

Times

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50

YEARS OF LEGACY

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LU LU

HAPPINESS

Ramadan

PRAYER TIMINGS

DHUHR.....12:21PM

ASR.....03:45PM

MAGHRIB.....06:21PM

ISHA.....07:31PM

FAJR (TOMORROW).....04:59AM

دعوات مباركة

DREAM DRIVE

SHOP & WIN 8 NISSAN

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN
Oman advances in competitiveness indicators

1 The National Competitiveness Office has announced that Oman made notable progress in several international indicators during 2024. The Sultanate advanced 20 ranks in the Corruption Perceptions Index, securing the 50th position globally among 180 countries. Oman also climbed over 90 ranks in the Environmental Performance Index, now holding the 55th position worldwide, and improved four ranks in the Network Readiness Index. **>A5**

OMAN
SSF to mark annual day on Sunday

2 The Sultan's Special Force (SSF) will celebrate its annual day under the patronage of Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office on Sunday. **>A3**

MARKET
Market capitalisation of MSX tops OMR27bn

3 The market capitalisation of the MSX rose to OMR27.60 billion by the end of the week. The positive performance of banking and investment company stocks led to a 38-point rise. **>B1**

OMAN'S TRADE BALANCE
RECORDS A SURPLUS OF
MORE THAN OMR7BN

This surplus reflects Oman's robust export performance of its oil and gas sectors, and active re-export market



the other hand, merchandise imports rose by 12.1% to OMR16.713 billion compared to OMR14.910 billion in 2023.

The rise in export value was primarily driven by increased oil and gas exports, which grew by 18.4% to OMR16.290 billion, up from OMR13.760 billion at the end of December 2023. Crude oil exports rose marginally by 0.8% to OMR9.908 billion, while refined oil exports surged by 185.5% to OMR3.854 billion. However, liquefied natural gas exports decreased slightly by 1.9% to OMR 2.528 billion.

Non-oil commodity exports, however, saw a decline of 16.3%, totalling OMR6.232 billion by December 2024 compared to OMR7.442 billion in 2023. Among non-oil exports, mineral products held the highest value at OMR1.781 billion, though this marked a 36.8% decrease.

Basic metals and their products followed at OMR1.320 billion, recording a slight increase of 0.1%, while plastic and rubber products rose by 13.3% to OMR996 million. **>A6**

All white and orange taxis operating in
Oman to use licenced app from April 1

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT) has announced that the integration of all white and orange taxis operating in public places with licenced applications from April 1, following an extension of the original timeline.

The licenced applications outlined by the ministry include OmanTaxi, OTaxi, Marhaba, Hala, and Tasleem.

Phased rollout
The phased rollout of the "Aber" application began with targeting taxis operating at airports, followed by those at hotels, commercial centres, and ports in the

second phase, which commenced on November 1, 2023.

The third phase, initially set to start on January 1, 2024, will now begin from April 1, targeting all white and orange taxis operating in public spaces.

This initiative is included in the Land Transport Law and its executive regulations. **>A5**

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PRAYER
TIMINGS

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Asr.....	3:45pm
Maghrib.....	6:21pm
Isha.....	7:31pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:59am

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1001

Transport ministry signs three pacts to develop road, ports, maritime services



These agreements reflect the commitment of the Transport Ministry to boost vital sectors of the Sultanate of Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: As part of the ongoing efforts to enhance the quality and efficiency of road infrastructure, develop ports, and improve maritime services, the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology signed on Friday three strategic agreements. The first agreement covers the dualisation of the Izki-Nizwa Road in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate. The second agreement establishes an investment framework for the design, construction, management, and operation of a quarry products port in the Wilayat of Shaleem and Hallaniyat Islands. The third agreement sets a framework for investment in the

operation, management, and development of ship services and crew change operations at Sultan Qaboos Port. The agreements were signed by Eng. Said bin Hamoud Al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology, in the presence of Eng. Khamis bin Mohammed Al Sham-makhi, Undersecretary for Transport at the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology. **Dualisation of the Izki-Nizwa Road** The first agreement, signed between the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology and Galfar Engineering & Contracting, involves the dualisation of the Izki-Nizwa Road in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate. The project covers approximately 30 kilometres, starting from the existing roundabout near Qaroot South in the Wilayat of Izki, passing through Birkat Al Mouz and Hay Al Turath, and extending to the entrance of Nizwa in the Firq area. The project aims to improve traffic flow, enhance road safety, and support economic and social development in the areas it serves. It also includes the construction of service roads totalling 3.167 kilometres on both sides of the dual carriageway in selected loca-



tions. Additionally, a 1.163-kilometre dualised road will connect the project to the Sanaw Bridge on Sultan Thuwayni bin Said Road, strengthening links between existing roads and key areas. Furthermore, the project will include the construction of a vehicle underpass in the Twai Al Nisf area of Izki to connect both sides of the road, as well as a road leading to Jabal Al Akhdar, stretching 0.877 kilometres. **Boost to the ports sector** The second agreement between the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology and Minji International Ports, aims to boost the ports sector by investing in the design, construction, management, and operation of a quarry products

mining and ports sectors. **Development of Sultan Qaboos Port** The third agreement, signed between the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology and the Omani Integrated Logistics Services Company, is a framework investment agreement aimed at supporting the ministry's plans to develop Omani ports and enhance the competitiveness of Sultan Qaboos Port. The agreement seeks to accelerate the port's development by attracting commercial activities aligned with its primary function as a tourism hub. The framework agreement covers the operation, management, and development of ship services and crew change operations at the port for two years. It also includes the preparation of a development and marketing plan for maritime services, which will involve analysing local and global markets, identifying potential opportunities for new or improved maritime services, and establishing an effective marketing strategy with performance indicators for measuring service efficiency. The project will be implemented in four interconnected phases. It will begin with an analysis of the local and global markets to assess ship service needs and identify service gaps. This will be followed by a phase dedicated to exploring investment opportunities through the introduction of new maritime services or improvements to existing ones based on international standards. Subsequently, a comprehensive marketing plan will be developed to enhance the port's position in the market and attract more shipping companies. In the final phase, precise performance indicators will be established to measure the quality and efficiency of services, ensuring continuous improvement and development. The project aims to enhance the port's appeal for commercial and maritime service activities while aligning with its role as a key tourism port. It also seeks to expand the range of logistics and maritime services available to ships. **Advancing Oman Vision 2040** These agreements reflect the commitment of the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology to developing vital sectors in the Sultanate of Oman by strengthening infrastructure, encouraging investment in ports, and expanding maritime services. These initiatives mark a significant step toward achieving Oman Vision 2040, which seeks to diversify income sources and enhance the contribution of non-oil sectors to the national economy.

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Internal Tender Committee at the Ministry of Labour announces the following tenders:

Tender No.	Tender title	Last date for tender purchase online	Bid submission date
17/2025	Providing maintenance services for the Ministry's buildings in Muscat Governorate	Thursday 03/04/2025 2:00 p.m.	Wednesday 23/04/2025 10 a.m.

- Specialized establishments may obtain the tenders' documents online through the following link, starting from **Sunday 16/03/2025 at 08:00a.m.:** [/https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om](https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om)
- Bids shall be submitted online.
- Bids shall be opened at **11:00 am on Wednesday 23/04/2025.**

(The Ministry shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any other bid)

labour_OMAN

12TH EDITION

'Fak Kurbah' facilitates the release of 511 prisoners

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The humanitarian initiative 'Fak Kurbah' has successfully facilitated the release of 511 financially distressed inmates across various governorates of the Sultanate of Oman since the launch of its 12th edition. This effort has brought hope to the families of the released individuals and given them an opportunity for a fresh start. The highest number of released cases was in North Al Batinah Governorate with 169 cases, followed by South Al Batinah with 85, Al Dakhiliyah with 73, and South Al Sharqiyah with 57. Other included 49 cases in Al Dhahirah, 29 in Muscat, 18 in North Al Sharqiyah, 14 in Al Wusta, and three in Al Buraimi. Dr. Hamad bin Hamdan Al-Rubaie, Chairman of the Omani Lawyers Association, emphasised that this achievement would not have been possible without the collective support of the Omani community, including individuals and institutions, who generously contributed to the initiative. He highlighted this as a shining example of social solidarity that distinguishes Omani society and called for continued support for the initiative. "This is evident in the initiative's statistics from previous years, which have enabled us to assist a significant number of deserving individuals." Dr. Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Zadjali, General Supervisor of the "Fak Kurbah" initiative, stated, "The initiative, under the supervision of the Omani Lawyers Association, has been running for 11 years. In previous editions, we successfully facilitated the release of over 7,110 insolvent individuals who met the initiative's criteria." He added that this year's initiative aims to release approximately 1,300 individuals, with support from community members and various institutions.

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COMMENTARY

Oman’s computing revolution: The hidden gem of the GCC’s digital future



ALI MOHAMMAD
AKBAR KHAN

Oman is quietly forging its own path in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), positioning itself as a rising star in the region's digital transformation. While countries like the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar dominate the headlines with their massive tech industries, Oman is quietly cultivating a unique market with enormous potential. In 2025, Oman's computing market is projected to generate US\$180.8 million, and it's on a steady growth trajectory with a 3.69% annual growth rate through 2029. This presents an exciting opportunity for both consumers and businesses to tap into a market that's ripe for innovation.

