

OMAN
عمان
DAILY
Observer

SUNRISE 05:26 AM

PRAYER TIMINGS

FAJR 04:04 AM

DHUHR 12:08 PM

ASR 03:32 PM

MAGHRIB 06:45 PM

ISHA 08:03 PM

2010000387405

CABLE CAR

A new dimension to Muttrah skyline

THE

Observer

60

300

4

INBRIEF

NO PLANS TO SELL STAKE IN OMAN GAS FIELDS

The Ministry of Energy and Minerals has firmly denied reports suggesting that the Sultanate of Oman is considering the sale of stakes in its natural gas production fields. The clarification comes in response to presumably a recent Bloomberg article that claimed the government was seeking partners for assets valued at \$8 billion.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the ministry said: “There is no intention to sell stakes in natural gas production fields in the Sultanate of Oman.” The Bloomberg report, citing anonymous sources, stated that Energy Development Oman SAOC (EDO), the state-owned firm, was exploring a potential minority stake sale in gas fields located in Block 6 - an area that also hosts Oman’s most valuable oil reserves. **DETAILS ON P13**

HM INVITED FOR GCC-US SUMMIT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a written message from the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), inviting His Majesty to attend the upcoming GCC-US Summit in Saudi Arabia. The message was handed over to Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, when he received Saad bin Ibrahim Bishan, Saudi Ambassador to Oman.

RO 23M WADI ANAAR DAM OPENS IN SALALAH

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources celebrated the opening of Wadi Anaar Dam in the Wilayat of Salalah, Governorate of Dhofar. The project, which cost about RO 23 million, is in pursuit of the ministry’s ongoing efforts to enhance protection against flood risks.

The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr Mahad bin Said Baowain, Minister of Labour. It was attended by government officials and representatives of private sector establishments.

The project also seeks to promote water security, notably by capturing the great volume of water that results from heavy rains in adjoining mountains and precipitates downwards towards Salalah Port, Raysut Industrial City and Salalah Free Zone. **DETAILS ON P2**

UN CHIEF HAILS HM’S ROLE IN REGIONAL PEACE

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Sunday evening received a phone call from António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

They discussed ongoing regional issues and developments.

The UN Secretary-General expressed his deep appreciation and gratitude for the constructive role played by His Majesty and his government in supporting and facilitating efforts to achieve peace in the region and helping to de-escalate tensions. He pointed to the Sultanate of Oman’s efforts that led to the resumption of maritime navigation in the Red Sea and the cessation of the armed conflict between the United States of America and the authorities in Sanaa in the Republic of Yemen.

The UN Secretary-General also praised the mediation efforts undertaken by the Sultanate of Oman on the nuclear issue between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America, expressing his strong support for these efforts to achieve international peace and security.

His Majesty emphasised to the UN Secretary-General that the Sultanate of Oman’s role is for the good and peace of all. His Majesty praised the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and the endeavours of the United Nations aimed at achieving peace and harmony for the entire humanity.

— ONA

US-Iran talks reflect shared wish for deal

THE SULTANATE OF OMAN hosted the fourth round of talks between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America in Muscat on Sunday. Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, said that another round of talks concluded on Sunday between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America. The discussions, the minister noted, included useful and original ideas reflecting a shared wish to reach an honourable agreement.

The fifth round of talks, he affirmed, will take place once both parties consult their leaderships.

The talks between Iranian and US negotiators over Tehran’s nuclear file ended in Oman on Sunday with further negotiations planned, officials said.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and Trump’s Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff held the fourth round of talks in Muscat through Omani mediators.

Araqchi said the talks were “more serious and more straightforward compared to the previous three rounds”.

“We now understand each other better and hope to make further progress moving forward... Iran’s uranium enrichment must continue, although its scope and level may change,” Araqchi told state TV.

A senior official from President Donald Trump’s administration said Sunday’s “direct and indirect” discussions had lasted more than three hours. “We are encouraged by today’s outcome and look forward to our next meeting, which will happen in the near future,” the official said.

The fourth round of talks took place ahead of Trump’s Middle East visit. Tehran is willing to negotiate some curbs on its nuclear work in return for the lifting of sanctions, according to Iranian officials.

“What the US says publicly differs from what is said in negotiations,” the official said, on condition of anonymity.

The US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Washington was “encouraged by today’s outcome and look forward to our next meeting, which will happen in the near future”, without specifying when. In a post on X, Iran’s foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said the talks could help “better understand each other’s positions and to find reasonable and realistic ways to address the differences”.

Baqaei earlier said negotiators would push for relief from US sanctions. Baqaei said that the “next round will be coordinated and announced by Oman”, which in turn said, “the talks will take place once both parties... consult their leadership”.

According to the US official, the talks on Sunday were “both direct and indirect, and lasted over three hours”.

“Agreement was reached to move forward” and “continue working through technical elements”, the official added. Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi noted the latest meeting was “more serious” than previous rounds. — Agencies

Largest sunspot of 2025 observed in Oman

MUSCAT: One of the largest sunspots that have ever appeared on the sun’s surface during the 25th solar cycle, known as Sunspot 4079, has been spotted in the skies of the Sultanate of Oman.

The sunspot’s size exceeded 11 times the size of planet Earth, Oman Society of Astronomy and Space (OSAS) said on Sunday.

The giant sunspot was seen on the skies of Muscat Governorate using specialised astronomical equipment in a rare scene that reflects the peak of the ongoing solar activity.

Wesal bint Salim al Hinaiyah, Vice-Chair of the Community Engagement Committee at OSAS, said: “Sunspot 4079 represents one of the largest phenomena we have observed during the current solar cycle. Photographing it from the Sultanate of

The sunspot’s size exceeded 11 times the size of planet Earth.

Oman is a scientific and astronomical achievement that highlights the OSAS’s efforts to monitor cosmic phenomena that have a direct impact on Earth.”

She added: “Sunspots are one of the most prominent phenomena associated with the sun’s magnetic activity. They represent a crucial indicator for understanding the behaviour of our solar system’s star and its multiple effects on planet Earth. The sun undergoes regular cycles of magnetic activity known as ‘solar cycles,’ each of which lasts an average of about 11 years.”

“During these cycles, the sun’s surface undergoes noticeable changes in the number of sunspots, the intensity of flares, and coronal mass ejections directly impacting space weather and the geomagnetic environment surrounding Earth.” — ONA

OMAN



Visiting

17th May 2025

Renowned visiting consultant from India



Injured on the field?

We'll help you come back stronger, faster, and more resilient.

Dr. Jacob Varghese
Sr. Consultant - Sports & Joint Surgery
Burjeel Hospital, Al Khuwair, Muscat

MCH 1347873/2025

SHORT TAKES



Heavy to moderate rainfall fell in the wilayats of Rustaq and Al Awabi in the South Al Batinah Governorate this evening. — ONA

WADIS FLOW WITH RAIN FROM AL HAJAR MOUNTAINS

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
MUSCAT, MAY 11

The beginning of the flow of Wadi al Daina, north of the Wilayat of Mahadha, was observed with great enthusiasm followed by Wadi Bani Awf in the Wilayat of Al Rustaq. Thunderstorm activity was reported in parts of Al Buraimi Governorate, with scattered showers, Wadi Bani Kharous in the Wilayat of Al Awabi.

Rain of varying intensity and hail were recorded in parts of the Wilayat of Ibri and north of Yanqul. The Met Office said mainly clear skies are expected in the next few days over most of the governorates with chances for cloud convection and isolated rain occasionally thunder showers associated with fresh winds over Al Hajar mountains toward the afternoon. There are also chances of low clouds/fog patches at late night and early morning over the governorates of Al Sharqiyah South, Al Wusta and Dhofar.

On the other hand, there are chances of dust rising over desert and open areas, in addition to low clouds/fog patches at late night and early morning over parts of Al Sharqiyah South, Al Wusta and Dhofar governorates.

Many areas were also affected by active downdrafts during cumulonimbus activity.

The coolest place in Oman was Jabal Shams recording a high of 25 degrees Celsius and a low of 17 degrees Celsius. The Highest temperature recorded was in Fahud, Al Buraimi and Samayil recording a high of 42 degrees Celsius and a low ranging around 27 degrees Celsius.

Along the Arabian Sea coasts, winds are expected to be southerly/southwesterly light to moderate occasionally fresh and along the Sea of Oman coasts winds will be northeasterly light to moderate at day time becoming variable light at night. In the rest of the governorates, it is expected to be southerly/southeasterly light to moderate occasionally fresh.

Sea conditions are expected to be light to moderate along the Arabian Sea coasts with maximum wave height of 1.5 metres.

ROYAL HOSPITAL ACHIEVES IAEA QUALITY STANDARDS IN NUCLEAR MEDICINE

MUSCAT: The Royal Hospital, represented by the Department of Nuclear Medicine, has completed the QUANUM programme (Quality Assurance Audit in Nuclear Medicine Practices) that was conducted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The programme, held from May 4 to 8, 2025, set grounds for the first nuclear medicine centre in the Sultanate of Oman that undergoes this type of international assessment.



The field assessment of the centre showed an outstanding score of 92.5 per cent, exceeding the global average of 73.9 per cent and going beyond the usual range of 56.6 per cent to 87.9 per cent. — ONA

RO 23 million Wadi Anaar Dam opens in Salalah

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources on Sunday celebrated the opening of Wadi Anaar Dam in the Wilayat of Salalah, Governorate of Dhofar.

The project, which cost about RO 23 million, is in pursuit of the ministry's ongoing efforts to enhance protection against flood risks.

The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr Mahad bin Said Baowain, Minister of Labour. It was attended by government officials and representatives of private sector establishments.

The project also seeks to promote water security, notably by capturing the great volume of water that results from heavy rains in adjoining mountains and precipitates downwards towards Salalah Port, Raysut Industrial City and Salalah Free Zone.

To ensure the dam's safety during emergencies, the ministry implemented advanced technologies, including the use of smart monitoring systems that assess water levels in the lake.

In addition, the project will be supplied with seismic sensors to track any sudden



geological activity. In addition, surveillance cameras will be in place to provide comprehensive coverage of all the sections of the dam. The dam is also equipped with automatic control gates that regulate water flow as needed.

The gates can be operated remotely through a secure central system and other apparatus integrated with a central control room, from which data is received and analysed in real-time. — ONA

MORE THAN 140 TONNES OF HONEY PRODUCED

SUHAR: Honey production in the wilayats of Al Batinah North Governorate in 2024 amounted to approximately 140.515 tonnes. This included 56.2 tonnes of Sidr honey and 84.3 tonnes of Samr honey, with a total value estimated at approximately RO 2.1 million.

Eng Said bin Mohammed al Adawi, Director of the Agricultural Development Department at the Directorate-General of Agriculture in Al Batinah North Governorate, said that the



directorate continues its efforts to support beekeepers and promote the honey industry in the governorate by organising marketing exhibitions aimed at opening new outlets for honey farmers, encouraging them to improve their display and marketing operations.

The directorate also implements programmes and field visits for beekeepers to support them and improve production quality. — ONA

Oman least polluted country in the Arab world: Pollution Index

YUSEF AL HABSI
MUSCAT, MAY 11

The Sultanate of Oman has been ranked first in the Arab world and 22nd globally in the Global Environmental Pollution Index for 2025.

This advanced ranking improves the Sultanate of Oman's position in global environmental indicators and makes it a model for adopting green policies. It also opens new horizons for international cooperation and attracts sustainable investments, particularly from global companies seeking environmentally safe countries for economic activities.

Economic-wise, the ranking boosts the ecotourism sector which is witnessing increasing global



interest. In addition, it contributes to attracting international institutions and companies that prioritise sustainability thus enhancing the green economy and strengthening the foundations of sustainable development in the Sultanate of Oman.

Marwa bint Hamad al



Mahrouqiyah, spokesperson for the Environment Authority (EA), said that this achievement is the output of effective measures and environmental efforts and appropriate legislation adopted by the Sultanate of Oman which have contributed to achieving sustainability goals and enhancing



environmental awareness at the local and regional levels.

Al Mahrouqi emphasised that continuous environmental monitoring is a fundamental pillar to ensure compliance with national environmental standards. The EA conducts periodic inspections in the industrial, construction and

commercial sectors to ensure their compliance with the environmental regulations.

The Environment Authority embraces the latest technologies in its monitoring efforts, such as smart sensors and drones, to measure emissions and analyse air quality data.

Environmental monitoring stations are also spread across the Sultanate of Oman providing real-time data that contributes to making quick and accurate decisions. Procedures adopted by the EA include imposing fines or halting polluting activities in addition to continuous monitoring of major facilities to ensure full compliance with environmental safety standards, she said.

SHORT TAKES



The ministry invites travellers to visit the nearest primary healthcare institution at least 4 to 6 weeks prior to travel.

MOH OFFERS HEALTH SERVICE BEFORE TRAVELLING ABROAD

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Health (MoH) has said that it provides a comprehensive travel health service aimed at safeguarding the well-being of citizens travelling abroad.

The initiative offers preventive, advisory and therapeutic healthcare support to travellers before departure, during their stay overseas, and upon return to Oman.

Through this service, travellers can receive personalised medical services. The ministry invites travellers to visit the nearest primary healthcare institution or health complex at least 4 to 6 weeks prior to travel in order to benefit from the full range of services offered by the travel health clinic of MoH. The initiative reflects the ministry's commitment to enhancing public health readiness and minimising health risks associated with international travel.



Discussions focused on strengthening human rights protection mechanisms. — ONA

OHRC HIGHLIGHTS ITS MANDATE WITH UN

MUSCAT: The Oman Human Rights Commission (OHRC) on Sunday highlighted its operational mechanisms, structure and mandate to a visiting delegation from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

This took place during the meeting between Dr Rashid bin Hamad al Balushi, Chairman of the Oman Human Rights Committee, with Johnny Baryougar White, Human Rights Officer at the National Institutions and Regional Mechanisms Section of the OHCHR and Cynthia Radert, Secretary of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the OHCHR. Discussions focused on strengthening human rights protection mechanisms and fostering partnerships between the OHRC and various national institutions in the field of human rights. — ONA

ROYAL OFFICE MINISTER RECEIVES AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN, SUDAN



The two sides touched on the bilateral relations between Oman and Sudan as well as developments on international arenas.



During the meeting, both sides reviewed the march of bilateral relations between Oman and Japan.

MUSCAT: Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office, received on Sunday Kiyoshi Serizawa, Ambassador of Japan to the Sultanate of Oman.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed the march of bilateral relations and the means of developing them in a bid to achieve common interests. Meanwhile, Gen Sultan bin

Mohammed al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office, also received Essam Awad Ahmed Metwally, Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan to the Sultanate of Oman. In this meeting, the two sides

touched on the bilateral relations between Oman and Sudan. They also discussed several topics and developments on the regional and international arenas. — ONA

Financing programmes to boost sustainability

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, MAY 11

TEN diverse financing programmes have been launched by the SME Development Authority (SMEDA) to empower entrepreneurs and meet their needs, ultimately enhancing their financial stability and capacity for expansion and development.

The financing programmes cover essential areas such as financing industrial projects, developing working capital, supporting craft and productive enterprises, and financing incubators and accelerators. Additionally, there are programmes for contracts and emergency projects. The programmes have been well-received, with a total of 400 loan approvals, amounting to over RO 37,690,085.

In order to enhance the innovation and entrepreneurship environment, the Authority has launched the Promising Omani Startups Programme in strategic partnership with various government agencies. This programme aims to promote the culture of startups in educational institutions, raise community awareness of their importance in supporting the national economy, empower individuals with innovative ideas, support the establishment of startups based on innovation and technology, and connect them to business, investment, and financing opportunities to enhance their competitiveness locally and globally.



SME sector is expected to play a crucial role in strengthening Oman's position on the global economic map.

The financing programmes cover essential areas such as financing industrial projects, developing working capital, supporting craft and productive enterprises, and financing incubators and accelerators.

