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Oman mounts sustained national response to grounded vessel incident

The Authority noted that continuous monitoring and image analysis reveal the slick is advancing along a consistent trajectory, with its observed extent along that path reaching nearly 449 kilometres

MUSCAT: The Environment Authority, in close coordination with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and other relevant national stakeholders, is continuing its comprehensive response to the grounding of the vessel Caroline Bezeengi off the Hallaniyat Islands in Dhofar Governorate. The operation is being executed through an integrated national framework that combines technical spill remediation, vessel securing, and ongoing environmental monitoring, surveillance, and impact assessment, with the overarching objectives of mitigating incident-related risks, safeguarding the marine ecosystem, and ensuring the safety of maritime navigation.

The Environment Authority has confirmed that it is overseeing the incident through a fully integrated environmental monitoring, surveillance, and assessment system, involving specialised national technical teams and leveraging state-of-the-art surveillance technologies, satellite imagery, environmental modelling, and field surveys. These tools are being utilised to conduct continuous environmental evaluations, track the trajectory and spread of oil pollution, and identify priority zones for response and protective measures.

The Authority further emphasised that the environmental response strategy is grounded in up-to-date scientific and technical data, alongside real-time monitoring results, while maintaining an ongoing assessment of potential risks to the marine environment, coastal areas, and ecologically sensitive habitats.

According to the latest monitoring and technical analyses, including high-resolution satellite image interpretation, oil pollution persists in the maritime area associated with the incident. A slick measuring approximately 390 square kilometres has been detected, extending northeastward from the Hallaniyat Islands towards the mainland coast, and at its nearest point, is located roughly 7 kilometres offshore.



The Authority noted that continuous monitoring and image analysis reveal the slick is advancing along a consistent trajectory, with its observed extent along that path reaching approximately 449 kilometres.

Current modelling and assessment outputs indicate that the slick is generally drifting in a northeasterly direction, with a projected advance of around 121 kilometres over the next 48 hours, based on prevailing marine and meteorological conditions at the time of model generation. The Authority stressed that this constitutes a scientific projection rather than an actual observation, and that environmental models remain subject to revision in response to any fluctuations in wind patterns, ocean currents, and sea-state conditions.

Analytical findings further suggest that the denser concentrations of the pollution may be trending towards the approaches of Ras Madrasah, underscoring the need for sustained, intensive monitoring of marine and coastal zones of high environmental priority. The Authority clarified that the detected slick area of approximately 390 square kilometres does not correspond to the volume of oil discharged, but rather reflects the geographic extent over which pollution has been observed in the most recent monitoring cycle.

The Authority explained that the correlation between slick surface area and actual oil quantity cannot be established directly, as it is contingent upon a range of technical variables, including the thickness of the oil layer, the physicochemical properties of the oil, the degree of natural dispersion, marine current dynamics, wind direction and speed, wave action, and general sea conditions.

It was further noted that the

slick's area, configuration, and position are inherently subject to change between successive observations due to ongoing movement, spreading, and natural dispersion processes. Accordingly, the recorded figures are treated as technical snapshots tied to specific observation times, rather than as static or definitive values.

With regard to the persistence and detectability of the pollution, the Environment Authority indicated that current monitoring confirms the continued presence of oil on the sea surface, with ongoing movement, morphological evolution, and dispersion driven by prevailing marine and atmospheric conditions.

Specialised Environment Authority teams remain actively engaged in tracking changes in the slick's extent, position, and drift direction, comparing successive observations to determine rates of change and dispersion patterns, thereby facilitating timely and evidence-based decision-making. Data is subjected to continuous analysis to ascertain whether observed slicks constitute continuous accumulations or fragmented patches resulting from dispersion and natural breakdown processes.

The Environment Authority reaffirmed its commitment to issuing official updates on the environmental status of the incident as developments warrant, thereby ensuring the dissemination of accurate, verifiable information to the public and media. It reiterated the importance of relying exclusively on official sources and cautioned against the circulation of unauthorised figures, maps, or estimates.

The Authority further underscored that the protection of biological diversity, marine habitats, and environmentally sensitive areas remains a foremost priority in

the incident response. Efforts are being directed towards identifying zones most vulnerable to impact and correlating them with pollution drift trajectories, with particular emphasis on areas of high ecological value and sensitivity.

Assessment and monitoring activities encompass a broad spectrum of sensitive marine environments, islands, and habitats, including coral reef systems, turtle nesting grounds, marine ecosystems, and coastal zones of ecological significance. Risk assessments are being continuously refined in line with changes in the pollution's location, extent, and directional movement.

The Environment Authority stressed the critical importance of distinguishing between empirically observed data and outputs derived from modelling projections or hypothetical scenarios. It noted that certain data concerning the scale, trajectory, extent, and potential ecological consequences of the pollution may be subject to refinement as monitoring and analytical efforts progress. Official information is accordingly updated in line with the most current, documented technical findings.

The Authority further cautioned that any circulating estimates regarding the volume of oil spilled should not be regarded as final or authoritative unless substantiated by technically validated assessments from the competent authorities.

In a related context, the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology reported that operations are being conducted in collaboration with all specialised technical teams from relevant national entities, supplemented by the expertise of a contracted specialist company. These efforts are directed towards conducting technical inspections and ongoing assessments of the vessel's hull condition and structural damage, pinpointing the sources of leakage, and formulating appropriate engineering interventions to prevent further hull deterioration and address leak points—including the safe transfer of the oil cargo—followed by the subsequent recovery of the hull, in full compliance with maritime safety requirements.

Dr. Abdullah Ali Al Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority, affirmed that monitoring,



surveillance, and environmental assessment results provide precise and reliable confirmation that there are no indications of impact on critical infrastructure, including seawater desalination plants, the aquaculture project, and the economic and tourism systems situated along the coastlines. He noted that seawater quality is subject to ongoing testing by the Environment Authority's specialised technical teams.

He further stated that clearly defined emergency response plans have been activated to address a range of potential scenarios, thereby ensuring robust protection against any possible effects. He observed that, while the challenging climatic conditions have rendered technical spill response operations more difficult, they have concurrently contributed to mitigating direct environmental impact by driving oil slicks away from Omani shores.

He reiterated that environmental monitoring, surveillance, and assessment findings conclusively and reliably demonstrate that there is no cause for concern regarding critical infrastructure, such as seawater desalination facilities, the aquaculture project, and coastal economic and tourism systems, as seawater is continuously sampled by the Environment Authority's technical teams, with no slicks or impacts posing a threat to public safety. Comprehensive emergency response protocols have been activated to address all contingencies and ensure protection from any potential repercussions. He added that aerial surveillance is being conducted daily to monitor oil slicks and track their movement across designated areas.

Meanwhile, Mohammed Abdullah Al Rawahi, Director General of Maritime Affairs at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, pointed out that the adverse climatic conditions of the autumn monsoon season have significantly complicated technical spill response operations.

He indicated that technical personnel from the Ministry, various relevant national entities, and specialist consultants from the engaged company are intensifying their efforts to accurately identify leakage sources, preserve hull integrity, and manage internal

breaches.

He stated that current operations encompass aerial surveillance, subsea diving inspections, continuous field monitoring and observation, and the development of technical solutions for the safe offloading of the vessel's oil cargo. These measures aim at minimising the risks posed by the incident, ensuring navigational safety, and protecting the marine environment.

He explained that the immediate priority is to halt ongoing pollution and address its sources, secure the vessel, and transfer its oil cargo under the highest practicable safety standards, while safeguarding the wellbeing of response personnel, the marine environment, and maritime traffic in the area—all within the framework of a coordinated national response involving multiple entities, each operating within its designated mandate.

He further reported that efforts have included the coordination of necessary air, maritime, and logistical support to facilitate the timely deployment of technical teams and equipment to the vessel's location, alongside ongoing coordination with the Environment Authority to utilise satellite monitoring outputs, aerial reconnaissance, and marine and field surveys in determining operational priorities and evaluating the risks surrounding the incident.

Technical teams from all relevant entities are operating around the clock, employing temporal satellite image comparison to track pollution movement, conducting aerial monitoring and reconnaissance of priority marine and coastal zones, performing marine and field surveys to verify actual conditions on the sea surface and along the shorelines, and utilising environmental modelling to forecast pollution drift and dispersion patterns. These efforts are integrated with analyses of wind, current, and wave data, correlated with environmental sensitivity mapping, and applied to continuous risk-level assessments for marine areas and habitats. These tools function in an integrated manner to furnish an up-to-date overview of the environmental situation, with model outputs being systematically compared against observed changes in the field and via satellite.

It is noteworthy that the Environment Authority holds the lead responsibility for managing and coordinating the environmental response to the incident under the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan, in collaboration with the relevant national entities, namely the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology; the Royal Air Force of Oman; the Royal Oman Police – Coast Guard; the Royal Navy of Oman; the Maritime Security Centre; the National Emergency Management Centre; the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources; the Ministry of Interior – Municipal Sector; the Ministry of Economy; and the Ministry of Finance—each acting within its respective area of competence. — ONA

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

Omanisation policies

<FROM A1 At the same time, Oman continues to implement Omanisation policies, aimed at increasing the participation of Omani citizens in the private sector and creating more sustainable employment opportunities for nationals.

Authorities have unveiled a range of measures in recent years to regulate the recruitment and employment of non-Omani workers, including tighter monitoring of work permits, professions and employer compliance. The Ministry's inspection programme is intended to protect compliant businesses from unfair competition created by unauthorised employment and other labour-market violations. The latest figures underline Oman's drive to strengthen labour-law enforcement, curb irregular employment and build a more organised labour market while balancing the needs of employers, workers and the national workforce.

ELECTRONIC INVOICE



New directive issued to Sanad Services Centre

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP), has urged owners of Sanad Services Centre to provide the beneficiary with an electronic invoice before payment of the transaction value, which clarifies the details of the service and the fees due.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Pro-

motion emphasises to all Sanad Services Centre owners the necessity of issuing an electronic invoice to the beneficiary through the Sanad Centres portal and delivering it to them before collecting payment for any transaction.

The electronic invoice must include all transaction details and applicable fees, including Sanad Centre service fees, in addition to government fees or fees charged by service providers.



Tender Announcement

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

Tender No.	Tender title	Last date for tender purchase online	Bid submission date
29/2026	Development of infrastructure of Al Buraimi Vocational College	Monday 24-8-2026	Sunday 13-9-2026
30/2026	Development of infrastructure of Shinas Vocational College	Monday 24-8-2026	Sunday 13-9-2026

- Specialised establishments can obtain the tender documents through the link below effective from 8:00am, Wednesday 5-8-2026.
/https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om
- The opening of tender envelopes shall be at 11:00am of Sunday 13-9-2026.

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



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ART EXHIBIT

Annual summer exhibition visualises dialogue combining Omani, international artistic works



MUSCAT: Stal Gallery in Muscat is hosting the new edition of its Annual Summer Exhibition, a leading artistic and cultural event bringing together under one roof creative experiences from an elite group of prominent Omani artists and a stellar line-up of guest international artists, marking a renewed presence on the Sultanate of Oman's cultural agenda.

Running until 20 August, the exhibition comes as an extension of an established annual tradition initiated by the gallery in 2015, evolving over time into a strategic platform for showcasing and introducing Omani visual arts while integrating contemporary global perspectives. This aims to forge a

cross-border creative dialogue and solidify the Sultanate of Oman's position as a hub for cultural and civilizational exchange among peoples.

In its current edition, the exhibition represents a living archive documenting the evolution of artistic concepts, performance techniques, and fine art works that reflect contemporary and fresh perspectives on the Sultanate of Oman. It affords the creative community an opportunity to explore aesthetic and social transformations through art's scrutinizing lens, contributing to enriching the knowledge and visual repertoire of those interested in the local and regional fine arts movement. -ONA

Omani Crafts Forum in Salalah focuses on heritage, innovation

Organised by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority, in cooperation with Dhofar Municipality and the Office of the Governor of Dhofar, the forum will run until August 22.



tended by a number of dignitaries and officials from government and private-sector institutions in the governorate.

Held as part of the Dhofar Autumn Season 2026 programme, the forum seeks to showcase the richness of Oman's traditional crafts while highlighting efforts to preserve their authenticity, develop them through innovation and ensure their continued relevance for future generations.

The forum traces the history and evolution of Omani crafts, showcasing traditional techniques, the stories behind them and the inherited knowledge that has shaped an important part of the Sultanate's cultural identity.

It also seeks to document and revive traditional craft practices through live demonstrations, giving visitors an opportunity to see and experience techniques used by artisans in the past.

The forum also provides a platform for contemporary craft designs and products inspired by Oman's historical heritage, demonstrating how traditional knowledge can be combined with modern creativity.

Another key focus is encouraging emerging artisans and designers to experiment with modern tools and techniques while retaining the essence and identity of traditional crafts. The forum also aims to strengthen the link between the past and the future by demonstrating how inherited craft knowledge can serve as a foundation for developing revitalised, future-oriented craft industries in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

The forum further promotes the transmission of traditional skills to younger generations through innovative approaches, helping ensure that Omani crafts continue to survive, evolve and remain part of the country's cultural and economic landscape.

The event features several sections bringing together traditional crafts, leading craft institutions, organisations working to develop the sector and suppliers of specialised tools and equipment.

Interactive sections offer workshops and hands-on experiences in producing craft items, while museum displays showcase collections of traditional crafts. The forum also includes an integrated craft environment designed to recreate aspects of traditional settings found across the Sultanate.

Engineer Ibrahim bin Saeed Al Kharousi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism for Heritage, said the organisation of the forum reflects Oman's continued attention to traditional crafts and craft industries and its efforts to develop the sector while preserving its authenticity and ensuring that it keeps pace with contemporary requirements.

He said holding the forum during the Dhofar Autumn Season provides an important opportunity to strengthen the presence of Omani crafts during one of the Sultanate's most prominent tourism seasons and benefit from the strong visitor activity witnessed by the governorate.

The event, he added, allows visitors to discover an important dimension of Oman's cultural heritage — one that combines the authenticity of the past with a spirit of innovation.

Al Kharousi noted that the forum brings together Omani crafts and traditional industries under one roof to highlight their diversity, as well as the skills, knowledge and inherited creativity behind them.

Through live demonstrations, interactive experiences and innovative craft products, visitors can explore the different stages involved in producing traditional items and learn about the techniques used by artisans.

He said the forum's theme, "Identity and Extension," reflects this approach: "Identity" represents the depth and diversity of Oman's craft heritage, while "Extension" highlights the importance of preserving, developing and carrying these crafts forward so they continue to have a place in community life and in Oman's tourism and cultural landscape.

MORAL INCENTIVES

'Ejada Card' launched for employees of state's administrative apparatus

SALALAH: The Individual and Institutional Ejada Seminar inaugurated on Monday the "Ejada Card" for the moral incentives system in the government sector, which is an electronic platform providing a number of benefits to employees of units of the state's administrative apparatus.

