

OMAN
عمان
DAILY

Observer



VOL. 45, NO. 21
PAGES 20 BAISAS 200

SUNRISE 06:33 AM
PRAYER TIMINGS
FAJR 05:14 AM
DHUHR 12:02 PM
ASR 03:04 PM
MAGHRIB 05:25 PM
ISHA 06:40 PM



20 ROHM LINES
UP RICH MIX
OF BALLET,
ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

HIS MAJESTY PARTICIPATES IN 46TH GCC SUMMIT

Call for unity and prosperity

HIS MAJESTY
RETURNS HOME
FROM BAHRAIN

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik returned home on Wednesday evening, arriving from the Kingdom of Bahrain, after participating, alongside the GCC leaders and their representatives, in the 46th GCC Summit and the GCC-Italian Summit, which concluded their proceedings in the Bahraini capital, Manama.

His Majesty the Sultan has sent a cable of thanks to the King of Bahrain. In his cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere appreciation to the King for the warm welcome and reception extended to His Majesty and his accompanying delegation during the summit.

His Majesty lauded the efforts of the Kingdom of Bahrain under the leadership of the King in enhancing the march of joint Gulf action and advancing it towards further partnership, mutual support and solidarity, fulfilling the goals and aspirations of the GCC peoples.

His Majesty was accompanied during the participation by a high-ranking official delegation. — ONA



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik attending the 46th GCC Summit at Sakhir Palace in Manama.

NEED TO REINFORCE DEEP- ROOTED TIES	UNIFIED VISION ON INTERNATIONAL MATTERS	RESPECTING SOVEREIGNTY OF GCC STATES	GCC SECURITY AND STABILITY ARE INDIVISIBLE	CALL FOR END TO HOSTILITIES IN GAZA STRIP	STRESS ON GCC COMMON MARKET
---	---	--	--	---	-----------------------------------

HIS MAJESTY SULTAN HAITHAM BIN TARIK participated in the 46th GCC Summit, which was held at Sakhir Palace in Manama, the Kingdom of Bahrain on Wednesday.

Upon His Majesty the Sultan's arrival at Sakhir Palace, King Hamad bin Issa al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain was at the forefront to receive His Majesty, welcoming him as an esteemed guest.

The communique of the 46th session of the GCC Supreme Council, held in Manama, affirmed the profound historical and fraternal bonds that unite the member states and their peoples, forged by a common heritage of religion, ancestry, language and destiny.

The communique emphasised the critical need to reinforce these deep-rooted ties and advance integration among member states. This commitment is driven by unwavering belief in the Council's noble objectives, a continuation of the visionary path set by the founding leaders, and a dedication to fulfilling the aspirations of GCC citizens for enhanced stability, security, progress and prosperity. The leaders resolved to intensify coordination and integration across all political, security, economic and social spheres, ultimately striving towards greater unity to serve shared fraternal interests and bolster security,

peace and prosperity regionally and globally.

JOINT ACTION

The leaders expressed deep satisfaction with the tangible achievements of joint Gulf action, realised under a cohesive defence and security framework, through prudent and balanced diplomacy, and via sustainable developmental and economic initiatives. These accomplishments reflect the Council's political cohesion and its unified vision, objectives, and stances on diverse regional and international matters.

The communique strongly affirmed the principle of respecting

the sovereignty of GCC states and all regional nations, coupled with a rejection of any interference in their internal affairs or the use or threat of force. It declared that the security and stability of the GCC is indivisible, and any violation of a member's sovereignty constitutes a direct threat to their collective security.

GAZA PEACE

Demonstrating a steadfast commitment to achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East through peaceful conflict resolution, the GCC leaders welcomed the outcomes of the Sharm el Sheikh Peace Summit.

They voiced support for all regional and international endeavours to ensure full adherence to the agreement ending hostilities in Gaza, to facilitate humanitarian aid delivery and reconstruction and to advance efforts leading to the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian state on the June 4, 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem (Al Quds Al Sharqiyah) as its capital. This aligns with the two-state solution, the Arab Peace Initiative, and pertinent international resolutions, thereby fulfilling the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and the region for a life of security and peace. **TURN TO P2**

HIS MAJESTY AND ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER REVIEW AREAS OF COOPERATION



MANAMA: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik met at his place of residence in Manama on Wednesday with Giorgia Meloni, Prime Minister of the Italian Republic. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 46th GCC Summit. The meeting reviewed areas of cooperation between Oman and Italy. It also explored means of boosting partnership in various spheres, in addition to exchanging views on a set of regional and international issues of common concern. It was attended by members of the official delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan and some officials at the Italian Government. — ONA

Oman facilitates return
of Eternity C crew

As part of its humanitarian efforts related to the situation of the crew of the ship Eternity C in Yemen, the Sultanate of Oman managed to secure their return.

The crew comprises 11 Filipino and Indian nationals who were transported from Sanaa to Muscat on board a Royal Air Force of Oman plane, prior to their return to their countries.

Hans Leo Cacdac, the Philippine Minister of Labour, expressed his government's thanks and appreciation for the tireless efforts of the government of the Sultanate of Oman, led by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, which culminated in the release of the crew members of the ship.

Ambassador Godavarti Venkata Srinivas, Ambassador of the Republic of India to the Sultanate of Oman, expressed his country's gratitude for the tireless efforts of the Sultanate of Oman that resulted in the release of the Indian citizen after coordination with various parties. — ONA



GCC SUMMIT CALLS FOR



HIS Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik participated in the 46th GCC Summit, which was held at Sakhr Palace in Manama, the Kingdom of Bahrain, on Wednesday.

Upon His Majesty the Sultan's arrival at Sakhr Palace, King Hamad bin Issa al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain was at the forefront to receive His Majesty, welcoming him as an esteemed guest.

At the outset of the summit, verses from the Holy Quran were recited. Then, King Hamad bin Issa al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain delivered the opening speech, in which he affirmed the continuation of the distinguished journey of joint Gulf action, a journey that derives its strength from the bonds of brotherhood and kinship, and is armed with unity of purpose and destiny.

He added that upon reflecting on the journey of this towering Gulf edifice, initiated by the founding fathers with all sincerity and love, we become certain of the correctness of its approaches towards the necessities of integration and unity, in line with its strategic weight. It demonstrates its position as an active and influential force in regional and international politics, he said.

He clarified that achieving these gains would not have been possible without the shared vision and unified policies that

Oman's role in US-Ansar Allah ceasefire hailed

MANAMA: The GCC Supreme Council, in the communique of its 46th session held in Manama on Wednesday, commended the Sultanate of Oman's pivotal announcement on May 6 of securing a ceasefire between the United States of America and Ansar Allah. The GCC Council specifically hailed Oman's instrumental diplomatic efforts, undertaken to safeguard international maritime navigation and trade, and its successful role in securing

the release of detained crew members from the vessel Galaxy. The GCC Council underscored the critical imperative of maintaining maritime security and the safety of vital sea lanes. It called for a firm response to any activities that threaten regional and global stability, including attacks on commercial shipping and the disruption of international maritime routes and commerce. The communique reaffirmed the necessity of upholding the right to freedom

of navigation in accordance with international law, particularly the provisions of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The GCC Supreme Council hailed the Sultanate of Oman for its successful hosting of the 8th Indian Ocean Conference in Muscat on February 16-17, 2025. The event, held under the theme "Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership", was recognised as a significant contribution to fostering regional cooperation. — **ONA**

made it a priority to establish Gulf security, preserve national sovereignty, respect the principles of good neighbourliness, and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. He underlined the continuation of addressing regional issues, foremost among them the Palestinian cause, based on dialogue and political and diplomatic options that enhance stability and open wider horizons for the region's security and its sustainable development. Shaikh Mishal Al Ahmed Al Jaber al Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, said, "The GCC, through the awareness

and solidarity of its peoples, overcomes complex regional and international circumstances and significant challenges, and achieves stability through collective security and a common destiny. It confirms to generations that unity and collaborative efforts are two paths to overcoming challenges towards peace." He added that the GCC possesses active political and economic strength in the regional and international arenas.

On his turn, Jassim Mohammed al Budaïwi, GCC Secretary-General, delivered a speech at the 46th summit in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

He stated: "This year witnessed two painful incidents affecting the State of Qatar, which demonstrated to the entire world that the Gulf destiny is one, Gulf security is one. Two incidents that proved what unites our states is not only proximity, but rather a shared decision, home and protection. And that no matter how severe the crisis, it will neither weaken our resolve nor loosen the ties of our unity." He added that the stances of the GCC states towards the Palestinian cause will remain as steadfast and firm as values, unwavering and unchanging.

The GCC states, he said, continue

to emphasise the centrality of this issue, the necessity of ending the occupation, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

During the summit, a commemorative photograph was taken, gathering the GCC leaders and their representatives.

Meanwhile, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik participated in the GCC-Italian Summit in Manama, in the presence of the GCC leaders and their representatives, as well as Giorgia Meloni, Prime Minister of the Italian Republic.

In her speech, the Italian Prime Minister confirmed that relations between the GCC states and European countries are going through an advanced phase of constructive cooperation.

During the summit, His Majesty the Sultan was accompanied by HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance, DDr Hamed bin Said al Aufi, Head of Private Office of His Majesty the Sultan, and Sayyid Faisal bin Harib al Busaidi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Bahrain. — **ONA**

HM, ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER REVIEW TIES

MANAMA: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik met at his place of residence in Manama on Wednesday with Giorgia Meloni, Prime Minister of the Italian Republic.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 46th GCC Summit. The meeting reviewed areas of cooperation between Oman and Italy. It also explored means of boosting partnership in various spheres, in addition to exchanging views on a set of regional and international issues of common concern.

It was attended by members of the official delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan and some officials at the Italian Government.

— **ONA**



UNITY AND PROSPERITY

FROM PAGE 1

COMMON MARKET

The communique outlined a forward-looking agenda for economic advancement. The leaders stressed the importance of finalising the GCC Common Market and Customs Union, boosting trade and tourism, and channelling investment into strategic sectors — especially infrastructure, transport, energy, communications, water and food security. Accelerating digital infrastructure integration, fostering e-commerce, and developing joint digital payment and cloud service systems were highlighted as key to achieving full economic citizenship and sustainable, inclusive development.

The leaders pledged to persist with economic diversification, championing an innovation-driven and sustainable economy to secure lasting prosperity. They underscored the necessity of a unified Gulf strategy to enhance cooperation in technology, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. This aims to promote knowledge integration, share digital transformation expertise, combat cybercrime, ensure a secure digital environment, and empower youth and women in the development process. The vital role of think tanks in future foresight and policy formulation was also acknowledged.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Renewing their environmental commitment, the GCC leaders pledged to address climate change, cut carbon emissions, promote clean energy and preserve natural resources, in harmony with Gulf and global Net-Zero and

sustainable development goals.

The communique called for stronger international collaboration to safeguard regional security, deepen partnerships with allies and international bodies, and combat extremism, terrorism, and transnational crime. Support was reaffirmed for the Combined Maritime Forces in Bahrain to protect energy security and maritime trade. The GCC leaders also advocated for a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction and for curbing arms races to enhance regional stability.

The GCC leaders extended full support to the Kingdom of Bahrain in its upcoming role representing the Arab Group as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, expressing confidence in its ability to advance Gulf and Arab interests and its role as a proactive partner for international peace and dialogue.

Appreciation was also extended to Giorgia Meloni, Prime Minister of Italy, for her participation in summit discussions. Both sides agreed to develop a joint action plan to elevate their historical friendship to a comprehensive strategic partnership, reflecting the GCC's openness to building substantive alliances.

In closing, Their Majesties and Highnesses, the GCC leaders, committed to developing institutional frameworks that broaden fraternal solidarity and strategic integration.

This is to ensure the enduring security and prosperity of their nations and peoples within a stable region and to contribute to a more just and prosperous world, reaffirming their unwavering dedication to this shared future. — **ONA**



KING OF BAHRAIN HOSTS LUNCHEON



MANAMA: King Hamad bin Issa al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain hosted an official luncheon at Sakhr Palace in honour of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the GCC leaders and their representatives, as well as the Prime Minister of Italy. The luncheon was hosted on the occasion of the 46th GCC Summit held in Manama. After the luncheon, the King of Bahrain bade farewell to His Majesty the Sultan, the GCC leaders and their representatives, expressing his profound thanks and appreciation for their gracious participation in the summit's proceedings. — **ONA**



Bonds of fraternity among GCC leaders



HIS Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq arrived in the Kingdom of Bahrain to participate in the 46th GCC Summit.

Upon his arrival at Sakhir Air Base, His Majesty and the accompanying delegation were welcomed by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

His Majesty the Sultan then passed between two rows of the Royal Bahraini Guard of Honour. After that, His Majesty shook hands with members of the welcoming party, who were Jassim bin Mohammed al Bedaiwi, GCC Secretary-General; Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid al Zayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Nawaf bin Mohammed al Maawda, Minister of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments; Ramzan bin Abdullah al Nuaimi, Minister of Information; Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali

al Khalifa, Governor of the Southern Governorate; Sayyid Faisal bin Harib al Busaidy, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Bahrain; Dr Juma bin Ahmed al Kaabi, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the Sultanate of Oman and a number of military leaders.

On his turn, His Royal Highness shook hands with the members of the delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan.

Thereafter, His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa escorted His Majesty the Sultan to the reception hall, where His Royal Highness renewed his warm welcome to His Majesty in his second home. For his part, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere thanks to His Royal Highness for the warm welcome and reception.

Following this, His Majesty the Sultan, accompanied by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and

Prime Minister, proceeded to the Sakhir Palace, the place of residence of His Majesty.

Earlier in the morning, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq left heading to the Kingdom of Bahrain to participate in the GCC Summit. This participation comes in response to an invitation received by His Majesty the Sultan from the King of the Kingdom of Bahrain. It aims to strengthen the bonds of fraternity and partnership among the GCC Leaders.

His Majesty was seen off at the Royal Airport by HH Sayyid Asaad bin Tariq al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan, HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, Shaikh Abdulmalik bin Abdullah al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council, Khalid bin Hilal al Maawali,

Chairman of Majlis Ash'shura, Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidy, Minister of Interior, Sayyid Mohammed bin Sultan al Busaidy, Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council, Nasr bin Hamoud al Kindi, Secretary-General of the Royal Court Affairs, Dr Madeeha bint Ahmed al Shaibaniyah, Minister of Education, Shaikh Al Fadhl bin Mohammed al Harthy, Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers, Lt Gen Hasan bin Mohsin al Shraiqi, Inspector General of Police and Customs, Lt Gen Said bin Ali al Hilali, Head of the Internal Security Service, Dr Mohammed bin Said al Maamari, Minister of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Vice Admiral Abdullah bin Khamis al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan's Armed Forces, Maj Gen Matar bin Salim al Balushi, Commander of the Royal Army of Oman, Air Vice Marshal Khamis bin Hammad al Ghafri, Commander of the Royal Air Force of Oman, Rear

Admiral Saif bin Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman and Maj Gen Musallam bin Mohammed Jaaboub, Commander of the Sultan's Special Force.

His Majesty the Sultan is accompanied during the visit by a high-ranking official delegation comprising HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tariq al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal al Busaidy, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance, Dr Hamed bin Said al Aafi, Head of Private Office of His Majesty the Sultan and Sayyid Faisal bin Harib al Busaidy, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Bahrain. May the Almighty Allah protect His Majesty in his journeys and grant him success! — **ONA**



Multilateral efforts take GCC summit to greater levels

KABEER YOUSUF
MUSCAT, DEC 3

The coordinated efforts of the GCC countries to strengthen brotherly bonds among member countries and beyond were reflected in the 46th session of the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

According to the General Secretariat of the GCC coordination office in Muscat, some key areas of GCC collaboration include

Gulf Specialised Portal for Air Navigation, the initiative, led by the Air Navigation Committee of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, that aims to provide a diverse, integrated, and easily accessible information and training platform for specialists in air navigation. The goal is to share best practices and the latest developments regionally and globally to improve air navigation services and enhance human competencies.

This platform is a joint effort between member states of the Council in coordination with the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council states.

Also, water resources conservation system where all member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council follow a water resources conservation system to ensure sustainable use and preservation of water resources in the region. This is in addition to

rehabilitation of qualified retired military personnel. The office also focuses on utilising experienced and qualified retired military or civilian personnel in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. The initiative aims to show that retirement is not the end, but rather a new beginning of effort, giving, belonging, and loyalty. Retired military or civilians play a crucial role in strengthening armed forces in the GCC countries, especially those willing to work and

adhere to systems and rules. This initiative is particularly beneficial for individuals with technical specialisations needed by military institutions in the GCC countries.

In addition, the office provides investigations in regional economic activities, products, and services, customs inquiries, intellectual property training, and high-level summits to explore more areas of cooperation and solidify existing relations.

SHORT TAKES



A ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najjar, Minister of Social Development. — ONA

MoE FETES WINNERS OF HOLY QURAN COMPETITION

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Education (MoE) on Wednesday felicitated 73 male and female students who won the 2024-2025 Holy Quran Competition.

