

GCC strengthens ties with India, Russia and Brazil



Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - In a push to enhance cooperation with India, Russia and Brazil, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries held ministerial meetings for strategic dialogue in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on Monday. The discussions took place alongside the 161st Ministerial Council meeting of the GCC.

The GCC meeting was chaired by Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, who currently presides over the Ministerial Council. Foreign ministers of all GCC countries were present, with Oman represented by H E Sayyid Badr al Busaidi.

During the GCC-Brazil meet-

In talks with Russia, there was particular attention to the conflict in Ukraine and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian crisis

ing, the two sides discussed ways to expand cooperation in various fields, including politics, investment, security and culture. The latest regional and international developments of mutual interest were also reviewed.

The first GCC-India ministerial meeting focused on deepening strategic partnership between the two sides, particularly in economic, trade and investment sectors. Discussions highlighted opening

new opportunities for cooperation to promote sustainable growth. Regional and international issues were also part of the agenda.

In talks with Russia, there was particular attention to the conflict in Ukraine and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian crisis, while ways of enhancing bilateral relations were also discussed.

Deliberations centred on humanitarian relief efforts in Gaza and advancing the political pro-

cess for a two-state solution for Palestine. The GCC appreciated Russia's supportive stance on the Palestinian issue, which aligns with its own.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov emphasised the importance of strengthening ties with the GCC. "Promoting relations with the Gulf countries is a key priority for us, particularly in areas such as the economy, technology and trade," Lavrov said. He added that the Gulf region remains central to Russia's current international agenda.

India's Foreign Minister Dr S Jaishankar described the meeting as a significant step towards charting a bold and far-reaching future for India-GCC relations. "The

relationship between India and the GCC is deeply rooted in shared history, culture and values."

Jaishankar highlighted the fact that the partnership - built on trust and mutual respect - has grown to cover areas such as energy, defence, technology and education. He further pointed out that the relationship goes beyond mere transactions. "It aims to foster progress in a world marked by technological change, shifting geopolitics, global economic shifts and the urgent need for environmental sustainability."

He praised efforts for the welfare and comfort of the 9mn strong Indian community in the GCC who serve as "the bedrock of our friendship".

Oman determined to win South Korea game

Our Correspondent
Muscat

After the setback against Iraq, Oman is determined to secure a win over South Korea in a crucial match of the Asian qualifiers for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The game will be played at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex Bausher on Tuesday at 6pm.

In a pre-match press conference on Monday, Oman head coach Jaroslav Šilhavý emphasised the match's significance, stating, "South Korea is one of the strongest teams in our group, and this game is crucial for us. We are determined to secure a win and recover from our loss to Iraq."

Šilhavý reassured fans that the team has prepared thoroughly, focusing on both technical skills and tactical strategies. He highlighted the Red Warriors' readiness and adaptability, noting that it is not reliant on any single player and has contingency plans for various scenarios.

Defender Ali al Busaidi echoed the coach's views, expressing confidence in the team's preparations and the vital support from

fans. "We are fully prepared for this match and determined to win. The support from our fans is greatly appreciated and I motivate us to achieve our goal."

Though optimistic, South Korean coach Hong Myung-bo said, "This is our first away match in the qualifiers. It will be challenging, but we are focused on securing a positive result. Our players are highly experienced and I trust their ability to perform well."

The Directorate General of Sports Activities in the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth has made arrangements to enhance the fan experience. Saud bin Badr Ambusaidi, Assistant Director General, announced that four main gates will be open for public access, with Gate No 5 designated for South Korean supporters. Gates will open at 3pm to ensure smooth entry and prevent congestion.

Ambusaidi added that free drinking water will be available, besides mobile food carts and promotional T-shirts. Activities have been planned to entertain fans in the complex's internal courtyard.



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Sayyid Badr receives credentials of several ambassadors

Muscat – H E Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, received copies of credentials of three newly appointed ambassadors to Oman and a copy of credentials of Jocelyn Fennard, Representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to the GCC countries, who is residing in Oman.

H E Sayyid Badr wished the UNFPA representative success in carrying out his duties. He also lauded the efforts of the UNFPA in supporting fields related to population, development and health.

The Foreign Minister also received copies of credentials of Rashad Ismayilov, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan appointed to the Sultanate of Oman; Nabil Hajlaoui, Ambassador of the French Republic appointed to Oman; and Agis Loizou, Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus appointed to the sultanate. H E Sayyid Badr welcomed the ambassadors and wished them success in carrying out their duties. He also wished bilateral relations further development and growth.

The meeting was attended by several officials from the Foreign Ministry.

Al Mouj awards final phase of Business Park to Oman Shapoorji

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

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

In this context, Nasser al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat, said, "Al Mouj Muscat has set a new benchmark for corporate offices with the launch and sell out of its stunning Business Park."

Positioned at the intersection of nature and quality design, this premier business destination boasts flexible workspace spread across eight Grade A office buildings. "With its award-winning design and infrastructure, the Business Park redefines the standard for premium office environments in Oman," the CEO underlined.

Al Mouj Muscat's commitment to excellence extends beyond just office space. "It's about creating a destination where business innovation flourishes, ideas are exchanged, and businesses are empowered to grow and reach new heights. With the construction of phase one progressing, this award of the final phase will ensure timely delivery of the project."

The Business Park is uniquely situated adjacent to one the top 100 golf courses of the world



100% of phase two has already been sold for world class office spaces overlooking the Al Mouj Muscat Golf Course

next to the ocean, providing an exemplary business environment that sophisticatedly combines professional and leisure facilities. Tenants will also benefit from the superior infrastructure, including advanced telecommunications and IT systems, as well as its proximity to major road networks and Muscat International Airport.

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

The Al Mouj Business Park is part of the broader Al Mouj Muscat community, which is home to over 8,000 residents from 85 nationalities.

The development includes luxury residential properties, a marina, an 18-hole championship golf course, and a variety of retail and dining options.

Special Oilfield Services Co. LLC Oman Achieves Prestigious API Q2 Certification



(MHD) Oman and AMPS (AMPS is a wholly owned subsidiary of TAQA an international company that offers leading well solutions for the energy industry with HQ in Saudi Arabia), SOS is one of the oldest, well-established, and reputed local services provider to the energy sector in Oman.

The API Q2 certification, granted by the American Petroleum Institute (API), demonstrates that SOS has met the stringent requirements of API Spec Q2, signifying its commitment to delivering consistent quality and exceeding customer expectations in the oil and gas sector. These standard

outlines comprehensive requirements for service supply organizations operating in the oil and gas industry.

Zahar Al Busaidi, CEO of SOS stated that achieving API Q2 certification provides clients with assurance that SOS delivers services with the highest levels of quality, safety, and environmental responsibility. With this, our Integrated Management System is now certified with the recognized international standards, including API Q2, ISO 9001, ISO 14001, and ISO 45001, assuring that SOS is committed to delivering exceptional service and value".

Special Oilfield Services Co. LLC Oman (SOS) announced the achievement of prestigious API Q2 certification. Founded in 1986 as a joint venture between Mohsin Haider Darwish LLC





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Designer feted at Inflow Expo in Hungary

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Amal bint Salim al Ismaili, a lecturer in the Department of Art Education in College of Education at Sultan Qaboos University, has gained international recognition for her jewellery design titled Dome, winning the Audience Award at Inflow Expo in Hungary.

Her piece was selected from 69 works representing 29 countries, out of a total of 389 submissions.

The Inflow Expo is a platform that celebrates personal stories and experiences in jewellery design, encouraging artists to draw inspiration from their lives, cul-



(Supplied photos)



My grandmother sold her silverware and was left with just one necklace. This motivated me to begin a journey through the Omani desert to fill her empty box with my contemporary designs

AMAL BINT SALIM AL ISMAILI

tures and achievements. The event is judged by an international jury, with awards in three categories.

Amal explained that her winning design was inspired by a memory from her childhood. "My work was chosen for its narrative content," she said. "It draws from a memory when I visited my grandmother's house in North Sharqiyah. A travelling merchant

had come to buy and sell goods and knick-knacks. My grandmother sold him some beautiful items, including a silver kohl pot. At the time, I didn't understand the significance of these objects, but that memory stayed with me."

She added that her work also reflects the decline of Omani silver craftsmanship, which she linked to the rise in global silver

prices. "Itinerant traders bought silver from villages. My grandmother sold her silverware and was left with just one necklace. This motivated me to begin a journey through the Omani desert to fill her empty box with my contemporary designs."

Amal's Dome design was inspired by a traditional bedouin head ornament made of leather and silver, which she encoun-

tered during her travels in Sharqiyah Sands.

She incorporates elements of bedouin aesthetics into her designs, blending cultural heritage with modern design. "My trips to the desert were profoundly inspiring. I am eager to show how art can embody identity and heritage."

Amal has experimented extensively with locally tanned leather, using traditional techniques and desert plants to create a range of colours and textures.

The Dome design captures the spirit of the desert, combining cultural elements presented with a modern twist.



EA warns against tampering with camera traps

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Environment Authority (EA) has issued a warning against tampering with camera traps and devices used for research and field studies.

In a statement, EA said camera traps are being installed across various locations in the country to support national environmental projects and research. The authority urged the public not to interfere with these devices, noting that violations will result in legal consequences.

EA has successfully deployed camera traps in different regions of Oman, capturing images of rare wildlife such as Arabian leopard, Arabian deer, red foxes and ibex, besides reptiles and birds. These hidden cameras, equipped with smart sensors, are strategically placed in rugged terrains and wadis to monitor animal movement during the night. The collected data is crucial for wildlife management and conservation efforts.

An EA official explained that images from these cameras are retrieved, sorted and analysed based on their location. This data is then compiled and added to EA's database, forming the basis for projects and plans aimed at protecting wildlife in the sultanate.

MoE launches Road Friends Programme for educators

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Education (MoE), in collaboration with Royal Oman Police (ROP) and support of Shell Development Oman, inaugurated a three-day training event called 'Road Friends Programme' on Sunday.

The inauguration was held under the patronage of H E Dr Abdullah bin Khamis Ambosaidi, MoE Undersecretary, in the presence of Brig Ali al Falahi, Director-General of Traffic at ROP, and Al Ahnaf al Zubaidi, Director of Social Investment and Community Relations at Shell Development Oman.

A total of 45 teachers and su-

pervisors from educational directorates across the sultanate are participating in the programme. Its objective is to equip them with skills and knowledge related to road safety, focusing on safe behaviour and implementation of the programme in schools.

In his speech, H E Ambosaidi expressed gratitude to the teams from MoE, ROP and Shell Development Oman for their efforts in conducting the programme in its pilot stage during the 2022/2023 academic year.

He highlighted MoE's ongoing commitment to the programme, which aims to teach road safety to students aged ten to 18. The programme seeks to raise



(Supplied photo)

awareness about risky road behaviour, accident prevention and the importance of safe conduct

on roads. It includes creating interactive and creative road safety messages and action plans for

safety measures in schools and their surrounding environments. The programme is currently

being implemented in 33 schools across various educational directorates, with a focus on Shell Development Oman's concession areas in Dakhliyah and Dhahirah. The training involves team members from MoE and ROP, specifically traffic safety institutes, preparing teachers for the programme.

Brig Falahi emphasised ROP's dedication to supporting traffic safety initiatives through various traffic safety institutes. He commended MoE's role in fostering traffic safety awareness among youth and highlighted the programme's potential to develop a well-informed generation that will share its knowledge with peers and the wider community.



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BRIEFS

Oil price rise amid Fed rate cut hopes

Oil prices increased on Monday, driven by mounting hopes that the US Federal Reserve will lower interest rates and growing tension in the Middle East while recession fears in the US limited further price increases.

International benchmark Brent crude increased by 0.6% to \$71.82 per barrel in morning trade in London, up from the previous session's close of \$71.37.

US benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) rose 0.6% to \$68.07 per barrel after closing at \$67.67 in the prior session.

Anticipation over the Fed's next move and its potential impact continues to influence oil prices.

US Federal Reserve Governor Christopher Waller said Friday the time has come to begin lowering interest rates and he is open to larger rate cuts.

OQ Exploration and Production to float up to 25% stake in IPO

Our Correspondent
Muscat

OQ Exploration and Production (OQEP), Oman's largest pure-play oil and gas exploration and production company, and a wholly government-owned upstream operator, announced on Monday its intention to proceed with an initial public offering (IPO) and list its ordinary shares on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX).

The offering will provide investors with exposure to one of the top three oil and gas producers in Oman and one of the largest holders of oil and gas reserves in the country.

OQEP, the exploration and production arm of OQ Group, has experienced significant growth, expanding its average daily production nearly 14-fold from its inception in 2009 through 2023. Its portfolio includes several successful joint venture partnerships.

OQ, the selling shareholder, plans to sell up to 25% of the total issued share capital of OQEP. Following the offering, a minimum of 75% of the shareholding will remain with OQ.

The subscription period for the IPO is expected to commence this month, pending the required approval from the Financial Securities Authority (FSA). OQEP shares are expected to be listed



The IPO subscription period is expected to commence this month and the listing of OQEP shares is expected to take place in October on the Muscat Stock Exchange

on the MSX in October.

HSBC, Natixis, OIB, and Sohar International have been appointed as joint global coordinators. Sohar International has also been appointed as the issue manager.

In a press statement, Ashraf Hamed al Mamari, Group CEO of OQ, said, "Today marks a significant milestone in our journey toward enhancing the value of OQ's portfolio through strategic divestments. The intention to float OQEP reflects our commitment to unlocking new opportunities for growth, both for the company and for Oman. To-

gether with our ultimate shareholders at the Oman Investment Authority, we continue to broaden the reach of OQ companies, offering an attractive and robust investment case to the global market. OQEP, with its leading position in maximising Oman's natural resources, underscores our focus on sustainable development and local value creation. By empowering local communities and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, we not only maximise local value but also contribute to the long-term economic stability of Oman."

OQEP Chief Executive Officer Ahmed al Azkawi said, "We are pleased to announce OQEP's intention to float on the MSX. This milestone represents the culmination of years of hard work. Our core values of operational excellence and sustainability have enabled us to build the company we are now taking public. OQEP is a reliable partner to 13 reputable international companies due to our significant growth trajectory, robust portfolio of assets, and record-breaking production, which has increased nearly 14-fold since our inception."

The offering will be divided

into two tranches. The Category I (institutional tranche) offering represents 60% of the total offering and will be made available to eligible investors in Oman and qualified institutional investors in various other countries, with allocations expected to be made on a pro-rata basis relative to order size. The Category II (retail tranche) offering represents 40% of the total offering and is designated for retail investors in Oman.

If demand in Category II is less than 40% of the offering, any remaining shares after full allocation will be made available to Category I investors in the case of oversubscription.

Dividend policy

OQEP has adopted a quarterly

dividend distribution policy, planning to distribute dividends after the IPO. The company has a strong track record of sustainable cash flow generation and intends to maintain a dividend policy that will return the majority of its distributable free cash flow, after accounting for growth opportunities and investments.

OQEP expects to make its first dividend payment of approximately RO57.7mn in or around December 2024 for Q3 2024, followed by RO57.7mn dividend payment in or around March 2025 for Q4 2024, resulting in an annualised dividend of approximately RO230.7mn. For the following two financial years ending December 31, 2025, and December 31, 2026, the company plans to pay quarterly dividends.



