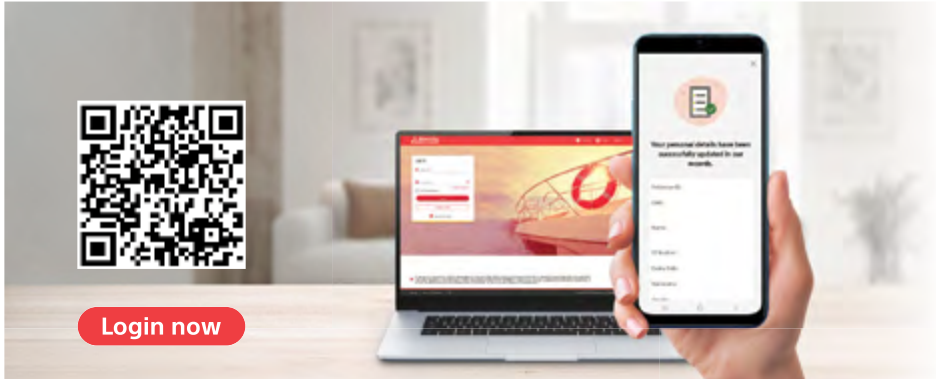




Login now

Update your Personal Details instantly & easily on the Mobile Banking App or Internet Banking!



Bank Muscat. Better Everyday.

030 14627/8

HIS MAJESTY RECEIVES CREDENTIALS OF ENVOYS

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik received at Al Barakah Palace on Wednesday credentials of ambassadors of three countries appointed to the Sultanate of Oman.

The ambassadors included: Lyu Jian, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Sultanate of Oman Ibrahima Seck, Ambassador of the Republic of Senegal to the Sultanate of Oman Sheikh Mohammed bin Maktoum bin Rashid al Maktoum, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the Sultanate of Oman

During their meetings with His Majesty the Sultan, the ambassadors conveyed greetings of their countries' leaders to His Majesty. They also expressed their great honour and delight at presenting their credentials to His Majesty the Sultan, wishing that their mission will be crowned with success in serving the mutual interests of their countries and Oman.

They underlined their sincere commitment and firm determination to promote relations of cooperation, partnership and investment across all fields, in a manner that serves the joint in-

terests.

His Majesty the Sultan welcomed the ambassadors. He expressed his gratitude for their leaders' greetings and best wishes, wishing the ambassadors success in carrying out their duties.

His Majesty affirmed that they would receive all support from the government and the

His Majesty affirmed that they would receive all support from the government and the people of Oman

Omani people to facilitate carrying out their duties in a bid to achieve the desired goals.

The ceremony was attended by the Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, the Foreign Minister, the Commander of the Royal Guard of Oman, the Head of the Royal Protocols and the Military Aides to His Majesty the Sultan.

See also Page 02



Lyu Jian, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Sultanate of Oman



Sheikh Mohammed bin Maktoum bin Rashid al Maktoum, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates

Oman intensifies evacuation of citizens from Iran



Our Correspondent Muscat

Oman has intensified its efforts to repatriate citizens stranded in northern Iran, launching coordinated overland and maritime evacuation operations amid rising regional instability.

Oman's Foreign Ministry, working closely with its embassy in Tehran, is managing a large-scale plan to ensure the safe return of all Omani nationals.

As part of this expanded effort, overland evacuation routes have been established through key border crossings with Turkey, Iraq, and Turkmenistan. These corridors were carefully chosen to provide safe access for citizens located in Iran's West Azerbaijan, Khuzestan and Khorasan provinces. The ministry is overseeing transportation, logistics, and all security measures in coordination with regional authorities.

Omani citizens currently in affected areas have been advised to remain where they are and wait for instructions from embassy field teams or the ministry's support units, which are directly managing the repatriation process on the ground.

This surge in evacuation efforts follows the successful return of 313 Omani citizens who were brought back via sea from Bandar Abbas to Khasab on Monday night.

Among them was Fatima al Khaifia, who described the fear and uncertainty she endured during the recent Israeli strikes on the Iranian territory. "Thank God, we returned safely and securely to the sultanate after surviving the war in Iran," she said. "We were in Shiraz when the attacks began. We heard bombs

We were in Shiraz when the attacks began. We heard bombs exploding behind us, and just after we were moved to Bandar Abbas, the area we left was bombed

FATIMA AL KHAIFIA

exploding behind us, and just after we were moved to Bandar Abbas, the area we left was bombed."

Visibly emotional, Fatima recounted the moment she saw the rescue ship. "I didn't feel safe until I saw the vessel. I cried with joy. I thank all the authorities who made it possible for us to return to our homeland."

The Foreign Ministry reaffirmed that repatriation operations will continue in full force, in coordination with regional partners, until every Omani citizen who wishes to return has been safely evacuated.

Meanwhile, the Directorate General of Meteorology of Oman has denied rumours suggesting a dust storm is set to impact coastal areas of the sultanate from Iran.

In an official statement, the department clarified that no dust activity is forecast, according to the latest analysis issued by the National Multi-Hazard Early Warning Centre. "There is no indication of any dust wave moving towards the coastal regions of the Sea of Oman," it said.

The clarification was issued in response to a message circulating widely on social media, which falsely claimed that a dust storm originating from Iran was expected to hit Oman.

'Israeli distruction an attempt to erase Palestinian identity'

Geneva, Switzerland - Oman has strongly condemned the systematic practices carried out by Israeli forces in the occupied Palestinian Territories, particularly the extensive targeting of civilian infrastructure, including educational and cultural centres.

This was reaffirmed during Oman's participation in the 59th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, during the interactive dialogue on the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Delivering the sultanate's statement, Sara al Balushi, First



Sara al Balushi

Secretary in Oman's Permanent Delegation to the United Nations in Geneva, expressed the sultanate's gratitude to the commission for its efforts in preparing the report, despite the serious challenges posed by the

Israeli authorities' continued refusal to grant access to the occupied territories.

Sara noted that the report outlines a series of grave violations by Israeli forces, including the deliberate targeting of schools, cultural centres and religious sites. She said such systematic destruction represents an attempt to erase Palestinian identity and heritage and constitutes a war of annihilation under international law. She stressed that these actions fall within the framework of crimes aimed at the total eradication of Palestinian national presence and identity.

Oman reaffirms commitment to anti-personnel mine ban treaty

Geneva, Switzerland - Oman has reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the principles of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and its continued cooperation with the international community to safeguard civilians and enhance human security.

This pledge was reiterated during Oman's participation in the 12th Preparatory Session of the convention, held in Geneva, Switzerland, with broad participation from State Parties and representatives of international and humanitarian organisations.

Delivering Oman's national statement, H E Idris bin Abdul Rahman al Khanjari, Permanent

Representative of Oman to the United Nations and International Organisations in Geneva, underscored Oman's steadfast support for the convention's core principles. He also announced that Oman has fully met the requirements of Article 5 of the convention, highlighting the sultanate's firm commitment to implementing its provisions and actively engaging with its executive mechanisms.

An official delegation from the Ministry of Defence, including Staff Colonel Khalid bin Abbas al Balushi and Staff Colonel Mohammed al Kaabi, attended the technical sessions.

Doctors at Khoula Hospital reattach severed hand in complex surgery

Our Correspondent Muscat

A specialised surgical team at Khoula Hospital has successfully performed a rare and complex procedure to reattach a fully amputated hand and two fingers of an expatriate worker who suffered a severe injury while on duty.

The 14-hour operation was led by Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Wahaibi, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon and Head of the Hand and Microsurgery Department at Khoula Hospital. The procedure is considered a



The 14-hour operation was led by Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Wahaibi

significant step in advanced microsurgery in Oman.

Dr Wahaibi said the success of the surgery was due to two

key factors: the immediate first aid given at the site of the incident and the correct preservation of the severed hand and

fingers according to international medical standards. "Swift and safe transfer of the patient to Khoula Hospital's replantation

centre was critical to restoring sensory and motor function," he said.

The team carried out bone fixation, reconnected small blood vessels, removed damaged tissue, and sutured ligaments and arteries under a microscope. "Such operations demand high precision and advanced techniques, showing the progress of Omani medical expertise," Dr Wahaibi added.

After surgery, the patient's condition stabilised without complications such as infection or clotting. Early signs indicate promising recovery of sensation

and movement, and the patient was discharged soon after the procedure.

Dr Wahaibi emphasised the importance of workplace safety, urging workers to follow safety measures, wear protective gear and ensure machinery is switched off during maintenance.

He also highlighted the need for quick response in trauma cases. "Proper first aid, correct handling of the amputated part and quick transfer to a specialist centre can be crucial for successful treatment and recovery," he said.



07 DNA matched for 190 victims of India plane crash



13 Turtle nesting: Waltz at dawn

Solutions as advanced as you are

Innovation inspired by you

Visit bankdhofar.com

بنك ظفار
BankDhofar



OMAN'S ENVOY TO BANGLADESH TAKES OATH OF OFFICE

Jameel bin Haji bin Ismail al Balushi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the People's Republic of Bangladesh, takes the oath of office before His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik at Al Barakah Palace on Wednesday. The ceremony was attended by Sayyid bin Badr Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister (ONA)

Forum held to link academia, industry

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation on Wednesday held its first annual forum to enhance collaboration between Oman's academic institutions and the industrial sector.

Held under the patronage of H E Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim al Mahrouqi, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, the forum aimed to strengthen dialogue and expand joint efforts in research, education and skills development.

In his opening address, H E Yahya bin Salam al Mandhari, Acting Undersecretary for Higher Education, said the forum supports the goals of Oman Vi-

sion 2040, which calls for an adaptive education system that can supply the labour market with skilled, competitive national talent. "Aligning higher education outputs with labour market needs has become a national imperative," he said, adding that this is vital for building a diversified, knowledge-based economy driven by innovation and broad participation from the academic and industrial sectors.

He said the forum provides a platform to exchange expertise, update academic programmes, improve education quality and expand training and job opportunities, contributing to a workforce ready to compete regionally and globally.

As part of the forum, 18 coop-

eration deals were signed to strengthen partnerships between higher education institutions and the community. They aim to raise awareness about educational endowments and encourage student and staff involvement in educational initiatives.

Eng Mahmoud bin Khalfan al Hiddidi, CEO of Siraj Education Endowment Foundation, said the agreements are part of the foundation's broader plan to support underprivileged students and encourage a culture of solidarity in education.

"Key initiatives include the 'Sponsor a University Student' campaign and the 'Siraj Benefits' digital platform, which makes donations and support services more accessible," he said.



Royal Oman Police

Directorate of Public Relations & Security Information

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Royal Oman Police (ROP), represented by the Department of Public Relations and Security Media, announces the launch of a public electronic auction for a selection of used vehicles. The auction will take place on Sunday, June 29, 2025, via the official ROP auction platform: www.rop.mzadcom.om, and will run for one day only. Prospective buyers may inspect the listed vehicles between June 23 and 25, 2025, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the vehicle impound yard of the General Directorate of Transport in Airport Heights.

Auction Terms and Conditions:

- All participants must register on the auction platform: www.rop.mzadcom.om.
- A **non-refundable deposit of OMR 500** is required via the platform. This deposit will be forfeited if the winning bidder fails to complete payment or finalize the registration and transfer within the designated timeframe.
- A **brokerage fee of 2%** of the vehicle's value is applicable, **plus 5% VAT**.
- The full vehicle payment must be made via **electronic transfer within 24 working hours**.
- Vehicle registration and transfer must be completed within **3 days** of payment. A late fee of **OMR 5 per day** will apply beyond this period. The ROP assumes no responsibility for any loss or damage.
- The ROP and the auction platform are **not liable** for any discrepancies between vehicle images/descriptions and actual condition. No guarantees are made regarding the vehicles' functionality or technical soundness.

For further details, please visit www.rop.mzadcom.om or contact **98886154**.

DHOFAR KHAREEF SEASON

Seed dispersal scaled up to fight desertification

Our Correspondent
Salalah

Dhofar Municipality has launched a major environmental campaign to restore natural vegetation and control invasive species by dispersing around 10mn seed balls and more than 3bn pastoral grass seeds across the Dhofar mountains during June and July this year, coinciding with the khareef season.

The initiative, overseen by the Steering Committee for Parthenium Weed Control, builds on efforts started in 2023 when over 400,000 seed balls were released.

Last year, the project expanded with the distribution of more than 4mn seed balls and over 10 tonnes of pastoral grass seeds, equal to about 4bn individual seeds.

Mohammed bin Mubarak Ak'ak, Deputy Head of the Field Team for Parthenium Weed Control in Dhofar, said the campaign is part of a broader plan to restore biodiversity and limit the spread of invasive plants such as parthenium weed and mesquite trees. These plants, along with overgrazing, climate change and human activities, contribute significantly to desertification in the region.

Ak'ak said the project applies nature-based solutions, using seed balls that remain dormant until conditions are right. They are drought-resistant and suitable for the khareef's unique rainfall pattern. Each seed ball contains a mix of native tree and grass species, including saghout, ar'ar, taiq, ghaidhit, tabaldi, alli, shabthaf, zadart and athath, all adapted to local conditions.

Besides seed dispersal, the campaign uses multiple methods to control parthenium weed, such as manual removal, mechanical cutting, flame treatment and targeted pesticide use. The aim is to reduce the weed's harmful effects on people, animals and native plants.

Ak'ak highlighted the importance of community support, describing the campaign as an example of government and civic collaboration. Volunteers and members of the Wa'i (Awareness) initiative are actively involved in the work. "This campaign is a vital step towards the long-term sustainability of ecosystems."



Muscat, Salalah airports see robust start to summer travel

Muscat - Passenger traffic at Oman's key airports continues to climb, pointing to a robust start to the summer travel season and growing momentum in the tourism sector.

Oman Airports announced that Muscat International Airport recorded a 2% increase in passenger numbers in May this year compared to the figures during the same month last year, while Salalah Airport registered an impressive 6.2% growth, buoyed by anticipation of the upcoming khareef season in Dhofar.

Number of flights in the two airports also rose by 3%, reflecting strong travel demand and growing interest in Oman as both a transit and tourist destination.

The Dhofar Khareef, which spans from June 21 to September 20, transforms the southern region of Oman into a lush, green landscape with cool temperatures and misty rains.

This unique natural phenomenon attracts thousands of visitors each year from across the Gulf, the Indian subcontinent, and beyond, eager to experience Dhofar's cool climate, waterfalls, and vibrant cultural festivals.

Hotels ready for high occupancy

Our Correspondent
Salalah

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT) has confirmed that hotel establishments in Dhofar governorate have completed their preparations to welcome tourists for the 2025 khareef season.

Hotels in the region are offering promotional packages and marketing programmes in anticipation of a high number of visitors during the season, which attracts tourists from across the region each year.

Many hotels have introduced competitive prices and improved hospitality services, including guest reception and departure assistance, as well as guided tours to key tourist, heritage and entertainment sites. A key highlight this year is the increased presence of qualified Omani staff in the hotel and tourism sector, further supporting the local hospitality industry.

Ahmed bin Mohammed al Ghassani, Director of the Quality Control Department at the Directorate General of Heritage and Tourism in Dhofar, said preparations began with an annual coordination meeting involving the directorate and representatives from the hotel and tourism sectors. The meeting focused on service readiness and maintaining high standards of quality across all facilities.

Ghassani said there are now 100 licensed hotel establishments in Dhofar, offering more than 8,000 rooms. "In 2024, hotel occupancy rates reached 90%, and we expect these figures to increase this year due to attractive marketing campaigns and seasonal promotions from hotels and tourism companies," he said.

He also noted the continued use of the 'Sikka' app during the 2025 season. Supervised by the Office of the Governor of Dhofar in coordination with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism and Dhofar Municipality, the app regulates the real estate market and formalises rental agreements between landlords and tenants.