A ceremony to this effect was held in Muscat under the auspices of Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najjar, Minister of Social Development.

The competition included three main categories: The “General Memorisation Contest”, the “Special Memorisation Contest” and the “Good Intonation (Tajweed) Contest”.

The “General Memorisation Contest” was dedicated to students in the early education stage (basic education and post-basic education) in government and private schools.

The “Special Memorisation Contest” was dedicated to students with disabilities, including those from private schools and schools that implement the system of auditory and intellectual integration. It targeted students with visual impairments, intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder.

The “Good Intonation (Tajweed) Contest” was dedicated to students who master the recitation of the Holy Quran, both in terms of vocal capacities and application of correct pronunciation rules and intonation. — ONA

TRA REVIEWS TELECOM SERVICES IN MUSCAT

MUSCAT: The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) recently reviewed its projects in Muscat Governorate and discussed challenges in their implementation.

The visit included a meeting with Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al Busaidy, Governor of Muscat, to review the status of telecommunications services and the availability of mobile network in villages and areas. Schools in Muscat now have 100 per cent high-speed Internet coverage, and residential units have exceeded 98 per cent coverage with 5G and 84 per cent with fibre optics.

The number of 5G stations also increased to 2,076 in 2025, compared to 131 in 2020, while the number of 4G stations reached 5,512, up from 3,073 during the same period. In 2025, the telecommunications sector implemented a range of projects, including the construction of 50 new stations, the implementation of 5 fibre optic projects and the upgrade of 279 stations to the 5G network.

WORLD CHILDREN’S DAY MARKED WITH DEDICATED INITIATIVE

MUSCAT: Oman Refreshment Company launched an initiative in celebration of World Children’s Day, observed annually on November 20 under the supervision of Unicef.

The initiative focuses on creating a safe, engaging and supportive environment for children at Sohar Hospital by preparing four dedicated spaces: a waiting area, an examination room, a pre-admission area and an activity room.

Organised in partnership with the Health Endowment Foundation ‘Athar’, the initiative aims to reach between 80 and 100 children. Sohar Hospital was selected for its significance as one of Oman’s largest government hospitals, providing specialised medical services across four governorates, Al



The initiative focuses on creating a safe, engaging and supportive environment for children.

Batinah North, Al Batinah South, Al Buraimi and Al Dhahirah. The hospital’s location in a densely populated area further underscores the importance and impact of this effort. Sulaiman al Salmi, Director

of People, Culture and Corporate Services at Oman REFCO, said: “Oman Refreshment Company is proud to be among the national companies marking World Children’s Day this year in alignment with Unicef’s goals. This initiative reflects our belief in the vital human and developmental role we play as a responsible Omani company.”

Al Salmi also expressed the company’s appreciation for its collaboration with Athar and Sohar Hospital, reaffirming Oman REFCO’s ongoing commitment to community initiatives that enhance the well-being of children and society at large, in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 and the UN Sustainable Development

Goals 2030.

Highlighting the value of such efforts, Hilal al Sarimi, CEO of the Health Endowment Foundation ‘Athar’, praised the initiative for its contribution to improving the healthcare environment for children. He stressed the importance of community partnerships that elevate the quality of services provided across Oman’s health institutions, expressing hope for further collaborations with private-sector companies in similar impactful initiatives.

The signing ceremony was attended by Ahmed al Khonji, Board Member at Athar; Mousa al Raisi, Board Member at Oman REFCO; and Youssef Ezzikhe, CEO of Oman REFCO.

Omani rescue team ready for UN classification status

IDRIS AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, DEC 3

THE Omani Search and Rescue Team, Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority, on Wednesday held a press conference during which it affirmed its readiness to upgrade its status to the ‘Heavy Level Classification’ granted by the United Nations’ International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) — the highest global classification of its kind.

Held under the auspices of Mohammed bin Said al Balushi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Information, the panel also included official representatives from the Authority’s strategic partner, the Singapore Civil Defence Force Academy (SCDF), namely the Assistant Commissioner of the Singapore National Civil Defence Forces and an official representative from Singapore’s National Defence Directorate. The conference highlighted the Authority’s commitment to strengthening national disaster-response capabilities, reinforced by the unveiling of a new fleet of modern hazardous materials response vehicles.

Brigadier Eng Ali bin Saif al Muqbali, Deputy Chairman of the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority, said that the Omani Search and Rescue Team recently embarked on an integrated preparedness plan that comprised advanced training programmes held in partnership with Singapore Civil Defence Academy.



The event was held under the auspices of Mohammed bin Said al Balushi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Information.

He added that the programmes include the enhancement of equipment and supplies in accordance with the requirements of the envisaged “Heavy Level Classification” and the finalisation of operational and organisational procedures in accordance with the standards set by the INSARAG.

Al Muqbali pointed out that the team will undergo a set of administrative, technical and field tests that focus on the application of readiness and response skills, incident site management and “Search Under Rubble” operations.

The programmes will be carried out under the supervision of international assessors from 12 countries selected by the United Nations to review the Omani team’s performance and evaluate its compliance with international standards, he added.

He explained that the outcome of the assessment is scheduled to be announced

on December 10, 2025 in the presence of dignitaries, senior leaders, officers from military and security services and invitees from GCC states.

Al Muqbali expressed his enthusiasm to see the Omani team accomplish the “Heavy Classification” target and enhance the Sultanate of Oman’s readiness to join the system of international humanitarian response. The Omani Search and Rescue Team was established to serve as a specialised force capable of dealing with complex incidents within the Sultanate of Oman. During its professional march, the team carried out a number of local operations and participated in international missions, including response to earthquakes in Nepal and Türkiye, which all earned the team advanced experience in the fields of search and rescue.

Col Eng Mohammed bin Hamood al Mahmoudi, Head of the Search and Rescue Team and Assistant Director-

General for Operations, elaborated on the evaluation process, explaining that the team will undergo a sequence of administrative, technical and field tests supervised by international evaluators from 12 countries appointed by the United Nations. These assessments will examine readiness, response methods, incident-site management and under-rubble search operations. He also highlighted several technological and operational enhancements introduced to strengthen performance, including the integration of drone systems for wide-area scanning, new specialised vehicles for searching and rescue work, the deployment of trained search dogs, the incorporation of advanced cameras and sensing devices for locating trapped individuals, modernised medical equipment and upgraded transport systems designed to support the team in large-scale operations.

SALE OF VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT

Leading Construction Company in Oman intends to dispose of their used Vehicles, Equipment and Crusher/Asphalt Plant in “as is where is” condition. The items identified are presently located at their Barka Khazaen Yard and will be offered for inspection to the public on 08/12/2025, 09/12/2025 & 10/12/2025 between 08.00am to 12.00pm and 03.00pm to 05.00pm.

Last date for submission of a closed tender is 10/12/2025 at 05.00pm at their Barka Khazaen Office.

Interested parties may contact
Tel: (+968) 26983777 / 26983767, Mob: (+968) 91354151

Awareness walk for World AIDS Day today

Under the auspices of Ahmed bin Mohammed al Humaidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality, the launch of the Awareness Walk and Festival for World AIDS Day 2025 will take place on Thursday.

The event is organised by Positive Vision Association in partnership with the Ministry of Health to promote awareness and a culture of inclusion.

Ahmed bin Mohammed al Humaidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality, stated, “Muscat Municipality is committed to supporting initiatives that enhance community well-being and quality of life.



The Awareness Walk and Community Engagement Festivities for World AIDS Day

2025 reflect the importance of public spaces as platforms for awareness and unity. We hope this event strengthens a culture of respect, acceptance and inclusion, sending a clear message that our society has space for everyone without stigma or discrimination.”

This year’s event is made possible through the generous contribution of Al Jisr Foundation, the main sponsor, whose support has been central to expanding the Association’s outreach and community impact.

Positive Vision Association also extends its appreciation

to the supporting sponsors, Sohar International Bank, Petroleum Development Oman, Mohammed Al Barwani Foundation and Omantel.

The event will bring together the general public, healthcare professionals, youth volunteers, and families for a day of awareness, reflection, and solidarity.

The event aims to create a safe and welcoming space where visitors can access trustworthy information, take part in health education sessions, and join community activities designed to break the silence and stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS.

OMAN

SHORT TAKES



Relevant government entities made considerable effort in preparing the draft.

STATE COUNCIL APPROVES REPORTS ON 2026 BUDGET

MUSCAT: The State Council approved the reports of the Expanded Economic and Financial Committee regarding the Eleventh Five-Year Development Plan (2026-2030) and the State’s General Budget for the Fiscal Year 2026.

This took place at the second meeting of the third regular session of the eighth term of the State Council, held under the chairmanship of Shaikh Abdulmalik bin Abdullah al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council, on Wednesday.

In his opening remarks, the chairman of the State Council said: “This meeting will discuss the draft Eleventh Five-Year Development Plan and the State’s General Budget for the Fiscal Year 2026, both of which were referred by the Council of Ministers, along with the report of the enhanced Economic and Financial Committee.” Al Khalili explained that the relevant government entities made considerable effort in preparing the draft Eleventh Five-Year Development Plan and the State’s General Budget for the Fiscal Year 2026.

The meeting discussed the opinion of the Economic and Financial Committee regarding the Eleventh Five-Year Development Plan (2026-2030). Dr Dhafer bin Awadh al Shanfari, Chairman of the Economic and Financial Committee, explained in the committee’s statement that the Eleventh Five-Year Development Plan (2026-2030) coincides with the draft the State’s General Budget for the Fiscal Year 2026 and the launch of the second phase of the Oman 2040 vision.

UTAS STUDENTS SHINE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST



The initiative aims to develop students' public speaking and presentation skills.

AL MUSANNAH: As part of the efforts by the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Al Musannah to enhance students’ effective communication skills, the Student Activities Society at the Preparatory Studies Centre organised the English Public Speaking Competition (UTAS-Talks) – Season Three on Monday.

The competition targets students enrolled in the General Foundation Programme, specifically those studying General English (Levels 2 and 3) across all UTAS branches. A total of forty-one students registered for the event, and sixteen contestants were selected from nine different branches to compete for the top positions.

This initiative aims to develop students’ public speaking and presentation skills, boost their self-confidence, and enhance their ability to use English effectively and expressively.

The participants’ speeches covered a wide range of themes, including innovation and technology, personal development and education, society and culture, environment and sustainability, and student life beyond the classroom. This thematic variety reflected the students’ awareness and engagement with contemporary global and social issues.

The judging panel comprised five English language lecturers from the Preparatory Studies Centres of various UTAS branches.

Over 2 million people expected to visit Muscat Nights

KABEER YOUSUF
MUSCAT, DEC 3

More than 2 million people are expected to visit Muscat Nights 2026, a celebration of culture, heritage, entertainment activities, gastronomic delights and fun, which will be held from January 1 to 31. The Muscat Municipality, the key organiser of the month-long event, anticipates attracting families from across the Sultanate of Oman.

This year, in addition to an increased number of venues and activities, various commercial outlets will announce special offers



Muscat Nights will be held from January 1 to 31.

and discounts during the Muscat Nights period, making it more attractive than ever.

Dr Shawqi bin Abdulrahman al Zadjali, Head of Marketing and

Promotions at Muscat Nights, stated, “Besides the newer attractions, we are in touch with airlines that connect Muscat with the rest of the world, and there are plans to attract more

visitors through Oman Air, SalamAir and China Eastern Airlines, which began direct flights between Muscat and Beijing.” Muscat Municipality has been preparing to host the Muscat Nights 2026 edition, which will attract citizens and expatriates alike to various venues. Invitations for organising entertainment and other activities were sent out much earlier. The 2026 edition will include cultural performances, traditional markets, food and flower festivals, and a variety of family-friendly entertainment such as electric games, shows and

exhibitions.

Bids were invited for the design, implementation, and management of various events, the design and construction of Oman sweets units, the implementation and management of inflatable games at Al Amerat Public Park, and the design and construction of Horror City at Al Naseem and Al Amerat Public Parks. Additionally, the civic body floated a bid seeking to contract with a company specialising in promotion and marketing to implement integrated promotional programmes for Muscat Nights 2026.

Catering for persons with disabilities on right track

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, DEC 3

THE Sultanate of Oman joins the world in celebrating the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2025, observed annually on December 3, under the theme ‘Building Inclusive Societies for Persons with Disabilities to Promote Social Progress’. This day is a global occasion aimed at promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society, raising awareness of their issues and the challenges they face, and emphasising the importance of their active participation in society.

The disability sector in the Sultanate of Oman has received the generous patronage of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. Last September, His Majesty issued directives to establish a new sector, at the level of under-secretary, within the Ministry of Social Development. This sector is responsible for monitoring and developing services provided to persons with disabilities, addressing challenges, ensuring their effective integration into society and facilitating their access to education at all levels.

The Ministry of Social Development places great importance on supporting and empowering people with disabilities. This year saw the launch of four protected, productive workshops in the wilayats



The disability sector in the Sultanate of Oman has received the generous patronage of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

of Nizwa, Al Mudhaibi, Al Rustaq and Salalah, targeting 236 beneficiaries with mild to moderate disabilities affiliated with Al Wafa Centres. The aim is to provide them with vocational training, economic empowerment, and enhanced integration into society and the labour market.

By the end of the first half of 2025, approximately 4,020 beneficiaries were enrolled in 41 government centres

across the Sultanate of Oman, including private and non-profit organisations. The number of beneficiaries enrolled in private rehabilitation centres reached 4,478, distributed across 72 private centres, while 662 beneficiaries were enrolled in 11 community-based rehabilitation centres. All of these centres provide care and rehabilitation services for people with disabilities and contribute to the ministry’s efforts to empower and integrate them into society. The number of beneficiaries of assistive devices and support services during the first half of 2025 reached approximately 4,282, while the number of individuals issued disability cards during the same period reached 2,633, bringing the total number of cardholders to 68,071. This reflects the expansion of services and the development of the support system.

At the international level, the National Autism Centre achieved a significant milestone by joining the QABA (Qualifying Association for Applied Behaviour Analysis) as the first full member in the Arab region within the network. It also received renewed accreditation as an “Autism Centre Accredited” from the International Board on Continuing Education Standards and Accreditation (IBCCES) in the United States. This reflects the Sultanate of Oman’s commitment to enhancing the quality of services provided to individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

Exhibition on Russia-ME cultural ties opens

MOHAMED AL BATTASHI
MUSCAT, DEC 3

The National Museum opened the exhibition “Russia and the Middle East: International Relations and Cultural Influences” on Wednesday under the auspices of HH Sayyidah Dr Mona bint Fahd al Said, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for International Cooperation at SQU and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum. The event marks a step in cultural cooperation and celebrates the longstanding connections between Russia and Oman.

The exhibition presents more than eighty remarkable objects from the Moscow Kremlin Museums, many of which are being shown outside Russia for the first time. The pieces include ceremonial weapons, decorative armour, horse adornments, jewellery and artworks that reflect how Eastern traditions influenced the appearance and craftsmanship of the Russian



HH Sayyidah Dr Mona bint Fahd al Said views artefacts at the expo.

royal court during the 16th and 17th centuries. Visitors can also see historical items linked to the use of frankincense, which for centuries was imported to Russia from Oman. The display will remain open to the public until April 3, 2026.

During the ceremony, Oleg Vladimirovich Levin, Ambassador of Russia to Oman, praised the event

as an important moment in cultural exchange. He described the exhibition as “a meaningful step that highlights the shared interest of both sides in preserving heritage and encouraging cultural understanding,” adding that culture serves as a lasting bridge that brings people closer.

Dr Elena Gagarina, Director-General of the Moscow Kremlin

Museums, expressed her appreciation for the continued cooperation between the two institutions. She explained that the two museums have enjoyed “very good relations for a number of years,” leading to an agreement to exchange exhibitions.

She added that the exhibition held in Moscow last year, The Splendour of Silver: Treasures from the Omani Court, was a great success with more than thirty thousand visitors. Speaking about the current exhibition, she noted that many of the objects “are being shown outside the Russian Federation for the first time,” and expressed her hope that it will leave visitors with “an unforgettable impression” and help expand cultural dialogue between the two countries.

From the attendees, Dr Hamed bin Hashim al Dhahab, Chairman of the Oman-Russia Business Council, shared reflections on the value of the exhibition.

SHORT TAKES



China's FM Wang Yi (2nd R) receives France's President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron upon their arrival, in Beijing. — AFP

MACRON IN CHINA
WITH UKRAINE ON
THE AGENDA

French President Emmanuel Macron touched down on Wednesday in China, where he is expected to put pressure on his counterpart Xi Jinping to help secure a ceasefire in Ukraine and discuss trade relations. Macron, on a fourth state visit to China since taking office in 2017, landed in Beijing at around 5:10 pm.

“We are counting on China, like us a permanent member of the Security Council... to lean on Russia, so that Russia and, in particular, Vladimir Putin can finally agree to a ceasefire,” French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said on Monday. “China can play a crucial role in guiding Vladimir Putin’s Russia to make the right decision,” Barrot told French radio.

