin whales, for the first time since Tokyo withdrew from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in 2019.

The fin whales were hunted in the Sea of Okhotsk, north of the northern island of Hokkaido, and shipped to Sendai Port in Miyagi province on Monday, Kyodo News reported.

It added that of 320 tonnes of fin whale meat, some 1.6 tonnes will be transported to

six markets across the country, including Tokyo and Osaka, as raw meat.

After resuming commercial fishing since withdrawing from the commission in 2019, the Japanese Fisheries Agency added fin whales to its list of commercial whaling target species last year.

It has set a quota of 60 to be hunted this year.

Japan resumed commercial whaling in July 2019, ending its over 60-year membership in the IWC.

US: 8 injured in 'targeted act of violence' in Colorado

Colorado, US - At least eight people were injured on Sunday when a man set people on fire during a demonstration in the US state of Colorado staged to raise awareness on hostages being held in Gaza, said local authorities.

"After receiving updated information, law enforcement officials have now identified eight victims: Four women and four men aged 52 to 88 were taken to Denver metro hospitals," The Boulder Police Department said.

"This attack happened at a regularly scheduled, weekly peaceful event. Witnesses are reporting that the subject used a makeshift flamethrower and threw an incendiary device into the crowd. The suspect was heard to yell 'Free Palestine' during the attack," FBI special agent Mark Michalek told reporters.

Michalek said the suspect has been identified as 45-year-old Mohamed Sabry Soliman.

"It is clear that this is a tar-



Law enforcement officials are seen at the site of the attack in Boulder, Colorado, US

geted act of violence, and the FBI is investigating this as an act of terrorism," he said, adding there is no evidence at this time suggesting the suspect was connected to a wider group.

Fox News reporter Bill Melugin, citing three sources at the Department of Homeland Security, said Soliman is an Egyptian national living in the US illegally

with a visa overstay. He entered the country during the Biden administration.

"At this point, we do not believe that there is an additional suspect at large," said Boulder Police Chief Stephen Redfearn.

According to Redfearn, one of the victims was 'very seriously injured' in the attack. Boulder District Attorney Michael Dougherty

said: "That is my promise - to hold the attacker fully accountable." Earlier, Redfearn said the suspect 'was taken into custody without incident' and was transported to a hospital with minor injuries.

Asked earlier whether local police also consider it a terror attack, Redfearn said: "I've been in contact with our local FBI multi-

ple times. We are in communication with them here. We are not calling it a terror attack at this point. It's way too early to speculate on the motive."

FBI Director Kash Patel said on X that federal authorities are treating the incident as a 'targeted terror attack'.

"We are aware of and fully investigating a targeted terror attack in Boulder, Colorado," Patel wrote. "Our agents and local law enforcement are on the scene already, and we will share updates as more information becomes available."

FBI Deputy Director Dan Bongino confirmed the investigation is being pursued as an act of terror and targeted violence.

"All of the necessary assets will be dedicated to this investigation," Bongino said on social media. "If you have any investigative tips, please contact the FBI," he said.

Anadolu Agency

Thousands of Syrian refugees return home after Assad’s fall

Idlib, Syria - After years of suffering and hardship in refugee camps, thousands of Syrian civilians began to return to their home country as peace and security continued to prevail in Syria following the collapse of the Bashar al-Assad regime.

Millions of Syrians have fled the country to neighbouring states to seek safety amid mass destruction and an aggravating humanitarian crisis under Assad.

“We lived in extremely harsh conditions in refugee camps. But now we thank God that our land was liberated,” said Mohammad Rahmon, who re-

turned after six years abroad to the village of Kafar Sijnah, south of the Idlib countryside. “We are returning to our home country even if it was destroyed.”

Although the regime’s strikes widely destroyed the village, Rahmon plans to build his tent on the rubble of his house as an expression of commitment to his country.

Al-Rezzaq Mohammed, another resident of Kafar Sijnah, said they went through great suffering in the refugee camps since they had to flee Syria in 2019.

“We have suffered a lot amid harsh weather conditions



Millions of Syrians had fled the country to seek safety elsewhere amid mass destruction and an aggravating humanitarian crisis under Assad

and a lack of infrastructure,” said Mohammed.

“Now we are returning to our village despite the destruction. Because no matter how hard life

is in the village, it is more dignified than the life of displacement,” he said.

Mohammed said that all houses in the village were destroyed, some by strikes and bombardments, while others were damaged by looting and deliberate destruction.

“However, the pleasure and the joy of returning overshadowed the sorrows of the destruction,” he added.

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

Anadolu Agency

Russian planes on fire after drone strikes

Moscow, Kyiv - Moscow said ‘several aircraft’ caught fire as Ukraine claimed its drone strikes have caused billions of dollars of damage.

Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy hailed a surprise attack on a number of Russian airfields by his intelligence service, the SBU.

“An absolutely brilliant result. A result achieved solely by Ukraine. One year, six months, and nine days from the start of planning to effective execution,” Zelenskyy said in a post on X.

“Our people involved in preparing the operation were withdrawn from Russian territory in time,” Zelenskyy went on to say.

The Ukrainian leader ended his post by saying: “Russia started this war, Russia must end it.”

Russian military airfields were struck by drones in a coordinated action, with claims that over 40 combat and reconnaissance aircraft were destroyed.

Russia’s Defence Ministry described the strikes as ‘terrorist attacks’ in the regions of Ivanovo, Ryazan, Amur, Murmansk and Irkutsk.

Russia confirms Ukrainian strikes

Russia’s Defence Ministry said



Ukraine had launched drone strikes targeting airfields across five regions.

“In the Murmansk and Irkutsk regions, the launch of FPV drones from an area in close proximity to airfields resulted in several aircraft catching fire,” the ministry said.

Russia said most of the attacks were repelled.

Ukraine’s SBU intelligence

Moscow has said ‘several aircraft’ caught fire as Ukraine claimed its drone strikes have caused billions of dollars of damage. Meanwhile, The 2nd round of peace talks concluded in Istanbul’s Ciragan Palace

agency said it was behind the attacks on Russian planes which it said caused US\$7bn in damage.

“This is the estimated cost of the enemy’s strategic aviation, which was hit today as a result of

the training units’, killing at least 12 Ukrainian troops and wounding over 60 others.

Most of the soldiers who lost their lives are said to have been in shelters during the attack.

Ukrainian ground forces commander Mykhailo Drapaty resigned following the incident, saying he felt ‘responsibility’ for the deaths.

Trilateral meeting concludes in Istanbul

Meanwhile, The second round of the Russia-Ukraine peace talks concluded in Istanbul’s Ciragan Palace on Monday after over an hour, an Anadolu correspondent reported.

Russia was represented by a delegation led by presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky, while Ukraine’s delegation was headed by Defense Minister Rustem Umerov.

The Ukrainian delegation also included the foreign minister, head of intelligence, and chief of the General Staff.

Speaking in a press conference at the Vilnius Summit with B9 and Nordic countries, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy confirmed the end of talks, saying he was waiting for Umerov’s report.

“They (delegations) exchanged documents through the

Turkish side, and we are preparing a new release of prisoners of war,” he said.

Following the talks, Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukraine’s presidential office and a member of the delegation, said on Telegram that Ukraine demanded the return of children, who, according to Kyiv were ‘illegally deported, forcibly relocated’ to the Russia-controlled territories.

At negotiating table after 3 years

Immediately after the bloody war began in February 2022, Türkiye brought Russia and Ukraine together at the same table in Antalya and Istanbul in the same year, and in May 2025, it managed to bring the Russian and Ukrainian delegations together at the same table again in Istanbul after 3 years.

Negotiations between Russia and Ukraine were held on May 16 at the Dolmabahce Office of the Presidency in Istanbul.

The two sides agreed to swap 1,000 prisoners of war each, to present detailed views on a possible ceasefire, and then to continue negotiations.

The two countries had announced that the prisoner swap agreed upon in Istanbul was completed on May 25.

Agencies



Syria to reopen border crossing with Lebanon ahead of Eid al-Adha

Damascus, Syria - The Syrian authorities announced on Sunday evening the reopening of the Al-Arida border crossing with Lebanon on Tuesday, ahead of the Eid al-Adha holiday.

“We kindly inform travellers that the Al-Arida border crossing with Lebanon will open for passenger movement on Tuesday morning,” Syria’s Land and Sea Ports General Authority said in a statement.

The authority added that the decision was made ‘despite ongoing restoration and maintenance work, in order to facilitate the movement of residents during the Eid al-Adha holiday’, which begins on Friday.