The platform protects the rights of all parties and provides property owners with new ways to market their properties within Oman and abroad.

Digital platform to boost volunteer culture in Oman

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), in partnership with Al Hosni Group International, has launched Oman's first national volunteering platform 'Ayadi' to bring together volunteer teams, associations, institutions, and individuals under one system.

The platform has been created to make it easier to access opportunities in fields such as health, education, environment, relief and development. It aims to unify efforts and build an accurate record of volunteer contributions, fostering a culture of giving and teamwork, officials said.

The launch event took place on Wednesday under the patronage of Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al Busaidi, Governor of Muscat, and was attended by ministers, dignitaries and representatives from government, private institutions and civil society organisations.

Ayadi is intended to promote and organise volunteer work in line with Oman Vision 2040, which prioritises social welfare and the creation of an environment that encourages community participation and social responsibility.

The platform aims to strengthen the culture of volun-



The platform's mobile app, available on the Apple App Store and Google Play, allows volunteers to register, create profiles, access training programmes and receive certificates

teerism and manage it efficiently through a supportive digital system. It will provide a unified database of volunteers and volunteering activities across the

sultanate, and help generate diverse opportunities for community engagement and social cohesion.

During the launch, three initiatives were introduced on Ayadi - one of which is 'Our Sea, Our Responsibility' announced by Sohar Port and Freezone.

This programme aims to increase environmental awareness and protect coastal areas through beach clean-ups in Majis and Suhar, involving around 200 volunteers.

The Omani Society for Design presented its national initiative

'Oman Design Week', to engage youth in organising an annual event for the promotion of design and reinforcement of cultural identity through ten participating volunteers.

Salalah Volunteer Team introduced Sawaed al Khair (Hands of Goodness), targeting remote mountain areas in Dhofar to open trails and clean water streams and springs, with around 30 volunteers involved.

Ayadi was developed with input from the community through an online engagement phase to ensure it meets public

expectations for a technology-based volunteering environment.

The platform's mobile app, available on the Apple App Store and Google Play, allows volunteers to register, create profiles, join opportunities, access training programmes and receive certificates. Organisations can propose initiatives, manage volunteers, track hours, and generate reports on their projects.

Officials hope Ayadi will encourage greater participation in volunteer work and strengthen community responsibility across Oman.

New roadmap to modernise grape farming unveiled

Our Correspondent
Mudhaibi

A special academic session - held during the 2025 Grape Festival in Mudhaibi, North Sharqiyah - called for adoption of artificial intelligence and smart farming methods for better yields of grapes in the sultanate.

The Agricultural Challenges Resolution and Investment Development Lab also recommended creation of e-marketing platforms to help farmers reach wider markets. The lab, which concluded on Tuesday, made recommendations aimed at strengthening grape cultivation and advancing the agricultural sector, officials informed.

The session brought together experts and academics from the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries and Water Resources, along with representatives from other government bodies. Among the proposals was the allocation of at least 100 acres of investment land in the first phase for grape cultivation in regions with a competitive advantage.

Papers presented during the lab encouraged the private sector to play a larger role in financing and promoting Omani agricultural products.

Dr Abdulaziz bin Ali al Mashikhi, Director General of Agricultural Fisheries and Water Resources in North Sharqiyah,



described the lab as an important outcome of the festival, covering topics such as improving grape varieties, pruning and harvesting methods, investment, marketing and technology use.

Four main presentations were shared - the ministry outlined investment opportunities; the Development Bank presented available funding options; Oman Agriculture Development Company highlighted marketing services; and the Omani Agricultural Society's North Sharqiyah branch discussed smart agriculture and future plans.

The festival also saw the launch of a 'Model Farms' project, adding 100 acres to the existing area under grape cultivation. The total area now stands at 127 acres, with an expected output of 635 tonnes and an economic return estimated at more than ROImm.

Six new international grape varieties were introduced to improve the quality, shelf life and market competitiveness of Omani grapes.

EA begins monitoring turtle hatchlings at Ras al Hadd

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Environment Authority (EA) has launched a new monitoring project at the Ras al Hadd Turtle Reserve in South Sharqiyah to scientifically track and study the hatchlings of endangered sea turtles.

Running till the end of October, the initiative aims to monitor the number of hatchlings emerging from nests, assess their survival rates, and examine the environmental factors influencing their journey to the sea.

The project has been designed to evaluate the effectiveness of existing conservation efforts and contribute to the development of improved strategies for the protection of sea turtles. It also seeks to build the capacity of national professionals in the fields of environmental monitoring and marine biology, while enriching the national database with precise data to support scientific research and policy-making.

In a statement, EA noted that



Running till October, the initiative aims to monitor the number of hatchlings, assess their survival rates, and examine the factors influencing their journey to the sea

the initiative forms part of broader efforts to enhance the sustainability of the marine environment, safeguard biodiversity and improve indicators of coastal ecosystem health.

The project is aligned with Oman Vision 2040, which emphasises a balance between economic development and the preservation of the sultanate's rich natural heritage for future generations.

Gen Nuamani receives British defence official

Muscat - H E Gen Sultan Mohammed al Nuamani, Minister of the Royal Office, received Vice Admiral Edward Ahlgren, UK Defence Senior Advisor to the Middle East and North Africa, on Wednesday.

H E Gen Nuamani welcomed the guest and reviewed the bilateral relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Kingdom.

The two sides discussed ways to enhance cooperation in a manner that strengthens the security of both friendly nations, in addition to reviewing recent developments on regional and international fronts.

وزارة التجارة والصناعة وترويج الاستثمار

دائرة الملكية الفكرية

إعلان

تعلن دائرة الملكية الفكرية عن طلب تسجيل العلامة التجارية المقبولة وفقا لاحكام قانون (نظام) العلامات التجارية لدول مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية الصادر بالمرسوم السلطاني رقم 33 / 2017

رقم العلامة: 1558560

رقم الفئة: 36

اسم طالب التسجيل: البنك الأهلي

الجنسية : عمانية ، العنوان : 545 سلطنة عمان

تاريخ تقديم الطلب : 19/5/2025

SOHAR

PORT / FREEZONE

إعلان مناقصة

Tender Announcement

تدعو شركة ميناء صحر والمنطقة الحرة الشركات المختصة للمشاركة في المناقصات أدناه

SOHAR Port and Freezone invites specialised companies to the following tenders

No رقم	Tender Ref الرقم المرجعي	Title العنوان	Tender Fee OMR الرسوم	Purchasing Closing Date تاريخ إغلاق الشراء	Submission Date تاريخ التقديم
1	SIPC2025/019	Organize and Execute SOHAR Hackathon Event	26.25	26/6/2025	10/07/2025
2	SIPC2025/067	Replacement of Port-Control Video Wall System	26.25	3/7/2025	25/07/2025
3	SIPC2025/049	Design and Construction of Additional Parking Area and Road Asphalt Re-Surfacing and Marking at SOHAR Port <i>(Participation in this tender is open to tenderers with at least five years of relevant experience)</i>	26.25	3/7/2025	25/07/2025

- تتضمن رسوم المناقصة المذكورة أعلاه ضريبة القيمة المضافة وقدرها 10٪.
- بإمكان مقدمي العطاءات طلب استلام وثائق المناقصة إلكترونياً.
- الخطوة الأولى:** يجب على مقدمي العطاءات سداد رسوم المناقصة وفقاً للتفاصيل المبينة أدناه.

SOHAR Industrial Port Co
شركة ميناء صحر الصناعي

3101-007970-500

Oman Arab bank SAOC – Main Br
بنك عمان العربي ش.م.ع-م - الفرع الرئيسي

OMABOMRUXXX

Account Name
اسم الحساب

Account Number
رقم الحساب

Bank Name
اسم البنك

SWIFT
رمز السوفيت كود

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

- Step 2:** Tenderers to send the following documents:
 - A request for the electronic tender documents
 - A scanned copy of bank transfer
 - The firm's commercial registration documents
 - All shall be communicated to the following e-mail address: sipc.procurement@soharportandfreezone.com
- Step 3:** Tenderers will receive the electronic Tender Document by e-mail.
 - SOHAR reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reasons.
 - All SMEs, holders of Riyadah Card, are requested to provide their Riyadah Card along with the required documents to exempt them from the tender fees.
 - For any clarification regarding the tenders please send an e-mail to: sipc.procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

الخطوة الثانية:

يلجأ على مقدمي العطاءات تقديم المستندات التالية:

- طلب الحصول على النسخة الإلكترونية من مستندات المناقصة
- نسخة من إيصال التحويل البنكي
- أوراق السجل التجاري للشركة
- على أن يتم إرسالها إلى: sipc.procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

الخطوة الثالثة:

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

- يحق لشركة ميناء صحر والمنطقة الحرة قبول أو رفض أي مورد بدون الإفصاح عن الأسباب.
- يتوجب على حاملي بطاقة ريادة من المؤسسات الصغيرة والمتوسطة تقديم بطاقة ريادة إلى جانب مستندات الشركة لإستثناءهم من دفع رسوم شراء المناقصة.
- في حال وجود أي أسئلة أو استفسارات تتعلق بالمناقصة الرجاء التواصل معنا عبر البريد الإلكتروني: sipc.procurement@soharportandfreezone.com

لنممي التجارة، نصنع الفرص

Connecting Commerce, Creating Opportunities

MARKET WATCH

MSX30	4,520.45
Sensex	81,444.66

FOREX RATES

(RO1 equals)

India	224.70
Pakistan	736.40
Bangladesh	317.69
Philippines	148.59
Sri Lanka	780.72

*Rates as on June 18
Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

Oman takes part in OPEC Fund forum

Oman is participating in the 2025 Annual Forum of the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), held in the Austrian capital, Vienna, under the theme “Transformation Empowering Our Future.”

Oman’s delegation is headed by H E Abdullah bin Salim bin Abdullah al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance.

The forum will discuss key topics, including financing the future to achieve sustainable development, sustainable transformations in developing countries’ economies, enhancing resilience to climate change, and digital enablers for building resilient economies.

On the sidelines of the forum, the head of Oman’s delegation held a number of bilateral meetings with officials from the OPEC Fund for International Development and representatives of regional and international financial institutions.

OQGN awards EPC contract for RO105mn loop line project

Our Correspondent
Muscat

OQ Gas Networks Company (OQGN), the sole operator of Oman’s natural gas transportation network, has awarded contracts for the engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) works, as well as the supply of line pipes for its second 193km-long Fahud-Suhar Loop Line Project.

In November last year, OQGN received regulatory approval to construct the new 193km loop line connecting Fahud to Suhar. The pipeline, which will have a diameter of 42 inches, is designed to strengthen Oman’s natural gas infrastructure and support regional energy demands.

‘OQ Gas Networks is pleased to announce the awarding of the tender for engineering, procurement, and contracting works for the 42-inch second Loop Line Fahud-Suhar Project to The Petroleum Projects Company Petrojet and Partners LLC,’ OQGN said in a disclosure to the Muscat Stock Exchange on Wednesday.

The agreement was signed on June 17, 2025, the company confirmed. As part of the project execution strategy, OQGN has also awarded the supply of 193km of line pipe to Jindal Saw Limited.

‘It is worth noting that the total project cost is approximately RO105mn, with a planned execution period of 24 months,’ the company added.

The project cost will be incorporated into the company’s Reg-



As part of the execution strategy for the Fahud-Suhar Loop Line Project, OQ Gas Networks has also awarded the supply of 193km of line pipes to Jindal Saw Limited

ulated Asset Base (RAB), and, like the rest of the RAB, the return on this investment will be calculated based on the weighted average cost of capital (WACC). The currently approved WACC under Price Control 3 is 7.79%, and it will remain in effect until 2027, according to

OQGN.

The company stated that the Fahud-Suhar Loop Line Project is in line with its growth strategy and vision of leading the energy infrastructure sector.

Described as one of the largest initiatives sanctioned by OQGN since the implementation

of the RAB framework, the project is expected to significantly boost gas supply capacity in the Suhar and Ibri regions. It supports Oman’s long-term energy strategy and aligns with OQGN’s infrastructure expansion objectives.

According to OQGN’s earlier disclosure, the Fahud-Suhar Loop Line Project is scheduled for completion in 2027. Once operational, the new pipeline will increase the capacity of OQGN’s northern gas network by 9mn standard cubic metres per day,

further solidifying the company’s role in meeting the growing demand from key industrial and power sectors.

OQGN, which operates the sultanate’s only natural gas transportation network, currently manages over 4,000km of pipeline infrastructure across Oman. The network supplies gas to a wide array of critical industries, including power generation, water desalination, cement and aluminium production, fertiliser manufacturing, and petrochemical plants.

FSA prepares for second phase of Dhamani platform

Muscat – In preparation for the launch of the second phase of the National Health Insurance Platform (Dhamani), the Financial Services Authority (FSA) held a preparatory meeting with insurance companies and representatives from private healthcare institutions to coordinate the implementation of this next stage of the Dhamani electronic platform.

The second phase involves upgrading the platform to facilitate the exchange of medical documents – such as X-rays, prescriptions, and medical referrals – between private healthcare institutions and insurance companies, as well as among all hospitals, medical complexes, clinics, and specialised health centres.

Dhamani platform demonstrated its efficiency and digital effectiveness during its operational period, with over four million health insurance transactions processed through the system by the end of May 2025.

The second phase is a significant step in the development of the Dhamani electronic platform, as it advances the service offering by paving the way for the creation of a unified medical record for insured individuals.



GS Inima secures financing for solar PV plant at Barka

Our Correspondent
Muscat

GS Inima, a Spain-based global leader in water infrastructure development and the operation of desalination and wastewater treatment plants, has secured the necessary financing to construct a 6.3MWp photovoltaic (PV) plant at the Barka V desalination facility in Oman. This milestone will support the integration of renewable energy into essential infrastructure and reinforces the company’s commitment to sustainable water management.

The company said that the adoption of renewable sources such as solar power is particularly relevant in countries like Oman, where high temperatures, strong solar irradiance, and the need to ensure sustainable access to water make such solutions vital.

‘Integrating clean energy into infrastructure such as Barka V enables the optimisation of resource use, the reduction of carbon emissions, and progress towards a more environmentally sustainable energy model,’ GS Inima said in a statement on its

website.

The new facility, designed for self-consumption, will supply approximately 11% of Barka V’s energy needs until 2044. Covering an area of 40,000 square metres, it will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained by GS Inima.

The financing has been made possible with the support of COFIDES, a Spanish public-private entity that promotes the internationalisation and sustainability of businesses by providing funding for overseas investment projects.

Operational since June 2024, Barka V is GS Inima’s first pro-

ject in the Middle East. With a production capacity of 100,000 cubic metres per day, it supplies water to over 800,000 residents in the Muscat and Batinah regions – two of the most densely populated areas in the Sultanate.

Barka V will be the second project in Oman to incorporate solar power into the desalination process, further enhancing GS Inima’s leadership in developing more efficient and environmentally friendly hybrid energy solutions.

Juan José Benayas, CEO of GS Inima Barka 5 Desalination Company, said, “The financing of the Barka 5 photovoltaic plant marks the culmination of a project that began in 2022. In addition to reaffirming our environmental commitment, GS Inima enhances the profitability of the Barka 5 desalination plant, which is fully owned by the company, and strengthens our presence in the Middle East. COFIDES’ support has been crucial, and we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the entire COFIDES team who collaborated with us during this phase of the project.”

Knowledge Oasis Muscat attracts 27 new projects worth RO28mn in 2024

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM), the technology park operating under the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), attracted 27 new projects in 2024, drawing investments exceeding RO28mn across a total area of 48,000 sqm. This achievement reflects KOM’s ongoing commitment to positioning Oman as a dynamic, knowledge-based economy driven by diversity, growth, and sustainability.