The French presidency said Macron will tell Xi that China must “refrain from providing any means, by any means, to Russia to continue the war”. Macron’s three-day visit follows a trip to Paris this week by Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky, who urged Europe to stand by Kyiv as US President Donald Trump pushes a plan to end the war. — AFP

KING CHARLES
WELCOMES GERMAN
PRESIDENT STEINMEIER



Britain's King Charles receives German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, in Windsor. — Reuters

Britain’s King Charles welcomed German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the start of his three-day state visit to Britain, the latest show of closer relations between the European allies following Brexit. The trip is the first state visit by a German President for 27 years and comes two years after Charles went to Germany for what was his first official overseas trip after he became king in September 2023. The British monarch and his wife Queen Camilla greeted the president and his wife Elke Bűdenbender in Windsor before they took part in a carriage procession to Windsor Castle along with the king’s son Prince William and his wife Kate.

On Thursday, the German president and his wife will lay flowers at the tomb of Charles’ mother, the late Queen Elizabeth, and will be shown the State Sleigh, which was designed by Queen Victoria’s German husband, Prince Albert. During his visit, Steinmeier will also address British lawmakers in parliament, and meet German soccer players playing their trade for Premier League clubs in Britain. — Reuters

IMMIGRATION PAUSE

US halts green card for 19 nations



The US government has halted immigration applications for citizens from 19 nations including Afghanistan, Yemen and Haiti, deepening a sweeping crackdown on migration. Authorities paused green card and citizenship processing for people from countries already subject to travel restrictions announced in June by President Donald Trump. Other affected nations include Venezuela, Sudan and Somalia. — AFP

ECOSYSTEMS PROTECTION

Norway postpones deep-sea mining



Norway on Wednesday postponed the first licences to permit deep-sea mining in its Arctic waters for four years, a delay environmentalists hope signals the “nail in the coffin” of the plans. The government agreed “not to launch the first tenders for deep-sea mining during the current legislative term”, according to a deal that received the support of two key parties. Norway’s seabed is believed to contain millions of tonnes of copper and zinc. — AFP

ONGOING OPERATIONS

Malaysia search for MH370 to resume



The search for missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 will resume at the end of December, more than a decade after the plane disappeared. Transport Minister Anthony Loke said that the decision to continue the efforts now is based “on the season, which is favourable for the search (to resume).” The Boeing 777 carrying 239 people vanished from radar screens on March 8, 2014, while en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing. — AFP

SOUTH KOREA’S
OUSTED
LEADER URGES
RALLIES A
YEAR AFTER
MARTIAL LAW

SEOUL: South Korea’s ousted leader Yoon Suk Yeol issued a call from prison on Wednesday urging his supporters to rally for “freedom” and defending his decision to declare martial law a year ago. Thousands of people joined a rally on Wednesday near the National Assembly in Seoul, where one year ago lawmakers defied soldiers to vote down the martial law bid within hours of the announcement. A march by supporters of the former leader drew several hundreds.

In a statement sent by his lawyers, Yoon called on followers to “rise again in defence of the Republic of Korea’s freedom”. “This country belongs to you, the sovereign people,” he said. He also said his decision last year to declare martial law had been justified in the fight against “pro-China, pro-North Korea, and traitorous activities”. Yoon is on trial for insurrection and other offences linked to his martial law declaration, and could face the death penalty if found

guilty. Lee, who was swept into office six months after the disastrous martial law bid, issued his own statement to the country to mark the anniversary. He said South Korea had “overcome an unprecedented crisis of democracy in world history through peaceful protest”. Speaking to foreign media, he touted the benefits of “K-democracy” in removing Yoon from office — but admitted the country remained deeply divided. “National unity is my priority,” he said. — AFP

Tens of thousands of Gazans
need medical evacuation

A DOCTORS

Without Borders official has pleaded for countries to open their doors to tens of thousands of Gazans in dire need of medical evacuation, warning that hundreds have already died waiting. “The need is really huge,” said Hani Isleem, who coordinates medical evacuations from Gaza for the charity, known by its French acronym MSF. The numbers taken in by countries so far remains “just a drop in the ocean”, Isleem said in an interview. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 8,000 patients have been evacuated out of Gaza since the war erupted following attack inside Israel on October 7, 2023. It says more than 16,500 patients still need treatment outside of the Palestinian territory.

Speaking at the MSF headquarters in Geneva after accompanying seriously ill and injured Gaza children to Switzerland for treatment, Isleem said that number was based only on patients registered for medical evacuation and the true figure was higher. “Our estimate is that it is three to four times that number,” he said. To date, over 30 countries have taken patients, but only a handful, including Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, have accepted large numbers. In Europe, Italy has taken over 200 patients, compared to France, which by the end of October had taken 27, and Germany none.

Switzerland in November took in 20 Gaza children who arrived in two batches. The 13 children aged two



Nine-years-old Rateb Mahmoud Qaliq uses his crutches rather than his ill fitting prosthetic leg, in Deir al-Balah, Gaza. — AFP

The World Health Organization estimates that more than 8,000 patients have been evacuated out of Gaza since the war erupted. some 1,500 patients left each month on average, but after Israel in May 2024 closed the Rafah crossing, the monthly average has dropped to around 70

months to 16 years whom Isleem accompanied last week included four babies with severe congenital heart disease, as well as cancer patients and children requiring complex orthopaedic surgery. Without the evacuation, some of those children would not have made it, he said, pointing out that the babies basically went straight to surgery after their arrival in Switzerland to avoid “irreversible damage”. Isleem lamented that as conditions in Gaza become more desperate, the pace of medical evacuations has slowed.

Initially, some 1,500 patients left each month on average, but after Israel in May 2024 closed the Rafah crossing into Egypt, the monthly average has dropped to around 70. A US-brokered ceasefire that came into effect on October 10 has not

seemed to speed up the process. Nor, surprisingly, has a dramatic drop in Israeli evacuation refusals. Isleem pointed out that the Israeli authorities’ denial rate had plunged from an average of around 90 per cent to just five per cent in recent months, adding that this was still too high. They should not “block any patients from leaving Gaza to access treatment”, he said.

Despite these shifts, there has been no big uptick in evacuations, with 148 carried out in October and 71 last month, with only around 30 expected to take place in December, Isleem said. The problem, he said, was the long and often “politicised” process for nations to accept Gaza’s medical evacuees. “Countries are taking a long time to decide or allocate the budget for these patients. — AFP



DELHI RECORDS OVER 200,000 RESPIRATORY ILLNESS CASES

New Delhi recorded more than 200,000 cases of acute respiratory illnesses at six state-run hospitals between 2022 and 2024, government numbers showed, highlighting the adverse effects of toxic air on health. Delhi, with its sprawling metropolitan region of 30 million residents, is regularly ranked among the world’s most polluted capitals.

India’s health ministry told parliament that air pollution was one of the triggering factors for respiratory ailments. “Analysis suggests that increase in pollution levels was associated with increase in number of patients attending emergency rooms,” junior health minister Prataprao Jadhav said in a written reply. More than 30,000 people with respiratory illnesses had to be hospitalised in the three years. A study in The Lancet Planetary Health last year estimated that 3.8 million deaths in India between 2009 and 2019 were linked to air pollution. — AFP

OPINION

When partnership means different things



RUMAITHA AL BUSAIDI

[LinkedIn](#)

@rumaithaalbusaidi

The writer is environmental strategist and advocate for sustainable development

“If Hydrogen production and localisation stay in producer countries, Europeans lose jobs. And unemployment leads to fascism.”

The European panellist’s words hung in the air during our discussion at Oman’s Green Hydrogen Summit, cutting through the usual diplomatic niceties that characterise these gatherings. It was the kind of honest statement rarely voiced in polished conference halls, where we typically speak of win-win partnerships and mutual prosperity without interrogating what those phrases actually mean.

My response was immediate: “We learned our mistakes from oil and gas. We don’t want opportunities to be missed. Local jobs matter more.”

This brief exchange revealed the essential tension underneath the entire energy transition, one that goes far beyond technical specifications or shipping logistics.

The panellist’s concern wasn’t unfounded. Across Europe, far-right movements are gaining ground on the back of economic anxiety and hollowed-out manufacturing sectors, and the green transition looks to many Europeans like another threat: tomorrow’s industrial jobs created elsewhere while Europe becomes merely a consumer of green molecules produced abroad. It’s a genuine fear rooted in real economic pain.

But here’s what that perspective fundamentally misses. Oman has lived through this exact dynamic for generations, only from the other side. For decades, we

extracted oil and gas from beneath our land and shipped it overseas, watching other nations capture everything that mattered: the valorisation, the manufacturing value, the technology development, the high-skilled engineering jobs, the economic complexity that transforms societies. We sold crude and bought back refined products. We exported gas and imported the petrochemicals and plastics it could have produced here.

The revenue flowed into national coffers, certainly, but the transformative opportunities to industrialise and diversify our economy beyond resource extraction largely flowed to Europe, to Asia, to America.

The green hydrogen transition represents something fundamentally different: a chance to break that pattern from the beginning. When Oman commits to hydrogen production, we’re talking about the entire value chain that follows: manufacturing electrolyzers domestically, developing deep engineering expertise, constructing green ammonia and methanol plants, establishing green steel production facilities, building a maritime bunkering industry for ships that will cross our waters.

This isn’t protectionism or resource nationalism. This is applying lessons learned from watching a century of wealth extraction that left behind too little industrial capacity.

The question my fellow panellist raised does deserve serious consideration, though. What does genuine partnership actually look like when interests conflict? Is it partnership if one region produces molecules cheaply

while another monopolises all value-added manufacturing? Or is real partnership something more uncomfortable: accepting that both regions will compete for the same industries, that guaranteed outcomes no longer exist for anyone, that the economic certainties of the past century are genuinely ending?

Europe’s anxieties about employment and social cohesion are legitimate and serious. But so are Oman’s ambitions to industrialise value after generations of exporting raw resources while importing finished goods. The energy transition simply cannot recreate the same extractive economic patterns, where the Global South provides raw materials, even renewable ones, while the Global North retains its monopoly on manufacturing, innovation, and high-value jobs.

Perhaps genuine partnership means something harder than we typically admit: both regions competing to innovate faster, invest smarter, and build better industries. That’s uncomfortable because it means Europe must compete for industries it once took for granted, and it means accepting that Oman’s gain isn’t necessarily Europe’s loss but rather a rebalancing that’s long overdue. But asking Oman to forgo industrialisation so European factories stay comfortable isn’t partnership. It’s just the old oil and gas playbook dressed in climate credentials.

We learned our mistakes from oil and gas. This time, we’re keeping the opportunities.

Aussie anti-migration populist Hanson eyes political resurgence

KIRSTY NEEDHAM

Australia’s flame-haired populist Senator Pauline Hanson and her anti-immigration party have rocketed up opinion polls, nearing a peak seen three decades ago when she first entered politics and pushed conservative parties to harden border policies. The resurgence of Hanson’s One Nation coincides with US President Donald Trump’s tougher message on migration, which has included the US embassy in Australia being instructed to collect migrant-linked crime data as Washington urged US diplomats to lobby against mass migration.

Yet Hanson’s revival as a political force is likely more driven by local factors including cost-of-living pressures, housing shortages and historically high migration which have driven voter dissatisfaction, analysts and party officials say.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese’s centre-left Labor Party won national elections decisively in May, and remains ahead in polling.

The conservative opposition Liberal Party, which lost its leader and a swath of seats at the May election, is at a historic low — another factor encouraging right-wing voters to look to One Nation, several analysts said.

“One would argue that Pauline was the original Trump,” James Ashby, Hanson’s chief of staff, said. “Other politicians and the public have caught up with where her mindset was at. We are being swamped by mass migration in this country.” Hanson, 71, made global headlines striding thrugh the Australian parliament in a burka last month, and was barred from the chamber for seven days.

One Nation holds just four seats in the parliament’s 76-seat upper house, but recent polls indicate it could win more at the next election due by 2028. A Roy Morgan survey of 5,248 people in November showed support for One Nation at 14 per cent nationally, the highest since 1998.

Three analysts, including a Liberal Party official, said One Nation’s polling is putting pressure on the opposition Liberal-National coalition.

A former deputy prime minister, Barnaby Joyce, quit the rural-focused National Party last week, and is considering joining One Nation at the next election, his office confirmed. — Reuters

Individual responsibility in a vision for prosperity

MOUZA AL MAHRUQIYAH

The writer is a retired HR official

OMAN is on a continuous journey of growth and development, guided by our dedicated leadership. This progress, aligned with Oman Vision 2040, prioritises Comprehensive Human Development—building a strong, resilient society through the security and welfare of its citizens.

While the government, under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, is tirelessly striving to achieve the best for its people, national prosperity is fundamentally a partnership. It is crucial that we, as individuals, meet these efforts with our own commitment to responsible living.

SELF-RELIANCE

For the nation to flourish, individuals must first take charge of their own stability. This begins with personal responsibility and informed decision-making.

PERSONAL FINANCE

One of the most immediate and impactful areas where we can help ourselves is in managing personal finances. A mindful approach to spending not only secures our personal future but also strengthens the broader national economy.

PRACTICE BUDGETING

Know exactly what you earn and where every rial is spent. Clearly distinguish between essential expenditures and discretionary purchases.

By embracing responsibility, managing our resources wisely, appreciating the foundation we have, and holding an honest, responsible team accountable for implementation, we collectively ensure a stronger, more stable, and more prosperous future for our beloved Oman

AVOID DEBT

Taking loans for non-essential activities or those that do not generate income is a major pitfall that can lead to significant financial strain.

LEARN THE BASICS

Take the time to truly learn how business works, from market analysis and financial planning to operational management.

Avoid expanding too fast, investing too heavily, or taking on too much debt before the enterprise has had time to stabilise and generate reliable income.

SEEK MENTORSHIP

Utilise available resources and seek guidance from established business owners. Rushing into business unprepared often leads to unfortunate outcomes. Success is a marathon, not a sprint; it requires careful preparation and patience. Let’s help ourselves before we complain.

SOCIAL SAFETY

To fully support its citizens, especially the most vulnerable, the nation prioritises an effective and comprehensive social safety net, alleviating economic pressure and enhancing the quality of life for low-income families and youth.

1. Targeted Financial Support & Social Security

A resilient safety net must ensure financial aid keeps pace with living costs and targets those most in need. Existing Social Security allowances (for widows, orphans, persons with disabilities) should be regularly reviewed and inflation-adjusted to

provide a sufficient basic income floor. Direct cash transfers for old age and children should be strictly limited to lower-income nationals.

2. Youth Employment and Training Allowances

Addressing youth unemployment through structured support and incentives. Provide a temporary allowance for unemployed youth, with the condition that it is suspended if the recipient refuses up to three job offers, encouraging active job seeking. Provide an allowance for all youth undergoing job training in both the private and government sectors.

3. Subsidies for Essential Services

Reducing the burden of living costs for the needy. Waive or heavily subsidise basic utilities (electricity and water) for lower-income nationals, including those under social security. A reasonable consumption limit must be implemented to ensure relief covers basic needs while promoting sustainability. Waive certain hospital fees or taxes for low-income nationals.

4. Social Housing

Secure and affordable housing is fundamental to social stability. Dedicated and accelerated efforts are required to provide accessible social housing programmes for lower-income nationals to build strong, stable communities.

By embracing responsibility, managing our resources wisely, appreciating the foundation we have, and holding an honest, responsible team accountable for implementation, we collectively ensure a stronger, more stable, and more prosperous future for Oman.

Crime narratives are not created in a vacuum



SONIA AMBROSIO

The writer is journalist, academic and researcher in media studies

POVERTY, Unemployment, and income inequality, as well as cultural shifts, can lead to higher crime rates by pushing individuals towards wrongdoing out of desperation. Understanding these root causes is central to any realistic assessment of security.

It is critical to analyse crime trends alongside the challenges faced by the security apparatus, and this deserves attention. Crime news is scanty, and the lack of context can leave the public uninformed about the true nature of crime and public safety, obscuring the real issues at stake.

I depart from the viewpoint that statistics, whether they are released or not, can be misleading because they can be manipulated through accidental errors, biased sampling, or the use of flawed methodologies. Sugarcoated data serve no one and can lead to deceptive conclusions.

Within security network protocols, crimes are managed discreetly and kept away from public scrutiny. However, issues emerge when pieces of information are disclosed to the community without adequate context. Educating people about crime and legal processes is no longer enough. The fear of harming cultural, diplomatic, or sustainability sensitivities cannot be limitless. Besides, criminal groups adapt to new technologies and law enforcement pressures. Based on observations of various media reports, the common transgressions in

the country include bounced cheques, often because of insufficient funds. Petty theft and break-ins are becoming increasingly frequent. Financial crimes, including corruption, are of great concern, and with technological advancements, cybercrime is an increasingly pressing issue.