Oman has a unique charm that makes it an appealing market, especially for those looking to step into something fresh and less competitive. Unlike the bigger tech giants in the region, Oman's computing market is still growing, offering a great opportunity for manufacturers, resellers, and investors to make their mark early. The population here is smaller, but what's interesting is how focused and



engaged they are when it comes to technology. Omani consumers aren't looking for flashy trends—they want practical, reliable, and sustainable tech that genuinely improves their lives. While other GCC countries often chase the latest fads, Oman is moving towards a more thoughtful approach to digital transformation. And because of this, its computing market is shaping up to be a space for long-term, sustainable growth. It's a chance to build something meaningful in a market that's still finding its footing.

Omani consumers are increasingly demanding tech products that are reliable, affordable, and enhance productivity. This is particularly evident in their interest in laptops, tablets, and cloud solutions. With a tech-savvy youth and expanding middle class, Oman's laptop market is expected to generate US\$56.7 million by 2025. Tablets, valued at US\$32

million in 2025, reflect the growing preference for portable devices that suit hybrid learning, remote work, and digital government services.

Oman's growing reliance on digital transformation, especially in education and government, also highlights the untapped potential in cloud computing and storage. Tech companies now have the opportunity to cater to this specific demand, offering innovative solutions for a rapidly evolving market.

Compared to its GCC neighbours, Oman's tech market evolves at a more deliberate pace. While countries like the UAE thrive on fast-moving, e-commerce-driven tech, Oman's adoption of new technology is more measured. This slower pace translates into unique opportunities for businesses looking to establish a niche in a less saturated market. Unlike the premium gadget-driven market of the UAE, Omani consumers

prefer durable, cost-effective, and eco-friendly devices that promise long-term value. With sustainability on the rise, Oman offers a fertile ground for companies that prioritise energy-efficient solutions and practical tech.

Opportunities for manufacturers and resellers

For businesses looking to capitalise on Oman's growing digital landscape, the market offers a host of opportunities. From affordable high-performance laptops to eco-friendly storage solutions, there's space to introduce products that address the specific needs of Omani consumers. Localisation is key—offering products with Arabic language support and aligning with government initiatives will build trust and loyalty. As sustainability continues to be a priority, eco-conscious and long-lasting products will resonate with the local audience. Additionally, with Oman's digital growth, businesses can play a key role in educating consumers and offering top-notch customer support to build strong, lasting relationships.

Oman's bright digital future

Oman's computing market may not be as large as those of the UAE or Saudi Arabia, but its steady growth, sustainability focus, and practical approach to tech adoption make it a hidden gem in the GCC. As the country embraces digital transformation, it's poised to become a key player in the region's tech landscape. For those who seize the opportunity now, Oman's computing revolution offers a chance to be part of a unique and exciting market that values innovation and long-term value over fleeting trends. The future is bright, and Oman is ready to shine in the digital world.

MARCH 15

Muscat Municipality marks Arab City Day



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman, represented by Muscat Municipality, joined its Arab counterparts in celebrating Arab City Day, observed annually on March 15. This year's theme, "Resilient and Enduring Cities," highlights 58 years since the founding of the Arab Towns Organisation in 1967.

Through its efforts, Muscat Municipality seeks to share expertise, leverage global experiences, and drive growth and prosperity while achieving national development goals.

In his speech on the occasion, Eng. Abdulrahman Hisham Al-Asfour, Secretary-General of the Organisation, emphasised the significance of smart cities, stating: "This year's theme reflects a deep awareness that cities represent the future of global life. With growing global challenges—climate change, health crises, urban expansion, and geopolitical shifts—the need for resilient cities is more urgent than ever."

Al-Asfour added: "Resilient cities rely on sustainable urban planning, robust infrastructure, economic diversity, community engagement, and smart technology. These factors enhance adaptability and ensure cities can withstand environmental, economic, and social shifts. A well-prepared city can respond to crises efficiently, minimizing damage, accelerating recovery, and maintaining a safe and sustainable environment where normal life continues even in challenging times."

For his part, Ahmed Mohammed Al-Humaidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality, stated: "Muscat Municipality's participation in Arab City Day reaffirms its commitment to adopting the best strategies for urban resilience and sustainability. This includes infrastructure development, service enhancements, proactive responses to environmental and economic challenges, and the creation of innovative solutions that contribute to societal well-being."

"These efforts align with Oman Vision 2040, which aims to enhance quality of life, boost the Sultanate's competitiveness, and build a future-ready, sustainable society and economy."

Resilient cities go beyond infrastructure; they integrate social, economic, and environmental elements that enhance their ability to adapt to crises and challenges. In this regard, Muscat Municipality continues to improve quality of life through balanced urban planning, efficient resource management, and the implementation of smart solutions, ensuring a more sustainable and thriving city.

Recognising the role of organisations in urban development, Muscat Municipality became a member of the Arab Towns Organisation in 1971. Since then, it has strengthened cooperation with cities, institutions, and organisations to enhance collaboration, share expertise, and advance sustainable urban development, ultimately driving growth and prosperity.

MODERNISATION PLANS

Sultan’s Special Force to mark annual day today

MUSCAT: The Sultan's Special Force (SSF) will celebrate its annual day under the patronage of Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office on Sunday. This celebration comes as the Sultan's Special Force continues its development and modernisation plans, thanks to the high attention and patronage it receives from His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander. -ONA



SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Souq projects to create investment opportunities

AL RUSTAQ: The completion percentage of Wadi Al Mawil Souq Project amounted to over 90% while the completion percentage of Al Wabi Souq amounted to 70%.

The two projects come within the government efforts of developing the services, achieving sustainable growth and enhancing the local economy.

The souq project of the Wilayat of Al Awabi is being built on a total area of 1,200 sq. metres and accommodates 16 commercial

stores. The investment value of the project is OMR 200,000. The souq aims to provide a modern commercial centre that contributes to the trading activity in the wilayat.

The completion percentage of the souq amounted to 70%, which reflects fast pace of the construction work of the project.

Meanwhile, work is underway for completion of Wadi Al Mawil Souq at a total area of 1,800 sq. metres and will have 27 commercial stores. The investment value

of the project is OMR300,000. The completion percentage of the project amounted to 92%. The two souqs are designed to include coffee shops, mosques, parking lots, open seating area, and landscaping works which all meet the needs of shoppers.

The two souqs reflect the efforts accorded by the Governorate of South Al Batinah for development of the souqs in the wilayats.

The two projects are expected to create new investment opportunities. -ONA

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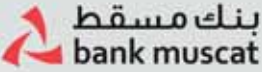
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Through the lens of this profound Islamic teaching, the Most Merciful Allah assures us elevation among the ranks of the excellent if we endure with patience the challenges that come our way. True patience encompasses embracing His Divine Will, regardless of how difficult our circumstances appear. Therefore, if you find yourself struggling today, refrain from despair. Stand firm in your resolve, for you have already achieved a magnificent triumph in life’s journey.

» FASTING HEALTH TIP

AVOID CARBONATED
AND SUGARY DRINKS



Consuming beverages high in sugar content, such as sodas and other sweetened drinks, is best avoided. Exercise caution when adding sweeteners to homemade or traditional fruit beverages. Offering carbonated drinks during iftar can suppress healthy hunger signals, potentially leading to inadequate hydration and increased sugar cravings throughout your fasting hours.

» GOOD DEEDS

THOUSANDS ATTEND OMAN’S
LARGEST COMMUNITY IFTAR



MUSCAT: The Ruwi Clock Tower in Muscat became the epicentre of unity during Ramadan, as thousands of people gathered for one of the largest community iftars in Oman on Friday (March 14).

Organised by the Deccani Wing of the Indian Social Club Oman (ISC), this annual event has been a cherished tradition for over two decades, drawing people from various nationalities in a celebration of generosity, unity, and cultural exchange.

The event not only marks the spirit of Ramadan but also fosters a deeper sense of community and belonging. Suhail Khan, Head of the iftar organising committee, said, “The gathering welcomed people from diverse backgrounds,

promoting the spirit of brotherhood and unity.”

He added: “Volunteers from all walks of life played a crucial role in ensuring the event’s success, distributing meals, coordinating logistics, and cultivating an atmosphere of compassion and solidarity.”

Attendees broke their fast with traditional Hyderabad delicacies, followed by congregational prayers for peace and harmony. More than just a shared meal, the community iftar served as a platform for building friendships, strengthening community bonds, and celebrating the values of Ramadan. The gathering also featured charitable contributions, emphasising the importance of giving back to society.




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Oman makes notable progress in all global competitiveness indicators

The Sultanate advanced 20 ranks in the Corruption Perceptions Index, securing the 50th position globally among 180 countries

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The National Competitiveness Office has announced that Oman made notable progress in several international indicators during 2024.

The Sultanate advanced 20 ranks in the Corruption Perceptions Index, securing the 50th position globally among 180 countries.

Oman also climbed over 90 ranks in the Environmental Performance Index, now holding the 55th position worldwide, and improved four ranks in the Network Readiness Index, ranking 50th out of 133 countries.

Additionally, Oman's Economic Freedom Score improved from 62.9 to 65.4 in 2025, classifying its economy as "moderately free."

In global governance indices, Oman's Rule of Law indicator reached 70.2 out of 100, Regulatory



tory Quality rose to 66.5 out of 100, and Government Effectiveness improved to 62.2.

Dr. Salem bin Abdullah Al-Sheikh, Director of the National Competitiveness Office at the Ministry of Economy, attributed these achievements to the efforts of national committees and task forces established to monitor these indicators.

He emphasised the contributions of the National Competitiveness Committee and specialised teams working on areas such as innovation, network readiness,

environmental performance, and business readiness.

In his statement to the Oman News Agency, Dr.Al-Sheikh noted that these teams have worked diligently to enhance Oman's performance in these areas.