The event was held as part of the Labour Forum organised by the Ministry of Labour in Dhofar Governorate.

The inauguration was held under the auspices of Said Abdullah Al Balushi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour for Human Resources Development, with the participation of several government entities and specialists in human resources and institutional excellence, aiming to promote a culture of excellence and enhance performance in the government sector.

Mohammed Mubarak Al Kalbani, Director General of Development and Quality Assurance at the Ministry of Labour, explained that the project to develop the rewards and incentives system in the government sector represents a step in developing the government human resources system and linking motivation to performance and achievement, in line with the targets of "Oman Vision 2040."

He pointed out that the project includes a modern electronic system providing benefits and services to employees of the state's administrative apparatus units implementing the Ejada system, through strategic partnerships with private sector institutions and companies.



makes recognition and motivation a sustainable practice.

The forum also witnessed the honouring of leading government units in the application integrity index of the individual Ejada system for 2026, which included 13 government units, namely: Muscat Governorate, Dhofar Governorate, Ministry of Education, Oman Investment Authority, Ministry of Health, Public Prosecution, Dhofar Municipality, South A'Sharqiyah Governorate, North A'Sharqiyah Governorate, North Al Batinah Governorate, South Al Batinah Governorate, A'Dhahirah Governorate and Muscat Municipality.

The forum featured a number of specialised working papers titled "The Future of Human Resources According to Ministry of Labour Trends," "Institutional Innovation and Change Management," "Personal Empowerment in the Government Sector," and "The Role of Institutional Excellence in Enhancing Government Work Culture."

The forum also addressed "The Individual Ejada System: From Application to Impact," "Developing Training Methodology in the Ejada System to Enhance Job Performance," "Continuous Improvement Methodology," and "Human Resources Planning in the Government Sector."

He noted that the project reflects a trend toward deploying modern technologies and digital solutions in human resource management, and consolidating an institutional culture that

28TH EDITION

Sohar to organise Literary Forum from 25 October



CULTURAL LIFE: The forum's programme includes a competition in classical Arabic poetry, popular poetry and short stories. -ONA

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth is organising the 28th edition of the Literary Forum in Sohar, Governorate of North Al Batinah, from 25 to 29 October 2026.

The forum is accorded great attention by talented people in the cultural community as it provides a platform for them to showcase their contributions to cultural life. The forum's programme includes a competition in classical Arabic poetry, popular poetry and short stories.

The competition will see the participation of 60 contestants, of whom 30 will be in the age group of 18 to 34 years and 30 others in the age groups above 34 years.

The programme also includes sessions for critical insights into the texts presented in the competition, in addition to specialised cultural sessions in the fields of classical poetry, popular poetry and short stories.

The forum, which hosts writers and poets from the Sultanate of Oman and abroad, also includes competitions in singing, photography, monodrama fine arts. -ONA

RAFO band claims overall top spot in World Music Competition



The RAFO team won the top three places in the individual baton-bearers competition

PERTH: The band of the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) occupied overall first place in the World Music Competition held in the city of Perth, Scotland, as part of Grade 4B contests.

The RAFO band also won first place in the bagpipe group and second place in the drum group.

The Royal Army of Oman Music Band maintained its excellence at the World Music Contest (WMC) in the city of Perth, Scotland, securing place in the third global level (B), and fourth place in the overall ranking of the third level (A) and (B).

In addition, the RAFO team won the top three places in the individual baton-bearers' competition, in which Warrant Officer Mohammed bin Khamis Al Amri took first place, followed by Staff Sergeant Mahmoud bin Yousuf Al Sinani in second place, while Captain Humaid bin Sulaiman Al Ghafri occupied third place.

These accomplishments reflect the Sultanate of Oman's advanced standards of artistic skills and discipline related to military music, highlighting the country's strong presence in the global arena. - **ONA**



COMMENTARY

Youth in Mind:

As Delicious as a Cookie: A conversation with the Indian author Rashmi Keshwani

Communication is all about understanding your audience, says Rashmi Keshwani, author of *The Communication Cookie*. Her debut book takes you by surprise, captivating readers and prompting them to wonder how she came up with such an out an innovative title? And what connection could possibly exist between communication and cookies? Drawing on 15 years as a soft skills trainer for leaders, managers, and teams, Rashmi distills the essence of her wisdom on effective communication, serving it up in bite-sized portions, just like a cookie.

The word COOKIE in the title is an acronym through which she invented her brainchild framework which she has developed for the book. This book uses the COOKIE metaphor to deliver short, meaningful insights that are easy to absorb and apply. Each chapter works like a cookie, easy to take in, yet carrying an insight that stays with you on confidence, voice, presence and connection as she wrote.

I approached her to explore the wisdom behind her debut publication, and our conversation flowed like a natural spring. Open and welcoming, she created a warm, transparent space for dialogue, answering each question thoughtfully to shed light on what it truly takes to be an effective communicator. Our conversation unfolded as follows:

The title *The Communication Cookie* is both memorable and intriguing. What inspired the COOKIE metaphor, and why did you choose bite-sized wisdom as the vehicle to write on communication?

Thank you for your interest in my book and the opportunity to connect with readers in Oman. The idea came quite naturally actually. One evening I was sitting

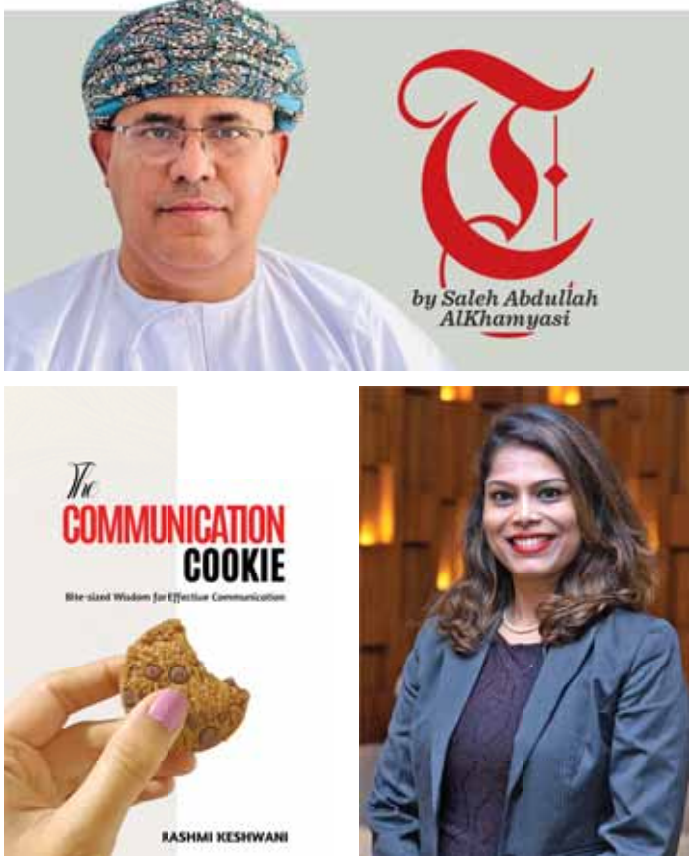
with my cup of coffee and, as always, enjoying a cookie. I absolutely love cookies! That's when I thought, why not combine my love for communication with something I genuinely enjoy. That's how *The Communication Cookie* was born. I also wanted to write a communication book that wasn't conventional. There are so many books filled with theories and jargon. I wanted mine to feel like a treat, simple, enjoyable and practical. Just as you savour a cookie one bite at a time, I wanted readers to savour one chapter at a time. Every chapter is short, actionable and leaves you with something you can apply immediately.

You suggest that communication isn't about saying more, but about connecting better. In your experience, what is the biggest reason communication so often misses the mark?

One of the biggest misconception is that communication is only about what comes out of our mouth. It's not. I've met people with an excellent vocabulary who struggle to connect, and others with very simple language who leave a lasting impact. Communication is about connection. It's about understanding people, reading situations, listening with intention, showing confidence, and being authentic. Words are just one piece of the puzzle. That's exactly why I wrote the book. I wanted readers to see communication as a collection of skills that work together not just speaking.

Your book emphasises confidence, clarity, and authenticity. Which of these do people struggle with most, and where should they begin?

Most people struggle with confidence. I believe that Confidence isn't something you suddenly wake up with. That's why the first chapter is Chocolate Chip



Confidence. Just like chocolate chips are small but make a cookie special, confidence is built through small, consistent actions. I always tell people to not wait until you feel confident to communicate. Start communicating, and confidence will grow along the way.

Having coached leaders, managers, and teams for over 15 years, what is the single communication habit that consistently transforms people's effectiveness?

Knowing your audience. That's why the K in COOKIE stands for KitKat Connect. Before you speak, ask yourself, who am I speaking to? What do they need from me? The moment people shift their focus from what do I want to say? to what does my

audience need to hear? their communication becomes far more impactful.

You write that communication extends beyond presentations to everyday conversations, relationships, leadership, and even silence. Which of these dimensions do people most often overlook, and why?

I would say people overlook everyday conversations the most. We often think communication only matters during presentations, interviews, or important meetings. But our careers, relationships and leadership are shaped by the hundreds of small conversations we have every single day with colleagues, family, friends and even with ourselves. Those everyday interactions build trust, strengthen relation-

ships and shape the way people perceive us. That's why this book isn't just about becoming a better public speaker. It's about becoming a better communicator in every aspect of life.

Can you share a memorable story from your coaching experience where a small shift in communication created a profound personal or professional transformation?

One of the most memorable people I coached was the CEO of an IT organisation. He was an outstanding communicator in one to one conversations, but whenever he had to speak on stage, he would either avoid it or hand the opportunity to someone else. He came to me convinced that he needed to improve his communication skills. As we worked together, we discovered that communication wasn't his challenge at all. The real barrier was his self-belief. A few negative experiences, coupled with deep-rooted childhood beliefs, had convinced him that he simply wasn't meant to be a public speaker. Once he recognised those limiting beliefs, we focused on small, consistent steps. And when he finally delivered his first independent presentation after years of avoiding the stage, he was overwhelmed with joy. That experience reinforced something I deeply believe and it is that communication transformation begins with self-transformation. When we change the way we see ourselves, the way we communicate with the world changes too

If every reader could leave *The Communication Cookie* with just one enduring lesson, what would you hope that lesson would be?

I hope readers walk away believing that small changes in the way we communicate can create big changes in the way we connect, influence and build relationship

Just like a cookie is small but satisfying, every lesson in this book is simple enough to apply immediately. My hope is that readers don't just finish reading the book but they start practicing one communication habit at a time and experience the difference it makes in their relationships, careers and confidence.

What do want to leave as a departing note?

Since your column has youth in mind, allow me to conclude with this message. I want to whisper in the ear of every young person reading this, I want to leave you with one thought. Your qualifications may open the door. But your communication skills can decide how far you go. You may have brilliant ideas, genuine talent and big dreams. But what truly matter is your ability to bring those qualities to life. To make your thoughts understood, your presence felt and your potential visible. Communication is not about having the perfect words. It is about having the confidence to say what you mean, stand by what you believe and connect with people along the way. So don't underestimate this skill. Invest in your voice. Invest in your confidence. Invest in yourself. Because the world needs your ideas, your perspective and your contribution. And in a world full of talented people, being able to communicate your value is a powerful advantage. Hence, make your communication as delicious as a cookie. Believe me it will be rewarding. As Maya Angelou Said: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel". Go ahead embrace the wisdom of *The Communication Cookie* to leave behind a tasty impact wherever, your destiny drifts you in your pursuit to be the best version of you.

Ministry lauds citizen for meteorite discovery

This initiative reflects community awareness of the importance of preserving the geological heritage of the Sultanate of Oman



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism commended the initiative of citizen Saeed bin Humaid Al Harizi, who contacted the Ministry after suspecting the discovery of a rock sample, that turned out to be a meteorite, in the Ramlat Jadila area of the Mitani district in Dhofar Governorate.

This initiative reflects commu-

nity awareness of the importance of preserving the geological heritage of the Sultanate of Oman.

Engineer Ibrahim bin Saeed Al-Kharousi, Undersecretary of the Ministry for Heritage, honoured the citizen in recognition of his initiative and his commitment to contacting the relevant authorities.

The Ministry initiated the necessary technical procedures to document the sample and subject it to laboratory testing. The test results confirmed that it is a stony

meteorite sample weighing approximately 12 kilograms.

This initiative underscores the importance of community partnership in preserving the natural and geological heritage of the Sultanate of Oman and enhancing the role of community members in identifying discoveries of scientific and historical value, thus enabling the relevant authorities to document and study them according to established scientific procedures.

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism affirms that the Citizen Initiative represents a positive model of cooperation between the community and the competent authorities, and contributes to raising awareness of the importance of geological discoveries, preserving them, and making them available for use in scientific and educational fields, thus enhancing knowledge of the geological and natural wealth that the Sultanate of Oman abounds in.

OMAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



Human rights awareness and education programme launched during Khareef

SALALAH: Oman Human Rights Commission implemented a human rights awareness and education programme in Dhofar Governorate, coinciding with the activities of Khareef Dhofar (monsoon) 2026.

Over 340 people from various segments of society benefited from the programme, as part of the Commission's efforts to spread a culture of human rights across various governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.

Executed in cooperation and coordination with several institutions, the program included the distribution of more than 2,500 awareness and research publications, alongside 104 awareness wall charts to a number of entities and institutions.

The distributed publications included research studies on human rights topics tailored for researchers, booklets to educate children on abuse, bullying, and other topics, as well as the Commission's annual reports and

introductory leaflets on international conventions.

The wall charts focused on introducing the conventions to which the Sultanate of Oman has acceded, and reviewing national protection mechanisms for women, children, and persons with disabilities.

The programme included a series of training workshops and interactive events held in conjunction with the Ministry of Education's summer programme for school students, "Summer: Learning and Innovation."

Among these were workshops on the role of Oman Human Rights Commission in protecting and promoting children's rights, conducted in cooperation with several schools.

This was in addition to activities aimed at children, including "Colour and Learn Your Rights," and others on self-protection mechanisms in cooperation with Omani Bahjah Orphans Association.

The programme also featured specialised workshops for Girl

Guides at the scout camp in Sahl Ashoor, and others for members of Special Olympics Oman at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex for Culture and Entertainment, alongside a symposium to promote humanitarian and rights work in cooperation with the Social Development Committee in the Wilayat of Taqa.

The programme was implemented in cooperation and coordination with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, the Social Development Committee in the Wilayat of Taqa, and several civil society institutions, in addition to Special Olympics Oman.

These programmes come within the mandates of Oman Human Rights Commission to spread a human rights culture among various segments of society, in accordance with its system issued by Royal Decree No. 47/2026, thereby enhancing awareness of rights and consolidating their principles among society members and institutions. — ONA

APPROVED CHANNELS

Commerce ministry reminds precious metals traders of new payment rules

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MOCIIP) has reminded businesses dealing in precious metals and valuable stones that transactions valued at OMR5,000 or more must be paid through approved payment methods.