Located between the village of Al-Arida in Lebanon’s northern

Akkar Governorate and Syria’s western Tartus Governorate, the crossing has undergone maintenance by Syrian authorities as part of rehabilitation efforts.

Beirut has also carried out repairs on the Lebanese side of the crossing after it was targeted by Israeli airstrikes during the latest conflict between Lebanon and Israel last September.

No official statement has been issued by Lebanese authorities regarding the reopening.

The move is expected to ease travel for families and trade between the two countries during the holiday period.

Lebanon and Syria are connected by six official border crossings.

Anadolu Agency

Israeli army kills at least 9 Palestinians in Gaza

Gaza City, Palestine - The Israeli army killed at least nine Palestinians and injured dozens in fresh attacks in the war-ravaged Gaza Strip on Monday, medics said.

A medical source said three people lost their lives and 35 others were injured by Israeli fire while heading to receive aid from an Israeli-American-established aid distribution site in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

Four more Palestinians were killed and several others injured



in an airstrike targeting a group of civilians near Abu Sharekh Roundabout in northern Gaza, medics said.

A municipal worker was also killed, and two others were in-

jured in Israeli shelling of their vehicle in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza, a medical source said.

Two Palestinian fishermen were wounded by Israeli army fire off the coast of Gaza City, the same source said.

In western Rafah, another Palestinian died of wounds sustained from an earlier Israeli strike while heading toward an aid distribution point.

According to Gaza’s government media office, at least 52 Palestinians have been killed

and 340 others injured since the Israel-introduced aid mechanism came into force on May 27.

Israel has crafted a plan to establish four aid distribution points in southern and central Gaza, which Israeli media say aims to evacuate Palestinians from northern Gaza into the south. According to Israel’s Army Radio, Israel’s aid distribution plan seeks to turn the territory’s north into a ‘completely depopulated area’.

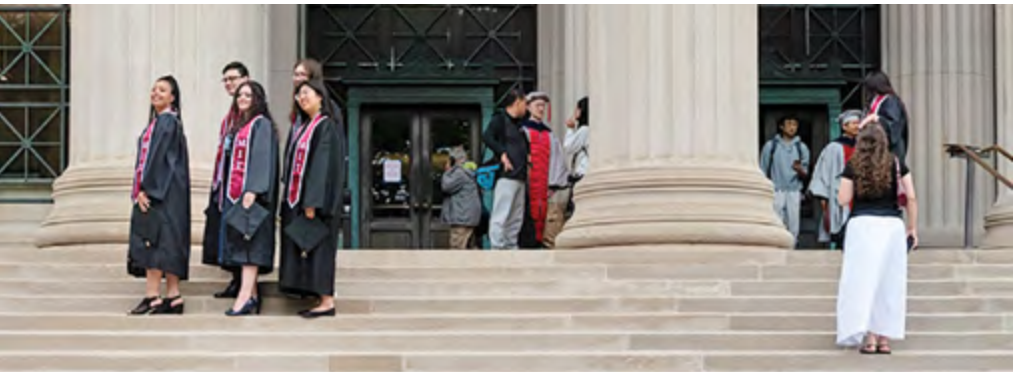
Anadolu Agency

MIT ‘complicit’ in Gaza genocide, says class president

Istanbul, Turkey - The president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) class of 2025, who was forbidden from attending her graduation ceremony after denouncing the war in Gaza, called the institution ‘complicit in this genocide’.

Megha Vemuri told CNN on Sunday she was not disappointed about being unable to walk the stage after her pro-Palestinian remarks in her commencement speech the day before.

“What I am dealing with right



now is absolutely nothing compared to the people of Palestine, and I’d take on much more if it

meant helping their cause,” she said.

“I am, however, disappointed

that MIT’s officials massively overstepped their roles to punish me without merit or due process, with no indication of any specific policy broken,” she added.

In her commencement speech, Vemuri criticised MIT’s ties to the Israeli military, saying the university is complicit in efforts to ‘wipe Palestine off the face of the earth’, and urging graduates to take action beyond campus.

“The MIT community that I know would never tolerate a genocide,” Vemuri told her classmates.

Anadolu Agency

Germany's Baerbock set to become new UN General Assembly president

Berlin, Germany - Annalena Baerbock knows how to land on her feet. Just a few weeks after it became clear that her Green Party was unlikely to be part of the next German government, the country's first-ever female foreign minister was already lining up a new job.

The UN General Assembly is set to elect her on Monday. She is running unopposed for the one-year top position, which is primarily of ceremonial significance and mainly involves organising plenary sessions. The inauguration is due to take place on September 9, shortly before the general debate of the UN General Assembly - and while the job is limited to a year, it is considered a good stepping stone for subsequent roles.

Appointment ruffled feathers

When Germany's former centre-left government nominated Baerbock as the new president of the United Nations General Assembly, a post that Germany was next in line to occupy, government spokesperson Steffen Hebestreit said Baerbock was highly respected and 'highly qualified for the job'.

The appointment did not come without some internal grievance: Germany had said last year that it would nominate the much-respected diplomat Helga Schmid for the post. A former Green Party member, Schmid is a Foreign Ministry veteran and was considered a vital architect of the nuclear agreement between Iran, the EU and other states, concluded in 2015.

Baerbock responded to the criticism saying her appointment was be 'analogous to many pre-



Germany's former Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock takes on a new job in New York

Germany's former foreign minister is nominated to become the new president of the United Nations General Assembly for one year in September. How did Annalena Baerbock get here

decessors who were also former foreign ministers or former prime ministers'.

Baerbock, still only 44, was foreign minister until the centre-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Christian Social Union (CSU) and the centre-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) negotiated their way to Germany's new government.

At least rhetorically, Baerbock always remained committed to the 'value-based foreign policy' she said she wanted to enact

even before she took office. As the Green Party's chancellor candidate in 2021, she made what many saw as assertive statements about human rights and democratic freedoms in China, Belarus, Hungary, and Russia.

Baerbock in office

But her outspokenness often did not go down well later, when she took office. Her ministry was forced to clarify a remark she made during a meeting of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg

in January 2023, when, during a call for unity among western allies, she said, in English: "We are fighting a war against Russia, not against each other." This was immediately pounced on by the Russian government, when spokesperson Maria Zakharova claimed that this was proof that the West was waging a 'premeditated war against Russia'.

Then in April 2023, during a press conference with her Chinese counterpart Qin Gang in Beijing, she offered a note of

warning about China's international ambitions, only to be told by Qin that the 'last thing that China needs is a teacher from the West'.

Nor did it help Chinese-German relations when, in an interview with US broadcaster Fox News in September 2023, she described Xi Jinping as a 'dictator', which led the Chinese government to summon Germany's ambassador to Beijing.

Overall, Baerbock's three years as foreign minister were marked by momentous international crises, which necessitated a tireless work rate: She made a total of 160 trips in her time in office, visiting some 77 countries - face-to-face diplomacy had never

been more necessary, she once told public broadcaster ARD.

During her time in office, she showed herself a strong supporter of sending military supplies to Ukraine, a country she visited nine times - including visits to Ukrainian troops on the front.

Following the October 7, 2023 attacks by Hamas, Baerbock attempted to walk a line between expressing Germany's continued support for Israel, while also trying to negotiate humanitarian aid for Gaza.

She also attempted to enact a more 'feminist' foreign policy, something she expressed by increasing the proportion of female officials in her own ministry, as well as in German embassies around the world, a third of which are now headed by women.

Baerbock's rise

Baerbock's political career was marked in her youth by her parents, who took her on anti-nuclear demos in the 1980s. On her personal website, she describes being 'touched by worldwide injustice' since her teenage years, which she said sparked early ambitions to be a journalist.

She studied political science and public law in Hamburg, earned a master's degree in international law at the London School of Economics, and then began a doctorate at Berlin's Free University, which she broke off in 2013 on being elected to the Bundestag.

Her academic career ran in parallel to a steep political ascent. Having joined the Green Party at the age of 25, she became leader of the party in the state of Brandenburg only four years later.

DW

India: Three Indian Army personnel dead in landslide

Mangan, India - Three army personnel died and six others went missing after a landslide, triggered by heavy rainfall, struck the Indian Army military camp at Chaten in Lachen town in Sikkim on Sunday evening.

Four individuals have been rescued with minor injuries, while the mortal remains of three personnel -Havaldar Lakhbindar Singh, Lance Naik Manish Thakur and Porter Abhishek Lakra - have been recovered, said the army.