As a result, 146 innovative startups have been established, and 62 entrepreneurs have received training in investment readiness and alternative financing in the past year (2024). Over 12,624 participants have benefited from programmes promoting a culture of entrepreneurship and alternative financing mechanisms.

According to the Authority's statistics, 67 per cent of job opportunities created by financing programmes are for men, while 33 per cent are for women. The initiatives and programmes offered by the Authority reflect Oman Vision 2040, aiming to achieve sustainable development by

boosting the entrepreneurship environment through financing, advisory solutions, and innovative programmes that contribute to building an integrated economic system supporting diversification and sustainability. The SME sector is expected to play a crucial role in strengthening Oman's position on the global economic map, fostering a culture of innovation and productivity. Entrepreneurs often require financial resources to turn their ideas into viable commercial projects, covering expenses like product development, market research, legal fees, and operational costs.

Donkey Day: A global movement to raise awareness for their welfare

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
MUSCAT, MAY 11

The world celebrated Donkey Day on May 8, as is done every year. It is a global movement to raise awareness and support sustainable solutions for their welfare.

Riding a donkey must be a rarity today, something children can experience at the Muscat Festival every year at the heritage corner. But once upon a time, it was a reality, as it was one of the main means of transportation in Oman.

Ali Mohammed reflected, "As children, we used to travel on donkeys from Muttrah to the farm in Ghala. It took more than two days."

According to World Population Review, the population of donkeys in Oman stands at 21,850. Today they roam around freely in the wilderness of Oman and sometimes in towns such as Al Amerat. The valleys on the way to Sifa are some

of the best places to approach them.

In the olden days, mud/clay was used to build houses, and Ahmed al Mahrouqi remembers how donkeys used to help in the transportation of soil and mud. "Remember, it was not only donkeys but also horses and camels. The donkey was also used to carry the wood for cooking food. Also, donkeys assisted in taking commodities to the mountains, for example Al Jabal Al Akhdhar."

Those trails are still visible, and some people still use them. The horse trail has been attracting attention, and Saif al Rawahi explained how in 2019 they had attempted the trail during winter in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar. In 2022, during Al Jabal Al Akhdhar Tourism Festival, they made the trail once again prominent.

There were eight horses of Arabian and English breeds. Adding an extra touch of tradition was a young rider from Al Jabal Al



The Donkey Day, celebrated on May 8 every year, is a global movement to raise awareness and support sustainable solutions for their welfare

Akhdhar on a donkey. The young rider is Mundher al Omari, who was cheered by everyone as he received his gift from the Wali.

"He is from Al Jabal Al Akhdhar, and he just came over and joined us, expressing his keenness in participating. He rides his donkey

every day, so he is professional in his own right. The rest of the team gave him full support," noted Al Rawahi.

Young Mundher took his donkey as his pet, and after school hours he loves taking the donkey to the foothills and back, with the consent

of his parents. He is actually reviving something from the past. This was the way commodities were transported from Nizwa market to the villages on the top of Al Jabal Al Akhdhar.

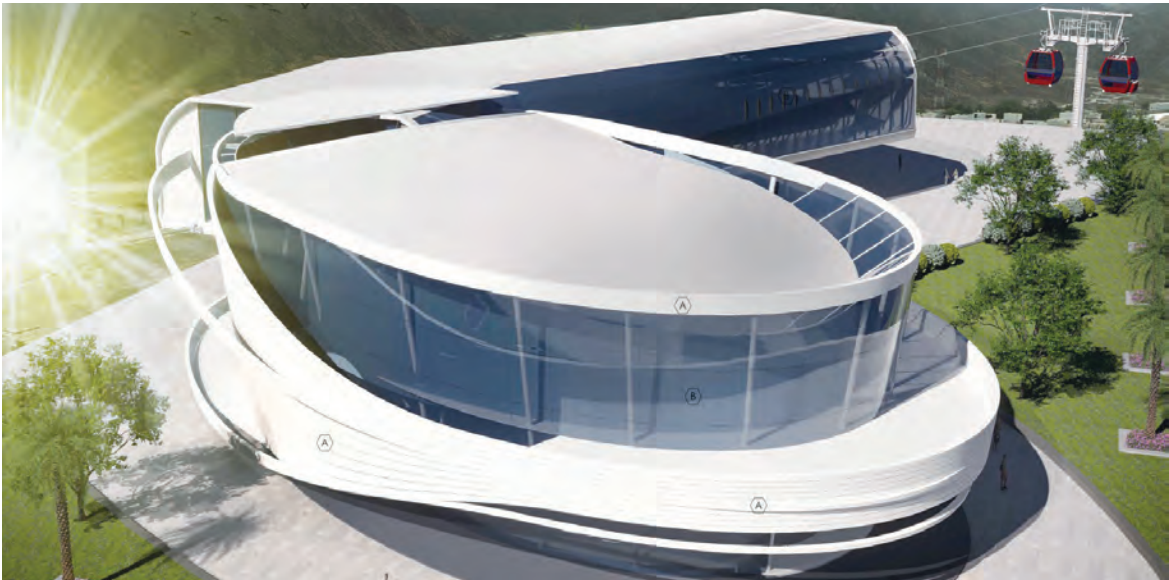
So why were donkeys used to haul cargo? Donkeys are slower and steadier. But people say donkeys are stubborn.

In a study conducted by the Donkey Sanctuary in the UK, the researchers Cara Clancy, Emma McClaghlin and Fiona Cooke wrote in their article titled 'Invisible Animals: Exploring public discourses to understand the contemporary status of donkeys in Britain', "Established representations of donkeys in Western literature and popular culture have often been negative, portraying the animals as stupid, inept and bad-tempered." The reality is that donkeys are known for their strength and stamina.

SPOTLIGHT

C A B L E C A R

A new dimension to Muttrah skyline



The cable car is designed and manufactured by Bartholet Swiss company, which has been in business for over 60 years and has completed over 300 installations worldwide

VINOD NAIR
MUSCAT, MAY 11

THE CABLE CAR is one of the most ambitious projects that can change the tourism landscape of Muttrah, a place deeply rooted in history and offering attractions such as forts, a souq, museums and the Royal palace, among others.

Providing insight into the project is Khalid al Nabhani, the co-founder & CEO of Sabeen Group, the owner of this private project. Sabeen also manages LunarCinemas, drone shows, and fireshows during specific events.

“This is not about developing infrastructure but about offering an experience to tourists visiting the capital. Muttrah is a unique spot with several viewpoints and historical sites, and according to our studies, tourists coming to the Sultanate of Oman certainly have Muscat on their wishlist. Our idea is to develop a destination where people can spend time experiencing the cable car itself and view the historical part of the city from the sky.”

The cable car service will have three stations — the first from the port (next to the fish market), the second at the mountain top (behind

“This is not about developing infrastructure but about offering an experience to tourists visiting the capital. Muttrah is a unique spot with several viewpoints and historical sites, and according to our studies, tourists coming to the Sultanate of Oman certainly have Muscat on their wishlist. Our idea is to develop a destination where people can spend time experiencing the cable car itself and view the historical part of the city from the sky.”

KHALID AL NABHANI
Co-founder & CEO of Sabeen Group, the owner of this private project



Al Riyam Park), which will provide a 360-degree view of the coastal area. The third station will be at Hay Al Ward (the Flower Park).

Al Nabhani mentioned that areas around stations will have several facilities for complete family experiences, including some global brand outlets. The mountain top station will feature an orchid centre and a roller coaster for children, while the Flower Park station will include restaurants and outlets for SMEs to showcase their products.

The project has been designed to accommodate the extreme and long summer months of the city. “The facilities have been designed so that tourists and local residents can visit the site multiple times a week. The cable car cabins are designed to allow people to enjoy the views in a comfortable temperature,” he said.

In addition to the three stations, Sabeen will develop the Flower Park, which will continue in the second phase of the tourism project. The Flower Park will also have a dancing fountain, while the Mountain Station will have a walking street for Swiss cuisine, affirming the relationship between the two countries.

The cable car is designed and manufactured by Bartholet Swiss company, which has been in business for over 60 years and has completed over 300 installations

worldwide. “We trust their quality. It’s considered one of the top companies in this field globally. They have appointed Bosch Studio, the same studio that designed Porsche cars, to design the cabins,” Al Nabhani said.

While Bartholet Maschinenbau, based in Switzerland, is a leading international company in the fields of ropeway systems and amusement parks, the standard cable car cabins will have eight seats, while the VIP cabins will be four-seaters. In total, 18 cars will be in operation, including two VIP cabins for special purposes. The cable car will start from the Port Station and transport passengers to the Mountain Top Station, where they can relax for some time and visit the Flower Park.

The service has been divided into two routes - Port Station to Mountain Station and Mountain Station to the Flower Park. The Mountain Station will function as an interchange station between the two routes.

The project is privately owned and self-financed by Sabeen. The company plans to complete the project by the year-end and has currently made progress of 35 to 40 per cent. A multi-floor car park has been designed for the area, but generally, tourists coming to Muttrah arrive by cruise ships or on foot and use public transportation.

SHORT TAKES



90 STUDENTS TO STAGE THEIR MAIDEN PERFORMANCE

KABEER YOUSUF

@kabiyousef

Ninety students who were trained under a renowned percussionist will be performing in public for the first time in their lives on Friday, May 16, to mark the debut of this year's new batch of Tripuda Muscat.

Additionally, 10 students will make their debut in the Panchari Melam under the tutelage of Amal Tripuda at the same event called “Triputotsavam”, the programmes of which will begin at 4.30 pm at the Majan Heights Hall in Wadi Kabir.

The Mela Chakravarthy of North Malabar, Kalamandalam Sivadasan Marar, will be the chief guest. For the first time in the GCC, the temple art form Garudan Parava will be presented in Muscat at the Tripuda Melam.

The organisers said that the main attraction of Thrissur Pooram, the Ilanjithara Melam (Pandi Melam), will also be present at the Tripuda Melam. In addition to the members of Tripuda Muscat, about 15 artistes from the Sultanate of Oman will be performing the Mela Universe, which will be aptly detailed by more than 50 artistes.

The musical show of violinist and singer Vivekananda, who performs magic on the violin, will also add to the charm of the Triputotsavam. There will also be Sopana music performed by Chandu Mirosh, and rhythm dance and music dance. Entry to the Triputotsavam will be free.

Tripuda Muscat members Amal Korappuzha, Chandu Mirosh, Sathish Kumar, Sudhi Pillai, Kalesh Kallingappuram, Harikrishnan and others attended the press conference held at the Ruvi Ananthapuri Hotel on Sunday.

Masirah moves towards child-friendly living

BALQEES AL ORAIMI

MUSCAT, MAY 11

N a remarkable community initiative, the Executive Office of Healthy Masirah Island recently launched a pioneering programme titled “Child-Friendly Home and Community” as part of national efforts to promote child health and strengthen local environments.

The initiative was carried out in collaboration with the Directorate-General of Health Services in Al Sharqiyah South Governorate — represented by the Department of Health Education and Community Health Initiatives, the Integrate Child Care Programme for under-fives, and the Administrative Services Office in the wilayat.

Spanning two days, the programme featured a range of awareness and training activities focused on children's health and education.

Highlights included a sign language workshop for children, a health lecture titled “Smart Breakfast”, and interactive sessions on integrated child healthcare, reflecting the local community’s strong commitment to early childhood well-being.

A community workshop was hosted at the Masirah Sports and Cultural Club, under the auspices of Shaikh Abdulhamid bin Ali al Abri, Deputy Wali of Masirah. The event brought together community leaders, government officials, members of the Omani Women's Association, kindergarten representatives and members of the wilayat's health committees.

It served as a platform for discussing national and international laws on children's rights and introduced the standards of the "Child-Friendly Home and Community" programme in a way that respects Omani social and cultural contexts.

Adel bin Khadim al Zarai, Head of Administrative Services and General Coordinator of Healthy Masirah Island, emphasised Oman's deep commitment to child welfare through the development of quality programmes that promote healthy



The initiative marks a significant step towards achieving sustainable goals in Masirah.

growth and development.

“The initiative is part of the Ministry of Health’s ‘Healthy Cities and Villages’ initiative and relies heavily on volunteerism and broad community participation,” he said, adding that the programme empowers families to apply child-friendly home standards and monitor progress in meeting children’s health, social and psychological needs.

The Child-Friendly Home Programme aims to create a safe and healthy home environment that supports a child's growth

and development, while the Child-Friendly Community component focuses on building a comprehensive social and environmental system within neighbourhoods that promotes children's rights, learning and participation.

This initiative marks a significant step towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Masirah, laying the foundation for a future of secure and healthy childhoods in line with Oman Vision 2040, which places human well-being at the heart of national development.



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

إعلان مزايمة استثمارية
Investment Announcement

Investment Announcement No.: (3/2025)
**Bidding for the Construction, Management and Operation of Marina
for Luxury Tourist Yachts in the Wilayat of Qurayyat, Muscat Governorate**

The Internal Investment Committee of the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology announces the launch of the following Bidding for local and international companies and investors specialized in the construction of marine ports. Interested parties are invited to submit investment proposals in accordance with the terms outlined in this announcement and as detailed in the tender documents and attachments.

ANNOUNCEMENT DATE	DOCUMENT PURCHASING DATE	CLARIFICATION PERIODS	CLOSING DATE	DOCUMENT FEES
12/05/2025	12/05/2025 to 22/06/2025	18/06/2025 to 06/07/2025	17/08/2025 12:00 AM	100 Omani Rials (non-refundable)

- Document fee should be paid by bank transfer only to the Ministry's account number **0423076490490027** Bank Muscat.
- The payment receipt must be sent to investment@mtcit.gov.om.
- The bidding document will be shared via email.
- The Investment proposals must include all the requirements mentioned in the Bidding document.
- The Investment proposal must be valid for at least 12 months and should be signed and stamped.
- All investment proposals should be sent as PDF to investment@mtcit.gov.om.
- For any other inquiries, you can reach us via the following contact details:

PHONE NUMBER	E-mail
24685340 24685341 24685091	investment@mtcit.gov.om

INTERNAL INVESTMENT COMMITTEE






@mtcitoman

www.mtcit.gov.om

OVER 1.8
MILLION
REGISTERED
VEHICLES
IN OMAN



MUSCAT: The number of registered vehicles in the Sultanate of Oman is 1,776,642 by the end of March 2025.

Statistics issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) indicated that private registrations accounted for 79.2 per cent of the total number of vehicles, amounting to 1,407,472.

Commercially registered vehicles accounted for 14.7 per cent, with 261,527 vehicles. Rental vehicles accounted for 40,678 vehicles, representing 2.3 per cent and taxis accounted for 28,307 vehicles, representing 1.6 per cent.

In terms of weight, the number of vehicles weighing less than 3 tonnes reached 1,612,032, representing 90.7 per cent of the total number of registered vehicles in the Sultanate of Oman.



MUSCAT GOVERNORATE MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

Advertisement No. (14/2025)

Companies specialized in the field and registered with **Tender Board**, may obtain Prequalification documents for the website through the following link: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) against non-refundable fees as mentioned below starting from the date of this announcement and until the end of deadline stipulated below.

Reference No.	Description	Deadline for Document Submission
(PRE/25/074)	Request for Prequalification for the Appointment of a Specialist to Study Structural Building Drawings Review System	22/06/2025

1. Participated companies shall submit their Documents electronically in the above mentioned website.
2. Clarification and Support:
 - For any inquiries regarding Prequalification, please send it through e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>).
 - For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om) or call (+968 24402200).

WORLD

SHORT TAKES



South Korea's Han Duck-soo speaks during a press conference, in Seoul. — Reuters

SOUTH KOREA
RULING PARTY
SELECTS CANDIDATE

SEOUL: South Korea's People Power Party registered former labour minister Kim Moon-soo as its official presidential candidate on Sunday, a day after it attempted to cancel his candidacy. The ruling People Power Party (PPP) has been in turmoil since former president Yoon Suk Yeol was ousted after he declared martial law in December.