Eng Jaafar al Ajmi, Director General of KOM, said that the cumulative investment volume at KOM had risen to RO312.52mn by the end of 2024. The number of projects has now surpassed 200, employing 2,621 individuals and occupying a total



area of 759,566 sqm.

Ajmi also outlined Madayn’s upcoming development plans for KOM, including the construction of a multi-storey car park and the establishment of a 1.4MW solar photovoltaic power plant.

He added that Madayn has completed infrastructure works related to the Ring Road project, launched a smart mobility initiative using e-scooters within KOM, developed a pedestrian walkway in the Boulevard Zone, and installed a new perimeter security fence around the premises.

In alignment with Madayn’s broader smart city initiatives and its commitment to enhancing Oman’s business ecosystem, Ajmi highlighted KOM’s successful field test of the RTK GNSS L700H tablet – an advanced GIS device used for surveying and mapping infrastructure.

“Additionally, KOM has part-

nered with Drone First Company to pilot the use of drones for cleaning building exteriors. This initiative aims to conserve water, promote the use of eco-friendly materials, and enhance sustainability in facilities management. It will also improve safety by reducing the need for manual labour in high-risk environments, while aligning with global trends in smart, efficient solutions,” he explained.

Through Knowledge Oasis Muscat, Madayn continues to attract international and regional firms seeking to expand or relocate their operations within the Sultanate. KOM also plays a vital role in supporting start-ups and SMEs focused on technology and innovation by offering world-class infrastructure and comprehensive support services.

ahlibank manages United Finance bond issuance

Muscat – ahlibank has successfully acted as issue manager for the RO15mn senior bond issuance by United Finance Company, comprising a base issue of RO10mn and a fully exercised greenshoe option of RO5mn.

This transaction featured a pioneering structure, marking the first senior bond issuance by a finance and leasing company in recent years. The structure allowed the three-year issuance to be competitively priced with a coupon rate of 7.00% per annum.

Hanaa al Kharusi, Senior General Manager – Wholesale Bank-



ing at ahlibank, said, “We continue to maintain our position as the number one issue manager for fixed income issuances by

private entities on the Muscat Stock Exchange. At ahlibank, we are committed to empowering Omani corporates through bespoke capital-raising strategies that are both efficient and responsive to market conditions. The successful execution of this bond issuance underscores our advisory capabilities, distribution strength, and our ability to navigate market dynamics with precision.”

The issuance attracted strong investor interest, with total demand reaching RO17.2mn – representing a 1.7 times oversubscription. This highlights

ahlibank’s capabilities in structuring and delivering high-impact capital market transactions. The private placement drew over 60 applications, the highest level of investor participation for any comparable corporate bond issuance in recent years.

This marks ahlibank’s fourth bond issuance within the finance and leasing sector, with all four issuances achieving oversubscription. The strong market momentum surrounding this offering reflects growing confidence not only in the issuer, but also in ahlibank’s execution expertise and readiness.

Strait of Hormuz oil flows could be at risk amid escalating Israel-Iran conflict

Srinivas Mazumdaru

The Strait of Hormuz is a key waterway that lies between Oman and Iran, and connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.

The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) describes it as the "world's most important oil transit chokepoint."

At its narrowest point, the waterway is just 33 kilometers (21 miles) wide, with the shipping lane just two miles wide in either direction, making it crowded and perilous.

Large volumes of crude extracted by OPEC countries like Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Iraq from oil fields across the Persian Gulf region and consumed globally flow through the strait.

Around 20mn barrels of crude, condensate and fuels are estimated to flow via the waterway daily, according to data from Vortexa, an energy and freight market consultant.

Qatar, one of the world's largest producers of liquefied natural gas (LNG), relies heavily on the strait to ship its LNG exports.

What's current situation in strait?

The conflict between Israel and Iran has put renewed focus on security in the waterway. Iran has in the past threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz for traffic in retaliation to Western pressure.

Since the fighting between Israel and Iran broke out, however, there haven't been any major attacks on commercial shipping in the region. But shipowners are increasingly wary of using the waterway, with some ships having tightened security and others canceling routes there, the AP news agency reported.

Electronic interference with commercial ship navigation systems has surged in recent days around the waterway and the wider Gulf, naval sources told the Reuters news agency. This interference is having an impact on vessels sailing through the re-



Moreover, Tehran itself relies on the Strait of Hormuz to ship its oil to its customers, making it counterproductive to close the strait, say experts.

"Iran's economy heavily relies

The Strait of Hormuz is considered the world's most important gateway for oil transport. Hostilities between Israel and Iran have raised fears that shipping and crude oil flows through the narrow waterway may now slow down

on the free passage of goods and vessels through the seaway, as its oil exports are entirely sea-based," Reuters quoted JP Morgan analysts Natasha Kaneva, Prateek Kedia and Lyuba Savinova as saying. "Cutting off the Strait of Hormuz would be counterproductive to Iran's relationship with its sole oil customer, China."

Are there alternatives to Hormuz Strait?

Gulf Arab nations like Saudi Arabia and the UAE have sought alternative routes to bypass the strait in recent years. Both countries have set up infrastructure to transport some of their crude via other routes.

Saudi Arabia, for instance, operates the East-West Crude Oil Pipeline with a capacity of five million barrels per day, while the UAE has a pipeline linking its on-shore oil fields to the Fujairah export terminal on the Gulf of Oman.

The EIA estimates that around 2.6mn barrels of crude per day could be available to bypass the Strait of Hormuz in the event of disruptions in the waterway. DW

gion, they said.

As there appears to be no immediate end to the conflict, markets remain on edge. Any blockade of the waterway or disruptions to oil flows could trigger a sharp spike in crude prices and hit energy importers hard, particularly in Asia.

Meanwhile, tanker rates for vessels carrying crude and refined oil products from the region have jumped in recent days.

The cost to ship fuels from the Middle East to East Asia climbed almost 20% in three sessions to Monday, Bloomberg reported, citing data from the Baltic Exchange. Rates to East Africa, meanwhile, jumped more than 40%.

Who will be most affected in case of supply disruption?

The EIA estimates that 82% of crude and other fuel shipments that traversed the strait went to Asian consumers.

China, India, Japan and South

Qatar warns Israeli attacks on Iran's energy facilities could affect oil prices

Doha, Qatar - Qatar has warned that Israeli attacks on energy infrastructure in Iran could have a significant impact on global oil prices.

"The attack on the Iranian side of the South Pars gas field is a reckless and uncalculated move that threatens energy security," Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesperson Majed al-Ansari said during a press briefing in Doha.

Ansari emphasised the urgent need to ease regional tensions.

"Regional security cannot withstand further crises or escalation," he stated, warning against the "irresponsible targeting of energy and nuclear facilities in the region."

He also denied reports suggesting that Iran had requested



Qatari mediation to stop Israeli airstrikes.

"Our communications with all international partners are ongoing in an effort to de-escalate the situation," he added.

The spokesperson reiterated that the only viable solution is to end the confrontation between Israel and Iran and to resume nuclear negotiations between Tehran and Washington. Ansari noted that the Strait of Hormuz - a strategic chokepoint for global oil and gas

shipments - is currently operating normally, but cautioned that continued escalation could result in "unintended consequences."

The Strait of Hormuz is responsible for transporting more than a quarter of the world's crude oil and petroleum product exports, according to unofficial estimates.

Regional tensions have been rising since Friday, when Israel launched coordinated airstrikes on multiple targets across Iran, including military and nuclear facilities, prompting retaliatory strikes from Tehran.

Israeli authorities have reported that at least 24 people have been killed and hundreds injured in Iranian missile attacks since Friday.

Anadolu Agency

DISCLAIMER

Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) would like to announce the following amendment for the tenders which were announced on 12/06/2025.

Sr.No	Tender No.	Tender Name	Last date for obtaining the documents	Bid Submission Date	Requirements from participants	Tender Document's Fees (Including VAT)(RO)
1	49/2025 (International)	Construction of Majan400/220/132kV Grid Station alongwith Associated 400kV L1LO (Underground Cables) from SFZ GridStation to SIS Grid Station.	03/07/2025	22/07/2025	Local & International Companies with Experience in SameField, Have A Valid CommercialRegistration.	2,625/-
2	54/2025 (International)	Construction of Sultan HaithamCity 132/33kV Grid Station andAssociated 132kV L1LO (Underground Cables) fromMobillah Grid Station to Mobilla Industrial Grid Station.	03/07/2025	22/07/2025	Local & International Companies with Experience in SameField, Have A Valid CommercialRegistration.	2,625/-

Company Address:
Muscat - Al Mawaleh
Way No : 2153 - Building No. 4230 Block No: 321
Web site: www.omangrid.com

تنويه

تعلن الشركة العُمانية لنقل الكهرباء بأنه تم تعديل المناقصات المذكورة ادناه التي تم الإعلان عنها بتاريخ ١٢/٠٦/٢٠٢٥م.

رقم المناقصة	عنوان المناقصة	آخر موعد لتقديم العطاءات	الدرجة	ثمن الوثيقة (شامل ضريبة القيمة المضافة) (ر.ع.)
١	إنشاء محطة كهرباء مجان جهد ١٣٢ /٤٠٠/٢٢٠ ك.ف. والخطوط المصاحبة لها (كابلات أرضية) جهد ٤٠٠ ك.ف من محطة منطقة صحار الحرة إلى محطة سيح المكارم.	٢٠٢٥/٠٧/٢٢	الشركات المحلية والدولية العاملة في هذا المجال ولديها سجل تجاري ساري المفعول	٢,٦٢٥/-
٢	إنشاء محطة كهرباء مدينة السلطان هيثم جهد ٣٣١/٣٣ ك.ف و خطوط الكهرباء المصاحبة لها (كابلات أرضية) جهد ١٣٢ ك.ف من محطة المعبيلة الى محطة المعبيلة الصناعية.	٢٠٢٥/٠٧/٢٢	الشركات المحلية والدولية العاملة في هذا المجال ولديها سجل تجاري ساري المفعول	٢,٦٢٥/-

عنوان الشركة محافظة مسقط - الموالح
رقم السكة ٢١٥٣ مبنى رقم ٤٢٣٠
البريد الإلكتروني tenders@omangrid.com
موقع الشركة www.omangrid.com



Sohar International, Sharakah celebrate women's SME Graduation at Sohar

Reinforcing its commitment to sustainable empowerment and inclusive growth, Sohar International, in collaboration with Sharakah, concluded the 'Sohar International Women SMEs Development Programme' with a graduation ceremony held recently at Crowne Plaza Muscat OCEC.

The event was held under the patronage of Eng Ahmed Hassan Alawi al Dheeb, vice chairman of the General Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones. Sohar International was represented at the event by Eng Aisha al Saifi, Chief Transformation Officer, Mazin Mahmood al Raisi, chief marketing officer and Abdul Qadir al Sumali, chief retail and Premier Banking officer of Sohar International.

The ceremony marked the culmination of a six-month transformative journey undertaken by ten Omani women entrepreneurs from across the sultanate. Designed to strengthen core business competencies and unlock future growth opportunities, the programme focused on equipping participants with practical skills in financial planning, digital enablement, and strategic marketing.

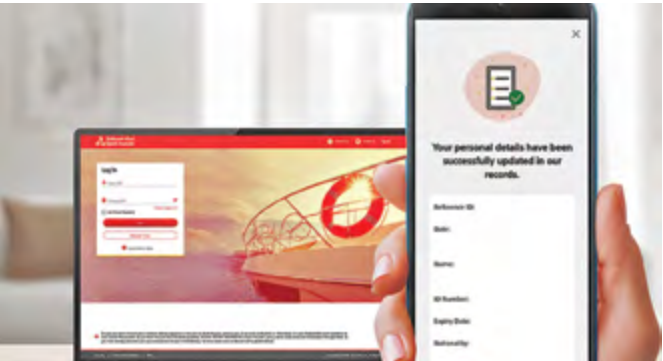
Fares al Harthy, assistant manager of SME Development at the Fund for Development of Youth Projects, emphasised the importance of empowering women entrepreneurs in supporting the national economy and promoting economic diversification.

This was followed by a speech from the bank delivered by Mazin Mahmood Al Raisi, chief marketing officer at Sohar International, who highlighted the bank's role in supporting Omani women and enhancing their entrepreneurial capabilities.

Participants in the programme were then given the opportunity to share their experiences and how they benefited from the initiative. The event concluded with the distribution of graduation certificates to the participants in recognition of their efforts and dedication throughout the programme.

Raisi said, "At Sohar International, we view empowerment as a long-term investment in national progress. This initiative reflects our commitment to shaping a resilient and inclusive economy by equipping Omani women entrepreneurs with the tools to lead, innovate, and grow. By fostering capability and confidence, we are not only supporting individual success but also contributing to Oman's strategic vision for sustainable and diversified economic development."

Bank Muscat offers enhanced digital KYC process



As part of its ongoing digital transformation and commitment to improving customer experience, Bank Muscat has introduced an enhanced KYC process, which is called now 'Update Personal Details', through Internet Banking and Mobile Banking.

The new process is fully automated and introduces a straight through processing (STP) system, which makes updating personal details seamless, instant and more efficient, a press release said.

Customers can now enjoy a fully digital, hassle-free experience with fewer steps, fewer clicks and no ID scanning required, significantly reducing processing time; instant reminders when personal details are due for update within 30 days or have already expired; and instant notifications via SMS and email once the update is successfully processed.

To update the personal data on Mobile Banking, customers can log in their mBanking App > go to Requests > Update my information > Personal Details, then follow the on-screen instructions. The details to update include declaration, personal details, address details, and employment details. Then after verifying the details and entering the OTP sent through the registered mobile number, the customers personal details will be successfully updated in the bank's records.

This addition is a key part of the bank's mBanking services, aimed at streamlining the customer experience. It highlights Bank Muscat's commitment to updating Mobile Banking in line with the latest developments in the sector. The bank remains dedicated to continuously enhancing its digital services.

ahlibank rolls out ahlinext kids banking app

In line with its commitment to advancing financial literacy and driving forward-thinking innovation, Ahlibank has launched Ahlinext, a first-of-its-kind, end-to-end child banking application in the Sultanate of Oman.

Crafted to resonate with the aspirations of a younger generation, Ahlinext represents a transformative step in raising financial awareness from an early age, empowering children to develop smart money habits while equipping parents with meaningful tools to nurture responsible financial behaviour. With a youthful and engaging interface tailored to capture young minds, the app delivers substantive educational value in a format that aligns with modern family dynamics. In doing so, it reinforces Ahlibank's broader vision to contribute to the social and economic priorities of Oman Vision 2040 through technology-led, future-focused initiatives.

As a dynamic and intuitive platform, Ahlinext seamlessly blends interactive learning with purposeful functionality. Children can complete assigned chores and earn rewards, receive structured transfers and card wallets, all within a secure, parent-controlled environment. With customisable settings for each child, parents gain full visibility and flexibility, enabling instant updates and tailored controls that adapt to individual needs.

The app also offers statement tracking to help children visualise their spending habits and develop a sense of accountability. The ahlinext app is designed to be very agile and progressive in nature – in the upcoming planned updates there will be a heavy emphasis on enhancing financial literacy for kids, as well as providing them with the necessary tools to be in control of their finances and money management.

Through Ahlinext, Ahlibank reaffirms its role as a catalyst for innovation with social relevance, bridging the gap between today's banking and tomorrow's needs. As the financial landscape evolves, the bank continues to invest in solutions that prepare the next generation for a future where knowledge, responsibility, and confidence form the cornerstones of financial well-being.

Huawei appoints Memac Ogilvy as PR partner

Memac Ogilvy announced today that it has been appointed by Huawei, the leading global provider of information and communications technology infrastructure and smart devices, as the public relations partner for its two core businesses – Huawei Consumer Business Group (CBG) for UAE, and Huawei Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for Middle East.