Under Ministerial Decision No. 2023/425, such payments must be made through approved channels, including electronic payment methods, cheques or bank transfers.



The ministry urged businesses operating in the sector to comply with the regulations, noting that the use of approved payment

methods helps ensure regulatory compliance and protects businesses from potential violations.

Violations may attract administrative penalties, including a warning, an administrative fine of at least OMR500, or suspension of the business or company's activities for a period of up to three months.

MOCIIP called on all businesses engaged in the sale and purchase of precious metals and valuable stones to adhere to the approved payment channels and comply with the provisions of the decision.

CABLE



His Majesty greets President of Chad

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Mahamat Idriss Deby, President of the Transitional Military Council of the Republic of Chad on his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Majesty expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to Chad for continuous security and stability, as well as the achievement of growth and prosperity.

— ONA

ROYAL ARMY OF OMAN



RAO's parachute team excels in Italy

TURIN: The Royal Army of Oman's (RAO's) freefall parachute team secured first place in the Italian Air Formation Freefall Championship, held in Pinerolo in Turin Province from August 7 to 9.

The championship featured 14 teams, with the Omani team delivering a strong technical perfor-

mance throughout the competition to claim the top position and add another international achievement to its record.

The team will next compete in the World Military Parachuting Championship (CISM), scheduled to take place in the Slovak Republic from August 14 to 23, 2026.



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DISC/2026/077	OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF REVERSE OSMOSIS WATER DESALINATION PLANT AT SADHOON-QATBAIT	25-AUGUST-2026	01-September -2026	52.500
DISC/2026/078	Consultancy Services for design and construction "supervision of wastewater systems in Wilayat Mirbat"	25-AUGUST-2026	03-September -2026	262.500
DISC/2026/079	Expansion of R.O Plant and Related Transportation Network at Al-Hallaniyah Island	25-AUGUST-2026	03-September -2026	262.500
DISC/2026/080	UPGRADING OF EXISTING 33/11KV AL SAAN PRIMARY SUBSTATION FROM 1 X 6 MVA TO 2 X 6 MVA AND ASSOCIATED WORKS	25-AUGUST-2026	10-September -2026	525.000

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Typhoon Dolphin makes landfall, millions evacuated

While authorities have downgraded Dolphin to a tropical storm, they continue to warn of torrential rains, severe flooding and the risk of landslides



BEIJING: Authorities in China have evacuated hundreds of thousands of people along its east coast after Typhoon Dolphin made landfall, bringing with it heavy rain and flooding, state media reported on Monday.

Xinhua reported that as of 7 am on Monday, about 167,900 people had been moved from vulnerable areas on land and at sea in Fujian Province. By late Sunday, Shanghai had evacuated around 215,600 people from areas considered at risk.

Dolphin was the 13th typhoon of this year and, according to China's

National Meteorological Centre (NMC), made two landfalls in Zhejiang Province on Sunday.

While authorities have downgraded Dolphin to a tropical storm, they continue to warn of torrential rains, severe flooding and the risk of landslides through Wednesday. Authorities issued a blue typhoon warning on Monday morning, forecasting persistent heavy rainfall through Wednesday in regions including Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Henan and Hebei. Some areas are likely to experience torrential rain,

thunderstorms and strong winds, as per Xinhua.

The storm moved over a long distance of 6,000km before making landfall, suggesting a lifespan of more than three times that of an average typhoon, according to China's state broadcaster CCTV.

The Chinese state media cited the NMC as saying that from Thursday, the remnants of the typhoon are expected to move northward and interact with cold air, bringing significant rainfall to Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei and Liaoning.

Meteorological experts warned that the typhoon could raise the risk of flooding and other disasters in some areas, calling for strengthened defences against geological disasters and flooding in small and medium-sized rivers.

Beijing's flood control authorities said that the city plans to activate a Level II flood response on Tuesday morning. Dolphin brought torrential rains to the Philippines, parts of northern Taiwan and Japan's Okinawa island before its landfall in China. -ANI



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‘Strait of Hormuz will not reopen until US lifts naval blockade’

TEHRAN: Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei stated on Monday that the Strait of Hormuz will not be reopened until the United States halts its naval blockade against Iran, according to local media reports.

Speaking at a weekly press briefing in Tehran, Baghaei attributed the closure of the strategic choke point to military aggression against Iran by the US and Israel. He underlined that reopening the critical corridor depends directly on the conditions imposed on Iran and the waterway by American and Israeli authorities, Iran's semi-official Tasnim News Agency reported.

Reaffirming Tehran's stance, Baghaei remarked, "As long as the US naval blockade continues, the necessary conditions for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz do not exist." He urged Washington to halt and reverse its "destructive actions" to enable both parties to negotiate subsequent steps.

Connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, the Strait of Hormuz serves as a vital energy artery, facilitat-



ing the movement of crude oil and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Gulf exporters to global markets. Addressing ongoing discussions with Oman regarding maritime transit, Baghaei clarified that the dialogue remains a strictly bilateral matter between the two neighbouring nations.

Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi confirmed on Sunday that no active negotiations are taking place with Washington.

Addressing media personnel at the Foreign Ministry's Centre for Political and International Studies, Araghchi observed, "We currently have no negotiations with the United States. Intermediaries are still making efforts to find ways to resume negotiations."

-ANI

LIFE-SAVING DRUGS

India dispatches medicines to Bolivia

NEW DELHI : The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated that India has dispatched an eight-metric-tonne consignment of essential and life-saving medical supplies to Bolivia to bolster the South American nation's public healthcare infrastructure.

Underlining India's commitment to supporting partner nations, the MEA on Sunday stat-

ed on social media platform X, "Extending a helping hand to a Global South partner.

India has dispatched 8 MT consignment of life-saving and essential medicines to Bolivia in support of its public healthcare capacity. India always stands ready for advancing co-operation through solidarity and shared progress."

The diplomatic gesture follows recent engagements between the two nations. Earlier in February, Bolivia's Vice President Edmand Lara Montano visited India and held talks with Vice President CP Radhakrishnan on the sidelines of the AI Impact Summit in the national capital, deliberating on avenues to deepen bilateral ties in solar energy, critical minerals,

digitalisation, higher education and the medical sector.

Following their meeting, the Vice-President's Office, in a post on X, stated, "Vice President of Bolivia, Edmand Lara Montano, called on the Vice President of India, CP Radhakrishnan, at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi today on the sidelines of the India AI Impact Summit 2026." -ANI



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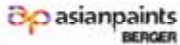
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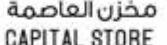
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Death toll in Indian state of Assam due to floods reaches 100 amid widespread devastation

GUWAHATI: The death toll due to the ongoing flood situation in Assam has reached 100, with casualties reported across several parts of the state continue to reel under the impact of the deluge.

According to the Disaster Reporting and Information Management System (DRIMS) Assam bulletin released on Sunday, the devastating floods have heavily impacted multiple regions, resulting in the loss of 60 males and 23 females, alongwith 18 children (12 males and 6 females).

The authorities clarified that the death count in Sivasagar district was revised after a correction in the reported data. A death was mistakenly recorded twice under the same name, due to which the



district's toll has been reduced from 50 to 49.

"This is for kind information that Sivasagar reported 1 death twice under the same name by mistake. So the total deaths in Sivasagar will be 49 instead of 50 till date," the authorities stated.

Among the hardest-hit areas, Cachar district has recorded 22 deaths, while Sivasagar has reported 49 fatalities. Other severely affected districts include Karimganj (nine deaths), Golaghat (eight deaths), along with casualties reported across Dhemaji, Nagaon, Udalguri, Sonitpur, and Karbi Anglong.

The flood situation continues to remain severe in several parts

of Assam, with rescue and relief operations remaining underway in the affected areas as district administrations and revenue circles continue to monitor water levels and provide assistance to affected populations in the inundated regions.

Amid the severe flood situation in the state, the Central Government and the State Government are extending continuous support for relief, rehabilitation and medical assistance. Authorities are also working to ensure that essential services and assistance reach people in the affected areas as the district gradually moves towards recovery.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Sunday an-

nounced financial assistance of Rs 5 crore from the state government to support people in Assam affected by the disaster.

The assistance will contribute to ongoing relief and rehabilitation efforts being carried out for flood-affected people in Assam. Chief Minister Sai also spoke over the telephone with Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and took stock of the flood situation in the state.

Around 1.66 lakh people have been affected by the floods in 304 villages across the Jorhat district. The floods have so far resulted in nine casualties. There has also been significant damage to agriculture and loss of livestock. -ANI

Trump may ditch nuke-deal plan if Iran reopens Hormuz

Finding a face-saving resolution has become increasingly difficult following a sweeping set of demands presented by Iran for restoring transit through the vital waterway



WASHINGTON, DC : US President Donald Trump appears to be seeking an exit route from the military confrontation with Iran, as the ongoing conflict proves increasingly complex to resolve, according to a report by The Wall Street Journal.

The report indicates that the US administration may be prepared to set aside the nuclear issue and declare victory if Tehran fully reopens the Strait of Hormuz.

According to The Wall Street Journal, Trump has spent weeks preparing the groundwork for this outcome and has privately informed senior aides that he could withdraw without securing a formal nuclear agreement with Tehran.

However, finding a face-saving resolution has become increasingly difficult following a sweeping set of demands presented by Iran for restoring transit through the vital waterway. Tehran is seeking billions of dollars in payments, an end to the US naval blockade, the complete withdrawal of American forces from the region, and other major concessions.

These requirements have restricted Washington's diplomatic options, raising concerns that Tehran may be preparing for a sustained, prolonged confrontation rather than a swift settlement.

Iran's ability to disrupt traffic through the narrow maritime corridor using missile and drone capabilities has provided Tehran with significant leverage, slowing global commercial shipping and driving volatility across international energy markets.

Although Trump has repeatedly

asserted in recent weeks that the strait was fully open, those declarations have proved premature. Tehran shut the strategic waterway following the outbreak of hostilities in February, maintaining that American warships and allied vessels must not be permitted transit, while also attempting to levy tolls on commercial shipping.

US officials stated that Washington has firmly rejected both the Iranian shipping restrictions and any attempts to impose tolls.

Diplomatic prospects dimmed further over the weekend following an announcement by the United Arab Emirates that Iran had launched a missile strike against one of its vessels.

Concurrently, Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, outlined an extensive set of preconditions for reopening the waterway.

According to Iran's state news agency IRNA, Zolghadr stated that the US would have to permanently end the war, lift its naval blockade, withdraw American military forces, eliminate all sanctions, release Iran's frozen financial assets, and pay war reparations.

He further demanded an end to US threats and insults, alongside a complete halt to American military action against Iran's allied militias across the region.

The imperative for Washington to secure a resolution is also being driven by domestic political considerations ahead of the upcoming US midterm elections. With domestic petrol prices remaining significantly elevated compared to pre-war levels, the administration has been searching for a

framework to demonstrate to the American electorate that the military campaign has achieved its objectives.

Addressing reporters in recent days, Trump stated that he had been prepared to launch the biggest military attack since World War II, but noted that US allies persuaded him not to do so.

He also claimed that a deal with Iran was "imminent", though no formal agreement has materialised.

On Friday, Trump appeared to suggest that victory had already been achieved regardless of a nuclear deal, sharing a social media post linking to an article titled "Donald Trump Won the Iran War".

Commenting on the administration's posture, Vice President JD Vance indicated that Washington would maintain pressure on Tehran to secure long-term structural changes in bilateral relations.

"And if not, that's fine, too, we're just going to keep on applying the pressure we can apply, and getting as much oil and gas out of the Middle East so that Americans can enjoy lower gas and energy prices," Vance stated.

"We're in the middle of the game," Vance added.

The nuclear dispute has remained central to US-Iran tensions since April, when the White House issued warnings that Tehran would never be permitted to obtain a nuclear weapon. While Washington initially sought to incorporate nuclear commitments into a broader bilateral agreement, complex negotiations prompted the White House to shift focus towards securing the reopening of

the Strait of Hormuz.

According to The Wall Street Journal, Trump privately informed senior aides in recent weeks of his assessment that Iran may be unable to restart its nuclear programme during his presidency, following the US destruction of three major Iranian nuclear facilities in May 2025.

The US President argued during internal meetings that American intelligence assets would promptly detect any attempt by Tehran to rebuild those sites or clandestinely develop a nuclear weapon, maintaining that the threat of renewed US military strikes would serve as a lasting deterrent.

Trump has similarly minimised concerns regarding Iran's subterranean enriched material.

"We've already got the nuclear material, because it's so far underground," Trump said during a July summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. "Nobody's going to be able to get it except us."

This strategic calculation could allow Washington to pivot away from demanding a formal nuclear deal if maritime transit through the strait is fully restored and the nuclear threat remains effectively contained.

Nevertheless, financial demands remain a primary impediment to any potential settlement. Tehran continues to insist on billions of dollars in war damages and the unfreezing of its overseas financial assets.

While Trump previously stated that his administration would not allow American taxpayers' money to be handed to Iran, US officials cited by The Wall Street Journal noted that achieving an agreement may be unattainable unless Washington consents to unfreezing select Iranian assets, potentially under specified conditions.

Another point of contention involves potential sanctions waivers that would permit Iran to resume international oil sales. Washington had previously granted such waivers as part of an interim truce, which subsequently collapsed when Iranian attacks on shipping in the Strait of Hormuz prompted the full restoration of US energy sanctions.

Consequently, the issue remains closely linked to whether the administration can craft an agreement that declares an end to hostilities without triggering political complications at home. -ANI

Former IRGC chief Rezaee appointed to top security body

TEHRAN: Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei has appointed former Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) chief Mohsen Rezaee as his representative to the country's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), replacing Mohammad Baqir Zolghadr, according to a decree published on Sunday.

Announcing the appointment, an account attributed to Mojtaba Khamenei posted on X, "Dr Mohsen Rezaee, considering your valuable experience, I am hereby appointing you, who were one of the first commanders in the triumphant 8-Year Sacred Defence, to be my representative in the Supreme National Security Council."

The position was formerly held by Ali Larjani, who was assassinated in US-Israeli strikes in March, and then Mohammad Baqir Zolghadr.

According to Al Jazeera, Rezaee is a former IRGC chief and a member of Iran's Expediency Discernment Council, which resolves differences between parliament and the Guardian Council, a separate body that vets candidates for office.

Rezaee was a military commander during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, referred to in Iran as the 'Sacred Defence'.

In a separate decree, Khamenei appointed Zolghadr as his Political Advisor and praised his efforts.

"In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Dear respected brother, Dr. Mohammad Baqer Zolghadr, in consideration of your valuable experience, I hereby appoint you to be my Political Advisor," Khamenei said.

He also expressed appreciation for Zolghadr's "round-the-clock efforts" during his tenure.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, Iranian state broadcaster Press TV claimed that President Masoud Pezeshkian held a meeting with Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei and discussed the country's military and economic affairs, days after Israeli media reported that Khamenei was in an "extremely critical condition."

