

Times

GOLDEN JUBILEE

OF OMAN

51

YEARS OF LEGACY

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ON BEHALF OF HM

Sayyid Shihab presides over reading of Prophet's biography

MUSCAT: On behalf of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs presided over a ceremony for the recital of the Biography of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), on the occasion of the Prophet's Birth Anniversary, at Al Mawlid Hall in Al Alam Palace, on Monday.

The recital was attended by some Royal Family members,



ministers, senior military commanders and heads of diplomatic missions of Islamic countries in Oman. -ONA

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Management plan of Jabal Akhdar reserve

1 The Environment Authority on Monday organised a specialised workshop for members of the "National Committee for the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme". >A2

OMAN

Muscat to host world athletics tour meet

2 Oman will break new ground in athletics on September 5 when it will host World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze. >A3

MARKET

Samail City localises 12 new projects

3 Samail Industrial City, affiliated with Madayn, localised 12 projects in the first half of current year. >B1

GOLD TOUCHES 3-MONTH HIGH AS OMAN TRADERS FEEL THE PINCH

The surge in international bullion prices quickly filtered into Oman's retail market, with 21-carat gold trading at around OMR51 per gram on Monday evening



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Gold prices climbed to a more than three-month high on Monday, pushing the 24-carat rate in Oman to OMR59 per gram and leaving jewellery traders facing a fresh slowdown in customer demand as high prices weigh on purchases.

The surge in international bul-

lion prices quickly filtered into Oman's retail market, with 21-carat gold trading at around OMR51 per gram on Monday evening. The latest rates remain below the record levels seen earlier this year, but traders say the sharp rise from recent lows is already affecting buying decisions.

"People allocate a budget for purchase. So, with the rates high,



the purchase has significantly come down," Mohammed of Al Haseena Jewellery told Times of Oman.

A gold trader on Ruwi High Street also said the rise in prices has affected trading activity, with customers increasingly holding back from purchases because of the higher cost.

The latest move marks a sharp turnaround from June, when gold prices in Oman had fallen considerably from their January peak, giving consumers some relief. >A5

RENEWED CONCERNS

No warning, sudden collapse: Leading doctors flag hidden heart risks in sport

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The fatal collapse of a 35-year-old expatriate Indian cricketer on the field in Muscat has renewed concerns over sudden cardiac death among sportspersons, with specialists urging both amateur and professional players to undergo medical screening and ensure their bodies are properly conditioned before strenuous activity.

The death of Shabeer Basheer, who collapsed while playing a tennis-ball cricket match in Al Hail on Friday, has once again highlighted the potentially hidden cardiac risks associated with intense physical exertion. While the exact cause of Shabeer's death has not been publicly established, doctors say apparently healthy sportspersons can have undetected heart conditions that may remain silent until triggered by strenuous activity.

'Don't assume fitness means safety'

Leading sports injury consultant Dr E B S Ramanathan (Ram Sethu) said some sudden collapses could be linked to underlying heart conditions that had not previously been detected.

"Such incidents could be caused by cardiomyopathy, which could lead to heart failure. There could have been a prevailing condition that has not been detected in the player. This is why it is very important to go for medical examinations for amateur and professional sportspersons," he said.

Dr Sethu said one of the important conditions associated with sudden cardiac death in athletes is hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM), in which the heart muscle becomes abnormally thick and may struggle to pump blood effectively.



His advice is particularly relevant to amateur players who may participate in competitive matches without undergoing the same level of medical assessment and fitness preparation expected of professional athletes.



'Several factors can trigger collapse'

Internal medicine specialist Dr Dilip Kumar Singvi said sudden collapse and death during physical activity are generally referred to as sudden cardiac death (SCD).

"Sudden collapse, especially on play fields, is happening very often. These are named SCD, sudden cardiac death," he said.

Dr Singvi said SCD has traditionally been associated with undiagnosed genetic, structural or electrical disorders of the heart. These include conditions such as hypertrophic cardiomyopathy,

ion-channel disorders and coronary artery abnormalities.

He also highlighted myocarditis, or inflammation of the heart muscle, which can follow viral infections and potentially leave the heart vulnerable during strenuous exercise.

Singvi said: "Lifestyle changes are another concern, particularly among people in the 25-40 age group. Lack of regular exercise, unhealthy eating habits and increasing weight can contribute to premature heart disease.

"At the same time, suddenly pushing the body into intense physical activity without adequate preparation can also be dangerous."

The internal medicine specialist added: "Overexerting the body with overzealous exercise and sports is also one of the leading factors, stressing the importance

of conditioning before intensive physical training."

Dr Singvi said stress and anxiety can also contribute to changes in the body's metabolic and hormonal functions.

'Screening can help detect hidden risks'

He said prevention and early detection remain important, particularly for people with a family history of heart disease.

"Prevention is the cure," he said, adding that early screening could go a long way towards preventing such episodes.

Dr Singvi said current recommendations call for screening to begin at around 35 years of age, making medical assessment particularly relevant for players in this age group who regularly participate in competitive or high-intensity recreational sport. >A5

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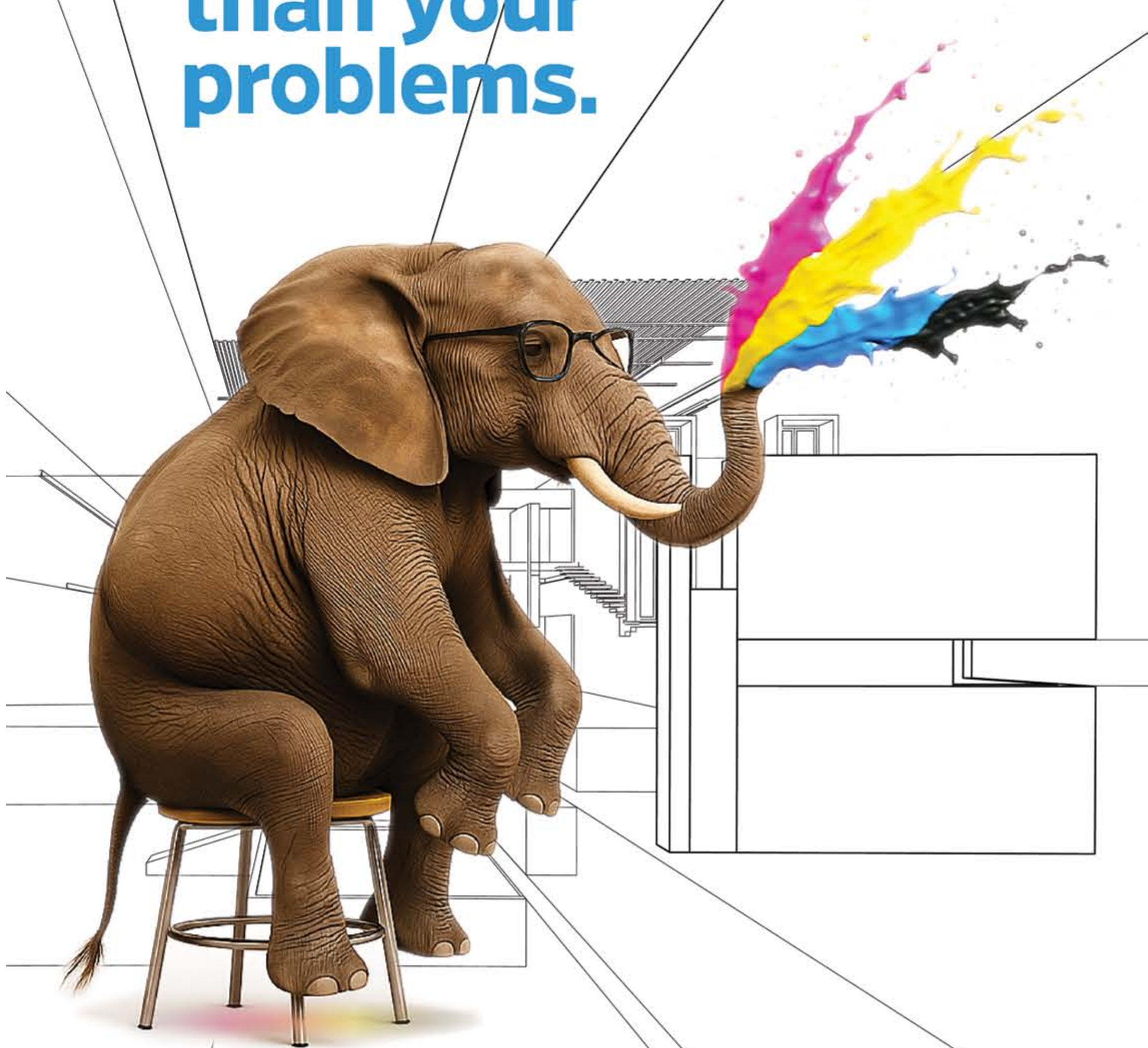
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ENVIRONMENT AUTHORITY

Workshop in Muscat discusses development of National Adaptation Plan for climate change and its implications

MUSCAT: A workshop on the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) formulation project convened today in Muscat to address the latest developments concerning climate change scenarios and their cross-sectoral implications.

Organised by the Environment Authority and spanning three days, the workshop brings together a broad spectrum of relevant stakeholders to examine national priorities and needs in the domain of climate adaptation.

The platform further enables participants to exchange views, expertise and proposals, thereby enriching the project's outputs and

ensuring their alignment with sectoral requirements and overarching national priorities.

The workshop presents the key findings and deliverables generated thus far by the National Adaptation Plan project, while also identifying national priorities, challenges, gaps and needs pertaining to adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

The main objective is to foster active stakeholder participation and integration, support the final stages of developing a comprehensive national adaptation framework, and strengthen the capacity of sectors and communities to ad-

dress current and future climate risks and impacts, thereby elevating overall preparedness and climate resilience.

It is noteworthy that this workshop is convened as part of the Environment Authority's ongoing efforts to enhance coordination and integration among national entities, advance sustainable development pathways, and stay abreast of evolving climate dynamics. These efforts collectively contribute to reinforcing the Sultanate of Oman's adaptive capacity to climate change effects while mitigating their adverse consequences across all sectors. -ONA



Discussion on management plan of Jabal Akhdar Biosphere Reserve



The workshop covered steps to form a technical team for monitoring Jabal Akhdar Biosphere Reserve and Al Sareen nature reserve

tives with the strategic plans of relevant government sectors.

Reserve's boundaries

The workshop covered steps to form a technical team for monitoring Jabal Akhdar Biosphere Reserve and Al Sareen nature reserve, in addition to the preparation of files on basic information for each reserve, including the reserve's boundaries, environmental values and challenges posed to it.

The workshop elaborated on the framework of Al Jabal Al Akhdar Biosphere Reserve's plan and the reserve's buffer zones.

It also discussed a proposal to organize an interactive workshop to review programmes of conservation and environment survey and to monitor climate change and sustainable ecotourism, as well as programmes of education, public awareness and stakeholder engagement. -ONA



REVIEWED THE KEY DEMANDS

Wali of Muttrah reviews latest developments in Aint Marina project

Times News Service

MUSCAT: As part of a series of meetings between the Office of the Wali of Muttrah and the company investing in the Aint Marina Project, Dr Hamad bin Saeed Al Maamari, Wali of Muttrah, met with representatives of the company, attended numerous residents of Aint Village and local fishermen.

This meeting discussed the latest developments in the project, reviewed the key demands and needs of residents and fishermen, and addressed the challenges facing the contractor company implementing this project, to find appropriate solutions.

During this meeting, numerous project-related matters were covered to boost coordination



among the various stakeholders, following up on the observations and demands raised, and reaching solutions that support the project progress according to its intended

objectives.

Representatives of Oman Flour Mills Company also attended the meeting. This company is currently expanding its geographical

operations and constructing additional silos.

Discussions focused on ways to utilise the soil and rock waste generated by the project works and to reuse these materials.

Thereby maximising benefits from available resources and supporting sustainable practices in project implementation.

The meeting forms part of the Office of the Wali of Muttrah's commitment to continuing direct co-ordination with relevant entities and the local community, and to strengthening integration among institutions and companies.

This contributes to addressing challenges, unifying efforts and supporting the implementation of projects that serve the public interest.

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

Treasury bills worth OMR15.5mn issued

MUSCAT: Oman's central bank raised OMR15.5 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Monday.

The value of the allotted treasury bills include OMR3 million for a maturity period of for a maturity period of 91 days. The average accepted price reached OMR99.050 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at 99.050 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 3.81044% and 3.84699%, respectively.

Additionally, treasury bills amounting to OMR12.5 million for a maturity period of 182 days was also allotted.

The average accepted price reached OMR98.093 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at 98.065

per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 3.82448% and 3.89884%, respectively.

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 4.25% while the discount rate on the treasury bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 4.75%.

- ONA

FOR DISRESPECTING NATIONAL ATTIRE

Seeb Court confirms conviction of citizen for disrespecting currency

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A prison sentence, a fine of OMR 150, confiscation of the phone used, and closure of the social media account of an Omani citizen who appeared in a video performing indecent dance moves while wearing Omani attire have been issued, according to the Public Prosecution (PP).

The Seeb Court of First Instance convicted the defendant, Shihab bin Ahmed bin Salem, on May 14, 2026. The court found him guilty of four misdemeanours: publicly committing an indecent act (two months' imprisonment); appearing in a public place in a manner that offends public decency (two months' imprisonment); using information technology to publish material violating public morals (four months' imprisonment); and treating the country's currency



with contempt (a fine of OMR 150). The sentences were ordered to be served concurrently, with the longest sentence executed, along with payment of court costs and publication of the verdict.

The court also ordered the confiscation of the mobile phone used in the crime and the closure of the defendant's social media accounts.

On July 22, 2026, the Seeb Court of Appeal upheld the original verdict while suspending the

prison sentence.

Public Prosecution investigations revealed a video showing the defendant performing indecent dance moves in Omani attire and filming another person in traditional clothing before posting it online.

The investigation also confirmed his contemptuous treatment of the national currency by placing it on another person and passing it around in a showy manner.

CEREMONY HELD

National Defence College marks start of 14th course



MUSCAT: The National Defence College at the Academy of Strategic and Defence Studies on Monday mark the start of its 14th fourteenth National Defence Course.

A ceremony to this effect was held at the college's headquarters in Bait Al Falaj Camp under the auspices of Rear Admiral Ali bin Abdullah Al Shidi, Commandant of the National Defence College.

In a speech on the occasion, the chief guest stressed the importance of the course in enhancing the participants' leadership and strategic capabilities.

He urged them to set their minds on ways to benefit from the course's components, including the diversity of military, security and civilian experiences and scopes for exchanging expertise in

a manner that enhances strategic thinking and the formulation of sound visions.

The course seeks to groom a new generation of military and civil leaders and provide them with knowledge, skills and leadership values that enable them to assume strategic positions and contribute to devising national policies and decision-making. -ONA

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COMMENTARY

Advantage Oman – Turning Regional Uncertainty into Long-Term National Opportunity

The Middle East is once again navigating a period of geopolitical uncertainty. While conflict and instability inevitably create economic and humanitarian challenges, history shows that periods of global realignment also create opportunities for nations that are prepared to respond strategically. For Oman, this moment presents a great opportunity.

