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Importance of adhering to controls for trademark registration stressed

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion is working to enhance the intellectual property rights protection system and raise awareness on the importance of registering trademarks in accordance with approved legal frameworks

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion emphasised the importance of the commitment of institution and company owners and entrepreneurs to legal requirements when selecting, designing, and registering trademarks. This is to ensure the preservation of intellectual property rights, limit commercial disputes, and enhance consumer confidence and fair competition.

The Ministry clarified that a trademark is considered one of the important intangible assets for institutions, given its role in distinguishing products and services, building a commercial reputation, and enhancing their presence in local and foreign markets.

Eng. Khalid Hamoud Al Hinai, Director of the National Intellectual Property Office at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, stated that the Ministry is working to enhance the intellectual property rights protection system and raise awareness on the importance of registering trademarks in accordance with ap-



proved legal frameworks, as it is a supporting element for the growth of institutions and the sustainability of their businesses.

He added that building a successful trademark is not limited to choosing a distinctive name or designing an innovative logo, but rather begins with ensuring its eligibility for registration and legal protection. The trademark represents an economic and investment value that grows with the expansion of the project, and it is important that this value is based on legal foundations that preserve the rights of its owners and enhance consumer confidence.

He pointed out that the National Intellectual Property Office continues its efforts to consolidate a culture of respect for intellectual property rights and to introduce the regulations governing the registration of trademarks. This encourages project owners and innovators to develop independent commercial identities that reflect the specificity of their products and services, and supports the emergence of Omani brands capable of competing and growing.

He indicated that among the most prominent controls that must be observed is refraining

from including official flags, logos, and sovereign symbols of states or organisations, or their imitations, in trademarks, in accordance with the cases where the law prohibits their registration. These controls aim to protect official symbols and prevent their commercial use in a way that might suggest an existing governmental connection or official accreditation that does not exist.

He clarified that the use of names of countries, regions, and geographical indications is, in turn, subject to legal controls, especially if it would cause confusion for the consumer regarding the origin or source of the goods or services. Furthermore, the use of images of castles, forts, and historical landmarks is not absolutely prohibited; however, accepting the registration of the trademark depends on the nature of the elements used in it, the extent to which it is free of official symbols or protected elements, or whatever might suggest a governmental association.

He emphasised that taking these requirements into account from the early stages of developing a commercial identity helps avoid the rejection of registration applications, saves time and costs, and

limits the possibilities of future legal disputes arising.

Ghalib Mohammed Al Saidi, Head of the Commerce Section at the Directorate of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion in the Musandam Governorate, clarified that examining trademark registration applications represents an essential stage to ensure the soundness of legal procedures and protect the rights of trademark owners. He pointed out that the examination process is not limited to verifying the general shape of the trademark, but also includes studying its distinctiveness and eligibility for registration, and ensuring it does not conflict with legal impediments or existing rights.

He added that among the most prominent reasons that may lead to the rejection of registration applications is the trademark containing legally protected official symbols or logos, or the use of geographical names and data in a manner that might suggest an unreal source for the products or services, in addition to trademarks that include elements that would mislead the public or cause confusion among consumers.

He explained that using names



and geographical indications in trademarks requires considering the nature of the products and services and their connection to the indicated geographical location. He emphasised the importance of distinguishing between the legitimate use of geographical names and cases that might lead to giving an incorrect impression about the origin or characteristics of the product, thereby preserving the rights of producers, protecting consumers, and enhancing credibility in the markets.

Al Saidi affirmed that conducting a preliminary search and examination before submitting a trademark registration application is considered one of the important steps that project owners and designers should pay attention to, as it helps discover potential legal impediments early on and limits the costs resulting from modifying or redesigning the commercial identity after submitting the application.

Regarding the legislative framework, the Ministry clarified that the registration of trademarks in the Sultanate of Oman is subject to the provisions of the Trademarks Law (System) of the GCC, issued by Royal Decree No. (33/2017), alongside the provisions of the Industrial Property Rights Law issued by Royal Decree No. (67/2008) for matters not specifically addressed in the trademarks system.

These legislations regulate the conditions of registration, the reasons for rejection, and the procedures for examining applications,

publishing them, and objecting to them, as well as the rights resulting from registration and the means of protecting them.

The Ministry indicated that submitting a registration application does not mean its automatic acceptance, as applications are subject to examination in accordance with legal provisions and executive regulations. This includes the possibility of requesting modifications or imposing necessary restrictions to define the trademark and prevent confusion, and notifying the applicant of the reasons for rejection or suspending procedures when necessary.

It added that upon acceptance of a trademark, it is announced according to approved procedures, and any concerned party has the right to submit a written objection within 60 days from the date of publication. The protection period for a registered trademark extends for 10 years from the date of submitting the registration application, with the possibility of renewing it for similar periods in accordance with legal conditions and procedures.

The Ministry called on institution and company owners, entrepreneurs, and designers to conduct a prior legal examination of trademarks and ensure their distinctiveness and freedom from prohibited symbols, elements, or data that might mislead consumers, affirming that awareness of these requirements represents an essential step for building strong and sustainable trademarks. — ONA

IN MANAMA



Oman participates in GCC meeting on environmental affairs

MANAMA: Represented by the Environment Authority, the Sultanate of Oman on Monday took part in the 28th meeting of the Committee of GCC Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs. The meeting was held in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Oman was represented by Dr. Abdullah bin Ali Al Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority.

The meeting discussed a number of topics of priority in the field of environment protection. It explored ways to enhance joint Gulf environmental action and coordinate positions at regional and international forums.

The discussions focused the 2030 Action Plan set by the Committee of GCC Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs, as well as a project to devise a GCC Environmental Performance Index.

The ministers also looked into issues related to the protection of wildlife and biodiversity, the Middle East Green Initiative (MGI), the Vienna Convention for Protection of the Ozone Layer and the GCC agreement on the

conservation of wildlife and natural habitats.

The meeting also reviewed a number of international environmental files, including the 8th session of the UN Environment Assembly and mechanism of GCC coordination towards international negotiations about drafting a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution.

In addition, the meeting dealt with issues related to carbon emissions in the maritime sector and the proactive monitoring of international environmental matters were also discussed.

The meeting discussed a proposal made by the Sultanate of Oman on consolidating joint GCC environmental action for responding to marine oil pollution incidents. The ministers recommended tasking the GCC General Secretariat with arranging a meeting between the Sultanate of Oman and the GCC Emergency Management Center to study the Omani proposal and, accordingly, draft joint cooperation mechanisms.

— ONA

IN 12 DAYS AND THREE MODULES

Royal Academy of Management launches Leadership and Logistics Programme

MUSCAT: The Royal Academy of Management (RAM) has launched the Leadership and Logistics Programme in partnership with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology.

The programme prepares senior leaders from government and the private sector to guide Oman's logistics sector through a period of rapid change.

Thirty leaders are taking part over 12 days and three modules. They include directors general and assistant directors general from government entities, as well as private-sector leaders of equivalent rank. Logistics and supply chains are becoming more complex, and they are changing faster.

The programme gives leaders the strategic, commercial and operational perspective they need to anticipate challenges, improve organisational performance and keep the sector competitive over the long term in accordance with Oman Vision 2040.

Dr Ali Qassim Al Lawati, President of the Royal Academy of Management, pointed out that RAM's strategic partnership with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology is rooted in the firm belief that investment in logistics infrastructure must be matched by investment in the leadership capabilities needed to guide it. By bringing together RAM role as a national centre of expertise in leadership development and the Ministry's responsibility for advancing the sector, the partnership embodies institutional collaboration and the principle of working as one government team. It also provides a model that can be adapted across other sectors of national priority.

He emphasised that the Lead-



ership and Logistics Programme provides a platform for developing a new leadership perspective: one that connects day-to-day operational decisions with national priorities, shifts the focus from managing costs to creating value, and encourages leaders to look beyond their own organisations to the wider ecosystem.

The programme combines strategic vision with a comprehensive understanding of the logistics ecosystem, enabling participants to interpret rapid geopolitical, trade and technological changes and turn them into opportunities that strengthen national competitiveness and advance the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

Sanaa Al Busaidi, Programme Supervisor, explained that the programme's design focuses on building an integrated leadership perspective among participants, combining strategic, commercial and operational dimensions and strengthening their ability to understand how the different components of the logistics ecosystem connect. She noted that the programme covers a number of focus areas, including strategic leadership in logistics, commercial

acumen and value creation, end-to-end supply chain excellence, and stakeholder and ecosystem leadership, as well as global market intelligence and geopolitical awareness.

The programme centres on strategic leadership in logistics, commercial acumen and value creation, end-to-end supply chain excellence, stakeholder and ecosystem leadership, global market intelligence and geopolitical awareness.

A central theme is the link between day-to-day operational decisions and wider goals: organisational growth, national priorities and the sector's long-term competitiveness. Participants are encouraged to move away from thinking driven mainly by cost and operations. The goal is a more commercial, value-driven style of leadership. Participants examine how data, analytics and emerging technologies can raise performance, resilience and competitiveness across supply chains, ports and shipping. They also look at the wider global context: shifting markets, geopolitical developments and the complexities of international trade, and how each

shapes decision-making in Oman's logistics sector.

The learning is delivered through three modules. The first, Strategic Leadership in Logistics and Supply Chains, examines the trends and structural shifts reshaping the sector, and how leaders can turn them into clear priorities and sound decisions. Commercial Capabilities and End-to-End Supply Chain Excellence then sharpens participants' commercial perspective and explores how supply chains connect, with particular attention to ports and logistics. The final module, Building a Future-Ready Logistics Ecosystem, looks ahead to the sector's next phase and considers how digital technologies and emerging innovations could reshape supply chain, port and shipping operations.

With the Leadership and Logistics Programme, RAM continues to build specialised national leadership in sectors of strategic importance to the Sultanate of Oman. The programme supports a more competitive, resilient and future-ready logistics sector, and the long-term objectives of Oman Vision 2040. — ONA

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COMMENTARY

How Fintech Is Shaping Oman’s Banking and Financial Industry

Technology is changing how we live, work, and manage our money. In Oman, this transformation is becoming increasingly visible in the banking and financial sector. From mobile banking and digital payments to artificial intelligence and e-wallets, financial technology or fintech, is gradually changing how people and businesses access financial services.

Not long ago, visiting a bank branch was essential to everyday banking. Today, many routine transactions can be completed within seconds using a smartphone. Customers can transfer money, pay bills, manage accounts and make payments without visiting a branch. This convenience is one of the most visible ways fintech is reshaping banking in Oman.

But fintech is much more than mobile banking. It is changing how banks make decisions and serve customers. Artificial intelligence and data analytics, for example, can help financial institutions understand customer needs, assess credit risk and detect unusual transactions. This can make banking faster, more personalised and potentially more secure.

For small and medium-sized enterprises, fintech can be particularly important. Access to finance remains a major issue for many smaller businesses. Digital platforms and data-driven lending models can potentially make it easier for banks to assess businesses and provide financing. Faster digital processes can also reduce the time and cost involved in accessing financial services.

Fintech is also creating opportunities beyond traditional banks. Digital payment companies, fintech start-ups



and other financial service providers are introducing new products and business models. This increased competition can encourage traditional financial institutions to innovate and improve the services they provide to customers.

For Oman, fintech development fits naturally within the broader objectives of economic diversification and digital transformation. A modern financial system can support entrepreneurship, encourage investment and make it easier for businesses to participate in the digital economy. It can also help strengthen Oman’s position as a regional centre for finance, trade and logistics.

However, innovation also brings challenges. As more financial activity moves online, cybersecurity, data privacy and consumer protection become increasingly important. A convenient digital service is useful only when customers have confidence that their money and personal information are safe. We also need to ensure that older people, those with limited digital skills, and people in less-connected areas are not left behind.

Another important issue is the human side of fintech. Technology should not mean replacing human judgement altogether. Banking is ultimately about people, trust and relationships. The most successful financial institutions will likely combine technology with human expertise rather than treating the two as alternatives.

The future of Oman’s financial sector is therefore unlikely to be a choice between traditional banking and fintech. Instead, the two will increasingly work together. Banks will become more digital, fintech companies will become more integrated into the financial system, and customers will expect services that are faster, simpler and more personalised.

For Oman, the real opportunity is to ensure that fintech is not simply about adopting new technology. It should use technology to build a more inclusive, efficient, and innovative financial system. If managed carefully, fintech can become an important part of Oman’s economic transformation—making finance not only more digital, but also more accessible and responsive to the needs of people and businesses.

Syed Mujahid Hussain is the Associate Professor, Department of Economics and Finance, College of Economics and Political Science, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman

TELEPHONE CALL

Foreign Minister and Armenian counterpart exchange views on regional, international issues

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, yesterday received a phone call from Ararat Mirzoyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia.

During the telephone conversation, the ties of friendship and cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Armenia were discussed, along

with the means of strengthening and developing them across various fields in a manner that serves the common interests of the two countries.

The two ministers exchanged views on a range of regional and international issues of mutual interest, and on the efforts aimed at supporting and entrenching security and peace.



REPUBLICAN PALACE IN KHARTOUM

Oman’s Ambassador presents credentials to President of Sudanese Transitional Sovereignty Council

KHARTOUM: General Abdel Fattah Al Burhan, President of the Transitional Sovereignty Council (TSC) of the Republic of Sudan, received on Monday the credentials of Yaqoub Badr Al Ruqaishi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Republic of Sudan, at the Republican Palace in Khartoum. The Ambassador conveyed to the President of the Sovereignty Council the greetings of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, along with His Majesty’s wishes to Sudan and its people for lasting security and stability.

For his part, General Abdel Fattah Al Burhan asked the Ambassador to convey his greetings to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, along with his wishes of abundant health and happiness to His Majesty. Al Burhan also wished the Omani people further progress and prosperity.

— ONA



NCSI DATA

Over 9mn passengers travel through Oman airports by the end of August 2026

MUSCAT: The total number of passengers travelling through the airports of the Sultanate of Oman, including arriving, departing, and transit passengers, reached 9.3 million passengers by the end of August 2026, dropping by 7.1 percent compared to 10.02 million passengers during the corresponding period of 2025.