According to Press TV, "The



talks covered people's livelihood needs, conditions and future prospects of the US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran, military developments, and ways to secure resources and manage rial, foreign currency and energy expenditures, as well as economic engagement with foreign partners."

The talks between the two leaders were also shared via the Farsi X account attributed to Mojtaba Khamenei.

"Coinciding with the Start of the Third Year of Dr Pezeshkian's Presidency Meeting and Discussion of the President with the Supreme Leader on the Country's Economic and Military Issues Mr Dr Masoud Pezeshkian, coinciding with the beginning of the third year of his presidency, held a meeting and discussion with His Eminence Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei," the X post said.

The thread added, "In this meeting, detailed discussions were held on the country's issues and problems, particularly the provision of the people's livelihood needs, the current conditions of the third imposed war and the future ahead, developments in the military domain, solutions regarding the provision of resources and management of expenditures--"rial, foreign currency, and energy"--as well as economic interactions with foreign parties."

Khamenei assumed the position of Supreme Leader shortly after his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was assassinated in joint US-Israeli military strikes on February 28. -ANI

RAIL LINK

Russia to India via train? Moscow floats ambitious railway route

MOSCOW: Russia must examine the feasibility of constructing a direct rail link to the Indian Ocean to mitigate transit hazards linked to the Bosphorus and the Strait of Hormuz, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin stated in an interview with news agency TASS.

Elaborating on potential corridors, Khusnullin noted that alternative transit options could traverse Turkmenistan, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, emphasising that any route offering connectivity to India would be considered viable.

The proposed network, if realised, would establish direct overland rail freight access between

Russia and India.

"A rail link to the Indian Ocean should also be explored. Risks related to the Bosphorus and the Strait of Hormuz might require alternative routes: through Turkmenistan, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Any options providing access to India are acceptable," Khusnullin was quoted as saying by TASS.

The proposal for alternative trade routes emerges against the backdrop of escalating maritime disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz following armed hostilities involving the US, Israel, and Iran.

On February 28, joint military strikes were launched against Iran,



targeting key urban centres, including Tehran. In response, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) initiated retaliatory missile and drone operations against Israeli positions and US military bases across Bahrain, Jordan, Iraq, Qatar, Kuwait, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

Consequently, Tehran announced a maritime blockade of the Strait of Hormuz against vessels affiliated with the US, Israel, and allied nations involved in the operations against Iran.

The strategic chokepoint accounts for approximately 25 per cent of global oil trade and nearly 20 per cent of worldwide liquefied natural gas (LNG) shipments.

Beyond international logistics corridors, Khusnullin addressed the domestic economic framework, asserting that Russia's construction sector requires sustained, long-term financial backing.

He pointed out that the domestic building industry currently possesses the capacity to absorb an extra one trillion rubles on an annual basis.

"The construction industry is already capable of handling an additional one trillion rubles annually. However, if such a volume is secured for the next five years, it would be possible to expand capacity and build even more," he added. -DW

Oman ready for Asian Games challenge in Aichi-Nagoya



Oman Olympic Committee confirmed that more than 50 athletes from the Sultanate will compete against Asia's best across ten sports: athletics, cricket, hockey, shooting, sailing, taekwondo, golf, fencing, weightlifting, and beach volleyball

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman will mount a broad 10-sport challenge at the 20th Asian Games in Japan next month, with more than 50 athletes set to represent the Sultanate of Oman as the country takes on Asia's biggest continental sporting stage.

From the athletics track and shooting range to the hockey field, cricket pitch, sailing course and beach volleyball courts, Omani athletes will compete across athletics, taekwondo, shooting, hockey, golf, fencing, cricket, weightlifting, sailing and beach volleyball at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Games, scheduled from September 19 to October 4, according to Oman Olympic Committee (OOC).

The OOC is putting the final arrangements in place for the na-



tional delegation, with athletes and support teams preparing for competition.

For Oman, the Games will provide not only a test of preparation and competitiveness but also an important opportunity for athletes to gain experience against high-level opposition across a wide range of disciplines.

Oman's hockey team will be

among the first national teams in action, with its campaign running from September 18 to October 3.

The shooting team will compete from September 20 to October 1, with eight shooters — six men and two women — taking part in various events covering skeet, trap, 10m air pistol, 10m air rifle, mixed 10m air rifle, 50m three-position rifle and 25m pistol events.



Beach volleyball will also begin on September 20, with Oman represented by four players and a coach.

Fencing follows from September 22 to 27, with seven athletes — four men and three women — competing in individual and team foil and épée events.

Weightlifting will see three Omani lifters compete between

September 23 and 29 in the 75kg, 85kg and 95kg categories, supported by two technical and administrative officials. Athletics will provide one of the largest Omani contingents at the Games, with 11 athletes — eight men and three women, scheduled to compete from September 24 to 29.

The team will contest the 100m and 200m, men's 4x100m relay,

mixed 4x100m relay, high jump, long jump, triple jump and hammer throw.

Oman will make their debut in cricket, with the national team competing from September 24 to October 3.

Oman's sailing team will compete from September 26 to October 3, with four athletes and three members of the technical and administrative staff taking part in the 49er class.

Golf will be represented by one player and a coach competing from September 30 to October 3.

The other Omani team to enter the competition will be the taekwondo squad, with one athlete competing in the under-58kg category from October 1 to 3, accompanied by a coach.

The delegation will be headed by Mohammed Al Rahbi, Chef de Mission, with Hanaa Al Battashi serving as Deputy Chef de Mission.

The administrative and support team also includes Majid Al Hinai, Said Al Jarjashi, Safeguarding Officer Salim Al Rawahi, team doctor Afrah Al Jabri, physiotherapist Khalil Al Busaidi, journalist Waleed Al Abri and photographer Haitham Al Shukairi.

A major continental stage

The 20th Asian Games will bring together athletes from across the continent for a programme featuring 43 sports. Competitions will be staged at venues across Aichi Prefecture and Nagoya, as well as at selected venues outside the two main host areas.

Japan will host the Asian Games for the third time, following Tokyo in 1958 and Hiroshima in 1994.

For Oman, however, the focus will be firmly on performance. Across 10 sports and a diverse group of athletes, the national delegation will look to convert months of preparation into competitive performances when the Games get under way in September.

AFTER 14 YEARS

Taskin 'honoured' to play Test series in Australia

DARWIN: Fourteen years ago, Taskin Ahmed got Travis Head out on his first visit to Australia.

Fourteen years later, he will get to open the bowling against him in a Test match in Darwin that has been 23 years in the making.

"We are really honoured to be here to be playing the Test series against Australia," Taskin said. "No doubt Australia is one of the biggest teams in the world and playing in Australia against Australia in Test cricket, it's a really proud moment for every one of our players. So, definitely that won't be an easy series for us, but still, we are hoping to do really well in the upcoming Australia series."

There was a childlike joy in Taskin's voice as he spoke of his love for Australia. He played an Under-19 World Cup in Australia in 2012, the ODI World Cup in 2015 and the T20 World Cup in 2022. But having made his international debut against Australia in a T20I in Mirpur 12 years ago, he has never faced them in an international on Australian soil.

He watched from home as an eight-year-old when Bangladesh played their only Test series in the country in 2003. Despite being only a handful of years younger than Australia's ageing bowling cartel, he has idolised them too from afar.

"From my childhood, I've been watching Australia team players, like great fast bowlers, legendary players," Taskin said. "Really now I have the opportunity to play against them. So I'm really excited. "Australia is my favourite place to bowl. I have been watching all of them, Starc, Hazlewood, Cummins, even Boland also doing well. If I have a chance to chat with them, definitely I will do."

Herein lies the problem for Bangladesh. The opportunities to play against Australia are so few and far between that they have to make them count beyond living out a boyhood dream.

The shift in pitches at home has set them up for this moment. They rattled Australia with pace and bounce in Mirpur only two months



ago and recorded a famous 2-1 ODI victory. But Starc, Hazlewood, and Cummins weren't there, nor was Head. That quintet was preparing for this series and the 12-month Test odyssey that is to follow.

Bangladesh had Nahid Rana,

Mustafizur Rahman and Shoriful Islam in support of Taskin for that series and they bowled superbly, but none of that trio is available for Darwin, with Shoriful the only one a chance to play in Mackay.

But the conditions at home and

beating Australia, albeit in a different format, does give Taskin confidence.

"That was a really great series for us, especially because normally, traditionally in Mirpur, it used to be a turning and slow wicket, but the last series was pretty sporting conditions," Taskin said.

"We all played a good series and we won against Australia. That's giving us really good confidence to play against them. But still, home and away, there is a big difference."

That was highlighted against a Cricket Australia XI on Saturday in Darwin in a tour match.

Campbell Thompson, a 22-year-old South Australia seamer with three first-class wickets to his name, took 8 for 25 to scythe through Bangladesh's batters and raze them for 54 and hand an innings defeat. That came after another fringe first-class batter in Teague Wyllie made 130 against an attack led by Taskin.

"That wasn't a great feeling after losing against Cricket

Australia, that practice game," Taskin said. "But in cricket that happens. We are also still trying to adjust to the conditions and pitches quickly. That was a good preparation, but we lost, though, but still we are hoping to do well in the main match."

For what it's worth, Head did not read too much into the result, wary of putting stock in a tour match where minds would have been elsewhere.

"I've played in some pretty poor ones over the years as well, and they're always a challenge because you've got your mind probably elsewhere," Head said.

"That's no disrespect to the CA team, but there'll be guys in that Bangladesh team that are only purely worrying about Thursday and what they need to get out of it. So I think they played well in the first innings, made 270-odd.

"So yeah, they'd be disappointed in that and what the outcome looks like externally. But I think internally they'd just be worried about Thursday." - **Agencies**

OMAN OIL PRICE RISES
The official price of Oman crude oil for October delivery settled yesterday at \$80.99 per barrel. The price of Oman oil recorded a rise of \$1.21 compared to the price of last Friday which stood at \$79.78 per barrel. — **ONA**

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER
The MSX index closed at 7,431.63 points, up by 0.49% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.17% at 586.18 points. Al Hassan Engineering, up 20.00%, was the top gainer while, Sohar Power, down 9.09%, was the top loser. **>B2**

MSX remains best performing bourse amongst GCC countries

Every other major GCC index sits in negative territory for 2026: Saudi Arabia's Tadawul at 0.9%, Qatar's QE 20 down 7.8%, Bahrain down 5.3%, and Dubai's DFM down 4.2%

VINOD KUMAR PK
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MUSCAT: Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) is higher by 24% year-to-date and is comfortably the best performer as compared to other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) markets, according to an industry watcher.

"Every other major GCC index sits in negative territory for 2026: Saudi Arabia's Tadawul at 0.9%, Qatar's QE 20 down 7.8%, Bahrain down 5.3%, and Dubai's DFM down 4.2%," said Shahneel Syed, Chief Operating and Transformation Officer, Graystone Capital. "This is a continuation, not a one-off, MSX also led the region for the whole of 2025, up 28% against



Kuwait's 21%, Dubai's 17.2% and Saudi's 12.8% decline, the only GCC market to close that year lower," he added. What stands out beyond the headline return is how MSX has handled the recent stress, he pointed out that "During the sharpest phase of the regional conflict, the MSX 30 fell around 15% peak-to-trough, compared with a 22% drawdown on Dubai's DFM index over the same period, according to market commentary accompanying the Omifco listing." And the market has done this without becoming expensive: MSX trades at a price-to-earnings ratio of roughly 10.7x, the second-lowest in the GCC after Dubai's 9.9x, versus Abu Dhabi near 21x, Kuwait near 19x and Saudi near 18x.

Strongest returns, smallest drawdown, and still one of the cheapest markets in the region, that combination is unusual, and it's a big part of why regional and international allocators keep circling back to Muscat, he said.

New IPOs expected

Elaborating about the new initial public offerings (IPOs) expected in the coming months, Shahneel Syed said, Oman India Fertiliser Company's (Omifco) 8 July listing was the story of the summer for MSX, and the numbers behind it are worth dwelling on. "The offering — 25% of the company's issued share capital, drew roughly OMR4.7 billion (\$12.2 billion) in investor orders against a raise of

about OMR261 million, making it 18 times oversubscribed," he said. Shares opened 18.6% above the 156 baisa offer price and touched an intraday high of 192 baisa before settling around 190 baisa, even as most Gulf indices were sliding on the same day amid renewed US-Iran tensions.

That divergence mattered, Shahneel Syed said, adding that "Sico Bank has since noted that Omifco is comparatively insulated from Strait of Hormuz-related disruption relative to other GCC-listed fertiliser producers, given its long-term gas supply contracts with the Integrated Gas Company running a decade out, and projects a minimum 2026 dividend yield of 6.4%."



Beyond Omifco, Minerals Development Oman (MDO) remains the name most investors are watching next. MDO, now majority-owned by the Oman Investment Authority (OIA) (76.8%) alongside the Oman National Investment Company, has been developing the \$270 million Mazoon Copper project in Yanqul, which reached financial close in January 2026 and is targeting production start later this year. A public listing has been discussed for years without a firm date materialising, but the maturing asset base gives the story more substance than it's had before.

More broadly, the OIA has signalled intent to widen its divestment pipeline into tourism and ICT names, building on the roughly \$4 billion raised across six state-linked IPOs since 2023.

Speaking about where the MSX index will be moving in the near future, Shahneel Syed said, "Near-term, the index will keep taking its cues from the region

rather than from Oman itself. The MSX 30 has spent the past several weeks oscillating in a roughly 7,200 to 7,500-point band, most recently closing at 7,349 points, up 0.73% on the day, with a jump of nearly 62% in trading value versus the prior session, a sign that liquidity is holding up well even in a choppy market."

"If the current phase of the US-Iran standoff eases meaningfully, I would expect the index to move back toward its earlier highs relatively quickly, since the underlying supports, corporate earnings, liquidity, and the IPO pipeline — remain intact," he added.

The case for that view is building in the data. Kamco's Q2 2026 report shows Oman's project awards surged 341.7% year-on-year to \$5.9 billion, one of the sharpest increases anywhere in the region, a genuine signal of real-economy momentum sitting underneath a consolidating index. First-half corporate results have shown broad-based profit growth that share prices haven't yet fully reflected. "Looking toward 2027-2028, the combination of a strengthening sovereign credit profile, an IPO pipeline extending into new sectors, and continued work toward MSCI and FTSE Russell emerging-market reclassification all point the same direction."

"The variables to watch remain the path of the regional conflict, oil prices, and how well the next listings — MDO chief among them — are received," he further added.

AMID HORMUZ UNCERTAINTY



Most European stock markets little changed

BRUSSELS: European stocks were little changed yesterday, amid continued uncertainty over the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, as investors looked ahead to a busy week of economic data.

The pan-European STOXX 600 index held at 660.12 points. The benchmark rose 1.7 percent last week and closed at a record high on Friday.