The Sultanate has spent decades building a reputation for stability, moderation and constructive diplomacy. Combined with its strategic location and the ambitions of ‘Vision 2040’, these strengths position Oman as a natural gateway for trade, logistics, energy and investment. This unique combination may be called “Advantage Oman”.

Importantly, the current geopolitical environment did not create these advantages. Geography, visionary leadership, sustained infrastructure investment and prudent economic management created them. The changing global landscape is simply bringing them into sharper focus, and the world is now beginning to recognise them.

Gulf-Oman-India Relationship - A Civilisational Connection

One of the clearest opportunities lies in the evolving relationship between the Gulf and India. This relationship extends far beyond modern trade. For centuries, the Arabian Peninsula and India have been connected through maritime commerce, culture and people-to-people ties. The next chapter of this relationship can be shaped by energy security, technology, logistics and shared economic growth.

India is expected to remain one of the world’s fastest-



growing major economies, while the Gulf will continue to play an important role in global energy supply. Connecting these two engines of growth requires secure, efficient and resilient logistics networks. Oman is uniquely positioned to serve as that bridge.

Vision for a “Gulf-Oman-India Rail & Maritime Corridor”

A long-term strategic vision worth exploring is the development of a “Gulf-Oman-India Rail and Maritime Corridor” that integrates Gulf energy infrastructure with Oman’s ports and maritime connectivity to India and the wider Asian region. The accompanying map is conceptual and intended to illustrate the strategic vision.

Duqm: The Emerging Energy Capital of the Indian Ocean

At the heart of this opportunity lies Duqm. Duqm has emerged as one of the region’s most strategically significant industrial and energy hubs. Its location on the Arabian Sea provides direct access to India and the Far East, reducing exposure to regional supply-chain bottlenecks and strengthening logistics resilience.

This geographical advantage, combined with Oman’s existing

infrastructure and India’s extensive railway expertise, presents an opportunity to explore a transformational partnership that could position Oman as an important bridge between Gulf energy production and Asia’s growing demand.

Oman and India as Joint Strategic Development Partners - OMIFCO model

The Oman India Fertiliser Company (OMIFCO) stands as a strong example of bilateral industrial cooperation, demonstrating how the two countries can combine capital, expertise and long-term strategic interests to create sustainable economic value.

Building on this partnership, participating stakeholders could explore the establishment of a dedicated project development entity, potentially named the Gulf-Oman-India Corridor Development Company (GOICDC) – to study, coordinate and potentially develop strategic infrastructure, subject to feasibility and commercial viability.

This is not a proposal for an immediate project, but rather a long-term strategic vision worthy of serious exploration by governments, investors and private-sector stakeholders.



From Vision to Execution

However, Vision alone is not enough. To maximise this historic opportunity, Oman should continue strengthening its investment environment through faster approvals, streamlined regulations, expanded public-private partnerships, investor-friendly frameworks and continued support for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Equally important is investing in human capital. A young Omani workforce working alongside experienced global talent will provide the skills and capabilities required to accelerate industrial development, promote innovation and sustain economic diversification.

As Eng. Hamed Al Maghdry,

Chief Executive Officer of Al Maha Petroleum, aptly observed: “We have built an Oman that can comfortably support 10 million people. We are 5 million today. To grow, we must bring the next 5 million in — investors, talent, and families — and ensure our policies welcome them.”

This observation highlights a powerful reality. Oman has already created an infrastructure platform capable of supporting significantly greater economic activity. The next step is attracting the investment, innovation, talent and enterprise required to unlock its full potential.

The question is no longer whether Oman possesses strategic advantages. The question is how rapidly those advantages

can be converted into measurable economic outcomes.

Ultimately, the success of “Advantage Oman” will not be measured by barrels exported, containers handled or billions invested. It will be measured by the quality of jobs created, the opportunities provided to Omani youth, the growth of local businesses and wider public prosperity.

That is the real promise of Advantage Oman — transforming geography, stability, infrastructure and strategic partnerships into sustainable national prosperity for generations to come.

(The author is Chief Financial Officer of Al Maha Petroleum Co. SAOG. The views expressed are personal).

Oman Athletics Grand Prix next month puts Muscat on world map

Oman to stage their first World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze meeting on September 5, with around 300 athletes from 40 countries set for a historic showdown at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman will break new ground in athletics on September 5 when Muscat stage the country’s first World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze meeting, bringing around 300 athletes from 40 countries to the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher.

The inaugural Oman Athletics Grand Prix marks a historic step in the Sultanate’s athletics journey, placing Muscat on the international competition circuit and offering athletes valuable ranking points as



part of the approved World Athletics tour system.

Oman Athletics Association (OAA) chairman Saeed bin Mohammed Al Hajri described the event as a “qualitative leap” for Omani sport, saying the federation’s ambition is to turn the Grand Prix into an annual fixture and establish Muscat as a permanent stop on the global athletics calendar.

The meeting will bring together athletes from Asia, Africa and Europe across a wide track-and-field programme.

The men’s events are the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 3000m, 110m hurdles, 4x100m relay, high jump, long jump, shot put and hammer throw.

The women’s programme features the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 4x100m relay, long jump, triple jump and hammer throw.

At a press meet on Monday, Al Hajri said the event’s international status underlines confidence in



Oman’s organisational capabilities and provides a foundation for attracting bigger competitions and stronger fields in the future.

For Omani athletes, the Grand Prix will provide a rare opportunity to compete directly against

international opposition while chasing ranking points that could improve their prospects of reaching higher-level continental and international championships.

The meeting is also positioned as a development platform for

coaches, referees, administrators, and organisers, while helping the federation identify and nurture promising national talent.

OAA vice-chairman and Grand Prix director Dr Ali Al Marzouqi said the event’s significance ex-

tends beyond competition, with the hosting aimed at developing national talent, promoting sports tourism and strengthening international relations.

With around 300 athletes from nearly 40 countries, he said the meeting will expose Omani athletes to different levels and styles of competition while giving the country valuable technical and organisational experience.

Al Marzouqi said the Continental Tour classification gives the meeting added technical and institutional value, allowing athletes to regard Muscat as part of their competitive schedules rather than simply a local or friendly meeting. The ranking points, he added, could help attract stronger fields in future editions.

The OAA’s wider goal is to ensure the impact lasts beyond the September 5 competition.

The event is intended to build expertise across the sport and strengthen Oman’s ability to host major international athletics meetings.

For Al Hajri, the long-term target is clear: the inaugural Grand Prix should be the beginning of a sustainable path, with Muscat ultimately becoming a fixed annual stop on the international athletics calendar.

September 5, therefore, will represent more than the launch of a new meeting. It will mark Oman’s first step into the World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze circuit — and a bid to make Muscat a lasting name on the international athletics map.

Scientific Symposium of GCC History and Archaeology Association commences in Dhofar



Participants will present 30 research papers addressing the Gulf's history, heritage, and culture across diverse chronological periods



SALALAH: The 25th Scientific Symposium of GCC History and Archaeology Association opened yesterday in Dhofar Governorate. Hosted by the Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, the three-day event has drawn over 180 members, professionals, and enthusiasts from within Oman and abroad. The opening ceremony was held under the patronage of Sheikh Salim Mustahail A-Ma'shani, Advisor at the Diwan of Royal Court, in the presence of numerous dignitaries, researchers, and academics. Participants will present 30 research papers addressing the Gulf's history, heritage, and culture across diverse chronological periods, drawing upon the findings

of field surveys and archaeological studies, while also highlighting the civilizational, intellectual, economic, and social dimensions of the region. Eng. Ibrahim Said Al Kharusi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism for Heritage Affairs and Chairman of the Organizing Committee, affirmed that Oman's hosting of this session reflects the Ministry's commitment to supporting research and enhancing awareness of the civilizational heritage, while also providing specialists with a forum to exchange expertise and discuss the outcomes of recent discoveries. The current session coincides with the silver jubilee of the Association's symposia, culminating a

distinguished journey of comprehensive scholarly dialogue and the strengthening of bonds among the peoples of the Gulf. Running alongside the symposium is an exhibition featuring a collection of artefacts and archaeological finds discovered in the Sultanate of Oman, scientific publications in the fields of history and heritage, a chronological timeline of the Sultanate of Oman, and a tourism information centre. The symposium programme also includes visits to several of Dhofar Governorate's most prominent archaeological, historical, and tourist sites, enabling participants to explore its historical, cultural, natural, and touristic assets, coinciding with the Khareef (monsoon) season in Dhofar. -ONA



CIVILISATIONAL HERITAGE

Ministry of Heritage and Tourism welcomes ICESCO delegation to promote cultural diplomacy

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, will host a delegation from the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) on Wednesday to implement the Civilization Bridges programme. Running from 25 to 28 August in Dhofar Governorate, the initiative aims to explore the Governorate's rich civilisational, cultural, heritage, and developmental assets, while reinforcing institutional cooperation between the Organization and the Sultanate of Oman to foster civilisational dialogue, cultural diplomacy, and to consolidate partnerships between ICESCO, its Member States and their National Commissions. The visit is grounded in the programme's strategic vision of transforming cultural tours from mere field visits into dynamic platforms for civilizational dialogue and institutional engagement. This approach enables ICESCO leaders and experts to gain direct insight into the national experiences of Member States, familiarise themselves with their cultural distinctiveness, national institutions, and development initiatives, and identify emerging avenues for collaboration and partnership. The visit agenda includes a



series of site visits and meetings highlighting historical landmarks, heritage sites, and cultural institutions, alongside reviews of select development initiatives and projects. The delegation will also examine local best practices in the domains of culture, heritage, tourism, archaeological site preservation, and community participation in civilisational and developmental progress. Furthermore, the visit will facilitate exchanges with officials and stakeholders active in heritage, tourism, culture, and development sectors, thereby promoting the sharing of expertise and

experience, identifying new collaborative opportunities between ICESCO and Omani national institutions, and strengthening alignment between the Organization's programmes and the developmental and cultural priorities of its Member States. The outcomes of the visit are expected to define new areas of cooperation, enhance the exchange of expertise and best practices, and support joint initiatives within ICESCO's areas of competence, thereby strengthening the Organization's field presence and consolidating its position as a leading platform for civilizational

diplomacy and cultural development across the Islamic world. It is noteworthy that the Civilization Bridges initiative was launched by the General Secretariat of National Commissions and Conferences at ICESCO with the aim of developing new cooperation mechanisms between the Organisation and its Member States. This is achieved by deepening direct knowledge of national experiences, building networks of relationships between ICESCO experts and national institutions, and encouraging the exchange of expertise and best practices. -ONA



COMMENTARY

Youth in Mind: Taking Advantage of Five Before Five

On Tuesday, the 25th of August 2026, the Islamic world will commemorate the anniversary of the birth of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). The 63 years of the Prophet's life were meaningful, impactful, and, above all, insightful. His remarkable achievements during his prophethood continue to be a source of inspiration and a centre of attraction for scholars and thinkers, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. His value centric leadership earned him the trust and respect of even those who did not necessarily embrace his religion or speak his language. Many books have been authored to explore the story of his success. Many poems have been brilliantly crafted to celebrate his glorious status. Numerous conferences have been held, doctoral theses written, and research papers published, all seeking to understand the wisdom, leadership, character, and legacy of a man whose influence continues to transcend time, culture, and geography.

Besides, many leaders, philosophers, and literary giants, such as Napoleon Bonaparte, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Thomas Carlyle, Leo Tolstoy, George Bernard Shaw, and Michael H. Hart, among many others, have expressed deep admiration for Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), focusing particularly on his character, his leadership, and the principles he championed. In his book, 'The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History', American astrophysicist and author Michael H. Hart placed Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the number one most influential figure in human history. As we commemorate our exemplary Prophet with youth in mind, I will focus on a profound Holy Saying of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which offers timeless guidance on making the most of the blessings and opportunities we are given: "Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your illness, your



wealth before your poverty, your free time before your busyness, and your life before your death. These few words shed light on some of the most crucial stages and states of our lives that the youth should take seriously. They offer a powerful reminder to make the most of the opportunities and blessings we are given before they fade away or are no longer within our reach. Therefore, the nagging question is: How can our youth take advantage of these five precious elements of life before the curve shifts towards the other

extremes, and avoid the limitations and constraints that those changes may impose on their lives? This is a profound message for youth around the world to reflect upon and to ask themselves: What kind of life do I want to lead? It is an advice they need to ponder upon, an assessment they need to make to develop a deeper awareness of their reality and the choices they are making. It is a moment to ask themselves crucial questions, for such internal introspection can lead to greater awareness and, ultimately, to

corrective measures. Taking advantage of your youth before your old age should therefore lead you to invest your energy, learning, skills, and character while you are young, so that you can build the capabilities and resilience needed to achieve your goals and shape the life you aspire to lead. On the other hand, using your health before your illness is an invitation to take care of your body and mind while you have the strength and ability to do so. As the saying goes, "A sound mind is in a sound body." Likewise, using your wealth before your poverty calls upon people in general, and youth in particular, to use their resources wisely, for their needs, their families, charity, learning, and other meaningful causes. Your free time before your busyness. Youth should realise that time is an asset that cannot be stored, saved, or recovered. As a result, it should be invested wisely in things that create lasting value and a rewarding impact.

Eventually, the Holy Saying turns our attention to life at large. Youth are asked to take advantage of their life before their death. Perhaps this carries the greatest message of all: make your life count before the opportunity to act comes to an end. Do not allow technology, circumstances, or others to decide how you spend the most valuable years of your life. Make your youth count before age, responsibilities, and limitations narrow your possibilities. Do not wait for old age to teach you the value of youth. Invest your youth today and let your future self inherit the rewards. You are simply asked to take advantage of five before five to make your results quadruple, your life more serene and balanced, ultimately crafting a saga of success that others can benchmark against and reap the lessons from.

An Omani writer focusing on youth development and cultural issues.

AI project screens more than 43,000 diabetic patients



Oman is the third country in the world to implement this project, confirming its commitment to keeping pace with technological and digital advancements

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has introduced a national project using artificial intelligence (AI) to screen diabetic patients for diabetic retinopathy, making it the third country globally to implement this technology. The initiative aims to create a framework for early detection and management, reducing vision

loss among the 15 percent of adult Omanis living with diabetes. Oman is the third country in the world to implement this project, confirming its commitment to keeping pace with technological and digital advancements. This includes adopting the latest technologies and utilising AI to enhance and improve diagnostic accuracy, saving time and costs in detecting diabetic retinopathy

in patients. Implemented across 25 health facilities in its first phase, the program has served over 43,000 patients. The AI system analysed retinal images and identified more than 12,000 high-risk cases that required specialized clinical care, achieving a scientific accuracy rate of 91.3 percent. Anas bin Nasser Al-Kimyani, Director of the National Center for Virtual Health, noted that the initiative reduced clinic wait lists by 87 percent—cutting appointment wait times from 62 days to just 8 days. Diagnostic assessment times also fell from over an hour to approximately 15 minutes, allowing specialists to focus on complex cases while lowering operational costs by 43.2 percent. Looking ahead, the Ministry of Health plans to extend the AI screening model to cover remote areas.