Oman, Bahrain establish joint investment company

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) held a coordination meeting in Muscat on Monday to finalise procedures for the establishment of the Oman-Bahrain Investment Company.

Oman-Bahrain Investment Company is a joint venture between the two countries aimed at identifying and developing projects with the private sector in both Oman and Bahrain.

The meeting between officials

of OCCI and BCCI reviewed the mechanisms for registering and announcing the company in accordance with the regulations and laws of the relevant authorities. They also explored available investment opportunities in the sectors initially agreed upon, particularly food security and logistics, to be launched in Oman.

Discussions focused on the most economically viable sectors for the company, in line with the development goals of both countries. The meeting emphasised the importance of empowering the private sector and reviewed the process for conducting feasi-

bility studies on available investment opportunities in the market.

Both sides highlighted the urgency of accelerating the necessary steps to ensure the company can begin its operations promptly. The meeting also addressed the role of the private sector in Oman and Bahrain in contributing to the company after its establishment.

Several presentations were made during the meeting, showcasing investment opportunities in the food security sector and profitable options within companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange.

UAE's GDP grew 3.4% to AED430bn in Q1

Abu Dhabi, UAE - The UAE's real GDP reached AED430bn in Q1 2024, recording a growth of 3.4% compared to the same period in 2023, while the non-oil GDP grew by 4%, according to Abdulla bin Touq al Marri, Minister of Economy.

Based on the data released by the UAE's Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre, financial and insurance activities emerged as the leading non-oil economic sector contributing to the UAE's GDP growth, with a remarkable growth of 7.9%. This growth can be attributed to the significant increase in the local credit granted to the private sector, which led to a six per cent growth and positively impacted the rebound of non-oil economic activities.

Following closely behind in the second place are transportation and storage activities, which grew 7.3%. This growth was driven by a notable increase in the number of travellers at the UAE's airports during the first three months of this year, reaching 36.5mn travellers, a growth rate of 14.7% compared to the same period last year.

The UAE's ports have demon-



Financial and insurance activities emerged as the leading non-oil economic sector contributing to the UAE's GDP growth, with a remarkable growth of 7.9%

strated exceptional performance during this time, with Dubai's international ports witnessing a 3.7% growth in the number of containers handled, while Abu Dhabi's ports experienced a 36% increase in cargo handling volume on an annual basis.

Ranking third, construction and building activities experienced a growth rate of 6.2%, which aligns with the several development projects initiated by the UAE government in early 2024. They saw a substantial rise in the government's public

capital expenditures, reaching AED4.8bn, compared to that of Q1 2023.

The restaurant and hotel sector secured the fourth spot with a 4.6% growth during the first quarter of 2024 compared to the corresponding period in 2023. Moreover, the UAE emerged at the forefront of the global tourism landscape, attracting a substantial number of tourists from around the world.

In particular, Dubai witnessed a remarkable influx of 5.18mn international tourists, representing an 11% increase compared to the corresponding period in 2023. Abu Dhabi also maintained its exceptional performance in key tourism indicators, including the average hotel occupancy rates and revenue per available rooms.

Trade activities made the largest contribution to the non-oil GDP, accounting for 16.1%. Manufacturing activities come in second at 14.6%, with financial and insurance activities ranking third at a rate of 13.4%.

Construction and building activities contribute 11.8%, followed by real estate activities with a contribution of 7.1%.

WAM

Central Bank of Oman issues treasury bills worth RO30mn

Muscat - The Central Bank of Oman announced the issuance of government treasury bills worth RO30mn this week.

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to RO0.3mn, for a maturity period of 28 days. The average accepted price and minimum accepted price reached RO99.650 for every RO100 bill. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.5625% and 4.5785%, respectively.

The value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to RO29.7mn, for a maturity period of 91 days. The average accepted



price reached RO98.780 for every RO100 bill, and the minimum accepted price arrived at RO98.770. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.8919% and 4.9523%, respectively.

The interest rate on the Repo operations with the CBO is 6.00% while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with the central bank is 6.50%.

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide li-

censed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. The CBO acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

Furthermore, the treasury bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures.

ONA

China's foreign exchange reserves reach \$31.8tn

Beijing, China - China's foreign exchange reserves totaled \$3.288tn as of the end of August, up by \$31.8bn, or 0.98% compared to the end of July, official recent data showed.

China's foreign exchange reserves have remained stable above \$3.2tn for nine consecutive months, according to the State Administration of Foreign Exchange. The administration said in a statement that the US dollar index declined and global financial asset prices generally increased last month (August

2024) due to factors such as macroeconomic data and monetary policy expectations in major economies.

The administration added that the combined effects of currency and asset price changes led to the increase in China's foreign exchange reserves in August.

China's economic operation is generally stable and the long-term growth trend remains unchanged, which will help sustain the stability of the scale of foreign exchange reserves in the country, said the administration.

Japan's second quarter GDP growth revised down to 2.9%

Tokyo, Japan – Japan's real GDP grew an annualised rate of 2.9% in the April-June quarter, revised down from an initially reported 3.1%, as private consumption and capital spending were not as high as previously thought, the Cabinet Office said Monday.

Despite the downward revision, the figure marked the first growth in two quarters as the negative impact of a safety data-rigging scandal in the auto sector eased, helping to boost personal consumption.

Real gross domestic product, adjusted for inflation, grew 0.7% from the previous quarter, compared with the preliminary reading of 0.8%. GDP is the total value of goods and services produced in a country.

Capital investment, reported earlier as an increase of 0.9%, was revised down to growth of 0.8% in the April-June period.

Private consumption, which accounts for more than half of GDP, increased 0.9%, marking the first rise in five quarters, but the figure was smaller than the earlier reported 1.0% gain due to weaker-than-expected demand for confectionery and dining out.

The GDP figures were in line with the government's view that the world's fourth-largest economy is recovering at a moderate pace, backing the case for the



Japan's exports climbed 1.5% in the second quarter of 2024 helped by auto shipments

Private consumption, which accounts for more than half of Japan's GDP, increased 0.9%, marking the first rise in five quarters, but the figure was smaller than the earlier reported 1.0% gain

Bank of Japan to raise its policy rate further, following its second hike this year in July.

"The downward revision is within the scope of a minor adjustment and there is no change to the view that the economy is recovering moderately," Shinichiro Kobayashi, a senior economist at Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting.

"Although the economy is ex-

pected to continue expanding in the July-September quarter, it may not grow as much as expected due to sluggish consumer spending," Kobayashi said, citing such factors as cancellations of travel plans due to unstable weather conditions and a government advisory last month on a potential megaquake.

Meanwhile, year-on-year growth in real wages in June and

July is likely to support private consumption, Kobayashi said.

According to the Cabinet Office, exports climbed 1.5%, upwardly revised from 1.4%, helped by auto shipments. Public investment climbed 4.1%, revised down from 4.5%.

Nominal GDP grew at an annualised rate of 7.2%, slower than the previously reported 7.4%.

On a nominal basis, Japan's GDP totalled 607.58tn yen (\$4.3tn), surpassing 600tn yen for the first time – a target set by the government in 2015 under former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Kyodo News

Google faces new lawsuit over ad-tech monopoly

New York, US – Google was set to face its second antitrust trial since September 2023 against the US Department of Justice (DOJ) on Monday, this time over its alleged monopolistic power in the ad-tech industry.

The DOJ is filing a lawsuit against Google arguing their advertising technology services creates an unequal field for their competitors and has allowed them to create a monopoly in the advertising space, leading to higher ad prices for customers, according to a Fox Business report.

For Google, their ad-tech service revenue accounts for 77% of their total earnings. The tech giant brought in a total of \$307bn in 2023, but \$237bn of that was produced through Google's advertising services, according to Google's annual revenue report.

This is coming as a judge ruled in August that Google created a monopoly in the search engine space, forcing their competitors such as, DuckDuckGo, Bing and Yelp, to deal with anticompetitive practices. In a failing argument, Google claimed their search engine was such a superior product, and they shouldn't be held responsible for their com-



petitors' inferior practices, which is a similar argument they are expected to make in this upcoming hearing.

In the advertising sector of Google, they operate the buying, selling and largest ad exchange, which has many critics saying is an unfair practice. The DOJ cited a Google advertising executive comparing it to "if Goldman or Citibank owned the NYSE (New York Stock Exchange)."

In the court filings, the DOJ argued Google, "forced key competitors to abandon the market for ad tech tools, dissuaded potential competitors from joining the market, and left Google's few remaining competitors marginalized and

unfairly disadvantaged." Google's response to these claims in the expected arguments they will argue that this lawsuit is a "Backward looking case" and "out of touch with reality."

The trial will be held in Alexandria, Virginia, where the trial is expected to last many weeks.

As the final steps for the search engine case are beginning, the judge is working with both sides to determine the timeline to find a remedy to the case. The DOJ is expected to provide a detailed remedy proposal to Google by the end of the year. The judge says there will need to be a solution by August 2025.

China's deflation crisis puts global markets 'at risk'

Dubai, UAE – As China faces growing economic challenges, global investors are being urged by one of the world's largest independent financial advisory and asset management organisations to reassess their strategies in light of increasing deflationary pressures in the world's second-largest economy.

The message from Nigel Green, the CEO of deVere Group, comes as recent data from the National Bureau of Statistics indicates that China's industrial producer prices fell by 1.8% year-on-year in August, marking the steepest decline in four months. This decline comes on the back of weakening sectors such as steel and agriculture and further underlines the broader concerns about the country's sluggish economic performance.

The recent figures starkly contrast with July's 0.8% drop and also fell short of analysts' expectations of a 1.4% decline.

At the same time, China's consumer price index, which rose by a mere 0.6% year-on-year, underscores the persistent lack-luster demand in the economy. While this slight uptick exceeded July's 0.5% increase, it still came in below the 0.7% rise anti-



ipated by many analysts.

"The subdued inflation figures suggest that many of China's manufacturers, food processors, and other key industries continue to grapple with weak domestic demand and pricing power, reflecting deeper economic vulnerabilities that could have significant global repercussions," observes Nigel Green.

"These developments raise urgent concerns for international investors, as China's economic performance often serves as a bellwether for global markets."

The deflationary forces at play in the Chinese economy are a worrying signal of broader economic instability. As former central bank governor Yi Gang highlighted last week, China is in dire need of 'proactive fiscal pol-

icy' and more accommodative monetary measures to stimulate demand and prevent deflation from taking root.

The deVere CEO said, "The country's GDP deflator, a broad measure of price changes, has been negative for several quarters, signaling entrenched deflationary pressures. If left unchecked, deflation could trigger a damaging cycle where companies are forced to cut prices to stay competitive, which in turn squeezes profits, reduces investment, and leads to wage cuts and layoffs."

"The knock-on effect of such a cycle would be diminished consumer spending, further weakening domestic demand and exacerbating economic stagnation."

Draghi calls for EU common borrowing

Brussels, Belgium – Ex-Italian Premier Mario Draghi has called for common EU borrowing and an end to national vetoes in a landmark report on economic competitiveness presented to the EU executive on Monday.

The long-awaited report, originally due in June, proposes a "new industrial strategy for Europe", saying that the era of open, rules-based trade is on its way out.

His findings, drafted with the aid of European Commission officials, come just days before its President Ursula von der Leyen is due to set out the duties of top lieutenants for her next five-year mandate.

"The EU should move towards regular issuance of common safe assets to enable joint investment projects among member states and to help integrate capital markets," the report said – a step towards the controversial idea of eurobonds, in which member states issue collective debt.

The EU already moved in that direction with Next Generation EU, a several-hundred-billion-euro investment plan that came in the wake of COVID-19 – but the idea has raised fears of subsidising weaker member states, among "frugal" member states such as von der Leyen's Ger-



EU should move towards regular issuance of common safe assets to enable joint investment projects among member states and to help integrate capital markets

MARIO DRAGHI

many.

In April, Draghi promised "radical change" amid growing concern over a massive productivity gap with the US, where incomes have grown twice as much as the EU's since 2000, Draghi said.

He is proposing more aggressive measures in response to the massive green tech subsidies offered in China and the US.

"A joint plan for decarbonisation and competitiveness could entail, in specific circumstances, defensive trade measures to level the playing field globally and offset state-sponsored competition abroad," the report said.

"The era of open global trade governed by multilateral institutions looks to be passing," he added, pledging to coordinate the screening of foreign direct

investment, given fears that China is hovering up expertise vital to European innovation and security.

Draghi has some tough messages for the European Commission, which he says needs to exercise more "self-restraint" in regulating.

"The Commission's legislative activity has been growing excessively," he said, saying that over half of small- and medium-sized companies complained of paperwork and regulatory obstacles.

The Italian, who while head of the European Central Bank pledged to do "whatever it takes" to save the euro, also proposed to clip the wings of its Council, the body representing member states which has often blocked EU reforms.

Existing treaty measures "should be leveraged to generalise voting by qualified majority in all policy areas in the Council", moving away from a system that lets individual governments veto economic or foreign policy plans, the report said.

Recent months have seen Hungary block a 50bn euro support package for Ukraine, and Estonia put the brakes on reforms to value-added tax. (Source: Euronews.com)

US economy in balance to begin rate cuts, says New York Fed chief

New York, US – The head of the US Federal Reserve Bank of New York said that the American economy is in balance to begin lowering interest rates.

"With the economy now in equipoise and inflation on a path to 2%, it is now appropriate to dial down the degree of restrictiveness in the stance of policy by reducing the target range for the federal funds rate," John C Williams said in his remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City.

"The significant progress we have seen toward our objectives

of price stability and maximum employment means that the risks to the two sides of our dual mandate have moved into equipoise," he added.

Williams said supply and demand imbalances have dissipated, labor market conditions have eased, and inflation has come down significantly in recent months.

He noted that labour market is now roughly in balance and therefore unlikely to be a source of inflationary pressures going forward.

"We've come a long way



from the unacceptably high inflation and overheated labour market that we experienced two years ago," he said.

"Monetary policy has been unequivocally focused on returning inflation to our 2 percent longer-run target. The risks to our two goals are now in better balance, and policy needs to adjust to reflect that balance."

The Fed's next two-day monetary policy meeting will conclude on September 18 when it is widely expected to make its first rate cut in more than four years.

Last week, Atlanta Fed Presi-

dent Raphael Bostic also said the Federal Reserve cannot wait until inflation falling all the way to its 2% target to begin interest rate cuts.

"We must not maintain a restrictive policy stance for too long," he wrote in an article published on the Atlanta Fed website. I believe we cannot wait until inflation has actually fallen all the way to 2% to begin removing restriction because that would risk labor market disruptions that could inflict unnecessary pain and suffering."

Anadolu Agency

Ominvest champions entrepreneurship as main sponsor of Injaz Oman Student

Ominvest, a leading investment company in the region, reaffirmed its commitment to fostering the next generation of Omani entrepreneurs by serving as the main sponsor for the Schools category in the recent Injaz Oman Student Company Programme and Competition.