Europe's energy sector rose 0.5 percent, with Brent crude futures rising 0.6 percent to USD 83.98 a barrel, while the technology sector led the gains, rising 0.7 percent. On the other hand, media stocks fell 0.7 percent. Shares of Caledonia Mining rose 1.6 percent after the company announced a 16 percent increase in its second-quarter profit.

Japan's Nikkei rises

Meanwhile, the Japanese Nikkei index rose 2.08 percent yesterday, closing at its highest level in about four weeks, supported by gains in artificial intelligence and semiconductor stocks.

Nikkei rose to 66,970.22 points, its highest closing level since 15 July, while the broader Topix index rose 0.63 percent to 4,100.61 points. Shares of semiconductor makers Advantest and Tokyo Electron rose 6.43 percent and 4.13 percent, respectively, while shares of optical-fiber cable maker Fujikura jumped 7.62 percent. Ibidem, a supplier to Nvidia in the field of AI, also rose 4.03 percent, while Recruit Holdings jumped 22.79 percent, whereas shares of Mitsui Kinzoku fell 13.55 percent. — **ONA**

NCSI DATA

Oman's mobile subscriptions climb to 8.32 million by the end of June

MUSCAT: The total number of mobile telecommunications subscriptions in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 1.3% by the end of June 2026, reaching 8,324,406 subscriptions, compared to the end of June 2025, according to the latest data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The data showed that the active postpaid mobile subscriptions rose by 6.2% to 1,313,837 subscriptions, while active prepaid mobile subscriptions declined by 2.1% to 5,305,401 subscriptions.

Internet of Things

Subscriptions to Internet of Things (IoT) machine-to-machine (M2M) services recorded a 9.3% increase, reaching 1,705,168 subscriptions by the end of June 2026.

In the internet services segment, the total number of active mobile broadband subscriptions recorded a slight increase of 0.3%, reaching 5,534,086 subscriptions. Meanwhile, total active fixed broadband subscriptions stood at 591,630, up by 0.5% compared to the end of June 2025.

Regarding fixed broadband technologies, Fiber-to-the-Home/Building (FTTH/B) subscriptions increased by 7.4%, reaching



364,487 subscriptions by the end of June 2026.

In contrast, Fixed 5G subscriptions declined by 2.5% to 210,125 subscriptions, while Fixed 4G subscriptions fell sharply by 73% to 5,666 subscriptions.

Subscriptions to Asymmetric

Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) services decreased by 20.9% to 8,933 subscriptions. Meanwhile, satellite broadband subscriptions recorded the highest growth rate among fixed internet technologies, surging by 134.3% to 1,696 subscriptions. The total number

of active fixed-line telephone subscriptions also increased by 0.2%, reaching 439,829 subscriptions by the end of June 2026.

International internet bandwidth expanded by 31.8%, reaching 5,382 million Mbps by the end of June 2026. — **ONA**

IFSC AI SURVEY

Nearly 32% entities expect AI to drive re-skilling over job cuts

NEW DELHI: Around 32 per cent of surveyed entities expect AI will drive significant re-skilling and job transformation rather than large net reductions, according to findings from the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSC) AI Survey 2026 report.

The data showed that institutions maintain a measured view on workforce changes, while an additional 10 per cent expect technology adoption to create net new roles through new product lines across fund managers, banking units, insurers, capital-market intermediaries, finance, leasing, and fintech firms.

"Entities take a measured, evidence-based view of AI's workforce impact. The most widely

held (32%) expectation is that AI will drive significant re-skilling and job transformation rather than large net reductions. A further 10% expect AI to generate net new roles through new product lines and capabilities," the report states.

Operational efficiency acts as the primary driver for technology integration, expanding its lead from 64 per cent in 2025 to 82 per cent in 2026. Process automation and productivity improvements across internal operations, risk, and compliance lead organizational motives.

Secondary drivers include cost reduction at 35 per cent, customer experience at 33 per cent, regulatory compliance at 28 per cent, and competitive advantage at 26



per cent. Furthermore, employee engagement increased, with 57 per cent of entities reporting that staff members use AI tools as firms establish internal usage policies.

"Operational efficiency is the

standout driver and widened its lead since 2025 (64% to 82%). Cost reduction, customer experience, and regulatory compliance form a strong second tier. The main barriers are data quality and regulatory

clarity, a lack of executive buy-in is the least-cited, implying that leadership intent is not the obstacle," the report noted.

On financial allocation, a combined 60 per cent of entities actively plan, scale, or maintain investments in AI capabilities, leaving 40 per cent assessing their business models. Specifically, 20 per cent have invested, 11 per cent are scaling, and 29 per cent are planning future commitments, with 1 per cent to 5 per cent of IT budgets representing the most frequent allocation.

Deployment spans three tech classes, where Generative AI sees 65 per cent exploration or implementation and Agentic AI functions as the next frontier for early

movers. "Investment in AI across the IFSC is on a clear growth trajectory. A combined 60% of entities have already invested, are scaling, or are actively planning AI investment, with the remaining 40% continuing to assess the optimal approach for their business model and scale," the survey finds.

Regulatory direction remains a central requirement, with 48 per cent of entities seeking clarity on existing rules and 46 per cent requesting principles-based guidance.

Key obstacles include regulatory uncertainty and data quality at 41 per cent each, followed by a lack of responsible-AI tools at 34 per cent and talent shortages at 27 per cent.

MARKET



MSX index ends higher

A total number of 8,337 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR53.05 million

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 7431.63 points, up by 0.49% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.17% at 586.18 points. Al Hassan Engineering, up 20.00%, was the top gainer while, Sohar Power, down 9.09%, was the top loser. Shares of Sohar International Bank were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 8,337 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR53.05 million, with more than 188.61 million shares changing hands. Out of 69 traded securities, 21 advanced, 23 declined, and 25 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for OMR86,000 while foreign investors were net buyers for OMR59,000, followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR28,000 worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 13,097.37 points, up 0.20%. Prices of Sohar International Bank, Al Madina Takaful, Oman United Insurance, Bank Nizwa, National Bank Oman were up by 2.78%,

2.73%, 1.27%, 0.74%, 0.66% respectively. Prices of Al Madina Investments, Takaful Oman, OM-INVEST, Muscat Finance, Bank Dhofar were down by 9.52%, 3.18%, 2.35%, 1.56%, 0.47% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 9,307.97 points, down -0.92%. Prices of Al Hassan Engineering, Al Anwar Ceramics, Gulf Mushroom Products, Jazeera Steel Products were up by 20.00%, 0.78%, 0.47%, 0.24% respectively. Prices of Oman Cables Industry, Oman Fisheries, A'Saffa Foods, Voltamp Energy were down by 8.12%, 4.55%, 2.67%, 0.58% respectively.

Services Index was up by 0.93% before closing at 2,985.24 points. Prices of Abraj Energy, Majan College, Phoenix Power, Barka Water & Power Company were up by 5.79%, 3.05%, 1.85%, 1.85%, 0.64% respectively. Prices of Al Jazeera Services, Muscat Desalination, Al Maha Marketing, Dhofar Generating, Al Suwadi Power were down by 3.53%, 3.30%, 2.54%, 2.41%, 0.54% respectively.

— United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	7,453.74	7,395.55	7,431.63	7,395.55	36.08	0.49 %
FINANCIAL INDEX	13,131.79	13,021.13	13,097.37	13,070.84	26.52	0.20 %
Industry Index	9,421.39	9,300.10	9,307.97	9,394.55	-86.58	-0.92 %
Services Index	2,990.52	2,956.76	2,985.24	2,957.65	27.59	0.93 %
MSX Shariah Index	591.75	585.97	586.18	587.18	-1.01	-0.17 %
MSX TR INDEX	11,531.79	11,441.77	11,497.59	11,441.77	55.82	0.49 %
FINANCIAL TR IDX	16,144.85	16,008.80	16,102.53	16,069.92	32.61	0.20 %
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	12,066.41	11,911.07	11,921.15	12,032.04	-110.89	-0.92 %
SERVICES TR IDX	4,006.73	3,961.50	3,999.66	3,962.69	36.97	0.93 %
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,253.83	1,253.83	1,253.83	1,253.83	0.00	0.00 %

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
188,611,767	53,051,752	8,337	37,988,539,597	21	23	25	69

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, AUGUST 10

SECURITY NAME

VOLUME

TURNOVER

TRADES

OPEN PRICE

HIGH

LOW

CLOSE PR.

PREV. CLOSE

DIFF (RD)

DIFF %

LAST PD

LAST BID

LAST OFFER

PUR VALUE

MARKET CAP

REGULAR MARKET

OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	6,995,607	2,616,766	560	0.365	0.386	0.365	0.384	0.363	0.021	5.785	0.384	0.385	0.384	0.100	295,756,800
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	70,788,662	12,854,719	1,485	0.181	0.185	0.179	0.185	0.180	0.005	2.778	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.100	1,420,061,050
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	18,706	20,895	35	0.112	0.113	0.112	0.113	0.110	0.003	2.727	0.113	0.110	0.113	0.100	19,775,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	5,905,371	8,240,353	256	1.386	1.420	1.382	1.418	1.387	0.031	2.235	1.418	1.418	1.419	0.100	1,063,500,000
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	15,178,395	4,222,960	137	0.271	0.279	0.271	0.276	0.271	0.005	1.845	0.276	0.274	0.276	0.100	403,678,003
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	19,957	6,287	4	0.315	0.320	0.315	0.320	0.316	0.004	1.266	0.320	0.315	0.320	0.100	33,600,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	159,081	21,632	27	0.136	0.137	0.135	0.137	0.136	0.001	0.735	0.137	0.136	0.137	0.100	306,462,565
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	1,045,040	480,643	7	0.457	0.460	0.457	0.460	0.457	0.003	0.656	0.460	0.460	0.462	0.100	747,935,323
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	2,000	316	1	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.157	0.001	0.637	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.100	25,280,000
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	3,046	1,293	4	0.425	0.425	0.424	0.425	0.423	0.002	0.473	0.425	0.422	0.425	0.100	21,395,510
OM00000010120	ASTAD SHIPPING	2,936,696	692,764	548	0.236	0.238	0.234	0.236	0.235	0.001	0.426	0.236	0.236	0.237	0.000	1,229,263,650
OM0000009908	QBASE INDUSTRIES (SP2)	23,301,948	5,804,577	1,209	0.249	0.251	0.248	0.250	0.249	0.001	0.402	0.250	0.225	0.250	0.040	864,872,713
OM0000003968	OOBROOD	473,807	153,313	48	0.323	0.325	0.323	0.324	0.323	0.001	0.310	0.324	0.320	0.324	0.100	210,905,551
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	29,627	95,288	5	0.856	0.856	0.850	0.852	0.850	0.002	0.235	0.852	0.839	0.860	0.100	106,413,062
OM0000001509	DHOFAR INTL DEVELOPMENT & INVEST	200	54	1	0.268	0.268	0.268	0.268	0.268	0.000	0.000	0.268	0.242	0.283	0.100	132,943,046
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	22,661	2,956	9	0.139	0.140	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.126	0.130	0.100	16,635,938
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	5,416	3,134	7	0.580	0.580	0.578	0.578	0.578	0.000	0.000	0.578	0.578	0.579	0.100	191,244,426
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FINANCIAL SERVICES	11,000	1,651	2	0.150	0.151	0.150	0.151	0.151	0.000	0.000	0.151	0.151	0.000	0.100	47,627,967
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	5,000	445	1	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.000	0.000	0.089	0.088	0.089	0.100	31,695,330
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	31,887	3,137	10	0.098	0.100	0.097	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.098	0.101	0.100	9,000,000
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	1,221	1,513	2	1.250	1.250	1.200	1.200	1.200	0.000	0.000	1.200	1.200	1.320	0.100	73,530,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	73,869	20,505	10	0.278	0.278	0.277	0.278	0.278	0.000	0.000	0.277	0.277	0.278	0.100	65,721,980
OM0000004735	SEMBOCORP SALALAH	43,715	11,118	16	0.254	0.255	0.253	0.255	0.255	0.000	0.000	0.255	0.254	0.255	0.100	243,415,847
OM0000000972	QOGAS NETWORKS	17,146,949	3,981,226	1,286	0.214	0.216	0.212	0.213	0.213	0.000	0.000	0.213	0.213	0.213	0.100	922,472,895
OM00000009759	QO EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	6,166,701	2,824,519	319	0.458	0.460	0.456	0.458	0.458	0.000	0.000	0.458	0.453	0.458	0.010	3,664,000,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	18,719,511	7,449,594	1,182	0.400	0.400	0.396	0.398	0.399	-0.001	-0.251	0.398	0.400	0.398	0.100	2,287,546,031
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	153,028	32,896	144	0.215	0.215	0.214	0.214	0.215	-0.001	-0.465	0.214	0.214	0.215	0.100	650,516,886
OM0000004925	ALBATHINAH POWER	329,824	61,007	38	0.183	0.186	0.183	0.185	0.186	-0.001	-0.538	0.184	0.184	0.184	0.100	124,854,175
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	276,722	50,714	40	0.183	0.185	0.183	0.184	0.185	-0.001	-0.541	0.184	0.184	0.185	0.100	131,450,767
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	357,210	61,421	66	0.172	0.173	0.171	0.172	0.173	-0.001	-0.578	0.172	0.172	0.176	0.010	172,000,000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	782,615	331,043	43	0.425	0.425	0.391	0.415	0.425	-0.010	-2.353	0.391	0.391	0.390	0.100	465,984,375
OM0000003000	AI MAHA PETROLEUM PRODS MRKTNG	700	816	2	1.190	1.190	1.150	1.150	1.180	-0.030	-2.542	1.150	1.150	1.190	0.100	79,350,000
OM0000002804	A'SAFFA FOODS	1,050	767	2	0.731	0.731	0.730	0.730	0.750	-0.020	-2.667	0.730	0.715	0.754	0.100	87,600,000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	18,268	4,625	9	0.255	0.256	0.246	0.246	0.255	-0.009	-3.529	0.246	0.250	0.258	0.100	10,339,376
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	29,283	96,586	15	3.300	3.300	3.032	3.032	3.300	-0.268	-8.121	3.032	3.033	3.300	0.100	271,970,400
Total	35	171,201,773	49,781,515	7,508												

