

Moody's upgrades Oman's outlook to 'positive'

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Global credit rating agency Moody's Ratings announced on Friday that it has upgraded its outlook on the Government of Oman to 'positive' from 'stable,' while affirming the sultanate's Ba1 long-term issuer and senior unsecured ratings.

The rating agency also maintained its (P)Ba1 senior unsecured medium-term note programme rating for the Government of Oman.

'The key driver for the outlook change to positive is the ongoing improvement in the government's debt metrics, supported by elevated oil prices and prudent fiscal management, which increases the likelihood that Oman's fiscal strength could be sustained at a level consistent with a higher rating,' Moody's said in its report.

Moody's highlighted the fact that Oman's reduction in government debt over the past two years was achieved without depleting its financial assets. A declining debt burden, particularly the foreign-currency portion, enhances the Omani government's ability to withstand shocks, such as those caused by cyclical fluctuations in global energy markets or increases in global interest rates, according to Moody's.

The affirmation of Oman's Ba1 ratings is also underpinned by the country's high per-capita income, moderate government debt burden and an improving track record of effective fiscal policy, the rating agency said.

Moody's further noted that sustained improvements in Oman's government debt metrics achieved during 2023 could lead to a higher rating.



'The key driver for the outlook change to positive is the ongoing improvement in the government's debt metrics, supported by elevated oil prices and prudent fiscal management'

The rating agency added. Moody's rating action also extends to Oman Sovereign Sukuk Company, a special-purpose vehicle (SPV) domiciled in Oman, whose obligations, in Moody's view, are ultimately the responsibility of the Government of Oman. The agency affirmed the SPV's Ba1 backed senior unsecured and (P)Ba1 backed senior unsecured medium-term note programme ratings with positive outlook.

Last year, Moody's upgraded Oman's sovereign credit ratings twice due to the sultanate's lower debt burden amid supportive oil prices and fiscal reforms. In May 2023, Moody's upgraded the Government of Oman's issuer and long-term senior unsecured ratings to Ba2 from Ba3, maintaining a positive outlook. Then again in December 2023, Moody's upgraded Oman's long-term issuer and senior unsecured ratings to Ba1 from Ba2, while changing the outlook to stable from positive.

Rains expected in next 2 days

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Issuing a weather alert for parts of Oman, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said in a statement on Saturday that the latest satellite images and analyses from the National Multi-Hazard Early Warning Centre indicated that the tropical storm Asna was centred northeast of the Arabian Sea at a latitude of 23.5°N and a longitude of 65.0°E, approximately 635km from the coast of Oman (Ras al Hadd).

The estimated wind speed around the centre is between 35 and 45 knots, with the nearest rain-bearing cloud mass about 280km away (Ras al Hadd). The storm is expected to move west towards the Sea of Oman over the next 24 hours and then shift south/southwest over the following 48 hours, gradually dissipating away from the South Sharqiyah coast (Arabian Sea). From Sunday evening until Monday, varying intensity rain (10-30 mm) is expected to affect the governorates of South Sharqiyah, North Sharqiyah, Muscat and parts of Al Wusta, which may lead to overflowing wadis.'

Gradual dissipation of the storm's impact is expected by Tuesday morning.

CAA advised all to monitor weather bulletins and reports, take necessary precautions, remain alert, avoid crossing wadis, and stay away from low-lying areas and the sea.

MHT to host over 70 tourism firms for 'Hello Europe'

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Represented by Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT), the sultanate is hosting over 70 tourism companies from France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Switzerland, Spain and the Nordic countries. The five-day event, titled 'Hello Europe', begins on Sunday and aims to strengthen ties between Omani tourism institutions and their European counterparts.

The showcase is part of MHT's broader efforts to attract tourists from diverse international markets. It seeks to enhance communication and cooperation between local and foreign tourism sectors, promote Oman's tourism products and experiences, and spotlight recent developments in the sector. The event will facilitate discussions on how to leverage these advancements to meet the ministry's goals for tourism development and promotion.

Haitham bin Muhammad al Ghassani, Director General of Tourism Promotion in the ministry, explained that hosting European tourism companies helps showcase Oman's tourist attractions and heritage sites. It also provides a comprehensive view of how these companies can contribute to promoting Oman. He described the event as a valuable opportunity to strengthen cooperation, attract tourists from target markets and exchange knowledge with European tourism firms.

Ghassani further informed that 'Hello Europe' is crucial for positioning Oman as a prominent global tourist destination. It will display the diversity of Oman's tourism offerings to the European market while facilitating interaction with international tourism companies. The event will include sessions to explore Oman's cultural and natural heritage, introduce exceptional tourism products and services, and build a cultural exchange platform between the local community and tourists.

Additionally, the event will feature interactive sessions to understand international market needs, discussions on developing tourism packages, and brainstorming to enhance Oman's appeal. Review of various tourism components, from natural and environmental attractions to cultural and civilisational value, held during the event aim to offer an authentic Omani and Arab tourism experience. Visual presentations will highlight Oman's unique position as a tourist destination.



ARABIAN HORSE CHAMPIONSHIP HELD IN DHOFAR

The inaugural National Arabian Horse Beauty Championship held in Mirbat, Dhofar concluded on Friday. Held under the patronage of H H Sayyid Marwan bin Turki al Said, Governor of Dhofar, it featured over 50 horses. Supervised by the European Conference of Arabian Horse Organizations and supported by UNESCO, the landmark championship celebrated the beauty of purebred Arabian horses and promoted Omani heritage. Mirbat was chosen as the event host due to its historic connection with purebred Arabian horses (Supplied photo)

MoH unveils National School Health Plan for 2024-2025

Our Correspondent
Muscat

With students returning to schools and universities, Ministry of Health (MoH), represented by the School and University Health Department, has unveiled its health plan for 2024-2025

Dr Anood al Badi, Acting School and University Health Director, informed that MoH is intensifying efforts to enhance the health of school students and the broader educational community in an integrated manner. It continuously works to improve school health by implementing comprehensive health programmes that provide both curative and preventive services, addressing both physical and mental aspects of the educational community.

MoH is focused on creating a "healthy, mentally and physically sound, academically outstanding, and socially engaged school and university generation" by offering a complete system of preventive, curative, and supportive services and employing governance to adapt to life conditions and create a safe and healthy environment.

Schools are the ideal environment for promoting health education, as these provide an organised way to reach the student population. The National School Health Plan aligns with Oman Vision 2040 priorities, aiming to develop a leading health system with international standards by providing comprehensive and equitable healthcare across various governorates in Oman. Currently, there are 742 school health service providers distributed throughout Oman, with 94% of schools having clinics.

Initiatives like the School Health Promotion Initiative adopted by MoH and Ministry of Education in collaboration with World Health Organization, UNICEF and Al Jisr Foundation, play a crucial role. This initiative has been described as "a process that empowers students and the entire educational community to increase their control over their health and its determinants in ways that lead to improved health outcomes". It aims to provide necessary policies, knowledge and skills to promote health, in addition to creating a supportive health environment. These efforts are effective in enhancing students' understanding, raising their awareness, correcting misconceptions and practices, and developing awareness to prevent surrounding risks.

MoH's comprehensive plan for the new academic year includes expanded immunisation programmes for students in Grades 1 and 6, and health awareness and education programmes.

The plan also features four early detection services - Comprehensive medical examination for students in Grades 1, 7 and 10; Eye health programme for Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10; A preventive oral and dental health programme for Grades 1 and 2; and Ear health programme for Grade 1 students.

School-based clinics are being equipped to effectively deliver these services, including first aid, case referrals and chronic condition monitoring. Additional programmes include the Adolescent Health Programme, Peer Education Programme and Mental Health Programme.

Badi emphasised the importance of health promotion as an ongoing process, particularly in higher education, where the Higher Education Health Promotion Programme encourages healthy behaviours and aims to create a safe university environment.



mental aspects of the educational community.

MoH is focused on creating a "healthy, mentally and physically sound, academically outstanding, and socially engaged school and university generation" by offering a complete system of preventive, curative, and supportive services and employing governance to adapt to life conditions and create a safe and healthy environment.

Schools are the ideal environment for promoting health education, as these provide an organised way to reach the student population. The National School Health Plan aligns with Oman Vision 2040 priorities, aiming to develop a leading health system with international standards by providing comprehensive and equitable healthcare across various governorates in Oman. Currently, there are 742 school health service providers distributed throughout Oman, with 94% of schools having clinics.

Initiatives like the School Health Promotion Initiative adopted by MoH and Ministry of Education in collaboration with World Health Organization, UNICEF and Al Jisr Foundation, play a crucial role. This initiative has been described as "a process that empowers students and the entire educational community to increase their control over their health and its determinants in ways that lead to improved health outcomes". It aims to provide necessary policies, knowledge and skills to promote health, in addition to creating a supportive health environment. These efforts are effective in enhancing students' understanding, raising their awareness, correcting misconceptions and practices, and developing awareness to prevent surrounding risks.

MoH's comprehensive plan for the new academic year includes expanded immunisation programmes for students in Grades 1 and 6, and health awareness and education programmes.

The plan also features four early detection services - Comprehensive medical examination for students in Grades 1, 7 and 10; Eye health programme for Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10; A preventive oral and dental health programme for Grades 1 and 2; and Ear health programme for Grade 1 students.

School-based clinics are being equipped to effectively deliver these services, including first aid, case referrals and chronic condition monitoring. Additional programmes include the Adolescent Health Programme, Peer Education Programme and Mental Health Programme.

Badi emphasised the importance of health promotion as an ongoing process, particularly in higher education, where the Higher Education Health Promotion Programme encourages healthy behaviours and aims to create a safe university environment.

health outcomes". It aims to provide necessary policies, knowledge and skills to promote health, in addition to creating a supportive health environment. These efforts are effective in enhancing students' understanding, raising their awareness, correcting misconceptions and practices, and developing awareness to prevent surrounding risks.

MoH's comprehensive plan for the new academic year includes expanded immunisation programmes for students in Grades 1 and 6, and health awareness and education programmes.

The plan also features four early detection services - Comprehensive medical examination for students in Grades 1, 7 and 10; Eye health programme for Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10; A preventive oral and dental health programme for Grades 1 and 2; and Ear health programme for Grade 1 students.

School-based clinics are being equipped to effectively deliver these services, including first aid, case referrals and chronic condition monitoring. Additional programmes include the Adolescent Health Programme, Peer Education Programme and Mental Health Programme.

Badi emphasised the importance of health promotion as an ongoing process, particularly in higher education, where the Higher Education Health Promotion Programme encourages healthy behaviours and aims to create a safe university environment.

health outcomes". It aims to provide necessary policies, knowledge and skills to promote health, in addition to creating a supportive health environment. These efforts are effective in enhancing students' understanding, raising their awareness, correcting misconceptions and practices, and developing awareness to prevent surrounding risks.

MoH's comprehensive plan for the new academic year includes expanded immunisation programmes for students in Grades 1 and 6, and health awareness and education programmes.

The plan also features four early detection services - Comprehensive medical examination for students in Grades 1, 7 and 10; Eye health programme for Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10; A preventive oral and dental health programme for Grades 1 and 2; and Ear health programme for Grade 1 students.

School-based clinics are being equipped to effectively deliver these services, including first aid, case referrals and chronic condition monitoring. Additional programmes include the Adolescent Health Programme, Peer Education Programme and Mental Health Programme.

Badi emphasised the importance of health promotion as an ongoing process, particularly in higher education, where the Higher Education Health Promotion Programme encourages healthy behaviours and aims to create a safe university environment.

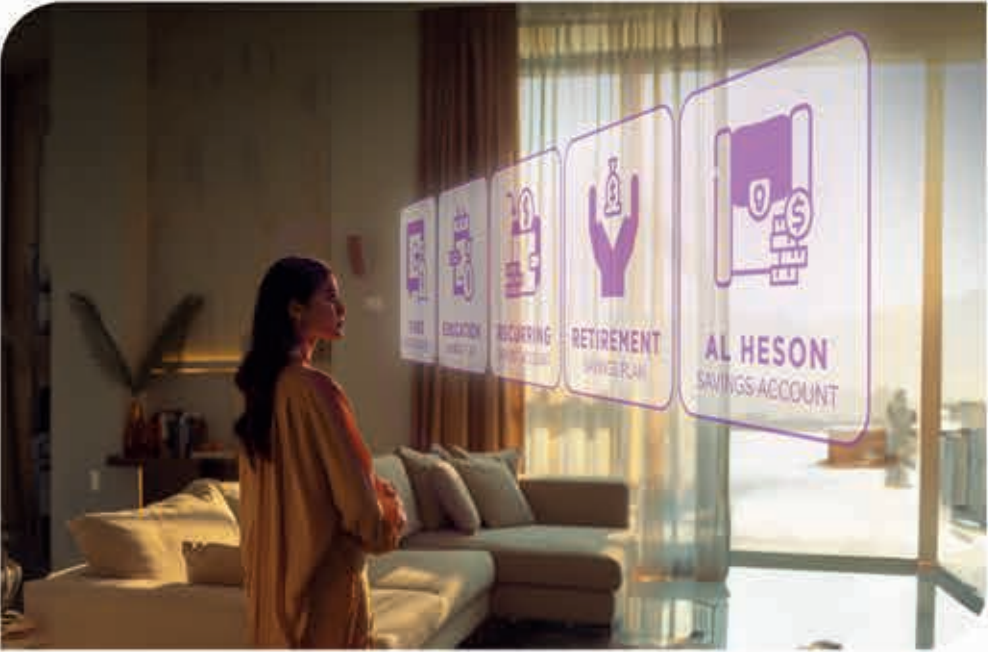


09
Yemen floods kill nearly 100 people



16
Leelangkika at Tokyo dance festival and competition

Terms and conitions apply



Empower your future today

With BankDhofar Ladies Account

Start Saving with BankDhofar Ladies account!
To know more, visit www.bankdhofar.com

bankdhofar

 2479 1111  www.bankdhofar.com



Duqm Forum on ‘Blue Economy: The New Destination for Investment’ on Oct 20

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry will host the 5th Duqm Forum on October 20, 2024, at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre in Muscat. This year's forum, titled 'Blue Economy: The New Destination for In-



Dr Salem bin Salim al Junaibi

vestment', will be held in collaboration with Foreign Ministry and Public Authority for Economic Zones and Free Zones.

The event will bring together experts, investors, and local and international companies specialising in the blue economy sector.

Dr Salem bin Salim al Junaibi, Member of State Council and

Chairman of Al Wusta branch of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, will oversee the forum. Junaibi informed that the chamber conducts programmes annually in efforts to enhance the investment climate in the governorate through coordinated initiatives with relevant authorities. The forum will focus on three

main segments - Pillars and Strategies of Investment in the Blue Economy: An exploration of fundamental strategies and frameworks for blue economy investments; Blue Investment Opportunities: Discussion of opportunities in food security, logistics, tourism and renewable energy in Oman; and Global

Technologies and Experiences: Examination of international technologies and experiences that can support blue economy investments.

Junaibi emphasised the fact that Al Wusta - with its strategic location between Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean and its access to Asian markets - is well-posi-

tioned to become a key maritime trade hub and logistical centre for shipbuilding and maintenance. Additionally, the governorate's significant marine resources present substantial opportunities in the fisheries sector. He noted that Al Wusta is poised to be a leading destination for blue economy investments in Oman.

MCSY launches campaign to support national football team

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth (MCSY) and Oman Football Association unveiled a campaign - 'Kulluna Maak' or 'We are all with you' - on Thursday to rally support for the national football team as it enters the decisive round of the Asian qualifiers for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Mohammed al Amri, General Manager of Sports Activities at the ministry and Campaign Manager, informed that the campaign consists of four key components - Logistical Initiative, Partnership and Marketing Initiative, Fans Supportive Initiative, and Media Initiative. These efforts aim to foster collective support from both individuals and organisations for the national team in the qualifiers.

According to Amri, the Logistical Initiative will involve upgrades to facilities at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex



Supplied photo)

Bausher, including enhancing services for fans, such as improved prayer spaces, additional parking and better access routes. It will also enhance accessibility to gates and stands within the complex and facilitate the availability of food and drinks.

The Media Initiative will feature collaborations with government and private entities, including Oman TV, radio stations, social media platforms and influencers to promote the campaign and the qualifiers. The

campaign will also use advertising screens in public spaces such as streets, malls and public buses, in partnership with Mwasalat, to this end. Additionally, the campaign is collaborating with the National Team Fans Association to rally support and a special song dedicated to the national team is set to be released soon.

Amri further explained that the campaign aims to create a supportive and engaging environment for fans using various ways, including flags.

Supplementary events will be organised around the upcoming matches to elevate the fan experience and foster a festive atmosphere for families and supporters, including setting up external screens, deploying volunteers to assist with organisation, and providing buses to transport fans from different regions.

