

OMAN
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OMAN OBSERVER

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TRAIL RUNNER HAMED FINISHES STRONG IN KHARDUNG LA CHALLENGE

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DHOFAR SET FOR TOURISM BOOST WITH 1,000 NEW HOTEL UNITS BY NEXT YEAR

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PROVIDING A HELPING HAND IN SAVING OMANI BEES

UN to meet over pager blasts

The United Nations Security Council will meet on Friday over the pager blasts in Lebanon targeting Hezbollah, said Slovenia's UN Ambassador Samuel Zbogar, president of the 15-member council for September. The meeting was requested by Algeria on behalf of Arab states, he said. Earlier on Wednesday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that the pager blasts targeting Hezbollah indicate "a serious risk of a dramatic escalation in Lebanon and everything must be done to avoid that escalation."

SUNRISE - 05:55 AM
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DEAL FOR INTERCHANGE BRIDGE IN SALALAH

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MoTCIT) signed an agreement for the construction of a one-way road and interchange bridge of Al Mughsail in the Wilayat of Salalah at a cost of more than RO 9 million. The project will ramp up the road network in Dhofar Governorate and improve connectivity between the Wilayat of Salalah and the western wilayats of the governorate. **DETAILS ON P2**

RO 15 million pharma plant in Salalah

SALALAH: Dhofar Pharmaceutical Industries Company opened a new plant in Raysut Industrial City in the Wilayat of Salalah, on Wednesday.

The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, in the presence of Dr Hilal bin Ali al Sabti, Minister of Health, and a number of officials. The RO 15 million-pharmaceutical plant aims to enhance drug security in

the Sultanate of Oman.

The new plant specialises in manufacturing intravenous solutions and kidney dialysis solutions utilising German technologies as per the highest international quality standards. It aims to provide the local and international markets with effective and safe medicines using the best manufacturing materials while adhering to the health quality standards applied in the Sultanate of Oman.

With a built-up area of

approximately 22,000 square metres, the new pharmaceutical plant will meet the local market needs for pharmaceutical solutions and constitutes a step forwards to localise pharmaceutical industries and achieve drug security in the Sultanate of Oman as well as the Middle East and North Africa regions. It has an annual capacity of 15 million units of intravenous solutions, and 2.3 million units of kidney dialysis solutions.

TURN TO P2

Oman ‘concerned’ over situation in Gaza Strip

NEW YORK: The Sultanate of Oman has commended the advisory opinion issued on July 19, 2024 by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding the legal consequences of the persistent Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, since 1967.

“This opinion reflects the international community’s commitment to the principles of justice and international law, and it urges Israel to end its illegal presence in Palestine and compensate the Palestinian people for all damages emanating from its atrocious policies,” Oman said in a statement.

Oman’s commendation of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) opinion was unveiled in a statement delivered before the resumed 10 Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly by Khalid bin Saleh al Rubkhi, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Sultanate of Oman to the

UN CALLS FOR END TO ISRAELI OCCUPATION

UN member states formally demanded in a non-binding resolution on Wednesday an end to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories within 12 months and sanctions for non-compliance. The text, which Israel said would fuel violence if adopted, is based on an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice calling Israel’s occupation since 1967 “unlawful.” There were 124 votes in favour, 14 against and a notable 43 abstentions. Arab countries called the special session of the assembly just days before dozens of heads of state and government meet at the UN headquarters to address the kick off of this year’s General Assembly session.

United Nations. “The adoption of the ICJ’s advisory opinion represents an important step forward in supporting the rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with international legitimacy,” he said. Oman called on the international community to assume a collective stance of responsibility to ensure the implementation of the advisory opinion and to work for the termination of Israel’s occupation of Palestinian lands and the realisation of a fair, comprehensive solution that leads to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state along the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem (Al Quds) as its capital.

Oman expressed its deep concern over the deteriorating situation in the Gaza Strip due to Israel’s blockade and its ongoing military operations in the strip. In this context, Oman called for the immediate lifting of the siege and the facilitation of delivery of urgent humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people.

TURN TO P2



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Oman lauds IAEA initiative to harness atoms for food security

VIENNA: The Sultanate of Oman has commended the initiative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to harness the atom for food through the use of nuclear technologies in the field of agriculture and food production, notably to ensure the sustainability of food safety. Oman has expressed its keenness to join this initiative.

This was unveiled in Oman's speech delivered before the IAEA's 68th session of the General

Conference. The speech was read out by Yousef bin Ahmed al Jabri, Permanent Representative of the Sultanate of Oman to the IAEA.

Al Jabri said that nuclear science and technology play an important role in addressing current global challenges. "Recognising this role, the Sultanate of Oman signed a technical cooperation framework document with the IAEA for the period (2024-2029). It is the third mandate of its kind to be joined



Yousef bin Ahmed al Jabri

by the Sultanate of Oman. This framework includes cooperation programmes in the fields of radiation safety, agriculture and food safety, human health, water resources, environment, and cultural heritage," he added.

Al Jabri pointed out that the first technical cooperation cycle under this framework for the period (2024-2025) began to be implemented in new projects in the fields of combating farm pests, ensuring food safety,

improving the quality of medical radiation practices and enhancing the infrastructure for radiation safety. Al Jabri affirmed Oman's cooperation with the IAEA and all member states to achieve the Agency's goals and enhance its central role in serving peace and development.

Al Jabri expressed thanks and appreciation to the Japanese government for its cooperation with the IAEA in hosting scientific Omani team of five

experts and specialists from the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MoAFWR) and Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) to learn about the experience of some Japanese institutions in developing and implementing programmes on monitoring and controlling viral and human diseases, as well the associated strategy for implementing these programmes.

— ONA

Deal signed for construction of Al Mughsail road, bridge

SALALAH: The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MoTCIT) today signed an agreement for the construction of a one-way road and interchange bridge of Al Mughsail in the Wilayat of Salalah at a total cost of more than RO 9 million.

The agreement was signed by Eng Said bin Hamoud al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, and Eng. Syed Azhar on behalf of AZ Engineers.

The project includes the setting up of a 630-metre concrete bridge on 20 columns and two side pillars at a height of 13 metres, with 6 decorative arches (35.9 into 45.9 metres).



The project includes the setting up of a 630-metre concrete bridge on 20 columns and two side pillars at a height of 13 metres, with 6 decorative arches (35.9 into 45.9 metres). — ONA

This is in addition to parking spaces on both sides of the road and a streamlined, lighted walkway and a ground crossing giving access to tourist sites.

The project is in pursuance of efforts to ramp up the road network in Dhofar Governorate and improve the quality of road connection between the Wilayat

of Salalah and the western wilayats of the governorate, said Eng Said bin Hamoud al Maawali.

The minister pointed out that the design of Al Mughsail Bridge is inspired by local architecture and took into account the weather conditions.

The project will ease the flow of traffic from Salalah to the western wilayats of Dhofar Governorate (Rakhyout and Dhalkout), in addition to the road leading to the Republic of Yemen.

The project is envisaged to boost the tourism sector, notably by giving better access to Al Marnif Cave, Al Mughsail Fountains and Al Mughsail Beach. — ONA

GCC Airports to cooperate to meet regional aviation growth



Shaikh Aimen bin Ahmed al Hosni, CEO of Oman Airports, stated that efforts would further strengthen Gulf-wide cooperation, in line with the economic development strategies of GCC countries

VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

The management of major airports in the GCC decided to collaborate on Wednesday in areas such as innovation, technology, youth investment, and the improvement of safety, security, and supply chains.

This decision was announced at the first Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Airports CEOs Forum held in Muscat on Wednesday, which was attended by top executives from Dubai, Sharjah, Qatar, Bahrain, and Riyadh airports.

aviation.

Al Hosni also mentioned the establishment of working groups to address the topics discussed during the forum and to develop a road map for the second annual meeting, scheduled to be hosted in Riyadh next year.

He expressed hope that these efforts would further strengthen Gulf-wide cooperation, in line with the economic development strategies of GCC countries and enhance the leading position of their airports.

CEOs of Riyadh and Sharjah airports, in separate statements to the Observer, emphasised the collective efforts needed for sustainable growth in the Middle East. It is worth noting that the number of passengers travelling through Oman's airports increased by 9.3 per cent by the end of July 2024, reaching 8,478,548 passengers on 63,219 flights, compared to 7,757,629 passengers on 59,778 flights by the end of July 2023.

According to the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI), the number of passengers travelling through Muscat International Airport reached 7,571,148 by the end of July, representing an 8.9 per cent increase. These passengers travelled on 56,498 flights, marking a 5.8 per cent increase in the number of flights.

10 advanced surgeries ease suffering

MUSCAT: A specialised medical team at Al Nahda Hospital (from the departments of ENT, Head and Neck Surgery, Oral, Maxillofacial and Facial Surgery) has successfully performed 10 advanced surgeries for a number of patients who suffered various health complications.

The surgeries included the removal of cancerous and benign head and neck tumours using free flaps. They took about 14 to 18 hours of operating.

Dr Rashid bin Mohammed al Alawi, Director General of Khoula Hospital, said that the performance of such operations at Al Nahda Hospital reflects the expertise that the hospital has gained, putting it on track to localise the special skills. — ONA



RAO CONDUCTS JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE

MUSCAT: The Royal Army of Oman (RAO), represented by Musandam Security Force, and the Royal Special Force of the Kingdom of Bahrain on Wednesday conducted a joint practical demonstration code-named "Al Nimr Al Arabi" or "Arabian Tiger 4". The exercise, implemented with backing from the Royal Air Force of Oman (Rafo), was held under the auspices of Maj Gen Matar bin Salim al Balushi, Commander of the Royal Army of Oman (RAO). It was attended by Brigadier General Yasser Mohammed Al Ma'awdah, Commander of the Special Operations Battalion 24 of the Royal Bahraini Special Force. — ONA

RO 15m pharma plant opens in Salalah

FROM PAGE 1

The Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said that the plant is one of the outputs of the Health Sector Investment Lab organised by the Ministry of Health in December 2022 in cooperation with the National Programme for Investment and Exports Development (Nazdaher) and Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit.

The minister noted that the project constitutes another achievement in expanding free and industrial zones in Dhofar Governorate and a step towards supporting national trends and the goals of Oman Vision 2040 in the fields of industry and health security.

Shaikh Salim bin Ali al Mahri, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Dhofar Pharmaceutical Industries Company, said that the project is the first-of-its-kind in the Sultanate of Oman, and is expected to cover the local demand for intravenous solutions and kidney dialysis solutions estimated at 5 million units annually. — ONA



Oman calls for end to Israeli occupation

FROM PAGE 1

Oman also stressed the significance of international efforts to rebuild the Gaza Strip and ensure decent life for Palestinians therein, namely by addressing the humanitarian situation, in addition to engagement in political efforts to achieve a lasting and comprehensive peace.

In conclusion of its statement, Oman called on all member states to support the draft resolution before the UN General Assembly. It pointed out that such support, though not a legal obligation, constitutes a moral responsibility to protect the rights of peoples. Oman also expressed its steadfast support for the Palestinian cause and reiterated its unwavering backing for the Palestinian people in their strive to realise their legitimate aspirations. This position, the statement said, stems from Oman's strong conviction



Khalid bin Saleh al Rubkhi Deputy Permanent Representative of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations.

that "justice, equality and respect for the rule of law are the foundations through which lasting peace can be achieved". — ONA

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ((يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطَهَّرَةُ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي)) صدق الله العظيم

We extend our sincere condolences to

Mr. Hussain Ibrahim Alfardan

Vice-Chairman

and

Mr. Omar Hussain Alfardan

Managing Director

And to all members of the Alfardan family

On the sad demise of

Badraih Ibrahim Alfardan

May her soul rest in peace

"إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ"

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Group Chief Executive Officer and all employees of
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Oman hosts Africa Bee Expo, showcasing innovations

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, SEPT 18

The third Africa Bee Expo kicked off on Wednesday under the auspices of Dr Saud bin Hamoud al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, at the Grand Millennium Muscat Hotel.

The Expo is one of the largest international events of its kind in the Arab and African regions, witnessing extensive local and international participation and concludes on September 21, Saturday.

The conference is organised by Waft Global and sees the attendance of distinguished experts, researchers and beekeepers, in addition to representatives from various regional and international organisations and private sector companies specialising in bees and honey production. Among the participating entities are the Arab Beekeepers Union, the Arab Association for Beekeeping, the European Buckfast Organisation, the Al Baha Association from Saudi Arabia, and the World Bee Breeding Organization.

Representatives from 37 countries are attending the conference, including Oman, Lebanon, Iran, Algeria, Tunisia, Turkiye, China, Pakistan,



Oman is hosting the 'Africa Bee Expo 2024' in which 37 countries are taking part

Kenya, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tanzania, the UK, and others, reflecting the significant international importance of this event.

The third edition of the conference aims to promote and develop the beekeeping industry, open new opportunities for companies and individuals, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, enhance the exchange of technological and cultural expertise and elevate the professional skills of beekeepers in areas such as export and accessing global markets.

The conference also aims to attract investors in the agricultural and processing industries and add value to bee products such as honey

Experts from various countries will present research findings and scientific experiments through working papers

and beeswax, while promoting tourism and alternative medicine through internationally certified bee products.

Dr Hamdan al Wahaibi, Director-General of Agricultural and Animal Research, said: "Oman's hosting of this conference and exhibition reflects its belief in the importance of the beekeeping sector as one of the promising economic sectors. The ministry is working to enhance this sector by transferring knowledge and modern technologies and



promoting honey production. This conference provides an opportunity to exchange experiences among participants and showcase the latest innovations in beekeeping and honey production."

Al Wahaibi added: "The ministry has given significant attention to the beekeeping sector, adopting several national programmes to develop the sector, including research, developmental, advisory and marketing projects. The ministry has also organised specialised

festivals to market honey and its products, encouraging the use of modern technologies to increase productivity and improve quality."

Al Wahaibi noted that the number of beekeepers in Oman has exceeded 5,000, with more than 145,000 beehives distributed across various governorates, contributing to the production of over 580 tonnes of honey in 2023, with a market value exceeding RO 11 million.

Dr Ahmed bin Nasser al Bakri, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources for Agriculture, expressed pride in Oman hosting the third International Bee Expo 2024.

He emphasised that this global event, lasting four days, brings

together companies and global organising bodies.

Al Bakri explained that the exhibition includes two main aspects. The first is a distinguished exhibition featuring a wide range of honey products, such as therapeutic, medicinal, cosmetic and food products, in addition to honey production supplies. More than 50 entities are participating in the exhibition to promote and market these products.

Al Bakri added that the conference includes four days of working sessions where experts from various countries will present research findings and scientific experiments through working papers aimed at improving production and enhancing the added value of local bee products in Oman.

He also pointed out that the beekeeping sector in Oman has witnessed remarkable growth over the past decade, both in terms of increased production and the number of Omanis involved in this profession. He noted that this sector contributes to creating job opportunities for citizens in various governorates of Oman. He also mentioned that the conference will discuss improving quality and finding solutions to challenges such as pest control affecting bees.

China's 'Bebinca' typhoon: Omani citizens safe

The Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in the People's Republic of China is closely monitoring the developments of Typhoon 'Bebinca' which has battered the city of Shanghai and the surrounding Chinese areas.

In an online statement, the embassy confirmed that all Omani citizens in these areas are safe, advising them to remain vigilant, follow local authorities' safety guidelines and take all necessary precautions.