SHABEER FROM THURAVOOR

Sporting activity is fine, but regular health checks a must

< FROM A1 **Shabeer's death raises concern** Shabeer collapsed while playing for Jiffnain Challengers at a ground in Al Hail on Friday morning. Fellow players said he was rushed to a nearby hospital, where doctors provided emergency treatment, including CPR but could not be saved. Shabeer, from Thuravoor in Kerala's Alappuzha district, had lived in Oman for around 14 years and worked for Electroman LLC. He is survived by his wife, who works at a private hospital, and their child. His body was subsequently repatriated to India after the necessary formalities were completed. The incident has also brought renewed attention to similar cases involving sportspersons in Oman in recent years. Reports of amateur cricketers and a bad-



minton player collapsing during sporting activity have emerged previously. Unverified reports indicate that several such deaths may have occurred over the past five years, although no official consolidated figure was available. A club owner said there was a need for greater awareness among players and organisers and that plans were being consid-

ered to work with Oman Cricket, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and hospitals on an awareness initiative. For doctors, the message is clear: sporting activity is beneficial, but regular health checks, awareness of family medical history and proper physical conditioning can be crucial in identifying risks before they turn into tragedy.

GOLD PRICE

Prices climb again as global bullion regains momentum

< FROM A1 At the end of June, 24-carat gold was around OMR51.3 per gram, after reaching OMR70.2 per gram on January 29. The local market has since seen prices climb again as international bullion regained momentum. The latest rise comes as gold prices reached their highest level in more than three months globally on Monday. Spot gold rose 0.8% to \$4,641.27 per ounce, after touching its highest level since May 15. US gold futures were up 0.4% at \$4,697.70. Gold had gained more than 5% last week. For Oman's jewellery sector, however, higher bullion prices

do not necessarily translate into stronger retail business. Traders say consumers tend to work within fixed budgets for jewellery purchases, meaning a higher price per gram can result in smaller purchases or delayed buying. The impact is particularly noticeable when customers compare current rates with the lower prices available only a few months ago. The international rally is being driven in part by a weaker US dollar, which makes gold more attractive to buyers holding other currencies. Markets are also awaiting US inflation data and remarks from Federal Reserve Chair Kevin Warsh later this week for clues about

the direction of interest rates. A weaker dollar has traditionally supported gold because bullion is priced in the US currency. Investors are also watching developments in the US bond market and broader economic and geopolitical uncertainty. For Oman's jewellery retailers, though, the immediate concern is less about gold's investment outlook and more about the impact on shoppers walking into their stores. With the metal price once again approaching elevated levels, traders say customers are becoming more cautious, postponing purchases or reducing the quantity they buy.

Toshiba Wins Best Brand in Customer Experience Award in Consumer Appliances



Toshiba was felicitated with the 'Times of Oman Best Brand Award in Consumer Appliances' at the Oman Best Brands Awards 2026. The awards presentation was co-located with the Oman CX Forum 2026, held at Kempinski Hotel Muscat. The premier event brought together over 325 senior CX leaders, business professionals, and industry experts from across Oman. For generations, Toshiba has earned the trust of households worldwide by combining quality, innovation, and reliability. In Oman, the brand continues to strengthen its presence through a strong commitment to customer satisfaction, reflected in its recognition as Best Brand in Customer Experience in the Consumer Appliances category. Exclusively distributed by MHD-ITICS, Toshiba offers a comprehensive portfolio of home appliances designed to meet the needs of modern households. From refrigerators

and washing machines to microwave ovens, water dispensers, and vacuum cleaners, its products combine Japanese engineering with practical innovation, advanced technology, and energy-efficient performance. With features including inverter technology and intelligent washing solutions, Toshiba appliances are designed to deliver lasting comfort, convenience, and reliability. Supported by MHD-ITICS' trusted sales and after-sales network across Oman, Toshiba continues to be a preferred choice for consumers seeking dependable, high-quality home appliance solutions. The Best Brand in Customer Experience (CX) Awards are instituted by Times of Oman, in collaboration with Muscat Media Group, Gulf Leaders Circle and TEvents. They are presented to the leading brands that are ahead of the

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For more information, contact: 78471944/97221630

curve in meeting and exceeding the customers expectations. The winners are selected based on an extensive consumer survey conducted by the Times of Oman.



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GUEST OF HONOUR AND KEYNOTE SPEAKER



H.E. Lujaina Mohsin Darwish
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Maryam Al Zadjali
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Dar Al Atta'a



Chenling Zhang
Group Chief Operating Officer
One Road Group, UAE



Dr. Adhari Al Zaabi
Associate Professor
College of Medicine and
Health Sciences



Shatha Salim Al Maskiry
Country Managing Director
Protiviti Oman

PANEL DISCUSSION

Beyond Expectations: Women at the Forefront of Progress



Mahira Al Raisi
Chief People Officer
Sohar International



Wafa Ibrahim Al Ajmi
AGM-Transaction and
Government Banking
Bank Muscat



Eman Al Zakwani
Head of Corporate
Performance – SCPP
Petroleum Development Oman



Dr. Nooreen Al Balushi
Director, Omani Center for
Organ Transplantation
Ministry of Health



Hawraa Fida Hussain Al Lawati
Vice President
Customer Experience
Al Mouj Muscat



Samah Al Rawahi
Communications
Specialist
Moderator



Co-located with
The Origin Forum

The Origin Awards 2026 celebrate remarkable women, organisations, and initiatives driving leadership, innovation, inclusion, and meaningful impact. Across diverse sectors, we honour those who lead with purpose, inspire change, and shape the future.

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US to unveil new Iran sanctions, says war entering ‘endgame’

President Donald Trump had “dismantled Iran’s military capabilities,” destroyed nearly 100% of its military factories and “buried its nuclear programme.” “We are now entering the endgame,” US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said

WASHINGTON DC: The US is preparing to unveil a raft of new economic measures targeting Iran and its trade partners amid the stalled six-month-old war in the Middle East.

Iran, a country that has already been living under international sanctions for decades, has vowed to retaliate.

In a post on X, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent described the sanctions as “the single greatest financial offensive ever marshaled against an adversary.”

He said US President Donald Trump had “dismantled Iran’s military capabilities,” destroyed nearly 100% of its military factories and “buried its nuclear programme.”

“We are now entering the endgame,” he added.



Hours ahead of the announcement on Monday, Trump said Iran was “completely collapsing” in a post on social media.

‘Economic D-Day’

Last week, the US president announced what he called an “economic D-Day” for Tehran, threatening harsher sanctions targeting not only Iran but also countries that continue to do business with it.

“Our objective is to sever every economic lifeline that sustains the tyrannical regime until Tehran stands alone,” Bessent said.

Already last week, the United Arab Emirates, one of Iran’s largest trading partners and its biggest source of imports, announced that it was suspending all trade with Iran.

It was not clear if the US measures will include action against China, Russia and India.

Ahead of Monday’s press conference, China’s Foreign Ministry

said Beijing was monitoring developments closely and would do what is necessary to protect its rights. The ministry also added that sanctions and pressure tactics do not help resolve problems.

How has Iran responded to the new sanctions?

Over the weekend, the head of Iran’s top security body warned that Tehran would see any country’s support of the US measures as an “act of war.”

Supreme National Security Council leader Mohsen Rezaei said Iran would “retaliate in a seismic manner” to the sanctions by targeting other oil-shipping routes from the Persian Gulf.

“If the economic war continues, not a single drop of oil will be exported, neither through the Strait of Hormuz nor from anywhere in the Persian Gulf,” Rezaei said.

The current situation in the Iran war

Middle East war began on February 28 when Israel and the US carried out strikes on Iran, killing Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Tehran responded with strikes on energy infrastructure and US bases in the Gulf region.

While the two sides have stopped the bombing, talks to end the conflict have stalled, with control over the Strait of Hormuz remaining a key sticking point. Iran has effectively closed the waterway, crucial for global oil and gas shipments, while the US maintains a blockade of Iranian ports.

Under a memorandum of understanding signed in June, the two sides had 60 days to negotiate an end to the war and reach an agreement on Iran’s nuclear program. But that period expired last week with no signs of a deal.

Meanwhile, Pakistan’s army chief was expected to travel to Iran on Monday as part of efforts to revive diplomatic talks in the conflict. — **DW**

US-Canada trade war escalates

WASHINGTON DC: The US-Canada trade war has escalated sharply, with US President Donald Trump on Monday announcing that tariffs on Canadian cars, trucks, automotive parts and steel imports will be raised to 50 per cent from January 2027, following the collapse of trade negotiations between Washington and Ottawa last week.

Trump announced in a post on Truth Social, accusing Canada of imposing high tariffs on American farmers and agricultural products and warning that companies manufacturing in the United States would face zero tariffs.

“Canada has been ripping off the United States of America for years. Their ridiculously high tariffs on our Farmers and farm products has made life impossible for these great American Patriots, and has long created a 60 Billion Dollar Deficit between our two Countries. Not sustainable, and NOT ANYMORE! On January First, 2027, Tariffs on all Cars, Trucks, both large and small, Automotive Parts, and Steel, will be increased to 50%. Build in the U.S. and there are ZERO TARIFFS. Canada will be treated like a State no longer!” Trump said in his post.

The US President further accused Canada of being among the most difficult countries to



deal with in trade, arguing that Ottawa depends heavily on the American market while claiming the US does not similarly rely on Canada.

“On Trade, and in other ways, also, they are among the worst Nations in the World to deal with. They feel entitled, and yet, WE DON’T NEED CANADA, THEY NEED US! They do 95% of their business with the U.S., with us, the exact opposite! Thank you for your attention to this matter!” he added.

The announcement came after trade negotiations between Washington and Ottawa broke down, with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney describing the US’ last-minute proposed terms as “unfair” and “uneconomic”. Canada has said it will respond with retaliatory tariffs on US goods. — **ANI**

HEIGHTENED TENSIONS

‘Not a single drop of oil will be exported if US economic war on Iran continues’

TEHRAN: Iran’s Supreme National Security Council Secretary Mohsen Rezaei on Monday warned that Tehran could halt all oil exports through the Strait of Hormuz and elsewhere in the Arabian Gulf if the United States’ “economic war” against Iran continues.

Rezaei, in a post on X, also warned that Iran would consider any country supporting or participating in the US economic campaign against Tehran to be an “act of war.”

“If the economic war continues, not a single drop of oil will be exported. neither through the Strait of Hormuz nor from anywhere in the Arabian Gulf. Iran will regard any country’s participation in or support for America’s economic war against the Iranian people as an act of war,” Rezaei said.

The warning comes amid heightened tensions between Tehran and Washington over US plans for tougher economic measures against Iran.

Earlier on Sunday, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf ridiculed the United States following the fresh economic sanctions threat by President Donald Trump, using satirical commentary to argue that heavy-handed economic restrictions ultimately backfire.

In a post on X, Ghalibaf commented on the limitations of trying to manage deep-seated financial strain through short-term state interventions and shared a sarcastic take on how economic pressures play out.

“Importing frozen meat to fix meat prices. Okay, that might work. What’s the plan for bonds, import frozen yields? Frozen homebuyers for housing? Frozen paychecks for wages? A frozen foreign policy delivers a frozen



economy. The only thing still moving? The Iran boomerang,” he said.

Accompanying the post, Ghalibaf shared a satirical four-panel comic strip illustrating the concept of the “Iran boomerang.”

The meme depicts a character throwing a giant boomerang labelled “the most crushing economic operation ever,” only for the weapon to loop back and strike the thrower directly in the face, mocking the perceived backfiring effects of US’ pressure sanctions.

Additionally, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Spokesperson Sardar Mohebi asserted that Washington’s heavy reliance on economic warfare is a tacit confession of the US’ “humiliating defeat” on the military front.

Addressing recent statements from Trump regarding aggressive economic pressure, Mohebi, according to IRIB, said that such measures are nothing new, noting that Tehran has faced restrictions targeting its core sectors for decades.

“The US President says that he has ordered economic warfare and has launched the most severe economic war against Iran. This is a tacit admission of the enemy’s humiliating defeat in the military arena,” he said. — **ANI**

BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

India’s Jaishankar meets Russian President Putin as part of his official visit to Moscow

MOSCOW: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday met with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin in Moscow as part of his two-day official visit to the country at the invitation of First Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Denis Manturov.

Jaishankar is on an official visit from August 23 to August 24.

As per the release from the Ministry of External Affairs, the EAM will co-chair the 27th Session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC).

As per the release issued on Saturday, “The External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, will undertake an official visit to Russia on 23-24 August 2026 to co-chair the 27th Session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC).”



During the visit, Jaishankar will also meet the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov and exchange perspectives on regional and global issues.

“During the visit, EAM will also meet Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov and exchange perspectives

on regional and global issues,” the release added.

India and Russia have a long-standing and time-tested partnership.

A prior release by the Ministry of External Affairs noted that since the signing of the “Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic

Partnership” in October 2000, India-Russia ties have acquired a qualitatively new character with enhanced levels of cooperation in almost all areas, including political, security, defence, trade and economy, science & technology, culture, and people-to-people ties.

Under the Strategic Partnership, several institutionalised dialogue mechanisms operate at both political and official levels to ensure regular interaction and follow-up on cooperation activities.

The India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission (IRIGC) has two divisions: the Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC), co-chaired by External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar from India and First Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov from Russia; and the Military and Military-Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M&MTC), headed by the Defence Ministers of the two countries.

— **ANI**

ON AUGUST 31

Malaysia announces temporary airspace closure and flight retimings ahead of 69th National Day

KUALA LUMPUR: In conjunction with Malaysia’s 69th National Day celebrations, the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) has announced temporary airspace closures within the Kuala Lumpur Terminal Control Area to facilitate the National Day Flypast 2026.

According to Malaysia Airlines, these closures will result in the retiming of selected Malaysia Airlines flights arriving at and departing from Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) Terminal 1.

Affected passengers will be notified via their registered contact details and are encouraged to check their latest flight status on the Ma-

laysia Airlines website or mobile app before travelling to the airport.

With the upcoming school holidays and peak travel period from August 26 to September 6, passengers departing from KLIA Terminal 1 are advised to arrive at least four hours before their scheduled departure time to allow sufficient time for airport procedures, the airline stated.

Malaysia’s National Day, celebrated annually on August 31, commemorates the Federation of Malaya’s independence from British rule in 1957.

Last year, the High Commission of Malaysia in New Delhi hosted a reception to commemorate the

68th National Day of Malaysia. The event was graced by the Chief Guest, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Law & Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India, Arjun Ram Meghwal.

According to the High Commission of Malaysia, New Delhi, the celebration brought together a distinguished gathering of guests, including representatives from Indian federal ministries, the diplomatic corps, international organisations, Friends of Malaysia in New Delhi, and members of the Malaysian diaspora.

The evening commenced with the national anthems of Malaysia

and India, setting a respectful and celebratory tone. This was followed by remarks from Dato’ Muzafar Shah Mustafa, High Commissioner of Malaysia to India, and the Chief Guest, Arjun Ram Meghwal. Both speakers highlighted the deep-rooted bilateral relations between Malaysia and India, and reaffirmed their commitment to advancing positive initiatives, diplomatic cooperation, and cultural exchange.

The ceremony underscored the importance of strengthening diplomatic ties, fostering regional development, and enhancing global peace and prosperity.