Amri highlighted the fact that the campaign is forming valuable partnerships with government and private institutions, including the Ministry of Information, Royal Oman Police, Muscat Municipality and Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development.

Several private sector companies have also agreed to sponsor and support the campaign. These combined efforts are aimed at supporting the national team, encouraging fan attendance and creating a positive atmosphere during the Asian qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup.



(Supplied photo)

Muscat airport celebrates landing of world’s largest cargo aircraft

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Muscat International Airport marked a significant milestone with the arrival of the Airbus Beluga A300, the world's largest cargo aircraft, on Thursday. This landmark event underscored the airport's operational excellence and strategic importance in global air cargo.

In a statement, Muscat International Airport highlighted the significance of this achievement,

emphasising the airport's preparedness to handle both the largest and smallest aircraft with efficiency.

Sheikh Ayman bin Ahmed al Hosani, CEO of Oman Airports, expressed his delight over the event and its impact on aviation enthusiasts and the global aviation agenda.

"This historic landing of the Beluga Airbus A300 at Muscat International Airport is a testament to our airport's capability and strategic importance," said

Sheikh Ayman. "We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of service and showcasing Muscat's role as a key player in global air cargo."

The event sparked reactions from citizens and residents. Dr Khalid al Bulashi remarked that hosting such an aircraft reflected the trust and professionalism of Muscat International Airport. Resident Stefan Rueter added, "A unique aircraft deserves a unique airport, and Muscat has certainly proved to be just that."

BUY BAHAR

OWN YOUR DREAM

TESLA

MODEL Y



75 GRAND PRIZES

15 iPhone 15

10 Samsung S24

5 iPhone 14

20 Washing Machines

25 Gift Vouchers worth RO 50 each



Buy any BAHAR, No. 1, Farah, Pinex, Spark products worth RO 3, get a coupon to participate in the raffle draw



EVERYONE IS A WINNER

(32,000+ SCRATCH & WIN PRIZES)

Promotion period: 25th July – 7th October 2024 | Draw dates: 2nd September & 9th October 2024

Images shown for illustrative purposes only.

Promotion available only in selected outlets in Oman.

Back to School: Fun and challenges

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Sunday marks a fresh beginning for students across Oman as schools are reopening for the 2024-25 academic year.

While many students are eagerly waiting for their reunion with friends, others are reluctant to get back to the grind leaving the ease of summer behind.

For parents, the start of the new session brings its own set of challenges, from managing new schedules to getting uniforms, bags, and supplies ready. Both students and their parents are manoeuvring through the joy and stresses of returning to routine, hoping for a productive and enjoyable year ahead.

Mohamed, the father of Hos-sam - a tenth-standard student at Ahmed Bin Al Naamani Al Kaabi School in Seeb - shared his thoughts on the eve of the first day of school. "I have prepared my son thoroughly for the new school year, both psychologically and academically. He completed courses in programming and English, which I believe have set him up well. He is excited about the start of the new year," Mohamed said.

Fatmah al Naamani, mother of Harith al Musalmi, a grade VII student at Haritha bin al Numan School, shared the excitement, while noting her child's initial resistance.

"At first, my son was cranky and resistant, but we managed to convince him. Now, he's fully adjusted and excited to see his friends again," she said.

"We hope the classes will be as engaging and fun as the break was. I don't want my son to feel overburdened with homework or lessons; education should be enjoyable."

However, Fatmah acknowl-



N Batinah declares contest for Best School Welcome

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In celebration of the new academic year, North Batinah governorate has announced an exciting competition designed to showcase the best school reception programme. The competition, which highlights the efforts of school administra-

tions in welcoming students for the 2024-25 academic year, offers a prize pool exceeding RO2,000.

According to a statement from the office of the North Batinah Governor, each participating school is required to submit a short video clip, in coordination with the Directorate General of Education in

the governorate. The video should capture various aspects of the morning programme, including student reception, morning assembly, school radio, school bus entry, and distribution of school books.

The competition is open to both government and private schools and includes several criteria, such as adherence to

the guidelines for student reception programmes. Video submissions should be no longer than two minutes.

Prizes are as follows: RO500 for the first place, RO400 for the second, RO300 for the third place, RO250 for the fourth place, and RO200 for the fifth. Sixth to tenth place winners will each receive RO100.

We hope the classes will be as engaging and fun as the break was. I don't want my son to feel overburdened with homework or lessons; education should be enjoyable

FATMAH AL NAAMANI

edged that the main challenge is going to be in getting him ready early and adjusting to a new schedule. But she expects him to adapt gradually.

Saeed al Balushi, father of Al Yazan, a KG2 student at Dawhat Aleim Private School, also spoke about the challenges of returning after a long vacation. "After three months of summer vacation, it's tough to wake them up early, get them

ready, and deal with the heavy traffic in the morning," he said. "Preparing uniforms, shoes, socks, breakfast, and water bottles are daily tasks, but we would be able to manage."

As the holidays ended, arranging the school essentials like books and dresses had been a stress for many parents.

Syed Zaib, a parent from Pakistan School Muscat, shared his experience of getting his

three children ready for school.

Unlike other schools, Pakistan School opened on August 18; and Zaid pointed out that one of the bigger challenges was to get tailor-made uniforms.

"I faced difficulties in finding tailors for uniforms. Also, as girls, they want trendy bags, so I had to hop from one mall to another," he narrated, exuding happiness that everything got sorted out eventually.



ROP unveils new safety strategies for schools

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To bolster security and order and achieve the highest levels of safety, the Royal Oman Police has completed its preparations for the 2024-25 academic year. They have implemented a range of preventive measures aligned with comprehensive security, traffic, and awareness plans.

Brigadier Engineer Ali bin Salim al Falahi, Director General of Traffic, outlined the measures taken to ensure smooth traffic flow and student safety.

These include intensified traffic awareness campaigns across various media and social media platforms, increased police presence on roads and near schools, effective traffic management to prevent congestion, and additional support for road users.

He stressed the importance of adhering to traffic laws and speed limits, particularly in school zones, maintaining safe distances between vehicles, prioritising pedestrians, and avoiding distractions such as mobile phones.

Regarding awareness efforts, Brigadier Falahi highlighted the



Brigadier Ali al Falahi

crucial role of traffic safety institutes across governorates in promoting traffic awareness.

In 2023, more than 20 specialised training programmes for school bus drivers were conducted, alongside over 640 lectures and awareness activities in both public and private schools. The Traffic Safety Institute also hosted 177 visits from students and kindergarten children.

Traffic safety is a shared responsibility requiring the collective efforts of all stakeholders, Brigadier Falahi emphasised.

He assured that the Royal Oman Police will continue to collaborate with relevant authorities to ensure the safety of students and extend awareness initiatives to enhance overall community safety.



Tourism ministry concludes 'Sur Marine Sports Festival'

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Sur Marine Sports Festival - one of the executive programmes of Sur as the Arab Tourism Capital 2024 - came to an end on Saturday under the patronage of Dr Rashid bin Mohammed al Ghailani, a member of the State Council.

Organised by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT), in collaboration with the Office of the Governor of South Sharqiyah and various governmental and

private entities, ended with swimming and traditional boat races, officials informed.

Mohammed bin Salem al Alawi won the swimming competition for children aged 10-15 years, followed by Abdullah bin Mohammed al Araimi in the second place and Aman Amin in the third.

In the adult category, for participants aged 16 years and above, Nasser bin Saif al Kindi came first followed by Mohammed bin Ahmed al Ghailani in the second and Khalid bin

Khalfan al Jahdhami in the third place. The festival featured a range of activities including sports events, races, and sailing experiences, alongside the Oman Sailing Championship. A fan area was set up, featuring an exhibition of local products and activities aimed at enhancing community involvement.

The festival highlighted the tourism value of the wilayat of Sur and South Sharqiyah governorate, showcasing its historical role as a centre of cultural and civilisational significance.

Oman opens shrimp fishing season today

Muscat - Omani fishermen are in an upbeat mood as the three-month long shrimp season begins on Sunday.

This season is particularly significant for the governorates of South Sharqiyah, Dhofar and Al Wusta, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Water Resources (MAFWR) noted.

The sultanate is home to twelve shrimp species, including four key varieties - white Indian shrimp, white shrimp, tiger prawns, and dotted shrimp - harvested using traditional nets.

Shrimp are found in shallow and deep water close in Masirah Island, Mahout, and the coastal areas of Al Wusta and South Sharqiyah governorates.

According to MAFWR, shrimp are a vital marine resource in the sultanate, prized for their nutritional value and high demands. This shrimp season will run till November.

NEW VISA MEDICAL SYSTEM "IGRA"

NOW AVAILABLE SAT - THU 8:00 AM-10:30 PM

SCAN FOR LOCATION

SCAN TO WHATSAPP

For Report, kindly Whatsapp us

MOH NO.- 1640238/24 2200 4040 9551 0632 9241 3639

WE EXCHANGE TRUST

WORLD WIDE REMITTANCE

WE BUY & SELL GOLD & SILVER

1 gm to 1kg 24ct gold bars available at best international rate.

PURSHOTTAM KANJI EXCHANGE

شركة برشوتم كنجي للمصارف

Download & NOW

+968 91787629 | 9549299

www.pkanjexchange.com

Oman, India discuss free trade pact, bilateral trade

Mumbai, India – An Omani delegation, led by H E Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion, visited India to prepare for a Free Trade Agreement between Oman and India.

During the visit, the delegation discussed ways to enhance joint cooperation and strengthen bilateral relations in the fields of trade, industry, and investment promotion between the two friendly countries.

H E Yousef also met with Piyush Goyal, Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry.

In their meeting, a number of topics of mutual interest were reviewed to further strengthen relations between Oman and India. They also explored investment opportunities for cooperation across various sectors and discussed the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the two nations.

The Omani delegation also met with representatives from several Indian companies in industries such as filmmaking, arts, cultural arts, content creation, and event organisation. They highlighted the most prominent aspects of Oman's investment,



In their meeting, H E Qais al Yousef and Piyush Goyal explored investment opportunities and cooperation across various sectors and discussed the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the two nations

tourism, and economic environment, including recent economic developments, investment laws, and facilities provided by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion to investors.

H E Yousef emphasised that under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Oman has made signifi-

cant strides in various fields such as investment, logistics, digital transformation, and the facilitation of the investment environment by updating legislative frameworks and infrastructure projects to keep pace with global investment developments.

He explained that the outcomes of this visit will yield clear benefits for both countries.

The delegation also included Pankaj Khimji, Advisor to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion for Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, as well as several officials from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, nd the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth. ONA

Muscat Stock Exchange closes August on positive note

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The main index of the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) rose by 84 points in August after two months of decline, benefiting from investor interest in buying shares of leading companies that had recorded significant declines in July and June.

The main index closed at 4,746 points at the end of August trading, marking the highest closing level since June 6, according to an Oman News Agency report.

The financial sector index increased by about 98 points, while the services sector index rose by 4 points. In contrast, the industrial sector index declined by 57 points, and the Sharia index fell by about one point.

Trading statistics released by the Muscat Stock Exchange showed a decline in trading value, which dropped to RO45mn in August compared to RO152.3mn in July. The July trading volume was bolstered by significant deals, particularly involving Abraj Energy Services shares, which accounted for RO103.8mn of July's trades.

The number of transactions executed in August also decreased by 9.7%, falling from 13,862 to 12,517. August trading



was marked by investor caution, especially in the first three weeks. However, renewed interest from local investment institutions in the last week of August revived trading.

Bank Muscat led the most traded companies in terms of trading value, with transactions worth RO8.2mn, accounting for 18.3% of the total trading value. OQ Gas Networks followed in second place with RO7.3mn, while Sohar International Bank ranked third with RO5.2mn. Omantel came in fourth with RO3.3mn, and Abraj Energy Services placed fifth with trades worth RO3.2mn, representing 7.2% of the total trading value.

In August, the prices of 35 securities increased, compared to 40 securities whose prices declined, while 22 securities remained stable at their previous

levels. Musandam Power recorded the highest gain, rising by 20.3%. Dhofar Insurance saw a 9.5% increase, and Al Anwar Ceramic Tiles rose by 7.6%.

On the downside, Financial Centre was the top loser, dropping 21.6%, while Barka Water and Power fell by 15.4%, and National Gas declined by 13.4%.

The market value of the Muscat Stock Exchange rose by the end of August trading to RO24.558bn, recording gains of RO201.8mn during the month. This increase was supported by the rise in the market value of closed companies, which climbed to RO10.842bn, gaining RO65mn.

The market value of the bonds and sukuk market recorded gains of RO17.8mn in August, rising to RO4.420bn by the end of August trading.



United Finance, Al Fairuz Trading sign strategic MoU

Muscat – United Finance Company announced the signing of a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at enhancing financial solutions for customers in Oman. The MoU was signed by Nasser al Rashdi, CEO of United Finance, and Adil al Fairuz, Chairman of Al Fairuz Trading & Contracting Company.

This partnership marks a significant step forward in facilitating the purchase of heavy equipment and machinery by providing tailored financing solutions through United Finance, according to a press release.

The collaboration is designed to support Al Fairuz Trading's customers by offering accessible and flexible financing options, thereby driving growth and expanding market reach for both organizations.

Rashdi said, "This MoU represents our commitment to supporting businesses in Oman by providing innovative financial solutions. We are excited to partner with Al Fairuz, a company with a long-standing reputation in the industry, to offer added value to their customers."

The MoU outlines the framework for cooperation between the two companies, including special financing solutions and streamlined processes for customer referrals. Both United Finance and Al Fairuz are committed to working closely together to ensure the success of this partnership.

Both companies expect that their strategic alliance will strengthen their market presence and contribute to the economic development of Oman by supporting businesses in their growth and expansion efforts.

GCC likely to have major role in Bitcoin mining's green energy-driven future

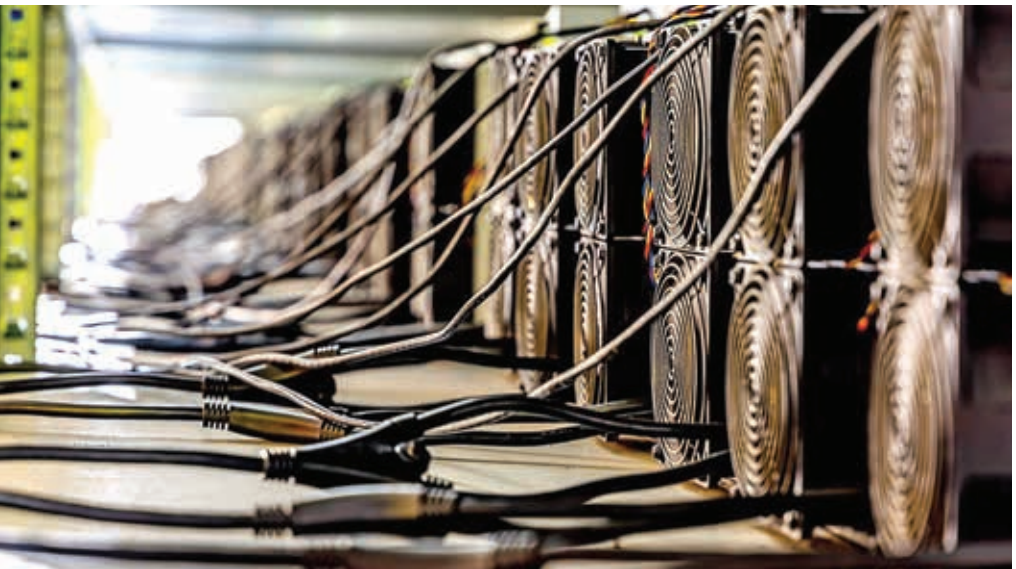
Dubai, UAE – As bitcoin mining undergoes major changes, the GCC region can have an important role in the transformation, which is being driven by a focus on renewable energy and new technology.

Abdumalik Mirakhmedov, Executive President of GDA, one of the world's largest bitcoin mining companies in terms of hash rate, said strong government support, an abundance of capital, and a commitment to sustainability are positioning the GCC region as a growing force in the sector.

"Governments across the region are demonstrating enthusiastic support for the growth of Bitcoin mining, recognising its potential to drive broader sector development," Mirakhmedov said in a press release.

"They are ramping up their green energy initiatives in a move that could propel the region to the forefront of sustainable bitcoin mining, and potentially secure a significant portion of the network's hash rate."

The Oman government's investment of more than \$800mn in crypto-mining operations has been widely reported. Meanwhile, the UAE's estimated 400MQ of Bitcoin mining represent around 4% of the global Bitcoin mining hash rate, according to data from the



Current data shows that renewable energy sources now power more than 55% of all bitcoin mining operations globally

Hashrate Index.

"A common misconception about Bitcoin mining is its purported dependence on fossil fuels and consequent environmental impact, but this outdated view no longer reflects reality," said Mirakhmedov.

