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51

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WORLD CUP 2026

UPCOMING MATCHES

HYUNDAI

Third place play-off

FRANCE

19 July 1:00am

??

LOSER OF ARGENTINA V/S ENGLAND

Final

SPAIN

19 July 11:00pm

??

WINNER OF ARGENTINA V/S ENGLAND

For Hyundai Enquiries

80050003

# CPA INTENSIFIES INSPECTIONS IN DHOFAR DURING KHAREEF

Teams are conducting field visits across the wilayats, monitoring markets and shopping centres

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** The Consumer Protection Authority (CPA) has intensified inspection campaigns across Dhofar Governorate during the Khareef season to ensure market stability, protect consumer rights and maintain compliance with consumer protection laws amid the influx of tourists and



heightened commercial activity.

According to the authority, inspection teams are conducting continuous field visits across the governorate's wilayats, monitoring markets, shopping centres, commercial establishments and traditional souqs to verify that businesses adhere to regulations and provide safe products

and transparent pricing. As part of the campaign, the CPA is also carrying out joint inspections with Dhofar Municipality, focusing on coconut and fruit stalls, as well as vehicle rental offices that experience increased demand during the Khareef tourism season.

Inspectors are checking com-

pliance with consumer protection legislation and ensuring fair commercial practices.

The authority said its teams are closely monitoring promotional offers and discounts, detecting commercial violations and taking legal action against businesses found to be breaching consumer protection laws. **>A6**

## VISIT TO QATAR

HH Honourable Lady offers condolences

**DOHA:** Her Highness the Honourable Lady Assayida Ahd Abdullah Hamed Al Bussaidi, Spouse of the Sultan of Oman, extended condolences on Wednesday on the demise of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. The condolences were offered at Al Wajba Palace in Doha.

Upon her arrival at the hall, she was received by Sheikhha Moza Nasser Al-Missned and Sheikhha Jawaher Hamad Al Thani, Spouse of the Emir of the State of Qatar.

The Honourable Lady expressed her sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy on this grievous loss, praying to Allah the Almighty to rest the deceased's soul in peace in Paradise, and grant Al Thani family and the people of Qatar fortitude to bear the loss. The Honourable Lady was accompanied by Dr. Madeeha Ahmed Al Shaibani, Minister of Education, Dr. Laila Ahmed Al Najjar, Minister of Social Development, and a number of other female dignitaries. **-ONA**

## COVETED TROPHY

# 'A tremendous gift for our fans': Spain's ambassador to Oman celebrates World Cup final berth

**RAHUL DAS**  
rahuldas@timesofoman.com

**MUSCAT:** Spain's Ambassador to Oman, F. Javier de Istúriz, has expressed delight after Spain secured a place in the FIFA World Cup final, describing the achievement as a reward for the country's passionate supporters and a testament to the strength of Spanish football.

Reacting to Spain's 2-0 semifinal victory over France, Ambassador de Istúriz praised both teams and acknowledged the quality of

the opposition. "Yesterday was a good match. We played against a very strong team with very talented players and were fortunate to win," he told *Times of Oman*.

"We have made it to the final, which is a tremendous gift to Spain's wonderful fans and a testimony to the high level of football in Spain."

Looking ahead to the final, the ambassador said he hoped the best team would emerge victorious. "And now, may the best team win," he added.

He also had a special message



**F. JAVIER DE ISTÚRIZ**, Spain's ambassador to Oman



for Spanish supporters living in Oman, expressing hope that they would cherish the moment and celebrate together if Spain captures the coveted trophy.

"As for the Spanish fans in Oman, I hope they will enjoy this beautiful moment and that we have the occa-

sion to celebrate a victory together," Ambassador de Istúriz said. The victory sparked scenes of celebration across Spain, with fans gathering in city squares, cafés and homes to celebrate La Roja's return to the World Cup final after 16 years. Many supporters described the win as an emotional moment reminiscent of Spain's golden era.

One jubilant supporter Vidal Gálvez summed up the national mood by saying in Oman, "It feels like 2010 all over again. This team has made us believe that another World Cup is possible." **>A5**

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# OMAN

COMMENTARY

## Sayyid Badr, the Illusion of Containment, and Gulf Security: Muscat Says What Must Be Said

Some articles are read and quickly forgotten. Others transcend the news cycle to become political documents that reveal how states interpret the world around them. The opinion piece by Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Oman's Foreign Minister, published in the French newspaper Le Monde on 14 July 2026, belongs to the latter category. Appearing in the aftermath of the military escalation between the United States and Iran—an escalation that Oman worked tirelessly to prevent—it offers far more than a diplomatic commentary. It presents Muscat's strategic reading of a region standing at a critical crossroads.

The significance of the article lies not only in its timing but also in its tone. Those familiar with Omani diplomacy know that it is traditionally measured, cautious, and deliberately understated. Direct judgments and confrontational language have rarely been its preferred instruments. Yet this time, Muscat spoke with unusual clarity, as if to say that recent events no longer permit diplomatic euphemisms and

that the moment has come to call things by their proper names.

The article's first message is unmistakable: the recent war was not inevitable. Rather, it was the culmination of years of accumulated political failure. Regional crises were allowed to fester, while their root causes were repeatedly postponed or ignored. The international community became adept at managing symptoms instead of addressing the disease itself.

It is in this context that the article describes the long-standing policy of "containment" as an illusion. This is not merely a criticism of a particular strategy; it is an indictment of an entire approach that has shaped international engagement with the Middle East for decades. Containment has failed to deliver lasting stability. Instead, it has preserved unresolved conflicts that erupt with even greater intensity the longer genuine political solutions are delayed. Ignoring legitimate rights while relying excessively on military deterrence has not produced peace; it has merely postponed the next crisis.



On Gulf security, the article advances a fundamentally different vision from that prevailing in many Western capitals. While some continue to equate maritime security with larger naval deployments and expanded military coalitions, Oman argues that genuine security must begin within the region itself. Strategic waterways cannot remain secure if the states that border them are excluded from the regional security architecture.

Here, Oman's strategic philosophy becomes particularly clear: geography is not a political choice—it is a strategic reality that must be accommodated rather than ignored. Iran will re-

main on the opposite shore of the Gulf, just as the Gulf Cooperation Council states will remain on theirs. Sustainable security, therefore, cannot be built against one's neighbors but with them. External military alliances, regardless of their strength, are inherently temporary, shaped by changing interests, elections, and shifting administrations. Geography and history, by contrast, remain constant.

Perhaps the article's boldest feature is its willingness to identify what it considers the principal source of instability threatening Gulf security. Rather than relying on the conventional diplomatic language of "regional

tensions," it explicitly argues that many of the risks confronting the Gulf originate from decisions made beyond its borders—specifically in Tel Aviv. This is less an ideological position than a strategic assessment. Recent years have repeatedly demonstrated that every expansion of Israeli military confrontation across the region increases the likelihood that the Gulf itself will be drawn into crises not of its own making.

This argument also reflects an important evolution in Omani strategic thinking. For the Gulf states, security is no longer viewed solely through a military lens; it has become an essential prerequisite for sustainable development. Billions of dollars invested in economic diversification, ports, free zones, renewable energy, tourism, and advanced industries can be jeopardized by a single military decision taken hundreds of kilometers away. Such decisions immediately reverberate through energy markets, shipping lanes, insurance costs, investor confidence, and ultimately the stability of the global economy.

For this reason, Muscat's message extends well beyond the current crisis. It argues that security cannot be imported from abroad, nor can it be imposed through military superiority alone. Lasting stability requires confronting the underlying causes of conflict, ending occupation, and building an inclusive regional security architecture founded on dialogue, mutual respect, and shared interests rather than exclusion and perpetual confrontation.

With remarkable clarity, Oman has declared that the illusion of containment has finally collapsed.

Persisting with the same failed policies while expecting different outcomes will only condemn the Middle East to new cycles of escalation, greater instability, and mounting human and economic costs.

The choice facing the international community is no longer between containment and confrontation. It is between the courage to build a just and inclusive regional order—or the certainty of reliving the same crises under different names.

FUTURE REQUIREMENTS

## ROP rolls out digital transformation leadership initiative



**MUSCAT:** The Royal Oman Police (ROP) on Wednesday launched the "Strategic Leadership for Digital Transformation" programme at the Officers' Institute of the Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences.

The programme's opening ceremony was held under the auspices of General Sultan Mohammed Al Nu'amani, Minister of the Royal Office and Head of the Office of the Supreme Commander, in the presence of Lt. General Hassan Mohsin Al Shuraigi, Inspector General of Police and Customs, and a number of senior officers.

The implementation of the programme, which is organised by the Royal Oman Police in co-operation with leading international expertise houses, embodies the keenness of the General Command of Police to build advanced leadership capabilities in the

fields of digital transformation, employ the latest technological advancements to develop the security work system, and raise readiness to keep pace with rapid changes and future requirements.

It also aims to enable participants to utilise modern technologies and smart data to support security decision-making, and to develop change, innovation, and foresight skills to enhance institutional efficiency.

The Strategic Leadership for Digital Transformation program at the Royal Oman Police also supports consolidating the integration between security and technical aspects, and enhancing institutional capabilities to address digital challenges and cybersecurity requirements, thereby contributing to the advancement of sophisticated smart systems. -ONA

### Oman showcased progress in implementing Arab Anti-Corruption Convention



**PROMOTING INTEGRITY:** Zaher Sulaiman Al Salmy, Deputy Chairman of the State Financial and Administrative Audit Authority for Audit of Government Units, received the visiting delegates. -ONA

**MUSCAT:** The Sultanate of Oman on Wednesday highlighted its efforts in implementing the Arab Convention Against Corruption.

This took place within the framework of the State Financial and Administrative Audit Authority's hosting of a country visit by experts from the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Morocco, and the General Secretariat of the Arab League.

Zaher Sulaiman Al Salmy, Deputy Chairman of the State Financial and Administrative Audit Authority for Audit of Government Units, received the visiting delegates.

During the meeting, Al Salmy commended the efforts of the two reviewing States and the General Secretariat of the Arab League in reviewing the Sultanate of Oman's implementation of the Arab Convention Against Corruption.

He noted that the Sultanate of Oman had ratified the Arab Convention Against Corruption pursuant to Royal Decree No. 28/2014, reflecting its commitment to fostering constructive co-

operation in promoting integrity and combating corruption through the implementation of measures aimed at preventing and combating corruption.

He further emphasised the importance of strengthening Arab cooperation in the areas of integrity, transparency, accountability, and the rule of law, while encouraging individuals and civil society institutions to actively participate in preventing and combating corruption.

He also underscored the national efforts undertaken by government entities in the Sultanate of Oman in fulfillment of their active

role under the National Integrity Promotion Plan.

In addition, he commended the dedicated efforts and valuable contributions of the Sultanate of Oman's team of experts in reviewing the implementation of both the United Nations Convention Against Corruption and the Arab Convention Against Corruption.

During the programme, the observations of the experts from the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Kingdom of Morocco on the Sultanate of Oman's responses regarding its implementation of the provisions of the Arab Convention Against Corruption were discussed.

The discussions also highlighted the Sultanate of Oman's key success stories and best practices identified through the convention review process, as well as opportunities for further improvement.

It is worth noting that these country review visits are conducted pursuant to Paragraph (35) of the Terms of Reference for the Mechanism for Reviewing the Implementation of the Arab Convention Against Corruption, which underscores the importance of complementing the desk review with country visits and joint meetings. -ONA

NATURAL RESOURCE UTILISATION

## Papaya cultivation supports national food security system

**SHINAS:** Modern agricultural projects in the Sultanate of Oman continue to strengthen their role in supporting the national food security system through the expansion of high-yield, economically viable crops and the adoption of advanced irrigation and farm management technologies.

These efforts contribute to enhancing the efficiency of natural resource utilisation, increasing the supply of local produce in domestic markets, and opening new avenues for agricultural investment while adding value to the sector.

The papaya cultivation project undertaken by farmer Khalid Mohammed Al Qamshoui in the Wilayat of Shinas, North Al Batinah Governorate, stands as a promising model in this regard.

Launched in 2023 across an area of approximately five acres, the project capitalises on the productive characteristics of this crop and its suitability for the Sultanate of Oman's climatic conditions.

Al Qamshoui stated that the decision to cultivate papaya followed a thorough assessment of the crop's attributes, notably its adaptability to local weather conditions and the fact that its potential pests



are well-documented and can be effectively managed.

He added that the crop's year-round production cycle and strong demand in local and regional markets were key factors encouraging its expansion.

In a statement to Oman News Agency (ONA), he noted that the project initially faced a number of challenges, including soil conditions, water management, high temperatures and humidity, as

well as difficulties in sourcing high-quality seeds.

However, these obstacles were overcome through the implementation of modern agricultural practices and the utilisation of technical extension services.

He indicated that the farm cultivates two varieties—the Chinese "Red Lady" and the Thai variety—selected for their strong pest resistance, high yield density, relatively compact growth



habit, fruit quality, and strong consumer appeal. He explained that papaya trees begin bearing fruit approximately six months after transplanting seedlings to the permanent field, with production continuing for up to 36 months.

Under optimal conditions, each tree yields between 30 and 40 kilograms of fruit.

The project employs a drip irrigation system to optimise water consumption, with trees irrigated

every 36 hours for 15 minutes per cycle, following a carefully designed schedule that ensures high water-use efficiency.

A regular fertilisation programme is implemented through the injection of ready-formulated fertilizer blends into the irrigation network at calculated rates that meet the plant's requirements across various growth stages.

He further noted that the farm's output is marketed locally through

Omani traders, with an average selling price of approximately 350 baisa per kilogram, subject to seasonal fluctuations and supply-demand dynamics. The production cost per tonne is estimated at around OMR100.

He pointed to the support provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, which has included technical extension guidance and the provision of limited quantities of fertilisers—contributing to enhanced performance and improved productivity.

Looking ahead, he confirmed that the next phase aims to expand cultivated area, alongside a strategic shift toward agro-processing and the production of value-added goods such as juices and dried products, thereby boosting economic returns and enhancing the competitiveness of Omani produce.

