LET'S TALK
Times OF OMAN

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CERTIFICATE

OMAN PARTICIPATES IN MEETING OF ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS

The Sultanate of Oman participated yesterday in the 162nd meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers, held at the headquarters of the Arab League in Cairo. Oman's delegation in the meeting was headed by Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Political Affairs. >A2

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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Oman on way to become investment destination

1 Oman is on the way to become a robust investment destination for foreign investors with its highly skilled talent pool of competitive manpower. Strategically located, Oman has proximity to 59 million consumers across the markets of Gulf Cooperation Council countries. It also has access to emerging markets in Asia and Africa , reaching a consumer base of one billion and also has good connectivity to trading route between east and west. >A3

OMAN

Clinics at Quriyat Hospital expanded

2 The Ministry of Health on Tuesday celebrated the opening of the expansion of the gynaecology and obstetrics clinics at Quriyat Hospital in Muscat Governorate, under the patronage of Dr. Said Harib Al Lamki, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Health Affairs. >A3

MARKET

AIIB delegation visits SEZAD

3 A delegation from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) yesterday visited the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD). The delegates met with Dr. Ali Masoud Al Sunaidi, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones. >B1

MADINAT AL IRFAN

HH Sayyid Bilarab visits Omantel Innovation Labs

MUSCAT: HH Sayyid Bilarab bin Haitham Al Said, Honorary President of the "Programme of Promising Omani Startups" (POPS) visited Omantel Innovation Labs at the company's headquarters in Madinat Al Irfan yesterday.

HH Sayyid Bilarab toured Omantel Innovation Labs. He was briefed about the initiatives and programmes sponsored and adopted by the labs, as well as the achievements that have been made since the labs' inception.

Investments

Further, HH Sayyid Bilarab also viewed the services offered by the labs to technology startups, including investments and experimental environments. These services aim to support those companies and to boost the entrepreneurial system in the Sultanate of Oman.

The visit also included observing eight technology startups from various programmes of the labs.

This visit comes as part of HH Sayyid Bilarab's keenness to continue supporting Omani technology startups and to monitor the challenges faced by these companies. -ONA

PACT WORTH OVER OMR90 MILLION INKED FOR HEALTHCARE IN SULTAN HAITHAM CITY

The Ministry of Health signed an agreement with Renardet SA and its partners to design the National Centre for Women and Children's Health in the Sultan Haitham City

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning and the Ministry of Health have joined hands to provide a healthy environment that supports vitality in the envisaged sprawling Sultan Haitham City (SHC).

Towards this objective, an agreement valued at more than OMR90 million was signed to build a referral hospital (with a capacity of 800 beds), in addition to the National Centre for Women and Children's Health (capacity: 500 beds).

The Ministry of Health on Tuesday signed an agreement with Renardet SA (Consulting Engineers) to design the National Centre for Women and Children's Health at Sultan Haitham City (SHC).

Inked to the tune of OMR1.3 million, the agreement reflects efforts being made to implement the first phase of the SHC project and enhance healthcare services in the modern metropolis.

The agreement was signed by Sulaiman Nasser Al Haji, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Administrative and Financial Affairs, and Lorenzo Nicolai, Managing Director of Renardet SA and partners. The ceremony was attended by Dr. Hilal Ali Al Sabti, Minister of Health, and Dr. Khalfan Said Al Shu'aili, Minister of Housing and Urban Planning.

Health services

The agreement aims to improve the quality of health services provided to women and children in a manner that reflects SHC's commitment to offer comprehensive healthcare for all members of society.

The agreement provides for consulting services, studies, surveys and determinants of the project, in addition to the designing of masterplans.

It is worth noting that the Sultan Haitham City has allocated an area of one million square metres for healthcare, including the referral hospital, the National Center for Women and Children's Health, Oman Health College, the Higher Institute for Health Sciences and Oman Medical Specialty Board. Within the first phase of the SHC's implementation, an area of more than 63,000 square metres has been allocated for lands adjoining the health centres. -ONA

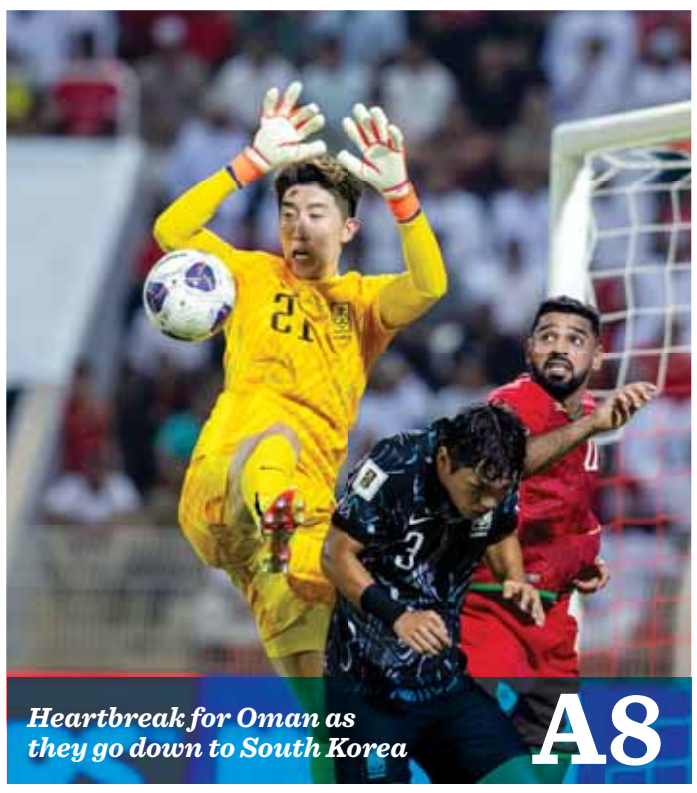
KHAN YUNIS

Israeli forces commit new massacre in Gaza, 40 dead

GAZA: Israeli occupation forces at dawn on Tuesday committed a new massacre in the Gaza Strip after they launched a violent airstrike targeting the area of the displaced people's tents in Mawasi Khan Yunis, southwest of the Strip.

The massacre, which took place near the British Hospital at the entrance to the Mawasi area, resulted in the killing and injury of dozens of civilians, including a large number of children and women, while a large number of citizens are still missing. Full report >A7

GAZA DEATH TOLL
as of September 10, 2024



Heartbreak for Oman as they go down to South Korea A8

INTEGRATED TOURISM COMPLEX

Al Mouj Muscat awards the second and final phase of business park to Oman Shapoorji Company

MUSCAT: Al Mouj Muscat, Oman's leading integrated tourism complex, has awarded phase two of the Al Mouj Business Park to Oman Shapoorji Company. Set to be completed in 2026, all units of this final phase of the project have already been sold, underscoring the high demand for premium business locations in Oman.

Phase two of the business park comprises three office buildings, each designed to the highest standards with controlled access basement parking, rooftop gardens, and extensive landscaped outdoor spaces conducive to business networking. These facilities will offer flexible office spaces, catering to the diverse needs of modern businesses whilst leveraging Al Mouj Muscat's strategic location and world-class amenities.

Nasser Al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat, said: "Al Mouj Muscat has set a new benchmark for corporate offices with the launch and sale of its stunning Business Park. Positioned at the intersection of nature and quality design, this premier business destination boasts flexible workspace spread across eight Grade A office buildings. With its award-winning design and infrastructure, the Business Park redefines the standard for premium office environments in Oman. Al Mouj Muscat's commitment to excellence extends beyond just office space. It's about creating a destination where business innovation flourishes, ideas are exchanged, and businesses are empowered to grow and reach new heights. With the construction of phase one progressing, this award of the final phase will ensure timely delivery of the project."

The Al Mouj Business Park is uniquely situated adjacent to a World Top 100 golf courses next to the ocean, providing an exemplary business environment that combines professional and leisure facilities. >A5

OMAN

PRAYER TIMINGS

Dhuhr 12:09pm
Asr 3:36pm
Maghrib 6:20pm
Isha 7:31pm
Fajr (Tomorrow) 4:37am

Oman participates in meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers in Cairo

The meeting reviewed means of ending the continuous Israeli aggression on Gaza and the West Bank

CAIRO: The Sultanate of Oman participated on Tuesday in the 162nd meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers, held at the headquarters of the Arab League in Cairo.

Oman's delegation in the meeting was headed by Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Political Affairs. The meeting reviewed means of ending the continuous Israeli aggression on Gaza and the West Bank. It also highlighted the crimes of genocide committed by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) against the Palestinian people. These crimes are ongoing for almost a year and have resulted in the martyrdom, injury and disappearance of more than 145,000 Palestinian civilians.

Further, the meeting underscored the necessity of ceasefire as the only solution to the situation in Gaza, where the Israeli Occupation Forces continue violating all international covenants and treatise and repeat their crimes against civilians. The meeting underlined that the international community should undertake a more positive stance against what Israel is doing in the Palestinian territories. It also emphasised the need for a two-state solution and the establishment of a Palestinian state with Al Quds Al Sharqiya (East Jerusalem) as its capital on the basis of the 1967 borders. – ONA

ELECTION

Oman Table Tennis Association elects new Board of Directors

MUSCAT: The general assembly of the Oman Table Tennis Association (OTTA) on Tuesday elected Abdullah Mohammed Bamkhalif as Chairman of the OTTA Board for the period 2024/2028 by acclamation.

The election was held with the participation of 7 member-clubs that have a right to attend the meeting and vote.

OTTA general assembly

OTTA general assembly also nominated Sajjad Mohammed Baqir to the position of Deputy Chairman and Samira Shaneen Al Shukaili to "women's mandatory seat".

Majid Marhoon Al Alawi and Mohammed Hamid Al Jassasi were nominated as members to the OTTA board, while Masoud Zayed Al Shaqsi was elected as a member representing the Athletes Committee on the OTTA Board of Directors. – ONA

1,500 CITIZENS

NCSI conducts 43rd Consumer Confidence Survey in Oman

MUSCAT: The National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) is pressing ahead with the "43rd Consumer Confidence Survey", now being conducted over the 3rd quarter of 2024.

The survey, which targets Omani citizens aged more than 18 years, will include a minimum of 1,500 citizens from Oman governorates. It takes into account the proportions of males, females, age groups and different educational levels. Data will be collected via telephone calls, among other methods.

Future projections

The survey aims to measure factors of significance to the economy in Oman, including families' financial status, future projections of the economy and the availability of job opportunities. – ONA

DOHA

Oman takes part in meeting on environment

DOHA: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Environment Authority, took part on Tuesday in the 26th meeting of GCC ministers of environment affairs, held in Doha, the State of Qatar.

The meeting discussed the decision of the GCC Supreme Council in regards to non-customs restrictions related to the environment.

It also touched on the strategic plan of environment ministers, among other topics.

Oman' delegation in the meeting was headed by Dr. Abdullah Ali Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority.

The meeting discussed the decision of the he GCC Supreme Council regarding non-tariff restrictions related to the environment, and the strategic plan of the Committee of Ministers Responsible for the Environment.

The meeting also discussed the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Convention on the Conservation of Wildlife and its Natural Habitats in the GCC States. -ONA

marafiq

شركة الدقم لتوليد الكهرباء ش.ش.و
Duqm Power Company S.P.C.

Tender Announcement

Introduction

Duqm Power Company SPC (herein the "Employer" or "DPC") inviting leasing proposals from qualified and experienced Bidders to undertake the leasing of new passenger vehicles to DPC. The Company invites Bidders to send their expression of interest to participate in the Tender.

Tender Number	Tender Title	Tender Description	Tender Fees	Clarification Closing Date	Bid Submission Date
DPC-DPW-00-000-LE-TND-0052	Leasing of new passenger vehicles to DPC	Leasing of new passenger vehicles to DPC for a leasing period of 5 years. The specification of the vehides is as follows. 1. **Type of vehicle – SUV-4-wheel drive** 2. **Total no. of vehicles required- 10 Nos** 3. **Minimum engine capacity- 2 litre and 4 Cylinders** 4. **Lease Period – 5 years.** 5. **Unlimited mileage**	No Tender Fee	12.09.2024	19.09.2024

Request for Quotation

- The RFQ will be made available through E mail to the intended bidders from the date of advertisement on receiving expression of interest from the Bidders.

Bidder Minimum Qualifications

Bidder must send the following to consider sending RFQ.

a. **Expression of Interest**
b. **Client details of the Bidder.**
c. **Valid Commercial registration certificate and tax certificate.**
d. **Any other document Bidder can provide to qualify.**

We encourage suppliers currently operating in Duqm area (Al Wusta Region).

Interested Suppliers shall contact DPC via email to **tender@marafiq.om** with the subject heading **"Leasing of passenger vehicles"** to receive the RFQ.

P.O.Box: 80 P.C: 102
Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
www.marafiq.om

Oman is on the way to become a robust investment destination

Oman has access to emerging markets in Asia and Africa , reaching a consumer base of one billion and also has good connectivity to trading route between east and west

ATTRACTIVE DESTINATION: With attractive laws and legislations, Oman is ready for doing business as investors have been offered 100% business ownership.

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman is on the way to become a robust investment destination for foreign investors with its highly skilled talent pool of competitive manpower.

Strategically located, Oman has proximity to 59 million consumers across the markets of Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

It also has access to emerging markets in Asia and Africa , reaching a consumer base of one billion and also has good connectivity to trading route between east and west.