"Current data shows that re-

newable energy sources now power more than 55% of all bitcoin mining operations globally," he added.

He further said, "Hydroelectricity, wind, and even captured methane gas have become go-to power sources for mining operations. This shift is not temporary, but indicative of a long-term trend, as renewable energy costs continue to decline, making them the obvious choice for miners worldwide."

Meanwhile, the adoption of advanced cooling technologies, such as liquid and immersion systems, promises to revolutionise operations, boosting energy efficiency and reducing

costs.

"As these technologies become more widespread, they'll further enhance the sustainability of mining practices," Mirakhmedov said. "While bitcoin mining strives to reduce its carbon footprint further, there are other benefits resulting from the industry's ingenuity."

"In Sweden, for instance, the excess heat from mining rigs is being used to warm greenhouses and de-ice vehicles, turning what was once waste into a valuable resource. This kind of innovation will help secure the industry's future, and the GCC region can play a big part in that," Mirakhmedov added.

India's economic growth slows to 6.7% in April-June quarter

New Delhi, India – The Indian economy grew by 6.7% in real terms in the April-June quarter of the current financial year 2024-25, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's official data showed on Friday. Last year same quarter, India's GDP grew 8.2%.

The nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 9.7% in the April-June quarter of 2024-25 as compared to the growth rate of 8.5% same quarter of last fiscal year.

The Reserve Bank of India, in its latest monetary policy meet-

ing, projected GDP growth for 2024-25 at 7.2%, with growth for Q1 expected at 7.1%, Q2 at 7.2%, Q3 at 7.3%, and Q4 at 7.2%.

India's GDP grew by an impressive 8.2% during the financial year 2023-24, continuing to be the fastest-growing major economy. The economy grew by 7.2% in 2022-23 and 8.7% in 2021-22, according to official data.

Many global rating agencies and multilateral organisations have also revised their growth forecasts for India upwards. In



July, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) raised India's growth projections for 2024 from 6.8% to 7%, reinforcing the country's

status as the fastest-growing economy among emerging markets and developing economies.

The IMF had earlier projected

a growth rate of 6.5% for 2024, revising it to 6.8% and now 7%. It had attributed robustness and strength in domestic demand and a rising working-age population behind its growth projections.

The Economic Survey tabled in Parliament last month "conservatively" projected India's real GDP growth at 6.5-7% for 2024-25, acknowledging that market expectations are higher. Real GDP growth is the reported economic growth adjusted for inflation.

The World Bank too had upwardly revised India's GDP growth forecast for the current fi-

nancial year 2024-25 by 20 basis points to 6.6% from its earlier projection of 6.4% made in January. World Bank said India will remain the fastest-growing of the world's largest economies, although its pace of expansion is expected to moderate.

Fitch Ratings, on August 29, affirmed India's Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook.

The outlook comes at the back of India's strong medium-term growth, the rating agency said, adding that the growth momen-

turn will continue to drive "improvement in structural aspects of its credit profile, including India's share of GDP in the global economy."

In its commentary, Fitch said that the strong medium-term growth will strengthen the external finance position of the country. It also noted that the actions taken by the government to strengthen fiscal credibility through deficit targets, enhanced transparency, and buoyant revenue will reduce the government debt in the medium term. ANI

Eurozone inflation hits 3-year low as ECB rate cuts loom

Brussels, Belgium – Inflation in the Eurozone has fallen to its lowest level in over three years, intensifying speculation that the European Central Bank (ECB) might soon consider lowering interest rates.

According to Eurostat's preliminary data, the harmonised index of consumer prices across the currency bloc observed a year-on-year rise of 2.2% in August 2024. This marks the lowest annual inflation rate since July 2021, before it spiked to a peak of 10.6% in October 2022.

This marks a significant easing from the 2.6% rise recorded in July, aligning with economists' expectations. On a monthly basis, the overall index edged up by 0.2%, following a stagnant reading in July.

The decline in annual inflation was primarily driven by a sharp 3% drop in energy prices and favourable base effects.

Excluding volatile components such as energy and food, core inflation slightly declined from 2.9% to 2.8% annually, reaching the lowest level since April 2024. However, on a monthly basis, core inflation saw a 0.3% increase, mainly due to a rise in services prices.

Service-related expenses, which constitute nearly 45% of the Eurozone's harmonised index, escalated by 4.2% year-over-year in August, up from a



Among Eurozone member states, Germany was a significant factor in cooling the region's overall inflation in August

Consumer price index across Eurozone bloc observed a year-on-year rise of 2.2% in August. This marks the lowest annual inflation rate since July 2021, before it spiked to a peak of 10.6% in October 2022

previous 4%, and experienced a 0.4% monthly rise.

"Policy should proceed gradually and cautiously since the current level of headline inflation understates the challenges monetary policy is still facing," said Isabel Schnabel, a member of the ECB's Executive Board, during a speech in Estonia on Friday. She highlighted that domestic infla-

tion remains high at 4.4%, largely due to persistent price pressures in the services sector, where disinflation has effectively stalled since last November.

In a separate release, Eurostat reported that the unemployment rate for the Eurozone eased from 6.5% to 6.4% in August, below market forecasts of 6.5%.

Among the Eurozone member

states, Germany was a significant factor in cooling the region's overall inflation in August.

The harmonised index of consumer prices for Germany fell to 2% annually in August, dropping sharply below the expected 2.3%.

On a monthly basis, Germany recorded deflation, with price pressures contracting by 0.2%,

driven by a sharp reduction in energy prices.

Other member states with negative monthly inflation in August included Lithuania (-0.5%), Finland (-0.5%), Latvia (-0.4%), Italy (-0.1%), Austria (-0.1%), and Portugal (-0.1%).

Conversely, Belgium saw a notable surge in inflationary pressures during the month, with its harmonised inflation rate rising by 1.6% compared to July 2024. This sharp increase marked a significant turnaround from the 0.6% decline seen in July and represented the steepest monthly rise since February 2024. On an annual basis, Belgium recorded the highest inflation rate at 4.5%, though this was a decrease from 5.4% in July, followed by Estonia at 3.4% and the Netherlands at 3.3%.

The euro held firm against the dollar on Friday following the release of the inflation data, likely buoyed by the stubborn inflation in the services sector. By 11:15am Central European Time, the single currency was trading at 1.1080 per US dollar, maintaining stability after two consecutive sessions of decline.

Yields on 10-year sovereign bonds remained largely unchanged in Germany after Thursday's decline, while they dipped slightly by 3 basis points in France, Italy, and Spain.

(Source: Euronews.com)



US GDP growth for Q2 revised up to 3%

Washington, US – The US economy grew at a healthy 3% annual pace in the second quarter of 2024, fuelled by strong consumer spending and business investment, the Associated Press quoted the government as saying in an upgrade of its initial assessment.

The Commerce Department had previously estimated that the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) – the total output of goods and services – expanded at a 2.8% rate from April through June.

The second-quarter growth marked a sharp acceleration from a sluggish 1.4% growth rate in the first three months of 2024.

Consumer spending, which accounts for about 70% of US economic activity, rose at a 2.9% annual rate last quarter, up from 2.3% in the government's initial estimate. Business investment expanded at a 7.5% rate, led by a 10.8% jump in investment in equipment.

Thursday's report reflected an

economy that remains resilient despite the pressure of continued high interest rates.

The latest GDP estimate for the April-June quarter also included figures that showed that inflation continues to ease while remaining just above the Federal Reserve's 2% target. The central bank's favored inflation gauge – the personal consumption expenditures index, or PCE – rose at a 2.5% annual rate last quarter, down from 3.4% in the first quarter of the year.

Both the PCE inflation numbers issued Thursday marked a slight improvement on the government's first estimate.

A GDP category that measures the economy's underlying strength rose at a healthy 2.9% annual rate, up from 2.6% in the first quarter. This category includes consumer spending and private investment but excludes volatile items such as exports, inventories and government spending.

WAM

Nvidia's earnings more than doubled in second quarter, but growth slows

Naomi Buchanan

The chip giant Nvidia reported better-than-expected revenue and earnings for the second quarter of fiscal 2025, though the pace of its growth slowed.

The chipmaker reported second-quarter revenue of \$30bn, more than doubling from the year-ago period. Net income for the fiscal second quarter was \$16.6bn, also more than double its value the year prior. Both figures exceeded analysts' expectations compiled by Visible Alpha, though growth slowed from previous quarters.

Nvidia's data center revenue for the fiscal second quarter was \$26.3bn, setting a new record high and more than doubling from the year prior.

"Hopper demand remains strong, and the anticipation for Blackwell is incredible," Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang said, adding that the chipmaker "achieved record revenues as global data centers are in full throttle to modernize the entire computing stack with accelerated computing and generative AI."



Nvidia's data center revenue for the fiscal second quarter was \$26.3bn, setting a new record high and more than doubling from the year prior

After concerns about reported delays in Nvidia's Blackwell AI chip sent Nvidia's stock price tumbling earlier in August, the chipmaker said Wednesday it began shipping some samples of its Blackwell chip in the second quarter, and expects to "ship several billion dollars in Blackwell revenue" during the fourth quarter as production ramps up.

The chipmaker gave a stronger-than-expected outlook for the third quarter of fiscal

2025, with revenue expected to be around \$32.5bn.

Nvidia's board also approved a new \$50bn share buyback plan. The company said it had \$7.5bn worth of previously authorized repurchases as of the end of the first half.

Despite Nvidia's earnings and revenue beat, the chipmaker's stock was down over 5% on Thursday at \$118.40 following the company's earnings release.

(Source: Investopedia)

China promises greater market openness in emerging industries

Beijing, China – China is set to remove more entry barriers in emerging industries by leveraging special policy tools to facilitate the application of new technologies, the country's top economic planner said Friday.

Pilot programmes will be implemented in key areas to spearhead this effort, with special measures aimed at easing market access to be introduced in stages, Li Chunlin, deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission, told a press conference.

Li was addressing an opinion document released on August 21 concerning improvement of the market access system. Elaborating on the highlights of this document, Li said it is the first of its kind to focus on ten emerging industries, including aerospace, aviation, new energy and artificial intelligence, among others.

It aims to remove key obstacles to deep industry transformation, and enhance the innovative allocation of production factors to improve access efficiency, he added.

The document further refines



negative list management, sets clear-cut access rules, enhances coordination between domestic and foreign investment access policies, and optimizes entry for new industries, among other areas, Li said.

It strengthens support for a nationwide unified negative list, ensuring its consistency, standardization and enforcement to better safeguard equal market entry for businesses.

Entry restrictions in the ser-

vice sector will be gradually eased in areas where national security and social stability are not compromised, and where market competition can enhance supply quality, Li noted.

Looking ahead, the commission will collaborate with other departments to implement the opinion document, optimize the market access environment, and boost market expectations, Li concluded.

Xinhua

Gautam Adani tops Hurun India Rich List, Mukesh Ambani follows

New Delhi, India – The Hurun India Rich List 2024, released on Tuesday, revealed shifts in the wealth landscape, with Indian tycoons Gautam Adani and Mukesh Ambani making headlines for their remarkable gains.

Adani Group's founder Gautam Adani has topped the list for this year, leaving behind Mukesh Ambani, the Chairman and Managing Director of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL).

With a total wealth of about Rs11.6tn, Adani secured the first position. The wealth of Adani and his family grew by 95%. Ac-

cording to the list, the total wealth of Ambani and his family stood at Rs10.1tn. The Shiv Nadar family captured the third spot in the Hurun India Rich List 2024.

The vaccine maker Cyrus S Poonawalla and the family of Serum Institute of India hold the fourth position in the list followed by Dilip Shanghvi of Sun Pharmaceutical Industries.

Over the past five years, six individuals have consistently remained in the India Top 10. Leading the list is Gautam Adani and his family, followed by



Mukesh Ambani

Mukesh Ambani and his family, Shiv Nadar, Cyrus S Poonawalla and his family, Gopichand Hinduja and his family, and Radhak-



Gautam Adani

ishan Damani and his family.

The total number of Indian billionaires reached to 334 individuals and the cumulative

Total number of Indian billionaires reached to 334 individuals and the cumulative wealth of theme stands at Rs159tn

wealth of these stands at Rs159tn, more than the combined GDP of Saudi Arabia and Switzerland and more than half

of India's GDP, as per the report.

"India continues to score Gold in the 'Wealth Creation Olympics'. The number of billionaires in 2024 Hurun India Rich List hits a triple century, with all the top 20 sectors adding new faces to the list! The top 20 sectors all added new faces, showcasing the unstoppable spirit of Indian entrepreneurs as they drive growth across the board," Anas Rahman Junaid, Founder and Chief Researcher, Hurun India, said.

Interestingly the founders of some startups have also secured

a place in the list. A total of 55 technology startup founders, with a cumulative wealth of Rs2.87tn and the average age of 40, featured in the Hurun Rich India list.

The youngest on the list is 21-year-old Kaivalya Vohra of \$5bn quick commerce startup Zepto. The co-founder of the Zepto is the second youngest on the list.

Co-founder of Lenskart, an eyewear retail company, Neha Bansal, aged 42 is the youngest self-made women entrepreneur on the list.

ANI

MHD celebrates 1st anniversary as Oman's distributor of Jeep, Dodge, RAM, Alfa Romeo



MHD Automobiles LLC, Oman's leading automotive distributor, is celebrating its first anniversary as the official distributor for Jeep, Dodge, RAM, and Alfa Romeo with exclusive pricing is being introduced on some of the most sought-after models from these brands.

Since the launch of the state-of-the-art Stellantis showroom in Al Hail North last year, MHD Automobiles has been committed to providing an exceptional automotive experience. Over the past year, the company has established itself as the premier destination for luxury automotive brands, including Jeep, Dodge, RAM, Alfa Romeo, and the after-sales brand Mopar.

This anniversary highlights the dedication to delivering top-tier automotive innovation, style, and service to Oman.

In appreciation of the continued support from customers, MHD Automobiles is presenting exclusive anniversary pricing on the following models:

- Jeep Grand Cherokee 18" Limited (MY24): Starting at RO18,995, featuring 18" wheels, a 5-seat configuration, and more.
- Dodge Durango R/T V8 (MY23): Starting at RO19,995, equipped with a powerful V8 engine, advanced technology, and premium comfort. This is the last chance to get your hands on the legendary Dodge 5.7L HEMI V8 engine with 360HP and 390LB-FT of torque.
- Dodge Charger GT V6 (MY23): Starting at RO17,695, with a sporty design, V6 engine, and advanced safety features.
- Alfa Romeo Tonale Ti (MY24): Starting at RO16,995, the compact SUV is an All-Wheel Drive featuring a powerful 2L Turbo engine. It comes with an industry-leading five years or 120,000km service and seven years or 200,000km warranty (whichever is earlier).

These exceptional prices provide an opportunity to acquire the renowned Jeep Grand Cherokee, the dynamic Dodge Durango, the powerful Dodge Charger, or the smart Alfa Romeo Tonale. These prices are available for a limited time and while stocks last.

Reflecting on the successful year, Mohsin Hani al Bahrani, CEO of MHD Automobiles, expressed his gratitude and vision for the future. "Celebrating this milestone as Oman's official distributor for Jeep, Dodge, RAM, and Alfa Romeo is a significant achievement," he said.

Observing that the past year was characterised by dedication, passion, and growth, the CEO asserted that the company's commitment to providing Oman with world-class automotive brands remains unwavering.

"This anniversary is an opportunity to express gratitude to the customers for their support and to present these exclusive pricing options as a token of appreciation. Our focus remains on continuing to serve the community with excellence and advancing automotive innovation in Oman," he added.

MHD called upon people to visit the flagship showroom in Al Hail North to take advantage of these exclusive pricing options and experience the performance of Stellantis brands firsthand.

MHD Automobiles is the authorised distributor of Stellantis brands in Oman, known for delivering outstanding services.

Bank Muscat holds meeting in Dhofar on impact of digital services on investment

As part of its constant keenness to introduce customers to various developments in the business sector, Bank Muscat recently organised a special meeting with its customers from the government sector in Dhofar, in the presence of Ilham Murtadha al Hamaid, General Manager of Corporate Banking at Bank Muscat, and a number of officials from the public sector.

This event aligns with Bank Muscat's objective of continuously sharing the latest developments in banking services tailored for government institutions. It also provided an open forum for exchanging views, listening to suggestions, and enhancing service offerings, echoing the bank's vision: 'To serve you better every day'.

In her speech, Ilham Murtadha al Hamaid, General Manager of Corporate Banking at Bank Muscat, highlighted the importance of the meeting, which took place during Khareef Dhofar 2024, underscoring the alignment of Bank Muscat's current strategy with Oman Vision 2040. She noted that the bank is dedicated to seizing available opportunities and enhancing services across all economic sectors.