He offered advice to prospective investors in this sector, emphasising the importance of scientifically preparing agricultural land and adopting modern irrigation networks and advanced fertilisation systems as critical success factors for project viability and production sustainability. -ONA

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# French ambassador highlights expanding Oman-France ties

The envoy said Oman and France are celebrating a relationship that spans generations, built on a long history of friendship

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** French Ambassador to Oman Nabil Hajlaoui has hailed the deepening strategic partner-



ship between France and Oman, describing the recent state visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to France as a landmark that has strengthened cooperation in

diplomacy, economic development and emerging technologies. Speaking at France's National Day celebrations in Muscat on Tuesday evening, the ambassador

said His Majesty's visit to Paris, where he was received by French President Emmanuel Macron, reaffirmed the two countries' shared commitment to peace, stability and closer bilateral relations. The reception, hosted by the Embassy of the French Republic at the Crowne Plaza Muscat in Qurum, was attended by senior Omani officials, members of the diplomatic corps and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Hajlaoui said Oman and France are celebrating a relationship that spans generations, built on a long history of friendship and strengthened over the years through cooperation in culture, education, healthcare, business and diplomacy. Referring to the discussions held during His Majesty's visit, the ambassador said both leaders focused on efforts to restore peace

and stability in the region, adding that France and Oman remain closely aligned in supporting dialogue and diplomatic solutions to regional challenges. He also reaffirmed France's support for Ukraine, noting that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy joined President Macron and other world leaders at the Bastille Day celebrations in Paris as a symbol of continued international solidarity with the Ukrainian people. **Expanding cooperation** Highlighting the growing economic partnership, Hajlaoui said France and Oman are expanding cooperation beyond traditional infrastructure projects into sectors that support the Sultanate's economic diversification agenda. He identified waste and water

management, renewable energy, artificial intelligence, data science and other advanced technologies as priority areas for future collaboration, adding that several agreements are expected to be signed in these sectors. The ambassador said France is also working with Oman on innovative energy storage projects and digital government technologies, expressing confidence that these initiatives would create greater value for the Sultanate while opening new opportunities for Omani talent through partnerships with French companies and institutions. He said the expanding cooperation reflects the two countries' shared commitment to preserving their historic ties while building a future based on innovation, sustainable economic growth and international cooperation.

COMMENTARY

## Oman's strategy – Upskilling and ICV

Oman's strategy for upskilling and In-Country Value (ICV) by 2030 pivots from strict compliance quotas to strategic capability building. Framed by Oman Vision 2040, the current 2026-2030 five-year plan targets an ICV contribution to GDP of over 40% by localizing supply chains and heavily modernizing the workforce. Oman's innovation and human capital strategy is anchored by Oman Vision 2040, which aims to transition the nation into a knowledge-based, diversified, and sustainable economy. The framework focuses on workforce localization (In-Country Value) alongside strategic investments in digital transformation, green energy, and high-tech sectors to drive global competitiveness. The pillars of ICV include Employment and training of Omani nationals; Retention of expenditure within Oman; Retention of local service providers and suppliers; and Omani goods and services. Merging ICV with human capital development gives rise to an economic opportunity in Oman that is planned and executed to achieve inclusivity. The key initiatives are : Qimam Platform: Monitored by the Oman Investment Authority (OIA), it tracks government companies' performance in ICV—specifically highlighting localized procurement and training investments.



National Employment Program (NEP): Drives frameworks that align higher education and vocational training outputs directly with market needs. "Itqan" Programme: An industrial sector initiative specifically focused on providing job seekers and current workers with practical training and upskilling pathways Vendor & Supplier Development: If your business is bidding on public or OIA-affiliated projects in Oman, upskilling your Omani employees and utilizing locally certified goods directly increases your ICV score Professional Certifications: for Training frequently host interactive ICV planning and reporting courses targeted at HR, Procurement, and Contracts professionals Over \$1.8 billion in energy sector contracts were unlocked for local SMEs, formalized by platforms like Majd. Oman is also focusing on local capacity for renewable

energy and green hydrogen. The Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion (MoCIP) targets raising the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP, actively supported by programs that grew national employment in the sector by over 79%. Tourism & Aviation: Major operators like OMRAN and Oman Airports developed a joint ICV blueprint strategy to localize supply chains and nurture local investors and cultural heritage. By prioritizing localization and upskilling, Oman aims to fortify its economy. Projections target a significant leap in ICV's overall contribution to GDP, coupled with substantial growth in SME exports and private sector employment for Omani nationals. The plan is supported by a clear vision and integrated legislative and regulatory frameworks, placing Oman on a promising trajectory toward a prosperous and sustainable economic future.

IMPROVE SAFETY

## Parts of Al Ma'amoura-Razat dual carriageway opened

**SALALAH:** Dhofar Municipality on Wednesday opened sections of Al Ma'amoura-Razat dual carriageway project in the Wilayat of Salalah to traffic, as part of its ongoing efforts to develop the Wilayat's road network. Dr. Abdullah Mohammed Ba'owin, Director General of Projects and Technical Affairs at Dhofar Municipality stated that the project, valued at more than OMR4 million, aims to upgrade the main road network in the eastern sector of Salalah city, enhance traffic efficiency and improve safety and flow along the corridor connecting Al Ma'amoura Roundabout and Razat Roundabout—in line with the urban and tourism expansion underway in the region. He added that the project entails the construction of a dual



carriageway along the existing route, extending approximately 5.5 kilometres, with two lanes in each direction, inner and outer shoulders, and a variable-width central median, all in accordance with approved specifications. He noted that the works ex-

ecuted to date have included the opening of sections of the dual carriageway to traffic, while confirming that the project has exceeded the approved programme timeline, with completion now expected in September 2027.

-ONA

IN DHOFAR

## Truck breakdown hits traffic

Times News Service

**MUSCAT:** A truck breakdown at Aqabat Al Yasmin in Dhofar Governorate has caused a partial disruption to traffic on the road leading down to Salalah, the Royal Oman Police (ROP) said. The ROP urged motorists using

the route to exercise maximum caution, remain vigilant, and strictly follow defensive driving practices to ensure their safety and help maintain the smooth flow of traffic. Authorities have advised road users to cooperate with traffic instructions while the situation is being managed.



NORTH AL SHARQIYAH

## Agriculture department organises forum on water desalination

**IBRA:** The Directorate General of Agriculture and Water Resources in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate on Wednesday organised a gathering on the importance of water desalination units in the governorate. The gathering saw the participation of representatives of private sector establishments, farmers, investors and technicians. The Director General of Agriculture and Water Resources in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate, Dr. Abdulaziz bin Ali Al Mashaikh, said that the gathering was one of the outcomes of food security laboratories and forums be-



ing held in the governorates of the Sultanate of Oman. Al Mashaikh added that the gathering aimed to activate wa-

ter desalination units to boost the Ministry's objective of achieving sustainable food and water security.

The meeting included presentations by private sector establishments and a session to answer the queries of attendees. During the meeting, held at the branch of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) in Ibra, a partnership agreement was signed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, and Nada Al Rabee Company to provide technical support to citizens whose farms are impacted by salinity. The agreement provides for the installation of water desalination units in the interest of such farmers.

-ONA

GEOGRAPHICAL FACTS AND FIGURES

## New book published

**MUSCAT:** , The National Survey and Geospatial Information Authority has published a book titled "Sultanate of Oman: Geographical Facts and Figures," which comes as part of the scientific and documentary publications issued by the Authority. Through its publications, the National Survey and Geospatial Information Authority at the Ministry of Defence has sought to extrapolate geographical facts and figures regarding the unique geographical diversity that the Sultanate of Oman enjoys. This is conducted through a scientific methodology based on measurement and spatial analysis within a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) environment to derive geospatial information, which is then

represented and displayed through the maps and charts published within the pages of the book. The book contains several essential geographical facts and figures that highlight the importance and status of the Sultanate of Oman. It does so by shedding light on key pillars, including: the area and geographical location that define the country's spatial framework, the international land and maritime borders that define its territory and separate it from its neighbors, and the administrative division of the governorates. The book reviews the most prominent geological features of Oman, reveals the diverse terrain and landforms that characterize the Omani territory, and highlights natural reserves. -ONA

# Al Buraimi cements its role as strategic commercial gateway

The Governorate capitalises on its unique geographic location and strategic proximity to local and Gulf ports and airports

**AL BURAIMI:** Al Buraimi Governorate continues to consolidate its contemporary strategic standing as one of the Sultanate of Oman’s most vital border commercial gateways. Throughout history, it has served as a vibrant crossroads where ancient trade caravans converged. Nowadays, it has evolved into a dynamic economic artery connecting Oman to promising investment and commercial horizons.

The Governorate capitalizes on its unique geographic location and strategic proximity to local and Gulf ports and airports, alongside its advanced infrastructural assets across its various wilayats. It thus functions as an integrated commercial and investment hub and a vital link between domestic markets and their regional and international counterparts, in alignment with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 for comprehensive economic stimulation and governorate-level development.

With its distinct geographical fabric, the Governorate constitutes a logistics confluence of paramount importance. Its modern road networks and advanced land border crossings ensure high fluidity in the movement of goods and products, while customs procedures are streamlined through the unified “Bayan” electronic system at the Governorate’s border points—reducing customs clearance times for commercial shipments to record levels.

This integration of geographic



proximity and smart systems has contributed to lowering logistics costs, positioning Al Buraimi Governorate at the forefront of

transit hubs and re-export operations, and establishing it as a prime choice for numerous manufacturers and exporters targeting

the Gulf market with agility and high efficiency.

Said Abdullah Al Balushi, Director General of Al Buraimi In-

dustrial City, stated that the total value of localized investments within the Industrial City has exceeded RO 280 million, hosting



more than 370 projects spanning industrial, commercial, and service sectors across a vast area of 5.5 million square metres, offering substantial headroom for future expansion.

Al Balushi added that the impact of this commercial upswing is directly felt by entrepreneurs in the Governorate, which is witnessing notable growth in the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These enterprises leverage the Governorate’s comparative and competitive advantages across services, logistics, and construction sectors, supported by thousands of active commercial records in retail, wholesale, and supply chain activities.

He further explained that ongoing coordination with relevant authorities aims to deliver integrated packages of facilitation measures and competitive incentives, including streamlined procedures through the one-stop-shop model and the “Invest Oman” platform.

He affirmed that this economic momentum is aligned with ambitious plans to develop core infrastructure and promising development projects across the Governorate’s three wilayats—including vital initiatives in Al Rawdah area, modern commercial schemes, and emerging economic zones. These are underpinned by an integrated road network extending to all border crossings, ensuring that the Governorate remains a vibrant commercial and investment engine supporting the Sultanate of Oman’s targeted economic diversification efforts. -ONA

## ENHANCED TRAFFIC SAFETY



## Completion rate of Sultan Thuwaini bin Said Road rehabilitation project reaches 89.46 percent

**BIDBID:** The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology continues to implement the rehabilitation project of Sultan Thuwaini bin Said Road (Bidbid–Nizwa), spanning from the Al Sharqiyah intersection to the Farq intersection in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, with the completion rate reaching 89.46 percent, advancing ahead of the planned schedule.

The project, which has a total cost of more than OMR10 million, aims to rehabilitate the road and its associated elements, treat damaged sections, and enhance traffic safety features. This will raise the road’s operational efficiency, improve the level of service, and ensure the continuity of its performance in a manner commensurate with the volume of traffic.

The project involves the ap-

plication of several modern engineering solutions and technologies, most notably the use of “Geogrid” technology in the rehabilitation works.

This contributes to enhancing the efficiency of the pavement layers and extending their expected lifespan, in accordance with the best approved engineering practices.

The project is expected to contribute to enhancing connectivity between the wilayats of Al Dakhiliyah Governorate and neighbouring governorates, raising the level of traffic safety, improving traffic flow, and supporting the efficiency of the transport network.

This aligns with the Ministry’s directions toward developing sustainable infrastructure that meets the developmental and economic requirements of the Sultanate of Oman. -ONA

## TOURISM

# Jabal Akhdar welcomes over 100,000 visitors during first half of 2026



**JABAL AKHDAR:** The number of visitors to the Wilayat of Jabal Akhdar in A’Dakhiliyah Governorate reached 101,608 during the period from the beginning of January to the end of June 2026, compared to 89,780 visitors during the same period last year—marking a 13.2 percent increase, according to statistics released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The statistics further indicated that Omani visitors to Jabal Akhdar during the first half of 2026 numbered 40,082, while Saudi visitors accounted for 13,272, Emirati visitors for 395, Bahraini visitors for 285, Kuwaiti visitors for 332, and Qatari visitors for 149.

According to the data, visitors

from other Arab nationalities totaled 4,863, whereas foreign nationals constituted the largest share of visitors, with 52,230.

The “Rose Spring Festival 2026” in Jabal Akhdar—held annually from late March through mid-April—generated significant tourism activity and played a key role in attracting numerous visitors from within the Sultanate of Oman and abroad.

The Rose Spring Festival stands as one of the seasonal events that enriches the tourism product of Jabal Akhdar, complementing its offerings in leisure tourism, adventure tourism, ecotourism, and heritage tourism. It affords visitors the opportunity to observe firsthand the traditional and modern methods of rosewater

production.

Moreover, the festival serves as a major tourist attraction due to its connection with the traditional craft of rosewater distillation, which is integral to local cosmetics, perfumery, Omani confectionery and traditional Omani coffee. The project, which has a total cost of more than OMR10 million, aims to rehabilitate the road and its associated elements, treat damaged sections, and enhance traffic safety features. This will raise the road’s operational efficiency, improve the level of service, and ensure the continuity of its performance in a manner commensurate with the volume of traffic.

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AL SUWAIQ HOSPITAL

New specialised services in dental surgery launched

**AL SUWAIQ:** In a special mission at Al Suwaiq Hospital, North Al Batinah Governorate, a medical team from Al Nahda Hospital recently launched dental surgery services for people with disabilities and activated a clinic for the treatment of temporomandibular joint diseases (TMJ). The step was in pursuance of a drive to localise specialised medical services and minimise the need to transfer patients to referral hospitals. It also helps accelerate access to healthcare, raise the quality of services offered to patients and cut down patient waiting time.