Lt Gen Zubin Minawalla, GOC Trishakti Corps, visited the site to oversee rescue efforts.

Rescue teams are relentlessly working around the clock under extremely challenging terrain and adverse weather conditions to locate and rescue the six personnel who remain missing.

The Indian Army expressed its 'deepest condolences to the families of the brave hearts who lost their lives in the incident'. "Every effort is being made to provide necessary support to the bereaved families in this hour of grief," the Army said in a statement.

"The Indian Army remains steadfast in its commitment to ensure the safety and well-being of all its personnel, demonstrating its unyielding spirit and dedication to duty even in the face of nature's fury," the statement added.

ANI

INDIA'S NORTHEAST REELS UNDER RAINS



Rescuers evacuate stranded students and staff of an institute in Imphal, India on Monday. Various northeastern Indian states are experiencing flooding, landslides and increasing river levels due to heavy rains (ANI)

India reports new COVID-19 deaths

New Delhi, India - India recorded four new COVID-19 deaths on Monday, as the total number of confirmed infections neared 4,000, according to the latest figures from the Indian Health Ministry.

The ministry reported 203 new cases in the past 24 hours, bringing the nationwide tally to 3,961. One death was reported each from four separate Indian states, with officials confirming that the deceased had multiple pre-existing health conditions alongside COVID-19 infection.

The southern state of Kerala continues to be the worst affected, accounting for over 1,400 of the total cases. Other states such as Maharashtra and the capital, Delhi, are also witnessing a notable rise in COVID-19 infections.

Despite the uptick, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the country's top medical



India has recorded more than 45mn COVID-19 cases and 533,570 deaths since the pandemic began in 2020

body, said last week that the current wave is largely driven by Omicron sub-variants and that infections remain 'generally mild'.

The ICMR said there was no immediate cause for concern, suggesting that the situation re-

mains under control.

Health Minister Prataprao Jadhav also reassured the public last week, stating that the government is fully prepared to handle any potential developments.

In Delhi, health authorities issued advisories last month in-

structing hospitals to review their preparedness levels.

According to Worldometer, India has recorded more than 45mn COVID-19 cases and 533,570 deaths since the pandemic began in 2020.

Anadolu Agency

Cambodia to take border issue with Thailand to International Court of Justice

Phnom Penh, Cambodia - Cambodia will take the border issue with Thailand to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Prime Minister Hun Manet told the country's first-ever joint session of parliament on Monday.

The 182 lawmakers unanimously endorsed the government decision, state-run AKP News reported.

"Cambodia hopes that Thailand will agree to jointly bring this issue before the ICJ in a spirit of fairness and mutual trust," said Manet. "Even if the Thai side does not agree, Cam-

bodia is prepared to proceed unilaterally. This is essential to prevent a handful of extremists in both countries from reigniting tensions and provoking repeated confrontations."

Senate President Hun Sen said: "Taking the dispute to the ICJ could reduce political pressure on both governments and pave the way for a long-overdue resolution."

He said a memorandum of understanding signed by two neighbours in 2000 was 'no longer viable, as it has been 25 years with no resolution', ac-



ording to daily *Phnom Penh Post*.

"If we don't let the court decide, this issue will be like Gaza

between Palestine and Israel - never resolved, with constant fighting, whether small or large. Why fear going to court if we

The area in Cambodia's Choam Ksan district and Chong Bok border pass in Thailand has not been clearly demarcated

are sincere?" asked the senate president, who was the longest-serving prime minister of Cambodia until 2023.

The joint session of Cambodia's National Assembly and

Senate is convened 'when necessary or to resolve national issues, including those related to independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity'.

Tensions between two Southeast Asian nations escalated last week when troops from Thailand and Cambodia on May 28 engaged in a brief gunfire in their border area.

At least one Cambodian soldier was killed during the incident, lasting 10 minutes, in the disputed area lying across Cambodia's Preah Vihear province and the northeastern

province of Ubon Ratchathani in Thailand.

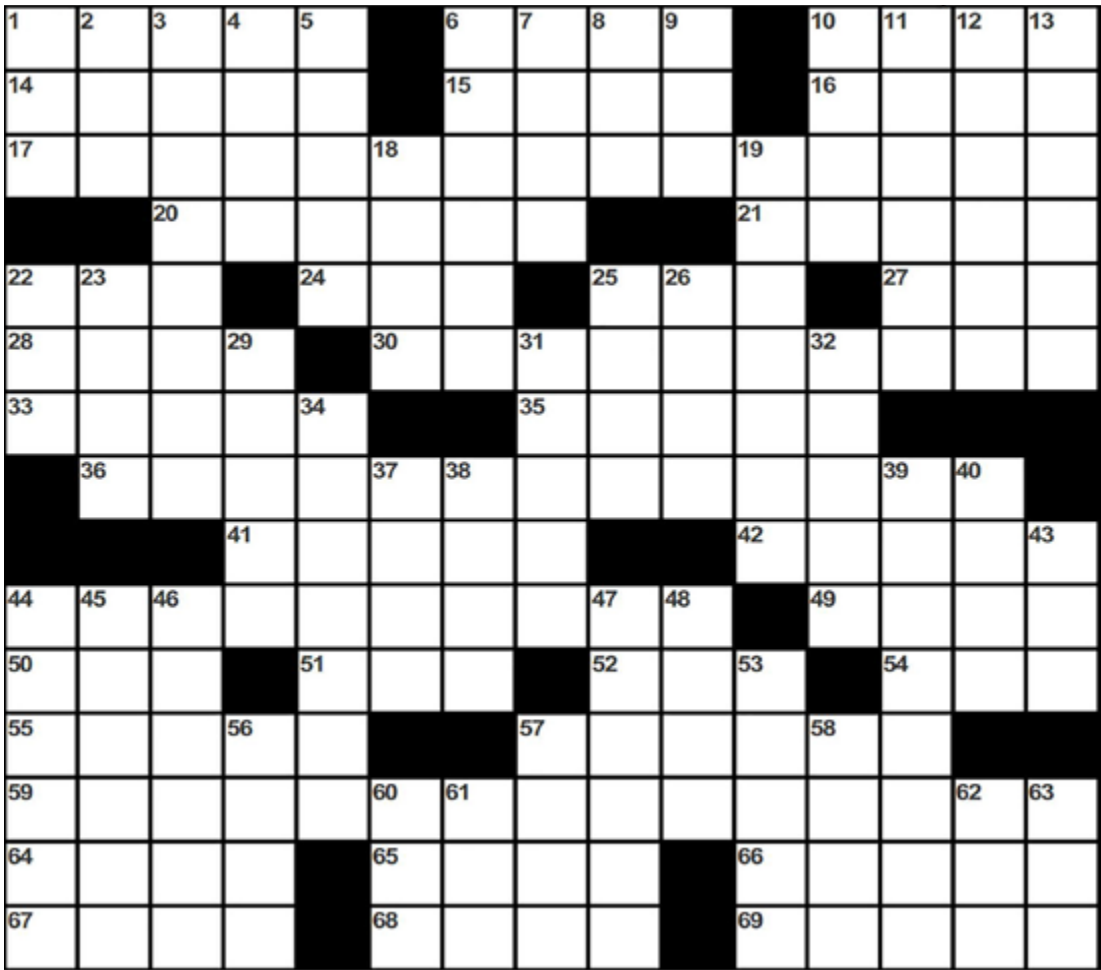
The two sides, however, gave conflicting statements on who initiated the gunfire.

The area in Cambodia's Choam Ksan district and Chong Bok border pass in Thailand has not been clearly demarcated and the two Southeast Asian neighbours have overlapping claims on the territory.

While the status quo appears to have been restored, the two armies were still in the area.