Even the rating agencies such as Moody's has upgraded its outlook on the Government of Oman to 'positive' from 'stable,' and S&P has given BB plus a stable outlook.

With attractive laws and legislation and economic stability with a good GDP growth rate, Oman has all the ingredients to attract foreign investors.

The country has entered into free trade agreements with many countries and recent FTAs with Singapore, Switzerland, and Pakistan will further enhance trade opportunities in the near future.

With attractive laws and legislations, the country is ready for doing business as investors have been offered 100% business ownership.

Residency permits

Investors can even get five year and 10-year residency permits depending upon the volume of investments, said Abdullah Al Rawahi, Section head, Industry Analysis and Evaluation, Ministry of Commerce Industry and Investment Promotion, at a recent event in Mumbai.

Having robust infrastructure in terms of roads and strategic ports like Duqm, Salalah, and Sohar, Oman can become a logistics hub, said Abdullah Al Rawahi, Section head, Industry Analysis and Evaluation, from the Ministry of Commerce.

"The government has created a special arm to offer large scale investment opportunities. "15 government entities have been brought under one umbrella to offer a one-stop shop for investors. The relationship managers, online platform, fast track team, integrated services, go-to market team are all ready to serve the investors," said Abdullah Al Rawahi.

Even financial facilities have been made available to investors with the help from Oman Investment Bank, Oman Development Bank and Future Generations Fund, he said, adding some laws such as the Foreign Capital Investment Law, the bankruptcy Law, the Public-Private Partnership Law, the Privatisation law, the Commercial Companies Law have all been made to create the bottlenecks for investments.

Many incentives have been offered including, up to 100 percent foreign ownership, , tax exemption up to 30 years, competitive land and Service prices, Customs duty exemptions, integrated e-services and investor residency up to 10 years, he added.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Gynaecology, obstetrics clinics at Quriyat Hospital expanded

QURIYAT: The Ministry of Health on Tuesday celebrated the opening of the expansion of the gynaecology and obstetrics clinics at Quriyat Hospital in Muscat Governorate, under the patronage of Dr. Said Harib Al Lamki, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Health Affairs.

Dr. Saif bin Rashid Al Tamimi, Chairman of Quriyat Hospital, said: "Last year, the new physiotherapy department was opened, the maternity ward was refurbished, and the hospital was provided with some equipment, in cooperation with the private sector, including a physiotherapy device and an ultrasound device."

He added that the hospital enjoys great attention from the Directorate General of Health Services in Muscat Governorate to develop the hospital, whether in terms of expanding the building, medical equipment and medicines, raising the efficiency of the medical team and increasing services.

He noted that the hospital is constantly seeking to raise the efficiency of the medical team through courses at the hospital or governorate level in cooperation with the Oman Medical Specialty Board and the American Heart Association and with contributions from the private sector.

It is worth noting that Quriyat Hospital has witnessed a number of updates aimed at improving the quality of healthcare provided to patients and enhancing work efficiency, including the virtual emergency medicine project in its pilot phase with its direct link with the Royal Hospital, which will contribute to effective communication, and providing an ultrasound device for the emergency department to improve the quality of medical examinations and appropriate diagnosis, especially for emergency cases and cases of very serious injuries, in addition to providing a mobile incubator device for premature babies to facilitate the transfer of critical cases to referral hospitals in Muscat. -ONA

OMAN

Community awareness on the harmful effects of drugs

The campaign included public events and various awareness activities' that aim to educate society about drugs' risks and their negative effects and involve the community and those recovering from addiction

Times News Service

MUSCAT: As part of the efforts to spread community awareness on the harmful effects of narcotics and psychotropic substances, Salalah came first, Muttrah second and Rustaq won third place in the third edition of community competition that aims to reduce use of drugs and psychotropic substances.

Dr. Mohammed bin Saeed Al-Maamari, Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs, sponsored the ceremony in the presence of Dr. Hilal Ali Al Sabti,the Minister of Health, and their excellencies, secretaries and governors, with the participation of several representatives of governmental and private institutions. At the Mövenpick Hotel in Muscat, the national campaign to combat narcotics and psychotropic substances in Muttrah titled the slogan "We join together" to indicate that unity and combined individual, institutional, and voluntary efforts is the best way to achieve awareness and change to anti-drugs and build a healthy and safe society.

The campaign included public events and various awareness activities' that aim to educate society about drugs' risks and their negative effects and involve the community and those recovering from addiction.

Besides, organizing awareness seminars and workshops in schools, public councils, and mosques,and implementing training workshops to train cadres about drugs and smoking risks. Additionally, organizing mass events to community participation and those recovering, and supporting economic projects that provide job opportunities and sources of income for those recovering and their families.

The campaign included holding awareness exhibitions and awareness messages via multiple means. For example,a mobile awareness bus equipped with visual elements, explanatory explanations, and educational messages on screens in Muttrah Souq, which contributed to raise awareness of drugs' risk and avoid it.

Abdul Hamid Al Kharousi, Muttrah Deputy Wali and the Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Control Project Team's head, said"Today we celebrate a major achievement achieved because of joint efforts and cooperation, which is Muttrah gain second position in the competition to combat narcotics and psychotropic substances.

This success was achieved by the grace of parties' combined efforts , from government institutions and individuals to local organizations,who worked to educate society about drugs' dangers and their negative impact on individuals and society. He indicated this achievement reflects awareness in our society to combat this scourge that threatens our youth's future,and emphasized that Muttrah has proven its ability to be a role model for cooperation,which enhances the safe and healthy environment that it achieves.

He added: "We ask Allah to grant us all success to continue these efforts, and to always remain to face challenges and build a strong and cohesive society able to face that threatens its stability and security".

It is worth noting that in the community competition's edition 3, which aims to limit drugs and psychotropic substances, 28 wilayats participated in it. 19 projects qualified for the competition. Muscat Governorate participated in two projects representing Muttrah and Bausher.

A multi-sectoral work team from the Ministries of Health, Education, Social Development, the General Administration of the Control of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and the Executive Office of National Committee for Drug Prevention's members participated in the evaluation.

This competition aims to motivate community members and youth to do projects that reduce use of drugs in all the wilayats, in cooperation with local health committees.

The competition includes cultural, sports and entertainment activities that positively promote youth's healthy behaviours and energies. The competition includes field surveys and analytical research to enhance parents' abilities to identify addicts, with these interventions being evaluated every two years.

OMAN SCIENCE FESTIVAL 2024

Ministry of education signs 17 MoUs to support Oman Science Festival

The Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Education celebrated the signing of memoranda of understanding to support the activities of the Oman Science Festival 2024.

The signing ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr. Madiha bint Ahmed Al-Shaibaniya, Minister of Education, in the presence of Prof. Dr. Abdullah bin Khamis Ambosaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry for Education, Majid bin Said Al-Bahri, Undersecretary of the Ministry for Administrative and Financial Affairs, and CEOs of companies and institutions contributing to supporting the Oman Science Festival 2024.

Prof. Dr. Abdullah bin Khamis Ambosaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, delivered the Ministry's speech in which he said: "We live in a new era where science and technology are accelerating, in a way that improves the quality of life, expands the horizons of learning and education, develops the economy, simplifies operations, and enables easy and convenient access to information. Therefore, we must all join hands and cooperate so that we can catch up and benefit from these sciences and technologies. Our meeting today is a true translation of the fruitful cooperation between the institutions of the public and private sectors, and the support provided by the partners had a significant impact on the success of previous versions of this event. The previous successes of this prominent scientific event were based on two main topics: First, the generous support and backing of the private sector, and second, the firm belief of the young men and women of this dear nation, who had this festival in mind, so they planned it carefully and implemented it wonderfully."

The Ministry of Education signed 17 memoranda of understanding to support the activities of the Oman Science Festival 2024, where the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education signed the first pact with a number of companies and institutions that will provide support to the festival, namely: OQ Company, Oman Petroleum Development Company, Oman Energy Association (OPAL), Liquefied Natural Gas Development Corporation, Duqm Refinery Company, Occidental Oman, Al Yusr Foundation, and Oman Telecommunications Company (OmanTel). The Undersecretary of the Ministry for Administrative and Financial Affairs signed the second group of companies and institutions, namely: Shell Oman, Financial Services Regulatory Authority, Oman Environmental Services Holding Company (Be'ah), Vodafone, Mazoon Dairy Company, Al Safa Foods, Ansar Technology Company, Al Waha Water Company, and Atyab Company.

The fourth edition of the Science Festival is considered the ideal platform for innovation, passion, and experimentation. It is a mirror that reflects the ambition in the goals of Oman Vision 2040 and the National Innovation Strategy; to make the Sultanate of Oman a model destination and the best among (20) countries in the innovation index by 2040.

The festival will be launched on 4 November over an area of 12,000 metres at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Center.

More than 2,500 participants from 120 governmental and private entities are participating in the festival, and more than 500 activities are implemented during its eight days.

It is expected that 300,000 visitors will be visiting the exhibition.

The fourth edition of the Oman Science Festival aims to deliver science to students and members of society easily and in an interactive way that stimulates creative thinking, keeping pace with global trends based on spreading science, technology, changes, and expected future developments. It also aims to encourage students to realise the importance of science in life, urging them to innovate, enhancing their skills to integrate into the knowledge-based economy, and encouraging students to continue their education in scientific disciplines.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Training programme to develop educational supervisory skills

Times News Service

Muscat: The Ministry of Education, represented by the Directorate-General of Educational Supervision, implemented a training programme entitled: "Basics of Self-Assessment of School Performance" to develop supervisory skills.

The programme targeted supervisors, senior supervisors, and administrators from the Ministry's General Diwan at the Specialised Institute for Professional Training for Teachers."

The training programme highlighted the diagnostic procedures in educational supervision processes by presenting various working papers that revolved around diagnostic vocabulary (domain, criterion, indicator, and evidence), evidence formulation skills according to diagnostic indicators, and self-assessment tools.

Participants were trained on the methodology of supervisory teams, enhancing trends around partnership in group supervision, and skills and knowledge that improve employee performance in their field of work.

Trainees also underwent practical application, each according to their specialization, from different materials.

The programme aims to familiarise participants with the procedures of educational supervision teams and provide them with skills in school self-evaluation and the foundations for its follow-up; so that they can become familiar with the mechanisms for providing technical and administrative support to schools and employ self-evaluation tools and reports to improve school performance, and thus master the mechanisms and roles of external evaluation.

The professional development of senior supervisors and supervisors represents one of the basic starting points for applying the supervisory teams methodology. It is also an effective tool in translating the objectives of the methodology internally and externally. The skills of diagnosing the reality of schools are among the main pillars of the external evaluation process carried out by the Academic Accreditation Commission. Therefore, honing supervisors with these skills is reflected in the quality of the schools' self-evaluation.

IMPROVED INTERFACE

Inception launches next version of JAIS Chat app

Times News Service

ABU DHABI: Inception, a G42 company specialising in AI-native products, on Tuesday announced the integration of JAIS 70B, K2-Diamond-Chat and advanced audio services into the latest release of the JAIS Chat mobile app.

Building on the recent launch of the JAIS 70B model as part of 20 other JAIS models and trained on the world's largest Arabic dataset, JAIS Chat now offers Arabic speakers the choice of three AI model options when interacting with its new and improved chat interface.

JAIS 30B, a small and swift model ideal for fast response times; JAIS 70B, a powerful and precise model designed for enhanced accuracy; and the new K2-Diamond-Chat, a 65-billion parameter model that sets a new standard for mathematics and coding.

The K2-Diamond-Chat model enables users to tackle complex mathematical problems and manipulation of symbolic expressions such as algebraic simplification and differentiation.

Inception has launched the new K2 Diamond Chat in partnership with the Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI).

"We are enhancing our offerings to deliver breadth, capability, and performance to the Arabic speaking community. We want our most advanced Arabic bilingual model, JAIS 70B, to be accessible to as many people as possible, wherever and however they use generative AI capabilities; on their mobile, on their laptop, through speech or text, at work and in school. With this collaborated model launch with MBZUAI, we are focused on training stronger foundational models in specialised domains. By combining our strengths in AI research and applied AI, we will drive speed and focus on building AI native products that can simplify data-rich segments within business and sector domains. We will continue to evolve JAIS as the leading LLM for Arabic-speaking nations to ensure that our models remain at the forefront of innovation offering quality and performance." said Andrew Jackson, Acting, chief executive officer (CEO) of Inception.

"The advancements we are announcing today mark a significant milestone in our mission to develop AI solutions that benefit society. Through our partnership with Inception, we will align closely around the most important applications of generative AI to create innovative and impactful language and domain models," said Eric Xing, Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence President and University Professor.

This update also features Inception's latest audio models, offering automatic transcription of Arabic speech (in its various dialects) into text, and converting text into natural sounding speech.

In line with Inception's commitment to equitable AI, the JAIS Chat app is available for free on iOS and Android platforms, and on https://jais.inceptionai.ai, ensuring that the company's advanced AI technology is accessible to all.

STRATEGIC EXPANSION

Wasl Li opens seven new branches across Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: As part of its ambitious vision to achieve excellence in logistics services and strengthen its presence in the Omani market, Wasl Li has announced the opening of seven new branches across various governorates of the Sultanate.