The partnership comes as Huawei pushes the boundaries of connectivity and innovation in line with its mission to bring digital to every person, home and organisation for a fully connected, intelligent world, a press release said.

Memac Ogilvy will provide the full suite of PR services for the two Huawei businesses, including communications strategy, media relations, thought leadership, influencer engagement and campaign development to drive Huawei's ambitious growth agenda and future-focused objectives in the region.

Leveraging its integrated communications expertise and strong media network, Memac Ogilvy will deliver bold, impactful communications strategies that engage consumers, inspire industry stakeholders, and strengthen relationships with strategic partners across the UAE.

Saad Abu Touq, managing director – PR, UAE, at Memac Ogilvy, said, "Huawei has cemented its position as a global innovation leader, shaping how people connect, communicate, and experience the world. In the UAE, the brand continues to evolve, expand and inspire customers and businesses across every touchpoint. We are honoured to be part of Huawei's incredible growth journey and will focus on delivering integrated storytelling and borderless creativity, two offerings that set us apart."

Rima Taha, director of PR and Communications, Middle East and Central Asia at Huawei ICT and Saeed Klaib, director of Communications and Public Relations at Huawei CBG, said, "Huawei CBG and Huawei ICT are proud to appoint Memac Ogilvy as their strategic communications partner. With a deep understanding of our brand ethos and a proven ability to translate vision into impactful storytelling, Memac Ogilvy is uniquely positioned to bring our narrative to life for audiences in the UAE and beyond."

Dar Al Atta'a unveils first phase of solar-powered community on June 11

In a significant step for sustainable community development in the sultanate, Dar Al Atta'a Association officially inaugurated the first phase of Hay Al Atta'a, Oman's first solar-powered residential neighbourhood, on June 11.

The project provides permanent housing for families who lost their homes during Cyclone Shaheen, which made landfall in North Batinah in 2021, a press release said.

The inauguration ceremony was held under the patronage of H E Eng Khalfan bin Saeed al Shuaili, Minister of Housing and Urban Planning, and H E Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najjar, Minister of Social Development.

Located in San'aa Bani Ghafir, in Wilayat Khabourah, the new neighbourhood includes 36 five-bedroom homes, each spanning approximately 272 sqm.

The project was developed by Dar Al Atta'a in partnership with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, the Office of the Governor of North Al Batinah, the Municipality of Al Khabourah, and with direct support from the local community.

Maryam bint Issa al Zadjali, founder and chairperson of Dar Al Atta'a, said "The idea for Hay Al Atta'a emerged in the wake of Cyclone Shaheen. In response, we launched a fundraising campaign – 'A Million from the People to the People.' We raised RO1mn. As an organisation, we always strive to develop sustainable projects. Rather than providing short-term aid like food or furnishings, we envisioned a long-lasting solution – to build permanent homes for families who had no means to rebuild on their own."

INDIA

India won't accept 3rd party mediation, Modi tells Trump

New Delhi/Alberta - Prime Minister Narendra Modi informed the US president that India will not accept third-party mediation with Pakistan, after Donald Trump's announcement that he would work with the two South Asian rivals to resolve the Kashmir dispute.

He clarified that the US has no role in India's recent ceasefire with Pakistan.

Modi conveyed New Delhi's position during a 35-minute-long phone conversation with Trump, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said.

The prime minister informed the US president that India has 'never accepted third-party mediation and will not accept such mediation in the future' in its conflict with Pakistan, according to Misri's video statement broadcast by state-run DD News.

Under the Simla Pact signed in 1972, India and Pakistan have agreed to solve their disputes bilaterally.

At the height of hostilities between India and Pakistan last month, triggered by the April 22 attack in Indian-administered Kashmir, Trump announced on May 10 that the US mediated a ceasefire, saying he prevented a potential nuclear war by using trade and direct diplomacy between the two South Asian nuclear-armed nations.

The ceasefire remains in effect until now. However, Modi said the US has no role in mediation with Pakistan.

It took place between existing channels of the Indian and Pakistani militaries and 'at Pakistan's request', Modi claimed.



Modi conveyed New Delhi's position during a 35-minute-long phone conversation with Trump

After nearly two years of dispute over New Delhi's alleged involvement in the killing of a Sikh separatist, Indian PM Narendra Modi and Canadian PM Mark Carney met on the sidelines of a G7 summit

There were 'no discussions on a trade deal between India and the US or about a mediation between India and Pakistan', Misri added.

India 'will now treat acts of terrorism not as proxy actions but as acts of war', Modi told the US president, according to the Indian official.

As of the time of publication, there was no immediate reaction from Islamabad about Modi's phone call with Trump.

Carney, Modi meet to reset relations

Meanwhile, Modi expressed hope on Tuesday for renewed cooperation with Ottawa as he met with his new Canadian counterpart, Mark Carney.

This comes after a bitter dispute over New Delhi's alleged involvement in the 2023 assassination of a Canadian Sikh separatist. "I congratulate him on his great victory and I am confident that together with him India

and Canada will work together to make progress in many areas," Modi said when he met Carney on the sidelines of a G7 summit.

Carney, who took office in March, said it was 'a great honour' to invite Modi to the summit in the Canadian Rockies as a guest of the Group of Seven major economies.

The Canadian leader said he invited India, which is not a G7 member, due to its importance in global supply chains.

According to a statement from Carney's office, the two leaders 'reaffirmed the importance of Canada-India ties, based upon mutual respect, the rule of law, and a commitment to the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity'.

They further agreed to name

new high commissioners, as ambassadors are known between Commonwealth nations. The key positions will be refilled over a year after the two countries expelled each other's diplomats over the allegations of the murdered separatist.

Carney and Modi made this decision 'with a view to returning to regular services to citizens and businesses in both countries', the Canadian prime minister's office said in a statement.

Canada is home to the largest Sikh population outside of India, and this community said that the country should have set conditions before inviting him. On Tuesday, a few dozen Sikh protesters tore apart Indian flags in downtown Calgary.

Anadolu Agency/DW



Lone survivor of AI-171 flight crash, Vishwas Ramesh Kumar, and others carry the mortal remains of his brother Ajay Ramesh (ANI)

DNA match confirmed for 190 victims of Air India plane crash

Ahmedabad, Gujarat - DNA samples of 190 victims of the tragic Air India crash in Ahmedabad have matched with their family members, and the bodies of 157 victims have been handed over, Ahmedabad Civil Hospital Superintendent Rakesh Joshi confirmed on Wednesday.

Joshi said that of the 190 matched DNA samples, 123 are of Indian nationals and 27 are from the United Kingdom. The DNA of a Canadian citizen has also been matched.

Addressing a media briefing, Joshi said: "... Mortal remains of 157 deceased have been handed over to their families... Of the 190 DNA samples that have matched, 123 are Indians, 7 are Portuguese, 27 are from the UK, four are non-passengers, and one Canadian."

He confirmed that the lone

survivor in the London-bound Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, which crashed into a hostel complex of BJ Medical College in the Meghani Nagar area of Gujarat's Ahmedabad shortly after take-off from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, has been discharged and sent back home with his family.

DNA testing is being conducted by forensic teams from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) and the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU).

Meanwhile, a bomb threat email targeting a Qatar Airways cargo flight was received at the Hyderabad airport on Wednesday morning, prompting an immediate response from law enforcement agencies, the GMR group said in an official statement.

ANI

Three top Maoist leaders killed in AP

Alluri, Andhra Pradesh - Three senior Maoist leaders, including AOBSCZ Secretary Uday and East Division Secretary Aruna, were killed by security forces in Alluri Sitharama Raju district, as per the information from Alluri Sitharama Raju district SP.

The police confirmed the operation took place in the area of the Andhra-Odisha Border.

As per the statement from the district SP, 'Maoists' AOBSCZ (Andhra Odisha Border Special Zonal Committee) Secretary Uday and East Division Secretary Aruna, along with another cadre, were killed by the security forces'.

Four hardcore Maoists had been neutralised in an intense exchange of fire with Gadchiroli Police and CRPF personnel near the Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border on Friday morning, fol-

lowing a targeted anti-Naxal operation launched based on credible intelligence.

According to the release, the operation, led by Additional SP Ramesh, involved 12 C60 commando teams, comprising around 300 personnel, and a CRPF unit. The operation was initiated on Thursday at noon from Kawande and Nelgunda, moving towards the Indravati riverbank near the recently opened Forward Operating Base (FOB) Kawande, despite heavy rainfall in the area.

While laying a cordon and searching the riverbank, Maoists opened indiscriminate fire on the C60 commandos, prompting effective retaliation, according to the CRPF.

The heavy exchange of fire lasted nearly two hours.

ANI

Axiom-4 launch not expected before June 22

New Delhi - Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said that the much-anticipated Axiom-4 space mission, which includes participation by Indian astronaut Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, is not expected to launch before June 22, citing safety as a key factor in finalising the launch date.

During a press conference, Singh said: "We have been told that it won't be before June 22. There is a safety angle also involved here."

Following the rescheduling of



The Crew of Axiom-4 mission, which has rescheduled the Mission (ANI)

the launch, Axiom Space said in an official statement that NASA, Axiom Space, and SpaceX are now targeting no earlier than Sunday, June 22, for the launch of the fourth private astronaut mission to the ISS.

The change in the targeted launch date allows NASA time to continue evaluating space station operations after recent repair work in the aft (rear) segment of the International Space Station's Zvezda service module, the statement added.

Peggy Whitson, former NASA

astronaut and now Director of Human Spaceflight at Axiom Space, will command the mission, while ISRO astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla will serve as the pilot. The two mission specialists will be ESA project astronaut Sławosz Uzna ski-Wi niewski of Poland and Tibor Kapu of Hungary.

The crew will launch aboard the SpaceX Dragon spacecraft on a Falcon 9 rocket from Launch Complex 39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida.

ANI

Nation's first indigenous Anti-Submarine Shallow Water Craft gets commissioned

Visakhapatnam - In a major boost to nation's coastal defence capabilities, the Indian Navy on Wednesday commissioned INS Arnala, India's first indigenously designed and built Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), at the Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam, with Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan presiding over the commissioning ceremony.

"INS Arnala - the pioneering Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft - proudly joins the Indian Navy today, 18 June 2025, at the Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam," the Indian Navy said in a statement.

Built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata, and delivered on May 8 at L&T Shipyard in Kattupalli under a Public-Private Partnership, INS Arnala is the first in a



INS Arnala is the first in a series of eight ASW-SWCs being developed

series of eight ASW-SWCs being developed to enhance India's coastal defence, a prior statement from the Minister of Defence said.

The 77-metre-long vessel, named after the historic Arnala fort off Vasai, Maharashtra, is equipped with advanced underwater surveillance systems,

mine-laying capabilities, and is designed for operations in shallow waters. It is the largest Indian Naval warship propelled by a diesel engine-waterjet combination.

According to the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the ship has been designed for underwater surveillance, search and rescue

operations, and Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO).

The ship's crest features a stylised Auger Shell, symbolising resilience and vigilance in hostile environments, while its motto, Arnave Shauryam, or 'Valour in the Ocean', reflects the courage of its crew.

The Defence Ministry also noted in a prior statement that the induction of ASW SWC ships would significantly boost the Indian Navy's shallow water Anti-Submarine Warfare capabilities in coastal areas and represents yet another milestone in the Navy's quest for indigenous shipbuilding and the Government's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', with over 80 per cent indigenous content.

Notably, INS Arnala was delivered to the Navy during Operation Sindoor.

ANI

WHERE PILGRIMS DARE



A view of the Gaurikund-Kedarnath trek route where stones fell down from the top of a hill, leaving two people dead and three injured, during Kedarnath Dham Yatra, in Rudraprayag on Wednesday (ANI)

Is Russia-backed North Korea boosting its nuke capabilities?

Vienna, Austria - The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said it is monitoring the construction of a new facility in North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear complex.

In a statement released last week, IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi said the agency is 'monitoring the construction of a new building at Yongbyon which has dimensions and features similar to the Kangson enrichment plant'.

He said the 'undeclared enrichment facilities' in North Korea 'are of serious concern', adding that, 'the continuation and further development of the DPRK's nuclear programme are clear violations of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and are deeply regrettable'.

'Paranoid about regime survival'

Analysts say that despite a functioning nuclear deterrent, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un sees an even greater atomic weapons capability as critical to the survival of his regime.

"North Korea has long been paranoid about its regime survival," said Erwin Tan, a professor of international politics specialising in security dilemma theory at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul.

Kim has inherited his father's belief that an operational nuclear



North Korea's main nuclear complex is seen in Yongbyon, North Korea, just north of the capital, Pyongyang

arsenal would serve as an 'insurance policy', he added. "The current moment is also something of a 'window of opportunity' for the North Koreans to develop an operational nuclear arsenal, due to the policy naivete of President Trump's administration and its lack of geostrategic foresight'.

An analysis of satellite images published on June 13 by 38 North, a publication of the Washington-based think tank Stimson Center, supports the IAEA's assessment, including that the facility under construction is 120 metres long and 47 metres wide, almost identical to a plant at Kangson built to house high spin-rate centrifuges.

Other developments include the construction of what appears to be an underground radioactive waste storage facility, it said.

An expanding stockpile

The reports also coincide with a study published on Monday by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute that examined the state of the world's nuclear arsenals.

The institute estimated that North Korea 'had assembled approximately 50 nuclear warheads and had sufficient fissile material to potentially produce up to 90 warheads' as of January

this year. It added that Pyongyang's stockpile of nuclear warheads is 'projected to expand in the coming years'.

Andrei Lankov, a professor of history and international relations at Seoul's Kookmin University, said the North could be following one of two trajectories; one optimistic in terms of greater regional security and the other pessimistic. "A decade ago, the North reached the level of technical capability to deploy both nuclear warheads and the ICBMs required to deliver them," he said. "They did not, however, halt their development work and now they have reached the point where

they can deliver a warhead anywhere in the world."

The 'implied scenario', Lankov said, is for the North to menace the US by threatening to attack its cities with nuclear weapons if it interferes with an invasion of South Korea. The North could then use tactical battlefield nuclear weapons to 'overcome the massive superiority that South Korea holds in conventional weapons systems'.

"The result would likely be a North Korean victory over the South," he added.

The more optimistic reading of the present situation, Lankov suggested, would be that the

North is constructing new facilities 'in plain sight' at Yongbyon to send a very different signal.

"This could be a very good sign that they are building this in full knowledge that it will be seen and understood as a sign that Pyongyang wants to negotiate."

proliferation concerns

Professor Tan said Kim's security alliance with Russian President Vladimir Putin has certainly given him additional power to resist international pressures, although there are tensions between the two sides.

"Russia and North Korea - and, for that matter, China - all distrust and dislike each other, but all of them also recognise that they have shared interests in opposing the US," he said. "Kim Jong Un has apparently calculated that he can 'piggy-back' on his cooperation with Putin to rely on Russian military protection to undertake further development of his nuclear arsenal."

This raises once again the spectre of nuclear proliferation in Northeast Asia including, potentially, South Korea developing and deploying its own nuclear deterrent. "Towards the end of Trump's first term in office, there already were discussions in South Korea about an independent nuclear arsenal, but these did not materialise," he said.

DW

S Korea, Japan agree to bolster relations with US

Seoul, South Korea - South Korea and Japan agreed to strengthen cooperation with the US to respond to geopolitical crises, including North Korea, local media reported on Wednesday.

The agreement came during a meeting on Tuesday between South Korean President Lee Jae-myung and Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba on the sidelines of the Group of 7 (G7) summit in the resort town of Kananaskis in Alberta, Canada, according to Yonhap News Agency.

"They agreed to further develop trilateral cooperation among the Republic of Korea, the United States and Japan to respond to various regional geopolitical crises, including the North Korean issue, and to deepen bilateral cooperation between the Republic of Korea and Japan," Lee's office said in a statement.