Anadolu Agency

DAILY CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 1) Window sill
 - 6) Mountain climber's obstacle
 - 10) Door fastener
 - 14) At full throttle
 - 15) A dollar, in some places
 - 16) Type of saxophone
 - 17) A voids doing a thorough job
 - 20) Pieces for piano students
 - 21) Some green pods
 - 22) Actor Kilmer
 - 24) Suffix for "velvet"
 - 25) Winter ailment
 - 27) Form into a knot
 - 28) Part of the human eye
 - 30) Certain communists
 - 33) Delirium or hysteria
 - 35) Campus females, once
 - 36) Doesn't quite play by the book
 - 41) Cherish
 - 42) The "p" of 6p
 - 44) It's actually a rodent
 - 49) "It's now or never" time
 - 50) Deep sleep stage
 - 51) Caribou kin
 - 52) Hold up
 - 54) Vehicle for the off-road
 - 55) Swords that are not dangerous
 - 57) Bother persistently
 - 59) Finishes camping
 - 64) Large part of an atlas
 - 65) Thing to hum
 - 66) It's a wrap, clearly
 - 67) "... me up, Scotty!"
 - 68) A weather's opposite
 - 69) Beginning
- DOWN**
-) Fond du Lac, Wisc.
 - 2) Flightless bird
 - 3) NBC news program
 - 4) General meaning
 - 5) Follow as a result
 - 6) Construction material
 - 7) Bemoans
 - 8) A compass can form one
 - 9) Baby's first word, sometimes
 - 10) Baseball legend Aaron
 - 11) Warns of danger
 - 12) Channel of the sea
 - 13) Sheriffs emergency assistants
 - 18) Some forms of poetry
 - 19) Big name in weed killers
 - 22) Vigor go-with
 - 23) Omani, for one
 - 25) Arctic ice sheet
 - 26) One who is in a horizontal position
 - 29) High point for Moses
 - 31) Was in pain
 - 32) Stranded like Gilligan
 - 34) Number for a house
 - 37) Gardener's need
 - 38) Longjourney
 - 39) Consumers of a product
 - 40) "Get outta here, cat!"
 - 43) Optometrist's interest
 - 44) Assembled in advance
 - 45) Lie comfortably
 - 46) A via tor Earhart
 - 47) Certain fruit
 - 48) He came after Quayle
 - 53) Lowest operatic voice
 - 56) Cheese tray choice
 - 57) Polish, as one's skills
 - 58) Mr. Musial
 - 60) Part of North America
 - 61) Campaign pro
 - 62) Dundee negative
 - 63) Blasting stuff

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

You've gone out of your way for your loved ones quite a bit lately, but you're willing to do even more for them now. They know exactly how good-hearted you are, so your generosity doesn't surprise them on its own, but what you're about to do is definitely far above and beyond the call of duty. Make sure to accept their thanks and praise with grace!

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

The one person you'd least expect to take your side is actually defending your actions to their superiors. In fact, they go way beyond what any reasonable person would expect of them. Fortunately, you're an expert at expressing gratitude, so once you get over the shock, you may even end up friends. Truth really is stranger than fiction!

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Everyone has an opinion on your life right now. Friends, family members, and even coworkers will all have a few words of advice if you ask them what they think. Not all of it will be remotely applicable to your situation now, but you should go ahead and ask them for their feedback. Listen to them with an open mind. You'll get a kick out of all the different takes.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Everyone has qualities they're famous for, and integrity is right at the top of your list. You pride yourself on doing what's right even if it's not necessarily the easy way, which is usually the case! Now that you have to take the long way to achieve an important goal, there's no pouting. Try not to be too disappointed in a loved one whose list isn't the same as yours.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Every now and then the Universe sends along a nice surprise for no special reason, and you're just about due for yours now. Someone you haven't seen in far too long may return to your life, and not just for a quick walk-on appearance either. Whether or not they admit it, they want to be back for good. Be gener-ous.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Everyone has an opinion on your life right now. Friends, family members, and even coworkers will all have a few words of advice if you ask them what they think. Not all of it will be remotely applicable to your situation now, but you should go ahead and ask them for their feedback. Listen to them with an open mind.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

You've never loved keeping secrets, always preferring to say what's on your mind (and in your heart) as it occurs to you. You want to let the world know exactly what's really going on! When a loved one comes to you with that odd look on their face, begging you to keep quiet about some recent event, you're torn. You know what they want.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

You specialize in relationships, and you stop at nothing to let the right person know just how fond you are. That's awesome, but it might not always be the best tactic. Right now, for example, playing a wee bit hard to get might not hurt so much. In fact, it might help a lot! Wait until the phone rings three or four times.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Someone emotionally close but physically distant is about to make contact, and you should be delighted to spend some time with them. You're in such a wonderful mood that you can't help but make everyone around you feel just as good -- and it doesn't matter if it's because of a professional situation that's turned out just right.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Friends in need aren't anything new. You actually tend to attract them, and you don't mind so much. You send out subtle signals that let others know you're the most trustworthy of friends. Right now, in fact, those traits are amped up, so no matter who comes to you, even just for a quick hug, you go above and beyond the call of duty.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

You love your privacy, and everyone knows it, but every now and then even you need to get out there and mingle. This absolutely does not mean you can't still give yourself some alone time. You absolutely need it! Once you get out there, though, you may find it surprising just how many people know how to press all the right buttons!

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

You've got something of a dilemma now, and you're pretty torn by it. Do you listen to what sounds like perfect logic, coming from someone close with experience with this type of situation, or do you go with your gut, which tells you to do the opposite of what everyone else is saying? Only you can make the final decision, but when you think about it.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. How many verbs are in the following sentence: "Roger told his dog not to jump on the furniture with muddy feet"?
- A. None
 - B. 3
 - C. 1
 - D. 2
02. Who voiced the eponymous hero in the 1973 film "Jonathan Livingston Seagull"?
- A. Don LaFontaine
 - B. Mel Blanc
 - C. Billy West
 - D. James Franciscus
03. What facial feature is missing from the Mona Lisa?
- A. Cheeks
 - B. Nose
 - C. Lips
 - D. Eyebrows

Answers: 1.D 2.D 3.C

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

E	T	R	N
J	O	A	S
K	E	R	E
S	C	R	S

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

SOLUTION

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

Sensational Gold Cup victory for Al Zubair, Klingmann and Tuck at Monza

Monza, Italy - Al Manar Racing by Team WRT's Al Faisal al Zubair, Jens Klingmann and Ben Tuck delivered another driving and strategic masterclass to finish fourth overall and first in the Gold Cup class at the second round of the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup powered by AWS at Monza late on Sunday afternoon.

Despite qualifying in seventh, the trio carried out their pit stop strategy perfectly and were able to move through the field during a yellow flag-interrupted three-hour race to finish fourth overall ahead of nine other rivals in the Gold Cup category in their BMW M4 GT3 EVO. It was another proud day for Al Zubair and Oman in endurance racing.

The Verstappen.com Racing Aston Martin was a distant second overall and the Tresor Attempto Racing Audi rounded off the Gold Cup podium.

A delighted Al Zubair said: "I'm happy to clinch the win in the Gold Cup Category. Honestly, this is a dream come true. Especially because we started the race from seventh on the grid. But the strategy from Team WRT was excellent. We had the speed throughout the weekend, but in qualifying we faced some issues, particularly in Q3.

"Fourth position in the overall classification and winning the



Al Manar Racing by Team WRT's Al Faisal al Zubair, Jens Klingmann and Ben Tuck celebrate on the podium after their Gold Cup class win

I'm happy to clinch the win. This is a dream come true. Especially because we started the race from seventh on the grid

AL FAISAL AL ZUBAIR

Gold Cup category, this was fantastic. I'm very proud to raise the Omani flag high. We are aiming to achieve even more."

From a start position of seventh in the Gold Cup category, Al-Zubair held eighth until a full

course yellow brought proceedings to a stop after around 20 minutes. The Garage 59 McLaren had the lead from the CSA Racing McLaren.

Action resumed around the half-hour mark and Al-Zubair made up a place to take seventh shortly afterwards. The Omani maintained his composure and was soon up to sixth with the Garage 59 McLaren continuing to lead from the Verstappen.com Racing Aston Martin.

Al Zubair retained sixth to another full course yellow with around 1hr 50min of the race remaining. The handover to Tuck was a good one and, when ac-

tion resumed, Tuck held the lead from the Garage 59 McLaren and the Verstappen Aston. The leading six Gold Cup cars were tightly bunched but Tuck retained the lead through 48 laps with 68 minutes of the race remaining. The CSA Racing McLaren had fallen by the wayside after 36 laps.

With less than an hour to run there was yet another full course yellow with Tuck still leading. Racing resumed under a green flag with 54 minutes to go and the final changeover to Klingmann was a successful one with the team retaining an advantage over the Aston Martin and the Optimum Motorsport McLaren.

DREAM, DARE, DOUE

French teenage sensation steps out of the shadows into Champions League stardom

Paris, France - Paris St Germain teenager Desire Doue, who was not even guaranteed a spot in the starting lineup, burst into instant stardom when he lit up the Champions League final as they thrashed Inter Milan 5-0 on Saturday.

With a deft assist and two clinical finishes at Munich's Allianz Arena, the attacking midfielder, who celebrates his 20th birthday on Tuesday, transformed from squad option to overnight sensation in PSG's 5-0 demolition of the Italian side.