According to the latest data published by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI), the total number of international arriving and departing flights through Muscat, Salalah, and Sohar airports reached 53,716 flights by the end of August 2026, a decrease of 8.8 percent compared to 58,890 flights during the same period in 2025.

Muscat International Airport recorded 57,870 international and domestic flights by the end of August 2026, representing a decline of 6.7 percent compared to 62,007 flights during the corresponding period of 2025.

The total number of passengers through Muscat International Airport reached 8.10 million passengers, down by 7.5 percent compared to 8.75 million passengers by the end of August 2025.

During August 2026, Omani nationality topped the list of most frequent nationalities in terms of arriving and departing passengers through Muscat International Airport, with a total of 202,033



passengers, including 111,360 arrivals and 90,673 departures.

Indian nationals

Indian nationality ranked second with a total of 145,720 passengers, including 77,001 arrival and 68,719 departures, while Bangladeshi nationality came third with a total of 42,050 passengers, including 23,454 arrivals and 18,596 departures.

As for Salalah Airport, the total number of international and domestic flights reached 7,657 flights by the end of August 2026, a decrease of 1.4 percent compared to 7,769 flights during the corresponding period of 2025.

The total number of passengers through Salalah Airport reached 1.15 million passengers, reflecting a decrease of 4.4 percent com-

pared to 1.20 million passengers during the same period in 2025.

Sohar Airport recorded 188 international and domestic flights by the end of August 2026, a decline of 6.9 percent compared to 202 flights during the corresponding period of 2025, while the number of passengers travelling through the airport reached 15,292 passengers, dropping by 17.4 percent compared to 18,522 passengers. Duqm Airport recorded 380 domestic flights by the end of August 2026, a decline of 7.3 percent compared to 410 flights during the corresponding period of 2025, while the number of passengers decreased by 9.3 percent to reach 36,443 passengers, compared to 40,173 passengers during the same period of the previous year. — ONA



JINDAL STEEL OMAN AND OMAN CEMENT COMPANY

Sign Strategic Partnership to Advance Sustainable Cement Production



Muscat, Oman | 8 October

2026: Jindal Steel Oman and Oman Cement Company have signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to support the sustainable utilization of approximately 1 million tonne of steel slag in Oman Cement Company’s clinker manufacturing process.

The MoU was signed by *Mr. Jiang Tao, Acting CEO, Oman Cement Company, a member of Huaxin, and *Mr. Harssha Shetty, CEO, Jindal Steel Oman.

Under the partnership, steel slag generated as a by-product of steel manufacturing will be used as an alternative raw material in cement clinker production. The initiative will help conserve natural resources, reduce reliance on virgin raw materials and improve the productive use of industrial by-products.

The collaboration brings together Oman’s steel and cement industries to promote industrial symbiosis and a circular economy, while



supporting efforts towards lower-carbon cement production.

The initiative also contributes to Oman’s Net Zero 2050 ambition by creating a circular link between two key industrial sectors and enabling the productive utilization of resources within the Sultanate.

Highlighting on MoU signed, Mr. Jiang Tao, Acting CEO, Oman Cement Company was delighted to say:

“This collaboration reflects Oman Cement Company’s commitment to translating Oman Vision 2040 into action. Steel slag utilization in our process will conserve natural resources, reduce industrial

waste, and advance the circular economy. At OCC, sustainability is a strategic priority, and through innovation and strong industrial partnerships, we aim to create measurable environmental and economic value while contributing to a more competitive and sustainable Oman.”

Commenting on the partnership, Mr. Harssha Shetty, CEO, Jindal Steel Oman, said:

“This partnership is an important step towards building a more sustainable and resource-efficient industrial ecosystem in Oman. By finding productive applications for steel slag in cement production, we are turning an industrial by-product into a valuable resource while supporting Oman’s circular economy and Net Zero 2050 ambition.”

The partnership reflects the commitment of Jindal Steel Oman and Oman Cement to developing practical sustainability solutions and creating greater value from industrial resources in Oman.

OMAN'S HANDICRAFTS HOUSE SEEKS TO BRING TRADITIONAL CRAFTS INTO MODERN LIFE



Preserving these crafts, therefore, means safeguarding an integral part of Oman's cultural identity

MUSCAT: The Handicrafts House in the Sultanate of Oman plays a significant role in promoting traditional crafts in contemporary life by supporting artisans, showcasing their skills and preserving the country's handicraft heritage for future generations.

Zuwaina bint Sultan Al Rashidi, Chief Executive Officer of the Handicrafts House, said Omani handicrafts are not merely products to be made and sold, but represent the living memory, identity and stories of the artisans and the places they come from.

She said her involvement in the sector stemmed from her belief that Oman has a rich cultural heritage and that the responsibility is not only to preserve it but also to develop it.

Her journey with the Handicrafts House began with the aim of transforming traditional craft pieces into contemporary products that can become part of everyday life, she added.

Omani handicrafts represent a visual record of the country's history, reflected in the symbols, colours and patterns found in textiles, silverwork, palm-leaf crafts, pottery, woodwork and other traditional materials. These elements vary from one governorate to another, with every detail tell-



ing a story connected to the place, its people and the surrounding environment.

Preserving these crafts, therefore, means safeguarding an integral part of Oman's cultural identity, Al Rashidi said.

She emphasised that developing traditional crafts does not mean changing their identity, but presenting them in contemporary forms and styles. While preserving the essence of each craft, including its techniques and symbols, artisans can adapt designs, colours, uses, packaging and quality to meet the demands of the modern market.

"I always say that we don't want to keep our heritage in a box and preserve it; rather, we want to bring it to life alongside us," she said.



Al Rashidi highlighted the distinctive details that characterise Omani handicrafts, including weaving techniques, silverwork, engravings, wickerwork, palm-leaf weaving and the selection of colours and materials. She stressed the importance of documenting these elements and understanding their origins and meanings before incorporating them into new designs.

Traditional craftsmanship can be integrated into modern lifestyles through products such as corporate gifts, home décor, accessories, hospitality items and office supplies, she said, noting the efforts of women working in the sector to transform traditional elements into contemporary products.

She expressed confidence that Omani handicrafts have consider-

able potential to compete in both local and international markets. However, achieving this requires an integrated approach encompassing quality design, innovation, attractive packaging, competitive pricing, effective marketing and consistent production.

Global consumers are increasingly looking for authentic and sustainable products, she added.

Al Rashidi said marketing had significantly changed how handicrafts are presented, making storytelling an important part of promoting them. When customers understand who made a product, where its design originated, what its engravings represent and how their purchase contributes to social and economic development, the product acquires a value that extends beyond its material worth.

Social media platforms have also become important tools for introducing cultural heritage to younger generations, she said. Photographs, videos and short stories can showcase the production process, highlight the artisans behind the products and explain the meanings of traditional symbols.

She stressed that sustaining Omani handicrafts is a shared responsibility, as artisans cannot preserve their skills and traditions without genuine consumer demand. The public can contribute by purchasing locally made products, exchanging them as gifts and teaching children to appreciate their cultural significance.

Al Rashidi said younger generations should view handicrafts not simply as remnants of the past but as part of their future. Oman's an-

cestors left behind a rich legacy of engravings, textiles, silverwork, woodwork, pottery and other crafts, which must be preserved and developed for generations to come.

She aspires to see Omani handicrafts gain international recognition, enabling people around the world to discover the Sultanate through its traditional craftsmanship.

Her vision is to see Omani crafts represented in international markets, museums, hotels, retail outlets and exhibitions, not merely as souvenirs for tourists but as contemporary design and cultural products that embody a distinctive Omani identity and can compete globally.

She also hopes that the Handicrafts House will become a platform for promoting Omani handicrafts in international markets.



MARITIME SECURITY CENTRE



US Congressional delegation visits MSC

MUSCAT: A delegation from the United States House of Representatives (Congress), accompanied by the Ambassador of the United States of America to the Sultanate of Oman, visited the Maritime Security Centre (MSC) on Monday. They were received by Commodore Abdullah bin Ali Al Hajri, Head of the Maritime Security Centre (MSC).

The visiting delegation listened to a briefing that reviewed the competences of the Maritime Security Centre, its national roles and the tasks entrusted to it in monitoring maritime conditions and enhancing response to incidents and emergencies, in coordination with the relevant authorities, in a manner that contributes to ensuring the security and safety of maritime navigation.

The delegation toured the Centre's facilities and was briefed on the equipment, technologies and systems it houses that contribute to enhancing its operational capabilities and raising the level of readiness and efficiency in carrying out the tasks and competences assigned to it.

— ONA

POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS

Oman and Greece discuss existing bilateral relations

MUSCAT: The first round of political consultations between the Foreign Ministries of the Sultanate of Oman and the Hellenic Republic was held in Muscat on Monday.

The Omani side was chaired by Sheikh Khalifa bin Ali Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Political Affairs and the Greek side by Alexandra Papadopoulou, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece.

During the consultations, the existing bilateral relations between the two countries were discussed, and the keenness of both sides to continue developing cooperation in the fields of tourism, maritime



transport and culture was affirmed, alongside discussion of a set of regional and international issues of mutual interest.

The session was attended by Katerina Varvarigou, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Sultanate of Oman and officials from both sides.

— ONA

Role of university student activities in developing skills under spotlight

The panel discussed students' interests, needs, and aspirations, as well as ways to enhance their active participation in various university activities



MUSCAT: The Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science at the Diwan of Royal Court organised on Monday a panel discussion titled "University Student Activities: Reality and Aspirations," with the participation of representatives from public and private higher education institutions in the Sultanate of Oman, held at the Centre's main hall.

The session aimed to highlight the importance of university student activities and their role in developing students' skills, refining their personalities and capabilities, and fostering values of leadership, initiative, and teamwork. It also discussed students' interests, needs, and aspirations, as well as ways to enhance their active participation in various university activities.

The discussion covered several pillars related to developing university student activities, most notably listening to students' opinions and aspirations regarding participation in activities, highlighting their impact on developing personal and academic skills, motivating students toward initiative and active engagement, and exchanging experiences and ideas that contribute to advancing student work.

Dr. Mohammed Nasser Al Abri,

Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for Guidance and Student Activities at Sultan Qaboos University, emphasised that student activities represent an important arena for developing students' personal skills, pointing to the importance of learning by doing and peer learning in gaining expertise and enhancing their capabilities through interaction

and shared experiences.

He explained that participating in student activities yields positive psychological impacts, contributing to boosting self-confidence, acceptance of others, and identifying strengths among group members, thereby reinforcing teamwork spirit and positive interaction among students.

Dr. Hilal Ali Al Maqbali, Deputy Assistant President for Electronic Systems and Student Services at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Sohar Branch, explained that optimal investment in student activities depends on directing them toward skill development and refining student capabilities, noting that these activities have become a modern necessity due to the opportunities they provide for acquiring and developing skills through practice and experience.

He pointed out the importance of utilising student activities in shaping student personality and preparing them for future requirements, emphasising that the initial steps in executing activities must be precise and well-considered, while paying attention to the cognitive and academic aspects to achieve integration between student activities and the educational process.

The session also addressed the requirements and needs of educational institutions in the realm of student activities, alongside presenting models of student initiatives across various higher education institutions, enabling the exchange of expertise and experiences and benefiting from practices that enhance the quality of student activities and expand their impact within the university community. — ONA

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Ministry of Social Development



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Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtainment of tender document	Last date for tender submission	Tender Document Price (non-retundable)	
					Small and Medium companies	Local companies
514/2026	Supplying and maintaining multi-use printers and operating them with the central administration system in the Ministry's General Office building	Companies specialized in the field of Supply of communications and information technology devices and accessories registered with the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority with excellent or first or second or third or fourth class.	Sunday 01-11-2026 02:00 PM	Thursday 19-11-2026 10:00 AM	10 R.O	25 R.O
515/2026	Maintenance services and provision of inks for photocopiers in the Ministry's General Office building	Companies specialized in the field of Equipping, installing and maintaining information systems and programs registered with the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority with excellent or first or second or third or fourth class.	Sunday 01-11-2026 02:00 PM	Thursday 19-11-2026 10:00 AM	10 R.O	-

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- F0006 - Dairy - Cheese
- F0007 - Dairy - Milk Fresh & UHT Milk
- F0008 - Cold Cuts & Other Breakfast Items
- F0009 - Fresh Fruits & Vegetables
- F0010 - Groceries & Other Dry Items
- F0011 - Pastry Products (Chocolates, Arabic Sweets & Hot Mezze)
- F0012 - Frozen Vegetables & Frozen Fruits & Others
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Mohammad Rakib
Kempinski Hotel Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
PO Box 57 • Postal Code 138 • Muscat • Sultanate of Oman
Phone +968 24 985113 • Mobile +968 9018 9649
Email: mohammad.rakib@kempinski.com
mohammad.rakib@kempinski.com

OCCI , Uganda’s national chamber sign trade MoU

The memorandum aims to develop economic and trade relations between the two countries and boost cooperation between private sector institutions

MUSCAT: Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) signed yesterday a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Uganda National Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The memorandum aims to develop economic and trade relations between the two countries, enhance cooperation between private sector institutions, encourage trade and investment initiatives, build partnerships, and expand business relations.

Fields of cooperation include exchanging economic and trade information, data, and reports, introducing markets and investment opportunities, encouraging direct communication between business owners, organizing trade delegations, participating in exhibitions and economic events, exchanging expertise in foreign trade and export promotion, and providing facilities for visiting delegations.

This took place during a meeting in which Faisal Abdullah Al Rowas, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, received a delegation from the Uganda National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, headed by Karamagi Al-



pha Charles, currently visiting the Sultanate of Oman.

During the meeting, ways to enhance trade and investment cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Uganda were discussed, alongside expanding partnerships between private sector institutions in both countries.

The two sides discussed investment opportunities in the sectors of agriculture, agro-processing,

tourism, mining, and science, technology, and innovation, in addition to introducing available opportunities in these fields and the potential to establish joint projects and partnerships. The delegation reviewed the incentives and facilities provided by their country to encourage investment and attract investors to priority sectors.