Bank Muscat launched electronic channels, providing customers with a wide range of options to conduct their transactions online, anytime

Ilham Murtadha al Hamaid, General Manager of Corporate Banking at Bank Muscat, highlighted the importance of the meeting, which took place during Khareef Dhofar 2024, underscoring the alignment of Bank Muscat's current strategy with Oman Vision 2040. She noted that the bank is dedicated to seizing available opportunities and enhancing services across all economic sectors.

partnerships and looked forward to continued success in the years to come.

She also touched upon the role of modern technology in transforming financial services, noting that digital transformation has redefined the future of banking. "To adapt to these changes, Bank Muscat has launched innovative electronic channels, providing customers with a wide range of options to conduct their banking transactions online, anytime, and from anywhere. I would like to extend gratitude to our valued customers for attendance and confirm once again that we will continue the development process to providing the best services."

The event also featured a presentation by Dr Ahmed Said Kashoob, Head of Investments -

Public Markets at the Oman National Investment Development Company. His paper, titled 'Automation of Government Services and its Impact on the Process of Attracting Investment', addressed key topics such as the significance of automation, the role of government institutions, challenges in implementing automation, and recommendations for attracting investment.

Kashoob also explored the public-private partnership, the development of digital skills, enhancement of service quality, cyber risks, system infrastructure, and data privacy.

The meeting fostered rich discussions and the exchange of ideas, proposals, and visions aimed at equipping attendees with the necessary knowledge to provide efficient digital services.



Sohar International launches 'Tap & Go' services for ATMs

Sohar International, Oman's best bank, has reinforced its commitment to leading the banking sector in technological innovation with the launch of its 'Tap & Go' service, now available across its extensive network of ATMs and CDMs.

This strategic move underscores the bank's dedication to enhancing customer experience through cutting-edge solutions, positioning Sohar International as a pioneer in delivering convenience and security in banking.

The introduction of contactless functionality represents a significant advancement in the bank's digital transformation journey. With this feature, Sohar International and Sohar Islamic cardholders can now complete transactions at ATMs and CDMs with unprecedented speed and ease. By eliminating the need for physical card insertion, the 'Tap & Go' service reduces transaction times and enhances security, offering a seamless banking experience. Additionally, Samsung Pay users can leverage this functionality to conduct transactions effortlessly, further enriching the convenience of mobile banking.

Sajeel Bashiruddin, Chief Digital Officer at Sohar International, commented, "At Sohar International, our commitment to innovation is driven by our focus on customer satisfaction. We are committed to delivering new digital services and ensuring a secure and convenient customer journey, while maintaining all the necessary safety and security measures first and foremost.

"The introduction of 'Tap & Go' is a testament to our relentless pursuit of excellence in delivering secure and convenient banking solutions. Sohar International continues to digitize and enhance its services to meet the evolving needs of customers. This is an exciting development in our service offerings, and we encourage everyone to experience the enhanced capabilities of our ATM and CDM network."

This service is available for all Near-Field Communication (NFC) enabled cards, including debit, credit, and prepaid cards from all banks, providing a broad reach to customers. By ensuring compatibility across a wide range of card types, Sohar International has made this innovation accessible to a diverse customer base, enhancing the overall utility of its ATM and CDM network.

Security remains a cornerstone of this initiative. While the 'Tap & Go' feature simplifies the transaction process, stringent measures have been implemented to maintain the highest standards of security.

Cardholders and Samsung Pay users are required to enter their PIN to authenticate transactions, ensuring that the service not only offers convenience but also robust protection against unauthorised access.

This strategic initiative is a crucial element of Sohar International's ongoing efforts to lead the market in delivering innovative banking services.

OJA takes part in forum for China's Belt and Road

The Omani Journalists Association (OJA) concluded its participation in the Belt and Road Journalists Forum organised by the Belt and Road Journalists Network (BRNG), affiliated with the Chinese Journalists Association (ACJA).

This year, the forum was held in Chongqing, China recently with a delegation including Saleh bin Mahfoudh al Qasmi, a member of the association and Vice Chairman of the International Relations and Cooperation Committee, and Bader Zahir al Kiyumi, a member of the OJA.

The Belt and Road Journalists Forum is one of the main activities of the BRJN and has been held for six previous sessions since its establishment in 2017.

This year, the Belt and Road Journalists Network secretariat has adopted the theme of 'Expanding the Road of Opportunities, Sharing a Bright Future'.



TCL launches world's largest 115" QD-Mini LED

TCL, the world's top two TV brand and top one 98-inch TV brand, has unveiled the world's largest 115" X955 MAX Premium QD-Mini LED TV in Oman.

The launch took place at the Extra Oman Store in Muscat, marking a significant milestone in TCL's expansion within the region. The event was attended by officials from Genetco, TCL's exclusive distributor in Oman, and representatives from TCL.

The event was graced by the presence of Fayeze al Rushaidi, captain of the Oman national football team and Genetco's brand ambassador, who officially inaugurated the launch. Fans were thrilled as he signed autographs and interacted with attendees.

Also present were distinguished guests including Dr Muthanna al Durrah, CEO of Genetco; Dr Ambuj Khare, COO of Genetco; Vic Shen, Business Head of the Dubai subsidiary of TCL; and Jitendra Kulkarni, regional sales director of Dubai subsidiary of TCL, among others.

The event took place in eXtra office Ghubra, where Fadi Shbaro, the Country Head of eXtra, and his team were also in attendance. The TCL 115" X955 MAX Premium QD-Mini LED TV is a technological marvel, boasting a peak brightness of 5,000 nits, over 20,000 local dimming zones, QLED Pro technology, a 144 Hz VRR, and an ONKYO 6.2.2 Hi-Fi system. These cutting-edge features come together to deliver an unrivalled cinematic experience with exceptional image quality and immersive sound.

Dr Muthanna al Durrah, CEO of Genetco, expressed confidence that TCL's World's Largest QD-Mini LED TV will set a new benchmark in home entertainment. Attendees had the opportunity to witness the TV's impressive visuals and audio first-hand in an immersive experience zone.

They were captivated by the vibrant colours, deep contrasts, and immersive sound, which created a truly memorable viewing experience. Guests particularly noted the TV's remarkable clarity, depth of display, and dynamic sound quality.

"The overwhelmingly positive feedback we've received today is a testament to TCL's relentless pursuit of excellence. Our goal is to push technological boundaries and deliver products that not only meet but exceed our customers' expectations," said Vic Shen, Business Head of the Dubai subsidiary.



MoE holds meeting of senior supervisors of various directorates

The Ministry of Education (MoE), represented by the Directorate-General of Educational Supervision, hosted a two-day meeting for senior supervisors of various academic subjects.

The opening ceremony of the annual meeting was patronised by Saif al Julandani, Director-General of Educational Supervision in the sultanate.

This annual meeting targets more than 240 participants from the ministry's General Diwan and the educational directorates in the governorates.

This meeting comes from the keenness of the Directorate-General of Educational Supervision to provide professional support to supervisory categories, including senior supervisors, and to keep pace with the rapid developments in the field of education in general, and ed-

This annual meeting targets over 240 participants from the ministry's General Diwan and the educational directorates in various governorates

ucational supervision in particular, and to achieve the objectives of the directorate's five-year plan, which includes activating the methodology of educational supervision teams, in which the senior supervisor is an important element.

The meeting included, on its first day, a training session presented by an expert in the field of training from the Queen Rania Training Academy, in which she

discussed support methodologies in supervisory practices, between directed and non-directed control practices.

This training session was held to define the concepts of supervisory practices, educational support, and to provide a model for each practice according to the nature of the teacher, the context, and the teacher's previous knowledge.

The second day of the programme included specialised meetings for each subject with the senior supervisors in the educational directorates, with the participation of specialists from curricula, evaluation, and training, addressing some aspects related to supervision, in addition to reviewing the latest developments in evaluation and curricula, and some of the observations made in these aspects to work on finding

practical solutions for them.

A set of training working papers was also presented during the event. In the second period of the day, H E Prof Dr Abdullah bin Khamis Ambosaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education for Education, exchanged ideas with the participants in a discussion session to provide them with some guidance and vision that can help the senior supervisors in developing technical work in the educational directorates in the governorates.

The meeting was held to help senior supervisors develop their skills in building supervisory work plans, following up on their implementation, assessing their impact, exchanging experiences, skills, and ideas to improve the work environment, and enable them to carry out their roles and job responsibilities effectively.

BYD marks production of eight millionth new energy vehicle



BYD, a global leader in new energy vehicles recently celebrated the production of its 8 millionth new energy vehicle. This landmark event highlights BYD's ongoing commitment to innovation and sustainability within the automotive industry.

The production of the 8 millionth new energy vehicle marks a significant milestone in BYD's quest to lead the way in sustainable mobility solutions.

BYD's achievement with the 8 millionth new energy vehicle is only the beginning. The company plans to expand its production capabilities and introduce even more innovative and environmentally friendly vehicles to meet the rising demand for sustainable transportation. Committed to its vision of 'cooling the earth by 1°C', BYD will continue to lead the way in the new energy vehicle industry.

In Oman, BYD's latest range that includes the ATTO 3, Seal, Han, Qin Plus or SONG Plus.

The BYD ATTO 3, an electric SUV boasts 201 HP and a range of 420km (based on standard

test conditions). Packed with features like the BYD blade battery, panoramic sunroof and advanced safety systems, the ATTO 3 promises both performance and comfort.

Meanwhile, the SEAL electric Sport AWD Sedan, equipped with 523 HP, 0-100 km per hour speed in 3.8 seconds and a range of 520km (based on standard test conditions), dazzled with its luxurious amenities and cutting-edge technology, including a 15.6" rotating advanced multimedia screen, multi-colour ambient cabin lighting, a head-up display and adaptive cruise control. The HAN electric luxury AWD sedan, with its impressive 509 HP, 0-100 km per hour speed in 3.9 seconds, and 521km range (based on standard test conditions), offered attendees a glimpse into the future of automotive luxury, boasting features like a panoramic sunroof, a 360-degree camera, luxury leather upholstery with seat ventilation and heater and automatic emergency braking.

Another addition to the SUV

line-up, the SONG PLUS electric plug-in hybrid SUV showcased versatility with its combination of 128 HP petrol and 201HP electric motor, promising up to 1000km of combined range (based on standard test conditions). With features like a lithium-ion phosphate battery, a 360-degree camera, and an integrated power braking system, the SONG PLUS exemplifies BYD's commitment to innovation.

BYD's Qin PLUS DM-i hybrid vehicle is equipped with the latest dual-mode system. Utilizing the power of a hybrid, it delivers a combination of 108 HP petrol and 194 HP electric motor and reaches 0-100 km/h acceleration in 7.3 seconds.

The system integrates engine, motor and power battery delivering key performance factors such as power, economy and NVH. Users can experience EV/HEV driving by switching between ECO/NORMAL/SPORT working modes. The 12V power battery provides electric energy for the motor with self-charge capability.

Asyad Express boasts expansive delivery network of 220 destinations

Asyad Express, a member of Asyad Group, is driving forward Oman's vision of establishing itself as a leading logistics hub in the region. As the premier gateway to the GCC and MENA region for international partners, the company's expansive network is designed to provide seamless connectivity, ensuring that goods are delivered quickly and efficiently to their destinations.

Holding a strategic location at

the crossroads of the Middle East, Africa and Asia; Oman offers unparalleled connectivity and integrated logistics solutions to businesses looking to expand their presence in the region.

Today, Asyad Express boasts a network that spans across the GCC and MENA region, with a strong presence in key markets such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Egypt, delivering to over 220 destinations.



Asyad Express's competitive advantage lies in its ability to offer a 'one-stop-shop' solution for logistics and express delivery needs. The company's in-house customs clearance, which significantly reduces transit times and costs for its partners, combined with its robust alliance with Oman Air to provide a comprehensive air freight solution, makes it an ideal partner for businesses looking to streamline their lo-

gistics operations in the GCC and MENA region.

Employing state-of-the-art warehouse operations, Asyad Express guarantees efficient inventory management and faster order processing. The company's e-fulfillment centres leverage advanced technology for parcel security, precise labelling and temperature control, ensuring accuracy and efficiency in e-commerce logistics.

Additionally, Asyad Express

has implemented several digital solutions for tracking, managing and optimising logistics operations, enhancing transparency and customer experience.

Asyad Express remains committed to supporting the growth of international businesses in the GCC and MENA region, offering a range of services designed to meet the specific needs of its partners, including express delivery, land and air freight, and customs clearance.



Millennium Resorts' opens summer campaign

Millennium Hotels & Resorts is inviting families to experience the ultimate retreat with its Hala Summer campaign, which began on June 15 this year.

'Prioritise family time and create unforgettable back-to-school memories with 50% off a second room when you book a stay between June 15 and October 15,' a release stated.

Whether for a relaxing beachside break or a bustling city getaway, there are destinations across the Middle East to suit every taste, all delivering exceptional experiences.

The Hala Summer offer enti-

ties parents who are booking a stay for them and their children to enjoy 50 per cent off the cost of a second room, meaning families can look forward to more space to rejuvenate and unwind during their stay.

Relaxation is always a priority and all rooms across Millennium Hotels and Resorts' properties are designed with indulgence and comfort in mind. But when you are travelling with the family, fun and adventure is equally as important. Each destination offers endless opportunities for exploration and guests can immerse themselves in new experiences.

Fans of Indian cine star hold blood donation drive

On August 23, a remarkable event took place to celebrate both the birthday of Dr Chiranjeevi and the spirit of altruism and community service. The blood donation drive organised in honour of Dr Chiranjeevi on his birthday was an overwhelming success, with approximately 130 participants coming together to contribute to this noble cause.

Dr Chiranjeevi - an Indian cine star from the southern state of Andhra Pradesh - is renowned for his contribution to the medical field and his unwavering commitment to public health. "This aspect of the megastar's life has inspired this special drive," the CMYF stated.

The event, which ran from 8.30am to 2.00pm, was organised by CMYF founder Ramadas Chandaka not only to celebrate Dr Chiranjeevi's birthday, but also to pay tribute to his lifelong dedication to saving lives and improving healthcare. By aligning the event with Dr Chiranjeevi's birthday, the organisers aimed to honour his legacy while address-



ing a critical and ongoing need in the healthcare system.

Blood donation drives are essential for maintaining a steady supply for medical treatments and emergencies in Oman. The drive conducted by CMYF was particularly significant during a period of heightened awareness about the importance of voluntary blood donation.

Held at Bausher Blood Bank

centre in Muscat, the drive was meticulously planned and executed by Madhusudhan, Saranga, Santosh and Borra Mahesh, each of whom played a vital role in ensuring the comfort of the blood donors.

The event attracted around 130 attendees, all of whom were eager to make a difference.

The drive was extensively promoted through various channels,

including social media, local news outlets, and community groups. This widespread outreach was crucial in attracting donors and raising awareness about the importance of blood donation.

Madhusudhan remarked that the success of the blood donation drive in honour of Dr Chiranjeevi sets a high standard for future community health initiatives. It demonstrates the effectiveness

of combining personal celebrations with charitable causes, creating a platform for individuals to contribute to the greater good. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to build on this momentum by organising similar events and fostering a culture of giving and community service.

Saranga noted that the drive served as a powerful reminder of the positive outcomes that can arise from honouring the legacy of individuals like Dr Chiranjeevi.

By channeling the celebration of his birthday into a meaningful act of service, the event illustrated how personal milestones can be leveraged to foster community spirit and address urgent needs. The collaborative effort and community spirit demonstrated at the drive serve as a powerful example of how collective action can lead to meaningful and life-saving outcomes.

Santosh and Borra Mahesh said their dedication and commitment were deeply inspired by Dr Chiranjeevi's exemplary service in healthcare.

Japan claims Chinese ship entered its territorial waters

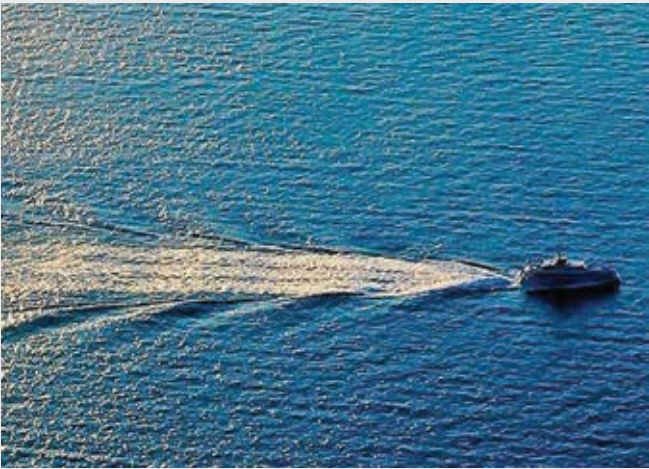
Tokyo, Japan - Japan's Defence Ministry claimed on Saturday that a Chinese Navy survey ship entered its territorial waters off its southwestern islands.

