



Unemployment rate drops to 2.6% in April

Our Correspondent Muscat

The rate of jobseekers in the sultanate decreased to 2.6% this year at the end of April compared to 2.8% in March, according to data released by National Centre for Statistics and Information. Breaking down the figures, the rate of male jobseekers decreased to 1.1% in April from 1.2% in March, while the rate of female jobseekers dropped to 8.3% from 9.2% in the same period. Breaking down the figures based on educational background, those holding a higher education diploma decreased to 8.5% in April compared to 9.2% in March. Similarly, the rate for Bachelor's degree holders dropped to 7.3% from 8%. For jobseekers with general education diplomas, the rate decreased to 3.6% from 3.8% in

March. Master's and doctorate degree holders also saw a marginal decrease to 0.6% in April from 0.7% in March. Analysis based on age group revealed the highest percentage of jobseekers was in the 15 to 24 years category - 8.6% - followed by 25 to 29-year-olds at 5.3%. The rate decreased with age; the rate of jobseekers among 30 to 34-year-olds was 2.7%, 1.4% among 35 to 39-year-olds, and 0.6% among those aged 40 and older. Geographically, Musandam and Dhahirah had the highest concentration of jobseekers at 4.9%, followed by North Batinah and South Batinah (3.5%), Buraimi (3.4%), Dakhliyah (3.3%), South Sharqiyah (3%), North Sharqiyah (2.8%), Dhofar (2.3%), Muscat (1.2%) and Al Wusta (1.1%) at the end of April 2024.

OIA assets up by RO1bn, profits grow to RO1.7bn

Our Correspondent Muscat

Oman Investment Authority (OIA) announced on Tuesday that its assets have grown by over RO1bn to a total of RO19.240bn. Additionally, OIA saw its profits exceed RO1.7bn, earning 9.95% in investment returns compared to 8.8% last year. The authority continued its contribution to the State General Budget totalling more than RO6bn between 2016 and 2023. OIA and its companies also created over 1,300 job opportunities for Omanis, the authority stated in its 2023 annual report - the third since its establishment on June 4, 2020 - released on Tuesday. The report reflects the principles and national goals of Oman Vision 2040, focusing on enhancing transparency, governance and institutional performance.

Abdulsalam al Murshidi, President of OIA, stated that high praise received from His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik serves as a starting point and motivation to continue growing and achieving success. "These milestones were achieved despite



AUTHORITY TO DIVEST FROM FIVE FIRMS

Muscat - Nasser Sulaiman al Harthy, Deputy President of Operations at OIA, informed that the authority is targeting divestment in five of its affiliated firms this year, three of which are in the energy sector,

one in logistics and one in services. OIA and its companies successfully completed nine divestments in 2023, exceeding the planned eight. These included both direct sales and

public offerings on Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX), notably Abraaj Energy Services and OQ Gas Networks. This had a positive impact on trading volumes in MSX and attracted foreign investments.

global economic fluctuations and escalating geopolitical tensions, tightening monetary policies by major central banks, banking sector turmoil in the US and Europe, the US debt ceiling controversy, the Ukraine-Russia war, and impacts of Gaza events."

OIA focused on diversifying its foreign and local investments geographically and across various sectors to maximise returns and minimise risks. It also brought an Omani angle in its international investments to attract value and technology to

targeted sectors. OIA's Future Generations Fund (FGF) is responsible for its investments abroad. In 2023, it invested in 13 global funds operating in the private sector. It also engaged in diversified direct investments in the private sector in

countries worldwide, achieving an average return of 9.8%, surpassing the target return of 5%. Among OIA's direct foreign investments is Electric Hydrogen (EH2), a company developing electrolyzers of higher current densities and lower voltages; Hysata, an Australian company contributing to the production of green hydrogen; and Our Next Energy (ONE), a US company specialising in manufacture of vehicle batteries, electric vehicles and energy storage systems. Continuing efforts to reduce debt and mitigate financial risks of its companies, OIA paid RO2.4bn, including RO300mn prepaid in 2023. These efforts contributed to raising Oman's credit rating by international rating agencies. As part of its commitment to achieving economic diversification, investments of National Development Fund (NDF) in local sectors increased approximately RO2.1bn, surpassing the target of RO1.9bn. OIA and its companies continued efforts to maximise in-country value (ICV) and enhance the role of SMEs. The total spend on SMEs was RO202.6mn, with RO106.7mn going to holders of the Entrepreneurship Card.

Athletes win 10 medals at West Asian meet

Our Correspondent Muscat

Oman's athletics team performed remarkably well at the Fifth West Asian Athletics Championship held in Basra Sports City, Iraq, returning home with ten medals. The team's impressive haul included three gold, three silver and four bronze medals, underscoring its talent and competitive prowess on the regional stage. Salem bin Saeed al Amri, Chairman of Oman Athletics Federation, praised the athletes for their outstanding performances, noting that such achievements highlight the ongoing development and potential of Omani athletics. "This achievement of ten medals is a testament to the significant progress our athletes have made and continues our tradition of excellence in international compe-



titions," Amri said. A standout moment was debut of the Oman women's relay team, which clinched gold in a fiercely competitive race marking a historic milestone. The

success in Basra is set to bolster the team's confidence as it prepares for upcoming challenges at the Arab Championship in Egypt and the World Athletics Championship, Amri added.

Al Mulham al Balushi won the 100m sprint in an impressive 10.25 seconds to claim gold. The third gold came in men's 4x100m relay. Silver medals were secured by

The team's impressive haul included three gold, three silver and four bronze medals, underscoring its talent and competitive prowess on the regional stage

Azza al Yarubiyah in both the 100m and 200m races, clocking 12.01 seconds and 24.77 seconds respectively, while Heba al Asmiyeh shone in javelin throw (40.67m). The bronze medalists were Salem al Rawahi in the long and triple jump, Muzoon al Alawiya in 100m hurdles, and Muhammad al Saadi in 200m. The Omani team included 15 athletes.



Oman up 19 places in 2023 Global Youth Development Index

Our Correspondent Muscat

Oman has leaptfrogged to 33rd rank in the 2023 Global Youth Development Index, moving up 19 places from 52nd in the last index compiled in 2020. The sultanate performs well in the domains of Employment and Opportunity, and Peace and Security, ranking 15th and ninth respectively. The Global Youth Development Index (YDI), a collaboration between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Institute for Economics and Peace, assesses youth well-being and empowerment across 183 countries, including 50 of the 56 Commonwealth countries. It covers six domains of youth development: Education, Employment and Opportunity, Equality and Inclusion, Health and Wellbeing, Peace and Security, and Political and Civic Participation. Changes in 27 indicators across the six domains were tracked over a 12-year period from 2010 to 2022. The 2023 YDI reflects data till the previous year. In the Equality and Inclusion

domain, Oman ranked 20th, 52nd in Education, 119th in Health and Wellbeing, and 104th in Political and Civic Participation. In the GCC, UAE leads ranked 26th, followed by Bahrain at 32nd, Qatar 33rd, Kuwait 40th and Saudi Arabia 46th. Globally, Singapore had the highest level of youth development in the 2023 YDI, followed by Denmark, Portugal, Iceland and Slovenia. Afghanistan had the lowest level, followed by Central African Republic, Niger, Chad and Somalia. Of the 183 countries included in the index, 166 - or 90.7% - recorded improvements over the 12-year period. The five countries recording the greatest improvements from 2010 to 2022 were Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire, Myanmar, Indonesia and Burkina Faso. Niger, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen and Angola recorded the largest deteriorations. On average, the top five most improved countries saw their scores increase by 13%, while the five largest fallers saw an average deterioration of 4%.



Connecting Omani orphans with the world through letters

Iran: Bagher Ghalibaf emerges prominent candidate to succeed Raisi

Indian voters deny Modi's BJP a majority

New Delhi, India - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed victory for his alliance, despite a lacklustre performance by his own party as it faced a stronger than expected challenge from the opposition, which pushed back against the leader's mixed economic record and polarising politics. Modi said that his National Democratic Alliance will form the government for the third consecutive time. "Today's victory is the victory of the world's largest democracy," he said, speaking at his party headquarters in New Delhi. "This is the third time we have received these blessings from the public. It is an emotional moment for me." For the first time since Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)



swept to power in 2014, it appeared unlikely that it would secure a majority on its own - but the prime minister's coalition was still expected to be elected to a third five-year term in the world's largest democratic exercise. In his first comments on the

preliminary election results, Modi posted on X, "This is a historical feat in India's history. We will continue the good work done in the last decade to keep fulfilling the aspirations of people." The outcome was a surprising setback for BJP, which exit polls had suggested would again win

an outright majority on its own. The BJP made surprise inroads in the southern state of Kerala. Victory for BJP candidate Suresh Gopi marks the first time the party has won a seat in the state. Hopes for a supermajority faded by afternoon. A supermajority for the BJP would have enabled it to change the constitution - something that opposition leader Rahul Gandhi said voters had decided against. The BJP has repeatedly denied it has plans to change the constitution. Indian stocks plunged on Tuesday as vote counting suggested Modi's dream of a landslide victory was at risk. It marked the worst daily drop for Indian stocks since 2020. Agencies

See also Page 10



MoH opens RO20mn pharma factory in Rusayl

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Health (MoH) inaugurated a factory of Menagen Pharmaceutical Industries in Rusayl Industrial Area on Monday. The RO20mn project aims to enhance drug security in the sultanate.

Spread over 12,000sqm, the plant is set to MoH, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and European Medicines Agency (EMA) specifications. It is the first facility of its kind in the Middle East specialising in the production of biosimilar medicines and treatments for rare diseases.

The inauguration ceremony was held under the patronage of H E Dr Hilal Ali al Sabti, Minister of Health, in the presence of several other ministers and senior officials.

On the occasion, Dr Khalfan

bin Saif al Hosni, Chairman of Board of Directors of Menagen Pharmaceutical Industries, said the factory aims to localise the manufacture of medicines in the Middle East and North Africa. "The factory's establishment is the culmination of tireless efforts, continuous work and meticulous planning. What started as a mere idea has now materialised into a significant reality with a clear vision and mission."

According to Hamad bin Saif al Hasani, Member of Board of Directors of the company, the factory will revolutionise the pharmaceutical industry in the region by providing innovative and life-saving medicines.

He informed that the total project cost is expected to exceed RO30mn in future phases. The name Menagen combines 'Mena' - the region - with 'gen',

reflecting the company's commitment to gene technology and biomedical innovation.

Hasani outlined several objectives of the factory, including enhancing drug security, boosting the national economy, creating job opportunities, fostering human capital development, and establishing a leading centre for scientific research, innovation and advanced technology transfer. "The factory aims to attract skilled professionals, innovative ideas and competencies."

Additionally, the company is working on several projects set to launch soon, including a pioneering one in cell and gene therapy - the first of its kind in the region. Another project - Ezz Pharmaceutical Industries specialising in intravenous solutions and other medications - is set to open in the last quarter of 2024 in Nizwa.

How to stay safe during rising summer temperatures

Our Correspondent
Muscat

As the sultanate grapples with soaring temperatures, health experts are urging the public to take measures to mitigate severe impacts of the summer heat-wave.

Recognising the dangers posed by the intense heat, the Ministry of Labour has implemented midday break for labourers, effective from June 1 to September 1, between 12:30pm and 3:30pm. This initiative is aimed to shield workers from the worst of the daytime heat, which can lead to severe health issues like increased heart rate, exhaustion and dehydration.

Health professionals are urging citizens and residents to stay indoors during peak heat hours and to stay hydrated.

Discussing the compounded risks for asthma and diabetes patients in such conditions, specialist internist Dr Vipin Sreekandan Nair, said, "Excessive heat exacerbates health issues, making it crucial to stay hydrated with water and natural drinks like buttermilk and coconut water."

Dermatologist Dr Celia Soni Saldanha advised the use of a high-quality, water-resistant sunscreen for protection against UVA and UVB rays. "Applying sunscreen every two hours and wearing protective clothing are essential during these hot months," she informed.



Use a high-quality, water-resistant sunscreen for protection against UVA and UVB rays. Applying sunscreen every two hours and wearing protective clothing are essential during these hot months

DR CELIA SONI SALDANHA



Additionally, Dr Aneesh Basheer, another specialist internist, pointed out that heat cramps, heat rashes and heat exhaustion are not uncommon during Omani summers. He urged everyone, outdoor workers and athletes in particular, to adhere to safety guidelines, such as staying hydrated and monitoring the colour of their urine to gauge hydration levels.

The impact of the heat on children's physical and mental well-being has been a matter of concern for parents across the

sultanate.

Praseeda Ranjit, a resident of Oman for 18 years, said, "The extreme heat compels children to be indoors, impacting their health when they do venture outside."

She also highlighted the broader environmental consequences, pointing to carbon dioxide and CFC emissions that exacerbate the intensity of heat waves.

Concerned about dehydration and sunstroke during the current heatwave, M Tufail

Ahmed, General Manager of Jibreen International Business LLC, said, "People often delay hydration until they feel extremely thirsty. It's crucial to adapt our habits to better cope with these extreme weather conditions, which are exacerbated by climate change."

By staying informed and following the guidance of health authorities, people in Oman can significantly reduce the risk of heat-related health issues and ensure a safer summer.

(Contributed by Sneha Lijoys)

Tender Notice

The Social Protection Fund (SPF) announces following E-Tender for 2024:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Deadline for Specifications Request	Deadline for tender bids	Tender Price
12 /2024	Enhancing and Upgrading SPF's Call Center	18 Jun 2024	02 Jul 2024	62.500 RO

Interested companies registered with Tender Board may obtain Tender document from the E-Tendering website: <http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>. The Vendors must provide electronic proposal valid for (120) days and addressed to Social Protection Fund on mentioned website.

CORRESPONDANCE:

- Tender inquiry : All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at eTendering system (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
- E-Tendering system inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering system technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number:
Tel : **+968 24402200** E-mail : etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om

SPF is not obliged to accept the lowest or any tender that may be received

Together we bring it to life

SPF.GOV.OM
SPF_Oman

Dakhliyah awards development projects worth RO1.5mn

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Tenders Committee of Dakhliyah governorate awarded several development projects worth a total of RO1.534mn on Tuesday.

These initiatives are part of a broader effort to enhance municipal services across the governorate, reflecting the government's commitment to infrastructure advancement and community welfare.

The committee convened under the chairmanship of Sheikh Hilal bin Saeed Al Hajri, Governor of Dakhliyah.

Key projects include construction of Jabal Akhdar Park and enhancement of Al Maamoura Park in Bahla. These

Key projects include construction of the 20,000sqm Jabal Akhdar Park and enhancement of Al Maamoura Park in Bahla

projects aim to provide recreational spaces for residents and visitors, and boost local tourism and community well-being. Additionally, the committee addressed infrastructure needs to prevent waterlogging in several roads in wilayats of Dakhliyah, which will significantly improve transportation safety and efficiency.

Other developments include construction of a new transportation building for the municipality department in Bidbid, installation of light poles at Nizwa Central Market parking lot and furnishing civic buildings across the governorate. These enhancements are expected to significantly improve municipal services and facilities.

The 20,000sqm Jabal Akhdar Park project will feature a variety of amenities, including public seating areas, children's play zones, exercise paths, and commercial investment sites including cafes and an open air multi-use theatre. The park is designed to be a cornerstone of community life, offering both leisure and commercial benefits to the residents and visitors.