The operations are supported by teams specialised in anaesthesia and nursing, in addition to technical teams. -ONA

AL WUSTA

Pacts signed to implement projects in Haima, Mahout



**HAIMA:** Sheikh Ahmed Musallam Jaddad, Governor of Al Wusta, signed agreements to implement a number of development projects in the Wilayats of Haima and Mahout, within the framework of ongoing efforts to enhance infrastructure and improve the quality of public services and facilities in

the governorate. The total value of these projects amounted to OMR1,530,168. The agreements included a project to rehabilitate internal roads in the Wilayat of Haima, a project to construct a health walkway in the Wilayat of Haima, and a project to develop and beautify the Al

Jouba roundabout in the Wilayat of Mahout. These projects come within the plans of Al Wusta Governorate aimed at supporting local development, improving infrastructure, and enhancing the quality of life, in line with the objectives of comprehensive development in the governorate. -ONA

Al Khalili, Al Ghailani & Co. LLP Wins Best Brand in Customer Experience Award in Legal Services Category



**Al Khalili, Al Ghailani & Co. LLP** was felicitated with the 'Times of Oman Best Brand in Customer Experience (CX) Award in Legal Services Category' at the Times of Oman CX Awards 2026. The awards presentation was co-located with Times of Oman CX Forum 2026, held at Hotel Kempinski, Muscat. The premier event was attended by over 325+ CX leaders across sectors in Oman. Al Khalili, Al Ghailani & Co. LLP has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to customer experience by delivering trusted legal counsel built on professionalism, responsiveness, and client-focused service. As one of Oman's leading full-service law firms, the firm has earned the confidence of local and international clients through its ability to provide practical legal solutions across a broad spectrum of practice areas, while maintaining the highest standards of integrity and excellence. With a customer-centric approach that places clients busi-

ness objectives at the forefront, the firm combines deep local expertise with an international outlook to deliver timely, commercially focused legal advice. Its emphasis on clear communication, long-term relationships, and tailored legal strategies has enabled clients to navigate complex legal and regulatory environments with confidence. By continuously investing in legal expertise, professional development, innovation, and service excellence, Al Khalili, Al Ghailani & Co. LLP continues to set benchmarks in customer experience within the legal services sector. Its unwavering commitment to quality, trust and client satisfaction reinforces its position as one of the Sultanate's most respected and trusted law firms. 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 curve in

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

Environment Authority inks pacts to tackle environmental challenges

The agreements included the implementation of research projects to monitor and manage plastic waste



**MUSCAT:** The Environment Authority signed on Wednesday a number of agreements to implement research projects within the Strategic Research Management Program. This aims to support scientific research and develop innovative solutions for environmental challenges, in alignment with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, the

Oman Environment Strategy, and Net-Zero Carbon Neutrality 2050. The agreements were signed on behalf of the Environment Authority by Eng. Sulaiman Nasser Al Akhzami, Vice Chairman of the Authority. On the other side, the agreements were signed by Dr. Ali Saud Al Bimani, Vice Chancellor of the National University of Science and Technology; Dr. Al Amir Nasser Al Alawi, Deputy Vice Chancellor of

the University of Technology and Applied Sciences for Administrative and Financial Affairs; and Dr. Salah Soumar Al Zadjali, Director General of Programs and Capacity Building at the Research and Innovation Authority. The agreements included the implementation of research projects to monitor and manage plastic waste in terrestrial and marine environments, and to develop sustainable solutions and mecha-

nisms to reduce them, alongside developing eco-friendly cooling technologies that contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and lowering the carbon footprint. These efforts also aim to enhance environmental innovation and support sustainable development priorities in the Sultanate of Oman. The signing took place on the sidelines of a workshop titled "Reviewing the Outputs and Results of Strategic Research Projects," organized by the Authority to review the key results of research projects implemented within the Strategic Research Programme, and to highlight their role in supporting environmental decision-making and developing scientific solutions for national challenges. Dr. Mohammed Saif Al Kalbani, Director General of Environmental Compliance at the Authority, stressed in a speech the importance of enhancing the partnership between the Author-

ity and academic institutions, and transforming scientific research outputs into practical applications that contribute to developing environmental policies and achieving sustainable development. The workshop witnessed a review of four research projects addressing several priority environmental issues. These included the sustainable management of Omani coasts, studying natural radiation levels and their health and social impacts, measuring radon gas concentrations and their impact on public health, in addition to developing innovative solutions for the sustainability of special economic zones and reducing pollution using biotechnology. The workshop also reviewed two new research projects within the Strategic Research Program for the period (2026-2028). The first addressed monitoring and managing plastic waste in terrestrial and marine environments to support finding sustainable solu-

tions aligned with "Oman Vision 2040," while the second focused on developing eco-friendly cooling technologies that contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and lowering the carbon footprint. The project also addresses the Authority's future directions in the field of strategic research, which are based on developing scientific and innovative solutions to national environmental challenges, and enhancing cooperation with the Research and Innovation Authority and academic institutions. The organization of the workshop comes within the framework of the efforts made by the Environment Authority to strengthen the environmental research system and exchange knowledge among government agencies, academic institutions, and research entities. This contributes to developing evidence-based environmental policies and supporting innovation in facing environmental challenges and achieving sustainability. -ONA

FIFA WORLD CUP

Spain to bid for crown

**FROM A1** Another fan Alexandre Fernandez said, "France are one of the strongest teams in the world, but Spain showed incredible discipline and character. We couldn't be prouder." A third supporter Maximo added, "The whole country is behind this team. We're just one match away from making history again, and everyone believes this group can do it." Spain reached the final with a disciplined display against France, neutralising one of international football's most dangerous attacks to keep Kylian Mbappé and his teammates scoreless. The victory sends Spain into their first World Cup final since lifting the trophy in 2010.



Celebrations continued late into the night, with jubilant supporters recreating Norway's popular "Viking Row" celebration that became one of the defining images of the tournament, as Spain moved within one victory

of football's biggest prize. Spain will now bid to crown an impressive campaign with a record-extending FIFA World Cup title when they face the winner of the second semifinal between England and Argentina.



Ministry of Defence

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

1. The medical city of military and security invites specialized companies to participate in the following Tenders:

| No | Subject                                                                                                                   | Tender Number | Grade            | Last date for Purchasing Tender document | Last date to submit bids | Tender document Fees + Vat |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Extension Of Central Plante                                                                                               | 02/2026       | First, Excellent | 23 July 2026                             | 17 August 2026           | 130 OMR                    |
| 2. | Development Of Visitors Waiting Hall At The Hospital Of Medical City Of Military And Security Services -Al Qurm           | 03/2026       | First, Excellent | 23 July 2026                             | 17 August 2026           | 90 OMR                     |
| 3. | Central Warehouse For Medical And Consumables At The Hospital Of Medical City Of Military And Security Services - Salalah | 13/2026       | First, Excellent | 23 July 2026                             | 17 August 2026           | 185 OMR                    |
| 4. | Commercial Complex Project                                                                                                | 14/2026       | First, Excellent | 23 July 2026                             | 17 August 2026           | 530 OMR                    |
| 5. | Supply And Custom Tailoring Bush Jacket And Administrative uniform Suiting                                                | 15/2026       | ————             | 23 July 2026                             | 10 August 2026           | 420 OMR                    |

2. Tenders documents and terms may be obtained on payment from the office of the secretary of the the Tender Committee in Medical City of Military and Security Services between 0900 to 1300 on the working days.

3. Omanisation compliance certificate (issued by ministry of labor) with a validity period not exceeding one month from the date of issuance must be submitted when tenders document collection.

4. payment of the tenders document to be made by transferring the amount to the bank account of Medical City of Military and Security Services details are provided on the official website (www.mcmss.gov.om/tenders).

WILAYAT OF SALALAH

Mobile screening unit launched for early detection of breast cancer

**SALALAH:** Oman Cancer Association branch in Dhofar Governorate inaugurated on Wednesday, at Al Saada Health Center in the Wilayat of Salalah, the mobile screening unit for early detection of breast cancer under the theme "Rest Assured with Early Screening."

The move comes as part of efforts to promote early detection of the disease and increase the chances of treatment.

The initiative aims to spread a culture of breast cancer prevention and raise awareness of the importance of early screening by providing the mobile unit to offer screening services to women in various wilayats of Dhofar Governorate.

The inauguration program included an introduction to the equipment of the screening unit, alongside an awareness corner on the importance of early breast cancer detection, in addition to



honoring the participating and contributing entities.

Zain Al Abidin Ali Al Ajeeli, Acting Chairman of Oman Cancer Association branch in Dhofar Governorate, stated that bringing the mobile screening unit to the governorate during the Khareef (monsoon) season takes place annually, stemming from the Association's keenness to enhance early detection of breast cancer.

He pointed out that the unit is equipped with a mammogram machine, targets women aged 40 and above, and provides its services free of charge to citizens, residents, and visitors.

He added that the Association is keen to deliver the unit's services to various wilayats of the governorate according to a field program. In past years, it visited the wilayats of Taqah, Shalim and

the Hallaniyat Islands, Thumrait, and Al Mazyona, while this year it visited the Wilayat of Mirbat for two weeks, and is currently continuing to provide its services at Al Saada Health Center in the Wilayat of Salalah until 28 August.

He noted that the number of beneficiaries of the unit's services during the year 2025 reached 413 women aged 40 and above who underwent screening, in addition to providing consultation and education to 371 beneficiaries under the age of forty, bringing the total to 784 beneficiaries.

Al Ajeeli explained that the unit has been visiting Dhofar Governorate annually since 2010 without interruption, praising the support of Oman Cancer Association in Muscat in facilitating its arrival in the governorate, and the exclusive support provided by Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) for the initiative. -ONA

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Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zedjali  
Deputy Editor-in-Chief: Anees bin Essa Al Zedjali  
Chief Executive Officer: Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali

**EDITORIAL:** Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24813153, E-mail: editor@timesofoman.com  
**ADVERTISING:** Telephone: 22009004, E-mail: amcoman@choueirgroup.com  
**CIRCULATION:** Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

KHAREEF

Consumer authority raises awareness

**< FROM A1** "The Khareef season witnesses a significant increase in commercial activity and visitor numbers, making market oversight a priority. Our inspection teams are working around the clock to ensure consumers receive quality goods and services at fair prices while maintaining a competitive business environment," the CPA said in a statement.

The authority added that the campaign is not only aimed at identifying violations but also at raising awareness among traders about their legal obligations and encouraging voluntary compliance with consumer protection regulations.

Local business owners welcomed the inspections, saying they help build customer confidence. "The regular inspections reassure visitors that businesses

are operating transparently. It creates a level playing field and discourages unfair practices that could harm the reputation of Dhofar during the tourism season," said a trader in Salalah.

Consumers also praised the initiative, noting that greater oversight helps ensure price transparency and product quality.

"Khareef attracts thousands of families and tourists every year. Visible inspections make shoppers feel more confident when buying products or using services, especially in busy markets and roadside stalls," said Imran, an expat visiting Salalah.

The CPA urged consumers to report any violations or unfair commercial practices through its official complaint channels, reaffirming its commitment to ensuring a safe shopping environment for residents and visitors throughout the Khareef season.



AIDSMO

Oman participates in Tripoli meeting

**TRIPOLI:** The Sultanate of Oman is participating in the preparatory session for the 29th session of the General Assembly of the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization (AIDSMO), which concludes on Thursday in the Libyan capital, Tripoli.

Oman is represented during the preparatory session by Dr. Hilal Abdullah Al Sinani, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Republic of Tunisia and Non-Resident Ambassador to the State of Libya.

This participation comes within the framework of preparations for the official session of the General Assembly, in which Oman is participating with an official delegation led by Eng. Ghalib Said Al Maamari, Undersecretary of the



Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry.

The preparatory meetings serve as a prelude to the launch of the 29th session of the organization's General Assembly, which is witnessing broad participation from ministers of industry and heads of delegations in Arab countries.

The assembly will discuss several topics on the agenda, most notably reviewing the organization's reports and achievements over the past period, reviewing implemented programs and initiatives, and approving future work plans aimed at developing the industry, standardization, and mineral resources sectors, as well as enhancing Arab industrial integration to support sustainable economic development and raise the competitiveness of Arab industries.

On the sidelines of the meetings, Dr. Hilal Abdullah Al Sinani attended a meeting in the capital, Tripoli, between Eng. Ghalib Said Al Maamari, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Commerce and Industry, and the Libyan Minister

of Industry and Minerals.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Libya, and discussed prospects for developing joint cooperation in the fields of industry, mining, and standards and metrology. They also discussed available opportunities to enhance investment partnerships between the two countries, contributing to supporting economic and industrial cooperation, exchanging expertise, and achieving the mutual interests of both sides.

The participation of the Sultanate of Oman in the General Assembly of the Arab Industrial Development, Standardization and Mining Organization underscores its keenness to enhance joint Arab action. -ONA

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PARTNERSHIPS AND AWARDS

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SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES

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# US launches new wave of strikes against Iran as tensions escalate

The strikes are designed to further degrade military capabilities Iranian forces have used to attack commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz

**FLORIDA:** The US Central Command on Wednesday said that it launched a fresh wave of strikes against Iran targeting the country's military capabilities, which CENTCOM claimed were used by Iran to attack commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

This is the second wave of strikes by Washington, which struck Tehran.

In a post on X, CENTCOM said, "At 6 a.m. ET today, US Central Command forces began launching a wave of strikes against Iran. The strikes are designed to further degrade military capabilities Iranian forces have used to attack commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz."

The development follows after CENTCOM said earlier that US forces carried out another round of strikes against Iranian military targets near the Strait of Hormuz and along Iran's coast, targeting missile and drone sites, naval capabilities and coastal defence systems in a seven-hour operation aimed at degrading Tehran's ability to threaten commercial shipping.

In a statement, CENTCOM said it completed the additional wave of strikes at 10 p.m. ET on July 14



(Tuesday), with US fighter aircraft, drones and naval vessels launching precision munitions against dozens of military targets.

"US fighter aircraft, drones, and naval vessels launched precision munitions against Iranian missile and drone sites, naval capabilities, and coastal defence systems during the seven-hour wave to further degrade Iran's ability to threaten commercial shipping and civilian crews," the statement said.

CENTCOM added that the strikes took place on the same day US forces resumed a naval blockade against vessels transiting to or from Iranian ports and coastal areas. According to the statement, the blockade came into effect at 4 p.m. ET on July 14 (Tuesday).

"The strikes took place the same day US forces resumed the naval blockade against vessels transiting to or from Iranian ports and coastal areas. The blockade went into ef-

fect at 4 p.m. ET today," it said.

Reaffirming the US military's operational posture, CENTCOM said, "US forces remain vigilant, lethal, and prepared to execute operations directed by the Commander in Chief."

**Hostilities continue**

As hostilities continue in the region, Iranian state broadcaster Press TV reported on Wednesday that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and the national army have announced a series of missile and drone strikes against US military positions across Kuwait, Bahrain, and Jordan, describing the attacks as retaliation for American strikes on Iranian territory.

In several statements by the IRGC issued early on Wednesday, it claimed the destruction of key US military infrastructure, including a Patriot air defence complex, a

satellite communications centre, and HIMARS rocket launch platforms in Kuwait. The attacks were carried out under "Operation Nasr 2" in the IRGC's "seventh wave" of retaliation, Press TV reported.

According to Press TV, the IRGC in a separate statement addressed to the people of Jordan, the IRGC said its forces "smashed the hangars of F-15, F-16, and F-35 fighter jets and destroyed a number of MQ-9 strategic drones" at the US base in al-Azraq, Jordan.

The Iranian broadcaster also said that the IRGC claimed of strikes on the US Fifth Fleet's facilities in Bahrain.

Meanwhile, Al Jazeera reported on Wednesday that GCC Secretary-General Jassem Albudaiwi has condemned Iranian attacks on Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan, including strikes on infrastructure and facilities that injured Kuwaiti military personnel. — **ANI**

## Iran's UN envoy accuses US of violating its territorial integrity

**TEHRAN:** Iran's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN), Ambassador Amir Saeid Iravani, said that the United States is the "aggressor, not the victim", accusing Washington of committing "gross violations" of the UN Charter by launching "two wars of aggression" alongside Israel without prior provocation, as reported by Iran's state news agency IRIB.

In a letter to the UN Secretary-General and the rotating president of the UN Security Council, Iravani rejected US allegations that Yemen's Houthi rebels act on behalf of Iran, saying, "The claim that Ansar Allah (Houthis) is acting on behalf of Iran is completely baseless."

He added that "the authorities in Sanaa represent a significant portion of the Yemeni people and make their decisions independently and in accordance with what they perceive to be the interests of the Yemeni people," calling the attempts to portray the group's action as being directed by Iran as "misleading, politically motivated, and without any evidence."

**Rotating president**

The rotating president of the United Nations Security Council for July 2026 is the Democratic Republic of the Congo, represented by Ambassador Zenon Mukongo Ngay, while the UN Secretary-General is Antonio Guterres.



The Iranian envoy also dismissed Washington's assertion that it remains committed to the 14-point Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), stating, "The US claim that it is committed to the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding is completely baseless and devoid of any evidence."