Japan has lodged a protest and conveyed its strong concern over the latest incident through diplomatic channels, Tokyo-based Kyodo News reported, citing a ministry statement.

This development follows a recent accusation by Tokyo that a Chinese military spy plane violated Japanese airspace for the first time on Monday. The plane reportedly entered Japanese airspace over waters in the East China Sea, near islands in the southwestern province of Nagasaki. Beijing has stated that it is investigating the alleged violation of Japan's airspace.

Japan had previously reported two similar incidents involving a Chinese marine surveillance plane and a drone over waters near the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, which China claims and refers to as the Diaoyu Islands, in 2012 and 2017, respectively.

The latest breach marks the 10th entry of a Chinese survey ship into Japanese waters off Kagoshima province since November 2021, according to reports. "The vessel was spotted entering the territorial waters west of Kuchinoerabu Island at around 6am and left the waters southwest of Yakushima Island at around 7:53am," the ministry said.



west of Kuchinoerabu Island at around 6am and left the waters southwest of Yakushima Island at around 7:53am," the ministry said.

In recent years, Japan has repeatedly reported incursions by Chinese ships into its territorial waters in the East China Sea, particularly around the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands, which China also claims.

The two countries have long been at odds over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands.

Shanshan continues to cause damage

Meanwhile, Typhoon Shanshan continued its destructive journey through western Japan on Saturday, bringing heavy rain and powerful winds that disrupted transportation and prompted warnings of further downpours.

The storm has already caused significant damage, with local media reporting at least six deaths and more than 100 injuries over the past four days. Some regions, including Tokai, Kanto, and Kyushu, have experienced record rainfall exceeding 400mm (15.7 inches) in the last 48 hours.

The impact on transportation has been severe. Japan Railway suspended its Tokaido Shinkansen services between Gifu-Hashima and Maibara on Saturday morning due to the heavy rain, according to Tokyo-based Kyodo News. Earlier, train services between Tokyo and Nagoya had already been halted. Air travel has also been heavily affected. Both All Nippon Airways and Japan Airlines cancelled or rescheduled numerous flights to and from airports in the storm-hit regions.

The weather agency has issued warnings for the Tokai region, cautioning that it could face more torrential rain through Sunday as Typhoon Shanshan continues to exert its force. Residents are urged to stay alert and take necessary precautions as the storm moves through the area. The Japan Meteorological Agency reported that the typhoon, moving east-southeast at approximately 15km (9 miles) per hour, was located 50km (31 miles) south of Cape Shionomisaki.

Anadolu Agency

HALAL RIBFEST IN CANADA



People present grilled food at the Halal Ribfest event in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada, on Friday (Xinhua)

Germany's far-right AfD set for big gains in polls



Regional elections will be held in the eastern states of Thuringia and Saxony on Sunday

Berlin, Germany - Germany's far-right AfD party is on course for big gains in regional elections in the eastern states of Thuringia and Saxony, the latest polls showed on Friday.

Nearly five million Germans will cast their votes on Sunday in a closely-watched election, widely seen as a test for Chancellor Olaf Scholz and his left-liberal coalition government.

A poll by Forsa research institute found that 30 per cent of voters in Thuringia would give their vote to the anti-immigrant AfD party, making it the biggest party in the state parliament.

The centre-right Christian Democrats (CDU) were expected to become the second largest party in this state, by winning 22 per cent of the vote.

The newly formed left-wing populist party, Bundnis Sahra Wagenknecht (BSW), was expected to reach 17 per cent, and become the third-largest group in the state parliament.

Scholz fears heavy losses

Chancellor Scholz's Social Democrat-led coalition was braced for heavy losses in Thuringia, amid growing voter discontent with the government's Ukraine policy, costly energy reforms, and concerns about irregular migration.

Forsa poll put support for Social Democrats (SPD) at seven per cent, while the pro-environment Greens and their coalition partner the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP) were below the five per cent threshold, which was needed to win seats in the parliament.

A deadly stabbing attack in Solingen last week has further increased pressure on Chancellor Scholz's coalition government, while the far-right AfD has seen a boost in popularity. The religious extremist who killed three people and injured eight others was a rejected asylum seeker, but his deportation was delayed, authorities have confirmed.

Scholz admitted legal and practical problems in deporting illegal migrants and criminal offenders, and promised that his government would undertake stronger efforts to address irregular migration. But he ruled out suspending asylum rights.

Close race in Saxony

In the neighbouring state of Saxony, a neck-and-neck race was underway between the far-right AfD and the centre-right CDU, with the latest polls showing that the Christian Democrats were leading by only a few points.

Friday's poll by Forsa institute put support for conservative Christian Democrats at 33 per cent, while the anti-immigrant AfD was at around 31 per cent, better than its showing in the previous state election. Sahra Wagenknecht's left-wing BSW party was expected to win up to 12 per cent of votes.

Support for the SPD was at seven per cent, and the Greens were expected to win six per cent, slightly above the five-per cent threshold to enter the state parliament. The liberal FDP was polled below three per cent.

After the attack in Solingen, the anti-immigrant AfD has called for a moratorium on immigration for at least 5 years.

Anadolu Agency

Bangladesh could seek extradition of Hasina: Foreign affairs advisor

Dhaka, Bangladesh - The Bangladesh interim government's foreign affairs advisor Mohammed Touhid Hossain, has said that as cases mount against Sheikh Hasina, his country could consider seeking the extradition of the former premier but that would create an 'embarrassing situation for the Indian government'.

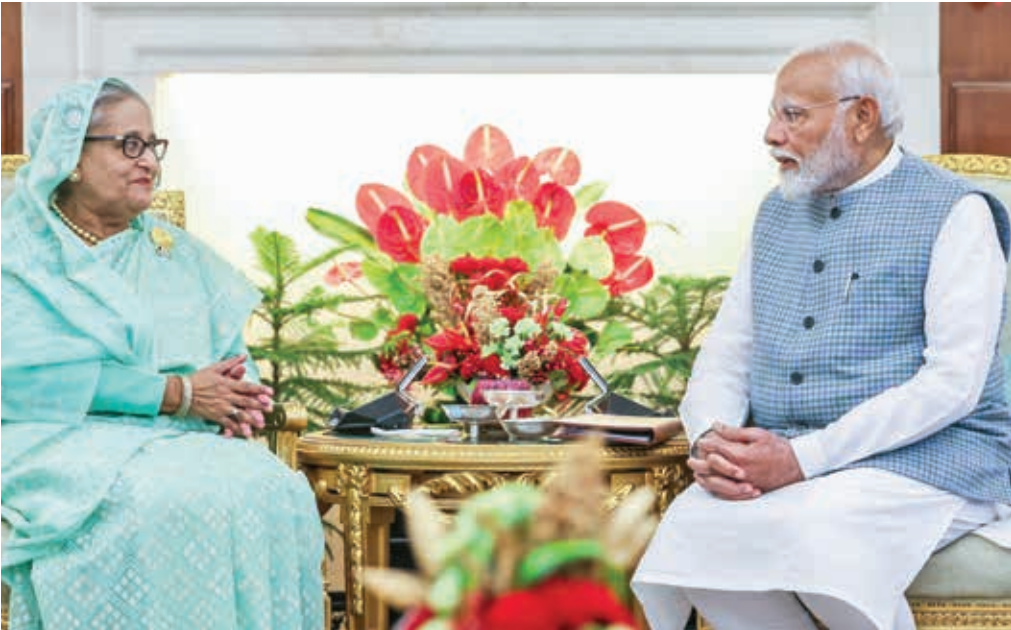
In an exclusive interview to Reuters TV in Dhaka, Hossain said that 'since there are so many cases' against Hasina in Bangladesh, the country's home and law ministries could make the request to extradite her.

"Her staying in Delhi, in India, the question comes that...there are so many cases (against Hasina) that could be... again some speculating, I am not a person right to answer this, if there is a request from there (Ministry of Home and Ministry of Law) we have to ask for her, you know, return to Bangladesh. If there is a demand from there, that creates an embarrassing situation for the Indian government. So I think the Indian government knows this and I am sure they will take care of it," Hossain told Reuters TV.

Sheikh Hasina had arrived in India on August 5, following an uprising led by students against her that turned violent. As per the Dhaka Tribune, a complaint has been lodged against Hasina and 24 others in the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, Netherlands for allegedly violating human rights.

The Bangladeshi media outlet said that there are multiple cases filed against Hasina.

Further, Hossein, the foreign



This file photo shows Indian PM Narendra Modi holding a meeting with the then Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, at Hyderabad House, in New Delhi, India on June 22 (ANI)

If there is a request from Ministry of Home and Ministry of Law, we have to ask for her, you know, return to Bangladesh... an embarrassing situation for the Indian government

MOHAMMED TOUHID HOSSAIN

affairs advisor in Bangladesh's interim government led by Mohammad Yunus stated that the Nobel Laureate is 'very unhappy' about the way the statements are coming from India, from the former Prime Minister and he had conveyed this to the Indian envoy in a meeting.

"Professor Yunus is very unhappy about the way the statements are coming from India, from the former Prime Minister. He is quite unhappy about this and I have conveyed this to the High Commissioner (of India)," Hossain said.

"I have also told the press that we have conveyed this because we believe in transparent relations. So whatever actually is there, unless there are some, there are some secret points could be there. Otherwise, we want to make things public. And we have - I have just told him about the displeasure of the chief adviser, and let us hope that they take care of it," he told Reuters TV in an interview.

Regarding the possibility of elections in the violence-hit

country, Hossein said there will be more clarity on the timeline by September.

"All my colleagues in the council of advisors, they are extremely busy with bringing back normalcy," he said adding: "I think from September, things will, normalcy and normal way of functioning will start."

On the issue of giving refuge to Rohingya, Hossein underscored that Bangladesh has 'done more than its share' and is 'not in a position to allow any more Rohingyas to enter'.

He said that other countries, including India should 'take charge on that'.

"We are not in a position to allow any more Rohingyas to enter. It's a humanitarian issue that involves the entire world, not only Bangladesh."

ANI

Russian chopper with 22 on board goes missing

Moscow, Russia - A Russian helicopter with 22 people on board, including three crew members has gone missing in the far eastern peninsula of Kamchatka, state media reported on Saturday.

As per TASS, the helicopter disappeared near the Vachkazhets volcano and another airline has been dispatched to search for it.

The Mi-8T of the Vityaz-Aero airline that took off from a site in the area of the Vachkazhets volcano to the village of Nikolaevka situated 25km away failed to make contact at the scheduled time, around 07:15 (Moscow time), the Russian news outlet said.

Further, it said that an Mi-8



The helicopter disappeared near the Vachkazhets volcano

helicopter of the Russian Emergencies Ministry with rescuers on board is ready to fly out for the search.

Meanwhile, a probe committee has begun investigating the incident for violation of traffic safety rules and operation of air transport.

Drizzle and fog were observed

in the area where the Russian helicopter went missing.

In January this year, four people had survived the crash of a Russian charter plane bound for Moscow in northern Afghanistan. Russian aviation authorities confirmed that the plane, a chartered ambulance had originated from Utapao airport in Thailand.

It was destined for Zhukovsky International Airport in Russia. Four crew members and two passengers were on board the plane.

Russian authorities said the plane, a French-made Dassault Falcon 10 jet was co-owned by the Athletic Group LLC and a private individual.

ANI

Israeli army reports killing 26 Palestinians during offensive on occupied West Bank

Ramallah, Palestine - The Israeli army announced on Saturday that its ongoing offensive in the northern occupied West Bank has resulted in the deaths of 26 Palestinians

In a statement, the army said its forces killed 26 Palestinians and arrested about 30 others since the start of its offensive in several cities of the territory.

The Israeli army continued its military offensive in the city of Jenin and its refugee camp for the fourth consecutive day, causing significant damage amid clashes that have lasted throughout the night, eyewitnesses told Anadolu.

Palestine TV broadcast videos showing the destruction in the city and its camp, including extensive damage in an eastern neighbourhood where attacks targeted shops, infrastructure, and the Khalid ibn al-Walid Mosque. The television channel reported that the clashes expanded to the town of Kafr Dan west of Jenin, where the army besieged a house amid armed confrontations.

The Israeli army launched a large-scale operation in the northern West Bank cities of Tulkarm, Jenin, and Tubas early on Wednesday, described as the



The Israeli army continued its military offensive in the city of Jenin and its refugee camp for the fourth consecutive day

'largest' since 2002.

On Friday, the Palestinian Health Ministry announced that the death toll in the northern West Bank since early Wednesday has risen to 20.

Tensions have been running

high across the occupied West Bank amid a brutal Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip since October 7 last year.

At least 674 Palestinians have been killed, nearly 5,400 others injured, and over 10,300 arrested

in the occupied territory, according to Palestinian figures.

Israeli army storms Hebron

The Israeli army, meanwhile, stormed the city of Hebron on

Saturday, shutting down the Ibrahimi Mosque and preventing worshippers from entering, according to eyewitnesses and local authorities. Eyewitnesses told Anadolu that Israeli forces raided the Wadi al-Hariya neighbour-

hood, searching several homes. The incursion also targeted the Jabal Abu Rumman neighbourhood, where soldiers and snipers were seen taking positions on rooftops of residential buildings, they added.

Sheikh Mutaz Abu Sneina, director of the Ibrahimi Mosque, reported that the mosque was closed at dawn on Saturday with-

pers. The army added that the mosque was briefly closed 'for security reasons' and later reopened under strict security measures.

The raid and mosque closure came just hours after three Israeli officers, including a brigade commander, were injured in a car bomb explosion at the Gush Etzion junction in the southern West Bank. The explosion coincided with an attack in the nearby Karmeit Zsur settlement.

Attack by illegal settlers

Besides, illegal Israeli settlers launched an early morning attack on a Palestinian residential area in the southern West Bank on Saturday, stealing 300 sheep and causing significant damage to the property of local residents.

Eyewitnesses reported to Anadolu Agency that settlers from the Nokdim settlement, which is itself illegal under international law, descended on the Jorat al-Khail area, east of the town of Sair, near Hebron. During the assault, the settlers not only stole livestock but also destroyed mobile homes belonging to three Palestinian families.

Anadolu Agency

Palestine TV channel reported that the clashes in the city of Jenin expanded to Kafr Dan town, west of Jenin, where the army besieged a house amid armed confrontations

out prior notice. "The occupation forces closed the mosque from 4am without warning, preventing worshippers from entering," Abu Sneina said.

The Israeli army confirmed the mosque's closure in a statement on its account on X, formerly known as Twitter. It cited security concerns following a 'sabotage operation' late on Friday in the Gush Etzion settlement bloc and Karmeit Zsur settlement as the reason for intensified inspections and security checks for both Palestinian and Israeli worship-

Palestine secures new position at UN general assembly

Hamilton, Canada - Palestine's Mission to the UN announced on Friday that it will participate in the 79th session of the UN General Assembly (GA) for the first time with an official seat.

"Starting the 79th GA session, and for the first time, you can find the State of Palestine seated between Sri Lanka and Sudan," the mission wrote on X, adding that the position comes following a resolution being adopted at the General Assembly.

The resolution, ES-10/23, grants Palestine additional rights and privileges for participation at the UN, marking a notable enhancement of its

status within the international organisation.

In May, the General Assembly endorsed a resolution calling for the re-evaluation of Palestine's UN membership bid and granting additional rights. The resolution was adopted with 143 member states voting in favour. The US was among nine countries to oppose it, while 25 others abstained.

Palestine applied for full UN membership in 2011 but did not receive the necessary support from the Security Council due to a US veto. However, in 2012, it obtained 'permanent observer status'.

Anadolu Agency

Yemen floods kill nearly 100 people

Devastating floods caused by heavy rain in Yemen have killed at least 97 people over the past month, according to a United Nations body.

Local rescue teams have been trying to reach areas affected by the rains and made worse by three dam bursts, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said.

The UN refugee agency said in its latest update on Friday that flooding in the western Malhan district has impacted more than 56,000 homes and displaced over 1,000 families.

The hardest-hit areas include Al Hudaydah, Hajjah, Al-Taweela and Marib.

Impassable roads were isolating affected areas and hampering rescue efforts.

Over 33,000 families throughout the country have been impacted by the floods



Flooding in the western Malhan district has impacted more than 56,000 homes and displaced over 1,000 families

since the monsoon season began in mid-July. The UN body warned that the catastrophe was compounding Yemen's ongoing humanitarian crisis.

Yemen's ongoing humanitarian crisis is one of the worst in the world

Nearly a decade of war in Yemen has displaced over 4.5mn people internally or 14 per cent of the population, UNHCR said.

The UN describes the prolonged crisis in the country as 'one of the world's worst humanitarian crises', with 85 per cent of

affected households, with many of them living in formal and informal sites for internally displaced people, unable to meet their daily food needs. The civil war between Yemen's internationally recognised government and Houthi militant forces has deci-

dated critical infrastructure and healthcare.