A study on the Corruption Perceptions Index gave recommendations, which were referred to relevant authorities for implementation, leading to noticeable improvements in international indicators.

He highlighted that Oman's progress is driven by overall

government performance, the enactment of new laws, governance improvements, and projects initiated by various government bodies.

Efforts by the National Centre for Statistics and Information to provide, improve, and update data with international organisations also played a vital role in improving the status.

Dr. Al-Sheikh added that the collective efforts of the government, private sector, civil society, and the community's response to surveys from international ex-



Dr. Salem bin Abdullah Al-Sheikh, Director of the National Competitiveness Office at the Ministry of Economy. -ONA



Dr. Yusuf bin Hamad Al-Balushi, an economic expert and founder of the Smart Gateway for Consultations and Investments. -ONA

perts have positively reflected on Oman's global rankings.

He reiterated the commitment of the National Competitiveness Committee and Office to further elevate Oman's competitive indicators over the coming years.

The Sultanate aims to enhance its standing in indicators such as innovation, environmental performance, business readiness, and future growth.

Oman is also preparing to be part of the Ease of Doing Business Index in its new format and the Future Growth Index, focusing on internal improvements and a clear vision aligned with international standards.

Dr. Yusuf bin Hamad Al-Bal-

ushi, an economic expert and founder of the Smart Gateway for Consultations and Investments, stressed the importance of competitiveness indices as tools to enhance business environments and attract investors.

He noted that these indicators provide a roadmap for policy makers to address challenges and bolster the Sultanate's international reputation, which is crucial for investors and researchers.

He also emphasised that while Oman has achieved significant progress in international indices, there remains room for further improvement to drive transformative changes in the structure of the national economy.

SEVEN FRIES

French fries made by Omani youth goes global

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Omani youth are currently seeking to transform their hobbies and daily practices into commercial ventures by innovating projects that will become popular with consumers and promoting them commercially, enabling them to compete in regional and global markets.

Among these projects is "Seven Fries," the first Omani brand specialising in fresh French fries. Owned by Issa bin Saleh Al Aghbari, the brand was launched in the Wilayat of Seeb in Muscat Governorate in 2021.

He explained that in less than two years, it has opened three branches in Muscat and Dhofar Governorates.

He said that his brand, "Seven Fries," was selected from among more than 300 participating Omani brands in the franchise programme offered by the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and he was able to sign an agreement with the Chamber to develop the brand.

He pointed out that in 2024, he was able to sign the first commercial franchise contract in the



Wilayat of Al Amerat in the Governorate of Muscat.

Wilayat of Ibri in the Governorate of Al Dhahirah. Globally, commercial franchise contracts were signed for the brand in Erbil in the Kurdistan Region, in Iraq, and another in Islamabad in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in addition to signing an exclusive contract in India.

He added that the company is seeking to open 300 branches in India in the coming period, as it is one of the largest global markets. He explained that there are several requests to sign franchise agreements in global markets, particularly in the US.

ENHANCED BENEFITS

Taxi operators, public advised to support the implementation

<FROM A1 It aims to enhance benefits for taxi owners by leveraging innovative technologies within the licensed apps, offering

features like trip tracking and route monitoring, all while prioritising user privacy and security. Taxi operators and the public are encouraged to comply with and

support the smooth implementation of this programme, which seeks to modernise and elevate the transport sector in the Sultanate of Oman.



Ramadan Iftar Program

The Prophet (ﷺ) said "Whoever breaks the fast for a fasting person, will have a reward similar to his reward, however, nothing is detracted from the reward of a fasting person".

The Oman Charitable Organization is pleased to announce that it will receive donations for Ramadan Iftar Program in Sultanate of Oman for the year 1446 AH AD 2025

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IS leader killed, says Iraqi Prime Minister

Abu Khadija, was ‘deputy caliph’ of the militant group and ‘one of the most dangerous terrorists in Iraq and the world’



BAGHDAD: The Iraqi Prime Minister said that personnel of the country’s national intelligence service, working with coalition forces commanded by the United States, had killed the head of IS in Iraq and Syria, as reported by CNN citing AP.

“The Iraqis continue their impressive victories over the forces of darkness and terrorism,” Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said.

Abdallah Maki Mosleh Al Rifai, or Abu Khadija, was “deputy caliph” of the militant group and “one of the most dangerous terrorists in Iraq and the world,” the statement said, as reported by CNN.

On his Truth Social platform Friday night, US President Donald Trump said, “Today the fugitive leader of IS in Iraq was killed. He was relentlessly hunted down by our intrepid warfighters” in co-ordination with the Iraqi government and the Kurdish regional government.

As per a report by CNN, a security official said the operation was executed by airstrike in the western Iraqi province of Anbar. According to a second official, Al-Rifai’s death was verified on Friday, but the operation happened Thursday night. They were not permitted to make public comments, so they talked on condition

of anonymity.

The announcement came on the same day as the first visit by Syria’s top diplomat to Iraq, during which the two countries pledged to work together to combat IS.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Fouad Hussein, according to the report, said at a news conference that “there are common challenges facing Syrian and Iraqi society, and especially the terrorists of IS.”

He said the officials had spoken “in detail about the movements of IS, whether on the Syrian-Iraqi border, inside Syria or inside Iraq” during the visit.

Hussein further referred to an operations room formed by Syria,

Iraq, Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon at a recent meeting in Amman to confront IS and said it would soon begin work.

The relationship between Iraq and Syria is somewhat fraught after the fall of former Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad. Al-Sudani came to power with the support of a coalition of Iran-backed factions, and Tehran was a major backer of Assad.

The current interim president of Syria, Ahmad al-Sharaa, was earlier reportedly known as Abu Mohammed Al-Golani and fought as an al-Qaida militant in Iraq after the US invasion of 2003 and later fought against Assad’s government in Syria.

The US and Iraq had announced an agreement last year to wind down the military mission in Iraq of an American-led coalition fighting the IS group by September 2025, with US forces departing some bases where they have stationed troops during a two-decade-long military presence in the country.

Iraqi political officials declared that the threat posed by IS was under control and that they no longer required assistance from Washington to defeat the residual cells after the coalition’s mission in Iraq was agreed to terminate. -ANI



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SpaceX, NASA mission to bring back astronauts

HOUSTON: SpaceX and NASA have launched a mission to bring back US astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore from the International Space Station (ISS), where they have been stranded for nine months.

The lift-off took place at 7:03 ET on Friday, with a Falcon 9 rocket carrying a Dragon spacecraft on the Crew-10 mission.

The mission also launched four crew members to the ISS: NASA astronauts Anne McClain and Nichole Ayers, JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) astronaut Takuya Onishi, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Kirill Peskov to the International Space Station.

Crew-10 is the 10th crew rotation mission under SpaceX’s human space transportation system and the 11th flight with a crew

aboard to the ISS station through NASA’s Commercial Crew Program, including the Demo-2 test flight. Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore have been stranded on the ISS for nine months after reaching there in June last year. They were supposed to stay there for about a week.

Ahead of the launch, US Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth shared a video message expressing support for NASA’s SpaceX Crew-10, Fox News reported.

In a video posted on X, Hegseth stated, “I just want to take a brief moment to say we are praying for you.” He added, “We wish you Godspeed, and we look forward to welcoming you all home soon.”

“President Trump said to Elon Musk, ‘get the astronauts home and do it now’ - and they’re responding,” Hegseth said. -ANI

TRADING PARTNERS

Re-export activities grow by 14.9%

< FROM A1 Chemical industries and related products declined by 19.6% to OMR804 million, while live animals and animal products fell by 11% to OMR350 million. Other exports declined by 5% to reach OMR981 million.

Re-export activities grew by 14.9% to OMR 1.708 billion. Notably, re-exports of food, beverages, and liquids surged by 30.6% to

OMR184 million, and re-exports of mineral products rose by 21.3% to OMR120 million. However, re-exports of live animals and animal products decreased by 10.1% to OMR97 million.

Mineral products

In imports, mineral products accounted for the highest value at OMR 4.674 billion, a rise of 11.3%. Machinery and electrical

equipment imports grew significantly by 28.9% to OMR2.934 billion, while base metals and their products increased slightly by 1% to OMR1.605 billion. Imports of transportation equipment rose by 13.5% to OMR1.516 billion.

The UAE topped Oman’s non-oil export trading partners with OMR1.046 billion in exports, an 11% increase from 2023.

The UAE also led in re-exports

at OMR569 million and as the largest exporter to Oman at OMR3.941 billion.

Saudi Arabia ranked second in non-oil Omani exports at OMR849 million, followed by India with OMR659 million.

This trade surplus reflects Oman’s robust export performance, driven by its oil and gas sectors, and its active re-export market.

NATIONWIDE

Cuba suffers power outage

HAVANA: Cuba was plunged into darkness on Friday night as a nationwide power outage left more than 10 million people without electricity, marking one of the most severe blackouts the country has faced in recent years, CNN reported.

The failure, which impacted homes, businesses, and public infrastructure across the island, underscored Cuba’s ongoing struggles with an aging energy grid and persistent economic challenges.

The Ministry of Energy and Mines confirmed that the outage was caused by a major failure at the Diezmero substation, located in western Cuba, which triggered a widespread collapse of the National Electric System.

“At around 8:15 pm tonight, a failure at the Diezmero substation caused a significant loss of generation in the west of Cuba and with it the failure of the National Electric System,” the ministry said in a statement. Officials assured that efforts to restore service were underway, though



no estimated timeframe was provided for when full power would be restored, reported CNN.

Scenes from Havana, captured on video by CNN, showed the capital city in near-total darkness, with residents navigating pitch-black streets using electric torches and mobile phone flashlights.