— **ANI**

SPORTS



India in control after Jurel's unbeaten ton

The visitors declared at 503 before picking two wickets to put Sri Lanka on the backfoot in Colombo

COLOMBO: Dhruv Jurel struck a 177-ball 115 as India piled on the runs on a rain-truncated second day's play in Colombo to take total control of proceedings in the second Test. Having declared on 503 for 9, India had already picked up two Sri Lankan scalps when play was called off for the day due to bad light.

At the crease was Kamil Mishara on debut, as he watched helplessly from the non-striker's end as his opening partner Lahiru Udara, and then nightwatcher Prabath Jayasuriya, fall under fading light. Both batters walked off openly aggrieved, having repeatedly complained to the umpires about the light conditions, but India won't mind that one bit.

Sri Lanka had begun their response with a little under an hour's play left in the day, but had to go off the field after two deliveries when it started drizzling. The dark clouds overhead suggested that something heavier was coming but it never transpired. Play then resumed at 5.35pm local time, where only three overs were possible before umpires stopped play for bad light. In that time,

there were consistent complaints from the Sri Lankans about the light, but to no avail. Not that that would have been an excuse for the two dismissals.

The first was one that bounced sharply and straightened down the line of off stump from Prasidh Krishna, as Udara seemed to close the face a touch early looking to defend it into the onside. The ball flew off the leading edge as Yashasvi Jaiswal at gully took an outstanding catch diving to his right. Jayasuriya meanwhile survived a Manav Suthar arm ball once in the over, rapped on the back foot but with it set to miss leg stump, but was done in by another a few balls later - this one striking the bat via the front pad. Sri Lanka reviewed, but umpire's call on the wickets hitting confirmed the bad news. The umpires brought play to a close straight after.

India will be absolutely chuffed at having made the most of what is likely to be the best of the batting conditions, as Jurel with contributions from a wounded Rishabh Pant and Suthar potentially batted Sri Lanka out of the contest.

Jurel started the day off with Saransh Jain for company, but the debutant wouldn't last long, failing to successfully fend off an Asitha Fernando bumper to a diving second slip. It was Asitha's fourth of the innings, but he would be unable to get what would have been a first ever five-for on Sri Lankan soil. Saransh's dismissal brought back Pant, and it was here that India took control of proceedings. Sri Lanka had done well till that point to chip away on what was a pretty placid pitch - albeit one that was beginning to take more turn.



But any hopes they had of running through the Indian lower order were quickly extinguished as Pant and Jurel took charge. The former struck a customarily brisk 63 off 89 during a stand of 112 off just 152 deliveries.

Sri Lanka's spinners in the meantime began to find grip and turn, but so set were the pair they quickly moved past any that beat the bat and carried on unfustered.

The wicket, like so many in this Indian innings, came against the run of play as Pant found long-off first ball after lunch. His exit brought about a more attritional session as Suthar and Jurel put together a 39-run stand off 76 deliveries, but worryingly for Sri Lanka the score kept going.

It took another batter error to bring the breakthrough as Suthar edged a pretty standard wide delivery from Jayasuriya. With Mohammed Siraj out in the mid-

dle, Jurel finally began farming the strike, but even so the score moved along. The only excitement at this point came about as a result of the rain, which stopped the post-lunch session early and delayed the start of the final session. When play resumed, Jurel had a nervy moment getting to his century. With 21 deliveries having gone by after reaching 99, Jurel was biding his time patiently for that crucial single. In the end, Jurel stole a quick single to mid-off, one where a direct hit would have seen him dismissed.

Following this, India looked to up the scoring rate and quickly passed the 500 mark before promptly declaring. Then with the ball they put Sri Lanka well and truly on the ropes.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka 8 for 2 (Prasidh 1-1) trail India 503 for 9 dec (Padikkal 117, Jurel 115*) by 495 runs. - Agencies

COLOMBO TEST



Jaiswal, Asitha penalised after on-field confrontation

COLOMBO: Yashasvi Jaiswal and Asitha Fernando have both been fined 25% of their match fees for "inappropriate physical contact" during the first day's play in the second Test between Sri Lanka and India in Colombo on Sunday.

Both players have also had a demerit point added to their respective disciplinary records.

The incident in question, which an ICC statement described as "a confrontation", took place after

Asitha dismissed Jaiswal off the last ball of the 17th over on the first morning. Jaiswal had been on his way to the dressing room when he appeared to change direction and moved towards Asitha, presumably in response to words that came out of the celebratory Sri Lanka huddle, in which Asitha was the central figure.

"Jaiswal walked towards Fernando and the two exchanged words, following which Fernando

moved his head towards Jaiswal," the statement described. "In response, Jaiswal leant in, resulting in their heads making contact."

Video evidence, however, showed that Jaiswal initiated the physical contact. Jaiswal had turned and walked towards Asitha, who also took a small step towards the dismissed batter. That was when Jaiswal leaned his helmeted head towards Asitha, who did not back away in that moment. - Agencies

INDIA SERIES

Naveen-ul-Haq returns to Afghanistan T20I team

KABUL: Fast bowler Naveen-ul-Haq returns to the Afghanistan side for the first time in almost two years after being named in the 15-member squad for a three-match T20I series against India.

He will have a new captain in Ibrahim Zadran, whose tenure begins in Delhi on September 13.

Naveen-ul-Haq, who last played for the national team in December 2024, was set for inclusion in Afghanistan's series against West Indies in the UAE, followed by the T20 World Cup earlier this year, but a stress fracture in his right shoulder kept him on the sidelines for more than eight months.

Veteran all-rounder Mohammad Nabi slots back into the white-ball side as well, having not featured in Afghanistan's recent ODI series against Ireland - which they won 4-0 - due to his CPL commitments.

Meanwhile, uncapped wicketkeeper-batter Noor ul Rahman has been included in the squad as the second wicketkeeper, behind Rahmanullah Gurbaz, while spinner Nangeyala Kharote has been added to the main squad after missing out on the T20 World Cup.

Batter Shahidullah Kamal has



been dropped down to the reserves, while wicketkeeper Mohammad Ishaq has been dropped from the side entirely.

Afghanistan are playing their first T20I series since the conclusion of the T20 World Cup in March, where they missed out on a Super Eight spot.

Zadran was named as Afghanistan's new captain after the tournament, taking over from Rashid Khan, who features in the squad as a regular player.

Gulbadin Naib, meanwhile, has been retained. He was with Afghanistan at the T20 World Cup but wasn't with them for their

Test and ODIs against India in June and the ODIs against Ireland in August.

Afghanistan will host India on Indian soil, with all three T20Is being played at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on September 13, 15 and 17 respectively.

Afghanistan squad: Ibrahim Zadran (capt), Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Noor ul Rahman, Sediqullah Atal, Darwish Rasooli, Azmatullah Omarzai, Gulbadin Naib, Mohammad Nabi, Rashid Khan, Nangeyala Kharote, Noor Ahmad, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Fazal-haq Farooqi, Abdullah Ahmadzai, Naveen-ul-Haq. - Agencies

SERIES IN SEPTEMBER

Skipper Cummins to use South Africa ODIs as Test preparation

MACKAY: Pat Cummins is set to use the ODIs against South Africa in late September as a springboard into the Test series with Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood likely to join him.

Cummins, who remains Australia's official ODI captain, has played just two matches in the format since leading the team to the 2023 World Cup with victory over India in Ahmedabad. Steven Smith, who is now retired from ODIs, Mitchell Marsh and Josh Inglis have all captained the one-day side in that period.

Australia will also visit Zimbabwe for a three-match ODI series on September 15, 18 and 20 before heading to South Africa, but Cummins indicated he could miss the Zimbabwe leg of the trip.

"I think I'll be part of at least some of it. I'm not sure I should say

this, but think the focus is on the Test series. So a lot of the white-ball [series], and how we play that, would be with an eye to the red ball," Cummins said after squaring the Test series against Bangladesh with a two-day win in Mackay.

"So I'd imagine it'd be one, two, probably a maximum of three games out of those six. "We'll probably all have, I imagine, a week or two off bowling, still do your gym work, and then we'll start building up for that series. I'll probably have an extra week here if I don't play the Zimbabwe [matches]."

Speaking to Fox Cricket in Mackay, Starc and Hazlewood indicated they were also expecting to play some part in the ODIs before the South Africa Tests.

While Cummins acknowledged the Tests as a priority, there is also an element of planning for the



2027 ODI World Cup where the majority of matches will be held in South Africa with other games in Zimbabwe and Namibia. For Australia, that will come after a run of up to 21 Tests in a 12-month period.

Starc has played nine ODIs since the last World Cup, includ-

ing all three against India at home last season, while Hazlewood has clocked the most among the big three with 11.

Cummins, who said he had a sore toe at times during the Darwin Test, indicated that the quicks had all got through the Bangladesh

series unscathed. There was a brief moment where Scott Boland came into contention for the second Test but Australia fielded the same attack across both matches. Dismissing Bangladesh for 64 and 95 in Mackay did not put huge workloads into them.

Following the ODI series against South Africa, which finishes on September 30 in Potchefstroom, Australia will have a two-day practice match at the same venue on October 3 and 4 before heading to Durban for the first Test.

The tour will mark Australia's first Test series in South Africa since the 2018 ball-tampering scandal although they have twice returned for white-ball series in 2020 and 2023.

They had been due to visit for Tests in early 2021 but they were cancelled due to Covid. South Af-

rica beat Australia at Lord's last year in the World Test Championship final.

"They're a really strong side," Cummins said. "We had a big series against them here in Australia a couple of years back and we probably exceeded expectations, played really well, and then they got us back at Lord's last year and outplayed us there."

"So it's going to be big, obviously, in their home conditions [and] places we haven't played Test cricket in for a while. So conditions are always a little bit unknown. Even the difference between Durban to, say, Cape Town can be quite different styles of pitches. It's going to be great. That's why I love playing Test cricket. It's all different conditions, different opponents, different parts of the world. Can't wait." - Agencies

OMAN CRUDE PRICES FALL

MUSCAT: Oman Crude (October delivery) fell by \$2.22 to \$97.39 per barrel. The average price of Oman Crude (August delivery) stabilised at \$7909 per barrel, \$22.91 lower than July delivery. - **OMA**

MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 7,501.05 points, down by -0.11% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.06% at 604.28 points. Oman Chlorine, up 5.23%, was the top gainer while, OQGN, down 2.22%, was the top loser. **>B2**



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Samail Industrial City localises 12 new projects in 2026 first half

Currently, 109 operational projects are established within the city, employing 4,031 workers, with an Omanisation rate exceeding 29%



SAMAIL: Samail Industrial City, affiliated with the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), received 24 investment applications during the first half of the current year, resulting in the localisation of 12 projects alongside the expansion of two existing facilities, with a combined investment volume exceeding OMR13 million.

These projects will be established across a total land area of 135,000 square metres and span

diverse sectors, including packaging materials manufacturing, chemical products, drilling and boring equipment maintenance, furniture and furnishings, metal and wood product processing, equipment repair and maintenance, plastics and polymers, water treatment and purification equipment maintenance, sewage network servicing, marble production, and other high-value-added industries.

Eng. Yasser Ibrahim Al Ajmi, Director General of Samail Industrial City, stated that the cumulative total investment in the industrial city exceeded OMR239 million by the end of the first half of this year. Currently, 109 operational projects are established within the city, employing 4,031 workers, with an Omanisation rate exceeding 29 percent. The total leased area has reached 2,637,402 square metres out of the developed area

of 7,773,876 square metres, while the city's overall designated land area stands at 11,889,233 square metres.

He further noted that Samail Industrial City successfully concluded an investment contract during the first half of the year for the construction of labour accommodation and commercial outlets, as well as an agreement for the equipping and operation of a medical fitness examination centre.



These efforts are part of the city's ongoing commitment to providing comprehensive services and facilities within the industrial estate, catering specifically to investors and business owners while also benefitting the broader community of the wilayat of Samail.

Designed in accordance with the latest international standards, Samail Industrial City aims to offer an integrated environment featuring a diverse array of recreational amenities and services.

The city has been zoned into multiple sectors, positioning it as a pioneering model industrial city. - **ANI**

INDIAN MARKETS

Nifty, Sensex close lower

MUMBAI: Benchmark domestic equity indices closed lower on Monday, as investors remained cautious ahead of fresh US sanctions on Iran, while elevated crude oil prices and rising domestic bond yields continued to weigh on market sentiment.

The Nifty 50 index closed at 24,219.05, declining 32.95 points or 0.14 per cent, while the BSE Sensex ended at 77,370.13, down 171.70 points or 0.22 per cent.

According to Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, caution dominated the market as investors awaited fresh sanctions from the US on Iran.

"Caution dominated market sentiment as investors are awaiting fresh sanctions from the US on Iran later today. Brent crude eased on profit-taking but remained above the \$90/bbl mark, supported by concerns over tighter Iranian oil supplies and ongoing tensions around the Strait of Hormuz," Nair said. He added that the RBI's recent hawkish stance, along with higher domestic bond yields, also affected risk appetite.

"Against this backdrop, coupled with the RBI's recent hawkish stance, domestic bond yields moved higher, dampening risk appetite," Nair said. - **ANI**

IN DHOFAR GOVERNORATE

Entrepreneurs' experiences discussed during dialogue session

SALALAH: The SMEs Development Authority (Riyada) on Monday organised a dialogue session titled "Leadership Talk", in the Governorate of Dhofar.

Entrepreneurs to talk

The session aimed to enable entrepreneurs to talk about their experiences in the field of entrepreneurship, right from the moment they

established their startups.

They explained how they turned their business ideas into viable projects, using technology and innovation skills in developing solutions that meet market needs, as well as challenges related to business growth, funding, competition and expansion in markets. They also spoke about opportunities to optimally engage in the entrepreneurship environment in Dhofar Governorate.

Space for dialogue

The event reflect Riyada's keenness on promoting entrepreneurship, space for dialogue and helping entrepreneurs to share their expertise with members of society that supports the growth of businesses and SMEs. - **OMA**



CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN



CBO announces auction results of 84th bond issue

MUSCAT: The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) on Monday announced the auction results of the 84th Government Development Bonds (GDB) issue, which received overwhelming response from investors, worth a total applied amount of OMR164.37 million.

According to a media release issued by CBO's Market Operations Department, the 83rd GDB Issue, has received applications amounting OMR164.37

million with allotment amount of OMR100. million. The average yield was 4.48 percent at an equivalent price of OMR100.120, while the highest yield was 4.50 percent at an equivalent price of OMR100.00 and the lowest yield was 4.00 percent at an equivalent price of RO 103.030.

The issue will be settled this Wednesday 25 August 2026. The 84th GDB issue, carrying a coupon rate of 4.50% p.a, will mature on 25 August 2033. - **OMA**

DEDICATED SAVINGS SOLUTION

Building a secure future with smart retirement planning from BankDhofar

MUSCAT: Reinforcing its commitment to supporting customers at every stage of life, from early in their career through to retirement, BankDhofar offers Long-Term Retirement Deposit, a dedicated savings solution designed to help employees build wealth, achieve financial independence, and enjoy greater peace of mind in their retirement years.

As the Sultanate's second-largest bank by branch network, BankDhofar continues to provide innovative financial solutions tailored to the evolving needs of individuals and families. The Long-Term Retirement Deposit encourages customers to adopt a disciplined savings approach and prepare for a financially secure future.