Last week, Kim won the PPP's primary to run as its candidate in presidential elections on June 3. But before dawn on Saturday, his nomination was cancelled and the party moved to replace him with ex-prime minister Han Duck-soo, who had resigned to contest the race initially as an independent.

The attempt however failed when party members voted down a motion to switch the presidential candidate from Kim to Han — automatically reinstating Kim as the nominee. "Today, I have completed the registration process for the presidential candidacy. I would like to express my gratitude to all the citizens who have shown concern and to my fellow party members," Kim told reporters after he registered his candidacy at the National Election Commission. — AFP

FAMILIES PROTEST
AFTER BORDER
EVENT CANCELLED



Families protest at the US-Mexico border, in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. — Reuters

CIUDAD JUAREZ: Families separated by the US-Mexico border staged a demonstration on both sides of the boundary, where US President Donald Trump's aggressive anti-migrant policies forced the cancellation of a Mother's Day reunion event. The American military last week set up a zone in Texas on the US southern border where troops are authorised to detain people crossing illegally.

The event scheduled for Saturday, one day before Mother's Day, was meant to bring together undocumented migrants in the US with their family members in Mexico. "We have been doing this since 2016 without any problems, and now we have been banned from using this section of the border," Irma Cruz of the Border Network said, calling the move "devastating."

The group urged the 100 families that had signed up for the reunion event to join a protest in the Mexican border city of Ciudad Juarez. It also called on families in El Paso, the Texas city across from Ciudad Juarez, to demonstrate too. — AFP

INTENSIVE OPERATION

Forces contain fires at Sudan fuel depot



Sudan's civil defence forces said they had "fully contained" fires that erupted at the main fuel depot and other strategic sites in Port Sudan. Civil defence director Osman Atta said the fires — involving "large quantities of petroleum reserves" — were brought under control following an intensive operation using "foam materials" and a "meticulously executed plan". The fires caused by a strike on the fuel depot had spread across "warehouses filled with fuel". — AFP

CASUALTIES REPORTS

Over 100 dead after flooding in Congo



More than 100 people have died after flooding in a village near the shores of Lake Tanganyika in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The flooding, which affected the village of Kasaba, comes at a vulnerable moment for the Central African nation. Samy Kalodji, administrator of Fizi territory in South Kivu province where the village is located, said late on Saturday that reports from the area "indicated more than 100 deaths". — Reuters

ROAD TRAGEDY

Overcrowded bus crashes in Sri Lanka



An overcrowded bus carrying dozens of Buddhist pilgrims plummeted into a precipice in Sri Lanka on Sunday, killing at least 21 and injuring 24. The roof and side panels of the bus were sheared off, and more than half the seats were ripped from the floor of the vehicle, which landed wheels up into a tea plantation. The bus was carrying around 70 passengers through the central hilly region of Kotmale. — AFP

AT LEAST
THREE DIE,
INCLUDING
TWO
CHILDREN, IN
LIBYA-ITALY
CROSSING

ROME: At least three people have died, including two children aged 3 and 4, in a Mediterranean sea crossing from Libya to Italy, a German sea rescue charity said on Sunday, adding that it had rescued 59 survivors. The migrants were intercepted on Saturday on a rubber boat floating adrift south of the Italian island of Lampedusa that had been spotted by a surveillance aircraft of the EU border agency Frontex. "By the time (we) reached the rubber boat at around 4.30 pm (1430

GMT), it was too late to help some of the people," the RESQSHIP charity said in a statement. "Two bodies of infants aged 3 and 4 were handed over to us," the charity quoted one of its paramedics identified only as Rania as saying. "They had died the day before, probably of thirst."

A man was found unconscious and declared dead after attempts to resuscitate him were unsuccessful, RESQSHIP said, adding that it was told by survivors that another migrant had drowned on Friday

after going overboard. Many of the survivors, who were taken to Lampedusa, suffered chemical burns from salt water and fuel, the group said. Two children and four adults in critical condition were handed over to the Italian coast guard to be brought ashore more quickly. The rubber boat had set off from the port of Zawiyah in western Libya on Wednesday, but its engine failed after one day of navigation, leaving the migrants on board exposed to wind and weather, the NGO said. — Reuters

Border town sees people
return after ceasefire

RESIDENTS of the town in Indian-administered Kashmir worst hit by the deadliest fighting in decades with Pakistan trickled back on Sunday, a day after a surprise truce. Over 60 people died in days of days of missile, drone and artillery attacks that came close to all-out war until the ceasefire, which was holding on Sunday despite early alleged violations. Most of the dead were civilians and the majority Pakistanis. On the Indian side, Poonch on the Indian-run part of divided Kashmir bore the brunt, with at least 12 people killed at 49 injured, according to officials. They included 12-year-old Zian Khan and his twin sister Urwa Fatima, hit by an artillery shell on Wednesday as their parents tried to leave the town. The majority of the 60,000-strong population fled in cars, on buses and even on foot, leaving only a few thousand to brave it out.

Tariq Ahmad arrived back on Sunday bringing back 20 people in his bus as signs of life and activity returned to Poonch's streets. "Most who fled are still afraid and will wait and watch to see if this agreement holds," the 26-year-old driver said at the main bus terminal. "Luckily, I managed to pick up 20 people from nearby villages who wanted to check if their homes and belongings survived the intense Pakistani shelling."

The ceasefire was agreed on Saturday after four days of fighter, missile, drone and artillery attacks which killed at least 60 people and sent thousands fleeing — the worst violence since India and Pakistan's last open conflict in 1999. The "full and immediate" halt

Trump praised the leaders of India and Pakistan for understanding that "it was time to stop the current aggression", and also pledging to increase trade "substantially" with both nations.



People gather at a bus station in the main town of Poonch district in Jammu region. — AFP

to hostilities was unexpectedly announced by US President Donald Trump on social media, who said that it followed a "long night of talks mediated by the United States".

Trump later praised the leaders of India and Pakistan for understanding that "it was time to stop the current aggression", and also pledging to increase trade "substantially" with both nations. But India's foreign secretary said early on Sunday that New Delhi had retaliated after Pakistan's "repeated violations" of the truce. Pakistan said it "remains committed" to the ceasefire and that its forces were handling violations by India with "responsibility and restraint".

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on X that his country -- which has long sought international mediation in Kashmir — "appreciates" the US intervention.

India has consistently opposed mediation, however, and observers were sceptical of the truce. News of the ceasefire was met with relief from countries including Britain and Iran, as well as the United Nations.

China, which borders India and Pakistan, said it was "willing to continue playing a constructive role" and remained concerned with any escalation, according to state-run news agency Xinhua. "The days ahead will be critical to see whether the ceasefire holds and gives way to relative normalcy," read an editorial in Dawn, Pakistan's leading English language newspaper. "While foreign friends can certainly help create a conducive atmosphere, it is Islamabad and New Delhi that will have to do the heavy lifting themselves to secure peace."

— AFP

ISRAELI JETS TARGET PALESTINIAN TENTS

GAZA: Gaza's civil defence on Sunday reported eight deaths, including four young children, in an Israeli air strike on tents housing displaced people in the southern city of Khan Yunis. Israeli fighter jets targeted three tents housing dozens of displaced people overnight, killing "eight people, including four children aged two to five and two women", civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal said.

The Israeli military, which resumed its offensive in Gaza on March 18 after a two-month truce, did not immediately comment on the strike. Footage shows rescuers in the dark evacuating bodies by ambulance, one of them in a white plastic body bag while the other was wrapped in a blanket, as well as a wounded baby. — AFP

SHORT TAKES



A CHEGA far-right party's member holds a Portugal's flag, at Quarteira market in Algarve. — AFP

INCUMBENT RIGHT EYES PORTUGAL SNAP POLL

LISBON: Portugal will hold its third early elections in three years next Sunday, with polls suggesting that outgoing centre-right Prime Minister Luis Montenegro may have an edge in another hung parliament. Montenegro triggered the snap polls when he lost a confidence vote he had himself proposed after the opposition called for an inquiry into potential conflicts of interest related to a family consultancy firm.

Opinion polls suggest the results of the May 18 vote will be similar to those of the last election in March 2024, which produced a hung parliament. The Democratic Alliance has 32 per cent support, against 26.7 per cent for the main opposition Socialist Party (PS) led by 48-year-old economist Pedro Nuno Santos, according to an online poll aggregator run by Radio Renascenca.

The far-right Chega party, led by 42-year-old former TV sports commentator Andre Ventura, appears on track to finish third once again, making it a potential kingmaker. Throughout the campaign, however, Montenegro has repeatedly rejected any kind of alliance with the anti-immigration Chega, which critics accuse of promoting xenophobia. — AFP

MASS DEDICATED TO SOLDIERS



A woman reacts, on the day of a mass for soldiers who were killed in Ecuador's Amazon region during an armed confrontation with a criminal group, in Quito, Ecuador. Eleven soldiers were killed and one was injured in Ecuador's Amazon region during an armed confrontation with a criminal group, the country's defense ministry said. The troops were attacked during an operation targeting illegal mining in the Alto Punino area. — Reuters

UK PLANS TO END 'FAILED FREE MARKET' IN IMMIGRATION

LONDON: The British government outlined plans on Sunday to end what it called the "failed free market experiment" in mass immigration by restricting skilled worker visas to graduate-level jobs and forcing businesses to increase training for local workers. Prime Minister Keir Starmer is under pressure to cut net migration after the success of Nigel Farage's right-wing, anti-immigration Reform UK party in local elections this month.

Under the government's new

plans, skilled visas will only be granted to people in graduate jobs, while visas for lower-skilled roles will only be issued in areas critical to the nation's industrial strategy, and in return businesses must increase training of British workers. Companies in the care sector will no longer be able to seek visas for workers recruited abroad.

The Labour government said the changes will be part of a policy document, known as a white paper, to be published on Monday setting out how ministers plan to reduce

immigration. High levels of legal migration were one of the major drivers behind the vote to leave the European Union in 2016 with voters unhappy about the free movement of workers across the bloc. "We inherited a failed immigration system where the previous government replaced free movement with a free market experiment," Yvette Cooper, the British interior minister, said in a statement. "We are taking decisive action to restore control and order to the immigration system." — Reuters

Zelensky cautious after Putin proposes direct talks

UKRAINIAN

President Volodymyr Zelensky responded guardedly

on Sunday to a proposal from Russian President Vladimir Putin of rapid direct talks aimed at ending the war, saying Kyiv was willing to talk but only after Moscow agreed to a ceasefire. Putin made his proposal in a 1:30 am televised statement from the Kremlin that coincided with prime time in the US, where President Donald Trump has been pressing both sides to agree to a truce of at least 30 days and stop the three-year-old war.

Trump, who says he wants to be remembered as a peacemaker and has repeatedly promised to end the war, called it "A potentially great day for Russia and Ukraine!" However, Putin suggested that any ceasefire was a matter for the talks he proposed for Istanbul next Thursday, May 15. And minutes later, senior Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov told reporters the talks must take into account both an abandoned 2022 draft peace deal and the current situation on the ground — shorthand for Kyiv agreeing to permanent neutrality in return for a security guarantee and accepting that Russia controls swathes of Ukraine.

Putin sent Russia's armed forces into Ukraine in February 2022, unleashing a conflict that has killed hundreds of thousands of soldiers and triggered the gravest confrontation between Russia and the West since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. With Russian forces grinding forward, the Kremlin chief has offered few, if any, concessions so far. He proposed what he said would be "direct negotiations without any preconditions", making no mention of the terms later set out by Ushakov.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, British PM Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron visit the Memorial Wall of Fallen Defenders of Ukraine, in Kyiv. — Reuters

Putin dismissed what he said was an attempt to lay down "ultimatums", and his foreign ministry spelled out that talks about the root causes of the conflict must precede discussions of a ceasefire

Putin said he did not rule out both sides agreeing in Türkiye on "some new truces, a new ceasefire" — but one that would be the first step towards a "sustainable" peace. Zelensky said it was "a positive sign that the Russians have finally begun to consider ending the war" but that "the very first step in truly ending any war is a ceasefire."

"We expect Russia to confirm a ceasefire — full, lasting, and reliable - starting tomorrow, May 12, and Ukraine is ready to meet," he said.

For his part, Trump added, in his post on Truth Social: "Think of the hundreds of thousands of lives that will be saved as this never ending 'bloodbath' hopefully comes to an end."

Putin's proposal came hours after major European powers demanded on Saturday in Kyiv that Putin agree to an unconditional 30-day ceasefire or face "massive"

new sanctions.

Putin dismissed what he said was an attempt to lay down "ultimatums", and his foreign ministry spelled out that talks about the root causes of the conflict must precede discussions of a ceasefire.

French President Emmanuel Macron said Putin's proposal for talks showed that he was looking for a way forward, but also trying to buy time. "It's a first step but it's not enough," Macron told reporters on his way back from Ukraine early on Sunday. "An unconditional ceasefire is not preceded by negotiations."

Putin said Russia had proposed several ceasefires, including a moratorium on striking energy facilities, an Easter truce and most recently a 72-hour truce during celebrations marking 80 years since Soviet victory in World War Two. — Reuters

Pope Leo XIV appeals for 'no more war' in first Sunday message

VATICAN CITY: Pope Leo XIV appealed to the world's major powers for "no more war" in his first Sunday message to crowds in St. Peter's Square since his election as pontiff. The new pope, elected on May 8, called for an "authentic and lasting peace" in Ukraine, a ceasefire in Gaza, and the release of all Israeli hostages held by Palestinian group Hamas. Speaking in fluent Italian, Leo also welcomed the recent fragile ceasefire between India and Pakistan, negotiated overnight, and said he was praying to God to grant the world the "miracle of peace."

"No more war!" the pope said, repeating a frequent call of the late Pope Francis and noting the recent 80th anniversary of the end of World War Two, in which some 60 million people were killed.

Leo said today's world was living through "the dramatic scenario of a Third World War being fought

piecemeal," again repeating a phrase coined by Francis. Tens of thousands of people in St. Peter's Square and on the Via della Conciliazione leading to the Vatican broke into applause at the call for peace on what was a joyous occasion despite Leo's solemn message.

The new pope said he carries in his heart the "suffering of the beloved people of Ukraine."

Hours after Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed direct talks with Ukraine aimed at ending the bloody three-year war, Leo appealed for negotiations to reach an "authentic, just and lasting peace."

The pope also said he was "profoundly saddened" by the war in Gaza, calling for an immediate ceasefire, humanitarian aid and release of the remaining hostages held by Hamas. Leo said he was glad to hear of the recent India-Pakistan ceasefire and hoped negotiations would lead to a lasting



Pope Leo XIV gestures after delivering the Regina Caeli prayer, in The Vatican. — AFP

accord between the nuclear-armed neighbors. He added: "But there are so many other conflicts in the world!"

Leo's first Sunday address coincided with a previously planned pilgrimage to Rome by marching bands from around the world. Minutes before the pope addressed the crowd, bands marched up the broad boulevard leading to the Vatican playing songs such as Y.M.C.A. by the Village People, the theme from the film Rocky, and music by John Philip Sousa, who composed the marching classic "Stars and Stripes Forever".

Peruvian Gladys Ruiz, who lives in Rome, was among the crowd in the square, estimated at more than 100,000 by Italian authorities. Calling Leo a "Peruvian pope" Ruiz said his election is "a great honour for us". Leo has dual citizenship, having gained Peruvian citizenship in 2015. — Reuters

OPINION

Student voices need to be centred in education



SANDHYA RAO MEHTA

The writer is a Associate Professor, Dept of English and Translation, SQU

THERE is no doubt that there are major challenges facing education at every level today. These include aligning education with market requirements, the unprecedented challenges of technology, particularly Artificial Intelligence, as well as associated issues of learner motivation and purpose. As educationists debate endlessly on such issues, there is one major voice that is missing and that is of students themselves.