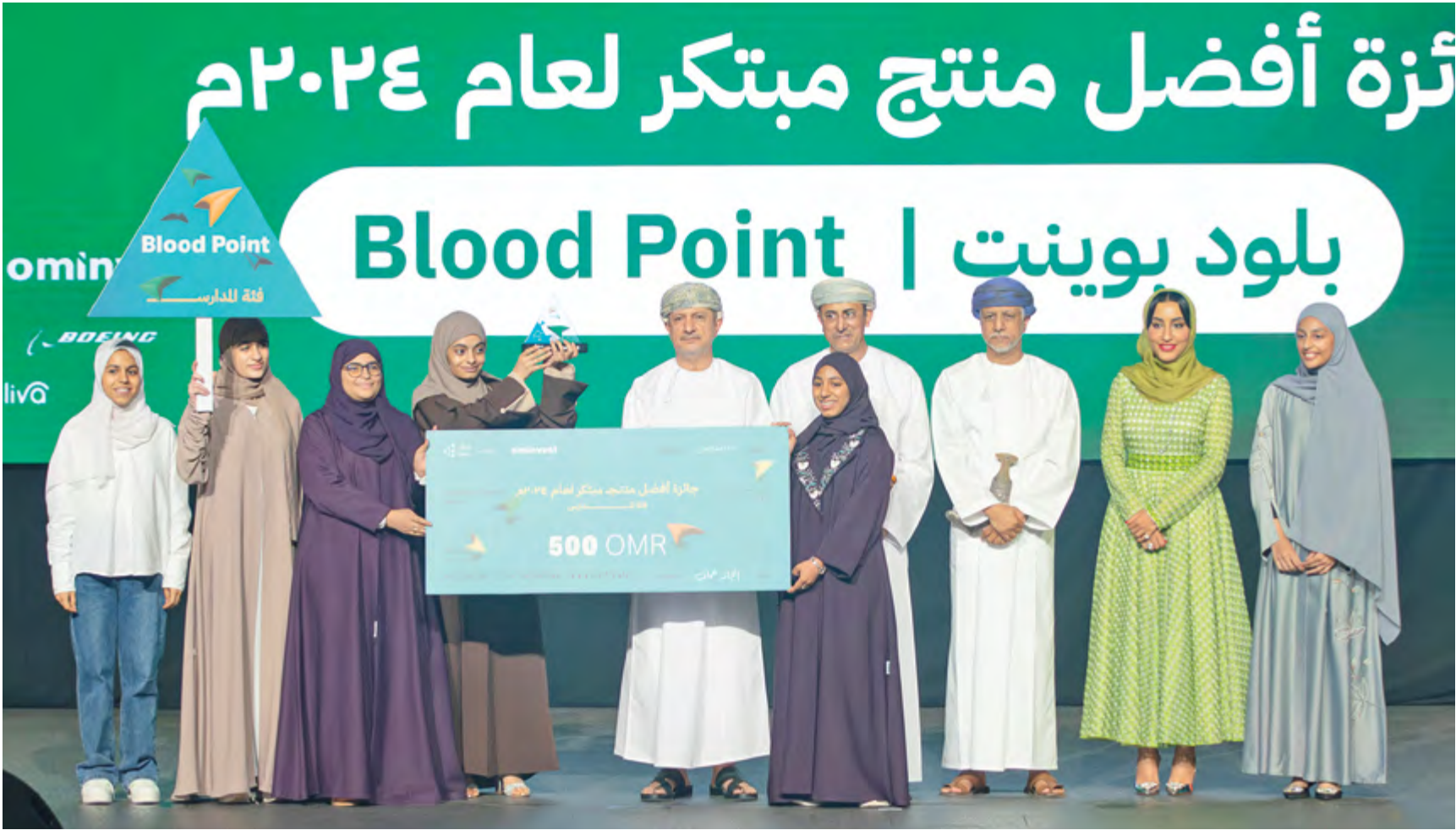
The programme, organised by Injaz Oman, a non-profit dedicated to youth empowerment, culminated in an award ceremony held at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) under the patronage of H E Sultan bin Salem al Habsi, Minister of Finance.

The event celebrated the achievements of student companies across various categories. In the Schools category, Courts company secured the coveted 'Best Student Company Award', earning the opportunity to represent Oman in the Injaz Al-Arab Competition.

The 'Best Innovative Product' award went to Blood Point, while Salaba company received recognition for the 'Best Sustainable Product'.

Abdulaziz Mohammed al Balushi, Group CEO of Ominvest, emphasised the company's dedication to nurturing an entrepreneurial spirit among Omani youth.

"Our continued support of the Injaz Oman programme reflects



our belief in the power of innovation and the potential of young Omanis to drive economic growth," he stated.

"By encouraging students to establish and manage their own companies, we are equipping them with the skills and mindset

needed to thrive in a dynamic business environment."

Injaz Oman, a non-profit organisation, works on preparing youth for the job market, enhancing their financial literacy, developing students' skills, and empowering them to turn their

ideas into innovative projects.

Khaula Hamood al Harthi, CEO of Injaz Oman, praised the level of competition seen in the latest edition of the Student Company programme and competition. She noted that 200 student companies from 72

educational institutions across various governorates participated in the competition, reflecting a heightened awareness among youth of the importance of companies in economic development and their anticipated role in the future.

She said that Injaz Oman aims through the Student Company programme and competition to enhance young people's confidence in their ability to establish successful companies and enter the world of entrepreneurship with greater assurance.

She emphasised that Injaz Oman, with its accumulated experience over the years, will continue to enhance the benefits for youth from the programmes it implements and remain a supporter of their various projects and entrepreneurial ideas. The concept of Courts company focuses on creating a sports platform that brings together venue owners, their clients, academy owners, sports equipment shops, and their customers under one roof.

Anas al Amri, CEO of Courts company, stated that the company aims to create a comprehensive sports community. Through its online platform, the company allows users to book sports venues, register for sports academies, purchase sports equipment, and access many other sports services.

He noted that the competition has fostered teamwork and a drive for success within the team and expressed hope for expanding the company's fields and activities in the future. He also extended his thanks and appreciation to Ominvest for sponsoring the competition.

Ominvest's sponsorship of the Injaz Oman programme is part of its broader commitment to empowering Omani youth and contributing to the nation's economic development.

Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre celebrates 8th anniversary

The Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC) marks its 8th anniversary on Monday, celebrating its evolution into Oman's leading events and exhibitions hub.

Over the past eight years, the OCEC has solidified its position as the sultanate's premier venue, hosting over 250 international and local events annually and welcoming thousands of delegates from around the world.

To commemorate this milestone, a series of staff activities were organised at the OCEC this week.

As a subsidiary of the successful Omran Group, OCEC has played a pivotal role in the development of the Madinat Al Irfan area. With JW Marriott and Crowne Plaza OCEC hotels nearby, the venue has become a business-oriented complex, perfectly positioned for hosting major events, thanks to its proximity



imity to the airport, world-class accommodation, and state-of-the-art facilities.

The OCEC has been a key player in Oman's economic diversification, particularly in the business events sector. Over the last eight years, it has attracted more than 50,000 international

delegates to Oman, creating a platform for critical discussions on the country's future.

Moreover, the OCEC has generated significant economic impact, driving investment and fostering growth across various business sectors. Through its strong collaboration with Omran

Group, the Ministry of Heritage & Tourism, the Oman Convention Bureau, and other key governmental stakeholders, the OCEC remains committed to generating positive economic outcomes for Oman.

The OCEC's impact extends to the business events industry

itself, having created thousands of jobs over the past eight years. With a commitment to employing local talent, the OCEC has maintained an Omanisation rate of over 90%, focusing on providing opportunities for Omani graduates to develop their skills in this growing industry.

In addition, the OCEC has offered valuable work experience to over 500 interns in the past few years, preparing the next generation of professionals in the field of business events.

The venue has also prioritised the career development and long-term training of its staff, with many senior executives and managers participating in national training programmes to enhance their skills.

"The OCEC is more than just a venue; it is a space where meaningful conversations about our country take place," said CEO Said al Shanfari.

Kalyan Jewellers announces winners of giveaway campaign

Kalyan Jewellers, one of the most trusted and leading jewellery brands, has successfully concluded its '50 Days, 25 Winners, 25 Gold Bars' giveaway campaign.

Over the course of 50 days, the jewellery brand has rewarded 50 lucky customers with a 10gm gold bar each, making this a memorable and joyous celebration for patrons in the region. This one-of-its-kind campaign was designed to enhance the shopping experience of Kalyan Jewellers' customers, providing them with an exciting opportunity to win a valuable gold bar every day, the company stated.

Customers who made gold and diamond jewellery purchases of RO50 and above were eligible to participate in this promotional activity. All

the winners were selected at their stores through a raffle draw conducted in the presence of Omani government officials.

Speaking on the campaign, Ramesh Kalyanaraman, Executive Director - Kalyan Jewellers, said, "We are delighted with the overwhelming response to our '50 Days, 25 Winners, 25 Gold Bars' giveaway campaign." At Kalyan Jewellers, he said, "we have been committed to enhancing the shopping experience of patrons with unique offers and exceptional service".

"The response garnered by this initiative is a testament to our efforts in ensuring that patrons garner maximum benefits on their jewellery purchases from Kalyan Jewellers," he added.



Japan embassy holds Manga seminar

In celebration of the commencement of 'Ryoma Manga Seminar' in Sur, the Arab Tourism Capital for 2024, the Embassy of Japan, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth, hosted a reception at the Sur Grand Hotel on September 1.

The event was graced by the presence of Yousef bin Salem bin Nasser al Mukhaini, member of

the Shura Council representing the wilayat of Sur.

During his speech, H E Jota Yamamoto, Ambassador of Japan to Oman, reaffirmed the significant role that manga plays in strengthening the friendship between Japan and Oman.

He expressed hope that the seminar participants would excel as ambassadors of Japanese

manga.

Starting on the same day, the manga seminar organised by the Ministry began at the Youth Centre in the wilayat of Sur.

Japanese manga artistes Yoshihiro Iwagami and Yuka Yamashita, invited from Kochi Prefecture, Japan, are providing lectures to participants on the art of manga creation.

Projects on drug, substance abuse awarded

The Ministry of Health (MoH), in collaboration with the National Committee for Narcotics and Psychoactive Substances (NCNPS), honoured the winning projects on drug and psychoactive substance abuse, at a ceremony held at the Movenpick Hotel on Monday.

As part of ongoing efforts to combat the spread of drugs and psychotropic substances due to their negative impact on individuals and society, MoH held the third edition of the community competition aimed at reducing drug and substance abuse in the sultanate.

The ward ceremony was inaugurated by H E Dr Mohammed Said al Maamari, Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs, in the presence of ministers, undersecretaries, governors and



wakees, along with representatives from various government and non-governmental sectors.

The competition aims to enhance the role of Wilayat Health Committees by encouraging them to adopt service projects that address priority issues within their communities.

It seeks to foster collaboration among community members and various sectors, promote community involvement in projects aimed at reducing drug and psychoactive substance abuse, and instill the concept of volunteerism.

The competition further en-

courages positive participation for the common good and strengthens social cohesion by addressing addiction issues and fostering innovation and creativity in problem-solving approaches.

At the end of the ceremony, the patron of the event honoured the winners of the third edition of the community competition. Salalah's (Determined) project for a safe and promising society won the first place, while the second place was granted to Mutrah with a project that showcased resilience and teamwork under the slogan 'Together We Unite'.

Rustaq received third place for its well-structured training programme aimed at achieving sustainable development, while the fourth place was obtained by two wilayats - Mudhaibi and Shinas.



Milano hosts annual traders meet in Oman

Milano, a leading brand in bath and home solutions under the Danube Group, recently held its annual Traders Meet at the Sheraton Muscat.

The event welcomed around 500 traders from across the region, celebrating Milano's impressive growth and reaffirming its commitment to strengthening partnerships with its extensive trader network.

Milano has established itself as a trusted household name in Oman, known for its range of high-quality and affordable products, including sanitaryware, doors, electrical items, and hardware solutions.

While the brand has a strong presence in urban and suburban areas, it is also expanding its reach to traders in more remote regions such as Ibri, Ibra, Duqm, Nizwa, Sinaw, Al Ashkhara, Izki, Jalan Bu Ali al Kamil wa al Wafi, Sur, Quriyat, Shinas, Wadijizi, and Liwa.

This expansion reflects Milano's dedication to making its products accessible to a broader customer base, the company stated.

During the event, Anis Sajan, Vice Chairman of Danube Group and the visionary behind Milano, spoke about the brand's deep connection with Oman.

"Milano found its wings in Oman, where it has grown to become a trusted and beloved name for high-quality, affordable home solutions. Our traders have been the driving force behind this success, and their dedication and commitment have been pivotal in helping us expand our footprint," said Anis Sajan.

"With their support, we have not only captured urban markets

but are also reaching more remote regions, ensuring that every customer can experience the quality and affordability that Milano stands for."

To recognise the invaluable contributions of its traders, Milano announced an exclusive incentive: a trip to Sri Lanka for those who achieve their sales targets by December 2024.

This initiative continues Milano's tradition of rewarding its top-performing partners, following previous trips to Switzerland and Italy.

These incentives are designed to motivate traders and foster a strong sense of community and loyalty within Milano's network.

"Our traders are the backbone of Milano's growth. These trips are a small token of appreciation for their hard work and dedication, and they reflect our commitment to celebrating our partners' successes," added Anis Sajan.

The event also marked a new chapter in Milano's leadership with the introduction of Sahil Sajan as the new Director of Milano.

Sharing his enthusiasm and vision, Sahil Sajan stated, "I am honoured to take on this role and work closely with our incredible team and our dedicated traders, who are the cornerstone of Milano's success. Together, we aim to push boundaries, bring innovative solutions to the market, and continue to strengthen Milano's presence both regionally and globally."

In a strategic move to enhance its market appeal, Milano also announced Bollywood actress Chitrangda Singh as its new brand ambassador.

BankDhofar strengthens network through 129 branches in sultanate

BankDhofar is proud to announce the launch of its new 'Relationship Banking' campaign, anchoring on its commitment to provide a banking experience that is not only highly personalised but also deeply human.

With 129 branches across the sultanate, the bank is dedicated to maintaining and nurturing the strong bonds, it built over the past thirty-four plus years.

In a world increasingly driven by technology, BankDhofar stands out by prioritising the human element of banking. The bank implemented VoC (Voice of Customer) tool across service led platforms including 24x7 contact centre thus ensuring the bank to capture the customer's feedback, conducting regular self-assessment exercises to identify areas for improvement and work to enhance customer service and acting upon customer feedback, to fine tune products, services, and overall customer interaction.

The bank wants to ensure every interaction with the bank is exceptional and make banking more rewarding by delivering ex-



ceptional experiences at every touchpoint.

BankDhofar believes that banking is more than just transactions - it's personal relationships, the bank stated in a release. 'Our new campaign, 'Banking that is proudly human', reflects our commitment to this

belief. We are more than just a bank; we are a partner in your financial journey,' the bank added.

'Every interaction with our customers is guided by the principles of trust, understanding, and a shared vision for the future', the bank pointed out.

Amjad Iqbal al Lawati, Chief

Retail Banking Officer at BankDhofar, said that the bank's primary goal is to leverage the relationship banking model to establish BankDhofar as a trusted partner, deepening connections with customers. "We aim to position ourselves as a bank that not only understands

customer's financial needs but also invests time to deliver personalized solutions."

Kamal Uddin Hassan Abdullah al Maraza, GM and Chief Dhofar Islamic Banking Officer asserted that relationships with customers are the guiding principles that drive everything the bank does.

"We are committed to offer sharia'a-compliant solutions that empower customers and reflect the strong bond we built with them. We ensure to offer tailored solutions to make banking more rewarding."

With 129 branches strategically located across Oman, BankDhofar is closer than ever offering a diverse range of products that include life-stage banking services such as Children, Minor, Youth or life-style banking such as Al Rifaa preferred or Al Riadah priority banking as well as Private Banking to meet the needs of Ultra-High-Net-worth customers.