He further alleged that "almost immediately after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding and to this day, the US has consistently refused to implement its commitments and has actively and purposefully undermined the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding."

Iravani noted that Iran has documented "42 clear and fundamental violations of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding by the United States government".

— **ANI**

### FOR GAZA'S RECOVERY

## Palestine praises India's development assistance

**NEW DELHI:** The Palestine Embassy in India on Wednesday welcomed India's announcement of three major development projects for the Palestinian people, calling the initiative a meaningful contribution to strengthening healthcare services and supporting Gaza's recovery amid the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

In a press statement issued in New Delhi and titled 'Palestine Welcomes India's New Development Assistance', the Palestinian Embassy welcomed the External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's announcement of India's commitment to establish a Speciality Hospital, an Artificial Limb Fitment Centre and a Vocational Training Institute for the Palestinian people.

The Embassy said the announcement was made during the launch of India's campaign for election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for 2028-29, following India's commitments at the Palestine Donor Group meeting in Brussels.

Welcoming the initiative, the Embassy said, "The Embassy of the State of Palestine warmly welcomes the announcement by Hon'ble External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar of India's commitment to establish three major development projects for the Palestinian people, a Speciality Hospital, an Artificial Limb Fitment Centre, and a Vocational Training Institute."

The statement said the announcement comes at a time when Palestinians, particularly in the Gaza Strip, continue to face a severe humanitarian crisis. It alleged that Gaza's healthcare system has been devastated, with hospitals and medical facilities destroyed or rendered inoperable, healthcare workers killed, injured or detained, and essential medicines and supplies remaining critically scarce.

It further said that thousands of Palestinians who lost limbs during Israel's military campaign are in urgent need of rehabilitation, prosthetic services and long-



term medical care.

Highlighting the significance of the Indian projects, the Embassy said, "Against this backdrop, India's commitment to establish a Specialty Hospital and an Artificial Limb Fitment Centre will make a meaningful contribution to strengthening healthcare services and supporting the rehabilitation of those most severely affected."

It added, "Likewise, the establishment of a Vocational Training Institute represents an investment in the future of the Palestinian people by helping equip young Palestinians with the skills necessary to rebuild their communities and economy after the immense destruction caused by the Israeli aggression."

The Embassy also welcomed India's reaffirmation of its long-standing support for "a negotiated two-State solution, with the independent State of Palestine and Israel living side by side in peace and security," backing for the State of Palestine's full membership in the United Nations, and continued humanitarian and development partnership with the Palestinian people.

Expressing appreciation, the Embassy said, "The Embassy of the State of Palestine expresses its sincere gratitude to the Government and the people of India for their continued friendship, humanitarian support, and steadfast commitment to peace, justice, international law, and the two-State solution." — **ANI**

### JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE

## Russian Foreign Minister accuses Ukraine of maritime terrorism

**MOSCOW:** Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov labelled Ukraine's attacks on commercial vessels in the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea as "pure terrorism", saying the strikes were intended to spread fear rather than achieve military objectives.

Speaking during a joint press conference with Chad's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdoulaye Sabre Fadoul, Lavrov alleged that Kyiv's actions were intended solely to spread fear and inflict damage.

"What the Ukrainian regime is doing goes beyond piracy. At least pirates plunder for their own gain. Here, however, it benefits no one. The sole purpose is simply to cause damage and spread fear. It's pure terrorism," Lavrov said.

He further claimed that such actions were not limited to the Sea of Azov but extended to the Black Sea and other regions.

"Such terrorist attacks are taking place not only in the Sea of



Azov but in the Black Sea as well. Yesterday, Turkish media reported a new series of fairly serious attacks by Ukrainian unmanned surface vessels against Turkish ships, including tankers and other vessels transporting Turkish car-

go. This is by far not the first such incident, not to mention that the infrastructure of the Blue Stream gas pipeline, which transports natural gas to Türkiye, is regularly targeted in terrorist attacks," Lavrov said.

This comes after Ukrainian forces struck 11 Russian vessels overnight in the Sea of Azov.

According to a statement by the Ukrainian military commander Robert Brovdi on Telegram, Ukrainian forces struck the Russian vessels as part of "Operation MoLoChKa."

According to Brovdi, the targets included five tankers, five dry cargo vessels and one tugboat.

He claimed that the latest operation brought the total number of Russian vessels targeted over the past nine days to 116.

Following the attacks, Russia's Ministry of Agriculture said in a statement on Telegram that the situation in the Sea of Azov would not affect domestic food supplies or the country's agricultural exports, adding that alternative cargo routes were being developed in coordination with relevant agencies and businesses.

— **ANI**

### SAN FRANCISCO

## 1 dead, 3 missing in Alcatraz boat sinking

**SAN FRANCISCO:** One person has died, three people are missing, and 16 others were saved by authorities after a three-deck pontoon vessel sank off the coast of Alcatraz Island in the San Francisco Bay on Tuesday, US officials said. A dog also died in the capsizing.

The island is home to a famous former Alcatraz federal prison, which now serves as a tourist destination. The prison was notorious for being inescapable due to the strong ocean currents and cold Pacific waters that surround it.

Alcatraz Island is about 1 mile off the shore (1.6 km) in the bay.

**Multi-pronged search effort underway**

Search and rescue teams were looking for the missing people throughout the night.



Local police and fire teams are working together along with the US Coast Guard to find survivors. Planes, boats and helicopters are being deployed in the operation. San Francisco fire chief Dean

Crispen, in a video posted online by the city's mayor, said responders were dispatched due to a report of "a boat on fire, 600 yards of Alcatraz" Island around 3:35 p.m. local time (1035 GMT) on Tuesday.

Although there were reports that a fire had taken place on the boat, Crispen said "we now don't have any evidence of that."

Chrispen rescuers had found the three-deck pontoon vessel capsized and almost completely under water. The boat's motor was still running and leaking fuel.

One dead person was found at the scene, with rescue teams making an attempt at resuscitation.

San Francisco Fire Department Lieutenant Elias Mariano told AFP news agency that rescuers were utilizing "thermal imaging, tide prediction and modeling to help direct search efforts."

Mariano called the capsized vessel a "pontoon pleasure boat." The boat was privately owned and it's unclear if it was heading to Alcatraz at the time of its sinking. — **DW**

SPORTS

# Gill, Patel deliver India’s first win of UK tour at Edgbaston

A captain's innings of 80 not out and an all-round display by Axar took the tourists to a six-wicket win over England in the first ODI

**EDGBASTON:** India finally tasted success on the UK tour on Tuesday at Edgbaston as the visitors thrashed England by six wickets to win the first ODI of the series. A captain's innings of 80 not out from Shubman Gill and an all-round display by Axar Patel took the tourists to a comfortable win. Boasting a far more experienced line-up than the one that lost a T20I series 4-0, and had been bested by Ireland 2-0, this was a show of nous and dominance, chasing down a lacklustre target of 259 with 4.4 overs to spare. Gill would have undoubtedly been there at the end had he not retired hurt due to cramps. Axar unbeaten 57 - accompanying 4 for 62 in the first innings - alongside Washington Sundar's 52\* polished

off the final 102 runs. The defeat was England's 13th in 19 ODIs since the start of 2025, this one coming as they were dismissed for a subpar 258 in the 48th over, with Joe Root's 76 not out a real saving grace after the hosts were reduced to 107/6. India also came into this match with their own problems to solve in international cricket's middle format off the back of three bilateral defeats in their last six. Though the returning Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli offered little, Jasprit Bumrah's first ODI appearance since 2023's World Cup final defeat brought incisiveness, albeit with just a single wicket to show for it. Bumrah set the tone, accounting for six of the top seven before Axar lopped off the tail.



India's captain led the chase from the off, two boundaries off his first two balls setting the tone. A stunned, scythe of a cover drive off Josh Tongue in the sixth over, three balls after a swivel-pull over sponge, was undoubtedly the shot of the day. A 19th ODI fifty looked highly likely to be converted to a 10th century as he shook off the fall of his seniors, Rohit and Kohli. Sam Curran struck with his third ball to remove Rohit as he spooned a heave to Brook at midoff. And after the biggest ovation

of the day, Kohli was undone for 5 by pace from Archer, the right-hander stepping across his stumps and wearing one on the shin. It was from this point, at 48/2, that Gill and Shreyas Iyer put on 101. Gill ended up limping off instead, assisted by 12th man Arshdeep Singh and India's physio Kamlesh Jain, with just 109 left to victory. Shreyas was run out for 35 via a direct hit from Harry Brook. KL Rahul followed him back to the dressing room five balls later, playing on for Tongue's maiden dis-

missal on his ODI debut. That loss of three batters in 15 balls shifted things England's way after they had gone big early on with their quicks, with Archer and Tongue sending down 13 of the first 16 overs of the innings. It subsequently allowed Axar and Washington to tick over against Curran, Will Jacks and Adil Rashid from the 29th over through to the 36th, when Archer return to the attack. With a few lusty blows down the ground off Jacks, the all-rounder was able

to raise his bat for his fourth fifty from just 39 deliveries, made up of six boundaries. With Axar milestone complete, it was left to Washington to cap his day off by launching Rashid into the sight screen to seal his maiden ODI fifty, the century stand and the match. Earlier, a top-order collapse of 5 for 19 left the hosts reeling on 80 for 5 after just 100 balls of the first innings. That England had something to defend was a recovery from 107-6, including a collapse of three wickets for three runs in six balls. The game was at risk of not stretching deep into the afternoon, only for a stand of 111 between Joe Root and Liam Dawson. Dawson's 68 was his highest score for England in any format, while Root was typically classy for his unbeaten 76. Root was left stranded when England lost their last four wickets for 30 runs, leaving India a target that was never likely to be enough. **Brief scores:** England 258 in 47.5 overs (Root 76\* (76), Dawson 68 (83); Patel 4-62) lost to India 262-4 in 45.2 overs (Gill 80\* (75), Patel 57\* (52), Sundar 52\* (63)). - Agencies

ICC DECISIONS

## Super Series and Super Seven twist to 2027 ODI World Cup

**EDINBURGH:** The 2027 ODI World Cup, to be co-hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, will be a 14-team event but will include a Super Series round before the group stages, and a new Super 7 before the semi-finals. The new structure, announced by the ICC on Wednesday following the body's Annual Conference in Edinburgh, was introduced, the ICC said, to "enhance consequence" in the early stages. Teams qualifying 12th to 14th will play the Super Series round.

One team from the three will progress to the Group round, becoming one of 12 teams split across two groups. The top three from each group along with the next-best ranked team across both groups will then qualify for the Super 7, from which the top four go through to the semis. A 14-team event in 2027 means the ICC sticks to a decision made in June 2021 to expand the marquee 50-team event, after 10-team events in the 2019 and 2023 editions. But the introduction of the

round robin Super Series from which one team goes through, means 12 teams will play in what becomes the meat of the tournament, the group round where 30 games take place. In the original format of this event, two groups of seven would lead to a Super 6 stage, before the semis and final. **T20 World Cup** The ICC has also introduced two additional knockout games to the men's T20 World Cup in a revamp of the tournament's format, which

will be used for the first time in Australia and New Zealand in October-November 2028. The 20-team tournament will still be played across 55 matches, but the new format sees a reduction in first-round group games (from 40 to 30), an increase in second-round fixtures (from 12 to 20), and the introduction of two 'eliminator' matches - effectively quarter-finals - before the semi-finals. The first-round group stage has been changed from four groups of five teams to five groups of four

teams. The top two teams from each first-round group will still progress, creating a 'Super 10' second-round group stage (previously Super Eight) with two groups. The winner of each Super 10 group will progress directly to the semi-final, but the second- and third-placed teams in each group will have to play a cross-pool 'eliminator' fixture, with the winner qualifying for the semi-final. The final structure of the tournament, and exact fixtures, will be confirmed at an ICC meeting in September.

As things stand the 14-team 2027 World Cup has 10 automatic qualifiers: the two Full Members among three co-hosts, South Africa and Zimbabwe, and the eight highest teams on the ODI rankings. The remaining four teams will be decided by a global qualifier, which is currently scheduled to be a 10-team event contested between the next two highest ranked teams, four teams from the World Cup Cricket League 2 and four teams from a qualifier playoff. - Agencies

## RANGE ROVER



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80062643

**OMAN OIL PRICE FALLS**  
The price of Oman crude oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by September 2026 reaching \$80.14. The price of Oman crude oil fell by \$2.03 from the price of Tuesday, which was \$82.17.

# MARKET

## BUSINESS & FINANCE



**MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER**  
The MSX index closed at 7,571.40 points, down by -0.43% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.79% at 604.59 points. Oman Oil Marketing, up 9.49%, was the top gainer while, Al Anwar Ceramics, down 4.76%, was the top loser.



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# Over 5.2 million passengers travel through Oman airports by May end

The total number of international flights (arrivals and departures) through Muscat, Salalah, and Sohar airports also reached 31,867 by the end of May 2026, declining by 10.7 percent compared to 35,679 flights during the same period of 2025

**MUSCAT:** The total number of passengers travelling through the airports of the Sultanate of Oman reached 5.25 million by the end of May 2026, representing a decrease



of 9.3 percent compared to the corresponding period of 2025, which was at 5.79 million passengers, according to the latest data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSD).  
The total number of international flights (arrivals and departures) through Muscat, Salalah,

and Sohar airports also reached 31,867 by the end of May 2026, declining by 10.7 percent compared to 35,679 flights during the same period of 2025.  
The statistics showed that Muscat International Airport recorded a decline in the total number of flights (international and

domestic) to reach 34,242 flights, representing a drop of 8.2 percent compared to 37,307 flights during the corresponding period of 2025. The number of passengers also decreased by 8.5 percent to reach 4,764,340, compared to 5,207,005 passengers by the end of May 2025. Meanwhile, at Salalah Airport,

the total number of flights (international and domestic) reached 3,234 by the end of May 2026, a decrease of 13 percent compared to 3,717 flights during the corresponding period of last year. The number of passengers also declined by 15.9 percent to reach 468,797, compared to 557,298 passengers.