Education is changing today in more ways than we can imagine. It is not only that attention spans are reducing owing to social media content, but that the very purpose of education is being questioned. If AI, it is often asked, can produce papers and projects within minutes and replace an entire semester worth of content learning, what is the purpose of a classroom?

Researchers have recently been investigating this phenomenon in depth. Answers are fleeting and still developing. Although there are many stakeholders in the eduscape, students somehow are still placed well below the hierarchy of opinion makers.

Surely this needs to change.

What, for example, do young learners feel about traditional classrooms which are teacher-centric? What suggestions do they have about how teaching and learning can change to make it more constructive? What strategies make them retain information and ask questions and what forms of teaching leave them unmotivated?

The answers to these questions are not always predictable. School students, for example, often show preference for teachers to speak in class rather than watching videos most of the time, according to research. A gentle hand holding seems better than passively sharing digital shows with little to no clear instructions which are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Nor is hosting endless sessions of using AI in classes. Already, the novelty that Artificial Intelligence brought with it is waning as students realise that they are spending just as much time editing the text it has produced as they would if they were doing an assignment themselves.

Add to this the perpetual question of the value of higher education in a weak market

Education is changing today in more ways than we can imagine. It is not only that attention spans are reducing owing to social media content, but that the very purpose of education is being questioned

scenario. College degrees are simply not needed for many jobs today but our society values education for its own sake more than it does training youngsters with necessary skills which could potentially offer them higher standards of living.

Students have multiple stories to tell. One glance at social media is enough to show what they are thinking. Ranging from complaints about teachers reading from decades-old notes to the absence of technology altogether, students face the very harsh reality that education is just not giving them what they require and want today.

The solution is not to discipline students or to complain about the limitations of Gen Zs. In real terms, it involves listening to them by providing platforms for their voices. Again, research suggests that this needs to go beyond ticking off a box of having student representatives. It involves creating spaces where dialogues between students and other stakeholders is valued and constructive conversations could take place.

Empowering students today is the only way to ensure that they are given a real stake in their own futures.

NEW CHECKS STIR OLD MEMORIES ON POLISH-GERMAN BORDER

CÉLINE LE PEIOUX

Germany’s strict new border policy is bringing back memories of separation on the frontier with Poland, as Chancellor Friedrich Merz’s new government seeks to implement a promised crackdown on irregular migration.

On the bridge over the Neisse River separating the small German town of Guben from its Polish counterpart Gubin, a police officer can now be found periodically raising a red-and-white stop sign and inspecting vehicles.

The checks are aimed at enforcing the new government’s policy of pushing back anyone trying to enter Germany without the necessary documents, including most asylum seekers.

For Gubin resident Bartłomiej Bartczak, 47, “it brings back old memories” of when travel between the two countries was not as easy. “Suddenly, we’ve gone back to that time,” he said. “Now if I want to go to do some shopping in Guben I have to think about whether to take my passport. I didn’t have to before.”

“We went through all this when we were children, then we experienced this period with no border checks, no papers,” Bartczak, mayor of Gubin until last year, said.

Nevertheless, traffic over the bridge remained largely fluid on Friday afternoon, with police allowing most cars to pass while stopping larger vehicles. Similar checks could be witnessed at several points along the border with Germany’s biggest eastern neighbour.

Even though Merz’s government was at pains to say the new checks would not be an inconvenience to its neighbours, Poland was quick to express its irritation, urging Berlin to instead “concentrate on the EU’s external borders”.

Nevertheless, 64-year-old Fred Mahro, the mayor of Guben on the German side, said “it was important to act” on the immigration issue. Mahro, who hails from Merz’s conservative CDU party, said he hoped the new measures would “stay in place until the EU’s external borders are secured”.

Even though many Polish workers cross every day to their jobs in Germany, Mahro does not anticipate much disruption. “The police are so experienced that they can tell from the number plate whether they need to carry out a check,” he said.

Merz, who took office this week at the head of a coalition with the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD), made a crackdown on immigration a central part of his campaign in February’s general election. — AFP

Albanians vote in election seen as key test of EU path

BRISEIDA MEMA

ALBANIANS headed to the polls on Sunday to decide whether to give Prime Minister Edi Rama a fourth term or side with his longstanding rival in an election seen as crucial for the country’s European Union ambitions.

Voting began at 7:00 am (0500 GMT), with early voters like 25-year-old Anisa Bega expressing hope for “a better and safer future”, while 70-year-old Agim Lali called for “a peaceful vote so we can express our will and build a better Albania” for future generations.

As each voter cast their ballot, a dark blue indelible ink mark was applied to their finger to prevent fraud. More than 2,000 domestic and international observers have been deployed to monitor the process, as the international community views the election as a test of the Balkan nation’s fragile institutions following a bitter and divisive campaign between Rama and fellow political veteran Sali Berisha.

A smooth electoral process is especially important for Albania, the most pro-EU country in the region, which waited 13 years before accession negotiations officially started in July 2022.

This election faces an added challenge, with the foreign diaspora voting for the first time, as low wages drive emigration, particularly among young and educated Albanians to countries such as Germany and Italy. Nearly 246,000 Albanians outside the country are registered to vote, according to the Central Election Commission.

Their ballots, sent by registered post, must be returned to the polling station in their birthplace. The commission has reported delays in some areas, however, while media said there had been address errors in ballot shipments.



A woman casts her ballot at a voting station in Tirana on Sunday. — AFP

Approximately 3.7 million voters are eligible to choose between candidates from three coalitions, in the proportional vote after a campaign dominated by the rivalry between Rama and Berisha

Approximately 3.7 million voters are eligible to choose between candidates from three coalitions, in the proportional vote after a campaign dominated by the rivalry between Rama and Berisha.

Rama, 60, has led the Socialist Party since 2005 and is seeking a fourth straight term as prime minister. A former student leader opposed to the communist regime, he served as mayor of Tirana and minister of culture before taking office in 2013. His key pledge is to secure EU membership by 2030.

“Let’s wait for the people to speak,” said Rama after casting his vote, speaking to journalists.

Albanians should “vote for the future of their children in this country,” said Berisha as he left the polling booth. Opponents regularly accuse Rama of ties to organised crime. He denies the charge, declaring he would “withdraw from political life if anyone proves links to corruption or criminal groups”.

The 80-year-old right winger Berisha was Albania’s first post-communist president. His Democratic Party of Albania has

joined with around 20 other parties, hoping to remove Rama from office.

Echoing US President Donald Trump, Berisha has promised a “great Albania” centred on economic recovery. His campaign is being advised by the US Republican consultant Chris LaCivita.

Declared “persona non grata” by the United States and Britain for his alleged ties to organised crime and corruption, Berisha is under judicial investigation in Albania for “passive corruption by a high-ranking official”.

The Albanian judiciary has also been active during the campaign, launching several investigations that could affect the results. The Special Prosecutor’s Office Against Corruption and Organised Crime (SPAK) revealed that 33 former high-ranking officials, including former ministers, MPs, and local officials, were under investigation in 2024.

More than 20 officials, including former president Ilir Meta, a candidate from the “Great Albania” alliance, and the mayor of Tirana, a former ally of Rama, are awaiting the results in prison. — AFP

Win your fights to flourish



ABDULAZIZ
AL JAHDHAMI

The write is author,
translator and a
communications
professional

YOU are not the same person you were a year ago or even a week ago. You are constantly learning, evolving and adapting as life unfolds around you. While you cannot control everything that happens, you can control your attitude. And by doing so, you begin to master a change rather than letting it master you.

Think of a tree in autumn, shedding its leaves. This is not a sign of death or defeat, but a preparation to make space for renewal and new growth in the spring. People, like trees, go through seasons. We experience joy, disappointment, loss and transformation. Therefore, letting go is part of that natural cycle, it is not just healthy, but necessary.

Of course, letting go is rarely easy. Emotional wounds from past mistakes, broken relationships, or unexpected life changes can weigh heavily. However, struggling with the past doesn't mean you are stuck, but it means you are trying to move forward. That is a sign of strength.

Research suggests that letting go can refresh your brain. It can ease emotional pain, help you release grief and even build resilience. By consciously moving forward, you begin to create healthier and more positive associations with your past.

At some point, we all face a truth: holding on hurts more than letting go. It is natural to cling to what once mattered deeply. We often confuse letting go with weakness or failure. But the reality is that letting go is not giving up, it is a bold, compassionate act. It is choosing to grow, to heal and to trust that the future holds something better.

Giving up implies walking away out of defeat or fear. Letting go, on the other hand, is a thoughtful decision. It means acknowledging what no longer serves you and choosing peace over continued pain. It is turning frustration into motivation rather than letting it consume you. You have the power to decide how you see and respond to life.

Letting go is hard because it brings grief. It is not just the loss of a person, job, or dream - it is the loss of the future you imagined. We stick to what was because of the time, effort, or emotion we have invested or associated with. Though, this doesn't fix what is broken, it only delays your healing.

In fact, letting go marks an act of self-respect. It is the quiet, but powerful declaration: "I deserve better," or "This part of my life is done." It is closing a chapter not with bitterness, but with acceptance. True strength lies in knowing when to stop

We experience joy,
disappointment,
loss and
transformation.
Therefore, letting
go is part of that
natural cycle, it is
not just healthy, but
necessary

fighting for something that no longer fits your life and having the courage to start a new chapter, even when the next page is blank.

Letting go is not an end - it is a beginning. It is a step into uncertainty, yes, but also a step towards something greater, even if you can't see it yet. So be mindful of how you spend your energy. Don't exhaust yourself trying to fix what only exists in your thoughts or expectations and not in real life.

You will know it is time to let go when emotional weight, stress, anger, sadness, begins to take a charge on your mental well-being, especially in relationships.

Remember: the world is larger than this moment. Things may never go back to how they were, but that is not always a bad thing. Sometimes, an ending is just the start of something new.

Letting go means honouring growth, accepting what cannot be changed, and choosing peace over pain. Though it may be accompanied by grief, uncertainty, or fear, letting go opens the door to healing, renewal and the possibility of something better. Life moves forward, and so must you. Just let the past fall away like autumn leaves, and trust that the ground beneath you knows how to catch new roots.

GAZA WAR CASTS SHADOW OVER CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

FRANCOIS BECKER

Israel may ban international media from entering Gaza, but the war in the Palestinian territory will feature at the Cannes film festival this year, including in a documentary whose protagonist was killed in an Israeli strike.

Fatima Hassouna, a 25-year-old Gazan photojournalist, is the main character in Iranian film-maker Sepideh Farsi's documentary "Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk".

An Israeli air strike killed Hassouna along with 10 relatives in her family home in Gaza on April 16, a day after she learnt the film had been selected for one of the festival's sidebar sections. Only her mother survived.

The documentary is likely to draw attention at a festival where the conflict was already present last year, including when actor Cate Blanchett caused a stir on the red carpet with a dress that many saw as a nod to the Palestinian flag. Cannes 2024 came more than six months after October 7, 2023, attack triggering a devastating Israeli military campaign in Gaza in retaliation. The death toll in the besieged coastal territory has soared, with US President Donald Trump calling for the resettlement of Gazans so the United States can turn it into "the Riviera of the Middle East".

After a two-month aid blockade, Israel has announced an expanded offensive that will displace "most" Gaza residents, drawing international condemnation.

From Tuesday's opening ceremony onwards, audiences will be closely watching celebrities to see if they take a stand on the conflict. British movie star Tilda Swinton at the Berlinale festival in February lashed out at "internationally enabled mass murder" and "development of riviera property", in an apparent reference to Trump's comments. Two fiction features are also likely to spark interest in sections parallel to the main competition. Gazan twin brothers Arab and Tarzan Nasser will screen "Once Upon a Time in Gaza", a tale of two friends.

The film — in the Un Certain Regard section — is the latest from the exiled duo to show at the festival, with several of their earlier works set in Gaza but filmed in Jordan.

And Israeli director Nadav Lapid, a critic of his government's policies, will be showing "Yes" in the Directors' Fortnight programme.

The Israeli offensive launched in retaliation has killed at least 52,787 people in Gaza, mostly civilians, according to data from the Gaza's health ministry, which the United Nations considers to be reliable. Farsi's documentary shines light on one of these lives lost. The film-maker, a refugee from Iran, made "Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk" from video phone calls with Hassouna over more than 200 days of war.

On April 15, she rang the young Palestinian to tell her the film had been selected for Cannes, and they immediately started trying to organise for her to attend the French festival. — AFP

Middle powers in the US-China trade war

AS US tariffs begin to reshape global trade flows, many countries are worried that a tsunami of discounted Chinese goods, originally destined for America, will hit their shores. To keep them out, especially as recessionary pressures mount, some may be inclined to impose their own tariffs on Chinese imports. In that case, China would be cut off entirely from international trade, delivering an unexpected victory for US President Donald Trump, who would undoubtedly claim credit for this new Great Wall.

To avert this scenario, China must pursue short-term policies that align with its long-term goal of building a global governance architecture for a multipolar world. China harbours no illusions that it will be the twenty-first century's hegemon. India will inevitably become a superpower by mid-century. Europe might join their ranks, too, as Trump's might-is-right worldview seems poised to accelerate and deepen European integration.

The current Sino-American standoff seemingly reflects a shared understanding that avoiding the Thucydides Trap – when tensions between an incumbent hegemon and a rising power lead to conflict – will require an eventual agreement on respective spheres of influence. Both sides' defensive efforts to expand their global reach have devolved into a crude form of imperialism. But it remains to be seen how the trade war will factor into this contest. The tariffs that the US and China imposed against one another have effectively decoupled their trade. Will countries hit by his "reciprocal" tariffs be cowed into joining the US sphere of influence as part of bilateral trade deals?

The answer is no, so long as China respects its trade partners' right to befriend all superpowers. In such a scenario, the benefits of trading with China remain too large to forgo. But to take advantage of these benefits and maintain their autonomy, middle powers will need to pursue multilateral cooperation.

As a first step, middle powers must convince China that it is in its long-term interest to stop the potential fire sale of goods intended



The Chinese government must also focus on boosting domestic consumption.



WING THYE
WOO

The writer is
Professor Emeritus
of Economics at
the University of
California, Davis,
is University Chair
Professor at the
China Economic
Research Institute
at Liaoning
University

for the US market, which means voluntary export restraints. But the Chinese government must also focus on boosting domestic consumption by lowering income and value-added taxes, expanding social-welfare programmes (especially for healthcare, childcare and pensions), and easing the hukou household registration system – which regulates access to social services – in major coastal cities. Moreover, China can generate higher demand for services by attracting more foreign tourists and students, and by incentivising Chinese tourists to travel domestically.

To cushion the adjustment pains and lower the budget deficit in the medium term, China should double down on supply-side structural reforms and overhaul the financial sector, which would unleash new productive forces. For example, if market-driven medium-size private banks were permitted to emerge, they could nurture the employment-intensive small and medium-size enterprises that large state-owned banks have traditionally discriminated against. Loosening capital controls would also support the renminbi's internationalisation to the status of the dollar and Shanghai's emergence as a global financial centre on par with London and New York. The escalating US-China trade war, and the competing technological

standards that stem from deeper geopolitical fragmentation, will cause substantial damage to middle powers. Being forced into a sphere of influence would erode these countries' sovereignty and limit their export markets. To avoid becoming pawns in a proxy war, middle powers should form a union of independent buffer states based on the same principles as the United Nations and the World Trade Organisation. Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), together with Japan and South Korea, should propose an Atlantic-Pacific Sustainability Pact to the European Union and the United Kingdom. Practicing open regionalism, APSP would have three main tasks. The first would be to create a free-trade area that is open to all countries, with an eye to building the biggest possible integrated market. Asean members, Japan and South Korea could then merge the main Asia-Pacific trade agreements under the economic umbrella of APSP.