This expansion reaffirms the company's commitment to providing innovative, high-quality services that meet the growing needs of customers in different regions, all while supporting the ambitious goals of Oman Vision 2040.

Since its inception, Wasl Li has built a strong reputation as a leading company in logistics services, committed to delivering a distinguished customer experience based on speed, efficiency, and quality.

With this latest expansion, which brings the total number of the company's branches to 18 across the Sultanate, Wasl Li once again underscores its commitment to exceeding customer expectations while maintaining the highest standards of quality, in alignment with Oman Vision 2040's goals for achieving comprehensive and sustainable development across various sectors.

This latest expansion represents a pivotal step in Wasl Li's long-term strategy, as the company strives for sustainable growth that enhances its market position and aligns with Oman Vision 2040's focus on developing logistics infrastructure and improving service efficiency. This move reflects the company's vision, which places customer satisfaction at the forefront of its priorities, constantly seeking to provide innovative logistics solutions that effectively meet customer needs.

The opening of these new branches comes in response to increasing market demands and reaffirms "Wasl Li's" commitment to delivering its services in every corner of the Sultanate. Whether it's related to parcel delivery or comprehensive logistics services, the company aims to be the first choice for customers in the Sultanate, accompanying the aspirations of Oman Vision 2040 to achieve a qualitative leap in the services provided to the Omani society.

AL MOUJ MUSCAT

Sophisticated infrastructure

< FROM A1

Tenants will also benefit from the development's sophisticated infrastructure, including advanced telecommunications and IT systems, as well as its proximity to major road networks and Muscat International Airport.

Additionally, the Business Park's location within Al Mouj Muscat provides access to world-class lifestyle, leisure, and business support services, enhancing the overall working environment.

Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender committee of **Ministry of Social Development** hereby announces the following tender :-

Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtainmentof tender document	Last date for tender submission	Tender Document Price (non-retundable)	
					Small and Medium companies	Local companies
353/2024	Implementing an awareness campaign on family issues	Companies specialized in the field of Television, film and radio production services registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the excellent, first degree, second, third, fourth	Satrurday 21-09-2024 02:00 PM	Thursday 03-10-2024 10:00 AM	10 R.O	25 R.O
354/2024	Implementation of the second edition of the intensive specialized training program in the field of marital counseling	Companies specialized in the field of Education, training and human resources development registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in the excellent, first degree, second, third, fourth	Satrurday 21-09-2024 02:00 PM	Thursday 03-10-2024 10:00 AM	10 R.O	25 R.O

- Specialized Companies, registered with the **Tender Board** may obtain the Tender documents at the Tender Board e-tendering digital portal link **(https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om),** on Wednesday 11/09 /2024
- For Inquiry, please contact through the e-tendering website **(reg@tenderboard.gov.om)** **Tel. (24402200)**

"The lowest or any other tender shall not be binding to the Ministry"

www.mosd.gov.om

TENDERS ADVERTISEMENT

Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) Announce the following Tender:

SR. NO.	TENDER NO.	TENDER NAME	LAST DATE FOR OBTAINING THE DOCUMENTS	BID SUBMISSION DATE	REQUIREMENTS FROM PARTICIPATORS	TENDER DOCUMENT'S FEES (INCLUDING VAT) (RO)
1	100/2024	Corporate Agreement for On-Call Vehicle Leasing Services for 5-Years in Muscat and Dhofar Governorates.	25/09/2024	22/10/2024	Local Companies with Experience in Same Field, Have A Valid Commercial Registration.	**26/250**

Participation	Interested Companies may obtain Tender Document with the necessity Apply on E-tendering.
Buying the Tender	By E-Tendering System.
Fees	Against non-refundable payment as mentioned above against each set of document. (Payment Through Bank Transfer), SMEs are exempted from tender's fees.
The deadline for clarification	Before (21) Days from bid submission date.
Submission	The submission of hard copy will be only for Bid Bond & other documents by E-Tendering.
Terms and conditions	• Specifying the name of the Company or whatever refers to in the Bid Guarantee Envelope. • The bid should be valid for not less than (90) days from bid submission date. • The Tenderer should enclose a bank guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of 1% of the bid value and should be valid for (90) days from bid submission date, addressed to Oman Electricity Transmission Company (SAOC). Small & Medium Enterprises are exempted from the submission of 1% of the bid bond. • Any bid not comply with the required guarantee, will not be accepted. • OETC is not bound to accept the lowest or any other offers.
Offer	The bid bond should be submitted in Tender Box No. (1) at the company's building before 11:00 am on the assigned date for submission of the Tenders.
Company Address	**Muscat - Al Mawaleh** **Road No: 2153 - Building No. 423 0 Block No: 321** **Contact Details: 91777378**
Email Website	**tenders@omangrid.com** **www.omangrid.com / link of E-Tendering System** **https://www.omangrid.com/en/Pages/Services.aspx**

OETCOMAN

WORLD

196 environmental defenders killed last year globally: NGO

Latin America remained the most dangerous region of the world for environmental activists, with 85% of the killings occurring there

BOGOTÁ: A recorded total of 196 environmental activists and land defenders from around the world were killed in 2023, watchdog Global Witness said Tuesday, with Colombia ranking as the deadliest place.

Latin America remained the most dangerous region of the world for environmental activists, with 85% of the killings occurring there.

Colombia saw 79 such murders in 2023 — the highest recorded for an individual country since the organization began its annual review in 2012. Brazil, Honduras and Mexico were next in line.

The report also alerted readers of a "crackdown on environmentalists across the UK, Europe and the US," warning that "laws are increasingly being weaponised against defenders."

Colombia and climate activists

his is Colombia's second straight year of highest killings worldwide. Yet, it will host this year's COP16 meeting to discuss the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Most of the murders of activists in the South American country occurred in the southwestern regions.

Late on Monday, the Colombian government released a statement, saying it was "dishonorable" to top the Global Witness list.

"The national government recognises the serious situation that is derived from socio-ecological conflicts associated with drug trafficking, extractivist practices connected to illicit economies and the reconfiguration of the armed conflict," it said.

"The figure is very embarrassing for us in the country," said Astrid Torres, coordinator for Somos Defensores, a Colombian human rights group. She said protecting the environment and its defenders was also the responsibility of state institutions like prosecutors.

Where environmentalists face persecution

Central America has emerged as one of the most dangerous places in the world for defenders, the report said, adding that Honduras had the highest number of killings per capita in 2023.

"Governments cannot stand idly by; they must take decisive action to protect defenders and to address the underlying drivers of violence against them," Laura Furones, Lead Author and Senior Advisor to the Land and Environmental Defenders Campaign at Global Witness said.

"We cannot afford to, nor should we tolerate, losing any more lives."

Furones said the report's findings were conservative and likely incomplete.

Apart from lethal attacks, the report highlighted other actions taken against environmental and land defenders. It spoke of "enforced disappearances and abductions," tactics used in both the Philippines and Mexico in particular. The criminalization of activists is another tactic used to silence them, across the world, it said.

"We are facing difficulties in returning to our homes and communities. We are still experiencing surveillance, red-tagging, and intimidation," said Jonila Castro, a Filipino activist who was abducted by the Philippines military in 2023 and currently facing criminalization, the report said.

In Africa, Global Witness recorded four deaths but warned the figure was likely a "gross underestimate" due to difficulty in collecting information.

In the UK and US, the report pointed out harsher legislation, noting penalties for protesters and activists, along with "draconian levels of surveillance." — DW

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BILATERAL RELATIONS

India and UAE discuss ways to boost trade ties

NEW DELHI: Indian Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, met with UAE Minister of State for Foreign Trade, Thani Al Zeyoudi to discuss ways to enhance trade relations between the two nations through collaborative efforts.

The meeting focused on exploring opportunities under the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

Piyush Goyal shared some pictures of the meeting on X and stated, "Delighted to meet my good friend H.E. Dr. @ThaniAlZeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade, UAE. Discussions focused on exploring opportunities under the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and advancing bilateral trade relations through collaborative efforts."

Meanwhile, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled Bin Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan is on his first official visit to India, he arrived in New Delhi on September 8 and was received by Piyush Goyal. He was also accorded a ceremonial welcome after he landed here in the national capital.

Further, the Commerce Minister also shared the post of the Abu Dhabi crown prince's arrival and stated, "Marking a new chapter in our strategic partnership Honoured to welcome Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi HH Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to India on behalf of PM @NarendraModi ji."

On September 9, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and held a meeting at Hyderabad House in the national capital.

Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and other officials were present in the meeting. — ANI

TAX LOOPHOLES EXPLOITED

European Court of Justice rules against Apple and Google

BRUSSELS: The European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled on Tuesday that Google had violated antitrust laws and that Apple needed to pay the European Union €13 billion ($14.3 billion) in back taxes. Both cases are seen as an effort by Brussels to close tax loopholes exploited by the US tech giants.

"Ireland granted Apple unlawful aid, which Ireland is required to recover," ECJ judges said, referring to the company's deal with Dublin over taxes.

The case against Google dates back to 2017, when the EU accused Google of prioritising its own Google Shopping links in searches. The bloc has argued this violates its antitrust regulations.

Google was fined €2.4 billion, but had appealed to the ECJ, which has now upheld the fine.

"In the light of the characteristics of the market and the specific circumstances of the case, Google's conduct was discriminatory and did not fall within the scope of competition on the merits," judges said.

In a response, Google said that they had already made changes back in 2017 to comply with EU regulations.

Apple's long bitter feud with the EU

Europe's case against Apple began in 2016, over allegations it received a sweetheart tax deal with authorities in Ireland, the location of the company's European headquarters.

The EU has long demanded that Apple pay back billions of taxes for two Irish subsidies that the company argues are primarily taxable in the United States. Arguing that they were being subjected to double taxation, and that the situation did not preclude state aid from Dublin, Apple initially won a ruling against the European Commission to annul the payment order.

The Commission first appealed that decision in 2020, prompting four more years of legal wrangling before today's ECJ verdict in their favor.

Both the judgments against Google and Apple are final and cannot be overturned.

EU and Apple reactions

The EU antitrust chief Margrethe Vestager welcomed the judgments. "Today is a huge win for European citizens and tax justice," she posted on X of the Apple ruling, also praising the Google judgment as a big win for digital fairness.

Apple, however, said in a statement: "The European Commission is trying to retroactively change the rules and ignore that, as required by international tax law, our income was already subject to taxes in the US."

This was not the last time that Apple found itself in the EU's crosshairs. Most recently, the commission hit Apple with an antitrust fine of 1.8 billion euros in March for abusing its dominant position in the market for the distribution of music streaming apps.

Separately, the EU's sweeping Digital Markets Act has forced companies to change some of their practices in Europe. The commission has opened various investigations under the DMA into tech giants, including Apple, Alphabet and Meta. — Agencies

DRINA RIVER

More migrants taking the Balkan route once again through Bosnia

KOZLUK: It's a warm, sunny, late summer day on the Drina River near the village of Kozluk in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Although the river can reach a depth of up to 1.5 metres (almost 5 feet) in places, it is mostly only knee-deep around here, which means it's almost possible to wade from one bank to the other.

Three young men have just emerged from the river; their shorts and T-shirts are still wet.

"We just swam over," one of them tells DW. He says his name is Aman and that he is 20 years old. "We saw that no one was on the other side, so we set off. In some places, the river bed is dry. We got wet, but the sun is shining, so we'll dry off quickly," he says, smiling. All three laugh.

Well-worn refugee path

The three young men come from Morocco and are on their way to western Europe. They travelled first to Turkey and then to Greece. From there, they crossed over into North Macedonia and on to Serbia. Until just a few days ago, they were in a reception facility near Belgrade.

The Drina River is part of what is known as the"Balkan route" used by many migrants en route to northwestern Europe. This land route usually begins in Turkey and then winds up through the Balkans through either Bulgaria or Greece.

Volunteers on hand to help

Here, at the Drina River, which forms a large part of the border between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the three young men waited until the coast was clear and for a good opportunity to cross. "No problem, no problem," they say at the end of almost every sentence.

One of the three sustained minor injuries to his legs while crossing the river. A volunteer from a Bosnian Red Cross team that happened to be in the area when they came out of the river, bandages the young man's right knee.

The Red Cross team patrols the river bank regularly on the lookout for migrants in need of food or medical assistance.

Sometimes, says team leader Mladen Majstorovic, they are called on by the border police.

His colleague, Darko Jovanovic, says that the Red Cross team treated a total of 800 refugees here and handed out almost 3,000 meals in the first eight months of the year.

Migrants have drowned in the river

Every day, dozens of migrants cross illegally into Bosnia along this section of river. Hardly anyone stops them.

This part of the border is patrolled by an insufficient number of Bosnian border guards. Hundreds — perhaps even thousands — of guards would be needed to patrol the entire region.

The situation is so dramatic that at some border crossings, there is only one officer processing all entries and departures at a time.

Despite claims to the contrary, the Balkan route was never entirely shut down. Indeed it has been particularly busy again for quite some time now — especially along the Drina.

There have been a number of tragedies on the route in recent years. The last one took place just a few weeks ago when at least ten migrants drowned in the Drina close to the Serbian town of Ljubovija on August 22 when a completely overcrowded inflatable boat capsized.

The people were apparently crammed onto the boat by human traffickers. Eighteen people managed to save themselves.

'It all seems organised'

Nihad Suljic has also noticed that the number of migrants at the Drina has risen sharply in recent months.