Furthermore, the two sides discussed preparing a joint action plan to activate the Memorandum

of Understanding, designating a focal point at each chamber to follow up on implementation and coordination, and exchanging information on prominent economic exhibitions and events in both countries. This will enable business owners to explore participation opportunities, build direct trade relations, and coordinate with relevant Omani authorities to enhance partnership and cooperation prospects. — OMA



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Korean Speech Contest organised

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the Sultanate of Oman hosted a Korean Speech Contest at the National Museum - Sultanate of Oman on 10 October 2026 to mark Hangeul Day. The event was supported by the National Museum - Sultanate of Oman, the Korean Association in Oman, and the United Korean Associations in Africa and the Middle East.

Hangeul Day, observed annually on 9 October, celebrates the Korean alphabet. The contest provided an opportunity for Korean language learners in Oman to share their thoughts and experiences, demonstrate their progress, and connect with others who share an interest in Korea.

In his opening remarks, H.E. Lee Jung-il, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Sultanate of Oman, noted that this year marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Hangeul Day. He encouraged participants to use their Korean language skills to play an important role in promoting exchanges between Korea and Oman.

Fourteen participants delivered speeches in Korean, competing in three groups according to how long they had studied the language.

The programme also featured



promotional videos introducing Korea and a presentation by a representative of Global Korea Scholarship (GKS) alumni in Oman. Drawing on her experience of living and studying in Korea, she offered the audience a personal perspective on student life and introduced GKS, a Korean government scholarship programme for international students.

Alongside the speech contest, a Korean child and his family explored the National Museum's exhibits. With the museum's support, the child expressed his impressions of Oman's history and heritage through writing and then presented his work to the audience.

By bringing together Korean language learners and Korean children discovering Oman's heritage, the event encouraged mutual understanding and provided a welcoming setting for people to learn about one another's language and culture.



4TH EDITION

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2026

26th OCTOBER 2026
JW MARRIOTT HOTEL MUSCAT

Marking its 4th edition, the **Times Business Leadership Summit** brings together senior government officials, business owners, C-level executives, SMEs and industry experts. Under the theme **Business Leadership in an Era of Unprecedented Change**, the Summit will examine how organisations can navigate a shifting geopolitical and economic landscape, build resilience, adapt strategies and turn emerging challenges into opportunities for sustainable growth.

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US judge orders halt to taxpayer-funded promo ads of Trump

The commercials feature Trump promoting his policies and warning against communism and of a “final battle” against “globalists”

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump must cancel any remaining television ads paid for with millions in taxpayer money for political promotions, a federal court judge ruled on Sunday night, granting a temporary restraining order.

This comes after publicly funded television ads glorifying Trump began airing in late September, sparking bipartisan backlash.

The commercials feature Trump promoting his policies and warning against communism and of a “final battle” against “globalists.”

They end with a disclaimer saying they were paid for by the US government.

What did the judge say?

New York District Judge Jennifer L. Rochon called the commercials an illegal misuse of funds, siding with a coalition which includes the nonpartisan watchdog Common Cause.

“Defendants shall not enter into, renew, or expand any agreement authorising the development, creation, dissemination,



placement, or airing of the challenged advertisements” during the two-week duration of her order, the judge said.

The court ordered the halt even as the administration said the ad campaign was coming to an end. In a court filing late on Saturday, the Justice Department had argued that the temporary restraining order was unnecessary because “the alleged offending conduct will end tomorrow.”

What is the controversy?

The Department of Homeland Security tapped \$20 million (£17.8 million) taxpayer funds to run the ads in question.

Legal experts argue that it violates a federal statute against congressionally appropriated

money being used for “publicity or propaganda,” along with other laws potentially.

On Monday, Trump had said he considered the ads to be “rather standard” and a “positive promotion for our great USA,” but that they would not be funded by taxpayers any longer.

The White House said last week that the president’s political action committee would fund the ads going forward but not reimburse taxpayers for the ones that had already run on their dime. “There is no legal justification — and no precedent — for the president to use the machinery of the government and funds set aside by Congress for other uses to influence electoral outcomes that further his own agenda,” the plaintiffs said in

a statement issued by Democracy Forward, a nonprofit organization that represents them.

“We won’t stop until this administration is held fully accountable, and no president from any party can waste and abuse taxpayer funds for propaganda ever again,” said Common Cause President and CEO Virginia Kase Solomon.

The plaintiffs, which included a public employee union and a candidate for Alabama state representative, urged the judge to block the ads by Friday so they would not air during weekend programming, such as football games and Saturday Night Live.

US Democrats have also challenged the ads in a separate suit filed at a federal court in Washington. - DW

UAE approves Dh292.5bn federal general budget

ABU DHABI: The UAE Cabinet, chaired by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has approved the federal general budget for the years 2027–2029, totalling Dh292.5 billion, reflecting a 28.3% increase compared to the preceding three-year period. The federal budget for the 2027 fiscal year was approved with estimated total expenditures of Dh90.1 billion, as part of the budget plan for the years 2027–2029.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said, “Today, we approved the Federal General Bud-



et for 2027 to 2029 with total expenditures of Dh292.5 billion, up 28.3% on the previous three years, and the 2027 budget with expenditures of Dh90.1 billion. Our priorities are fixed and have not changed: education, health, housing, social services, and the quality of life and stability. – WAM

TWO-STAGE METHOD

Russian scientists develop method to recycle solar panels into silicon carbide

LOREM: Scientists from Tomsk Polytechnic University and Sevastopol State University have developed a two-stage method for recycling end-of-life solar panels to produce silicon carbide, a valuable material used in power electronics, ceramics and other industrial applications. This was reported on the website of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation.

Photovoltaic modules typically operate for 20–30 years before reaching the end of their service life. They contain multiple materials, including glass, aluminium, silicon, copper and polymers, making their recycling a complex process. The new method enables the recovery of silicon-containing materials and their conversion into silicon carbide, which is valued for its hardness, heat resistance, corrosion resistance and high thermal conductivity.



To test the technology, the researchers processed a used polycrystalline solar panel. First, they applied pyrolysis at 500°C to separate silicon from the polymer layer. The resulting silicon-containing material was then mixed with technical carbon and treated using a non-vacuum electric arc at 1,800°C. This produced silicon carbide in just one minute.

According to Zhanar Bolatova, one of the study’s authors and an assistant at Tomsk Polytechnic University’s Materials Science Division, pyrolysis also helped remove polymers, produce a solid carbon residue and collect gaseous products. – Agencies



Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma



Social Impact Awards 2026



Oman Sail Wins Disability Inclusion Initiative Award at Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma 2026



Oman Sail was felicitated with the 'Disability Inclusion Initiative Award' at Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma Social Impact Awards 2026. Organised by Muscat Media Group, publisher of Times of Oman and Al Shabiba, and managed by TEvents, the awards recognised organisations, initiatives and individuals creating meaningful social, environmental and economic impact across Oman. The evening culminated in the presentation of 22 awards across diverse areas of community and social impact. Oman Sail was recognised for its commitment to promoting disability inclusion, equal opportunities and accessibility in sports through its successful hosting of the inaugural World Sailing Inclusion Championships in Oman. The international event brought together sailors from 28 nations,

creating a platform for athletes with disabilities to compete, demonstrate their abilities and participate in an inclusive sporting environment. Hosted at Barceló Musanah Resort, the championship placed accessibility and inclusion at the centre of its planning and execution. Through inclusive event design, accessible facilities and opportunities for community engagement, Oman Sail demonstrated how international sporting events can help remove barriers, challenge perceptions and encourage greater participation among people with disabilities. The initiative also reflected a wider commitment to environmental responsibility, community participation and the advancement of inclusive sailing worldwide. By showcasing the capabilities of sailors with disabilities

on an international stage, the championship contributed to global efforts to strengthen the visibility of inclusive sailing and support the sport's aspirations for reinstatement in the Paralympic Games. Through this landmark initiative, Oman Sail continues to position Oman as a destination for inclusive international sporting events, while promoting equal opportunities, social inclusion and the positive role of sports in empowering individuals and bringing communities together. Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma 2026, organised by Muscat Media Group and managed by TEvents, celebrates organisations and individuals whose initiatives contribute to community development, healthcare, education, youth empowerment, sustainability, inclusion and social progress across the Sultanate.

Areej Vegetable Oils & Derivatives Wins Outstanding Omanisation Achievement in Food Manufacturing Award at Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma 2026



Areej Vegetable Oils & Derivatives (AVOD) was felicitated with the 'Outstanding Omanisation Achievement in Food Manufacturing Award' at Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma Social Impact Awards 2026. Organised by Muscat Media Group, publisher of Times of Oman and Al Shabiba, and managed by TEvents, the awards recognised organisations, initiatives and individuals creating meaningful social, environmental and economic impact across Oman. The evening culminated in the presentation of 22 awards across diverse areas of community and social impact. Areej Vegetable Oils & Derivatives was recognised for its contribution to developing Omani talent, strengthening

local capabilities and supporting national workforce participation within the food manufacturing sector. With a strong presence in Oman for over 30 years, the company has established itself in the food industry through its diverse portfolio of cooking oils, ghee, margarine, specialty fats, butter and mayonnaise. Alongside its commitment to delivering quality food products and promoting healthier food choices, the organisation's recognition highlights the importance of Omanisation and local talent development in strengthening the country's manufacturing sector. Developing national capabilities and creating opportunities for Omani professionals remain essential to

building a skilled and sustainable industrial workforce. Through its longstanding presence in the Sultanate and contribution to the food manufacturing industry, Areej Vegetable Oils & Derivatives reflects the role of established Omani businesses in supporting economic diversification, workforce development and the broader objectives of Oman Vision 2040. Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma 2026, organised by Muscat Media Group and managed by TEvents, celebrates organisations and individuals whose initiatives contribute to community development, healthcare, education, youth empowerment, sustainability, inclusion and social progress across the Sultanate.

SPORTS

Haaland, Doku, Cherki score as Man City beat Liverpool 3-0

Liverpool started brightly and pushed City back during the opening 15 minutes

LIVERPOOL: Manchester City secured a 3-0 victory over Liverpool at Anfield, with Ryan Gravenberch's sending-off proving costly for the hosts in the Premier League 2026-27 clash. After withstanding Liverpool's early pressure, Erling Haaland opened the scoring in the 65th minute, shortly after Gravenberch was sent off for a second yellow card. Jeremy Doku doubled City's lead with a stunning strike before Rayan Cherki sealed the win late in the match. Liverpool started brightly and pushed City back during the opening 15 minutes. However, the visitors created opportunities of their



own, with Antoine Semenyo delivering a dangerous low cross that neither Haaland nor Iliman Ndiaye could reach. Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker and City's Gianluigi Donnarumma were called into action as the match progressed. Don-

narumma denied Lewis Koumas and Gravenberch early in the second half, while Alexis Mac Allister came close with a curling effort. Haaland missed a good chance around the hour mark after being set up by Semenyo, but City soon capitalised on their numerical ad-



vantage. Gravenberch received his second yellow card for a challenge on Doku, leaving Liverpool with 10 players. City took less than three minutes to make the extra man count. Doku's effort was deflected into Haaland's path, and the Norwegian

striker finished clinically to give the visitors the lead. Doku then produced a superb individual effort, cutting in from the left before curling the ball past Alisson to make it 2-0. Cherki completed the scoring late on, turning inside Jeremie Frimpong

and finishing under Alisson after a slick team move. The victory maintained City's perfect start to the league campaign and kept them at the top of the table. Liverpool, meanwhile, suffered their first league defeat and dropped to ninth.

THIRD T20I

Abhishek, Arshdeep shine as India secure 14-run win over WI



INDORE: Crucial wickets from Arshdeep Singh and Naman Dhir helped India stem the run-flow of a fighting West Indies team, beating them by 14 runs in the third T20I of the five-match series to keep the series alive on Sunday. With this win at Indore, India is 2-1 ahead in the series. Despite a collapse from 115/1 to 135/5, India managed to score 223 runs. However, timely scalps from Arshdeep Singh (3/44) and Naman Dhir (2/39) helped India restrict Windies to 209/7. During the chase, West Indies were off to a poor start as they lost the in-form skipper Shai Hope for just five, with a delivery by Arshdeep Singh nipping back and hitting the middle stump. WI was 7/1 in 1.5 overs. The pairing of Shimron Hetmyer and Kamil Pooran put back pressure on India, getting 19 runs in the fourth over, with a four by Kamil and two fours and a six by Hetmyer against Arshdeep. Hetmyer continued to bash pace, getting two boundaries in the final powerplay over against Mayank Yadav, with WI reaching 54 runs at the end of six overs. Hetmyer got a couple of fours against Naman Dhir in the seventh over, but the all-rounder castled his stumps for 26-ball 43, including six fours and two sixes. WI was 67/2 in seven overs after Naman enjoyed the last laugh. Rovman Powell, the former skipper, could not stick around, becoming Axar Patel's first wicket for just five runs. WI was 82/3 in 9.4 overs. Halfway through, WI was 84/3, with Kamil Pooran (23*) and Sherfane Rutherford (1*) unbeaten. Kamil bullied Naman with three sixes in the 11th over; however, the spin-bowling all-rounder once again enjoyed success, getting him out for 27 balls, 42, courtesy of a catch from Arshdeep at deep backward square leg. Kamil went back, hitting three fours and sixes each, with WI 105/4 in 11 overs. At the end of 15 overs, WI was 149/4, with Quentin Sampson (20*) and Sherfane (23*) unbeaten. Nitish Kumar Reddy ended the partnership, removing Simpson for 15-ball 21. WI was 151/5 in 15.3 overs. In the 18th over, Arshdeep sealed the game for India, taking

wickets of Keemo Paul (10) and Sherfane (32 in 20 balls, with two fours and four sixes). India had WI down 174/7 in 17.5 overs. Shamar Springer unleashed a six-spree against Axar Patel, smashing him for three sixes and a four in the final over, but it was still not enough as WI ended at 209/7, with Springer (35* off 11 balls, with two fours and four sixes) and Roston Chase (5*) unbeaten. Arshdeep Singh (3/44) was the top bowler for India, with Naman also getting two wickets. Axar and Nitish also got a wicket each. Earlier, a blistering half-century from Abhishek Sharma and his century stand with Ishan Kishan helped India reach 223 in 20 overs. India was racing towards a massive total at one point, but collapsed from 115/1 to 135/5. India did manage to get a few partnerships going, but a few unfortunate run-outs and wickets left India short of what could have been a 250-run-plus total. Put to bat first by West Indies, India was confined to taking singles for the first two overs, with the pressure on West Indies and Shamar Joseph, and the wicket of Sanju Samson (three in six balls), with India at 7/1 in 1.4 overs. In the next over, Abhishek broke the shackles, depositing Roston for two sixes and a four, while Ishan Kishan greeted Keemo Paul with a four over deep midwicket and ended the over with another four over mid-off. Abhishek, who became the sixth player to join India's 2,000-run T20I club, made an absolute feast out of Shamar Springer, ending the fifth over with 4.4 and a 6. India touched the 50-run mark in 4.2 overs. The left-handed batters continued their dominance against Shamar in the final over of the powerplay, getting 21 more runs, with two fours and a six by Abhishek and a four from Ishan. Abhishek reached his half-century in 18 balls, with four boundaries and four sixes. India was 87/1 in six overs. Abhishek and Ishan continued the onslaught on Keemo, getting a four each in the seventh over. India crossed the 100-run mark in 7.2 overs.