The criminal ecosystem is complex, involving international connections and local individuals. The more serious crimes are trafficking, including drugs, firearms, and people. Smuggling illicit goods as well as money laundering, remains a significant concern. Another persistent criminal issue is the theft of wires and cables, resulting in substantial financial losses due to the costs associated with damages and replacing stolen materials.

Stories about environmental crimes, such as discharging pollutants into the desert, water, or the air, and cases of illicit wildlife trade are few. Individuals might have ‘heard’ or ‘witnessed’ illegal activities; however, they may also opt to turn a blind eye. The reasons could include fear of reprisal, insufficient information, disinterest, or a cautious choice to remain ignorant to protect themselves. Unfortunately, communities are kept in the dark regarding deliberate pollution acts.

Another alert: two individuals succumbed to poisoning after drinking tainted bottled water in September. According to information released, laboratory tests confirmed the water was adulterated with harmful substances, later identified as amphetamine, which had been deliberately

Educating people about crime and legal processes is no longer enough. The fear of harming cultural, diplomatic or sustainability sensitivities cannot be limitless

introduced into certain packages. This episode might have been motivated by a personal vendetta, though others could see it as a serious security threat that could harm thousands of users.

In perspective, all security measures are complex, especially considering that sectors like food, health, the environment, cyber, finance, and economics are increasingly vulnerable to exploitation. Individuals may become involved in crimes because of factors such as substance misuse, socioeconomic needs, or the prospect of substantial financial gain, particularly in high-profit markets like drugs, weapons, or human trafficking. People can be attracted to the allure of international organised crime.

Despite strong internal security and a low crime rate by global standards, traditional measures are insufficient against new threats. Institutions might deprioritise certain low crimes due to limited resources and bureaucratic burdens, contributing to misinformation and exposing vulnerabilities. Crime news can make people fearful, yet less informed about actual crime rates and types.

Finding new ways to examine crime and security highlights that lawbreaking at any level can impede a nation's progress, and it requires recognising the link between crime and broader societal issues. Law enforcement and criminals are fundamentally opposed, a dynamic akin to a cat's relentless pursuit of rats.

Behind every crime lies a story – a confluence of circumstances and choices.

AIRLINE PILOTS HIDE MENTAL HEALTH TO KEEP FLYING

RAJESH KUMAR SINGH & DAN CATCHPOLE

Annie Vargas could see her son slipping away and pleaded with him to seek help. But her son, Brian Wittke, a 41-year-old Delta Air Lines pilot and father of three, pushed back, terrified that getting treatment for depression would cost him his licence and livelihood. The drop in air travel during the pandemic kept Wittke at home more and affected his mental health, Vargas said.

On the morning of June 14, 2022, Vargas tried to reach Wittke by text, but his location data was disabled. By the time it reappeared, Wittke had died by suicide in the Utah mountains near his home outside Salt Lake City.

Commercial airline pilots often conceal mental health conditions for fear that disclosing therapy or medication, or even just seeking help, could mean having their licence pulled, putting themselves and their passengers at risk, according to Reuters interviews with three dozen pilots, medical experts and industry officials, as well as a review of medical studies.

For this story, Reuters spoke to at least 24 commercial pilots at US and foreign carriers who said that they were reluctant to disclose mental health issues - even minor or treatable ones - fearing immediate grounding and a lengthy, costly medical review that could end their careers.

The pilots Reuters spoke to cited multiple reasons for not coming forward with mental health challenges, including airline policies, regulatory requirements and social stigma. “Real people have real problems,” Vargas said. “And they shouldn’t be penalised for dealing with it.”

Vargas said she was speaking to Reuters because she hoped the family’s tragedy would challenge the culture surrounding mental health in the aviation industry. The news agency corroborated details of her account with Wittke’s wife.

Delta said Wittke was a valued team member and called his death “tragic and heartbreaking”. It also said the pilot community had a stigma against seeking mental health services. Like many major US carriers, Delta offers confidential peer support programmes and counselling services for staff. It recently launched a new employee assistance programme for pilots, offering access to therapy and coaching and taking into account medical certification requirements.

In most industries, individuals can seek medical or psychological treatment without involving employers or regulators, such as the Federal Aviation Administration.

Aviation operates under stricter standards: pilots must meet rigorous physical and psychological criteria to maintain their FAA medical certification, in some cases undergoing medical exams every six months. — Reuters

A just transition for land

WITH The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) and the G20 Leaders’ Summit now concluded, attention turns to this week’s gathering of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in Panama. Whether the event delivers progress on sustainable land management and drought resilience in a just and equitable manner hinges largely on one familiar factor: finance.

Insufficient funding has emerged as a stumbling block in advancing multiple Sustainable Development Goals, with SDG15 – focused on the protection, restoration, and sustainable use of land and terrestrial ecosystems – receiving some of the lowest levels of finance. But human well-being, and progress towards many other SDGs, depend directly on healthy soil, water, and terrestrial biodiversity.

Already, up to 40 per cent of our planet’s lands are degraded and deteriorating, jeopardising the health and livelihoods of more than three billion people, especially poor rural communities, small-scale farmers, women, youth, Indigenous peoples, and other at-risk groups. Annual economic losses linked to desertification, land degradation, and drought amount to \$878 billion – far more than the investments needed to address them. A just transition from an exploitative land economy to one that is restorative, inclusive, and resilient is urgently needed. The concept of a just transition has become central to discussions on climate action – in particular, the energy transition. For example, it is understood that European communities dependent on coal production need support, so that they can secure good jobs in emerging clean industries. Globally, numerous initiatives have been created to support a just energy transition. But no equivalent exists for the land sector (which includes agriculture, forestry, and other land use), even though the need for a “just land transition” to support interconnected climate, nature, and human-development imperatives is at least as great.

Land-related activities account



ANDREA MEZA MURILLO

The writer is a former minister of environment and energy of Costa Rica, is Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification



Already, up to 40 per cent of our planet’s lands are degraded and deteriorating.

for nearly a quarter of greenhouse-gas emissions and employ over 20 times more workers than the energy sector globally. Moreover, unlike energy-sector workers – who tend to be formally employed, with regular, reasonably strong wages – many land workers are self-employed or seasonal, meaning that they have minimal safety nets and low financial resilience. In fact, extreme poverty is typically concentrated in degraded rural communities, which are often among the most exposed to climate and non-climate shocks.

Now, these communities are being forced to pursue their own transitions, with minimal support from the international community – including the countries that are most responsible for climate change. For example, climate change has left nomadic pastoralists in the Horn of Africa, whose own carbon footprint is negligible, with no choice but to alter millennia-old migration routes, owing to water scarcity and land degradation. Such unstructured and risky transitions exacerbate poverty, inequality, and marginalisation, increasing the risk of instability, out-migration, and conflict – and underscoring the need to support vulnerable communities and ecosystems on the frontline of climate change, nature loss, and land degradation.

But the news isn’t all bad. Momentum is gathering around land and soil restoration. China has long been a land-restoration pioneer, exemplified by the Three-North Shelterbelt Forest Program

that began in 1978. And a growing number of countries are emulating such initiatives with local efforts to strengthen resilience increasingly complemented by national plans for halting and reversing land degradation and improving drought management. Progress is also being made at the regional level. Africa’s Great Green Wall initiative – which aims to restore 100 million hectares of degraded land, sequester 250 million tonnes of carbon, and create ten million green jobs by 2030 – is being implemented in 22 countries. The Middle East Green Initiative, backed by up to \$2.5 billion in seed funding from Saudi Arabia, includes the world’s largest landscape-restoration programme.

At the global level, frameworks like the 30x30 land conservation goal, the UNCCD-led Land Degradation Neutrality initiative, and the G20 Global Land Initiative point to a growing consensus on the importance of land protection and restoration. The recently announced Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership aims to support the world’s most drought-vulnerable countries. Yet finance is still lagging behind ambition. At last year’s UNCCD gathering in Riyadh, participants pledged over \$12 billion in funding for “drought resilience, land restoration, and the fight against land degradation,” which is a step in the right direction, but nowhere near enough to meet global goals. For that, the world must mobilise \$278 billion annually.

Addressing this shortfall requires an innovative combination of financing mechanisms. Private finance can be mobilised through specialised debt instruments, such as green or restoration bonds. These are already gaining traction: the global sustainable bond market reached \$1.1 trillion in 2024. Moreover, companies can invest in land-based communities, in order to secure sustainable commodity supply chains, restore soil health, and support resilient livelihoods.

Blended finance models – which combine, say, philanthropic grants with concessional lending – can ensure that support reaches remote communities.

©Project Syndicate, 2025

SPORTS

MODERN TOOLS



Wadha al Farsi presented her paper, which showcased the ministry’s experience in debate programmes.

MOCSY ORGANISES 2025 SPORTS CLUBS SECRETARIES FORUM

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, DEC 3

The 2025 Sports Clubs Secretaries Forum, organised by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth (MoCSY) through the Leadership Development Centre, kicked off in Muscat with the participation of 40 club secretaries representing various sports clubs across the Sultanate of Oman.

The forum, held from December 3 to 4, comes as part of the ministry’s ongoing efforts to advance administrative systems within clubs, improve communication tools, and enhance the readiness of administrative staff to elevate the quality of services provided to youth and athletes.

The forum’s programme featured a wide range of working papers and lectures covering essential topics, including: Effective sports media, laws and regulations governing club operations, sports talent development, youth dialogue and the National Debate Championship, Oman Vision 2040 objectives, and the results of a study on the current state of the sports sector.

These themes collectively provided a broad knowledge framework aimed at improving the competencies of club secretaries and equipping them with modern administrative tools.

Wadha al Farsi, Director of the Youth Dialogue and Communication Department at the General Directorate of Youth, expressed her pleasure in presenting her working paper, which showcased the ministry’s experience in debate programmes – both through the National Debate Championship, held annually since 2016, and through introducing debate activities as a new field within the Cultural Creativity Competition this year.

Al Farsi explained that promoting debate culture among youth in schools, universities, and sports clubs aims to strengthen dialogue, foster respect for differing opinions, enhance public speaking and persuasion skills, and enrich young people’s knowledge by exposing them to national, regional, and global issues. She added that the inclusion of debates in the Cultural Creativity Competition has been a positive and enriching experience for club youth, and expressed her hope that it continues in the coming years.

EXCHANGING IDEAS

Regarding the importance of such forums, Al Farsi emphasised that they contribute significantly to strengthening meaningful communication between the ministry and youth across different governorates. This communication, she said, allows for exchanging ideas, discussing issues relevant to young people, and understanding their aspirations and viewpoints. She concluded by underscoring her pride in staying close to the youth, listening to them, and developing programmes that meet their future needs.

For his part, Juma al Mahrami, Secretary of Seeb Club, affirmed that the forum provides a valuable opportunity for exchanging expertise between newly appointed and experienced club secretaries.

He praised the ministry’s consistency in organising these annual gatherings, noting that this year’s opening session featured a rich lecture on sports media, shedding light on new data and insights that will contribute to improving media programmes within clubs.

Queiroz slams refereeing as Saudi edge Oman

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, DEC 3

OMAN head coach Carlos Queiroz voiced strong frustration over the refereeing decisions that overshadowed the national team’s opening Group B clash in the Fifa Arab Cup on Tuesday night. The Red Warriors fell 2-1 to Saudi Arabia at Education City Stadium in Doha, a result that Queiroz firmly believed was influenced by crucial officiating errors made by Jordan’s referee Adham Makhadmeh.

With the defeat, Oman did not obtain any points, while Saudi Arabia started in a strong position ahead of their second match against Comoros on Friday. Oman will face a difficult challenge as they prepare to meet group leaders Morocco on Friday night. Morocco defeated Comoros 3-1 in their opening match and top the group on goal difference over Saudi Arabia.

Speaking in the post-match press conference, Queiroz did not hide his disappointment: “I congratulate Saudi Arabia as they played well and won the match. However, football must be fair. How can a referee witness a clear red-card incident and fail to penalise the player? This is not acceptable,” Queiroz said.

“Everyone works very hard including players, staff and the federation and these efforts cannot be destroyed by refereeing mistakes. The second goal was controversial and should not have stood. The referee ignored the Saudi player’s interruption against the Omani player and they took the advantage to score from an attacking attempt to score the second goal.”

“The team had shown spirit and discipline despite the challenges. We did everything we could to win. It is difficult when decisions go against you, but my players were honest and committed.”

During the match, Saudi Arabia players began the encounter with high intensity, applying early pressure and seeking to control possession.

Salim al Dawsari created the first scoring attempt in the match after a cross supplied by Nawaf Bashawel in the sixth minute.

Oman produced the first major opportunity in the 16th minute as Ali al



Saudi Arabia’s Salem al Dawsari in action with Oman’s Thani al Rushaidi during the Fifa Arab Cup Qatar 2025 Group B match at Education City Stadium, Al Rayyan, Qatar. — Reuters

Busaidy delivered a well-measured free kick into the box but Thani al Rushaidi could not connect with his header attempt despite being in a promising position.

Although the Green Falcons moved the ball quickly in transition, they lacked sharpness in the final third, with Mohamed Kanno and Saleh Abu al Shamat struggling to make the breakthrough.

Oman goalkeeper Ibrahim al Mukhaini was called into action in the 34th minute, blocking a powerful shot from Kanno before reacting swiftly again to smother Abu al Shamat’s low effort moments later.

At the start of the second half, Jameel al Yahmadi was introduced to replace Musab al Maamari by coach Queiroz.

Yousef al Malki did not take the advantage of the scoring attempt in the 46th minute while Ali al Busaidy nearly surprised goalkeeper Nawaf al Aqidi with a curling free-kick towards the far corner, but Al Aqidi managed to turn it away.

BREAKTHROUGH

Saudi Arabia, however, finally broke through in the 55th minute when Salim al Dawsari lifted an accurate cross into the area, allowing Feras al Burikan to glance a header into the bottom corner. Oman responded with determination. Ahed al Mashaikhi fired a fierce shot from long range in the 69th minute, forcing Al Aqidi into another save. Their persistence paid off two minutes later when Ghanim al Habashi flicked on a corner, and Thani al Rushaidi reacted quickly to head the ball into the net for the equaliser.

Saudi Arabia regained the lead in the 77th minute as Musab al Juwayr threaded an incisive pass behind the Oman backline, freeing Al Dawsari, who squared the ball for Saleh al Shehri to finish clinically In the closing minutes, another clever Al Juwayr pass split the defence, with Abdulrahman al Sanbi setting up Al Dawsari, whose effort crashed off the crossbar.

Security Unit clinch Royal Court Affairs football crown

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, DEC 3

Under the auspices of Nasr bin Hamoud al Kindi, Secretary-General of the Royal Court Affairs (RCA), the Royal Court Affairs Security Unit were crowned champions of the 14th Royal Court Affairs Football Championship for the eighth time in Muscat.

Royal Court Affairs Stadium in Al Khoudh hosted the final match, the Security Unit defeated the Royal Cavalry team 2-0 to secure the title.

The closing ceremony featured a patriotic musical performance by artist Ayman al Nasser, along with aerial displays presented by the Muscat Remote-Control Aircraft team. Ahmed al Niyadi of the Royal Court Affairs Security Unit was named best player of the tournament. The top-scorer award went to Muhannad al Amri of the Royal Camel Corps with six goals, while Mohammed al Maamari



Royal Court Affairs Security Unit players receive the champions trophy.

of the Royal Court Affairs Security Unit received the best goalkeeper award. The General Directorate of Supplies earned the fair play team award.

Dr Salim bin Abdullah al Abidly, Director-General of Human Resources and Chairman of the Sports Affairs Committee, said: “The annual championship continues its mission of promoting organised sporting activity and enhancing communication among employees and officials.”

He added: “The competition contributes to developing players’ skills, improving fitness levels, fostering teamwork, and identifying talent capable of strengthening the Royal Court Affairs team in inter-institutional tournaments.”

Mohammed al Saadi, Assistant Coach of the Royal Court Affairs Security Unit, said: “The team’s return to the podium after 2017 was the result of collective effort from the technical staff,

administration and players. He noted that the competition was tough throughout, and the final against the Royal Cavalry proved particularly challenging due to the strength and quality of their squad.”

The Royal Cavalry team qualified from Group 3 with six points from two wins and a loss. They advanced through the quarterfinals by defeating the General Directorate of Supplies 1-0, before overcoming the General Directorate of Human Resources with the same score in the semifinals.

The Royal Court Affairs Security Unit extend their lead in the all-time winners’ list, securing its eighth title after previous triumphs in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2017. They are followed by the General Directorate of Transport with four titles (2016, 2018, 2019 and 2024). The Royal Yachts team won once in 2011, while the Royal Camel Corps claimed the 2015 title.

SHORTTAKES



ABQ PARTNERS WITH OMAN PADEL

SPORTS REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 3

The ABQ Education Group has announced a strategic partnership with the Oman Padel Committee. This collaboration establishes a new Padel Youth Centre at ABQ Azzan Bin Qais International School in Madinat Sultan Qaboos, marking a significant step in supporting the rapid growth of one of Oman’s fastest-growing sports.