"He is reaping the rewards of his hard work," coach Luis Enrique had presciently said weeks before the final. "He will continue to grow. He's in the right club for his development."

Luis Enrique's decision to select Doue over regular starter Bradley Barcola proved inspired.

The teenager repaid his manager's faith within 12 minutes, intelligently squaring the ball for Achraf Hakimi's opener when most players would have shot.

Desire's clinical finishing soon followed as he netted twice to seal victory before departing to thunderous applause from the PSG supporters after 67 minutes of sustained brilliance.

Doue's ascension has been swift yet measured. After catching French eyes during Les Bleus' Olympic silver medal run last summer, he made the switch from Rennes to PSG, where he initially waited patiently for op-

portunities. Desire showed his composure when converting the decisive penalty in the shootout against Liverpool in the last 16 but Saturday's performance elevated him from hot prospect to phenomenon.

Bruno Genesio, his former coach at Rennes, offered reassurance for those fearing success might change the young star.

"Away from the pitch he's a dream: easy, calm, with a streak

He (Desire Doue) is reaping the rewards of his hard work. He will continue to grow. He's in the right club for his development

LUIS ENRIQUE

of leadership while still asking for advice. He's both care-free and conscientious in his work."

As Doue joins up with France for next week's Nations League Finals, the irony is inescapable — at 20 he will arrive with a Champions League winner's medal that his international teammate Kylian Mbappe left PSG pursuing elsewhere at Real Madrid.

In a club that was deliberately rebuilt without superstars, PSG may have just found one after a night when Doue eclipsed the team's Ballon d'Or candidate Ousmane Dembele.



Desire Doue scored two goals and provided an assist to emerge as PSG's star in the Champions League final

Dembele, Doue Champions League players of the season

Munich, Germany - Paris St Germain striker Ousmane Dembele was named Champions League Player of the Season by UEFA on Sunday after his turnaround season ended with him playing a big role in his side winning the competition for the first time.

Dembele's teenage teammate Desire Doue was named Champions League young player of the season by European soccer's governing body.

Dembele struggled early in the campaign, dropped by coach Luis Enrique for a league phase game with Arsenal for disciplinary reasons, but the 28-year-old went on to score eight Champions League goals after his switch to a more central role. While Dembele failed to find the net in PSG's 5-0 thrashing of Inter Milan in Saturday's final in Munich, he was singled out by the manager for his performance.

"I would give the Ballon d'Or to Mr. Ousmane Dembele," Luis Enrique said. "The way he

defended tonight, just that alone could be worth the Ballon d'Or. That's how you lead a team. Goals, trophies, leadership, defence, his pressing."

The 19-year-old Doue wrapped up his extremely impressive campaign by creating the opening goal in the final for Achraf Hakimi before scoring twice himself.

PSG had seven players named in the competition's team of the season while finalists Inter had just one included.



Desire Doue and Ousmane Dembele celebrate with the Champions League trophy

TEAM OF THE SEASON:
Goalkeeper: Gianluigi Donnarumma (PSG)
Defenders: Achraf Hakimi (PSG), Marquinhos (PSG), Alessandro Bastoni (Inter), Nuno Mendes (PSG)
Midfielders: Vitinha (PSG), Declan Rice (Arsenal)
Forwards: Lamine Yamal (Barcelona), Desire Doue (PSG), Ousmane Dembele (PSG), Raphinha (Barcelona)

Pyramids win maiden African Champions League title

Cairo, Egypt - Egypt's Pyramids claimed a deserved 2-1 victory over Mamelodi Sundowns from South Africa for a 3-2 aggregate success and a first African Champions League title following the second leg of this year's final at the 30 June Stadium in Cairo on Sunday.

After the first leg in Pretoria finished 1-1, Fiston Mayele gave Pyramids the lead on 23 minutes when he profited from a Sundowns defensive error, before Ahmed Samy doubled the advantage on 56 minutes with a header from a free-kick.

Sundowns pulled a goal back through Iqraam Rayners with 15 minutes remaining and one more would have given them victory in the tie on the away goals rule, but Pyramids held firm despite heavy pressure from the visitors.



Pyramids players celebrate with the African Champions League trophy

Pyramids are the fourth Egyptian side to lift the Champions League trophy after record 12-time winners Al Ahly, Zamalek and Ismaili, while 2016 champions Sundowns head to this month's Club World Cup in the United States on a low note.

Sundowns had been favourites for the title with their

vast experience of playing in African club competition, against a Pyramids side appearing for only the second time in the Champions League.

It is more misery for their Portuguese coach Miguel Cardoso, who also lost last year's final when in charge of Esperance as they were beaten by Ahly.

Pyramids took the lead when Sundowns defender Grant Kekana could only steer a cross into the path of Mayele, who took his shot first time and drilled the ball low into the far corner of the net.

Sundowns winger Tashreeq Matthews found himself one-on-one with Pyramids goalkeeper Ahmed Al Shenawy in the first half, but the latter stuck out a boot to deflect the shot away from goal. The hosts got their second goal from a simple free-kick from the right by Mohamed Chibi that was headed unchallenged into the net by Samy.

Tebobo Mokoena's 30-yard free-kick forced a good save from Al Shenawy, before the visitors pulled a goal back to provide some hope to their small travelling support.

I don't stay where I'm not wanted: Acerbi withdraws from Italy squad

Munich, Germany - Inter Milan's veteran defender Francesco Acerbi withdrew from the Italy squad on Sunday, the day after his club's humbling defeat to Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League final, citing a lack of respect from manager Luciano Spalletti.

Acerbi has not played for Italy since November 2023, but after his recent exploits with Inter - where he scored an equaliser in their semi-final with Barcelona - Spalletti named him in his squad for the upcoming World Cup qualifiers.

The 37-year-old's announcement comes immediately following Inter's 5-0 loss in Munich on Saturday, but Acerbi, who spoke with Spalletti on Sunday morning, said this had nothing to do with his decision.

"I felt that, in light of recent

events, the conditions to continue this path peacefully do not exist today," Acerbi said in a social media post. "I don't seek alibis or favours, I demand respect. And if this respect is lacking on the part



Francesco Acerbi

of those who should lead a group, then I prefer to step aside.

"I've always given everything, but I don't stay where I'm no longer really wanted and it's clear that I'm not part of the manager's

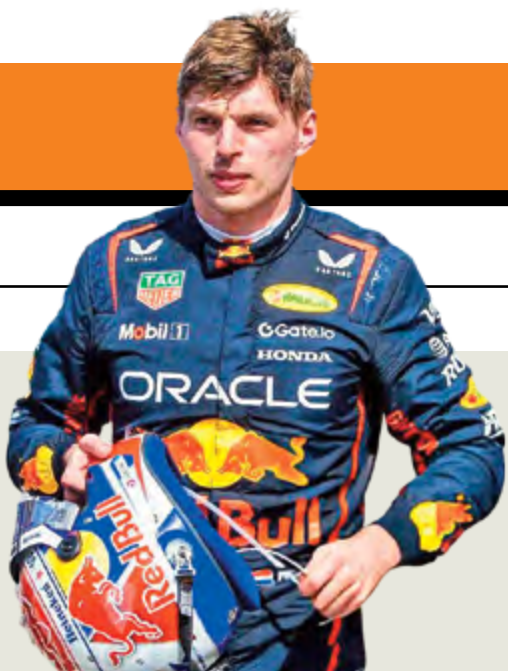
project."

Acerbi did not clarify what this lack of respect referred to. Earlier, Spalletti spoke about the player's decision at a press conference on Sunday, before Acerbi's statement.

"For me Acerbi has value, we knew he had some physical problems, he had been operated on, I had given space at the time to other defenders too," the coach said. In March, after Italy exited the Nations League at the quarter-final stage to Germany, when Spalletti was asked by a reporter if he would consider calling up Acerbi, the manager responded with a question of his own.

"Do you know how old Acerbi is?" Spalletti asked.

Italy begin their World Cup Group I qualifying campaign away to Norway on June 6, before hosting Moldova three days later.



Max Verstappen

Russell clash was not right and should not have happened, says Verstappen

Barcelona, Spain - Max Verstappen has conceded that his Spanish Grand Prix clash with Mercedes' George Russell, which left the Formula One champion on the brink of a ban, was wrong and should not have happened.

The Red Bull driver made his comments on Instagram a day after the race.

Four-time world champion Verstappen was given a 10-second post-race penalty for appearing to drive into Russell after a late safety car period, as well as three penalty points on his super-licence.