Sohar Airport witnessed a decline in flight traffic, with total flights (international and domestic) reaching only 50 by the end of May 2026, compared to 82 flights during the corresponding period of last year, a decrease of 39 percent. The number of passengers also dropped by 48.5 percent to reach 173, compared to 336 passengers.  
Domestic flight traffic at Duqm Airport decreased by 13.3 percent to reach 222 flights by the end of May 2026, compared to 256 flights during the corresponding period of last year. The number of passengers also decreased by 19.3 percent, recording 20,476, compared to 25,371 passengers during the corresponding period of last year.  
Regarding passenger traffic through Muscat International Airport during the month of May 2026, Indian nationals topped the list of most active nationalities on arrivals and departures, with a total of 175,022 passengers, including 76,515 arrivals and 98,507 departures. Omani nationals followed in second place with 80,732 passengers, including 40,955 arrivals and 39,777 departures, while Pakistani nationals came in third place with 45,956 passengers, including 20,723 arrivals and 25,233 departures. -ONA

STATISTICS

## Real estate trading value in Oman rises by 5.5% to over OMR1.17 billion



**MUSCAT:** The traded value of real estate in the Sultanate of Oman recorded an increase of 5.5 percent by the end of May 2026, reaching OMR1.17 billion, compared to OMR1.11 billion during the corresponding period of 2025.  
Statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSD) showed an increase in the traded value of sales contracts to OMR551.8 million for 27,864 sales contracts, compared to OMR536.3 million for 27,302 sales contracts during the corresponding period of 2025, registering a growth in value of 2.9 percent and an increase in the number of contracts by 2.1 percent.  
The traded value of mortgage contracts also rose by 7.9 percent to reach OMR618.1 million for 11,130 contracts by the end of May 2026, compared to OMR572.7 mil-

lion for 9,140 contracts during the corresponding period of 2025.  
Meanwhile, the traded value of exchange contracts reached OMR5.4 million for 319 contracts by the end of May 2026, compared to OMR4.6 million for 538 contracts during the corresponding period of the previous year, registering a growth in value of 17.8 percent.  
On the front of real estate title deeds, the number of issued title deeds decreased by 12.9 percent to reach 82,224 by the end of May 2026, compared to 94,414 title deeds during the corresponding period of 2025.  
The number of title deeds issued to citizens of the GCC countries also declined by 28 percent, to reach 439 by the end of May 2026, compared to 610 title deeds during the corresponding period of 2025. -ONA

WITH ZL GROUP



## Dhofar Islamic signs financing pact for major industrial project at Sohar Port and Freezone

**MUSCAT:** Dhofar Islamic, the Islamic banking window of BankDhofar, has signed a financing agreement with ZL Group, an oilfield services company, to support the establishment of an Acrylamide and Polyacrylamide Production Plant at Sohar Port and Freezone. The agreement highlights Dhofar Islamic's commitment to financing strategic industrial projects that contribute to Oman's economic diversification, industrial growth, and Vision 2040 objectives.  
The agreement was signed on behalf of ZL Group by Echo Liu, CEO of Group, while Dhofar Islamic was represented by Amor Said Al Amri, Chief Islamic Banking Officer.  
As the sole financier of the project, Dhofar Islamic is supporting the development of a high-value-added manufacturing facility that is expected to enhance Oman's industrial capabilities, strengthening local production, support exports, and create new employment opportunities for Omani talent.  
Strategically located at Sohar Port and Freezone, one of the region's leading industrial and logistics hubs, the project will benefit from access to global markets and integrated infrastructure, enabling it to serve customers across Oman, the GCC, and international markets. The facility will also support the growth of

Oman's chemical manufacturing sector and contribute to the supply of specialised polymers used in enhanced oil recovery (EOR), hydraulic fracturing, and drilling applications.  
Upon reaching full operational capacity, the plant is expected to produce around 350,000 tonnes annually, positioning Oman as a significant global producer of acrylamide and polyacrylamide products. These advanced polymers play a critical role in improving oilfield efficiency, enhancing production performance, and supporting the development of energy resources.  
The project represents an important partnership between Oman's financial and industrial sectors, demonstrating the role of Sharia-compliant financing in enabling large-scale investments that deliver economic value. It will also contribute to strengthening local content, facilitating technology transfer, and developing industrial expertise within the Sultanate of Oman.  
Commenting on the agreement, Dhofar Islamic reaffirmed its commitment to supporting projects that align with Oman's national development priorities by providing innovative and Sharia-compliant financing solutions that empower productive sectors and promote sustainable economic growth.

COMPETITIVE INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT

## Al Mudhaibi Industrial City attracts 14 investment projects worth OMR15mn

**AL MUDHAIBI:** Al Mudhaibi Industrial City is consolidating its position as one of the most promising economies in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate. The city recently attracted 14 investment projects worth OMR15 million.  
The city saw the start of the first phase of infrastructure development works as part of an integrated plan to provide a competitive investment environment that supports the goals of economic diversification in North Sharqiyah Governorate within the framework of Oman Vision 2040.  
The first phase (which will cover an area of 1.34 million square metres out of the city's total area of 9 million square metres) includes a network

of internal roads that connects all industrial plots, in addition to fresh water, electricity, sewage and communication networks and a centre to provide services to investors.  
The total cost of infrastructure at the city stood at OMR 17.5 million. The infrastructure reached a completion rate of 77%.  
The fact that the 14 projects attracted recently by the city were equally distributed between Omani and foreign investors reflects balance in the city's attractiveness to local and international investment. The projects include units for the production of electrical equipment and furniture, as well as slaughterhouses and other facilities. -ONA



# MARKET

## MSX index ends lower

Oman Oil Marketing, up 9.49%, was the top gainer while, Al Anwar Ceramics, down 4.76%, was the top loser

**MUSCAT:** The MSX index closed at 7,571.40 points, down by -0.43% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.79% at 604.59 points. Oman Oil Marketing, up 9.49%, was the top gainer while, Al Anwar Ceramics, down 4.76%, was the top loser. Shares of Sohar International Bank were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 7532 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 26.31 million, with more than 87.89 million shares changing hands. Out of 68 traded securities, 19 advanced, 30 declined, and 19 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for RO 2793K while foreign investors were net sellers for RO 2022K, followed by GCC & Arab investors for RO 771K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 13,170.15 points, up 0.14%. Prices of Al Anwar Investment, Ominvest, Oman United Insurance, Bank Dhofar, Bank Muscat were up by 2.31%, 1.87%, 1.52%, 1.33%, 0.26% respectively. Prices of Muscat Insurance, Al Madina Investments, Global Financial Investments, Al Sharqia Investment, DIDIC were down by 3.45%, 2.86%, 2.03%, 1.96%,



1.69% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 9,773.35 points, down -0.57%. Prices of Galfar Engineering, Dhofar Cattle Feed, Oman Cement were up by 1.14%, 0.49%, 0.17% respectively. Prices of Oman Fisheries, Al Anwar Ceramics, Oman Chlorine, Gulf International Chemicals were down by 8.33%, 4.76%, 3.57%, 2.78% respectively. Services Index was down by -0.70% before closing at 3,033.21 points. Prices of Oman Oil Marketing, Barka Water & Power Company, Oman Education & Training, Al Maha Marketing, National Gas were up by 9.49%, 3.75%, 2.78%, 1.70%, 0.94% respectively. Prices of Muscat Desalination, Muscat Gases, OQ Gas Networks, OQ Exploration & Production, Sembcorp Salalah were down by 3.23%, 1.41%, 1.38%, 1.25%, 0.78% respectively. — **United Securities**

### OMAN STOCKS

## MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

### INDICES

| Index              | High      | Low       | Value     | Prev. Value | Diff.  | Diff%  |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|--------|--------|
| MSX 30 INDEX       | 7,634.55  | 7,568.54  | 7,571.40  | 7,603.97    | -32.56 | -0.43% |
| FINANCIAL INDEX    | 13,200.71 | 13,092.67 | 13,170.15 | 13,152.06   | 18.10  | 0.14%  |
| Industry Index     | 9,839.86  | 9,773.35  | 9,773.35  | 9,829.37    | -56.02 | -0.57% |
| Services Index     | 3,065.03  | 3,032.40  | 3,033.21  | 3,054.57    | -21.36 | -0.70% |
| MSX Shariah Index  | 611.04    | 604.59    | 604.59    | 609.40      | -4.82  | -0.79% |
| MSX TR INDEX       | 11,811.53 | 11,704.40 | 11,713.84 | 11,764.22   | -50.38 | -0.43% |
| FINANCIAL TR IDX   | 16,229.58 | 16,096.75 | 16,192.02 | 16,169.77   | 22.25  | 0.14%  |
| INDUSTRIAL TR IDX  | 12,602.37 | 12,517.18 | 12,517.18 | 12,588.93   | -71.75 | -0.57% |
| SERVICES TR IDX    | 4,106.57  | 4,062.85  | 4,063.93  | 4,092.55    | -28.62 | -0.70% |
| 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 |
|------------|------------|--------|----------------|----|------|-------|-------------|
| 87,899,148 | 26,309,955 | 7,532  | 38,279,513,727 | 19 | 30   | 19    | 68          |

## SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, JULY 15

|                 | SECURITY NAME                    | VOLUME     | TURNOVER   | TRADES     | OPEN PRICE | HIGH  | LOW   | CLOSE PR | PREV. CLOSE | DIFF (RD) | DIFF % | LAST PR | LAST BID | LAST OFFER | PUR VALUE | MARKET CAP    |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------|-------|----------|-------------|-----------|--------|---------|----------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| REGULAR MARKET  |                                  |            |            |            |            |       |       |          |             |           |        |         |          |            |           |               |
| OM0000002572    | OMAN OIL MARKETING               | 9,500      | 11,410     | 7          | 1,200      | 1,205 | 1,200 | 1,200    | 1,096       | 0.104     | 9.489  | 1,200   | 1,105    | 1,205      | 0.100     | 73,530,000    |
| OM0000003141    | BARKA WATER AND POWER            | 16,741     | 2,779      | 4          | 0.166      | 0.166 | 0.166 | 0.166    | 0.160       | 0.006     | 3.750  | 0.166   | 0.165    | 0.166      | 0.100     | 26,560,000    |
| OM0000001772    | ALANWAR INVESTMENT               | 829,772    | 144,613    | 41         | 0.174      | 0.179 | 0.174 | 0.177    | 0.173       | 0.004     | 2.312  | 0.177   | 0.177    | 0.177      | 0.100     | 54,429,185    |
| OM0000001533    | OMINVEST                         | 46,733     | 17,578     | 5          | 0.381      | 0.382 | 0.375 | 0.382    | 0.375       | 0.007     | 1.867  | 0.382   | 0.371    | 0.381      | 0.100     | 428,930,196   |
| OM0000003000    | AI MAHA PETROLEUM PRODS MRKTNG   | 750        | 900        | 2          | 1,200      | 1,200 | 1,200 | 1,180    | 1,200       | 0.020     | 1.695  | 1,200   | 1,126    | 1,200      | 0.100     | 82,800,000    |
| OM0000001097    | OMAN UNITED INSURANCE            | 59,969     | 17,318     | 9          | 0.332      | 0.340 | 0.332 | 0.335    | 0.330       | 0.005     | 1.515  | 0.335   | 0.325    | 0.335      | 0.100     | 35,175,000    |
| OM0000002549    | BANK DHOFAR                      | 491,086    | 106,094    | 198        | 0.227      | 0.229 | 0.224 | 0.229    | 0.227       | 0.002     | 1.327  | 0.227   | 0.228    | 0.227      | 0.100     | 686,115,864   |
| OM0000002796    | BANK MUSCAT                      | 12,555,834 | 4,928,624  | 1,340      | 0.385      | 0.386 | 0.381 | 0.393    | 0.392       | 0.001     | 0.255  | 0.393   | 0.393    | 0.393      | 0.100     | 2,950,014,045 |
| OM0000001749    | OMAN CEMENT                      | 426        | 253        | 1          | 0.594      | 0.594 | 0.594 | 0.594    | 0.593       | 0.001     | 0.169  | 0.594   | 0.570    | 0.652      | 0.100     | 196,538,390   |
| OM0000001707    | OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY             | 2,560      | 8,292      | 1          | 3.300      | 3.300 | 3.300 | 3.300    | 3.300       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 3.300   | 3.295    | 3.300      | 0.100     | 296,010,000   |
| OM0000002176    | JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS           | 4,759      | 4,062      | 2          | 0.856      | 0.856 | 0.854 | 0.856    | 0.856       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.854   | 0.854    | 0.854      | 0.100     | 106,912,654   |
| OM0000002226    | ALJAZEERA SERVICES               | 43,840     | 12,231     | 13         | 0.279      | 0.279 | 0.279 | 0.279    | 0.279       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.279   | 0.277    | 0.279      | 0.100     | 11,953,194    |
| OM0000002287    | GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS           | 4,000      | 1,715      | 4          | 0.430      | 0.430 | 0.426 | 0.430    | 0.430       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.426   | 0.426    | 0.430      | 0.100     | 21,647,222    |
| OM0000003898    | SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK         | 19,283,783 | 3,532,124  | 1,155      | 0.184      | 0.185 | 0.182 | 0.183    | 0.183       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.183   | 0.185    | 0.183      | 0.100     | 1,404,706,038 |
| OM0000003661    | VOLTAMP ENERGY                   | 161,380    | 27,761     | 51         | 0.172      | 0.173 | 0.172 | 0.172    | 0.172       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.172   | 0.155    | 0.173      | 0.100     | 172,000,000   |
| OM0000004248    | SMN POWER HOLDING                | 1,100      | 215        | 1          | 0.195      | 0.195 | 0.195 | 0.195    | 0.195       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.195   | 0.195    | 0.200      | 0.100     | 38,928,942    |
| OM0000003026    | OMAN TELECOM                     | 2,602,422  | 3,636,936  | 58         | 1.396      | 1.398 | 1.392 | 1.393    | 1.397       | -0.004    | -0.286 | 1.392   | 1.392    | 1.258      | 0.100     | 1,044,750,000 |
| OM0000003224    | RENAISSANCE SERVICES             | 74,140     | 22,479     | 9          | 0.304      | 0.304 | 0.303 | 0.304    | 0.305       | -0.001    | -0.328 | 0.304   | 0.304    | 0.304      | 0.100     | 71,868,640    |
| OM0000005683    | PHOENIX POWER                    | 265,389    | 66,992     | 39         | 0.253      | 0.255 | 0.250 | 0.254    | 0.255       | -0.001    | -0.392 | 0.254   | 0.252    | 0.254      | 0.100     | 371,500,771   |
| OM0000008934    | ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES            | 4,988,727  | 1,875,626  | 144        | 0.387      | 0.388 | 0.380 | 0.383    | 0.385       | -0.002    | -0.519 | 0.383   | 0.380    | 0.383      | 0.100     | 294,986,600   |
| OM0000004925    | ALBATINAH POWER                  | 33,000     | 6,049      | 11         | 0.183      | 0.184 | 0.183 | 0.183    | 0.184       | -0.001    | -0.543 | 0.183   | 0.183    | 0.184      | 0.100     | 123,504,400   |
| OM0000004933    | AL SUWADI POWER                  | 21,670     | 3,963      | 7          | 0.184      | 0.184 | 0.182 | 0.182    | 0.183       | -0.001    | -0.546 | 0.182   | 0.182    | 0.183      | 0.100     | 130,021,351   |
| OM0000003968    | COBREP CO                        | 298,731    | 96,401     | 36         | 0.335      | 0.335 | 0.332 | 0.333    | 0.335       | -0.002    | -0.597 | 0.333   | 0.333    | 0.334      | 0.100     | 216,764,429   |
| OM0000004420    | BANK NIZWA                       | 301,480    | 42,811     | 23         | 0.142      | 0.143 | 0.142 | 0.142    | 0.143       | -0.001    | -0.699 | 0.142   | 0.142    | 0.142      | 0.100     | 317,647,364   |
| OM0000004735    | SEMBCORP SALALAH                 | 140,420    | 35,863     | 24         | 0.255      | 0.256 | 0.254 | 0.254    | 0.256       | -0.002    | -0.781 | 0.254   | 0.253    | 0.256      | 0.100     | 242,461,275   |
| OM0000004788    | MADINA TAKAFUL                   | 133,779    | 15,977     | 24         | 0.120      | 0.120 | 0.119 | 0.120    | 0.121       | -0.001    | -0.826 | 0.120   | 0.117    | 0.120      | 0.100     | 21,000,000    |
| OM0000001483    | NATIONAL BANK OMAN               | 106,540    | 32,526     | 7          | 0.463      | 0.466 | 0.461 | 0.463    | 0.468       | -0.005    | -1.034 | 0.461   | 0.461    | 0.465      | 0.100     | 801,591,553   |
| OM0000001020    | ASTAD SHIPPING                   | 349,117    | 97,469     | 205        | 0.282      | 0.282 | 0.278 | 0.278    | 0.281       | -0.003    | -1.068 | 0.278   | 0.278    | 0.278      | 0.000     | 1,448,030,910 |
| OM0000000759    | OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION    | 7,553,277  | 3,762,437  | 547        | 0.482      | 0.486 | 0.471 | 0.474    | 0.480       | -0.006    | -1.250 | 0.474   | 0.432    | 0.474      | 0.010     | 3,792,000,000 |
| OM0000000672    | OQ GAS NETWORKS                  | 14,039,434 | 3,018,867  | 1,349      | 0.218      | 0.218 | 0.213 | 0.214    | 0.217       | -0.003    | -1.382 | 0.214   | 0.196    | 0.214      | 0.100     | 826,753,519   |
| OM0000000908    | OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SFZ)         | 5,690,688  | 1,445,885  | 1,148      | 0.267      | 0.267 | 0.261 | 0.261    | 0.265       | -0.004    | -1.509 | 0.261   | 0.260    | 0.261      | 0.040     | 902,927,112   |
| OM0000001509    | DHOFAH INTL DEVELOPMENT & INVEST | 72,424     | 21,056     | 10         | 0.291      | 0.294 | 0.290 | 0.291    | 0.296       | -0.005    | -1.698 | 0.291   | 0.281    | 0.291      | 0.100     | 144,352,337   |
| OM0000002440    | AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO         | 249,751    | 25,268     | 30         | 0.103      | 0.103 | 0.100 | 0.100    | 0.102       | -0.002    | -1.961 | 0.100   | 0.100    | 0.103      | 0.100     | 9,000,000     |
| OM0000001025    | GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO   | 3,101      | 2,577      | 5          | 0.280      | 0.289 | 0.280 | 0.289    | 0.295       | -0.006    | -2.034 | 0.289   | 0.289    | 0.289      | 0.100     | 57,800,000    |
| OM0000001132    | OMAN NATIONAL ENRG & INVESTMENT  | 43,290     | 6,496      | 6          | 0.156      | 0.156 | 0.150 | 0.150    | 0.156       | -0.006    | -3.846 | 0.150   | 0.150    | 0.150      | 0.100     | 22,500,000    |
| Total           |                                  | 35         | 70,468,595 | 23,056,820 | 6,516      |       |       |          |             |           |        |         |          |            |           |               |
| Parallel Market |                                  |            |            |            |            |       |       |          |             |           |        |         |          |            |           |               |
| OM0000007910    | AMAN REAL ESTATE                 | 4,226      | 308        | 4          | 0.073      | 0.073 | 0.073 | 0.073    | 0.068       | 0.005     | 7.353  | 0.073   | 0.067    | 0.073      | 0.100     | 14,600,000    |
| OM0000002280    | OMAN EDUCATION & TRAINING INVEST | 1,000      | 1,850      | 1          | 1.850      | 1.850 | 1.850 | 1.850    | 1.800       | 0.050     | 2.778  | 1.850   | 0.000    | 1.850      | 0.100     | 129,500,000   |
| OM0000003821    | GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING | 53,516     | 9,416      | 9          | 0.176      | 0.177 | 0.171 | 0.177    | 0.175       | 0.002     | 1.143  | 0.171   | 0.171    | 0.171      | 0.100     | 35,928,601    |
| OM0000003669    | JABAL REIF                       | 29,000     | 2,900      | 3          | 0.104      | 0.104 | 0.104 | 0.104    | 0.105       | -0.001    | -0.971 | 0.104   | 0.102    | 0.104      | 0.100     | 18,980,000    |
| OM0000001160    | NATIONAL GAS                     | 233,025    | 25,453     | 35         | 0.113      | 0.113 | 0.107 | 0.108    | 0.107       | 0.001     | 0.935  | 0.108   | 0.107    | 0.110      | 0.100     | 6,180,000     |
| OM0000001897    | MAJAN COLLEGE                    | 3,100      | 409        | 3          | 0.132      | 0.132 | 0.132 | 0.132    | 0.131       | 0.001     | 0.763  | 0.132   | 0.128    | 0.132      | 0.100     | 13,068,000    |
| OM0000008868    | THE PEARL REIF                   | 5,680      | 1,004      | 2          | 0.176      | 0.177 | 0.176 | 0.177    | 0.176       | 0.001     | 0.568  | 0.177   | 0.176    | 0.177      | 0.100     | 104,684,328   |
| OM0000001301    | DHOFAH FOODS AND INVESTMENT      | 425,000    | 87,975     | 18         | 0.207      | 0.207 | 0.207 | 0.207    | 0.206       | 0.001     | 0.485  | 0.207   | 0.206    | 0.207      | 0.100     | 40,919,123    |
| OM0000001095    | DHOFAH INSURANCE                 | 22,416     | 7,621      | 5          | 0.340      | 0.340 | 0.340 | 0.340    | 0.340       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.340   | 0.340    | 0.340      | 0.100     | 39,559,336    |
| OM0000001384    | FINANCIAL SERVICES               | 2,500      | 608        | 1          | 0.243      | 0.243 | 0.243 | 0.243    | 0.243       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.243   | 0.000    | 0.243      | 0.100     | 4,860,000     |
| OM0000001400    | OMAN FLOUR MILLS                 | 16,406     | 9,565      | 1          | 0.583      | 0.583 | 0.583 | 0.583    | 0.583       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.583   | 0.565    | 0.585      | 0.100     | 101,234,306   |
| OM0000001590    | MUSCAT FINANCE                   | 48,135     | 3,185      | 3          | 0.067      | 0.067 | 0.065 | 0.067    | 0.067       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.067   | 0.065    | 0.067      | 0.100     | 20,578,804    |
| OM0000002275    | SHELL OMAN MARKETING             | 806        | 645        | 2          | 0.800      | 0.800 | 0.800 | 0.800    | 0.800       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.800   | 0.800    | 0.800      | 0.100     | 76,000,000    |
| OM0000003290    | OMAN ARAB BANK                   | 120,968    | 28,765     | 13         | 0.238      | 0.238 | 0.236 | 0.238    | 0.238       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.236   | 0.238    | 0.238      | 0.100     | 476,652,913   |
| OM0000004447    | OMAN TRUST FUND                  | 88,782     | 9,234      | 11         | 0.108      | 0.108 | 0.107 | 0.107    | 0.107       | 0.000     | 0.000  | 0.107   | 0.106    | 0.107      | 0.100     | 89,809,628    |
| OM0000001151    | OMIFCO                           | 14,961,563 | 2,879,215  | 805        | 0.191      | 0.195 | 0.191 | 0.191    | 0.193       | -0.002    | -1.036 | 0.191   | 0.191    | 0.191      | 0.0       |               |
| OM0000001171    | MUSCAT GASES                     | 3,000      | 422        | 3          | 0.141      | 0.141 | 0.140 | 0.140    | 0.141       | -0.002    | -1.408 | 0.140   | 0.138    | 0.140      | 0.100     | 1,277,676,000 |
| OM0000001023    | OMAN GATEWAY FUND                | 190        | 190        | 1          | 1.030      | 1.030 | 1.030 | 1.030    | 1.045       | -0.015    | -1.453 | 1.030   | 1.016    | 1.061      | 0.000     | 26,165,000    |
| OM0000002228    | GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS     | 38,100     | 2,708      | 5          | 0.071      | 0.072 | 0.070 | 0.070    | 0.072       | -0.002    | -2.778 | 0.072   | 0.072    | 0.072      | 0.100     | 1,470,000     |
| OM0000001962    | AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING     | 11,836     | 404        | 1          | 0.034      | 0.034 | 0.034 | 0.034    | 0.035       | -0.001    | -2.857 | 0.034   | 0.032    | 0.038      | 0.100     | 2,890,000     |
| OM0000007084    | MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION         | 2,501      | 225        | 1          | 0.090      | 0.090 | 0.090 | 0.090    | 0.093       | -0.003    | -3.266 | 0.090   | 0.090    | 0.093      | 0.100     | 13,396,336    |
| OM0000001606    | MUSCAT INSURANCE                 | 18,000     | 10,080     | 2          | 0.560      | 0.560 | 0.560 | 0.560    | 0.580       | -0.020    | -3.444 | 0.560   | 0.560    | 0.579      | 0.100     | 61,734,026    |
| OM0000002341    | OMAN CHLORINE                    | 31,342     | 5,131      | 6          | 0.160      | 0.166 | 0.162 | 0.162    | 0.168       | -0.006    | -3.571 | 0.162   | 0.162    | 0.163      | 0.100     | 11,584,432    |
| OM0000002168    | AL ANWAR CERAMIC                 | 1,069,199  | 154,235    | 42         | 0.146      | 0.146 | 0.140 | 0.140    | 0.147       | -0.007    | -4.762 | 0.140   | 0.140    | 0.141      | 0.100     | 39,800,000    |
| Total           |                                  | 24         | 17,186,192 | 3,241,519  | 977        |       |       |          |             |           |        |         |          |            |           |               |



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COACHES SPEAK

## De la Fuente salutes ‘best team in world’

**ARLINGTON:** Spain coach Luis de la Fuente saluted his players as the “best team in the world” on Tuesday after a stunning 2-0 FIFA World Cup 2026 semi-final victory against France.

De la Fuente, who had repeatedly said Spain was the best side in the tournament, was left beaming with pride as La Roja outplayed France to reach Sunday’s final.

It was another tactical masterpiece by the Spanish coach, who oversaw La Roja’s European Championship victory in 2024 and has now beaten France in three straight competitive matches.

“We started almost four years ago with an idea and we’ve been faithful to that idea and it’s brought us here,” de la Fuente said.

“Today we faced one of the best national teams in the world, but in front of them they had the best team in the world. That is different,” he added.

De la Fuente is now contemplating Spain’s first World Cup final appearance since 2010.

“These players deserve everything -- day after day they’ve shown their commitment, their solidarity, their generosity, their talent. They make the difficult look easy,” de la Fuente added of his team.

France coach Didier Deschamps said his players were left “devastated” by their defeat before aiming a barb at match referee Ivan Barton from El Salvador.

Deschamps’ free-flowing French team had dazzled the competition en route to the last four, rattling in 16 goals in six games to earn comparisons to some of the greatest teams in World Cup history.

But France’s dreams of a third World Cup title were left in tatters after a dominant Spanish performance that left Deschamps, who is stepping down after the tournament, struggling for answers.

“Of course, there is a lot of disappointment,” Deschamps said immediately after the defeat at



the AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

“The players are devastated because we had a lot of ambition, even though we also have to be realistic and acknowledge that today we were a notch below on the technical level against a team that controlled the game well.

“But first of all, it’s our fault, I don’t want to blame anyone.” Deschamps though could not resist firing a shot at referee Barton,

who had awarded Spain an early penalty after Lucas Digne kicked Lamine Yamal in the first half.

“I’ll ask a loaded question and I won’t answer it,” Deschamps said. “Is the referee at the level required to officiate a World Cup semi-final?”

“And I’m not saying this just because we lost today. There were quite a few situations. There were some favourable calls, too,” he said, without elaborating. - Agencies

FRENCH CAPTAIN



## Mbappe rues end of World Cup dream

**ARLINGTON:** Kylian Mbappe rued the end of France’s World Cup dream on Tuesday, blaming tactical and technical blunders for his side’s 2-0 semi-final defeat to France. Mbappe had emerged as one of the stars of the tournament during France’s run to the last four, rattling in eight goals at the tip of a free-scoring attack that delighted fans worldwide.

But the 27-year-old French captain’s dreams of a third straight World Cup final appearance ended abruptly as Spain outplayed Les Bleus at the AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

Mbappe told French broadcaster M6 that the loss had been a “huge disappointment” for the French squad. “I don’t think we played the match we wanted to play – whether tactically, technically, or in terms of our overall performance level,” Mbappe said. “And when you don’t do what you’re supposed to do in a World Cup semi-final, you don’t win.”

“Our goal was to press them high up the pitch to prevent them from settling into that slow, controlled rhythm -- because when it comes to controlling the game, they are better

than us. We failed to do that.”

Mbappe pinpointed the crux of the problem in midfield, where France’s duo of Adrien Rabiot and Aurelien Tchouameni rapidly found themselves overrun by Spain’s triumvirate of Rodri, Dani Olmo and Fabian Ruiz. “We kept finding ourselves outnumbered 3-on-2 in midfield,” Mbappe said. “And against Spain, that’s a real problem...When you put it all together, the result is a defeat.

Mbappe said France’s crestfallen squad was determined to bounce back after digesting the lessons of

the loss. “It was a dream for us to reach the final, to give our country the chance to keep dreaming and to make history,” he said. “Now, it is something we have to face with our heads held high. I believe that when you win, you win with your head held high; so when you lose, you have to lose with your head held high, too.” But right now, there is immense disappointment. I find it hard to put into words just how disappointed the squad and I are.

“Yet even if it might seem a bit robotic at times, we have to pick ourselves up, go on vacation, and move

on to the next chapter. Because football waits for no one. We have to start over, put this failure behind us, and learn from it.”

“At the end of the day, you take all the glory when you win,” Mbappe said. “When you don’t win... it’s part of the game. As the captain, I have to take all the responsibility, and I have no problem with that. We wanted to go to the final. We didn’t go.”

Mbappe had the fewest touches of any forward in the first half with 15. Perhaps his most prominent moment was trying to persuade referee Ivan Barton that the penalty result-

ing in Spain’s first goal shouldn’t have been called.

Mbappe’s best chance came in the 67th minute when his shot deflected off Spain defender Marc Cucurella and went just wide. La Roja already had a two-goal lead at that point.

“It’s a team who loves to have control of the game, control of the ball,” Mbappe said. “That’s what we let them do. We let the midfield too much time to play, and at the end of the day they had quality to play. It’s difficult when you don’t change the play of Spain. We weren’t at the level to go to the final.” - Agencies

Spain in their second World Cup final.

A day after his 19th birthday, Yamal was denied a goal on a close, offside call that came soon after Porro’s give-and-go with Dani Olmo in the 58th minute had put Spain up 2-0. But it was Yamal’s smart play against a veteran defender that gave Spain the early lead.

Spain will face either defending champion Argentina or England on Sunday in East Rutherford, New Jersey, across the river from New York City.