COMPLETE ANTENATAL BUNDLE

All Three Trimesters Together

190 OMR	170 OMR
60 OMR	1st Trimester
80 OMR	2nd Trimester
50 OMR	3rd Trimester
Normal Delivery 320 OMR	C-Section Delivery 580 OMR

*Package contains Delivery rates and Baby care charges including vaccines

MOH NO - 840380 | 2200 4000 | 9972 8290 | 9797 1672

Terms And Condition Applies



Get more returns on High Yield Savings Account

With Al Rifaa Privilege Account

Visit your nearest branch today



Scan to learn more



Al Rifaa



بنك عمان

الأعمال المصرفية الحصرية
PRIVILEGE BANKING



bankdhoofar

2479 111 | www.bankdhoofar.com

Salas Abeel Badr al Busaidi (Muscat Daily)

Connecting Omani orphans with the world through letters

Our Correspondent
Muscat

An initiative called Pen Pals will be launched soon to connect Omani orphans with others from around the world through the art of letter writing.

A joint effort of Oman Airports and the French Academic Society Arts-Sciences-Lettres, the initiative aims to revive the practice of heartfelt, spontaneous letter writing and build meaningful global connections.

Salas Abeel Badr al Busaidi, who leads the initiative, shared her enthusiasm, saying, "Omani children will discover the joy of writing and receiving letters. The mystery of not seeing each other

adds an intriguing element to their friendships, enhancing their writing skills and creativity through various topics."

The programme is set to begin with orphans in Istanbul, Turkey. Omani children will exchange letters, sharing personal stories and experiences; following the initial exchange, there are plans of face-to-face meetings in the future in Istanbul.

Supported by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, the initiative promises a rich cultural exchange. After meeting in Turkey, the Omani children will extend their hospitality by inviting their Turkish friends for a two-week visit, allowing them to experience the sultanate's culture and

heritage firsthand.

Elaborating on the future of the initiative, Salas said, "The programme doesn't stop with Turkey. Next year, we aim to extend Pen Pals to include other countries, enhancing the scope of our cultural bridges. This programme is not just about writing letters; it's about building bridges of friendship and understanding."

By connecting children from different parts of the world, Salas added, the programme will nurture a global community and empathy.

"Through Pen Pals, Omani orphans will not only improve their writing skills but also discover the joys of friendship and culture from other lands."

MCSY announces 244 activities for 2024 Summer Sports Programme

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth (MCSY) announced details of its 2024 Summer Sports Programme on Tuesday, designed to engage the nation's youth in productive sports activities throughout the summer vacation.

The programme aims to develop their talents and shape their characters to play vital roles in the country's ongoing development. Since its inception in 2006, the Summer Sports Programme has been a key feature of MCSY's offerings during the summer months. The 2024 edition is set to include 244 events across 115

(Supplied photo)

training centres, 77 open sports days, 33 sports caravans, and 19 volunteer initiatives.

The events will take place in sports complexes, clubs and venues throughout the sultanate, involving partnerships with sports clubs, Omani Women's Associations, and civil society teams.

Samira al Shukaili, Director of Sports Activities Department and

Head of the programme's main committee, highlighted its new approach, which introduces innovative activities aimed at enhancing participants' leisure time with health and social benefits. "This year's programme not only aims to keep the youth engaged during their holidays but also introduce them to a lifestyle that safeguards against modern-day

health issues and promotes overall well-being," Samira explained.

The programme's agenda is divided into four segments - sports centres offering training under professional guidance, open sports days for public enjoyment, sports caravans in remote areas, and volunteer initiatives that emphasise physical activities and environmental conservation.

Pacts inked to kickstart Oman Innovates platform

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MoHERI), in partnership with ITHCA Group and support from Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, signed several agreements on Tuesday to start the initial phase of a national digital platform for innovations in the sultanate

called Oman Innovates.

Dr Badr bin Ali al Hinai, Director of Scientific Research at MoHERI, and Dr Badr bin Salim al Manthari, Executive Vice-President for Strategic Affairs at ITHCA Group, signed the agreements.

The project will be managed by Digital Transformation Management Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of ITHCA Group.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) won the consulting study contract to provide an overview and analysis for the design and implementation needs of the project.

Osos Company and its partner Liferay secured the website development contract, while Moving Pictures has been appointed to handle marketing services for Oman Innovates.

The platform aims to bring to-

gether all stakeholders of innovations in the sultanate, aligning these with the goals outlined in Oman Vision 2040. Its purpose is to support economic diversification through efficient services, guiding innovators from idea conception to realisation, and fostering collaborations locally and globally to enhance Oman's innovation ecosystem and positioning in the Global Innovation Index.

TRUSTED SINCE 1920

OMAN'S 1st EXCHANGE

WE EXCHANGE TRUST

WE BUY & SELL GOLD & SILVER

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





WORLD WIDE REMITTANCE



Download it NOW!

PURSHOTTAM KANJI EXCHANGE

شركة برشوتم
كانجي للمصارفة

+968 91787629 | 99849289
www.pkexchange.com

TENDER NOTICE



SULTANATE OF OMAN
The Ministry of Agricultural
Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources

The Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources Announces the following Tenders :-

Tender No.	Tender Title	Tender Document Sales Start Date	Tender Document Sales End Date	Bid Submission Closing	Companies that are eligible to participate	Tender Document fee (R.O)
385/2024/MAFWR/HQ-25	Supply and the installation of materials and equipment and the rehabilitation of new a rainfall enhancement stations in the Nakhal and Alrustaq states	Monday 3/6/2024	Sunday 23/6/2024	Sunday 14/7/2024	Specialized companies registered with The General Secretariat of the Tender Board with excellent, first, second, third and fourth grades	(25/-) Omani riyals for local companies (10/-) Omani riyals for SMEs
41/2024/MAFWR/HQ-5 Recall-1	Design, Supply & installation of Monitoring room on the third floor of the ministry head quarter	Monday 3/6/2024	Wednesday 12/6/2024	Sunday 30/6/2024	Specialized companies registered with The General Secretariat of the Tender Board with fourth grades	25/-) Omani riyals for local companies (10/-) Omani riyals for SMEs

- above mentioned Grade) may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>.
- The value of the document will be paid & submitted on line on given website.
- The Tenderer should attach Bid Commitment Declaration for local companies, and for International company that not have head quarters in the Sultanate of Oman should attach Bank Guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman (as required in the tender) and addressed to the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources.
- All correspondence pertaining to the tender inquiry must be online at e-tendering System.
- All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering System technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: +968 24402200 or etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om.

TENDERS COMMITTEE

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources

MARKET WATCH	
MSX30	4,783.20
Sensex	72,079.05
FOREX RATES (RO1 equals)	
India	217.07
Pakistan	722.58
Bangladesh	305.07
Philippines	152.97
Sri Lanka	784.93

*Rates as on June 04
Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

CBO issues RO19mn treasury bills

The Central Bank of Oman announced the issuance of treasury bills worth RO19.06mn for a maturity period of 91 days.

The average accepted price reached RO98.726 for every RO100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at RO98.725 per RO100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 5.1085% and 5.1744%, respectively.

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

Profits of Oman's listed firms rise 10% to RO193mn in first quarter

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Total net profits for listed companies in Oman increased by 10.1% in the first quarter of 2024 to \$500.8mn (approximately RO193mn) compared to \$455mn in the same period of 2023, according to a research report.

The increase in total profits of the companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) was mainly driven by higher profits for the banking, energy and diversified financial sectors during the January-March quarter, the report released by Kamco Investment said.

The sultanate's banking sector witnessed net profits growth of 18.2% to \$306.4mn in the first quarter of this year, up from \$259.2mn in the first quarter of 2023. All the seven listed banks that disclosed their financials reported growth in their net earnings for the quarter.

As per the report, Sohar International Bank reported the biggest increase in absolute net earnings among the Omani banks during the first quarter. The bank's net profit jumped from \$34.5mn in the first quarter of 2023 to \$65.3mn in the first quarter of 2024 on the back of



Banking sector witnessed net profits growth of 18.2% to \$306.4mn in the first quarter of 2024, up from \$259.2mn in the first quarter of 2023

the bank's recent merger, Kamco Investment noted.

In contrast, Bank Muscat reported the biggest net profit among the banks at \$140.9mn during the first quarter as compared to \$133.2mn in the corresponding period of 2023.

"The moderate growth of Bank Muscat's quarterly net earnings was attributed to 18.3% increase

in the bank's non-interest income due to an overall improvement in various businesses lines and volume growth," Kamco Investment said.

On the other hand, total first quarter net profits of the diversified financial sector increased by 12.7% year-on-year to \$54.1mn this year as compared to \$48mn in the first quarter of 2023. OM-

INVEST posted the largest net profit among the 14 constituent companies in the sector at \$24.1mn for the first quarter of 2024 despite recording a 17.8% year-on-year decline from \$29.3mn in the first quarter of 2023. Dhofar International Development and Investment followed with net profits of \$8.2mn, up from \$7mn in the first quarter of 2023.

For the telecommunications sector, net profits declined to \$40.7mn in the first quarter of this year as compared to \$62.3mn in the same period of 2023. The profit fall was mainly due to 39.4% decline of net profits reported by Omantel that

reached \$33.4mn down from \$55.1mn in the same period a year ago. Moreover, first quarter net earnings for Ooredoo Oman stayed unchanged at \$7.2mn.

However, net profits for the utilities sector registered a smaller net loss of \$4.2mn as compared to a loss of \$6.7mn in the first quarter of 2023. Three of out the seven companies in the utilities sector reported net losses; Phoenix Power Company (net loss of \$11.2mn), Al Suwadi Power Company (net loss of \$3.3mn) and Al Batinah Power Company which registered a net loss of \$3.5mn.

On the other hand, Sembcorp Salalah recorded the highest net

profit among the companies in the utilities sector at \$12.8mn, only partially offsetting the overall decline in sector earnings.

GCC corporate earnings slide: According to the Kamco Investment report, aggregate net profits reported by companies listed on the GCC exchanges dropped to the second lowest level in nine quarters during the first quarter of 2024 at \$56.4bn as compared to \$61.8bn in the same period of 2023.

The decline was mainly led by a year-on-year decline in profits for the energy, telecom and capital goods sectors partially offset by higher profits reported by mainly by banks, F&B and real estate companies.

Net profits for the GCC energy sector witnessed the biggest year-on-year decline during the first quarter of 2024 mainly led by fall in volumes sold by companies in the sector, partially offset by higher crude oil prices as compared to the first quarter of 2023.

On the other hand, healthy profits for the GCC banking sector helped to partially offset the bulk of the decline in earnings. Aggregate earnings for the GCC banking sector surged 11.5% year-on-year or by \$1.5bn to reach \$14.5bn in the first quarter of 2024.



Oil prices drop to 4-month lows amid OPEC+ decision

London, UK - Oil prices fell to four-month lows on Tuesday following the OPEC+ decision to gradually phase out output cuts until the end of September 2025 and on allayed supply concerns with ceasefire hopes in Gaza.

Global benchmark Brent crude traded at \$77.39 per barrel in morning trade in London, a drop of 1.24% from the closing price of \$78.36 per barrel on Monday. The US benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) traded at \$73.07 per barrel at the same time, a 1.54% fall from the previous session that closed at \$74.22 per barrel.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies, known as OPEC+, declared on Sunday that the group agreed to extend additional voluntary cuts of 2.2mn barrels per day (bpd), announced in November 2023, until the end of September 2024.

However, the cuts of 2.2mn bpd will be gradually phased out on a monthly basis until the end of September 2025.

Furthermore, the group announced that the 300,000 bpd production increase in the UAE will be phased in gradually from January 2025 until the end of September 2025.

This decision put downward pressure on oil prices by easing supply concerns, despite the output cut decision taken by the OPEC+ group.

Meanwhile, growing ceasefire possibilities in the Middle East, home to the vast majority of

global oil reserves, alleviated supply angst.

US President Joe Biden confirmed Israel's "readiness to move forward" with a ceasefire proposal presented to Hamas last week during a call with Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the White House said Monday.

Global benchmark Brent crude traded at \$77.39 per barrel in morning trade in London, a drop of 1.24% from the closing price of \$78.36 per barrel on Monday

The plan was presented to Hamas on Thursday night. The White House said earlier Monday that it is "awaiting" the Palestinian group's official response.

Hamas, for its part, said it will "respond positively to any proposal that includes a permanent ceasefire, a full withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, reconstruction efforts, the return of the displaced, and the completion of a comprehensive hostage exchange deal."

On the other hand, uncertainties about when the US Federal Reserve will start cutting interest rates continue to raise oil demand concerns.

Anadolu Agency

Bloodbath in Indian stock market as trends show below par show by BJP-led NDA

New Delhi, India - Indian stock indices witnessed a bloodbath on the day the general election results were being announced, where incumbent BJP performed below par and seems it may fall short of exit poll predictions and the majority mark on its own.

The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was leading in less than 300 seats while the INDIA alliance was leading in more than 230 seats in late evening on Tuesday, as per data from the Election Commission of India.

The idea of a coalition government lead by BJP at the centre has led to widespread market anxiety and a sharp decline in stock indices. The BJP, which has been the dominant force in Indian politics for the past decade, is seen as a pro-industry party whose policies have generally favoured economic growth and market stability. The failure to secure a clear majority to BJP of its own raises concerns about the formation of a stable government and the continuation of economic reforms.



At the closing bell, Sensex closed at 72,079.05 points, down 4,389.73 points or 5.74%,

while Nifty closed at 21,884.50 points, down 1,379.40 points or 5.93%. All Nifty sectoral indices, barring Nifty FMCG, were deep

in the red on Tuesday.

"The steep fall is due to the results so far falling short of the exit polls which the market had discounted yesterday. If BJP doesn't get a majority on its own there will be disappointment and this is getting reflected in the market. Also it is possible that Modi 3.0 may not be as reform-oriented as the market expected and may turn more welfare-oriented," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services.

At one point during the afternoon, Indian equity indices plummeted over 8% on Tuesday, as poll trends indicated a closer than anticipated fight for the incumbent Narendra Modi-led NDA government. Sensex logged its worst session in over four years, it witnessed back during Covid days.

"Markets rallied 3-3.5% on expectation of a Modi led NDA win on Monday. Today polls were not in line with exit poll outcome. Markets move more than 4-5% down today," said

Jaykrishna Gandhi, Head - Business Development, Institutional Equities, Emkay Global Financial Services. "We expect 7-10% downside for broader markets from current levels."

Manish Chowdhury, Head of Research, StoxBox, asserted that markets have reacted sharply to the initial trends of the NDA leading on around 290 seats, way less than as projected.

"With the NDA still looking to form a government, though with the important support of coalition partners, markets look jittery about the prospects of strong decision making. Markets believe that the reformist approach, which was a hallmark of the previous two terms, might take a backseat in the third term," said Chowdhury.

On Monday, Indian benchmark indices closed at record highs, driven by fresh buying from investors after exit polls indicated a comfortable majority for the NDA government. ANI

Emaar launches AED1.5bn expansion for Dubai Mall

Dubai, UAE - Dubai-based real estate giant Emaar Properties has announced a monumental expansion of Dubai Mall, which will include 240 new luxury stores and food and beverage outlets. This project represents an investment of AED1.5bn and the contractor is already mobilising on-site.

Announcing the impressive enhancement, Mohamed Alabbar stated, "The new Dubai Mall expansion is a great addition to one of the most visited sites in the world. We extend our gratitude to our esteemed guests and loyal customers, as well as our partners, retailers,



and government authorities for their unwavering support. This expansion reflects Dubai's am-

bitious vision to remain at the forefront of global innovation and culture, further solidifying

our city's position as a top global destination."

In 2023, Dubai Mall became

the most visited place on Earth achieving a new attendance record with 105mn visitors, a 19% increase from the previous year, coupled with exceptionally strong sales.

The momentum continues in 2024, as Dubai Mall remains a global retail and leisure icon, offering innovative experiences while maintaining high customer satisfaction ratings.