The Youth Centre will serve as a national hub for identifying and developing young Omani athletes, offering structured training pathways for boys and girls aged 6 to 18. Led by certified coaches from the Oman Padel Committee, the programme aims to nurture future talent for the Oman Youth Padel National Teams.

ABQ Education Group Chief Executive Officer, Ali Asgar Shroff, said: “This partnership reflects ABQ’s ongoing commitment to providing outstanding opportunities for young people in Oman. By hosting the Padel Youth Centre on our campus, we are taking part in both sport and national talent development, while giving our students and the wider community access to high-quality coaching infrastructure and pathways to excellence.”

The first initiative under the partnership will be a dedicated kick-off tournament for Omani nationals aged 12 to 18, taking place from December 18–20, 2025, followed by a full evaluation and training schedule beginning in January 2026.

Adil Anwar Ali Sultan, Head of National Teams and Youth Development at the Oman Padel Committee, said: “We are thrilled to partner with ABQ Education Group in establishing the Padel Youth Centre. This initiative provides a vital platform for young Omanis to develop their skills, gain structured training and aspire to represent the nation at the highest level.”

THUNDER BEAT WARRIORS TO BAG 13TH STRAIGHT WIN



Golden State Warriors’ Jimmy Butler III (10) dribbles the ball next to Oklahoma City Thunder’s Kenrich Williams (34). — **Imagn Images**

SAN FRANCISCO: The Oklahoma City Thunder staved off a ferocious Golden State Warriors fightback to bag their 13th consecutive win on Tuesday, pulling away 124-112 in their heavyweight NBA showdown.

Reigning Most Valuable Player Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 28 points to steer the reigning NBA champions to a win that leaves them on 21-1 at the top of the Western Conference standings.

Oklahoma City had looked poised to deliver a crushing win after romping into a 63-44 half-time lead at the Chase Center in San Francisco.

The Warriors were missing the injured Stephen Curry while Jimmy Butler limped out at half-time.

But Golden State exploded for 44 points in the third quarter to turn the game on its head, and even edged into the lead in the fourth quarter.

Oklahoma regrouped in the final period and Gilgeous-Alexander and Chet Holmgren combined for 16 points to get the Thunder over the line.

Jaylen Brown finished with 42 points as the Boston Celtics came from behind to defeat the New York Knicks 123-117.

Anthony Edwards dropped 44 points as the Minnesota Timberwolves downed the New Orleans Pelicans 149-142 in overtime to improve to 13-8.

The San Antonio Spurs outlasted the Memphis Grizzlies 126-119 while the Toronto Raptors edged the Portland Trail Blazers 121-118. — **AFP**



New Zealand’s Jacob Duffy (2nd R) celebrates the wicket of West Indies’ Johann Layne with his teammates during day two of the first Test match between New Zealand and West Indies at Hagley Oval in Christchurch on Wednesday. — **AFP**

Five-wicket Duffy puts New Zealand on top

A five-wicket haul by Jacob Duffy gave New Zealand a 64-run first-innings lead over the West Indies after the tourists were all out for 167 in the first Test on Wednesday.

At stumps on day two in Christchurch, New Zealand were 32-0 in their second innings to be 96 ahead. Devon Conway was 15 not out with Tom Latham on 14.

Once the forgotten man of New Zealand domestic cricket, Duffy found himself the enforcer in only his second Test.

“There was a point in time I didn’t think I would be playing any Test cricket,” said the 31-year-old, who made his international debut against Zimbabwe four months ago.

“It’s my second Test, the first at home, and it feels really cool to get a ‘five-for’.

“And to put our team in a good position is pretty huge.”

In 16 deliveries following a rain break in the final session, Duffy removed the last four West Indian batsmen while conceding only two runs off his bowling.

The fast bowler had earlier dismissed the West Indies top scorer Shai Hope for 56 to finish with career-best figures of 5-34 off 17.4 overs.

Half-centuries from Hope and Tagenarine Chanderpaul provided the backbone of the West Indies innings in a 90-run stand for the third wicket.

TOUGH FOR BATTING

But Chanderpaul said it was difficult to bat on a second-day wicket that continued to be bowler-friendly.



New Zealand’s Jacob Duffy celebrates the wicket of West Indies’ Jayden Seales. — **AFP**

“It was seaming around all day and you just had to try and hang in there,” he said.

“You had to pick up singles here and there and score when you could. It was definitely tough.”

Hope, wearing sunglasses under heavily overcast skies because of an eye infection, went to the crease with the West Indies in early trouble at 10-2.

Despite being affected by conjunctivitis and needing breaks to be treated with eye

drops, he produced a near-chanceless sixth Test half-century.

But on 56 he allowed a short ball from Duffy to brush his gloves on its way to wicketkeeper Latham and was gone.

Matt Henry struck twice with a double-wicket maiden having Roston Chase and Justin Greaves caught behind by Latham as the West Indies slumped from 100-2 to 106-5.

Chanderpaul battled his way to 52 from 169 deliveries before he was undone by Zak Foulkes as the floodlights came on under murky skies after the tea break.

The West Indies opener had been dropped twice, on five and 24, by Conway at leg slip.

But Conway, leaping to his left, pounced the third chance sent his way at midwicket.

After a 30-minute rain interruption Duffy removed Tevin Imlach (14), Johann Layne (0), Jayden Seales (2) and Ojay Shields (0).

The West Indies took just three balls to end the New Zealand first innings at the start of the day, without an addition to the overnight score of 231.

Foulkes, the last man out, was then immediately in the action with the ball, removing John Campbell for one with his first delivery.

Will Young completed the dismissal with a smart one-handed catch to his left at third slip, but then dropped a regulation chance when Alick Athanaze, on four, edged Henry.

However, the scoreboard had not moved before Henry bowled Athanaze in his following over with a ball that nipped back sharply. — **AFP**

Markram ton helps S Africa level ODI series

RAIPUR, India: Opener Aiden Markram hit a sparkling century to help South Africa chase down 359 for a series-levelling win over India in the second one-day international on Wednesday.

Virat Kohli’s second successive century went in vain after South Africa achieved the target with four balls and four wickets to spare in Raipur.

Number eight Corbin Bosch hit the winning boundary in his unbeaten 29 and let out a roar with the three-match series level at 1-1 and the decider on Saturday in Visakhapatnam.

Kohli, who made 102 for his 53rd hundred in the ODI format, put on 195 runs for the third wicket with Ruturaj



Aiden Markram plays a shot.

Gaikwad, who hit 105, as India posted 358-5.

In reply, Markram made 110 and put on 101 runs for the second wicket with captain Temba Bavuma (46) to lay the foundations for the joint-highest target chased down against India. Australia chased down 359 in 2019 in Mohali.

Markram, who survived a dropped catch on 53 by Yashasvi Jaiswal in the deep, lost partner Bavuma in the 21st over but kept firm to raise his fourth ODI ton in 88 balls.

Pace bowler Harshit Rana dismissed Markram on a slower ball to raise the noise of the 60,000-capacity packed stadium.

Dewald Brevis, who hit 54

off 34 balls, joined Matthew Breetzke, who made 68, and the two kept the chase on track in their fourth-wicket partnership of 92. Brevis reached his maiden ODI fifty with a six off Kuldeep Yadav but the left-arm wrist spinner had his revenge next ball to get the batsman caught out at long-on.

Breetzke was next to go after Krishna trapped him lbw and Arshdeep Singh dismissed Marco Jansen (2) in the next over. There was more drama when Tony de Zorzi went retired hurt on 17, clutching his hamstring in pain after taking a run with Bosch, who then kept calm to take the team over the line with Keshav Maharaj (10 not out). — **AFP**

SPORTS

SHORTTAKES



Morocco's Marwane Saadane in action with Comoros' Affane Said Djambae. — Reuters

MOROCCO DEFEAT COMOROS IN FIFA ARAB CUP

DOHA: The Moroccan national team began its campaign in the Fifa Arab Cup Qatar 2025 with a 3-1 victory over Comoros, in the match held at Khalifa International Stadium on Tuesday in the first round of Group B, which also includes Saudi Arabia and Oman.

Morocco's goals were scored by Soufiane Bouftini in the 5th minute, Tarik Tissoudali in the 11th minute, and Karim El Berkaoui in the 45+4 minute, while Comoros' goal came when Moroccan player Mohamed Boulaksout accidentally scored an own goal in the 56th minute. With this result, Morocco temporarily moved to the top of the group with 3 points, with Saudi Arabia and Oman still to play later tonight.

The Moroccan team imposed clear dominance at the start of the match with high pressing and managed to open the scoring after a corner taken by Oussama Tannane, which Soufiane Bouftini met with a powerful header into the net in the fifth minute.

Morocco continued its offensive pressure, extending the lead with a second goal, also from a corner executed by Oussama Tannane into the box, which Tarik Tissoudali converted with a shot to the goalkeeper's right in the 11th minute.

Comoros attempted to respond after going down, nearly reducing the deficit with a shot from the edge of the box, but it went over the crossbar in the 24th minute.

Morocco relied on wing-based attacking play and managed to add a third goal after a cross from Hamza El Moussaoui into the box, which Karim El Berkaoui headed into the net in the 45+4 minute, ending the first half with Morocco leading 3-0.

Comoros succeeded in scoring their first goal when Amir Zaid penetrated the defence and sent in a cross that Moroccan defender Mohamed Boulaksout mistakenly turned into his own net in the 56th minute. — ONA

GERMANY TO HOST 2029 WOMEN'S EUROS



Uefa President Aleksander Ceferin.

NYON, Switzerland: European football's governing body UEFA on Wednesday announced that Germany will host the women's 2029 European Championships, where England will be the two-time defending champions.

Germany, the record eight-time winners of the Euros, beat off competition from Poland and a joint Sweden-Denmark bid, and will host the tournament for the third time, just five years after doing so for the men's Euros.

It is a measure of compensation for Germany, who missed out on hosting the 2027 women's World Cup when Fifa picked Brazil instead. In its bid, Germany had vowed to help women's football realise it's "enormous potential".

"We have the big stadiums and I'm convinced we will fill them," German football federation president Bernd Neuendorf said recently.

The eight host stadiums include Munich's 70,000-capacity Allianz Arena, Dortmund's 66,000-capacity Westfalenstadion and five more stadiums with between 45,000 and 54,000 capacities. — AFP



Barcelona's Brazilian forward #11 Raphinha scores his team's first goal next to Atletico Madrid's French defender #15 Clement Lenglet. — AFP

Barcelona make Atletico comeback to extend lead

BARCELONA produced an impressive comeback to beat Atletico Madrid 3-1 on Tuesday and move four points clear at the top of La Liga, with coach Hansi Flick saying his side had taken a step forward after some shaky performances.

Alex Baena fired Atletico ahead but Raphinha equalised for the champions before Dani Olmo and Ferran Torres struck to end the visitors' run of 13 straight league games without defeat.

Barca might have been more comfortable had Robert Lewandowski not ballooned a first half penalty over the bar at the partially rebuilt Camp Nou.

Real Madrid, second, visit Athletic Bilbao on Wednesday aiming to peg Barca back, while Diego Simeone's Atletico are fourth, six points behind the Catalans.

"We will see (if it's a turning point) but this was one of the best matches from us, I really appreciate what I saw over the 90 minutes," Flick told reporters.

"This was the next step... we are coming back to our best level, today was really good."

This was Barca's fifth consecutive Liga win after losing the Clasico against Madrid in October, but they have not shone consistently in that period, and coming against a title rival this display gave Flick's side a welcome boost.

"This is the spirit we need to have to turn around games like this," Raphinha told Movistar.

"We're building confidence game by game, and these three points are going to be vital for the end of the season, they can decide a title race."

Barca were without defender Ronald Araujo, who is taking a mental health break according to Spanish reports, along with ill midfielder Frenkie de Jong and the longer-term absentees.

After a 3-0 thrashing at Chelsea last week in the Champions League, followed by a shaky win over Alaves to claim pole position in La Liga, nerves were jangling among home fans.

Following a tense start, Atletico took the lead with, predictably, a ball in behind Barcelona's persistently high defensive line.

Baena scampered through on goal and beat Joan Garcia, barely celebrating because he could sense the linesman's



Barcelona's Spanish forward #10 Lamine Yamal kicks the ball during the Spanish league match between FC Barcelona and Club Atletico de Madrid at Camp Nou Stadium in Barcelona. — AFP

raised flag behind him.

However a VAR review showed the Spaniard was level with Pau Cubarsi when he broke and the goal was reinstated.

Barcelona responded rapidly and levelled in the 26th minute when Pedri, back fit to start, played in Raphinha.

The Brazilian winger, another player recently back from injury, took the ball around Jan Oblak and slid it into the empty net.

Barca should have gone ahead but Lewandowski spurned a penalty, blazing high and wide of Oblak's goal after Pablo Barrios brought down Dani Olmo.

The Polish veteran almost made amends moments later but Oblak brilliantly clawed out his header from Lamine Yamal's cross.

'BARCA WERE SUPERIOR'

In the second half Olmo, who netted twice against Alaves on Saturday, sent Barcelona ahead with a slick finish after Lewandowski managed to bundle the ball into his path.

The Spanish playmaker, who has struggled for consistency at Barca amid various physical problems, sustained a shoulder injury falling

as he scored and was replaced by Marcus Rashford.

Pedri, who was controlling the game for Barca also went down hurt after 70 minutes and Flick replaced him, but later said the midfielder was just tired.

Atletico substitute Thiago Almada had his team's best chance of equalising but after bursting across the penalty area he lost balance and screwed his finish wide.

Alejandro Balde found Torres in stoppage time to cap Barca's win and claim his side three vital points in the title race while dealing Atletico's own ambitions a blow.

"Barca were superior. We had a couple of chances to equalise and in the last second they scored the third," Oblak told Movistar.

Atletico coach Simeone said his team gave their all and could not fault them despite the result which cut short their charge up the table after six straight league wins prior.

"I'm happy with the team's performance and we competed well," said the Argentine.

"We couldn't be efficient in front of goal, that's what we ask for but sometimes it doesn't happen." — AFP

BARCELONA WIN WITH GOALS FROM RAPHINHA, OLMO AND TORRES

LEWANDOWSKI MISSES A FIRST-HALF PENALTY

BARCA LEAD LA LIGA WITH 37 POINTS; ATLETICO STAY FOURTH ON 31



MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE
5,836.696

BUSINESS

CRUDE OIL
OMAN \$63.43
BRENT \$63.20
LIGHT \$59.45



LIVE YOUR DREAM LIFE TODAY
with profit rates starting from
3.49%
on goods financing.



[www.dhofarislamic.com](#) | 24775777
*Terms and Conditions Apply.

SHORT TAKES



Miscellaneous personal goods and services recorded the strongest increase.

INFLATION EDGES HIGHER IN OMAN

MUSCAT: Oman's general consumer price index rose by 1.5% in October 2025 compared with the same month a year earlier, based on 2018 prices, according to official data. The average inflation rate for the January–October period of 2025 also climbed by 0.9%, reflecting modest but broad-based price pressures across the economy.

Figures released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information showed that miscellaneous personal goods and services recorded the strongest increase, with average inflation of 6.6% during the first ten months of the year.

This category also led monthly movements, rising by 8.8% in October compared with October 2024. Transport prices increased by 3.9%, followed by restaurants and hotels at 2.6%, furniture, household equipment and maintenance at 2.5% and education services at 2.2%.

Food and non-alcoholic beverage prices edged up slightly by 0.4%, while clothing and footwear and health costs each rose by a marginal 0.1%. In contrast, prices in the culture and entertainment category declined by 0.3%. Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels, along with communications and tobacco, remained unchanged during the period.

Al Dhabirah Governorate recorded the highest inflation rate up to the end of October 2025 at 2.9% year on year, followed by Al Dakhiliyah Governorate at 2.1% and Al Buraimi Governorate at 2%. Inflation stood at 1.5% in both Musandam and Muscat Governorates, 1.3% in Al Batinah South Governorate and 1% in Dhofar Governorate.

OQAE targets FID on 2 GW of renewables by year-end

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, DEC 3

Alternative Energy (OQAE) — the clean-energy investment arm of OQ Group — expects to reach Final Investment Decisions (FID) on new renewable energy projects of around 2 gigawatt capacity before the end of this year — part of a sizable portfolio of investments to support Oman's decarbonisation goals.

This upcoming capacity, mainly solar PV, builds on three renewable projects that recently entered construction within Petroleum Development Oman's (PDO) Block 6 concession.

Branded as the 'Rawafid Projects', they include the Riyah-1 and Riyah-2 wind farms at PDO's Amin and West Nimr fields in the south and the North Solar plant at Saih Nihaydah in northern Oman.

Renewable power from the 234 MW wind farms and the 105 MWAC solar plant will be supplied to PDO under long-term Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), with OQAE (51%) and TotalEnergies Renouvelables (49%) jointly developing and operating the assets.

According to Eng Ghalib al Maamari, Acting CEO of OQ Alternative Energy, the pace of renewable-energy investment is accelerating in line with the company's national mandate.