In addition to his regular work in the eastern Bosnian city of Tuzla, the 34-year-old is also a human rights activist who helps stranded migrants by providing them with the bare necessities.

Suljic is well known in Bosnia because he helped set up a cemetery for migrants who had been found dead in the country.

"When it comes to migration, Bosnia is once again the center of attention," Suljic told DW. "But unlike in the pandemic years and the period immediately preceding it, the human traffickers now seem to be perfectly integrated into the structures."

After crossing the border, migrants used to walk in small groups to the reception facilities or straight on towards Croatia, says Suljic, adding that migrants are now rarely seen on the streets, because the reception centers are all full. "It all seems to be perfectly organized," he says.

Migrants keep out of sight

Miroslav Radisic says much the same thing. He owns a guesthouse only a few meters from the Sepak crossing on the Bosnian-Serbian border, about 20 kilometres (12.4 miles) downstream from the city of Zvornik in Bosnia.

Radisic says that business with the refugees is booming, that everything is interconnected and everyone in the region knows it.

According to Radisic, taxi drivers wait right outside his guesthouse and negotiate with arriving migrants about prices.

"You can't get any sleep around here, with taxis coming and going all the time," he complains. "Then there are the sirens blaring. People fight over the refugees: Sometimes ten refugees arrive and 20 taxi drivers are waiting for them here."

Radisic is standing underneath the bridge over the Drina that leads to Serbia, explaining how migrants cross the border on the underside of the bridge.

"They climb onto the steel girders under the bridge and abseil down a rope hanging down on our side that no one removes — not even the officers here at the border."

When asked why this is the case, Radisic says that the border will only be hermetically patrolled when the border police get enough personnel. — DW

HISTORIC TRADITION

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince plants sapling at Rajghat

NEW DELHI: Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Monday planted an amaltas (Cassia fistula) sapling at Rajghat, becoming the third-generation leader from the UAE's ruling family to do so.

This marks the first time in the history of Rajghat that three generations of leaders from a single nation have planted trees honouring the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, signifying the deep-rooted and growing relationship between the India and the UAE.

Further, in a post on X, Ministry of External Affairs spokeperson Randhir Jaiswal stated, "In the footsteps of the Mahatma for a greener planet: Continuing a historic tradition, Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, planted a sapling at Rajghat today, highlighting the India-UAE sustainability connect and Mahatma's universal teachings."

Jaiswal also wrote, "He is the third generation leader from the UAE to plant a sapling at Rajghat. Earlier, former Prez Sheikh Zayed and Prez @mohamedbinzayed had planted saplings here."

India and the UAE share a multifaceted relationship, of which sustainability partnership forms a key pillar. This special bond is highlighted through a unique tradition of tree planting by UAE leaders at Rajghat in New Delhi.

In 1992, Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founding father of the UAE, planted an Amaltas (Cassia Fistula) sapling during his visit to India. — ANI

Israeli forces commit new massacre in Gaza, 40 dead

Medics said that 40 slain people and 60 wounded were recovered after three hours of recovery operations for the victims of the Mawasi Khan Yunis massacre

GAZA: Israeli occupation forces at dawn on Tuesday committed a new massacre in the Gaza Strip after they launched a violent airstrike targeting the area of the displaced people's tents in Mawasi Khan Yunis, southwest of the Strip.

The massacre, which took place near the British Hospital at the entrance to the Mawasi area, resulted in the killing and injury of dozens of civilians, including a large number of children and women, while a large number of citizens are still missing.

Medics said that 40 slain people and 60 wounded others were recovered after three hours of recovery operations for the victims of the Mawasi Khan Yunis massacre.

The Civil Defence said that "we are facing one of the most heinous massacres since the beginning of the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, and that entire families disappeared in the sand due to the concussion missiles."

According to press and local reports, five missiles were used in the attack, causing total destruction to the tents and digging nine meters deep into the ground, which made it more difficult for rescue and medical teams to reach the victims.

The area is seeing chaos, with an intense presence of Israeli reconnaissance aircraft flying over the site, amid a complete power outage and fires resulting from the bombing.

Eyewitnesses and paramedics from the Palestinian Red Crescent said that medical teams are facing major challenges in retrieving bodies and the injured due to the massive destruction and deep holes.

They also added that a large number of ambulances transported the slain people and the injured to field hospitals and nearby medical centers, while rescue teams continue to search for the missing.

This bombing comes within the framework of the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, where the Strip has been subjected to intensive raids by the occupation army since October 7, amid catastrophic humanitarian conditions.

UN Secretary-General calls the killing and destruction in Gaza the worst he's seen

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that the destruction and killing in the Gaza Strip is the worst he has seen during his current term in office, which he assumed in 2017.

He added, in a press interview, that the United Nations has offered to monitor any possible ceasefire in Gaza, recalling the presence of the "United Nations Truce Supervision Organization" in the Middle East (UNTSO).

He pointed out that Israel's acceptance of this offer is "a weak possibility", so he described the involvement of the United Nations in any role in the future of Gaza as "unrealistic".

The UN Secretary-General stressed the necessity and importance of an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

He affirmed that he has never witnessed such a level of killing and destruction as witnessed in Gaza in the past few months.

He stressed that the two-state solution is the "only way" to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that there is "no other alternative" to it.

Australia says it will deny entry to extremist Israelis

Australia has renewed its call on Israel to accept the UN Security Council's ceasefire resolution in Gaza.

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong said on Tuesday in a post on X that there is an "urgent" need for a ceasefire in Gaza.

She added that she is concerned about the escalation of violence in the West Bank and the "provocative" actions of far-right Israeli ministers.

Wong explained that this situation has also weakened the possibility of achieving lasting peace.

She stated that her country's government will not grant travel visas to Australia to Israeli settlers who seize Palestinian lands.

"Ongoing illegal settlement activity and settler violence undermines the prospects of a just and enduring peace," she said.

"Australia has imposed sanctions on Israeli extremists and will deny anyone identified as an extremist settler a visa to travel to Australia."

Since October 7, 2023, Israel has been waging a devastating war on Gaza that has left about 136,000 dead and wounded, most of them children and women, and more than 10,000 missing, amid massive destruction and deadly famine. — WAFA

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Can European cities lead on climate action?

BRUSSELS: Cities are climate change's engine rooms — consuming 65% of the planet's energy and producing 70% of the greenhouse gas emissions responsible for heating up the planet.

And they are often one of its biggest casualties: residents swelter in dense, concrete environments due to the "heat island effect".

By 2050, urban populations are expected to double, meaning the climate footprint of cities could balloon unless the way we plan, power and move around them is reconfigured.

112 cities are hoping to rise to the challenge

As part of an EU initiative, 112 cities are hoping to rise to the challenge.

100 from across the European Union and 12 from associated countries such as the United Kingdom and Turkey were selected to receive support in their efforts to rapidly reduce fossil fuel use and ensure any unavoidable emissions can be absorbed by nature or removed via carbon capture technologies. In other words, to reach net zero by 2030.

By comparison most countries around the world are falling short of the 45% reduction in emissions that scientists say are needed by the end of the decade if the world is to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.

Mission cities receive technical help and support in attracting investment. They are also encouraged to develop detailed roadmaps, which the EU estimates will require an estimated €650 billion (over $700 billion) in investments, mostly from the private sector, to achieve.

Thomas Osdoba, program director of NetZeroCities, an EU-funded project supporting the cities mission, says many of those selected share similar challenges. These include old buildings that are difficult to retrofit, car-centric urban planning, limited renewable infrastructure as well as the constraints of national policies and slow investment cycles.

Helsinki closes coal plants

However, Osdoba highlights the Finnish capital, Helsinki, as a leading example of turning climate ambitions into reality.

While Finland has committed to climate neutrality by 2035, Helsinki is aiming to reach this in 2030 by an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. So far, the city has almost halved emissions since 1990.

As is the case for most cities, heating and transport are the main sources of Helsinki's emissions. Over the next year, after closing the second of its two coal plants, the Finnish capital is set to slash its heating emissions and switch to keeping the city warm through a combination of electric boilers, bioenergy and heat pumps

The energy company in charge of district heating is owned by Helsinki, and the decision to close plants illustrates how "agile" cities can be in climate action, explained Hanna Wesslin, climate director of the city of Helsinki. The capital is also aiming to tackle transport, the second biggest emission source, by promoting electric vehicle use and developing the charging network, as well extending its public tramway system.

Free public transport for youth in Porto

In Porto, a coastal city in northwest Portugal, changing attitudes towards public transport is a big focus, explained Filipe Araujo, the city's vice-president responsible for the environment and climate transition office. Transport makes up 40% of the city's emissions.

Araujo said the biggest investments over coming years will be in mobility, including expanding the metro system with two new lines and making 40% of public buses electric by 2027.

He added that reducing the cost of a monthly transport pass to €30 and making it free for people under 23 has had a huge impact, doubling the number of 13–18-year-olds using public transport in recent years.Porto has attempted to reduce its energy consumption. Switching to LEDs in street lighting, for example, has more than halved energy use. And while overall, Portugal generated a record 60% of its electricity from renewables last year, Araujo said their goal is "to produce much more energy in the city."

He said most public buildings such as schools and libraries now have solar panels, and the city is encouraging the private sector to further invest in solar by offering property tax benefits.

Porto is also investing in ensuring all social housing has solar on its rooftops so it can produce its own energy, Araujo added. "This one is very important for us because it also tackles energy poverty."

Millions of people across Europe are unable to afford enough energy to adequately power basic services in their homes such as heating, hot water and lighting.

Greening homes and streets in Leuven, Belgium

Leuven, Belgium, may be one of the smaller mission cities but is advancing quickly on a plan already 10 years in development, says Osdoba.

Jessie Van Couwenberghe, leader of Leuven's Climate Neutral mission says the city has worked hard to engage all elements of society so there is a sense of ownership in its plans.

As heating buildings is currently the biggest source of energy consumption in Leuven, the city is prioritizing retrofits to curb energy use and boost renewables. As part of this Leuven has created a "Climate House", which the public can visit for information on renovating their homes, including advice on where to find subsidies.

And while massive emissions cuts are needed, it is also addressing what is happening street by street.

For local communities this includes grants for projects related to nature-based solutions and asking the public to suggest areas for so-called depaving, which is the process of replacing concrete and asphalt surfaces with carbon absorbing plants and soil.

Will cities be able to do it?

But with only a few years left and much of the funding yet to be invested, how realistic are these goals?

Osdoba is optimistic a good number will hit net zero by 2030, and those that don't will be much closer to it than they would have otherwise.

Warsaw, one of five Polish cities on the EU mission, is a case in point. "Frankly, it's impossible for us to be climate neutral by 2030," said Jacek Kisiel, deputy director of Warsaw's air protection and climate policy department, explaining the city is reliant on a state-owned heating network powered by fossil fuels, which continue to produce most of Poland's energy. — DW

ABDOMINAL SURGERY

Princess Kate has completed chemotherapy treatment

LONDON: Princess of Wales Kate Middleton on Monday revealed that she has successfully completed her chemotherapy treatment.

Notably, in the month of March, Kate Middleton posted a video message on her social media in which she revealed that she underwent major abdominal surgery in January, which was successful. But, the tests after the operation detected the presence of cancer.

On Monday, Kate Middleton posted a video message on her social media and said, "A message from Catherine, The Princess of Wales. As the summer comes to an end, I cannot tell you what a relief it is to have finally completed my chemotherapy treatment."

She added, "The last nine months have been incredibly tough for us as a family. Life as you know it can change in an instant and we have had to find a way to navigate the stormy waters and road unknown."

Describing the cancer journey as "complex," the Princess of Wales further said, "The cancer journey is complex, scary and unpredictable for everyone, especially those closest to you. With humility, it also brings you face to face with your own vulnerabilities in a way you have never considered before, and with that, a new perspective on everything."

She added, "This time has above all reminded William and me to reflect and be grateful for the simple yet important things in life, which so many of us often take for granted. Of simply loving and being loved."

Kate Middleton expressed her determination to prioritise her health and wellbeing, stating that her primary focus will now be on maintaining her cancer-free status. "Doing what I can to stay cancer-free is now my focus. Although I have finished chemotherapy, my path to healing and full recovery is long and I must continue to take each day as it comes," she said.

Expressing her enthusiasm to returning to Public life, Kate Middleton said that she will be looking forward to undertaking public engagements in the future.

She said, "To all those who are continuing their own cancer journey - I remain with you, side by side, hand in hand. Out of darkness, can come light, so let that light shine bright." — ANI

SPORTS

Heartbreak for Oman as they go down 3-1 to South Korea

The visitors drew first blood in the 10th minute when Hwang Hee-Chan beat Oman custodian Ibrahim Al Mukhaini

MUSCAT: It was another heartbreak for Oman as they went down fighting to South Korea 3-1 in their Group B third round match of Asian Qualifiers-Road to 2026 at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex on Tuesday evening.

Days after narrowly losing to Iraq in Basra [1-0], the Red Warriors put up another brave display in front of their home fans but the experienced South Koreans managed to eke out a thrilling win with two late goals coming through Son Heung-Min and Joo Min-Kyu.

The scoreline certainly doesn't reflect the gallant performance of the hosts.

Earlier, Oman, coached by Jaroslav Silhavy rallied from an early goal to find the equaliser minutes before halftime.