"In case of emergency, please contact the embassy using the phone numbers provided on official account on the X platform," the embassy stated.



OMAN POSTS RO 3.6 BILLION TRADE SURPLUS

MUSCAT: Oman's trade balance recorded a surplus of RO 3.658 billion by the end of June 2024, slightly down from RO 3.704 billion in the same period in 2023, according to preliminary data from the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Total exports rose by 6.7% to RO 11.67 billion, while imports increased by 10.8% to RO 8.012 billion. The rise in exports was driven by a 5.3% growth in oil

and gas exports, reaching RO 7.228 billion, compared to RO 6.866 billion in June 2023. Crude oil exports climbed 7.2% to RO 5.134 billion, while refined oil exports jumped 12.8% to RO 842 million. However, liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports declined by 5.7% to RO 1.252 billion.

Non-oil exports also grew by 8.1% to RO 3.575 billion. Mineral products led non-oil exports, increasing by 21.5% to

RO 1.304 billion. Metal products followed with RO 671 million, up 7.3%, while chemical industries recorded RO 521 million, down 0.7%. Plastics and rubber exports increased by 11.5% to RO 473 million, but live animal and animal product exports dropped by 21% to RO 169 million.

Re-exports grew by 13.9% to RO 867 million, driven by transportation equipment at RO 259 million, up 19%, and food, beverages, and liquids at RO 82

million, up 15.7%. Re-exports of mineral products jumped 57.6% to RO 76 million, while animal products saw a decline of 18.4% to RO 59 million.

On the import side, mineral products topped the list at RO 2.338 billion, up 22.5%, followed by machinery and electrical equipment at RO 1.324 billion, rising by 20.2%. Imports of metal products reached RO 752 million, down 4.1%, while chemicals fell 1.7% to RO 750 million. — ONA

Intl conference on 'Oral History' to begin on Sept 23

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, SEPT 18

The much-awaited international conference on 'Oral History', themed "The Concept and Experience in the Arab World", is scheduled to kick off next Monday at the Grand Millennium Hotel in Al Khuwair, Muscat.

The event, which runs from September 23 to 25, is being organised by the National Records and Archives Authority in partnership with the Document of the Nation Foundation from Syria. Attendees will include a diverse group of participants from Arab and international institutions, organisations and documentation centres.

The conference will be inaugurated by Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al Busaidy, Governor of Muscat, and will focus on three major themes: The theoretical axis, examining the concept of oral history in the Arab world; the scientific axis, which delves into regional, Arab and international experiences with oral history, including methods and findings; and the future axis, which will address how oral history can evolve and play a more significant role in Arab societies.

The event will also explore the unique challenges faced



Dr Hamed al Dhawyani

by oral historians in the region, raise awareness of the importance of oral history in modern historical writing and encourage collaboration on specialised projects. A key focus will be on how oral history can be incorporated into educational systems and developed further to enrich historical and social narratives in the Arab world.

Dr Hamed bin Mohammed al Dhawyani, Chairman of the National Records and Archives Authority (NRAA), noted that over 25 speakers from Oman and beyond will present papers, visual content, and participate in panel discussions on the challenges and future of oral history.

Dr Al Dhawyani highlighted the importance of promoting oral history as a vital tool for historical documentation in the Arab world.

Rights of passengers with disabilities are well defined: CAA

VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in the Sultanate of Oman recently issued regulations for the protection of air passenger rights, which also cover the rights of those with disabilities and special needs passengers.

The rights detailed across various articles inform air travellers of what they are entitled to and how they can claim compensation in case of denial of rights.

Article 47 of the regulations states that the air carrier

must announce its policy and procedures regarding the carriage of passengers with disabilities and special needs on its website.

Article 48 states that a passenger with disabilities and special needs must disclose his condition and the necessary devices and equipment when making a reservation.

Article 49 states that the air carrier is prohibited from requiring a passenger with disabilities and special needs to sign any waivers of their rights or services under the provisions of these regulations.



Article 50 states that the air carrier must allow passengers with disabilities and special needs to carry the devices and equipment necessary for movement under the contract of carriage. If the passenger has service animals, they must obtain prior approval from the air carrier to carry the animal.

Article 51 states that the air carrier must ensure that devices and equipment that assist movement arrive with the disabled or special needs passenger, and in case of damage or loss, they will be compensated at the equivalent value.

Article 52 states that the air carrier must secure a replacement seat immediately if the wheelchair does not arrive on the same flight and compensate the passenger as stipulated in Chapter Four of these regulations.

Article 53 states that if the air carrier fails to provide an alternative flight for a passenger with disabilities or special needs, or fails to provide the necessary services outlined in this chapter, the passenger shall be compensated with the equivalent of 200 per cent of the total value of the ticket.



Workshop highlights urban development and renewal



Workshop on urban development and renewal held in Musandam Governorate

KHASAB: The Directorate-General of Housing and Urban Planning in Musandam Governorate organised an impactful workshop, 'Develop Your Neighbourhood and Urban Renewal,' in the Wilayat of Dibba. Held at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the event was inaugurated by Sayyid Ibrahim

bin Said al Busaidy, Governor of Musandam.
The initiative focuses on beautifying urban areas through sustainable landscaping and afforestation, aiming to create vibrant communities that promote biodiversity, reduce carbon emissions and enhance the region's tourism potential.
— ONA

Omani Theatre Festival from Sept 22

MUSCAT: Theatre enthusiasts in Oman are in for a cultural treat as the 8th Omani Theatre Festival kicks off on September 22, at the prestigious Al Irfan Theatre, Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC).
The festival begins with the performance 'Al Jadr' by Luban Troupe, which will be sponsored by Dr Abdul Karim bin Ali al Lawati.
The festival, running until October 1, will feature eight competing theatrical performances, bringing together the finest talents of Omani creators. The event, organised by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, aims to elevate the national theatre scene, reflecting the values of Oman Vision 2040.
In addition to the main performances, audiences can enjoy parallel shows, art exhibitions and intellectual seminars. The festival's programme will also honour key figures in the Omani theatre movement.
— ONA



55 contestants for Holy Quran contest in Bahla

BAHLA: The 32nd Sultan Qaboos Holy Quran Competition continued on Wednesday in Bahla, Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, with 55 male and female contestants participating in various levels. The preliminary qualifying committee is conducting its evaluations at the Bahla Centre.
The competition, overseen by the Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science at the Diwan of Royal Court, is taking place across 25 centres spread throughout the Sultanate of Oman.
A total of 1,790 participants have registered for this year's competition, competing in seven different memorisation

levels.
The levels include:
Level 1: Memorisation of the entire Holy Quran,
Level 2: Memorisation of 24 consecutive parts,
Level 3: Memorisation of 18 consecutive parts,
Level 4: Memorisation of 12 consecutive parts (for those aged 25 and under),
Level 5: Memorisation of 6 consecutive parts (for those aged 14 and under),
Level 6: Memorisation of 4 consecutive parts (for those aged 10 and under) and lastly
Level 7: Memorisation of 2 consecutive parts (for those aged 7 and under). — ONA

Nepal celebrates National, Constitution Day



Nepal Embassy hosted a reception to mark Nepal's National Day and Constitution Day on Tuesday.

MUSCAT: The Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal hosted a grand reception to mark Nepal's National Day and Constitution Day.
The celebration, held at the Intercontinental Hotel in Muscat, saw participation from distinguished officials of the Sultanate of Oman, diplomatic heads and representatives from

the Foreign Ministry.
The formal occasion of the reception commenced after Dornath Aryal, Ambassador of Nepal to the Sultanate of Oman, lighted the traditional lamp.
Ambassador Aryal in his speech highlighted the salient features of the Constitution of Nepal and elaborated how the constitution of Nepal has paved

the way for peace, stability, economic and social progress.
He explained that the constitution has institutionalised the values and norms of inclusive democracy and it has guaranteed 33 per cent participation of women in every organ of the state.
The ambassador outlined that Oman and Nepal have

been enjoying excellent state of relations based on friendship, mutual trust and understanding ever since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1977.
The event underscored the strong bilateral relations between Oman and Nepal and celebrated the shared values of unity, peace and prosperity.
— ONA



Ministry of Health

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Health invites specialized companies to participate in the following Tenders:-

Tender Ref.	Description	Last date for Collection of Tender Document	Bid Submission Closing Date on/ Before 10:00 am Wednesday	Eligibility	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable) Per set
3297/2024/MOH/HQ-241	National Accreditation for Various Health Facilities	26/9/2024	23/10/2024	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in Excellent & First Grade	• SME: 10 • LO: 300 • INT:300
3429/2024/MOH/HQ-245	Supply of Surgical Consumables Items (PRP)	19/9/2024	9/10/2024	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	• SME: 10 • LO: 25
3541/2024/MOH/HQ-254	Supply & Installation of Medical Equipment for Khoula Hospital	24/9/2024	23/10/2024	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	• SME: 10 • LO: 25
3551/2024/MOH/HQ-255	Supply of Laboratory Items	3/10/2024	23/10/2024	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board	• SME: 10 • LO: 37/500
3566/2024/MOH/HQ-256	Maintenance work for DGPEs building and the Security Room in the DGMS	19/9/2024	2/10/2024	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in Fourth Grade	• SME: 10 • LO: 25
3575/2024/MOH/HQ-258	Roof Waterproofing Works at Royal Hospital Building	26/9/2024	23/10/2024	Specialized Companies registered with the General Secretariat of the Tender Board in Third & Fourth Grade	• SME: 10 • LO: 25

• Tenders should be submitted online on <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>.
• Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.
• For any Clarification, you may contact via Telephone: 24402200, Email id etenderhd@ita.gov.om.



سلطنة عُمان
وزارة النقل والاتصالات وتقنية المعلومات
Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology

إعلان مناقصة Tender Notice

The Internal Tenders Committee at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology invites for the Following Tenders:

TENDER NUMBER	TENDER NAME	DATE OF PUBLISHING	LAST DATE TO PURCHASE TENDER DOCUMENT	SUBMISSION DATE	COMPANIES WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS TENDER	DOCUMENT PRICE
MTCIT/ 225/2024	CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR REHABILITATION OF SHANNAH AND MASIRAH PORTS	19-9-2024	3-10-2024	31-10-2024	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (FIRST & EXCELLENT CLASS)	(300/-) THREE HUNDRED OMANI RIAL FOR LOCAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES (10/-) TEN OMANI RIAL (FOR SME) NON-REFUNDABLE
MTCIT/ 227/2024	VIDEO GAMES DEVELOPMENT BOOTCAMP	19-9-2024	3-10-2024	31-10-2024	EXPERIENCED COMPANIES AND REGISTERED WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF TENDER BOARD (SECOND CLASS)	(25/-) TWENTY FIVE OMANI RIAL FOR LOCAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES (10/-) TEN OMANI RIAL (FOR SME) NON-REFUNDABLE

Interested Companies registered with the Secretariat General of Tender Board may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of documents. Tenders should be submitted online on given website

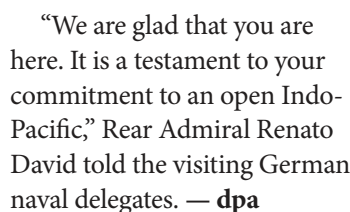
CORRESPONDENCE:

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

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In brief

CARACOLLO



CLASHES ERUPT ON BOLIVIAN EX-LEADER PROTEST MARCH

A week-long march led by Bolivian ex-president Evo Morales against incumbent leader Luis Arce descended into violence when followers of each politician clashed along the route, leaving 26 people injured. Morales and more than 5,000 supporters set out on the seven-day journey but were soon met in the small town of Vila Vila by approximately 1,000 Arce supporters. Clashes between the two camps broke out, with a total of 26 injured, including bone fractures and other wounds. Morales told backers Arce had “abandoned us, betrayed us, with bad management and corruption.” — AFP

THE HAGUE



DUTCH GOVT SEEKS OPT-OUT FROM EU ASYLUM RULES

The Netherlands announced that it had requested from Brussels an opt-out from the European Union’s rules on asylum, days after the coalition government unveiled the country’s toughest-ever immigration policy. “I have just informed the European Commission that I want a migration ‘opt-out’ on migration matters in Europe for the Netherlands,” Asylum and Migration Minister Marjolein Faber posted on X. “We have to handle our own asylum policy once more!” said Faber, a member of the far-right Freedom Party (PVV) led by Geert Wilders. — AFP

AGUEDA



DEADLY PORTUGAL WILDFIRES FORCE NEW EVACUATIONS

Deadly wildfires raging in Portugal forced more people to flee their homes as crews battled dozens of blazes in the north of the country. Stifling heat and strong winds over the weekend fanned a spate of forest fires across the north and centre of the country that have left five people dead, including three firefighters and a volunteer firefighter. An earlier toll of seven was revised downwards on Wednesday. Head of the civil protection service Andre Fernandes said the deaths of two people who had died of heart attacks could not be directly attributed to the fire. — AFP

Europe flood deaths rise amid defence efforts

WROCLAW: Volunteers and emergency personnel raced to secure river banks and buildings in Poland and Hungary on Tuesday as flood waters that have wreaked havoc across central Europe began to rise in new areas and the Czech Republic reported another death. The worst floods to hit central Europe in at least two decades have left a trail of destruction from Romania to Poland, spreading mud and debris in towns, destroying bridges, submerging cars and leaving authorities and householders with a bill for damages that will run into billions of dollars. Authorities in the Czech Republic announced the death of a fourth person in that country on Wednesday, bringing the death toll across the region to at least 23. Seven people have been killed in Romania, seven in Poland, and five in Austria. Czech media reported the latest victim was a 70-year-old woman from a village near Jesenik who was found 20 metres from her house. She had been evacuated on Saturday but left the evacuation centre on Sunday to return home, Czech TV said. In the Czech Republic, water levels were mostly receding, but rivers were still peaking in some



General view taken by drone of soldiers and civilian volunteers securing buildings and streets against flooding of the Bystrzyca river with sandbags in Wroclaw, Poland. — Reuters

parts of southern Bohemia. In Poland’s third-largest city Wroclaw, lines of people passed sandbags to fortify river banks and to protect buildings, while further south soldiers built walls of sandbags on the banks of the Oder. Authorities expect waters to peak in Wroclaw on Thursday. “We are concentrating on keeping the Oder within its banks,” said

Polish Interior Minister Tomasz Siemoniak. “We have a very difficult dozen or so hours ahead of us.” The Polish defence ministry said more than 14,000 soldiers

Czech Republic reports fourth death as at least 23 killed across central Europe. EU’s von der Leyen to visit Poland as

had been deployed to flood-hit regions, with the armed forces using helicopters to evacuate people and strengthen flood defences, while drones monitored the situation from above. At a water level measurement station near Wroclaw, the Oder had already significantly exceeded the alarm level. Albert Wrotnowski, 29, an artist living nearby, was securing the riverbank with sandbags. “The mood is positive,” he said. “I think people have such faith and hope, and you can see it.” Pope Francis talked about the “tragic hardships” caused by the floods during his weekly general audience in St Peter’s Square. “I assure everyone of my closeness, praying especially for those who have lost their lives and their families.” In Hungary, authorities opened a dam in the country’s northwest to channel water from the Leitha river into an emergency reservoir in a bid to protect the city of Mosonmagyaróvár. — Reuters

Lebanon doctors tell of horror after pager blasts

BEIRUT: Doctors in Lebanon spoke on Wednesday of horrific eye injuries and finger amputations, a day after Hezbollah paging devices exploded across the country, killing 12 people and wounding up to 2,800. “The injuries were mainly to the eyes and hands, with finger amputations, shrapnel in the eyes — some people lost their sight,” said doctor Joelle Khadra, who was working in emergency at Beirut’s Hotel-Dieu hospital. Hundreds of wireless paging devices belonging to members of the group exploded simultaneously on Tuesday, hours after Israel said it was broadening the aims of the Gaza war to include its fight against Hamas’s Lebanese ally. Khadra said that Hotel-Dieu, located in the Lebanese capital’s Ashrafieh district, treated about 80 injured. Around 20 “were admitted to intensive care immediately and were put on ventilators to ensure they wouldn’t suffocate due to the swelling in their faces”, she said. “The rest are going one after the other to the operating room. Today, we have 55 surgeries,” she added, wearing her white doctor’s coat over her blue scrubs. A doctor at another hospital in Beirut said he worked all night and that the injuries were “out of this world — never seen anything like it.” “It’s beyond what can be described,” he said, requesting anonymity because he was not authorised by the hospital to speak to the media.