This latest blackout adds to Cuba’s worsening energy crisis, as the country struggles with outdated infrastructure, ongoing fuel shortages, and the impact of natural disasters. The government has frequently attributed these

challenges to decades-long US economic sanctions, which were tightened under US President Donald Trump.

However, critics argue that the Cuban government’s failure to modernise its infrastructure has played a significant role in the continued instability of the energy grid, CNN reported.

Cuba has faced repeated power outages in recent years, with one of the worst occurring in October, when most of the island endured nearly a week of near-total blackouts. -ANI

WARNING

US asks Hamas to free hostages

NEW YORK: The United States government on Friday put pressure on the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas to immediately release several hostages from Gaza or “pay a severe price.”

The warning came in a written statement from the National Security Council and the office of Special Envoy Steve Witkoff.

It follows fresh talks in Qatar where US officials presented a “bridge” proposal to extend the Gaza ceasefire until mid-April to allow time to negotiate a permanent end to the conflict.

Friday’s statement also restated the call on Israel to allow aid deliveries to Gaza again and release several Palestinian prisoners in exchange for the release of an American-Israeli dual national and the bodies of several other hostages.

Hamas accused of muddying waters

Hamas said on Friday it was ready to free the hostage and the remains of four others.

A statement from the Islamist movement said it had agreed to “release the Israeli soldier Edan Alexander, who holds American citizenship, along with the remains of four others holding dual citizenship.”

US statement

The US statement, however, said Hamas was publicly claiming to support the extension, “while privately making demands that are entirely impractical without a permanent ceasefire.”

The statement added that if Hamas fails to meet all the demands in time, the United States “will respond accordingly,” with-

out elaborating.

Israel, meanwhile, played down the chance of the hostage deal, accusing Hamas of waging “psychological warfare” on the families of the abductees.

The first phase of the Israel-Hamas truce ran out on March 1 without agreement on the next steps.

Fresh talks began in Doha, with Israel and Hamas both sending negotiators to work on a plan to extend the ceasefire.

During the first six weeks of the truce, Palestinian militants released 33 hostages, including eight dead bodies, in exchange for about 1,800 Palestinian detainees held in Israeli prisons.

Israel says Hamas is still holding 24 hostages, as well as 35 bodies of abductees.



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INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION



ISRO earns \$143mn via foreign satellite launches in 10 years

NEW DELHI: India generated foreign exchange revenue worth \$143 million through launching foreign satellites during the period from 2015 to 2024, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Jitendra Singh, who looks after the space sector, informed Lok Sabha.

During the last ten years starting from January 2015 to December 2024, a total of 393 foreign satellites and three Indian customer satellites have been launched on a commercial basis on board ISRO's PSLV, LVM3 and SSLV launch vehicles, the ministry apprised the Lok Sabha in a written reply.

India has launched satellites of 34 countries so far, including those of developed countries, since 2014: Of the total 393 foreign satellites that were launched, 232 were for the US, 83 for the UK, Singapore (19), Canada (8), Korea (5) Luxemburg (4), Italy (4), Germany (3), Belgium (3), Finland (3), France (3), Switzerland (2) Netherland (2), Japan (2), Israel (2), Spain (2), Australia (1), United Arab Emirates (1), and Austria (1).

Currently, space cooperative documents have been signed with 61 countries and five multilateral bodies. The major areas of cooperation are satellite remote sensing, satellite navigation, satellite communication, space science and planetary exploration and capacity building, the minister said in a separate reply to the Lok Sabha.

India is a big space power now, with back-to-back successful

missions.

In 2023, in a stellar display of prowess, India soared to new heights with the successful soft landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the South Pole of the Moon and with the success of Aditya-L1, India's first solar mission.

India is now preparing for its ambitious Gaganyaan mission, envisaging a demonstration of human space capabilities by launching a crew of astronauts into an orbit and then bringing back these human astronauts safely to earth by landing them in India's sea waters.

The manned mission Gaganyaan is scheduled for launch this year. The four astronauts who will be part of India's first human space flight program, Gaganyaan, were trained at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Russia, the same centre where Rakesh Sharma underwent training. Rakesh Sharma was the first Indian to go into space in 1984.

These milestones not only secured India's standing in the global space economy but also fueled the engines for the private space sector in India. Among other feats, India now aims to set up 'Bharatiya Antariksha Station' by 2035 and send the first Indian to the Moon by 2040.

Indian space startups have become a strong pillar for the private space industry in the last decade, especially after the landmark move to open the Indian space sector to private companies in 2020. —ANI

Trump's tariffs trigger a 'Boycott USA' backlash from around the world

Several Facebook groups have been set up in recent weeks aimed at organising boycotts and campaigns

OSLO: Scandinavian countries and Canada are at the forefront of a growing international trend, in which some consumers are shunning US goods because of President Donald Trump's decision to place tariffs on a range of products from all over the world.

Several Facebook groups have been set up in recent weeks aimed at organising boycotts and campaigns. A Swedish group called "Bojkotta varor från USA" in Swedish, meaning "Boycott goods from the US," had almost 80,000 members at the time of writing.

It describes its purpose as to "protect democracy, self-determination and security," and says it hopes boycotts will put pressure on the Trump administration. The use of the American platform Facebook is justified as it is "the best weapon," it added.

Several similar Canadian groups have started on Facebook, while a French group called "BOYCOTT USA: Achetez Français et Européen!" — BOYCOTT USA: Buy French and European! — has over 20,000 members.

There also appears to be support for a similar stance in Germany. A survey by the research group Civey for the business newspaper Handelsblatt found that 64% of Germans would prefer to avoid US products, if possible. A slim majority said Trump's policies are already influencing their choices when shopping.

Garritt van Dyk, a lecturer in history at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, said consumer boycotts have become pop-



ular in recent years as people see as it an additional option to voting to exercise political opinion.

"It could be that either they voted with one expectation and the reality is something different, or that they didn't get the result they wanted," he told DW. "They're looking for other ways to exercise that agency."

Tesla sales drop amid Musk wrath

There is limited data available so far to show if such campaigns are having an impact. However, one of the US products with an especially tangible link to the Trump administration is Tesla. The electric car brand is run by Elon Musk, a senior adviser to Trump currently tasked with running the newly established Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

Tesla sales in Europe plummeted in January, according to data from the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association, dropping 45% from the same period in 2024. Tesla sales in Europe fell throughout 2024, down 13% across the European Union.

Van Dyk said boycotts have become popular across the political divide, pointing to the example of the boycott of Bud Light beer in the US which began in April 2023.

The boycott came in response to a Bud Light ad campaign fronted by a transgender person, which led to a backlash and boycott from American conservatives and a significant drop in sales for the beer.

"It can happen from any direction," said van Dyk. "It's not just a progressive tool."

'Buy Canadian' campaign among rising anti-Trump sentiment

Sentiment against US goods appears to be particularly strong in Canada. Trump has plowed ahead with 25% tariffs, against Canada despite the countries being longstanding allies and sharing a nearly 9,000-kilometre (5,592-mile) border.

Trump has also repeatedly talked about making Canada the US' 51st state and has referred to the country's outgoing prime minister, Justin Trudeau, as "Governor Trudeau" in an apparently public and intended display of disrespect.

That has all led to a serious backlash from Canadians. Rising anti-Trump sentiment has seen the Liberal Party, previously run by Trudeau and now by incoming prime minister Mark Carney, stage a dramatic recovery in polls. In early 2025, it trailed the Conservative Party by 25% but a stunning turnaround now sees it leading many polls.

That mood is increasingly reflected among consumers. Dylan Lobo runs a website called "Made in CA," which aims to provide an online directory of Canadian-made goods. He told Business Insider magazine that his website had recently seen a major surge in traffic.

"There's a lot of patriotism right now in this country," he told the magazine. "There's a huge sense that Canadians want to support other Canadians." Several apps have even emerged, such as Buy Beaver and Maple Scan, that help shoppers identify US products when shopping.

Many Canadian businesses have also taken action with "Buy Canadian" campaigns. In Ontario, the province's Liquor Control Board announced it would stop stocking US-made products such as bourbon and wines in its stores. Other provinces, like British Columbia and New Brunswick, have taken similar actions.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford also ended a CA\$100 million (\$69 million, €63.3 million) contract with Starlink, the telecommunications company owned by Elon Musk. "Ontario won't do business with people hellbent on destroying our economy," he said on social media platform X. —DW

GRAVE CONCERNS

Could Sudan be split into two countries?

Khartoum: The current month of Ramadan marks almost two years of fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces, or SAF, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, and their respective allies.

During Ramadan in April 2023, the commanders of the two forces fell out over how to integrate the RSF into the SAF.

The ensuing brutal war over who should control the country has plunged Sudan into the world's biggest humanitarian and displacement crisis.

Now, in addition to the dire humanitarian situation, hunger and famine, ongoing fighting and outbreaks of cholera, the war-battered country risks being split into two rival administrations.

'Grave concerns'

The paramilitary Rapid Support Forces — which hold nearly all of Sudan's western Darfur region and parts of the south — recently signed a charter to establish a "Government of Peace and Unity" in areas under their control.

The United Nations Security Council has warned that "such a move would risk exacerbating the ongoing conflict in Sudan, fragmenting the country, and worsening an already dire humanitarian situation."

This week, the African Union, a continental body that comprises 55 African countries, also condemned "the announcement by the Rapid Support Forces and its affiliated political and social forces of the establishment of a parallel government in the Republic of Sudan, and warned that such action carries a huge risk of partitioning of the country."