Relations between South Korea and Japan have historically been strained due to Japan's colonial rule over the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945. Ties began to improve under President Yoon Suk Yeol, whose tenure ended after he was

The agreement came during a meeting on Tuesday on the sidelines of the Group of 7 (G7) summit

impeached by South Korea's National Assembly for imposing martial law in December.

"I hope that collaboration and cooperation between Japan and South Korea will become a big driving force for the benefit of our region and the world," Kyodo News Agency quoted Ishiba as saying.

President Lee also met with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and discussed ways to step up cooperation in defence, the arms industry, energy security, climate change, artificial intelligence and other areas.

He also met with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Antonio Costa and discussed ways to broaden economic cooperation.

It marked Lee's first visit outside the country and meeting with foreign leaders since he took office on June 4.

Meanwhile, South Korea, the US, and Japan held joint air drills on Wednesday, the first since South Korean President Lee Jae Myung took office earlier this month.

The exercise, conducted over waters near South Korea's southern island of Jeju, featured two South Korean F-15K fighter jets, six US F-16 fighters, and two Japanese F-2 jets, according to South Korea's Air Force, cited by Yonhap News.

Anadolu Agency



Pentagon officer removed over anti-Israel posts

Washington, D.C., US - The Pentagon has removed a senior officer from his post and launched an internal probe following the emergence of inflammatory social media posts criticising Israel and US policy in the Middle East.

Col. Nathan McCormack, who had been serving as the Levant and Egypt branch chief within the Joint Chiefs of Staff's J5 strategic planning directorate, is at the centre of the controversy.

The move came shortly after the Jewish News Syndicate (JNS) reported on Tuesday on a semi-anonymous X account allegedly linked to McCormack, which included remarks describing Israel as 'our worst ally'.

A Pentagon official told JNS: "He will no longer be on the joint staff while the matter is being investigated," adding that the Defence Department is assigning an investigating officer to examine the content and its implications.

"The individual is being returned to his service while the matter is being investigated."

First reported by JNS and further detailed by Middle East Eye, the posts, which have since been archived, also included criticism of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

McCormack referred to him and his allies as 'Judeo-supremacist cronies' and accused them of wanting 'to expel (Palestinians) and cleanse 'Eretz Israel' (Israeli territory) of ethnic Palestinians."

"This is the kind of bitter over-sharing I'd expect from someone who doesn't know better," a Defence Department contractor told JNS. "But at his level and under his own name and likeness? It's mind-boggling."

The Pentagon emphasised that the posts 'do not reflect the position of the Joint Staff or the Department of Defence', underscoring the potential impact such

Col. McCormack, who had been serving as the Egypt branch chief within the Joint Chiefs of Staff's J5 strategic planning directorate, is at the centre of the controversy

views could have on US alliances. "Our global alliances and partnerships are vital to our national security," the official said.

McCormack's LinkedIn profile states he began his current assignment in June 2024. According to Middle East Eye, the posts also accused Washington of enabling Israel's 'bad behaviour' and added: "The Western states go to great lengths to avoid criticism of Israel, much out of Holocaust guilt."

Anadolu Agency

Argentina: Ex-president to serve 6-year house arrest

Buenos Aires, Argentina - Argentina's former President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner will serve a six-year sentence on corruption charges under house arrest, a federal judge ruled on Tuesday.

The court determined that placing the 72-year-old Kirchner under house arrest was appropriate, citing her age and prominence as a political figure.

It also referenced security concerns, noting Kirchner's survival of a 2022 assassination attempt, and said that her safety

'would become complex in a situation of prison confinement in coexistence with any type of prison population'.

According to the ruling, Kirchner must begin serving her sentence immediately. She will be monitored electronically and remain confined to her apartment in the capital Buenos Aires, where she resides with her daughter and granddaughter.



The court ordered that Kirchner 'must remain at the registered address, an obligation that she may not break except in exceptional situations'.

It added that any future visitors to the apartment aside from household staff, medical personnel and other authorised individuals must first receive court approval.

Kirchner was initially sentenced in 2022 to six years in prison and permanently banned from holding public office over corruption. However, she had remained free pending the Supreme Court's review of her appeal.

Former President Carlos Menem died before serving a seven-year prison sentence in the case of illegal arms sales to Ecuador and Croatia and he only served around six months of pretrial detention in 2001.

Anadolu Agency

Kenya: Police officer held after man shot at anti-brutality rally

Nairobi, Kenya - A Kenyan police officer has been arrested following the shooting of an unarmed civilian during Tuesday's rally to protest the death of a blogger in police custody.

DW's Nairobi correspondent, Felix Maringa, witnessed and filmed the man being shot in the head at close range.

His video shows two policemen repeatedly striking the man on his head before one of them fired at him with what appeared to be a shotgun.

Police say the man was taken to hospital to be treated for his wounds. Jonah Kariuki, the father of the shooting victim, said his son is currently on life support in the ICU. He initially received word that his son had died, but later learned he had survived and was being treated in hospital.

The shooting happened as a group of whip and club-wielding motorcyclists - known in Kenya as 'goons' - assaulted protesters who were calling for an end to police brutality and demanding the resignation of a senior officer they blame for the death of blogger Albert Ojwang on June 8.

In a post on X, Amnesty International's Kenya chapter re-



A police officer fires his weapon during a demonstration in Nairobi over the death of Kenyan blogger Albert Ojwang

ported the presence of dozens of motorbikes carrying hooded passengers, who were seen whipping protesters and members of the public. "The goons attacked us. They cornered us and beat us with whips and the police were just watching them do it," Hanifa Adan, one of the leading voices from last year's massive Gen Z-led protests in Kenya, told the AFP news agency.

"Police, shame on you, stop siding with the goons, side with the citizens who pay your salary through our taxes," one protester told Reuters.

Pictures taken by press pho-

tographers show counter-protesters running alongside police officers as they disrupted the demonstrations over Ojwang's death.

Blogger's death in custody

Ojwang, a blogger, was arrested earlier this month for allegedly defaming the country's deputy police chief, Eliud Lagat. Police initially claimed he died 'after hitting his head against a cell wall'. However, an autopsy revealed injuries consistent with assault as the likely cause of death.

Since then, President William

Ruto has acknowledged that Ojwang died 'at the hands of the police'. Two officers were arrested last week in connection with the death, but the investigation is ongoing. On Monday, Lagat announced he had temporarily stepped down from his position as investigations into Ojwang's death continue.

The protests over Ojwang's death reflect broader public concerns that little has changed since more than 60 people were killed during demonstrations last year, which were initially sparked by proposed tax increases.

DW

Israel hits Iran’s centrifuge production sites, says UN watchdog

Tehran/Tel Aviv - Iran's centrifuge production sites in Tehran and the central province of Karaj were hit, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) announced on Wednesday.

"The IAEA has information that two centrifuge production facilities in Iran, the TESA Karaj workshop and the Tehran Research Centre, were hit," the UN nuclear watchdog said on X.

"At Tehran site, one building was hit where advanced centrifuge rotors were manufactured and tested. At Karaj, two buildings were destroyed where

different centrifuge components were manufactured," it added.

The agency noted that both were previously under its monitoring and verification as part of the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action).

Escalating Iran-Israel conflict

On June 13, Israel launched large-scale attacks targeting Iran's nuclear facilities across several cities, as well as high-ranking military command centres. Iranian media reported on Wednesday that the death toll from Israeli airstrikes across



Tehran and other populated areas has risen to 585, with at least 1,326 people injured since the attacks started last week.

Israel evacuates 3,800 citizens

Israel said on Wednesday that it has evacuated around 3,800 cit-

izens from various areas due to Iranian missile and drone attacks since last week. Iran fired over 400 ballistic missiles and hundreds of drones since June 13, the Israeli Government Press Office said in a statement.

The Iranian attacks resulted in over 40 confirmed impact sites, the office said, without specifying the exact locations.

At least 24 Israelis were killed and 804 others injured in the Iranian attacks, including eight in critical condition, the office said.

According to the statement, a total of 18,766 insurance claims had been filed with the Israeli

Tax Authority, including 15,861 related to structural damage, 1,272 for vehicle damage, and 1,633 for other types of personal property.

Meanwhile, US officials said Iran could resort to mining the strategic Strait of Hormuz if American forces join Israel's military campaign - a move that could trap US warships in the Persian Gulf and trigger a regional confrontation. "Officials said that in the event of an attack, Iran could begin to mine the Strait of Hormuz, a tactic meant to pin American warships in the Persian Gulf," according to

intelligence reviewed by the Donald Trump administration, as reported by The New York Times on Tuesday.

The threat highlights growing fears that an already volatile conflict could spiral into a broader war involving direct US-Iranian clashes.

The warning comes amid reports that Iran has readied ballistic missiles and other weaponry for strikes on US bases across the Middle East if Washington supports Israeli operations, particularly a possible strike on Iran's underground Fordo nuclear facility.

Iran's supreme leader warns US joining Israel will have irreparable consequences

Tehran/Tel Aviv - Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warned on Wednesday that any direct involvement by the US in Tehran's conflict with Israel will have 'irreparable consequences'.

"The Zionist entity (Israel) has made a grave mistake and will face consequences," Khamenei said in a televised speech.

He said that Iran will not forgive the violation of the country's airspace or the blood of its 'martyrs'.

"Those familiar with Iran's history and people know better than to speak the language of threats," he said.

"The Americans must understand that any military intervention will undoubtedly bring irreversible harm. They should know that Iran will not surrender, and any US strike will cost the Americans serious, irreparable consequences."



Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said that Iran will not forgive the violation of the country's airspace or the blood of its 'martyrs'

US deployment

Satellite images have revealed that all forward-deployed US Navy vessels have departed a key port in Bahrain, as Washington braces for a potential attack on Iran, *Newsweek* reported on Wednesday.

Satellite imagery analysed by open-source experts, including Ian Ellis on X, indicates that at least one littoral combat ship, four mine countermeasure vessels, and the special operations support ship M/V *Ocean Trader* are currently operating within

the US Central Command's area of responsibility.

Their departure indicates a shift toward strategic locations throughout the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman - critical areas within CENTCOM's area of responsibility, analysts told *Newsweek*.

On Monday, the *USS Nimitz* was redirected from the South China Sea to the Middle East, bringing the total number of US aircraft carriers in the region to two, amid conflict between Israel and Iran.

In a related move, dozens of US Air Force refuelling aircraft deployed to Europe over the weekend as a precaution to support potential operations in the Middle East, according to two defence officials, as reported by *Politico* on Monday.

"Consistent with the duty to protect US forces in the Middle East, Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth directed the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group to the US Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility to sustain our defensive posture and safe-

guard American personnel," a defence official told *Newsweek*.

The US has also deployed more than 30 aerial refuelling tankers to the Middle East in recent days to potentially support Israeli air operations, press reports said on Tuesday, citing two US officials.

The tankers could be used to extend the range and flight time of Israeli fighter jets conducting missions over Iran, according to CNN.

"Without this ability, Israel's warplanes have a limited time

they can linger over Iran," CNN's Brad Lendon reported.

The Israeli military reportedly flew as many as 200 jets during initial strikes against Iranian targets.

Although Israel possesses its own tankers, officials said they are insufficient to support this volume of aircraft over extended distances.

Extended flight time is especially critical for targeting mobile ballistic missile launchers, which can move and hide between missile launches.

requiring midair refuelling to complete missions in the region.

Tankers could additionally support US military aircraft stationed in the region or aboard aircraft carriers in the Indian Ocean.

CNN further noted that if US forces are ordered into the conflict, the tankers would play a vital role in sustaining long-range operations. The deployment comes amid concerns that the Israel-Iran conflict could escalate into a broader regional war.

Anadolu Agency

Satellite images have revealed that forward-deployed US Navy vessels have departed a key port in Bahrain, as Washington braces for a potential attack on Iran

N Korea to implement treaty with Russia: Kim

Istanbul, Turkey - North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has vowed to 'honestly implement' the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with Russia, the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on Wednesday.

Kim made the pledge during his meeting with Russian security chief Sergey Shoygu in Pyongyang on Tuesday.

Pyongyang will 'invariably and unconditionally support' Russia to defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and international justice against the 'imperialist moves of hegemony', Kim said.

North Korea deployed thousands of soldiers to aid Russia in the war against Ukraine, following the signing of the partnership pact by Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim in Pyongyang in June 2024.

The pact requires extending military support in case either side is attacked by a third party. Kim and Shoygu discussed and approved 'some ideas and plans for conveying long the heroic feats displayed by soldiers of units of the Korean People's Army in the operations for liberating the Kursk area'.

Anadolu Agency

Israel kills at least 32 across Gaza

Gaza City, Palestine - The Israeli army killed at least 32 Palestinians and wounded dozens more in airstrikes and gunfire across Gaza on Wednesday, according to medical sources and witnesses.

Among the dead were 11 Palestinians who had gathered near the Netzarim corridor in southern Gaza City awaiting humanitarian aid, where Israeli forces opened fire, wounding others, some critically.

The Israeli military allows only a limited number of aid trucks into Gaza, prompting large crowds of desperate civilians to gather.

According to Gaza's Government Media Office, these gatherings have increasingly become targets of Israeli attacks or thefts by armed gangs supported by Israel to sow chaos.

Elsewhere in Gaza City, an Israeli airstrike on a home in the Al-Zaytoun neighbourhood killed three people, including a child, and wounded several others.

In central Gaza, a strike on a house in the Maghazi refugee camp killed 10 Palestinians and injured others.



Among the dead were 11 Palestinians who had gathered near Netzarim corridor in southern Gaza awaiting humanitarian aid, where Israeli forces opened fire

Separately, in the southern city of Khan Younis, Israeli forces struck two tents sheltering displaced families in the Al-Mawasi area, killing eight civilians, including children.

At least 55,637 Palestinians

have been killed in Israel's genocidal war in the Gaza Strip since October 2023, the Health Ministry said on Wednesday.

A ministry statement said that 144 bodies were brought to hospitals in the last 24 hours, while

560 people were injured, taking the total number of injuries in the Israeli onslaught to 129,880.

"Many victims are still trapped under the rubble and on the roads as rescuers are unable to reach them," the ministry added.

The Israeli army resumed its assaults on the Gaza Strip on March 18 and has since killed 5,334 people and injured nearly 17,839 others, shattering a ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreement that took hold in January.

Austria govt plans gun control measures after school shooting

Vienna, Austria - Austria's coalition government is taking steps to tighten gun laws following a deadly school shooting that shocked the country last week.

A 21-year-old gunman killed 10 people and then himself at his former high school in the southern city of Graz using a shotgun and Glock pistol he owned legally.

Austria has a relatively relaxed policy on firearms purchases when compared to other European countries, and the shooting has prompted the government to tighten some rules.

Current rules allow for shotgun purchases for any adult who has not been banned from owning weapons. Meanwhile, buying a Glock requires a gun permit pending a psychological test and a minimum age of 21.

Minimum age to be raised

Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker introduced some of the proposed reforms during a press



Austria will raise the age for gun ownership in the wake of a school shooting

conference after a cabinet meeting on Wednesday in Vienna.

"We ... promised that we would not go back to business as usual and that we would draw the right conclusions from this crime to live up to the responsibility we have," Stocker said.

"Today's cabinet decision shows that we are fulfilling that responsibility," he added.

At the top of the list is raising the minimum age to buy a dangerous firearm from 21 to 25 years old. The waiting period between purchase and receipt of a firearm will be raised from three days to four weeks. Newly issued

gun permits are set to expire after eight years.

More emphasis is also to be placed on psychological tests required for gun owners.

The government also plans to increase the number of school psychologists over the next three years.

"In the future, school psychology must no longer be the exception, but the rule," Stocker said.

The aim is to identify potential dangers at an early stage and make access to particularly dangerous weapons more difficult, the chancellor added.