The bank also offers specialised corporate, investment, SME propositions to ensure partnership in national development.

BYD models win '2023 Japan EV of the Year' awards

BYD, the world's leading new energy vehicle manufacturer, earlier this year, achieved a victory in the '2023 Japan EV of the Year' awards, with the BYD Dolphin winning the 'Grand Prix' at the first place and the BYD ATTO 3 ranks third.

This marks the first time a Chinese carmaker has received such accolades.

The BYD Dolphin, the second model launched in the Japanese market, garnered the most votes with its exceptional performance, cutting-edge driving assistance technologies and accessibility.

The pure electric hatchback is also engineered with precision to cater to the needs of the Japanese market. The overall height, for instance, has been modified to accommodate mechanical parking facilities that are commonly found in Japan.

The BYD Atto 3, slated for third place, is the first BYD new



energy passenger vehicle sold in Japan. It has received widespread acclaim and recognition for its stylish exterior design, spacious interior and outstand-

ing performance. As one of the most pioneering pure electric SUVs in the market, the vehicle underscores BYD's commitment to driving experience and to

blending aesthetic appeal with functionality.

The '2023 Japan EV of the Year', hosted by the esteemed EV industry media EVsmart and energy consultant Enechange, aims to recognise outstanding electric vehicles and manufacturers that have excelled in the Japanese market. The accolades, determined by votes from journalists, key figures in EV-related companies, and readers, highlight BYD's influential presence and reaffirm its leadership in the electric vehicle domain.

This prestigious award not only signifies BYD's dedication to leveraging "technological innovations for a better life", as well as its commitment to the Japanese market. Since 2022, BYD has consistently been devoted to providing Japanese consumers with electric vehicles of superior quality and performance. Looking forward, BYD will keep driving forward to expand its contribution to Japan's green mobility landscape, contributing to the company's vision to "Cool the Earth by 1°C".

Range Rover Evoque redefines luxury in sophisticated design, technologies

The Range Rover Evoque, a hallmark of contemporary luxury, continues to set the benchmark for comfort, convenience, and wellbeing in the SUV segment.

With its sleek, reductive design and the integration of state-of-the-art technologies, the Evoque delivers a driving experience that is both serene and sophisticated. Now, starting at just RO311 per month, the Range Rover Evoque redefines what it means to travel in style.

The Range Rover Evoque is engineered to create a sanctuary on wheels, offering a suite of advanced features designed to enhance comfort and wellbeing for all occupants. Central to this is the Cabin Air Purification Plus system, one of the most sophisticated interior air quality technologies available in its class.

This system ensures that the cabin environment is not only clean but also conducive to wellbeing and alertness. By purging the cabin air before each journey, it helps to reduce allergens and particulates, making the Evoque an ideal choice for health-conscious drivers and their families.

Driving the Evoque is an experience in itself, thanks to its advanced chassis systems. Both



Adaptive and Configurable Dynamics contribute to a ride that is smooth, composed, and cossetting, ensuring that every journey is as comfortable as it is enjoyable. Whether navigating city streets or cruising on the highway, the Evoque provides the refinement and comfort that

are synonymous with the Range Rover brand.

In keeping with its luxury pedigree, the Range Rover Evoque offers a wide range of materials and finishes, allowing clients to tailor the vehicle to their specific tastes and preferences. The interior features a cu-

rated collection of tactile materials, including non-leather options such as Ultrafabrics and Kvadrat textile seats. These materials offer a contemporary alternative to traditional leather, providing a unique blend of luxury, comfort, and sustainability. The Kvadrat wool blend fabric, available ex-

clusively in the Evoque, is 58% lighter than leather and delivers a modern, tactile experience inspired by bespoke tailoring.

At the heart of the Evoque's interior is an 11.4-inch curved glass touchscreen, which appears to float within the driver's eyeline for enhanced visibility

and ease of use. This design not only liberates space for interior storage but also integrates Wireless Device Charging, ensuring that your devices are always ready for use. Powered by the intuitive Pivi Pro system, the touchscreen offers a seamless digital experience, enhanced by regular Software Over the Air updates and built-in Amazon Alexa, ensuring that the Evoque stays ahead of the curve in terms of connectivity and user experience.

For those seeking the best of both worlds, the Range Rover Evoque's plug-in electric hybrid model is the perfect solution. With an electric-only range of up to 62km, this model allows drivers to complete their average daily journeys with zero tailpipe emissions, making it an eco-friendly option without compromising on performance. The hybrid system is complemented by the Remote App, which allows users to check key information about their Evoque, including fuel level, location, and journey history. The app also enables remote locking and unlocking, and even the initiation of climate control through the Park Heat function, ensuring the cabin

is at the perfect temperature before you step inside.

Mohsin Hani Bahrani, CEO of MHD ACERE, said, "The Range Rover Evoque goes beyond simply being an SUV; it makes a statement about modern luxury and technological innovation. In every aspect of the Evoque, we've committed to providing unparalleled comfort, refined design, and leading-edge technology."

"We have carefully crafted this vehicle to meet the evolving needs of our discerning clients, offering them not just a mode of transportation, but a sanctuary on wheels. The Evoque is designed to exceed expectations and set new standards in the luxury SUV segment."

With its focus on comfort, wellbeing, and convenience, the Evoque continues to redefine the standards of luxury driving, offering a tranquil and sophisticated experience tailored to the needs of today's discerning clients. Whether you are drawn to its advanced air purification systems, its customizable luxury interiors, or its innovative hybrid technology, the Evoque is designed to exceed your expectations at every turn.

Will Ukraine soon use its own missiles?

Missiles Ukraine receives from allies have range and deployment limitations for use on Russian territory

Kyiv, Ukraine - Since Russia began its war in Ukraine in February 2022, its military has regularly used long-range weapons manufactured at home. However, Ukrainian forces have not been able to counter with their own weapons.

Furthermore, the missiles Ukraine receives from its allies have range and deployment limitations regarding its use on Russian territory.

To change the country's defence and reduce its dependence on weapons supplies from its partners, Ukraine has been working to implement its own missile programme.

"Russians will find it quite difficult even to pronounce the name. It will be just as difficult for them to defend themselves against this drone. But understanding what they've done to deserve it won't be a problem," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky joked about the new Palyanytsya combat drone.

'Palyanytsya' is the Ukrainian word for bread and is often used humorously, as most Russians have trouble pronouncing it.

Zelensky said during a speech in late August to celebrate the country's Independence Day that 'the first and most successful combat use of our new weapon has already taken place'.

"There are some components coming from abroad, but the design and the full manufacturing comes from Ukraine," Alexander Kamyshin, Ukraine's Minister of Strategic Industries, told DW.

According to United24, a Ukrainian government site which posted the video of the Palyanytsya drone, Ukrainian specialists developed this weapon over the course of a year and a half. Palyanytsya is equipped with a turbojet engine and, therefore, has a much higher speed than drones with combustion engines. It is also furnished with several



Ukraine has stepped up its local arms' production industry as missiles from its allies come with limitations and dependence

guidance systems.

The main targets of the 'Palyanytsya' combat drones are likely going to be the around 20 Russian military airfields from which Russia has been firing at Ukraine. Some are between 600 and 700km (372 and 434 miles) from the Ukrainian border.

According to United24, the cost of the combat drone is 'much lower than that of analogue missiles', and further price reductions and an expansion of production are expected. All other information remains classified.

However, Serhiy Zgurets, CEO of the Ukrainian media company Defence Express, told DW that as the drone data is not yet fully available, it is not possible to accurately assess the effectiveness of the Palyanytsya.

"At the moment, range is the

only parameter that helps us to evaluate the weapon, however, the range is not the most important thing, but rather the weight of the warhead and the accuracy of the hit."

Neptun sea and land-based missiles

Shurez told DW that Ukraine has achieved some achievements in its missile programme in recent years.

"For example, the series of anti-tank weapons, such as Stugna and Corsair, are currently in mass production. Or the R-360 Neptun anti-ship missile. This product from the Kyiv design bureau Lutsch has been in service with the armed forces since 2020, as has the RK-360MC coastal missile system, designed to detect and destroy enemy ships of various classes," he said.

Ukraine is certainly capable of producing sufficient amounts of rockets for a war with Russia. You cannot underestimate Ukrainians in respect of this kind of technology

FRANK LEDWIDGE

A Neptun missile has a 150kg warhead and a range of up to 300km.

On April 13, 2022, one of the most significant events of the Ukrainian-Russian war took place: two Neptun missiles sank

the Russian flagship Moskva.

In 2023, it transpired that Ukrainian designers had modified the Neptun sea-based missile into versions capable of hitting both ships and land targets.

A Ukrainian Ministry of Defence representative told the American news and analysis website The War Zone that the new weapon has a new guidance system but is launched from the same launcher as the sea-based missile. The official said that the modified Neptun has a range of about 400km and a 350kg warhead, more than twice as much as the anti-ship version.

The Ukrainian military has already used the modified Neptun missile on several occasions.

What's new in missile programme?

According to media reports,

Ukraine also deployed missiles of the S-200 air defence system to strike deep into Russia last year.

These missiles have now been modified so that they can also hit ground targets. Kyiv has not officially confirmed this, but a government representative told BBC Ukraine that such work is underway: "In the current circumstances, we have to find a way out. We have found the solution with S-200, and it seems to be working well so far."

The S-200 was officially decommissioned in Ukraine in 2013. The country also utilised modernised Soviet Tu-141 Strizh surveillance drones. These drones have a turbo engine and can reach around 1,000km per hour (621 miles per hour). According to the Ukrainian Defence Intelligence Service, these drones damaged Russian Tu-95 long-

range bombers in Engels in 2023.

First ballistic missile

Then, in late August, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky celebrated the successful test of the first local ballistic missile. "Ukraine ultimately needs to achieve the highest level of defence independence," he emphasised. Selensky did not, however, say which type of missile was involved.

Citing secrecy, the Ministry of Defence refused to comment on the missile programme to DW. It was only pointed out that the national budget funds the missile programme.

However, it is known that the Ukrainian defence industry has been developing a ballistic missile since 2006.

This is the short-range missile Sapsan, which has a fuselage diameter of 0.9 metres and a range of 500km. The missile is known under its export name Hrim-2. Ukraine is said to have produced Hrim-2 with a diameter of 0.6 metres and a range of 280km for Saudi Arabia.

Since the outbreak of the war, the development of the Sapsan has not been commented on publicly, although Russia has repeatedly claimed to have downed Ukrainian Hrim-2 missiles.

"Ukraine is certainly capable of producing sufficient amounts of rockets for a war with Russia," Frank Ledwidge, a British military analyst and former British military intelligence officer, told DW.

"You cannot underestimate Ukrainians in respect of this kind of technology," he added. "Before the war, they were certainly within the top 10 world's space powers because they had this expertise in building rocket missiles and suchlike," he said. "Just by way of illustration: Elon Musk's favourite rocket, apart from his own, is Zenith, made in Ukraine." dw



Joint China-US team develops drug for deadly brain cancer

Istanbul, Turkey - In a significant scientific collaboration, researchers from China and the US have developed a potential treatment for glioblastoma, the most aggressive and deadly form of brain cancer.

The study, published in Small Science journal, details how scientists from Renmin Hospital in Wuhan, China, and Yale University in the US created nanoparticles that can identify and attack tumour cells in mice. This promising development may pave the way for more effective treatments for glioblastoma, a cancer that has proven resistant to many therapies.

Glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) poses a unique challenge to researchers due to the difficulty in delivering drugs across the blood-brain barrier while effectively targeting cancer cells. However, the joint team's innovation centres on a novel 'phytochemical nanomaterial' called bardoxolone methyl, which forms spindle-shaped nanoparti-

cles. These nanoparticles have demonstrated a remarkable ability to penetrate brain tumours in lab tests, providing a potential breakthrough in the fight against GBM.

The new drug disrupts specific molecular processes that

This promising development may pave the way for more effective treatments for glioblastoma, a cancer that has proven resistant to many therapies

contribute to the growth and survival of glioblastoma cells. With little progress made in glioblastoma treatment over recent decades, this discovery offers renewed hope for patients suffering from this highly lethal cancer.

Anadolu Agency

Polls reveal tight race between Trump, Harris

Washington, D.C., US - With the US presidential election just two months away, recent polls reveal a tight race between Republican nominee and former President Donald Trump and Democratic candidate and Vice President Kamala Harris.

A survey conducted by The New York Times and Siena College shows Trump with a narrow lead at 48%, just one percentage point ahead of Harris. However, when averaging polls conducted across the nation, Harris has edged ahead with 49%, giving her a 2-point lead over Trump.

The poll results highlight the competitive nature of the race as



Republican nominee Donald Trump and Democratic candidate Kamala Harris

the candidates prepare for their first televised debate on September 10. The debate, set to take

place at ABC News' studios in New York, will be a crucial moment for both candidates as they

vie for voters' support ahead of the November 5 election.

Nearly 30% of the respondents admitted they were not well-informed about Harris's political stance, indicating potential challenges for the Democratic candidate in solidifying her platform with the electorate. On the other hand, a majority of voters believe they have an understanding of Trump's political views.

As the election approaches, both candidates are expected to intensify their campaigns, focusing on key battleground states and undecided voters who could swing the outcome of the race.

Anadolu Agency

Surge in wildfires across Southwestern US

California, US - A dangerous heat wave sweeping across the Southwestern US has triggered a surge in wildfires, particularly in California and Nevada, forcing tens of thousands of residents to flee their homes as firefighters struggle to contain the flames.

Nevada Governor Joe Lombardo declared a state of emergency on Sunday due to the rapidly spreading Davis Fire, located south of Reno. Around 20,000 people have already been evacuated as the fire continues to grow. "State agencies are working diligently to support local partners as we mitigate and eliminate this fire together," Lombardo stated on X, formerly Twitter.

Meanwhile, in California, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an



emergency declaration on Saturday for San Bernardino County, where the uncontained Line Fire is endangering over 11,000 residents. The National Interagency Fire Centre reports that seven

major wildfires are currently burning across the state, with the Line Fire alone scorching nearly 17,500 acres and threatening 35,000 structures.

Firefighters in San Bernardino

County face the added challenge of an excessive heat warning in effect until Monday evening, as issued by the US National Weather Service.

Anadolu Agency

Pope Francis arrives in East Timor

Dili, East Timor - Pope Francis arrived in the Southeast Asian nation of East Timor on Monday for a three-day visit including an open-air Mass expected to attract about half of the small island nation's population.

The 87-year-old pontiff is on his longest overseas journey yet - a 12-day Asia-Pacific tour spanning the four nations of Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Singapore.

The Vatican said organisers expected crowds between 700,000 to 750,000 to attend the Mass on Tuesday - more than half of the nation's 1.3mn population. The gathering was set to take place at the Tasitolu coastal area, a place of historic significance where Indonesian forces were known to bury killed Timorese freedom fighters.

The Pope is expected to address East Timor's authorities in a speech on Monday.

East Timor gained independence from its neighbour Indonesia in 2002 after a brutal, decades-long occupation. The country is among the most Catholic nations in the world, with the Vatican saying some 96 per cent of Timorese are believers in the faith.

dw

Hundreds pay farewell to activist killed by Israeli army

Nablus, Palestine - Hundreds of Palestinians in the West Bank city of Nablus paid farewell on Monday to Turkish-American activist Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, who was killed by Israeli forces on Friday.