Inaugurated in 2008, Dubai Mall is the epicentre of modern retail and leisure in Dubai. It is the world's second largest shopping malls, measuring an impressive 1.2mn sqm.

Airlines profits to hit \$30bn in 2024: IATA

Dubai, UAE - The International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced strengthened profitability projections for global airlines in 2024 compared with its June and December 2023 forecasts.

Global airlines' total net profits are expected to reach \$30.5bn in 2024 and total travellers expected to reach 4.96bn, according to IATA.

"In a world of many and growing uncertainties, airlines continue to shore-up their profitability. The expected aggregate net profit of \$30.5bn in 2024 is a great achievement considering the recent deep pandemic losses. With a record five billion air travelers expected in 2024, the human need to fly has never been stronger," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director-General.

"Moreover, the global economy counts on air cargo to deliver the \$8.3tn of trade that gets to customers by air. Without a doubt, aviation is vital to the ambitions and prosperity of individuals and economies. Strengthening airline profitability



and growing financial resilience is important. Profitability enables investments in products to meet the needs of our customers and in the sustainability solutions we will need to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050," he added.

Walsh further said that the airline industry is on the path to sustainable profits, but there is a big gap still to cover. A 5.7% return on invested capital is well below the cost of capital, which is over 9%.

"And earning just \$6.14 per

passenger is an indication of just how thin our profits are—barely enough for a coffee in many parts of the world. To improve profitability, resolving supply chain issues is of critical importance, so we can deploy fleets efficiently to meet demand," he said.

"A relief from the parade of onerous regulations and ever-increasing tax proposals would also help. An emphasis on public policy measures that drive business competitiveness would be a win for the economy, for jobs, and for connectivity. It would

also place us in a strong position to accelerate investments in sustainability," said Walsh.

Meanwhile, profitability is expected to strengthen in 2024 as revenues grow slightly faster than expenses (+9.7% vs. +9.4% respectively). Operating profits are expected to reach \$59.9bn (up14.7% from \$52.2bn estimated for 2023). Net profits, however, are expected to grow slightly more slowly at 11.3%,

2024, up 15.2% from \$646bn in 2023.

Revenue passenger kilometres (RPKs) growth is expected to be 11.6% year-on-year. The long-term 20-year growth trend is expected to see passenger demand grow 3.8% annually for the 2023-2043 period.

The estimates showed that cargo revenues are expected to fall to \$120bn in 2024 (from \$138bn in 2023). Both are down

According to IATA, airline industry revenues are expected to reach an historic high of \$996bn in 2024. Passenger revenues are expected to reach \$744bn in 2024, up 15.2% from \$646bn in 2023

OPEC oil output up as Iraq continues to overproduce

Tsvetana Paraskova

OPEC's crude oil production rose by 145,000 barrels per day (bpd) in May compared to April, as Iraq continues to pump above its quota and boosted output alongside African producer Nigeria, the monthly Reuters survey showed on Tuesday.

OPEC produced a total of 26.63mn bpd in May, an increase of 145,000 bpd compared to April, according to the Reuters survey, which tracks supply to the market and is based on information provided by industry sources and shipping data.

Iraq, OPEC's second-biggest producer behind Saudi Arabia, has been consistently pumping crude above its OPEC+ quota, and has also consistently promised it would compensate for said overproduction.

Last month, Iraq and non-OPEC producer Kazakhstan presented to OPEC plans that would ensure full compensation of overproduced volumes by the end of the year. Additionally, any



excess production in April 2024 will be accommodated within the respective compensation frameworks throughout the remainder of the year.

Despite the pledges made in early May, Iraq raised its production by about 50,000 bpd last month, as per the Reuters survey.

Nigeria also boosted its output by 50,000 bpd, as it looks to raise production after years of underperforming in the OPEC+ deal, which led to the OPEC+ group cutting its quota at the end of last year.

Overall, the nine OPEC members bound by the OPEC+ pact

produced around 250,000 bpd more than their combined implied target in the deal, according to the Reuters survey. Iraq accounted for a large part of OPEC's overproduction versus the implied quota.

The observed increase in OPEC's oil production isn't contributing to any bullish sentiment at all, as one part of the market was largely left disappointed by the OPEC group's decisions this weekend, while the other part of market participants are fretting about slowing economies that could hit global oil demand.

(Source: Oilprice.com)

Eurozone inflation accelerates in May

Piero Cingari

Eurozone inflation surged in May, surpassing economists' expectations just days before the European Central Bank (ECB) is set to convene to announce the first interest rate cut in four years.

According to preliminary data from Eurostat, the harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) in the eurozone rose by 2.6% year-on-year in May, up from 2.4% in April and exceeding the forecast of 2.5%. This marks the first increase in the annual inflation rate since December 2023.

On a monthly basis, the HICP climbed by 0.2%, a slowdown from April's 0.6%.

Notably, energy inflation turned positive at 0.3% year-on-year for the first time since April 2023. Core inflation, which excludes food and energy, also rose in May, ending nine months of disinflation. The core inflation rate increased from 2.7% in April to 2.9% in May, surpassing the 2.8% expectation. Monthly core inflation edged up by 0.4%, decelerating from April's 0.6%.

Among member states, the highest annual inflation rates in



May were observed in Belgium (4.9%), Croatia (4.3%), and Portugal (3.9%). The latter, recorded its highest annual inflation rate in a year. Conversely, Finland (0.5%), Italy (0.8%), and Lithuania (0.8%) had the lowest annual inflation rates.

ECB rate cuts

The May flash inflation data is one of the last critical inputs before the ECB's meeting on June 6, where a 25-basis-point cut is widely expected.

Several ECB policymakers have recently indicated a prefer-

ence for a rate cut in June, which should suggest that a slight upside surprise in inflation is unlikely to alter their plans.

By not cutting interest rates, the ECB could send a worrying signal to market participants that they believe inflationary pressures are re-emerging and that maintaining restrictive interest rates is necessary.

It is highly anticipated that they will proceed with the rate cut in June without committing to further reductions, as Chief Economist Philip Lane outlined in his May 27 speech.

Lane emphasised that the pace of future rate cuts will be slower if there are upward surprises in underlying inflation, particularly in domestic and services sectors.

The ECB forecasted an average core inflation rate of 2.5% year-on-year for the second quarter of 2024.

Given the 2.7% reading in April and 2.9% in May, the June reading would need to be between 2% and 2.1% to align with the prior ECB's forecast, which seems unlikely.

The cut-off date for the ECB's June macroeconomic projections has passed, suggesting that a slight upward revision to second-quarter core inflation estimates will be on the cards.

President Christine Lagarde could also communicate during the press conference that the return to the 2% target for core inflation might be slightly slower than previously forecasted.

Money markets are currently pricing in 61 basis points of ECB rate cuts by year-end, implying only one additional 25-basis-point cut for 2024 after June's expected cut.

(Source: Euronews.com)

Fed may introduce first rate cut in Q4

Washington, US - Pricing in the money markets point to a possibility that the Fed may cut its policy rate after its 23-year peak to combat inflation in the fourth quarter, though the cautious statements from Fed officials and US macroeconomic data cause uncertainties to continue.

As the world's central banks struggle with inflation, what the Fed has in mind is not yet clear, despite the signs of a cooling in the country's economy.

Data showing that the US labour market remains tight is the main driver narrowing the Fed's policy space, and the possibility of a soft landing in the economy supports the arguments that there will be no rush to start cutting rates.

The US unemployment rate is still close to its historic lows, currently at 3.9%, while the Consumer Price Index (CPI) climbed 3.4% in April, and it continues to be above the Fed's 2% target.

Meanwhile, the US gross domestic product (GDP) climbed 1.3% in the first quarter, according to data released in the country last week, therefore, the



lowest growth since the second quarter of 2022 was recorded, as per the preliminary GDP published in April, while the country's economy was projected to grow 1.6% in the first quarter of 2024.

The core personal consumption expenditures (PCE) index, excluding food and energy items, climbed 0.2% month-on-month in April, below expectations, and by 2.8% year-on-year, in line with estimates.

In March, the core PCE index increased 0.3% month-on-month, and 2.8% on an annual basis.

Despite the softening depicted in the data, the impact of

the Fed's hawkish decisions to fight inflation has yet to be at the desired level, analysts say.

Additionally, it is uncertain whether the policy rate will be cut at the September meeting, as the pricing in the markets shows that 60% of estimates expect the policy rate to be cut, while the remaining 40% expect it to be left unchanged.

As for the November meeting, estimates show that 87% of estimates believe that the Fed will go for the first rate cut, and 57% of participants expect that the policy rate will be left unchanged in December after the possible cut in November.

The US employment data to be released on Friday is estimated to influence these expectations, especially the signals from the non-farm payrolls data, which will be closely monitored.

The US macroeconomic data continues to indicate inflationary pressures to be effective still, leading Fed officials to maintain their cautious stance on rate cuts.

Neel Kashkari, president of the Minneapolis Fed, stated that the rates should remain steady for an extended period, as lowering borrowing costs before inflation is brought under control would risk the country's prosperity, though he had said that he would not rule out the possibility of further rate hikes if price pressure goes up again in a previous statement.

Raphael Bostic, Atlanta Fed president, said that further rate hikes would not be needed to bring the inflation down to the 2% target, as the outlook is that inflation will fall very slowly, emphasizing that the Fed should adopt a restrictive stance.

Anadolu Agency

Tender Announcement

Al Morooj Dairy company would like to invite competent and experienced Construction companies (Excellent Grade and First Grade) to participate in the Tendering process for Three Milk Collection Centers.

Tender No.	Description of Service	Location	Tender Fee (R.O)	Last Date for Purchasing Tender
AMDC/TD-24-004	Civil works for the new Milk Collection and Chilling Centers (RCC and Steel Structure).	Taqah	50 OMR Non-Refundable	26/6/2024
AMDC/TD-24-005	Civil works for the new Milk Collection and Chilling Centers (RCC and Steel Structure).	Mirbat	50 OMR Non-Refundable	26/6/2024
AMDC/TD-24-006	Civil works for the new Milk Collection and Chilling Centers (RCC and Steel Structure).	Thumrait	50 OMR Non-Refundable	26/6/2024

- Interested vendors may obtain the tender documents through email - tender@almoroojdairy.om after the payment of the non-refundable tender fee.
- All bidders are required to submit their proposals addressed to the Chairman of BOD in Al Morooj Dairy, P.O Box:1385: PC-211 and should be submitted to the Bait Al Musharat Building, Fourth Floor, Salalah, sultanate Of Oman

Al Morooj Dairy Company reserve all the rights to accept, reject any or all of the offers, extend the tender closing date, modify tender document(s) or cancel the tender without assigning any reason(s)

'Appreciating Cancer Warriors' initiative launched

'Appreciating Cancer Warriors', a unique, year-long cancer awareness programme was launched on June 1 to keep cancer awareness alive throughout the year in a bid to curb its incidence and motivate people to avail of early detection and treatment programmes.

Organised by Oman Cancer Association (OCA) - the main organisation who has constantly been involved in spreading awareness in the community through various programmes, including MMUs, the annual walkathon and other activities, this initiative was launched under the auspices of Dr Rashid bin Mohammed al Ghailani, president of ONEIC, in the presence of dignitaries and cancer awareness enthusiasts, especially Yuthar al Rawahi, founder of the cancer awareness initiative in Oman and Dr Wahid al Kharusi, chairman of OCA.

Dr Rajeshwari Narayanan Kutty, a key functionary in the field who has been spearheading cancer awareness and treatment programmes in Oman over the past few decades, said the idea of launching the 365 Days Cancer Awareness Campaign was very much needed in Oman to give a boost to the efforts of all those working in this area. It stresses the fact that cancer awareness should be continuous



and not restricted only to certain days or months every year. "This is an initiative spread awareness throughout the year, bringing focus to all the types of cancer," she observed.

She further pointed out that the goal is to be achieved not only by the doctors and health care professionals but with the participation of people of all walks of life. With concerted efforts by all stake holders, including educational institutions, the private sector, and individuals. "We need to remove the fear of cancer in the minds of people



We need to remove the fear of cancer from the minds of people and instill hope and confidence in them to motivate them to undertake regular check-ups to detect abnormalities

DR RAJESHWARI

and instill hope and confidence in them to motivate them to undertake regular check-ups to detect abnormalities or dangers signs," she said, adding, "Cancer is curable, if detected early, and everyone needs to know that, instead of despairing when one has to suffer due to sheer negligence and lack of awareness. Cancer does not have any boundaries - of age, gender, religion, caste or region. It is a global threat. So, everyone has to be aware and not fear it," she stressed.

She further pointed out that the survivors - the cancer war-

riors - are the most important ambassadors who can motivate, give hope alleviate fear among people. With the launch of this novel initiative, all cancer warriors have been urged to share their own success stories to motivate others and spread greater awareness, she said, adding that it will give a greater impetus to all the concerted efforts.

A special memento with the logo of this initiative was also presented to OCA and received by Dr Manal al Zadjali, Secretary General of OCA, on the occasion.

Oman participates in World Cities Summit in Singapore

The Sultanate of Oman, represented by Muscat Municipality, participated in the ninth edition of the World Cities Summit, held in the Republic of Singapore, yesterday.

The summit was themed 'Liveable and Sustainable Cities: Rejuvenate, Reinvent, Reimagine,' a press release said.

The forum brought together capital secretaries, mayors, and specialised delegations from various countries worldwide to discuss how to achieve smart, regenerative, and sustainable cities for future generations. It served as an ideal platform to showcase best practices, learn from the experiences of others, and develop sustainable solutions for future cities.

The sultanate's delegation was headed by Ahmed bin Mohammed al Hamidi, chairman of Muscat Municipality, who said, "Prosperous cities are those that maintain high standards of welfare for their inhabitants and can sustainably provide these stan-



dards regardless of external conditions. To ensure the prosperity of these cities, we must ensure their ability to adapt to technological, social, environmental, and other changes. This was extensively discussed during the forum sessions, where we learned from the experiences of cities with rich histories and promising futures. We are striving diligently to make Muscat a sustainably growing city."

He further said, "This year's forum emphasised the strategic

partnership between the public and private sectors in building the cities of the future. Both sectors must work together to achieve this goal. In Muscat Municipality, we call on everyone to collaborate to make Muscat and all Omani cities smart, resilient, and regenerative."

The forum's activities included various events such as the Mayor's Forum, a special symposium for young leaders, the 'Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize' award ceremony, etc.

Ranger Raptor - Ford's ultimate adventure truck

Explore Ford's Ranger Raptors rugged off-road and towing prowess. Understanding the high-performance vehicle's dynamics is crucial before you make the final call.

The mighty Ford Ranger Raptor ensues modern technologies and safety measures that elevate adventures to a new level. The Ranger Raptor is a massive cruiser designed for exhilarating expeditions on rugged mountain terrains and unpredictable muddy surfaces, a press release said.

Developed by Ford Performance, the Ranger Raptor is equipped with a twin-turbo 3.0L EcoBoost V6 engine, delivering 392 HP Power and 583 NM Torque. Ford Performance ensured that the engine delivers prompt action to throttle inputs and embedded a race-bred anti-lag system similar to the first one seen on the Ford GT road car and Focus ST. It promises rapid on-demand boost delivery when



revving up for the race.

Moreover, the new anti-lag system can be accessed through the Baja mode on the Raptor. It keeps the turbochargers spinning for up to three seconds after the driver backs off the throttle, allowing faster acceleration resumption. The need to use this

mode arises in extreme off-roading conditions when the car's suspension requires an instant boost. In addition, each selectable mode is programmed with an individual turbocharging boost profile for swift action and optimised performance across various terrains.