A man donates blood, following pager detonations across Lebanon in Beirut suburbs. — Reuters

“We have a lot of injuries with amputated fingers” because people were holding the pagers in one or both hands, he said, while some people who had been sitting on the floor also had wounded feet. But the “most devastating” wounds were when the pagers blew up in people’s faces, he said, citing up to 40 patients with eye injuries, most of them severe. Around three-quarters of those patients “lost one eye completely, and the other eye is either somewhat salvageable or barely salvageable”, he said, while “15 to 20 per cent... lost both eyes in a way that’s irreparable.” “A lot of colleagues have been saying this is worse compared to the August 4... (eye) injuries that we saw,” he said. On August 4, 2020, a catastrophic explosion at Beirut’s port killed more than 220 people and injured some 6,500, with several hundred at least suffering ocular injuries and some people even blinded in one eye by flying shards of glass and other debris. The doctor also reported “a lot of burns and foreign bodies — metallic pieces of pagers being retrieved from patients’ eyes, brains, faces, sinuses, from their insides, from their bones”. He said there was “a lot of tissue loss, fingers lost — things that we can’t repair, we can’t replace”. Health Minister Firass Abiad said on Wednesday that two children were among 12 people killed, while almost 300 people were “in critical condition”, some suffering facial injuries and brain haemorrhaging. Of some 1,800 people who were admitted to hospital, “460 needed operations on their eyes, face or limbs, particularly the hands”, he said, noting “multiple finger or hand amputations”. — AFP

Russian advance in Kursk region ‘stopped’

KYIV: Russia’s counter-offensive to retake territory captured by Ukrainian forces in the Kursk region has been “stopped”, a spokesman from Ukraine’s military administration set up in the area said on Wednesday. Russia earlier this month said it had seized several villages back from Ukraine in the Kursk region, where Kyiv has held on to swathes of land since its surprise incursion in early August. “They tried to attack from the flanks, but they were stopped there,” spokesman Oleksiy Dmytrashkivsky said. “The situation was stabilised and today everything is under control, they are not successful,” he said. Dmytrashkivsky also said there were “several thousand” Russian civilians in areas occupied by Ukrainian troops. “In some settlements there are more than 100 people, more than 200, more than 500,” he said. Russia has not said how many of its

civilians remain in the Kyiv-controlled areas, saying only that around 130,000 have fled. The Ukrainian military official admitted “some minor success” by Moscow. “The Russians entered one of the settlements. They started fighting for another settlement, but that was it,” he said. Dmytrashkivsky also claimed that Russian strikes on the area as it tries to re-seize the land have killed “23 civilians” since the end of August, saying they are “dying with the Ukrainian military.” He said the civilians are “not allowed to leave” because “the situation must be controlled” but are allowed to “move around” the area. They can “visit each other, eat there, unite somewhere, dig potatoes now, work in the garden,” Dmytrashkivsky said. The area held by Ukraine has been described as forested and largely rural small settlements. — AFP



A building damaged by a Russian military strike in seen in the town of Pokrovsk, amid Russia’s attack on Ukraine, in Donetsk region. — Reuters

Digital devices vs textbooks: Research remains divided



Sandhya Rao Mehta

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With the ubiquitous presence of digital devices in every home, their use in education is naturally the subject of much debate. Devices like tablets, laptops and even mobile phones carry all the information required for traditional learning, including textbooks, exercises, experiments and suggestions for extra work.

So why are they not more popular in schools across the world?

Both, books and tablets, are a growing market internationally as the young population increases in many parts of the world, including Africa and Asia, if not Europe.

While the textbook publishing industry in the United States is an \$11 billion industry, the tablet market is worth \$18 billion. According to the Pew Research Center, more than 97 per cent of youngsters between 8-15 own at least one digital device, most commonly a smartphone. In Oman, 99 per cent of children use technology, with 75 per cent using smartphones and 45 per cent also having access to computers.

Leveraging this availability of digital resources seems to usher in exciting possibilities in education. Students can explore and discover endless forms of knowledge, learn independently and pursue their own specific hobbies and interests. Encouraging the use of digital tablets seems the logical next step.

Of course, using digital devices like tablets in schools is a very good idea, especially as it combines traditional education with current technology.

The advantages of using tablets in school seem obvious: lighter school bags, more possibilities for interactive activities, economical in the long run and environmentally friendly. In addition, learning on digital devices makes updating of material easier and the learning material can also be tailored to address specific student needs and levels.

And yet, educationists caution against a wholesale embracing of digital devices in the classroom, especially in the primary stages of learning.

An important reason for resisting the use of tablets at the primary level is that this is the time that children are learning essential skills like writing by hand, identifying and using colours as well as understanding shapes and numbers in the real

DIGITAL DEVICES TRANSFER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHING TO AN ELECTRONIC SOURCE RATHER THAN A HUMAN BEING AND TAKE AWAY THE HUMAN TOUCH THROUGH WHICH SO MUCH LEARNING TAKES PLACE

world. The link made between the brain and the human hand as it is writing, drawing or colouring is well documented. These are basic skills that help a child to process information, not just understand the final product.

There is also the associated loss of curiosity and wonder among children for whom answers are waiting at the end of their fingertips. There is no doubt that wandering in a small garden, participating in a seeding activity or actually mixing colours to make a new one are still irreplaceable experiences that no technology can replace.

On top of this, digital devices transfer the responsibility of teaching to an electronic source rather than a human being. This takes away the human touch through which so much learning takes place: values, social skills and interactions form the core of childhood education.

There are no clear answers as to whether digital devices should be used in a classroom. Rejecting such tools outrightly is clearly not an option in today's world. A more judicious use of such devices, with appropriate teacher training, is the need of the hour.

Ethiopia plagued by abductions ‘epidemic’

DYLAN GAMBA

One day in August, Aynalem was on her way to university in the Amhara region of northern Ethiopia when armed men suddenly stopped the bus and climbed aboard.

“They were all very young and threatened us with assault rifles. I was terrified,” recalled the 21-year-old biomedical engineering student.

The kidnappers blindfolded Aynalem and the other passengers. After several hours on the road, they forced her to call her family to demand a ransom payment.

They wanted about \$4,400, a huge sum in a country where more than a third of the population lives below the poverty line.

Then began a harrowing days-long wait in a forest.

“They made us sleep on the grass, we only had dirty water and a loaf of bread,” Aynalem said.

“I experienced horrific things,” she continued, collapsing into sobs. “I was assaulted.”

After several days, Aynalem’s family managed to get the money together “by getting into a lot of debt and borrowing from several people”, said her mother, and she was released.

Aynalem’s name has been changed for security reasons, along with those of other victims and relatives who spoke to.

Not everyone on the bus escaped the ordeal alive.

“While I was held, several people died because their families could not pay the ransom. I could hear them begging our kidnappers before their deaths,” she said.

Many regions of Ethiopia, Africa’s second most populous country, with around 120 million inhabitants, are plagued by kidnappings.

Observers say the menace has grown since the end of the brutal two-year war between the government and rebel forces in the northern region of Tigray, which resulted in the deaths of several hundred thousand people.

That conflict largely ended with a peace agreement in November 2022, but armed rebellions have worsened in two other regions, Oromia and Amhara.

Armed groups are exploiting the security vacuum in areas beyond the government’s control, said Mebrihi Brhane of the Human Rights First Ethiopia NGO.

“The capital city is the only safe place in the country,” Mebrihi said saying that kidnappings have become an “epidemic”.

“They are a way for unemployed young people to earn money,” he said. — AFP

Social Media: Between freedom and the destruction of nations



Yahya Al Aoufi

The writer is an Omani writer and translator

The technological and communications revolution continues to challenge many of our traditional values, ethics, and concepts of freedom that previous generations were raised on before the emergence of social media platforms and applications, which have now established themselves as an inescapable part of reality.

It is no exaggeration to say that the future will be even more complex and ambiguous, especially as we enter the era of artificial intelligence. This major shift hands over many human functions to machines.

This raises the inevitable question: where are these dramatic changes in human society taking us, and what effects do these platforms have on our time, awareness, and relationships with ourselves and others, both positively and negatively?

Much has been written about this issue, and it’s no surprise that the renowned Brazilian novelist Umberto Eco (1932-2016) harshly criticised the situation, stating that “tools like Twitter and Facebook give the right to speak to legions of idiots who used to speak only in bars after a glass of wine, without causing harm to society, and were immediately silenced. But now they have the same right to speak as Nobel Prize winners. It is an invasion of idiots.”

In a similar vein, the Canadian philosopher and academic Alan Dono argues in his book ‘The Banality System’ that this trend ‘has developed to sweep across all fields, where banality has become a celebrated system, allowing the mediocre to build a world that stifles creativity, distinction and legitimises mediocrity and backwardness.’

As we navigate the realm of freedom and opinion on these platforms, the question remains: where should the limits of expression begin and end?

While there are vast opportunities to benefit from the content of these platforms, despite the ongoing controversies, they have also become weapons for some, tools of destruction for others, and dangerous avenues for



British writer Jonathan Freedland in ‘The Guardian’ on August 9, even called for the prosecution of Elon Musk, accusing him of inciting instability by predicting a ‘civil war’ in Britain on the X platform.

spreading hatred, violence, defamation, and destabilising nations.

Observers of global events will recognise the exploitation of these platforms by extremists of all ideologies to spread terror and hatred, whether it be terrorist organisations in the Middle East, far-right movements in the West, or racist political extremism targeting minorities in some Asian countries.

NINE ARAB COUNTRIES TOPPED THE FAILED STATES INDEX IN 2024 AFTER THE SPREAD OF HATE-FILLED, DIVISIVE AND VIOLENT RHETORIC IN BOTH TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA SHATTERED THEIR STABILITY

These hateful messages, which scorn human life and dignity, use the same platforms to expand their influence and spread their violent rhetoric to their followers.

When intellectual and ideological decline reaches this dangerous level under the guise of freedom of speech, it is unreasonable to expect responsible governments to stand idly by as this wave of violent thought undermines the stability of nations and the foundations of civil peace.

Without security, there can be no real progress in development, urbanisation, or civilisation. It is no surprise, then, that nine Arab countries

topped the Failed States Index in 2024, after the spread of hate-filled, divisive, and violent rhetoric in both traditional and digital media shattered their stability, undermining decades of progress and sacrifices.

Even in the West, where freedom and democracy are often celebrated, we see direct action being taken to counter far-right movements in the UK after the murder of two girls, with immediate trials and harsh penalties for those inciting hatred, even under the guise of free speech.

Some voices, such as the British writer Jonathan Freedland in ‘The Guardian’ on August 9, 2024, have even called for the prosecution of Elon Musk, accusing him of inciting instability by predicting a ‘civil war’ in Britain on the X platform.

Such platforms, along with their owners and malicious actors, possess immense potential to destabilise societies from afar, presenting security challenges that cannot be overlooked.

This makes it imperative to fortify nations against this rising tide and regulate the social media sector, particularly concerning incitement and instability, while promoting its positive uses and enriching local content in ways that reflect a nation’s heritage, wealth, and the creativity of its youth.

Translated by Badr al Dhafari
The original version of the article was published in the print edition of Oman Arab newspaper on September 18.

Where to send the diggers?

During one of the university courses I taught, students complained about having to learn new technology to create vlogs on metals and minerals. They could hardly foresee the broad media transformation or the go-green discourse.

A couple of years later, there has been a widespread focus on renewable energy, mining, and technologies with plans and projects for economic and social development. Global warming and environmental deterioration have driven the agenda for exploring new resources.

Gripping the smartphone tightly in the hand, many people can't imagine life without a cell phone, or the Internet. But no matter where smartphones are made, producers depend on materials from at least a dozen countries for the mobile to shine bright, conduct electricity, hold a charge, record a message, take a picture, and perform other functions we take for granted.

However, we rarely think about the components of a smartphone, orthopaedic implants, bone screws, medical imaging, dentistry, or how the earth's richness is critical to sustain our needs. From dinner plates, cosmetics, and paper to medication, industrial minerals and metals are essential to technologies, including in defence, agriculture, and renewable energy.

Despite their importance to our daily lives, minerals and metals are often overlooked. People can learn about these expensive natural resources and how they can benefit national economies and local populations. Humans also need certain amounts of metals to function properly, such as iron, zinc, copper, nickel, etc.

Industrialised economies and improved lifestyles demand more energy. Cities, hospitals, airports, and ports rely on 24-hour power supply. The expansion of electricity networks implies that copper consumption is rapidly increasing; without energy, our way of life would collapse.

Experts predict a metals supercycle driven by the transition to renewable energy and electric transportation. Experts also anticipate a global lithium crisis as early as 2025, as supply struggles to keep up, while nickel has become a critical component in the green transition, with prices tripling



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WHILE EXPERTS BELIEVE THE EARTH'S QUANTITY OF NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES IS DIMINISHING, THE FAST-GROWING DEMAND RAISES WORRIES REGARDING SUPPLY AVAILABILITY AND RELIABILITY

since 2016.

The discussion of going green with renewable energy technologies sourced from natural resources rather than oil, gas, and coal tells an interesting story. The reality is that many renewable energy systems rely on mineral extraction, which causes environmental damage. One example is the trend of electric vehicles entering the market with fanfare about zero-pollution and eco-friendly promises, as well as their use of rechargeable batteries.

Almost all electric car batteries contain lithium, nickel, cobalt, manganese, and graphite. Graphite, for example, the most common and well-known material used in pencils, plays an important function in batteries by storing and releasing electrons during the charging and discharging processes.

Batteries' use of raw materials and/or polluting substances makes recycling challenging due to cost and/or technological limitations.

While experts believe the earth's quantity of non-renewable resources is diminishing, the fast-growing demand raises worries regarding supply availability and reliability.

Mining has emerged as a key component of Oman's economic diversification agenda. Previous surveys revealed deposits of coal, iron ore, manganese, copper, lithium, gypsum, nickel, silver, zinc, and gold, among other natural resources. Statista estimates that in 2022, Oman had 15 copper-related mines and projects as well as nine gold-focused mines.