The second task would be to institute a nonpartisan peace caucus in the UN and other global and regional forums to prevent tensions between the US and China (as well as Russia) from impeding international coordination on shared global problems such as climate change and pandemics.

©Project Syndicate, 2025

SPORTS

Oman clinch second consecutive West Asia Beach Volleyball title

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, MAY 11

OMAN'S national men's beach volleyball team was crowned champions of the West Asia Men's Tour, hosted in the Qatari capital, Doha, with the participation of top teams from across the continent. The title came after a deserved 2-0 victory over the host nation, Qatar.

The national team, led by the outstanding duo of Mazen al Hashmi and Hood al Jalboubi, delivered an exceptional performance throughout the tournament, proving their worth as front-runners. They entered the final match with great confidence and clear on-court chemistry.

The final began with Oman asserting dominance early. Mazen al Hashmi opened the scoring with a powerful spike, followed by a successful serve from Hood al Jalboubi to make it 2-0. The duo continued their brilliance as Hood added two more points through powerful serves, and Mazen extended the lead to 5-0.

Qatar attempted a comeback through player Mahmoud Essam, who scored his team's first point. However, Hood al Jalboubi responded with another strong serve that deflected off a Qatari player and out of bounds, adding to Oman's tally.

Saif al Majeed scored Qatar's second point, but Oman's cohesive performance and their ability to capitalise on their opponent's mistakes saw them widen the gap to 7-2.

Oman maintained control, exploiting Qatar's shaky defense, extending their lead to 15-9. Near the end of the set, Mazen al Hashmi

The national team, led by the outstanding duo of Mazen al Hashmi and Hood al Jalboubi, delivered an exceptional performance throughout the tournament, proving their worth as front-runners. They entered the final match with great confidence and clear on-court chemistry



Oman finish 1st, Qatar the runners-up and Bahrain 3rd in West Asia Beach Volleyball championship

showcased his skill with a clever shot for point 16, followed by a Qatari error from Saif al Majeed that gifted Oman another point. Oman closed the first set comfortably with a 21-13 win.

In the second set, Mazen al Hashmi once again led the way with a successful block to open the scoring. Qatar momentarily leveled the score, but Oman quickly regained control as Qatar continued to falter. Oman gradually extended their lead to 14-10.

Despite Qatar's attempts to rally, Oman maintained focus, and the duo of Al Hashmi and Al Jalboubi sealed

the second set 21-14, securing the match and clinching the West Asia Tour title deservedly.

National team coach Badr al Subhi expressed his delight with the achievement, saying, We congratulate Oman and all beach volleyball enthusiasts on this well-deserved title, which marks our second consecutive win after claiming the previous edition. The players rose to the occasion today, delivering a focused and disciplined performance from start to finish, which enabled us to secure a comfortable victory over a

strong team like Qatar. Al Subhi described the win as a key milestone in the team's preparation journey, adding, Our focus now shifts to the upcoming tournament in Jordan. We will give the players a short break of no more than three days before resuming serious preparations through an intensive training camp aimed at boosting our physical and technical readiness to continue our success. He concluded by thanking the Oman Volleyball Association for its support of the national team.



Sultanate of Oman
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

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

Tender No.	Project Category	Location	Last Day to Purchase Tender Documents	Last Date of Tender Submission
6/2025	Construction & Maintenance	CONSTRUCTION OF PLAYERS CHANGING ROOMS AND FENCING HALL AT SEEB SPORTS STADIUM	24/05/2025	23/06/2025
7/2025	Consulting Offices	CONSULTANCY SERVICES (DESIGN AND SUPERVISION) AL BURAIMI CULTURE AND YOUTH CENTER AT AL BURAIMI, AL BURAIMI GOVERNORATE	24/05/2025	23/06/2025
8/2025	Construction of ports roads bridge rail way dams and maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF ASPHALT ROADS AND ALLIED WORKS IN CAMEL RACE TRACK AT MAHDAH AL BURAIMI GOVERNORATE	24/05/2025	23/06/2025
9/2025	Construction of ports roads bridge rail way dams and maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF ASPHALT ROADS AND ALLIED WORKS IN CAMEL RACE TRACK AT HAIMA AL WUSTA GOVERNORATE	24/05/2025	23/06/2025
10/2025	Construction of ports roads bridge rail way dams and maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF ASPHALT ROADS AND ALLIED WORKS IN CAMEL RACE TRACK AT JALAM BANI BU ALI AL SOUTH SHARQIAH GOVERNORATE	24/05/2025	23/06/2025
11/2025	Construction & Maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF CAMEL RACE TRACK, RAILING AND GATES AT MAHDAH AL BURAIMI GOVERNORATE	24/05/2025	23/06/2025
12/2025	Construction & Maintenance	DESIGN AND BUILD CONTRACT OF CAMEL RACE TRACK RAILING AND GATES AT HAIMA AL WUSTA GOVERNORATE	24/05/2025	23/06/2025
13/2025	Construction & Maintenance	MAINTENANCE OF CAMEL RACE TRACK RAILING AND GATES AT JALAM BANI BU ALI SOUTH SHARQIYA GOVERNORATE	24/05/2025	23/06/2025

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

INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

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

Competition heats up at Asian Beach Handball championship

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, MAY 11

The quarters phase of the 10th Asian Men's and Women's Beach Handball Championship 2025 — qualifiers for the 2026 Beach Handball World Championship — will kick off on Monday at the sands court at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex. A total of six matches will be played including two matches for the women's category. In today's matches, all the eight qualified teams will eye to secure slots in the semis which will take place on Tuesday while the final is scheduled on Thursday with one day rest in between. The Asian Handball Federation (AHF) decided to give the opportunity for all the teams to get the chance for moving into the second round of the tournament with this playing format. The first-placed team in Group A will play the fourth-positioned team in Group B. Similarly, for the other groups, the different teams will play against different ranking teams in the group order. In the women's competition, Philippines will meet Hong Kong, and the match will kick off at 6:00 pm and it will be followed by Vietnam and India match which will begin at 7:00 pm.

THRILLING COMPETITION Salim al Saadi, Event Director, said that the group matches of



A total of six matches will be played.

the tournament featured strong competition. “ I believe the competitions will heats up as the event will move into the next round. I am expecting a thrilling games especially some of the teams will eye to go further in the event and secure slot to the IHF World Championship,” he added “ I would like to thank all the participating teams and delegations for their commitment and cooperation with the organizing committee to register the required success in this tournament. All the organizing committee members and volunteers are working very hard for an exceptional closing ceremony that will be remembered by all participating teams. The event will include various segments and honor government and private entities that contributed to the

success of the tournament, along with awarding the top three teams in both the men's and women's categories,” he ended Oman's national team former player, Maher bin Saif al Dugheishi, a member of the Asian Beach Handball Committee, was selected by the technical committee to be as a match supervisor in this tournament. This is the his fourth participation for him in Asian beach handball tournaments as he had previously served as a supervisor in qualifiers held in Iran (2022), Bali, Indonesia (2023), and Bangkok, Thailand (2024). He is the only Omani nominated by the Asian Handball Federation for this supervisory role, a testament to their confidence in his capabilities. On the other hand, Oman's national team players including Asaad al Hasani and his teammate Said al Hasani are the most experienced players from the national team. Both players had represented Oman in several editions of the IHF World Championship and delivered strong performances in this tournament. Asaad typically plays as a utility player (joker) while Said is a core member of the starting lineup. Both players are among the key players for the national team head coach Hamood al Hasani who will rely on them in the forthcoming matches.

SHORT TAKES



Oman was represented at the meeting by Dr Abdullah bin Khamis Ambusaidi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Education for Education, Deputy Chairman of Oman Olympic Committee. — ONA

MEETING OF HEADS OF GCC OLYMPIC COMMITTEES

MUSCAT: Represented by Oman Olympic Committee (OOC), the Sultanate of Oman participated in the 37th meeting of heads of GCC Olympic Committees, held in Kuwait today.

Oman was represented at the meeting by Dr Abdullah bin Khamis Ambusaidi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Education for Education, Deputy Chairman of Oman Olympic Committee.

The meeting looked into the report filed by the organising committee of the 3rd GCC Beach Games (Muscat 2025) held in Muscat Governorate from April 5 to 11, 2025.

The meeting’s participants expressed thanks and gratitude to the Sultanate of Oman for the efforts it made to ensure the success of the the 3rd GCC Beach Games. — ONA



Shotokan Karate members after the promotions

BLACK BELT PROMOTIONS FOR SHOTOKAN KARATE

MUSCAT: In a significant milestone for martial arts in the Sultanate of Oman, the Shotokan Karate Association celebrated the promotion of several of its members to black belt ranks following a rigorous examination held on Saturday, May 10.

Four senior practitioners, Al Yaqdhan al Abdali, Alawi Baomar, Shaima Baomar, and Bayan al Abdali were elevated to the esteemed 3rd Dan Black Belt level, marking years of commitment and excellence in their discipline. While Rimas al Wahibi earned the 2nd Dan rank, showcasing advanced skills and consistent dedication. The 1st Dan Black Belt was awarded to a group of promising karatekas, including Sulaiman al Hinai, Shehab Baomar, Mais al Rasbi, Munther Ghassan, Ammar al Siyabi, Dia Shaheer, and Himank Kaushik. Their promotion signifies a major personal achievement and underscores the growing strength of the karate community.



Seeb players celebrate crowned the champion of the 2024–2025 Junior Basketball League

Seeb Junior Basketball League champions

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, MAY 11

SEEB Club has been officially crowned the champion of the 2024–2025 Junior Basketball League, despite losing their final-round match to Nizwa 73-64. Seeb had already secured the title before the last match by leading the standings in the double round-robin final stage. Al Amerat finished in second place, while Nizwa claimed third.

The final match and the award ceremony were held under the auspices of Captain Said bin Salim al Busaidy, Chairman of Muscat Sports Board, and attended by Abubakar al Jahwari, Vice-President of the Oman Basketball Federation, Said al Habsi, Head of the Competitions Committee and Acting Secretary-General, along with representatives of the winning clubs. The event took place at the secondary hall of Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher.

The league’s final match saw a competitive encounter between Seeb and Nizwa, with Nizwa managing to come from behind to claim a morale-boosting 73-64 victory, despite Seeb having already sealed the title.

Seeb dominated the opening stages, with Saif al Hinai hitting a three-pointer to open the scoring, followed by points from teammates Azzan al Ajmi and Azd al Bahlani, giving Seeb a 29-14 lead by the end of the first quarter. Both teams maintained high energy in the second quarter, but Nizwa managed to narrow the gap, ending the half with Seeb leading 41-33.



Seeb and Nizwa players in action

In the third quarter, Nizwa, led by Adam al Hinai and Abdulsamad al Subhi, turned the game around, taking a narrow 54-53 lead as Seeb’s performance declined. Nizwa continued their momentum in the final quarter, extending their lead while Seeb missed several scoring opportunities, eventually sealing the match 73-64 to end their campaign on a positive note despite finishing third.

Following the match, Captain Said al Busaidy presented the individual awards to the standout performers of the season. Mazen al Owaisi from Al Amerat was honoured as the Top Three-Point Shooter, while Mishal Kafkaf from Salalah received the League Top Scorer award. The Best Playmaker title went to Azd al Bahlani of Seeb, and Adam bin Suleiman al Hinai from Nizwa was recognised as the Best Young Player. Seeb then received the championship trophy and gold medals, while Al Amerat

claimed silver medals for finishing second, and Nizwa received bronze for securing third place.

PRaises for the competition and calls for increased support

Captain Said al Busaidy praised the high technical level displayed in the final match, describing it as intense and exciting, showcasing promising talents on both sides in terms of technical and physical abilities. He stressed the need for continuous support from clubs and the federation to nurture these talents, which could form the foundation of future national teams capable of competing at the Gulf and Arab levels. He highlighted Nizwa’s comeback as a testament to the players’ high potential and skills.

Said al Habsi also congratulated Seeb on securing the title early, noting that their dominance throughout the league was well-deserved. He commended the overall performance of the four finalist teams, particularly the thrilling final match between Seeb and Nizwa. He also praised Al Amerat for their remarkable progress in only their second season in the Junior League.

Al Habsi concluded by stating that the Junior League’s conclusion marks the end of the federation’s 2024–2025 sports calendar. He emphasised the competitions committee’s efforts to elevate the level of competition by introducing a multi-stage format. He closed with a call to the private sector to support basketball tournaments, clubs, and players, contributing to the sport’s development and raising its standards both locally and internationally.

Al Harthy, Valentino, Kelvin secure hard-fought 9th at Spa

Team WRT trio Ahmad al Harthy, Valentino Rossi and Kelvin van der Linde had to be satisfied with a ninth place result during round three of the FIA World Endurance Championship in Belgium on Saturday, in an encounter where the pace of the No.46 BMW M4 was largely maximised.

Aiming to mount a podium challenge ahead of the TotalEnergies 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps, continuing the momentum from their fabulous second place at Imola in Italy last month, other than a speed-limiter glitch in one of the pit-stops the race went fairly faultlessly.

Oman’s Al Harthy raced very competitively from ninth on the LMGT3 grid during his two hour-plus stint. Making excellent early gains after a superb start, he ensured the team was in the best position possible as the No.46 car spent a good portion of the first 120 minutes in and around the top three.

Following the system glitch at Al Harthy’s second stop, an unfortunate drive-through penalty had to be served before Rossi and van der Linde then took the concluding parts of the six-hour race at the famous Ardennes track.



Oman’s Al Harthy raced very competitively from ninth on the LMGT3 grid during his two hour-plus stint. Making excellent early gains after a superb start, he ensured the team was in the best position possible as the No.46 car spent a good portion of the first 120 minutes in and around the top three.



2025 FIA World Endurance Championship

Qualifying on Saturday went well for Al Harthy, ending the run seventh fastest and just half a second shy of provisional pole. Progressing the Team WRT entry into the all-important Hyperpole session immediately after, which Rossi contested, the Italian ended up ninth in the top 10 grid shoot-out.

Following the team’s second stop Al Harthy found himself ninth in LMGT3

and into the third hour he climbed back into the top six and worked hard to undo the damage of the penalty stop before Rossi took over.

Rossi then pitted and rejoined in seventh, climbing up to third with just a couple of hours remaining as the Safety Car circulated once more. At the next pit visit van der Linde took his first race miles with roughly 90 minutes to go and

although moving up from the top 12 to fifth, after a final stop with 40 minutes left the South African was 12th again and had to ultimately settle for ninth position.