In addition, the Raptor is fitted with the next-generation FOX 2.5-inch Live Valve internal bypass shock absorbers equipped with position-sensitive damping capability. These shock absorbers are the most advanced ever fitted to Ranger Raptor and are loaded with Teflon infused oil.

OAB floats Ruwad al Arabi for Leadership Development programme



As part of its initiatives to develop national skills and build future leaders, Oman Arab Bank (OAB) organised a field visit for participants in the 'Ruwad Al Arabi for Leadership Development' programme to Oman Sail, where they explored first-hand the non-profit organisation's work environment and innova-

tive operations through engaging dialogues with its management team.

During the visit, the participants met with Dr Khamis al Jabri, CEO of Oman Sail who expressed his appreciation for OAB's initiatives and its goals to develop and prepare young leaders, enabling them to keep pace

with economic growth and the requirements of the labor market, a press release said.

Dr Jabri presented Oman Sail's activities and strategic vision to the 'Ruwad Al Arabi for Leadership Development' programme participants, highlighting its achievements in reviving the Omani maritime heritage

and promoting tourism and investments in the Sultanate of Oman.

"This visit is an integral part for the 'Ruwad Al Arabi for Leadership Development' programme," explained Essam al Busaidi, chief Human Resources & Administration officer at OAB. "One of OAB's key initiatives is

to nurture talent and develop national cadres, cultivating leaders who meet the highest international standards. The programme equips future leaders with the skills necessary to drive change and contribute to growth and innovation. Participants gain a wide range of experiences and knowledge, enhancing their

strategic thinking, decision-making, and communication skills."

These field visits familiarise participants in the programme with diverse work environments in various government and private sector entities across various sectors, including information technology, manufacturing, aviation, hospitality,

and medical services.

This visit provides a unique opportunity for participants to engage with leaders and work teams at Oman Sail and understand the role of strategic thinking in the success of the organisations, the importance of innovation and teamwork in achieving goals.

Liva Insurance offers coverage for Omantel postpaid customers

Liva Insurance - a leading insurer in the Sultanate of Oman - announced a strategic partnership with Omantel to provide third party and comprehensive Motor Insurance coverage to Omantel Postpaid customers.

This collaboration underscores both companies' commitment to delivering innovative and customer-centric solutions. The agreement was recently signed at Omantel headquarters by Hanaa al Hinai, CEO of Liva Insurance, and Tala al Mamari, CEO of Omantel, a press release said.

Under this partnership, eligible Omantel customers can purchase Third Party Package and Comprehensive Motor insurance policies online with an Easy Monthly Installment (EMI) facility. The annual premium will be conveniently divided into 12 easy monthly installments, which will be added to the customer's post-paid phone bill. This seamless integration allows customers to manage their insurance payments effortlessly alongside their regular phone bills.

Hanaa al Hinai, CEO of Liva Insurance, said, "We are thrilled to partner with Omantel to offer an innovative motor insurance solution tailored for Omantel's



postpaid customers. This collaboration reflects our commitment to delivering unparalleled customer experiences by making insurance accessible and affordable. By integrating easy EMI payment options into Omantel's billing system, we aim to simplify the process for our customers, ensuring they can enjoy comprehensive coverage without financial strain. This partnership implies a significant step towards our vision of being the most efficient personal lines insurer.

OABC, Bait Al Qanoon host MSS session

There are many changes coming forth for all employees in Oman, whether Omani or expatriate, when it comes to end of service benefits.

Timelines and specifics raise questions for many leaders - and this is what prompted the OABC's latest informational event for the business community, a press release said.

The Oman American Business Council (OABC), Oman's largest and most active business networking group and the official affiliate of the U S Chamber of Commerce in Oman, in partnership with OABC Corporate Member Bait Al Qanoon, a purely Omani Law Company with extensive international experience, hosted a successful morning session on the new Mandatory Saving Scheme (MSS), under the Oman Social Protection Law.

The event took place on May at Crowne Plaza, Qurm, welcoming over 100 professionals and business leaders to discuss the significant changes in store for companies in Oman under the Social Protection Law.

The networking session was followed by a presentation by Noor al Khonji, associate at Bait Al Qanoon.

Ahmed al Abri, partner at Bait Al Qanoon Law firm, said, "Bait Al Qanoon was delighted to present 'The Social Protection Law and Savings Scheme: Implementation & Implications,' arranged by the Oman American Business Council (OABC). We are grateful for the active participation and keen interest from OABC members, and extend a big 'thank you' to the OABC team for making this event possible."

Rebecca Olson, CEO of OABC, added, "What will happen to the current gratuity I've already accumulated? When does the new requirement for maternity leave begin? What if an employee prefers to opt out of the new scheme? These were just three of the 15-20 questions asked and answered by members during the session. We are so grateful for the time and sponsorship of Bait Al Qanoon, and thank each team member for sharing their knowledge and experience with our members."

MHA hails completion of Toolkit for SMEs

Muscat Hospitality Academy (MHA) in collaboration with The Small and Medium Enterprise Development (SME) Authority, proudly announces the successful conclusion of its exclusive Entrepreneurial programme tailored for SME business owners.

The inaugural graduation that took place on May 16 was a significant milestone for participants who had completed the programme diligently, improving their business knowledge and strategy to enhance industry standards, a press release said.

The joint initiative is open to individuals holding a valid Riyada card and actively managing an SME encompassed key fundamental aspects of 'the ABC's of Business', including Business Model creation, Financial control, Branding, Leadership, with practical Industry-Relevant In-



sights.

Aligned with Oman's Vision 2040 to bolster small and medium-sized enterprises across sectors, the programme serves as a sustainable stimulus for entrepreneurial success in Oman supporting and equipping this pivotal sector with the necessary 'real-world' guidance to establish and grow their businesses sustainably, and to contribute competitively and positively to Oman's economic

development.

"The course at Muscat Hospitality Academy was super helpful and packed with useful tips for the participants. The sessions were engaging, and I learned critical skills that I now use in my business daily, definitely I recommend anyone who has passion in SME's and hospitality to join them," said Salma al Hajri, Toolkit for SME participant and founder of Salma's chocolates, the first Chocolatier in Oman.

Amina al Zadjali, founder and chairperson of MHA Oman, said, "We are dedicated to nurturing the growth and excellence of Oman's SME's through such specialised programmes. Our collaboration with the SME Development Authority underscores the collective commitment to providing meaningful support and education to the entrepreneurs."



Indian School Bousher marks World Bicycle Day with rally

Indian School Bousher (ISB) organised a lively 5 km bicycle rally to commemorate World Bicycle Day, uniting students, staff, and the community for a morning filled with fitness and enjoyment.

The rally was officially flagged off at 6am by the school principal, P Prabakaran, an avid advocate of a healthy lifestyle and student wellness. The event, which saw the participation of over 150 enthusiastic participants from Bousher, adorned with helmets and vibrant reflective safety jackets, was a testament to the school's commitment to encourage students to spend time outdoors, enjoy nature, and engage in physical activities away from screens.

The cyclists, led by the facilitators of the Physical Education Department, traversed a scenic 5km route, which was meticulously planned to ensure safety and enjoyment for all participants. The event received tremendous support from the Royal Oman Police, Muscat Municipality and Oman Bicycle Association, whose presence ensured the safety and success of the rally.

The principal expressed his pleasure at the impressive turnout and highlighted the significance of such events in building community spirit and raising awareness on sustainable living.

Al Obaidani expands retail footprint in Saham

Al Obaidani, Oman's most preferred Dishdasha brand, has further expanded its retail presence by inaugurating its 32nd store in Saham.

This new outlet caters to the discerning, quality-oriented men of Saham and its neighbouring areas, offering a diverse range of

fabrics. With a legacy spanning 60 years, Al Obaidani has remained dedicated to introducing high-quality fabrics, enhancing the personality and character of Omani gentlemen, a press release said.

Reflecting on the significance of the Saham store opening,

Khalil al Obaidani, director of Al Obaidani Stores, expressed his delight, stating, "We are thrilled to continue our rapid expansion with the launch of our latest store. As a leading Dishdasha brand in Oman, we are committed to extending our reach and providing our customers with the

finest quality fabrics. Our collaboration with top fabric suppliers in Asia and Europe ensures a continuous supply of high quality, premium fabrics."

The company aims to tap into a new customer base with its latest store in Saham, specialising in high-quality dishdashas.

BMW Group Middle East director visits Oman facility to check out operations

Al Jenaibi International Automobiles, the official importer of BMW Group vehicles in Oman, welcomed its new managing director of BMW Group Middle East, Karim-Christian Haririan, on his first official visit to Oman since assuming his role.

The tour provided an opportunity for Haririan to witness first-hand the robust operations and customer-centric services that have been the cornerstone of the premium automotive brand's success in Oman, a press release said.

During his visit, Haririan conducted an extensive walkaround of the show-



room and facilities along with Rachid Zamani, Managing Director of Al Jenaibi International Automobiles, and Dennis Obermeier, Regional Sales Manager for BMW Group Middle East.

Zamani said, "We are thrilled to welcome Karim-Christian Haririan to Oman for a visit to the heart of our retail and service operations, in Muscat. With his vast experience and proven track record within the BMW Group, we look forward to working closely with Karim-Christian to continue delivering exceptional experiences to our customers and push for market

growth. This visit aligns perfectly with our long-term vision for BMW Oman."

Haririan said, "I was delighted to visit BMW Oman and witness the dedication and enthusiasm of Al Jenaibi International Automobiles. This much-anticipated first visit has given me an exciting glimpse into Oman's dynamic automobile scene and market requirements. I am excited about the opportunities ahead and confident that, together, we will achieve new successes for BMW in Oman. Additionally, I am proud to announce that BMW Oman was awarded Balance Scorecard Champion for 2023."

China’s spacecraft takes off from lunar far side with first samples

Beijing, China - The ascender of China's Chang'e-6 probe lifted off from lunar surface on Tuesday morning, carrying samples collected from the moon's far side, an unprecedented feat in human lunar exploration history.

The ascender has entered a preset orbit around the moon, said the China National Space Administration (CNSA).

The ascender took off at 7:38am (Beijing Time) from the moon's far side. A 3,000-newton engine, after working for about six minutes, pushed the ascender to the preset lunar orbit, according to the CNSA.

The Chang'e-6 probe, comprising an orbiter, a lander, an

ascender and a returner - like its predecessor Chang'e-5 - was launched on May 3. The lander-ascender combination, separated from the orbiter-returner combination on May 30, touched down at the designated landing area in the South Pole-Aitken (SPA) Basin on June 2.

The spacecraft finished its intelligent and rapid sampling work, and the samples were stowed in a container inside the ascender of the probe as planned, the CNSA said.

During sampling and packaging, researchers conducted simulated sampling in a ground lab, based on the detection data sent back by the Queqiao-2



Technical personnel work at the Beijing Aerospace Control Centre (BACC) in Beijing on Tuesday (Xinhua)

relay satellite, providing important support for decision-making and operations in every link.

"The mission has withstood the test of high temperature on the far side of the moon," the CNSA said.

It adopted two methods of moon sampling, including using a drill to collect subsurface samples and grabbing samples on the surface with a robotic arm. It automatically gathered diverse samples at different sites.

Ge Ping, spokesperson for the Chang'e-6 mission, said that through detailed analysis of the soil structure, physical properties and material composition of the Chang'e-6 samples, scientists will be able to deepen research on the formation and evolutionary history of the moon, the origin of the solar system and so on, laying an improved foundation for later exploration missions to build on.

The multiple payloads installed on the lander, including the landing camera, panoramic camera, lunar soil structure detector and lunar mineral spectrometer, worked well and carried out scientific exploration as planned, the CNSA said.

The lunar soil structure detector analysed and judged the underground lunar soil structure of the sampling area.

Xinhua



Volcano erupts in Philippines; orders issued for evacuation

Manila, The Philippines - The Philippines on Tuesday ordered the evacuation of people amid an eruption at the Kanlaon Volcano on the island of Negros.

Kanlaon Volcano is an active stratovolcano and the highest mountain on the island.

Mayor Jose Chubasco Cardenas of Canlaon city warned that there was a risk of flash floods, mudflows, and other hazards due to volcanic ash deposition.

"All residents living within three miles from the rivers downstream are hereby ordered to evacuate immediately," said Jose in a statement.

The volcano produced a massive plume rising to 5,000 metres (3.1 miles) above the summit on Monday, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

The eruption at 6.51pm local time (1051GMT) lasted six minutes, and was preceded by a volcano-tectonic earthquake.

The civil aviation authorities have been alerted to advise pilots to avoid the volcano's summit as ash can be hazardous to aircraft.

Volcano eruption also led to air-traffic disruption in many regions of the archipelago.

About 29 flights from the Philippines Ninoy Aquino International Airport have been cancelled, state news agency (PNA) reported, citing the Manila International Airport Authority on Tuesday.

Raising the alert level from one to two, the institute said it continues to closely monitor the incident and will provide updates as necessary. The public has been urged to stay vigilant and follow safety measures to mitigate the dangers of volcanic activity.

Agencies

Biden not to attend Ukraine peace summit: White House

Washington, D.C., US - US Vice President Kamala Harris will travel to Switzerland next week to participate in a summit aimed at helping chart a path toward peace in Ukraine, the White House said.

Vice President Harris will be accompanied by US National Security Advisor, Jake Sullivan to the Summit on Peace in Ukraine set for June 15-16 in Lucerne, Switzerland. US President Joe Biden will skip the two-day summit as he is due to be at a star-studded fundraising event for his 2024 reelection campaign in Los Angeles. Biden, who Ukraine President Vladimir Zelensky invited will be participating, according to the Hollywood Reporter at the fundraiser event in which host Jimmy Kimmel will moderate a conversation between Biden and former President Barack Obama. It will feature special guests George Clooney and Julia Roberts.

Vice President Harris and Sullivan at the Switzerland summit will highlight the importance of countries continuing to support Ukraine's effort to secure a just and lasting peace the National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby told reporters at a press gaggle at the White House on Monday. At the peace conference, they will underscore the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to supporting Ukraine's effort to secure a just and lasting peace based on Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and the principles of the UN Charter, Kirby said.

The spokesperson said that



US President Joe Biden will skip the summit as he is due to be at a star-studded fundraising event for his 2024 reelection campaign in Los Angeles

US Vice President Kamala Harris, accompanied by US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, will attend the Summit on Peace in Ukraine set for June 15-16 in Lucerne, Switzerland

the war could end tomorrow 'if Russian President Vladimir Putin would simply withdraw his forces from Ukraine'. "In the meantime, we will continue, and our allies and partners will continue, to support the people of Ukraine as they fight every day to defend themselves against this aggression," Kirby said.

At a press conference in Brussels last week, Zelensky had said that US President Biden's absence 'would only be met by an applause by Putin - a personal, standing applause'.

In response to reporters' queries at the White House gaggle on Monday, Kirby said Biden has been a staunch supporter of the peace deal.

"The United States has actively participated in every single one of the previous Ukraine peace summits. Every single one. And as I said earlier, we have been the strongest, most staunch supporter of this peace deal that President Zelensky put forward."

The Kremlin has maintained that any talks around securing peace in Ukraine should involve Russia, which has not been invited to the summit.

Zelensky who was in Singapore to attend the Shangi-La Dialogue told the security conference that China was helping Russian efforts disrupt the peace conference by pressuring leaders of other countries not to attend.

"These attempts to disrupt the summit are systematic and are unprecedentedly large in scale, which once again confirms that we are doing everything right," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said.

ANI

Globetrotting Turkish traveller Umut Balkis, his dog reach Afghanistan

Kabul, Afghanistan - Turkish traveller Umut Balkis, continues his world tour on bicycle with his companion dog Del in Afghanistan.