Speaking at the Green Hydrogen Summit Oman (GHSO) earlier this



OQAE expects its renewable energy portfolio to exceed 10 GW in capacity by 2030.



ENG GHALIB AL MAAMARI
Acting CEO of OQ Alternative Energy

week, he said: "OQ Alternative Energy has been tasked with two main roles.

First, we are the National Champion for developing renewable projects in the country for industrial or direct sales — essentially B2B agreements.

We already have projects under execution and by the end of 2030 we anticipate our portfolio will exceed 10 gigawatts (GW).

That is a huge, fast-track development for a company that only started a year ago with zero investments. By the end of this year, we will be FID-ing close to 2 GW. This is a major accomplishment made possible with the support of government

stakeholders".

OQAE also plays a pivotal role in advancing Oman's green hydrogen industry. "We are the co-developer of three large-scale projects with international partners and we value these partnerships highly", Eng Al Maamari noted.

"Our role in green hydrogen is multifold. We are an active commercial entity aiming to develop projects that return value to our shareholder — the state of Oman. At the same time, we carry a national agenda. Green hydrogen is no longer a choice but a necessity for the future".

He added that OQAE is committed to amplifying local content, generating employment for Omanis and supporting local industries to participate meaningfully in the green hydrogen value chain.

OQAE's portfolio of renewable and green hydrogen projects includes the Sohar Renewable Energy Cluster in Al Batinah North Governorate (800+ MW), Block 9 Solar in Al Dhabirah Governorate (140 MW), Block 60 Solar at Bisat (35 MW), Marsa Solar (300 MW), HyPort Duqm, Green Energy Oman and Salalah H2.

"We are building very large, utility-scale renewable projects and we believe establishing this backbone will support the green hydrogen economy going forward. This is something we aspire to — and something already under execution", Eng Al Maamari added.

Omani Sarooj mortar poised for industrial revival

JOMAR MENDOZA
MUSCAT, DEC 3

OMANI Sarooj mortar re-emerges as a market-ready, low-carbon construction material following a focused research and industrialisation effort led by Middle East Calcined Clay Company.

The initiative, presented by Najat al Fudhaili at LC3 Day in Muscat on December 2, seeks to convert the century-old binders used in Omani heritage structures into standardised, engineered products for conservation and contemporary building.

According to laboratory analysis, historical Omani Sarooj samples exhibited high calcium oxide and low levels of reactive alumina-silicate, a composition that explains variable mechanical performance in traditional mixes.

Researchers responded by developing a controlled, two-phase programme:

analytical characterisation of historical and local raw materials, followed by formulation, pilot production and on-site validation.

The team collected representative samples from diverse heritage sites, tested local clays and identified a kaolin source meeting reactivity thresholds.

They established an optimised calcination at about 800°C to convert kaolin into reactive metakaolin and engineered particle fineness to increase surface area and reaction rates.

The engineered Sarooj mortar blends calcined kaolin with limestone in a calibrated ratio, delivering standard-grade performance while retaining visual and aesthetic compatibility with historic masonry.

Pilot batches of 200 kilogrammes were applied to fort walls during field trials, showing strong adhesion, minimal cracking



Historical Omani Sarooj samples exhibited high calcium oxide and low levels of reactive alumina-silicate, a composition that explains variable mechanical performance in traditional mixes.

and consistent quality.

Mechanical testing recorded a 28-day compressive strength averaging 13.7 N/mm² — a marked improvement over comparable lime-pozzolan benchmarks and comfortably above several international standards.

For industry stakeholders, the commercial implications

are twofold: a new domestic product stream for heritage conservation that reduces reliance on imports and a demonstrable low-carbon binder option suitable for niche modern construction uses. The use of locally sourced feedstocks and controlled calcination supports potential scaling through industrialisation,

positioning Oman to develop a value chain around calcined kaolin production, processing and specialised masonry supplies.

"This is about honouring tradition while providing engineers and conservators with predictable, certified materials", said Najat al Fudhaili, Business Development Specialist at Middle East Calcined Clay Company.

"We've shown that with laboratory control and pilot validation, Sarooj can meet modern standards without sacrificing authenticity". A Ministry of Tourism and Heritage representative added: "Standardising Sarooj opens new prospects for restoration projects and sustainable cultural tourism investment".

Market adoption will depend on codifying an Omani salvage specification, establishing quality control across producers and linking the product to procurement frameworks

used by conservation agencies and contractors.

Early signs from pilot trials and analytical results give confidence but further scale-up, third-party certification and cost benchmarking are required before wide commercial uptake.

If those steps succeed, Oman could export not only a revived traditional material but also a replicable industrial model for heritage-sensitive, low-carbon binders.

Stakeholders estimate that successful industrialisation could create skilled jobs in kiln operation, quality laboratories and specialised masonry manufacturing, while attracting private investment into pilot plants, technology licensing and training programmes through the Industrial Innovation Academy and partnering universities, thereby multiplying local economic and heritage conservation benefits.

ADVERTORIALS



Experience Better

Their future starts today!

Change to AWASR, Fastest Internet In Oman

○ Get Ashel Educational Platform for free!

○ Unlimited data for all plans





SUBSCRIBE NOW !

WhatsApp

80001000

Website: [awasr.om](#)

SHORT TAKES



The truffle was introduced in Muscat by Massimo Vidoni, globally recognised as ‘The Truffle Man’.

NOVIKOV CAFE MUSCAT UNVEILS ONE OF THE SEASON’S HEAVIEST TRUFFLES

MUSCAT: Novikov Café Muscat, the Mediterranean inspired brasserie-style restaurant at The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort, has unveiled one of the heaviest and most valuable truffles weighing 1.039 kg.

The arrival of this extraordinary ingredient from Italy represents a significant moment for the Sultanate of Oman’s culinary scene and reinforces Novikov Café Muscat’s role in bringing world class gastronomic experiences to the country, creating truly unique moments for guests.

The truffle was introduced in Muscat by Massimo Vidoni, globally recognised as ‘The Truffle Man’ and trusted partner of top chefs across the Middle East for sourcing the finest seasonal varieties. His presence at Novikov Café Muscat reflects the restaurant’s commitment to authenticity, craftsmanship and quality excellence, which are cornerstones of the Novikov brand.

“Welcoming a truffle of this quality to Oman is a proud moment for our team and our guests”, said Viacheslav Prykhodko, General Manager of Novikov Café Muscat. “Our chefs and sourcing team work tirelessly behind the scenes to bring extraordinary ingredients to the table, while pushing culinary boundaries and crafting dishes that celebrate nature’s artistry.

It’s about more than just flavour; it’s the story behind every element that makes dining at Novikov an immersive and memorable journey”.

For an exceptional culinary experience, a limited-time menu curated by Novikov Cafe Muscat’s Head Chef, Gheorghe Pintea, celebrates the truffle’s rarity, intricate aroma and delicate complexity.

Dishes include Burrata, Beef Carpaccio, homemade Tagliolini, Parmesan Risotto and Angus Beef Tenderloin, each creation pays homage to the richness of the truffle.

“The magic of a truffle lies in its ability to connect people to the earth and tradition, while inviting new tastes and experiences”. added Massimo Vidoni. “It is always exciting to introduce remarkable truffles to new destinations just like Oman.

Kia EV9 showcases future of effortless mobility

AS the global shift towards electric mobility accelerates, Kia continues to push boundaries, not only in sustainability, but also in intelligent convenience. The Kia EV9, the brand’s flagship all-electric SUV, introduces a suite of advanced technologies designed to simplify everyday driving. Among its standout innovations is Remote Smart Parking Assist (RSPA), a feature redefining how drivers interact with their vehicles in tight, challenging, or crowded spaces.

A NEW LEVEL OF PARKING CONFIDENCE
Remote Smart Parking Assist gives EV9 drivers the ability to park or exit a parking space while standing outside the vehicle, using only the smart key. With just the press of a button, the EV9 can move forward or backward, making it possible to navigate areas where space is limited, or where physically entering the vehicle may not be possible.



Remote Smart Parking Assist gives EV9 drivers the ability to park or exit a parking space while standing outside the vehicle, using only the smart key.

HOW IT WORKS
RSPA relies on Kia’s advanced network of sensors and onboard intelligence to evaluate surroundings with precision. The system uses:

- Ultrasonic sensors to detect nearby obstacles
- Cameras and radar to map distances and movement
- Autonomous steering, acceleration and braking control

powered by the EV9’s advanced driver assistance framework
Once the driver initiates the function via the smart key, the EV9 independently manages movement, monitoring the space around it and stopping automatically if an obstruction is detected. The feature is available for both forward and reverse maneuvering, ensuring full mobility without the need to

be behind the wheel.

DESIGNED FOR REAL-WORLD CONVENIENCE
More than a technological showpiece, RSPA is engineered with practical benefits in mind:

- **Getting in and out of tight spaces:** Perfect for narrow parking slots where door opening is restricted.
- **Ease of access:** Particularly helpful when loading or unloading in confined spots.
- **Stress-free manoeuvring in congested areas:** Ideal for drivers of large SUVs who often face parking challenges.
- **Enhanced safety:** The system avoids contact with objects, pedestrians, or nearby vehicles using automatic avoidance.

With these benefits, RSPA contributes to reducing minor parking incidents, one of the most common causes of vehicle scratches and dents, making ownership simpler and more reassuring.

Jetour unveils the all-new G700 and T2 i-DM

MUSCAT: Under the golden desert sky of the Rimal Al Sharqiya, Jetour unveiled its latest hybrid innovations, the all-new G700 and T2 i-DM, during a spectacular launch event held at Bidiyah Carnival 2025.

The reveal brought together the thrill of motorsport, the richness of Omani heritage and Jetour’s evolving Travel+ philosophy, capturing the attention of automotive enthusiasts, media and festival visitors.

Hosted amidst the high-energy atmosphere of one of Oman’s most anticipated annual events, the launch showcased Jetour’s commitment to elevating mobility through performance, luxury, intelligent design and environmental responsibility. Running from November 19–29, the Bidiyah Carnival is an iconic celebration held in the Wilayat of Bidiyah, Al Sharqiyah North Governorate.

With more than 14 cultural, sports and tourism activities, the festival blends modern entertainment with deep-rooted Omani heritage.



The launch showcased Jetour’s commitment to elevating mobility through performance, luxury, intelligent design and environmental responsibility.

The Jetour reveal stood as a key highlight of the carnival, drawing crowds to the specially curated desert stage at Bidiyah Sands.

THE NEW JETOUR G700
Positioned as an all-terrain luxury electric hybrid off-road SUV, the G700 embodies the brand’s future-ready engineering. With advanced hybrid powertrain efficiency,

premium interior comfort and robust off-road capability, the G700 is designed for drivers seeking refinement in every landscape.

THE NEW JETOUR T2 I-DM (4WD)
The T2 i-DM introduces a bold combination of rugged 4-wheel drive performance with modern luxury and intelligent technology. Built to handle Oman’s diverse terrains from dunes to mountain roads, the SUV delivers durability, advanced connectivity and enhanced efficiency through its plug-in hybrid system.

Mohsin bin Hani al Bahrani, CEO of MHD ACERE, said: “Unveiling the G700 and T2 i-DM under the Rimal Al Sharqiya sky reflects our unwavering commitment to bringing advanced, future-forward mobility solutions to Oman. These vehicles born from JETOUR’s Travel+ philosophy symbolise a new era of exploration, innovation and sustainable progress for our customers and for the nation”.

Burjeel Hospital launches ‘Blossoms’ maternity packages

MUSCAT: Burjeel Hospital, a premier healthcare provider in the region, officially launched the Burjeel Blossoms Maternity Packages at a grand event attended by over 225 participants, including key government and private sector doctors, midwives, insurance leaders and key opinion leaders (KOLs).

These new, customised care plans are designed to deliver what is arguably the most comprehensive and supported maternity journey available in the country.

The launch event underscored the importance of collaboration in advancing national healthcare goals.



The event underscored the importance of collaboration in advancing healthcare goals.

A special thank you was extended to Nine Centre and Her Highness Dr Zakiya al Busaidy for their instrumental partnership in enhancing maternal health services and developing the programme’s holistic features.

The Burjeel Blossoms Maternity Packages — offered in distinguished Gold, Platinum and Diamond tiers — are built on two pillars: clinical excellence and empathetic, all-round support.

They guarantee access to Burjeel’s expert team of doctors, capable of managing both routine pregnancies and high-risk complications with world-class expertise.

Complementing this clinical

assurance is a robust suite of support services addressing the emotional and physical journey of motherhood, ensuring pre- and post-partum wellbeing.

These services include Pre-natal Yoga sessions, Labour and Birth workshops, Breastfeeding workshops, Hydrotherapy sessions, Midwife postnatal visits; and Mom and Baby Yoga Sessions.

The premium packages elevate the experience further with access to luxurious suite rooms, creating a truly royal maternity experience. It is worth noting that patients with maternity coverage under insurance will be automatically privileged to receive the Gold package.

SHORTTAKES

OTTCO AFFIRMS STRATEGIC ROLE IN DRIVING OMAN’S HYDROGEN GOALS

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, DEC 3

Oman Tank Terminal Company (OTTCO), a subsidiary of OQ Group, reaffirmed its strategic role in Oman’s clean energy landscape by participating in the Green Hydrogen Summit — Oman 2025, which concluded in Muscat on Wednesday, December 3, 2025. The company highlighted two major partnerships that continue



ENG SALIM AL HASHMI
Managing Director of OTTCO

to underpin the Sultanate of Oman’s hydrogen ecosystem: its appointment by Hydrogen Oman (Hydrom) as the national champion for green ammonia storage and export; and its established joint venture with Royal Vopak to develop world-class storage infrastructure in Al Duqm.

In June 2025, Hydrom named OTTCO the National Champion for the storage and export of green ammonia in Dhofar and Al Duqm. This longstanding appointment reflects Hydrom’s confidence in OTTCO’s ability to provide reliable midstream infrastructure that supports Oman’s emerging hydrogen value chain and strengthens the country’s readiness for large-scale green fuels export.

OTTCO’s joint venture with Vopak, officially established by signing the shareholder Agreement in October this year, continues to progress in the development of integrated storage and terminal facilities in Al Duqm. The JV aims to serve both traditional and renewable energy markets, reinforcing the region’s position as a strategic hub that supports global energy transition pathways.

By bringing these partnerships into focus at the summit, OTTCO is demonstrating how its midstream capabilities from crude oil storage to green ammonia export infrastructure, play a vital role in enabling the Sultanate of Oman’s clean energy ambitions.

Eng Salim bin Marhoon al Hashmi, Managing Director of OTTCO, said, “Our longstanding collaboration with Hydrom, together with our joint venture with Vopak, forms a strong foundation for enabling Oman’s clean energy vision.

New hydrogen carrier offers promise to Oman

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, DEC 3

TWO Netherlands-based green fuel technology firms have joined hands to introduce an innovative hydrogen carrier that could help overcome many of the technological, safety and cost-related hurdles associated with existing green hydrogen storage and transport solutions — a development of particular relevance to emerging producers such as the Sultanate of Oman.

H2-Fuel and HydroFlexx showcased their new powder-based hydrogen storage and transport medium, branded ‘H2Easy’, during the Green Hydrogen Summit Oman (GHSO) 2025 at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC).

At the summit, Koos-Jan van Brouwershaven, CEO of H2-Fuel and Sander Castel, CEO of HydroFlexx, also announced plans for a full merger of their two companies effective January 1, 2026, to accelerate the commercialisation of what they described as a potentially game-changing hydrogen carrier.

At the core of the H2Easy concept is sodium borohydride, a well-known industrial chemical that offers significant advantages as a hydrogen carrier.

With its high hydrogen density, the compound enables compact, stable, solid-state storage that is safer and easier to handle than compressed or liquefied hydrogen.

Sodium borohydride can release hydrogen on demand through controlled hydrolysis, while its chemical stability and non-volatility allow for long-term storage with



Sander Castel, CEO of HydroFlexx and Koos-Jan van Brouwershaven, CEO of H2-Fuel, at the GHSO 2025 Summit.

minimal safety or logistical complications.

According to the partners, H2Easy enables hydrogen to be stored and transported at ambient temperatures in a non-flammable, non-toxic powder, representing a major step forward in safety and handling.

The system is fully circular: once hydrogen is released, the residual powder — known as H2Spent — can be regenerated into fresh carrier material using the company’s patented recycling technology.

Because the carrier is stable and solid, it can be shipped using conventional container vessels, avoiding the need for costly specialised hydrogen tankers.

After hydrogen is extracted at the destination, the H2Spent material can be shipped back — for example, to Oman — where it can be regenerated into sodium borohydride.

Although energy-intensive, the regeneration process could be powered by Oman’s abundant

renewable energy resources, enhancing cost and carbon efficiency.

Van Brouwershaven noted that the H2Easy platform tackles several of the most pressing barriers to global hydrogen trade, including safety risks, energy losses and carrier inefficiencies. “

With a stable powder that releases hydrogen through our patented process and can be fully regenerated, we offer a practical pathway to move green hydrogen from production hubs like Oman to demand centres worldwide”, he said.