“So difficult to get to this moment, but we want more,” Spain midfielder Rodri said. “We want to win this World Cup.” After trying to become only the third team to reach three consecutive World Cup finals, France instead will play in the third-place game in Miami Gardens, Florida, on Saturday.

This win on football’s biggest stage marked the third summer in

Mikel Oyarzabal’s first-half penalty and Pedro Porro’s stunning second-half strike secured a commanding 2-0 victory



a row that Spain beat France in a tournament semi-final match.

After France goalkeeper Mike Maignan’s attempted clearing pass in the 38th minute instead went straight to Baena, there were several quick passes before Fabian Ruiz’s close-range shot was denied on a nifty play by Upamecano.

Mbappe, who is tied with Argentina great Lionel Messi with a tournament-high eight goals and leads the race for the Golden Boot on the assist tie-breaker, still has the third-place match to add to his tally. Messi has two goals left in his sixth World Cup to try to win the Golden Boot and also increase his overall record of 21 goals at the tournament. - Agencies

gium that snapped his World Cup record of 650 scoreless minutes.

This World Cup run has extended Spain’s unbeaten streak in regular time to 37 matches (28 wins and nine draws) since March 2024. That broke the country’s previous record of 35 in a row from 2007-09.

The loss broke France’s record-matching streak of six consecutive World Cup wins, which the team also accomplished in the 2018 and 2022 tournaments.

Oyarzabal’s penalty kick in the 22nd minute came after Yamal drew a foul when kicked by defender Lucas Digne.

After a poor first touch with his head, Digne was trying to clear the ball when Yamal raced in from behind to challenge in the penalty area.

The ball hit off the elbow of the leaping teen before he was kicked by Digne, playing in his 83rd game for France only six days before his 33rd birthday.

Oyarzabal’s fifth goal of this year’s World Cup marked the first time either team had trailed in their seven games in this tournament. It was his 30th goal in 60 international games for Spain.

For the second game, Porro broke free and received a pass back from Olmo, who got the touch just before getting knocked off his feet by defender Dayot Upamecano.

“We knew that we’re a very tough team, we’re doing things really well,” Porro said.

France allowed only two goals in its first six games in this tournament.

Spain had two other real scoring chances in the first half.

“They (France) can punish you at every single moment, so I think the focus in every single minute was key in this game,” Spain midfielder Rodri said. “Unbelievable effort by everyone.”

There was a free kick from just beyond the box after Adrien Rabiot drew a yellow card for a foul on Olmo in the eighth minute. Alex Baena’s kick went directly into the wall of French players.

After France goalkeeper Mike Maignan’s attempted clearing pass in the 38th minute instead went straight to Baena, there were several quick passes before Fabian Ruiz’s close-range shot was denied on a nifty play by Upamecano.

Mbappe, who is tied with Argentina great Lionel Messi with a tournament-high eight goals and leads the race for the Golden Boot on the assist tie-breaker, still has the third-place match to add to his tally. Messi has two goals left in his sixth World Cup to try to win the Golden Boot and also increase his overall record of 21 goals at the tournament. - Agencies

## IOC asked to probe FIFA president’s role in Balogun suspension reversal

**NEW YORK:** The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has received a complaint alleging FIFA president Gianni Infantino has repeatedly breached rules on political neutrality in his support of President Donald Trump.

FairSquare, a nonprofit organisation and advocacy group, asked the IOC to investigate, among several instances, Infantino’s possible involvement in the suspension of a one-game ban for striker Polarin Balogun, enabling him to play for the United States in a round of 16 match on July 6 against Belgium.

Infantino acknowledged receiving a call from Trump, who publicly lobbied for Balogun to play, but the FIFA president said he did not interfere with the decision-making process.

Balogun played as the USMNT was eliminated 4-1 by Belgium.

He had received a direct red card in the 64th minute of a July 1 match for a foul on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Tarik Muharemovic. The US went on to win 2-0 with 10 men in the round of 32, and Balogun was suspended for the next game.

A red card or suspension cannot be appealed.

FIFA, however, posted this message without further explanation to its website on July 5 about its use of the rule book in the case: “By operation of Article 27 FDC, the implementation of the automatic match suspension for USA player Polarin Balogun is suspended for a probationary period of one (1) year.”

“All I did was ask for a review because I didn’t think it was a foul,” Trump said on the day of the game against Belgium.

“And, you know, again, I’m good at this stuff. I didn’t think it was a foul. I thought it was two great athletes that



in 2020. The organisation said he “is obliged to adhere to strict rules on political neutrality in the Olympic Charter and the IOC Code of Ethics, adding that the IOC can expel members who don’t fulfil these obligations.

“As outlined in the FairSquare complaint, there is compelling evidence that Infantino has committed five clear breaches of IOC rules on political neutrality through statements or other clear expressions of support for the US President,” FairSquare posted on its website.

**Balogun admits red card furore affected team**

Polarin Balogun admitted on Tuesday that the suspension of his red card in the World Cup after President Donald Trump intervened put added pressure on the US team.

Balogun said in an interview with CBS he was “definitely in shock” when he was sent off for treading on the foot of a Bosnia-Herzegovina defender in his side’s 2-0 group-stage win.

“When something is not intentional it should never be a red card,” he said.

The US went on to lose 4-1 to Belgium and Balogun made little impact despite starting the game.

“It was just an unfortunate situation and it put a lot more pressure on us than we needed,” said Balogun, 25.

“My initial reaction was I was happy to be back in the team but when I kind of started to reflect on it, I knew it was going to cause a lot of controversy.”

He added: “I could almost see within my team-mates a bit of nerves because it’s something that’s so unique. The closer it got to the game I just tried to focus as best as I could. It was difficult, a lot of outside noise, and that’s hard to avoid.” - Agencies

# DR Congo Ebola cases top 2,000 amid WHO warning of hidden toll

A total of 2011 confirmed cases, including 754 deaths, were reported, according to the latest report released by the country’s health authorities on Tuesday.

**KINSHASA:** Confirmed Ebola cases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have surpassed 2,000 as the World Health Organization (WHO) warned the true scale of the outbreak could be “at least two to four times” the reported caseload.

A total of 2011 confirmed cases, including 754 deaths, were reported, according to the latest report released by the country’s health authorities on Tuesday.

The announcement came as the WHO warned earlier in the day that undetected transmission, community deaths and rapid geographic expansion threatened to keep the response behind the epidemic curve.

Chikwe Ihekweazu, executive director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme, said the current outbreak, caused by the Bundibugyo Ebola virus, was growing faster than any Ebola outbreak.

The outbreak, declared in mid-May, has spread to five provinces and is already the third-largest Ebola outbreak ever recorded, according to the WHO.



**Fastest growth** “We’ve seen the fastest growth in a single month since the outbreak started and of all the Ebola outbreaks that we have managed,” said Ihekweazu.

“This is a fire,” he said, describing the epidemic that is being fuelled in its core areas while simultaneously spreading outward.

The outbreak appears to be entering a “new phase” characterized by progressive geographic expansion beyond its original epicentre in the Ituri province, said a weekly situation report by the WHO regional office for Africa released Tuesday.

The outbreak has newly spread to two more provinces, namely Tshopo and Haut-Uele, increasing the complexity of the response and elevating the risk of further national and cross-border spread, the report said.

DRC health authorities said on Tuesday that the emergence of new cases in Haut-Uele, which has so far reported 14 cases, including 13 deaths, indicated a further geographical spread, requiring an immediate strengthening of surveillance, diagnostic capacity and operational preparedness.

The detection of cases in Kisan-

gani, a city of more than 1.6 million people and a major transport hub linking east and west of the country, highlighted the risk of wider transmission along key transport corridors, including the Congo River, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs warned on Tuesday.

### Hidden transmission

Despite improvements in laboratory capacity and contact monitoring, around 80 percent of newly confirmed patients were not previously listed as contacts of known cases, which means they were emerging from “unknown chains of transmission,” Ihekweazu said.

As of Monday, 12,430 contacts of confirmed cases have been under surveillance, with the follow-up rate at 67.4 percent, health authorities said, well below the recommended operational target of 95 percent.

The mortality pattern points to the same delays. During the reporting period, 205 confirmed deaths were recorded, nearly 68 percent of which occurred outside treatment facilities, indicating that delayed presentation for care continues to contribute substantially to mortality, said the WHO report.

The current outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo Ebola virus, for which there is no approved vaccine or specific treatment, unlike the better-known Zaire species.

On Tuesday, a first clinical trial was launched to assess whether the antiviral obeldesivir can prevent Bundibugyo Ebola infection after exposure.

The trial is being conducted in the DRC and Uganda and aims to enroll nearly 1,000 adults and children aged over 12, said the WHO. Eligible participants must have had direct contact with a confirmed patient, an infected body or a contaminated needle within the previous five days. Recruitment will continue in line with the evolution of the outbreak.

A separate WHO-backed trial, PARTNERS, was launched in the DRC on July 2 to evaluate treatments for patients already infected, as the trial is assessing the monoclonal antibody MBP134 and the antiviral remdesivir, individually and in combination.

### Wider crisis

The Ebola response is unfolding against the backdrop of a much broader humanitarian emergency in eastern DRC, where armed vio-



lence, mass displacement, food insecurity and multiple disease outbreaks are competing for already limited resources.

Treatment capacity is under mounting strain. As of Monday, 753 patients were in isolation or hospitalization, while Ebola treatment and care facilities were operating at an average of 87.4 percent occupancy nationwide and at or near full capacity in several high-transmission areas, said authorities.

The response has been further complicated by insecurity, attacks on health workers and facilities, community mistrust, patients leaving treatment centers before completing care, and protests by frontline responders over working conditions and unpaid allowances.

A total of 114 health workers had been infected, and 36 had died, authorities said, underscoring persistent gaps in infection prevention and control at health facilities.

Ihekweazu said reducing resistance and preventing further attacks would require greater transparency, the early involvement of community leaders and clear assurances that patients would not be isolated and abandoned.

Beyond the treatment centers,

the outbreak is spreading through provinces already deeply affected by conflict and displacement. UN humanitarian figures showed that the DRC had hosted about 5.8 million internally displaced people by the end of March, including some 923,000 in Ituri and 1.2 million in North Kivu, the two provinces bearing the heaviest burden of Ebola transmission. Around 307,000 people had been newly displaced nationwide since the beginning of the year.

The outbreak is also competing for attention and resources with other major public health emergencies. During the first 26 weeks of 2026, the country reported about 32,100 cholera cases, 99,200 measles cases and 22,800 mpox cases, according to UN humanitarian data released on Tuesday.

Despite the pace of transmission, Ihekweazu urged governments and international partners not to become resigned to the outbreak.

“We need the world to come together, not just out of charity or out of support for the DRC, but in our own enlightened best interest,” he said. “The more we do right now, the better placed we will be in the future.” — **Xinhua**

## INDIAN ASSISTANCE



## Foundation stone to build monastery in ‘Gateway of Everest’ laid in Nepal

**KATHMANDU:** A foundation stone has been laid for the construction of a monastery in Solukhumbu District of Nepal, which is also known as the gateway of Everest, to be built with Indian assistance.

As per the release from the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, the foundation stone has been laid for the construction of Ngagyur Nyinagma Palyul Dhongag Chholing Monastery in Likhu Pike Rural Municipality.

It “was jointly laid today by Mina Karki Basnet, Chairperson, Likhu Pike Rural Municipality; and Ajay Kumar Singh, Second Secretary, Embassy of India, Kathmandu,” the release stated.

The Monastery Building is being built with the Government of India’s financial assistance of approximately 33 million Nepali rupees.

“This High Impact Community Development Project (HICDP), will be implemented through the Likhu Pike Rural Municipality, Solukhumbu, and is the sixth HICDP in Solukhumbu district of Nepal,” the Embassy stated.

The Chairperson of Likhu Pike Rural Municipality, Solukhumbu and other stakeholders appreciated the developmental support being provided by the Government of India, and

expressed confidence that the new infrastructure would help preserve the rich cultural heritage of Likhu Pike Rural Municipality, Solukhumbu.

As close neighbours, India and Nepal are engaged in wide-ranging and multi-sectoral cooperation. The implementation of HICDPs reflects the continued support of the Government of India in strengthening the efforts of the Government of Nepal in promoting growth and development, apart from augmenting infrastructure in priority sectors.

Over the past seven decades, the India-Nepal development cooperation has not only expanded but also diversified to cover a wide range of sectors that include health, education, power, archives, archaeology, connectivity, trade, agriculture, cultural heritage preservation, capacity building and many more.

Projects under the bilateral development partnership implemented are based on the needs and priorities of Nepal and are spread across the length and breadth of the country. India-Nepal Cooperation for the development of modern infrastructure in Nepal began in 1951 with the construction of Gauchar Airport in Kathmandu (completed in 1954).

— **ANI**

## UNITED STATES

# Senate Democrats block \$1.15 trillion defence bill over concerns on Iran war

**WASHINGTON DC:** US Senate Democrats on Tuesday blocked an \$1.15 trillion Pentagon policy bill, opposing its advancement over concerns about US President Donald Trump’s handling of the Iran war and seeking greater restrictions on the administration’s military actions, according to media report.

According to Politico, the National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) failed to secure the 60 votes required to move forward to Senate debate, with the procedural vote ending 50-46.

All Democrats present voted against advancing the legislation.

The move dealt a setback to Republicans, who had sought approval of the defence policy bill as part of efforts to advance Trump’s record-level defence budget proposals.

The NDAA is one of the few major pieces of legislation that traditionally passes Congress every year.

According to Politico, Democrats had indicated for months that they would not support the Pentagon legislation without additional safeguards on presidential war powers, particularly regarding the US military campaign against Iran.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune and other Republican lawmakers argued that blocking the bill amounted to politicising national security, while Democrats maintained that the legislation



should include limits on the administration’s actions.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer criticised the bill’s advancement without restrictions on the Iran conflict.

“The NDAA cannot become a permission slip for that recklessness that we see occurring in Iran,” Schumer said, as quoted by Politico.

“Donald Trump does not get to drag the American people deeper into a war he cannot explain and does not know how to end, and then demand Congress look the other way,” he added.

The Senate has failed multiple times to advance its own version of the NDAA amid partisan disagreements.

However, it is considered rare for one party to prevent the chamber from even beginning debate on the annual defence legislation. The last instance occurred more than 15

years ago, when Senate Republicans blocked Democratic-led defence legislation over a proposal to repeal the military’s “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy. The latest standoff comes as lawmakers in both chambers signal that the traditionally bipartisan defence bill could become a major political battleground.

Democrats have criticised the proposed \$1.15 trillion defence allocation, describing it as part of Trump’s broader \$1.5 trillion defence budget request, while arguing that more attention should be given to domestic priorities and reducing costs for Americans, as reported by Politico.

The dispute also comes amid renewed US military action against Iran after Trump declared the end of a months-long ceasefire and the United States resumed strikes.

Republicans have largely supported the defence bill, but law-

makers remain concerned about the potential economic impact of continued military operations, including possible effects on fuel prices ahead of the midterm elections.

Beyond the defence budget request, lawmakers are also considering a White House request for an additional USD 67 billion to cover costs linked to the Iran war.