Plus, climate change has also increased the frequency and intensity of rainfall in Yemeni highlands - much of which is controlled by Houthis. DW



The 32-year-old suspect was arrested after the incident in the town of Siegen, police said

Germany: Knife attack injures 6

Berlin, Germany - A woman stabbed and wounded six people in a bus in western Germany on Friday evening, police said. They said five were injured in the incident but later revised the figure.

The 32-year-old suspect, a German national, was arrested after the attack in the town of Siegen.

At least 40 people were on the bus traveling to a city festival at the time of the incident.

Three of the victims are in a life-threatening condition, according to authorities.

Police are investigating the motive behind the crime. They

said there were no indications that it was a terrorist attack.

Police appealed to citizens 'not to spread false reports' on social networks or other channels.

Germany's Bild tabloid reported that the attacker may have been suffering from mental health issues.

A growing security challenge

The incident comes a week after a deadly knife attack in Solingen that shook the country and forced the government to announce changes to security and asylum policies.

The Solingen attack left three people dead and eight wounded. The suspected perpetrator is a 26-year-old Syrian man who was previously due for deportation to Bulgaria.

Following the incident, Chancellor Olaf Scholz's government imposed new restrictions on carrying knives in public places. It also announced curbing benefits for some illegal migrants.

On Tuesday, police shot dead a man suspected of attacking passersby with knives in the western town of Moers near Solingen. DW

Polio vaccination campaign targeting children under 10 launched in Gaza

Gaza City, Palestine - The Gaza Health Ministry has launched a polio vaccination campaign in the southern Gaza Strip, specifically targeting children aged under 10 years.

The campaign began on Saturday in Khan Younis, with the aim of vaccinating over 90 per cent of children across all regions of Gaza by September 12.

The vaccination drive, which is being conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), kicked off at Nasser Hospital following a joint press conference by the organisations.

Majdi Duhair, head of the technical committee overseeing the vaccination effort, stated that the campaign will first focus on central Gaza from September 1 to 4, followed by Khan Younis from September 5 to 9, and will conclude in Gaza City



The campaign began in Khan Younis, with the aim of vaccinating over 90 per cent of children across all regions of Gaza by September 12

and northern regions from September 9 to 12.

The campaign comes amid a severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza, where ongoing conflict and a blockade have led to critical shortages of food, clean water, and medical supplies. The deteriorating conditions have heightened concerns about po-

tential outbreaks of diseases, including polio.

The urgency of the campaign was underscored by the confirmation of Gaza's first polio case in a 10-month-old child last month. On August 16, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a seven-day humanitarian ceasefire to allow the vac-

cination of 640,000 children, a request that was supported by UNRWA. The polio vaccination campaign is taking place against the backdrop of Israel's continued military attacks in Gaza.

Gaza death toll rises to 40,700

The death toll in Gaza, meanwhile, has risen to nearly 40,700 as Israeli forces killed 89 more Palestinians over the past two days, the Gaza Health Ministry reported on Saturday. The relentless Israeli onslaught, ongoing since October 7, 2023, has also left 94,060 others injured, according to the ministry.

"Israeli forces killed 89 people and injured 205 others in five 'massacres' against families in the last 48 hours," the ministry said. Many victims remain trapped under rubble, with rescuers unable to reach them due to the continued bombardment, the ministry said.

Anadolu Agency

INDIA

PM Modi flags off three more Vande Bharat trains

New Delhi - Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday flagged off three Vande Bharat trains via video conferencing and said that the expansion of Vande Bharat trains reflects the nation's progress towards the goal of Viksit Bharat with modernity and speed.

The three routes on which PM Modi flagged off trains are Meerut - Lucknow, Madurai - Bengaluru and Chennai - Nagercoil. Speaking on the occasion, PM Modi said: "Today, from the north to the south, another chapter is being added to the country's journey of development. The expansion of Vande Bharat trains reflects our nation's progress towards the goal of a developed India with modernity and speed. These trains have provided connectivity to important religious places in the country. The Temple City of Madurai is now directly connected to the IT City of Bengaluru via Vande Bharat. This train will also prove beneficial for pilgrims."

"On the Chennai-Nagercoil route, students, farmers, and IT professionals will greatly benefit. Wherever the convenience of Vande Bharat has reached, the number of tourists has increased, which means that there has been a rise in the income of businesses and shopkeepers. New employment opportunities are also being created in our region," he added.

Further, the Prime Minister asserted that to achieve the goal



Prime Minister Narendra Modi flags off three Vande Bharat Express trains via video conferencing, in New Delhi on Saturday (ANI)

Southern India has immense talent and vast resources. Therefore, the development of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and the entire south is a priority for our government

NARENDRA MODI

of Viksit Bharat, the rapid development of southern states is crucial.

"Southern India has immense talent and vast resources. Therefore, the development of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and the entire south is a priority for our

government. The railway development journey in these states over the past 10 years is a testament to this. In this year's budget, we have allocated over Rs 6,000 crores for Tamil Nadu's railway budget. This budget is more than seven times greater

than that of 2014. Six Vande Bharat trains are already operating in Tamil Nadu, and today, this number will reach eight," PM Modi said.

He also highlighted that for Karnataka, a budget of over Rs 7,000 crores has been allocated this time.

"This budget is also more than nine times greater than that of 2014. Today, eight pairs of Vande Bharat trains are connecting all of Karnataka. We have strengthened rail transport in the south. The railway tracks in these states are being im-

proved, and electrification is taking place, which has enhanced people's ease of living," he added.

The Meerut City - Lucknow Vande Bharat will help passengers save around one hour in comparison to the current fastest train between the two cities. Likewise, the Chennai Egmore - Nagercoil Vande Bharat and Madurai - Bengaluru Vande Bharat trains will cover the journey saving more than 2 hours and around 1 hour 30 minutes respectively.

ANI



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar speaks at the ET World Leaders Forum, in New Delhi on Saturday (ANI)

Jaishankar: China is not just an Indian problem

New Delhi - Calling China a 'unique problem', External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that India is not the only country in the world that is having a debate about that country.

Addressing the ET World Leaders Forum on Saturday, Jaishankar said everyone chose to consciously overlook the nature of Chinese production decades ago, and are now complaining.

"China is a unique problem because it has a unique polity and economy. It's not just an Indian problem. If today people are complaining about trade deficits with China, it is because decades ago, we all consciously chose to overlook the nature of Chinese production and the advantages that they enjoyed in a system where they got a level playing field with all the advantages that they brought to bear," Jaishankar said.

"There is a general China problem. We are not the only country in the world which is having a debate about China," he strongly asserted.

Citing an example of Europe and the US, the minister said: "Go to Europe and ask them, what is today among your major economic or national security debates? It's about China. Look at the United States, it's obsessed with China, and rightly so in many ways."

Notably, in 2020, the Indian and Chinese troops clashed at Galwan, the same year the pandemic started.

Since May 2020, when the Chinese troops tried to aggressively change the status quo on LAC in eastern Ladakh, both sides have been deployed in forward positions near Patrolling Point 15, which emerged as a friction point in

the wake of the Galwan clash.

Meanwhile, Jaishankar further asked: "What happens when you have multiple neighbours?" Making a thinly-veiled reference to neighbouring nations of Bangladesh and Pakistan, Jaishankar termed neighbouring countries as 'democratic polities', saying that the change in government will always give rise to political debates in the country.

"You know, by definition, re-

China is a unique problem because it has a unique polity and economy... There is a general China problem. We are not the only country in the world which is having a debate about China

S JAISHANKAR

relationships with neighbours are very complicated. They are all democratic polities. Governments will change, and there will be political debates in their country. Often, we will be the centre of those debates. It's natural as we are a big country. We have to expect, plan and build into our policy, making an expectation that there will be changes, some more organic and some more disruptive in our neighbourhood," the minister went on to say.

Jaishankar on Friday had said that India has to find a ground of mutual interest with Bangladesh and that India would deal with 'the government of the day'.

ANI

‘Your daughter stands with you’, Vinesh Phogat tells farmers protesting for rights

Shambhu border, Haryana - Olympian wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Saturday reached the farmers' protest site at Shambhu border, extending her support to farmers and saying she, as a 'daughter', stands with them and prays to God so that farmers get their rights and justice.

Phogat also refused to be drawn into speculation about her entering the political arena and called herself an athlete and belong to the whole nation and had 'nothing to do with upcoming state assembly polls'.



Olympic wrestler Vinesh Phogat

"I am an athlete; I belong to the entire country. I have nothing to do with which state is going to

the polls. All I know is that my country is suffering, farmers are in trouble. Their issues should be resolved and it should be the first priority of the Government to resolve this," she said.

When reporters asked if she would contest the Haryana elections, if Congress offers her ticket, Phogat said: "I will not speak on this, I will not talk about politics. I have come to my family. If you talk about this, you would waste their struggle and fight. The focus is not on me today. The focus should be on the farmers, I request this."

Addressing farmers, Phogat said: "Your agitation completes 200 days today. I pray to God that you get what you have come here for - your right, for justice...Your daughter stands with you. I also urge the Government. We too are citizens of this country, if we raise our voices it is not political every time...You should hear them...What they are demanding is not unlawful..."

Phogat was also felicitated by farmer leaders as she arrived at the Shambhu Border. The farmer agitation at the border has completed 200 days.

It has been a topsy-turvy month for Vinesh after she reached the final of the women's 50kg event but still returned to India empty-handed. On August 7, Sarah Ann Hildebrandt of the United States stood between Vinesh and the gold medal.

However, things went downhill after she was disqualified before the final after breaching the 50kg weight limit. A day after her heartbreaking disqualification, Vinesh announced her decision to retire from wrestling.

ANI

CELEBRATING DAY OF DELIVERANCE



Women from tribal community dressed in traditional attire during the 'Mukti Diwas' celebrations which marks the 72nd anniversary of the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act and de-notifying the DNTs as 'Criminal Tribes', at AICC headquarters, in New Delhi on Saturday (ANI)

Actor Mohanlal urges not to destroy Malayalam film industry

Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala - In his first address after resigning as the President of the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA) amid the #MeToo storm in Bollywood, actor Mohanlal on Saturday, urged people not to 'destroy' the Malayalam film industry.

The actor welcomed the Hema Committee report and asserted that the guilty will be punished and they will cooperate in the investigation. He also informed that elections for the new positions in AMMA will be held soon. A redacted version of the Justice Hema Committee report on harassment faced by women in the Malayalam cinema industry was made public, earlier this month. The report containing shocking accounts of harassment, exploitation, and



Actor Mohanlal speaks to media on Saturday (ANI)

ill-treatment of women professionals has taken the whole industry by storm.

"When such incidents happen, which might lead to the destruction of the entire industry, we do not know what else to do. We request you not to put the entire focus on

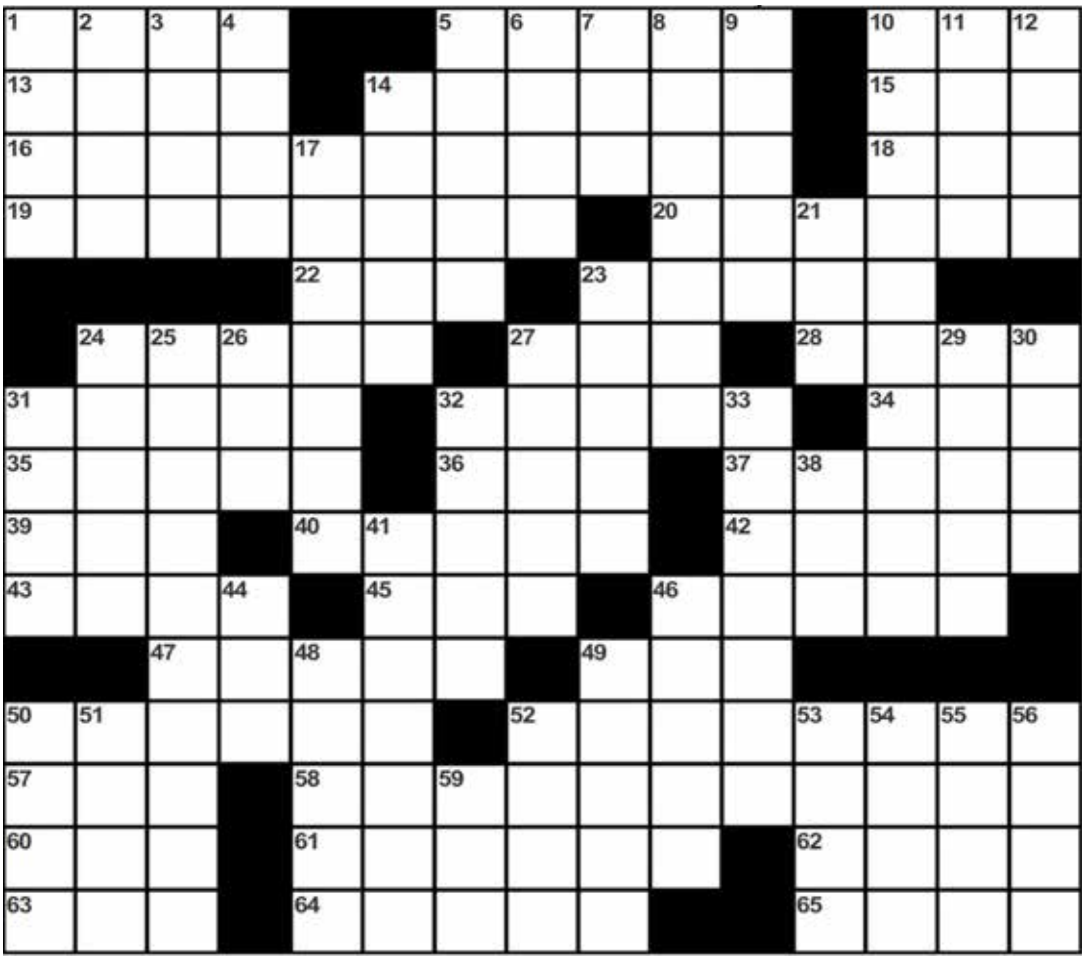
AMMA. The investigation is going on, and all the statements are out in the public," the veteran actor told reporters on Saturday.

"There are disagreements in the association as well, so we will take appropriate action. There will be an election soon. This is not any kind of escape. Please don't put unnecessary blame on the association. We welcome the Hema Committee report.

"It was the correct decision by the government to release that report. We welcome that. I was AMMA president for the last two terms. "The entire Malayalam cinema is answerable for the resignation of the executive members," he added.

ANI

DAILY CROSSWORD



- ACROSS
- 1) Water-to-wine site

5) Beat at chess

10) Propel a dinghy

13) Pioneering DJ Freed

14) "Shoulda listened to me!"

15) Raw rock

16) UFC fighter nicknamed "Rowdy"

18) Grazing place

19) "Don't panic"

20) Crew member

22) "Born in the ..."

23) They're verboten

24) Soup base

27) Film charioteer Ben-...

28) The munchies, say

31) Berry's Johnny B.

32) Mineral deposits

34) "... the ramparts ..."

35) Chair designer Charles

36) Work unit

37) Jon of "Pretty in Pink"

39) Baking meas.

40) Beef cut

42) Taxi drivers

43) Blossom support

45) Walk-... (minor roles)

46) Skeletal makeup

47) Synagogue leader
- 49) Feeling blah

50) Sentence ender

52) Doing the Wright

57) Self-image

58) 1972 Michael Jackson hit

60) In the past

61) United in a cause

62) Spydom's _ Hari

63) Male cat

64) Sub-freezing temperatures

65) Make coffee
- DOWN
- 1) Alamo rentals

2) Oodles and oodles

3) Granny

4) Roddick of tennis

5) Cash, slangily

6) Reunion attendee

7) QB's scores

8) Weedy lot, e.g.

9) Moshe of Israel

10) British luxury car

11) Three-layered cookie

12) Hold up well

14) Totally destroy

17) Most severe

21) Debtor's letters
- 23) Gentle jab

24) Blowhard's claim

25) Children's show from 1953 to 1994

26) Work of Sappho

27) Brass section

29) Nerdy types

30) Slips up

31) Fetches

32) Tea of "Madam Secretary"

33) Learned one

38) Sought office

41) 1996 Bill Clinton rival

44) _ tai cocktail

46) Window shade

48) Sacha Baron Cohen role

49) Dartmouth, Yale, etc.