With its natural valleys, cliffs, canyons, and coastline, Oman is more than just a desert. From Suhar to Masirah, Taqah to Yanqul, Ibri to Samayil, Liwa to Thamrait, Sur to Duqm, Mahout, and the northern mountain highlands, the country has rich natural reserves.

History suggests that the copper industry has sustained Oman for almost 4,000 years, with Suhar thought to be the ancient 'majan' (copper mountain) mentioned in Mesopotamian records from the third millennium.

Despite their whining, introducing minerals and mining to media students was a positive step towards educating them about the country's potential.

Leading mining countries: Australia, Chile, China, Russia, Canada, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Africa, and the United States.

THE RISING MOON!



The full moon rises above the Oriental Pearl Radio and Television Tower in Shanghai, China, on Wednesday. – AFP

The need for methane targets

As summer in the northern hemisphere draws to a close, hundreds of temperature records have been broken, and there is a roughly 95 per cent chance that 2024 will beat 2023 as the hottest year since measurements began. But millions of people don't need data to tell them that – they are living through it. In 2023, the United States suffered 28 climate-related disasters that each caused at least \$1 billion worth of damage, while China experienced both extreme heat and devastating floods, with a typhoon displacing more than 120,000 people in Beijing.

It is clear that warming is occurring faster than expected, and that the world needs to pull an emergency brake on rising temperatures. China and the US, as global superpowers, could work together to drive change, and they recently held a high-level meeting to discuss opportunities for reducing greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions. As these conversations continue ahead of the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) and into 2025, they should focus on dealing with the climate crisis that has already arrived. To address it requires increased efforts to mitigate emissions of super pollutants, which are responsible for more than half of climate change.



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Sarah Ann Smith

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Super pollutants, specifically warming agents like methane, N₂O, tropospheric ozone, and hydrofluorocarbons are tens, hundreds, or even thousands of times more potent than carbon dioxide per tonne. Methane, for example, is a GHG that is roughly 80 times more potent than CO₂ over a 20-year period and contributes to ozone smog. But it remains in the atmosphere for only around a decade, whereas CO₂ can last centuries. This means that reducing methane emissions is the fastest and most effective way to fight climate change and improve air quality.

Cleaner air is especially important for communities living or working near cattle farms, oil and gas infrastructure, landfills, and other pollution sources. Deteriorating air quality has become a pressing public-health problem, and reducing methane levels in the atmosphere would lower rates of death and asthma, and lessen the severity of wildfires, flooding, hurricanes, and other extreme weather events.

The good news is that there are ways to cut methane emissions by as much as 45 per cent, which could reduce warming by 0.3°

Celsius by 2040, bolster energy and food security, and put the world on a path to a healthier future. In addition to the broad public support for government intervention to address methane emissions, there is also global consensus on the need to address non-CO₂ GHGs. To date, 158 countries have signed the Global Methane Pledge to cut emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. And at last year's COP28 in Dubai, countries agreed to submit updated 2035 emissions-reduction targets, known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs), that are economy-wide, cover all GHGs, and are aligned with limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

Increased global attention to



Deteriorating air quality has become a pressing public-health problem.

non-CO₂ GHGs could not come at a better time, as updated NDCs are due in February 2025. While current NDCs contain meaningful CO₂-reduction targets, they often lack concrete, measurable goals for cutting super pollutants.

Countries must recognise that this approach does not fully address the fight against climate change and raise their ambitions accordingly. Strong 2035 targets for methane and other super pollutants are necessary to achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050 and would reduce potentially irreversible planetary changes.

Methane has historically been hard to track, making it difficult to include specific targets in NDCs. But now, after addressing critical

funding and technology gaps, methane-detecting satellites are improving data collection. Satellite programs launched after the previous NDC update, including Methane SAT, Carbon Mapper, and the Waste MAP, have helped local authorities pinpoint and address emissions sources. Given these developments, there is no excuse for submitting NDCs that lack methane targets.

China and the US can build on the climate commitments they made in last year's Sunnylands Statement by including robust super-pollutant targets in their updated NDCs.

The Chinese government has already expressed its intention to do so, while the US has shown a willingness to implement ambitious climate policies, including support for research on emissions-reduction innovations.

The world must unite to reduce super pollutants and usher in a new era of cleaner air, improved food production, and greater energy security.

The public overwhelmingly supports measuring and mitigating methane emissions across sectors, and it is time for governments to listen. © Project Syndicate, 2024

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TRAIL RUNNER HAMED FINISHES STRONG IN KHARDUNG LA CHALLENGE

LADAKH: Veteran Omani trail runner Hamed al Harthy added another remarkable achievement to his long list of daring endeavours by completing the Khardung La Challenge, the world's highest ultra-marathon. Al Harthy finished seventh in the Veteran Male category with an impressive time of 11:17:19 at the Leh town of India's Union Territory of Ladakh.

The Khardung La Challenge, a gruelling 72-kilometre race, is known for its harsh conditions and high altitude, with participants running over 60 km at elevations exceeding 4,000 metres. Al Harthy, 65, is the first Arab to participate in this prestigious race, which takes runners across the Khardung La Pass at 5,400 metres. With temperatures dipping below -10° C at night, the ultra-marathon is considered one of the toughest endurance races in the world.

Al Harthy spent two weeks in July acclimatising to the altitude and familiarising himself with the race route, a key part of his preparation. Reflecting on his experience, he stated: "This race is extremely challenging due to the altitude and the cold, but I've been training since May, including stints in Thailand, Al Jabal Al Akhdhar, and right here in Leh. The thin air makes breathing difficult, but I'm proud to have completed this race and represented Oman as the first Arab competitor."

The seasoned runner emphasised the importance of preparation, especially given the physical demands of the race: "The lack of oxygen, the high altitude, and the sub-zero temperatures during the night all added to the challenge. But I'm glad I pushed through and finished strong."

Al Harthy's journey to the Khardung La Challenge was self-funded, with no formal backing from the government or private sector. In his statement, he highlighted the need for more support for athletes embarking on such adventures: "Participation and preparation costs a lot, and I hope the private sector recognises the value in supporting athletes who represent Oman on the global stage."

Through his achievements, Hamed al Harthy hopes to inspire Omani youth to challenge themselves and realise their potential. His message to them is simple: "Age is just a number. There are no shortcuts



to success – patience, consistency and passion are key."

In addition to his remarkable achievement in the Khardung La Challenge, Hamed is a key figure in Oman's trail running scene. He has been instrumental in organising the Himam Trail Run Race, one of Oman's premier endurance events, which saw over 2,000 participants from 60 countries in its 2023 edition. Hamed's dedication to promoting trail running in Oman continues, with the fourth edition of the Himam Trail Run Race scheduled for December 5-6. Through both his competitive efforts and organisational leadership, Hamed remains a driving force in nurturing the trail running community in Oman and inspiring athletes to push their limits on the global stage.

BAYERN HIT NINE, REAL AND LIVERPOOL WIN

NEW FORMAT OF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE KICKS OFF

PARIS: Bayern Munich became the first team to score nine goals in a game in the modern Champions League as the new format of Europe's elite club competition kicked off on Tuesday, with title holders Real Madrid and Liverpool also among the winners.

Harry Kane scored four goals, including three penalties, as Vincent Kompany's Bayern hammered Croatian champions Dinamo Zagreb 9-2 at the Allianz Arena.

Michael Olise scored twice on his Champions League debut, while Raphael Guerreiro, Leroy Sane and Leon Goretzka were also on target for the home team in Germany.

Dinamo were 3-0 down at the break but scored twice in two minutes just after half-time to give the hosts a scare, with Bruno Petkovic and Takuya Ogiwara on target. But Bayern then scored six times from the 57th minute onwards.

"An amazing game, a bit of a crazy game," Kane told broadcaster DAZN.

"It's the first time I've scored three (penalties) in a game. That doesn't happen at all really."

Bayern had been the last team to score eight in a Champions League match, when they beat Barcelona 8-2 in the quarterfinals in 2020.

It was a remarkable way to mark the opening night of the brand-new Champions League, with the competition now featuring 36 teams all pooled together in one giant league instead of the old group stage.

Every participant now plays eight games against eight different opponents, with the top eight teams at the end of the league phase advancing automatically to the last 16. Those finishing from ninth to 24th will go through to a play-off round to decide the remaining sides in the last 16, while the bottom 12 will be eliminated.

Uefa, European football's governing body, introduced the new format to ward off the threat of a breakaway Super League by the biggest clubs, but it also hopes the changes will breathe new life into the competition.

MBAPPE ON TARGET FOR REAL

There was plenty of excitement around the continent on Tuesday, with reigning champions Madrid made to work hard before beating VfB Stuttgart 3-1 at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Kylian Mbappe marked his first game in the competition with Real by scoring the opening goal just after half-time.



Bayern Munich's English forward #09 Harry Kane scores the 7-2 goal from the penalty spot during the Uefa Champions League match against GNK Dinamo Zagreb in Munich, southern Germany. – AFP



Liverpool's Dutch defender #04 Virgil van Dijk (R) celebrates scoring his team's second goal during the Uefa Champions League first round match against AC Milan at the San Siro stadium in Milan. – AFP



Aston Villa's Belgian midfielder Amadou Onana celebrates with teammates after scoring his team's third goal against Young Boys at the Wankdorf Stadium in Bern. – AFP

However, Deniz Undav equalised midway through the second half for a Stuttgart side appearing in the Champions League for the first time since 2010.

Real nevertheless emerged victorious as Antonio Rudiger headed them back in front against his old side seven minutes from time, and Brazilian youngster Endrick got the third goal in stoppage time.

"I know I can do more, each game I feel better and now I'm scoring goals, and I'm happy here," new signing Mbappe told broadcaster Movistar.

"What we know is that the Champions League has changed and it's important to win quickly to see if we can qualify quickly or not."

Liverpool marked their return to Europe's top table by coming from behind to win 3-1 away to seven-time

Kylian Mbappe marked his first game in the competition with Real by scoring the opening goal just after half-time

champions AC Milan in Italy.

Christian Pulisic gave Milan an early lead, but Ibrahima Konate equalised and Virgil van Dijk headed the away side in front before the interval. Dominik Szoboszlai then wrapped up the victory for Liverpool at San Siro.

VILLA BACK IN BIG TIME

Aston Villa enjoyed a 3-0 win away to Swiss champions Young Boys in Bern in their first ever match in the modern Champions League, 41 years after they last

appeared in the old European Cup.

Youri Tielemans and Jacob Ramsey scored in the first half for the 1982 European champions, and Amadou Onana completed their victory late on.

Villa boss Unai Emery wanted his team to take three points as a tribute to the club's former striker Gary Shaw, a member of their European Cup-winning side who died on Monday aged 63 after being injured in a fall.

"Forty-two years (ago) they achieved winning the Champions League. We want to try and follow what that team achieved," Emery said.

Elsewhere, Juventus beat PSV Eindhoven 3-1 in Turin, with Kenan Yildiz opening the scoring in some style and Weston McKennie and Nicolas Gonzalez also netting. Ismael Saibari pulled one back.

Portuguese champions Sporting beat Lille 2-0 at home, with impressive Swedish striker Viktor Gyokeres on target before a Zeno Debast piledriver. The French side had Angel Gomes sent off.

The action continues on Wednesday, including a rematch of the 2023 final between Manchester City and Inter Milan. — AFP

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE RESULTS ON TUESDAY: League stage, matchday one

Juventus (ITA) 3 (Yildiz 21, McKennie 27, Gonzalez 52) PSV Eindhoven (NED) 1 (Saibari 90+3)
Young Boys (SUI) 0 Aston Villa (ENG) 3 (Tielemans 27, Ramsey 38, Onana 86)
Bayern Munich (GER) 9 (Kane 19-pen, 57, 73-pen, 78-pen, Guerreiro 33, Olise 38, 61, Sane 85, Goretzka 90+2) Dinamo Zagreb (CRO) 2 (Petkovic 48, Ogiwara 50)
AC Milan (ITA) 1 (Pulisic 3) Liverpool (ENG) 3 (Konate 23, Van Dijk 41, Szoboszlai 67)
Real Madrid (ESP) 3 (Mbappe 46, Rudiger 83, Endrick 90+5) Stuttgart (GER) 1 (Undav 68)
Sporting Lisbon (POR) 2 (Gyokeres 38, Debast 65) Lille (FRA) 0



Sultanate of Oman

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

TENDERS ANNOUNCEMENT

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH, Muscat, hereby give notice of tenders for the following projects

Tender No.	Project Category	Location	Grade in Tender Board Registration	Last day to Purchase Tender Documents	Last Date of Tender Submission
28/ 2024	Constriction of Ports Roads Bridge Rail Way Dams and Maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF ASPHALT ROADS AND ALLIED WORKS IN CAMEL RACE TRACK AT AL MUDHAIBI IN NORTH SHARQIYA GOVERNORATE	First Grade	18/09/2024	28/10/2024
29/ 2024	Constriction of Ports Roads Bridge Rail Way Dams and Maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF ASPHALT ROADS AND ALLIED WORKS IN CAMEL RACE TRACK AT BIDIYAH IN NORTH SHARQIYA GOVERNORATE	First Grade	18/09/2024	28/10/2024
30/ 2024	Constriction & Maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF CAMEL RACE TRACK, FENCING AND GATES AT AL MUDHAIBI IN NORTH SHARQIYA GOVERNORATE	First Grade	18/09/2024	28/10/2024
31/ 2024	Constriction & Maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF CAMEL RACE TRACK, FENCING AND GATES AT BIDIYAH IN NORTH SHARQIYA GOVERNORATE	First Grade	18/09/2024	28/10/2024
32/ 2024	Services	CONSTRUCTION OF SYNTHETIC TURF FOOTBALL PITCH AT THUMRAIT (DHABUN)	Second Grade	18/09/2024	28/10/2024

Companies, which are registered with the Tender Board and engaged in same category with experience in and same Grade as noted above, can obtain the Tender Documents at the Tender Board E-tendering digital portal link (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>).

The last date of tender submission on above E-tendering site

INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

Any participants have doubt in adopting e-tendering can contact over the phone 24402200 or through email etenderhd@ita.gov.om

Seeb take on Al Khabourah, Al Nahdha meet Bahla

S O H A R T O H O S T S U R I N O L F I F T H R O U N D T O D A Y

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, SEPT 18

On a football-filled evening, Omani teams are gearing up for the fifth round of the Omantel League, with great anticipation from fans. The clubs aim to improve their standings or maintain their winning momentum as the competition approaches a critical stage.

In the opening match of the fifth round, Sohar will host Sur on their home ground on Thursday evening. Sohar is looking to capitalise on the home advantage and the support of their fans to return to winning ways after a draw in the previous round. Sohar currently sit in sixth place with four points and hopes to improve their position. On the other hand, Sur are searching for their first win of the league, as they are at the bottom of the



Seeb and Bahla players in action during the fourth round of Omantel League.

standings with no points after three matches.

In the second match, Seeb Sports Stadium will witness a strong clash between Oman Club and the visiting Al Shabab. Oman Club are keen to continue chasing the league leaders Seeb and Al

Nahdha, as they occupy third place with 10 points, aiming to get closer to the top. In contrast, Al Shabab seek their first win of the season, having collected only one point out of a possible 12 in the first four rounds.