Having left his job nine months ago, leaving his family and loved ones behind, Balkis travels on his bicycle across countries, continuing his journey undeterred by the challenges brought by cycling through Afghanistan's rugged terrain.

He has been a DJ in Turkey but the series of unfortunate events he experienced, including his breakup with his girlfriend, the death of his dog, and his dissatisfaction with his job, became turning points in his life.

All these events led him to embark on a vast adventure, causing him to realise 'how quickly time passes and to start questioning the meaning of life', Balkis told Anadolu in an interview. With his desire to 'explore

With his desire to 'explore the world', Balkis acquired a durable bicycle and equipment for long journeys, starting his world adventure from Yalikavak district of Mugla in southern Turkey on September 7, 2023

the world', Balkis acquired a durable bicycle and camping equipment for long journeys, starting his world adventure from Yalikavak district of Mugla in southern Turkey on September 7, 2023.

On road for 9 months

At the beginning of his journey,



the Turkish traveller first went to the southern province of Mersin and then crossed over to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Later, returning to Mersin again, he reached the region affected by the twin earthquakes centred in Kahramanmaraş in February 2023.

Then, traveling through cities in Iraq's Kurdish Regional Government, Balkis also went to Iran.

Crossing from Iran to Pakistan and reaching the capital Islamabad, Balkis intended to reach

Thailand via India, but the Indian Embassy in Islamabad did not grant him a visa.

Consequently, he redirected his route toward Afghanistan.

Arriving in Afghanistan last week, Balkis will head to Tajikistan from Kabul in the coming days. While Balkis aims to visit the Turkic countries in Central Asia, his route's endpoint depends on the visa policies of the countries he will visit.

Next goal to visit African countries

Resting usually near water and particularly in areas with low human density, the Turkish traveller stays with people he meets in cities. He aims to stay on the road for a longer period and his next goal is to travel through African countries with his bicycle and his dog, Del.

He covers a distance of 100-120km (62-74 miles) in flat areas and 50-60km (31-37 miles) in rough terrain per day, and the most challenging parts for him are the hills and the insects he encounters while camping.

Met his travel companion in Iran

Balkis found a dog injured in a repair shop in the city of Shiraz in southern Iran, had it treated, and adopted it.

He named the dog 'Del', which means 'heart' in Persian. Now, wherever Balkis goes, Del accompanies him. People stop to take pictures with Balkis and want to meet him, while others invite him into their homes.

Balkis said he never feels alone, talking to Del by his side.

"He understands me too. With my hearing already 50 per cent impaired, he acts as an alarm for security during nights in the tent," he said.

Anadolu Agency

8 Palestinians killed in fresh Israeli airstrike in central Gaza

Palestinian death toll from Israeli attacks on Gaza since last October has reached 36,550

Gaza City, Palestine - At least eight Palestinians were killed in an Israeli airstrike on a car and a people's gathering near a shelter in Deir al-Balah city in the central Gaza Strip, on Tuesday morning. A medical source at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital said eight Palestinians were killed in an Israeli airstrike in the vicinity of the Palestine Technical College, which serves as a displaced people's shelter. Eyewitnesses told Anadolu that the injured were transferred to a hospital on animal carts due to a lack of fuel in Gaza. The struck area is crowded with people as the Israeli army has designated it as a safe zone, eyewitnesses added. The Health Ministry is yet to confirm the exact number of casualties. Meanwhile, Palestinian death toll from relentless Israeli attacks on Gaza since last October has



The struck area is crowded with people as the Israeli army has designated it as a safe zone, eyewitnesses said

reached 36,550, the ministry said on Tuesday. At least 82,959 people have also been injured in the onslaught, the ministry added in a statement. "Israeli forces killed 71 people, and injured 182 others in seven 'massacres' against families in the last 24 hours," the ministry said.

No clear stance on deal Qatar said on Tuesday that the principles outlined by US President Joe Biden provide a roadmap for a permanent ceasefire in the Gaza Strip. On Friday, Biden said Israel presented a three-phase deal that would end hostilities in Gaza and secure the release of

hostages held in the coastal enclave. The plan includes a ceasefire, a hostage-prisoner exchange, and reconstruction of Gaza. Washington and Tel Aviv, however, are at odds over the proposal. "The principles outlined by President Biden regarding the Gaza ceasefire and hostage swap meet the demands of all

sides," Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed al-Ansari told a press conference in Doha. "These principles provide a roadmap for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and ending the crisis," he added. The Qatari spokesman said there are no clear positions so far from Israel or Palestinians regarding Biden's proposal.

"In Israel, there are differences among ministers (about the proposal), with some supporting Biden's initiative and others opposing it," he added. "There has been no clear stance from Hamas on the initiative," he added. Hamas earlier said that it would deal 'positively' with Biden's proposal. Anadolu Agency

Rebuilding of Gaza pier 'ongoing': Pentagon

Washington, D.C., US - The US is still working to rebuild and repair a temporary humanitarian pier off the coast of Gaza after rough seas caused motorised sections to run aground last month, a Pentagon spokeswoman said on Monday. "The rebuilding and repairing of the pier is ongoing at (the Port of) Ashdod. Additionally, the recovering of the remaining two army vessels that were beached near the Trident Pier is ongoing, with assistance from the Israeli Navy," Sabrina Singh told reporters. On May 25, US Central Command (CENTCOM) announced that 'heavy sea states' affected four US Army vessels which broke free from their moorings, with two vessels now anchored on the beach near the pier. The third and fourth vessels are beached on the coast of Israel near Ashkelon, it added. "I believe the Army vessels just did take on a lot of water and sand, so the recovery efforts are just proving to be a little bit more difficult. But we are working with the Israeli Navy to make sure that they can be pushed back and will be operational," Singh said. Anadolu Agency

UN human rights chief urges end to killings in West Bank

Geneva, Switzerland - The UN human rights chief on Tuesday urged for an end to killings in the West Bank by Israeli forces. On Saturday, Israeli forces shot dead 16-year-old Ahmed Ashraf Hamidat and critically wounded 17-year-old Mohammed Musa Al Bitar near Aqabat Jaber refugee camp, Jericho. Al Bitar died the following day, according to the human rights office. Their deaths, along with the killings of four more Palestinians by the Israeli army on Monday, took the number of Palestinians killed in the West Bank to 505 since October 7. "As if the tragic events in Israel and then Gaza over the past eight months were not enough, the people of the occupied West Bank are also being subjected to day-after-day of unprecedented bloodshed. It is unfathomable that so many lives have been taken in such a wanton fashion," Volker Turk said in a statement.



As if the tragic events in Israel and then Gaza were not enough, the people of the occupied West Bank are also being subjected to unprecedented bloodshed

VOLKER TURK

"The killing, destruction and widespread human rights violations are unacceptable, and must cease immediately," Turk said. "Israel must not only adopt but

enforce rules of engagement that are fully in line with applicable human rights norms and standards." He stressed that any allegation of unlawful killings must

be 'thoroughly and independently' investigated and those responsible held to account. "Pervasive impunity for such crimes has been commonplace for far too long in the occupied West Bank. Such impunity has created an enabling environment for more and more unlawful killings by the ISF," he warned, referring to the Israeli Security Forces by initials. The office noted that ISF has often used 'lethal force as a first resort' against Palestinian protesters throwing stones, incendiary bottles, and firecrackers at ISF armoured vehicles, in cases where those shot 'clearly did not represent an imminent threat to life'. The prevalence of Palestinians who died after being shot in the upper part of the body, along with a pattern of the denial of medical assistance to those injured, suggests 'intent to kill in violation of the right to life', he said. Anadolu Agency

Sanders to skip address by Netanyahu at US Congress

Washington, D.C., US - US Senator Bernie Sanders reiterated on Monday that he will not attend an address by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to a joint session of Congress. "No, Mr. President, I will not be in attendance for that speech," Sanders told the Senate floor. Sanders said he believes it is 'a very sad day' for the US that Netanyahu has been invited by leaders from both political parties, including Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson, Democratic Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell and House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries. No date has been set for Netanyahu's speech, according to local sources citing his office, following reports that it had been scheduled for June 13. Showing photographs of children fighting hunger in the Gaza Strip taken by Getty, Reuters and Al Jazeera, Sanders blasted Johnson, who accused him of 'parrot-



Using starvation as an act of war... is a violation of both American and international law. It is a war crime

BERNIE SANDERS

ing the talking points of Hamas' for refusing to attend an address by Netanyahu. "I would say to Speaker Johnson that when you attend your

fundraising dinners with your billionaire friends, and you eat your fine steaks and your lobsters and your other wonderful food, please remember these pictures from Gaza," Sanders said. The senator added that the US should remember that the Netanyahu government has intentionally blocked humanitarian aid including food, water and medical supplies. "Blocking humanitarian aid and creating the conditions for famine is not only an act of extreme cruelty, using starvation as an act of war, but it is a violation of both American and international law. It is a war crime. That is what it is," Sanders stressed. According to the UN, he said, since mid-January, at least 30 children have starved to death, adding more than 93,000 children under five have been screened for malnutrition. "But importantly, that is just what we know. The full reality is likely much, much worse," he said. Anadolu Agency

Iran: Bagher Ghalibaf emerges prominent candidate to succeed Raisi

Tehran, Iran - Iran's Parliament Speaker Bagher Ghalibaf, a leading conservative political figure, emerged as the most prominent candidate in this month's elections to elect a successor to late President Ebrahim Raisi. Ghalibaf, who was reelected as parliament speaker last week, joined the presidential race on Monday, the final day of registration for the upcoming polls. The snap vote is slated to be held on June 28 after Raisi died in a helicopter crash in northwestern Iran on May 19. Iran's election supervisory body, the Guardian Council, began the vetting process for

candidates on Tuesday and will release the list of qualified candidates on June 11. Candidates approved by the 12-member vetting body will have two weeks to campaign before the voting takes place on June 28, according to election authorities. **Raisi's successor** Ghalibaf, a leading conservative politician who has contested presidential elections several times in the past, was widely considered a potential successor to Raisi. In the 2013 presidential election, he lost to Hassan Rouhani, the eventual winner, finishing



Iran's Parliament Speaker Bagher Ghalibaf

second. In the 2017 presidential election, Ghalibaf entered the race again but withdrew in favour of

Raisi, a more formidable and populist figure, who ultimately lost to Rouhani. In the 2021 presidential elec-

tion, while serving his first term as parliament speaker, Ghalibaf chose not to contest and supported Raisi instead. Weeks after Raisi died in the helicopter crash, Ghalibaf was re-elected as parliament speaker by a large majority of votes, which left many political analysts speculating about his plans. Ghalibaf ended speculations about his plans on Monday and decided to register for the June 28 vote. Speaking to reporters after filing his nomination, Ghalibaf said he felt compelled to run to ensure the continuation of efforts started under Raisi's government. He

vowed to 'wholeheartedly strive to solve problems'. **IRGC ties** Ghalibaf's entry has dimmed the prospects of another prominent conservative figure, Saeed Jalili, a former nuclear negotiator, who joined the race on the first day of registration on Thursday. Both Ghalibaf and Jalili are expected to be approved by the Guardian Council, but it remains uncertain whether Jalili will withdraw or continue to the finish line. Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani, who has also registered, is likely to withdraw in favour of Ghalibaf in the later stages if both go

ahead, according to political analysts. Before entering active politics, Ghalibaf, a certified pilot, served as a commander in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Air Force and was active during the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s. He served as Iran's police chief from 2000 to 2005. In 2005, he was elected Tehran mayor, a position he held until 2017, which earned him widespread popularity. Ghalibaf was a close friend of Iran's former top commander, General Qassem Soleimani, and they had known each other since the Iran-Iraq War. Anadolu Agency

INDIA ELECTIONS

Modi claims 3rd consecutive win for NDA

According to the latest trends from the Election Commission, NDA is leading or has won 293 seats

New Delhi, India - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday claimed victory for the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA), terming it a 'historical feat' in the history of the country.

Modi said that the BJP-led NDA will form its third successive government and that it is the victory of resolve of Viksit Bharat, of 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas' and of strong faith of people in India's Constitution.

Addressing party workers and leaders at the BJP central office here after the results of Lok Sabha polls, PM Modi said people have reposed faith in the BJP and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

He said it is the first time after 1962 that a government that completed two full tenures has got a third successive term in office. He said 'new history' has been created after six decades.

The Prime Minister made a special mention of BJP's performance in Odisha where the party is poised to form government for the first time. BJP has also performed very well in the

Lok Sabha polls in the state.

"On this sacred day, it is confirmed that NDA is forming the government for the third time. We are grateful to the people, they reposed full faith on the BJP, NDA. This is the victory of the world's largest democracy, it is a victory of strong faith on India's Constitution, it is the vic-

It is confirmed that NDA is forming government for the third time. We are grateful to the people, they reposed full faith on BJP, NDA

NARENDRA MODI

tory of the resolve of Viksit Bharat. It is the victory of 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas'," he said.

The Prime Minister also lauded the Election Commission for successfully conducting the world's largest democratic exercise.

"They carried out such a huge election with so much efficiency in this scorching heat. Our security forces have also effectively carried out their work. Every Indian is proud of the credibility of India's election



Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets the supporters at BJP headquarters in New Delhi on Tuesday (ANI)

process and system," he said.

According to the latest trends from the Election Commission, NDA is leading or has won 293 seats and the INDIA bloc has won or is leading on

231 seats.

The BJP is poised to win 240 seats on its own.

The BJP had won a majority on its own in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha polls, securing 282

seats in 2014 and improving its tally to 303 seats in the 2019 elections.

The Lok Sabha polls were held in seven phases from April 19 to June 1.

Meanwhile, Modi won the Varanasi constituency in Uttar Pradesh by defeating Congress candidate Ajay Rai by a margin of 1,52,513 votes, according to the Election Commission of

India.

In the state of Uttar Pradesh, BJP is ahead on 31 seats, while its allies Rashtriya Lok Dal and Apna Dal are ahead on two and one seat respectively. Notably, this is much lower than BJP's 2019 tally, when it registered a massive victory winning 62 out of 80 seats.

The INDIA bloc has registered a strong performance with Samajwadi Party and Congress being ahead on 38 and 7 seats respectively.

Union Ministers Amit Shah, Anurag Thakur, and Kiren Rijiju retained their respective Lok Sabha seats as counting concluded in their constituencies on Tuesday.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah won from his constituency of Gandhinagar in Gujarat with a mammoth margin of over 7 lakh votes, surpassing his 2019 victory margin of 5.55 lakh votes. In the Hamirpur Lok Sabha constituency of Himachal Pradesh, Union Minister Anurag Thakur won against Congress' Satpal Raizada by a margin of over 1 lakh votes.

ANI



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and party chief Mallikarjun Kharge addressing a press conference in New Delhi (ANI)

Fight is not over, says Kharge after INDIA bloc's big gains

New Delhi, India - As none of the major parties has received a full majority in the elections with counting almost coming to an end, the Congress party will hold discussions with its allies as well as 'new partners', party president Mallikarjun Kharge said on Tuesday.

He said that the 'fight' is not over, and they will continue to work for people's rights and protection of the Constitution and democracy. This comes after the BJP failed to cross the majority mark on its own.

Addressing a press conference on Tuesday, Kharge said: "I thank our INDIA bloc partners. Everyone campaigned for each other and worked. Our fight hasn't reached its conclusion, we have to keep fighting for people's rights, the protection of the Constitution and democracy, the nation's development and safety on the border."

We have to keep fighting for people's rights, the protection of the Constitution and democracy and the nation's development

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE

"The coming days are going to be important and we will talk as soon as possible," he said.