50) Organic fuel

51) Frozen waffle brand

52) Related (to)

53) Mummy's home

54) Support beam

55) Evening, in an ad

56) Chew like a squirrel

59) The Browns, on scoreboards

NOTE PAD

A	P	S	E		S	C	R	E	E		C	L	A	M
B	R	O	W		W	H	I	M	S		R	E	L	O
L	I	T	E		O	A	S	I	S		U	N	D	O
E	G	O		R	O	C	K	L	O	B	S	T	E	R
			S	M	A	S	H			A	T	O	N	E
P	A	P	E	R	H	A	N	G	E	R	S			
I	R	E	N	E		I	S	E	E		P	E	W	
T	E	A	S		F	I	N	A	L		L	E	V	I
Y	A	K		A	R	T	E		I	O	T	A	S	
			S	C	I	S	S	O	R	S	K	I	C	K
A	D	A	P	T		R	E	L	I	T				
Z	E	R	O	S	U	M	G	A	M	E		F	A	D
U	B	E	R		S	U	N	N	I		C	O	N	E
R	U	N	T		S	N	A	G	S		O	U	T	S
E	T	A	S		R	I	T	E	S		T	R	E	K

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19
Today you have energy to play and certainly energy to pursue sports because your competitive drive is aroused. Meanwhile, social plans might suddenly change. Parents should be extra vigilant about their kids because this is a mildly accident-prone day for them.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22
Something unusual might disrupt your morning or change your routine today. Be careful because this is a slightly accident-prone influence as well. Therefore, pay attention! Meanwhile, you have lots of energy to interact with friends and groups. You'll be unusually competitive, as well. Oh yeah.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21
Travel plans might change today, especially this morning. Double check details and itineraries. However, you are full of abundant, eager energy to travel and explore new places and meet new faces. You will love learning something new. Look for opportunities in publishing, the media, medicine and the law.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20
Your home routine will be interrupted this morning. Small appliances might break down or a little breakage could occur. Surprise company might appear at your door. Whatever happens, you will handle this because you have lots of energy to put into home and family today.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22
This morning you might be vaguely distracted by something. Or perhaps, something unexpected will occur and catch you off guard? Later in the day, you'll make a great impression on bosses, parents and authority figures, which is why things will easily go your way. (You can use this to your advantage.)

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19
Make friends with your bank account to make sure you know what's happening because something unusual could impact your assets today, especially this morning. Later in the day, you can use the resources of someone to benefit you. Your Lucky color is Black. Your Lucky number is 17.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21
Pay attention to everything you say and do today because your daily routine might suddenly change. This is also a mildly accident-prone day for you, so pay attention to everything you say and do. Nevertheless, it's a lovely social, even a romantic day! You will enjoy a lively debate and learning new things.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22
You might meet someone unusual this morning; or perhaps, someone you know will do something that surprises you. You might also encounter an interesting group? Certainly, in exchange with a friend will be lively and energetic. (You will lead others, if you want.)

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18
Be patient with others because difficulties with partners or family members might create tension this morning. Fortunately, as the day wears on, this is a sociable, fun-loving, high-energy day for you! Plan on some fun outings, especially with children. Competitive sports will appeal.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22
Keep an eye on your money and your possessions today because something unexpected could impact them this morning. (You might find something or lose something.) However, you might also have some excellent moneymaking ideas. You might also make a purchase you like. (Check Moon Alert above.)

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21
You're high viz. today and people notice you more than usual. Do be aware of this because this morning something unexpected will occur. You might have difficulties with an authority figure. Someone might try to stop you from doing something. Or you might encounter someone who is powerful. Keep your eyes open.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20
Your work routine will change this morning. Allow extra time for everything because something unexpected might impact your plans. Later in the day, you will have lots of energy to make home improvements or deal with family members. You might see better ways of doing something.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What did Napoleon Bonaparte I establish in 1804, a measure which has had worldwide effect?
A. Ecole Spéciale Militaire de Saint-Cyr
B. Treaty of Amiens
C. Banque de France
D. Napoleonic Code
2. Which 1910 Murray and Weston song became a signature song of the music hall star, Harry Champion?
A. Any Old Iron
B. I'm (H)enry the Eighth, I Am
C. A Little Bit of What You Fancy Does You Good
D. Burlington Bertie from Bow
3. What wood or woods did the Stradivari family use in the construction of their exceptional stringed instruments?
A. Ebony and rosewood
B. Spruce, willow and maple
C. Sycamore
D. Beech and spruce

Answers: 1. D 2. B 3. B

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

S	S	E	O
M	E	C	N
S	B	Y	G
K	M	A	E

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

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

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

BOLT FROM THE BLUE

Arsenal pull off shock transfer of Chelsea's Sterling transfer on deadline day

London, England - Arsenal have signed Chelsea winger Raheem Sterling on a season-long loan, the two Premier League clubs announced in the early hours of Saturday, after the England international was frozen out of the Chelsea squad by new manager Enzo Maresca.

Although the deal was not completed before Friday's 11 p.m. deadline, a deal sheet was submitted for a two-hour extension which allowed Arsenal to sign Sterling, who made 81 appearances for Chelsea but has not played in the new campaign.

"People like to talk, don't they? Well so do I," Sterling said in a video uploaded to Arsenal's social media accounts. "And I'll say this, you're about to see the best of me."

The former Manchester City and Liverpool winger added: "It's an unbelievable feeling. It's really exciting. I'm buzzing."

"It's one where we kind of left it late but it's one I was hoping for. Looking at everything, I'm just, like, 'This is a perfect fit for me', and I'm super happy we got it over the line."

"I spoke with [sporting director] Edu and I said you can see the real togetherness from Mikel's time here and you see the journey the boys are on. You can see the hunger, and I keep saying again, the togetherness is something I'm looking to be a part of."

Chelsea signed Sterling from Manchester City in a deal worth up to 50 million pounds in 2022 but the 29-year-old was told in no uncertain terms by Maresca that he would not get any playing time and was welcome to seek a move to another club.

Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta had said earlier this month that he ad-



It's one where we kind of left it late but it's one I was hoping for. Looking at everything, I'm just, like, 'This is a perfect fit for me', and I'm happy we got it over the line

RAHEEM STERLING

mired Sterling, having worked with the winger during his time as assistant coach at Manchester City. Sterling's capture will give Arsenal depth on the left wing where he will compete with Gabriel Martinelli and Leandro Trossard for a spot in the starting lineup.

"We all know Raheem's qualities, he is a top talent with a lot of

experience who can help the team in a big way," Arteta told TNT Sport over Sterling's arrival.

"He has his numbers (at Manchester City) because he played under a great manager with great players, he scores a lot of goals and creates a lot of problems for the opponents."

Having started his senior career at Liverpool where he was named the Young Player of the Season twice, Sterling played the majority of his career at Manchester City where he won 10 trophies - including four Premier League titles.

Sterling also has 82 caps for England but he has not played for his country since the 2022 World Cup. He is Arsenal's fourth sum-

mer recruit after goalkeeper David Raya, who made his loan move permanent, defender Riccardo Calafiori and midfielder Mikel Merino.

Goalkeeper Neto joins Arsenal on loan

Bournemouth goalkeeper Neto has joined Arsenal on a season-long loan deal, the Premier League club announced on Friday after England keeper Aaron Ramsdale sealed a permanent move to Southampton.

Brazil's Neto, who previously played for Juventus, Valencia and Barcelona, has made 61 Premier League appearances for Bournemouth since joining the club in 2022.

"I'm realising a dream in my life, a dream come true, and I'm really, really happy," Neto said.

"I had two dreams as a kid to play for a football team. It was my team in Brazil, where I grew up and became a professional footballer, and also Arsenal. And now I'm realising it. I'm a really lucky person."

Neto will be Arsenal's backup goalkeeper with David Raya expected to be the first name on the team sheet for Mikel Arteta's side.

Last season's runner-ups Arsenal hosted Brighton & Hove Albion on Saturday but Neto was not be eligible to play in that game, with the 35-year-old set to join the squad next week.

England striker Toney joins Saudi's Al Ahli

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - England striker Ivan Toney has joined Saudi Pro League side Al-Ahli from Brentford on a permanent transfer, the two clubs announced on Friday as they completed a transfer deadline day deal.

Financial details were not disclosed, but British media reported the Saudi side paid the Premier League club 40 million pounds (\$52.50 million) to sign Toney until 2028.

"It's been a pleasure to work with Ivan over the last four years," coach Thomas Frank said.

"It's a wonderful journey that we have been on together. Ivan helped the club and the team, and the club and the team have helped Ivan."

"I'm happy he has an opportunity to try something new in his life and career. We thank him for so many magic moments and wish him all the best for his next chapter. Ivan leaves as a Brentford legend."

Toney had been a key figure at Brentford and had been instrumental in their promotion from the second-tier Championship to the top flight in 2020-21 when he scored 33 league goals.

However, an eight-month ban for breaches of betting rules saw him miss a huge chunk of last season, and Brentford finally cashed in on the 28-year-old who scored 72 goals in 141 appearances for the club.

Toney has also played six times for England, scoring one goal.

Lyon sign Zaha on loan

Olympique Lyonnais have signed Galatasaray's Ivory Coast winger Wilfried Zaha on loan for the 2024-2025 season, the Turkish club said in a statement.

Galatasaray said Olympique Lyonnais will pay a temporary transfer fee of 3 million euros for the player.

In July 2023 Zaha joined Galatasaray on a three-year deal following the expiration of his Crystal Palace contract.

The 31-year-old scored 10 goals in all competitions for the Istanbul-based side, but fell out of favour towards the end of last season. He only played in two friendlies for Ivory Coast last year and was left out of their Cup of Nations squad.



Ivan Toney



Eddie Nketiah

Arsenal's Nketiah joins Crystal Palace

London, England - Crystal Palace have signed forward Eddie Nketiah from Arsenal on a five-year deal, both Premier League clubs said on Friday.

Financial details about the transfer were not disclosed by either club, but English media reported Palace paid around 30 million pounds (\$39.38 million) for the 25-year-old.

"It's amazing to sign for Crystal Palace. I'm excited to get going," Nketiah said in a statement. "Every time I come back to South London, it always puts a smile on my face, so it's good to be back home."

Nketiah has scored 38 goals in 168 appearances for the north London club. He joined Arsenal's academy at the age of 16 and made his first team debut in

2018.

Midfielder Emile Smith Rowe, also a product of Arsenal's academy, joined Fulham on a five-year contract for some 27 million pounds earlier in this month.

Chelsea's Chalobah moves to Palace

Defender Trevoh Chalobah has joined Crystal Palace on a season-long loan from Chelsea, the Premier League clubs announced on Saturday.

Chalobah, 25, joined Chelsea as an 8-year-old and has previously served loan spells at Ipswich Town, Huddersfield Town and Lorient. He made 13 Premier League appearances last season after missing six months with a hamstring injury.



Man United's Sancho joins Chelsea

London, England - Chelsea have signed English winger Jadon Sancho from Manchester United on a season-long loan deal, British media reported on Saturday.

Sancho joined Chelsea on the final day of the transfer window, with a deal sheet being submitted to the Premier League to sign him after the 11 p.m. deadline had passed.

The BBC reported Chelsea have an obligation to make the move permanent for a fee of 20 million-25 million pounds (\$59.1 million). Sancho joined United in 2021 from Borussia Dortmund on a five-year contract, but had a public falling-out with manager Erik ten Hag last year which led to him returning to Dortmund on loan in January this year until the end of the season.

Man United's McTominay joins Napoli after 22 years at Old Trafford

Manchester, England - Scotland midfielder Scott McTominay has ended a 22-year stay at Manchester United to join Napoli, the Premier League club said on Friday.

McTominay, 27, who joined United at the age of five and played 178 Premier League matches for the club since making his senior debut in 2017, signed for the Serie A club in a deal worth 30.5 million euros (\$33.70 million).

"McTominay will be missed by everyone at the club and leaves with our best wishes as he embarks on a new chapter of his career in Italy," Manchester United said in a statement.

McTominay is Napoli's second major signing from the Premier League this week, with



Scott McTominay

Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku joining from Chelsea on Thursday.

McTominay made his final appearance for United when he came on as a late substitute during Saturday's 2-1 loss at Brighton & Hove Albion.

Scotland international Billy Gilmour also completed a permanent move to the Serie A side for undisclosed terms from Brighton & Hove Albion.

The 23-year-old midfielder spent five years at Chelsea until 2022 when he signed for Brighton, where he made 60 appearances in all competitions.

Napoli, who got their first league win under manager Antonio Conte when they beat Bologna 3-0 last weekend, host Parma on Saturday.

Uruguay midfielder Ugarte joins Manchester United

Manchester, England - Midfielder Manuel Ugarte has joined Manchester United from Paris St Germain on a five-year deal, the Premier League club said on Friday.

Uruguay's Ugarte made 25 Ligue 1 appearances for champions PSG in 2023-24 and made a season-highest 98 tackles. He joined United in a deal worth 50



Manuel Ugarte

million euros (\$55.26 million), signing a contract until 2029 with the option of a further year.

"Signing Manuel was another of our primary targets for this summer," United's sporting director Dan Ashworth said in a statement. "He is among the very best ball-winning midfield players in the world and has an excellent record at both club and

international level."

Ugarte, 23, started every match as Uruguay finished third at Copa America in July.

"It is an incredible feeling to join a club of this magnitude, one that is admired all around the world," Ugarte said.

United, who lost at Brighton & Hove Albion last weekend, host Liverpool on Sunday.

ARSENAL'S WINNING RUN ENDS AS RICE SEES RED

Joao Pedro's scnd-half goal helps Brighton hold 10-man Arsenal in Premier League

London, England - Brighton and Hove Albion ended Arsenal's winning start to the new Premier League season with a 1-1 draw at The Emirates on Saturday, with the home side holding on with 10 men after Declan Rice's second-half sending off.

Arsenal dominated the first half and deservedly led at half-time after Kai Havertz finished brilliantly in the 38th minute, having been played in expertly by Bukayo Saka.

Four minutes into the second half, however, Arsenal's task was made all the harder when Rice was sent off after picking up a second yellow card. Brazilian striker Joao Pedro fired Brighton level 12 minutes later.

"I thought it was a bit harsh for us. We just want some consistency," said Bukayo Saka. "Joao Pedro booted the ball halfway across the pitch in the first half and got nothing for it and Dec got the slightest touch and was sent off.

"It is what it is, I don't want to put the whole game on the referee as we still had chances to win it. It has been a good start. Today is a disappointment but it is a long season."

Both sides missed golden chances to win the contest late on, but they each had to settle for a point that keeps Arsenal and



Brighton and Hove Albion's Joao Pedro scores against Arsenal on Saturday

Brighton unbeaten in their three games so far.

After narrowly missing out on their first Premier League title

since 2004 last season, Arsenal started the new term in perfect fashion.

With champions Manchester

City also coming into this weekend's fixtures with two wins from two at the start of the new season, Arsenal know any slip-up,

even this early in the campaign, could be costly.

They appeared set to be course for a ninth successive

league victory after a dominant first-half display. Skipper Martin Odegaard should have scored earlier in the opening period be-

fore Havertz lofted home his second of the campaign.

Rice's second yellow for trying to stop Brighton taking a quick free kick, a decision that was met with consternation around the stands, turned the tide in the visitors' favour.

"I was amazed. Amazed because of how inconsistent decisions can be," said Arteta. "In the first half there are two decisions and nothing happens. In the second half in a non critical area Declan is not even looking. By law if you want to do it you can do it, but you don't have to."

Since Boxing Day 2019 - Mikel Arteta's first game in charge of Arsenal - the Gunners have been shown 16 red cards in the Premier League, at least three more than any other side. But it was Rice's first red in his 245th Premier League appearance.

Following his last-gasp winner against Manchester United last weekend, Pedro reacted first after Yankuba Minteh's shot had been saved to pull Brighton level, and the game opened up thereafter.

Saka could have snatched the win late on, while Arsenal goalkeeper David Raya had to be at his best on several occasions to keep Brighton from earning all three points, but both seemed content with a draw after an exhilarating tussle.

Mbappe settling at Real Madrid not a problem, says manager Ancelotti

Madrid, Spain - Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti said on Saturday he is happy with how new signing Kylian Mbappe is settling into life with the Spanish soccer giants and he has no concerns about his team's slow start to the LaLiga season.

France captain Mbappe, who joined Real from Paris St Germain in June, scored in a 2-0 win over Europa League champions Atalanta in the UEFA Super Cup final three weeks ago but has yet to find the net in three LaLiga games.

Playing in the centre forward spot as left winger Vinicius Jr's partner, Mbappe has missed several chances and struggled to link up with his new team mates in disappointing draws at Mallorca and Las Palmas and in a dull home win against Real Valladolid.

"(Mbappe) is playing very well even if he hasn't scored yet. His influence creates danger. Him settling in here is not a problem,"



Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe (R) with his teammates during a training session

Ancelotti told a press conference ahead of his side hosting Real Betis on Sunday.

"For me (Vinicius and

Mbappe) are teaming up well, the offensive work is being done very well. It hasn't been a problem because we've scored goals

in every game.