Parallel Market

OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	5,600	756	4	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.131	0.004	3.053	0.135	0.131	0.135	0.100	13,365,000
OM0000001151	OMIFCO	14,707,662	2,907,795	521	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.197	0.195	0.002	1.026	0.197	0.197	0.198	0.000	1,317,806,875
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	230,540	29,532	17	0.130	0.130	0.128	0.129	0.128	0.001	0.781	0.129	0.125	0.129	0.100	28,380,000
OM00000010823	OMAN GATEWAY FUND	5,000	5,070	4	1.014	1.014	1.014	1.014	1.010	0.004	0.396	1.014	1.000	1.111	0.000	27,808,790
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	166,001	17,708	27	0.106	0.108	0.106	0.107	0.107	0.000	0.000	0.107	0.106	0.107	0.100	9,095,000
OM0000001301	DHOFAR FOODS AND INVESTMENT	18,459	3,969	4	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.000	0.000	0.215	0.215	0.225	0.100	42,500,538
OM0000001384	FINANCIAL SERVICES	17,231	4,135	1	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.000	0.000	0.240	0.240	0.000	0.100	4,800,000
OM0000001307	DHOFAR FOODS AND INVESTMENT	146	112	1	0.770	0.770	0.770	0.770	0.770	0.000	0.000	0.770	0.770	0.800	0.100	73,150,000
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	147,498	32,959	17	0.220	0.224	0.220	0.224	0.224	0.000	0.000	0.224	0.224	0.224	0.100	145,755,769
OM0000002275	NATIONAL DETERGENT	2,000	1,242	2	0.621	0.621	0.621	0.621	0.621	0.000	0.000	0.621	0.621	0.621	0.100	12,420,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	119,867	18,665	16	0.155	0.157	0.155	0.156	0.156	0.000	0.000	0.156	0.156	0.170	0.100	31,665,886
OM0000000305	ALMAHA CERAMICS	741	196	2	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.265	0.000	0.000	0.265	0.265	0.267	0.100	14,575,000
OM0000000847	OMAN REIT FUND	33,798	3,616	5	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.000	0.000	0.107	0.106	0.107	0.100	90,064,033
OM0000009569	JABAL REIF	11,755	1,217	4	0.103	0.104	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.000	0.000	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.100	17,822,000
OM0000000560	OMAN ARAB BANK	587,300	156,809	49	0.287	0.287	0.287	0.287	0.286	-0.001	-0.373	0.287	0.286	0.287	0.100	534,732,470
OM0000000898	THE PEARL REIF	26,100	4,677	8	0.180	0.180	0.179	0.179	0.181	-0.002	-1.105	0.179	0.179	0.181	0.100	105,867,202
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	28,618	1,857	3	0.065	0.065	0.063	0.063	0.064	-0.001	-1.563	0.063	0.063	0.066	0.100	19,350,218
OM0000007047	DHOFAR GENERATING	14,100	1,142	7	0.083	0.083	0.081	0.081	0.083	-0.002	-2.410	0.081	0.078	0.082	0.100	18,001,440
OM00000007910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	49,400	3,494	17	0.073	0.074	0.066	0.071	0.073	-0.002	-2.740	0.068	0.068	0.071	0.100	14,200,000
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	12,050	730	6	0.061	0.062	0.060	0.061	0.063	-0.002	-3.175	0.062	0.060	0.062	0.100	15,250,000
OM0000000784	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	18,368	1,644	11	0.090	0.090	0.088	0.088	0.091	-0.003	-3.297	0.088	0.088	0.090	0.100	13,688,435
OM0000003711	SOHAR POWER	144	31	3	0.218	0.220	0.218	0.220	0.224	-0.022	-9.091	0.220	0.220	0.266	0.100	4,400,000
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	525,874	30,053	42	0.057	0.059	0.057	0.057	0.063	-0.006	-9.524	0.057	0.057	0.060	0.100	2,456,700
Total	23	16,728,252	3,227,412	771												

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Netanyahu rejects US President Trump-backed Gaza peace plan

Trump announced last month that there had been a breakthrough on a 15-point roadmap aimed at ending the war in the Gaza Strip

BERLIN: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday rejected US President Donald Trump's plan for Gaza, saying Israeli troops would not withdraw from the territory until Hamas was fully disarmed.

"Israel rejects the 15-point document," Netanyahu told a Cabinet meeting, referring to the US-backed roadmap agreed to by Hamas in late July.

The Israeli military "will not carry out any withdrawal until Hamas is genuinely disarmed," Netanyahu said, adding that this included "heavy weaponry, lighter weaponry, all weaponry."

Netanyahu said Israel remained in talks with Washington despite its objections. He described Trump as "our greatest friend in the White House," but added: "They have ideas; some of them are acceptable to us and some are not, and we know how to stand our ground on these matters."

The White House did not immediately comment.

What does Trump's Gaza plan say about Hamas disarmament?

Trump announced last month that there had been a breakthrough on a 15-point roadmap aimed at ending the war in the Gaza Strip.

The plan drawn up by his Board of Peace calls for Israeli troops to withdraw as Hamas gives up its weapons. An International Stabilization Force would then work alongside a new Palestinian police force to secure Gaza.

The group has avoided using the term "disarmament." It says it agreed to hand over its weapons for storage under a US-backed Palestinian technocratic administration that would govern Gaza under the supervision of the Board of Peace.

Hamas has said implementation also depends on Israel meeting its obligations, including withdrawing troops and halting attacks.

"We expect the mediators and the American guarantor to pressure Netanyahu and his govern-



ment to adhere to the roadmap, and not obstruct the process for internal political and electoral reasons," Hamas political bureau member Bassem Naim said.

Hamas said Sunday it remained committed to the roadmap.

Nickolay Mladenov, the Board of Peace's high representative for Gaza, said Israel would face no obligations until Hamas had surrendered all its weapons, including assault rifles.

However, Mladenov told Isra-

el's Channel 12 that Israeli troops would eventually have to withdraw "sector by sector" once Hamas' weapons had been collected and rendered unusable.

"The option we are offering today is the only way forward that ensures this tragedy does not happen again," he said, referring to the Hamas-led attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023, which triggered the war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Mladenov said discussions with

Israel were continuing and that he hoped for a "positive outcome."

How are Israel's elections affecting Netanyahu's Gaza policy?

The disagreement comes at a politically sensitive moment for Netanyahu ahead of elections scheduled for October 27, Israel's first national vote since the Hamas led attacks that sparked an ongoing Israeli military campaign in Gaza.

The prime minister is running level with or behind rivals in some polls and faces pressure from far-right members of his government who oppose concessions to Hamas.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich welcomed Netanyahu's position.

"We went to war with a central goal: the destruction of Hamas," he said. "The [military] cannot withdraw even a millimetre from the Gaza Strip."

The dispute is the latest sign of differences between Netanyahu and Trump. The two leaders are considered as close allies, but have recently disagreed over how to deal with the conflicts in Iran, Lebanon and Gaza.

The Gaza roadmap builds on a US-mediated ceasefire reached in October 2025.

Gaza health officials say more than 1,250 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks since then. The Israeli military says five of its soldiers have been killed during the same period.

Despite the ongoing negotiations over the roadmap, Israeli forces continue to control large parts of Gaza, while most of the enclave's more than 2 million residents have been displaced and are living in a much smaller coastal area, many in tents or damaged buildings. -nw

GAZA ROADMAP

Egypt calls for full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza

CAIRO: During a phone conversation with US President Donald Trump's Board of Peace Director-General Nikolay Mladenov, Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty called for the implementation of all provisions of the Gaza roadmap, including a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian enclave and sustained humanitarian aid delivery, according to a report by Anadolu news agency.

According to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry statement, Abdelatty and Mladenov discussed developments in Gaza and efforts to implement Trump's peace plan. The two officials also reviewed arrangements for the deployment of the International Stabilisation Force, which is expected to monitor security during the

transitional period.

Abdelatty emphasised the need for ensuring the "full, safe and sustainable" delivery of humanitarian assistance to Gaza and said that a complete Israeli withdrawal would help pave the way for the second phase of the roadmap, including early recovery and reconstruction efforts.

He also called for enabling the National Committee for the Administration of Gaza to begin its interim duties within the enclave and stressed the importance of proceeding with plans to deploy the International Stabilisation Force to support security during the transitional period and to preserve the unity of the Palestinian territories.

Anadolu news agency reported that the process should ultimately



allow the Palestinian Authority to take up its responsibilities in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. He urged all sides to fulfil their com-

mitments and avoid actions that could obstruct progress.

The proposed plan includes transferring Gaza's administration to a Palestinian technocratic committee, deploying an international stabilisation force, placing weapons under the supervision of the National Committee for Gaza Administration, a phased Israeli withdrawal, and reconstruction efforts in the territory.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, Israel rejected Trump's 15-point Gaza peace plan and will not withdraw its forces from the enclave until Hamas is "genuinely" disarmed, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced.

"Israel rejects the 15-point document," Netanyahu said, referring to a proposal endorsed in

late July by Hamas, according to Israeli media.

Speaking at a cabinet meeting, Netanyahu emphasised that the Israeli military "will not carry out any withdrawal until Hamas is genuinely disarmed, and will continue to thwart threats against our forces and our citizens."

Facing pressure from far-right coalition partners urging a fresh cabinet vote to abandon the peace plan, Netanyahu, who is locked in a competitive electoral race according to opinion polls, noted that Israel remains in discussions with Washington on the issue.

"They have ideas; some of them are acceptable to us, and some are not, and we know how to stand our ground on these matters," he stated. -ANI

SUSPECTED GUNMAN

Thai ex-lawmaker kills local official

BANGKOK: Thai police arrested a suspected gunman — identified as former lawmaker Chalong Riewraeng — after he allegedly fired shots that killed a local politician on Monday at a government office on the outskirts of Bangkok.

Authorities said the former MP confessed to the shooting.

Surrounded by police, Chalong told reporters he attempted to speak with Thongchai Yenprasert about money.

"I followed him to his car and hit his car's window, saying I want to talk," the suspect said. "He said he will not talk, so I pulled my gun. I did not aim to shoot, but his driver pulled a gun and pointed it at me so I fired." -DW

LOSS OF POWER HAS CONSEQUENCES

When extreme heat threatens Europe's nuclear power

BERLIN: The state of the Danube is currently showing just how dependent nuclear power plants are on their local conditions. At the power station in Paks, Hungary — which normally produces about 40% of the country's electricity needs — only one of four turbine units is still operating. Due to record-low water levels in the Danube, the country's only nuclear power plant was even briefly at risk of a complete shutdown.

But for the European electricity market, France is of far greater significance. No other country in Europe relies so heavily on nuclear power, and if output in France drops, the country supplies less electricity to its neighbors, and may even become an electricity importer itself.

Reduced power

Over the course of the entire year, heat-related production losses at French power plants are minimal, but during individual weeks of extreme heat, the restrictions can be significant.

A 2023 report by France's official audit office estimated that, between 2000 and 2022, annual losses across all of the country's nuclear reactors due to high water temperatures and low river levels amounted to less than 1% of annual nuclear power production in any given year. Even in the extremely hot summer of 2003, they amounted to only about 1.5%.

But the annual figures obscure short-term fluctuations. In the summer of 2003, French nuclear power plants had to temporarily reduce their output by more than six gigawatts, and the most recent heat waves at the end of June and in mid-July 2026 saw the maxi-



mum available capacity was temporarily limited by eight to nine gigawatts. This corresponds to up to one-fifth of the nuclear power capacity normally available to France in the summer.

But eight gigawatts less capacity is not the same as an eight gigawatt overall shortfall. Even without the low water levels, some reactors would not be running at full capacity — either because of lower summer demand, high solar-power production, or bottlenecks in the power grid. According to grid operators, France still had sufficient reserves even during the 2026 heat waves and, on balance, remained an electricity exporter.

Other countries feel the impact

Nevertheless, such restrictions are relevant for grid operators and electricity traders. For them, it doesn't matter how much electricity was ultimately produced

by nuclear power plants at the end of the year: What is crucial for the stability of the power grids and short-term price surges is whether the power is actually available when it is needed. And here, experience shows that heat waves increase electricity demand due to air conditioning. Not only that: As this year's heat waves are affecting large parts of Europe, reserves from abroad are also declining.

Rivers getting warmer

Nuclear power plants suffer from low water levels because they must discharge a comparatively large amount of waste heat per kilowatt-hour generated. Only about one-third of the heat generated in a nuclear reactor is converted into electricity; the rest is released into the environment via the cooling system — often into rivers or the sea. But if the river is carrying little water, the waste heat is distributed over a smaller volume of water, and

the water temperature rises faster.

Warm water also contains less oxygen, and legal temperature limits are in place to protect fish and other aquatic life. When operators throttle back a reactor in the summer, it is therefore usually not an emergency shutdown for reactor safety, but rather a measure to protect the local river life.

In critical situations, French authorities occasionally grant exemptions from these limits. In such cases, water bodies are monitored more closely, allowing the state-owned power company EDF to produce additional electricity in the short term.

A power plant with cooling towers draws significantly less water from the river and discharges considerably less heat directly into the water than a plant with an open cooling circuit. However, cooling towers do not make a nuclear power plant independent of weather conditions, as the Golftech

plant demonstrates.

Located on the Garonne River, which is particularly warm in summer and frequently experiences low water levels, it is one of the most vulnerable sites, despite its cooling towers.

Meanwhile in Chooz on the Meuse River, the reactors had to be throttled back in 2020 despite the cooling towers, to avoid jeopardizing the drinking water supply in Belgium.

Repairs also reduce output

Not every decline in nuclear power production can be explained by the weather. Four years ago, France's reactors generated nearly 82 terawatt-hours less electricity than in 2021. This headline-grabbing crisis was caused less by climate change than by stress corrosion cracking and postponed maintenance work.

But looking ahead, the French audit office expects that climate-related reactor downtime could triple or even quadruple by 2050. Given the low baseline so far, even that would not yet constitute a widespread outage, but it could become critical for individual sites.

With additional cooling towers, deeper water intake structures, and better maintenance planning, France can at least partially counteract this trend. However, making the power plants more heat-resistant costs a lot of money and requires more land.

In its upcoming nuclear power plant modernization program, France intends to take the consequences of climate change into account. Four of the six modern EPR2 reactors initially planned are to be built on the coast, in Penly and Gravelines. Only the third

pair of reactors will be built on the Rhone River near Bugey. Cooling towers there are intended to limit the thermal load on the river and water intake.

Consequences across Europe

The consequences of French reactor curtailments are evident in the European electricity market. On June 24, capacity was reduced by approximately 4.1 gigawatts due to high river temperatures. As a result, France's electricity exports fell to about three gigawatts, after the country had supplied 10 to 12 gigawatts to its neighbors just the week before.

Combined with higher electricity consumption, low wind power generation, and increased use of gas-fired power plants, this contributed to electricity prices in France and Germany briefly climbing to their highest levels since January 2025.

During the subsequent heat waves in July, the curtailment of reactors was even more extensive, though the impact on other countries was less significant. On July 13, eight reactors with a combined capacity of 6.3 gigawatts were affected, and two were completely taken offline. Nevertheless, France only intermittently exported more than 10 gigawatts and imported affordable solar and wind power from Spain.

The heat-related curtailments of nuclear power plants appear to be a manageable problem for the country. Whether this will develop into a Europe-wide shortage in the future will likely depend not least on the development of foreign demand and the reserves of wind and solar power. -nw



LIFESTYLE

OBESITY

‘BIGGER CANCER RISK’ THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT

A new study has found that being significantly overweight could be responsible for more cases of cancer than previously known. Abdominal fat, in particular, increases the risk of cancer — especially among women

Being overweight or obese significantly increases the risk of developing colon cancer, breast cancer or liver cancer, and is a major risk factor for 10 other types of cancer, a new study has found.