Round four of the FIA WEC season, the 24 Hours of Le Mans, will be contested over the weekend 14th/15th June at the Circuit de la Sarthe in France. TotalEnergies 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps LMGT3 Race Result:

1st Alessio Rovera / Francois Heriau / Simon Mann
(Vista AF Corse / Ferrari 296)

2nd Dennis Olsen / Stefano Gattuso / Gianmarco Levorato
(Proton Competition / Ford Mustang)

3rd Davide Rigon / Thomas Flohr / Francesco Castellacci
(Vista AF Corse / Ferrari 296)

4th Ben Barker / Bernardo Sousa / Ben Tuck
(Proton Competition / Ford Mustang)

5th Mattia Drudi / Ian James / Zacharie Robichon
(Heart of Racing Team / Aston Martin Vantage)

9th Ahmad Al Harthy / Valentino Rossi / Kelvin van der Linde
(Team WRT / BMW M4)

SPORTS

SHORTTAKES



The facility stands testimony to the Sultanate of Oman's global accomplishments in the fields of developing and modernising sports facilities in accordance with the highest international standards and criteria. — ONA

NOSC TO BE OPENED IN MUSCAT TOMORROW



HH SAYYID SHIHAB BIN TARIK AL SAID
Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs

MUSCAT: The National Olympic Shooting Complex (NOSC) in Muscat will be opened tomorrow under the auspices of HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs. The establishment of the NOSC, Muscat, stems from efforts to promote the status of Omani sports at regional, continental and international levels. The facility stands testimony to the Sultanate of Oman's global accomplishments in the fields of developing and modernising sports facilities in accordance with the highest international standards and criteria. The NOSC is a national monument that embodies Oman's aspirations for leadership and enhances its ability to host official tournaments at various levels. — ONA

ZVEREV AND SABALENKA INTO NEXT ROUND

ROME: German tennis star Alexander Zverev swatted aside Camilo Ugo Carabelli 6-2, 6-1 to make a strong start to the defence of his Masters title in Rome on Friday. The number two seed won the Munich tournament last month but has not gone beyond the quarter-finals at any other event since he lost the Australian Open final in January to Jannik Sinner. But he looked in fine fettle under the lights in the Eternal City to set up a meeting with Lithuanian qualifier Vilius Gaubas, who shocked Denis Shapovalov. Carlos Alcaraz, Holger Rune, Daniil Medvedev, Lorenzo Musetti, Jack Draper and Stefanos Tsitsipas were other notable men's winners in Friday. Top seed Sinner, making his comeback from a three-month doping ban,makes his bow in front of the Italian home fans on Saturday against Mariano Navone. Among the women, world number one Aryna Sabalenka made quick work of Anastasia Potapova to cruise through 6-2, 6-2 in her Rome opener. — dpa



(From L) Barcelona's Spanish midfielder 16 Fermin Lopez, Barcelona's Spanish forward 19 Lamine Yamal and Barcelona's Spanish midfielder 06 Pablo Gavi celebrate victory at the end of the Spanish league football match between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid CF at Estadi Olimpic Lluis Companys in Barcelona. — AFP

Barcelona edge Madrid to move to brink of Liga title

BARCELONA MOUNTED a spectacular comeback to beat Real Madrid 4-3 on Sunday and move to the brink of the La Liga title. Kylian Mbappe scored a hat-trick for Los Blancos but Raphinha's double and goals from Lamine Yamal, Eric Garcia and Fermin Lopez gave Barcelona a seven-point lead on reigning champions Madrid with three matches remaining. Hansi Flick's side were knocked out of the Champions League in the semi-finals by Inter Milan on Tuesday and risked their season collapsing if they were beaten by Madrid, but they resisted after Mbappe's early brace. Barcelona battled back to claim a fourth Clasico victory from four meetings this season, showing their dominance over Carlo Ancelotti's side. Real Madrid had made the perfect start to what is expected to be the Italian coach's final Clasico at the helm. Mbappe earned a penalty when he was scythed down by Barcelona goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny, although the Catalans complained in vein the French forward was offside in the build-up. The striker beat Szczesny, who dived the right way and got his fingers to it, but could not keep it out. In the 14th minute Mbappe doubled Madrid's advantage with a lethal finish after Vinicius Junior played him through, with Barcelona complaining again about a perceived foul on Yamal earlier in the move. It was his 26th La Liga strike, taking him past Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski on 25 at the top of the scoring charts, and his 38th of the season across all competitions, beating Ivan Zamorano's club record of 37 in a first season with Los Blancos. Just as they have done on so many occasions this season, Flick's spirited young Barcelona fought their way back in front with a stirring comeback. Thibaut Courtois tipped Gerard Martin's drive over, and from the corner Eric Garcia headed home Ferran Torres' flick-on. Torres flicked wide from close range with an improvised effort and Fede Valverde was booked for a crunching tackle on whirlwind teenager Yamal. Madrid could not stop the 17-year-old star from levelling with a cultured bending effort beyond Courtois after Torres laid the ball off to him in the box.

RAPHINHA BRACE
Two minutes later, Raphinha sent Barca ahead, with Pedri threading a pass through for the Brazilian winger to drill home. Raphinha headed over from a brilliant

Yamal cross with the outside of his boot, something of a trademark for the Spain international. Mbappe thought he had won another penalty when he fell under pressure from Frenkie de Jong but VAR revealed an offside in the build-up. Moments later, Raphinha netted his second, picking Lucas Vazquez's pocket on the edge of the area, exchanging passes with Torres and beating Courtois. Mbappe netted from an offside position before the break, bringing a rollercoaster first half to a close. Yamal had a goal ruled out for offside early in the second half as Barcelona looked to put their arch-rivals to the sword. Flick brought on Alejandro Balde and Andreas Christensen, with the latter cutting out a dangerous ball as Vinicius looked for Mbappe. Next time around the Brazilian found his man, with Mbappe slotting home his hat-trick as he and Vinicius broke in behind Barca's high line. Barcelona appealed for a penalty when Aurelien Tchouameni blocked Torres' shot with his arm, but after watching the incident again the referee decided not to award a penalty. — AFP

T-Wolves grab 2-1 NBA playoff series lead as Celtics get key win

SAN FRANCISCO: Anthony Edwards scored 36 points and rallied the Minnesota Timberwolves for a 102-97 victory over Golden State on Saturday to seize the lead in their NBA playoff series. The Warriors, missing star guard Stephen Curry with a left hamstring strain, dominated defensively before the T-Wolves battled back in the fourth quarter behind Edwards and Julius Randle, who had a triple double with 24 points, 12 assists and 10 rebounds. Asked about the keys to a fightback triumph, Edwards said, "Playing as a team, getting stops on the defensive end and limiting those guys to one shot." The Timberwolves took a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven Western Conference second-round playoff series with game four on Monday at San Francisco. "You can't ever get too comfortable," Edwards said. "This is a championship DNA team. This is

what they do so we've got to be ready at all times." Edwards had eight points in the first half but scored 28 points in the second half, 13 in the fourth quarter, and made 10 of his last 16 shots. "I stunk in the first half," Edwards said. "But you know, that happens. Shots are going to fall. Shots are not going to fall sometimes. But as long as you trust the work, keep shooting it and shoot with confidence, you'll be all right." He praised Randle's first playoff triple double. "He's big time. He has come through in every game for us in the playoffs," Edwards said. "The way he's finding people (with passes) and getting us open looks, I can't ask for nothing better." In Saturday's only other NBA game, defending champion Boston routed New York 115-93 at Madison Square Garden to pull within 2-1 in their Eastern Conference second-round series with game five Monday in New



Boston Celtics guard Payton Pritchard (11) shoots the ball against the New York Knicks in the second half during game two of the second round for the 2025 NBA Playoffs at TD Garden. — Reuters

York. The Celtics had squandered 20-point leads in two home playoff losses to the Knicks with woeful three-point shooting but Boston hit 20-of-40 from beyond the arc and held firm to the finish to blow out New York, knowing no NBA team down 0-3 had rallied to win a series. "We understood the magnitude of this game," Boston's Jayson Tatum said. "We needed this one. Didn't like the way we felt after last game so just coming out here with the right mindset, just trying to put it all together." At San Francisco, the Warriors led 42-40 at half-time without making a three-pointer -- their first playoff first half since 2007 without a hoop from beyond the arc. Butler, who had 18 first-half points, scored six and Kuminga added five in an 11-0 run that gave the Warriors their first lead at 23-21 early in the second quarter. Golden State kept the T-Wolves without a basket for the last 6:29 of

the second quarter and closed the half on a 13-1 run, but Edwards lifted the T-Wolves onto his shoulders and carried them to the finish with a dazzling second-half surge.

TAP INTO YOUR DARKNESS
Reserve Payton Pritchard, the 2025 NBA Sixth Man of the Year, led Boston's blowout win with 23 points while Jayson Tatum added 22 points, nine rebounds and seven assists. Jaylen Brown had 19 points and Derrick White scored 17. "We understand Monday is going to be a great atmosphere, a big game. It's going to be fun," Tatum said. "Just coming out with the right mindset, understanding we played better but we can play a lot better based on a lot of things we did we really didn't like tonight. So just building off that." The Celtics overcame two humbling defeats to boost their chances at Boston's first back-to-back NBA titles since 1968-69. — AFP



MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE
4,355.24

BUSINESS

Terms And Condition Applies



Get more returns on High Yield Savings Account

With Al Rifaa Privilege Account

Visit your nearest branch today



البنك الرفعة
PRIVILEGE BANKING

2479 1111

www.bankdhofar.com



bankdhofar



Scan to learn more



Al Rifaa

SHORTTAKES

OQX BACKS 13 OMANI CLEAN ENERGY-LINKED START-UPS

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, MAY 11

OQX, the Research and Development and Innovation arm of OQ, the global energy investment group, has launched its flagship accelerator programme with 13 pioneering start-ups that will drive Oman’s sustainable energy future. Announced during Oman Sustainability Week 2025, the initiative represents a strategic investment in homegrown innovation aligned with OQ’s global energy transition objectives.

“This accelerator represents OQ’s commitment to transforming Oman’s innovation landscape,” said Dr Ammar al Ojaili, VP of Innovation at OQ. “Through systematic conversion of our brightest ideas into market-ready solutions, we are

DR AMMAR AL OJAILI

VP of Innovation at OQ

positioning the nation as a leader in the new energy economy. Our programme ensures Omani innovation doesn’t just compete but defines global energy standards.”

The carefully selected cohort demonstrates Oman’s emerging leadership across critical energy technologies. In renewable energy optimisation, DAWM is developing nanocoatings

to enhance solar panel efficiency, while Dymuma has created autonomous cleaning robots that maintain photovoltaic systems without water. AB Energy brings innovative thermal storage solutions and mobile solar microgrids to increase renewable energy accessibility.

Water sustainability innovations feature prominently, with Desolenator pioneering solar-powered desalination and EcoSorb transforming palm waste into aerogel materials for water treatment. InkClear offers an equally compelling solution, replacing traditional activated carbon with marine waste-based filtration that reduces costs by 40 per cent.

The programme also supports breakthroughs in industrial efficiency. Sentin leverages AI to revolutionise energy sector inspections, while Smart PSV brings intelligent monitoring to pressure safety valves. PolyPro Solutions enhances pipeline safety with polymer-based systems featuring predictive failure technology, and IPO Control optimises plant operations through AI-driven analytics.

No plans to sell stake in Oman gas fields

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, MAY 11

THE Ministry of Energy and Minerals has firmly denied reports suggesting that the Sultanate of Oman is considering the sale of stakes in its natural gas production fields. The clarification comes in response to presumably a recent Bloomberg article that claimed the government was seeking partners for assets valued at \$8 billion.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the ministry said: “There is no intention to sell stakes in natural gas production fields in the Sultanate of Oman.” The Bloomberg report, citing anonymous sources, stated that Energy Development Oman SAOC (EDO), the state-owned firm, was exploring a potential minority stake sale in gas fields located in Block 6 — an area that also hosts Oman’s most valuable oil reserves. The report added that a sale could help Oman raise funds to support public finances and investment programmes, and cited a valuation by consultancy Wood Mackenzie at approximately \$8.2 billion.

The ministry’s statement, however, rebuts those claims and reaffirms the government’s long-standing policy of retaining full ownership and strategic control over its upstream gas assets — seen as a national economic pillar under Oman Vision 2040.

In the statement, Dr Saleh al Anboori, Director-General of Exploration and Production of Oil and Gas, Ministry of Energy and Minerals, emphasised that the ministry is actively pursuing significant development projects in gas fields, in full compliance with international standards of sustainability and financing.

“This endeavour is underpinned by a solid financial base and carefully considered investment

OPES and OSW 2025 together represent a prominent showcase of Oman’s energy sector achievements.

strategies that support the ambitions of the next phase, thus precluding any requirement to sell off natural gas producing assets,” the statement noted.

Debunking media reports concerning the disposal of interests in natural gas fields, the official stressed that the ministry’s priority is to enhance operational effectiveness and to draw in global technical and investment proficiency through prudent collaborations centred on the transfer of knowledge and the maximisation of value creation within Oman, without compromising the ownership or sovereign rights over strategic national resources.

“The ministry reiterates its complete commitment to the principles of transparency and accountability, and continues to engage in coordination with all local and international stakeholders to advance the interests of the Sultanate of Oman and reinforce its standing as a reputable regional hub within the energy sector,” it stressed.

Meanwhile, the ministry also announced the start of the activities of Oman Petroleum and Energy Show (OPES) and Oman Sustainability Week (OSW) on Monday, May 12, 2025, at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. The 3-day forum is being held under the supervision of the ministry.

“These events are organised as a direct result of the Sultanate of Oman’s unwavering dedication to promoting sustainable energy and to achieving harmony between innovation, economic expansion and environmental stewardship. This approach is integral to Oman’s initiatives to ensure the sustainability of its natural resources and to advance the energy sector in accordance with global progress. The Ministry of Energy and Minerals remains committed to its long-term strategy, centred on the development of national assets and the optimisation of their benefits to realise the country’s economic and developmental ambitions,” it added.

There is no intention to sell stakes in natural gas production fields in the Sultanate of Oman

Oman commissions Mideast’s first Circularity Gap Report

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, MAY 11

Underscoring Oman’s commitment to fostering the growth of a circular economy, the Ministry of Economy has tapped Circle Economy, a global circularity foundation behind the internationally acclaimed Circularity Gap Report (CGR), to undertake the production of the first-ever report on the Sultanate of Oman.

Preparatory work on ‘CGR-Oman’, envisaged as a definitive roadmap charting the country’s pathway to circularity by 2040, will be kicked off this week in conjunction with the Oman Sustainability Week 2025, which

The initiative will support the development of Oman’s Circular Economy National Roadmap and advance the country’s vision of a green and circular economy by 2040.

opens in Muscat today, May 12, 2025.

“The Ministry of Economy of Oman has commissioned the Circularity Gap Report Oman, in partnership with Circle Economy,”

the Amsterdam-based think-tank announced in a recent post.

“This trailblazing initiative aims to: Support the development of Oman’s Circular Economy National Roadmap and advance the country’s vision of a green and circular economy by 2040; Provide strategic insights to reposition the waste sector as a driver of economic growth; and Measure Oman’s circularity baseline and its potential, allowing for strengthening circular economy policies and aligning them with international standards and climate objectives,” the Foundation added.

A coalition of industry experts and stakeholder representatives –

dubbed the CGR Oman coalition – will hold the first roundtable this week against the backdrop of Oman Sustainability Week 2025.

Circle Economy, based in the Netherlands, describes itself as a global impact organisation that seeks to empower businesses, cities and nations with practical and scalable solutions to put the circular economy into action. Its ultimate goal is to enable the doubling of global circularity by 2032, up from a dismal 6.9 per cent presently.

“More and more countries are recognising the circular economy as a means to make their economies more competitive, improve living conditions for

growing populations, help meet emissions targets and avoid deforestation. But how countries reach an ecologically safe and socially just development space for their people varies greatly. The Circularity Gap Report for Countries provides insight into the best interventions to boost circularity on a national level and the tools to monitor progress,” it explained on its website.

First unveiled in 2012 during the World Economic Forum in Davos, around dozen countries have since engaged Circle Economy to produce Circularity Gap Reports on their respective national performances benchmarked against a global circularity score.

ADVERTORIAL

SHORTTAKE



BANKDHOFAR BACKS AI-POWERED BANKING CONFERENCE

MUSCAT: BankDhofar, one of Oman’s leading financial institutions, proudly sponsored the 3rd International Banking, Finance and Business Conference 2025, hosted by the College of Banking and Financial Studies (CBFS). The high-profile event was inaugurated by Eng Said bin Hamoud al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology.

The conference focused on the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in banking and finance, spotlighting opportunities to enhance operational efficiency, customer engagement and sector-wide innovation. Attendees delved into the challenges and success stories of AI adoption across global financial markets.

BankDhofar’s Digital Banking team played an active role in the proceedings, contributing to discussions on smart analytics, machine learning and digital transformation. Their participation underlined the bank’s strategic commitment to integrating cutting-edge AI solutions in its services and operations.