The Sudanese Armed Forces, which control most of the country's north and east, and recently won back large swathes of the capital Khartoum and central Sudan,



also unveiled a political roadmap "for peace" in February.

"Each side hopes to position themselves [sic] as the 'legitimate power' in the country," Leena Badri, from the International Security Program at the London-based think tank Chatham House, told DW.

"The SAF stated that any end to fighting will only happen once the paramilitary militia withdraws and gathers for disarmament while the RSF hopes to gain access to more formal weapons import through establishing a government," she added.

"However, a real willingness to end the fighting and destruction on the ground has not been expressed."

Partition exacerbates the humanitarian situation

Analysts and human rights activists are increasingly concerned about the ripple effects of a potential partition.

"Parallel administrations would draw Sudanese civilians even further away from the goals of peace, justice, and freedom and would cement the control of military men over Sudan's political future," Shayna Lewis, a Sudan specialist and senior advisor at the US-based non-governmental group Preventing and Ending Mass Atrocities (PAEMA), told DW.

"We have already been seeing an unfriendly environment for humanitarian aid by the RSF and the SAF, with blockages and restrictions on unfettered humanitarian access remaining in place," Mohamed Osman, a Sudan researcher at the

US-based NGO Human Rights Watch, confirmed.

"The RSF-proposed government is not something we can expect to help or advance human rights or improve the humanitarian situation, given their own record throughout the war," he told DW.

For the 12.9 million Sudanese people forced to flee their homes, of which close to 9 million are internally displaced, the already dire situation risks getting even worse.

The UN warned this week that in Sudan's western Darfur region, civilians in refugee camps were dying of hunger.

Salah Adam, who is living in the Abu Shouk refugee camp in Darfur, said on Friday that "conditions are very tough."

"We have very little food left,

and there is a water shortage," he told DW.

He said that there was no more medical care and that shelling by the RSF continued.

"We are so worried about our lives and the situation in Sudan but we have no power to change anything."

International influence

Observers have repeatedly pointed out that the outcome of the conflict in Sudan depends largely on the respective international allies of the warring sides.

The Sudanese Armed Forces under General Abdel-Fattah al-Burhan rely on political backing and military support from Egypt and Qatar.

The UN estimates that there have been at least 40,000 deaths in the past two years. —DW

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Rights group urges probe into Burkina Faso civilian massacre

New York: Human Rights Watch (HRW) late on Friday called on Burkina Faso's military rulers to investigate and prosecute those implicated in an apparent massacre of dozens of civilians this week.

Videos surfaced allegedly showing soldiers and militias killing members of a nomadic group, accused of collaborating with an uprising in the Sahel region, which spans northern central Africa.

City of Solenzo

HRW cited videos of the incident posted to social media, which it said showed the massacre of dozens of civilians in and around the western city of Solenzo on March 10 and 11.

The human rights watchdog said armed men wearing identifiable uniforms of local militias allied with the junta can be seen in the videos standing around by or walking among the bodies.

The various footage shows 58 people including women, children and the elderly "who appear to be dead or dying," HRW said.

The rights group added that the real number could be higher as the videos showed bodies piled on top of each other, with the victims' hands and feet bound.

HRW said the victims appear to be ethnic Fulani, a group of primarily nomadic herders often stigmatised across the wider Sahel, accused of working with the jihadists who stalk the region.

The rights group said the Islamist groups have exploited the Fulani's frustrations over corruption and seizure of natural resources to recruit them to their cause. —DW

Norris takes Melbourne pole

Local hero Oscar Piastri came second as McLaren locked out front row at Albert Park

MELBOURNE: Lando Norris powered to pole position for the Australian Grand Prix, leading a McLaren one-two alongside teammate Oscar Piastri in a dramatic qualifying session at Albert Park in Melbourne on Saturday.

McLaren's dominant display saw Norris edge out local hero Piastri by just 0.084 seconds, both drivers recovering from early mistakes in the final phase of qualifying to deliver flawless laps when it mattered most.

Their late charge relegated Max Verstappen's Red Bull to third, 0.385 seconds adrift, despite the reigning world champion's best efforts - his final lap hampered by a brush with the gravel at the high-speed Turns Nine and Ten chicane.

George Russell put his Mercedes fourth, ahead of a surprise top-six showing from Yuki Tsunoda in the Racing Bull and Alex Albon in the Williams.

Meanwhile, Lewis Hamilton secured eighth on his Ferrari debut, setting the stage for an intriguing race.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc outpaced Hamilton by 0.218 seconds, placing the Scuderia duo on the fourth row, with Pierre Gasly (Alpine) and Carlos Sainz (Williams) rounding out the top ten.

A four-time race winner in 2024, Norris was delighted with McLaren's strong start but remained cautious about Sunday's race, which is expected to be affected by rain.

"The perfect way to start the year," said Norris. "Everyone at McLaren has done an amazing job to get us a one-two, but it's just qualifying - tomorrow is going to be tricky. The car is extremely quick, but putting a lap together isn't easy. I know how fast Max and Red Bull are in the wet, so we need to be ready for anything."



Rookie watch
Among the six rookies on the grid, Brazilian Gabriel Bortoleto delivered the standout performance, out-qualifying his experienced Sauber teammate Nico Hülken-

berg to line up 15th. Conversely, Haas' Oliver Bearman endured a nightmare session, his weekend unraveling after a crash in second practice, a spin in final practice, and a gearbox failure

on his first lap in qualifying, leaving him at the back of the grid.

Elsewhere, Mercedes' Andrea Kimi Antonelli and Red Bull's Liam Lawson were both eliminated in Q1, with Antonelli blaming

gravel damage for a compromised lap that left him 16th.

Verstappen accepts third
Despite missing out on pole, Verstappen took the result in

stride after a challenging Friday. "Yesterday was quite tough, so to be P3, I'll take that," said the three-time world champion. "The qualifying laps were exciting, lots of grip, and some fast corners, which is always fun. "The gap to McLaren was quite big, so even a perfect lap wouldn't have changed much. Wet or dry, I don't mind - though in the wet, anything can happen." Hamilton, meanwhile, admitted Ferrari had work to do overnight to unlock more pace. "There's a lot to dissect," Hamilton told Sky Sports. "We're not on the pace with the front runners, so we need to figure out why. Tomorrow will be a challenge - I've never driven this car in the rain, so I need to study the settings tonight and learn as much as I can." With rain looming, an unpredictable Sunday showdown awaits as Norris leads the pack into battle, hoping to convert his pole into victory amid the Melbourne downpour. - Agencies



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In celebration of the blessed month of Ramadan, Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC) Khedmah has launched its 'Share the Light' campaign. This initiative aims to foster the spirit of giving and social solidarity among Khedmah app users and charitable organisations throughout the Sultanate of Oman. **>B2**

FOR 2024

ahli Global Equity Fund
delivers 10.6% return

MUSCAT: In line with its continued commitment to delivering value, ahlibank announced a 10.6% return for its flagship ahli Global Equity Fund in 2024. The Fund, regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), continues to provide exposure to both GCC and Global markets, reinforcing its position as a trusted platform for long-term capital growth.

The Fund's strength lies in its strategic diversification across key sectors, including financial services, technology, energy, real estate, and industrials. This approach is complemented by a focus on long-term capital appreciation, driven by investments in high-quality stocks with sustainable competitive advantages. Over the past three years, the Fund has delivered consistent positive returns, sustaining double-digit compounded growth, making it a preferred choice for investors in Oman.

ahlibank remains steadfast in its focus on GCC markets—particularly Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, and Oman—while selectively capitalising on opportunities in the US, China, and other emerging markets. The Fund's outlook is bolstered by strategic investments in energy, renewables, and tourism across key markets. Meanwhile, the team remains vigilant about potential volatility driven by geopolitical tensions, monetary policy shifts, and macroeconomic uncertainties, emphasising a balanced approach and selectivity in high-quality names with strong fundamentals.

Speaking on the Fund's performance, Hanaa Al Kharusi, Chairperson of ahli Global Equity Fund, remarked, "Our disciplined, bottom-up investment process allows the Fund to navigate volatility and seize emerging opportunities. At ahlibank, our commitment to delivering exceptional value drives all that we do. The ahli Global Equity Fund reflects this by generating superior returns through strategic invest-



ments. We extend our gratitude to our investors and stakeholders for their continued support and encourage them to harness the Fund's potential for long-term growth and financial prosperity."

Building on this strong foundation, the Fund offers accessible entry points for investors, allowing participation with a minimum investment of around OMR1,000. Incremental investments of 100 units through the Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) further enhance its flexibility, catering to both seasoned investors and newcomers alike.

Beyond accessibility, the Fund's appeal is strengthened by its investments in emerging markets and Initial Public Offerings (IPOs). This alignment with global growth trends broadens its market reach and positions it as a forward-looking investment vehicle. With an actively managed approach, the Fund leverages the expertise of a professional management team that skillfully adapts to changing market dynamics.

Poised to capitalise on global economic growth, the ahlī Global Equity Fund employs proven strategy to delivering superior risk-adjusted returns for our investors. As a trusted partner in Wealth & Asset Management, ahlībank remains committed to redefining the investment landscape and driving economic progress within the Sultanate.

Market capitalisation of MSX tops OMR27bn

Investors on the MSX during the week targeted bank shares and are awaiting the approval of dividend distributions at the annual general meetings, which are expected to be held in the coming days



tion was of OQ Exploration and Production (OQEP) at OMR2.5 billion, Bank Muscat at OMR1.9 billion and Bank Sohar International, at OMR 820.5 million. Omantel's market capitalisation was at OMR603 million.