Until recently, researchers believed that 2% to 8% of all cancer cases were attributable to excess body weight. But a new study by a team led by Hermann Brenner, an epidemiologist with the German Cancer Research Centre (DKFZ), suggests that this was a serious underestimate.

According to the study, up to 11.5% of cancers may be attributable to being overweight.

The DKFZ researchers “have not only updated existing risk estimates, but have also questioned whether the link between excess weight and cancer may have been underestimated until now,” Michael Leitzmann, an epidemiologist at the University of Regensburg, told DW.

Leitzmann, who was not involved in the study, researches diet, body weight, physical activity and the development of chronic diseases at the university’s Institute of Epidemiology and Prevention, and has advised German Cancer Aid.

The abdominal-fat ‘trigger’

The DKFZ team changed its research methods for the new study. Previous research used body mass index (BMI), which is calculated based on height and weight, as an indicator of excess weight. But BMI does not distinguish between fat and muscle mass, and does not provide information on how fat is distributed throughout the body.

This is important, because not all fat is the same. Fat cells that accumulate around the abdomen are more than just a passive store for excess calories, unlike those in other parts of the body. “They trigger what is known as a chronic inflammatory metabolic state,” Leitzmann said.

Excess abdominal fat functions like a gland that releases various signaling molecules, known as adipokines. These travel through the bloodstream to different parts of the body, where they influence other metabolic processes — including cell growth and division, as well as the inhibition of programmed cell death. “These are all mechanisms that can contribute to the development and subsequent growth of tumors,” Leitzmann said.

The DKFZ researchers therefore focused not only on BMI but

also on waist circumference and the waist-to-hip ratio. Data from 458,543 women and men from the UK Biobank, which holds one of the world’s biggest health datasets, were included in the study. The participants were followed for an average of 12 years, during which 50,000 new cases of cancer were identified.

Understanding previous underestimates

The researchers wanted to rule out a potential methodological bias in previous studies: the fact that cancer can lead to weight loss even before diagnosis — that is, while it is still developing.

That suggests that previous studies failed to identify a link between obesity and cancer because the participants had already lost weight because they had developed cancer by the time they entered the study.

For this reason, the team excluded the first few years following the participants’ enrollment from the analysis. Only cancer cases that occurred seven years after the start of the observation period were considered — and that made the statistical link between being overweight and cancer clearer.

Women at risk

The study suggests that the proportion of overweight women who develop cancer is higher than that of men, but Leitzmann urges caution when interpreting these findings. Further studies with a similar design are needed to see whether the results can be replicated.

Leitzmann offered a theory on why being overweight might have a more severe impact on women. Being overweight is blamed, among other things, for breast, uterine and ovarian cancers. “These types of cancer, which affect women, are hormone-dependent,” Leitzmann said. For example, the hormone estrogen can stimulate the growth of breast cancer, and excess abdominal fat can contribute to elevated estrogen levels.

Most people are now aware that obesity increases the risk of cardiovascular disease or Type 2 diabetes, Leitzmann said. Conversely, this also means that people who lose weight also reduce their risk of heart attacks, strokes and diabetes.

Though the DKFZ study emphasises the increased risk associated with obesity, Leitzmann said the findings were also a reason for optimism: “To me, this clearly indicates that, by preventing obesity, we will be able to make a greater contribution to cancer prevention than previously assumed.” - DW



SPORTS

Rybakina and Gauff advance

Rybakina survived a Samsonova thriller, Gauff extended her dominant run to reach quarter-finals at the Canadian Open in Toronto

TORONTO: World No.2 Elena Rybakina survived a huge scare to battle into the Canadian Open quarter-finals on Sunday in Toronto while fourth-ranked Coco Gauff cruised through.

Kazakhstan's Rybakina recovered from 0-3 and two breaks down in the final set to beat Liudmila Samsonova 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 before American Gauff swept aside Russian teenage qualifier Alina Korneeva, 6-3, 6-1.

Rybakina will face four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka, who eliminated home hero Leylah Fernandez 6-4, 6-4.

Gauff reached the last eight in Canada for the first time since 2023 and next meets 14th-ranked Swiss Belinda Bencic, who won 6-4, 6-0 in 73 minutes over 20th-ranked Alexandra Eala, a Filipina who won her first WTA title last Monday in Washington.



"My main focus today was let me try and close it out," said Gauff, who has not dropped a set in Canada.

"Probably not the way I should be thinking but it worked today.

"I'm proud of how the last three matches have gone and just knowing if I have to go the distance I'm ready, but obviously would prefer to cut it short if I can."

Osaka broke in the seventh game of each set to advance in 82 minutes. "It was all pretty good for me," the 13th-ranked Osaka said. "She has a great attitude. She's consistent and she will fight. She's kind of like a bulldog."

The Japanese star, who has never faced Rybakina, said sound groundstrokes were key. "When I feel comfortable or at least confident in myself knowing I can run things down, I loosen up a lot," Osaka said.

"I was catching my service toss a couple times. Hopefully in the next match I don't do that as often.

"I need to be confident in myself, execute what I can and at the end of the day just try my best and whatever happens happens."

Bencic connected on 64.4% of her first serves and won 72.4% of those points in a 73-minute victory, her 10th win in a row over left-handed opponents.

"I hate to play against lefties so I'm surprised by this statistic," Bencic said. "Very tricky.

"Maybe it helped me I played a lefty the round before against Taylor Townsend. I got used to the serve a little bit. I wish I was a lefty too." - Agencies

WORLD NO.1



Sinner withdraws from Cincinnati Open because of knee injury

CINCINNATI: Jannik Sinner, the world's No.1 men's tennis player, withdrew from the Cincinnati Open on Sunday because of a knee injury.

Sinner, who hasn't competed since capturing his second straight Wimbledon title last month, also withdrew from the tournament in Toronto that began Wednesday.

The 24-year-old Sinner has five Grand Slam titles and just needs to win the French Open to complete the career Grand Slam.

"After consulting with my doctors and my team, I have to announce that I need to withdraw

from the Masters 1000 tournament in Cincinnati," the Italian said in a statement released by tournament officials.

"My right knee has been bothering me and even though we have been working hard with my medical team, I have to accept that I'm not ready to compete yet. I'm very disappointed not to be able to play in Cincinnati. I can't wait to be back next year and I'm now focusing on getting ready for the U.S. Open."

Sinner's announcement follows a similar decision by Carlos Alcaraz, who said Tuesday he also was withdrawing from the hard-

court event in Cincinnati because of a lingering wrist injury.

The absences mean fans in Cincinnati will not see either of the world's top two players when men's singles begins Saturday.

Two years ago, Sinner won the title in Cincinnati, which traditionally is one of the last stops before the US Open and serves as a warmup. He then went on to win the US Open.

Last year, Alcaraz dethroned Sinner with a four-set victory in the US Open final. The 23-year-old Spaniard will try to defend his title when the main draw of the tourney begins August 30. - Agencies

MONTREAL MASTERS

Shelton sweeps past Fonseca

MONTREAL: Defending champion Ben Shelton kept a clean slate at the ATP Montreal Masters on Sunday, holding off a challenge from Joao Fonseca to power 6-3, 7-6 (3) into the quarter-finals.

World No.10 Shelton has not dropped a set in reaching the last eight. The 23-year-old American left-hander will play for a semi-final berth against 13th-seeded Czech Jakub Mensik, who beat Botic Van De Zandschulp 6-4, 7-5, claiming victory on a winning lob.

Van De Zandschulp served for the second set but was broken, with Mensik seizing the momentum as he won 12 of the final 14 points.

Brazilian teenager Fonseca, billed as one of the faces for the future of the sport, might have compromised his own chances when he landed badly on his ankle after missing a smash while leading 3-1, 40-30 in the second set.

The youngster was plagued by 32 unforced errors as his opponent mastered an annoying evening wind to earn the victory.

"It was tough today, not easy conditions," Shelton said. "With the wind I struggled to find footing on a lot of balls.

"It all came down to grit. The tennis was not clean. Beating a high-quality player like that is huge for me."

Shelton secured his ninth straight victory in Canada on the second of four match points as Fonseca hit the net with a return after leading in both sets.

Daniel Merida smothered Tallon Griekspoor 6-3, 6-1 as the Spaniard continued his rapid adjustment to hardcourt tennis in Canada.

The world No. 63 joins compatriot Rafael Jodar in the Can-



ada quarter-finals and will break through to a career-best spot inside the top 50 as a result of his fourth-round victory.

Prior to making his Montreal debut, clay-courtier Merida had never won a tour-level match on hardcourt.

He will try to extend his streak of cement success to five in a row when he plays a first Masters quarterfinal against US 12th seed Learner Tien, who wore down Argentine Thiago Tirante 6-4, 6-4.

Tien saved the first eight break points he faced in the second set in a battle of big hitters and secured victory in his fifth match point, with his opponent handing over the final game with four unforced errors. "Today was humid, conditions are always tough," Tien said. "I'm happy with how the match worked out.

"This was one of those days where I was making good contact with the ball. I was seeing the ball well and returning well." - Agencies

BOSTON CELTICS LEGEND

Historic NBA player and coach Don Nelson passes away

SAN FRANCISCO: Don Nelson, who won the second-most games of any coach in NBA history and five NBA titles as a player with the Boston Celtics, died on Sunday at the age of 86, his family announced.

Nelson was a member of NBA championship teams with Boston from 1966 to 1976 and the Celtics retired his jersey number 19.

As a coach, Nelson finished with a record of 1,335-1,063 -- what had been an NBA record until Gregg Popovich passed him in 2022 -- in stints with Golden State, Milwaukee, New York and Dallas from 1976 to 2010.

"Don Nelson revolutionised NBA basketball through his fearlessness, ingenuity and deep conviction," NBA commissioner Adam Silver said in a statement.

"He spent nearly 50 years in the

NBA -- winning five championships as a player with the Boston Celtics before building one of the most successful and pioneering coaching careers in league history.

"He brought an unmistakable personality to everything he did, and his impact on our sport will continue to be felt for generations."

Nelson, who was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2012, never reached the NBA Finals as a coach but was remembered as a historic figure among bench bosses.

"The Golden State Warriors mourn the passing of Hall of Fame head coach Don Nelson," the team said in a statement.

"Nellie" was one of the most innovative and influential coaches in NBA history and an iconic figure in Warriors history...

"More than anything, Don Nel-



son will be remembered for his authenticity, larger-than-life personality, and incredible passion for basketball and his influence on the Warriors franchise will endure for years to come."

Steve Kerr, the current Warriors coach, recalled Nelson as a visionary whose influence remains with the modern era of the league.

"Don Nelson was a true innovator whose influence on the game of basketball is still felt today," Kerr said. "He consistently challenged conventional thinking, experimented with different lineups and styles of play, and saw possibilities in the game that others often did not.

"So much of what is now commonplace in the modern NBA can be traced back to the way Nellie approached the game."

The Celtics paid tribute to

Nelson's playing career in a statement. "Nellie was a tough and reliable all-around player whose tenacity and ability to 'think the game' was on full display throughout his 11 seasons with the Boston Celtics, where he was a key member of five championship teams across two eras," the Celtics said.

The Bucks paid tribute to Nelson's first NBA coaching stint.

"During his 11 seasons as Bucks coach from 1976-1987, Nellie won two of his three NBA Coach of the Year awards and established himself as one of the most innovative and visionary leaders in basketball history," the Bucks said.

The Dallas Mavericks called him an innovator and legend whose "impact will never be forgotten," saying he left "an incredible mark on our franchise and the game of basketball." - Agencies

OPEN LETTER

UEFA, CONCACAF, AFC accuse FIFA of ‘deception, breach of trust’

LONDON: FIFA and its president Gianni Infantino have been accused of breaking trust “through deception” in an open letter issued by UEFA, CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

In an “open letter to the football family” revealed on Monday, UEFA, CONCACAF and the AFC also said that “when trust is broken through deception, when an individual places himself above the collective that entrusted him with authority, that duty has been abandoned.”

UEFA runs football in Europe, CONCACAF does the same for North, Central America and the Caribbean, while the AFC governs the sport in Asia.

The letter was co-signed by

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin, AFC president Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa, CONCACAF president Victor Montagliani and three general secretaries.

“Football is the world’s greatest shared passion. It belongs to no individual and no institution. It belongs to the players, the fans, the clubs, the member associations and every institution entrusted with safeguarding its future,” the open letter said. “It is in that spirit, as confederations representing its members that we speak collectively today.”

Infantino is facing a revolt after his failed plan to sell stakes in the World Cup to private equity investors. “It is not the conduct of a custodian of the game, but of one who believes the game is answerable to him,” the letter said. “These are not



the qualities football deserves in its leadership. That is why we have taken this stance: not lightly and not alone, but together, and out of duty to the game we serve.”

UEFA previously issued a threat to boycott the World Cup and other FIFA competitions despite the governing body abandoning and apologising for its failed plan.

Norway’s football federation called for Infantino to step down, while the English Football Association has also withdrawn its support for Infantino’s re-election next March.

“Football’s strength has always been its unity. We call for that unity to be honoured now,” the letter said. “For leadership that serves football, not seeks to command it.”

Last Wednesday, FIFA said it had apologised for errors made over the failed plan but that senior staff at a crisis meeting in Morocco “reaffirmed their full support” for his presidency.

However, the nature of the meeting was also met with criticism. “FIFA’s own letter also confirms that only one elected official was present at the leadership meet-

ing in Morocco,” the open letter said. “No FIFA Council members or Member Associations were invited to participate. Only the management committee, composed of FIFA-employed senior staff, was present.”

FIFA was also urged to go further than just acknowledging mistakes were made.

“It treats this as a failure of communication, when what football witnessed was a failure of judgment,” the letter said. “There remains no recognition that attempting to sell an interest in the FIFA World Cup was a profound failure of judgment — not just a procedural misstep, but a fundamental breach of trust with the very institutions FIFA exists to serve.” - Agencies

TRANSFERS



Digne completes move to PSG from Aston Villa

LONDON: France international Lucas Digne has completed a move from Aston Villa to European champions Paris Saint-Germain (PSG).

The 33-year-old left-back signed a three-year deal at the Parc des Princes on Sunday.

Digne, who joined Aston Villa from Everton in 2022, spent three years with PSG at the start of his career.

He returns to the club after eight years in England, following PSG’s decision to activate a £8.5m release clause in his contract.

“I am very honoured to be returning to Paris Saint-Germain following the wonderful experience I had here more than 10 years ago,” said Digne.

“I am particularly impressed by how the club has developed over the years.”

Digne is set to provide competition for first-choice left-back Nuno Mendes.

The Frenchman joins a PSG side who have won the Champions League twice in succession, most recently after beating Arsenal on penalties in the 2026 final.

Digne made 30 appearances for PSG during his first spell, before leaving for Barcelona in 2016.

The left-back was part of the Villa side who won the Europa League last season - the club’s first major silverware since 1996.