The visitors drew first blood in the 10th minute when Hwang Hee-Chan beat Oman custodian Ibrahim Al Mukhaini.

Minutes before the interval, Oman drew parity as under pressure Jung Seung-Hyun slotted an own goal, deflecting a shot from Ahmed Al Khamisi.

Spurred by the equaliser, the hosts went for the elusive winner only to be thwarted by Korean defenders. South Korea then managed to pierce the hosts defence twice late into the match as Red Warriors looked for an equaliser.

First it was experienced Son finding the target in the 82nd minute and then Joo made it 3-1 in the dying minutes of the injury time.

The win meant South Korea picked their first full three points in the group after their earlier opening match draw against Palestine while Oman are yet to open their account.

UPCOMING TEST SERIES

Former Pakistan cricketer Basit Ali predicts 'big centuries' from Virat

NEW DELHI: Former Pakistan cricketer Basit Ali has predicted that stalwart batter Virat Kohli will score some "big centuries" in India's upcoming Test series against Bangladesh and New Zealand.

Virat will return to Test format for the first time since featuring for India during the South Africa tour in January this year. He missed out on India's home Test series against England due to the birth of his son Akaay. Since then, he has gone through an underwhelming T20 World Cup and Sri Lanka tour and will be keen to return to find his rich vein of form. Basit believes fans will witness Virat hitting the three-digit mark against Bangladesh and New Zealand.

"In the England series, Virat wasn't there. He didn't perform well in the Sri Lanka series. But in the Bangladesh and the New Zealand series, you will see big centuries (from Virat). Not 110 or 115, you may see a 200-run knock from him," Basit said on his YouTube channel.

During India's successful unbeaten run in the T20 World Cup, Virat finished the tournament with 151 runs in eight matches at an average of 18.87.

During India's surprising 2-0 ODI away series defeat against Sri Lanka, Virat just like the rest of the batters was exposed in front of spinners. In three ODIS Virat could garner a mere 58 runs at an average of 19.33.

The two-match series against Bangladesh will begin on September 19 in Chennai, and the second Test will kick off on September 27 in Kanpur.

India announced the squad for the first Test against Bangladesh on Sunday. Skipper Rohit Sharma, young top-order batters Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill and Virat will form a formidable batting pair for India. KL Rahul made his return to the Test set-up after missing out on the bulk of the England Test series due to an injury. Dynamic wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has returned to Test cricket for the first time since his life-threatening accident in December 2022. -ANI

RALF RANGNICK

Austria head coach takes a dig at Manchester United

NEW DELHI [INDIA]: Austria head coach Ralf Rangnick took a dig at his former side, Manchester United, by reaffirming his stance that he made two years ago about the club needing an "open heart operation."

In the 2021-22 season, Rangnick took charge of Manchester United on an interim basis after Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was sacked from his position as head coach. Even though Rangnick's stint lasted for six months, his time at the club was marked with various remarks he made about the players and the management.

During that season, when Manchester United endured a 4-0 thrashing at the hands of Liverpool, Rangnick had said, "The good thing, one of the few, is it's crystal clear. You don't even need glasses to see the problems. Now it's only about how you can solve them. Not minor cosmetic things. This is an open-heart operation. If everyone realises this has to happen and works together, it doesn't need to take years." -ANI

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Reliable International Automotive LLC. C.R. No. 1707183, Wattayah: 24579846/47: Al Mawelah: 99473174: Barka: 92190747: Nizwa: 99874368: Sohar: 92837722: Sur: 25546190: Rustaq: 92869449: Salalah: 23211460
Saturday Showroom Timing: Muscat, Al Mawelah, Barka, Sohar & Salalah from 9.00 AM to 1.30 PM

®Standard offer of 1 yr. comprehensive Insurance, 30,000Km/ 3 yrs. (Whichever is earlier) Service & Registration will available on select models/MY. Insurance applicable would be given to the extent of a private vehicle only, if applicable. Additional premium as per insurance norm wouk have to be paid by the buyer. For models where Insurance is offered as a benefit, additional cash gift can be availed by customer in lieu of Insurance. Insurance benefit is NOT applicable on 25MY of K5, Sportage & Carnival models, 24MY models of Picanto, Cerato, K5, K8, Carens, Sportage, Sorento PE. Service offer benefit is not applicable on EV model, Registration benefit is not applicable on 25MY models of Carnival & Sportage & 24MY models of Picanto, Cerato, Sportage & Carens.*Buy a Kia and Scratch an Assured coupon and Win Gold coins (10 grms/24 carat), iPhone 15 & Chance to upgrade extra service from 30,000Km to 50,000Km (or) 80,000Km (or) 100,000Km (or) 200,000Km. Selection coupon will be given one time & cannot be changed once finalized by the Kia buyer. The offer is not valid on EV models. All EV customers will be offered an assured Gift of Iphone 15. All the above benefits not applicable on Ministry, Bulk fleet, Corporate & RAC deals. Scheme Period: 25th AUG 2024 to 23rd OCT 2024. Vehicles may also include some Dealer Installed Accessories. Pictures & Colors are indicative. For further details, please visit your nearest Kia showroom.

OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by November 2024 reaching $71.84, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 48 cents from the price of Monday, which was $72.32. - ONA

MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 4,748.38 points, up by 0.07% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.25% at 434.79 points. Al Madina Investments, up 3.77%, was the top gainer while Oman Fisheries, down 13.51%, was the top loser.

AIIB delegation explores project financing, cooperation in Sezad

Chairman of Opaz discussed enhancing cooperation with the AIIB to leverage the bank's mechanisms for financing new projects in Sezad

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) welcomed a delegation from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) on Monday.

The delegation met with Sheikh Dr Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz), Eng. Ahmed bin Ali Akaak, CEO of Sezad, and other senior officials from the Authority.

During the meeting, the efforts of the authority to implement several infrastructure projects in Sezad were reviewed. These projects aim to facilitate local and foreign investment in the region, which has directly contributed to attracting numerous local and international projects and increasing interest in investment in Duqm.

Al Sunaidy also discussed enhancing cooperation with the AIIB to leverage the bank's mechanisms for financing new projects in Sezad. This includes projects related to renewable energy, green industries, logistics and supply chains, and those aimed at improving the quality of life, including tourism and service projects.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank delegation praised the growth observed in Duqm over the past years since their last visit to the region in 2019, expressing their interest in strengthening cooperation with the authority and the bank's intention to expand its operations in Duqm.

During their visit to Sezad, the delegation reviewed several projects in the region, including the commercial quay at Port of Duqm, which the bank helped finance, as well as the fishing port, the seafood and food processing zone. The Sultanate of Oman is one of the contributing countries to the AIIB.

STATE AUDIT INSTITUTION

SAI Deputy Chairman leads delegation at 25th GCC Audit and Accounting Meeting

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Ahmed bin Salim Al-Rujaibi, Deputy Chairman of the State Audit Institution, headed the SAI delegation to the 25th Meeting of the Undersecretaries of the GCC Audit and Accounting Bureaus, which was launched from Doha, Qatar, via video conference on Tuesday, September 10.

The Undersecretaries of the member SAIs and bureaus, the Assistant Secretary General for Legislative and Legal Affairs and a number of SAI specialists participated in the meeting.

Several topics were reviewed and discussed during the meeting, most notably the applied study on the results and recommendations of the winning research in the GCC Competition for the Research and Studies in the Field of Auditing, in a way that enhances the role of applied research and the implementation of the recommendations contained therein in improving the institutional performance.

Additionally, the meeting discussed the mechanisms for benefiting from the issued manuals and views on their development in order to achieve efficiency in implementing audit tasks, as well as reviewing a number of draft professional manuals prepared by a sub-group of specialists in the member SAIs, namely the updated Financial Audit Manual (General Manual) and the Manual of Audit of Disaster and Crisis Management.

The meeting also included a review of a plan to enhance cooperation and partnership with the INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI), in light of SAI's undertaking to implement this initiative within the GCC Training Strategic Plan.

OMAN INVESTMENT BANK

GCC Weekly Monitor launched

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Following its establishment in Q1 2024 as Oman's first dedicated corporate investment bank, Oman Investment Bank (OIB) is marking another milestone with the launch of its GCC Weekly Monitor. This new resource is accessible through www.oib.om.

The website will serve as a key information platform for clients, reflecting OIB's continued development into a full-service investment bank and its role as an internationally aligned partner in Oman's dynamic and competitive economy.

This comprehensive resource offers professional investors and corporate clients a detailed snapshot of market movements, valuation data, and news across Oman, the GCC, and key emerging markets, covering equities, fixed income, and commodities.

Commenting on the launch, Akin Tuzun, Head of Research at OIB, noted: "This, our first product, reflects our commitment to providing high-quality, independent research and analysis tools. We hope it will positively contribute to our clients' investment processes and investment outcomes. We look forward to introducing our company research, macroeconomic analysis, and strategic insights over time."

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Al Madina Investments, up 3.77%, was the top gainer while Oman Fisheries, down 13.51%, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,748.38 points, up by 0.07% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.25% at 434.79 points. Al Madina Investments, up 3.77%, was the top gainer while Oman Fisheries, down 13.51%, was the top loser. Shares of Jazeera Steel Products were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 546 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 2.25 million, with more than 10.99 million shares changing hands. Out of 45 traded securities, 13 advanced, 13 declined, and 19 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for RO 149K while GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 136K, followed by foreign investors for RO 13K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,780.40 points, up 0.22%. Prices of Al Madina Investments, Oman & Emirates Investment, National Bank Oman, Al Anwar Investment, Global Financial Investments were up by 3.77%, 2.70%, 1.46%, 1.32%, 1.32% respectively. Prices of Dhofar Insurance, Bank Nizwa, OMINVEST were down by 4.35%, 0.94%, 0.82% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,801.28 points, down 0.31%. Prices of Galfar Engineering were up by 1.52% respectively. Prices of Oman Fisheries, Voltamp Energy, Al Maha Ceramics, Salalah Mills were down by 13.51%, 4.00%, 1.25%, 0.80% respectively.

Services Index was up by 0.13% before closing at 1,829.51 points. Prices of Al Maha Markting, Al Suwadi Power, OIFC, Ooredoo were up by 2.89%, 1.35%, 1.35%, 0.35% respectively. Prices of Barka Water & Power Company, Barka Desalination, Oman Oil Marketing, Renaissance Services, Abraj Energy were down by 2.31%, 1.60%, 1.27%, 0.74%, 0.67% respectively.— **United Securities**

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev . Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,751.43	4,739.78	4,748.38	4,744.99	3.39	0.07
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,784.07	7,754.61	7,780.40	7,763.29	17.11	0.22
Industry Index	5,823.99	5,793.92	5,801.28	5,819.60	-18.33	-0.31
Services Index	1,829.51	1,815.30	1,829.51	1,827.05	2.46	0.13
MSX Shariah Index	436.31	433.44	434.79	435.87	-1.08	-0.25
MSX TR INDEX	6,603.74	6,587.54	6,599.50	6,594.79	4.71	0.07
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,843.51	8,810.04	8,839.33	8,819.90	19.44	0.22
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,719.50	6,684.81	6,693.30	6,714.44	-21.15	-0.31
SERVICES TR IDX	2,128.91	2,112.38	2,128.91	2,126.06	2.86	0.13
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
10,990,039	2,254,704	546	24,556,116,435	13	13	19	45

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

REGULAR MARKET

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	88,300	6,542	9	0.074	0.076	0.074	0.076	0.074	0.002	2.703	0.076	0.074	0.076	0.100	9,262,500
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	501,560	138,831	15	0.275	0.279	0.275	0.279	0.275	0.004	1.455	0.279	0.279	0.285	0.100	453,639,033
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	45,386	3,404	7	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.074	0.001	1.351	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.100	53,580,476
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	2,900	221	2	0.076	0.077	0.076	0.077	0.076	0.001	1.316	0.077	0.076	0.077	0.100	15,400,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	692,944	179,802	16	0.260	0.260	0.259	0.260	0.259	0.001	0.386	0.260	0.259	0.260	0.100	1,951,663,236
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	172,745	49,259	15	0.285	0.289	0.283	0.289	0.288	0.001	0.347	0.289	0.289	0.289	0.100	188,122,882
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	13,000	5,135	4	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.395	0.000	0.000	0.395	0.395	0.434	0.100	130,694,720
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	5,000	900	1	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.000	0.000	0.180	0.165	0.179	0.100	39,600,000
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	3,593,848	970,339	1	0.270	0.270	0.270	0.277	0.277	0.000	0.000	0.270	0.270	0.279	0.100	34,596,735
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	100,000	7,300	4	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.000	0.000	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.100	6,570,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	207,452	208,439	28	1.004	1.005	1.004	1.004	1.004	0.000	0.000	1.004	1.004	1.015	0.100	753,000,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	143,508	20,353	11	0.142	0.142	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.000	0.000	0.141	0.141	0.141	0.100	786,391,724
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	229,524	17,912	12	0.078	0.079	0.078	0.079	0.079	0.000	0.000	0.079	0.078	0.079	0.100	13,825,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	691,510	51,172	16	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.073	0.074	0.100	49,941,670
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	1,855,445	265,671	143	0.144	0.144	0.143	0.143	0.143	0.000	0.000	0.143	0.137	0.148	0.100	619,279,221
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	149,480	44,651	29	0.299	0.299	0.297	0.297	0.299	-0.002	-0.669	0.297	0.297	0.300	0.100	228,749,400
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	105,573	42,410	29	0.405	0.405	0.400	0.400	0.403	-0.003	-0.744	0.400	0.401	0.401	0.100	94,564,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	22,325	8,184	10	0.368	0.368	0.365	0.365	0.368	-0.003	-0.815	0.365	0.360	0.370	0.100	243,953,380
Total	18	8,620,500	2,020,524	352												