In other trading, investors on the MSX during the week targeted bank shares, awaiting the approval of dividend distributions at the annual general meetings, which are expected to be held in the coming days.

Muscat Stock Exchange falls in weekly trading

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Omani stock market experienced a slightly negative performance during the week, marking its fifth consecutive week of losses. This downward trend reflects the broader regional market performance, where most markets ended negatively, according to an industry watcher.

"Sentiment remains exposed to global conditions, particularly the escalating trade tensions as the US implements tariffs on its economic partners. This has prompted retaliatory measures, increasing overall economic uncertainty," said Ahmed Negm, Head of Market Research MENA at XS.com.

Oil prices have also had a significant impact on the Omani market, especially considering the current low levels and the commodity's critical importance for regional economies, even though prices stabilised this week at their support levels, he further said. "The Omani stock market, like other regional markets, could continue to be influenced by developments



in trade tensions and oil price movements, while any improvements could potentially help the market recover," said Ahmed Negm.

The Omani market saw the introduction of Asyaad Shipping, the first initial public offering (IPO) in the Omani market this year. This follows a successful offering that enriches the market's diversity and increases its appeal to international investors, providing a positive note amidst the current challenging market conditions.

Performances on the sector level this week were mixed across the Omani stock market. The Industrial sector emerged

as the worst performer with a decline of 2.66%. Within this sector, Oman Cement fell by 1.42%, while Oman Flour Mills experienced a more significant drop of 8.06%. Al Anwar Ceramic also contributed to the sector's poor performance with a 5.83% decrease.

The Services sector similarly finished on the negative side, declining by 0.99%. In this segment, Oman Telecom saw a modest decrease of 0.25%, while OQ Gas Networks fell by 0.77%. Renaissance Services registered a more substantial decline of 4.64%, further weighing on the sector's overall performance.

The Financial sector stood out as the only positive performer this week, demonstrating resilience amidst the broader market weakness. National Bank Oman led this sector with a 7.14% gain and was the market's most traded stock based on value and volume. Oman Emirates Holding rose by 1.56%, while Muscat Insurance delivered the strongest performance with a substantial rise of 45.94%.

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Bank Nizwa’s Savings Accounts fuel financial growth and also promote a culture of savings

Empowering customers with Sharia-compliant financial solutions

MUSCAT: Committed to empowering customers in their financial journeys, Bank Nizwa, the leading and most trusted Islamic bank in the Sultanate of Oman, offers a comprehensive product portfolio of Sharia-compliant financial solutions that deliver exceptional value to its clientele. In line with this, the bank’s Savings Account provides a secure option for financial growth with transactional flexibility. The bank also offers Recurring Deposit and Term Deposits which offer stable, systematic returns over a defined period. In addition, the Current Account delivers the necessary flexibility to manage daily finances. Together, these offerings exemplify Bank Nizwa’s dedication to promoting responsible financial practices, enabling customers to grow their wealth prudently, while benefiting from Sharia-compliant investment opportunities.

Commenting on these offerings, Mr. Mohamed Al Ghassani, Chief Retail Banking Officer at Bank Nizwa said, “As demand for Sharia-compliant financial solutions continues to rise, Bank Nizwa’s products have resonated strongly with customers seeking secure ways to manage and grow their wealth. Our Savings and Current Accounts, along with our deposit offerings, cater to diverse individuals—from minors and young adults embarking on their finan-



cial journeys to retirees looking for prudent investment opportunities. These products help our customers develop strong saving habits while providing a solid foundation for effective financial planning. At Bank Nizwa, we are dedicated to promoting a culture of savings and financial empowerment, while ensuring our customers have access to innovative, inclusive banking solutions that align with their values.”

The Bank Nizwa Savings Account provides unlimited transactions, hassle-free deposits and withdrawals, and access to a wide range of banking services, including standing instructions, pay orders, and local and international remittances. As a leader in Islamic banking, the bank combines modern banking conveniences with Sharia-compliant solutions. Customers can easily manage their

finances through the bank’s secure mobile application, internet banking, and ATMs, with 24/7 customer support available through the call center. To facilitate all segments of the society, the bank does not apply any minimum balance charges.

The Savings Account is based on the concept of Mudaraba, where the bank acts as the Mudarib (investment manager) and the account holder as the Rab-ul-Maal (capital provider). The bank invests the account balance in Sharia-compliant opportunities within its general Mudaraba pool with anticipated profit rate, ensuring profits are derived from ethical investments in alignment with Islamic finance principles. Profits are calculated based on the monthly average balance and credited to customers’ accounts quarterly.

Bank Nizwa enhances conveni-

ence and accessibility for customers, allowing them to easily apply for a Savings Account through the mobile application, or visit their nearest branch to open an account in person. Additionally, customers can enjoy the instant issuance of debit cards through ITM machines or at their nearest branch. With seamless transaction capabilities, Savings Account holders can effortlessly make utility payments through various electronic channels. To further enrich the banking experience, account holders are also provided with a range of exclusive discounts and offers from partner merchants.

Bank Nizwa offers the Investment Mudarabah Deposit, providing its customers with the perfect opportunity to start their saving and investment journey. The account is available in Omani Rial and US Dollar, offering flexible profit payment options, whether monthly, quarterly, or annually. It features higher and competitive profit rates, along with the ability to withdraw the invested amount before the maturity date in emergency situations, all without any hidden fees. This reflects the bank’s commitment to providing innovative banking solutions that meet the needs of its customers.

Additionally, Bank Nizwa provides a Recurring Deposit service to further enhance its customers’ saving solutions. The account is the ideal choice for long-term saving to meet goals, such as funding one’s children’s education, planning for retirement, medical expenses, marriage, and family obligations. Bank Nizwa offers higher and competitive profit rates, with no hidden fees, along with flexibility in choosing the deposit date and ease of managing standing instructions, reflecting the bank’s commitment to providing innovative banking solutions that meet the needs of its customers.

OHI Leo Burnett delivers strategy and communications for Asyad Shipping’s landmark \$333 million IPO on MSX

Times News Service

MUSCAT: OHI Leo Burnett, a leading creative advertising agency in Oman, announced the successful completion of its strategy and communications for the \$333 million initial public offering (IPO) of Asyad Shipping Company. Asyad Shipping, one of the world’s largest diversified maritime providers and a global leader in deep-sea transportation, debuted recently on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX).

IPO’s narrative and equity story

As part of its role, OHI Leo Burnett developed the IPO’s narrative and equity story across all three phases of the process – pre-IPO preparation, Listing Day execution, and post-IPO positioning. The agency crafted a strategic and compelling communication framework to engage investors, enhance market visibility, and reinforce Asyad Shipping’s brand presence throughout this milestone journey.

As part of the IPO, Asyad Shipping offered 20% of its total issued share capital, amounting to 1,041,748,856 existing shares at an offer price of Bzs 123 per share. This implies a market capitalization of OMR 641 million (USD 1.7 billion). The company now trades under the ticker ASCO.

OHI Leo Burnett played a pivotal role in shaping the marketing strategy and crafting compelling brand messaging for this milestone event, ensuring strong market visibility and investor engagement.

High-impact strategy

“We are honoured to have played a key role in one of Oman’s most significant IPOs, showcasing our expertise in delivering high-impact strategy and communications. Our approach focused on crafting a compelling narrative, engaging investors, and elevating brand visibility across multiple platforms. This achievement reflects our commitment to excellence and innovation in financial marketing, and we take pride in supporting Asyad Shipping in reaching this major milestone. We look forward to continuing to drive success for our clients and shaping impactful market communications in the region,” said Narayan Iyer, General Manager at OHI Leo Burnett.

With this achievement, OHI Leo Burnett reaffirms its expertise in delivering high-impact marketing solutions for landmark financial events.

OHI Leo Burnett boasts a strong track record of successfully delivering high-impact IPO marketing campaigns.

With extensive expertise in strategic branding and investor engagement, the agency has played a pivotal role in major IPO projects, including OQ Exploration & Production (OQEP) and OQ Gas Networks (OQGN) for OQ Group.

Through innovative storytelling and data-driven strategies, OHI Leo Burnett continues to shape market-leading IPO communications, reinforcing its position as a trusted partner in the financial and corporate sectors.

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OMAN INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY

OIFC Khedmah launches ‘Share the Light’ Ramadan campaign to support local charitable organisations

MUSCAT: In celebration of the blessed month of Ramadan, Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC) Khedmah has launched its ‘Share the Light’ campaign. This initiative aims to foster the spirit of giving and social solidarity among Khedmah app users and charitable organisations throughout the Sultanate of Oman.

The campaign aims to support several local charitable associations by facilitating donations through the Khedmah app, enabling donors to participate effectively and extensively. The associations available for donations via the app include the Oman Charitable Organisation, Health Endowment Foundation (Athar), Siraj Education Endowment Foundation, Endowment Fund for Online Learning, Zakat Committee in Al Seeb, Association of Early Intervention for Children with Disabilities, Al Noor Association for the Blind, Oman Diabetes Association, and Dar Al Atta’a Association. The Khedmah team also highlighted the outstanding efforts of these associations through its digital media platforms, enabling the public to explore these initiatives and encouraging them to support causes that resonate with them.

Mr. Mohammed Al Jabri, Manager – Customer Experience, OIFC Khedmah, stated: “At Khedmah, we are dedicated to promoting the values of giving and social solidarity, especially during the blessed month of Ramadan. Through our ‘Share the Light’ campaign, we aim to support local charitable associations and assist those in need. The Khedmah app provides users with a convenient and effective platform to contribute to causes they care about, enabling them to make a meaningful impact in just a few simple steps. This ensures that these or-



ganisations receive the essential support needed to continue their vital work.”

Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC) Khedmah has simultaneously launched its second Ramadan campaign, ‘Mufajat Ramadan’, featuring raffle draws with attractive prizes, including electronics, Khedmah Delivery vouchers, and so much more. Users will also enjoy exclusive discounts and offers across a wide range of products and services, such as restaurants, entertainment activities, and shopping.

To participate in the ‘Mufajat Ramadan’ campaign, users are required to complete transactions through the Khedmah app during Ramadan, such as the payment of utility bills and traffic fines, order gas cylinders with Awan Gas, and balance top-ups. This initiative aims to reward users for their continued trust by offering special promotions that enhance their overall experience.

It is worth noting that Oman Investment and Finance Company (OIFC) Khedmah has been a leader in billing and collection services in the Sultanate of Oman for over 40 years. The company provides a central hub for customers to pay various bills, including electricity, water, communications, traffic fines, vehicle insurance, entertainment channel subscriptions, charity donations, and many other services. These services are available through the company’s widespread branch network, covering most regions in Oman, as well as its electronic platforms, including the Khedmah app and website.



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LIFESTYLE

CHINESE ARCHAEOLOGISTS FIND

According to the Liaoning provincial institute of cultural relics and archaeology, through sample collection and analysis, these findings provide new evidence of the evolutionary process of Hongshan culture

HISTORICAL SITES



Archaeologists have recently discovered multiple Hongshan culture sites in the city of Lingyuan, northeast China's Liaoning Province. According to the Liaoning provincial institute of cultural relics and archaeology, through sample collection and analysis, these findings provide new evidence of the evolutionary process of Hongshan culture, as the recently found sites are located in the Wubaiding site complex, where archaeologists from the institute have conducted a systematic archaeological survey covering approximately 285,000 square meters.

DATING BACK

TO THOUSANDS OF YEARS

During this survey, archaeologists collected pottery shards and stone artifacts from various periods and found a total of 53 sites, including 38 cultural remnants ranging from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age. Yu Huaishi, a researcher from the institute said that "this archaeological survey provides key coordinates for exploring settlement sites that evolved in coordination with the core area of Hongshan culture." Hongshan culture is an important prehistoric archaeological culture dating back roughly 5,000 to 6,000 years. Its distribution covers three regions located in the west of Liaoning Province, the north of Hebei Province and the east of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Among these, Liaoning is the core area in terms of Hongshan culture distribution and the focal region for studying this culture. - ONA

SPORTS

Slot aims for first trophy as Magpies try to end drought

Liverpool take on Newcastle United in League Cup final at Wembley on Sunday

LONDON: Liverpool will be aiming for their first piece of silverware under new manager Arne Slot, while Newcastle United look to end a 56-year wait for a trophy when the two sides clash in Sunday's highly anticipated Carabao League Cup final at Wembley.

The Reds, defending champions after their dramatic extra-time victory over Chelsea last season, are eager to lift another domestic trophy - this time under the guidance of Slot, who replaced Jurgen Klopp last summer. Newcastle, meanwhile, are desperate to end a decades-long drought, with their last major title coming in the 1969 Inter-Cities Fairs Cup. Their last domestic triumph was even further back, winning the FA Cup in 1955.

Slot has enjoyed a commanding debut season in England, guiding Liverpool to the top of the Premier League with a comfortable 15-point lead over second-placed Arsenal.

However, their midweek exit from the Champions League at the hands of Paris Saint-Germain has left the Carabao Cup as their only other opportunity for silverware this season.

"You play games like this to win them, and that's what we're going



to try to do," said Slot.

"And we're really looking forward to it - playing a final again, because you cannot take a final for granted, especially in this country with so many top teams competing in every cup competition. "If you are part of it, of course, you want to try to win it. But that's probably what Newcastle wants as well."

Slot arrived at Anfield following a successful spell at Feyenoord, where he won the Eredivisie in 2023 and the Dutch Cup in 2024.

Now, he has the chance to secure his first English trophy just months into his tenure.

Injury concerns for Liverpool

Liverpool will have to manage key absences heading into the final. Right-back Jarell Quansah is expected to start in place of Trent Alexander-Arnold, who remains sidelined alongside Conor Bradley



and Joe Gomez. However, there is hope that Ibrahima Konaté will recover in time to feature.

"Trent is indeed not available. He will not be there at the final," Slot confirmed. "But he's still to be assessed for how long he'll be out. We do expect him back before the end of the season."

Newcastle's bid to end trophy drought

For Newcastle, this final represents another shot at ending their long and painful wait for silverware.

Their last appearance in the Carabao Cup final came in 2023, when they fell to Manchester United under Eddie Howe's management.

Since their 1969 European triumph, 30 different English league teams have won major trophies, further underlining Newcastle's barren spell. Their last domestic cup success came 70 years ago in the 1955 FA Cup - five years before the League Cup was first contested.

Manager Eddie Howe believes his side is better equipped for this final after experiencing both cup and European competition in recent seasons. Newcastle competed in the Champions League last season, reinforcing their ability to handle high-pressure matches.



"That's been a big part of what we've done since we've been here," said Howe. "Big-game experience should help us when we need it."

"We've stayed competitive mainly in big games. Our style, we have adaptability, but also a clear method. A clear representation of us in and out of possession will be really important."

"We want to break that wait for a trophy. It's not a negative. We're trying to look at it the other way round - it's the chance to make history and be remembered positively."

Newcastle will be without key players, with defenders Sven Botman and Lewis Hall ruled out through injury. Attacker Anthony Gordon is also unavailable as he serves the second match of a three-game suspension following his red card against Brighton in the FA Cup. - Agencies

BRAZIL SQUAD

Injured Neymar replaced by teenager Endrick



RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil head coach Dorival Jr has called up teenage forward Endrick to replace Neymar for this month's World Cup qualifiers after the Santos attacker picked up a muscle injury.

Neymar was due to make his Selecao return after a 17-month absence because of a knee injury which he sustained against Uruguay in October 2023.

But the 33-year-old has now had a further setback, ruling him out of the qualifiers against Colombia and Argentina.

"The return seemed so close,

but unfortunately I won't be able to wear the most important jersey in the world for the moment," he wrote on Instagram.

"We had long conversations and everyone knows of my desire to return, but we agreed that it's best not to take any risks and prepare as best as possible to completely eradicate the injury."

Endrick, 18, has made 28 appearances for Real Madrid across all competitions this season, scoring six goals.

He has made 13 senior appearances for Brazil and scored three goals. - Agencies

FROSTY RELATIONSHIP

Guardiola hits back at Capello's 'arrogant' jibe

LONDON: Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola has hit back at Fabio Capello's latest criticism of his management style, insisting he has "raised the bar" in the Premier League.

The two have shared a frosty relationship since Capello briefly managed Guardiola at Roma in 2002, and the 78-year-old Italian has not held back in his critiques of the Manchester City boss.

Capello reignited their long-standing feud amid City's dismal run earlier this season, where they managed just one win in 13 games.

Speaking on Sky Italia, the former Juventus, AC Milan, and England manager accused Guardiola of being "too arrogant and presumptuous," suggesting he was more focused on proving his tactical superiority than winning matches.

City currently sit fifth in the Premier League and will face Bournemouth in the FA Cup quarter-finals on March 30 - likely their last shot at a major trophy this season, aside from the Community Shield triumph in August.

Following City's 1-0 defeat to third-placed Nottingham Forest last weekend, Capello dou-



bled down in an interview with *El Mundo*, where he acknowledged Guardiola's tactical brilliance but accused him of having "caused enormous damage" to Italian football by inspiring coaches to imitate his playing philosophy.

Guardiola, well aware of the remarks, addressed them with characteristic sarcasm ahead of City's league clash against Brighton. "I listen to everything people say about me, so be careful," he quipped. "It's not the first time Mr. Fabio Capel-

lo has said that. But I'm not good enough to ruin Italian football. A big hug to Fabio. A big hug."

The sarcasm continued when Guardiola was asked about the rising competitiveness of mid-table Premier League clubs.

"I don't want to look arrogant, and I don't want to pretend to be - let's name again one of the big, exceptional managers, Fabio Capello - but we helped raise the bar in the Premier League," he said. "Teams had to go to the markets, and that helps

everyone. People want to improve, clubs are well-organised, they make smart decisions, and you can see good players everywhere."

He pointed to the evolution of teams like Bournemouth, Brighton, and Fulham - clubs that played in the Championship at various points during his nine-year tenure at City and are now pushing for European football. "I'm an old guy, the longest-serving manager here - nine years. The Premier League has evolved massively," he added.

INDIAN WELLS TENNIS

Rising star Andreeva to face Sabalenka for women's singles title

INDIAN WELLS: Rising Russian star Mirra Andreeva became the first 17-year-old player to reach the women's final at Indian Wells since 2001 after overcoming defending champion Iga Swiatek in the last four on Friday.

She beat the world NO.2 for the second time in as many tournaments, after knocking her out at the quarter-final stage in Dubai in February on her way to becoming the youngest winner of a WTA 1000 tournament.

Andreeva extended her winning streak to 11 matches as she bounced back from losing a one-sided second set to beat the experienced Pole 7-6 (7-1), 1-6 6-3.

She will face top seed Aryna Sabalenka in the final after the Belarusian avenged her defeat by American Madison Keys at the Australian Open in brutal fashion to win 6-0, 6-1.

"I feel that I was dealing with the nerves and the pressure pretty good, so I just feel proud of myself,"



said ninth seed Andreeva on her recovery in the final set.