On being asked about the meeting with INDIA bloc partners, Kharge said that Congress will hold talks with its alliance partners as well as 'new partners' who are 'going to ally' with them. "Till we don't talk to our alliance partners and the new partners who are going to ally

with them, we will talk to them as well and see how we can make a majority. If I talk about all the strategies here, Modiji will become clever," the Congress president said.

The Congress President lauded the party's campaign and said they continued to raise the issues of the people, despite the 'government machinery' working against them. He also said that Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra and Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra formed the foundation of the party's campaign.

"Congress and the INDIA bloc fought the elections positively, government machinery tried to create hurdles for us, our accounts were frozen, ran cases against our leaders. But, still, we continued to raise the issue of farmers, labourers, inflation, unemployment and misuse of central agencies."

ANI

CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY



BJP supporters celebrate as the party leads in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, at the party office in Bhubaneswar, Odisha on Tuesday (ANI)

'People of UP have shown a lot of discretion'

New Delhi, India - Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday expressed happiness over the 2024 Lok Sabha election results and said that she is most proud of Uttar Pradesh.

"I am very happy... I want to tell the people of UP that they have shown a lot of discretion. I am most proud of UP..." said Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

The INDIA bloc has registered a strong performance with Samajwadi Party and Congress being ahead on 38 and 7 seats respectively.

Meanwhile, Congress' K. L.



Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra at the AICC HQ in New Delhi

Sharma won against BJP leader Smriti Irani from the Amethi seat. Irani said that she gave 10 years of her life to Amethi and

will continue to serve the area in times to come.

In Tamil Nadu, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)-

led alliance made a clean sweep in the Lok Sabha elections.

As per the latest number issued by the Election Commission of India, the DMK won seven seats and is leading on 15 seats. The seat position of its allies as per the ECI data are Congress (9) leading on 6 and won three seats, Communist Party of India won 2, CPI (M) won two, Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (2) leading on 1 and won one seat, Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (1) and Indian Union Muslim League is leading on one seat.

ANI

BJP makes LS debut in Kerala as Suresh Gopi wins in Thrissur

Thrissur, India - Actor-turned-politician Suresh Gopi who made a historic win in the parliamentary seat of Thrissur said he is 'ecstatic' about the BJP breaching the bastion in Kerala.

"What was very impossible became gloriously possible," said the actor who contested from the seat for the second time after losing in the last general elections in 2019.

Gopi said he 'bowed down to' the 'truly secular voters' of Thrissur, adding that there were attempts to 'corrupt' the voters'

mind away from the BJP but the Gods 'led them in the correct path'.

"Attempts were made to mislead the voters but God led them on the correct path to accept my party through me...even if some of you feel that this is a miracle, this miracle was imminent...The victory is due to people's blessings. I bow down to the truly secular voters of Thrissur who made this victory possible," the actor said.

He further said: "...Narendra Modi is my political God...I am



not believing in just a manifesto...I will work for the whole Kerala...I will work as Kerala MP..."

The 65-year-old actor said: "I am in totally an ecstatic mood. What was very impossible became gloriously possible...it was not a 62-day campaign process, it was an emotional carriage for the past 7 years...I work for Kerala as a whole. My first pick will be to have AIIMS..."

Gopi also credited his victory to the BJP workers who worked in his election campaign.

"I also credit my party workers who worked in more than a thousand booths in the constituency. A lot of mothers and sisters from other districts and states also worked for me. Many of them came from Mumbai, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi. Their effort made a positive impact," he said.

Tharoor wins after neck-and-neck fight

After a neck-and-neck fight, Congress incumbent MP Shashi Tharoor has won Kerala's

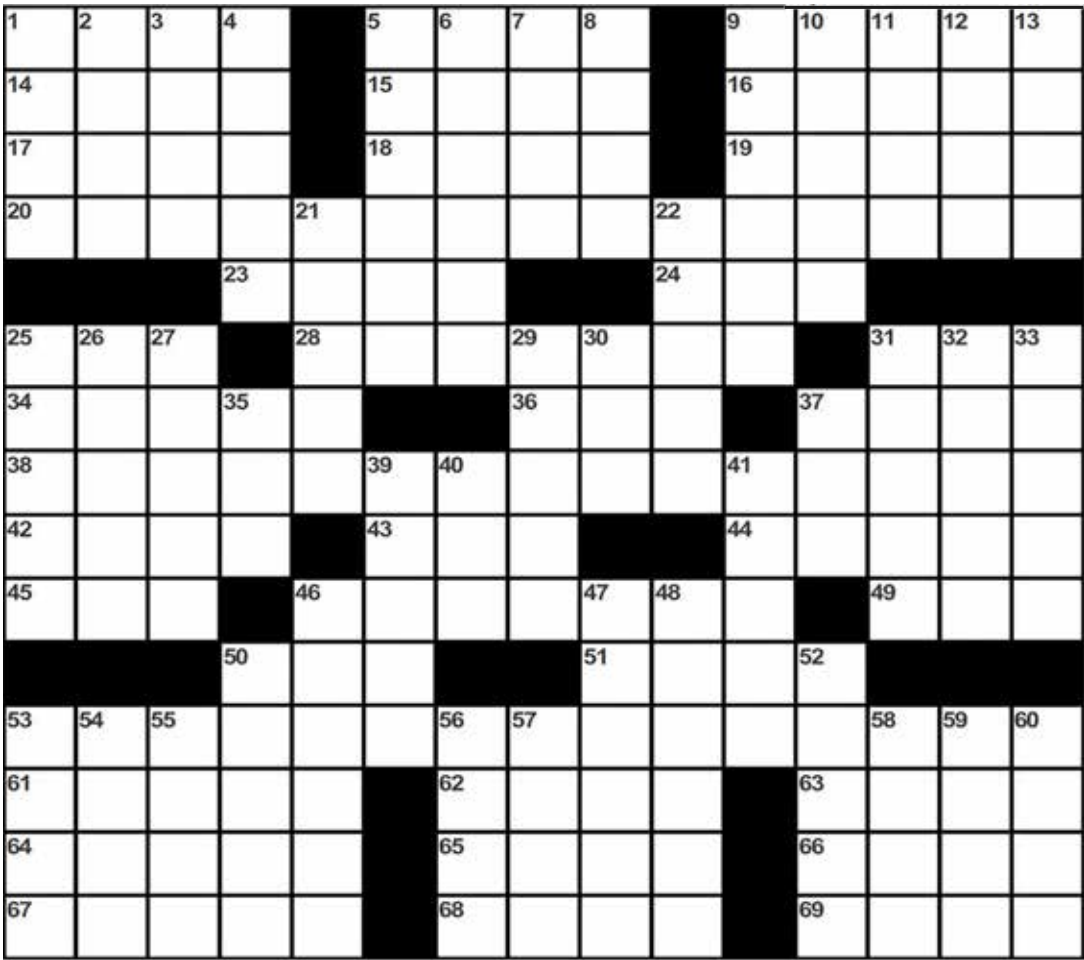
Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha seat against BJP's Rajeev Chandrasekhar for a record fourth term.

In the early trends, BJP's Rajeev Chandrasekhar was leading by over 20,000 votes. However, Tharoor later gained the lead, according to ECI data.

The Congress incumbent MP won the seat by a margin of over 16,077 votes. Tharoor said that the BJP put up an enormous fight and described it as a super over condition.

ANI

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) Luxurious health re-treats
5) Rubber tube
9) City near Great Salt Lake
14) Wales of Poland
15) Great Lake
16) 66, for one
17) Geometry calculation
18) 100 dinars
19) Athletic shoe attachment
20) Stuffed things
23) Head out to sea
24) Line up the crosshairs
25) Abscam investigator
28) Well-chilled
31) Banned bug-killer
34) Permitted by law
36) " _ for the money ... "
37) Callas number
38) Stuffed things
42) Insect feeler
43) "Are we there,?"
44) Brown shade
45) Crafty, like a fox
46) Become extinct
49) How-_ (instructional books)
50) Cafeteria dispenser

- 51) "If all _ fails ... "
53) Stuffed things
61) Lacking human warmth
62) Early bird's breakfast
63) Pesky insect
64) European ermine
65) Garden with a snake
66) Volcanic discharge
67) Wrongful acts, in law
68) Hindu outfit
69) Picture pitcher
DOWN
1) Noisy closing
2) Andean land
3) "Bullets," to a poker player
4) Persian pooh-bahs
5) Medal-worthy
6) Baltimore pro
7) "The King and I" king-dom
8) Sea wrigglers
9) Prom dress ornament, often
10) Robot of Jewish folklore
11) Hamilton vs. Burr, for one
12) And others, for short
13) Shows a profit of
21) Indian yogurt dish

- 22) City of witch hunts
25) Pilots let them down
26) Twofold
27) Without compassion
29) Terra-_ (fired clay)
30) Lennon's wife
31) French right
32) San_., Calif.
33) Uses a stun gun on
35) Sitter's handful
37) Donned the feedbag
39) Flunking a polygraph
40) "Amazing Grace" verse ender
41) Deep gulf
46) Pub servings
47) One donning something
48) Homecoming game attendee
50) Subsurface war vessel
52) Apollo 11 moon lander
53) It protects a break
54) Choir voice
55) Ill-mannered lout
56) Mother sheep
57) Bar mixer
58) Work on a bone, dog-style
59) Roofer's repair site
60) Five-pointed figure

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Part of being smart is knowing when you don't know everything. Instead of berating yourself for a little knowledge deficit, get cracking on filling it up. Think of the folks you know who are likely to know more, and assemble your own team of experts. Do online research. Ask your mentor. Maybe even consult your parents. Using the resources available to you is truly intelligent.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

You have a stellar opportunity to smooth over an uneasy interpersonal situation now. You'll want to be diplomatic but truthful, tactful yet fair. Luckily, you're extra capable of all of these things at the moment. Once the tension is broken, the conversation could be far easier than you ever imagined. Even if it isn't a total cakewalk, the care you take with this matter will be well worth it in the end.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Your trademark freewheeling approach might have landed you in a little bit of a deficit, and economizing isn't your specialty. However, chances are that someone close to you is an expert in this particular field, and they've been offering to help you for quite some time. Don't waste time feeling sheepish or embarrassed. Just take them up on it. The first step is the hardest. Once you're with the program, it will be relatively painless.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Your conservative side may put up a red flag when some information comes from an unorthodox source, but don't reject it outright. Sometimes the best gifts arrive in banged-up packages with tacky wrapping paper. And worrying about what other people think while you're unwrapping this little mystery will only slow you down. It's the end result that counts in this case, not how pretty the path is getting there.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Fixing a communication breakdown can be a pain, but avoiding it creates a whole new bottleneck. Get out your flashlight and assess the situation, then start rooting through your toolbox to find what you need to get back on the road. A forthright attitude and willingness to work with it may be all that's really required. Start an open and honest dialogue, and insist that the other parties involved join in.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Saying what you mean and meaning what you say can feel like a bit of a risk, but then beating around the bush can get mighty tiring after a while. You can be honest while still maintaining a modicum of diplomacy. The bonus is that honesty begets honesty, and before you know it, you're actually having a meaningful and possibly productive dialogue. Bring your sense of humor and get started.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

When other people are stuck in the dance of two-steps forward, one step back, you're pretty good about sidestepping and coming up with some creative lateral moves. Nonetheless, the recent lack of progress in a certain area has you frustrated. The good news is your frustration actually has you devoting some concentration to the issue, and that, combined with a little boost from the stars, can finally get you moving in the right direction again.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

You consider yourself a responsible person, but even you have your limits, and a certain situation could have you on the verge of telling someone where to go. This may, in fact, be a viable option, but it isn't something you should do in the heat of the moment. Take some time for a little stress management with a long walk, primal scream, or something along those lines. Once you've decompressed, another kinder, gentler solution will likely present itself.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

If someone's asking you to do something that makes you uncomfortable, you don't have to grin and bear it. Lodge a complaint with them, with yourself, even with a third party if that seems appropriate. Make it official, or at least make a crystal-clear statement about what exactly is bothering you and how you'd like to see it be different. Sometimes saying it is enough to set the process of change in motion.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Expect some conflict between exterior and interior, public and private, or extroverted and introverted to emerge now. Perhaps someone else (your sweetie, your friend) is applying the pressure to get you out and about when all you want is to curl up with a good book. Or maybe you're longing to cut loose and no one else wants to come out to play. Consider taking the middle path. There's a compromise here that will work well. You just have to find it.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Admit it: You have a tendency to hold things in when you should let them out and let the chips fall where they may. Spilling the beans now is endorsed by the stars, and the feeling of relief you'll get is a reward in and of itself. As for what happens afterward, you'll need to relinquish your desire to control that too. Whatever will be, will be, and you'll handle it much more gracefully if you let it be.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

An idea about a big change could surface in your life now, one related to work or a relationship or a big trip or your living situation or all of the above. So it's a whale of a concept, but that doesn't mean you have to panic and start raising alarms on the ship of your life. Watch it calmly and see how you like the looks of it. What you should do will become clear in the fullness of time.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. In which sport is there a hog line, and sometimes a hogger?

- A. Cheese rolling
B. Gumboot throwing
C. Curling
D. Caber tossing

02. Brazil is the largest country on which continent?

- A. North America
B. South America
C. Asia
D. Africa

03. In what field is Robert Maplethorpe known?

- A. Sculpture
B. Experimental dance
C. Jazz
D. Black and white photography

Answers: 1.C 2.B 3.D

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

L	A	D	A
E	P	O	F
E	O	R	R
S	O	C	B

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 Boggler 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

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

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



Kylian Mbappe

Madrid, Spain - France forward Kylian Mbappe has joined Real Madrid as a free agent on a five-year contract, the LaLiga club said on Monday, ending a transfer saga that rumbled on for years before the European champions captured their newest “Galactico”.

“Real Madrid C. F. and Kylian Mbappe have reached an agreement whereby he will be a Real Madrid player for the next five seasons,” the Spanish champions said in a statement, fresh off their 15th European Cup triumph.

Mbappe shared images of himself as a youngster in a Real Madrid kit as well as meeting Cristiano Ronaldo onto his social media profiles shortly after the club statement.

“A dream come true,” he wrote. “So happy and proud to join the club of my dream @real-madrid.

“Nobody can understand how excited I am right now. Can’t wait to see you, Madridistas, and thanks for your unbelievable support. Hala Madrid!”

'A DREAM COME TRUE'

Real Madrid sign Mbappe on free transfer

The 25-year-old captain of the French national team had announced he was leaving Paris St Germain in a video posted on social media platform X on May 10.

Mbappe will move to Real Madrid in July when his PSG contract expires on June 30 but the forward will be unveiled before joining up with the France squad for the European Championship in Germany.

Mbappe joins a star-studded side in Madrid with the likes of Ballon d’Or favourites Vinicius Jr. and Jude Bellingham, led by Italian Carlo Ancelotti - the most

Nobody can understand how excited I am right now. Can't wait to see you, Madridistas, and thanks for your unbelievable support.

KYLIAN MBAPPE

successful coach in Champions League history with five titles.

Although Mbappe won several trophies at PSG, often com-

pleting domestic doubles and trebles, the Champions League has eluded him and remains the only major honour left to complete his sparkling resume.

Mbappe leaves PSG after seven years at the club where he won six Ligue 1 titles and four French Cups, finishing his career in the capital city as the club’s all-time top scorer with 256 goals.

The 2018 World Cup winner surprised PSG last year when he sent a letter stating he would not take up the option of a one-year contract extension when it expires in June.

The letter led to a standoff with the club and Mbappe was omitted from the first-team squad before being reinstated.

Allowing Mbappe to run down the final year of his contract meant PSG were unable to recoup any of the 180 million euro (\$195.95 million) transfer fee they paid in 2017 to sign him from AS Monaco.