TABLE TENNIS

Al Amerat defeat Seeb to claim Oman TT senior teams title

MUSCAT: Al Amerat Club managed to defeat defending Champions Seeb by 3-2 to lift the title of 2026 Oman Table Tennis Senior Teams Championship for the first time in the club's history in this category in an exciting final on Sunday night at the main hall of the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher. In the third-place playoff, Ibri Club beat Saham Club 3-1 to secure the bronze medal, leaving Saham in fourth place. The final concluding day was held under the patronage of Prof. Dr. Abdullah bin Khamis Ambusaidi, Vice-President of the Oman Olympic Committee. The event was attended by several presidents of sports federations and clubs, members of the Oman Table Tennis Association Board, and a large gathering of table tennis enthusiasts. This season's championship featured an improvement in the technical standard and competitiveness among participating clubs, particularly with the participation of professional players from several countries, including Iran, France, Australia and Bahrain. Their presence added further intensity to the competition and provided local players with valuable opportunities to gain experience and test themselves against players of different playing styles. Al Amerat's title triumph was the result of consistent performances throughout the tournament. The club topped Group One with eight points before continuing its impressive run in the knockout stages, defeating Taqah Club 3-0 in the quarter-finals and Saham Club 3-0 in the semi-finals. Amarat then completed its campaign with a hard-fought 3-2 victory over Seeb in the final. The Oman Table Tennis Association (OTTA) concluded its individual and team competitions across the different age categories, with players and clubs earning honours in both formats. In the U13 individual category, Al Yaman bin Sulaiman Al Hasani of Quriyat Club claimed the title, while Al Yazid Al Alawi of Yanqul Club finished second and Fahad Al Alawi, also of Yanqul, took third place. In the U15 individual category, Nasser Al Zaabi of Saham Club secured first place, followed by club teammate Ali Al Ajmi in second, while Turki Al Abri of Amarat Club finished third. In the U18 individual competition, Ahmed Al Riyami of Ibri Club claimed the title, while Ali Al Ajmi of Saham Club took third place. In the senior individual category, Mahannad Al Balushi of Amarat Club won the title, with Nasser Al Balushi of Seeb Club finishing second and Ghassan Al Ghasani, also of Seeb, taking third place. In the U13 team competition, Quriyat Club claimed first place, followed by Ibri Club in second and Yanqul Club in third. Amarat



Club won the U15 team title, while Saham Club finished runners-up and Ibri Club secured third place after a competitive campaign. In the U18 team category, Ibri Club emerged victorious, with Amarat Club finishing second and Saham Club taking third place. Ibri's success added another notable achievement to its record in this season's competitions. In the senior team category, Amarat Club secured the title after its thrilling 3-2 victory over Seeb Club in the final. The result marked the club's first-ever senior team championship, while Seeb finished runners-up. Ibri Club claimed third place after defeating Saham Club 3-1 in the playoff.

Promising Young Talents Prof. Dr. Abdullah bin Khamis Ambusaidi, Vice-President of the Oman Olympic Committee, said the successful conclusion of the table tennis season reflected the efforts being made to develop the sport in the Sultanate of Oman. Speaking after the championship, Ambusaidi said the Oman Table Tennis Association was doing important work to prepare young players and develop their technical abilities, adding that their progress had been evident in the performances throughout the season. He also praised the high standard of the final, which featured experienced players capable of competing at a strong level. Ambusaidi stressed that the next phase should focus on expanding participation in table tennis and strengthening its presence across clubs and governorates throughout Oman. He emphasised the importance of coordinated efforts

between the association, clubs and relevant stakeholders to introduce the sport to a wider base of young people. He concluded by commending the constructive cooperation among the various parties, noting that continued collaboration was essential to developing Omani table tennis and discovering more talented players capable of representing the national teams in upcoming competitions.

Bamakhlaf Praises Clubs and Partners Abdullah bin Mohammed Bamakhlaf, President of OTTA, expressed his satisfaction with the successful conclusion of the season's championships and competitions. He praised the cooperation shown by clubs and their active participation in the federation's programmes and activities throughout the year. Bamakhlaf congratulated all clubs that secured top positions, commending the performances of their players and the efforts of their technical and administrative teams. He also wished success to clubs that had not reached the leading positions, expressing hope that future seasons would bring even stronger competition and further improvements in technical standards. He also praised the effective partnerships with sponsors and supporters who contributed to the success of the association's programmes and activities, highlighting the importance of such partnerships in creating favourable conditions for the sport's development and expanding its participation base. Bamakhlaf also thanked media organisations

and Oman Sports TV for their interest in covering the federation's programmes and activities, noting their important role in highlighting the efforts of players and clubs and promoting the achievements of Omani table tennis.

An Exceptional Season Mahannad al Balushi expressed his delight at winning both the senior individual title and the team championship with Amarat Club, describing the current season as different and exceptional due to the increased level of competition and the participation of professional players from several countries, including Australia, Iran and Bahrain. He said the presence of players with diverse technical backgrounds had added greater intensity and excitement to the competitions and raised the overall standard of play. Al Balushi noted that the championship was important not only for competing for titles but also for identifying promising talents and monitoring the development of players across different age groups. He added that the emergence of young players highlighted the potential within Omani table tennis and underlined the importance of continuing to organise tournaments that provide them with opportunities to gain experience through competition. He expressed hope that the championship would continue to develop and achieve further success in future editions.

High Technical Standard Ali Abdulrasool Jabri, coach of Amarat Club's table tennis team, praised the high technical standard of the championship and expressed appreciation for the continued support provided by the club's president throughout the competition. He also thanked Amarat's players for their outstanding performances and efforts. Jabri said the tournament featured players with varied technical abilities and levels of experience, including competitors from France, Iran, Bahrain and other countries. Their participation strengthened the competition and gave local players valuable opportunities to test their abilities and gain further experience. He added that the standard of play reflected the development of the championship, expressing hope that future editions would see further improvements in both organisation and technical quality, enhancing the tournament's standing and giving players more opportunities to demonstrate their abilities. Jabri concluded by expressing his hope that his team and Omani players would continue to deliver strong performances in upcoming competitions, particularly the Arab Championship, reflecting the work and preparation undertaken and contributing to positive results for Omani table tennis.

OMAN OIL PRICE RISES
MUSCAT: The official price of Oman crude oil for November delivery rose by \$1.34 to reach \$109.70 per barrel on Monday. It is worth noting that the monthly average price of Oman crude oil for October delivery stood at \$87.84 per barrel, up by \$11.48 compared with the September delivery price. — **ONA**

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2026



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 7,803.93 points, down by -0.61% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.47% at 639.63 points. Salalah Port Services, up 10.00%, was the top gainer while, Phoenix Power, down 9.75%, was the top loser. **>B2**

Oman's Islamic banking sector continues on positive trajectory

The sector posted quarterly profits of more than OMR23 million with a non performing financing ratio of 3.3%. This is a sector that has grown quickly without compromising discipline, which is not easy to achieve

VINOD KUMAR PK
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MUSCAT: Islamic banking assets in Oman reached OMR9.8 billion by the end of May 2026, a rise of 9.2% year on year, and the sector now holds close to 19% of total banking assets in the Sultanate, says an industry watcher.

Financing extended by Islamic banks and windows stood at OMR7.9 billion, up 10.5%, while deposits grew 11% to OMR7.8 billion. By the end of June, total Islamic lending had crossed OMR8 billion, said Sayed A., Chief Business Officer, Global Business, Graystone Capital.

"Just as important, the quality is sound. The sector posted quarterly profits of more than OMR23 million with a non performing financing ratio of 3.3%. This is a sector that has grown quickly without compromising discipline, which is not easy to achieve," he added.

Oman licensed Islamic banking only in 2011, and reaching a fifth of the banking system within 15 years is a remarkable achievement by any global measure. Fitch expects the industry to exceed \$45 billion in 2026, against roughly \$36 billion at the end of 2025.

Sayed further said that the challenges are honest ones.

The sector is still building scale, the Islamic money market needs greater depth, and the domestic sukuk market must mature further to give institutions proper liquidity management tools. "The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) is addressing all three, through Wakalah certificates of deposit, Islamic treasury bills and a clear push to develop the sukuk market," he added.

The consolidation now under way, including the proposed combination of Bank Nizwa and Al-izz Islamic Bank, points towards fewer but significantly stronger institutions. That is exactly what the next phase requires.

When asked whether local entrepreneurs and SMEs are finding it difficult to obtain financing from conventional banks, Sayed said the data tells the story clearly. "Oman has more than 267,000 registered small and medium enterprises (SMEs), yet SME lending accounts for roughly 3.7% of total bank credit, below the 5% guideline set by the CBO," he pointed out.

This is not a failure of the bank-



ing system, which has remained resilient through some very testing global cycles, he said.

It reflects how conventional credit is structured. Assessment relies heavily on collateral, and small firms are frequently asked to pledge assets worth well beyond the value of the facility itself. A profitable young company with contracts, customers and cash flow but no property to offer simply does not fit the template.

The consequence is that viable businesses stall, not because the economics fail, but because the security does not.

When asked whether the Islamic banking sector can help overcome this problem, Sayed said, "This is where Islamic finance holds a genuine structural advantage, and I do not say that as a matter of preference. Islamic contracts are built around assets and real economic activity rather than around lending against security."

Murabaha finances inventory and raw materials, with the goods themselves forming part of the

structure. Ijarah funds equipment and vehicles, where the asset provides the comfort. Wakalah supports working capital. Salam and Istisna'a suit manufacturers and contractors who need funding against future production or delivery. Diminishing Musharaka allows a bank to enter as a partner and progressively exit as the business grows. Look at what these structures do. They shift the conversation from what a business owns to what a business actually does. For the SME sector, that distinction is transformative.

Elaborating about the significant structural hurdles faced by businesses and SMEs, he said, four stand out in our work across the region.

Collateral dependency remains the biggest, and it disqualifies capable companies at the first hurdle. Second is informality, where personal and business finances are mixed and accounts are not current, leaving a financier unable to assess true performance. Third is awareness. Many owners still do

not know which Sharia-compliant structures exist or which one suits their situation, and awareness of Islamic products among Omani SMEs remains lower than it should be. Fourth is the economics of small ticket financing, where the cost of assessing a modest facility is nearly the same as a large one.

"Each of these is solvable. Credit guarantee mechanisms, cash flow based scoring and digital invoicing data all reduce collateral dependency directly, and they are the direction the market is taking," Sayed further added.

Speaking about digital frontier help the Islamic banking sector, he said that digital capability solves the small ticket problem, which is the single biggest barrier to SME financing anywhere in the world. When onboarding, verification, credit scoring and documentation move onto a properly designed platform, a financier can approve a OMR40,000 facility profitably and in days rather than weeks.

Oman has already laid the groundwork. The Central Bank's digital banking framework opened the way for fully digital institutions, including Islamic ones, and the fintech sandbox operated jointly with the Financial Services Authority allows new models to be tested safely.

Alternative data matters here too. Payment histories, invoicing records and transaction flows tell a far more accurate story about a young company than a property deed ever will. Combine that data with Sharia-compliant structures and you reach businesses no traditional model could serve.

When asked about how Islamic financing can emerge as the back-

bone of Oman's future economy, he said, "It can, and I believe it will become one of the central pillars."

Consider the alignment. Oman Vision 2040 is built on diversification, productive investment and private sector employment. Islamic finance, by its very nature, must attach to real assets and real activity. It cannot exist in abstraction. A financing philosophy rooted in tangible economic value is precisely what a diversifying economy requires.

Sayed further said that the foundations are already in place. The Central Bank's framework for Shariah compliant finance and leasing companies has widened the field beyond banks.

The windows conversion framework charts a phased path towards stronger standalone institutions through 2030. Sovereign sukuk issuance, including the landmark \$1 billion transaction, has built a pricing benchmark, and corporate issuers such as Oman Electricity Transmission Company have followed with green sukuk.

Globally, Islamic financial assets stand near \$5 trillion, with the GCC accounting for close to 70%, and outstanding sukuk have passed \$1 trillion. Oman is positioned in the right region, with the right framework, at the right moment.

What will decide the outcome is delivery at the small business level. If Islamic institutions take their asset based structures and reach the thousands of Omani entrepreneurs currently underserved, this sector will not merely grow. It will become the mechanism through which Oman's diversification actually happens.

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

Oman's central bank raises OMR65mn through treasury bills

MUSCAT: Oman's central bank raised OMR65 million by way of allotting treasury bills on Monday. The value of the allotted Treasury bills include OMR10 million, for a maturity period of 28 days.

The average accepted price reached OMR99.700 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR99.700 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 3.91071% and 3.92248%,

respectively.

Additionally, treasury bills amounting to OMR44.5 million, for a maturity period of 91 days was also allotted. The average accepted price reached OMR98.972 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR98.965 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.12298% and 4.16580%, respectively.

In addition, treasury bills

amounting to ONR10 million for a maturity period of 182 days was also allotted on Monday. The average accepted price reached OMR97.910 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR97.910 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.19148% and 4.28096%, respectively.

Moreover, treasury bills amounting to OMR0.5 million

for a maturity period of 364 days was also allotted. The average accepted price reached OMR96.350 for every OMR100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR96.350 per OMR100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 3.66003% and 3.79868%, respectively.