The added time dropped him from fifth to 10th while the penalty points took his tally to 11 in a 12-month period. One more in the next two races before the end of June will trigger a race ban.

"We had an exciting strategy and good race in Barcelona, till the safety car came out," Verstappen, who had led Sunday's race won by McLaren's Oscar Piastri, said in his post. "Our tyre choice to

the end and some moves after the safety car restart fuelled my frustration, leading to a move that was not right and shouldn't have happened.

"I always give everything out there for the team and emotions can run high. You win some together, you lose some together. See you in Montreal."

On Sunday, in the immediate aftermath, Verstappen had preferred not to comment.

The Dutch driver has won twice this season, the only non-McLaren driver to do so, but his hopes of a fifth title are slipping away as McLaren continue to dominate with seven wins in nine races so far.

His move on Russell drew a mixture of condemnation and astonishment in the paddock.

"It looked like a very intentional retaliation. Wait for the opponent, go ramming into him, just like you felt the other guy rammed into you at Turn One," said Mercedes' 2016 world champion Nico Rosberg on Sky Sports.

MIRRABALL!

Teenager Andreeva outguns Kasatkina to reach French Open quarterfinals

Paris, France - Mirra Andreeva became the youngest player to reach back-to-back French Open quarter-finals in nearly three decades after the gifted Russian teenager overcame Australian 17th seed Daria Kasatkina 6-3 7-5 on Monday.

The powerful 18-year-old has scythed through the women's field at Roland Garros without dropping a set and her fourth-round victory on a sunbathed Court Suzanne Lenglen helped her match the feat of Swiss Martina Hingis between 1997 and 1998.

"Honestly, I'm so happy I won. I hate playing against her, we practise a lot and even that is a torture," Andreeva said with a smile in her on-court interview.

"It was a hell of a match. I'm super happy I stayed calm in the second set when she raised her level ... I had to fight and continue playing my game.

"I knew if I believed in myself I would win a third set."

Andreeva came up with a tight hold to thwart her frequent practice partner in the seventh game and grabbed the break in the next game when Kasatkina sent a backhand long.

Russian-born Kasatkina, who switched nationalities this year, beat Andreeva in three sets when they met in last year's Ningbo final and the 28-year-old show-

cased her fighting spirit in the next set to recover a break and lead 5-3.

"My coach (Conchita Martinez) says you've got to practise with the people you don't like. That's why I practice with her because I hate her," Andreeva joked. "I knew this match would be tough."

Sixth seed Andreeva broke back and defended valiantly to level at 5-5, before edging ahead

I hate playing against her, we practise a lot and even that is a torture. It was a hell of a match. I'm super happy I stayed calm in when she raised her level

MIRRA ANDREEVA

again to close out the victory and book a meeting with either French wildcard Lois Boisson.

Earlier, second seed Coco Gauff brushed aside Russian Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-0 7-5 on to move into the quarter-finals and stay on course for her first title in Paris.

The American world number two must have thought she would have an easy morning session after powering through the first set in sensational fashion but the Russian bounced back in the second to test her opponent.



Mirra Andreeva celebrates after winning a point against Daria Kasatkina in their fourth-round match on Monday

Swiatek survives Rybakina scare to reach last eight, Alcaraz marches on

Paris, France - Four-time champion Iga Swiatek clawed her way back from the brink to reach the French Open quarter-finals by defeating her claycourt nemesis Elena Rybakina while men's title holder Carlos Alcaraz also went through after a tough workout on Sunday.

Fifth seed Swiatek looked out of sorts as she trailed 6-1 2-0 on Court Philippe Chatrier, leaving the crowd stunned. But Swiatek found her groove and some grit to prevail 1-6 6-3 7-5.

Her final opponent from last year, Jasmine Paolini, was on the wrong end of another last-16 clash against 13th seed Elina Svitolina of Ukraine, the Italian wasting three match points in a 4-6 7-6(6) 6-1 defeat.

Svitolina will provide the next test for Swiatek, who continues her quest to become the first female player since tennis turned professional to claim the singles' title four times in a row at Roland



Iga Swiatek fought her way back from a set and a break down to beat Elena Rybakina

Garros.

Elsewhere in the top half of the draw, Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen battled on, the Chinese eighth seed overcoming Russia's Liudmila Samsonova 7-6(5) 1-6 6-3, with a potential clash against world number one Aryna Sabalenka looming.

In the men's draw, Carlos Alcaraz etched his name deeper in clay by overcoming American Ben Shelton 7-6(8) 6-3 4-6 6-4 for his 100th tour-level win on the surface to reach the quarter-finals for a fourth successive year.

Up next for him is world number 12 Tommy Paul, who blitzed Alexei Popyrin 6-3 6-3 6-3 to become the first American male player to reach the French Open quarter-finals in 22 years.



'Hand of Neymar' earns Brazilian superstar red card

Santos, Brazil - Neymar has spoken about the impact Diego Maradona had on his career after meeting him as a child but his bid to emulate the late Argentine great's "Hand of God" goal backfired on Sunday when he was sent off in what could be his last game for Santos.

With Santos and Botafogo locked at 0-0 heading into the last 15 minutes of their Brazilian league game, Neymar launched himself at a rebound in the penalty area and steered the ball into the net with his hand.

The Brazilian was quickly surrounded by furious Botafogo players before the referee flashed a second yellow card at the

forward, cutting short his first start for the club since he made his return from injury last month. Rubbing salt into the wound, Botafogo scored with four minutes left to secure a 1-0 victory.

The 33-year-old later apologised to his team and fans.

"I made a mistake, forgive me!" he posted on social media. "Today, if I hadn't been sent off, I'm sure we would have gotten the three points. You can count these three points against me!"

Neymar had returned to his boyhood club Santos in January after a stint at Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal, with his contract at the Brazilian side running until June 30.

The red card rules him out of Santos's match against Fortaleza on Thursday, meaning he will only be able to play for the club again if he extends his contract before the league's resumption in July following the Club World Cup.

Oman Cricket celebrates Youth Talent at Junior 2nd Tournament Prize Distribution

Muscat, Oman - Oman Cricket proudly hosted the Junior 2nd Tournament - a series of tournaments hosted following an excellent rollout of the first edition, a vibrant celebration of emerging cricketing talent across the Sultanate. Spanning four competitive age categories - Under-11, Under-13, Under-16 (Schools & Academies) supported by Mazoon Dairy, and Under-19 supported by Majees Technical Services LLC - the tournament highlighted the growing strength of grassroots cricket in Oman.

With exceptional performances and a strong show of ex-



Oman Cricket Academy side emerged as the U19 champions

citing growing young talent, the tournament concluded with a formal prize distribution ceremony on Saturday to honour

both team achievements and standout individual efforts.

"We are proud of the dedication and discipline shown by

these young athletes. Tournaments like this are essential to building a strong future for Oman cricket," said Alkesh Joshi, Treasurer - Oman Cricket who supported Chief Guest, H.E. Pankaj Khimji, Chairman - Oman Cricket and Guest of Honor, Ms. Nadia Hamzi, Marketing Director, Mazoon Dairy SAOG for the prize distribution.

THE AWARDS

Under-11
Champions: Indian School Muscat U11 A
Best Batter: Ashbel Burboz - Indian School Wadi Kabir U11

Best Bowler: Aarav Keskar - Indian School Muscat U11 A

Under-13
Champions: Indian School Muscat U13 A
Best Batter: Swastik Kale - Indian School Muscat U13 A
Best Bowler: Yohan Sriram - Indian School Muscat U13 A
Consolation (Batting Performance): Aarav Saraiya - Indian School Wadi Kabir International U13

Under-16 - Schools Category
Champions: Indian School

Muscat U16 B
Best Batter: Vihaan Chauhan - Indian School Muscat U16 B
Best Bowler: Atharv Kalu - Indian School Al Seeb U16
Consolation (Batting Performance): Guransh Singh - Indian School Buraimi U16
Consolation (Batting Performance): Ayush Shetty - Indian School Wadi Kabir U16

Under-16 - Academies Category
Champions: BSC Braveheart U16
Best Batter: Vivaan Malhotra -

BSC Braveheart U16
Best Bowler: Oomkar Murthy - BSC Braveheart U16
Consolation (Batting Performance): Arsh Javed - BSC Braveheart U16

Under-19 - T20 League
Champions: Oman Cricket Academy U19
Best Batter: Jeet Shah - Indian School Muscat U19
Best Bowler: Arshad Farshad - Oman Cricket Academy U19
Consolation (Batting Performance): Rishab Gupta - Indian School Wadi Kabir U19



Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer with Royal Challengers Bengaluru skipper Rajat Patidar ahead of the final

IPL awaits new champions as Bengaluru meet Punjab in final

Ahmedabad, India - The IPL will have a new champion after Punjab Kings beat Mumbai Indians in Qualifier 2 in Ahmedabad on Sunday night to set up a summit clash against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB). Neither team has won the IPL before.