Parallel Market

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RO)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAR VALUE	MARKET CAP
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	920	48	2	0.048	0.055	0.048	0.055	0.053	0.002	3.774	0.055	0.048	0.055	0.100	4,675,000
OM0000003000	Al MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	100	107	1	1.070	1.070	1.070	1.070	1.040	0.030	2.885	1.070	1.040	1.095	0.100	73,830,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	863,808	114,786	56	0.131	0.134	0.131	0.134	0.132	0.002	1.515	0.134	0.131	0.134	0.100	27,200,184
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	115,100	7,597	12	0.066	0.067	0.066	0.067	0.066	0.001	1.515	0.067	0.066	0.067	0.100	32,886,038
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	100,000	7,605	15	0.076	0.077	0.076	0.077	0.076	0.001	1.316	0.077	0.076	0.077	0.100	16,337,860
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	2,500	378	1	0.151	0.151	0.151	0.151	0.150	0.001	0.667	0.151	0.151	0.165	0.100	354,798,277
OM0000002036	MUSCAT THREAD MILLS	4,000	407	2	0.101	0.104	0.101	0.104	0.104	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.104	0.110	0.100	1,704,987
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	4,784	1,000	1	0.209	0.209	0.209	0.209	0.209	0.000	0.000	0.209	0.210	0.215	0.100	12,791,693
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	9,610	1,518	2	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.000	0.000	0.158	0.158	0.159	0.100	473,423,527
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	104,994	15,197	15	0.145	0.146	0.144	0.145	0.145	0.000	0.000	0.145	0.145	0.153	0.100	242,064,450
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	594,891	33,869	18	0.057	0.057	0.056	0.057	0.057	0.000	0.000	0.057	0.057	0.057	0.100	83,368,283
OM0000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	14,000	938	2	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.067	0.066	0.069	0.100	14,890,080
OM0000009569	JABAL REIF	1,500	152	1	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.000	0.000	0.101	0.101	0.105	0.100	17,574,000
OM0000001889	SALALAH MILLS	11,313	5,600	1	0.495	0.495	0.495	0.495	0.499	-0.004	-0.802	0.495	0.000	0.495	0.100	24,731,717
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	29,501	3,452	6	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.118	-0.001	-0.847	0.117	0.114	0.128	0.100	59,448,115
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	100,400	10,543	3	0.107	0.107	0.105	0.105	0.106	-0.001	-0.943	0.105	0.104	0.106	0.100	234,880,068
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	2,880	455	1	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.160	-0.002	-1.250	0.158	0.155	0.160	0.100	8,690,000
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	3,500	2,730	2	0.780	0.780	0.780	0.780	0.790	-0.010	-1.266	0.780	0.780	0.000	0.100	47,794,500
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	17,900	2,202	4	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.125	-0.002	-1.600	0.123	0.121	0.123	0.100	9,289,206
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	13,775	3,322	6	0.240	0.254	0.240	0.254	0.260	-0.006	-2.308	0.254	0.240	0.254	0.100	40,640,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	3,486	1,291	6	0.371	0.371	0.360	0.360	0.375	-0.015	-4.000	0.360	0.360	0.400	0.100	29,304,990
OM0000001095	DHOFAR INSURANCE	41,999	9,240	3	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.230	-0.010	-4.348	0.220	0.210	0.220	0.100	24,805,567
Total	22	2,040,961	222,435	160												

CURRENCY

Dollar stable, yen declines as investors await US inflation data

SINGAPORE: The dollar remained stable yesterday, while the yen slightly retreated from its highest level in a month as investors await US inflation data and anticipate a large interest rate cut from the US Federal Reserve next week.

The dollar showed little change, trading at 143.10 yen, giving up earlier gains in the session.

The Dollar Index, which measures the US currency against a basket of six major currencies, stood at 101.61 after rising 0.4 percent Monday.

The euro was traded at 1.1039 dollars after a decline of about 0.5 percent on Monday.

The Pound sterling was traded at 1.307 dollars after a three-week low of 1.3058 earlier in the session.

For other currencies, the Australian dollar was trading at 0.66655 dollars, after reaching its lowest level in over three weeks at 0.66445 dollars.

The New Zealand dollar remained near a three-week low, trading at 0.6148 dollars. -**ONA**

PARTNERSHIP

OSHRM and Elevatus forge strategic alliance to accelerate Oman's digital transformation

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman Society for Human Resource Management (OSHRM), the Sultanate's premier HR organisation, has forged a strategic alliance with Elevatus, a global leader in AI-driven recruitment technology.

This partnership marks a significant step forward in Oman's digital transformation, empowering businesses to optimise their talent acquisition strategies and achieve sustainable growth.

Elevatus' cutting-edge solutions, powered by advanced artificial intelligence, offer a comprehensive suite of tools designed to revolutionise the recruitment landscape. From automated candidate screening and video assessments to streamlined onboarding processes, Elevatus enables organisations to attract top talent, reduce time-to-hire, and enhance overall HR efficiency.

By leveraging Elevatus' technology, OSHRM is committed to supporting businesses across Oman in achieving their strategic goals. This partnership aligns seamlessly with Oman Vision 2040, which prioritises technological advancement and economic diversification.

Faisal Al-Siyabi, CEO of the Omani Human Resources Management Association, stated: "At OSHRM, we are committed to adopting best practices and reliable technologies to enhance human resource management in the Sultanate. Through our partnership with Elevatus, we aim to simplify recruitment processes and boost Omani institutions' readiness for a digitally transformed future, in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040."

"Elevatus is proud to join forces with OSHRM to support Oman's digital transformation," added Yara Burgan, CEO of Elevatus. "Our AI-powered solutions will help organizations streamline their recruitment processes, improve candidate experience, and make data-driven decisions to achieve sustainable success."

THREE-DAY PROGRAMME

Training launched on 'Sustainability of Government Investments in Governorates'

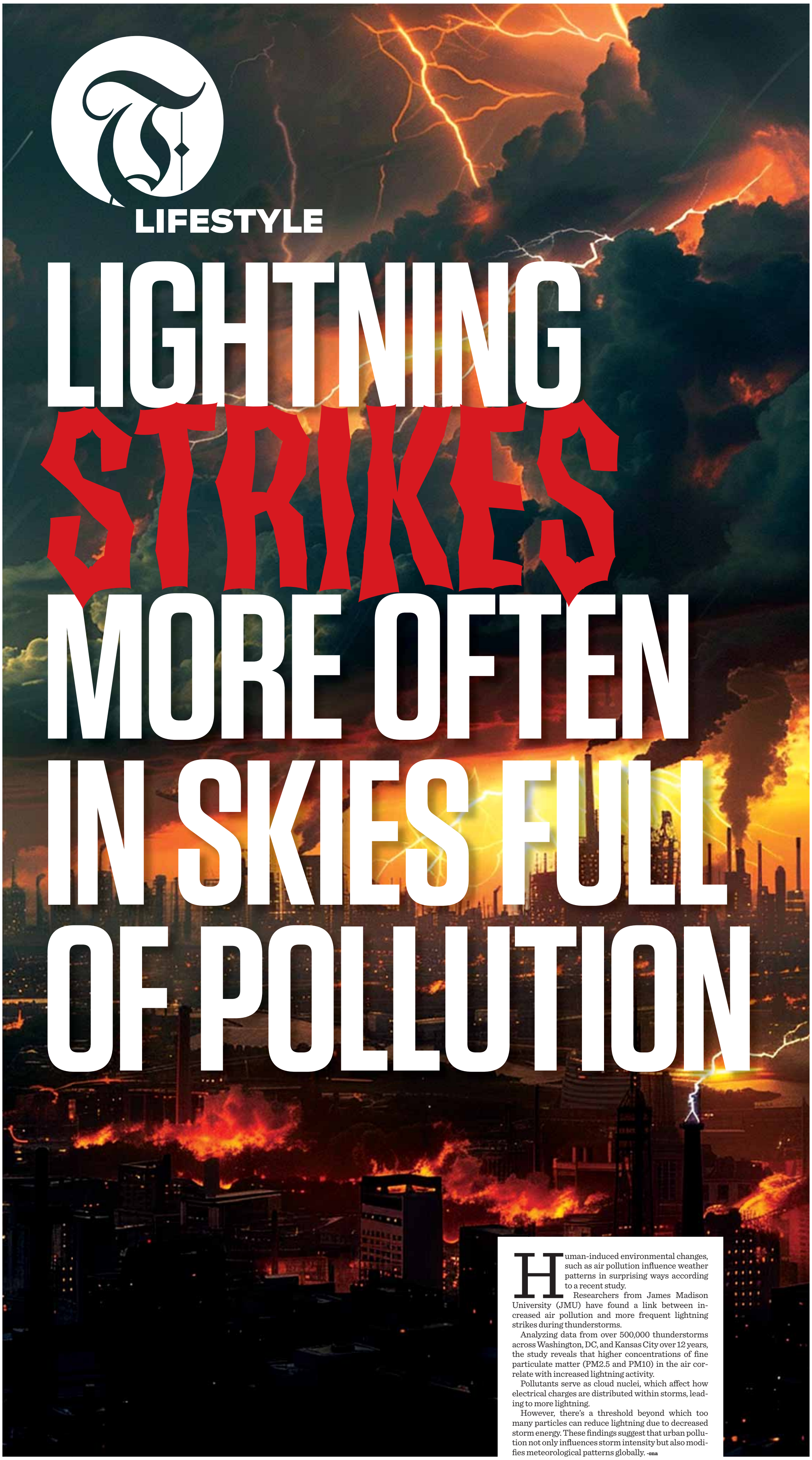
Times News Service

MUSCAT: In line with the institutional partnership aimed at enhancing resource efficiency and the State Audit Institution's (SAI) commitment to promoting professional competencies, the training programme titled 'Sustainability of Government Investments in the Governorates' was inaugurated yesterday.

The programme held in Dhofar, is directed at a first group consisting of General Directors, specialists from internal audit units, and employees involved in project and investment management within various units of the State Administrative Apparatus in the governorate.

The three-day programme is taking place at the lecture hall of the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex for Culture and Entertainment in Salalah and is being delivered by SAI specialists. The program was opened under the patronage of Younis Al Toobi, Director General of the Directorate General of Financial & Administrative Audit in Dhofar Governorate, with the attendance of several SAI specialists.

The programme aims at enabling participants to understand the strategic direction of sustaining investment and development in the governorates and building professional capacities in evaluating and following up investments, in addition to promoting the capabilities of employees in detecting fraud and corruption in the development projects, as well as dealing with public fund crimes.



LIFESTYLE

LIGHTNING STRIKES MORE OFTEN IN SKIES FULL OF POLLUTION

Human-induced environmental changes, such as air pollution influence weather patterns in surprising ways according to a recent study.

Researchers from James Madison University (JMU) have found a link between increased air pollution and more frequent lightning strikes during thunderstorms.

Analyzing data from over 500,000 thunderstorms across Washington, DC, and Kansas City over 12 years, the study reveals that higher concentrations of fine particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) in the air correlate with increased lightning activity.

Pollutants serve as cloud nuclei, which affect how electrical charges are distributed within storms, leading to more lightning.

However, there's a threshold beyond which too many particles can reduce lightning due to decreased storm energy. These findings suggest that urban pollution not only influences storm intensity but also modifies meteorological patterns globally. -ona

SPORTS

Karunaratne joins elite company of Sangakkara and Jayawardene

Despite Karunaratne's disappointing display with the bat, Nissanka made the headlines

LONDON: Dimuth Karunaratne etched his name into the history books after becoming just the fourth batter for Sri Lanka to score the 7,000-run landmark in the Test format.

During Sri Lanka's first win on English soil in the Test format in a decade, Karunaratne scored just 17 runs across both innings which proved to be enough to claim his stake as one of Sri Lanka's Test greats.

He joined the elite 7,000-run Test club that features Kumar Sangakkara (12,400), Mahela Jayawardene (11,814) and Angelo Mathews (7,734).

Overall, it was a dull outing for Karunaratne throughout the three-match away Test series against England. He managed to score just 108 runs in six innings at a mere average of 18.00.

Despite Karunaratne's disappointing display with the bat, Pathum Nissanka made the headlines with his blitzkrieg on Day Four in the third Test. He produced his variation of England's 'Bazball' style of play and raced to 127* in 124 deliveries at a strike rate of 102.42.

He made the headlines by singlehandedly propelling the visitors to a historic 8-wicket win at Kennington Oval. Despite a late show from Sri Lanka in the third Test, the hosts sealed a 2-1 series triumph over the Asian side.

Even though England stepped out of The Oval with the series win, Sri Lanka benefitted the most in the World Test Championship standings. In the final game that swung back and forth, the visitors stood tall in the final Test and tasted success, which saw them rise above the hosts in the WTC rankings.