HydroFlexx CEO Sander Castel added that the company’s regeneration technology delivers efficient hydrogen extraction at the point of use and enables the circular reuse of the carrier.

“By industrialising this technology, we open the door to safe, scalable hydrogen logistics for maritime, industrial and remote-power markets — from early pilots to gigaton-scale

deployment”, he stated.

According to the developers, the H2Easy carrier could be 30–40% cheaper than many competing hydrogen carriers.

Unlike compressed hydrogen, liquid hydrogen, ammonia, methanol, or liquid organic hydrogen carriers (LOHCs), H2Easy combines high volumetric and gravimetric performance with everyday, user-friendly handling characteristics.

Both companies are now seeking strategic investors and partnerships within Oman’s fast-growing green hydrogen ecosystem, including project developers, offtakers and infrastructure providers.

Potential near-term collaboration areas include pilot projects in Oman and GCC export corridors, maritime and port-based hydrogen bunkering, industrial decarbonisation and distributed power systems; and the establishment of large-scale regeneration and powder production facilities.

Key forum highlights Oman’s emergence as new hub for arbitration

SAEED AL MASHARFI
MUSCAT, DEC 3

MUSCAT Arbitration Days 2025, a first-of-its-kind gathering in Oman, kicked off on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, under the auspices of Abdulsalam bin Mohammed al Murshidi, Chairman of Oman Investment Authority (OIA), bringing together leading arbitrators, practitioners, policymakers and industry experts from around the world.

Positioned as a landmark event in the international arbitration calendar, the forum highlights Muscat’s emergence as a new hub for arbitration and dispute resolution. The sessions explore the development of a robust regional



The first-of-its-kind event has brought together leading arbitrators, practitioners, policymakers and industry experts from around the world.

arbitration ecosystem, alongside key disputes arising in sectors such as oil and gas, maritime, finance and insurance.

Dr Khalid al Saidi, Chairman of the Oman Commercial Arbitration Centre, emphasised that arbitration offers investors a reliable, fair and

efficient mechanism for resolving disputes, reinforcing confidence in Oman’s business environment.

He highlighted the Centre’s commitment to developing a modern and integrated arbitration ecosystem built on advanced legal and technical standards, supported by specialised experts and strengthened through partnerships with regional and international arbitration institutions.

He added that the first edition of Muscat Arbitration Days brings together leading global legal minds and sheds light on the rising role of artificial intelligence in streamlining procedures and expediting dispute resolution.

Dr Al Saidi stressed that arbitration has become a central

pillar of the modern economy, supporting investment growth and aligning with Oman Vision 2040 by enhancing competitiveness and ensuring fairness, neutrality and the protection of commercial confidentiality.

The event also examines critical issues related to enforcement challenges and the growing influence of artificial intelligence in arbitration, reflecting global shifts in dispute-resolution practices.

Showcasing Oman as a trusted, forward-looking destination for commercial dispute resolution, Muscat Arbitration Days aligns with the ambitions of Oman Vision 2040 to strengthen the national business environment and enhance the country’s global competitiveness.

POLICY PUSH

China eyes 5 per cent growth target



China is likely to retain a roughly 5% Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth target in 2026 as Beijing seeks to break a deflationary cycle, advisers said. Achieving this would require continued fiscal and monetary stimulus.

The target would underpin the next five-year plan, offsetting property-sector weakness, soft consumption and excess industrial capacity, while longer-term economic restructuring gains traction. — Reuters

CURRENCY SLIDE

Rupee slips below 90 per dollar mark



The Indian rupee weakened past the 90-per-dollar level, extending an eight-month slide driven by capital outflows and hedging demand.

One of Asia’s worst-performing currencies, the rupee is down 5% this year, pressured by steep tariffs from the US on Indian exports, which have dampened foreign investor appetite for equities. The rupee’s decline from 85 to 90 took a little under a year. — Reuters

PRODUCTION SNAG

Airbus trims aircraft delivery goal



Airbus cut its 2025 aircraft delivery target to about 790 jets, citing quality issues with fuselage panels on its bestselling A320 family. Despite lowering deliveries by 30 aircraft, the planemaker maintained its financial targets.

Media reported the industrial quality problem, on the heels of an emergency recall of thousands of A320s. Shares rose 2% after recent losses, as investors took comfort from unchanged profit expectations. — Reuters

OPINION

SQU graduates contribute to Oman’s development journey



HAIDER AL LAWATI
haiderdawood@hotmail.com

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

THE number of Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) graduates has continued to increase each year since the university was inaugurated in 1986 under the auspices of the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos — may he rest in peace — who was committed to providing all levels of education, from primary to university, since 1970. Recently, the university celebrated the graduation of its 36th cohort of students over two consecutive days, comprising 3,106 male and female graduates from various programmes, colleges and specialties needed by Omani institutions and Omani society at large.

This group of graduates includes postgraduate students at the doctoral and master's levels, students from scientific colleges and others from the humanities, sciences and literary colleges — fields that provide essential human capital across all areas of life.

Since its establishment, the university has supplied the Omani labour market with many highly qualified national professionals, academically and in research, who have contributed to the country's economic and social development. The university continues to strengthen the development process across all administrative, economic, financial, medical and literary fields. The idea to establish a local university emerged in the

early 1980s during celebrations of the 10th National Day and the first batch of students was admitted in 1986.

The university initially consisted of five main colleges: the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, the College of Engineering, the College of Science, the College of Agriculture and Marine Sciences; and the College of Education.

Other colleges were added later. Before the university existed, many Omani students pursued academic studies in Arab and foreign countries.

Today, SQU occupies a strong position among Arab and international universities. According to the QS ranking for the 2025–2026 academic year, it is ranked 334 among the world's top universities.

In the 2025 Times Higher Education rankings, it falls within the 601–800 category globally. In the QS Arab Region 2025 ranking, SQU is ranked eighth among Arab universities. It is therefore considered one of the leading Arab and international universities in terms of ranking, specialised programmes and scientific research.

It is globally distinguished in certain programmes, such as petroleum engineering, nursing and international networks; and its ranking in several other specialties has improved in recent years.

The Omani government allocates a substantial annual budget to the university

Today, SQU occupies a strong position among Arab and international universities. According to the QS ranking for the 2025–2026 academic year, it is ranked 334 among the world's top universities.

to keep pace with global academic developments in key fields, maintain educational quality and ensure that graduates are connected to both local and regional labour markets.

As a result, the university has become a leading institution not only in Oman but across the Arab region, attracting a diverse international student population from various Arab and foreign countries.

A pressing issue remains the employment of most of its graduates in public and private institutions, as some still wait in line for job opportunities that match their skills and academic specialisations.

This matter needs careful consideration in the coming period — especially since many graduates in research fields can contribute significantly to Oman's development.

Strengthening their integration into the economy will enhance Oman's ability to transition towards a knowledge-based economy and sustainable development.

The university strives through its programmes to prepare a generation capable of addressing future challenges in alignment with national development goals and elevating Oman's academic and global standing. It remains a fundamental pillar in the nation's efforts to achieve sustainable development, diversify the economy, build a qualified human capital base and strengthen local knowledge.

APPLE WOES UNDERCUT INDIA’S OPENING-UP DRIVE

SHRITAMA BOSE

Doing business in developing countries is never straightforward, but India needs to make life easier for foreign firms. Apple is tussling with telecoms officials and antitrust watchdogs in the country.

The US company’s growing list of headaches undercuts New Delhi’s big push to open up the world’s fifth-largest economy to multinationals.

The Cupertino giant’s stand-off with the telecoms ministry kicked off last week when the agency issued a directive for all handset-makers to install the controversial Sanchar Saathi app within 90 days on all new devices.

The move is meant to help authorities track stolen phones and combat “serious endangerment” of cybersecurity and comes just weeks after a

The \$4 trillion company has the resources to fight these battles, but it’s a bad advert for those sitting on the sidelines.

deadly terrorist attack in India’s capital. But it has sparked concerns about government surveillance on the country’s 730 million smartphones. The furore forced the telecoms minister to clarify the app can be deleted at any time.

Even so, Apple intends to defy the order because of privacy and security issues, including for its iOS operating system

Management bandwidth is also getting sucked up in a legal battle with the Competition Commission of India, which last year found the US firm led by Tim Cook had engaged in “abusive conduct” through its app store: Apple is challenging a potential fine of 10% of its global turnover, implying a maximum hit of \$38 billion.

The amount is so large because new antitrust laws target the firm’s global topline rather than its local sales. The \$4 trillion company has the resources to fight these battles, but it’s a bad advert for those sitting on the sidelines.

That a company that now makes one out of every five iPhones in India is facing these headaches highlights the government’s struggle to really make things easier. That takes the sheen off Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s headline reforms, including an overhaul of labour rules introduced last month. India needs many more companies like Apple.

It needs to create jobs and boost the share of manufacturing up from 17% of GDP. Net foreign direct investment into the country dropped 96% to \$400 million in the year ended March 31 compared to the previous year, due to a repatriation of funds by foreign investors and outbound investments by domestic firms.

Other multinationals that are expanding in India include Alphabet’s Google, which is pouring \$15 billion into data centres. Officials have also tried to entice Tesla to set up a factory, offering land in Maharashtra, per reports. — Reuters

Can blame be put on Brexit for UK’s economy?

A LITTLE over a year ago, the governor of the Bank of England (BoE), Andrew Bailey, took the unusual step of warning that in his view, Brexit has undermined the British economy. He urged ministers to “rebuild relations with the European Union”.

Traditionally, BoE governors do not comment on politically contentious issues. Bailey sought to get round this by claiming that he had no view on Brexit itself, he was just pointing out the consequences.

This is how most people would put it, if they did not want their view to be known. In October, he said: “If you ask me what the impact of Brexit is on economic growth, the answer is that for the foreseeable future it is negative”.



ANDY JALIL
andyjalil@aol.com

The writer is our foreign correspondent based in the UK.



There is no doubt that to date much of the potential of Brexit has been wasted. Image for illustration only. — Reuters

One would find it hard to understand this view with the evidence published last month by Make UK, the manufacturing industry body. Spending on investment in plant and machinery had been rising and was at a 10 year high in 2024. But it has since dropped to its lowest level since 2017.

support Reeves’ argument when one looks at economic growth in the major European Union economies and compare it to that of the UK.

Economist at Volterra Partners LLP, Paul Ormerod, rightly points out that since the Brexit vote, all the major economies in the EU have grown slowly.

The referendum was held at the end of the second quarter of 2016. Between then and the second quarter of 2025, the French economy, grew by a total of 11.5 per cent.

In Italy, growth was 9.5 per cent and in Germany just 5.6 per cent. The UK over the same period has grown by 10.6 per cent. These are all the low growth rates by historical standards.

Even if one was to calculate the rates from the end of 2019, when Boris Johnson had been elected to “get Brexit done” the growth rates

are similar through to 2025. Italy, which registered zero growth 2016-19, expanded by 9.6 per cent, France by 5.1 per cent, the UK by 4.2 per cent and Germany by a mere 0.1 per cent.

In short, the big four economies in Western Europe have all grown at a very similar (and slow) rate over the past ten years. It therefore seems very unlikely that Brexit is the principal cause of growth stalling under Labour since the election.

There is no doubt that to date much of the potential of Brexit has been wasted. Britain has remained enmeshed in attitudes and regulation which discourage innovation and entrepreneurship.

As Ormerod says, a step in the right direction would be to start removing the barriers to growth instead of creating new ones. Reeves instead looks for scapegoats and to pin the blame on Brexit.

CLASSIFIEDS

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Muscat based Grade 1 Company is seeking for **talented Civil Engineers and Estimation Engineer** with a strong background in GCC construction projects.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Minimum **5-7 years of experience** in the GCC region.
- Valid **driving license**.
- Preferably with experience in **Ministry of Education (MOE)** projects.
- Ready to join **immediately**.

Apply Now: muscatjob2025@gmail.com

SIT. WANTED

ACCOUNTS/ Finance: Indian male (MBA Fin) having more than 19 years of experience in Oman accounts & finance looking for suitable placement, NOC available and can join immediately. Contact: 92076716

ACCOUNTS/ SALES Indian male (b com) having 2+ years of experience in India accounts sales looking for suitable placement, join immediately. Contact: 76324360

LOOKING for part time OR full time Accounts/Finance job. 20yrs experience in Muscat. Upto finalization & Audit. Please contact: 92065499

INDIAN male, 10+ years GCC experience in Catering, Accommodation, Building Supervision, Admin, Sales & Rent-a-Car. Valid Oman D/L. Ready to join immediately. Contact: 92275471.

INDIAN male, international MBA graduate from Australia, valid Omani D/L, seeking job opportunities, presently in Oman. contact 77424205 Email: aj.internationalrelations@gmail.com

INDIAN electrical engineer more than 20 years experience in "MEP" construction field in Oman seeks suitable job. Contact: 92919281

FOR RENT

10000 sqm plus area of open yard fully blacktop with compound wall, wide gate & CCTV for immediate rent in Jifnain. Contact 99853040

SIT. WANTED

INDIAN male MBA, 20 years experience in Oman & GCC in Project sales/ Dealer market in All construction materials including Cables & Accessories having D/L looking for the post of Sales Manager/Assistant Manager. Contact: 00968 78099493

CHIEF accountant, MBA finance, 9+ years experience in financial statements, auditing, budgeting, VAT, tax, fixed assets, reconciliation, payroll. Seeking a full-time or part-time position in a senior role. Contact: akramhaniffa@yahoo.com / 93988825.

SIT. VACANT

JOB VACANCY:

Operations Manager (Lifting Inspection Company) Required Qualifications: -ASNT Level II (minimum requirement). -LLEA or ASNT Foundation certification. -Diploma in Lifting Accessories. -Diplomas in the following equipment: Mobile Crane Overhead Crane MEWP (Mobile Elevating Work Platforms) Forklift Gantry Crane Additional Advantage: ASNT Level III certification Send all your CVs & certificates on below email: pipe2566@yahoo.com

PEST CONTROL OMAN CO. L.L.C.

Supply of Pesticides, Gel (Cockroaches), Public Health Chemicals, Agriculture Chemicals, Snake Repellent, Rodent Baits and other insect repellent from UK & USA

PROFESSIONALS in Pest Control Service, Bedbug Treatment, Rodent Treatment, Snake Treatment and Termite Treatment [Pre & Post Construction]

Tel: 24787606, 24787503
Direct Line: 24786077
GSM: 99382355, 99172309

pcomctom@omantel.net.om
P.O. Box 565, Al Wadi Al Kabir 117, Sultanate of Oman

WJ Towell Group Company



- Fleet of 2,000 vehicles
- Choose from a wide range of brands & models
- PDO, OXY and BP spec vehicles available
- Attractive rates for short-term & long-term lease

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 Salalah 9429 9325
www.orbit-oman.com

اوربیت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

VACANCY

Sales Executive, Laboratory Equipment Supplier, Excellent Communication, Science Graduate.

sales@alchemyarabia.com
+968-96654041

Driving School

Special offers for those wishing to learn driving in (Aziba - Khwair Qurum - Ruwi Al Amirat)
Contact No: 99074072

FOR RENT/SALE



Fish Plant & Accommodation Building FOR RENT/SALE

LOCATION: MULANDHA INDUSTRIAL AREA

3511 sqmt Plant with Cold Store / Blast Freezers / Office & Other facilities

1663 sqmt with number of Offices

3084 sqmt Accommodation Block with Flats, Restaurants, Stores & other facilities.

Contact Nos: 99643760/ 92192020

Job Vacancy

URGENTLY REQUIRED FOR CONTRACTING COMPANY

- 1- Estimation Engineer (Civil) (10-12 Years Experience) - 1 No.
- 2- Business development Officer (Male/Female) (10-12 Years Experience in Oman Market) - 1 No.
- 3- MEP Coordinator (10-12 Years Experience in Oman) - 1 No.
- 4- Division Head (ELV) (10-12 Years Experience in Oman Market) - 1 No.
- 5- Junior Accountant (Male/Female) - 1 No.
- 6- Sales Coordinator - 1 No.

Please send your CV to 71739823 and Email ID: saleemmalik_123@yahoo.co.in

ALL SEASON AYURVEDA CLINIC

The most efficient and authentic Ayurvedic Treatment & Medicine, Panchakarma, Yoga, Kalari, Massage Dhara etc... Rehabilitation, Marma Therapy & Post Delivery Care
Zaher Building, 1st Floor, Flat 8A, Al Khuwair Service Road, Near Al Zawawi Mosque & Burger-King
Tel: 24475280, GSM: 95371664, 92504980, Website: www.siddhayur.com



KR
كيمجي رامداس
KHIMJI RAMDAS

SALE OF VARIOUS STEEL SCRAP ITEMS

like Wires, Pipes, Rods, Sheets, Frames, Plates, Beams, Chains, Pulleys, Mixed structural scraps etc.