The bank underscores the importance of starting retirement planning early.

Effective retirement preparation begins with defining personal goals and envisioning the desired lifestyle after retirement, including living arrangements, travel plans, leisure activities, and other aspirations.

Equally important is assessing future financial requirements by estimating expected income and expenses, while factoring in inflation, healthcare costs, education commitments, and other long-term obligations.

To maximise financial resilience, BankDhofar also advocates



a diversified investment strategy, encouraging customers to spread their savings across different asset classes such as equities, bonds, real estate, and other investment instruments. The bank's financial experts provide guidance to help customers identify solutions aligned with their individual goals and risk profiles.

Among the bank's savings offerings is the Retirement Savings Deposit, which combines flexibility with accessibility. Customers

can begin saving with as little as OMR10 per month, choosing from plans ranging between one and ten years. The account offers competitive returns of up to 5 per cent per annum, helping customers steadily grow their savings and build a stronger financial future.

In addition to retirement-focused products, BankDhofar offers a comprehensive suite of savings and investment solutions, including fixed deposits, recurring deposits, and long-term education

savings accounts designed to help parents plan ahead for their children's higher education expenses.

BankDhofar continues to expand its reach across the Sultanate through a network of 145 branches, including Dhofar Islamic branches, supported by more than 400 ATMs, cash deposit machines, and multi-service interactive kiosks. This extensive presence ensures customers enjoy convenient and seamless access to banking services anytime and anywhere.

MARKET



MSX index ends lower

Oman Chlorine, up 5.23%, was the top gainer while, OQGN, down 2.22%, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 7,501.05 points, down by -0.11% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.06% at 604.28 points. Oman Chlorine, up 5.23%, was the top gainer while, OQGN, down 2.22%, was the top loser. Shares of OQBI were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover. A total number of 7,535 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR20.01 million, with more than 74.2 million shares changing hands. Out of 84 traded securities, 22 advanced, 29 declined, and 33 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for OMR788,000 while foreign investors were net sellers for OMR718,000, followed by GCC & Arab investors for OMR71,000 worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 13,319.01 points, up 0.65%. Prices of OMINVEST, Bank Dhofar, Muscat Finance, Al Sharqia Investment, Oman & Emirates Investment were up by 3.54%,

2.78%, 1.54%, 1.02%, 0.78% respectively. Prices of Takaful Oman, Al Madina Investments, DIDIC, Al Anwar Investment, Bank Nizwa were down by 1.61%, 1.49%, 1.07%, 1.06%, 0.70% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 9,486.48 points, up 0.75%. Prices of Oman Chlorine, Oman Cables Industry, Muscat Thread Mill, Oman Cement, Al Anwar Ceramics were up by 5.23%, 3.19%, 3.14%, 1.54%, 1.47% respectively. Prices of Oman Packaging, Voltamp Energy were down by 2.22%, 1.15% respectively. Services Index was down by -0.60% before closing at 3,009.02 points. Prices of SMN Power Holding, Barka Water & Power Company, Al Suwadi Power, Al Suwadi Power, Ooredoo were up by 2.63%, 0.63%, 0.55%, 0.55%, 0.31% respectively. Prices of OQ Gas Networks, Barka Desalination, Shell Oman Marketing, Oman Telecom, OQ Exploration & Production were down by 2.22%, 1.80%, 1.31%, 1.30%, 1.25% respectively.

— United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	7,526.19	7,479.49	7,501.05	7,509.36	-8.31	-0.11%
FINANCIAL INDEX	13,329.89	13,207.59	13,319.01	13,232.44	86.57	0.65%
Industry Index	9,514.13	9,397.49	9,486.48	9,416.27	70.22	0.75%
Services Index	3,029.87	3,007.44	3,009.02	3,027.07	-18.06	-0.60%
MSX Shariah Index	607.12	601.40	604.28	604.61	-0.33	-0.06%
MSX TR INDEX	11,643.88	11,571.63	11,604.99	11,617.84	-12.86	-0.11%
FINANCIAL TR IDX	16,388.41	16,238.04	16,375.02	16,268.59	106.43	0.65%
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	12,185.19	12,035.80	12,149.77	12,059.85	89.93	0.75%
SERVICES TR IDX	4,059.46	4,029.40	4,031.52	4,055.71	-24.19	-0.60%
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
74,204,543	20,008,791	7,535	38,238,826,653	22	29	33	84

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, AUGUST 24

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR	LAST RD	LAST OFFER	PWA VALUE	MARKET CAP
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REGULAR MARKET

OM000001533	OMINVEST	204,015	80,615	10	0.385	0.409	0.385	0.409	0.395	0.014	3.544	0.409	0.394	0.410	0.100	459,247,251
OM000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	4,340	14,756	6	3.400	3.400	3.400	3.400	3.295	0.105	3.187	3.400	3.370	3.400	0.100	304,980,000
OM000001249	BANK DHOFAR	819,757	177,233	83	0.219	0.222	0.217	0.222	0.216	0.006	2.778	0.222	0.217	0.228	0.100	674,883,274
OM000001424	SMN POWER HOLDING	1,750	941	1	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.190	0.005	2.632	0.195	0.000	0.195	0.100	38,928,942
OM000001749	OMAN CEMENT	2,304	1,362	9	0.585	0.594	0.585	0.594	0.585	0.009	1.538	0.594	0.560	0.643	0.100	196,538,390
OM000001440	AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO.	50,522	4,956	7	0.098	0.099	0.098	0.099	0.098	0.001	1.030	0.099	0.090	0.100	0.100	240,000,000
OM000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	1,169	151	3	0.128	0.130	0.128	0.129	0.128	0.001	0.781	0.129	0.128	0.129	0.100	16,507,969
OM000001341	BARKA WATER AND POWER	100	16	1	0.159	0.159	0.159	0.159	0.158	0.001	0.633	0.159	0.146	0.159	0.100	25,440,000
OM0000014925	ALBATHINAH POWER	241,560	44,004	15	0.182	0.184	0.182	0.184	0.183	0.001	0.546	0.184	0.182	0.184	0.100	124,179,287
OM0000014935	AL SUWADI POWER	55,005	10,069	13	0.183	0.184	0.183	0.184	0.183	0.001	0.546	0.184	0.183	0.184	0.100	131,450,767
OM0000012796	BANK MUSCAT	8,223,234	3,260,889	1,314	0.398	0.400	0.394	0.400	0.398	0.002	0.503	0.400	0.398	0.400	0.100	3,002,558,825
OM000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	35,287	16,980	6	0.479	0.483	0.479	0.483	0.481	0.002	0.416	0.483	0.476	0.490	0.100	785,332,089
OM000001398	OOREDOO	4,550	1,459	8	0.321	0.321	0.320	0.321	0.320	0.001	0.313	0.321	0.320	0.321	0.100	208,953,098
OM0000012267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	879	375	3	0.456	0.459	0.424	0.424	0.423	0.001	0.236	0.429	0.422	0.429	0.100	21,345,168
OM0000010987	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	1,450	455	2	0.313	0.320	0.313	0.320	0.320	0.000	0.000	0.320	0.313	0.320	0.100	33,600,000
OM0000012077	AL OMANIYA FINANCIAL SERVICES	100	15	1	0.146	0.146	0.146	0.146	0.146	0.000	0.000	0.146	0.146	0.154	0.100	46,050,882
OM0000012176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	23,172	22,655	7	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.900	0.000	0.000	0.900	0.891	0.900	0.100	122,408,154
OM0000012374	UNITED FINANCE	600,000	52,800	1	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.100	31,339,202
OM0000012804	ASAFFA FOODS	318	238	2	0.748	0.750	0.748	0.750	0.750	0.000	0.000	0.750	0.730	0.750	0.100	90,000,000
OM0000013125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	305,500	101,274	9	0.330	0.335	0.330	0.335	0.335	0.005	0.000	0.335	0.331	0.339	0.100	67,000,000
OM0000013224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	17,278	4,750	4	0.274	0.275	0.274	0.275	0.275	0.000	0.000	0.275	0.275	0.281	0.100	65,012,750
OM0000013398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	16,469,240	3,008,344	1,310	0.182	0.184	0.181	0.182	0.182	0.000	0.000	0.182	0.183	0.182	0.100	1,397,033,032
OM0000014768	MADINA TAKAFUL	95,953	10,555	24	0.110	0.111	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.000	0.000	0.110	0.110	0.112	0.100	19,250,000
OM0000014908	QIBASE INDUSTRIES (SFC)	18,794,289	4,590,592	1,315	0.247	0.248	0.244	0.247	0.247	0.000	0.000	0.247	0.245	0.247	0.040	854,484,240
OM0000018934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	1,967,235	798,780	490	0.410	0.410	0.405	0.409	0.410	-0.001	-0.244	0.409	0.409	0.409	0.100	315,011,800
OM0000015983	PHOENIX POWER	385,555	105,889	22	0.275	0.277	0.273	0.276	0.277	-0.001	-0.361	0.276	0.276	0.277	0.100	403,678,003
OM0000013120	ASTAD SHIPPING	1,684,071	386,803	516	0.238	0.238	0.235	0.237	0.238	-0.001	-0.420	0.237	0.235	0.237	0.000	1,254,472,394
OM0000011152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGG & INVESTMENT	10,832	1,625	3	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.151	0.151	0.001	0.662	0.150	0.149	0.150	0.100	22,500,000
OM0000014420	BANK NIZWA	136,610	19,308	18	0.142	0.143	0.142	0.142	0.143	0.001	-0.699	0.142	0.142	0.143	0.100	317,647,331
OM0000012226	ALAZEEHA SERVICES	8,535	2,142	3	0.251	0.251	0.251	0.251	0.253	-0.002	-0.791	0.251	0.240	0.273	0.100	10,753,591
OM0000011772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	3,613	675	2	0.183	0.187	0.183	0.187	0.188	-0.002	-1.058	0.187	0.187	0.188	0.100	37,504,280
OM0000011509	DHOFAR INT'L DEVELOPMENT & INVEST	108,166	30,075	19	0.288	0.288	0.276	0.278	0.281	0.003	-1.068	0.278	0.260	0.295	0.100	137,903,607
OM0000013961	VOLTAMP ENERGY	333,544	57,513	44	0.173	0.174	0.172	0.172	0.174	-0.002	-1.149	0.172	0.170	0.172	0.100	172,000,000
OM0000014735	SEMBOOR SALALAH	23,122	6,337	5	0.252	0.254	0.252	0.252	0.255	-0.003	-1.178	0.252	0.250	0.255	0.100	240,553,131
OM0000019759	QO EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	2,034,213	969,701	196	0.480	0.480	0.473	0.474	0.480	-0.006	-1.250	0.474	0.474	0.482	0.100	3,792,000,000
OM0000013026	OMAN TELECOM	1,539,430	2,126,898	116	1.389	1.389	1.368	1.370	1.388	-0.018	-1.297	1.370	1.350	1.370	0.100	1,027,500,000
OM0000018710	BARKA DESALINATION	23,400	3,838	1	0.184	0.184	0.184	0.184	0.187	-0.003	-1.796	0.184	0.183	0.185	0.100	12,385,608
OM0000010072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	11,808,406	2,623,379	1,390	0.225	0.226	0.220	0.220	0.225	-0.005	-2.222	0.220	0.220	0.219	0.100	352,737,262
Total		38	65,874,504	18,537,845	6,979											

Parallel Market

OM0000012341	OMAN CHLORINE	100	16	1	0.161	0.161	0.161	0.161	0.153	0.008	5.229	0.161	0.155	0.168	0.100	11,512,923
OM0000012036	MUSCAT THREAD MILLS	350	81	1	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.223	0.007	3.139	0.230	0.000	0.230	0.100	4,256,115
OM0000011590	MUSCAT FINANCE	100	7	1	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.065	0.001	1.538	0.066	0.063	0.066	0.100	20,271,657
OM0000012168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	933,804	130,435	98	0.135	0.142	0.135	0.138	0.136	0.002	1.471	0.138	0.138	0.143	0.100	30,360,000
OM0000017910	AMAN REAL ESTATE	8,730	637	4	0.073	0.074	0.073	0.074	0.073	0.001	1.370	0.074	0.073	0.074	0.100	14,800,000
OM0000011020	OMAN CHROMITE	554	1,931	3	3.450	3.500	3.450	3.500	3.465	0.035	1.010	3.500	3.500	3.630	1.000	12,705,000
OM0000011400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	860	503	2	0.585	0.585	0.585	0.580	0.580	0.005	0.862	0.585	0.570	0.620	0.100	101,581,594
OM0000010995	DHOFAR INSURANCE	2,342	796	2	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.000	0.000	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.100	38,559,336
OM0000011160	NATIONAL GAS	13,600	1,485	7	0.111	0.111	0.109	0.110	0.110	0.000	0.000	0.110	0.108	0.110	0.100	8,350,000
OM0000011178	MUSCAT GASES	100	14	1	0.139	0.139	0.139	0.139	0.139	0.000	0.000	0.139	0.132	0.139	0.100	4,170,000
OM0000011301	DHOFAR FOODS AND INVESTMENT	7,335	1,592	2	0.217	0.217	0.217	0.217	0.217	0.000	0.000	0.217	0.217	0.217	0.100	42,895,892
OM0000011426	OMAN REFRESHMENT	1,800	1,980	2	1.100	1.100	1.100	1.100	1.100	0.000	0.000	1.100	1.100	1.100	0.100	55,000,000
OM0000013265	NATIONAL DETERGENT	875	569	3	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.650	0.000	0.000	0.650	0.000	0.649	0.100	13,000,000
OM0000013521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	255,965	38,123	13	0.148	0.149	0.148	0.149	0.149	0.000	0.000	0.149	0.146	0.149	0.100	30,244,980
OM0000014669	SHARGIAH DESALINATION	9,730	1,654	1	0.170	0.170	0.170	0.170	0.170	0.000	0.000	0.170	0.170	0.175	0.100	16,626,367
OM0000015005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	410	105	1	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.255	0.000	0.000	0.255	0.250	0.265	0.100	14,025,000
OM0000017084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	5,500	484	3	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.087	0.095	0.100	13,688,435
OM0000017290	ARABIA FALCON INSURANCE	2,582,500	348,638	1	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.000	0.000	0.135	0.000	0.135	0.100	13,945,724
OM0000015260	OMAN ARAB BANK	261,744	68,282	4	0.261	0.261	0.259	0.260	0.261	0.001	0.388	0.260	0.256	0.260	0.100	5,207,317
OM0000011823	OMAN GATEWAY FUND	18,190	1,836	3	1.030	1.030	1.025	1.025	1.029	-0.004	0.389	1.025	1.025	1.030	0.000	28,110,463
OM0000010571	ALAZEEHA SERVICES	100	1	1	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.021	-0.001	0.452	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.100	4,440,000
OM0000015654	NATIONAL FINANCE	10,000	2,150	2	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.216	-0.001	0.465	0.215	0.214	0.217	0.100	13,989,950
OM0000014868	THE PEARL REEF	8,372	1,525	12	0.180	0.185	0.180	0.184	0.185	-0.001	0.545	0.184	0.181	0.184	0.100	10,824,366
OM0000014447	OMAN REIT FUND	221,481	23,489	28	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.106	0.105	-0.001	0.935	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.100	80,222,313
OM0000018569	JABAL REEF	13,240	1,379	10	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.105	-0.001	0.952	0.104	0.104	0.105	0.100	18,096,000
OM0000011151	OMIFCO	3,595,703	725,012	221	0.203	0.203	0.201	0.201	0.203	-0.002	0.985	0.201	0.201	0.201	0.000	1,344,564,375
OM0000017407	DHOFAR GENERATING	10,700	831	2	0.077	0.080	0.077	0.080	0.081	-0.001	1.235	0.080	0.077	0.080	0.100	17,778,200
OM0000012275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	5,120	3,865	2	0.750	0.755	0.750	0.755	0.765	-0.010	1.307	0.755	0.755	0.800	0.100	71,725,000
OM0000011962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	101,300	6,781	19	0.067	0.069	0.066	0.067	0.067	-0.001	1.493	0.066	0.061	0.073	0.100	2,844,600
OM0000014776	TAKAFUL FUND	56,000	3,366	11	0.061	0.061	0.060	0.061	0.062	-0.001	1.613	0.061	0.058	0.060	0.100	15,250,000
OM0000011608	OMAN PACKAGING	7,094	1,563	5	0.220	0.230	0.220	0.220	0.222	-0.005	2.222	0.230	0.230	0.230	0.100	7,135,889
OM0000012333	SALALAH PORT SERVICES	110	52	1	0.476	0.476	0.476	0.476	0.478	-0.002	9.848	0.476	0.476	0.000	0.100	85,602,602
Total		32	8,117,318	1,369,181	503											



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Fast-moving wildfire forces mass evacuation near Reno in Nevada

About 42,000 residents were ordered to evacuate, with another 45,000 told to be ready to leave, officials said. The evacuation zone stretched to the edge of the University of Nevada in northwest Reno, a city of more than 280,000 people near the California border



morning off Hawk Meadow Trail and spread rapidly through the Peavine Peak area northwest of the city, growing to between roughly 13,000 and 15,000 acres by Sunday. About 42,000 residents were ordered to evacuate, with another 45,000 told to be ready to leave, officials said. The evacuation zone stretched to the edge of the University of Nevada in northwest Reno, a city of more than 280,000 people near the California border. At least six people were injured — three first responders and three civilians — local authorities said.