The IPL final is on Tuesday, June 3, also in Ahmedabad.

RCB will be playing an IPL final for the fourth time, having finished runners-up in 2009, 2011 and 2016 to Deccan Chargers, Chennai Super Kings and Sunrisers Hyderabad, respectively.

PBKS have been in an IPL final only once before, in 2014, when they were known as Kings XI Punjab and lost to Kolkata Knight Riders.

The 2014 season was also the only time that PBKS had made the playoffs since the concept was introduced in 2011. Their

captain Shreyas Iyer is the first IPL player to lead three different teams to the finals: he was captain of Delhi Capitals in the 2020 final and led KKR to the title in 2024.

PBKS and RCB had finished Nos. 1 and 2 in the league stage, with nine wins, four defeats and one no-result each in 14 games. There was very little difference between their net run rates too. While PBKS had beaten RCB in Bengaluru, RCB won the reverse fixture in Mullanpur.

They met in Qualifier 1 on May 29 in Mullanpur, where RCB dismissed PBKS for 101 and won with ten overs to spare to book their place in the final first. PBKS had to travel to Ahmedabad to play MI in Qualifier 2, and they beat them for the second time in the span of a week to qualify for the final.

IYER THAN EVER BEFORE

Captain plays a cracking knock as Punjab beat Mumbai to reach their first final

Ahmedabad, India - Punjab Kings batter Shreyas Iyer played a captain's knock as the Indian Premier League (IPL) table toppers beat Mumbai Indians by five wickets in the second qualifier on Sunday to set up a tantalising final with Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

Punjab had won the toss and opted to field before the rain came down and delayed the start of the game by more than two hours. But they did not lose any overs, with the match eventually finishing at well past 1:30 a.m.

Chasing a target of 204 for victory, Iyer smashed an unbeaten 87 off 41 balls with eight clean sixes as Punjab returned to the final for the first time in 11 years.

The result means Tuesday's final at the same venue will crown a new IPL champion, with Bengaluru also falling short in the summit clash in 2009, 2011 and 2016.

Punjab lost to Bengaluru in the first playoff match on Thursday, but they will now have another shot at winning their maiden trophy.

"I love big occasions. I always



Shreyas Iyer scored an unbeaten 41-ball 87, which included eight sixes and five fours, to steer Punjab Kings to their first ever IPL final

We shouldn't think about where we went wrong (against Bengaluru) because throughout the season we've been playing amazing... One match cannot define us as a team

SHREYAS IYER

tell my team, the bigger the occasion, the calmer you are," said Iyer, who captained Kolkata to the title last year before moving to Punjab.

"We shouldn't think about where we went wrong (against Bengaluru) because throughout the season we've been playing amazing... One match cannot de-

fine us as a team."

Punjab had a good start when Rohit Sharma fell cheaply in the third over but Jonny Bairstow (38) and Tilak Varma (44) went after the bowling before Suryakumar Yadav smashed three sixes and four boundaries in his quick-fire knock of 44.

A mammoth total looked on the cards but Yuzvendra Chahal dismissed Suryakumar while Azmatullah Omarzai picked up two wickets, including skipper Hardik Pandya, to restrict Mumbai to 203-6.

In response, Punjab scored 64 runs in the powerplay with Josh Inglis (38) leading the charge before Iyer and Nehal Wadhwa stitched together an 84-run partnership for the fourth wicket to frustrate Mumbai.

While Iyer effortlessly accelerated the run rate with three consecutive sixes in an expensive Reece Topley over, Wadhwa rode his luck with some loose shots that found the boundary to put the pressure back on Mumbai.

Wadhwa fell for 48 but Iyer notched up his half-century in 27 balls before denying Jasprit Bumrah a wicket with a fine boundary off a yorker.

Iyer then welcomed Ashwani Kumar back into the attack with a high and handsome six before clearing the ropes three more times as the 19th over went for 26 runs and Punjab won the game with an over to spare.

"The way he batted, he took his chances. Some of the shots he played were really outstanding," a bitterly disappointed Hardik said.

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Bolt-On 2: MEWPS

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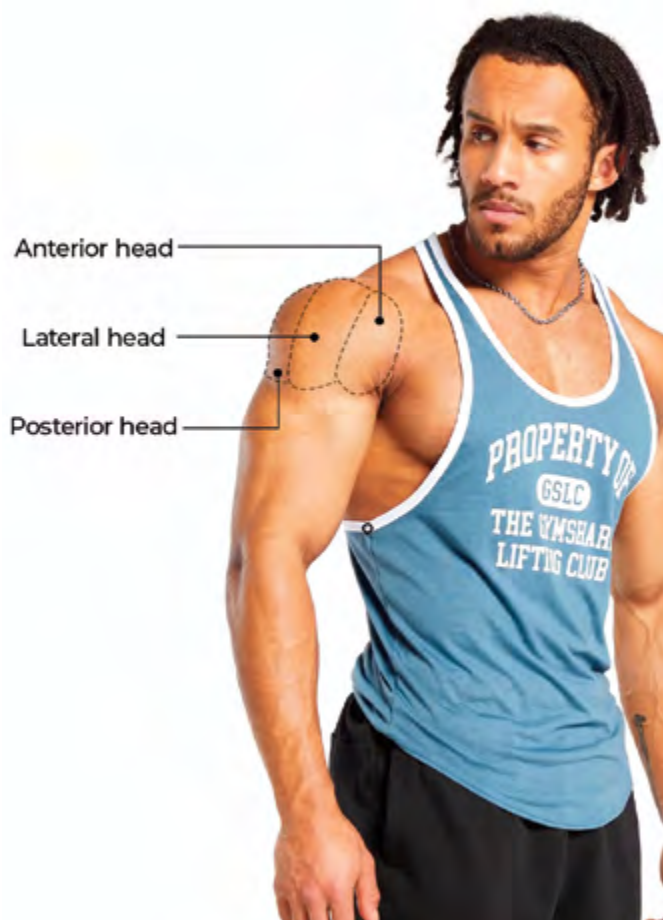
CONTACT NO: 9 3 8 9 3 5 9 6

BIRTHDAY WISHES

AIDENN

Happy birthday dear Aidenn
Have a great year filled with lots of fun, joy and happiness.
God bless you.
With lots of love and hugs.
Parents & Grandparents

TONED AND SYMMETRICAL SHOULDERS ARE BUILT THROUGH A LIST OF KILLER EXERCISES THAT TARGET THE DELTOIDS WHICH ARE DIVIDED INTO THREE DISTINCT HEADS - ANTERIOR (FRONT), LATERAL (MIDDLE), AND POSTERIOR (REAR). MACHINES IN A GYM HELP IN BUILDING GOOD FORM OF DELTOIDS



DELTOID WORKOUT



Cable Face Pulls (Model: Nizamuddin)

BROAD SHOULDERS

The deltoid muscle is an important muscle in the shoulder, as it helps to provide strength for the shoulder joint. Strengthening the deltoids can help to support the shoulder joint, improve posture, and reduce the risk of shoulder injuries.

Deltoids are an important part of the shoulder complex involved in activities such as pushing, pulling, and lifting. It is also important for athletes, as it helps create power and control when performing certain sports-related movements.

The deltoid muscle is most often worked with exercises such as shoulder presses, lateral raises, and rear deltoid raises. It's important to perform these exercises correctly, under supervision, to ensure that the muscle is being properly worked and that the shoulder joint is being properly stabilised.

Cable Face Pulls

Cable face pulls are an exercise that uses a cable machine with a rope attachment to target the rear deltoids, the muscles at the back of the shoulders. This exercise can help improve posture, shoulder stability, and overall upper back strength.

How to do

- Attach a rope grip to the cable machine, setting the pulley to a height slightly above your head. Grab both ends of the rope with an underhand grip, thumbs pointing towards your back.
- Take a few steps back so the cable is taut and your arms are extended in front of you. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, engage your core, and slightly lean back.
- Pull the rope towards your face, keeping your elbows high and slightly flared out, aiming for your hands to reach your ears.
- Squeeze your shoulder blades together and rear deltoids, pausing at the top of the movement.
- Slowly return to the starting position by extending your arms.