The funeral procession began from Rafidia Government Hospital in Nablus, with mourners walking through several streets, chanting slogans condemning Israeli actions and praising foreign supporters, according to an Anadolu reporter.

Mourners performed the funeral prayer, led by Nablus Governor Ghassan Daghlash, with the participation of leaders from various Palestinian factions and a large public turnout.

The body, carried on shoulders, was wrapped in the Palesti-

nian flag, with the head covered by the traditional Palestinian keffiyeh.

Eygi's body is expected to be transported to Turkey.

Eygi, 26, a dual citizen of Turkey and the US, was shot dead by Israeli forces during a Friday protest against illegal Israeli settlements in the town of Beita in the occupied West Bank.

Early on Monday, Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesperson Oncu Keceli announced that his country is working to facilitate the handover of Eygi's body.

"We continue the necessary work to deliver the body of our citizen Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, who was killed by Israeli soldiers in the West Bank, to her family for burial," Keceli wrote on X.



Turkish-American activist Aysenur Ezgi Eygi

The Israeli military has yet to comment on the specifics of the incident or the findings of the autopsy.

Eygi's killing echoes the case of American-Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, who was killed in a similar manner in 2022.

Eygi, 26, a dual citizen of Turkey and the US, was shot dead by Israeli forces during a protest against illegal Israeli settlements in West Bank

Meanwhile, Germany on Monday deplored Israel's killing of the peace activist in the West Bank.

"This is a terrible incident that

needs to be clarified. The Israeli army and government are responsible for doing this," Foreign Ministry deputy spokesman Christian Wagner said at a press conference in Berlin.

Besides, Stephen Kapos, a Holocaust survivor, and his family have joined many to speak up against the killing of Eygi.

In an interview with Anadolu, Kapos, an 87-year-old Holocaust survivor from Budapest, Hungary termed the killing 'outrageous'. "I think it's an obvious outrage because she was, I think, deliberately targeted," he said during a march for Palestine in London over the weekend.

Kapos also called out the double standards in coverage of Israeli violence against Palestinians, saying the killing should not be paid more attention to than the killing of thousands of Palestinians since October 7 last year.

"It points out the double standards of thousands of others. Palestinians are also being assassinated, murdered and nobody takes an equal amount of interest at all."

He added that it also shows 'the difference in human value given to a Western connected person or a Palestinian, and it should be equal, equal attention, equal treatment'.

Kapos was accompanied by his family members during the march, including his son Peter and daughter Andrea under a banner that said: 'Holocaust survivor descendants against Gaza genocide'.

Anadolu Agency



Israeli strikes hit central Syria; at least 14 killed

Istanbul, Turkey - Israeli strikes hit central Syria late on Sunday, killing at least 14 people and wounding 43 others, as well as causing fires at sites believed to house Iranian forces, according to Syrian state media.

Syrian air defences responded to the attacks, which damaged a highway in the Hama province, with firefighting teams working to control the blazes, the SANA news agency reported. Masyaf National Hospital reported 14 fatalities and 43 injured, with six of them in critical condition.

The Masyaf area, often linked to Iranian forces, has been frequently targeted in attacks attributed to Israel.

The site contains the Scientific Studies and Research Centre (CERS) used by Iran to develop missiles. There has been no comment from Israel on the attacks as of yet. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) claimed the strikes targeted a research centre in Masyaf and

areas near Tartous.

SOHR, often criticised for inflating figures, reported an Iranian militia presence at the sites.

Israel, which rarely comments on operations, has conducted airstrikes in Syria since 2011, focusing on Iranian forces and Hezbollah targets.

Meanwhile, at least four people were wounded early on Monday in an Israeli airstrike in southern Lebanon, the Lebanese Health Ministry said.

The attack targeted the town of Hanine, the ministry added in a statement. The state-run National News Agency said the town came under two Israeli strikes shortly after midnight.

Artillery shelling was also reported in the town of Kfarkela, but no injuries were reported.

Lebanese group Hezbollah, for its part, said its fighters had fired rockets at the Ma'ayan Baruch site in northern Israel, resulting in a direct hit.

Anadolu Agency

Jordan again closes King Hussein Bridge Crossing

Amman, Jordan - Jordan said on Monday that it has again closed the King Hussein Bridge (Allenby) Crossing with the West Bank to both outbound and inbound travellers, as well as cargo, hours after earlier statements regarding its reopening.

In a statement from the Public Security Directorate, which operates under the Interior Ministry, authorities said: "The King Hussein Bridge has been closed to travellers and cargo on Monday until further notice."

The directorate urged those who use the crossing to stay informed through the media regarding any updates on travel operations. Amman had announced the reopening of the King Hussein Bridge for travel on Sunday, with cargo operations suspended, following its closure due to a shooting incident, resulting in the deaths of three Israelis and the attacker.

Israel also closed its border crossings with Jordan, including the Yitzhak Rabin (Wadi Araba) crossing near Eilat, the Allenby Bridge (King Hussein Bridge), and the Jordan River (Sheikh Hussein Bridge) near Beit She'an.

The Allenby Bridge Crossing is one of three border terminals between Jordan and Israel, besides Sheikh Hussein Bridge and the Wadi Araba crossing. The attack came amid rising tensions in the occupied West Bank as Israel presses ahead with its brutal offensive on the Gaza Strip, which has killed nearly 41,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children,



Israel, Jordan had announced closure of King Hussein Bridge crossing after a deadly attack

Israel also closed its border crossings with Jordan, including the Yitzhak Rabin crossing near Eilat, the Allenby Bridge, and the Sheikh Hussein Bridge near Beit She'an

since last October 7.

Meanwhile, Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said on Monday he is working to grant 500,000 illegal settlers in the occupied West Bank 'the same rights of every citizens in Israel'.

"I will continue to work with all my strength to allow the half million settlers who are on the front line and under fire to enjoy the same rights of every citizen in Israel and to establish facts on the

ground that will prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state," Smotrich posted on X.

"My life's mission is to build the Land of Israel and thwart the establishment of a Palestinian state that would endanger the State of Israel," he claimed. "It's not political. It is national and existential," added the leader of the far-right Religious Zionism Party.

Smotrich is responsible for settlement affairs in the occupied

West Bank. The West Bank is home to around half a million illegal Israeli settlers, in addition to more than 230,000 settlers in occupied East Jerusalem.

Last July, the Knesset (Israel's parliament) passed a resolution rejecting the establishment of a Palestinian state, calling it an 'existential threat' to Israel.

Tensions have intensified throughout the occupied West Bank as Israel persisted in its offensive on the Gaza Strip.

At least 692 individuals have since been killed and more than 5,700 injured by Israeli gunfire in the occupied West Bank, according to the Health Ministry.

The escalation follows a significant ruling by the International Court of Justice on July 19, which declared Israel's decades-long occupation of Palestinian territories unlawful and called for the evacuation of all settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Seven killed in Gaza

At least seven people were killed in Israeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip, according to reports.

The Palestinian news agency Wafa said the Israeli military's operations against Gaza have now entered their 339th day.

The report highlighted that several areas in Gaza were subjected to heavy airstrikes and artillery fire overnight.

Anadolu Agency

Turkey to attend Arab League ministerial for 1st time in 13 years

Ankara, Turkey - Turkey is set to participate in the Arab League's Council of Foreign Ministers meeting for the first time in 13 years, following an invitation from the organisation, according to diplomatic sources.

Turkey will join the 162nd council meeting scheduled for Tuesday in Egypt's capital Cairo. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan is expected to deliver remarks during the opening session, focusing on Turkey-Arab League relations and regional issues, especially the situation in Gaza.

Experts say Turkey's invitation is a result of normalisation efforts led by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Fidan played a key role in these diplomatic processes behind closed doors during his tenure as head of Turkey's Na-

tional Intelligence Organization (MIT), fostering ties with Gulf countries.

Fidan's recent participation in the EU's informal meeting of foreign ministers, known as the Gymnich, in August, after a five-year gap, is seen as a reflection of Turkey's global and regional influence under Erdogan's leadership, and Fidan's long-term diplomatic efforts.

Experts also note that convincing Iraq to cooperate against the PKK terrorist group has been a process that Fidan worked on for years under Erdogan's leadership.

The invitation to the Arab League Summit signals an end to the 'negative campaigns' the Arab League previously ran against Turkey and the beginning of a new period of close cooperation, the sources said.



Results of Turkey's foreign policy

Turkey's 'strong and determined foreign policy' has made the country an increasingly active player in promoting stability, peace, and prosperity in both its

immediate geography and the wider region, diplomatic sources said. The sources emphasise that many topics on the Arab League's agenda, especially Palestine, are among the priorities on Turkey's foreign policy agenda.

Noting that Turkey's recently deepening and diversifying relations with Arab countries offer new opportunities for both resolving existing regional problems and establishing future-oriented collaborations

based on mutual benefit, the sources said that enhancing institutional relations and coordination with the Arab League is currently on the agenda.

The sources also mentioned that Fidan's invitation reflects the developing bilateral relations with member states as well as the growing interest in Turkey's role in the region.

The sources recalled Turkey's relations with the Arab League began developing in 2003, with a 'Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and the General Secretariat of the AL' signed in 2004.

The Turkish-Arab Cooperation Forum Framework Agreement, signed in 2007, further solidified these ties. The Arab League mission in Ankara was inaugurated in January 2010.

Recent diplomatic contacts

In recent months, Fidan has engaged with Arab League officials to enhance ties. He met with Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit during a visit to Cairo in October 2023.

On February 28, political consultations were held in Ankara, under the chairmanship of former Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Ahmet Yildiz.

During the 33rd Arab League Summit held in Bahrain on May 16, 'The Arab Ministerial Committee on Turkish Interference in the Internal Affairs of Arab Countries' was dissolved, and no decision regarding Turkey's interference in Arab countries' internal affairs was brought to the agenda and no anti-Turkey stance was included in the summit's declaration.

Anadolu Agency

INDIA

Kharge blasts PM's 'failure' in Manipur

New Delhi - Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge launched a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday over the recent spike of violence, drone and rocket-propelled grenade attacks in Manipur.

In a post on X Mallikarjun Kharge shared: "Prime Minister Modi's abject failure in Manipur is unforgivable."

He said that the former Manipur Governor, Anusuiya Uikey, has echoed the voice of the people of Manipur. She said that the people of the strife-torn state were upset and sad, for they wanted PM Modi to visit them, he added.

He said: "In the past 16 months, PM Narendra Modi has not spent a single second in Manipur, even as violence continues unabated in the state and people suffer the consequences of Modi-Shah's complicity. BJP's Manipur CM who has set a record in shamelessly brazening out his rank incompetence has reportedly demanded the transfer of the 'Unified Command' to the state government."

He said that the Unified Command oversees security operations in Manipur and is currently handled by a team of Union Home Ministry officials, the state security adviser and the Indian Army.

"Just like the PM, it looks like the Union Home Minister has also given up on his Constitutional responsibility to ensure security in Manipur, and is busy politicking and addressing rallies in elections going states. Drone



Charred remains of the vehicles are seen after the drone bombing that occurred at Koutruk village recently, in Imphal West, Manipur on Monday (ANI)

In the past 16 months, PM Modi has not spent a single second in Manipur, even as violence continues unabated in the state and people suffer the consequences of Modi-Shah's complicity

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE

and rocket-propelled grenade attacks have begun, and this is now turning out to be a National Security threat. In such a serious

situation, BJP seems to enact a resignation drama," he further shared.

He said that the Congress de-

manded the immediate dismissal of Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh.

"The Union Govt must take full responsibility of the sensitive security situation. There should be a massive crackdown on all kinds of insurgent groups, with the help of the state forces. The Supreme Court mandated and monitored Manipur Commission of Inquiry into ethnic violence must expedite its investigation. Modi Govt must not misuse CBI, NIA and other

agencies investigating the violence," the Congress President said.

Meanwhile, several students from different schools, colleges and universities in Imphal rallied towards the Raj Bhavan on Monday, demanding the resignation of the Director General of Police, Security Advisor and also the Governor amid the recent spike of violence and crisis that has gripped the northeastern state since last year.

The students further de-

manded the withdrawal of the paramilitary forces and also the resignation of the 50 MLAs on moral grounds. The students were carrying banners and posters as they walked towards the Raj Bhavan. "This rally is to give the information to the concerned authorities that there is no difference between living in a cage and living in the Imphal Valley," said the General Secretary of Dhanamanjuri University Student Union.

ANI

Total ban on firecrackers in Delhi till year end

New Delhi - The Delhi government has announced a complete ban on production, storage, sale, and use of firecrackers in the national capital to address air pollution during winter. The ban will remain in place till January 1, 2025.

"In a bid to control the rise in pollution levels in Delhi during the winter season, the Kejriwal government has imposed a complete ban on the manufacturing, storing, sale, and usage of firecrackers. Online sale/delivery of firecrackers to also remain prohibited. The prohibitions to remain in effect till 1st January 2025," Delhi Environment Minister, Gopal Rai, said in a statement on Monday.

On Thursday, Gopal Rai said that the Environment Department will use drones to monitor air quality at pollution hotspots as part of a 21-point plan to curb air pollution during the winter session.

"In a first in Delhi, the Environment Department will use drones for real-time air quality monitoring at pollution hotspots as a part of the 21-point Winter Action Plan to curb air pollution in cold months."

ANI

ENHANCING RELATIONS



PM Narendra Modi meets with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khalid bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, in New Delhi (ANI)

Rahul makes 'fantastic start' to US visit

Dallas, US - Calling the Indian diaspora in the US a 'vital bridge' between two nations, Congress MP and Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, has said that Dallas has provided a 'fantastic start' to his three-day US visit.

Gandhi, who arrived in Dallas on Sunday, interacted with students and teachers at the University of Texas. He also addressed the members of the Indian diaspora in Dallas.

Calling his interaction with students and faculty at the University of Texas 'dynamic and engaging', Rahul Gandhi said that they held discussions on politics, production, and skill-respect in India.

On his interaction with the Indian diaspora, Congress MP said that he emphasised key values that are essential to Indian politics, including love, respect, and humility.



Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi interacts with students at the University of Texas, in Dallas, US on Monday (ANI)

In a post shared on Facebook, Rahul Gandhi stated: "I highlighted the importance of embracing India's rich diversity - its languages, cultures, and traditions - while upholding the

principles enshrined in our Constitution. Like the US, India is a union of states, where all languages, religions and communities are equal," he added.

He said that he looks for-

Like the US, India is a union of states, where all languages, religions and communities are equal...The Indian Diaspora serves as a vital bridge between the two countries

RAHUL GANDHI

ward to more meaningful exchanges in the coming days.

The Congress MP was welcomed at the airport by Sam Pitroda, Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, and members of the Indian diaspora.

"The Indian Diaspora serves as a vital bridge between the

two countries, and their commitment to these values strengthens the bond between our two great unions. I am passionate about unleashing India's potential and look forward to more meaningful exchanges in the coming days," Rahul Gandhi said in a post on Facebook.

He stressed that Indian diaspora should bring the idea of India to the US and the ideas of the US to India.

The Congress MP said: "You're the bridge between these two unions - United States of America and the Union of States which is written in our Constitution, and so you have a very important role because the relationship between these two unions is going to determine the future of both these unions. The US needs India and India needs the US."