"After she literally killed me in the second set, I was just 'well, OK, might just try to fight'. There is not much I could do about it. She was playing amazing."

"And I just kind of decided to grind and fight for every point. It doesn't matter how I put the ball in. But I have to put it in. So I just try to do everything and in the end, it was not too bad."

Andreeva is the youngest woman to reach the Indian Wells final since Kim Clijsters, who lost to Serena Williams in 2001.

She will face another big test in world number one Sabalenka, who took just 51 minutes to dismiss fifth seed Keys.

It was a repeat of their Australian Open final, which Keys won 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 to end Sabalenka's hopes of a third consecutive title in Melbourne.



"That Australian Open match was really heartbreaking for me, and I really needed some time to recover after that," said Sabalenka.

"And if I would lose today again, it would get in my head and I didn't want that to happen. I was really focused, so I was just really hungry to get this win against Madison."

Draper sets up semis clash with Alcaraz

Jack Draper beat big-serving

American Ben Shelton 6-4, 7-5 on a cold and blustery evening in Indian Wells to set up a tantalising semi-final against two-time defending champion Carlos Alcaraz.

Britain's Draper reached his first Grand Slam semi-final at September's US Open but had never before made it to the last four at a Masters 1000 event.

"I'm always proud of myself," said Draper, who is yet to drop a

set in the tournament.

Draper has played Alcaraz four times, with his sole win coming on grass at Queen's last year.

Spanish world No.3 Alcaraz beat Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo 6-3, 7-6 (7-4) to record his 16th successive match win in California.

Daniil Medvedev will face Holger Rune in the other semi-final.

Russia's Medvedev, runner-up here the past two years, beat France's Arthur Fils 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (9-7)

Medvedev is famous for not celebrating his victories but made an exception this time, leaping into the air four times with sheer delight after Fils missed a volley on match point.

"I was surprised, and that got my adrenaline too much. I couldn't control it," the fifth seed said.

He will face Denmark's Rune, who beat Dutchman Tallon Griekspoor 5-7, 6-0, 6-3, for a place in the final. - Agencies

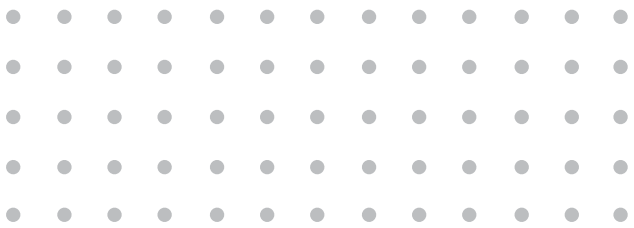


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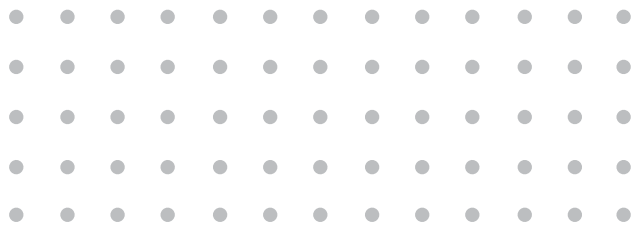
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Born in Oman, Heard Everywhere

ROUND-UP

Omran, Visit Oman & Resilience Council lead global dialogue on sustainability at ITB Berlin

Industry leaders representing key markets in Germany, France, China, the Middle East, the US, and the UK convened at the world's largest travel trade show to discuss sustainable practices



BERLIN: In a landmark initiative to advance sustainable tourism, the National Travel Operator – Visit Oman hosted an exclusive high-level Roundtable at the premiere travel industry event, ITB Berlin. Organised by the Global Travel and Tourism Resilience Council, the event brought together key global travel industry leaders to discuss sustainability strategies, case studies, and best practices from around the world. Maitha Saif Al Mahrouqi, Oman's Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, attended the

Roundtable as the Guest of Honor. The exclusive event welcomed senior executives from Trip.com, Sabre, Travelzoo, Mastercard, ICF, and MMGY, representing some of the most influential travel and tourism companies across Germany, France, China, the Middle East, the US, and the UK. The discussions focused on practical methodologies for integrating sustainability into destination management, travel technology, and tourism investment, while Oman shed light on the National Priorities of Oman Vision 2040 related to sustainability, the initiatives carried out to achieve Oman's National Strategy for an Orderly Transition to Net

Zero, Oman's first net zero energy city by 2025 (The Sustainable City Yiti), and local communities as a crucial component of sustainable tourism. Dr Hashil Al Mahrouqi, Chief Executive Officer of Omran Group, commented on the company's ESG Framework: "Sustainability is a core pillar of our tourism development strategy, driving economic growth while preserving Oman's natural and cultural heritage. Through our ESG framework, we integrate responsible tourism principles to minimise environmental impact, empower local communities, and enhance governance, ensuring long-term resili-

ence. As a key enabler of Oman Vision 2040, we are committed to fostering a sustainable tourism ecosystem that aligns with global best practices." Shabib Al Maamari, Managing Director of Visit Oman, stated: "Our collaboration with the Resilience Council offers us an excellent opportunity to engage with and learn from global sustainability leaders in the sector, ensuring Oman remains at the forefront of responsible tourism. Recognising that over 80% of travellers prioritise sustainable travel and seek authentic, eco-conscious experiences, our strategic focus is on accelerating the accessibility of Omani tourism

offerings through digital distribution. By closely collaborating with our local partners, we are actively adapting our strategies to not only meet, but exceed, these evolving traveler expectations." Facilitated by the Resilience Council, the discussion provided a platform for executive leaders to engage directly with global travel companies that shape consumer behavior in key source markets. Laurie Myers, Global Strategist for the Resilience Council, emphasised the importance of fostering industry dialogue, "Destinations that engage in meaningful conversations with their source markets are best positioned to

align with evolving sustainability expectations. This Roundtable brought together both sides of the equation, Oman's leadership and global travel brands to develop collaborations, and practical solutions that benefit both industry and environment." The Roundtable event coincides with the announcement of the Resilience Council's strengthened 2025 international Executive Leaders network. Omran Group, under the leadership of Dr Hashil Al Mahrouqi, has joined the council's 'Global' division. Additionally, Visit Oman, led by Shabib Al Maamari, will serve as the 'Middle East & North Africa' representative.

LIMITED-TIME



Meethaq launches special offer on auto finance

MUSCAT: In line with its customer-centric vision, Meethaq Islamic banking from Bank Muscat has launched an exclusive Auto Finance offer. This limited-time offer is available till 1 May 2025 and applies to Meethaq Auto Finance, providing customers with attractive offer. Customers availing auto finance during the offer period can also get an extended tenor of upto 10 years on new and used vehicles. In addition, applicants will enjoy quick processing and minimal documentation, making the process seamless and hassle-free. Meethaq customers are eligible for up to 80% financing on their vehicles purchase. The launch of this attractive offer is based on a detailed study of customer needs, reinforcing Meethaq's commitment to delivering tailored financial solutions. On this occasion, Sami Bait Rashid, Assistant General Manager – Meethaq Personal Banking, said: "We are delighted to celebrate this holy occasion with

our valued customers through this special Ramadhan Auto Finance offer. Meethaq remains committed to enhancing its suite of Sharia-compliant products and services to meet customer needs while keeping pace with global trends. I would like to take this opportunity to invite our customers to take advantage of the special offer and enjoy a host of benefits on their financing solutions." As Oman's leading provider of Sharia-compliant financial services, Meethaq Islamic Banking offers a comprehensive range of products and services. With a network of 32 branches across the Sultanate, Meethaq ensures enhanced accessibility through its dedicated banking network and provides with free access to over 890 ATMs and CDMs under Bank Muscat. Every Meethaq product is created in accordance with the guidelines of the Central Bank of Oman and undergoes Sharia compliance review and certification by the Sharia Supervisory Board.

PROMOTION

Exclusive limited time Ramadan offers from Lynk & Co – Drive in luxury



MUSCAT: This Ramadan, Lynk & Co invites you to seize the season with exclusive offers that make owning luxury more attainable than ever. Enjoy our limited-time Ramadan deals from 24 February to 15 April. These offers combine attractive starting prices with a suite of tailored benefits on all models, ensuring every journey becomes a celebration of innovation, style and performance. **Exclusive Ramadan offers** During this festive period, benefit from unbeatable deals including four years of free unlimited service, a comprehensive six-year

extended warranty covering unlimited kilometers and six years of AAA roadside assistance. With flexible trade-in options and attractive starting prices across our entire lineup, there's never been a better time to upgrade your drive. Notably, the newly launched Lynk & Co 06, a sporty SUV, is available at an irresistible starting price of just 6,966 OMR. **A range tailored for every journey** Experience the perfect blend of style, performance and innovation with Lynk & Co's diverse lineup. The Lynk & Co 01 dazzles

with its sleek design and smart connectivity, perfect for urban adventures. The 03 and 03+ models deliver exhilarating sporty performance and cutting-edge technology for a racing drive, while the robust Lynk & Co 05 offers both power and refined luxury for those with a taste for adventure. The spacious Lynk & Co 09 provides unmatched comfort and versatility for family journeys and the Lynk & Co 06 stands out with its sporty design and competitive pricing, making it an irresistible choice for drivers seeking both innovation and value.

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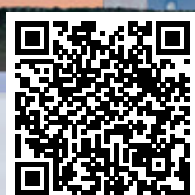
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B70S

PREMIUM MY2025

1.5L Turbo Engine, 158hp,
7-speed DCT

L x W x H (mm): 4555 x 1850 x 1515

CASH PRICE

OMR 7,450*

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CASH PRICE

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B70

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