"With time, they will team up better, not just Vini with Mbappe, but Mbappe with the midfielders

as well. Offensively we don't have a problem. We haven't had it these years and we're not going to have it now that we have the best strikers in the world."

After a season in which they won the LaLiga and Champions League double, Ancelotti said he thinks criticism for a slow start to the domestic season is only natural.

The champions are currently fourth in the standings with five points, four behind leaders Barcelona who started the season with three consecutive wins.

"It's absolutely normal (the criticism) because the demands on this team are at their highest. We are going to be criticised until May. This is normal for us," Ancelotti said.

"We are not happy, but not because we are four points behind (Barcelona). It's because we didn't play well so far. The season is very long and that (points difference) doesn't mean much."



Inter Milan's Marcus Thuram scores against Atalanta

Thuram double helps Inter Milan cruise past Atalanta

Milan, Italy - A Marcus Thuram double helped Inter Milan to an emphatic 4-0 win over Atalanta on Friday, the second straight Serie A home win for the defending champions.

Inter, coming off a draw at Genoa and a 2-0 win over Lecce, scored twice in the opening stages of each half to prevail and provisionally move top of the standings with seven points.

The hosts opened the scoring just three minutes in when Thuram's low cross deflected off Atalanta's Berat Djimsiti into his own net, before Nicolò Barella doubled the lead with a stunning volley from the edge of the box seven minutes later.

"It is only week 3, this is not a signal to anyone. We tried to put in a good performance against a very difficult opponent, so we are very happy," Thuram, named man-of-the-match, told DAZN.

"Bare' only scores spectacular goals! He does it in training all the time and I'm really happy for him," said the Frenchman.

Thuram scored twice in similar fashion after the break, taking advantage of loose balls from the visitors' poor defence to fire home from close range in the 47th and 56th minutes and seal the rout.

"This game might've seemed easy from the outside, but there are always risks and the intensity was really high," Barella said.

Inzaghi hails Thuram

A delighted Inter coach Simone Inzaghi praised his team after the commanding win.

"Thuram is starting to get more experience in Serie A and is building on last season," Inzaghi

It all starts from his mentality and his hunger, he returned to training early from vacation because he knew that we needed him

SIMONE INZAGHI

said referring to the French international who joined Inter last summer. "It all starts from his mentality and his hunger, he returned to the training ground early from vacation because he knew that we needed him."

The Italian coach said all his strikers are in good form, despite last season's top scorer Lautaro Martinez, coming off injured.

Real Madrid to play Liverpool, Milan in Champions League

Monaco - Reigning champions Real Madrid will play Borussia Dortmund in the league phase of the Champions League in what will be a repeat of last season's final after the draw for the new-look 36-team tournament was held on Thursday.

Clubs will no longer playing three teams home and away in the group phase, but will face eight different teams with four games at home and four away which were picked with the help of a computer.

With clubs facing two

teams each from the four pots, the draw threw up plenty of mouth-watering fixtures with Spanish giants Real also set to play former champions Liverpool and AC Milan in the league phase.

Premier League champions Manchester City will face Inter Milan -- a repeat of the 2023 final -- Paris St Germain and Juventus while Bayern Munich are up against PSG and Barcelona among others.

Apart from Real, Liverpool also take on RB Leipzig, Bayer Leverkusen and AC Milan.

Enrique 'happy with players' level, 'now I have to develop their potential'

Paris, France - Paris St Germain manager Luis Enrique said on Saturday he is pleased with the Ligue 1 club's business in the summer transfer window and is now focused on bringing out the best in his players.

Having lost forward Kylian Mbappe on a free transfer to Spanish giants Real Madrid, the reigning French champions signed highly rated defensive midfielder Joao Neves, winger Desire Doue, centre back William Pachon and goalkeeper Matvei Safonov in the close season.

But just as they search for a goal scorer to replace Mbappe,



Luis Enrique

they have suffered a blow after an injury to striker Goncalo Ramos, who is expected to be out for up to three months.

"We want to sign players, and

their prices were very high. I have the players I have, I'm happy with their level, now I have to develop their potential," Enrique said.

"As a nine, we can play with (Marco) Asensio, (Ousmane) Dembele, RKM (Randal Kolo Muani), (Bradley) Barcola, Ramos, Warren (Zaire-Emery), (Achraf) Hakimi, Vitinha, Fabian (Ruiz), Neves... that's ten. It's the same with the defenders.

"I've got some very versatile players, which fits in with the plan we wanted for this team. Pachon, Doue and Neves -- they can play in lots of different roles... so I have a lot of options."

'SOME OF THE WORST TENNIS I'VE EVER PLAYED'

Defending champion Djokovic stunned by Popyrin at US Open

New York, US - Novak Djokovic's bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title ended with a whimper at the US Open as the defending champion was stunned in the third round by Alexei Popyrin on Friday while Aryna Sabalenka survived a late-night scare.

Djokovic searched in vain for the form that helped him win the Paris Olympics gold this month, as the 37-year-old Serbian crashed 6-4 6-4 2-6 6-4 against Australian Popyrin to ensure a year without a major for the first time since 2017.

"I spent a lot of energy winning gold and I arrived at New York just not feeling fresh, mentally and physically," Djokovic said. "But because it's the U.S. Open I gave it a shot and tried my best. I didn't have any physical issues. I just felt out of gas and you could



Novak Djokovic's defeat will mark the first time since 2002 that a year will finish without a member of the "Big Three" - the Serb, Rafa Nadal and Roger Federer - winning a major

see that with the way I played." "Congratulations to him and his team," Djokovic said. "He definitely played better and deserved to win today. "I mean, on my end, honestly, the way I felt and the way I played from the beginning of this tournament, third round is a success. I mean, I have played some of the worst tennis I

have ever played, honestly, serving by far the worst ever. The result will also mark the first time since 2002 that a year will finish without a member of the "Big Three" - Djokovic, Rafa Nadal and Roger Federer - winning a major. A second shocker in as many days at the year's final Grand

Slam, after French Open and Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz's premature exit, left a host of players relishing the chance for a rare shot at glory. Frances Tiafoe kept alive his hopes of becoming the first American man to claim the U.S. Open title since Andy Roddick 21 years ago by outlasting compa-

triot Ben Shelton 4-6 7-5 6-7(5) 6-4 6-3 to move ahead. He was joined by another top contender in Taylor Fritz, who eased past Francisco Comesana 6-3 6-4 6-2 to emerge as the first American man to make the last 16 at all four Grand Slams in the same year since Andre Agassi in 2003. Defending champion Coco Gauff conceded six games across the first two rounds but came under pressure from Elina Svitolina as she dropped the first set to the Ukrainian before rebooting to complete a 3-6 6-3 6-3 victory. "I feel like I lost eight points in a row at the end of the first set. I don't really know the exact number. Probably more," world number three Gauff said. "So I knew I needed a reset at that point. I just went and used the bathroom, changed the bottom half of my clothes, and splashed some water on my face, and felt like a new person coming out. "I just didn't want to leave the court with any regrets." Sabalenka looked shaky after the latest start to a US Open match at 12.08 a.m. local time on Saturday morning but secured a 2-6 6-1 6-2 win over 29th seed Ekaterina Alexandrova.



Kimi Antonelli to replace Hamilton at Mercedes in 2025

Monza, Italy - Italian Kimi Antonelli will replace seven times Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton at Mercedes next season in a deal announced at the 18-year-old's home grand prix on Saturday. Team boss Toto Wolff told reporters at Monza he had decided on Antonelli within minutes of Hamilton, 39, informing him last January that he would be moving to Ferrari in 2025.

the sport. The announcement came a day after Antonelli, who will also be the most high-profile rookie since Hamilton debuted with McLaren in 2007, crashed Russell's car in his free practice debut at Monza. "It's not possible to replace Lewis Hamilton, he's such a great figure in the sport of today and he has achieved so much in his career," said the Italian, who will race next season with the number 12.

"I'm just the next driver for Mercedes in '25, so I'm really excited for that." Wolff had also sounded out Red Bull's triple world champion Max Verstappen about a possible move but the Dutch driver is under contract to the end of 2028 and the overtures came to nothing. "These two are the future," said Wolff. "All of our focus in the team is on George and Kimi. There's no discussion, there are no second thoughts about what we're doing in 2026 because now it's about 2024 and 2025."

Miraz claimed his third and fourth victims late in the day before Ahmed removed Salman Agha for 54. Miraz then had Abrar Ahmed stumped. Root hits 34th Test century Joe Root hit his 34th Test century for England at Lord's on Saturday, surpassing the 33 scored by Sir Alastair Cook to become his country's greatest centurion in the game's longest format. England were building an enormous lead on day three of the second Test against Sri Lanka when Root steadily made his way to a back-to-back century in the second innings, smashing a four to reach 102.

Miraz five-for helps Bangladesh restrict Pakistan

Rawalpindi, Pakistan - Mehidy Hasan Miraz claimed five wickets as Bangladesh bowled out Pakistan for 274 on the second day of their rain-hit second test at Rawalpindi on Saturday, after half-centuries by Shan Masood, Saim Ayub and Salman Agha. Shadman Islam was batting on six and Zakir Hasan was on zero as Bangladesh reached 10 for no loss at stumps, seeking a strong reply in their bid to secure a 2-0 series victory after winning the first game at the same venue by 10 wickets. Miraz (5-61) and Taskin Ahmed (3-57) were the picks of the Bangladesh bowlers. Taskin, drafted into the Bangladesh side after fellow pace



Bangladesh's Mehidy Hasan Miraz celebrates with teammates after taking a Pakistan wicket

bowler Shoriful Islam sustained a groin injury, bowled Abdullah Shafique with a swinging delivery in the first over of the day after the tourists won the toss and opted to field. Pakistan recovered from that

early setback and got to 99-1 at lunch, with Masood completing his 10th half-century, but the skipper did not last long when play resumed and was dismissed lbw by Miraz for 57. With the 107-run stand for

the second wicket ended, the Bangladesh bowlers grew in confidence as the day wore on and could have had more wickets but for some sloppy catching. Ayub was stumped for 58 a few overs later while Saud Shakeel, who was dropped at slip on one, perished after chopping one from Taskin back onto his stumps. Having stemmed the flow of runs, Bangladesh removed the out-of-form Babar Azam for 31 before tea and Mohammad Rizwan for 29 shortly after to leave Pakistan in a spot of bother at 211-6. Khurram Shahzad departed attempting a big shot and Mohammad Ali edged to slip as

CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

Sri Lankan Male - (CGMA ACMA+CPA+BBA+MAAT) Looking for Asst. Finance Manager/Chief Accountant role. 12 years of experience in various industries, looking for a suitable placement. Key areas: MIS, VAT, Audit, Fin Reporting, Cashflow Mgt, Budgeting, ERP etc) Available to join. Contact: +968 78773250 & 92095240 Email : ali.mohamedown@gmail.com

Indian male over 15 years experience in a leading MNC for civil project, fitout project and planning engineer with valid Oman driving licence is looking for a suitable placement. Contact: +968-96568922

An experienced teacher with master's in Food Science &

SEND YOUR REQUEST FOR

Birthday/Anniversary wishes to wish@apexmedia.co.om with your resident card copy (It's free of cost)

Nutrition, seeking roles in elementary school teaching/food quality department in hotels or food companies. Contact: +968-79115006 92781722 email: abreezaanees60401@gmail.com

A smart, honest and efficient male, having a total experience of 22 years+ in MIS, Budget, Cashflow, Treasury, Banking, Tax, Audit, with the knowledge of SAP FICO, ERP, GPS, Tally, is looking for a senior position in Accounts & Finance. Contact: +968-91468679, Email: amitpandit007@gmail.com.

URGENTLY REQUIRED

1)Mechanical Engineer - Minimum 2-year Oman Experience
2)Electrical Engineer - Minimum 2-year Oman Experience
3) Civil Engineer - Minimum 2-year Oman Experience
4) AC technician - Minimum 2-year Oman Experience

We are looking for a dynamic and experienced Mechanical Engineer and Electrical Engineer to join our organization immediately. The ideal candidates will be responsible for the Technical aspects and growth of the company in service and maintenance related jobs.

Having Driving license is added advantage

Contact and send CV to: css400855@gmail.com

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

- 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

أوربيت ORBIT

Car Rental & Lease

FOR RENT/SALE

Available 2100 sq meter best in class Warehouse cum office Space, fully furnished ready to use, Located at Prime area of Ghala in the heart of the city having easy access to airport & express Way.

Contact: Mr.Sumit Mudgil - 95616835
Girish Sewani - 93893596

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

DA VINCI CODE



A section from Leonardo da Vinci's Codex Atlanticus titled *Floral composition*

Artistic aromas

Research indicates that Leonardo da Vinci studied the ‘science of smell’, experimented with perfumes, and created his own fragrances from flowers and fruit



A pomander ball that opens to reveal eight compartments for storing spices



Arance, lime, limoni e lumie, Bartolommeo Bimbi, 1715

Leonardo da Vinci was a true Renaissance man - artist, scientist, inventor and fragrance connoisseur. Though his olfactory fascinations aren't as well-known as his other works, scent was one of Leonardo's many inspirations.

'Leonardo da Vinci and the Perfumes of the Renaissance' - an exhibition at the Château du Clos Lucé in Amboise, France, takes visitors on a scented journey through the famed Mona Lisa painter's life, focusing on the smells of Europe and beyond.

The show begins in Constantinople, where Leonardo's young mother, Caterina, may have been enslaved in the 15th century, according to a statement from the Château du Clos Lucé. Caterina's story has been a divisive subject among scholars, and one of the exhibition's curators, Carlo Vecce, made headlines last year for his research.

As such, the first room explores perfume's many uses in the Byzantine capital, where markets would have smelled strongly of spices like myrrh, cinnamon, pepper and musk. Based on Vecce's research, the show follows Caterina's travels from Constantinople to Venice; original Venetian perfume recipe books are on display in the second room. The third room focuses on the scents of Leonardo's birthplace - Tuscany.

'The sensory world of Leonardo's childhood is evoked here by plants and trees typical of Tuscany and of Florentine gardens - lemon trees, orange trees, olive trees,' as per the statement. 'His relatively free-spirited upbringing in the heart of the Tuscan countryside undoubtedly gave rise to Leonardo's interest in nature and in the study of flowers and plants.'

Fascination with smell

As a scientist, Leonardo was intrigued by perfumes, 'comparing the machinations of smell to those of sight and hearing', as *Artnet's* Tim Brinkhof writes. He bought perfumes that were common in 15th-century Italy - many made from oil, fats and flowers - and recorded their components. His fascination with smell can be seen in the vast volumes of his writings and drawings, in which he documented methods of scent extraction and distillation.

'Add the flowers of sweet orange, jasmine, privet or other fragrant flowers and change the water each time you have to change the flowers, so that the almonds do not take on the musty smell,' Leonardo noted in *Codex Atlanticus*. He wrote in *Codex Forster*, 'Remove that yellow surface which covers oranges and distill them in an alembic, until the distillation may be said to

be perfect.'

In the 15th century, fragrances were commonly spread using perfume burners, and the scents 'doubled as air fresheners that masked the omnipresent odour of unpleasant smells,' as per *Artnet*.

Fragrances were also believed to ward off disease. Around this time, medical professionals 'saw the human body as porous and hence liable to be permeated by air corrupted by the plague,' as French historian Robert Muchembled wrote in his 2020 book *Smells: A Cultural History of Odours in Early Modern Times*. Containing unpleasant smells was thought to be an effective preventative measure.

Fragrances were also applied to skin or clothes. Sometimes, they were distributed through tools like the pomander, a decorative metal ball that opened to reveal perfumed objects. Visitors to the exhibition will be able to see examples of these items, which are on loan from the National Museum of the Renaissance in Écouen, France.

They'll also be able to 'smell' the subject of one of Leonardo's most famous portraits, *Lady with an Ermine* (1489). Experts have created a replica of the woman's scented black amber necklace for the exhibition.

(Courtesy: smithsonianmag.com)



Leonardo da Vinci's *Lady With an Ermine* (1489)



Rupsa Mandal
senior performer

DISTRIBUTION
Shamshad Khan
Toll Free No. 80076000
Email: shamshad@apexmedia.co.in

BUY BAHAR

OWN YOUR DREAM

TESLA

MODEL Y



75 GRAND PRIZES

15 iPhone 15



10 Samsung S24



5 iPhone 14



20 Washing Machines



25 Gift Vouchers worth RO 50 each



Buy any BAHAR, No. 1, Farah, Pinex, Spark products worth RO 3, get a coupon to participate in the raffle draw



EVERYONE IS A WINNER

(32,000+ SCRATCH & WIN PRIZES)

Promotion period: 25th July – 7th October 2024 | Draw dates: 2nd September & 9th October 2024

Images shown for illustrative purposes only.

Promotion available only in selected outlets in Oman.