ANI

NZ detects new mpox case, raising tally to 5 this year

Wellington/Manila - New Zealand on Monday detected a new case of mpox, bringing the total number of confirmed cases of the virus to five this year, the Health Ministry said.

The newly confirmed case has a 'likely' link to the recent Winter Pride Festival in Queenstown, public broadcaster Radio New Zealand reported citing the ministry.

The latest case brings the number of cases of mpox in the Pacific country to 54 since its outbreak in June 2022.

National clinical director Dr Susan Jack said the National Public Health Service is investigating after several people who attended the event - including Monday's case - came into contact with people who later tested positive for mpox overseas.



"While it is possible that other cases may yet be confirmed, it's important to remember that mpox is a rare infection and the risk of it spreading widely in New Zealand remains low," she was

quoted as saying.

Mpox is transmitted to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal, or with material contaminated with the virus. Patients often start ex-

hibiting symptoms with a fever, enlarged lymph nodes, back pain, and muscle aches before a rash appears on the skin, according to the World Health Organization.

The WHO in August declared

the mpox outbreak a global health emergency.

Cases in the Philippines

Meanwhile, the number of active mpox cases in the Philippines has risen to 14 as the country detected six new cases, the Philippines' Department of Health (DOH) said on Monday.

All new active cases carry the less severe strain clade II and no patient has died from the infectious viral disease.

"Despite continued community transmission, the DOH can manage mpox clade II," DOH Assistant Secretary Albert Domingo said. With the new mpox cases, Domingo said the Philippines has now tallied 23 cases since July 2022.

Agencies

Nigeria: Dozens killed in fuel tanker collision

Abuja, Nigeria - At least 48 people were killed on Sunday in a collision between a fuel tanker and another truck in central Nigeria, the country's emergency response agency said.

The crash occurred in the Agaie area of the state of Niger. The victims were burnt beyond recognition and were given a mass burial near the site of the accident.

It was initially unclear how many people were injured.

The truck was carrying cattle, at least 50 of which were burned alive.

Abdullahi Baba-Arab, director-general of the Niger State Emergency Manage-

ment Agency, said that rescue operations were underway at the scene of the accident.

Nigerian media reported that the van loaded with passengers and cattle was travelling from the Wudil area in northern Kano State.

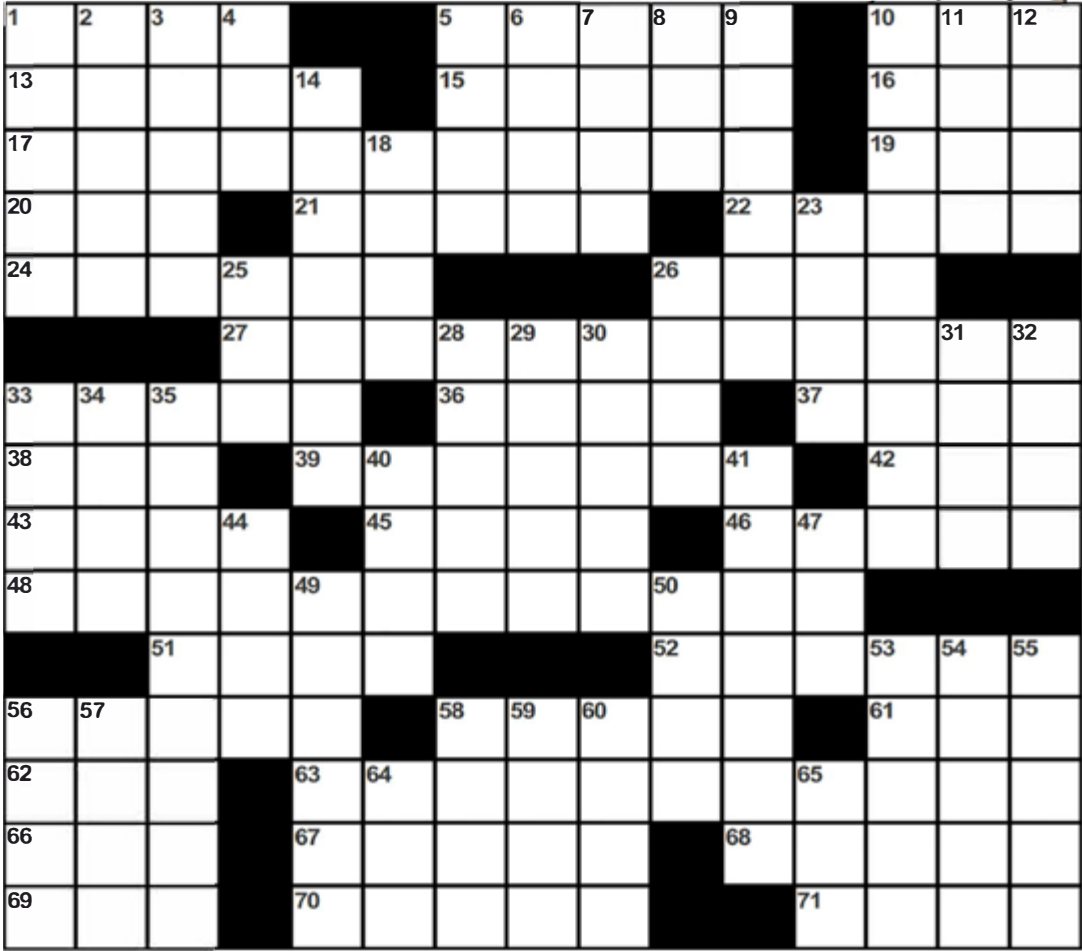
Niger Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago expressed his deep sorrow over the tragedy.

He told residents of the affected area to remain calm and urged drivers to 'always be cautious and abide by road traffic regulations to safeguard lives and property'.

Serious road accidents are common in Nigeria.

DW

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) Successfully pitch
- 5) Reads quickly
- 10) Tick off
- 13) In a tough spot
- 15) Carb-rich fare
- 16) Prankster's missile
- 17) WWII hero-turned-movie mstar
- 19) Uncle Sam costume part
- 20) Shoulder-fired weapon, for short
- 21) "Alice in Wonderland" pastries
- 22) Sandcastle setting
- 24) Trample underfoot
- 26) Roget's abbr.
- 27) Mike Myers' spy
- 3) Lecherous deity
- 36) Son of Seth
- 37) Not of the cloth
- 38) Unreturned serve
- 39) Spread far and wide
- 42) After-school org.
- 43) Bowie's musical genre
- 45) Employs
- 46) For face value, as a stock
- 48) "The Thinker" sculptor

- 51) Tennis legend Arthur
 - 52) Emcees' deliveries
 - 56) Goodie from Linz
 - 58) Titicaca's locale
 - 61) Hobby farm denizen
 - 62) "Tell me more ... "
 - 63) Hanna-Barbera pooch
 - 66) Versatile truck, for short
 - 67) Tot's ride, briefly
 - 68) Family reunion attendee
 - 69) Scale unit
 - 70) Gregory of "Tap"
 - 71) River to the Baltic Sea
- DOWN**
- 1) Marquee names
 - 2) Blow one's stack
 - 3) Place for flowerpots
 - 4) Sweet-smelling neck-lace
 - 5) Railroad siding
 - 6) Links ride
 - 7) Hieroglyphic snakes
 - 8) To the_ degree
 - 9) Verbally refuses
 - 10) Bit of Apple software
 - 11) Delivery door locale
 - 12) Wins let of "Titanic"
 - 14) Highway annoyances
 - 18) Assigns workers to
 - 23) Haunted house sound

- 25) Settle up
- 26) Basilica center
- 28) Flirty sort
- 29) Prefix with "face" or "faith"
- 30) "Au contraire!"
- 31) The Beatles' meter maid
- 32) Emotional wound
- 3 3) "Beowulf," for one
- 34) Scopes trial org.
- 35) Place for an outdoor cuppa
- 40) Pleasing to look at
- 41) Spoils, as a parade
- 44) Has to
- 47) Blaster's need
- 49) Sword holder
- 50) Went kaput
- 53) Made like a hurricane
- 54) Chilling
- 55) Beef on the hoof
- 56) Like a tuned string
- 57) Knowledgeable about
- 58) Opposed, in Dogpatch
- 59) Brand with a "swoosh" logo
- 60) Miserable marks
- 64) Ocean State sch.
- 65) Acqua di_ (men's fragrance)

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Finishing up all your errands isn't that important today. Starting new projects is. So put off picking up your dry cleaning, getting more kitty litter, or stopping to get your oil changed. These things can wait. But when an opportunity or invitation lands right in your lap, you have to take it! Don't let the day-to-day routine make you forget that life is an adventure. Go down an unexplored path today.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Saving money always sounds like a good idea, but it is seldom any fun. If you are feeling a pinch in your wallet, today you will be able to find the creativity and energy you need to start making little alterations that will make a big difference in your bank account. Join in with friends and pool your money for an upcoming social event. Not only are two heads better than one, two cash flows are too! Group outings will help you have a lot of fun without spending too much money.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Today, any secrets you learn are to be kept, not shared. You could be the recipient of a lot of privileged information from a few very influential people. This sudden trust people are putting in you could be a sort of test, and the stakes are high. Do not betray them or disappoint their expectations by letting some confidential stuff leak out. You have to be vigilant about it, because you'll be involved in several very fun conversations and it could be easy to slip up.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. The Trendalyzer software, which enabled display of information in animated bubble graphs, was originally developed by a team working where?

- A. Bjarne Stroustrup
- B. Google
- C. Linus Torvalds
- D. Gapminder Foundation



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

The world is full of opportunities for you to grow, so try to free up some time in your afternoon to take advantage of at least one of them. Your brain is open to new ideas and new ways of doing things, and you are one old dog who is ready to learn some new tricks. If you've been thinking about starting a new hobby, pursuing a new interest, or making a big move toward a new relationship, this is the right day to get things going. Making a change has never felt so exciting.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

You have worked hard to get where you are, and you should feel proud. Just don't be surprised if guilt creeps into your mind. Not everyone is as lucky as you are, and this fact is becoming clearer to you every day. It's time you got involved in a charity or volunteer effort. Doing something for others will make you feel socially useful. Even if you just drop off old clothes at your local shelter, helping others is important.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Controversy will be a helpful shield for you today. It will create a nice loud, distracting noise that will keep everyone busy and out of your hair. Today is the perfect day to put your new ideas to work, so you will need all the elbow room and autonomy you can muster. Get in any research, planning, or organising you need to do as early in the day as possible. By late afternoon, people could be hovering around you again and looking for answers only you can give.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

Family problems are fading now, as the people you're related to are realizing you are your own person. This elevated level of respect is starting to gain momentum, and it's seeping into other areas of your life. Expect even your most judgmental friend to take a "live and let live" attitude about what you choose to do in life. This is a new period of harmony, so enjoy it. It doesn't come around as often as you would like it to.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Every time you get rid of an old idea, assumption, or unwanted item, you make room for a new influx of energy and growth. Today, you could use a big dose of freshness, so see what you can do to empty a few closets (emotional and physical). Whether you toss out a relationship, grudge or old sweater, you'll immediately feel a sense of freedom and relief. You've been released from hanging on to what you thought you needed. The truth is you already have everything you need.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Be careful about how you approach any business deals today, and try not to let your emotions get the better of you. Someone could try to push your buttons, but don't let them. They're bringing up issues to get a rise out of you, not to make any real or valuable points. A well-phrased comment made at the right time will be more effective than any threats they could ever make. Respect other people's arguments, and take note of how each individual behaves in a pinch.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Details, details. Facts and figures are swarming all over you today, and they could create quite a buzz in your brain. Save yourself some stress by getting some advice from the voice of experience. Admit defeat when it's appropriate, and don't suffer a bad outcome just because you are too embarrassed to ask for help. You can turn a day of frustration and shame into a day of enlightenment and learning if you just swallow your pride.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Your charm is going to be so effective today that doors won't just open a little bit so you can elbow your way in. Doors will fly open, revealing a great big sign that welcomes you to come on in. Getting comfortable in a new situation will take you nanoseconds, so it is a perfect day for a big job interview or a trip to an unfamiliar place. Your career could take a giant leap forward if you just relax and let your inner brilliance shine.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Some of the people around you are undergoing exciting changes, and their happiness is contagious. Volunteer to help them with any finishing touches and get in on the good karma they're enjoying. You are as happy for them as you would be for yourself in this situation, and your generous spirit is helping them enjoy their success. Not everyone can be this big-hearted, and they appreciate your support. This is a growth phase for your relationships.

02. The warm Agulhas Current runs along what African coastline?

- A. Mediterranean Sea
- B. The southwest Indian Ocean
- C. Red Sea
- D. Southeast Atlantic Ocean

03. A "bench press" is used in what activity?

- A. Wrestling
- B. Wheel-making
- C. Furniture making
- D. Body building

Answers: 1. D 2. B 3. D

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

N	G	O	I
I	R	I	U
O	S	O	T
D	N	W	S

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

SOLUTION

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

FOREVER YOUNG

Ronaldo’s late goal hands Portugal win over Scotland in Nations League

Lisbon, Portugal - Portugal substitute Cristiano Ronaldo struck a late winner as his side came from a goal down to beat Scotland 2-1 and continue their strong start to the Nations League on Sunday.

After Bruno Fernandes had fired in Portugal’s equaliser, Ronaldo pounced in the 88th minute for his 901st career goal.

Scotland were given hope of a first win against Portugal since 1980 as they took a shock lead through Scott McTominay’s bullet header in the seventh minute.

But the visitors ended up with nothing to show for their efforts as 39-year-old Ronaldo again delivered for his country.

“The influence is always the same, regardless of whether he starts on the bench or not,” Fernandes, who played his 600th career game, said of his former Manchester United team mate.

“Everyone who came on made the difference. Cristiano has a goal, today he scored 901 and now he’s on his way to a thousand, which is what he wants.”

Portugal lead League A Group 1 with six points after they started with a victory over Croatia, who are second on three following a 1-0 win against Poland on Sunday. Scotland have suffered two defeats, both of them to late goals.

The Scots arrived in Lisbon still stinging from a 3-2 home defeat by Poland but the travelling Tartan Army were soon in full voice in the Estadio da Luz as for-



Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates with Diogo Dalot after scoring against Scotland in their Nations League match on Sunday

mer Manchester United midfielder McTominay arrived at the back post to power home a superb cross by Kenny McLean.

Portugal responded to lay siege to Scotland’s goal but keeper Angus Gunn made a string of saves, one a world class effort to keep out Rafael Leao’s

low drive. The hosts had 15 goal attempts before the break but were left frustrated as Scotland dug deep to protect their lead.

Gunn was beaten in the 54th minute though as the ball was pulled back to Fernandes whose shot was well-struck but probably should have been kept out by

the Scotland keeper.

Portugal seemed to have run out of steam but found another gear late on with Joao Felix twice being denied by superb Gunn saves and Ronaldo heading against the inside of the post.

Inevitably, however, Ronaldo stole the limelight with a simple

tap-in from a wicked delivery by Nuno Mendes.

Scotland looked crestfallen as they soaked up another late disappointment in a winless run of eight competitive matches. They have conceded in the 85th minute or later in five of their last six games in all competitions.



Croatia’s Luka Modric celebrates after scoring against Poland in their Nations League match on Sunday

Modric goal helps Croatia beat Poland

Osijek, Croatia - Croatia midfielder Luka Modric scored early in the second half to secure a 1-0 home win over Poland in their Nations League A Group 1 clash on Sunday.