Location – Khatmat Malaha

We invite offers from VAT registered Companies and Individual Nationals having Tax Identification number for purchase of Scraps

 **JAYAKUMAR +968 71519394**



PASSPORT LOST

ZABZILA Hasani Selemani has lost Tanzanian Passport No TAE641247 Finder please handover to ROP.

SIT. VACANT

LOOKING for Pipeline Engineer with 8 Years Experience offer salary: 200 OMR
Phone : +96896965333
Email : sultanalhabsi701@gmail.com

URGENTLY REQUIRED FOR CONTRACTING COMPANY

- 1- Electrical Foreman.
- 2- Civil foreman (Experience in Piping work).
- 3- Civil Supervisor.

Contact @ Mr.Mohmmaed GSM : 92563101 send CV to mohammed92563101@gmail.com

OMAN  DAILY

Observer

FREE* CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

* Now **FREE** CLASSIFIED IN OMAN DAILY OBSERVER ON THE ABOVE CATEGORIES **ONLY**

Send your advertisement (Only one per coupon & no photocopies), either by mail or in person, with your local identity.

To advertise please contact:
Tel: 71455532/ 71455531/ 71455530
Email: adv@omaninfo.om

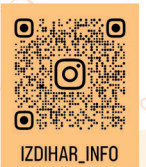
To advertise in Ministry of Information channels



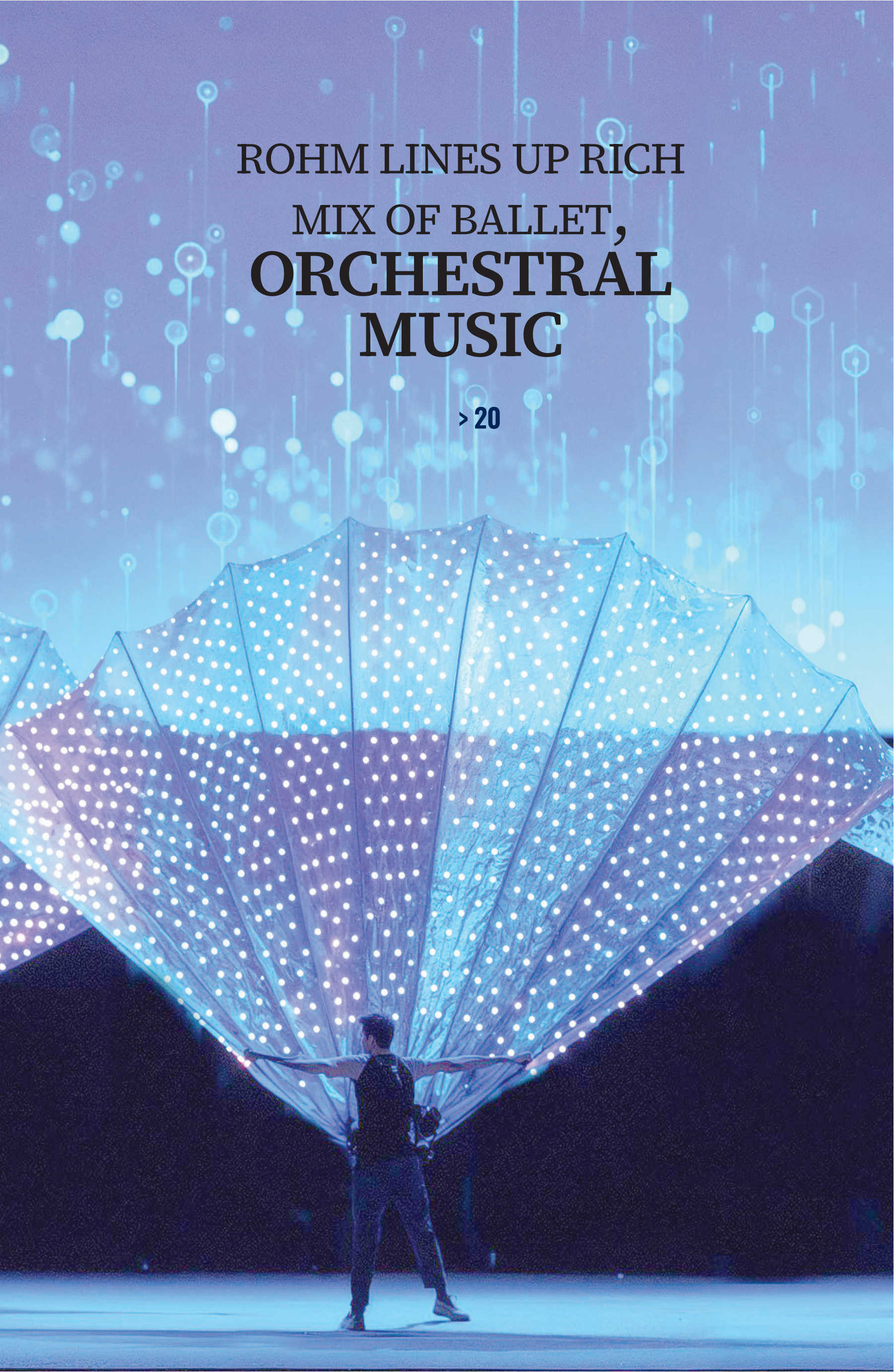
To advertise

71455532- 71455531- 71455530
adv@omaninfo.om
[izdiyar_info](https://www.instagram.com/izdiyar_info) [izdiyar.info](https://www.facebook.com/izdiyar.info)

ازديهار
izdiyar



ART/LIFE



ROHM LINES UP RICH MIX OF BALLET, ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

> 20

CHANGING WORLD

IT’S ALL ABOUT WORKING SMART AND HARD AT THE SAME TIME



SHADDAD AL MUSALMY
The writer is a Senior Editor at the Oman Daily Observer

The idea of ‘working smarter, not harder’ is often presented as a choice between two mutually exclusive approaches to work.

However, a more accurate and effective perspective suggests that true success and high performance are achieved by integrating both smart work and hard work. The common phrase ‘work smarter, not harder’, in modern interpretations often createS a false dichotomy, implying that one can choose between working hard or working smart.

Many successful individuals I spoke with argue that this is a misconception and that both elements are crucial for achieving significant results. Working hard typically involves dedicating long hours and significant effort to tasks, often measuring success by inputs like hours worked or tasks completed.

This can sometimes lead to poor time management and an imbalance between work and personal life if not coupled with smart strategies.

Conversely, working smart focuses on prioritising tasks, optimising processes and leveraging strengths to achieve the most valuable outputs efficiently. Smart workers often have better work-life balance and are adept at identifying and delegating tasks that don’t align with their core strengths. However, working smart alone is insufficient. Successful people are known for both their efficient strategies and their exceptionally long working hours. They don’t view working smart as a substitute for applying maximum effort. Instead, they combine smart strategies with intense dedication, understanding that discipline will sooner or later defeat talent.

To my knowledge, key strategies for integrating smart and hard work include understanding strengths and weaknesses.

We need to focus on projects that align with strengths and delegate or outsource tasks that fall into weaker areas.

Also, prioritising impactful tasks is key. Concentrate on tasks that yield the greatest results rather than simply completing a large number of tasks.

Here, I mean quality matters. Effective time management is another issue. This involves batching similar tasks, proactively reducing distractions, and understanding peak productivity times. This list is long but will stop here for now. But all in all, the most effective approach is to ‘work hard at smart work’.

This means applying diligent effort to strategically chosen and efficiently executed tasks, rather than simply working hard for hard work’s sake.

It’s all about working smart and hard, recognising that both are essential components of sustained success and high performance.

Q U I C K F E A T U R E S



HOLLYWOOD

Actor Sarah Paulson poses next to her newly unveiled star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, in Los Angeles, California. — Reuters



ART

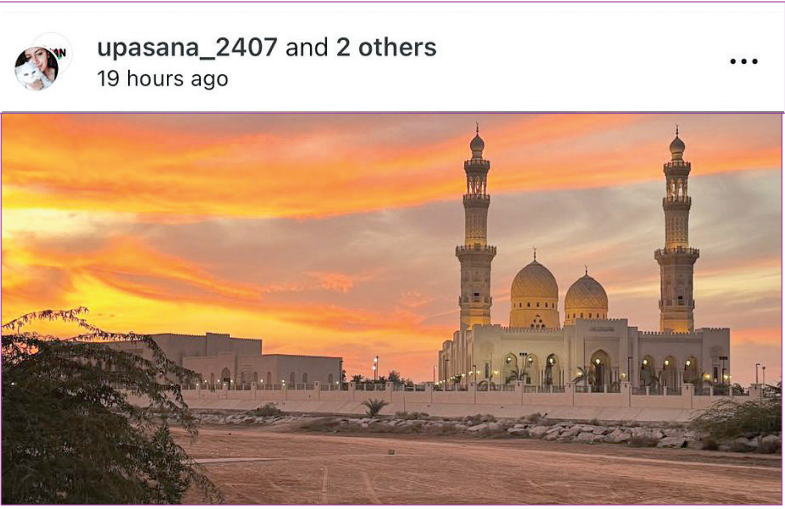
Italian paintings from the 18th century, including “Cardinal Melchior de Polignac Visiting Saint Peter’s” and “Musical Celebration Given by Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld at the Teatro Argentina in Rome. — AFP



TECHNOLOGY

GMO AI and Robotics’ humanoid robot Unitree G1 dances alongside a dancer to the music at GMO’s booth in the International Robot Exhibition 2025 at Tokyo. — Reuters

INSTA PICKS



Hues of winter



Cycle of life, uninterrupted

SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

We select photos daily for our Instagram Top Picks of the Day. The rules are simple. Follow us on Instagram. Upload your photos. Tag us and use #OmanObserver and #BeAnObserve

WINTER EGG FETCHES
RECORD \$30 MILLION
IN LONDON AUCTION



The Imperial Winter Egg by Faberge is displayed at Christie's auction house in London. — Reuters

LONDON: Faberge's *The Winter Egg*, considered one of the most beautiful creations by the legendary jeweller of Imperial Russia, fetched a record £22.9 million (\$30.2 million) at auction Tuesday, Christie's said.

The egg "has just sold for £22,895,000, shattering the previous world auction record for a work by Faberge", the auction house said in a statement, adding it had easily topped the £8.9 million price paid when Christie's sold *The Rothschild Egg* in 2007.

Commissioned by Russia's Tsar Nicholas II for his mother in 1913, the delicate crystal egg created by Carl Faberge has changed hands and broken sales records multiple times over the last century.

Faberge created 50 Imperial Easter Eggs for Russia's then-ruling Romanov family over a 31-year period, making them incredibly rare and valuable, Margo Oganessian from

Christie's said

They were commissioned as Easter gifts in a tradition started by Tsar Alexander III in the 1880s.

His heir Nicholas II had an annual standing order for two Easter Eggs to be made for his mother and his wife, until the fall of the Romanovs in the 1917 Russian Revolution.

Today, only 43 of the Imperial Easter Eggs remain, with seven missing.

"The Winter Egg is truly one of the rarest items that you can find", Oganessian said ahead of the sale. Carved from delicate rock crystal, the icy-looking orb is studded with some 4,500 rose-cut diamonds and stands at only 14 centimetres tall.

Beyond its opulence, it is the "technique and craftsmanship" that makes it exceptional, according to Oganessian.

"It's really hard to comprehend how Faberge created it". — AFP

MARYAM AL SHUAIBI

AL Hawiyah is a very small village which is located in Bidiyah in the Al Sharqiyah North Governorate. Al Hawiyah in Arabic means a place surrounded by sand dunes from all the four sides. This small oasis is a very calm and quiet place where people live a very simple life away from the noise of cities and crowds.

One of the famous Omani poets, Mohammed Bin Sheikan described the softness of its land and the gentle breeze that guides a lost soul back to its path. The villagers are strongly attached to their village and to each other.

Al Hawiyah's people are woven together like a single fabric. They are working very hard to sustain the existence of the village by planting more trees to protect it from advancing dunes. Now, an afforestation project is being implemented in different locations in Bidiyah including Al Hawiyah with the support of the Environment Authority. This afforestation project is expected to expand Al Hawiyah's green areas since they were vastly decreased because of the dryness of Al falaj which was once among the most vibrant and bountiful waterways, flowing with unmatched abundance.

Although Falaj Al Hawiyah, which was the source of life and nourishment, had dried up, Al Hawiyah is still keeping its beauty. Similarly, Al Hawiyah's people are strongly attached to their village and the youth reject leaving it. Because of the lack of space in Al Hawiyah village, people have decided to build their houses at the top of the sand dunes which creates a very beautiful landscape. It shows resilience in the face of a challenging environment. It shows the strong attachment between parents and their children



AN OASIS
EMBRACED BY
GOLDEN DUNES



who have grown up and decided to live near their parents and raise their children in the same healthy environment.

Al Hawiyah village is a gorgeous village especially after the rains, when the sands soak up the water and glow up with a golden hue. Laughter of the children fills the air and families head out towards the rolling dunes to enjoy their time with their children who run towards the dunes to glide down the slopes holding some plastic bags to skate on. After heavy rains, the flood water floods the only road into the village creating a very charming scene especially when the cars cross it. Everyone who lives in Al Hawiyah

or outside is being attracted by this flooded wadi which brings with it joy and happiness. Although the floodwater is known to be laden with mud and dirt, you will see children playing and swimming in this water while adults bring their coffee or tea to savour the joy of serene view of the flowing water.

One can see witness authentic Omani heritage and experience the Bedouin life in Bidiyah. The locals have set up many attractive camps and organised activities such as camel rides, sand bike riding, sandboarding, fireworks and hot-air balloon rides which offer a magical elevated view of the sweeping golden dunes.

FEATURES

ROHM LINES UP RICH MIX OF BALLET, ORCHESTRAL MUSIC



The month opens with Coppélia on December 4 and 5



The year concludes on December 31 with a distinguished New Year's Eve concert by the Royal Bangkok Symphony Orchestra

STAFF REPORTER

THE Royal Opera House Muscat announces a vibrant line up of performances and events this December, offering audiences a rich mix of ballet, orchestral music, family experiences and festive entertainment.

The month opens with Coppélia on December 4 and 5, inviting audiences into a whimsical world of love and mischief. Astana Opera brings Roland Petit's celebrated choreography to life with Delibes' joyful score in a performance full of charm and theatrical magic.

"The company and I will be happy to meet the Omani audience again. I am taking the most important things with me: love for the profession, good physical condition, and the mood of my Swanhilda — audacious, mischievous and bright. I also want to express my gratitude to the organisers and the Omani host for this opportunity. There is no greater joy for a performer than sharing their art and we will do everything to make this visit special for both the audience and us", says Astana Opera's principal dancer Aigerim Beketayeva.

"We are looking forward to the tour in Oman with great anticipation. This is already my third trip to this amazing country. I first performed



Backstage Pass on December 13 offers children a rare chance to explore the behind-the-scenes world of theatre, discovering lights, sound and costumes with guidance from the ROHM team.

here as part of the Bayerisches Staatsballett in Romeo and Juliet; and the second time with Astana Opera, presenting the new production of Swan Lake by our artistic director of the ballet company, Altynai Asylmuratova. These performances left such vivid emotions that I still remember every moment — the stage, the journey, the atmosphere. This time, we are bringing Roland Petit's Coppélia — and this causes special reverence and inspiration", principal dancer Olzhas Tarlanov says.

On December 12, Omani Night presents the music of Sayyid Khalid al Busaidy at ROHM. The Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra and leading local artists join together to honour Omani heritage in a moving

celebration of culture and song. Families can enjoy two special events. Backstage Pass on December 13 offers children a rare chance to explore the behind-the-scenes world of theatre, discovering lights, sound and costumes with guidance from the ROHM team. On December 20, Let's Read invites young audiences to travel the Silk Road with Marco Polo in a storytelling session that sparks curiosity and imagination.

Symphony of Lights on December 18 and 19 brings a thrilling acrobatic performance to ROHM, blending luminous visuals with gravity defying movement for a magical festive experience suitable for all ages.

The year concludes

on December 31 with a distinguished New Year's Eve concert by the Royal Bangkok Symphony Orchestra. Pianist Behzod Abduraimov and violinist Elli Choi join the orchestra for an evening of powerful, uplifting music to welcome the year ahead. Abduraimov is an Uzbek pianist. A former student of Van Cliburn International Piano Competition gold medalist Stanislav Ioudenitch at Park University's International Centre for Music, he was described by The Independent as "the most perfectly accomplished pianist of his generation".

Choi is a very busy violinist for someone her age: she has given many concerts and recitals in the United States, Europe and Asia. She has also won numerous prizes in many competitions, like the Monaco World Music Masters Competition in Monte Carlo and the Grand Prix at the Young Virtuoso Competition in Sofia. Last April, she performed at the Berlin Philharmonie with the Sinfonie Orchester Berlin. While Elli loves playing music, she realises that the most difficult part of being a violinist is the loneliness. Brahms is her favorite composer: "He has a distinctive sound across all his works. His ability to experiment with rhythm is unparalleled".