The victory saw Sri Lanka surge to the fifth spot with three wins and a points percentage of 42.857 after playing seven Tests in the ongoing cycle. England, with eight wins in 16 Test matches, are mere decimal points below with a points percentage of 42.187 in the sixth position.

India continue to top the chart with six triumphs in nine Test matches and a points percentage of 68.52. The defending champions, Australia, closely follow on in the second spot with eight victories in 12 matches and a points percentage of 62.50. -ANI

BORUSSIA DORTMUND

How Gross turning into Germany's new Toni Kroos

BERLIN: Pascal Gross had settled into life in southern England after seven years with Premier League side Brighton & Hove Albion. But in the spring of 2024, a call from Borussia Dortmund changed everything for the 33-year-old midfielder, offering a unique opportunity that turned his world upside down.

Joining a UEFA Champions League team and earning a place in Germany's national team, Gross seized his chance. Known for his quiet yet aggressive leadership, Gross has quickly become a crucial asset for coach Julian Nagelsmann, as Germany prepare for their UEFA Nations League match against the Netherlands this Tuesday evening in Amsterdam.

Gross's rapid rise in the national team has positioned him as the orchestrator of Germany's new-look squad following the retirements of Toni Kroos, Manuel Neuer, Thomas Muller and Ilkay Gundogan. While younger players like Jamal Musiala, Florian Wirtz, and Aleksandar Pavlovic represent the future of German football, Gross has emerged as a key veteran presence from outside the spotlight.

The experienced midfielder's low-key approach to public attention made it easy for Nagelsmann to integrate him into the team after his debut in September 2023. The Germany coach even appointed him to the players' leadership board. While Bayern Munich's Pavlovic may eventually take over the midfield, Gross is currently guiding the team's rising stars toward the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

"There are players like James Milner who have played in the Premier League for over 20 years, living a fully professional life every single day," Gross said, also referencing the influence of experienced former teammates like Adam Lallana and Danny Welbeck. "Their attitude has been overwhelmingly inspiring."

Returning to the German Bundesliga felt like unfinished business for Gross, who spent his early career in Germany's second division with Karlsruhe and Ingolstadt. Now, he is bringing the discipline and hard work of the "old" generation to a team full of young talent.

With a passing accuracy of over 90 percent, Gross gained recognition at Brighton as a reliable playmaker. -Xinhua

PLAYER OF THE SUMMER

The last few years have been the most enjoyable, says Joe Root

LONDON : Following his side's loss to Sri Lanka in the third Test, England batter Joe Root, named as the Player of the Summer following the series win, said on Monday that the last few years of his career have been the most enjoyable of his career and expressed hope that his team continues to evolve the way it is doing right now.

A fine century by Pathum Nissanka and an inspired effort by Sri Lankan bowlers in the second innings helped Sri Lanka secure an eight-wicket win against England in the third Test at The Oval on Monday. With this win, the three-match series ends in favour of England with a scoreline of 2-1.

This is also Sri Lanka's fourth win at England and their first in the country in 10 years. This is also the highest successful run chase by an Asian country in England, outdoing Pakistan's chase of 180 runs against Australia in 2010.

Speaking after the game on being given the 'Player of the Series' and 'Player of the Summer' honour, Root said that the side has played some fine cricket in the Test summer at home against West Indies and Sri Lanka and it feels nice to have contributed to both series wins. He was also appreciative of new faces like Jamie Smith, Gus Atkinson, Olly Stone and Josh Hull for their fine performances throughout the summer.

"It is what you pride yourself on as a senior player and as a batter. Great to see this team constantly finding new ways to look at the game and keep evolving and keep getting better. To see some new faces come in and put their best foot forward shows the depth that we've got within this format in English cricket. I feel good, you know how fickle this game is, you have to keep working. Try and work as hard as I can to get better. I love playing in this team, great lads, play some really exciting cricket. Turn up every day wanting

to get stuck in because of the way we go about it. The last few years have been the most enjoyable of my career and long may that continue. May the success of this team continue as well. I think we came up against different conditions in this game. As a team, we try to keep finding ways to put pressure on the opposition but unfortunately for us, it didn't come off this game. We still stuck to our methods, there will be times when we get challenged and we need to find ways to get back into the game. It is an opportunity for us to learn and keep getting better," said Root.

This Test summer has been a fine one for Root. In six games across series against WI and SL, Root scored 666 runs in 10 innings at an average of 74.00, with three centuries and three fifties. His best score is 143. He also went past England great Alastair Cook's record of 33 Test centuries to become the country's most successful batter in terms of centuries.

Despite a double failure in the final Test, Root ended the Lanka series as the top-run-getter, with 375 runs in six innings at an average of 75.00, with two centuries and one fifty. His best score is 143.

In the ongoing World Test Championship 2023-25 cycle, Root is the leading run-getter with 1,398 runs at an average of 53.76, with five centuries and six fifties in 29 innings. His best score is 143.

Coming to the third match, Sri Lanka won the toss and opted to field first. England was bowled out for 325 runs in the first innings, with contributions from Ollie Pope (154 in 156 balls, with 19 fours and two sixes) and Ben Duckett (86 in 79 balls, with nine fours and two sixes) taking England to a solid score.

Key highlights of the innings were a 95-run partnership for the second wicket between Duckett and Pope and latters' half-century stands with Joe Root (13) and Harry Brook (19), in which Pope did the majority of the scoring.

Milan Rathnayake (3/56) was a top bowler for SL. Vishwa Fernando, Lahiru Kumara and Dhananjaya de Silva got two wickets each.

In the first innings, Lankan Lions lost wickets at regular intervals. SL was reeling at 93/5 at one point, but a fine 127-run partnership between Dhananjaya de Silva, the skipper (69 in 111 balls, with 11 fours) and Kamindu Mendis (64 in 91 balls, with seven fours) took SL to 263, trailing by 62 runs. Pathum Nissanka had contributed 64 in 51 balls, with nine fours at the top, but did not get support from his batting partners.

Olly Stone (3/35) and Josh Hull (3/53) were the top bowlers for England. Chris Woakes got two scalps and Shoaib Bashir got one wicket.

In the England's second innings, Lankan bowlers asserted their dominance. Other than a half-century by Jamie Smith (67 in 50 balls, with 10 fours and a six), nothing really stood out. England was reduced to 82/7 at one point, but then Jamie launched a counter-attack with some solid support from Stone (10), in which wicketkeeper-batter displayed his free-flowing strokeplay and immense game awareness while batting with the tail.

England was bowled out for 156 runs, and England set 219 runs to win for Sri Lanka.

Lahiru (4/21) was the top bowler for SL, while Vishwa (3/40) got key wickets of Root, Brook and Jamie. Asitha Fernando took 2/49 in 12 overs while Milan got one wicket. -ANI

BRAZIL DEFENDER

Brazil seeking 'flow' in World Cup qualifiers: Gabriel

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil defender Gabriel Magalhaes has called for patience from the country's football fans, promising the team is close to clicking under manager Dorival Junior.

Brazil ended a four-game winless run in World Cup qualifiers with a 1-0 home victory over Ecuador in Curitiba on Friday.

According to Gabriel, the five-time world champions have adapted quickly to the methods of Dorival, who replaced Fernando Diniz as manager in January.

"It's been a short time and we've had to make quick adjustments, but we already have in mind what the manager wants," the 26-year-old Arsenal player told a news conference on Sunday.

"It's a new cycle and we know that we have a lot to improve. But we also have a lot of quality. From the moment we are in sync on the

field, things will flow better. What won't be lacking is willpower because when you were this short, you know that you take on a big responsibility."

The comments came as Brazil prepared for Tuesday's World Cup qualifier against Paraguay in Asuncion.

Brazil are currently fourth in the 10-team South American group, with 10 points from seven qualifiers, while Paraguay are seventh, four points further back.

"Some of the Paraguayan players are in the Premier League so I know them," Gabriel said. "They are fast players, but we are focused on going there and trying to get the three points."

He added: "What we want is to win first and, of course, to bring joy to the Brazilian people. Football today isn't just about playing beautifully, it's about results."

"There will be games that you win 1-0 without playing well and there will be games in which you'll play well and not win. That's football. We have to be patient."-Xinhua

AT THE OVAL

Coach Jayasuriya compares two famous victories

LONDON [UK]: Sri Lanka's interim head coach, Sanath Jayasuriya, compared their two famous Test wins against England at the Oval. While comparing the two victories, the former batting maestro pointed out their recent success came in "tough conditions."

During Sri Lanka's renowned win at The Oval in 1998, Jayasuriya played the architect's role with his 213-run blitzkrieg in the first inning.

He returned to The Oval as Sri Lanka's interim head coach and saw Sri Lanka celebrate their second triumph at the venue. Their 1998 conquest came on a slow and dry surface under a clear sky. The iconic spinner, Muttiah Muralitharan, exploited the conditions and scythed 16 wickets across both innings.

"About 27 years ago, we won here, under Arjuna [Ranatunga]. Murali [Muttiah Muralitharan] got about 16 wickets, I got a double-hundred, and Aravinda [de Silva] got a 150. It's a place we'll never forget - The Oval," Jayasuriya said while reminiscing about the 1998 win.

In their recent triumph in the third Test, clouds constantly hovered over the stadium, and the green deck turned out to be a pacer's dream. Jayasuriya pinpointed the tough conditions in which the Sri Lankan team battled for a win while crediting the players for their all-around efforts.

"But these guys played in different conditions altogether. It was tough conditions, with the grass, the weather, and everything was cloudy and cold," Jayasuriya added. -ANI

Adventure awaits with Geely's exclusive summer campaign

The alluring lineup of cars from new Geely Oman seamlessly blends contemporary design with outstanding performance

MUSCAT: Time to unleash your summer adventures with Geely's unbeatable summer campaign.

Until 30 September discover an exciting world of driving pleasure and exceptional value with our lineup of stylish and technologically advanced SUVs and sedans. With a promise to deliver the thrill of ownership, one can grab complimentary insurance (for Oman only) and registration packages** (on select Azkarra, Coolray, Tugella, and Preface models) for the first year. To top it all, 7-year/250,000-kilometer manufacturer warranty and a free 3-year/30,000-kilometer service package depending on selected model.

But that's not all! Geely is offering attractive financing options and flexible repayment plans. Elevate your summer adventures with Geely. From thrilling performance to luxurious comfort, grab the deals on the lineup delivering an unforgettable driving experience.

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The alluring lineup of cars from new Geely Oman seamlessly blends contemporary design with outstanding performance. With models ranging from the lively Coolray to the adaptable Okavango, our lineup offers something for every preference and lifestyle. With their advanced technologies and thorough engineering, these new Geely automobiles guarantee an efficient yet thrilling driving experience. With our New Geely car offers in Oman, discover the mobility of the future and open the door to a whole new driving experience.

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Take advantage of our amazing New Geely summer campaign in Oman and experience the thrill of owning a New Geely automobile. We are happy to provide an incredible 3.75% interest rate on New Geely auto financing in Oman to make your dream a reality. This limited-time offer provides an exceptional opportunity to reduce your monthly payments and maximize your savings.

Seize Summer Carnival with the Geely Emgrand

The sedan boasts a spacious, stylish design perfect for hitting the road this season. The Geely Emgrand boasts a modern design with a wide body for better stability, offering neat, luxurious interiors with ample legroom and comfortable seating.

Experience the thrill of driving with Emgrand's intelligent technologies, including a smart air conditioning system, 6 SRS airbags, and an electronic stability program keeping you safe and secure on your adventures.

Don't miss out on amazing summer carnival deals. Sale prices on the Geely Emgrand start at RO 4,599 with low EMI offers.

Unleash your spirit with the Geely Coolray

Geely Coolray - the perfect companion for all your summer adventures. The sporty SUV is packed with power, style, and cutting-edge technology. Experience the thrill of driving with its 172hp turbocharged engine and super-responsive handling. The Coolray's sleek design turns heads wherever you go, while its advanced safety features keep you and your loved ones protected.

Get behind the wheel of your Coolray for as low as RO 6595, along with exciting EMI option at 90 OMR onwards. Start your summer adventure with the perfect summer deal.

Experience the ultimate summer getaway with the Geely Okavango.

This spacious SUV is designed for all your adventures, with room for the whole family and all your gear. The spacious utility vehicle combines comfort and style, with its expansive interior seating up to seven passengers. Inspired by nature, its sleek design exudes elegance and power. Under the hood, a powerful 2.0TD 190hp engine delivers a thrilling driving experience, accelerating from 0 to 100 km/h in just 7.9 seconds. With its impressive features and unbeatable value, the Okavango is the perfect choice for your summer adventures.

Want a powerful SUV, think Okavango. Offer prices at RO 6,999 with an EMI 95 OMR onwards

Geely Preface: A luxurious pinnacle of automotive engineering

Indulge in the epitome of automotive excellence with the Geely Preface. This SUV offers a harmonious blend of power, luxury, and safety all combined in one. With its sleek design, and spacious interiors boasting of advanced technology, the Preface is a testament to Geely's commitment to sheer innovation. Enjoy the thrill of driving a vehicle engineered to perfection. Benefit from the generous offers available during our Summer Carnival at the brand.