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

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

It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 4.50% while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 5.00%. — **ONA**



TWO PRESTIGIOUS RECOGNITIONS

Sohar International receives dual recognition for Oman's \$1 billion Sukuk and Asyad Shipping IPO

MUSCAT: Sohar International has received two prestigious recognitions at the Islamic Finance News (IFN) Awards 2026, reaffirming its growing role in advancing Oman's capital markets and facilitating transactions that contribute to the Sultanate's economic development and international investment appeal. The Bank was recognised for its involvement in two landmark transactions: the Sultanate of Oman's \$1 billion Sukuk, which was named IFN Oman Deal of the Year 2025, and Asyad Shipping Company's OMR640.5 million Initial Public Offering (IPO), which received the IFN IPO Deal of the Year 2025 award.

The recognitions highlight Sohar International's ability to support strategic funding and capital-raising initiatives, combining market expertise, institutional relationships and execution capabilities to connect issuers with investment opportunities. They also reflect the Bank's contribution to the continued development of Oman's financial ecosystem, supporting greater market participation, diversification of funding sources and access to regional and international capital.

Commenting on the recognition, Abdulwahid Mohamed Al Murshidi, Chief Executive Officer of Sohar International, said:



"As Oman advances its economic ambitions, the ability to mobilise capital, attract investment and connect institutions with financial markets will become increasingly important to sustaining long-term growth. At Sohar International, we see our role extending beyond the successful execution of individual transactions to helping build a more dynamic, competitive and internationally connected financial ecosystem. These landmark trans-

actions demonstrate the strength of Oman's investment proposition and the growing sophistication of its capital markets, while reflecting our ability to bring together institutional expertise, market access and execution capabilities to deliver outcomes of national significance. Our ambition is to continue strengthening Sohar International's position as a trusted financial partner; enabling capital to flow towards strategic oppor-

tunities, supporting the growth of key economic sectors and contributing to Oman's broader economic transformation in line with Oman Vision 2040."

The awards were presented during the IFN Awards ceremony held at Palazzo Versace Dubai. Representing Sohar International at the ceremony were Dr Almuatasim Musabab Al Mutairi, Executive Vice President, Head of Investment Banking & Capital Markets,

and Waleed Sulaiman Al Adawi, Vice President, Head of Private Equity & Asset Management, who received the awards on behalf of the Bank.

The two award-winning transactions represent important developments in Oman's capital markets, each contributing to a distinct dimension of the Sultanate's financial and economic priorities.

The \$1 billion sovereign Sukuk demonstrated the continued relevance of Islamic finance as a strategic funding channel, supporting the diversification of sovereign financing sources while reinforcing Oman's engagement with regional and international investors. Meanwhile, Asyad Shipping Company's OMR640.5 million IPO represented a significant development in Oman's equity capital markets, expanding investor participation in a strategically important enterprise operating within the Sultanate's logistics and maritime sector.

Together, the transactions reflect the increasing role of capital markets in mobilising investment and supporting the development of sectors central to Oman's economic diversification agenda.

The IFN Awards recognise transactions that demonstrate excellence, innovation and significance within the Islamic finance industry.

Winners are selected through an independent judging process involving experts from non-competing organisations, with assessments considering factors such as transaction impact, complexity, execution challenges, uniqueness and broader market relevance. Rather than focusing primarily on transaction size or pricing, the evaluation emphasises the contribution and distinctive characteristics of each deal, underscoring the strategic significance of the two recognitions received by Sohar International.

Building on these achievements, Sohar International continues to expand the depth and reach of its investment banking and capital markets capabilities, supporting sovereign entities, corporates and institutions in accessing financing and investment opportunities. Through an increasingly integrated approach that combines advisory expertise, financial structuring and access to capital, the Bank is contributing to the development of a more resilient, diversified and globally connected financial sector. These efforts reflect Sohar International's long-term commitment to enabling Oman's economic ambitions, strengthening its competitiveness as an investment destination and supporting sustainable growth in alignment with Oman Vision 2040.

MARKET

MSX Index ends lower marginally



Salalah Port Services, up 10.00%, was the top gainer while, Phoenix Power, down 9.75%, was the top loser in yesterday's trading session

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 7,803.93 points, down by -0.61% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.47% at 639.63 points. Salalah Port Services, up 10.00%, was the top gainer while, Phoenix Power, down 9.75%, was the top loser. Shares of Sohar International Bank were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 11,226 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of OMR74.42 million, with more than 267.59 million shares changing hands. Out of 68 traded securities, 20 advanced, 32 declined, and 16 remained unchanged.

Financial Index closed at 13,894.88 points, down -0.78%. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Oman & Emirates Investment, Oman United Insurance, Bank Muscat were up by 3.24%, 0.81%, 0.63%, 0.23% respectively. Prices of Muscat Finance, Ahli Bank, National Finance, Al Madina Invest-

ments, OMINVEST were down by 5.97%, 2.91%, 2.70%, 2.41%, 1.68% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 10,152.86 points, down -0.51%. Prices of Oman Flour Mills, Gulf Mushroom Products, Oman Refreshment, Raysut Cement, Gulf International Chemicals were up by 2.93%, 2.36%, 2.27%, 1.58%, 1.41% respectively. Prices of Construction Materials, Al Anwar Ceramics, Oman Fisheries, Oman Chlorine, Galfar Engineering were down by 6.67%, 4.46%, 4.35%, 4.14%, 1.21% respectively.

Services Index was down by -1.12% before closing at 3,067.63 points. Prices of Salalah Port Services, National Gas, Oman National Engineering, Abraj Energy were up by 10.00%, 0.83%, 0.67%, 0.67%, 0.46% respectively. Prices of Sembcorp Salalah, Dhofar Generating, Muscat Desalination, Ooredoo, Barka Desalination were down by 1.39%, 1.25%, 1.09%, 0.63%, 0.60% respectively.

— United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	7,854.28	7,797.63	7,803.93	7,852.11	-48.18	-0.61%
FINANCIAL INDEX	14,013.69	13,893.10	13,894.88	14,004.09	-109.21	-0.78%
Industry Index	10,250.50	10,152.86	10,152.86	10,205.37	-52.51	-0.51%
Services Index	3,102.50	3,064.22	3,067.63	3,102.50	-34.87	-1.12%
MSX Shariah Index	644.32	639.63	639.63	642.68	-3.04	-0.47%
MSX TR INDEX	12,244.80	12,156.49	12,166.31	12,241.42	-75.11	-0.61%
FINANCIAL TR IDX	17,229.10	17,080.84	17,083.03	17,217.30	-134.27	-0.78%
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	13,128.30	13,003.24	13,003.24	13,070.49	-67.25	-0.51%
SERVICES TR IDX	4,283.36	4,230.50	4,235.21	4,283.36	-48.14	-1.12%
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,291.27	1,291.27	1,291.27	1,291.27	0.00	0.00%

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
267,591,886	74,417,272	11,226	39,846,477,022	20	32	16	68

MSX DAILY BULLETIN AS ON 12/10/2026

	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																
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	130,784	68,276	34	0.508	0.525	0.508	0.520	0.508	0.012	2.362	0.520	0.520	0.550	0.100	26,178,036
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	121,774	15,216	14	0.125	0.126	0.124	0.124	0.123	0.001	0.813	0.124	0.124	0.125	0.100	15,868,125
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENRG & INVESTMENT	125,000	18,750	3	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.149	0.001	0.671	0.150	0.149	0.160	0.100	22,500,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	60,760	19,525	9	0.325	0.325	0.320	0.322	0.320	0.002	0.625	0.322	0.322	0.320	0.100	33,810,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	1,103,227	485,560	422	0.440	0.442	0.437	0.442	0.440	0.002	0.455	0.442	0.445	0.442	0.100	340,428,400
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	6,151,804	8,340,719	133	1.354	1.358	1.354	1.358	1.354	0.004	0.295	1.358	1.489	1.358	0.100	1,018,500,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	25,853,218	11,413,255	1,619	0.444	0.446	0.436	0.444	0.443	0.001	0.226	0.444	0.447	0.444	0.100	3,332,840,296
OM0000009759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	14,118,400	7,200,905	640	0.507	0.512	0.507	0.508	0.507	0.001	0.197	0.508	0.508	0.457	0.000	4,064,000,000
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	15,289	7,616	2	0.498	0.500	0.498	0.500	0.500	0.000	0.000	0.500	0.497	0.500	0.100	812,973,178
OM0000001509	DHOFAR INT'L DEVELOPMENT & INVEST	52,856	15,599	16	0.296	0.296	0.295	0.295	0.295	0.000	0.000	0.295	0.295	0.295	0.100	146,338,562
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	1,945	6,701	2	3.445	3.445	3.445	3.445	3.445	0.000	0.000	3.445	3.410	3.445	0.100	309,016,500
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	16,680	10,758	6	0.645	0.645	0.644	0.645	0.645	0.000	0.000	0.645	0.640	0.645	0.100	213,412,898
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	2,961	2,073	5	0.700	0.700	0.700	0.700	0.700	0.000	0.000	0.700	0.695	0.700	0.100	84,000,000
OM0000003000	AI MAHA PETROLEUM PRODT'S MRKTNG	3,455	4,353	5	1.260	1.260	1.260	1.260	1.260	0.000	0.000	1.260	1.260	1.260	0.100	86,940,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	19,399	5,321	11	0.275	0.275	0.274	0.275	0.275	0.000	0.000	0.275	0.274	0.275	0.100	65,012,750
OM0000004925	ALBATNAH POWER	92,930	18,543	18	0.200	0.200	0.199	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.198	0.200	0.100	134,977,486
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	99,591	19,662	18	0.200	0.200	0.199	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.198	0.200	0.100	142,881,268
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	1,100	1,026	1	0.933	0.933	0.933	0.933	0.935	-0.002	-0.214	0.933	0.920	0.935	0.100	116,529,797
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	282,000	110,866	3	0.394	0.394	0.393	0.394	0.395	-0.001	-0.253	0.394	0.385	0.394	0.100	78,800,000
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	28,321,546	6,622,029	1,738	0.235	0.237	0.232	0.234	0.235	-0.001	-0.426	0.234	0.234	0.234	0.100	1,013,365,997
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	407,554	90,641	382	0.225	0.225	0.221	0.223	0.224	-0.001	-0.446	0.223	0.224	0.223	0.100	677,875,073
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	129,873,947	24,825,023	2,083	0.191	0.193	0.190	0.191	0.192	-0.001	-0.521	0.191	0.191	0.191	0.100	1,466,117,084
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	42,080	7,019	3	0.167	0.167	0.166	0.167	0.168	-0.001	-0.595	0.167	0.167	0.166	0.100	12,612,174
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	436,077	139,174	43	0.319	0.320	0.317	0.317	0.319	-0.002	-0.627	0.317	0.317	0.317	0.100	206,349,321
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	332,500	50,865	27	0.154	0.154	0.152	0.153	0.154	-0.001	-0.649	0.153	0.153	0.155	0.100	342,253,814
OM0000009908	OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SPZ)	43,428,914	11,848,409	2,243	0.275	0.275	0.271	0.271	0.273	-0.002	-0.733	0.271	0.271	0.271	0.040	97,522,020
OM0000004769	MADINA TAKAFUL	96,200	10,570	18	0.110	0.110	0.109	0.109	0.110	-0.001	-0.909	0.109	0.109	0.114	0.100	19,072,000
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	34,320	7,207	4	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.212	-0.002	-0.943	0.210	0.210	0.210	0.100	64,576,999
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO.	58,700	6,046	6	0.104	0.104	0.102	0.103	0.102	-0.001	-0.971	0.102	0.102	0.103	0.100	9,180,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	211,546	39,515	27	0.188	0.188	0.186	0.186	0.188	-0.002	-1.064	0.187	0.187	0.187	0.010	186,000,000
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	207,919	59,270	25	0.285	0.286	0.282	0.283	0.287	-0.004	-1.394	0.283	0.283	0.286	0.100	270,143,862
OM0000001333	OMINVEST	75,356	30,590	9	0.410	0.417	0.410	0.410	0.417	-0.007	-1.679	0.410	0.410	0.414	0.100	460,370,105
OM0000001320	ASTAD SHIPPING	2,111,031	487,876	932	0.234	0.234	0.229	0.230	0.234	-0.004	-1.769	0.230	0.230	0.234	0.000	1,198,011,184
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	1,148,178	244,562	58	0.213	0.213	0.213	0.213	0.236	-0.023	-9.746	0.213	0.215	0.259	0.100	311,534,111
Total		34	255,040,041	72,234,057	10,559											
Parallel Market																
OM0000002333	SALALAH PORT SERVICES	110	64	1	0.583	0.583	0.583	0.583	0.530	0.053	10.000	0.583	0.477	0.000	0.100	104,845,204
OM0000005280	OMAN ARAB BANK	1,082,100	301,478	81	0.278	0.288	0.278	0.287	0.279	0.009	3.237	0.287	0.278	0.287	0.100	59,788,129
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	100	60	1	0.598	0.598	0.598	0.598	0.581	0.017	2.926	0.598	0.583	0.600	0.100	103,836,963
OM0000000126	OMAN REFRESHMENT	1,145	1,288	1	1.125	1.125	1.125	1.125	1.100	0.025	2.273	1.125	1.100	1.125	0.100	56,250,000
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	383	69	1	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.176	0.004	2.273	0.180	0.177	0.181	0.100	106,458,638
OM0000003028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	30,000	2,160	4	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.071	0.001	1.408	0.072	0.068	0.072	0.100	1,512,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	280,000	34,045	37	0.124	0.124	0.120	0.122	0.121	0.001	0.826	0.122	0.122	0.125	0.100	10,370,000
OM00000010823	OMAN GATEWAY FUND	8,350	9,051	5	1.084	1.084	1.084	1.084	1.076	0.008	0.743	1.084	1.084	1.100	0.000	29,728,529
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	9,000	1,233	2	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.136	0.001	0.735	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.100	13,563,000
OM0000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	39,319	4,443	4	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.000	0.000	0.113	0.113	0.113	0.100	32,057,069
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	4,750	285	2	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.060	0.000	0.000	0.060	0.058	0.064	0.100	15,000,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	112,441	33,058	5	0.294	0.294	0.294	0.294	0.294	0.000	0.000	0.294	0.275	0.294	0.100	16,170,000
OM0000001080	OMAN CHROMITE	618	3,029	6	4.890	4.890	4.890	4.890	5.000	-0.110	-0.809	4.890	0.900	4.890	0.100	18,113,700
OM0000001151	OMIFCO	5,838,869	1,356,371	239	0.232	0.232	0.231	0.232	0.232	0.000	0.000	0.232	0.231	0.232	0.000	1,551,935,000
OM0000009569	JABAL REIF	263,480	27,668	23	0.106	0.106	0.105	0.105	0.106	-0.001	-0.943	0.105	0.104	0.105	0.100	18,270,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	86,137	8,855	7	0.105	0.105	0.104	0.104	0.105	-0.001	-0.952	0.104	0.104	0.104	0.100	87,538,873
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	78,221	7,166	11	0.092	0.092	0.091	0.091	0.092	-0.001	-1.087	0.091	0.091	0.094	0.100	14,155,086
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	90,153	14,642	17	0.165	0.165	0.162	0.163	0.165	-0.002	-1.212	0.163	0.162	0.163	0.100	33,868,791
OM0000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	5,000	396	2	0.080	0.080	0.079	0.079	0.080	-0.001	-1.250	0.079	0.079	0.080	0.100	17,556,960
OM00000010962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	72,879	5,821	9	0.080	0.083	0.079	0.081	0.083	-0.002	-2.410	0.081	0.080	0.081	0.100	3,491,100
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	23,473	5,070	1	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.222	-0.006	-2.703	0.216	0.218	0.222	0.100	140,550,206
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	371	74	1	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.206	-0.006	-2.913	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.100	555,658,183
OM0000002341	OMAN CHLORINE	2,840	460	2	0.162	0.162	0.162	0.162	0.169	-0.007	-4.142	0.162	0.162	0.162	0.100	11,584,432
OM0000000268	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	642,901	97,605	101	0.157	0.157	0.150	0.150	0.157	-0.007	-4.459	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.100	330,000,000
OM00000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	3,000,100	192,747	34	0.068	0.068	0.068	0.063	0.067	-0.004	-5.970	0.063	0.063	0.069	0.100	19,350,000
OM0000000368	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	41,240	2,882	8	0.070	0.070	0.069	0.070	0.075	-0.005	-6.667	0.070	0.071	0.074	0.100	4,372,218
Total		26	117,182,980	21,010,019	605											