Officials said the fire was human-caused but have not released further details. “The Hawk Fire is a very dynamic incident for us as it’s being driven by the winds. The wind-driven fires move very rapidly into our residential areas,” fire chief Richard Edwards told AFP. Nevada Governor Joe Lombardo declared a state of emergency in Washoe County and mobilized the National Guard, deploying two helicopters and 60 troops to assist firefighting and security efforts. “This is an active and rapidly evolving situation, and I urge everyone in the affected areas to remain vigilant and follow the direction of local officials,” he said, according to Reuters.

Human cost of the wildfire The fire has already destroyed homes. Cari Kieffer told AP her family fled with only minutes to spare, grabbing clothes, a Bible, her wedding photos and her mother’s ashes, but leaving behind birth certificates and childhood photos. “I kept looking outside and the flames just kept getting closer and



closer every time I looked,” she said. “I was like, we gotta go like now.” “We lost all our stuff. Everything we own is gone.” Nearly 10,000 customers remained without power in Washoe County on Sunday, down from about 60,000 the day before, AP reported. Parts of US Route 395 were closed, two hospitals evacuated patients, and officials monitored

whether the county jail would need to be evacuated. The Reno-Tahoe airport remained outside the evacuation zone, with flights operating normally. The blaze adds to a wave of fire activity across the drought-stricken Western United States this year. Fifteen new fires broke out across Nevada on Saturday alone.

— Agencies

SUDAN

Crisis-affected children receive \$22mn lifeline

GENEVA: Sudan’s civil war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) since April 2023 has triggered forcible internal displacement of millions and widespread hunger. The war in Sudan has entered its fourth year now, majorly affecting crucial aspects of civilian lives, including the education of nearly 2,00,000 children and teenagers, in West Darfur, South Kordofan and Gedaref. Thousands of families fled to displacement camps in El Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan state in south-central Sudan, after the RSF attacked villages across southern and western parts of the region, Al Jazeera reported on August 21. Taking cognizance of the humanitarian and displacement crisis, Education Cannot Wait (ECW), an organisation within the United Nations and administered under the rules of the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), committed to a fresh \$22 million multi-year investment to help “restore safe, quality and inclusive education” for affected children, a press release said. This announcement comes af-

ter ECW director Maysa Jalbout met the crisis-affected civilians, including children and teachers. They have been affected by more than three years of armed conflict and displacement. Since 2023, at least 14 million people have been internally displaced in Sudan, while nearly 33.7 million people require humanitarian assistance as a result of the ongoing war between the SAF and the RSF. The RSF emerged in 2013 from the Janjaweed, a militia group that was supported by the Sudanese government during the War in Darfur, which began in 2003. The civil war has forced at least 8 million children, which amounts to nearly half of Sudan’s 17 million school-age children, out of school since the schools across the country remain non-operational given the sustained conflict. According to ECW, some crisis-affected children in Sudan have missed nearly 500 days of schooling due to the ongoing conflict. The ECW investment will not only support the restoration of education and learning environments, but also help children regain a sense of “safety and normalcy.” — ANI

ENHANCING COOPERATION

India-Kuwait discuss opportunities to further strengthen bilateral relations

KUWAIT CITY: Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Paramitha Tripathi called on the Gulf nation’s Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Khaled Abdullah Bodai to explore avenues for deepening bilateral engagement across key sectors. During the meeting on Sunday, the two leaders deliberated on enhancing cooperation across trade, industry, and economic domains, with a specific focus on food security and supply chain resilience. “Ambassador Paramitha Tripathi called on H.E. Mr Osama Khaled Abdullah Bodai, Minister of Commerce and Industry of the State of Kuwait, today. Discussions were held on the longstanding friendly relations between India and Kuwait and opportunities to further strengthen cooperation in trade, industry and economic sectors, with a focus on food security and supply chain,” the Indian Embassy in Kuwait posted on X. The diplomatic engagement follows External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar’s visit to Kuwait last month, where he called on Kuwait Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. During the interaction, EAM Jaishankar expressed gratitude for the Gulf nation’s support towards the Indian diaspora’s welfare while endorsing his vision for



a stronger partnership. EAM Jaishankar also held a meeting with Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah to assess bilateral ties. “A pleasure to meet FM Kuwait Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. Discussed the impact of Gulf conflict on the region and beyond. Conveyed appreciation for ensuring the well-being of the Indian community. We jointly assessed our cooperation focusing on energy, trade, investments, defence, technology, food security

and health domains. Confident that our Strategic Partnership will continue to strengthen in times to come,” EAM Jaishankar posted on X. Defence industry cooperation and maritime security featured prominently during EAM Jaishankar’s meeting with Kuwait Defence Minister Abdullah Ali Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. Additionally, EAM Jaishankar called on Kuwait Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah to review overall bilateral relations and exchange perspectives

on regional developments in the Gulf. EAM Jaishankar commended the Crown Prince’s commitment to advancing India-Kuwait cooperation. “Privileged to call on Crown Prince His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah of Kuwait this morning. Conveyed warm greetings from PM Narendra Modi. Deeply appreciate his commitment to take forward our bilateral cooperation. Thank him for his sharing of perspectives on developments in the Gulf” EAM Jaishankar posted on X. — ANI

PROCUREMENT COMMISSION

Afghanistan approves projects worth approx \$99mn

KABUL: Hamdullah Fitrat, the Deputy Spokesperson of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, announced that the Procurement Commission has approved of 21 developmental projects worth 6.5 billion Afghanis (approximately valued at \$99 million) aimed at strengthening key developmental infrastructure elements in the country. Sharing the details in a post on X on Sunday, the Deputy Spokesperson said that during the meeting of the Procurement Commission, chaired by Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, 34 projects were presented for approval. He also informed that the approved projects will be financed by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. As per Fitrat, following com-

prehensive discussions, 21 projects worth approximately 6.5 billion Afghanis were approved, and necessary amendments were endorsed for 12 projects. Additionally, a committee was tasked with negotiating with the winning company regarding the pricing of one project and submitting a report to the Procurement Commission leadership. **Amended projects** According to the Deputy Spokesperson, the approved and amended projects include the reconstruction of the Manaqi Hydroelectric Dam in Kunar Province, the procurement of scanners for the customs at airports in Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar, Balkh, and Khost Provinces. Apart from this, other approved

projects include the construction of the Qadri Hospital in Helmand Province, the construction of public hospitals in Shughnan District of Badakhshan Province, Chak District of Maidan Wardak Province, and Qala-e-Zal District of Kunduz Province, as well as the implementation of several power supply and distribution projects in various provinces. The major announcement comes after Afghanistan last week emphasised on how the focus has shifted from managing war towards strengthening diplomatic and economic relations, reconstruction and economic development, and providing public services. The remarks were made by Mufti Noor Ahmad Noor, Charge d’Affaires at Afghanistan’s Em-

bassy in India, during the fifth anniversary of the ‘Victory’ Day reception in New Delhi. “Advancing regional economic projects and supporting the private sector are clear examples of this direction,” Noor said. He also highlighted the progress of regional economic and transit initiatives, describing them as important foundations for Afghanistan’s economic growth and regional connectivity. “The implementation of long-term plans in the areas of economic growth, energy, urban development, health and infrastructure, as well as maintaining the stability and strength of the Afghan currency, demonstrates that alongside short-term measures, Afghanistan also has a clear vision for sustainable development,” he said. — ANI





LIFESTYLE

The wildfires this summer have broken records in Germany and are unlikely to subside in future. Psychologists say post-traumatic stress disorder caused by such disasters is serious but can be treated if people seek help

This year, wildfires have already burned more land than the annual average from 2006 to 2025 in Germany. North Rhine-Westphalia, the country's most populous state, has just seen the largest recorded wildfire in its history. It destroyed or damaged about 300 to 400 hectares in the Hürtgen Forest in the Eifel region.

After weeks without rain, the wildfire spread rapidly across the arid landscape with wind driving the flames in different directions. Unexploded munitions from World War II that were at risk of exploding or did explode complicated the firefighting efforts. Around 1,500 firefighters battled the flames for almost a week until the fire was stabilized, with some working 12-hour shifts.

Peter Berndgen, a spokesperson for the volunteer fire department in the Düren district in the west of the state, said that the physical and mental strain was enormous.

"Your eyes itch every night, your nose is always black and the airways and lungs are under pressure. During a 12-hour-shift, you're constantly on high alert, ready for whatever might happen," he said.

This can be trees falling or the flames changing direction, he added.

And on top of that, the constant fear that "the situation is spiraling out of my control, we won't be able to cope, you get that kind of feeling sometimes. And then you start wondering whether you'll manage to get it under control at all."

Not everyone suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder

Despite being prepared and professional, firefighters know they are also at risk of death. "The fear, or dread, that you can have is really, where can I take refuge, how will I get out of this. I'm right in the middle of a forest."

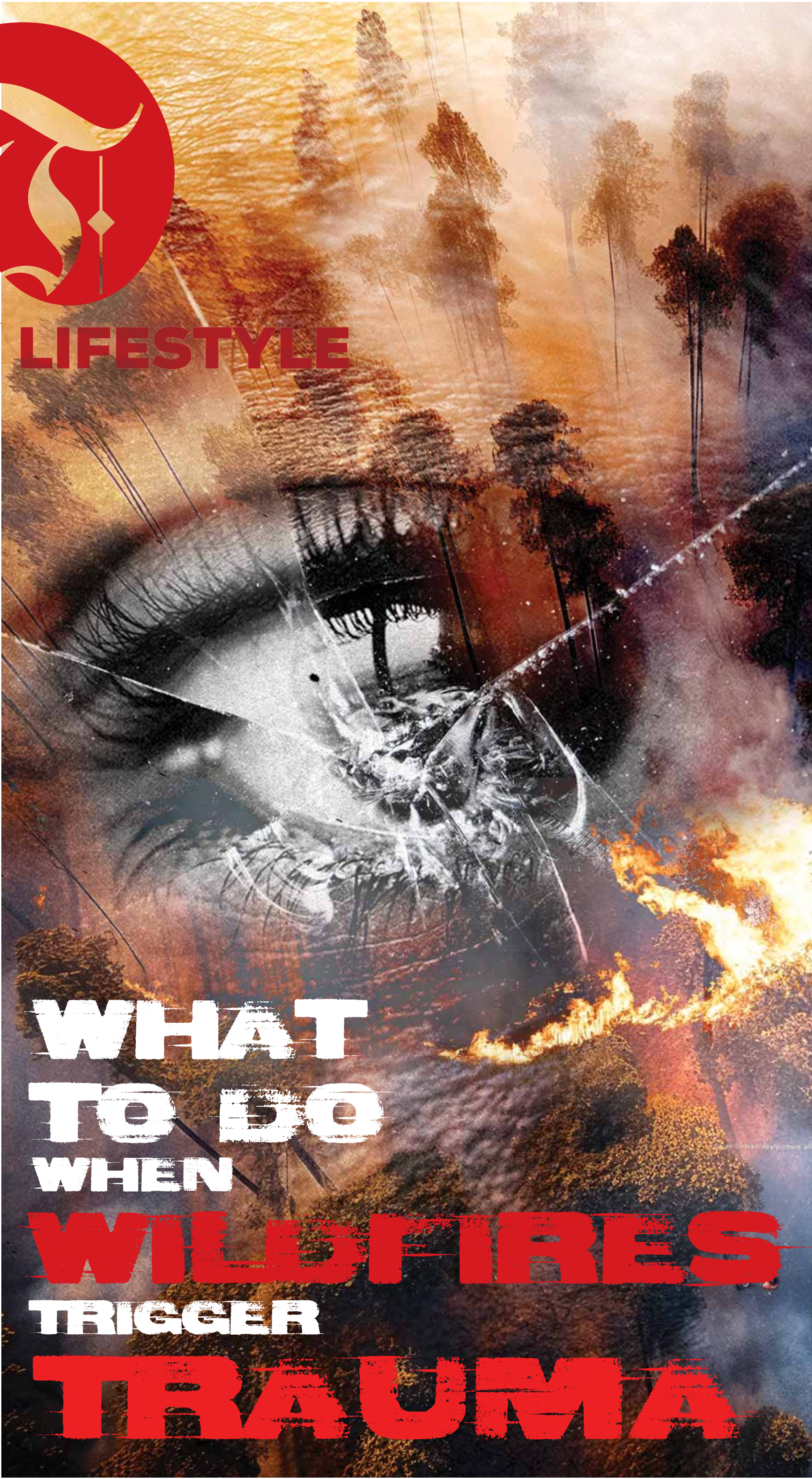
Andreas Meyer, a psychiatrist from the Central Institute of Mental Health in Mannheim who co-authored the "Berlin Declaration on Climate Change and Mental Health," says such situations can have long-lasting effects.

"Not everyone, but several people who experience something like this end up developing what is known as post-traumatic stress disorder. They find themselves reliving the event over and over, having nightmares, and experiencing flashbacks. Post-traumatic stress disorder is three times more common among firefighters than it is in the general population."