With over 35 years of experience, BankDhofar has established itself as a pioneer in digital banking in Oman. The bank operates 131 branches nationwide and serves a broad customer base with innovative products tailored for women, youth, children and high-net-worth individuals.

In 2024, BankDhofar achieved a net profit of RO 43.6 million, marking a 12.5 per cent increase from RO 38.7 million in 2023. This performance reflects its strong market position and investment in digital innovation.

BankDhofar has led several tech initiatives, including being among the first in Oman to introduce Apple Pay and Samsung Pay. It has also rolled out services like wholesale cash deposit machines and Easy Biz, a digital collection and settlement platform for businesses.

By supporting this conference, BankDhofar reaffirmed its role as a forward-thinking institution driving innovation and excellence in Oman’s banking sector under the goals of Oman Vision 2040. — ONA

OOREDOO CHAMPIONS ACCESSIBILITY AT 50TH ARAB AEAF WEEK

MUSCAT: Ooredoo reaffirmed its commitment to accessibility and inclusion by participating in the 50th Arab Deaf Week, held under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Laila bint Ahmed Al Najjar, Minister of Social Development. The event focused on promoting education, employment, and technology access for people with hearing disabilities—an agenda closely aligned with Ooredoo’s values. Ooredoo highlighted its experience launching Oman’s

first customer care centre for the hearing-impaired, offering video-based sign language support. This initiative reflects Ooredoo’s inclusive workplace philosophy, aimed at empowering individuals through respect, support, and opportunity.

Feras Al Shaikh, Director of Branding Communications & Corporate Affairs, said: “Inclusion isn’t just a policy—it’s part of our culture. Our colleagues with diverse abilities

bring incredible strength to our team. As digital transformation advances, Ooredoo ensures it remains inclusive, human, and real.”

From tactile signage at reception areas to workplace support programmes, Ooredoo continues to lead in accessible innovation. These efforts support its ESG strategy and align with Oman Vision 2040, promoting equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

National Finance appoints Chief People Officer

NATIONAL Finance, the Sultanate of Oman’s leading finance company, recently announced the appointment of Marwa bint Ali al Kharousiyah as Chief People Officer — General Manager.

This strategic leadership appointment underscores the company’s ongoing commitment to cultivating a high-performance, people-centric workplace culture that supports its long-term vision for sustainable growth and operational excellence.

Her appointment underscores National Finance’s strategic focus on reinforcing its leadership team to ensure effective and forward-looking management.

She brings over 21 years of extensive experience in executive Human Resources (HR) leadership across key sectors, including Telecommunications, Oil & Gas, and Professional Services. She has held senior roles at renowned organizations such as Deloitte Consulting, Omantel, Shell, and Ooredoo Group in Qatar.

In her roles, she has played a pivotal role in driving HR transformation, nationalization programs, performance

She is recognised for her strategic insight, strong leadership and deep expertise in corporate culture, diversity and inclusion; and organisational effectiveness.



Marwa bint Ali al Kharousiyah, Chief People Officer — GM, is a strategic leader known for her expertise in people development, corporate culture and organisational excellence.

management, and employee engagement initiatives.

A passionate advocate for people development and workplace excellence, she is recognized for her strategic insight, strong leadership, and deep expertise in corporate culture, diversity and inclusion, and organizational effectiveness.

Notably, her role as Change

& Engage Planner at Shell’s Downstream-One Project was highly impactful, driving operational efficiency and effectively implementing organizational change management.

In addition to her corporate achievements, she is an engaged speaker and facilitator, having conducted leadership workshops and participated in international conferences.

Her dedication to mental well-being, coaching programs, and interpersonal skills development highlights her ability to develop female talent, and her comprehensive approach to people leadership. Marwa holds a Master of Science Degree in International Management from the University of the West of England, UK, along with a Higher Diploma in Information Technology.

She is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and brings extensive technical expertise in Oracle HRMS systems.

National Finance eagerly anticipates Marwa’s leadership as the company continues to empower its people, cultivate a dynamic workplace culture, and create meaningful impact across the organization.

Seizure of over 300 electronic cigarette products

MUSCAT: The Consumer Protection Authority, represented by the Department of Market Regulation and Monitoring in Muscat Governorate, recently seized electronic cigarettes, electronic shisha and chewing tobacco in clear violation of the Consumer Protection Law and its executive regulations.

This comes as part of the Authority’s ongoing efforts to monitor and control violations.

The details of the seizure reveal that the Authority’s inspection and control teams detected the sale of electronic cigarettes, electronic shisha and chewing tobacco at a commercial establishment in the Wilayat of Al Seeb, Muscat Governorate.

After verifying the circulation of unlicensed products and confirming the



A total of 265 electronic shisha devices and 110 packs of chewing tobacco were seized.

violation, the necessary administrative measures were taken and the products were confiscated by the Authority’s judicial officers.

A total of 265 electronic shisha devices and 110 packs of chewing tobacco were seized, in violation of the Consumer Protection Law, Administrative Decision No 756/2023 and Decision No 301/2016 amending Decision No 256/2015.

It is worth noting that the Authority continues its inspection and monitoring campaigns to ensure safe markets for consumers and to protect all their rights guaranteed under the provisions of the law. The Authority also urges consumers to report any violations through its various communication channels.

OETC participates in Oman Sustainability Week 2025 events

MUSCAT: As part of its ongoing efforts, commitment and dedication to achieving the highest standards in environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices; and to ensure alignment between its vision and objectives with both national and global aspirations, the Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) is participating in the Oman Sustainability Week Awards Ceremony, held under the auspices of Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals.

This event is part of Oman Sustainability Week 2025, taking place from May 11-15, 2025,

under the theme: “Sustainable Development: Balancing Progress and Environmental Conservation”.

The event witnesses broad international participation, with representatives from over 10 countries, more than 120 exhibiting organisations, over 30,000 visitors and more than 200 speakers including experts and specialists.

OETC was awarded the Gold Category Award in the same category last year, marking a significant achievement in its first participation in this major national event.

Samira bint Salim al Mughairiyah, Manager of Communication and



OETC’s participation focuses on competing for the Oman Sustainability Week Awards for the second consecutive year, under the ESG category, highlighting its ongoing efforts, achievements and initiatives in sustainability; and reaffirming its role in shaping a sustainable future for Oman.

Sustainability at OETC, reaffirmed the company’s commitment to all global sustainability standards.

Al Mughairi also highlighted the strong focus and priority placed by OETC on achieving sustainability, by embedding it within the company’s corporate objectives, exploring areas for improvement and fostering collaboration with leading institutions locally and internationally.

These efforts aim to enable continuous knowledge exchange, share successful experiences and implement best practices that enhance the sustainability and operational efficiency of the

company, as well as contributing meaningfully to the realisation of broader sustainability goals.

It is worth mentioning that OETC, a member of Nama Group, is the only company responsible for the transmission and control of electricity across Oman’s network. The transmission network operates at a voltage of 132kV and above to cover most of the governorates in the Sultanate of Oman, whether in the north or the south.

Furthermore, OETC manages the interconnection lines between Oman and the GCC interconnection network, which operates at a voltage of 220kV.

BUSINESS

SHORTTAKES



A panel discussion on market trends, regulatory challenges and the impact of technology on real estate development.

REAL ESTATE
TOUR EXPLORES
INVESTMENT
PROSPECTS

The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, organised the inaugural “Real Estate Tour” on 11 May 2025 at its headquarters in Muscat. The event aimed to showcase ongoing real estate projects and highlight promising investment opportunities across Oman.

Speakers included Eng Khalfan bin Masoud al Naabi, Director General of Urban Planning and Ali bin Mohammed al Lawati, Chair of the Real Estate Development Committee, who emphasised the importance of fostering direct communication between investors, developers and government representatives.

Maryam bint Hamad al Sharjiyah, Director of the Real Estate Development Services Centre, outlined the Centre’s role in supporting developers through project registration, licensing and regulatory guidance. She also discussed ongoing efforts to finalise key legislation aimed at enhancing investor confidence and digital transformation in the sector.

The session included presentations on model residential projects, real estate legislation and national development strategies, followed by a panel discussion on market trends, regulatory challenges and the impact of technology on real estate development.

STOCKS MIXED AS
GLOBAL MARKETS
EYE US-CHINA
TARIFF TALKS

NEW YORK: Global stocks were mixed on Friday as markets awaited weekend US-China talks amidst hopes for a deescalation in the trade war between the world’s two largest economies.

“If ever there was a wait and see on Friday, this is it,” said Art Hogan of B Riley Wealth Management. “It’s all about our perceptions of how the trade war is going.”

Representatives from the two countries are scheduled to meet in Switzerland this weekend. Analysts do not expect a breakthrough but are hoping for deescalation in the trade war.

US President Donald Trump said an 80 per cent tariff on China “seems right” in a post on social media. That would be a shift from the three-digit levies the two countries have imposed on each other in recent weeks.

After opening higher following Trump’s remarks, US stocks moved in a choppy fashion, with the S&P 500 finishing narrowly lower.

Trump’s comments came a day after the United States and Britain announced the first agreement since the US President launched his tariffs blitz last month. — AFP

FISCAL SLUMP

Aramco profits fall 4.6% in first quarter



Saudi Aramco, the world’s largest oil exporter, reported a 4.6 per cent decline in net profits for the first quarter of 2025. The company’s net income fell to 97.54 billion riyal (\$26.01 billion), down from 102.27 billion riyal (\$27.27 billion) in the same period last year. The Saudi government, which holds 81.5 per cent of Aramco’s shares, is relying on its revenues to fund its Vision 2030 projects. — AFP

OXY EYES
15-YEAR
EXTENSION IN
OMAN’S BLOCK
53, UNVEILS
LARGE
GAS FIND

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, MAY 11

US energy major Occidental Petroleum (Oxy) is in advanced talks with the Omani government to extend its contract for Block 53 — home to the world-class Mukhaizna steamflood field — by 15 years to 2040, the company confirmed during its Q1 2025 earnings call.

The proposed extension is expected to unlock over 800 million barrels of additional resources



The proposed extension is expected to unlock over 800 million barrels of additional resources.

across stacked pay formations.

Occidental noted that the revised terms will support both low-decline enhanced oil recovery and conventional production.

“These developments reflect our deep-rooted partnership with Oman and reaffirm our long-term commitment to supporting its energy strategy,” said CEO Vicki Hollub. She noted that recent efficiency gains have reduced drilling costs by 50 per cent in Block 53.

Tejarah Talks to delve into
Oman’s mining sector

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, MAY 11

INDUSTRY

experts will gather at the Civil Aviation Authority Training Centre on Tuesday, May 27, at 11am, to explore innovation and sustainability in the mining sector. The session will examine strategies for positioning Oman as a regional centre for mineral production.

The 70-minute forum, Digging into the Future: Innovation & Sustainability in Mining, will unite specialists to review Oman’s geological resources and emerging industry trends as development continues in alignment with Oman Vision 2040 objectives.

The event will showcase Oman’s rich mineral heritage — known in ancient times as Majan for its copper smelting — and how these resources are being utilised today. Substantial deposits of dolomite, limestone, gypsum, gabbro, copper and gold remain partially untapped, offering significant commercial potential.

“Most people don’t realise that minerals extracted in Oman are in their smartphones, cars, homes and even the food they eat,” said Badriya al Amri, Oman Business Forum Office, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and Tejarah Talks Administrator.

“This month’s session will reveal how mining touches nearly every aspect of our daily lives while showcasing how innovative approaches are making the industry more



BADRIYA
AL AMRI

Oman Business
Forum Office, Min-
istry of Commerce,
Industry and Invest-
ment Promotion
and Tejarah Talks
Administrator

sustainable.”

Topics will include renewable energy adoption, efficiency improvements and low-carbon technology integration in extraction operations. Speakers will address ESG integration, digital transformation and technological advancements including drone usage and IoT applications for the sector.

The discussion will emphasise the practical importance of locally-sourced minerals in everyday life. Gypsum, which reached export volumes of 12 million tonnes in 2024 — up 7.1 per cent from 2023 — is essential for manufacturing drywall, conditioning soil in agriculture and producing cement.

Without it global construction would grind to a halt. Limestone is vital for cement manufacturing, glass production and as a purifier in power station emissions systems while also serving as a calcium supplement in food and medicines. Dolomite is used in manufacturing glass bottles, ceramics and as a soil enhancer for agricultural production.

The event will also cover mining’s role

in the global green energy transition. The worldwide push towards electrification has created unprecedented demand for copper with its exceptional conductivity properties making it essential for renewable energy systems and electric vehicles (EV). It is estimated the average EV contains approximately 83kg of copper — nearly four times the 23 kg found in conventional cars — primarily in batteries, motors and charging infrastructure.

Similarly, renewable energy installations are copper-intensive with a single wind turbine containing up to 4 tonnes of copper in its generators, transformers and cabling systems. With sizeable copper reserves, Oman is well-positioned to benefit as countries worldwide commit to carbon reduction targets.

Projects across Oman are adding value to raw minerals through processing facilities, including titanium dioxide production and aluminium manufacturing. Panelists will discuss how these capabilities contribute to economic diversification while creating high-skilled jobs in fields ranging from environmental science to robotics and data analytics.

Organised by Oman Business Forum in association with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion; and supported by Nortal, MHD, Invest Oman and Oman FM, May’s Tejarah Talks will provide practical insights for investors, policymakers, industry stakeholders and anyone interested in understanding how mining shapes our modern world.

Real estate transactions exceed RO 572 million

MUSCAT: The traded value of real estate transactions in the Sultanate of Oman fell by 2.5 per cent to RO 572.7 million till the end of March 2025, compared to RO 587.5 million in the same period of 2024, according to the latest data released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

According to preliminary statistics issued by the NCSI, fees collected of all legal action’s transactions amounted to RO 18.3 million till the end of March 2025, constituting an increase of 10.6 per cent compared to RO 16.5 million by the end of March 2024.

The traded value of sale contracts reached RO 252.4 million till the end of March



2025, and the number of sale contracts fell by 6.3 per cent to 15,815, compared to 16,877 in the same period of 2024.

The value of mortgage contracts rose by 5.8 per cent till the end of March 2025 to RO

317.1 million compared to RO 299.8 million during the same period of 2024. Meanwhile, the number of mortgage contracts rose by 10 per cent to 5,344 contracts from 4,858 contracts in the same period of 2024.

The value of traded barter contracts rose by 12.2 per cent to RO 3.2 million till the end of March 2025 compared to RO 2.8 million in the same period of 2024. The number of barter contracts fell by 7.6 per cent to reach 354 contracts till the end of March 2025 compared to 383 contracts in March 2024.

The number of properties issued by the end of March 2025 fell by 3.1 per cent to 55,378 by the end of March 2025, compared to 57,167 properties during the same period in 2024, and the number of properties issued to citizens of GCC countries also decreased by 13.3 per cent reaching 280 compared to 323 till the end of March 2024.

— ONA

HIGH TARIFFS

Walmart turns to India amidst high tariffs



Major US retailers like Walmart and Costco are turning to India as an alternative sourcing hub to bypass steep US tariffs on Chinese, Bangladeshi and Vietnamese garments.

India’s Tiruppur, a leading textile hub, faces a critical labour shortage despite this opportunity. While India’s apparel exports stand to gain from lower tariffs compared to its Asian competitors, challenges remain. — Reuters

EARNINGS DECLINE

China consumer prices fell in April



Consumer prices in China slumped in April for the third straight month, official data showed on Saturday, as Beijing attempts to revive an economy stymied by sluggish spending and a fierce trade war with Washington. The consumer price index (CPI), a key measure of inflation, was down 0.1% last month year-on-year, according to data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). — AFP

OPINION

Dealmakers hope on European revival as US stutters



ANDY JALIL
andyjalil@aol.com

The writer is
our foreign
correspondent based
in the UK

TOP dealmakers are pinning their hopes on a revival of activity in Europe, with president Donald Trump’s trade war having dampened expectations for US investment banking fees. At the beginning of the year, lawyers and investment bankers were anticipating that Trump would rekindle spirits and prompt firms to push ahead on pent up demand for M&A deals and equity fundraising.