Modric, who turns 39 on Monday, sealed the win in the

The visitors barely threatened Croatia’s box for the majority of the game and home goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic only had to intervene following halftime to deny Nicola Zalewski from Poland’s first attempt on goal out of two in

Portugal, who came from a goal down to beat Scotland 2-1 in their match in Lisbon, top the group with six points ahead of second-placed Croatia and Poland in third, both with three points

52nd minute with an expertly executed free kick from the edge of the box that sailed just under the bar.

Croatia pressed from the start, having been beaten 2-1 by Portugal in their Nations League opener on Thursday, but despite early chances for Duje Caleta-Car and Modric the game was goalless at the break.

total.

Strikers Igor Matanovic and Robert Lewandowski hit the bar for Croatia and Poland respectively later in the second half.

Portugal, who came from a goal down to beat Scotland 2-1 in their match, top the group with six points ahead of second-placed Croatia and Poland in third, both with three points.



Win against Ireland has done my confidence good: Carsley

London, England - Lee Carsley said there were times he wondered if he was out of his depth as England’s interim manager but their 2-0 win over Ireland in Dublin on Saturday in his first game in charge has quietened that self-doubt.

Carsley, who represented Ireland 40 times having qualified to play for the country through his grandmother, has been installed as caretaker while England search for a full-time successor to Gareth Southgate.

The win over Ireland not only gave England the ideal start to their Nations League campaign but may also have boosted Carsley’s chances of filling the role permanently and he will be at the helm on Tuesday against Finland at Wembley.

“You always think it’s easy to be the England manager when you’re sat in the house but there have been times where I’ve thought I’m not sure I could do it,” Carsley said. “But it (the Dublin win) has done my confidence good and the rest of the staff, as well - that, actually, we’re OK, we’ll be all right.

“I spoke about it at the first press conference, (being) a safe pair of hands. I feel like we’re in a good position with the players,” added Carsley, who had been managing England’s Under 21s since 2021 and led them to the European title last year.

Ruiz hits double as 10-man Spain thrash Switzerland

Geneva, Switzerland - Spain’s Fabian Ruiz scored twice as his 10-man side defeated Switzerland 4-1 in the pouring rain in Geneva to earn their first victory in Nations League A Group Four on Sunday and inflict a second successive defeat on the hosts.

Euro 2024 winners Spain had been held to a dull 0-0 draw by Serbia in their pool opener but found their groove in a quick start at the Stade de Geneve as Joselu and Ruiz had them 2-0 up inside 13 minutes.

A red card for Spain defender Robin Le Normand after 20 minutes was a setback and brought Switzerland into the game as Zeki Amdouni pulled a goal back before halftime. But as the Swiss pressed for an equaliser late on, Ruiz netted his second and Ferran Torres also got on the score-sheet as Spain hit the hosts with lightning counter-attacks.

“If there’s one thing I like to boast about, it’s the pride I’ve always felt for this team,” Spain coach Luis de la Fuente said. “When these circumstances happen, one feels more proud.

“With 10 men we have been able to interpret the game in a masterful way. I am very proud



Spain’s Fabian Ruiz celebrates with Yerey Pino after scoring against Switzerland in their Nations League match on Sunday

of this team and every day we see that we continue to grow and that we can improve.”

Spain led inside four minutes when 17-year-old Lamine Yamal lifted a deft cross for Joselu to head home.

The visitors doubled their advantage in a lively opening as Nico Williams’ initial shot was parried by goalkeeper Gregor

Kobel and the ball fell to Fabian Ruiz, who lashed his shot into the back of the net.

Spain were reduced to 10 men midway through the first half when Breel Embolo was held back by Le Normand as the striker threatened to race clear and the Spaniard was handed a straight red card by referee Irfan Peljto.

Poulsen scores stunner as Denmark beat Serbia

Copenhagen, Denmark - Denmark striker Yussuf Poulsen created the opening goal and then added a brilliant second with a bicycle kick as his side beat Serbia 2-0 in their Nations League A Group 4 clash on Sunday.

With group rivals Switzerland and Spain set to meet later on Sunday, the Danes top the group with a perfect six points from their opening two games.

After an industrious display in his debut on Thursday when Denmark beat Switzerland, attacking midfielder Albert Gronbaeck gave his side the lead against Serbia with his first senior international goal in the 36th minute, playing a one-two with Poulsen before drilling the ball into the net.

The 30-year-old Poulsen wrapped up the three points in the second half, flinging himself into the air between two defenders and burying Victor Kristiansen’s cross with a left-footed scissor kick in the 61st minute.

The Serbs, who held Denmark to a scoreless draw when the two met at the group stage of Euro 2024 in June, struggled to create any chances to trouble goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel as the hosts cruised to victory.



Denmark’s Yussuf Poulsen scores against Serbia 2-0 in their Nations League match on Sunday



Rodrygo

Rodrygo says he deserved to be in Ballon d’Or shortlist

London, England - Brazilian Rodrygo said his versatility may have cost him a Ballon d’Or nomination after the Real Madrid forward was not among the 30 names short-listed for the prestigious award.

The 23-year-old scored 17 goals and registered nine assists in 51 appearances for the club last season.

His Madrid team mates Vinicius Jr, Jude Bellingham, Dani Carvajal, Federico Valverde, Antonio Rudiger, as well as the now-retired Toni Kroos, were all nominated.

Kylian Mbappe, who arrived at Madrid from Paris St Germain in the close season, was also on the shortlist.

“I was upset, I think I deserved it,” Rodrygo told ESPN. “I don’t want to belittle the play-

ers who are there, I think they deserved it also.

“But I think I had a place in the 30. It was a surprise but there is not much I can do as I’m not the one who decides these things.”

Rodrygo primarily plays on the right but can also play on the left or as a centre forward, and is often utilised as a second striker by coach Carlo Ancelotti.

“Often, I’m just filling spaces,” Rodrygo added. “Is someone missing there? Put Rodrygo in. Is someone missing on the right? Rodrygo. Is someone missing as number nine? Rodrygo. That’s it.

“It may get in my way a little, but I’m a team player.”

The winner of the award will be announced at a ceremony in Paris on October 28.

Sinner all the way

World No.1 beats Fritz to become first Italian man to win US Open

New York, United States - Jannik Sinner produced a brutal display of baseline power as he became the first Italian man to win the U.S. Open with a 6-3 6-4 7-5 win over American Taylor Fritz in the final on Sunday.

Sinner held aloft his arms in celebration after breaking Fritz to clinch the title and cheers rang around Arthur Ashe Stadium, even though home fans had hoped to see Fritz end a 21-year U.S. men's Grand Slam drought.

Sinner was under a cloud of controversy at the start of the tournament after revelations that he tested positive twice for an anabolic agent in March but avoided a ban. An independent tribunal accepted his claim that the positive tests were the result of an unintentional contamination.

The top seed blocked out the furor in New York and with the win claimed his second Grand Slam title after winning the Australian Open earlier this year.

"We just went day-by-day, trying to practice well, even on the days off, believing in ourselves which is the most important. I understood, especially in this tournament, how important the mental part is in this sport," said Sinner.

"I would like to thank everyone for being so fair in this amazing arena. It was a huge pleasure."

Fritz got off to a dreadful start when he handed Sinner the break with an unforced error in the first game but settled his



Jannik Sinner celebrates a point against Taylor Fritz in the US Open final on Sunday

nerves, breaking back in the fourth game and surviving a 23-shot rally - the longest of the match - to save break point in the fifth.

But it was only a matter of time before the Italian would hit his stride and he broke the 12th seeded American with a perfectly placed drop shot in the seventh game.

Fritz dropped his serve again on set point when he sent a backhand beyond the baseline, one of 34 unforced errors that cost him dearly across the match.

The fired up home crowd that included pop megastar Taylor Swift tried to lift Fritz with chants of "USA!" in the second set, as he worked to get some traction in his first major final.

However, the momentum swung in Sinner's direction as he broke Fritz on set point from the baseline, sending a sublime backhand down the line that the American was unable to return.

He piled further misery on Fritz when he clawed back from triple break point down in the opening game of the third set, holding his serve with an overhead smash, a fine effort that even the U.S. fans applauded.

Fritz clung on and even went up a break but was left smacking his racket onto the court in frustration when he hit a volley into the net to let Sinner break back in the 10th.

Sinner broke for a sixth time in the contest to wrap up the win, with Fritz swiping a forehand into the net on match point.



Jannik Sinner celebrates with the US Open trophy on Sunday

Mental toughness helps Sinner whether doping controversy

New York, United States - Jannik Sinner normally employs his powerful serve, on-court speed and rocket forehand to dispatch opponents, but the world No. 1 said the "mental part" of his game was especially important in his run to the U.S. Open title this year.

News of two failed doping tests broke just days ahead of the year's final major, and although Sinner was cleared of wrongdoing by an independent tribunal, the saga threatened to tarnish a dream season that saw him claim five titles, including his first major at the Australian Open.

"I understood, especially in this tournament, how important the mental part is in this sport," Sinner said in an on-court interview after his victory over Taylor Fritz.

Unsure if he would be welcomed by the Flushing Meadows crowds or jeered after some media and current and

former players claimed the world No. 1 received favourable treatment, Sinner said he leaned on family and his training team to help tune out the distractions.

"The general reaction of the players was quite positive, even when things came out. Then there have been, of course, some different voices," Sinner told reporters.

Social media posts from former top-10 player Denis Shapovalov and Australian Nick Kyrgios have been particularly harsh, while a 19-month doping ban then exoneration of former doubles British No. 1 Tara Moore further fuelled the debate about a double standard.

"With my family and team and everyone who supports me daily, I always try to stick together with them especially when moments are getting difficult and tough," Sinner said.



Slovenia's Primoz Roglic celebrates after winning Vuelta a Espana title

Primoz Roglic seals fourth Vuelta title

Madrid, Spain - Slovenia's Primoz Roglic sealed a record-equalling fourth Vuelta a Espana title on Sunday after retaining his overall lead in the final stage of the race, a 24.6 km individual time-trial in Madrid which was won by Stefan Kung.

Red Bull-BORA-hansgrohe's Roglic reclaimed the red jersey from Australian Ben O'Connor with a devastating solo attack on stage 19 on Friday and the Slovenian rider never looked back as he equalled Spaniard Roberto Heras's record of four Vuelta wins. Roglic finished with an overall lead of two minutes and 36 seconds over O'Connor while Spaniard Enric Mas of Movistar was third.

"It is just a lot of sacrificing, it's not only me," Roglic said. "My family, everyone around me - we all sacrifice, we all live for it. I just feel happy actually that I could do

it and I really appreciate the support. The more you get to the end (of the Tour), you just want to finish it off and it was tough. But everything went fine, I was fast, so I'm happy."

Victory was all the more special for Roglic who was forced to abandon the Tour de France ahead of stage 13 after the yellow jersey contender crashed twice in consecutive stages.

Roglic, who won three consecutive Vueltas from 2019, came into this year's race as the clear favourite, with Giro d'Italia and Tour de France winner Tadej Pogacar, Jonas Vingegaard and Olympic champion Remco Evenepoel opting not to ride.

However, he was surprised by O'Connor when the Decathlon-AG2R La Mondiale rider took the red jersey from him on stage six and opened up a gap of nearly five minutes.

Fritz 'pretty upset with how I played' in final defeat

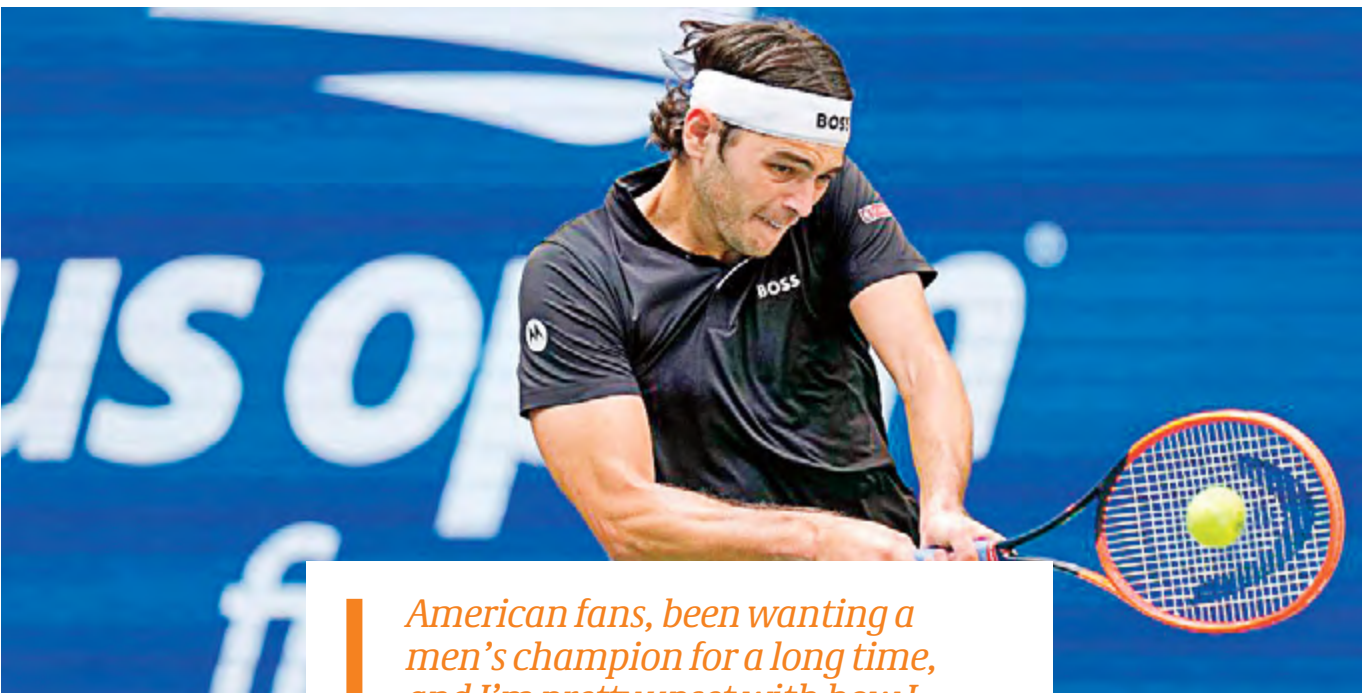
New York, United States - Taylor Fritz enjoyed his deepest major run at the U.S. Open but said he felt as though he let American fans down after losing in the final, unable to end a long U.S. men's Grand Slam drought when he fell to top seed Jannik Sinner on Sunday.

No American man has hoisted a major trophy since Andy Roddick in 2003 and fans piled into Arthur Ashe Stadium hoping to see it happen, cheering wildly as they urged on the 12th-seeded Fritz.

But Italian Sinner's ruthless play snuffed out any hope Fritz might have had in straight sets and the American sat grimly at a post-match media conference, offering a withering appraisal of his performance.

"Right now I'm pretty just disappointed in ... just a lot of things on the court, how I played, how I hit certain shots. It sucks," he said after the 6-3 6-4 7-5 defeat.

"American fans, been wanting a men's champion for a long time, and I just, I don't know, I'm pretty upset with how I played. I feel like, I don't know, I feel like I almost let a lot of people down."



Taylor Fritz

The progress Fritz made in New York was undeniable. He beat two top-10 opponents - former finalists Casper Ruud and Alexander Zverev - en route to his first major semi-final, where he took down compatriot Frances Tiafoe. It was the breakthrough he wanted after four previous

American fans, been wanting a men's champion for a long time, and I'm pretty upset with how I played. I feel like, I don't know, I feel like I almost let a lot of people down.