DW



Jannik Sinner

Sinner to take on Bublik in last 16

Halle, Germany - Top seed Jannik Sinner beat local hope Yannick Hanfmann 7-5 6-3 to move into the last 16 at the Halle Open on Tuesday as the world number one looks to defend the only grasscourt title he has won in his career.

In his first match since the epic Roland Garros final where he lost to Carlos Alcaraz in a contest that lasted 5-1/2 hours, Sinner returned to winning ways as he got the better of Hanfmann who is ranked 138 in the world.

"I'm very happy. He is a great server and a great baseliner, so breaking him is very difficult on this surface," Sinner said.

"I'm very happy how I handled the tough situations mentally. The first set could have gone into a tiebreak and then anything can happen.

"First matches are never easy on grass, and also second and third matches. So let's see what's coming in the next round. I think

tomorrow I have the day off, which is good, because the body feels different on this surface."

Sinner will next face Alexander Bublik, who won the tournament in 2023 and also faced the Italian in the French Open quarter-finals, and the top seed said he can only expect "the unexpected" against the unpredictable Kazakh entertainer.

"He's a great player, a great talent. A huge talent, actually, and grass is his favourite surface. He beat me here in Halle, he won (the trophy) here in Halle, so it's for sure a place he loves to play," Sinner added.

Earlier, Russian fourth seed Andrey Rublev beat Sebastian Ofner 6-3 6-4 to advance but other top seeds Ugo Humbert and Francisco Cerundolo fell.

Denis Shapovalov knocked out sixth seed Humbert 6-4 4-6 7-6(4) while American Alex Michelsen beat fifth seed Cerundolo 2-6 7-5 6-4.

WORKLOAD BALANCE

Indian pace spearhead Bumrah explains why he declined Test captaincy

London, England - Jasprit Bumrah has said that he didn't want to become India's Test captain because of workload management and that he had communicated the same to the BCCI, who were looking at him as a leadership candidate at the time.

After Rohit Sharma had announced his retirement from Test cricket in May, Shubman Gill was picked as India's new Test captain for the upcoming five-match series against England.

"There's no fancy stories to it [captaincy]," Bumrah told Sky Sports during an interview with Dinesh Karthik. "There is no controversy or there's no headlining statements that I was sacked or I was not looked after. Before Rohit (Sharma) and Virat (Kohli) retired during the IPL, I had spoken to BCCI that I have discussed about my workloads going forward in a five Test-match series. I've spoken to the people who have managed my back. I've spoken to the surgeon as well, who's always spoken to me about how smart you have to be about the workloads.

"I did speak to him and then we came to a conclusion that I have to be a little more smart. I called the BCCI and said I don't want to be looked at in a leadership role because I won't be able to give [it my] all Test matches coming a five Test-match series. So then, yes, the BCCI was looking at me at leadership. But then I had to say no. It's not fair for the



Jasprit Bumrah has been managing his workload carefully since suffering a back injury in January

team as well that in a five Test-match series, someone is leading in three matches and someone else in two matches. It's not fair on the team and I always wanted to put the team first."

During the final Border-Gavaskar Test in Sydney in Jan-

uary earlier this year, Bumrah had suffered a back injury. What was initially reported as back spasms then turned out to be a stress-related injury, which forced him to miss the Champions Trophy and the start of IPL 2025.

Bumrah has been cautious

I called the BCCI and said I don't want to be looked at in a leadership role because I won't be able to give [it my] all Test matches coming a five Test-match series

JASPRIT BUMRAH

whether he would play the first, third and the fifth matches. "Three Test matches is what I'm looking at. Obviously that number is not decided. First [Test] is definitely on, that is going to happen. The rest we'll see how things are, what is the workload, what are the scenarios. Three Test matches is what I can manage at this moment. And I don't want to be in a desperate scenario.

"I cannot be dictating if I'd have been the captain that, 'okay, I'll only play three Test matches'.

That doesn't send a good message in the team as well. All of these things in mind, trying to give my best as a player and trying to contribute to the best of my capacity. Hopefully in the games that I play, I'll give it my absolute best."

Bumrah had marked his return to action in IPL 2025, taking 18 wickets in 12 games at an average of 17.55 and economy rate of 6.67. Bumrah, 31, said that he had "no complaints" about his body going into the Test series in England. "The body is feeling good. All good, no issues," Bumrah said. "I played an IPL, a hectic IPL. I always try my best to look after my body and do everything that is there in my power. The weather is good. It was hot in India. Now we are experiencing a different weather."

Bumrah has been cautious against big spikes in his workload and has steadily built it up to be ready for the first Test, which begins on June 20 at Headingley.

Alcaraz battles past Walton to reach Queen's Club last 16

London, England - Top seed Carlos Alcaraz got his grasscourt campaign up and running with a 6-4 7-6(4) victory over Australian Adam Walton to move into the last 16 at the Queen's Club Championships on Tuesday.

Playing in his first match since his epic 5-1/2 hour French Open final victory over world number one Jannik Sinner nine days ago, Alcaraz was tested by Walton who had set points in the second set before the Spaniard recovered and won the tiebreak.

Alcaraz was meant to play compatriot Alejandro Davidovich Fokina but the Spaniard withdrew due to illness, giving lucky loser Walton the chance to play the French Open champion as he warmed up for his Wimbledon title defence.

"I realised that I was going to play against Adam after my warm-up... He has played a few



Carlos Alcaraz hits a return to Adam Walton

matches already before this one. I think he played really great tennis," said Alcaraz, the champion at Queen's Club in 2023.

"It surprised me a little bit. So I knew that I was going to struggle a little bit today, but just really

I realised that I was going to play against Adam after my warm-up... He has played a few matches already before this one

CARLOS ALCAZAR

happy to get the win.

"I feel super happy to be back on grass. It is a special surface, a special place to me."

French qualifier Corentin

Moutet pulled off the biggest win of his career, saving a match point to stun American third seed Taylor Fritz 6-7(5) 7-6(7) 7-5 in a marathon battle. The 26-year-old, who earned just his second career victory over a Top-10 opponent, will face Britain's Jacob Fearnley in the last 16.

Second seed Jack Draper warmed up the home crowd when he claimed an impressive 6-3 6-1 victory over American Jensen Brooksby for his first win on grass this season. Draper had beaten defending champion Alcaraz in the second round last year and the Briton is hoping to improve on his quarter-final run.

Australia's fifth seed Alex de Minaur bowed out of the tournament after a 6-4 6-2 loss to Jiri Lehecka while Alexei Popyrin beat Aleksandar Vukic 6-2 6-7(9) 7-6(3) in an all-Australian battle.

Sacking Postecoglou was 'emotionally difficult but the right decision', says Levy

London, England - Sacking coach Ange Postecoglou soon after he delivered Tottenham Hotspur's first major trophy in 17 years was "emotionally difficult", but the club needed a change after a poor Premier League season, chairman Daniel Levy said.

Postecoglou was dismissed earlier this month, just over two weeks after leading Tottenham to a 1-0 win over Manchester United in the Europa League final, securing the club's first silverware since 2008 and earning

them a place in next season's Champions League.

Levy noted that while the decision divided supporters, the Australian manager ultimately paid the price for a dreadful league campaign that saw his side finish 17th in the table - their worst finish since they were relegated in the 1976-77 campaign.

"I don't regret appointing Ange, I'm very grateful to Ange. In his first season we finished fifth and in his second we were over the moon to win a trophy," Levy

said in an interview released by the club on Tuesday. "But we need to compete in all competitions, and we felt that we needed a change. Emotionally it was difficult but we feel that we've made the right decision for the club.

Tottenham last week named former Brentford boss Thomas Frank as their fifth full-time manager in six years and the 13th since Levy became chairman over 25 years ago.

"Failure is not an option, the desire (is) to succeed. And be-

cause it's so difficult, I want to succeed even more," Levy added.

"Whenever you have a new coach, it's always a fresh start. (There are) always different ideas but we want to build on the success of winning a trophy last season.

"One of the things that stood out to me with Thomas was that he is clearly highly intelligent, a great communicator, super human being plus all the technical aspects which are obviously important."



Ange Postecoglou was sacked despite winning the Europa League, Tottenham Hotspur's first major trophy in 17 years

Liverpool start Premier League title defence against Bournemouth

London, England - Liverpool will begin their Premier League title defence when they host Bournemouth at Anfield on August 15 while last season's runners-up Arsenal visit Manchester United two days later, England's top flight, said on Wednesday.

Manchester City, who are eyeing a seventh Premier League title under Pep Guardiola after finishing third in the last campaign, take a trip to Wolverhampton Wanderers for their season opener on August 16.

Chelsea welcome FA Cup winners Crystal Palace to Stamford Bridge on August 17, a day after Thomas Frank has his first Premier League game in charge of Tottenham Hotspur when they host promoted Burnley.

Spurs sacked Ange Postecoglou after they finished one place above the relegation zone, despite the Australian leading them to the Europa League title for their first major trophy in 17 years.

Last season's surprise package Nottingham Forest will host Brentford and League Cup champions Newcastle United take a trip to Aston Villa on August 16.

RIVER DROWN URAWA

Argentinian side defeat spirited Japanese to make winning start at Club World Cup

Seattle, US - River Plate opened their Club World Cup campaign with a 3-1 win over Urawa Red Diamonds on Tuesday, with goals from Facundo Colidio, Sebastian Driussi and Maxi Meza enough to see off a spirited challenge from the Japanese side.

Urawa, who made the re-vamped 32-team competition courtesy of their 2022-23 Asian Champions League win, were backed by raucous support in their Group E clash at Seattle's Lumen Field, where their spirited display was undone by moments of casual defending.

The Argentine team got off to a dominant start and opened the scoring after 12 minutes when Colidio headed home a fine cross from Marcos Acuna on the left.

"We needed to start the tournament like this we knew we could do it, it was a tough game like we knew it was going to be," Colidio said. "Today we were very effective and that's why we won. We knew we had to be intense too, and we took our chances."

Urawa went close to equalising before the break, with Marius Hoibraten having a goal ruled out for offside and Takuro Kaneko



Maximiliano Meza (L) of River Plate celebrates after scoring against Urawa Red Diamonds in their Club World Cup opener on Tuesday

drawing a sharp save from goalkeeper Franco Armani.

However, Driussi doubled the lead three minutes into the second half, capitalising on a poor header back from Hoibraten to head the ball over the advancing goalkeeper Shusaku Nishikawa and into an empty net.

Striker Driussi was forced off soon after, having picked up an injury in the build-up, and Urawa pulled one back in the 58th minute through Yusuke Matsuo, who calmly converted a penalty following a foul by Acuna.

"The match was decided by tiny details," Matsuo said. "We found things really tough at the start, but the positive was that we gradually found our pace and looked to dominate...I managed to get into shooting positions in the box and it's something I can build on."

While Urawa pushed hard for an equaliser, substitute Meza delivered the decisive blow in the 73rd minute, with yet another header from Acuna's corner, his second assist of the match.

"I'm happy with the first game. There was a lot of nerves, it was important to win," River coach Marcelo Gallardo said.

Urawa Red Diamonds coach Maciej Skorza said his team could not find their rhythm at the beginning. "We weren't able to play as we had prepared at the start and couldn't get into a rhythm. After about 20 minutes, we started to get our groove, but we conceded a goal early on in the second half. I thought we controlled the game after we scored, but the third goal put us in a difficult situation."



Iqraam Rayners of Mamelodi Sundowns celebrates his goal

Rayners goal helps Sundowns down Ulsan

Orlando, US - South African champions Mamelodi Sundowns won their opening game at the Club World Cup on Tuesday as striker Iqraam Rayners netted the only goal in a 1-0 win over South Korea's Ulsan HD.

The result put this month's African Champions League runners-up top of Group F after Borussia Dortmund were held 0-0 by Fluminense earlier in the day.

It was also a first victory for an African side at the new-look 32-team tournament in the United States after Egypt's Al Ahly drew their opener while Esperance of Tunisia lost to Flamengo on Monday. Rayners' goal came nine minutes before halftime at the Inter & Co Stadium in a match that was delayed by just over an hour due to the threat of lightning in central Florida.

The teams had come onto the pitch to start the match before French referee Clement Turpin ordered them back to the change rooms as a precaution.

Rayners had two other first-

half strikes ruled out after VAR checks - one for handball and the other inches offside.

The effort which counted was a well-worked effort with Sundowns' Brazilian playmaker Lucas Ribeiro slipping a pass through the Ulsan defence for the striker to poke into the net.

Sundowns could have been ahead inside the opening 20 seconds after some slick passing set up a chance for Ribeiro but his effort was blocked.

It set the tone for almost total dominance by Sundowns, who had more than 70% of possession, though their passing game was too pedestrian at times and they were wasteful in front of goal.

Ulsan looked for chances on the counter and had their best opportunity in the fourth minute after a quick break but the Korean club's Brazilian forward Erick Farias missed with the goal at his mercy. Ulsan were rarely on the front foot but did have two opportunities that Sundowns scrambled off the line.

Fluminense settle for goalless draw against Dortmund

East Rutherford, US - Fluminense held Borussia Dortmund to a 0-0 draw in their Group F Club World Cup opener in New Jersey on Tuesday, as the Brazilian side were left to rue missed chances at MetLife Stadium.

Fluminense were firmly in control against the Bundesliga side in the first half but Dortmund goalkeeper Gregor Kobel produced a handful of superb saves to frustrate the Brazilian team in front of a crowd mostly in their favour.

After Dortmund struggled to get a foothold in the match with no shots on goal in the first half, Kobel did his part with a remarkable double-save midway through the second half and frantic late efforts from both sides went unrewarded.

Niko Kovac, Dortmund head coach, said he was not surprised by the firepower of Fluminense.

"I'm not surprised because I know Brazilian football very well and I knew that they have a lot of quality, a lot of experienced play-



Borussia Dortmund's Pascal Gross challenges Matheus Martinelli of Fluminense for the ball

ers," said Kovac. "It is always also a battle - European football and South American football...for me, this was not a surprise and I'm convinced that most of these South American teams will pass into the next round."

Flag-waving Fluminense fans

arrived early and cheered wildly as their team applied early pressure, with winger Jhon Arias's shot towards the top corner saved by Kobel in the 17th minute. Fluminense midfielder Martinelli missed by inches in the 34th minute and Kobel saved an-

other fine attempt from Arias two minutes later.

Kobel kept out Fluminense striker Everaldo's powerful shot from outside the box in the 69th minute and leapt to block a follow-up effort from midfielder Nonato moments later.

Nearly 1.5 million tickets sold for Club World Cup, says FIFA

East Rutherford, US - Fans from over 130 countries have purchased nearly 1.5 million tickets for the Club World Cup that kicked off last weekend in its newly expanded format across the United States, FIFA said on Tuesday.

A crowd of more than 60,000 turned up for the opener at Miami's Hard Rock Stadium on Saturday, which featured Inter Miami's Lionel Messi, while some 80,000 were in the Rose Bowl stands as Paris St Germain beat Atletico Madrid 4-0 on Sunday.

Yet some matches have also been sparsely attended, as a 0-0 draw between Borussia Dortmund and Fluminense that kicked off midday on Tuesday played out to a half-empty MetLife Stadium in New Jersey.

Fluminense deserved more, says Thiago Silva

East Rutherford, US - Had you offered Thiago Silva a point pre-game, he'd have instantly accepted. So, too, he says, would the entire Fluminense squad.

They got that against Borussia Dortmund - UEFA Champions League finalists only last year - in their Club World Cup curtain-raiser at MetLife Stadium. Given how the game played out, however, the men in Tricolor shirts are not celebrating a surprise result but rueing what could have been. Renato Gauchao's side, indeed, dominated their illustrious

opponents and only the heroics of Gregor Kobel denied them victory.

"I'm pleased with our performance," the former Brazil captain told FIFA. "Given the opportunities, the chances we created, I think we deserved a better result."