During the Senate Armed Services Committee’s closed-door markup last month, only four of the 13 Democratic members supported the bill, including Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island, the committee’s ranking Democrat. However, all four voted against advancing the legislation on the Senate floor.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune changed his vote from “yes” to “no” in order to preserve the ability to bring the bill up again through a motion to reconsider, as reported by Politico.

Four senators did not participate in the vote, including Republicans Jim Justice of West Virginia and Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, and Democrats John Fetterman of Pennsylvania and Alex Padilla of California, Politico reported.

Republicans highlighted provisions in the bill, including a 3.6 per cent pay increase for troops, expanded drone technology development and major investments in shipbuilding. — **ANI**

## ENTIRE GOVERNMENT DISMISSED

# Zelenskyy pushes for new govt in Ukraine

**KYIV:** On Tuesday, Ukraine’s parliament approved Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko’s resignation with a clear majority, dismissing the country’s entire government.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had announced on social media on Sunday that he had offered Svyrydenko a new position. Media report that she could become Ukraine’s next ambassador to the United States.

“I am grateful to Yulia for her clear, steady and effective work as prime minister, and for all her years of successful work as part of Team Ukraine,” Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram. “I have offered her the opportunity to take on a new significant role in relations with an important partner. I expect that, together with members of parliament, we will make the necessary changes to the

Ukrainian government.”

Zelenskyy posted photos of meetings with Sergii Koratskyi, head of the state-owned energy company Naftogaz, first Deputy Prime Minister and Energy Minister Denys Shmyhal, Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko, Defense Minister Mykhailo Fedorov and Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov.

There has been much speculation and debate about why Ze-

lenskyy might be reshuffling the government, which has been in office for less than a year. Ihor Reiterovych, a political scientist with the Taras Shevchenko National University in Kyiv, told DW that a reshuffle had originally been planned for the coming fall or spring. However, Reiterovych said, several recent incidents had prompted a more immediate intervention. — **DW**



LIFESTYLE

# SCIENTISTS REVERSED MEMORY LOSS BY RECHARGING THE BRAIN’S TINY ENGINES: STUDY

The discovery

hints that energy

failure inside

neurons could

happen before

brain cells die,

potentially

offering a new

target for future

Alzheimer’s

treatments

By creating a new tool that temporarily boosts mitochondrial activity in the brain, scientists restored memory performance in mouse models of dementia. The discovery hints that energy failure inside neurons could happen before brain cells die, potentially offering a new target for future Alzheimer’s treatments.

In a study published in Nature Neuroscience, researchers from Inserm and the University of Bordeaux at the NeuroCentre Magendie, working with scientists at the Université de Moncton in Canada, reported a major step forward in understanding dementia.

Their results showed a direct cause-and-effect link between faulty mitochondrial activity and cognitive symptoms associated with neurodegenerative disease.

**Brain Energy and Memory Loss**

The team created a highly specific tool that allowed them to temporarily increase mitochondrial activity in animal models of neurodegenerative disease. When they boosted the brain’s energy machinery, memory problems improved.

Although the findings are still early and were observed in animal models, they point to an intriguing possibility: mitochondria may not simply break down after brain disease begins. Instead, their failure may help drive the symptoms that appear as dementia develops.

That idea could reshape how scientists think about future treatments. If brain cell energy failure contributes to memory loss, then restoring mitochondrial function may one day become a strategy for slowing or reducing symptoms.

**Why Mitochondria Matter in the Brain**

A mitochondrion is a small structure inside the cell that helps generate the energy required for normal function. This matters especially in the brain, which consumes a large amount of the body’s energy.

Neurons depend on that energy to send signals to one another. When mitochondrial activity drops, neurons may no longer have enough power to work properly. Over time, that energy shortage could weaken communication in the brain and contribute to memory and thinking problems.

Neurodegenerative diseases

involve the gradual decline of neuronal function, followed by the death of brain cells. In Alzheimer’s disease, researchers have long observed that mitochondrial problems appear alongside neuronal degeneration, often before cells die. Until recently, however, it was difficult to determine whether mitochondrial dysfunction helped cause the disease process or merely appeared as a result of it.

**A tool designed to recharge mitochondria**

To explore that question, the researchers developed a tool that can temporarily stimulate mitochondrial activity. Their reasoning was simple but powerful. If increasing mitochondrial activity improved symptoms in animals, that would suggest mitochondrial impairment can come before neuron loss and contribute directly to cognitive decline.

Earlier work by the research teams had already identified a role for G proteins, which have the specific role of enabling the transfer of information within cells, in regulating mitochondrial activity in the brain. In the 2025 study, they built an artificial receptor

called mitoDreadd-Gs. This receptor was designed to activate G proteins directly inside mitochondria, which in turn stimulated mitochondrial activity.

When mitoDreadd-Gs was activated in the brain, mitochondrial activity returned to normal levels. Memory performance also improved in mouse models of dementia.

**A possible new target for dementia research**

“This work is the first to establish a cause-and-effect link between mitochondrial dysfunction and symptoms related to neurodegenerative diseases, suggesting that impaired mitochondrial activity could be at the origin of the onset of neuronal degeneration,” explains Giovanni Marsicano, Inserm research director and co-senior author of the study.

The results do not mean that a treatment is ready for patients. The work was performed in animal models, and much more research is needed to determine whether similar approaches could be safe, durable, and effective in humans.

Still, the findings add momentum to a growing shift in de-

mentia research. Scientists are increasingly looking beyond the familiar hallmarks of Alzheimer’s disease, such as amyloid plaques and tau tangles, to examine how energy production, metabolism, inflammation, and cellular stress may shape the disease from its earliest stages.

Recent research has continued to strengthen that broader view. A recent Mayo Clinic study linked disruptions in mitochondrial complex I, a key part of the cell’s energy system, to Alzheimer’s disease progression and potential treatment response. Reviews published afterward have also described mitochondrial failure as an early and potentially central feature of Alzheimer’s biology, not merely a late consequence of brain damage.

“These results will need to be extended, but they allow us to better understand the important role of mitochondria in the proper functioning of our brain. Ultimately, the tool we developed could help us identify the molecular and cellular mechanisms responsible for dementia and facilitate the development of effective therapeutic targets,” explains Etienne Hebert

Chatelain, professor at the Université de Moncton and co-senior author of the study.

The next major question is whether longer term stimulation of mitochondrial activity can do more than improve memory symptoms. Researchers now want to know whether restoring mitochondrial function could slow neuron loss, delay disease progression, or possibly help prevent damage before it becomes irreversible.

“Our work now consists of trying to measure the effects of continuous stimulation of mitochondrial activity to see whether it impacts the symptoms of neurodegenerative diseases and, ultimately, delays neuronal loss or even prevents it if mitochondrial activity is restored,” added Luigi Bellocchio, Inserm researcher and co-senior author of the study.

For now, the discovery offers a striking message: memory loss may be tied not only to dying brain cells, but also to living neurons that are running short on energy. By learning how to recharge those tiny engines, scientists may be opening a new path in the fight against dementia. -ANI

# ROUND-UP

## iCAUR’s ‘Born to Play’ spirit takes over Oman’s roads with massive landmark delivery ceremony

The premium handover event showcased a diverse lineup of vehicles, with deliveries featuring both the robust iCAUR V27 and the all-electric iCAUR O3T

**MUSCAT:** The flagship iCAUR showroom in Wattayah came alive with excitement as New World Autos hosted the Sultanate’s first-ever mass key handover ceremony, marking a landmark achievement in the country’s automotive history.

The high-profile event saw 20 customers simultaneously receive the keys to their brand-new vehicles. This major celebration officially welcomes the first collective group of owners into the iCAUR family, solidifying the brand’s rapid momentum and growing footprint across Oman.

The premium handover event showcased a diverse lineup of vehicles, with deliveries featuring both the robust iCAUR V27 and the all-electric iCAUR O3T. By putting these highly anticipated models directly onto Omani roads at the exact same time, the Born to Play brand philosophy is creating a strong wave of impact across the local automotive landscape. The brand’s unique blend of rugged capability and smart technology is clearly resonating with modern consumers looking for an expressive, adventurous lifestyle.



Speaking at the ceremony, Naveen Kumar - General Manager, iCAUR, from New World Autos said: “Today is a monumental day as we execute the first-ever mass key presentation for new iCAUR owners here at our Wattayah showroom. The overwhelming response to both the V27 and the O3T proves that the Born to Play spirit

is making a profound impact on the Omani automotive landscape. This mass handover is just the beginning of our journey to redefine smart, exciting and premium travel experiences across the Sultanate. Also, we wanted to thank our customers for their patience waiting for their new cars, and we wanted to celebrate this moment

like a family get together. This event is indeed a token of gratitude for our beloved customers for the trust they have bestowed upon us”.

The event concluded in spectacular fashion as the newly delivered iCAUR vehicles lined up outside the venue for a grand, synchronized parade formation. The stunning visual display perfectly show-

cased the distinct road presence of the V27, with its long-range capabilities built for Oman’s unique terrain, alongside the urban energy, all-aluminum safety cage, and agile performance of the O3T.

iCAUR is an all-new brand developed by Chery Group, born for the global market. Backed by Chery’s deep manufacturing her-

itage and cutting-edge innovation, iCAUR targets the young – and the young at heart – through its integrated “Category + Ecosystem + Culture” brand model. Oman represents a key strategic market for iCAUR in the Middle East. The brand is exclusively represented in the Sultanate by the New World Autos.

### EASING FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

## Sohar International introduces marriage loan with exclusive benefits for newly married couples

**MUSCAT:** Reinforcing its commitment to supporting Omani youth and contributing to initiatives that strengthen social well-being and family stability, Sohar International have launched a new Marriage Loan designed to help eligible Omanis take their first steps toward married life with greater financial confidence.

While complementing the Sultanate of Oman’s broader efforts to support young Omanis, including the Government’s Marriage Fund initiative, the bank has introduced the proposition as part of its commitment to easing the financial considerations associated with marriage. The offering provides financing of up to OMR 2,000 at 0% profit/interest, alongside flexible repayment terms of up to 24 months, and is further enhanced by exclusive benefits for the wife through the bank’s be Zahiya proposition.

Commenting on the launch, Abdul Qadir Al Sumali, Chief Retail & Wealth Management Officer said: “We recognize the important role that financial institutions can play in supporting national priorities and contributing to the wellbeing of the communities they serve. As Oman continues to introduce initiatives that empower youth and strengthen family foundations, we believe the private sector also has a role to play in creating practical solutions that help individuals navigate important life milestones with greater confidence and financial stability.”

Al Sumali added, “The Marriage Loan reflects our commitment to supporting Omani youth as they embark on a new chapter in their lives. In alignment with the Sultanate’s broader focus on supporting young Omanis and encouraging



family formation, we have introduced this financing solution at 0% interest rate to help ease some of the financial considerations associated with marriage.

“By combining accessible financing with meaningful value-added benefits, we aim to provide practical support that enables young couples to begin this important journey with greater confidence. This initiative also reflects our broader approach to developing solutions that create long-term value for customers while contributing to the social and economic aspirations of the Sultanate.”

The proposition is further strengthened by a dedicated benefit for the bride. Newly married wives who open a be Zahiya account and deposit their “mahar” amount of OMR 1,000 or more may qualify for a cashback reward of up to 5%, with the value determined in line with the campaign structure. As part of the initiative, the first 100 eligible Marriage Loan applicants will receive OMR 50 cashback, while the next 200 eligible applicants will receive OMR 10 cashback, credited directly to the wife’s account or card.

Developed specifically for first marriages, the Marriage Loan is available to eligible Omani male applicants whose spouses are also Omani nationals, subject to the bank’s approved criteria and standard credit assessment process. Both new and existing Sohar International customers who meet the eligibility requirements may apply. Applicants must provide official proof of first marriage certified by the Notary Public, meet the minimum salary requirement of OMR 400, transfer their salary to the bank, and be employed by an organization included on the approved employer list.

The launch of the Marriage Loan reflects the continued commitment of Sohar International to delivering customer-centric financial solutions that address evolving needs while supporting national priorities. By aligning its offerings with initiatives that contribute to youth empowerment, family well-being, and financial inclusion, the bank continues to create meaningful value for customers and support the Sultanate’s long-term development goals in line with Oman Vision 2040.

### PROUD MOMENT

## Malabar Gold & Diamonds represents India’s global business vision at PM Modi’s ‘Kia Ora Modi’ event in Auckland, New Zealand

**MUSCAT:** As India continues to strengthen its position as a global economic powerhouse and marks a historic chapter through the landmark India - New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the world’s 4th largest jewellery retailer, was proud to represent the Indian business diaspora at the prestigious Kia Ora Modi event in Auckland, New Zealand. The occasion served as a celebration of the longstanding friendship between the two nations, their growing economic collaboration, and the enduring cultural and sporting bonds that have further deepened bilateral relations.

The occasion marked a proud moment for Malabar Gold & Diamonds when Ajith Murali, Regional Head – Far East & Oceania, had the honour of meeting the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, alongside New Zealand Prime Minister Rt Christopher Luxon. The interaction provided an opportunity to share the brand’s remarkable global growth story and ambitious expansion plans, reflecting Malabar Gold & Diamonds’ role as a global ambassador of Indian enterprise and excellence.

“The strengthening partnership between India and New Zealand marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter in economic collaboration, creating greater opportunities for Indian businesses to expand their global footprint. As a proud Indian brand with a growing presence in New Zealand, Malabar Gold & Diamonds is honoured to have been an integral part of the Kia Ora Modi Community Event during the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi’s historic visit. Inspired by the vision of ‘Make in India, Market to the World’, we remain committed



to deepening our presence in New Zealand while taking India’s rich jewellery heritage, craftsmanship and values of trust to customers across the globe”, said MP Ahamad, Chairman – Malabar Group.

The Kia Ora Modi Community Event in Auckland brought together thousands of people of Indian origin to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi. For Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the occasion symbolised the journey of an Indian-origin brand that has taken India’s craftsmanship, manufacturing excellence and cultural heritage to global markets. With over 445 showrooms across 14 countries, including New Zealand, the company proudly embodies the vision of ‘Make in India, Market to the World’.

Speaking on the occasion, Ajith Murali, Regional Head – Far East & Oceania, Malabar Gold & Diamonds said, “It was a distinct honour to meet the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, in the presence of New Zealand Prime Minister Rt Christopher Luxon along with dignitaries from both nations. The engagement

reaffirmed Malabar Gold & Diamonds’ position as a global ambassador of Indian excellence and entrepreneurship and provided an opportunity to share Malabar Gold & Diamonds’ global growth journey and expansion plans across New Zealand, Australia and the wider Oceania region. As we look ahead, we are excited to expand into Wellington, Hamilton and Christchurch, while continuing to strengthen the economic and people-to-people ties between India and New Zealand.”

For Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the moment is a reflection of the larger philosophy of “Make in India, Market to the World”, one the brand has lived out for years by carrying India’s design heritage and manufacturing excellence to customers across 14 countries. Today, as India and New Zealand step into a new phase of economic partnership, Malabar sees an opportunity to deepen its own roots in the New Zealand market, continuing to bring India’s timeless craftsmanship to a new generation of customers on the other side of the world.



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