Standing Overhead Press

The Smith machine standing overhead press is a key exercise for building strong, well-defined shoulders. This movement targets the deltoids while minimising the involvement of stabiliser muscles due to the Smith machine's fixed path.

How to do

- Adjust the Smith machine bar to just above your shoulders. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and grasp the bar with an overhand grip, hands slightly wider than shoulder-width.
- Lift the bar off the safety catches. Keep your core engaged, chest up, and head facing forward.
- Take a deep breath in and engage your core. Press the bar overhead by extending your elbows and pushing the bar upward until your arms are fully extended.
- Lower the bar slowly back to the starting position, controlling the descent to avoid any sudden movements. Take a breath out at the same time.
- Repeat for the desired number of reps, maintaining proper form throughout the exercise.

Standing Cable Shoulder Press

The standing cable shoulder press is a fundamental compound exercise that primarily targets the anterior and medial deltoids. It promotes balanced shoulder development by engaging muscles responsible for lifting the arms forward and sideways.

How to do

- Adjust the cable machine pulley to the lowest setting and attach a single-handle grip to each side.
- Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, gripping the handles with an overhand grip.
- Position your hands at shoulder height, elbows bent at 90 degrees.
- Keep your back straight and engage your core for stability.
- Exhale and press the handles overhead, fully extending your arms.
- Pause briefly at the top, then inhale as you slowly return to the starting position with control.
- Complete 3-4 sets of 10-12 repetitions, focusing on smooth, controlled movements.



NUTRITION & YOU



fresh fruits, herbs, or vegetables. Unlike juices or sugary drinks, it contains no added sugars or artificial ingredients. The ingredients are soaked in water for a few hours, allowing their natural flavours and nutrients to seep in, creating a refreshing, low-calorie drink that's both tasty and healthy.

Health benefits

Hydration is the key - For any drink to be taken as a healthy summer drink, it has to be refreshing and hydrating. Proper hydration is essential for maintaining body temperature, supporting digestion, improving circulation, and preventing heat-related fatigue. Infused water encourages one to drink more by making water, naturally sweet.

Great way to detoxify - Our bodies naturally detoxify through liver and kidneys, but staying well-hydrated enhances this process. Certain ingredients commonly used in infused water, like lemon, cucumber, ginger, and mint support the detox process.

Rich in Antioxidants - Infused water draws out some of the vitamins and antioxidants from the ingredients used. Berries, citrus fruits, and herbs

Drink infused water in summer



health. Drinking infused water regularly can help keep skin fresh, moist and radiant all summer long.

Reduces cravings - Many a times, thirst is mistaken for hunger. Drinking infused water not only satisfies hydration but can curb one's cravings. Flavoured naturally with fruit and herbs, it offers a hint of sweetness without calories, making it a smart choice for those who are on weight-loss journey.

Here are some easy simple ways to create Infused water:

- Cucumber + Lime/lemon + Basil/mint: Digesting, Cooling and anti-inflammatory
- Strawberry + Blue berries + Mint + Ginger: Antioxidant boost
- Ginger + Lemon + Mint + Orange: Digesting, cooling and refreshing.

To conclude, Infused water is not just a trendy drink, it's a simple, natural way to boost hydration and wellness during the hot summer months. With variety of combinations that are easy to make, it's a delicious and healthy way to keep oneself hydrated all summer long.

(Vandana Chawla is an Online Nutrition Expert and a Registered Nutritionist-UKVRN)

PEDAL SMART

RIDE SAFELY

On the occasion of **World Bicycle Day**, here are a few safety guidelines for all bikers



When cycling in the city, always remember that the road belongs to cars, not you – never assume a vehicle will stop for you

YAHYA AL HASHIMI
Triathlete



Safe and sustainable

UN Resolution, 2018

The idea of World Bicycle Day has its roots in a sociology class project exploring bicycles and their role in development. Professor Leszek Sibilski initiated the project in Maryland, USA, in 2015.

It soon catapulted into a massive movement backed by Sustainable Mobility for All, a US-based non-profit organisation. Turkmenistan and 56 other countries further supported and co-sponsored the movement.

On April 12, 2018, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution declaring June 3 each year as 'World Bicycle Day'. The resolution was unanimously adopted by all 193 member states of the UN General Assembly.

Bicycle is also a clean, safe, environmentally fit, and sustainable means of transportation. Bicycling doesn't generate any greenhouse gas emissions, so it can help to improve air quality and mitigate climate warming.



POTENTIAL HAZARDS

Cyclists face various hazards on city roads and highways

BEWARE OF

- Poor road conditions, pot-holes, loose sand/gravel, and accident debris left at the side of the road.
- Distracted/mischievous drivers or hasty commuters
- Of being in blind spots of adjacent vehicles
- Opening doors of parked cars



While obeying rules is essential, riding defensively often proves a life-saving strategy on busy city roads

BUTCH THERON
Expert cyclist



Eco-friendly fun sport

Training & Techniques

Cycling is fun and one of the most effective ways to improve your health. It not only keeps you mobile in an eco-friendly way but also boosts your metabolism, builds muscles, burns body fat, and helps you lose weight.

Cycling is a life-long sport that accommodates everyone, from the slow and steady beach cruiser to the fast and fierce road bike racer. It might take up to three years for an athlete to build a fitness and experiential base that enables elite-level riding. Proper training, aerobic base, and developed techniques are all critical variables in how long it takes to become a great cyclist.

While riding, remember, if your saddle is too low or high, you'll be less efficient and your rides will be harder on your body. Saddle height should be such that your knee should be at 25-35 degrees when the pedal is at the lowest. Wearing appropriate attire is also crucial.

SAFETY TIPS: BASIC RULES OF THE ROAD



FOLLOW RULES AND ROAD SIGNS



BE SAFE: WEAR A HELMET



BE VISIBLE: DRESS FOR SAFETY



BE WATCHFUL: LOOK AHEAD



DON'T WEAR HEADPHONES



BE ALERT: PAY ATTENTION TO VEHICLES



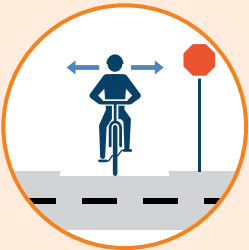
FOLLOW TRAFFIC DIRECTION



RIDE IN SINGLE FILE AND LEAVE SAFE SPACE



IDENTIFY HAZARDS ON THE ROAD



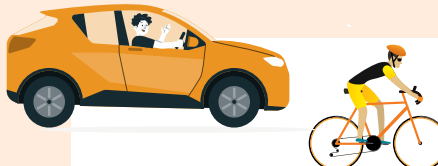
LOOK BEFORE ENTERING LANES



BE VISIBLE AT NIGHT



PLAN YOUR ROUTE



PASSING A CYCLIST

Treat a cyclist like a slow moving vehicle

SLOW DOWN

- Cars maintain minimum 3 ft and trucks minimum 6 ft buffer from cyclists at all times
- Cross the double yellow lines when necessary
- If not clear, wait to pass
- Return to lane when cyclist is in your rear view mirror

BIKERS' SIGNALS



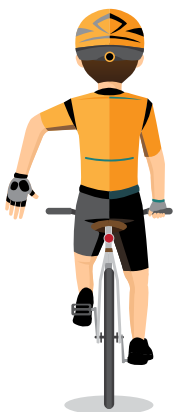
← LEFT TURN

Extend your left arm outwards and point to the left. Perform this signal at least ten yards prior to intended turn



→ RIGHT TURN

Extend your right arm outwards and point to the right. Perform this signal at least ten yards prior to intended turn



■ STOP

To signal the trailing group of a sudden stop, place your hand behind your back and make a fist



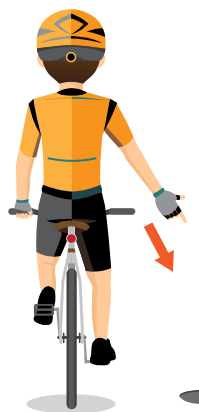
SLOWING DOWN

If you need to slow down, signal the riders behind you by placing an open hand, palm facing out on your waist



OVERTAKE

Place your hand outwards to right/left and gently wave forwards to let riders behind to overtake and move on



SINGLE ROAD HAZARD

For a single road hazard, the rider should signal by pointing towards the hazard with one finger



DEBRIS/LOOSE GRAVEL

Point the hand open palm down at the gravel or debris and make a shaking motion with the hand