When the transfer was completed, Mbappe became the second-most expensive player of all time after his former PSG teammate Neymar, who was signed for 222 million euros from Barcelona in 2017.

Real Madrid had courted Mbappe in the past but failed to land the player, who signed a contract extension with PSG in May 2022 when the Spanish club had a bid rejected.

With Mbappe finally in their ranks, the club can look at consolidating their dominance in LaLiga where they lost only once last season to win the title by 10 points and they were unbeaten in the Champions League.

Slovenia’s hot prospect Sesko to attract plenty of attention



Benjamin Sesko

Leipzig, Germany - Plenty of eyes will be on young striker Benjamin Sesko, one of the hottest prospects in Europe, when Slovenia make their first European Championship appearance in 24 years in Germany.

The 20-year-old - who at 1.96 metres tall has drawn comparisons to Manchester City’s Erling Haaland - has been linked with major clubs across Europe in recent months, including Arsenal, Manchester United, Chelsea and AC Milan. Reports have the Gunners as front-runners to sign him.

Slovenia manager Matjaz Kek is not surprised by the interest in the RB Leipzig forward, saying the talented youngster will be a bargain for whoever signs him.

“He is physically strong, technically gifted and mature. There aren’t many strikers like this in the world. I think he has steadily improved, becoming more concrete in his decisions. Another quality he has is pace,” the 62-year-old Kek told *La Gazzetta dello Sport*.

Part of the comparison to Haaland is that both played for

Red Bull Salzburg before dipping a toe in the Bundesliga, Haaland at Borussia Dortmund and Sesko at Leipzig.

Sesko, who played his way into the German side’s starting 11 in the second half of his debut season, has scored 14 goals in 31 league matches for Leipzig.

The forward, who was eligible to play for Slovenia and Bosnia & Herzegovina - his mother was born in the latter - has scored 11 goals in 28 internationals, including five in Euro 2024 qualifying, since making his debut in 2021.

Sesko has downplayed comparisons to Haaland, while saying his boyhood hero was former Sweden striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic, who is the same height.

“Personally, I don’t think much of comparisons,” Sesko said after signing for Leipzig. “Erling is an absolutely world-class striker. I enjoy watching his games on TV and obviously pay attention to what he does in different situations in the game but as I’ve already said I am a completely different type of player.”

Chelsea appoint Italian Maresca as new head coach

London, England - Chelsea have appointed Enzo Maresca as their new head coach on a five-year contract, the English Premier League club said on Monday.

The Italian will leave Leicester City, whom he led to promotion back to the Premier League in his first season in charge, and begin his new role on July 1, Chelsea said in a statement.

“He has proven himself to be an excellent coach capable of delivering impressive results with an exciting and identifiable style,” said Chelsea’s sporting co-directors Laurence Stewart and Paul Winstanley.

“His ambitions and work ethic align with those of the club.” Leicester were disappointed to see Maresca leave.

“With Enzo’s decision made and the board’s terms for his departure met, we wish him well in his future endeavours,” they said in a statement.

The 44-year-old replaced Mauricio Pochettino, who left the club last month after one season.

Under Argentine Pochettino, the west London side put

together a strong run late in the season to finish sixth and secure European football, a marked improvement on their 12th-placed finish in the 2022-23 campaign. Maresca will be tasked with returning Chelsea to the Champions League which they won for the second time in 2021

The 44-year-old previously coached Manchester City’s youth team and was the senior side’s assistant coach under Pep Guardiola during their treble-winning season. His first managerial role came at Italian side Parma in 2021, where he lasted 14 games, winning only four times.

Maresca was appointed Leicester manager at the start of the 2023-24 Championship season, which they began in scintillating form, racking up an eight-point lead at the top of the second tier by the end of 2023.

Leicester struggled at times in the second half of the season and were beset by off-field issues, but Maresca guided them back to the Premier League as they secured automatic promotion and finished top of the standings.



Enzo Maresca

Bellingham poised to shine for England

London, England - England coach Gareth Southgate is hardly lacking potential match-winners in his Euro 2024 squad but Jude Bellingham has become the player most likely to propel the nation to its first major trophy since 1966.

The Midlands-born 20-year-old, who has never even played in England’s top flight, has taken LaLiga by storm in his first season with Real Madrid after joining from Borussia Dortmund.

Signed for an initial 103 million pounds (\$130.50 million), Bellingham became an instant hit when he scored on his debut, bagged 15 goals in his first 16 appearances and since then has continued to exhaust the list of superlatives.

Bellingham has scored 23 goals in all competitions for Real Madrid this season having been utilised further forward as a false nine by coach Carlo Ancelotti.

His goals, not to mention his tireless work rate, vision and leadership qualities, helped Real to wrap up the title and win the Champions League final and he will now shift his focus to England.

Bellingham, who made his England debut aged 17 and now has 29 caps, was an unused substitute when Southgate’s team lost to Italy on penalties in the final of Euro 2020.

This time, along with captain and record goal-scorer Harry Kane, he will be an automatic choice and will shoulder much of England’s sky-high expectations as they try to finally get over the winning line after several near misses.

Bellingham began his career with Birmingham City before joining Dortmund as a 17-year-old and it was not long before he was being regarded as one of the most complete midfield players



Jude Bellingham celebrates with the Champions League trophy

to emerge for generations.

It is the ultimate compliment that it is even hard to pin down exactly where he is most effective, simply because whether he plays in a holding role, as a box-to-box dynamo, a false nine or a conventional number 10, he can do it all.

Ancelotti has worked with a vast array of greats during his glittering managerial career, but few have made an impact on the Italian quite like Bellingham.

“He surprises every day, in every game. Not just us, he’s surprising everybody. Bellingham is a gift for football,” Ancelotti said a few months into the season.

Bellingham is certainly a gift to England and if they are to triumph in Germany then Southgate must construct his team around him and work out the best way to harness the collective talents of Bellingham and Manchester City’s Phil Foden.

I bring attention with me, says Fenerbahce coach Mourinho

Istanbul, Turkey - Newly announced Fenerbahce manager Jose Mourinho said on Monday that his signing and reputation would bring more attention to the Turkish league, adding that his aim was to win the Super Lig and make it to the Champions League group stage next season.

Mourinho, 61, was unveiled as Fenerbahce manager in front of thousands of enthusiastic fans on Sunday. The Portuguese manager had been out of a job since being sacked by Italian Serie A side AS



Jose Mourinho

Roma in January.

Speaking at a press conference at Fenerbahce’s facilities in Istanbul, Mourinho said he was making “zero promises” apart from “huge commitment and passion, and work and empathy”, adding that his ambition in coming to Turkey was “to feel the heat”.

“One of the things is, I bring attention in with me. More people in Europe will follow the Turkish league,” Mourinho said. “I’m coming to work for Turkish football, for Turkish Super Lig. But

fundamentally I come for Fenerbahce.

“My wish is that Turkish football improves at every level. But if I have to raise my voice to defend Fenerbahce I will not think twice,” he added, in an apparent reference to the club’s complaints over what it calls unfairness.

The Super Lig was marred by controversies last season, with a spate of violence and disputes overshadowing the narrow title fight between Fenerbahce and bitter rivals Galatasaray.

MARATHON MAN

Djokovic survives Cerundolo scare to reach French Open quarterfinals



Novak Djokovic celebrates his victory against Francisco Cerundolo

Paris, France - Defending champion Novak Djokovic produced a superhuman effort to subdue Argentine Francisco Cerundolo 6-1, 5-7, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3 on Monday and reach the quarter-finals of the French Open, as the top seed shrugged off a knee issue for a milestone win.

Big-hitting women's title contenders made short work of their opponents earlier as second seed Aryna Sabalenka thrashed American Emma Navarro 6-2, 6-3 while fourth seed Elena Rybakina eased to a 6-4, 6-3 victory over Ukraine's Elina Svitolina.

Russian 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva then outclassed former compatriot and newly-French Varvara Gracheva 7-5, 6-2 to end home hopes in the afternoon, but all eyes were on a potential upset that was brewing on Court Philippe Chatrier.

Djokovic, who is chasing a record-extending 25th Grand Slam title was taken to five sets for the second time in less than 48 hours but showed his class to seal a record 370th match victory at the majors that broke a tie with retired Swiss great Roger Federer.

The Serb also celebrated reaching his 59th major quarter-final - the most by any men's player - to eclipse his long-time rival Federer again, while an 11th five-sets Roland Garros win tied him with Gael Monfils and Stan Wawrinka in the Open Era.

"Again a big, big, big thank you because once again like the last match. The win is your win," an exhausted Djokovic told the crowd in fluent French.

But Djokovic's title rivals in Paris will be smelling blood after another up-and-down display.

The 37-year-old showed no early signs of fatigue from his marathon third-round win over Lorenzo Musetti, a 4-1/2 hour epic that ended in the early hours of Sunday morning, as he blitzed claycourt specialist Cerundolo in the opening set.

He sustained a right knee issue early in the next and needed treatment on court before saving four break points to draw

Injured Djokovic pulls out

Paris, France - World number one Novak Djokovic's disappointing season continued on Tuesday when the defending French Open champion was forced to pull out of the Grand Slam before his quarter-final with a knee injury that could threaten his Wimbledon and Olympic chances.

The injury, sustained in his fourth-round win over Francisco Cerundolo, ended the Serb's quest to win a record-extending 25th Grand Slam trophy and will result in him losing his top ranking to Italian Jannik Sinner later this month.

"Due to a torn medial meniscus in his right knee (discovered during an MRI scan), Djokovic, who was supposed to play Casper Ruud in the quarter-finals tomorrow, has been forced to withdraw from the Roland Garros tournament," tournament organisers said.

Last year's runner-up and seventh seed Ruud will now advance to the semi-finals, where he could take on fourth seed Alexander Zverev or 11th seed Alex de Minaur.

Djokovic said on Instagram that he was disappointed to pull out of the tournament that he has won three times.

"I played with my heart and gave my all in yesterday's match," Djokovic said. "Unfortunately... I had to make a tough decision after careful consideration and consultation."

level at 3-3 with a backhand bullet, but allowed his opponent a way back in by surrendering his serve in the 12th game.

Cerundolo grabbed another break early in the next set to go 3-0 up and comfortably got ahead in the clash as

alarm bells began to ring for Djokovic in a second straight match at the claycourt Grand Slam he has won three times.

The finish line seemed to appear in sight for Cerundolo when he raced up 4-2 in the next set, but the 25-year-old squandered the advantage as Djokovic sent down two big serves and produced a spectacular drop en route to holding for 6-5 before levelling the contest.

Having dropped serve after a fast start in the deciding set, Djokovic took a nasty tumble during a point and ranted about the state of the Court Philippe Chatrier surface.

He dusted himself off and the smile returned shortly after as he executed a sensational drop volley while doing the splits at 3-3 and celebrated the point by lying on the court with his arms outstretched in a superhero pose.

With the crowd firmly behind him, Djokovic closed out a superb victory and paid tribute to fans on the main showcourt at around 9 p.m local time.

"I actually felt great coming into the match, as good as I could under the circumstances and played really well first set," Djokovic told reporters.

"Then in the third game of the second set, I slipped, one of the many times that I slipped and fell today. That affected the knee... At one point I didn't know, to be honest, whether I should continue or not."

Next up for the tournament's top seed is a rematch of last year's final against Norway's Casper Ruud after the seventh seed defeated American Taylor Fritz 7-6(6), 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.

Alex de Minaur broke a long Australian jinx as the 11th seed battled from a set down to stun Daniil Medvedev 4-6, 6-2, 6-1, 6-3 and become the first man from his nation in two decades to make the last-eight at Roland Garros.

He will face fourth seed Alexander Zverev after the German outlasted 13th seed Holger Rune 4-6, 6-1, 5-7 7-6(2), 6-2 in a match that ended in early morning hours.

Gauff gets the better of Jabeur to reach French Open semis

Paris, France - American third seed Coco Gauff fought back to beat fan-favourite Ons Jabeur 4-6, 6-2, 6-3 on Tuesday and become the first player to reach the French Open semifinals.

Jabeur was roared on by a Tunisian contingent on Court Philippe-Chatrier as Gauff dropped the opening set, but the American grew in confidence in the second and stamped her authority in the third to reach the semis for the second time.

"She's a tough opponent, she's well loved on tour and I could tell by the crowd today. I know you guys wanted her to win," reigning U.S. Open champion Gauff said.

"Honestly, whenever she's not playing, I cheer for her too. So thank you guys for making it a good atmosphere. I like playing in environments like this.

"Even when I lost the first set and they were chanting when I was in the bathroom, I was like, 'This is just really fun', win or lose."

The pair matched each other blow for blow in the opening set, whether it was rallying from the baseline or coming into the net.

In an eight-minute game at 3-3, however, Jabeur finally converted a break point and the Tunisian hit a purple patch on serve as Gauff had no answer to her pinpoint winners and drop shots.

Roared on by her fans, Jabeur made it 5-3 in a flash and nearly



Ons Jabeur took the first set 6-4 but Coco Gauff fought back strongly to win the match

She's a tough opponent, she's well loved on tour and I could tell by the crowd today. I know you guys wanted her to win

COCO GAUFF

broke Gauff again before wrapping up the set on serve, sealing it with a searing ace.

Gauff grew in confidence in the second set, however, especially on serve where she consistently went over 200 km/hr, while Jabeur faltered as the American converted all three break point opportunities to force a decider.

Swiatek enters last four with thumping victory



Iga Swiatek celebrates her victory

Paris, France - Defending champion Iga Swiatek declared that she was in the zone as her quest for a fourth French Open title hit top gear after a 6-0, 6-2 victory over former runner-up Marketa Vondrousova sent her through to the semifinals on Tuesday.

The 23-year-old's 62-minute workout set up a seismic last-four encounter with American Coco Gauff in a repeat of the 2022 final won by the Pole who will look to improve her 10-1 overall record against the third seed.

"Today it was pretty straightforward. I'm happy that I kept my focus. Sometimes I felt the game was pretty intense," Swiatek said after making the

Roland Garros semi-finals for the fourth time in five years.

Sinner enters semis

Italian Jannik Sinner stepped up his bid for a second Grand Slam title by securing a 6-2 6-4 7-6(3) victory over Grigor Dimitrov on Tuesday to reach the semi-finals, minutes after it was confirmed he would be the new world number one.

Although he didn't know it at the time, the second seed will take top spot in the rankings on Monday regardless of who wins the French Open after defending champion Novak Djokovic pulled out with a knee injury before his quarter-final match.



Emilio Nsue

Nsue played illegally for country for 11 years

Cape Town, South Africa - The top scorer at this year's Africa Cup of Nations finals, Emilio Nsue, played illegally for Equatorial Guinea for 11 years, it has emerged from FIFA documentation detailing a six month ban he was handed last month.

The 34-year-old striker, whose previous clubs include Birmingham City and Middlesbrough, finished top marksman at the finals in the Ivory Coast in January where Equatorial Guinea sensationally punched above their weight as they beat the host nation in the group phase and progressed to the last-16.

MotoGP leader Martin to move to Aprilia

Madrid, Spain - MotoGP world championship leader Jorge Martin will switch from Pramac Racing to Aprilia next year, the motorcycle racing organisation said on Monday.

Martin's move comes after Aprilia's Aleix Espargaro announced last month that he would retire at the end of MotoGP's 2024 season.

Aprilia also announced the move on social media, welcoming the Spaniard to their team.

Martin, who finished second in the world championship last year, has 171 points after seven



races and sits 18 points ahead of Ducati's defending champion Francesco Bagnaia.

The 26-year-old has won the Portuguese and French grand

prix main races while earning a podium finish in three other main races. He finished third in the Italian Grand Prix at the weekend.