TAYLOR FRITZ

major quarter-final appearances.

"There's obviously a lot of positives, and when I get some time to, like, cool down, you know, then I'll be happy about the fact

that I made it to the final," he said.

He will get back into the top 10 as a result of his deep run at Flushing Meadows and will rejoice his countrymen to compete in

the Laver Cup, leaving New York with at least one dream realised.

"Hearing the crowd go crazy and just kind of, like, soaking in the moment," he said.

"Like, I'm walking out to play my match on Ashe in the U.S. Open final (it) is what I dreamed about my whole life."

Taylor Swift leads celebrity rush at final

New York, United States - Taylor Swift headlined the list of celebrities present at the U.S. Open final on Sunday, as another Taylor - Fritz - aimed to end a 21-year American men's major drought on Arthur Ashe Stadium against Italian top seed Jannik Sinner.

Sports, television, movie and music stars have flocked to Flushing Meadows over the past fortnight, occupying luxury boxes and sipping on the venue's famous \$23 "Honey Deuce" cocktails and the



Taylor Swift with her boyfriend Travis Kelce at the US Open final

celebrities were back in full force for Sunday's finale.

But few stars shine brighter in American pop culture than Swift, who kicked off a spending frenzy in the NFL ticket resale market last season just by showing up to watch her boyfriend, Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce, play.

Kelce and Swift arrived hand-in-hand for the match and sat with Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes and his wife Brittany, ignoring the first Sunday of the NFL season in favour of tennis

after the Chiefs beat the Baltimore Ravens 27-20 in their Thursday opener.

"In a tennis era," tournament organisers wrote on social media platform X to accompany a video of the couple at Flushing Meadows. Swift has been breaking records around the world with her Eras Tour.

Former U.S. Open champion Andy Roddick, the last American man to claim the title, and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Jon Bon Jovi were also spotted among the crowd.

AL HARTHY LOOKS TO FIGHT BACK IN FUJI

Omani and team focused on replicating Circuit of the Americas pace as FIA WEC heads to Japan

Muscat - Only a week since Ahmad al Harthy returned home to Oman after a hugely competitive FIA World Endurance Championship outing in the US, the Sultanate's number one racing driver is preparing for more travels as he heads to Fuji Speedway in Japan for round seven of the 2024 season.

The penultimate race of the FIA WEC campaign, the 6 Hours of Fuji, will be contested on Sunday and the Far East track is one where Al Harthy shone last year on his first-ever visit to the venue.

Going into the event sixth in the LMGT3 standings, along with Team WRT team-mates Maxime Martin and Valentino Rossi, Al Harthy is aiming for a trouble-free weekend in Japan after a fantastic showing in America ended with enforced retirement very late in the race.

"It's exciting to be heading back to Fuji for only the second time in my career this weekend, it's an incredible circuit and I'm really looking forward to going there for the first time with WRT and the BMW M4," said Al Harthy. "It's a big turnaround for



Ahmad al Harthy and his Team WRT teammates, Maxime Martin and Valentino Rossi, will be hoping for a change in fortunes at the 6 Hours of Fuji in Japan

the teams and drivers with it only being just over a week since we left America, but we're aiming to continue the momentum we showed at COTA.

"Without the issue with the steering almost near the end of the race it would've been a fantastic result, coming from P15 to P4 and being pretty close to the podium. It wasn't to be, unfortunately, but the hard work and commitment of everyone in the team really did show our capability. It'd be great to challenge for the podium at Fuji, hopefully we'll be in a position to try and achieve that."

Based on performance, pace and consistency during round six at the Circuit of the Americas in Texas just over a week ago, by rights the No.46 BMW M4 trio would have celebrated their second LMGT3 podium of the year - at the very least a top-four finish after storming from 15th on the grid. During the final quarter of an hour though, with Martin at the wheel, power steering failure meant a bitterly disappointing retirement from the 'Lone Star Le Mans' after a truly magnificent performance by all three teammates, one which really did deserve significant reward.

As the Omani's first season of FIA WEC racing a BMW, his second visit to Fuji will bring another new challenge as his previous experience of the track last year came at the wheel of a different car and so all that was learnt then will require some additional thought.



Pathum Nissanka

Ton-up Nissanka leads Sri Lanka to consolation win against England

London, England - Sri Lanka completed a rare Test victory in England on Monday as they reached their target of 219 with untroubled ease on the fourth day at The Oval, with Pathum Nissanka's unbeaten 127 leading them to a consolation win in a 2-1 series defeat.

After their impressive end to Sunday's final session, Sri Lanka resumed at 94-1, needing a further 125 to win and knocked them off in a little over two hours to finish on 219-2 and win by eight wickets.

It was their fourth victory in 21 Tests in England over 40 years and their first since a 1-0 victory in a two-Test series 10 years ago.

"It is very special, winning in England," Sri Lanka captain Dhananjaya de Silva told the BBC. "The boys were tough enough to handle the pressure and get into some scenarios."

"It is not comfortable. There was hard work put in by the bowlers and batters. We were there in every match - had positive points. The boys wanted to win in the end."

"Credit to all of the bowlers. They have been on target from ball one. In the second innings they were spot on. He (Nissanka) has proved he is the best opener in Sri Lanka right now."

Their Sunday evening assault had set them up to be favourites but the few England fans scattered around The Oval knew that a few early wickets could make things interesting.

Kusal Mendis had added nine to his overnight 30 before a brilliant running catch by Shoaib Bashir gave Gus Atkinson another wicket, but it proved the only bright note for England on an overcast south London day.

Opener Nissanka, who had hammered a quick 53 not out in Sunday's final session to set up the chase, was initially more controlled in his approach, but kept the scoreboard ticking and reached his second Test century off 107 balls.

He then cut loose with some

There was hard work put in by the bowlers and batters. We were there in every match - had positive points. The boys wanted to win in the end.

DHANANJAYA DE SILVA

Determined Oman take on South Korea in Muscat

Muscat - Oman and South Korea will both be determined to get their AFC Asian Qualifiers - Road to 2026 campaigns back on track when they face off in Group B on Tuesday.

Oman suffered a 1-0 defeat against Iraq, while South Korea were left frustrated following their 0-0 draw against Palestine on Thursday. Oman head coach Jaroslav Silhavy believes his side deserved more from their 1-0 loss to Iraq and remains optimistic about his team's campaign.

"The match could have ended



Oman players during a training session

with a better result than a loss, and the Iraqi team snatched the victory by exploiting a corner kick," said Silhavy. "Our players were able to regain their composure after falling behind but were unable to score. We will work hard to keep our hopes alive."

The last time the two sides met was in the AFC Asian Cup 2015, which ended 1-0 in favour of South Korea with the East Asians only having lost once in six previous meetings.

South Korea head coach Hong Myung-bo will need to reassess

and improve their tactics after the East Asian side failed to find a way past the Palestinian defence.

"I think our players did their best until the end, but we got off on the wrong foot to begin this qualification phase."

"We'll have to go back to the drawing board and start our tactical preparation for the next match," said Hong.

"How these players feel is really important. Those based in Europe flew in to play right after playing their club matches, and they had some physical issues."

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CELL PHONE SAFETY

ENERGY EXPOSURE

You might have heard speculation that electromagnetic radiation from mobile phones and wireless technologies is dangerous.

The radio waves wireless technologies transmit are very weak. They do not have enough energy to damage DNA and are very unlikely to cause cancer. Nevertheless, researchers are continuing to monitor whether there are any potential long-term health risks of phone use.

A new study provides comprehensive evidence that mobile phone use is not linked to cancer. The study is the largest review on the topic to date and is one in a long line of research showing that wireless technologies do not harm the human body.

"For the main issue, mobile phones and brain cancers, we found no increased risk, even with 10+ years exposure and the maximum categories of call time or number of calls," said Mark Elwood at the University of Auckland in New Zealand, who was a co-author in the study.

The review was commissioned by the World Health Organization (WHO) and published in Environment International.

No increased risk

The review, which stemmed from concerns that phones held against the head emit radio waves into the brain, analysed more than 5,000 studies, focusing on 63 studies from 22 countries most relevant for their analysis.

"For this report, cancers of the brain (three types, and in children), pituitary gland, salivary glands, and leukemias were included," said Elwood.

A WHO study reviewed thousands of previous studies into whether mobile phone use causes cancer. None of the studies assessed in the review showed an increased risk of brain cancer with mobile phone use.

A review of 28 years of research has shown that mobile phones and wireless tech devices are not linked to increased risk of cancer. The radio waves they emit do not contain enough energy to damage the human body or DNA

"The evidence did not support an increased risk of cancers from the use of mobile phones. Furthermore, there was no evidence to support any risk from broadcasting transmitters or base stations," said Keith Petrie of the Department of Psychological Medicine, at the University of Auckland, in a press statement.

How mobile phones work

Mobile phones and wireless tech exchange signals using radiofrequency (RF) waves. This is a form of energy in the electromagnetic spectrum, which is why mobile phones are sometimes said to give off electromagnetic radiation.

Electromagnetic radiation sounds dangerous but it depends on how much energy the radiation contains. Radiofrequency waves used by mobile phone networks are a form of non-ionising radiation. Non-ionising radiation uses tiny amounts of energy to transmit data, nowhere near enough energy to damage the human body or DNA (genes).

And it's true for all types of mobile phone networks. WiFi, 4G, 5G and Bluetooth all rely on radio waves to transmit data, as do FM radios. Each type uses a different frequency

of radio waves, but none have enough energy to heat body tissues or damage cells or DNA.

Radiofrequency waves are different from ionising types of radiation, such as X-rays, gamma rays and ultraviolet (UV) rays. Ionising radiation contains much more energy and can damage DNA, which is why high levels of sun exposure can cause skin cancers.

There are also concerns that keeping a phone in your pocket or leaving the WiFi router on might be dangerous, but these myths have been debunked for the same reason - radio waves don't cause cancer.

When we stand outside on a cloudy day, we are actually exposed to more DNA-damaging rays than we get from having a mobile phone in our pocket or leaving the WiFi router on at night.

Mobile phones don't

cause cancer, but can we prove it? Worries about the health effects of new technologies are common, especially when online conspiracy theories are involved.

"This was seen during the COVID-19 pandemic when people attacked cell towers believing a baseless theory that 5G towers spread the coronavirus," said Petrie.

The evidence is clear that the radio waves emitted by mobile phones and wireless technology don't have enough energy to damage the body directly.

No links between mobile phones and cancer

The scientific consensus has remained strong. So far, no studies have found links between mobile phone use and cancer, so we can be confident that wireless technologies do not cause cancer.

Nevertheless, many health care and scientific organisations don't have official positions on whether or not radiofrequency waves from phones cause cancer.

The problem is the philosophical conundrum of finding evidence of the absence of something. It's like when people argue that there is no God because there is no evidence of God. This issue of showing evidence that wireless technology doesn't cause cancer works the same way. Wireless technology is a significant part of our daily lives, so healthcare and government agencies are yet addressing their safety.

Overall, the data shows that using mobile phones and wireless tech is completely safe for our bodies.

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NOMOPHOBIA

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SIGNS OF
NOMOPHOBIA

- While nomophobia is not a clinical diagnosis, some of the signs that are commonly identified as related to this fear include:
- The inability to turn off your phone
 - Constantly checking your phone for missed messages
 - Charging your battery even when it is fully charged
 - Taking your phone everywhere, even into the bathroom
 - Repeatedly making sure that you have your phone
 - Fear of being without WiFi or connected to a network
 - Worrying about eventualities and not being able to call for help
 - Stress over being disconnected from one's online presence
 - Skipping activities/events to spend time on the mobile device



MOBILE
PHONE?



HAVE YOU EVER FOUND YOURSELF GETTING ANXIOUS OR EVEN PANICKED WHEN YOU COULDN'T FIND YOUR MOBILE PHONE? DOES THE THOUGHT OF BEING STRANDED IN AN ISOLATED PLACE WITH NO CELLULAR SERVICE FILL YOU WITH A SENSE OF DREAD? IF SO, YOU JUST MIGHT HAVE SOME OF THE SYMPTOMS OF 'NOMOPHOBIA'

Watch out, if you are one of the millions around town who just cannot get started, whether for work or leisure, without the comforting assurance of having one's mobile phone securely by your side!

You could be on the way to suffering from a new phobia - Nomophobia (No Mobile Phone Phobia) which keeps you hooked to your phone. Some users keep ensuring throughout the day that the phone is around, some are obsessed with recharging the battery, and some develop anxiety when they learn that they've set out without carrying their phones.

People with this phobia check their phones constantly, take their phones everywhere they go (including the shower and bathroom), spend many hours per day using their phones, and experience feelings of helplessness when they are separated from their phones.

Growing concern in Oman

According Nutaila al Kharusi, practising psychologist, Al Harub, "Nomophobia, or the fear of being without your mobile phone, is a growing concern as people become more dependent on their phones for everything from work to staying in touch with friends and family. It can cause feelings of stress or anxiety when someone doesn't have access to their phone.

"In Oman, especially among young professionals, many people are glued to their phones all day for work, social media, and entertainment. While there's no specific research on how common nomophobia is here, it's likely increasing because smartphones have become such an essential part of daily life."

From a psychological perspective, Nutaila explained, "When people feel anxious without their phones, it can become a real



Nutaila al Kharusi

problem, leading to stress. Some ways to manage this include gradually reducing phone use and learning to handle the discomfort of not always being connected. Developing healthier phone habits can help prevent this reliance from becoming overwhelming."

Behavioural addiction

Mobile phones have become a ubiquitous part of modern life. Not only do they serve as a way to communicate, but they also act as a social network tool, personal organiser, online shopping tool, calendar, alarm clock, and mobile bank. While they are without a doubt beneficial devices, some suggest that over-reliance on digital devices may be a form of behavioural addiction.

In fact, the term nomophobia was coined fairly recently to describe the fear of being without your phone. This includes not just losing, forgetting, or breaking your phone, but also being outside of mobile phone contact.

It is a growing concern in a world where always being connected seems more im-

portant than ever before. When people lose their phone, when their mobile runs out of battery, or when they are in an area with no cellular coverage, it can lead to feelings of stress and anxiety - or even feelings of fear or panic.

This fear of being without a mobile device is often considered a sign of problematic digital device use, which some experts believe, may have a detrimental impact on mental health and well-being.

The term Nomophobia was first coined in a 2008 study that was commissioned by the UK Postal Office. In a sample of more than 2,100 adults, the study indicated that 53% of participants experienced nomophobia. The condition is characterised by feelings of anxiety when people lose their phones, run out of battery life, or have no cellular coverage.

The need to be in touch

The study revealed that this fear can be so powerful that many people never turn off their phones, even at night or during times that they won't be using their devices. When asked why they never turn off their phones, 55% cited a need to keep in touch with family and friends, 10% said they needed to be contactable for work reasons, and 9% reported that turning off their phones made them anxious.

The fear of missing out on something is, perhaps, what leads so many people to report that they would respond to a call or text even if they are in the middle of something else. The study revealed that people were often willing to interrupt life activities in order to respond to a call.

The majority of people (80%) were willing to answer a call while watching television, 40% would respond to a call while eating a meal, and 18% would be willing to answer the phone when they were in bed.

(With inputs from: verywellmind.com)

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