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Email: chris_alwin@yahoo.com

WA:79788708 | nellks2020@gmail.com

HR/FINANCE

Indian, male, Masters in degree in HR and finance with 12+ yrs of experience in Oman as an HR with valid Oman D/L. Looking for a job currently in Oman.

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Email: chris_alwin@yahoo.com

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Indian male MBA, 12 yrs of experience in accounts & procurement looking for suitable opportunities. Contact: 98104268, Email: shinishakir@gmail.com

Indian male M-Com, Accountant, 6 yrs experience in Oman, India. 77509446

48 yrs male Manager in Accounts (23 yrs exp). Contact: 91410602

Indian male with 2yrs of experience as accountant looking for suitable job opportunities. Contact: +96896530788. Email: Rameezm.s1234@gmail.com

JOB WANTED

ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

Accountant having 10 yrs gulf experience in accounts, D/L and NOC Available
Contact: 79192017

Senior accountant, CBA (CA SL), BBA (accounting), finance professional with 10 yrs experience, specializing in IFRS financial reporting, VAT and tax compliance, audit, treasury, financial controls, ERP systems. Contact: +968 79161550. Email: ashmalaraos@gmail.com

Indian male - CPA, CMA, CA finalist, MCom with 13+ yrs Finance exp. in Reporting, FP&A, Budgeting, MIS & ERP Implementation. Seeking Senior Finance role. Phone: 98078321

Senior Accountant cum procurement (FMCB, construction), finance job required with D/L & NOC MBA-finance, 8+ yrs experience in accounts, finance, admin (finalization, audit, MIS, banking, cash flow, VAT, payroll, etc). Contact: 94822604

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Indian female MCom qualified, 10 yrs of experience in home country seeking job. Tally ERP, busy, Manager.io Contact: 95473637

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Indian female, MSc Industrial Psychology graduate with 1 yr HR experience, seeking HR, Administration, Sales or Marketing roles. Excellent communication, coordination & people management skills. Contact: 99680529, Email: evapraisay@gmail.com

Male looking a suitable post. Admin or accounts. Contact: 75224936

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Indian male, 18 yrs experienced in channel sales, project sales, business development, having D/L, seeks suitable placement. Contact 92790532

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Saudi Arabia says 1 dead and 11 injured in latest attack on Riyadh



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Suspension of operations at King Khalid International Airport extended for safety checks

RIYADH: At least one person was killed and 11 others were injured in a strike on Riyadh airport in Saudi Arabia on Sunday, a day after a similar attack killed 12 and injured hundreds.

“King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh was subjected to a new attack on Sunday afternoon,” the General Authority of Civil Aviation said in a statement.

It later confirmed that the indi-

vidual killed in the Sunday attack was a Pakistani national.

Meanwhile the General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) announced an extension of the suspension of operations at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh while it completes procedures to verify the safety and operational readiness of the airport’s facilities, in coordination with the relevant authorities.

International community reacts

US President Donald Trump on Saturday said he would be speaking to Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, in the wake of the attack, which he said was “not acceptable.”

Trump also said that the US was “going to look” at potentially joining Saudi strikes against the rebels.

On Sunday, European leaders expressed their “shock” at the at-

tack on Riyadh airport.

The President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, said the EU stands in “solidarity with Saudi Arabia” as she condemned the “dangerous escalation.”

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl “firmly” condemned what he described as “a terrorist act against Saudi Arabia and civil aviation.”

“Our thoughts are with the victims and I send my sincere condolences to their loved ones,” he said on X.

UK Defense Secretary Wes Streeting slammed the attacks as “contemptible” and a “dangerous escalation,” while the French Foreign Ministry condemned the “heinous attack” and stressed its “total solidarity” with Saudi Arabia.

Australia, meanwhile, has urged its citizens in the Saudi capital to “shelter in place” amid the escalating attacks. — Agencies

SPECIAL INTENSIVE REVISION

India opposition marches to Supreme Court, seeks election chief’s removal

NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi led the INDIA bloc’s march towards the Supreme Court on Monday, where the opposition plans to petition the court, listing out alleged irregularities in the SIR process and seeking action against CEC Gyanesh Kumar.

All India Students’ Association (AISA) president Neha Bora was walking alongside the two leaders during the march. Thousands of political workers and civil rights activists joined the march, bringing major stretches of the capital, including Mandi House and Barakhamba Road, to a complete standstill.

Rahul Gandhi’s legal team has reached the Supreme Court registry seeking an extension to file an in-person writ petition. The petition reportedly concerns protest-related issues in New Delhi linked to alleged irregularities by the Election Commission of India.

His legal team is seeking an extension beyond 4:30 pm, which is the closing time for the apex courts’ registry to file their plea.

Generally, in such a case, a party can always access the apex courts’ E-filing service, which is open and accessible 24/7.

In view of the march, barricades and heavy police deployment were placed as thousands of political workers and civil rights activists marched under the INDIA bloc banner for a march to the Supreme Court seeking the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

Led by leaders including Rahul Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge and Akhilesh Yadav, the ‘March for Democracy’ brought key stretches of the capital, including Barakhamba Road and Mandi House,



to a standstill. Protesters waved national flags, held placards and raised slogans alleging irregularities in the Election Commission’s Special Intensive Revision

(SIR) of electoral rolls. During the march, Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge questioned the conduct of the poll body.

They earlier reached the Bara-

khamba Road intersection as they began a march towards the Supreme Court, where they will petition the court, listing out alleged irregularities in the SIR process and seek action against CEC Gyanesh Kumar.

Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge questioned the conduct of the poll body. “We are asking very valid questions. Who authorised Form 6? Whose bulk-printing, pre-printed Form 7?... Where is Gyanesh Kumar hiding? When a constitutional body head is missing, we need to ask questions,” he said.

Congress MP Amarinder Singh Raja Warring appealed to the Chief Justice of India Surya Kant for a meeting. “If the Chief Justice of India will not meet us, then who will listen to the grievances of the public? We urge the Chief Justice of India to meet us,” he said.

SP Chief Akhilesh Yadav alleged that the Election Commission seemed to be working at the behest of the BJP.

Akhilesh Yadav said, “BJP is still getting fake votes registered. We hope that the Election Commission will stay impartial. SIR was ongoing in UP and it has now concluded. Still, there are a large number of double votes. You conducted such a huge exercise, spent crores of rupees, and deployed officials for the same. Still, you could not rectify the voter list...What can you expect from them then? Why the SIR then? EC seems to be working at the BJP’s behest.”

Despite the presence of high security, the INDIA bloc delegation has registered a strong protest against the Election Commission and, with them vowing to continue, the issue continues to dominate. -ANI

MODERN IT ECOSYSTEM



Pakistan PM Shehbaz directs development of Daanish IT Park into world-class tech hub

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the authorities concerned to develop the Daanish IT Park Islamabad into a world-class hub of technology and transform it into a centre of a modern IT ecosystem through effective collaboration between academia and industry.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss matters related to the Daanish IT Park Islamabad, said that the government would continue its efforts to equip Pakistani youth with modern skills in IT, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and FinTech, besides creating new opportunities for IT entrepreneurs.

He instructed the Ministry of Information Technology to conduct a comprehensive case study of the project. The prime minister directed to operationalise Daanish IT Park in partnership with global technology companies, and carry out a third-party audit of

the project.

During the meeting, a briefing was given on the creation of a comprehensive ecosystem aimed at boosting IT exports and promoting investment in the sector.

It was informed that 50 private buildings have been upgraded into Software Technology Parks under the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB). Additionally, eight incubation centres have been established across the country to support startups, while 105 co-working spaces are operational to facilitate IT professionals.

The participants of the meeting were told that global technology companies were being approached to operationalise the Daanish IT Park Islamabad.

The meeting was attended by Federal ministers Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Musadik Masood Malik, Ahad Khan Cheema, and Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State Bilal Azhar Kiyani, and senior government officials. -APP

TREMENDOUS HONOUR

Nobel Prize in Economics goes to pair of US economists

STOCKHOLM: The 2026 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences was awarded to Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm announced on Monday.

The pair got the Nobel for their work in microeconomic foundations of stabilisation policy, allowing for the development of economic models that help governments and central banks respond more effectively to booms and recessions.

Hall is affiliated with Stanford University in California, and Woodford with Columbia University in New York.

“It’s a tremendous honour, it’s a surprise,” Woodford said, addressing the committee by phone from New York on Monday.

Why did Hall and Woodford win the Nobel Prize?

The pair of US scientists were awarded for looking toward microeconomic indicators to in-



form macroeconomic stabilisation policies.

They have based their economic models on a microeconomic foundation, breaking with the long-standing Keynesian models, developed by economist John Maynard

Keynes almost a century ago.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences argued that decades of applying the Keynesian models showed their limitations – including in failing to curb unemployment and instead raise inflation.

“The West experienced a decade of low growth, high unemployment and high inflation. Many people believed that stabilisation policy had done more harm than good and that it should be retired,” the academy said in

its press release.

Hall and Woodford’s model instead demonstrated how the total mass of individual households and businesses affect the economy through their actions.

“The Laureates’ work has provided us with a stable theoretical foundation for the models that are now used by central banks and governments around the world. With them, we are better equipped to deal with shocks in the economy, such as energy crises or sudden changes in how much households consume,” said John Hassler, Chair of the Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences.

What else to know about the Nobel Economics prize?

The economics prize is formally known as the Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel.

Last year’s prize was awarded to three business innovation researchers who explained how new

products and inventions promote economic growth and human welfare, even as they leave older companies behind.

The Sveriges Riksbank established it in 1968 as a memorial to Nobel, the 19th-century Swedish businessman and chemist who invented dynamite and established the five Nobel Prizes.

Since the economics prize was not one of the five original Nobel Prizes established by Nobel in his will, some argue that it is not technically not a Nobel Prize.

Nevertheless, it is always presented together with the others on December 10, the anniversary of Nobel’s death in 1896.

Nobel honors were announced last week in medicine, physics, chemistry, literature and peace.

This year’s prize money is 12 million Swedish kronor (about \$1.2 million or €1.07 million), whether for an individual, small group of laureates or organization. -DW



LIFESTYLE



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

Bollywood's grand return to Yas Island for IIFA 2027

RAHUL DAS
rahuldas@timesofoman.com

MUSCAT: The International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) is returning to Abu Dhabi for the fourth time in January 2027, with founder and director Andre Timmins describing the emirate as a “home away from home” for the global Indian film industry and revealing plans for a bigger entertainment programme, a new business forum and an international expansion of the IIFA brand.

The IIFA Weekend and Awards will take place in Abu Dhabi on January 21 and 22, bringing together leading Bollywood and South Indian stars, filmmakers, business leaders and audiences from across the region.

Speaking to the Times of Oman, Timmins said IIFA's decision to return to Abu Dhabi was influenced by both the emirate's strong relationship with the Indian entertainment industry and the current global environment.

“IIFA travels around the world, right, to different destinations. IIFA first three times was on the request of the leadership there to kind of promote India, India, Abu Dhabi,” Timmins said.

“Then after that, we went to Jaipur and we were supposed to go to Greece and Malaysia. And because of the current situation in the world, we decided to either come back to India or then go to Abu Dhabi.”

He said Abu Dhabi offered IIFA a familiar and supportive environment at a time when bringing people together was particularly important.

“We've come back to Abu Dhabi because it's more of a comfort zone that we know the people there. IIFA is all about celebrating. IIFA is all about bringing people together. It's all about culture. It's all about commerce.”

“Why not go to Abu Dhabi? Because one is the leadership will, with arms open, welcome us. And second thing, for us, it becomes stress-free in terms of bringing people together. It's close to India. It's two and a half hours away from India.”

Timmins said the return of IIFA to Abu Dhabi also carried a wider message about India's cultural influence.

“With IIFA coming into Abu Dhabi, it also shows the test that India's committed, our soft power, Indian cinema's committed to make the world a better place.”

He described Abu Dhabi's leadership as “absolutely brilliant” and said the city had become a natural home for IIFA. “It's like home far away from home. They understand the ethos of Indian travellers. If I'm not mistaken, last year, they did about 1.2 million Indians into Abu Dhabi, which is brilliant.”