NADEEM: FIGHTBACK AGAINST NAMIBIA GIVES US HOPES

All-rounder hopes to play a bigger role for Oman in the remaining games

Bridgetown, Barbados - At the age of 41 years, Mohammad Nadeem is the seniormost all-rounder of Oman team at the on-going ICC Men's T20 World Cup, co-hosted by the West Indies and the USA. The soft-spoken medium pacer and middle-order batter has been serving the national team for a decade with pride and has made important contributions in some of the memorable victories over the years in both the T20 and the ODI formats.

Nadeem, who failed to make any major contribution in Oman's defeat against Namibia in their Group B opener at the Kensington Oval on Sunday, is now hoping to play a bigger role in the remaining games in the West Indies. Nadeem could score only 6 runs in Oman's total of 109 and did not get a chance to bowl during the Super Over loss.

Speaking a day after the team's narrow defeat, Nadeem said: "Yes, it was a very close game, an edge of the seat thriller for fans around the world. We



were possibly 20-30 runs short but we fought bravely to make a game out of it. Few would give us a chance when we finished our innings at 109. But this is what our team is all about. We showcased how strong our bowling attack is and but for few dropped catches, we almost won the game."

He added: "Defeats are always tough to swallow but the way we came back in the game against Namibia gives us lot of hopes that as a unit, we can fight till the end, irrespective of any opposition."

Nadeem, who landed in

Oman in 2009 and have played for domestic top-flight club As-sarain CT for long, made his T20I debut for his adopted country in 2015 against Afghanistan in Dublin.

With a decade of service to Oman's national team, Nadeem embodies dedication and resilience

He said: "For me, it was important to make contribution with both bat and ball. I am thankful to Oman Cricket and national coach Duleep Mendis for his trust and belief in me. I am proud to represent Oman at the world's biggest stage and this is

my second T20 World Cup."

During his early days, Nadeem impressed with his speed and line and length as the Sialkot-born all-rounder from Pakistan clocked above 140km regularly. Of late, he may not have the same speed but is a smart cricketer with effective use of line and length.

While he has been used often as a change bowler, his batting skills have been more to the fore including his crucial and unbeaten innings of 46 during Oman's historic five-wicket win over Ireland last year during the ICC ODI Cricket World Cup

Qualifier in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

In the T20Is, Nadeem has played 53 games so far and scored 489 runs with his highest being an unbeaten 77 against Canada in 2022 while he has picked 30 wickets with his career-best figures of 4/23 against Jersey in 2019.

Nadeem is a vital cog in the wheels of success of Oman's cricket over the years and is described as a "living legend" by his team-mates. His batting style is simple but efficient, but what stands out is his ability to soak up pressure in tense situations and steer Oman across the line on many occasions.

Fondly known as 'Bhalli', Nadeem has a gentle run up that belies the consistent 120-130kph pace he can generate even now and has an impressive strike rate with his success particularly achieved in the middle overs.

Nadeem, who idolised and closely followed the journey of South African all-rounder Jacques Kallis, during his young days, is still passionate about his cricket.

Looking forward to the remaining Group B games with the next match coming up against former champions and heavyweights Australia, Nadeem said: "I am ready to put in my best foot forward if I am given a chance. At this level and in this format, there are no favourites."

"We can upset any team on our day. We have prepared well, and we are ready to take on the heavyweights."

Coach Dravid will not reapply for job

Long Island, New York - India head coach Rahul Dravid will leave his post at the end of the ongoing Twenty20 World Cup after almost three years in charge and has no plans to re-apply for the position.

The 51-year-old said late on Monday.

The India cricket board has advertised the vacancy since early May as Dravid's contract expires at the end of June. The former India captain took over the national team following the 2021 Twenty20 World Cup, replacing Ravi Shastri.

"I've really enjoyed coaching India, and I think it's a truly spe-



Rahul Dravid

cial job to do. I've enjoyed working with this team, and it's a great bunch of boys to work with," Dravid said ahead of Wednesday's match with Ireland.

"Unfortunately, just the kind of schedules (that are in place in international cricket) and where I find myself in this stage in my life, I don't think I'll be able to re-apply (for the position)."

Former India opener Gautam Gambhir, who has been the mentor of Indian Premier League champions Kolkata Knight Riders, is a strong contender for coaching the national team, according to Indian media.



South Africa's Anrich Nortje celebrates the fall of a Sri Lankan wicket

Bowlers dominate as South Africa defeat Sri Lanka

East Meadow, New York - South Africa defeated Sri Lanka by six wickets in their opening T20 World Cup group match on Monday after dismissing their Asian opponents for their lowest ever score of 77 on a lively drop-in pitch at the temporary Nassau County stadium in Eisenhower Park.

The South Africans also struggled on a pitch cultivated in Adelaide and offering pace,

bounce and spin before reaching their target with six wickets to spare and 22 balls remaining.

Afghanistan win

Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran struck fifties in the second-highest opening stand in T20 World Cup history and Fazalhaq Farooqi took his maiden five-wicket haul in T20Is as Afghanistan crushed debutants Uganda by 125 runs.

CLASSIFIEDS

SEND YOUR REQUEST FOR

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

عيادة فصول السنة للطب الهندي التقليدي ALL SEASON AYURVEDA CLINIC

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

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

FOR RENT/SALE

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

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

CLASSIFIED LISTINGS

MUSCAT DAILY offers a variety of classified listings for individuals and establishments:
Situations Vacant/Wanted, Accommodation Wanted or Available, Sale of Household Items, Cars for Sale or Wanted, Matrimonial Alliances, etc

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

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 | Salalah 9429 9325
www.orbit-oman.com

WJ Towell Group Company

- Fleet of 2,000 vehicles
- Choose from a wide range of brands & models
- PDO, OXY and BP spec vehicles available
- Attractive rates for short-term & long-term lease

أوربت ORBIT Car Rental & Lease

mai alkaline

pH 9.1 to 9.5
Alkaline Ionized Drinking Water

HYDRATE SMARTLY

- Ultra-hydrating
- Revitalizing
- Energizing
- Electrolytes

800 71 222
9275 5522

ANIMAL RIGHTS

No new furs: Queen Camilla



Buckingham Palace has written to an animal rights group to confirm that Queen Camilla will no longer buy clothes that include furs

Queen Camilla will no longer buy clothes featuring fur. It is not clear whether the trim on the hat she wore here on Remembrance Day last year is real fur.

Buckingham Palace has written to an animal rights group to confirm that Queen Camilla will no longer buy clothes that include animal pelts.

The letter sent to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), and seen by CNN, said that: "Her Majesty will not procure any new fur garments." It is unclear, however, what the Queen's position is with regard to fur items in her existing wardrobe.

The move follows a similar stand taken by her late mother-in-law, Queen Elizabeth II, who ruled out buying new fur products back in 2019.

The palace's correspondence was in response to a letter sent by PETA to the Queen in April. In it, Elisa Allen, vice president of the organization's UK programmes and operations, detailed the cruel practices which, it says, are employed in

the fur industry, as well its impact on the environment.

The charity's founder, Ingrid Newkirk, welcomed the news. In a statement sent to CNN, she said, "PETA is toasting to Queen Camilla with a glass of the finest claret for being a true queen by standing with the 95% of British people who also refuse to wear animal fur, as polls show."

News of the decision taken by Queen Elizabeth II was divulged by her senior dresser, Angela Kelly. In her book "The Other Side of the Coin: The Queen, the Dresser and the Wardrobe," Kelly wrote: "If Her Majesty is due to attend an engagement in particularly cold weather, from 2019 onwards fake fur will be used to make sure she stays warm."

PETA encourages owners to donate existing items to its "fur amnesty programme," which sends them on to "the homeless, refugees, and people in war-torn areas to help keep them warm in the winter months." Explaining the rationale, it states on its website, "We can't bring back the animals who suffered for these coats, but we can use old furs to help humans who desperately need them."

STATUS SYMBOL

Fur was once seen as glamorous, a luxury among the rich and famous. It wasn't worn for warmth necessarily – it was rather a fashion statement and status symbol.

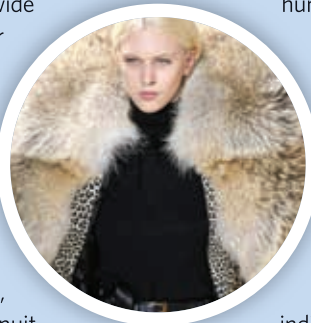
These days, we have come to understand the grim reality of the fur industry, which has thankfully led to the development of some innovative alternatives to fur such as synthetic and bio-based 'faux furs'.

The traps, the farms, the horrifying conditions – we are all largely aware of the concerns associated with the fur industry. But while animal activists have helped increase awareness of the ethics surrounding the fur industry there is also an environmental impact that doesn't get as much attention – namely, its massive carbon footprint.

Mankind has worn fur and leather since its earliest times

out of the African cradle to protect from the colder weather conditions as well as from harm. Warmth and durability, very practical aspects which no other material could provide at the time, made them unrenounceable not just for clothing, but a wide variety of other practical uses like shoes, water flasks, helmets, bags and much, much more.

To this day, tribes like the Inuit who live in some of the harshest weather conditions on the planet wouldn't be able to survive without them – their fur garments are so precious, they wear them all their lives, often passing them on from one generation to the other.



Sourcing fur and leather has been complicated. One would either have to be a hunter oneself, adding an education in the knowledge of fur and leather treatment after having killed an animal of choice, or have a position of wealth where a hunter would be at your service.

Thus, owing fur or leather very soon turned into a representation of wealth.

Different kinds of fur could indicate different social status. In ancient Egypt for instance a leopard skin or lion skin could be worn only by kings or high priests performing ceremony.

Over in Europe, chinchilla, mink, ermine and sable were exclusive to royalty, nobility

and high-ranking clergy. In some early societies fur, leather and its by-products would acquire a mystical or spiritual power if worn by hunters, soldiers or the ruling classes.

In short, fur soon became an indicator of social stratifications and it remained such until the 1980s when the voice of animal rights movements questioning the ethics of such products made itself stronger, with fake fur often providing a valuable option.

Technology of course radically changed things, as it would do in so many other markets. In the last century advancements in processing pelts made fur and leather available to the masses. This changed fur's status symbol connotation. Now you weren't considered wealthy wearing any kind of fur. And, you were if you wore specific kinds of fur.



UPCYCLING FASHION

Sustainable styles

A little over a year ago, NFL player Travis Kelce stepped out in a flamboyant silk shirt emblazoned with two barrel-chest-sized pink flamingos and trimmed across the bottom with a giant Chanel logo.

The design was upcycled from vintage Chanel scarves by stylist Logan Horne, whose brand, J Logan Home, specialises in refashioning heritage luxury accessories. His pieces, which retail at close to US\$3,000 each, have also been worn by the musicians Dua Lipa and 2 Chainz and are sold at stores including Farfetch, Kith and The Webster. They've also caught the attention of the French luxury giant's legal department.

In February, lawyers acting for Chanel sent Horne a cease and desist letter, demanding his label stop selling products bearing its logo and other brand signifiers. It's the latest in a flurry of cases that have turned upcycling into an emerging legal battle ground, pitting a practice that's been pitched as key to improving the industry's sustainability credentials against the bounds of trademark protection.

"We really have these two values that point in different directions," said Fashion Law Institute founder Susan Scafidi. "(Upcycling) is absolutely risky, despite the fact that it is trending and ethical."

Why is upcycling controversial?

Chanel's objection to J Logan Home's designs isn't exactly a bolt from the blue.

Major luxury players have historically been wary of the secondary market, concerned it could damage their

carefully controlled hold on brand distribution and image, cannibalise sales and encourage counterfeiting.

It's a tension that has played out prominently over the last decade thanks to the rapid rise of online resale platforms. Though some brands have begun to tentatively embrace the space, others have remained cautious. Chanel, in particular, has pursued high-profile cases against re-commerce players it argues are using its brand without permission and selling fakes.

The brand scored a major win earlier this year, when a New York court awarded it US\$4mn in damages in its suit against the resale business What Goes Around Comes Around. A separate legal dispute with The RealReal is ongoing.

As they move to protect their intellectual property, big brands are coming into conflict with a growing class of up-and-coming designers working with refashioned designer gear. Here, a showgoer at Paris Fashion Week in a Chanel dress.

As they move to protect their intellectual property, big brands are coming into conflict with a growing class of up-and-coming designers working with refashioned designer gear.

Smaller-scale upcycling has attracted less attention so far. But the practice has become more widespread, driven by demand for logo-heavy streetwear, greater access to vintage products and deadstock fab-

rics and a desire among young designers to operate sustainably.

That's given rise to an increasing number of trademark and copyright infringement complaints targeting upcyclers from brands including Louis Vuitton and Levi's, as well as Chanel.

In 2022, Louis Vuitton secured a US\$603,000 pay out and permanent injunction in a Texas case against a business selling refashioned Vuitton products. Last year, Levi's brought a complaint against French label Coperni, alleging it was using pocket stitching and fabric tabs confusingly similar to the famed denim label.

The sale of such products, alongside items that had actually been upcycled from Levi's jeans without authorisation, created additional risk of consumer confusion, the company argued.

Does upcycling infringe on brands' trademarks?

The disputes reflect legitimate trademark and copyright concerns, but they also raise questions over how far these protections should stretch when they conflict with broader sustainability goals, according to legal experts.

"It is a grey area within the law," said Scafidi. "Brands absolutely have a legal leg to stand on. The question is how well-clad it is."

In general terms, once a brand has sold an item, it becomes fair game to be resold or redistributed by third parties. But this principle, known as the

first-sale doctrine or trademark exhaustion, may not apply if an item has been reworked or embellished, lawyers said.

Fashion brands' legal claims are varied but ultimately boil down to concerns that third parties are free-riding on brands' valuable IP in ways that could risk confusing consumers, eroding primary sales and tarnishing or diluting carefully cultivated marks.

Upcyclers can take precautions, like avoiding the prominent use of logos, or providing consumers with clear disclosures that reworked products are not authorized or affiliated with the brands they reference (an approach J. Logan Home adopted). But these steps still may not be sufficient to counter arguments of copyright or trademark infringement, according to lawyers.

"If we want to move from a linear to a circular economy, we need to upcycle," said Irene Calboli, a professor of law at Texas A&M University. "The fact that intellectual property law gets in the way of those who want to upcycle or recycle is just wrong."

Chanel said it is paying close attention to sustainability matters, pointing to its work with L'Atelier des Matières, which recycles unsold items.

"(Upcycling is) a positive trend that we continue to explore, and we have always been conscious of the need to strike a balance between protecting the rights of our brand and the rights of others to create and trade freely," the company said in a statement.

(Courtesy: cnnstyle.com)



MAJOR LUXURY PLAYERS HAVE HISTORICALLY BEEN WARY OF THE SECONDARY MARKET, CONCERNED IT COULD DAMAGE THEIR CAREFULLY CONTROLLED HOLD ON BRAND DISTRIBUTION AND IMAGE

oman OASIS

Exclusive OFFER

عيد مبارك

50 ONLY

Hot & Cold Dispenser + 2 Full Bottles + 30 Refill coupons

20 ONLY

White Tap Dispenser + 2 Full Bottles + 15 Refill coupons

OASIS WATER COMPANY SAOC
P.O.Box: 87, Rusayl 124, Sultanate of Oman.
(SA No. 180442 / 1999/2019/0001)
Offer valid from 10th March to 30th June 2024.

800 71 222
9275 5522

taste the

NEW GOODNESS

طبيعي أطيّب

CRANBERRY Drink

NO SUGAR ADDED

VITAMIN C

NATURAL IMMUNITY BOOST

DISTRIBUTED BY

CATERING SOLUTIONS TRADING LLC

CONTACT NO.: +968 22060236 / 237