He becomes the third senior player to leave Villa Park in the run-up to the new season, following the exits of Morgan Rogers to Chelsea and Youri Tielemans to Manchester United.

Swap agreed for Everton’s McNeil-Palace’s Johnson

Everton and Crystal Palace have agreed a swap deal that will involve Toffees winger Dwight McNeil joining the Eagles and Wales international Brennan Johnson moving in the opposite direction.

It is understood the wingers will sign initial four-year contracts with their new clubs.

McNeil, 25, who has played 45 times for Wales, scored the winning goal for Tottenham in their 1-0 victory over Manchester United in the Europa League final in May 2025.

Johnson moved to Palace in a £35m deal in January and helped them reach the Conference League final, although he was an unused substitute in their 1-0 victory over Rayo Vallecano as the Eagles won their first European trophy.

Johnson failed to score in 26 appearances for Palace in all competitions, including 13 starts in the Premier League.

McNeil joined Everton from Burnley for £20m in July 2022, scoring 15 times in 128 games in all competitions. - Agencies

Fernandez’s ‘perfect’ race earns him British MotoGP victory

Aprilia-Trackhouse’s Spanish rider led all 20 laps of the Silverstone circuit from start to finish after Jorge Martin got off to a poor start



SILVERSTONE Aprilia-Trackhouse’s Spanish rider Raul Fernandez won the British MotoGP Grand Prix on Sunday, claiming just the second race victory of his career.

Championship leader Jorge Martin started on pole but was outpaced from the flag by his 25-year-old compatriot. Martin finished second with Italian Marco Bezzecchi rounding off the podium. “I think it was a perfect race,” Fernandez said.

“I’m happy and this win is special because we got three consecutive podiums and this one was a victory. “Now we want more.”

After crashing out of contention in the sprint on Saturday, Fernandez said he was “an idiot”.

Fernandez led all 20 laps of the Silverstone circuit from start to finish after Martin got off to a poor start, possibly due to a mechanical problem following a shower of sparks from the rear.

Raul Fernandez is the 12th different winner at Silverstone in 12 Grand Prix races on the legendary course, which also hosts the Formula One Grand Prix.

It was nonetheless a fine weekend for 2024 world champion and Silverstone sprint winner Martin

as he grew his lead in the overall standings to 31 points.

“This result gave us a big, big boost for our motivation,” Martin said.

“Today I wanted that victory so badly. I was really focused, but I did a small mistake in the first corner and I lost a lot of places.”

Japan’s Ai Ogura, who had started second on the grid and

was sitting second overall, slid off midway through the race and now trails Martin by 37 points.

Instead, Martin’s Aprilia teammate Bezzecchi is now his principal challenger for the title following a heroic weekend after he had spent the summer break recovering from a collarbone fracture suffered in qualifying at the Germany MotoGP last month.

“It’s been a tough weekend, a tough period in general,” Bezzecchi said. Bezzecchi had also been disqualified from the Czech Grand Prix in June for slapping a track steward in a fit of anger following a crash.

“We worked hard through the whole summer break,” he added.

“Obviously I didn’t expect such a great (comeback)... I couldn’t have given anything more because I am destroyed now. It was good...”

The MotoGP, which Fernandez completed in under 40 minutes with top speeds of 330 km/h on the straights, saw several riders crash out, notably Ogura and former Italian world champion Francesco Bagnaia, who endured a very poor weekend.

Spain’s Alex Marquez of Ducati-Gresini finished fourth, ahead of KTM’s Spaniard Pedro Acosta and Italy’s Fabio Di Giannantonio of Ducati satellite team VR46. Reigning world champion Marc Marquez of Spain, on his factory Ducati, finished only seventh. - Agencies

GUNNERS MANAGER SPEAKS

‘Guimaraes can ignite something different for Arsenal’

LONDON: Mikel Arteta has backed Bruno Guimaraes to “ignite something different” in Premier League champions Arsenal.

Brazil international Guimaraes was introduced to Gunners fans ahead of Sunday’s 3-2 friendly defeat by Borussia Dortmund, after completing a move from top-flight rival Newcastle reported to be worth £75 million.

The 28-year-old has strengthened an already impressive midfield featuring Declan Rice, Martin Odegaard, Mikel Merino, Martin Zubimendi and Eberechi Eze.

“You can see the immediate reaction,” Arteta told Arsenal’s website after Guimaraes was given an enthusiastic reception.

“I think he describes himself as a warrior,” the Spaniard added.

“I think he’s a warrior with a tremendous quality as well and intuition and leadership and charisma that is going to help us, that is going to really ignite something different in the team.

“I think he’s going to push everybody inside the team as well and



that’s the type of player that we need.”

Arsenal, after finishing runner-up for three successive seasons, finally ended their 22-year wait for a Premier League title last term, as well as reaching the Champions League and League Cup finals.

Guimaraes watched on against Dortmund as an Ethan Nwaneri strike and Viktor Gyokeres’s penalty were not enough to prevent defeat.

Samuele Inacio, Konstantinos Kareltsas and Joane Gadou scored

weekend before launching its title defence against newly-promoted Coventry on August 21.

City win in friendly

Elsewhere, Omar Marmoush scored twice in a three-minute spell in the second half as Manchester City came from behind to beat Atletico Madrid 3-1 in a friendly in Seoul, South Korea, on Sunday.

The Spanish side took the lead just before half-time when City failed to properly clear Koke’s corner and Morten Hjulmand set up 16-year-old Jorge Dominguez, who shot past goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma.

But City equalised in the 57th minute. Antoine Semenyo did well to slide and keep the ball in play before he charged into the penalty area down the left flank and his low cross was converted by Marmoush.

The pair linked up again two minutes later with a near identical goal - Marmoush finishing comfortably following Semenyo’s low cross from the left. - Agencies

Brazilian player falls down tunnel during goal celebration



CURTIBA: A Brazilian footballer says he got “carried away” after he was injured jumping over advertising boards to celebrate a goal - only to fall down a hole on the other side.

Defender Jacy Maranhao, 29, headed in for Coritiba against Chapecoense in the Brazilian top flight with his side 1-0 up in the 41st minute.

He celebrated by running towards fans, vaulting the hoarding, before disappearing down a tunnel that went to the away team’s dressing room.

He was able to gingerly clamber out but suffered an ankle injury.

To add insult to injury, the goal was disallowed by VAR in a game Coritiba won 2-1. He was substituted shortly after half-time due to the injury.

“I twisted my foot there. It’s a bit sore, but I’m fine,” said Jacy. “Centre-backs hardly ever score goals. So when you do score ... I just got carried away.”

It isn’t the first time such an incident has happened at the Couto Pereira Stadium in Curitiba.

Back in 2014, Cameroon striker Joel jumped over the barriers and fell down the passageway in Coritiba’s 3-1 win against Sao Paulo.

ROUND-UP

Win big this summer with exclusive Bank Muscat visa credit cards

Throughout the campaign, the Bank will conduct monthly draws offering valuable prizes, including an Apple iPhone 17 Pro and an Apple Watch Series 11. Each monthly draw will reward 72 winners: 30 winners receiving an Apple iPhone 17 Pro, and 42 winners receiving an Apple Watch Series 11

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, continues to offer its exclusive Apply, Spend & Win campaign on credit cards in partnership with Visa. Customers still have the opportunity to apply for a Bank Muscat Visa credit card and stand a chance to win valuable prizes, as part of the Bank's ongoing commitment to enhancing the customer experience and the added value of the services and products it offers.



The offer runs until 30 September 2026 and is open to all customers applying for a Bank Muscat Visa credit card for the first time during the offer period

The offer runs until 30 September 2026 and is open to all customers applying for a Bank Muscat Visa credit card for the first time during the offer period. Throughout the campaign, the Bank will conduct monthly draws offering valuable prizes, including an Apple iPhone 17 Pro and an Apple Watch Series 11. Each monthly draw will reward 72 winners: 30 winners receiving an Apple iPhone 17 Pro, and 42 winners receiving an Apple Watch Series 11. Customers wishing to be eligible for the Apple Watch Series 11 prize draw are required to make a minimum spend of OMR 100 using their credit card. To be in with a chance of winning the Apple iPhone 17 Pro, a minimum spend of OMR 200 is required. This applies to all local and international transactions through point-of-sale terminals or e-commerce platforms, providing cardholders with full flexibility across all modes of payment. Customers who are not selected in one draw automatically retain their eligibility for subsequent draws, provided they continue to meet the minimum spend each month. Participation is exclusively open to new Bank Muscat Visa credit cardholders who have issued their cards for the first time during the offer period. Supple-

mentary, reissued or replacement cards are not included. Bank Muscat has launched this exclusive offer to enable customers to enjoy a premium experience with its comprehensive suite of credit cards, including the Private Banking Visa Infinite Credit Card, Asalah Signature Visa Credit Card, Al Jawhar Visa Platinum Credit Card and Bank Muscat Visa Gold Credit Card. These cards offer a wide range of travel and shopping benefits, including the opportunity to earn and redeem reward points for valuable benefits such as flight and hotel bookings, shopping and eVouchers through Bank Muscat Rewards programme, which is accessible within the Bank Muscat Mobile Banking App. Customers can apply for a Bank Muscat Visa credit card through Bank Muscat Mobile Banking or through their nearest branch, with the card delivered via complimentary courier service. For more information, please visit: <https://www.bankmuscat.com/en/bm-cards/Pages/Win-Big-with-Bank-Muscat-Visa-Credit-Card-.aspx>, or contact Bank Muscat's Call Centre on 24795555, send an instant message via WhatsApp on the same number, or reach out through the Bank's official social media channels on X and Facebook.

EXECUTIVE MOVE

Nebi Ozan Ozdemir appointed Cluster General Manager of Alila Hinu Bay and Alila Jabal Akhdar

MUSCAT: Alila Hotels & Resorts is pleased to announce the appointment of Nebi Ozan Ozdemir as Cluster General Manager of Alila Hinu Bay and Alila Jabal Akhdar, part of Hyatt's luxury portfolio, bringing the brand's two Oman resorts under a unified leadership vision. Following a successful tenure as General Manager of Alila Hinu Bay, Ozdemir will continue to lead the beachfront resort in Southern Dhofar while extending his leadership to Alila Jabal Akhdar, Alila's acclaimed mountain sanctuary in the Al Hajar range and a Condé Nast Traveller Triple Crown Award winner. His expanded role marks an important step in strengthening Alila's presence in the Sultanate and creating a more connected Oman portfolio defined by thoughtful luxury, crafted experiences and a deep sense of place.



Over the past two years at Alila Hinu Bay, Ozdemir has focused on elevating the resort's positioning as a destination-led retreat, with emphasis on personalised service, distinctive dining, wellness, cur-

rated Alila Moments and meaningful connections to the culture, landscapes and communities of Dhofar. This next chapter will see him bring the same purposeful approach to Alila Jabal Akhdar,

where stunning mountain scenery, Omani heritage, adventure, wellness and design combine to create one of the region's most memorable luxury experiences. Ozdemir's expanded remit

unites two contrasting expressions of Oman: Alila Hinu Bay, set between the Arabian Sea and the Dhofar Mountains, and Alila Jabal Akhdar, perched high in the Al Hajar Mountains. From coast to mountain, he will oversee strategy, guest experience, commercial performance, brand positioning, operations and talent development across both properties, with a focus on delivering the Alila promise of journeys that are unexpected, profound and deeply rooted in destination. "Oman is a destination of extraordinary contrast and depth - from the calm shores of Hinu Bay to the dramatic heights of Jabal Akhdar," said Nebi Ozan Ozdemir. "It is a privilege to lead these two remarkable Alila resorts and to work with our teams to create journeys that feel personal, authentic and deeply connected to place. My

focus will be on strengthening our guest experiences, empowering our colleagues and further positioning Alila in Oman as a benchmark for thoughtful, destination-led luxury." Ozdemir brings extensive experience in luxury hospitality, multi-property leadership and food and beverage excellence. Most recently, he served as multi-property Manager for Absheron Hotel Group in Azerbaijan, following his role as General Manager of Six Senses Kocatas Mansions in Istanbul. His MENA experience includes senior positions at Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, and W Doha. As Cluster General Manager, he will lead Alila Hinu Bay and Alila Jabal Akhdar as complementary gateways to Oman, united by design, nature, wellness, dining and meaningful connections to place.

GREATER VALUE ON EVERY PURCHASE

Toyota Oman announces launch of Akeed campaign

MUSCAT: Saud Bahwan Automotive announces the launch of the Toyota Akeed Offers, a new campaign designed to reward customers with greater value on every Toyota purchase across the Sultanate. Running until 7th October, the campaign brings together a 5-year or 50,000 km (whichever is earlier) service package, Thiqah Loyalty Points, and one year of complimentary registration, applicable across the Toyota lineup excluding all diesel grades. (Terms & Conditions Apply) At the heart of the offer is long-term peace of mind. The 5-year or 50,000 km service package, whichever comes first, takes care of maintenance well beyond the point of purchase, while Thiqah Loyalty Points add ongoing value as part of Toyota's loyalty programme. One year of complimentary registration rounds out the offer, making the ownership journey simpler from day one. The Akeed campaign spans Toyota's diverse lineup in Oman, each model bringing its own strengths to the table. The Camry offers a choice between a 2.5-litre 201 HP



engine and a 226 HP hybrid setup, giving buyers flexibility between traditional power and electrified efficiency. Corolla buyers get a similar choice, with a 168 HP 2.0-litre Dynamic Force engine on one side and a more economi-

cal 1.6-litre unit on the other, both known for consistent, dependable performance. The Yaris, built with city life in mind, runs on a 104 HP 1.5-litre Dual VVT-i engine and CVT combination that keeps daily driving light and efficient.

Further up the range, the Crown pairs its 2.4-litre turbo hybrid setup, good for a combined 340 HP and All-Wheel Drive, with a 2.5-litre hybrid alternative tuned for 21.6 km/l efficiency and multiple drive modes to suit different

moods behind the wheel. The Fortuner brings genuine off-road capability, with a 2.7-litre engine for daily use and a 235 HP 4.0-litre V6 for drivers who want more when the tarmac ends, both mated to a 6-speed automatic.

The Prado combines its GA-F platform underpinnings with Electric Power Steering and a choice of 2.4L Turbo Petrol or 2.8L Turbo Diesel power, making it as suited to family trips as it is to rougher terrain. These highlighted models are just part of the picture, with the Akeed Offers extending across the broader Toyota range in Oman, excluding diesel grades. With offers spanning service, loyalty rewards and registration, the Toyota Akeed campaign gives customers a straightforward reason to choose Toyota this season. Customers are encouraged to visit their nearest Toyota showroom before the campaign closes on 7th October to explore the lineup and take advantage of the Akeed Offers. For the latest Press Releases, Test Drive requests and more, please visit www.toyotaoman.com, www.youtube.com/toyotaoman, www.facebook.com/toyotaoman, and www.instagram.com/toyotaomanofficial/. For any further details & to ascertain availability of stocks, please visit your nearest Saud Bahwan Automotive Showroom.



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