"When you stop and think about before the game, if you'd have offered us a draw, I think all of us would have signed for a 0-0 and a point. But given the way we played, all we lacked was a goal to complete our performance. I'm happy with the team,



Thiago Silva

with my own performance.

"Obviously we always go to win, we always play to win, but we had great courage to go toe to toe with Dortmund. If there had to be a winner today, I think it would have been Fluminense given everything we created throughout the game."

"I'm proud of our team. We have to be pleased with our performance. That's football. Even when you create more, you don't always win. But overall, I'm super happy with the performance."

The consensus was that Fabio

was in for an extremely busy afternoon in New York New Jersey. The reality is that he was a bystander for much of it while his counterpart Kobel was incessantly active.

"I think it was a really competitive game," said the 44-year-old goalkeeper. "Both teams imposed their game. It was even, but Fluminense had the better chances. Unfortunately their goalkeeper had a great game, managed to thwart our attack scoring and coming away with the victory."

RAMOS RISES TO THE OCCASION

Veteran Spanish defender on target as Monterrey hold Inter at Club World Cup

Los Angeles, US - UEFA Champions League finalists Inter Milan were held 1-1 by Mexican side Monterrey in their opening Group E game at the Club World Cup in Pasadena on Tuesday.

Inter dominated possession at the outset but underdogs Monterrey struck first, grabbing the lead when 39-year-old defender Sergio Ramos leaped above two defenders to power home a header from a corner in the 25th minute.

"It was a very difficult match against a great rival, a Champions League finalist. We knew the physical demands it would take," Ramos said after the game.

Monterrey defender Víctor Guzmán shared his experience of playing alongside Ramos:

"Honestly, I never imagined I'd be playing alongside Sergio Ramos. We even joked among ourselves, wondering how we were going to handle it, he's a global icon," said Guzmán. "What surprised us the most wasn't his résumé, we all know what he's accomplished on the field, but his humility."



Monterrey's Sergio Ramos scores against Inter Milan in their opening Group E game at the Club World Cup in Pasadena on Tuesday

The Italians drew level three minutes before halftime when Kristjan Asllani's floated free-kick into the box was played across the face of goal by Carlos Augusto to give Lautaro Martínez the easy tap-in.

Nelson Deossa had a golden opportunity to win it for Monterrey in stoppage time but his shot hit the side netting on a hot day at the Rose Bowl, where plenty of empty seats were visible.

"I think we could have scored a second goal, which we didn't unfortunately," said Inter's Henrikh Mkhitaryan. "But this is football, we have to work hard, we

have to do our best to win the next games because it's a new competition and the teams are very motivated to get out of the group stage.

Tuesday's match, the first competitive meeting between the sides, saw both teams debuting new managers.

Cristian Chivu took over from Simone Inzaghi at Inter Milan shortly after their crushing 5-0 Champions League final defeat by Paris St Germain, while Spaniard Domènec Torrent was brought in at Monterrey after their disappointing start to the season.

Porto transfer targets turned down moves to avoid Club World Cup, says Villas-Boas

New Jersey, US - Portuguese side Porto struggled to recruit players ahead of FIFA's expanded Club World Cup, with transfer targets turning down moves specifically to avoid the tournament's additional fixture burden, club president Andre Villas-Boas said.

FIFA had given leagues the option to open the transfer window between June 1-10 so participating clubs could sign players before the month-long tournament in the United States.

"We tested the market recently, so we had a special transfer window from June 1-10 where the Club World Cup clubs operated. It was incredible to see that a lot of football players didn't want to be in the competition," Villas-Boas told Men in Blazers.

"They prefer to rest in order to start afresh in the new season. So this is actually outstanding as well because FIFPRO (the global players' union) is demanding more rest for the players."

A FIFPRO study concluded that a four-week off-season break should be mandatory for professional soccer players.

"With the World Cup coming in America next season (2026), it's an even bigger competition -- more teams, probably 1,200 athletes in one competition," he added.

"So the calendar is becoming exhausting and we have more injuries... The players can't put on a good spectacle if they are not fresh."

Villas-Boas, a former manager at clubs like Porto, Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur, also said that the expanded 32-team tournament comes at a "very bad time" for European clubs who wrapped up an exhausting season in May.

Porto drew 0-0 with Palmeiras in their opening group game where the Brazilian side dominated the contest but were unable to find a breakthrough.

"A few of us (European clubs) have had to give a vacation to the players, then we have to bring them back early without time enough for them to reset," Villas-Boas said.

"So for us, we are like in a continuation of the last season. And whatever happens after this tournament, the new season is coming, so they never actually have the reset that they need (going) into a new season."

Porto will next play Lionel Messi's Inter Miami on Thursday.



Andre Villas-Boas

'It was best for Grealish not to travel to Club World Cup'

Philadelphia, US - Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola has suggested that Jack Grealish may need to consider leaving the club in the summer to secure more regular playing time, after the England international was omitted from the squad travelling to the United States for the revamped FIFA Club World Cup.

The 29-year-old attacking midfielder, signed from Aston Villa for £100 million in 2021, started just seven Premier League matches during the 2024-25 campaign. Speaking ahead of City's Group G opener against Morocco's Wydad Casablanca, Guardiola admitted that Grealish's future remains uncertain.

"We had a conversation between him and the club and decided it was best for him not to travel to the Club World Cup," Guardiola told reporters in Philadelphia on Tuesday.

"Jack is an exceptional player. The only reason he didn't play last season was, of course, my decisions. Now, we've decided he needs to play. The club was honest, and he was honest."

Guardiola emphasised Grealish's importance to the squad during City's treble-winning campaign in 2022-23, as well as



Pep Guardiola with Jack Grealish

his influence during his time at Aston Villa. However, he acknowledged that the past two seasons have seen the player struggle for consistency.

"He has incredible respect and love for the team," Guardiola said. "We decided it's best for him to stay in Manchester, find a place where he can feel like playing again, and rediscover the form he showed in the year of the treble or during his time at Villa."

Jorginho: Flamengo fits my style

Philadelphia, US - Jorginho landed on a Friday morning at Tom Jobim International Airport, surrounded by hundreds of tourists ready to enjoy a weekend in Rio de Janeiro. But the midfielder was there on business: within hours, he would sign his first contract with a Brazilian club — CR Flamengo.

That was on 6 June. Ten days later, he made his debut for Fla in their FIFA Club World Cup 2025™ opener – a 2-0 victory over Tunisian outfit Espérance in Philadelphia.

In his 73 minutes on the pitch, the Brazilian-born Italian international displayed an early chemistry with his new team-mates, comfortably slotting into the system designed by coach Filipe Luis, and even claiming the assist for Luiz Araújo's goal that sealed the result in the second half.

"This team fits my style really well, especially how I work tactically on the field," the former Chelsea man said after the match. "It aligns a lot with what the other players are doing. Everything's clicking with what I've been doing in recent years. It feels like I already understand what my teammates are doing and what the coach wants. Now it's just about keeping up the pace and constantly improving."

Once again, much like at



Jorginho

It feels like I already understand what my teammates are doing and what the coach wants. Now it's just about keeping up the pace

JORGINHO

Napoli, Chelsea and Arsenal, Jorginho finds himself surrounded by technically gifted players with a penchant for passing. That starts with the central defensive duo of Leo Ortiz and Leo Pereira, and continues into

midfield with Erick Pulgar, then with Giorgian de Arrascaeta, Gerson, and others. So much technical quality around him elevates Jorginho's game – just as his quick thinking and unselfish play feed into theirs.



Atletico Madrid goalkeeper Jan Oblak pours water on his face to cool down during a break in play

Players and fans concerned about scorching heat at Club World Cup

Miami, US - Soaring temperatures and oppressive humidity at the Club World Cup are fuelling concerns among players, coaches, and fans, with calls for additional cooling breaks and adjustments to match schedules.

Midday kickoff temperatures in Pasadena at the weekend approached 32 degrees Celsius (89.6 Fahrenheit), forcing players in the Paris St Germain v Atletico Madrid match to dig in early as the midday sun blazed on the Rose Bowl's uncovered stands and pitch.

Atletico's Marcos Llorente described the conditions as "terribly hot," saying "my toes were sore, my nails were hurting... it's incredible."

Fans, too, voiced concern. Attendees at the Rose Bowl complained of long queues in

harsh heat, limited shaded areas and water restrictions at entry, with some leaving at halftime due to dehydration and fear of fainting. Similar mid afternoon kickoff conditions are planned for upcoming matches, stoking safety concerns for supporters and players.

Monday's match in Pasadena was not an isolated incident. Miami and Los Angeles are experiencing temperatures north of 30 °C (86 °F), many rising above the 32 °C heat stress threshold, triggering warnings from player unions.

Tuesday's game between Real Madrid and Al Hilal is scheduled at 1500 local time with temperatures expected to reach 32°C with humidity set to hover around 70%.

The world players' union FIFPRO has suggested FIFA should revise scheduling, if needed.

"FIFPRO has consistently advocated for comprehensive heat protection measures including mandatory cooling breaks, adjustments to kick-off times to avoid the most intense heat, and the postponement of matches when conditions pose a serious health risk to players," FIFPRO said.



14

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

The sauce defines how you like your spaghetti and what you love on the side



15

IN TOWN

British Business Forum hosts a charity golf event to back autism awareness



16

ENTERTAINMENT

A peek into tinsel town, in Hollywood and Bollywood

Anirban Ray

A fortunate few may witness the celestial waltz of the soft-hued rising sun, the effervescence of the ocean, and wet ochre sands - all in one frame - at 4am at Raz al Jinz beach, around 60km from Sur city, the capital of Sharqiyah South Governorate...

The hour before dawn is said to be sacred in many cultures. As I stood at the edge of that sleepy beach, I imagined how our ancestors, the early risers, must have felt at this hour. Empty roads behind us, dark clouds above, as faint rays of silver sunlight begin to peek through the rugged mountains.

Cold mist from the sea kissed the sands, and silence echoed through every wave that hit the shore. Each step was slow, pulled lovingly but stubbornly by thick wet silica, drawing our bodies into the beach as if to keep us grounded to its ancient memory.

Two eyes peered...

Then came a shiver. Gentle, soft, but unmistakable. The sand trembled faintly beneath our feet. And from this trembling earth emerged a pair of eyes - sleepy, curious and wise. A mother green turtle!

She must have weighed close to 100kg. As brightening sunlight played spoilsport, revealing her secret nest as well as those of many other turtles in the vicinity of the beach, it was, probably, time for her to leave. Her work was done and the sea beckoned her back into its salty embrace.

These magnificent creatures - green turtles - are a treasure of

TURTLE NESTING

Waltz at dawn

FROM JUNE TO SEPTEMBER, TOURISTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD FLOCK TO RAS AL JINZ BEACH, NEAR SUR – ONE OF THE LARGEST NESTING SITES FOR ENDANGERED GREEN SEA TURTLES IN THE WORLD – TO SEE THE TURTLES LAY THEIR EGGS IN THE COOL SANDS, OFF THE BEACH, IN THE WEE HOURS. IF YOU ARE CONTEMPLATING A TRIP, THIS IS THE RIGHT TIME OF THE YEAR TO DO SO

PLAN YOUR TRIP

- **Ras Al Jinz entry fee:** RO4 (Omanis), RO8 (Residents), RO12 (Foreigners)
- **Tips:** Arrive early, wear light clothes and slippers.
- **Camera users:** Avoid changing lenses due to humidity and sand.
- Night turtle viewing is from 9pm and visitors have to be in the Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve by 8.30pm.
- Dawn turtle viewing is from 5am and visitors have to be in the reserve by 4.45 am.

Oman, and Ras Al Jinz is among the most sacred places to witness their story. Located near Ras Al Hadd, near Sur (around 250km from Muscat), this protected reserve is the only proclaimed nesting ground for turtles in the country. Other beaches along its 45km stretch are closed between 5pm and 5am, ensuring that nature remains undisturbed when the turtles crawl ashore under the moonlight.

Guided tours at sunrise and sunset allow visitors to witness this ancient ritual. The nesting turtles, aged between 30 to 40 years and weighing up to 120kg, return to the same shores to lay their eggs (around 100 at a time) several times a season. Afterward, they migrate across oceans, only to return again to this exact stretch of sand, led by memory and instinct.

A short drive away is the serene Turtle Beach Resort, a haven for

tourists -international and domestic - who seek a retreat far from the chaos of modern life. This is one explicit activity which people from around the world flock to witness from June to September when the green turtles - an endangered species - come ashore to lay their eggs (around 10,000 - 13,000 each season).

Turtle Beach Resort

Visitors are offered a chance to witness the turtles laying eggs during the wee hours while some may even be lucky to spot other species of turtles that pass by, including the Loggerhead, Leatherback, Olive Ridley and Hawksbill turtle. They also have the option of either staying in the facility at the reserve or nearby hotels in Sur.

Turtle Beach Resort is a traditional Omani resort with a makeshift dhow overlooking the Arabian Sea, celebrating local culture and hospitality. With 54 rooms, it offers direct access to the beach, and has a swimming pool, BBQ areas, a basketball court, and a warm communal space. By 10 pm, lights go off, leaving the stars to light up not just the sky, but also the soul.

The resort is also deeply committed to turtle conservation. As Ankit Kushwah, the operations supervisor, explained, "We actively monitor nesting sites, conduct beach clean-ups, and educate our guests about marine conservation. If we find an injured turtle, we contact Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve to ensure rehabilitation."

He also disclosed that, though the nesting season is from June to October, tourists arrive all through the year, especially those from Italy, Germany, France, Russia, the UK come from October to April.

Fleeting moments

As evening fades, guests retire early, setting alarms for the appointed hour - 4 am - when the cool sands come alive again. We tread softly across the beach, our feet brushing against ancient shells. A sudden poke from a millennia-old remnant nudges my toe, but I hold back a gasp. I do not want to disturb the nesting turtles.

From the shifting granules of sand, a turtle emerges slowly, steadily, her heavy form moving with the rhythm of time, each movement altering the shade of the sand around her. This is her fleeting moments before she returns to the ocean.

I crouch quietly, and beneath her I glimpse the gelatinous, golden eggs - her pride and legacy. I raise my camera, eager to freeze the miracle. But something within me did not let the shutter click. I let her moment live, unframed. With great effort, she begins her journey back.

There's a struggle - sand below, wind above - but she continues. Our guide, Syed, watches with a soft smile. He has been witnessing these spectacular 'ladies' for decades and knows well how they travel back safely. We all hold our breath. She looks back, then onward she crawls, pulling her weight across the shore.

She is returning to the ocean, to her family. Perhaps her mate waits patiently beyond or beneath those salty waves. Maybe, he is wary of her safety. She comes bearing a promise that their children will soon meet him in the vast embrace of the ocean. Somewhere, beneath the blue surface, love and rest awaits her.

cook-up

SPAGHETTI

Strings ATTACHED

A staple of Italian cuisine, typically made from durum wheat semolina and water, spaghetti is known for its versatility and commonly paired with various sauces. Try these two versions that go well with any protein on the side

Spaghetti in Creamy Tomato Sauce

- Ingredients
- 250g durum wheat spaghetti pasta

1 carrot - thinly sliced

green bell pepper - thinly sliced

1tsp dried oregano, 1tsp red chilli flakes

¼ cup fresh cream, salt, to taste

1tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- For the sauce
- 500g tomatoes,

6 cloves garlic - finely chopped, 1 onion - finely chopped

4 sprig basil leaves - roughly torn

1tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper, to taste



Method
Start by boiling the spaghetti. Drop in the spaghetti pasta and a pinch of salt and leave it to boil. Boil the spaghetti pasta till it is just the biting consistency which is the al dente. Strain the water and rinse the cooked spaghetti pasta over cold water, to stop cooking the pasta. Drizzle the pasta with olive oil and keep aside.
The next step is to make tomato basil sauce. Cut the tomatoes into halves and place them into a pressure cooker.