A typical symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder is avoidance behavior. People might avoid places that resemble those where the trauma first occurred, as well as conversations about the event itself.

"This can lead to the disorder setting in," said Meyer-Lindenberg.

He explained that it was totally normal to feel shaken immediately after such a disaster; to have trouble sleeping, for example, or to feel sad, but he said that if such a state persisted for more than a



month and interfered with daily life, people should seek psychological help.

"The good news is that post-traumatic stress disorder can be treated very successfully with behavioral therapy," he said, adding that it resolved the disorder in two-thirds of patients.

Apart from post-traumatic stress disorder, wildfires and other such disasters can also trigger depression, anxiety disorder or addiction. Some studies have found that people are also more likely to self-harm or even commit suicide afterward.

Meyer-Lindenberg said that the number of psychiatric diagnoses is likely to double after such a disaster. "Fortunately, for many of those affected, the symptoms sub-

side on their own. But, unfortunately, this is not always the case. Illness might still be detected years later."

Some population groups more likely to be affected, particularly women

Some groups of the population are more likely to be affected than others, studies have found. For example, children and adolescents, as well as people who are poor or who already had a mental illness. Women are also more likely to be affected than men.

While one in three people affected by a natural disaster is at risk of developing long-lasting post-traumatic stress disorder, this falls to one in 10 amid emergency responders.

Meyer-Lindenberg said that

they were helped by experience, clear rules during an operation and working together as a team.

"So much depends on these factors when you are confronted with an emergency," he said. "Do I feel capable? Do I know what I have to do? Do I have colleagues, teammates I can rely on? Is there a structure in place or am I at the mercy of a situation?"

While ordinary people might be forced to stand by as their neighborhood goes up in flames, firefighters have the task of putting out the fire.

Peter Berndgen said that the volunteer firefighters in the Rhine region were highly motivated. "We want to protect ourselves, the population, our villages, our homes. We want to protect all of that," he said.

"And I believe that gives us energy."

He added that psychological support was on hand if necessary and that talking about experiences was a routine part of operations as well as fighting the flames.

Taking action and control can be useful in fighting feeling of helplessness

Meyer-Lindenberg said that everyone affected by a natural disaster could benefit from action and taking control of their situation if possible. He said it was useful to put in place preventative measures against fires or floods, for example. However, it was not helpful to try to toughen oneself up for a disaster or to get used to them.

"Quite the contrary: if someone has already lived through such a disaster, they are more likely to

suffer psychological consequences from the next one," he said

Firefighters who are able to put out a fire, as Berndgen and his colleagues did in the Hürtgen Forest, are also less likely to suffer from long-term psychological stress. "It confirms that what we did made sense," he said.

Unfortunately, he did not feel the same during the flood in the Ahr Valley five years ago, he said. "People from the Ahr region whose lives were in danger called us for help, but we knew we couldn't help them."

That is the worst possible situation for a firefighter, he said. "If I knew that I'd have to do this every six months, I would probably reach a point and ask whether I could really cope." - dw

SPORTS

Maresca’s ‘perfect day’ for City; Liverpool clinch late equaliser

Man City scored twice to clinch a 2-1 win at home to Bournemouth; Reds and Newcastle were united as they paid tributes to great Kevin Keegan



LONDON: For Enzo Maresca, it was the “perfect day” as he earned his first victory as Manchester City manager on Sunday. City produced a stirring late rally in Maresca’s first Premier League game in charge, scoring twice in the final 10 minutes to grab a 2-1 win at home to Bournemouth on Sunday. Josko Gvardiol placed a finish into the bottom corner in the first minute of added-on time for the winner, which was initially given offside before being awarded following a video review. Marc Guehi had equalised with a 84th-minute header from a corner to start the comeback. Maresca, the successor to Pep Guardiola, punched the air

when Gvardiol’s goal was awarded and went onto the field after the final whistle to hug his players. A huge banner, reading “Welcome back Enzo,” had been held aloft by City fans as the Italian — Guardiola’s assistant in City’s treble-winning 2022-23 season — emerged from the tunnel before kickoff. Wearing a sharp black suit, Maresca certainly looked the part on the touchline but the slickness synonymous with City’s play under Guardiola down the years wasn’t quite there until the late comeback sparked by substitute Rayan Cherki, who set up both goals. “It is the perfect day, to be honest,” Maresca said. “I was very pleased when the game started to

see the banner on the other side. And I was pleased because we give them the joy of the three points. “It was quite emotional and the perfect day.” Maresca began his time as Guardiola’s replacement with a 3-0 loss to Arsenal in the Community Shield last weekend and has had to deal with the departure of star midfielder Rodri to Barcelona. City might have found a long-term replacement for Rodri in 18-year-old Morocco international Ayyoub Bouaddi, who is set to join from Lille for 100 million euros (\$117 million) according to French media, but Maresca opted against Bournemouth to deploy Guehi — a centre back — as a holding midfielder instead. City striker Erling Haaland wasn’t on the scoresheet



in the first league game of the season for the first time since joining the club in 2022. He sported a new hairstyle — a buzz cut that went viral on social media ahead of kickoff — and wasted a couple of great chances to score with it. **Szoboszlai’s late equaliser for Reds** Dominik Szoboszlai converted a penalty in the ninth minute of stoppage time to salvage a 2-2 draw for Liverpool at Newcastle in a match overseen by two new managers. Before kickoff, the teams united to pay tribute to Kevin Keegan — a star player for both clubs — following his death last month at age 75. Players from Newcastle and Liverpool wore shirts with “Keegan”

and the No.7 on the back in the warmup at St. James’ Park, while there was a mosaic in the centre circle, a tribute video and a huge tifo in the stands dedicated to the former England star. Szoboszlai smashed an unstoppable spot kick into the top corner after debutant Victor Munoz was fouled in the area in a dramatic finish. There was a 3 1/2-minute wait for a video review of the decision. “I really hit it good,” the Hungary captain said. “I love the pressure.” Joe Willock looked to have scored a 57th-minute winner for Newcastle, one minute after coming on as a substitute and two minutes after Cody Gakpo had equalised for Liverpool. Anthony Elanga put Newcastle ahead in the fifth minute.

Liverpool striker Alexander Isak was jeered by Newcastle fans when he came off the team coach and then every time he touched the ball, a hangover from his switch of clubs at the start of last season. Matthias Jaissle was taking charge of Newcastle for first time, while Andoni Iraola is Liverpool’s new manager as Arne Slot’s replacement.

Brighton destroys Villa Brighton scored four goals in the opening 31 minutes and also missed a slew of great chances in a 4-0 hammering of Aston Villa in the other early game. To make matters worse for Villa, Joao Gomes was sent off for kicking out at Brighton’s Georginio Rutter in the 40th but the visitors somehow didn’t concede any more goals. It has been a tough offseason for Villa, with key players Morgan Rogers, Yuri Tielemans and Ezri Konsa leaving and speculation surrounding the future of Ollie Watkins and Emi Martinez at the club. Fan dies A Brighton fan died after falling ill as he was leaving the Amex stadium following the win over Villa. The 72-year-old man became unwell as he was leaving to board a supporters’ club bus. Brighton said that, despite the best efforts of emergency services and club staff, the medical team could not save him. - Agencies

FRENCH LIGUE 1



Torres’ double helps PSG draw against Rennes

PARIS: Ferran Torres scored a brace on debut as Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) came from two goals down to rescue a 2-2 draw against Rennes in their opening match of the Ligue 1 2026-27 season on Sunday. The European champions trailed by two goals at half-time, but forced their way back into the match with consistent pressure to earn a point. Rennes took the lead inside the opening 10 minutes, with Sebastian Szymanski rifling a shot in off the post to open the scoring for the match. Desire Doue thought he had

levelled the scoring, but had his goal disallowed for offside before Esteban Lepaul — last year’s top-goal scorer — doubled the lead by turning home a Przemyslaw Frankowski cross. With 19 minutes left to go, Torres — who scored the winner in the FIFA World Cup 2026 final — opened his PSG account after beating the offside trap to get on the end of a Fabian Ruiz pass. Ruiz would be the provider for the second goal as well, crossing for Torres as the duo ensure PSG’s title defence did not start on a losing note. - Agencies

SPANISH LA LIGA

Barca begin title defence with Elche thrashing

BARCELONA: Raphinha and Fermin Lopez both found the net twice as Barcelona began their quest for a third consecutive La Liga title with a thumping 5-0 at Elche on Sunday. Hansi Flick’s side has won the last two Spanish league titles, and the German manager could not have asked for a better performance to get its latest campaign underway. Both Raphinha, who was forced to leave early, and Fermin, who missed out with a foot fracture, were not involved with this summer’s FIFA World Cup as much as they would have wanted, but looked sharp in their first competitive appearances in the league this year. Captain Raphinha got the procession underway in the 14th minute, slotting away a penalty after he was fouled in the penalty area by Victor Chust. Summer signing Karim Adeyemi — who arrived from Borussia Dortmund — doubled the lead in first-half stoppage time after being slipped through by Raphinha. Another high-profile sum-



mer arrival, England winger Anthony Gordon, made the impact in the second half. He first set up Raphinha’s second in the 67th minute before squaring for Fermin’s first goal. The 23-year-old added a second towards the end, rifling home from the edge of the box to complete the rout. The only negative for Barca will be the injury of Gavi, who was forced off towards the end of the first half with a knee complaint.

The club is yet to provide an update on his fitness. **Alvarez booed** Atletico Madrid salvaged a 2-2 draw against Villarreal in La Liga on Sunday despite having defender Robin Le Normand sent off. Giuliano Simeone grabbed his team a draw after Gerard Moreno and Georges Mikautadze’s penalties put Villarreal in front following Marc Pubill’s 59th-minute opener.

Someone began with Alvarez on the bench, and fans jeered as his name was read aloud by the stadium announcer at the Metropolitan stadium, after his attempt to leave the club this summer amid interest from Barcelona and Real Madrid. Atletico took the lead just before the hour mark when Spain defender Pubill scored from long range, curling powerfully into the top corner. Moreno then levelled from the penalty spot after Morten Hjulmand clumsily felled Tajon Buchanan. Someone sent on Alvarez for his first appearance of the season, with Atletico fans showing their anger at the Argentina international. With 12 minutes remaining, Villarreal took the lead with another penalty, after Mikautadze had been shoved over by Le Normand, who was sent off following a VAR review of the incident. Mikautadze calmly converted from the spot. However, Baena, who won the World Cup with Spain, played in Simeone’s son Giuliano to finish with five minutes remaining. - Agencies

Salah scores on debut with Trabzonspor



ISTANBUL: Mohamed Salah scored twice on his Turkish Super Lig start to fire Trabzonspor to a 2-1 win over Istanbul Basaksehir on Sunday. Salah, who joined the Turkish side on a free transfer after ending his storied association with Liverpool after nine years, produced a stunning display. He made his Trabzonspor debut as a substitute in the season-opener, and it took him just eight minutes on his first start to score his first league goal. Basaksehir got itself back into the match courtesy of a penalty from Uzbekistan striker Eldor Shomurodov and went into the half-time break level. However, Salah would prove the difference again just three minutes post the resumption, slotting home a second.

ITALIAN SERIE A



Amorim starts AC Milan tenure with 2-1 victory

MILAN: Ruben Amorim got his tenure as AC Milan coach off to a winning start as they started their Serie A 2026-27 campaign with a narrow 2-1 victory over Torino on Sunday. The Portuguese manager has taken over at the San Siro hoping to turn around the poor results of the last couple of seasons, and has overseen a summer of change with the likes of Goncalo Ramos and Diego Moreira among the new faces. Milan were the dominant side early on against their opponent from Turin, but was forced to wait for an hour before they took the lead through debutant Alphaadjio Cisse’s deft finish. Veteran midfielder Adrien Rabiot — who was part of France’s

FIFA World Cup 2026 squad — doubled the lead shortly after by turning in a cross from the returning Samu Chukwueze. Che Adams scored a late consolation goal for Torino, but it was not enough to stop the Rossonieri from taking home all three points. Juventus also got off to a winning start, albeit with a less than inspiring performance against newly-promoted Frosinone, winning 1-0, on Sunday. The winner came in the 22nd minute from centre-back Gleison Bremer, who scored with a header. There was also a debut for goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario, who has joined on loan from Tottenham Hotspur. - Agencies

FIFA PRESIDENCY

UEFA president Ceferin rules out running against Infantino

LONDON: European football governing body (UEFA) president Aleksander Ceferin has ruled himself out of the running to replace Gianni Infantino, but says he expects a candidate to challenge the FIFA president’s leadership in March. Infantino has faced calls to step down after he scrapped a controversial plan to sell off stakes in FIFA’s competitions to private investors following widespread opposition. UEFA led the backlash to the plan, with its members voting to boycott World Cups unless it was scrapped, while European football’s governing body said it has lost confidence in Infantino. Ceferin, 57, has been widely seen as a potential challenger to Infantino, but says he does not plan to stand for the position at the FIFA Congress in March 2027. “I’m not interested because of two reasons. One reason is that I love UEFA and I love working here, and I think that at a certain point, it’s time to also enjoy life a bit,” Ceferin said on the Rest is Politics podcast. “The second point is, my credibility is much, much higher if I’m not interested in the position.” Ceferin says he either expects



56-year-old Swiss Infantino to step down because of a lack of support, or to face a challenge to his role from another candidate. “One option is that he realises that he doesn’t have the support, and that’s not only a political support of the ones who vote, but the political support of football community, the political support of fans, the political support of the players, former players, coaches,” he said. “And the second option that he goes to the elections in March, but in that case, I think he will have a candidate against him. I don’t know yet who.” Infantino’s scrapped proposal involved creating a new company

- FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE) - to manage the commercial and ticketing rights of all FIFA competitions, with 21% to be sold off to a private investment company. A number of football associations have withdrawn their support for Infantino, who was accused of breaking trust “through deception” in an open letter issued by UEFA, CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation. The football associations of all the home nations have withdrawn support for Infantino, but he retains the support of South American governing body CONMEBOL and CAF, the African governing body. - Agencies



HERITAGE AUCTIONS

Maradona’s ‘Hand of God’ ball sells for \$3.4mn



NEW YORK: The football with which legendary Argentine star Diego Maradona scored his famous ‘hand of God’ goal at the 1986 World Cup has sold at auction for US\$3.4mn.

Maradona famously punched the ball past goalkeeper Peter Shilton in Argentina’s 2-1 quarter-final win over England.

After the game, he told reporters it had been scored “a little with the head of Maradona and a little with the hand of God”.

Maradona later scored what became known as the ‘goal of the cen-

tury’ in the same game, dribbling past five England outfield players before slotting the ball past Shilton. Though it sold for US\$3.4mn at Heritage Auctions in the United States on Saturday, the ball had been expected to fetch nearer US\$10mn.

Speaking to media before the auction, Mike Provenza, a specialist auctioneer at Heritage, said: “It’s a true one-of-one item. Arguably the most significant soccer item that exists.”

Tunisian Ali Bin Nasser, who refereed the match in 1986, col-

lected the Adidas Azteca ball at full-time and kept it for more than three decades.

In 2023, he signed a letter to confirm it was the only ball used during the match, which has also been confirmed by further independent authentication.