The Preface is more than just a car; it's an experience. Grab it at RO 8,095 with an EMI 110 OMR onwards

Take home stylish, powerful Geely Azkarra today

This SUV boasts a muscular and refined design that will make heads turn wherever you go. The Azkarra is packed with features to keep your family entertained on those long summer road trips, including a panoramic sunroof, wireless charging, and a high-definition infotainment system. Enjoy the thrill of driving with its powerful 187hp engine with seamless handling.

This summer, indulge in the luxury of the Azkarra and create unforgettable memories.

Make it yours at RO 9,449 with an EMI of 128 OMR onwards.

Seize the Summer Carnival with Geely Tugella

The Geely Tugella is a testament to automotive artistry, boasting a captivating design that exudes sophistication and dynamism. The powerful 2.0T engine delivers a thrilling driving experience with its 238 horsepower. Turn heads this summer carnival with the very sleek and sporty Geely Tugella, featuring a dynamic design. Experience a new level of refinement with its sporty style for amazing aerodynamics. With its captivating design and powerful performance, the Tugella is the perfect choice for those seeking a stylish and dynamic SUV.

Don't miss out on amazing summer carnival discounts and deals active. Own the Tugella for just RO 9,495 with an EMI of 129 OMR onwards.

This is a limited-time promotion, so act quickly!

In Oman, Geely vehicles are brought to you by Towell Auto Centre LLC. Established with a commitment to excellence, TAC has been delivering premium automotive products and services to the Sultanate of Oman over the years. Visit your nearest Geely dealership today to explore our range of vehicles and avail exclusive summer offers.

POSITIVE VISION ASSOCIATION

MoU inked to launch peer education training programme on substance abuse and HIV/AIDS

MUSCAT: Positive Vision Association and Al Jisr Foundation have announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on a groundbreaking initiative aimed at addressing the rising concerns of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS in Oman. This partnership will implement a peer education training programme focused on substance abuse prevention and HIV/AIDS, set to roll out in Muscat during Q4 of 2024.

Recent statistics underscore the urgency of this initiative. The prevalence of substance abuse among Omani youth has been on the rise, coinciding with an increase in HIV infections. In 2022, Oman reported 2,994 drug-related crimes involving both nationals and expatriates, while 8,149 individuals sought treatment, primarily in the 21-40 age group. Muscat Governorate alone accounts for 62% of drug users in the country. In terms of HIV/AIDS, Oman registers approximately 200 new cases annually, with a total of 2,157 Omanis currently living with the virus.

Strategic partnership for change

The MoU between Positive Vision Association and Al Jisr Foundation represents a strategic alliance to tackle these challenges head-on. Positive Vision Association, a non-governmental organization dedicated to raising awareness about HIV/AIDS and substance addiction, will work closely with Al Jisr Foundation, a philanthropic organization committed to sustainable development in health, education, and economic empowerment.

Empowering peer educators

The core of this collaboration is the development and implementation of a Peer Educators Training program. This initiative will recruit 50 young dedicated volunteers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to become effective peer educators in their communities. By empowering these young individuals, the program aims to amplify its impact, spreading vital information about substance abuse and HIV/AIDS to a broader audience.

Nashia Nasib, President of Positive Vision Association, emphasized the importance of this initiative: "Our efforts this year are focused on raising awareness within our community about HIV/AIDS and the dangers of drugs and other psychotropic substances. We believe that by equipping our community with the right knowledge and resources, we can foster a healthier and safer environment for all."

Dina Al Khalili, General Manager at Al Jisr Foundation, added: "At Al Jisr Foundation, we are deeply attuned to the challenges facing our youth today. The rise in substance abuse and HIV/AIDS is not just a statistic it's a reality that affects families and communities across Oman. This partnership with Positive Vision Association is our way of standing with those impacted and empowering young people to become part of the solution. By increasing their awareness and knowledge, we believe that youth can lead the way in driving positive change within their communities, paving the path for a brighter and safer future for our nation."

Throughout 2024, Positive Vision Association will be actively engaging in various activities to promote awareness about these critical issues. The organization plans to launch educational campaigns, community outreach programs, and collaborative efforts with both local and international partners.

INDIAN SOCIAL CLUB

ISC set to conduct annual badminton tournament 2024

MUSCAT: Indian Social Club Oman in association with O! Millionaire is all set to conduct its Annual Badminton tournament from 13 September onwards at ISC Darsait indoor Badminton courts.

The tournament will consist of: Open Badminton tournament where all Indian Resident of Oman can participate which will be held on 20 and 21 September. This category involves Men's Premier single and double, Men's single and double. The last date to register for the tournament is 15th September 2024.

Next category is exclusively for ISC Members and its linguistic wing members which involves U11 Boys and Girls U 15 Boys and Girls, Men's, women's, veterans and Mixed all in double categories whereas in singles we have men's women's and Veteran's. This tournament will start from 13 September 2024 and finals will be held on 21 September 2024.

This year ISC has introduced Team Championship it will be exclusively for ISC Members and its linguistic wing members. Each team will consist of 7 players and will be played under the category of Men's singles, Men's Doubles and Mixed Doubles.

The last date of registration for the ISC & its linguistic wing members for the tournament is 12th September 2024 by 12.00 Noon. Players can register at ISC reception contact no: 24701347

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Europcar Oman and Bahrain partners with Oman Cancer Association to host informative breast cancer awareness session

MUSCAT: Europcar Oman & Bahrain, a leading mobility services company, announced its continued support to the Oman Cancer Association (OCA) through various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities planned for 2024.

In a proactive effort to raise awareness about early breast cancer detection, Europcar Oman and Bahrain yet again recently collaborated with the Oman Cancer Association (OCA) to host a pivotal lecture on the significance of self-examination.

The engaging session took place at the prestigious Europcar Oman and Bahrain Headquarters, providing a platform for education and empowerment.

Led by Faiqa, a prominent Board Member of the OCA, the lecture focused on illuminating the audience, especially women, about the risk factors associated with breast cancer and underscored the critical importance of early detection and regular screening.

The event seamlessly integrated theoretical knowledge with practical demonstrations, equipping attendees with the tools for self-examination to facilitate timely breast cancer detection.

Looking ahead to October 2024, Europcar Oman and Bahrain is gearing up to host a mobile mammogram screening station in collaboration with the Oman Cancer Association at its premises. This initiative, which is one amongst many as part of the CSR undertakings- is set to be open to all employees, their families, and Europcar partners, promising accessibility to free testing for early detection of breast cancer. The upcoming event stands as a monumental step towards fostering greater awareness about breast cancer and empowering individuals to proactively manage their health through timely detection.

Join Europcar Oman and Bahrain, the Oman Cancer Association, and partners in this crucial endeavor to promote #BreastCancerAwareness, support the #OmanCancerSociety, and emphasize the importance of #EarlyDetection in the fight against breast cancer.

ROUND-UP

Kia named among Time Magazine's World's Most Sustainable Companies

Key criteria included adherence to the UN Global Compact, alignment with the Science Based Targets initiative, inclusion in the S&P Global Sustainability Yearbook, participation in the UNFCCC Race to Zero, and MSCI ESG & SRI evaluations

MUSCAT: Kia announced that it has been named among TIME magazine's "World's Most Sustainable Companies of 2024."

TIME Magazine collected a roster of over 5,000 of the world's largest and most influential companies, and then partnered with data firm Statista to develop a methodology to assess sustainability. Companies were measured on external sustainability ratings. Key criteria included adherence to the UN Global Compact, alignment with the Science Based Targets initiative, inclusion in the S&P Global Sustainability Yearbook, participation in the UNFCCC Race to Zero, and MSCI ESG & SRI evaluations. The final step involved researching various environmental and social Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from the companies' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reports.

"Kia is honoured to be recognized in TIME's 'World's Most Sustainable Companies of 2024' list," said Steven Center, COO & EVP, Kia America. "This accolade reflects Kia's commitment to electrified vehicles. Kia is driving towards a future where mobility is sustainable, efficient, and accessible to everyone. This distinction from TIME motivates us to further accelerate our efforts in creating a sustainable future for all."

Kia's sustainable mobility initiatives are guided by its comprehensive "Plan S" strategy. "Plan S" represents a bold shift for Kia, heavily focusing on electrification. Kia expects to build an EV lineup of 15 models globally by 2027, including the recently revealed EV3.

Kia's sustainable range in Oman includes the all-electric sedan EV6 and the EV9 in the SUV category. For those looking for diverse automobile options, The EV6 is a powerhouse of innovation, with spacious interiors featured with user-centric intuitive technologies that make journeys smooth.

Based on Kia's new E-GMP platform the vehicle covers a longer range of up to 500 km on a single charge, has ultra-fast charging capabilities and emits zero carbon pollution with noiseless acceleration.

Experience the prowess of an SUV with the Kia EV9. Enjoy the enhanced driving experience with its futuristic looks, sophisticated appeal and remarkable speed, all in the absence of an engine. The EV9 features an electric rechargeable battery with an impressive driving range of up to 500 km on a full charge. Whereas, a quick 20-minute charge goes a long way from 10 to 80 per cent embracing both short and extended journeys. Depending on usage, the EV9 is an ideal city car.

Charge Kia EVs at home with the EV charging device provided and installed by Kia's team. Kia's EV range is a modern automotive solution supporting its goal of a net-zero future and reducing burden on the depleting natural resources. Embrace the change, contribute towards a greener planet and become a part of the global shift.

Kia's other range of vehicles in Oman includes the Sportage, Sorento, Seltos, Cerato, Carnival, Telluride, and Sonet in the SUV category. The all new K5, K3, Rio, Picanto and Pegas.

Reliable International Automotive (RIA), Kia's distributor in Oman, ensures a rewarding ownership experience with excellent product attributes and unmatched facilities.

GIVEAWAY CAMPAIGN

Kalyan Jewellers picks winners of its '50 Days, 25 Winners, 25 Gold Bars' campaign

This campaign was designed to enhance the shopping experience of customers, providing them with an exciting opportunity to win a valuable gold bar every day. The winners' names are on the brand's official social media pages

MUSCAT: Kalyan Jewellers, one of the most trusted and leading jewellery brands, has successfully concluded its '50 Days, 25 Winners, 25 Gold Bars' Giveaway Campaign. Over the course of 50 days, the jewellery brand has rewarded 50 lucky customers with a 10g gold bar each, making this a memorable and joyous celebration for patrons in the region.

This one-of-its-kind campaign was designed to enhance the shopping experience of Kalyan Jewellers' customers, providing them with an exciting opportunity to win a valuable gold bar every day. Customers who made gold and diamond jewellery purchases of OMR 50 and above were eligible to participate in this promotional activity. All the winners were selected at their stores through a raffle draw conducted in the presence of Omani government officials.

Speaking on the success of the campaign, Ramesh Kalyanaraman, Executive Director – Kalyan Jewellers, said, "We are delighted with the overwhelming response to our '50 Days, 25 Winners, 25 Gold Bars' Giveaway Campaign. At Kalyan Jewellers, we have been committed to enhancing the shopping experience of patrons with unique offers and exceptional service. The response garnered by this initiative is a testament to our efforts in ensuring that patrons garner maximum benefits on their jewellery purchases from Kalyan Jewellers."

The winners' names have been announced on the brand's official social media pages. Kalyan Jewellers extends its heartfelt congratulations to all the winners and expresses gratitude to all its patrons for their continued support.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Alizz Islamic Bank introduces fourth batch of 'Ruwad Alizz' in partnership with Harvard Manage Mentor

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank announced the enrolment of the fourth batch in the renowned RuwadAlizz Leadership Programme, aimed at cultivating leadership in various industries in the Sultanate of Oman.

In partnership with Harvard Manage Mentor, the esteemed e-learning platform affiliated with Harvard University, the programme offers a comprehensive training experience.

It aims to empower and develop 40 employees annually, 20 from Alizz Islamic Bank and 20 from other esteemed government & private sector institutions. The programme entails six consecutive months of dedicated study, with the first, second and third batches having already produced more than 90 successful graduates.

The programme encompasses a range of activities, including visits to large corporations and meeting inspiring CEOs to gain insights from their leadership experiences. Participants will also undergo various examinations from Harvard University to apply their acquired knowledge in practical scenarios. Furthermore, the programme is designed to focus on group projects to foster collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and problem solving while preparing the candidates for the realities of the workplace.

Additionally, they enhance learning outcomes by encouraging active participation, diverse perspective and peer learning. The final assignment is for the groups to present to an esteemed judging panel their innovative banking solution for evaluation.

Expressing his congratulations to the participants of the fourth batch, Ali Al Mani, the Chief Executive Officer of Alizz Islamic Bank, emphasised the increasing responsibilities that lie ahead, particularly given the current focus on providing employment opportunities to young leaders.

In his address, he stated, "We are proud to have hundreds of graduates from various programmes conducted by the bank, training future leaders both internally and externally is crucial and it aligns closely with our sustainability initiatives. We believe that this continuity of learning and development is vital for the long-term to help drive innovation, ethical leadership and our contribution to the nation."

The 'RuwadAlizz' programme is a comprehensive leadership development journey that spans various stages of study. Initially, employees engage with Harvard University, accessing educational materials through technological means. During this time, participants conduct independent research on a specific leadership topic. By offering a comprehensive and accelerated development journey, the program facilitates enhanced learning and the assimilation of diverse experiences and leadership styles. It acknowledges the importance of harnessing individual, societal, and organisational experiences as a means for personal growth, going beyond mere observation.

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