Allow the tomatoes to pressure cook just for one whistle.
After the first whistle release the pressure immediately and allow the tomatoes to cool. Once cooled, drain the water from the tomatoes. Remove the skin from the tomatoes and place the pulp in a mixer grinder and make a smooth puree.
Once the puree is ready, keep this aside. Heat olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic and onions. Saute the onions until the onions be-

come tender. At this stage add the carrots and capsicum and roast the vegetables until soft and cooked. Once cooked add in the freshly made tomato puree, the basil leaves, red chilli flakes, oregano, salt and pepper and bring the mixture to a brisk boil for 3 to 4 minutes.
Stir in the cooked spaghetti pasta into the tomato basil sauce. Stir in the cream, and stir fry the spaghetti pasta on high heat until the spaghetti gets well coated with the sauce.

Mexican White Spaghetti

- Ingredients
- 450g spaghetti

4tbsp butter

1tbsp garlic minced

1½ cups Mexican cream

½ cup milk

1tsp salt

8 bay leaves

½ cup queso fresco (Mexican cheese) - crumbled

Method
In a large pot, boil water and add the spaghetti. Cook according to package instructions. While the pasta is cooking, use a medium or large sized skillet to make the sauce.
Turn heat to medium-low and add the butter and garlic. Cook on medium-low, stirring often, for about 2-3 minutes, or until the butter is melted and garlic is fragrant.
Add the Mexican cream, milk and salt. Turn heat down to low. Gently stir or whisk until combined. Add the bay leaves and simmer on low for about 5 minutes, stirring often. Then, carefully remove bay leaves with a spoon. Once spaghetti is done, drain well. Add them back to the large pot they cooked in and pour the sauce on top. Add the crumbled queso fresco and gently mix to combine everything. Taste and add more salt or queso fresco, if desired. Serve immediately.



CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

CA with 15 yrs experience in Oman, familiar with ERP, financial management, IFRSs, taxation, budgeting, fund management and audits, looking for suitable placement. Can join soon with D/L. Contact: 0096896543236 / omanca968@gmail.com

MEP Design Engineer with experience in Design Softwares and Calculations. Available on own visa
Contact: 99506977

Hospitality professional with 30-plus years of experience in

managing multi-unit restaurant operations. Excels in team leadership & driving profitability. Seeking opportunities in Q S R &

Bachelor of Commerce with 6.5 years of experience in jewellery sales and accounts in Oman. Currently on a visit visa and actively seeking job opportunities. Holds a valid Omani driving licence and is available to join immediately. For opportunities, please contact 95913513 or email mohammedasif331@gmail.com.

WE ARE HIRING!

Project Manager – Building Construction

Seeking a skilled Project Manager to lead major building construction projects in Oman.

REQUIREMENTS:

• 10+ years' experience in building construction within Oman

• Successfully handled projects worth R.O. 10 million+

• B.E. in Civil Engineering from a reputed institution

• Strong leadership, planning & communication skills

Ready for a new challenge?

Email your CV, Cover Letter, and Experience Certificate to: gmpositionmuscat@gmail.com.

VACANCIES

BELOW LISTED POSITIONS FOR A REPUTED WATER COMPANY BUSINESS IN OMAN

1. Assistance Store Keeper (1)

2. Sales Executive (3)

3. Sales Helper (2)

4. Chemical Laboratory Technician-Water (1)-Omani

5. Accountant Receivable- 1-3 experience (1)

Relevant experience of water company, can send their CV's to Email:almanal.oman@agthia.com

SEND YOUR REQUEST FOR

BIRTHDAY/ANNIVERSARY WISHES TO

wish@apexmedia.co.om with your resident card copy (It's free of cost)

SITUATION VACANT

Supplying of manpower for cleaning, loading, unloading, with 17-person workforce available. Tel: 93207977

CLASSIFIED LISTINGS

MUSCAT DAILY offers a variety of classified listings for individuals and establishments:

Situations Vacant/Wanted, Accommodation Wanted or Available, Sale of Household Items, Cars for Sale or Wanted, Matrimonial Alliances, etc

Please email your listing to dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call: 99104346

FOR RENT

State of the Art warehouse and office in Misfah

Centrally located with ease of access to Muscat - Nizwa Sohar

WAREHOUSE

3000++ pallets space available on monthly/ per pallet rental bases.

loading/unloading bays, with state of the art racking and centrally air conditioning @21 degree

OFFICE

700 sq mts of office space, centralized air conditioning ready to use.

CONTACT NO: 9 3 8 9 3 5 9 6

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684

Sohar 9731 6218 | Salalah 9429 9325

www.orbit-oman.com

أوربت ORBIT

Car Rental & Lease

Fleet of 2,000 vehicles

Choose from a wide range of brands & models

PDO, OXY and BP spec vehicles available

Attractive rates for short-term & long-term lease

عيادة فصول السنة للطب الهندي التقليدي

ALL SEASON AYURVEDA CLINIC

The most efficient and authentic Ayurvedic Treatment & Medicine, Yoga, Kalari, Panchakarma, Massage, Dhara etc... Rehabilitation, Beauty therapy & post Delivery Care

Zaher Building ,1st Floor, Flat 8A, Al Khuwair Service Road ,near Al Zawawi Mosque & Burger-king Tel:24475280, GSM: 95371664 , 92504980 , Website:www.siddhayur.com

take a break

HOPPING
AROUND
WITH
HOPIBI



Mid-air etiquette

There has been a flutter among air travellers around the world, these days, following a spate of incidents which have shaken the confidence of many as well as induced an element of fear. 'You don't have to worry about a bomb scare or a hijack,' they say, 'things can go literally out of hand even when everything is said to be perfectly normal and you are in the hands of the most experienced pilots flying the most-safe aircraft. Last month, I had hopped onto a long flight out of town and every time the pilot turned on the seatbelt sign, due to turbulence, my heart jumped to my mouth. Somehow, my mind begins to race at great speeds sans



any jet fuel. And I tend to imagine the unimaginable - I'm sure, some of you relate to my predicament. But, apart from the fear of flying, what seems to irritate me on every flight is the lack of civic sense among passengers. When your flight has landed, as you stroll out of the aisle with your cabin baggage, just look around - you see stuff strewn be-

tween seats all through. Water bottles, polythene pouches, blankets, half-eaten foodstuff, disposable earphones, et al. The worst sections are the first and business class sections where the most affluent passengers are seated and treated with great care by the cabin crew who fuss with them over every bite and every expressed need.

The various complementary accessories (blankets/pil-lows, serviettes, plates, wel-come drinks and food served out to them behind closed curtains are all over the place, and you wonder whether cattle were kept in these sections. Guys, we all expect orderly entry and exit on every flight, as well as a smooth experience all through, but why can't we maintain order just around our seats so that we don't leave the aircraft in a mess, with a bad impres-sion for the cleaners, who will soon hop on to get the cabin ready for its next flight - many of whom have prob-ably never been on a flight and often wonder what on Earth happens mid-air?

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19 Just when you thought you might actually be willing to leave your pet project alone for a bit, and that re-cent in-trigue might be nearing its end, things turn out to be even more complex than you had thought. Someone who seems to just love irritating you is hard at work on that project, so it may be best for you to stay right where you are and keep working just as hard as ever.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20 Whatever is most important to you is something the rest of the world is sure to hear all about soon. That's even more true for the loved ones you're spending most of your time with, of course. There may be a few surprises on the way. In fact, it's near certain, given that things probably can't work out exactly as you'd hoped. No worries. If any-one is creative when it comes to surprising, it's you.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21 An intense work situation could lead you to wonder if you ought to tell all or just keep quiet, and isn't that a recurring dilemma for you? Since you may be feeling that you've kept this secret for too long, consider what might happen once the truth is revealed. The good news is that in long run the truth always comes out.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22 You can almost always sense something brewing even be-fore it's officially started. At the moment, your intuition is definitely high-powered, as is your temper, unfortunately! That could be a divine combination, especially someone who's been glancing your way has been gradually (and, so it would seem, deliberate-ly) letting those glances last just a longer.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22 Back when people started throwing around the term "dysfunctional family" you understood that just about ev-eryone's family is dysfunctional in one way or another. In your family's case, you probably have an unusual yet suc-cessful way of handling all the freaky problems that crop up: You agree to disagree and keep on loving each other anyway.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22 When it comes to telling someone when something's wrong, you're a master. It might be an upturned col-lar, a scratch in the paint, or a terminal case of onion breath, but you can handle the responsibility. Right now, it's pretty much maxed out, so the very least you can do is to mention that, to issue a disclaimer.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22 Your energy is driving you hard to turn your attention to-ward some big personal issue that is likely to end in an argument with someone. You're not crazy about engag-ing in that particular sport, but every now and then it's just about impossible to avoid. If money is the issue and you need to draw a line in the sand, or maybe just have a serious talk about a debt a loved one owes you.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21 Your infamous passion and determination to stand tough when you feel strongly about something is nothing to take lightly. It has never been, of course, but that goes double now. You're practically irresisti-ble and just about impos-sible to refuse. Don't rein it in, no matter how tired you might be.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21 You've never been known for being shy, retiring, or afraid to speak your mind. You're also a great friend to have on one's side, the best anyone could possibly ask for, really, and not just when times are good. When an equally good friend comes asking for your understanding and support, you're right there for them.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19 No matter who you know or how long you've actually known them, you just can't seem to avoid being put in charge of them from time to time. Right now, what you're being asked to do by a friend amounts to them putting you in a position in which you are giving far more than you are likely to get back.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18 That so-called friend who seems to have it in for you lately and seems to be playing both sides of a certain issue is well worth watching out for more closely. Their reasons for their weird behavior may be a lot less (or a lot more) devious than you'd imagined, but either way, don't let them think they're getting away with it.



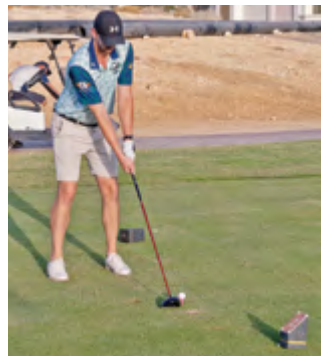
PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20 There's just one person who can help you figure out what to do next, and you both know it. The thing is you prob-ably haven't seen each other for quite some time, and you might not be quite sure where to find them. Work those antennae of yours and figure out where to start looking. Give them a buzz, send a mes-sage, or simply show up at their door.

IN TOWN

Charity Golf



The British Business Forum held a Charity Golf event at the La Vie Golf Club to raise awareness on Autism, supported by Milly's Golf Society and Oman Autism Society



Photos: VK Shafeer

BOGGLER

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

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

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

LEVEL EASY:

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

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

TRIVIA QUIZ - FOR TEENS

- K-Pop as a musical genre was started by which group?**
A. Deux
B. Seo Taiji and Boys
C. BTS
D. Shinhwa
- Which city is famous for oranges in the world?**
A. Nagpur (India)
B. Yichang, China
C. Valencia, Spain
D. Sao Paulo, Brazil
- Which ingredient is not used in Omani halwa?**



- A. Caster sugar
B. Rose water
C. Saffron
D. Cinnamon powder

Answers
1. B
2. C
3. D

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

entertainment



The darling duo's back



Guys, we are over the moon. And our joy has turned to tears as our two darlings are back... and how! Two key members (and our biases) of K-pop powerhouse BTS - RM and V - have completed their military service and are back to where they belong. Muah...muah... mmmuah!

Kim Nam-Joon, known professionally as RM, is not just a South Korean rapper-songwriter and producer, he is the leader of the most loved South Korean boy band BTS and now Samsung Electronics has announced RM as the official ambassador for Samsung AR TVs. Let's join in the gig to celebrate his return.

And we can't simply contain the fact that our heartthrob V (Kim Tae-Hyung) who enlisted for military service in December 2023, served in the elite Counter-Terrorism Unit, also called the Special Duty Team (SDT) of the Ssangyong Military Police Special Task Force. He was promoted to the sergeant rank due to his exceptional service and dedication. And now he is back to command our love and kisses like never before...We can't wait for an overdose of 'aegyo' from him.

The darling duo greeted fans (many dressed in purple, BTS' signature colour) with salutes and a saxophone performance after being discharged last week and we, too, just cannot wait to see them reunite with all their BTS mates soon.



HBO'S 'HARRY POTTER' CASTS 9 MORE ROLES

The TV adaptation of JK Rowling's fantasy series has announced nine actors playing key roles for its first season tackling *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*.

The cast includes (from left to right in the photo below) Katherine Parkinson as Molly

Weasley, Lox Pratt as Draco Malfoy, Johnny Flynn as Lucius Malfoy, Leo Earley as Seamus Finnigan, Alessia Leoni as Parvati Patil, Sienna Moosah as Lavender Brown, Bel Powley as Petunia Dursley, Daniel Rigby as Vernon Dursley and Bertie Carvel as Cornelius Fudge.



BEYONCÉ PAYS TRIBUTES FOR 'BLACKBIRD' INSPIRATION

Beyoncé is showing her gratitude to the McCartney family in connection to the legendary Beatles song 'Blackbird'. The superstar - currently on her international 'Cowboy Carter' tour - covered the 1968 track on her groundbreaking album of the same name and performs it during the show. Following her six-night run at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London, England, Beyoncé honoured Beatles member and 'Blackbird' scribe Paul McCartney on her Instagram page on Monday, thanking him for writing one of the best songs ever made. "Every time I sing it I feel so honoured. And it is a full circle moment to wear your beautiful daughter's design," Beyoncé added, referring to McCartney's daughter Stella McCartney.



'Ghosts' Star Rose McIver talks moonlighting on own series

Rose McIver has been on sets since she was 3 years old. But not in a creepy way. "I still had a regular childhood and went to school and everything," says the star of CBS' *Ghosts*. "I've just had a lot of exposure to

sets, and I love the organised chaos of it all. There is a real marriage of logistics and creativity."

Given her long tenure as an actress, it's not much of a surprise that McIver would want to branch out. And she finally did during the recent fourth season of *Ghosts*, directing her first episode of television after false starts.



Madness and mayhem



including Akshay Kumar, Abhishek Bachchan, Riteish Deshmukh, Sanjay Dutt, Fardeen Khan, Shreyas Talpade, Nana Patekar, Jackie Shroff, Dino Morea, Jacqueline Fernandez, Nargis Fakhri, Chitrangada Singh, Sonam Bajwa, Soundarya Sharma, Chunky Pandey, Nikitin Dheer and Johnny Lever. Phew!

A murder mystery comedy, the film follows multiple impostors who claim to be the son of a recently deceased billionaire as they compete for his fortune while aboard the World's most luxurious 20 storey cruise ship where the birthday celebrations for the billionaire Dobriyal are interrupted by his demise.

What follows is a roller coaster of frenzied fueds as three impostors claiming to be his long-lost heirs named 'Jollys' vie for his fortune. The hunt for the real Jolly is mired by a string of murders. With two fake cops further complicating matters, the mystery intensifies as the waves of laughter collide with the ship.

This is a story of madness personified filled with hilarious mishaps and unexpected twists, as the narrative navigates through mayhem, decep-

tion and mystery. And what's more, there are dual endings for this masala flick, and viewers are egged to view both offerings

You'd wonder who died...? Who lied...? as you encounter truth A or Truth B and still walk out confused having downed two tubs of popcorn and a barrel of cola. Go ready for a crazy fiasco and soon discover that you have forgotten the tension about an impending office presentation or the loan you're struggling to repay.

What started as a grand birthday celebration soon turns out to be a web of deception, greed, and laughter-proving once again that in the Housefull universe, the madness is never truly over. And you cannot really have enough of this 'pauli-kam' brigade.

Rating ★★★★★