Timmins said IIFA had played a role in strengthening the relationship between Abu Dhabi and India and wanted to contribute further to the emirate's tourism ambitions.

“IIFA has played an important role in growing that relationship between Abu Dhabi and India. And we want to play an important role to see how we can get more people across, not only from a touristic perspective.”

He pointed to Abu Dhabi's major attractions, including Ferrari World, Warner Bros. World and other entertainment destinations, as part of the wider experience available to visitors.

Business forum added

For the 2027 edition, IIFA is expanding beyond its traditional awards and entertainment format with a new business forum focused on the media, entertainment and commerce sectors.

“What we are doing this year, we are adding a business forum to it, in the media, entertainment and commerce,” Timmins said.

The forum, scheduled around January 21 and 22, will bring together Abu Dhabi leadership, ministers from India and Indian business leaders.

“The forum will be another new addition to what we are doing,” he said.

On the entertainment side, Timmins said the 2027 edition would feature a mix of Bollywood and South Indian cinema, with a number of new collaborations and film promotions.

“We are bringing a little more cinema to it. We're bringing more films. We are kind of promoting some new films coming in. We're looking at some larger tie-ups. We are going to bring some South stars there. So it's going to be a mix of Bollywood stars, South stars together in one platform.”

He said audiences could therefore expect content that would be different from previous IIFA editions in Abu Dhabi.

Shah Rukh Khan invited

Salman Khan has already been announced for the event, while Tim-

“

Salman Khan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Shahid Kapoor, Janhvi Kapoor, Varun Dhawan, Ananya Panday, Karan Johar, Pankaj Tripathi, Ali Fazal and Maniesh Paul are among the Bollywood stars set to take centre stage at IIFA 2027 in Abu Dhabi on January 22 and 23

mins said IIFA would be delighted if Shah Rukh Khan accepts its invitation.

“We would be more than happy if Shah Rukh accepts the invitation. He's busy with his movie King. Till the 24th of December, his movie gets released,” he said.

“I think it's going to be a success. There's no doubt about it with Shah Rukh and Deepika. And then we just heard Ranbir is doing a special appearance.”

“Many more. So we've requested if he accepts the invitation, I think Abu Dhabi, the world and IIFA will be more grateful to him.”

Gulf audience increasingly important

Timmins said the importance of the Gulf market to Indian cinema has grown dramatically over the past decade.

“It's not only important to IIFA. If you look at the current demographics of the world, probably 15 years ago or 10 years ago, from a ticket-buying audience, it would be first India, second London, then America and then UAE.”

“Today, it's India. Second is UAE. So how important it is not to



IIFA only, but to the cinema industry, because our ticket sales, the second largest ticket sales is UAE. And then it's America and then it's London.”

“So it has changed over the last seven, eight years. So Middle East, UAE, Saudi is very important to the industry, not only IIFA.”

He said IIFA's role was to act as a catalyst for Indian cinema and help strengthen its connection with international audiences.

Live experience cannot be replaced

With IIFA also announcing a partnership with YouTube for live streaming the IIFA AWARDS Night Timmins acknowledged the changing way audiences consume entertainment but urged fans to experience the event in person.

“Live events, and watching it on YouTube or Zee TV, is very different. You've been to IIFAs because what you experience in the live is very different than watching it on TV.”

“Of course, I propagate everybody to come and buy tickets and come and see it live because that encourages us to keep going.”

Timmins said ticket sales had already reached around 50 per cent and urged audiences to support the event.

“Please tell all your listeners, please tell all your viewers to go out there and support IIFA, to buy the tickets and sell it out.”

“We, I think, if I'm not mistaken, have reached about 50 per cent. I'm sure in the next one month, Diwali, all will be sold out.”

Hollywood to enter IIFA awards

Timmins also revealed that IIFA is introducing a new award recognising a Hollywood film that has performed strongly at the Indian

box office.

“What we are doing this year is also integrating one of the best Hollywood films that's done well in India. So we are integrating one award for Hollywood.”

He said the award would recognise the best-performing Hollywood movie at the Indian box office and would be selected with the involvement of an advisory board.

“It's something new, never done in the world. And second thing, I'm not losing my roots. I'm still honouring people from India.”

Abu Dhabi remains his favourite destination

IIFA has travelled to around 25 countries, but Timmins said Abu Dhabi remained particularly close to his heart.

“For me, there can be no other country than Abu Dhabi, which is close to my heart because the leadership is absolutely brilliant. I like the ethos of how they promote events. I like the structure of how they promote events. I like the thinking.”

He described Abu Dhabi as one of the world's best destinations for major events.

“It's a very event-friendly country because they do about 85 events in Abu Dhabi. They understand events. They understand how to bring it there. What to bring.”

“I think, if you ask me, single-handedly, it's one of the best destinations to bring events to. They have the formula. They have the structure.”

“Hands down, Abu Dhabi would be my first love from that perspective.”

But Timmins also has another major ambition — taking IIFA back to London. “I want to go back in London in 2028, play to 100,000 people in Wembley Stadium. That's my big dream.”

“I think after Diljit, IIFA will bring that audience together. So I think 2028, London, here we come, Wembley Stadium, 100,000 people sold out.”

Abu Dhabi's event infrastructure

Timmins said IIFA had experienced few difficulties in organising its Abu Dhabi events because of the city's structured approach to major international events.

“There have never been any challenges within the Abu Dhabi system because they have it, everything is laid down very, very clear.”

He said regular meetings take place to ensure that every aspect of an event is on track.

“They do meetings every 15 days. They're ticking the box of what's happening, whether it's licences, booking of the venues. They also check what's happening in your life. Artists are booked, cars are booked, hotels are booked. They monitor everything.”

“You can't go wrong. There's a whole team working with the Abu Dhabi Miral office.”

He said the main logistical challenge sometimes involved arranging airline tickets and first-class travel for artists, with some travelling through Dubai before reaching Abu Dhabi.

Next generation of Indian stars

Asked about the next generation of Indian cinema talent, Timmins singled out Ahaan Panday as a promising young actor.

“I think we already have Ahaan Panday, who, his movie did very well. And I think he looks definitely promising.”

He said a number of other young actors from established film families were also expected to enter the industry. “In the corridors, we know that Arbaaz's son, Sohail's son, they're all going to be starting shooting next year.”

“These kids will be the next big stars to come.”

“Come, celebrate, enjoy”

For audiences considering a trip to Abu Dhabi for IIFA 2027, Timmins had a simple message. “I think the one thing I want to say to all our audiences, the people that support IIFA, is come, celebrate, enjoy, watch.”

“And support India, support Indian film industry and come and see the stars up and close.”

“This IIFA is going to be very, very different.”

He said even the hosting of the digital awards would bring a new combination of talent, with Pankaj Tripathi, Ali Fazal, Debina and Abhishek among those involved.

“Pankaj Tripathi, for the first time, hosting with Ali Fazal and Debina and Abhishek. So again, there you have the Mirzapur team.”

SPORTS

LA LIGA



Betis beats Osasuna as Real Sociedad survives Deportivo fightback

MADRID: Isco scored twice as Real Betis beat Osasuna 5-2 at home on Sunday to move into third place in La Liga, five points behind leader Barcelona.

Isco opened the scoring from the penalty spot in the tenth minute after Osasuna defender Unai Santos conceded a foul, and Ez Abde doubled Betis' lead in the 31st minute following an assist from Cucho Hernandez.

Betis went 3-0 ahead three minutes after halftime when Ante Budimir's attempted clearance deflected off Diego Llorente and into the net, but quick goals from Budimir and former Betis forward Raul Garcia brought Osasuna back into contention.

Isco restored Betis' two-goal advantage with his second of the match before debutant Jose Antonio Morante completed the scoring in stoppage time.

Elsewhere, Valencia coach Javier Aguirre saw his side take the lead after just over a minute against Racing Santander, with Dani Raba scoring against the newly promoted side. Racing equalized in the 32nd minute when Inigo Vicente set up Yassir Zabiri, and Ivan Martin put the hosts ahead two minutes after halftime.

However, young Valencia substitute David Otorbi struck in the 65th minute to earn his side a 2-2 draw. Real Sociedad survived a dramatic second-half fightback to beat Deportivo La Coruna 3-2 at home despite finishing with ten men. Jon Martin headed Sociedad ahead from Carlos Soler's corner before Arsen Zakharyan

doubled the lead in the 34th minute. Goncalo Guedes made it 3-0 with a powerful left-footed finish after a run from the half-way line, but Deportivo refused to surrender.

Mario Soriano pulled a goal back in the 61st minute, and Sociedad's Pablo Marin was sent off four minutes later for denying Bil N'Songo a clear scoring opportunity. Yeremay Hernandez converted the resulting penalty to reduce the deficit to 3-2, but Sociedad held on under intense pressure to secure all three points. Elche and Celta Vigo opened Sunday's program with a goalless draw.

On Saturday, Barcelona recorded its eighth consecutive league victory with a 3-0 win over Getafe. Anthony Gordon, Gabriel Jesus and Jules Kounde scored for the league leader.

Atletico Madrid came from behind to beat Alaves 2-1 away, with Alejandro Grimaldo opening the scoring before Cristian Romero headed in a late winner.

Real Madrid edged Villarreal 1-0 thanks to a 62nd-minute goal from Yan Diomande. Vinicius Junior was later sent off following a VAR review for pulling an opponent's hair, having earlier seen a goal disallowed.

On Friday, Malaga drew 1-1 at home to Espanyol, while Saturday's match between Rayo Vallecano and Athletic Club was suspended after home supporters threw objects onto the field in protest against club president Raul Martin Presa.

Messi, Suarez lead Inter Miami past D.C. United

It took just two and a half minutes for the hosts to open the scoring as German Berterame's cross found Suarez, who sent a first-time effort into the far corner

MIAMI: Luis Suarez and Lionel Messi scored two goals each as Inter Miami cruised to a 4-0 home MLS win over D.C. United on Saturday. It took just two and a half minutes for the hosts to open the scoring as German Berterame's cross found Suarez, who sent a first-time effort into the far corner. Berterame was again the pro-



vider in the 39th minute when his headed cross was volleyed in by Suarez from inside the six-yard box. Suarez was irrepressible and his dinked pass set up Messi to fire in Inter Miami's third goal just after halftime. Messi completed the

rout on the hour with a mazy run into the box and low shot that beat goalkeeper Sean Johnson at his near post.

The match came four days after Messi scored and provided two assists in his 208th and final ap-

pearance for Argentina in its 3-0 friendly win over Benin in Buenos Aires. Despite his retirement from international football, the 39-year-old eight-time Ballon d'Or winner has more than a year left on his Inter Miami contract.

BUNDESLIGA

Goto fires 10-man Freiburg top as Schalke fall to late winner

BERLIN: Substitute Keisuke Goto struck late as ten-man Freiburg defeated Schalke 04 2-1 to move top of the Bundesliga after five rounds, edging Borussia Dortmund on goal difference.

Julian Schuster's side made a commanding start and took the lead after ten minutes. Matthias Ginter met a corner with a header that goalkeeper Loris Karius saved, but Maximilian Eggstein reacted quickest to convert the rebound. Freiburg continued to dominate possession, with Igor Matanovic threatening to double the advantage before Hasan Kucuray blocked his effort in the 18th minute. Schalke gradually settled and equalized against the run of play. Adrian Gantenbein struck following a corner, with his shot deflecting off Kenan Karaman to beat goalkeeper Backhaus in the 30th minute.

The visitors improved after the interval. Moussa Sylla threatened in the 59th minute before



Matanovic cleared Maximilian Wober's header against his own crossbar moments later.

Freiburg was reduced to ten men when Yuito Suzuki received a second yellow card for fouling Soufiane El-Faouzi in the 64th minute.

Despite their numerical disadvantage, the hosts remained dangerous and eventually found a winner through two substitutes.

Vincenzo Grifo delivered a precise cross that Goto headed home in the 85th minute.

"We are delighted with the victory and being top of the table, but it's still early in the season," Ginter said. "We controlled the first half well, created chances and managed to play through Schalke's pressing. Going into halftime at 1-1 was frustrating. Schalke were bet-

ter in the second half and had their opportunities."

The victory leaves Freiburg unbeaten with 13 points from five matches, ahead of second-placed Dortmund on goal difference. Bayern Munich sits third with 11 points, followed by Bayer Leverkusen on ten.

Freiburg, who previously led the standings at this stage in 2022-23, next face Jablonec in the Conference League before visiting Leverkusen. Schalke remains 13th with five points ahead of a home fixture against Mainz.

Elsewhere, Cologne defeated Borussia Monchengladbach 2-1 in the Rhine derby. Isak Johanneson opened the scoring in the 26th minute before James Scally equalized in the 39th, while Said El Mala restored Cologne's lead in the 66th minute. The victory lifted Cologne to tenth with seven points, while Gladbach remains bottom without a point after five consecutive defeats.

FOOTBALL



Barcelona, Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid all win in different ways in La Liga

MADRID: FC Barcelona made it eight wins from eight games with a comfortable 3-0 victory at home to Getafe on Saturday.

Getafe rarely troubled the fit-again Joan Garcia in the Barcelona goal after Anthony Gordon put Barcelona ahead in the second minute of the game.

The England international was given space to run towards the Getafe penalty area and his shot took a slight deflection on its way into the back of the net.

Gabriel Jesus doubled the lead in the 30th minute after Getafe gave the ball away, with the Brazilian, who started for the injured Raphinha, hitting an angled drive across the face of goal.

Barcelona continued to dominate possession, and Jules

Kounde added the third in the 73rd minute, converting a free kick from Lamine Yamal. Atletico Madrid kept the pressure on Barcelona with a 2-1 win away to Deportivo Alaves.

Alejandro Grimaldo put Atletico ahead in the 33rd minute. Lucas Boye equalized from the penalty spot in the 50th minute, but Alaves' hopes suffered a setback when Angel Perez was sent off for a challenge from behind.

Powerful header

Alaves held on until the 87th minute when Cristian Romero scored a powerful header following Alex Baena's pinpoint cross from the left.

Real Madrid edged Villarreal 1-0, with Kylian Mbappe hitting

the post early in a first half that produced few clear chances. Yan Diomande scored the winner in the 62nd minute after a long VAR review overturned an initial off-side decision.