In the same round, three more



Al Nahdha and Sur players fight for the ball.

matches will be played on Friday evening. Al Nasr will welcome Saham at Al Saada Sports Complex in Salalah. Al Nasr, currently in fourth place, aim to continue their positive results and secure another win, while Saham enter the match after their recent

derby win and their first three points, boosting their desire to improve their standing.

Meanwhile, at Al Rustaq Sports Complex, Al Rustaq will host Ibri. Both teams share the same points, with three each, and enter the match to secure a win to

move up to sixth place.

In another clash, Al Khabourah will visit defending champions Seeb at the Seeb Sports Stadium. Seeb, sitting at the top of the table with 12 points, aim to maintain their winning streak, while Al Khabourah, currently in fifth with six points, are looking to recover after their previous loss.

The fifth-round matches will conclude on Saturday evening with an exciting encounter between Bahla and Al Nahdha at Al Buraimi Sports Complex. Al Nahdha come into the match on the back of consecutive victories, holding second place, tied with Seeb on 12 points but trailing by goal difference. Meanwhile, newly promoted Bahla are eager to secure their first win in the league after a strong performance in their previous match against Seeb in round four.



Nizwa and Ahli Sidab players in action. – Abdulwahid al Hamadani

Nizwa steal the show with last-minute win over Ahli Sidab

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, SEPT 18

Nizwa Club achieved an exciting victory over Ahli Sidab with a score of 57-54 in the 2024 Credit Oman Basketball Cup at the secondary hall of the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher on Tuesday.

The game witnessed intense competition between the two teams, who alternated control over different periods of the match. Several players from both sides stood out in scoring, with Nizwa relying heavily on Saif al Toubi, Musab al Wahaibi and Basel al Sabhi, while Ahli Sidab was led by Adil al Battashi and Abdulaziz al Balushi.

Nizwa started the game strongly, opening the score with a three-pointer from Musab al Wahaibi, but Ahli Sidab quickly responded with a basket from under the rim by Suhail al Busaidi, followed by a three-pointer from Abdulaziz al Balushi. However, Saif al Toubi tied the game shortly after. Nizwa then took the lead with a free throw by Musab al Wahaibi, ending the first quarter ahead at 12-11.

In the second quarter, the intense exchange of attacks continued. Nizwa's Basel al Sabhi scored two points with a basket from under the rim, but Adel al Battashi responded with a three-pointer for Ahli Sidab, bringing the score to

14-14. The tie was repeated several times, with Nizwa eventually leading at half-time 29-25, thanks to 12 points scored in this period compared to Ahli Sidab's 8 points.

The third quarter was closely contested, with both teams exchanging baskets. Ahli Sidab earned a free throw that Haitham Bani Araba converted for one point, but Nizwa quickly responded with a three-pointer from Basel al Sabhi, extending the lead to 32-26. Abdulaziz al Balushi scored two points for Ahli Sidab to reduce the gap to 28-32. Both teams continued exchanging attacks and points, ending the third quarter with Nizwa ahead 41-37.

In the fourth quarter, both teams intensified their efforts, especially Ahli Sidab, who sought to close the gap. Abdulaziz al Balushi scored several points, but Nizwa responded with a basket from Musab al Wahaibi. The game reached a higher tempo with Ahli Sidab adding 15 points and Nizwa scoring 14, but the match ultimately ended with a 57-54 victory for Nizwa.

The game was officiated by international referee Rashid al Mashifri, with international referee Thani al Khalasi as the second official and Ali al Salmani as the third official. The table officials were Juma al Hinai, Musa al Siyabi and Fatima al Harthi.

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, SEPT 18

The Oman Under-20 team players are raising up their final preparations in Dushanbe city, Tajikistan, after they arrived on Sunday for a short preparatory camp ahead of the AFC U20 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers.

After their arrival, the Oman team players, coached by Ahmed bin Mubarak al Alawi, reported to the daily training sessions on the grounds of the secondary field in Dushanbe. The first training session included light warm-up exercises, along with a recovery session for the players, following their late arrival in the city. The coaching staff headed by Ahmed al Alawi and his assistant Jamal al Mahrami arranged a detailed technical plan for the team ahead of their matches in the AFC U20 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers which will take place in Dushanbe city, Tajikistan, during September 21 to 29. The plan will include two times training sessions including



the fitness and gymnasium training while in the evening the players will get some technical and tactical sessions.

The junior Red Warriors will meet in Group E qualifiers alongside Malaysia, Sri Lanka, North Korea and hosts Tajikistan. The 10 group winners and five best second-placed teams will advance to the finals as China will host the tournament during February 6-23, 2025. Oman will aim for their fourth presence in the Asian event and will fight for securing a spot in the expected tough qualifiers.

The national team will commence their Asian campaign against Malaysia on Saturday at the Republican Central Stadium while they will take on Sri Lanka on September 25. Then, Oman will play against North Korea on September 27 before they conclude their games against hosts Tajikistan on September 27. All the matches will be held at the same venue.

OMAN U20 SQUAD: Majid al Farsi, Masoud al Bahri, Ghassan al Manwari, Yousef al Shabibi (Al Shabab), Said al Alawi (Al

Nahdha), Jawad al Azi, Adnan al Mushaifri, Said al Ghanbousi (Seeb), Faisal al Haidi (Bausher), Oudai al Manwari, Muhannad al Saadi (Al Salam), Fahad al Mukhaini (Sur), Abdullah al Maamari (UAE's Hatta), Abdulaziz al Shaqsi (Al Rustaq), Bashar al Maharbi (Fanja), Moamin al Souli (Al Suwaiq), Shihab al Mukhaini, Hamed al Mukhaini (Al Taliea), Yassar al Balushi (Sur), Ziyad al Jaalani (Saudi's Al Khaleej), Abdullah al Jabri (Nizwa), Rashad al Dhaeen (Al Nasr) and Mohammed al Sameen (Dhofar).

Feeney to join Al Faisal, Baumann in Monza

MONZA, Italy: Australian racer Broc Feeney will join forces with Oman's Al Faisal bin Khalid al Zubair and Austrian Dominik Baumann to compete for Gold Cup honours at the fourth round of the 2024 Fanatec GT World Challenge powered by AWS Endurance Cup at Monza this weekend.

Feeney replaces Canadian Mikael Grenier in the Al Manar Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo as the new racing combination aims to close the nine-point gap on the Sainteloc Racing trio of Paul Evrard, Gilles Magnus and Jim Pla in both the Team and Gold Cup Championships. Sainteloc Racing won rounds one and three at Paul Ricard and the Nurburgring, while the Al Manar Racing by Getspeed crew prevailed at the prestigious CrowdStrike 24 Hours of Spa.

Feeney, 22, is a well-known young Australian racing driver who competes in the Repco Supercars Championship and was also the winner of the



Al Manar Racing by Getspeed head to Monza for GTWC this weekend.

2021 Dunlop Super2 Series in a VF Commodore. He started karting 11 years ago and won numerous state and national championships before graduating to the Toyota 86 Racing Series Australia.

The Gold Coast youngster is also a class winner at the Bathurst 12-Hour and finished third, fifth and sixth overall on his last three outings in a Triple Eight Race Engineering Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo.

Al Faisal said: "Looking

forward to this weekend's race in Monza. It is the penultimate round of the championship before Jeddah. We are currently second in the championship, nine points behind the Sainteloc Audi. Anything is really on and it is still possible to win the title. This weekend we have a good package with the Mercedes for Monza.

"We will have Broc Feeney joining us instead of Mikael Grenier, as Mik has a race in the IMSA Championship. We

really believe in Broc's strength and we think we can achieve a good result at the weekend and continue the fight for the championship."

Fifty-two cars will compete for honours across the various categories in Italy this weekend. Gold Cup rivals include the third-placed Haupt Racing Mercedes crew, the Tresor Attempto Racing Audi and the CSA Racing Audi that claimed a podium finish at the opening round in France.

The weekend's action gets underway with a bronze test on Friday (September 20) afternoon before a two-hour free practice session takes centre stage from 09.00hrs on Saturday (September 21). Pre-qualifying will be permitted for an hour in the afternoon.

A hectic Sunday (September 22) sees the three qualifying sessions take place from 09.00hrs and then the three-hour race fires into life at 15.30hrs.

فرصة وظيفية Vacancies 423



Oman Airports, in collaboration with its subsidiaries Transom Handling, Oman SATS, and contractors, are offering (423) job opportunities. This initiative is part of their commitment to enhance the Civil aviation sector with skilled Omani talent, in alignment with ambitious future plans. These opportunities are created in partnership with the Ministry of Labour. For more details on the positions and application process, please refer to the official announcements or visit the Oman Airports website.

عدد الفرص الوظيفية Number of job opportunities	مطارات عُمان والشركات التابعة لها Oman Airports & its subsidiaries
52	مطارات عُمان Oman Airports
7	ترانزوم المناولة TRANSOM Handling
7	العمانية ساتس Oman SATS

عدد الفرص الوظيفية Number of job opportunities	الشركات المتعاقدة مع مطارات عُمان Companies contracted with Oman Airports
10	مستشفى كيمز Kims Health
170	المجموعة العمانية الدولية Oman International Group
167	مؤسسة الأمن والسلامة Security and Safety Services
10	شركة بهوان الهندسية Bahwan Engineering Company

أولاً: وظائف مطارات عُمان First: Oman Airports Jobs

الموقع Location	المسمى الوظيفي Position	عدد الفرص Number of Opportunities
مسقط Muscat	إداري شؤون قانونية Legal Officer	1
مسقط Muscat	إداري Administrator	3
مسقط Muscat	إداري شؤون مالية Finance Officer	1
مسقط Muscat	مطور أنظمة وبرمجيات Application Developer	1
مسقط Muscat	مهندس الدعم الفني Support Service Engineer	4
مسقط Muscat	مهندس مركز عمليات الشبكات NOC Engineer	1
مسقط Muscat	إداري مناب شؤون الطيران Aviation Duty Officer	6
مسقط Muscat	إداري مركز الوثائق Records Management Officer	1
مسقط Muscat	إداري مشتريات / القيمة المحلية المضافة Procurement / In-Country Value Officer	1
مسقط Muscat	مهندس الميكانيكا والسباكة Mechanical & Plumbing Engineer	2
مسقط Muscat	مهندس أنظمة المطار Airport Systems Engineer	2
مسقط Muscat	فني أنظمة المطار Airport Systems Technician	3
مسقط Muscat	فني تبريد وتكييف HVAC Technician	2
مسقط Muscat	فني الكهرباء والأجهزة الدقيقة Technician Electrical & Instruments	1
مسقط Muscat	فني الميكانيكا والسباكة Technician Mechanical & Plumbing	1
مسقط Muscat	مساعد إداري Assistant Administrator	4
مسقط Muscat	إطفاثي متدرب AFS Trainee Fire Fighter	12
مسقط Muscat	إداري الصحة والبيئة والسلامة HSE Officer	1
صحر Sohar	إداري عمليات Operations Officer	1
الدقم DQM	إداري عمليات Operations Officer	1
حلالة Salalah	مساعد إداري Assistant Administrator	1
حلالة Salalah	فني تبريد وتكييف HVAC Technician	2

على الراغبين بالتقديم للشواغر المتاحة زيارة الموقع الإلكتروني:
To apply for the available vacancies visit the website:
<https://www.omanairports.com/om/content/careers>

ثانياً: وظائف العمانية ساتس Second: Oman SATS Jobs

الموقع Location	المسمى الوظيفي Position	عدد الفرص Number of Opportunities
مسقط Muscat	وكيل تسجن Agent	7

على الراغبين بالتقديم للشواغر المتاحة زيارة الموقع الإلكتروني:
To apply for the available vacancies visit the website:
www.omansats.com

ثالثاً: وظائف ترانزوم المناولة Third: Transom Handling Jobs

الموقع Location	المسمى الوظيفي Position	عدد الفرص Number of Opportunities
مسقط Muscat	محاسب Accountant	1
مسقط Muscat	محلل تجاري Commercial - Business Analyst	1
مسقط Muscat	مساعد خدمات الضيوف Guest Services Agent	4
الدقم DQM	مساعد خدمات الضيوف Guest Services Agent	1

على الراغبين بالتقديم للشواغر المتاحة زيارة الموقع الإلكتروني:
To apply for the available vacancies visit the website:
<http://apps.omanairports.com/Om/TransomRecruitment/vacancies.aspx>

رابعاً: وظائف مؤسسة الأمن والسلامة Fourth: Security and Safety Services Jobs

الموقع Location	المسمى الوظيفي Position	عدد الفرص Number of Opportunities
مسقط Muscat	مناول أجهزة الأشعة السينية Handlers of X Ray Machines	150
مسقط Muscat	مشرف المتاولين Supervisor	10
مسقط Muscat	معاون مكاتب Office Assistant	7

خامساً: وظائف شركة بهوان الهندسية Fifth: Bahwan Engineering Company Jobs

الموقع Location	المسمى الوظيفي Position	عدد الفرص Number of Opportunities
مسقط Muscat	كهربائي تمديدات صناعية Industrial Wiring Electrician	3
مسقط Muscat	ميكانيكي تكييف - عام Air Conditioning Mechanic - General	4
مسقط Muscat	مساعد ميكانيكي صيانة Maintenance Mechnic Assistant	2
مسقط Muscat	مساعد كاتب حسابات Accounts Clerk Assistant	1

على الراغبين بالتقديم للشواغر المتاحة زيارة الموقع الإلكتروني:
To apply for the available vacancies visit the website:
<https://www.mol.gov.om/job>

سادساً: وظائف المجموعة العمانية الدولية Sixth: Oman International Group Jobs

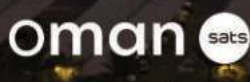
الموقع Location	المسمى الوظيفي Position	عدد الفرص Number of Opportunities
مسقط Muscat	منسق حركة عربات الأمتعة Baggage Carts Handling Coordinator	131
مسقط Muscat	مشرف عمليات Operations Supervisor	31
مسقط Muscat	سائق رافعة شوكية Stand on Stacker	8

على الراغبين بالتقديم للشواغر المتاحة زيارة الموقع الإلكتروني:
To apply for the available vacancies visit the website:
<https://www.mol.gov.om/job>

سابعاً: وظائف مستشفى كيمز Seventh: KIMSHEALTH Jobs

الموقع Location	المسمى الوظيفي Position	عدد الفرص Number of Opportunities
مسقط Muscat	ضابط جودة Quality Officer	1
مسقط Muscat	صيدلي Pharmacist	2
مسقط Muscat	فني تصوير إشعاعي Xray Technician	2
مسقط Muscat	مشرف خدمة Service Supervisor	1
مسقط Muscat	اختصاصي تسويق Marketing Specialist	2
مسقط Muscat	فني تصوير موجي Ultrasonic Waves Photography Technican	2

على الراغبين بالتقديم للشواغر المتاحة زيارة الموقع الإلكتروني:
To apply for the available vacancies visit the website:
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Oman-China trade exceeds RO 10 bn

HIBBA AL KINDI
MUSCAT, SEPT 18

BILATERAL trade between the Sultanate of Oman and the People's Republic of China amounted to RO 10.4 billion in 2023, according to a key official of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI). Addressing the Oman-China Business Forum on Wednesday, September 18, 2024, Eng Hamoud bin Salem al Saadi, Second Deputy Chairman – OCCI, highlighted the significance of the bilateral ties.

“China is one of Oman’s most prominent trading partners,” the official noted. “The trade exchange between the two countries reached more than RO 5.6 billion (\$14.5 billion) by the end of June last year and more than RO 10.4 billion (\$27 billion) by the end of 2023.