Bin Nasser sold the ball in 2022 for US\$2.37mn. Its new owner again put it up for auction in 2023 though it did not sell as bids did not meet the minimum value set. The shirt worn by Maradona during the same match sold for US\$ 9.6mn at auction in 2022. - Agencies

CINCINNATI ATP OPEN

Fils downs Tiafoe for first Masters 1000 title



CINCINNATI: Frenchman Arthur Fils earned his first Masters 1000 title with a hard-fought victory over American Francis Tiafoe in the final of the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters on Sunday.

Fils won in a three-set battle 6-3, 1-6, 6-0, holding off a mid-game surge from Tiafoe to become only the second Frenchman to win a Masters 1000 after Jo-Wilfried Tsonga won in Toronto in 2014.

This was also the first time two Black players have met in an ATP Masters 1000 final.

Both players gave early accounts of their high quality, with Fils racing through the first set to take an early lead before Tiafoe hit back with an equally impressive second set.

However, Tiafoe — appearing in his second Cincinnati final after losing the 2024 final to Jannik Sin-

ner — had to stretch and receive massage treatment on his upper left leg and lower back before the third set.

Fils came out roaring for that decider, breaking Tiafoe twice to go into a 4-0 lead before rushing towards a sweeping win.

“I started the first set very, very strong,” Fils said. “In the second set I lost a bit of focus, he put me under pressure.

“But I had a small talk with myself in front of the mirror after the second set. I said ‘if you are going to lose, it cannot get worse than this. You need to fight.

“I don’t have any words to describe this win,” added Fils, whose young career has been beset by injury so far. “There is a bit of relief.

“It was a hell of a week,” he said. “We made a hell of a job and it is not done yet.” - Agencies

CINCINNATI WTA

Gauff sweeps past Pegula for maiden crown of 2026



CINCINNATI: Coco Gauff swept past fellow American Jessica Pegula in the final of the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters 2026 on Sunday to secure her first title of 2026 ahead of the upcoming US Open.

Gauff won in straight sets, taking the game 6-2, 6-4 in 75 minutes for a confidence-boosting victory ahead of her home Grand Slam later this month. This is the second time Gauff has won the competition, having previously won it in 2023 in the build-up to the first of her two Grand Slam titles at that year’s US Open.

Gauff got off to a fast start, racing into a 5-0 lead in the first set before Pegula could get on the board. Though she would break back in the first set, it proved a small con-

solation as Gauff sealed the opening set in 34 minutes.

The 22-year-old then broke early in the second set on her way to a 3-0 lead. Pegula held on for longer this time around, but was ultimately left delaying the inevitable as Gauff won her first title since last October in Wuhan.

Gauff had struggled at the event last year, and said, “It’s a big difference, what a year can make.”

Pegula, who defeated Iga Swiatek to reach the final, noted that she had not played too badly in the final. “I don’t think I played bad but you played a very high level, it was not fun to play against,” she told Gauff during the trophy ceremony. “You have amazing momentum heading into the US Open.”

Norris edges past Antonelli to claim final Dutch GP win



The McLaren driver had also won the Hungarian Grand Prix from pole position before the summer break to make it back-to-back Formula One wins



ZANDVOORT: Lando Norris had a clear message for his Formula 1 rivals after a spectacular race-winning pass on standings leader Kimi Antonelli on Sunday. Write off his title defence at your peril.

“This fight is still on,” Norris said over team radio after winning the Dutch Grand Prix for back-to-back F1 victories and a trophy presented by the King of the Netherlands.

The Dutch GP will be dropping off schedule after this season.

Norris asked his McLaren team to “just keep bringing upgrades (to the car), just keep bringing performance please” as he eyes an 83-point gap to Antonelli.

Max Verstappen nearly reeled in a similarly vast lead last year as Norris held on by just two points. Now the British driver is the hunter. “There’s still plenty of things we can do better and need to do better if we’re going to fight for a championship,” Norris added.

Norris seizes his chance

Norris started on pole but was overtaken by Antonelli’s Mercedes at a restart after the race was stopped for a heavy crash by home hero Verstappen, who was unhurt, shortly after the start.

Norris reeled in Antonelli before passing him around the outside of the first corner in a daring move on lap 54 of 72, then took the lead from Ferrari’s Hamilton before the lap was over.

The defending champion held on with old tires to take the win. “This fight is still on,” he said over team radio.

“The move (to pass Antonelli) was good. I knew I was not going to get many chances. Every lap I spent behind him my chances got lower and lower,” Norris said. “Well played from my part...I probably had one chance.”

Antonelli was second after his Mercedes team-mate George Russell was ordered to move out of his way, following a failed gamble on a tire change by Antonelli.

Russell clung on to finish third ahead of Hamilton.

Antonelli’s standings lead grew to 59 points over Russell and Hamilton, who are now level. Norris moved ahead of Charles Leclerc for fourth.

There was tension at Mercedes as both Antonelli and Russell criticised the team’s decisions over the radio.

Antonelli called his team’s strategy “too risky” when the team congratulated him on second place, while Russell earlier seemed to object to being asked to give way to his team-mate.

“Is he fighting for the win? Or is he planning to catch Norris?” Russell questioned, at a point where Norris was far ahead of both.

Russell relented after the race

and said he felt Mercedes had made the right decision to avoid the two battling for position as Hamilton closed in behind.

Antonelli “would have overtaken anyway so it was the right decision,” said Russell, who won the sprint race on Saturday. “It’s been a strong weekend overall so I’ll take the positives.”

Verstappen’s big crash

There was a half-hour delay after Verstappen slammed into the wall on a damp first lap, stopping the race and ensuring a nightmare end to his last home race in the Netherlands for the foreseeable future.

Just a couple of seconds later, there would have been another huge collision if not for lightning reactions by Nico Hulkenberg. As his Audi team-mate Gabriel Bortoleto span across the track, the German swerved around him through a cloud of tire smoke.

“It was crazy with Gabi, I almost T-boned him,” Hulkenberg said over team radio.

The Dutch Grand Prix is dropping off the schedule after this season and the many orange-clad Dutch fans who turned up to support Verstappen instead saw Norris and his orange McLaren take the win.

Verstappen said he simply misjudged his speed on the damp track after pre-race rain.

Charles Leclerc was fifth on another disappointing day for Ferrari ahead of its home race in Italy in two weeks’ time. Norris’ team-mate Oscar Piastri was sixth after running in the top three early on, and Liam Lawson salvaged seventh for Red Bull after being called in to replace the injured Isack Hadjar.

Hulkenberg was eighth for Audi, with Fernando Alonso ninth in the best result of an otherwise-disastrous 2026 for Aston Martin. Alpine’s Pierre Gasly rounded out the top ten. - Agencies

US Open announces record \$108 million prize purse for 2026



NEW YORK: US Open organisers announced an increased prize money pool of US\$108 million, the highest amount for a tennis tournament to date.

The men’s and women’s champions at Flushing Meadows will take home US\$5.5 million each, the largest payout in Grand Slam history, and a 10 per cent increase from last year.

First-round payout also

sees a 27 per cent increase to US\$140,000.

The decision comes amid widespread protests over player compensation, with top stars — led by Jannik Sinner and Aryna Sabalenka — limiting media duties at earlier Grand Slams demanding a higher percentage of tournament revenue for prize money.

“These steps represent important progress in the ongoing

conversations between players and the US Open over the past 18 months,” top players said in a press release issued on their behalf.

“This is a substantial increase in prize money. While this is not yet tied to an agreed revenue-sharing formula, players remain committed to that principle and will continue to work with each of the Grand Slams toward that goal.”

IN MISSOURI

Clark holds off McIlroy fightback to win BMW Championship

MISSOURI: Wyndham Clark said he is “one of the best players in the world” after he survived a fightback from Rory McIlroy to win the BMW Championship in Missouri on Sunday.

Clark held a five-shot lead going into the final day, but saw his advantage evaporate as McIlroy drew level with seven holes left to play.

But Northern Ireland’s McIlroy could not take several opportunities to move ahead, and while he

closed with a bogey, Clark had a run of three successive birdies as he posted a fourth-round 70 to finish the week 17 under par.

Patrick Cantlay also closed his round with three birdies to finish runner-up on 14 under in the second of the three end-of-season FedEx Cup play-off events.

After pushing Clark all the way, McIlroy ended the day one under par to finish 13 under, four shots behind the winner.

“It was weird - I wasn’t nervous but I was kind of out of it, making double bogeys. I can’t believe I didn’t make anything on the greens. But I kept trying to get myself going,” said Clark, who picked up a third win of the year.

“I really started to swing free down the end. I was proud I didn’t let it get away and was mentally strong. “I’m one of the best players in the world. Everyone gives me a hard time and roots for other peo-

ple, but I’ve come into my own. It’s my best season yet coming off my worst year.”

After losing his first-day lead with a second-round 69, McIlroy said he needed a “heroic effort” to catch Clark on the final day.

The back-to-back Masters champion fought hard to gain two shots as Clark dropped three, but missed a putt on the 14th with the scores tied - and from there Clark recovered.

“I’m not playing well enough to be too disappointed to not win,” McIlroy told CBS Sports.

Scotland’s Robert MacIntyre carded the joint lowest round of the day, a five-under 65, to jump up to joint seventh on 10 under.

World No.1 Scottie Scheffler, who won the previous week’s opening play-off event by eight strokes, closed with a two-under 68 to finish joint 12th on seven under. - Agencies



ROUND-UP

Meethaq Islamic Banking Platinum Sponsor of 16th National General Assembly for medical students

Held under the theme “Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation in Healthcare,” this year’s edition provided a platform to explore a range of topics related to emerging technologies and their growing role in healthcare

MUSCAT: As part of its commitment to supporting youth and strengthening partnerships with educational institutions and community, Meethaq Islamic Banking from Bank Muscat participated as the Platinum Sponsor of the 16th edition of the National General Assembly (NGA 16) for medical students, held from 20th to 22nd of August at the InterContinental Muscat Hotel.

The opening ceremony was held under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Said Harib Al Lamki, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Health Affairs, in the presence of Ali Ahmed Al Lawati, Assistant General Manager of Meethaq Corporate Banking, alongside officials, academics and specialists from the health and innovation sectors, and medical students from various colleges across the Sultanate.

Held under the theme “Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation in Healthcare,” this year’s edition provided a platform to ex-



plore a range of topics related to emerging technologies and their growing role in healthcare.

The event highlighted the importance of keeping pace with rapid technological developments and enhancing students’ awareness of the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence to improve the efficiency of the healthcare services,

while encouraging innovative and forward-looking thinking.

Throughout the 3-day event, Meethaq’s team engaged with students and participants, introducing them to a range of Shari’a-compliant banking products and services designed to meet different financial needs and aspirations. These included the Meethaq Sav-

ings Plan, Home Financing, Credit Cards and Maal Card, while the team also responded to visitors’ enquiries about Meethaq’s various banking solutions including Meethaq digital channels and banking applications.

The sponsorship reflects Meethaq’s focus on building meaningful partnerships with

educational institution and platforms that contribute to knowledge sharing, skills development and engaging on topics shaping the future of key sectors in the Sultanate of Oman.

Commenting on the occasion, Ali Ahmed Al Lawati, Assistant General Manager of Meethaq Corporate Banking, said: “At Meethaq,

we believe that investing in the next generation goes beyond supporting their educational and professional journeys. It also means equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to contribute to a more innovative and sustainable future. Our sponsorship of the National General Assembly reflects the importance we place on initiatives that connect knowledge with practical application and address areas increasingly relevant to Oman’s future, including digital transformation and artificial intelligence. The event also gave us an opportunity to engage directly with students from the health sector, better understand their aspirations and introduce them to the Shari’a-compliant banking solutions that can support their evolving needs.” He added: “Meethaq will continue to support initiatives that encourage knowledge exchange and strengthen engagement with the next generation of Omani talent. Such platforms play an important role in preparing students to contribute effectively to the future development of vital sectors across the Sultanate.”

Through its participation in the National General Assembly, Meethaq Islamic Banking continues to contribute to community focused initiatives that support youth development and encourage knowledge, innovation, and development

These efforts align with Oman Vision 2040 and its focus on developing human capital, fostering a knowledge-based economy and preparing future generations to respond to evolving economic and technological developments. Meethaq Islamic Banking is a leading Islamic banking service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, offering a comprehensive range of Shari’a compliant financial solutions.

With a focus on customer centricity and operational excellence, Meethaq combines strong Shari’a governance with modern banking capabilities to deliver quality, convenience and reliability through its branch network and various digital channels.

NEW SPACE IDENTITY 2.0

Own your perfect SUV: Kia Sportage or Seltos at 2.22% interest, two free EMIs

MUSCAT: Kia is transforming its customers purchase experience in its showroom, through upgraded interiors and amenities in the form of a New Space Identity 2.0. The New Identity includes wider customer experience options.

In celebration of its ongoing “New Identity, New Savings” campaign, Kia Oman is putting the spotlight on two of its most popular SUVs, the Sportage and the Seltos, giving customers even more reasons to make the switch this season.

The campaign brings a reduced interest rate of 2.22% on financing deals of up to four years and 3.33% for five-year agreements, with the first two EMIs covered by Kia.

As the summer vacation winds down and schools reopen, we know your priorities shift, which is why we are bringing you a whole new purchase experience and have made owning you next Kia easier than ever. On a 5 year deal, save upto OMR 400 on the Sportage 2.0 RVC 26 MY, while the Seltos 1.4T SPL 26 MY comes with savings of upto OMR 349 for a 5 year deal, both adjusted directly against the vehicle price and in addition to the standard Cash Gift offer already applicable on eligible models. Both the Sportage and Seltos come with a service package of 30,000 km or three years, whichever comes first, along with one year of complimentary registration, giving customers continued value well after purchase. (Terms & Conditions Apply).

The Kia Sportage 2.0 RVC stands out as a sophisticated SUV built for family life in Oman, combining bold styling, advanced tech-



nology and dynamic performance in one package.

A spacious 2,680 mm wheelbase and 591-litre cargo capacity make it ideally suited for everyday versatility, with a 157 HP 2.0 litre engine, paired with a 6-speed automatic transmission to deliver a refined and responsive drive.

An Electronic Parking Brake

and an All-Wheel Drive system to add further confidence on the road, intelligently distributing power across varying conditions and an 8 inch integrated infotainment display on the inside.

The Kia Seltos continues to attract young enthusiasts drawn to its elevated, modern driving experience.

A high SUV seating position offers a commanding view of the road, while a 1.4L Turbo engine producing 138 HP, paired with a 7-speed Dual-Clutch Transmission, delivers spirited performance and fuel efficiency of up to 17 km/litre.

It also comes with a Panoramic Sunroof, Ventilated Seats, Wire-

less Smart Charger, 8 inch infotainment display.

Kia Oman invites customers to visit their nearest showroom to experience the Sportage and Seltos firsthand, and discover what “New Identity, New Savings” means for their next SUV.

Reliable International Automotive LLC (RIA), the official dis-

tributor of Kia in Oman, continues to deliver a rewarding ownership experience for customers. The company was ranked #1 by Kia in 2024 for Sales Customer Satisfaction in the Middle East and Africa, reflecting its commitment to providing exceptional products, facilities, and customer service across the Sultanate.



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