Vinicius Jr thought he had scored a second goal in the 72nd minute but the goal was ruled out because the striker had pulled Nathan Saliba's hair, and instead of a goal, Vinicius was shown a red card and his angry reaction could earn him a lengthy suspension.

The round began on Friday with Malaga drawing 1-1 at home to Espanyol. Saturday's match between Rayo Vallecano and Athletic Bilbao was suspended after home fans threw objects onto the pitch in protest against club president Raul Martin Presa.

BASKETBALL LEAGUE

FIBA WBL Asia 2026: Bengaluru set to host six of Asia's best in women's club competition

BENGALURU: Bengaluru will welcome six of Asia's leading women's basketball clubs as the city hosts the FIBA Women's Basketball League Asia 2026 from October 20 to 25, bringing elite international club competition to Indian fans.

Organised by the Karnataka State Basketball Association (KSBA) under the aegis of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI) and supported by the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Government of Karnataka, the tournament will feature the domestic league champions of China, Japan, South Korea and Chinese Taipei, Philippines, alongside Indian Railways, India's national champions, as per a release.

"Bengaluru is honoured to host another FIBA competition. Hosting the FIBA Women's Basketball League Asia 2026 is a proud moment for Karnataka and reflects our commitment to promoting sports and providing athletes with opportunities to compete at the highest level," said G Parameshwara, Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka, at a press conference on Monday.

"Bengaluru has established itself as a major sporting destination, and an international competition of this stature will further strengthen the city's position on the global sporting map. It will also provide an opportunity for our young athletes to witness world-class basketball, draw inspiration from international players and

pursue their own sporting ambitions," he said. "We are delighted to welcome the participating teams from across Asia and look forward to a successful tournament that celebrates sporting excellence, promotes women's basketball and brings the basketball community together," he added.

The six teams competing in Bengaluru are Denso Iris of Japan, Cheongju KB Stars of South Korea, Sichuan Yuanda Meile of China, Akari Sparks of the Philippines, Cathay Life Tigers of Chinese Taipei and Indian Railways.

"The FIBA Women's Basketball League Asia is an important platform for bringing the best women's club teams in the region together and showcasing the growing strength of women's basketball in

Asia. With six outstanding teams competing in Bengaluru, fans can look forward to a week of high-quality basketball featuring some of the finest talent from across the continent and beyond," K Govindaraj, President of FIBA Asia and Secretary of the Karnataka State Basketball Association.

"Hosting this competition in Bengaluru is also an opportunity to strengthen India's place on the Asian basketball calendar and inspire the next generation of players, particularly young women who aspire to compete at the highest level. We are delighted to welcome these teams to Karnataka and look forward to an exciting tournament that celebrates the spirit, quality and international appeal of women's basketball," he added.

Each team will feature two import players from the United States, Australia and Europe, adding further depth to a competition that promises compelling matchups throughout the six-day event.

All games will be played at the Sree Kanteerava Indoor Stadium, with two matches scheduled daily at 4:00 PM and 7:00 PM.

Indian Railways, one of the most successful teams in Indian women's basketball, will take on the continent's leading clubs with home support behind them.

As India's national champions, Railways will have the opportunity to test themselves against some of Asia's strongest teams while giving local fans a side to rally behind on the international stage. — **ANI**

The tournament will feature the domestic league champions of China, Japan, South Korea and Chinese Taipei, Philippines, alongside Indian Railways

IN PICTURES



Aurora observed from China's Heilongjiang

This stacked composite photo shows the aurora observed from the Mongolian Autonomous County of Dorbod, northeast Xinhua



Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Sri Lanka held in Colombo
A model presents a creation during the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Sri Lanka in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Xinhua



Fall migration of snow geese in Quebec, Canada

This photo shows the fall migration of snow geese at the Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Area in Quebec, Canada. Xinhua

People participate in color run event in Canberra, Australia

Children take part in a sack race during a color run event in Canberra, Australia. Xinhua



Annual Halloween-themed event held in Vancouver

Costumed actors perform during the Fright Nights 2026 at the Pacific National Exhibition's Playland in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Xinhua



Scenery of blooming jacarandas in Nairobi, Kenya

A woman poses for photos on an old locomotive with blooming jacaranda trees in the background in Nairobi, Kenya. Jacaranda trees in Nairobi bloom from September to November every year. Xinhua



Rescuers evacuate residents as heavy rains trigger floods in Indonesia

Rescuers are seen in floodwaters after heavy rain hit Padang in West Sumatra Province, Indonesia. Xinhua

ROUND-UP

Bank Muscat supports knowledge & innovation to shape Oman’s future

The partnership reflects the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors in supporting initiatives that contribute to building a knowledge- and innovation-driven society

MUSCAT: Reaffirming its commitment to supporting national initiatives that promote knowledge and innovation and encourage future generations to explore science and technology, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has signed a cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Education to sponsor the upcoming Oman Science Festival 2026 as the Banking Sponsor.

The signing ceremony was held under the patronage of Dr. Madiha bint Ahmed Al Shaibani, Minister of Education, and in the presence of a number of officials from the public and private sectors.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the Ministry of Education by Dr. Intisar bint Abdullah Ambosaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education for Educational Support Programmes, and on behalf of Bank Muscat by Sheikhha



bint Yousuf Al Farsi, Deputy Chief Executive Officer – Operations.

The partnership reflects the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors in supporting initiatives that contribute to building a knowledge- and innovation-driven society.

Fifth edition

The fifth edition of the festival is scheduled to take place from 2 to 11 November at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre under the theme “Science Behind Everything.”

This year, Bank Muscat’s participation will be presented under the theme “The Science Behind Banking,” highlighting the con-

nection between science, technology and innovation on one hand, and the banking and financial services sector on the other. It will also showcase the role of science in developing modern banking solutions, enhancing customer experience and improving operational efficiency.

Commenting on the occasion, Sheikhha bint Yousuf Al Farsi, Deputy Chief Executive Officer – Operations at Bank Muscat, said: “We are pleased to continue our partnership with the Ministry of Education through our sponsorship of this year’s Oman Science Festival, which has established itself as an important national platform for fostering interest in

science, knowledge and innovation across society. Our support for the festival stems from our belief that investing in knowledge and innovation is an investment in Oman’s future. It also reflects our commitment to supporting the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, which places the development of a knowledge- and innovation-based economy and society among its key priorities.”

Bank Muscat’s support for the Oman Science Festival builds on its successful participation in the fourth edition, which brought together around 2,500 participants from 120 institutions and featured more than 500 diverse activities held across several lo-

cations at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The festival also witnessed strong attendance and engagement from different segments of society. During the previous edition, Bank Muscat’s participation featured a range of activities focused on promoting financial literacy, including the use of modern interactive screens that provided visitors of different age groups with an innovative educational and informative experience, in addition to competitions and interactive activities that attracted significant public interest.

The partnership between Bank Muscat and the Ministry of Education continues through

the implementation of a range of initiatives, including the Maliyat Academy programmes, which have so far reached more than 800 schools and over 170,000 male and female students across the Sultanate of Oman. This is in addition to supporting events and activities organised by educational directorates across various governorates.

The Bank also contributes to empowering students at the Ministry’s Omar bin Al Khattab Institute for the Blind by providing advanced educational equipment, in addition to supporting the “Rikaz” Entrepreneurship Competition. This reflects the Bank’s strong belief in the importance of such initiatives in empowering national talents and fostering a culture of innovation among young people.

Innovation and knowledge remain key priorities for Bank Muscat across its operations. The Bank continues to launch initiatives and programmes that support innovation in banking and the delivery of best-in-class services. These include the development of digital channels and investment in the latest technological solutions, as well as encouraging employees to propose innovative ideas that enhance customer experience. The Bank also organises workshops targeting different segments of society, including school students, to promote creative thinking and encourage innovation, while continuing its programmes supporting and developing entrepreneurs and start-ups.

Bank Muscat continues to support various national initiatives and programmes in partnership with government institutions and community organisations, targeting different segments of society across a range of areas, including education, youth, sports, healthcare, entrepreneurship and sustainability. These efforts are aligned with the Sultanate of Oman’s priorities and the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

NAVIGATING THE STREETS

The reality behind Europe’s green public transport push

BRUSSELS: An electric plug icon on their windows makes them easy to spot in cities like Brussels and Madrid. Quietly navigating the streets, electric buses have become an increasingly common sight on Europe’s streets in recent years.

Michela Le Pira, assistant professor of transportation at Italy’s University of Catania, says removing tailpipe emissions – the gases and particles generated when a combustion vehicle is running – might be “the easiest strategy to improve public transport.”

Most Europeans live in urban settings, and road transport harms air quality. In 2023, almost 300,000 deaths across the EU were caused by air pollution levels exceeding the World Health Organization’s (WHO) recommended thresholds.

Of all fine particulate matter (PM2.5) concentrations in European urban areas, about 14% come from road transport, including public, private and freight transport. Additionally, towns and cities account for nearly a quarter of the European Union’s transport greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

DW and the European Data Journalism Network evaluated more than a decade’s worth of data from more than 100 reports and sources on public transit and the emissions it causes, and identified 148 sustainability commitments by local authorities and transport operators in 33 cities across Europe. The analysis focuses on motorized mass transit, leaving out bikes and pedestrians as well as taxis, shared vehicles and e-scooters.

More electric buses, thanks to EU funds

The EU wants to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. A key part of that plan is cutting transport-related GHG emissions by 90% from 1990 levels.

As DW’s analysis shows, Copenhagen is the only EU capital that has almost electrified its entire bus fleet – its vehicles do not have combustion engines and therefore do not produce tailpipe emissions. In cities like Rome, Lisbon and Nicosia, more than 90% of buses



still run on diesel, and metros and trams account for less than 10% of their public transport fleet.

Although cars still dominate European streets, “electric buses are one way to reduce local air pollution,” said Martin Baierl, data analyst with Transport & Environment, an advocacy non-profit for clean transport.

EU funds enabled many cities to increase their electric and alternative fuel bus fleets from 2021 on.

Electric buses comprise 20% of the total fleet in EU capitals and selected cities. Their number increased by 55% between 2021 and 2025 – equivalent to 1,234 more such vehicles on the road. The number of diesel-only buses has been declining since then, although they still outnumber those running on alternative fuel.

Slow road to sustainability in some cities

In addition to decarbonizing the bus fleet and helping to reduce air pollution, embracing electric models can help to lower noise and public transport operating costs. All the more so if the city produces

its own electricity, explains Baierl. However, the outlay for e-buses is higher than for diesel models. In 20 out of the 31 cities with data to analyze, over 50% of the bus fleet is made up of traditional vehicles.

Brussels, for example, was an early adopter of moving away from traditional diesel-powered buses, switching to hybrids instead. Now the Belgian capital is in the process of electrifying its fleet, but at a slower pace. “It’s not easy to know what the right technology will be in the end,” Baierl said.

Another example is hydrogen-powered buses, which also produce zero emissions but are more costly to operate than their electric counterparts.

Many cities have not fully committed to zero-emissions despite EU targets

Transportation is the only major sector where greenhouse gas emissions remain above 1990 levels, despite the EU’s ambition of a 90% reduction by 2050.

On average, public transport – including buses, trams and metros – is used for more than a quarter of trips

in the 10 largest EU capitals, according to recent data from the non-profit group CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project). In Stockholm, the share is 49%, while in the smaller Slovenian capital of Ljubljana, it’s 11%. DW analysis of transport sustainability pledges reveals that only four cities have explicitly committed to achieving zero emissions in buses or all public transport.

Rail transport is climate-friendly, but scarce

Yannis Papadimitriou lives 85 kilometers (about 53 miles) away from Athens, the EU capital with the highest air pollution mortality risk. He travels to work by commuter rail, a means of transport he’d like to see promoted more.

“For me it is a very conscious choice to use electric public transport, especially trains, which are the safest, most environmentally friendly and quickest way of transport.”

Though trains, trams and metros run on electricity, there are more buses within city boundaries, and in many urban areas the majority still run on diesel.

Public transport’s emissions go beyond the tailpipe

In Northern Europe, 15 kilometers away from Copenhagen, Poul Kattler also used to commute to work. He is now retired and takes the bus more frequently with his grandchildren. Despite Copenhagen having an almost completely fossil-fuel-free public transport system (only one bus runs on biomethane), the metro expansion, which is responding to the city’s growth, comes with its own set of concerns.

“The whole construction phase [of the new metro line] is extremely environmentally demanding,” Kattler said. If the construction emissions are considered, “the CO2 balance would be very poor for the metro now.”

But in the long run, the benefits of a new metro line in reducing CO2 emissions outweigh its construction-related emissions, Le Pira said.

Combustion or exhaust emissions are not the only way transport pollutes the air and the environment. Indirect emissions, like those coming from electricity gen-

eration or fuel production, add to transport’s CO2 footprint. Brakes and wheels release non-exhaust particle matter when wagons or vehicles slow down.

Since 1992, buses and any vehicle running on fossil fuels in the EU have been subject to stricter emissions standards. Fine particle emissions from buses and heavy-duty vehicles had dropped by 92% in 2022 according to the European Environment Agency. Yet overall road transport non-exhaust emissions from tire wear have increased 58% in two decades, as cars have become heavier.

Shifting from cars to a multimodal transport system

With a few exceptions, EU member states are not close to cutting greenhouse gas transport emissions by 90%, as envisioned by the EU’s 2050 target.

Zero-emission public transport is one step toward decarbonizing transport in cities and meeting GHG reduction goals. The next challenge is to get people out of their cars. “If we talk about sustainable mobility in general and not only clean public transport, the main problem is the model shift from private cars to public transport,” Le Pira said.

On average, private automobiles account for more than a third of transport in the largest EU capitals, according to CDP data.

Cheaper ticket prices for groups, like students, and disincentives for car use, such as low-emission zones, are two complementary ways of attracting more passengers while reducing private transport.

In her research work, Le Pira investigates how public transport can be more efficient and appealing for city dwellers, for example, by combining transport modes where people step off their bikes and onto a train. This kind of solution could be particularly relevant for small cities “where cars are still the main transport mode.”

According to Baierl, places with good public transport draw people in. “Cities where not everybody has to use a car are just more livable,” he said. — DW



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