“This calls for continued efforts to enhance these partnerships, especially considering Oman’s investment potential, strategic location, modern infrastructure, roads, airports, and ports overseeing global shipping and navigation routes.

“This positioning qualifies Oman to be a global export hub, in addition to the agreements Oman has with several countries and econom-



The Oman-China Business Forum aims at strengthening private sector investment ties between the two countries.

ic blocs.”

Underscoring the significance of the Forum, Al Saadi said that the Oman-China Business Forum builds on the progress made in enhancing trade and economic partnerships between the Sultanate of Oman and the People’s Republic of China, noting that the private sector in both countries is the primary driver of these partnerships.

He added that the current phase of implementing Oman Vision 2040 is filled with numerous investment opportunities in various sectors, including those highlighted by

this forum such as agriculture, fisheries, industry and logistics, in addition to sectors like technology, artificial intelligence, legal services, media, renewable energy and construction.

“These sectors have vast potential, especially with the projects being implemented by the Sultanate of Oman, such as infrastructure and urban development projects and logistics services across various seaports,” he stated.

Yu Jianlong, Vice-Chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT),

also hailed the growing economic relationship between the two countries. “Over the years, China and Oman have shared a strong relationship, and their trade relations have been continuously improving.

“This progress is thanks to the efforts of the Oman Chamber of Commerce, the CCPIT, and all the business people represented here today. In the future, we need to strengthen our bilateral ties with the Oman Chamber of Commerce to bring more Chinese business people here to identify areas of cooperation.”

The vice-chairman also shed

some insight about the future of Chinese investments in the country.

“Chinese companies have already invested in Oman in sectors such as infrastructure, the chemical industry and the energy industry. In the future, more Chinese companies will be interested in investing in new energy, telecommunications and electric vehicles (EVs), as these are areas encouraged by the Omani government to attract foreign investment.”

Jianlong further added: “The second area where we can make more efforts is aligning our initiatives with the Belt and Road Initiative and Oman Vision 2040. These initiatives provide opportunities to enhance cooperation in sectors like scientific innovation, green technology, digital technology and artificial intelligence.

“There’s significant potential for collaboration in these areas.” The forum also included B2B meetings, and a presentation by Invest in Oman, highlighting the various incentives offered by the government. Additionally, the CCPIT showcased an introduction about the China International Supply Chain Expo, which will be held from November 26 to 30, 2024, in Beijing. An Omani delegation will be attending the event.

Dhofar set for tourism boost with 1,000 new hotel units by next year

QASIM AL MAASHANI
SALALAH, SEPT 18

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism has unveiled plans to expand the tourism sector of Dhofar Governorate through the implementation of a series of major initiatives. The announcement came at a press conference held during the ‘Marhaba Dhofar’ forum currently under in Salalah.

Khalid al Abri, Director General of Heritage and Tourism in Dhofar Governorate, announced the construction of four new hotels, which are expected to add 1,000 accommodation units by next year.

Highlighting Dhofar’s unique natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, Al Abri stressed the importance of these projects in catering to the rising demand from both domestic and international tourists.

The new developments, he noted, are designed to enhance the governorate’s tourism infrastructure and strengthen its appeal as a year-round destination.

These initiatives, according to Al Abri, are part of a broader strategic vision



Officials of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism addressing media representatives on Wednesday.

aimed at transforming Dhofar into one of Oman’s leading tourist hubs, offering visitors high-quality experiences that showcase the region’s distinct attractions.

Azan bin Qais al Busaidi, Under-Secretary for Tourism Affairs at the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, added: “We have witnessed a significant increase in the number of tourists coming from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, exceeding 100,000 tourists over the course of the year.

The tourism season in the Sultanate of Oman is ongoing throughout the

year, making Dhofar Governorate one of the most prominent tourist destinations in the Sultanate of Oman. This distinction is due to the region’s breathtaking nature and unique atmosphere.”

The Under-Secretary further stated: As part of Oman Vision 2040, we believe that continuous cooperation with tourism institutions in Saudi Arabia directly contributes to enhancing mutual tourism between the two countries, further strengthening the economic and cultural ties between the two brotherly peoples.”



TENDERS ADVERTISEMENT

Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) Announce the following Tender:

SR. NO.	TENDER NO.	TENDER NAME	LAST DATE FOR OBTAINING THE DOCUMENTS	BID SUBMISSION DATE	REQUIREMENTS FROM PARTICIPATORS	TENDER DOCUMENT'S FEES (INCLUDING VAT) (RO)
1	77/2023 (Re-float)	Supply, Installation and Configuration of Governance Risk Compliance & Internal Audit (GRC) Platform with 3 Years AMC.	03/10/2024	05/11/2024	Local Companies with Experience in Same Field, Have A Valid Commercial Registration.	52/500

Participation	Interested Companies may obtain Tender Document with the necessity Apply on E-tendering
Buying the Tender	By E-Tendering System.
Fees	Against non-refundable payment as mentioned above against each set of document. (Payment Through Bank Transfer). SMEs are exempted from tender's fees.
The deadline for clarification	Before (21) Days from bid submission date.
Submission	The submission of hard copy will be only for Bid Bond & other documents by E-Tendering
Terms and conditions	- Specifying the name of the Company or whatever refers to in the Bid Guarantee Envelope. - The bid should be valid for not less than (90) days from bid submission date. - The Tenderer should enclose a bank guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of 1% of the bid value and should be valid for (90) days from bid submission date, addressed to Oman Electricity Transmission Company (SAOC). - Small & Medium Enterprises are exempted from the submission of 1% of the bid bond. - Any bid not comply with the required guarantee, will not be accepted. - OETC is not bound to accept the lowest or any other offers.
Offer	The bid bond should be submitted in Tender Box No. (1) at the company's building before 11:00 am on the assigned date for submission of the Tenders.
Company Address	Read No: 2153 - Building No. 423 0 Block No: 321 - Contact Details: 92217856
Email Website	tenders@omangrid.com www.omangrid.com / link of E-Tendering System https://www.omangrid.com/en/Pages/Services.aspx

BUSINESS/ADVERTORIAL

Lulu opens new branch in Al Mudhaibi

LULU Hypermarket, Oman's leading retailer has further expanded its presence in Oman with the grand opening of its newest store in Samad Al Shan, Al Mudhaibi on September 18, 2024. The inauguration of the outlet was held under the auspices of Shaikh Saud bin Mohammed bin Saud al Hinai, Wali of Al Mudhaibi, in the presence of senior government officials in the Sultanate of Oman, Lulu group Chairman Yusuff Ali M A and other dignitaries. Spanning over 40,000 square feet, the Al Mudhaibi store is the 31st store of Lulu in Oman. It offers a wide range of products across multiple categories, including groceries, fresh produce, electronics, and more. The spacious layout and modern design provide



The new branch was inaugurated by Shaikh Saud bin Mohammed bin Saud al Hinai, Wali of Al Mudhaibi, Lulu group Chairman Yusuff Ali M A, guests and dignitaries.

a comfortable shopping experience for customers. The new store features an improved décor with multiple check-out counters and liberal parking space to add to a relaxed shopping experience.

Speaking at the launch, Yusuff Ali emphasised the company's commitment to serving the Omani community and contributing to the local economy. "We are extremely grateful for the continued support of the

Government of Oman and the people of this beautiful country," he stated. "We are committed to fostering a strong partnership with the Omani community and contributing to the nation's economic growth.

Spanning over 40,000 square feet, the Al Mudhaibi store is the

31ST
store of Lulu in Oman.

Our expansion into Al Mudhaibi is a testament to this commitment. By prioritising In Country Value in our operations, we aim to support local businesses, create employment opportunities, and develop a sustainable supply chain. We believe that this approach will not only benefit our customers but also contribute to the overall development of Oman," he added. The expansion of Lulu Hypermarket into

Al Mudhaibi reflects the company's strategic approach to reaching new markets and meeting the evolving needs of its customers. The new store is expected to become a popular destination for residents in the area, offering a wide variety of products, competitive prices, and excellent customer service. Lulu Hypermarket's commitment to providing exceptional value and service is evident in its ongoing expansion. The Al Mudhaibi store reflects the company's dedication to enhancing the shopping experience and contributing to the economic development of the region. Present also on the occasion were Ananth A V, Director Oman, Shabeer K.A, Regional Director, Oman of the Lulu Group and other officials.

TAAGEER FINANCE TO LAUNCH TIER 1 PERPETUAL BONDS

MUSCAT: Taageer Finance Company SAOG (or Taageer Finance), a premier finance and leasing company in the Sultanate of Oman has opened for subscription its inaugural tier 1 perpetual bond issuance on September 16, 2024, for a period of two weeks. The issue size is up to RO 15 million (with a greenshoe option to increase size up to RO 25 million) at an attractive coupon rate of 7.50 per cent. The perpetual bonds shall be denominated in Rial Omani and listed on MSX in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations in Oman. The perpetual bonds are being offered by private placement to prospective investors with a minimum investment amount of RO 100,000 through a book building process. Bank Muscat Investment Banking, Oman's premier investment banking team, is the sole issue manager for the transaction. The subscription closes on September 26,

2024, with a tentative bond issuance date of October 2, 2024. Taageer Finance, with a proven track record of more than 20 years, is one of the largest and the fastest growing finance and leasing finance company in Oman. Taageer Finance, backed by strong Omani shareholders and a highly experienced management team has delivered sustainable business and financial performance across market cycles. The company caters to diversified economic segments through its varied and innovative product offerings. Over the years, the company has successfully diversified its funding sources which include bank borrowings, corporate deposits as well as bonds, thereby reflecting the confidence demonstrated in the Company by banks and a wide investor base. The proposed issuance would further strengthen Taageer Finance's balance sheet and aid the delivery of Company's growth plans going forward.

OMAN INVESTMENT BANK JOINS PANEL DISCUSSION AT 9TH IFN OMAN FORUM

MUSCAT: In line with its goal of becoming an international financial services hub, Oman Investment Bank recently participated in the 9th IFN Oman Forum held at the Grand Hyatt Muscat. As the only international Islamic finance event of its kind in the Sultanate of Oman, the IFN Oman Forum attracted a large number of local banks and intermediaries and received full regulatory support. Omar Musharraf, Head of DCM & Structured Finance at the bank, was among four panellists discussing



"Building on Oman's Growing Position as a Centre for Islamic Capital Markets." As a seasoned finance professional, Mr Musharraf provided various insights into the Sultanate

of Oman's evolution and growth as a regional and global centre for Islamic capital markets. He addressed several current topics in Islamic finance, such as how a period of lower global interest rates might influence Islamic capital markets, the key factors currently affecting global Islamic markets, the importance of developing a yield curve, the impact of new bond and Sukuk regulations from both issuer and investor perspectives, and how a flourishing equity and IPO market is contributing to Oman's broader divestment programme.

A 'SHARQIYAH UNIVERSITY HOLDS ORIENTATION WEEK



MUSCAT: This week, the Orientation Week activities for new students for the first semester of the academic year 2024/2025 were launched at A'Sharqiyah University, receiving more than 3,200 male and female students in various specialisations and programmes offered by the university. The 4-day orientation week will include students' free tour to get to know the campus buildings and facilities, an integrated exhibition for students organised by student activity groups, and introductory corners for a number of service departments, such as the Student Affairs Department, the Language Centre, and the Foundation Program. As well as an introduction to the Admissions and Registration Department, the Finance Department, the Information Technology Department, and the Learning

Resources Centre. In addition to the Internal Housing Department Services, the Administrative Affairs Department is represented by the University Clinic, the Security Department, and the Security and Safety Department instructions. The programme will also include meetings with colleges' deans and the placement tests in English, IT, and mathematics. The programme included a meeting of Professor Fouad Chedid, the Vice-Chancellor, with the students during the evening entertainment and cultural evening. The evening included visual presentations about the university and the departments and centres that serve the students during their university career. In addition to an inspiring personalities section for a number of distinguished university students and a theatrical show.

Sohar International provides ultrasound machines to Directorate-General of Health

MUSCAT: In line with its unwavering commitment to social responsibility and support for national initiatives, Sohar International, Oman's Best Bank, recently visited Al Seeb Polyclinic as part of its efforts to support national healthcare initiatives. The visit follows the bank's strategic contribution to the Directorate-General of Health in Muscat, providing two state-of-the-art Ultrasound machines to Al Seeb Polyclinic, specifically for the women's and maternity clinic. The initiative aims to enhance the clinic's capacity for early detection of fetal abnormalities and pregnancy-related health conditions, thereby elevating the quality of healthcare services delivered to the community.

Mazin bin Mahmood al Raisi, Chief Marketing Officer of Sohar International, expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership with the Directorate-General of Health in Muscat, stating, "Our paramount objective has always been to promote comprehensive well-being within the community by supporting initiatives that cater to all segments of society. We are thrilled to collaborate with the Directorate-General of Health in Muscat to address societal welfare. Sohar International's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy is rooted in the bank's conviction that the private sector has a duty to positively impact society through sustainable business practices. This partnership exemplifies Sohar



International's proactive efforts to make a meaningful contribution to societal welfare." Recently, Sohar International paid a visit to Al Seeb Polyclinic, led by Mazin bin Mahmood al Raisi, Chief Marketing Officer of Sohar International. They were

welcomed by Dr Thamra al Ghafri, Director-General of Health in Muscat. This visit underscores the bank's ongoing support for Oman's healthcare sector and reinforces the pivotal role of the private sector in enhancing and advancing the nation's healthcare infrastructure.

Dr Thamra al Ghafri, Director-General of Health Services in Muscat Governorate, highlighted the strategic impact of Sohar International's contribution, stating, "The advanced Ultrasound machines will greatly enhance the Al Seeb Polyclinic's capacity to deliver comprehensive and efficient medical care, particularly in the area of women's and maternity health. We recognise the pivotal role the private sector plays in supporting our efforts to elevate healthcare services, and we look forward to continued successful collaboration in the future." Sohar International actively drives initiatives across key sectors such as education, healthcare, sports, and more, through

strategic partnerships with government entities and institutions committed to community development. As a forward-thinking and dynamic financial institution, Sohar International takes pride in playing a pivotal role in the nation's socio-economic advancement, aligning its efforts with Oman's broader vision for sustainable growth and prosperity. The bank's commitment to these sectors reflects its dedication to fostering positive change and enhancing the quality of life for communities throughout the Sultanate of Oman. By leveraging its expertise and resources, Sohar International continues to support and implement impactful projects that drive long-term benefits for society.

New Business Platform to be Oman’s ‘digital HQ’

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, SEPT 18

THE new Oman Business Platform, proposed to be established as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) initiative, is envisioned as the digital headquarters for efficient and secure government services, according to the Ministry of Finance (MoF).

Leading UK-based independent investment and financial advisory services group Altra Capital has been selected to support the Ministry of Finance, as well as the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment promotion (MoCIIP), in the restructuring of the Oman Business Platform as a PPP project aimed at streamlining and enhancing digital interactions for businesses in Oman.

Expressions of Interest (EoI) from local and international companies interested in partnering with the MoCIIP in the implementation and operation of the platform are due for submission by November 12, 2024.

Announcing the PPP initiative, the Ministry of Finance said: “The (Oman Business Platform) project aims to further develop the platform’s capabilities, aligning it with the strategic objectives of the Oman Vision 2040 by leveraging cutting-edge technology and private sector expertise.

The project will focus on enhancing the platform’s functionality, ensuring robust digital transformation in government-to-business interactions.” First launched in 2003 as a One Stop Shop (OSS), it was gradually rebranded as the Oman



The platform is envisioned as a world-class digital hub that remains competitive on a global scale.

This Project will focus on strategic enhancements that support a seamless, robust user experience, aligning with MoCIIP’s commitment to digital governance and the broader goals of the Oman Vision 2040

Business Platform, featuring a comprehensive suite of e-services developed to streamline government-to-business interactions.

Through the latest PPP initiative, the platform is now proposed to be revamped to maintain ongoing service continuity while integrating new services and functionalities that meet the evolving needs of its users, according to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment promotion.

Importantly, the new Oman Business Platform is envisioned as the digital headquarters for efficient and secure government services, says the Ministry of Finance.

“This Project will focus on strategic enhancements that support a seamless, robust user experience, aligning with MoCIIP’s commitment to digital governance and the broader goals of the Oman Vision 2040,” it said.

Local and international tech-

nology service providers with a proven track record in the development, implementation, and operation of large-scale digital platforms and e-services have been invited to bid for the contract to partner in this initiative.

The selected private partner in the project will be required to design, finance, develop and operate these enhancements. The goal is to foster innovation and deliver a world-class digital platform that remains competitive on a global scale, according to the MoF, which currently oversees all PPP projects.

Conceived as a sophisticated e-government service digital hub, the Oman Business Platform will be designed to manage a vast array of transactions and data interactions across government and private sectors. It will leverage a robust technical architecture focused on reliability, security and efficiency.

SYMBOL TOWER



The agreement will help leverage the infrastructure components of the telecom towers.

PACT INKED TO INSTALL ORNAMENTAL TELECOM TOWERS IN AL DHAHIRAH

NASRULAH AL AJMI
MUSCAT, SEPT 18

Al Dhahirah Governorate has signed a partnership agreement with the Oman Towers Company to design and construct ornamental telecom towers. The agreement was signed by Najeeb bin Ali al Rawas, Governor of Al Dhahirah, and Eng Majid al Kharoosi, Managing Director of Oman Towers.

The agreement will help leverage the infrastructure components of the telecom towers that the company will establish using innovative and modern methods. These methods align with the comprehensive development strategy of Al Dhahirah Governorate, contributing to the goals of the governorate’s development plans and enhancing its economic and social aspects.

These towers will serve as prominent landmarks at the sites where they will be built. The first ornamental tower will be constructed in the Wilayat of Ibri, standing at a height of 40 metres. The tower will feature various symbols and images, with a digital screen measuring 17 metres in height and 3 metres in width for digital advertising, along with a digital clock at the centre. Different logos will also be displayed, and the location of this tower has been chosen to meet the technical specifications of the Oman Towers Company.

Speaking to the *Observer*, Majid al Kharoosi, Managing Director of Oman Tower Company, said, “This agreement was signed between Al Dhahirah Governorate and Oman Towers Company to design and implement decorative or aesthetically pleasing communication towers that harmonise with the surrounding environment and reduce visual pollution, while also becoming prominent landmarks in the Wilayat of Ibri.

The signing of this agreement is a result of cooperation with the Al Dhahirah Governorate Office, which played a key role in advancing such agreements. The agreement will include the construction of several decorative towers across the wilayats of Al Dhahirah Governorate, with the first tower set to be completed in the coming months, followed by additional towers in other locations agreed upon by Al Dhahirah Governorate, Oman Towers, and the relevant authorities involved in the construction of communication towers.”

FUEL PRODUCTION SURGES 25 PER CENT IN OMAN

MUSCAT: Automotive fuel production in Oman surged by 25 per cent in July 2024 compared to June, despite a 2.4 per cent drop in total refinery and petroleum industry output by the end of July compared to the same period in 2023, according to data from the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

Production of regular motor fuel (M-91) fell by 9.6 per cent, with output reaching 8.685

million barrels and sales totaling 8.045 million barrels. In contrast, premium motor fuel (M-95) production rose by 8.3 per cent to 7.803 million barrels, with sales of 7.595 million barrels.

Diesel production saw a 5.2 per cent drop, recording 18.831 million barrels, while sales amounted to 8.59 million barrels. Jet fuel production declined by 1 per cent to 6.79 million barrels, with sales

of 2.36 million barrels. LPG production totalled 5.17 million barrels, with sales of 5.82 million barrels.

In petrochemicals, gasoline production increased by 6.8 per cent to 99,900 metric tonnes, while paraxylene output climbed 6.6 per cent to 325,600 metric tonnes.

Polypropylene production, however, fell by 21.8 per cent to 122,700 metric tonnes, though sales surged by 30.9

per cent to 19,800 metric tonnes.

Oman’s fuel exports also saw significant changes. Automotive fuel (91) exports grew by 16 per cent to 1.415 million barrels, while premium fuel (95) exports soared by 119.8 per cent to 912,700 barrels. Diesel exports hit 10.5 million barrels, and jet fuel exports reached 4.4 million barrels. LPG exports totalled 290,800 barrels. — **ONA**

Bank Muscat leads development of capital markets in Oman

MUSCAT: The capital markets are crucial pillars for boosting economic growth across the world as they contribute to sustainable development and the creation of a strong economy through offering a platform to businesses for raising capital while providing investors an opportunity to invest the capital in line with their investment objectives.

Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has been playing an important role in capital markets in Oman, as evidenced by the continuous accomplishments of Bank Muscat and the prominent strategies implemented to support its pioneering role as a trusted banking institution for over 40 years.

In order to highlight the Bank’s role in developing the capital markets, recently Bank Muscat organised a media meet to highlight Bank Muscat’s contributions

to the investment banking and capital markets field locally and regionally. The visit, attended by a number of media representatives, provided an opportunity for the audience to have conversations with the Bank’s officials, as well as to further strengthen partnership with various media outlets, which are an important component of the Bank’s growth and success.

Bank Muscat is the largest asset manager in Oman and a leading asset manager in the GCC region, with a proven track record of successful operations for almost three decades. It offers tailored investment solutions across various asset classes including equity, fixed income, real estate and private equity investments.

Further, the Bank’s investment banking team is the market leader in offering financial advisory and fundraising solutions across debt or equity solutions and for a wide range of instruments. Being the



Bank Muscat is a leading asset manager in the GCC region.

largest financial advisory team in Oman, it has delivered more than \$40 billion for over 95 financial advisory and fundraising mandates over the last 15 years.

Speaking about the event, Khalifa bin Abdullah al Hatmi, Deputy General Manager, Invest-

ment Banking and Capital Markets at Bank Muscat, said: “I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all our stakeholders for their partnership and ongoing cooperation. The Investment Banking and Capital Markets department’s accomplishments

over the years reflect Bank Muscat’s commitment to incorporating the Bank’s values into its various businesses; working towards enhancing the Bank’s vision and serving the customers better every day.

Bank Muscat invests heavily in its expertise in expanding financial advisory services, providing investment opportunities, and promoting Oman’s economy by successfully completing several strategic transactions for major institutions across a diverse range of economic sectors.”

Khalifa al Hatmi further explained: “Bank Muscat is keen to maintain its leadership in investment in the Sultanate of Oman and the progress made thus far is a testament to the dedication shown by our team of experts and professionals, who are committed to providing the best in class investment services to the Bank’s individual and corporate customers.”

OPINION

Why subscription in OQEP’s new IPO is not limited to locals only



HAIDER AL LAWATI
haiderdawood@hotmail.com

The author is a Muscat-based economic analyst who previously worked for CBO and OCCI

SOME Omani national companies offer part of their shares for public subscription whether by obtaining temporary profits when they sell them on the Muscat Stock Exchange or keeping them as long-term savings and obtaining the usual annual dividends.

The decision of the “OQ Exploration and Production” (OQEP) to offer 25% of the shares for public subscription gives citizens and foreigners the opportunity to own OQEP shares.

In such a process, foreign investors have always succeeded in owning large quantities of these shares, but they resell them upon listing and benefit from the profits they achieved in a few days without keeping their investments in the country for a long period.

The question that is raised every time in such cases is: “Why is the offering of shares in government companies not limited at the beginning to individual citizens and national institutions only so that they can sell them to non-Omanis on the Muscat market later?”

The answer comes from the concerned authorities that the government is working to attract foreign investments to the country by allowing non-Omani institutions and individuals to buy shares of these companies, which leads to activating commercial, finan-

cial, banking and purchasing transactions, and the movement of funds from outside the country.

This helps in activating the operations of the Muscat Stock Exchange.

The next question that is raised again to these authorities is: “Are citizens, institutions and well-known Omani companies unable to fill the value of the offered shares?”

The answer comes from the same authorities that this process helps in introducing Oman and works to activate institutions, brokerage companies and banks in dealing with such cases to a greater extent, which gives a reputation to the country and the banking and financial institutions working in these cases.

The reality is that foreign investment in such valuable companies does not remain for a long time at the same rates as the purchase, because their owners sell the shares of these companies and exit with their money at multiples of what they brought from abroad, while the returns for Omani individuals and institutions remain at small rates in the end.

If we review, for example, the current value of a foreign investment in OQ Group, according to the Financial Services Authori-

Highlights

We will see that Omani investment currently amounts to about

80.49%
of the total value, while the share of non-Omanis in the company amounts to 19.51%, of which the percentage of 12.44% is for Gulf citizens, 0.16% for Arabs, and 6.91% for foreigners.

ty data, we will see that Omani investment currently amounts to about 80.49% of the total value, while the share of non-Omanis in the company amounts to 19.51%, of which the percentage of 12.44% is for Gulf citizens, 0.16% for Arabs, and 6.91% for foreigners.

This gives the idea that non-Omani institutions and individuals do not hold shares in Omani companies to a large extent, and their only concern is to benefit from initial subscriptions and sell them to citizens at higher prices later.

The new subscription for OQ Exploration and Production Company will be listed soon, where 60% of the total shares offered will be allocated to institutional investors, and the remaining 40% will be allocated to small individual investors, according to the mechanisms that will be adopted by the Financial Services Authority.

There are countries and institutions that offer their shares in initial subscriptions only to citizens, institutions and local companies at first so that they can benefit from them, and then licence them to others. Can we do the same and give citizens the opportunity to benefit from these good subscriptions at first?

UNDER-FIREWORKERS SPELL TROUBLE FOR US AND EUROPE

NO PAINS, all gains. That’s the surprising message sent by labour markets in the United States and Europe for the past two years. Even as interest rates rose sharply, unemployment remained low. That has given central banks on both sides of the Atlantic confidence they can deliver the economic “soft landing” of defeating inflation without causing a major recession. Their problem is that the surprising resilience of workforces is showing signs of breaking down. Once that happens, economic contractions usually ensue.

“Unemployment is like a headache or a high temperature—unpleasant and exhausting but not carrying in itself any explanation of its cause.” The famous definition of joblessness by the British economist William Henry Beveridge has been turned on its head. The labour market in most Western economies has been in rude health since the end of the pandemic, to the amazement of central bankers and Wall Street.

After all, the US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank jacked up interest rates to combat the high inflation caused by the pandemic-related economic disruptions and Russia’s attack of Ukraine. Higher borrowing costs normally curb demand for goods and services, reducing companies’ revenues and prompting them to cut costs by laying off workers. Newly unemployed people tighten their belts, further reducing firms’ sales and hitting economic growth. This negative loop eventually ends after rates come down again. This time, though, it was different. The Fed began raising borrowing costs in early 2022 and lifted them to a 23-year peak. But the US unemployment rate mostly remained below 4% throughout this period – well under the 5.7% average since 1948. In the eurozone, borrowing costs touched a record high of 4% in September 2023, but unemployment has hovered around its all-time low of 6.4% for 18 months.

Meanwhile, both blocs rebounded sharply from pandemic-induced recessions. GDP in the United States expanded at a heady annual rate of 3% in the second quarter of 2024. The eurozone suffered a brief contraction in 2022 but recovered to grow by 0.6% year-on-year in the three months to June.

The most persuasive explanation is that companies refused to fire workers even when there was not enough for them to do. The data supports this “labour hoarding” narrative. In March 2020, as the global pandemic raged, US companies laid off more than 13 million workers.

A year later, that figure had dropped to around 1.4 million and it has remained around that level since. And nearly half of US CEOs expect to keep their workforce stable, according, opens new tab to a survey by the Business Roundtable. — **Reuters**



SIMON ZADEK

The author Co-CEO of NatureFinance



Investing in nature will not save it so long as the global economy consumes more natural resources than the planet can sustain.

THE world economy continues to over-exploit nature, despite being fully dependent on it. It is easy to see why this is unsustainable, especially in light of dangerously escalating climate change.

With the biodiversity financing gap estimated to be about \$700-900 billion per year, calls are growing ahead of October’s United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Cali, Colombia (COP16) to “invest in nature.”

But these well-meaning efforts miss the bigger picture. Investing in nature will not save it so long as the global economy consumes more natural resources than the planet can sustain.

It is like trying to shift to a low-carbon economy by using expensive carbon-storage schemes, while simultaneously allowing fossil fuel-intensive industries to emit ever more greenhouse gases.

Instead, what is needed is a regenerative global economy that preserves and restores nature and, in so doing, helps the world achieve crucial climate goals. In short, we must work toward a sustainable and equitable bioeconomy.

The bioeconomy comprises a wide range of sectors and business activities. Most obvious are regenerative forms of agriculture, fishing, forestry, and aquaculture. There are also many ways that technology is combined with land- and sea-based production, from bio-based plastics to bioenergy and biopharmaceuticals.

Lastly, there are many opportunities to financialise nature’s value through high-integrity and equitable nature-based carbon and biodiversity credits.

The potential is enormous. The World Bioeconomy Forum estimates the current value of the global bioeconomy at \$4 trillion, with some projections showing that this could rise to \$30 trillion or more by 2050.

However, the bioeconomy is not automatically sustainable or equitable. It can destroy nature, such as through overfishing and deforestation.

Similarly, it can deepen inequalities: land grabs by foreign investors have already been reported, leaving nature-rich countries and local communities in the Global South worse off.

For example, one major question on the biodiversity agenda is how to ensure fair sharing of the profits earned from the digital sequencing of genetic resources.

DNA sequence data – called “digital sequence information” (DSI) in policy circles – have revolutionised the life sciences and are fuelling innovation in sectors such as food security, medicine, green energy, and biodiversity conservation.

Open access to the SARS-CoV-2 viral sequences was partly responsible for the rapid development of diagnostic kits and vaccines.

DSI also has many commercial applications and offers new opportunities for economic development. It is promising that negotiators recently agreed on a

draft recommendation for operationalising the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from DSI, including the creation of a global fund, to be considered at COP16.

Brazil, in its current role as G20 president, has taken the lead in advancing an equitable, sustainable bioeconomy.

This includes establishing the G20 Initiative on Bioeconomy, which recently defined ten voluntary high-level principles that will help policymakers cultivate a bioeconomy that promotes social inclusion, provides sustainable jobs, and accelerates progress toward climate and nature goals.

There are high hopes that Brazil will continue this work during its presidency of the UN Climate Change Conference in 2025 and that South Africa will advance a similar agenda when it assumes the G20 presidency at the end of the year.

Several steps can be taken now to facilitate investment in the bioeconomy.

Creating common measurement standards and natural capital accounting could help agencies like UN Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization improve bio-trade arrangements and address subsidy problems.

Nature pricing could help drive investment by increasing the economic value of a sustainable bioeconomy. Devising trade and investment rules, addressing data shortfalls, and ensuring systematic analysis is vital for developing a robust bioeconomy. Regional groups such as the European Union and the African Union are well-positioned to begin implementing these changes.

Developing a successful bioeconomy requires an integrated approach, and that starts with enabling policies. Regenerative agriculture, like bioplastics and bioenergy, struggles to compete with carbon-intensive alternatives that often receive significant subsidies.

“Bio-businesses” that rely heavily on technology need a supportive ecosystem of business partnerships, research and innovation, regulation, and public financing that is often lacking in low- and middle-income countries.

Such challenges make it harder for Global South countries to advance value-adding sectors that sustainably use their natural assets.

Moreover, while several governments are increasingly developing bioeconomy strategies, sovereign-debt crises, and the resulting fiscal pressures, are often a barrier to unlocking domestic public finance or crowding in private investment.

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Indian male 6 years experience in accounts/ automobile/admin. Seeking for suitable opening in any field, currently in Oman. Contact: 78988055/ 92850930, email: ullasmon8@gmail.com

Senior accountant - Indian male above 12 years experience (8 years in Oman). Seeking for suitable opening. Currently in Oman. Contact: 98957235. Email: unnikrishnanalways@gmail.com

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Indian male, 10 years experience in Oman as Coordinator have diploma, valid D/L with NOC ready to join. Contact: 95645241.

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CHANGINGWORLD

Are husbands doing enough to help wives with house chores?



BY SHADDAD AL MUSALMY
shadadm75@gmail.com

Shaddad is a seasoned Omani journalist and currently one of Oman Observer's senior editors.

In Oman, traditional gender roles have historically dictated that women are primarily responsible for domestic chores, while men take on the role of providers. However, as societal norms evolve and the dynamics of family life change, there is a growing recognition of the importance of shared responsibilities within households.

Through this column, I want to highlight the implications of husbands helping with house chores in Oman, considering cultural perspectives, benefits to family relationships, and potential shifts in gender roles.

Omani culture has deep-rooted traditions that often assign specific roles to men and women. Men are typically seen as breadwinners who engage in work outside the home, while women manage household tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and childcare. Despite these traditional views, many families are beginning to embrace a more equitable distribution of household responsibilities. This shift can be attributed to various factors, including increased female participation in the workforce and changing attitudes towards gender equality.

When husbands actively participate in household chores, it fosters a sense of partnership and teamwork within the marriage. Research indicates that couples who share domestic responsibilities tend to experience higher levels of satisfaction in their relationships. According to the couples I interacted with, shared chores can reduce stress for both partners and create a more harmonious living environment. Furthermore, when children observe their fathers engaging in household tasks, it sets a positive example that challenges traditional gender stereotypes and promotes equality.

Despite the benefits of shared responsibilities, there remain challenges in promoting this practice within Omani society. Some men may feel societal pressure or stigma associated with performing tasks traditionally viewed as feminine, while older generations may uphold traditional views on gender roles.

To address these challenges, education and awareness campaigns can play a crucial role in reshaping perceptions about domestic work.

Encouraging husbands to help with house chores is not merely about dividing labour; it is about fostering mutual respect and understanding within relationships. As Oman continues to progress towards greater gender equality, both men and women need to recognise the value of shared responsibilities at home.

By embracing this shift, families can cultivate stronger bonds and contribute positively to the evolving social landscape. Till next, let's embrace the change of perception.

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS



LIFESTYLE

Afghan traders sort figs for sale at a wholesale market in Kandahar. In Kandahar, figs are grown locally and are often used in various dishes, including desserts and snacks. — AFP



CULTURE

Members of the fire dragon dance team spin balls of joss sticks during the Tai Hang Fire Dragon Dance, in Hong Kong. Celebrated for over a century, the community believed that the fire and noise from the dragon dance would drive away the disease and protect them from further harm. — AFP

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



Deep Dive



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Hawk-eyed photographer snaps threatened bird feared lost

A hawk-eyed photographer has thrilled scientists by snapping a threatened bird of prey in Papua New Guinea, more than five decades since it was last officially documented, the World Wildlife Fund said on Friday.

The New Britain Goshawk is only found on Papua New Guinea's New Britain island and is considered threatened, though information about its status is sparse.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature estimates there are between 2,500 and 10,000 mature individuals in the wild, but the bird's elusive nature makes details hard to confirm.

In fact, the bird is so unusual that Fiji-based photographer Tom Vierus didn't even realise what he captured until later.

"It was such a great surprise to hear that this photo seems to be the first-ever of this 'lost species,'" he said in a statement issued by WWF, an environmental NGO.

The last scientific documentation of the species appears to be a 1969 specimen now kept in a US museum, according to John Mittermeier, director of the Search for Lost Birds at the American Bird Conservancy.

While there have been sporadic reported sightings, "the New Britain Goshawk seems to have eluded photo, sound, and specimen documentation for 55 years," he said.

WWF said the discovery highlighted the importance of protecting the area from threats including logging and mining.

Much of Papua New Guinea's population lives below the poverty line, and many officials are keen to welcome companies to exploit vast reserves of gold, copper, nickel, natural gas and timber.

It is also home to the world's third-largest intact tropical forest, according to WWF, and environmentalists warn little research has been done on diverse and rich ecosystems now at risk.

— AFP

Seafood, a staple in Tunisian cuisine, is also a major export commodity for the North African country, with Italy, Spain and Malta top buyers, and revenues nearing

900 MILLION

dinars (\$295 million) last year, according to official figures.

Tunisian women have long played a major role in this vital sector.

OFF a quiet Tunisian island, Sara Souissi readies her small fishing boat. As a woman in the male-dominated trade, she rows against entrenched patriarchy but also environmental threats to her livelihood.

Souissi began fishing as a teenager in a family of fishers off their native Kerkennah Islands near the city of Sfax, defying men who believed she had no place at sea.

"Our society didn't accept that a woman would fish," she said, hauling a catch onto her turquoise-coloured boat.

"But I persisted because I love fishing and I love the sea," said Souissi, 43, who is married to a fisherman and is a mother of one.

A substantial portion of Tunisia is coastal or near the coast, making the sea an essential component of everyday life.

Seafood, a staple in Tunisian cuisine, is also a major export commodity for the North African country, with Italy, Spain and Malta as top buyers, and revenues nearing 900 million dinars (\$295 million) last year, according to official figures.

Tunisian women have long played a major role in this vital sector.

But their work has been undervalued and unsupported, a recent study by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) found.

The study said that while women were actively involved throughout the fishing value chain, they remained "generally not considered as an actual worker" by their male counterparts.

Fisherwomen also have less access to administrative benefits, training and banking services, where they are viewed as "high-risk borrowers" compared to men, the study said.

As a result, many don't own their own boats, and those working with male relatives are "considered as family help and therefore not remunerated", it added.

UNDER THE TABLE

In Raoued, a coastal town on the edge of the capital Tunis, the Tunisian Society for Sustainable Fishing launched a workshop in June for women's integration into the trade.

But most of the women attending the training said they were only there to help male relatives.

"I want to help develop this field. Women can make fish nets," said Safa Ben Khalifa, a participant.

There are currently no official numbers for fisherwomen in Tunisia.

Although Souissi is formally registered in her trade, many Tunisian women can work only under the table -- the World Economic Forum estimates 60 per cent of workers in informal sectors are women.

"We want to create additional resources amid climate change, a decrease in marine resources, and poor fishing practices," said Ryma

TUNISIA FISHERWOMEN BATTLE INEQUALITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE



Moussaoui, the Raoued workshop coordinator.

Last month, the Mediterranean Sea reached its highest temperature on record at a daily median of 28.9 degrees Celsius (84 Fahrenheit), Spain's leading institute of marine sciences said.

The strain on sea life and resources has been compounded in countries like Tunisia by pollution and overfishing.

Rising temperatures make the waters uninhabitable for various species, and unsustainable fishing like trawling or using plastic traps indiscriminately sweeps up the dwindling sea life and exacerbates pollution.

"They don't respect the rules," Souissi said about fishers using those methods. "They catch anything they can, even off-season."

UNFAVOURABLE ENVIRONMENT

In 2017 in Skhira, a port town on the Gulf of Gabes, 40 women clam

collectors formed an association to enhance their income — only to see their hard-won gains later erased by pollution.

Before its formation, the women earned about a tenth of the clams' final selling price in Europe, said its president, Houda Mansour. By cutting out "exploitative middlemen", the association helped boost their earnings, she added.

In 2020, however, the government issued a ban on clam collecting due to a severe drop in shellfish populations, leaving the women unemployed.

"They don't have diplomas and can't do other jobs," Mansour, now a baker, explained.

In hotter, polluted waters, clams struggle to build strong shells and survive. Industrial waste discharged into the Gulf of Gabes for decades has contributed to the problem.

It has also forced other species out, said Emna Benkahla, a fishing economics researcher at the University of Tunis El Manar.

"The water became an unfavourable environment for them to live and reproduce," undermining the fishers' revenue, she said.

"Because they couldn't fish anymore, some sold their boats to migrants looking to cross the Mediterranean illegally," she added, calling for more sustainable practices.

Souissi, who only uses relatively small nets with no motor on her boat, said she and others should fish responsibly in order to survive.

"Otherwise, what else can I do?" she said, rowing her boat back to shore. "Staying at home and cleaning? No, I want to keep fishing."

— AFP

Oman's deep-rooted relationship with bees has recently attracted the attention of international players, most notably Rolls-Royce, which has established a new apiary in collaboration with Alila Jabal Akhdar.



FROM **P18**

Providing a helping hand in saving Omani bees

BY YERU EBUEN

BEEKEEPING in Oman dates back several centuries, with records indicating that the practice was well-established in the ancient communities of the Arabian Peninsula.

In Oman, the craft of beekeeping has been passed down through generations, particularly in the country's mountainous regions, where the rugged terrain and diverse flora provide the perfect conditions for bees to flourish. Traditional beekeepers, known locally as "nahl", have used centuries-old methods to cultivate honey, relying on natural hives built from materials such as clay, wood, and palm fronds.

Beyond honey production, bees play a crucial role in Omani agriculture, particularly in the pollination of crops. As natural pollinators, bees support the growth of essential food sources such as fruits, vegetables, and legumes, contributing to the country's food security.

The importance of bees extends to Oman's broader environmental conservation efforts. As the global bee population faces challenges due to climate change, habitat loss, and pesticides, Oman has taken proactive steps to safeguard its bee populations.

Oman's deep-rooted relationship with bees has recently attracted the attention of international players, most notably Rolls-Royce, which has established a new apiary in collaboration with Alila Jabal Akhdar. This project, which builds on the success of Rolls-Royce's Goodwood Apiary in the UK, aims to support local bee populations and highlight the importance of bees in sustaining ecosystems.

"This is an initiative that sits very close to the hearts of everyone at Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, and we are very proud to be a part of this project. With this project, we aim to contribute to Oman's bee population while creating awareness about the global challenges these vital pollinators face," Rachid Zamani, Managing Director of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Muscat, said.

THE SECOND APIARY AFTER THE UK The Rolls-Royce Apiary at Goodwood, which was established in 2017, has been a significant and cherished project. Home to around 250,000 English honeybees, the Apiary consists of six beautifully crafted traditional beehives, five of which are named after current Rolls-Royce models—'Phantom', 'Wraith', 'Ghost', 'Dawn' and 'Cullinan'—while the sixth, 'Spirit of Ecstasy', celebrates the marque's illustrious mascot.

These bees are vital to the Good-

wood ecosystem and contribute to the wider biodiversity of the South Downs National Park. They forage across a 42-acre site, rich in trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and sedum plants on the living roof, as well as the 12,000-acre Goodwood Estate. Their pollination supports local wildlife and produces the marque's hand-processed 'Rolls-Royce of Honey,' which is shared with guests.

"The success of the Goodwood Apiary has been instrumental in our decision to extend this initiative beyond the UK. It has shown us how impactful such a project can be, not just in terms of supporting local biodiversity, but also in raising awareness about the importance of these fascinating creatures globally. Oman presents a unique opportunity in this regard, with its distinctive flora and ecosys-

AL JABAL AL AKHDHAR AS HOME FOR THE APIARY

The planning began in 2023, with the first discussions around how best to bring this initiative to the region. The project came to life in January 2024, following about four months of preparation. During this time, the team meticulously crafted the beehives to meet company standards, shipped them to Oman, and sourced four original Omani bee colonies. Each step was carefully executed to ensure the project aligned with Rolls-Royce's commitment to quality and sustainability.

Situated at over 2,000 meters above sea level, the unique climate of the Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdhar provides excellent conditions for bee populations. The cooler temperatures and clean mountain air, combined with the

experience in running two existing bee farms as part of their sustainability efforts,

"The honey produced at the Rolls-Royce Apiary in Oman will not be sold. Instead, in true Rolls-Royce Motor Cars fashion, it will be gifted to Rolls-Royce Motor Cars clients as a token of appreciation," Zamani said.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH AND AWARENESS

Beyond producing honey, Rolls-Royce plans to use the apiary to raise public awareness about the vital role bees play in our ecosystem. An educational programme is in development to engage students, media and clients, offering interactive experiences such as guided tours and Q&A sessions. Guests will also have the opportunity to participate in beekeeping activities,



tem that can benefit from sustainable practices like beekeeping. Establishing an Apiary here allows us to contribute to local conservation efforts and highlight the global need for bee protection," shared Zamani.

In Oman, the Apiary comprises four beehives, which were also named after a current Rolls-Royce model. Made from cedar and painted white to withstand the country's high temperatures, each honey-producing hive is headed by an 'Omani Queen' bee.

"Our experience at Goodwood demonstrated that, with the right conditions and care, such projects can flourish and have a meaningful, positive impact. This has motivated us to replicate that success in Oman, creating another haven for bees and furthering our commitment to environmental sustainability," Zamani said.

abundance of diverse flora, create an ideal environment for bees to thrive and produce high-quality honey. The location also allows for easier and more efficient honey harvesting, ensuring that the bees can forage in an untouched, plastic-free environment, supporting both local biodiversity and sustainable agriculture.

Alila Jabal Akhdar was chosen as the location for the Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Muscat Apiary because of its deep commitment to sustainability and its natural alignment with the company's conservation goals. The hotel is renowned for its eco-friendly initiatives, from cultivating its organic produce to maintaining existing beehives on-site, which made it a natural fit for this initiative.

The daily operations of the apiary are expertly managed by the team at Alila Jabal Akhdar with their extensive

fostering a deeper understanding of bees' contributions to both the environment and agriculture.

By actively involving the community, Rolls-Royce aims to highlight the importance of these crucial pollinators and inspire broader conservation efforts. The initiative stands as a testament to the brand's evolving commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility.

With its expansion into Oman, Rolls-Royce is reinforcing its position as a leader in environmental stewardship within the luxury sector. The apiary is not just a symbol of the marque's elegance, but a demonstration of its dedication to the global need for bee protection and biodiversity. As the project grows, it will continue to serve as a model for how luxury brands can contribute meaningfully to the preservation of the planet.