It hasn’t worked out that way. The first quarter is disappointing, with global investment banking fees down by 10pc to \$20.6bn for the first three months of this year, according to data provider Dealogic. The US has slipped by 7pc to \$10.6bn for the period, while European fees have fallen even further, dropping 22pc to \$4.6bn.

But despite the numbers, top dealmakers in the financial district of London say that Europe is starting to benefit from the volatility that has hit the US.

High hopes from Trump’s election in November, when he promised to tame inflation, increase US exceptionalism and kick-start deregulation of the M&A market, have given way to caution.

Global co-head of the alternative capital group at USB, Simona Maellare, said: “In January, there was a lot of talk about animal spirit in the US and people were very negative on Europe.

“Three months later and those predictions have not come about because the M&A market does not like volatility. In Europe, sponsors are making progress, so we are seeing improved levels of activity. Overall, Q1 has been soft, but I am encouraged by the amount of activity in Europe, where we see big deals continue to happen.”

Global co-head of the infrastructure and strategic investors group at JPMorgan, Guillermo Baygual, said that there was increasing optimism around European deal activity as appetite to transact has dampened in the US.

“This could end up being good for Europe, because it is forcing European nations to get their act together,” he said.

“The infrastructure fund in Germany, other infrastructure initiatives developing in European countries, the emerging plans for investment in the military across Europe, governments in Europe are supporting investment and therefore growth. Europe has big challenges, but suddenly there’s a sense that things are looking up.”

‘America First’ policies in the US have seen European leaders coin the phrase ‘Make Europe Great Again’ – a nod to the red baseball cap sported by Trump supporters and Trump himself proclaiming he’ll “make America great again”.

Dealmakers say that pressure for Europe to take care of itself is spurring growth. One

At the beginning of the year, lawyers and investment bankers were anticipating that Trump would rekindle spirits and prompt firms to push ahead on pent up demand for M&A deals and equity fundraising

example is the German government’s plans to increase defence spending by 500bn euros in a bid to counter what its chancellor Friedrich Merz called Russian president Vladimir Putin’s war of aggression against Europe”.

Global head of sectors and advisory at BNP Paribas, George Holst, said that a 25pc increase in Emea (Europe, Middle East, Africa) M&A volume was spurred by “material growth” in deals over 1bn euros, even though the number of transactions is down. “Higher fiscal stimulus in Europe, paired with the need for greater sovereignty plus a trend of lower rates, has made Europe more attractive on a relative basis,” he said.

“The need and search for a scale is apparent in many sectors and we saw broad activity in a cross section of areas.”

Bankers were also expecting an increase in equity capital markets activity after a slump in listings that has resulted in a brutal three years for the business. However, market conditions have led to clients pulling planned IPOs and struggling to price them effectively, dealmakers said.

“This recent period of volatility has reopened the debate on the sustainability of the recently reopened IPO market,” said Gareth McCartney, global co-head of ECM at UBS. “The consensus was that 2025 would see a return to normalised IPO issuance volumes, but a slow start has questioned this, albeit we have a long way to go.”

US, CHINA REACH DEAL TO CUT TRADE DEFICIT

GENEVA: US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on Sunday reported “substantial progress” in US talks with China’s top economic officials to de-escalate a damaging trade war, but offered no details of an agreement reached as two days of negotiations wrapped up in Geneva.

Bessent told reporters that details would be announced on Monday and that US President Donald Trump was fully aware of the results of the “productive talks.”

Bessent told reporters that details would be announced on Monday and that US President Donald Trump was fully aware of the results of the “productive talks.”

US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, who participated in the talks with Bessent, Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng and two Chinese vice ministers, described the conclusion as “a deal we struck with our Chinese partners” that will help reduce the \$1.2 trillion US global goods trade deficit.

“And this was, as the Secretary pointed out, a very constructive two days. It’s important to understand how quickly we were able to come to agreement, which reflects that perhaps the differences were not so large as maybe thought,” Greer said, adding that the Chinese officials were “tough negotiators”

The meeting was the first face-to-face interaction between Bessent, Greer and He since the world’s two largest economies imposed tariffs well above 100 per cent on each other’s goods.

Although Bessent has said the bilateral tariffs were too high and needed to come down in a de-escalation move, he did not offer any details of reductions agreed and took no questions from reporters.

Earlier, White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett said the Chinese were “very, very eager” to engage in discussions and rebalance trade relations with the United States.

Hassett also told Fox News that more foreign trade deals could be coming with other countries as soon as this week.

Overnight, Trump gave a positive reading of the talks, saying the two sides had negotiated “a total reset... in a friendly, but constructive, manner.”

“A very good meeting today with China, in Switzerland. Many things discussed, much agreed to,” Trump posted on his Truth Social platform.

“We want to see, for the good of both China and the US, an opening up of China to American business. GREAT PROGRESS MADE!!!,” Trump added, without elaborating on the progress.

Speaking on “Sunday Morning Futures” on Fox News with Maria Bartiromo, Hassett said Beijing is eager to re-set trade relations with the United States.

“It looks like the Chinese are very, very eager to play ball and to re-normalise things,” Hassett said.

Hassett also said more trade deal announcements could be imminent following last week’s announcement of an agreement with the United Kingdom. He said he had been briefed by Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick on two dozen pending deals in development with USTR Greer. “They all look a little bit like the UK deal but each one is bespoke,” Hassett said. — Reuters

Essential skills for tomorrow’s workplace

THE fundamental changes in the future of work are bound to happen due to the explosive growth of technological advancement, decarbonisation and dramatic demographic shifts. Digitisation has impacted and will continue to impact human lives with relative influence and a broader scope of application.

We are presently in the fourth industrial revolution, Industry 4.0, which is characterised by integrating technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics, interactive themes, cloud computing, and big data. While the world is dominantly experiencing the influence of Industry 4.0, there are discussions and early adoptions of Industry 5.0, especially in some parts of Europe. Industry 5.0 emphasises the human-centric approach towards technology.

According to the World Economic Forum, ongoing skill disruption has stabilised despite uncertainty. 39% of workers’ skills will change in the coming five years. Research also shows that skill disruption is not uniform across economies and industries. The lower emerging economies will experience greater skill disruption compared to higher-income and advanced economies. While the core skill sets are relatively consistent across broader industries and geographical regions, notable distinctions exist within specific sectors and geographies.

Among the technological expectations, the evolution of AI and big data skills is at the top of the chart, followed by cybersecurity and technology literacy. Employers will also seek complementary skills like resilience, agility, flexibility, curiosity and lifelong learning.

In addition to these self-management skills, talent management, environmental sustainability and systems thinking are rising, aligning with organisational transformation and the increasing green transition among sectors worldwide.

According to the World Economic Forum’s Future of Jobs Report, the most essential skills for 2030 are:



Students review MRI brain scans during an AI research study. — Reuters



DR MYTHILI KOLLURU

The writer is an assistant professor at the marketing and management department of the College of Banking and Financial Studies in Muscat

- Skill 1:** AI has radically transformed decisions across industries. AI-driven analytics and actionable insights will optimise operations, empower customer experience and give organisations a competitive edge.
- AI and Big Data are the fastest-growing skills through 2030, with 87% growth projected to remain competitive. Understanding and leveraging artificial intelligence and data analytics will be critical across industries.
- Skill 2:** By 2030, most jobs will fundamentally require digital literacy, ranging from basic to advanced. The paradigm shift to digital workspaces will drive the surge in demand for ICT specialists and require reskilling. Technology proficiency will become foundational with digital transformation, with 68% expected growth potential.
- Skill 3:** Rapid expansion of digital infrastructure will lead to an increase in sophisticated cybersecurity attacks, necessitating the need for cybersecurity professionals and network management competency.
- The skillset of cybersecurity, cloud security and threat intelligence has a 70% growth potential without a shortage of professionals. As digital threats grow, skills in cybersecurity and managing digital networks will be increasingly important.
- Skill 4:** According to the Future of Jobs Report, published by the

- World Economic Forum, analytical thinking is the top core skill for employers in 2025. In nearly every industry, the ability to analyse information and solve complex problems, identify trends and solve multifaceted problems to implement practical solutions remains a top priority for employers.
- Skill 5:** Innovation and generating new ideas will be highly valued. As more routine and repetitive tasks are automated, creative thinking and innovation will be the key differentiators in an era of rapid digital transformations.
- Skill 6:** Adaptability to change, learning new skills and handling uncertainty are crucial as workplaces evolve. Employers seek employees with resilience, flexibility and agility to navigate and adapt to the neck-breaking speed of technological advancements.
- Skill 7:** Effective leadership, influencing others and strong interpersonal skills are essential for navigating complex environments. Leadership skills, including influencing and collaborating, are in high demand (61%). Effective leaders foster innovation, guide teams through change and build inclusive, high-performing cultures.
- Skill 8:** A commitment to continuous learning and personal growth will help professionals stay relevant. Curiosity is one of the core skills to stimulate the learning for life approach. This attitude ensures that professionals remain adaptable and future-ready.
- Skill 9:** Skills in attracting, developing and retaining talent are increasingly important. These skills now encompass empathy, inclusivity, resilience and aligning leadership goals with organisational goals.
- Skill 10:** Understanding sustainability and green practices is becoming more critical as organisations focus on eco-friendly strategies. Companies embed sustainability into products, business models and strategy, making green skills essential for future competitiveness and risk management.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

Auditors & Accountants
• Audit & Accounting • CFO Services • Secondment
• VAT & Tax Return Filing • VAT Refund Assistance
Contact: 92182750 • Email: contact@umpauditors.com

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

SIT. WANTED

SEEKING a new Job / Logistics & supply chain professional with 10-plus years experienced in Export & Import of Sea, Land & Air transport modes (Email: nouchimp1986@gmail.com, Mob: 79820286)

Indian male (Mechanical Engineering) with 3 years experience in Diesel engine works (Gensets/Engines), 2 years in Machine Maintenance, seeks job. Contact: 78022420

ACCOUNTANT/AUDITOR Indian Female, 3+ yrs exp. in Accounting & Auditing. Expertise in IFRS, GAAP, VAT, Financial Mgmt & Compliance. Contact: 7841408, fzahrasr@gmail.com

ACCOUNTANT with overs 6 years of experience Detail-Oriented Financial Professional: Expert in Accounting, Audit Prep and Expense Management. Contact: +968 78320801, Ready to join immediately.

CHIEF accountant, MBA finance 9+ years experience in financial statework auditing, budgeting, VAT, tax, fixed assets, reconciliation, payroll. Seeking a full/ part time position in a senior role. 93988825 .

MASTER'S graduate in MSc Global logistics, operations & supply chain management from London, seeking a full-time job in Oman. Possess 2 years of sales executive experience in London and 1 year as a purchase executive in Oman. Holding a valid Oman D/L. Contact: 77231865, email: finan8157@gmail.com

Indian male 14 years experience light/ heavy driver. Looking for suitable opening currently in Oman. Contact: 77050986/ 91280205, email: kokkadmou@gmail.com

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.

Indian Male /10+ years of experience in Sea, Air & Land shipments/ Looking for Sr. Logistics operations role. Aware of Incoterms & international procedures. Mob: 79820286 Email: nouchimp1986@gmail.com

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

SRI LANKAN Male – (CGMA ACMA+ CPA+BBA) Asst. Finance Manager/ Chief Accountant, 12+ Experience in Oman & GCC, Expert in Finan. Reporting (MIS), VAT, Audit, Cashflow, Budget, AR AP Recon, IFRS, Payroll, Banking. Contact: 78773250. Email: ali.mohamedown@gmail.com

INDIAN Male /CPA, CMA, CA Finalist & BCOM/ 10+ years of Experience/ Currently Working as Finance Manager, Looking for Senior Management Roles in Finance. Contact: 78611653. Email: jobcpacma@gmail.com

ACCOUNTANT with 5 years expertise in Accounts Payable, Receivables, Financial Reporting, VAT, Payroll, and Bank & Cash Reconciliation. Actively looking for new opportunities. Contact: 79791746 Email: Ibrahimsaw52@gmail.com
.....
Mechanical Engineer – 4+ yrs exp. in CAD, GA/ fab drawings, BOMs. AutoCAD, SolidWorks, CATIA. Ready to join. Ph: +968 72807858

SIT. WANTED

INDIAN female (BE+EEE+MBA) 3 years of Experience in Estimation and Business Development. Looking for a suitable postition. Contact: + 968 92850930 / 78066162 vaparna14@gmail.com

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

B. COM. 35 years of experience in accounts, sales coordinator, admin, HR, personal assistant, document controller with Oman D/L, looking for a job. Contact: 92558734

PLANNING Engineer, PMP. Indian male 11 years experience in Construction Projects. Well versed with Primavera P6 Software, strong communication skills, Interpersonal skills, EDT Claims, Recovery schedules, project control. Having Omani Driving Licence. Contact: 78002582 Email: engineer4planning@gmail.com

GRADUATED female candidate seeking finance, HR, Accounts, Data entry related jobs. Contact details as follows: Mobile: +968 92637030, Email: athiraanilkumarhh@gmail.com

INDIAN Female, M-Tech in Environmental Engineering, B-Tech in Civil Engineering. 7 years of Teaching experience as Asst. Professor, 2 years of professional experience in civil construction and soil investigation. Seeking suitable job, now in Muscat. Contact: 95136664, 79620397 Email: mayakrish.1804@gmail.com

PTC Rent A Car
Travel & Tours
Daily, Weekly, Monthly Car Rental Available
9345 3444

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.
Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 Salalah 9429 9325
www.orbit-oman.com

- 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

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

MECHANICAL engineer - 4+ yrs exp. in CAD, GA/ fab drawing, BOMs. AutoCAD, SolidWorks, CATIA. Ready to join. Contact: +968 72807858.

Indian Male 35, Finance Professional. MBA & PGDM in Finance. 8 yrs of experience in Oman out of 14 yrs exp.. Handled independently Accounts Finalization, IFRS, Vat & Tax Audit. Know Oracle & Tally. Ready to Join Immediately. Contact: 71181096. Email: kansebalvant@gmail.com.

A SUDANESE resident in Salalah, BSc of administrative sciences with 21 years of experience in the fields of (sales/ management/ logistics and fleet). Contact: +968 98510880.

.....
Indian Male, Storekeeper / Document Controller 2+yrs of experience in GCC, Completed BCA, ready to join immediately. Email: swamierezhasouth@gmail.com GSM: +968 71818173

WE'RE HIRING
ACCOUNTANT EXECUTIVE
Location: Muscat, Oman
Immediate joining preferred

Requirements:

- Bachelor's in Accounting/Finance
- 2-3 years experience (Oman/GCC)
- Knowledge of VAT, Accounting Software, Compliances
- English a must (Arabic a plus)

Send CV: dprana@gmail.com
Contact: +968-95506978

WE ARE HIRING

A **3-STAR HOTEL MANAGER** is required in Ad Dakhiliyah Governorate. The candidate for this position must have 7-10 years of experience in the hospitality field, including 3-5 years in a managerial position. Must be fully fluent in English, possess strong leadership skills, and have experience in food and beverage management and event organization. A degree in hotel management or a related field is required.

Send your CV to the following email:
hrdoman@omantel.net.om

PEST CONTROL OMAN CO. L.L.C.
Supply of Pesticides, Gel (crocoraches), 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

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
izdihar_info izdihar.info

ازديهار
izdihar



ART/LIFE



TRAVEL

WHEN A FORMER MISS UNIVERSE DISCOVERS MUSANDAM > 20

LIFESTYLE

World’s richest 10% caused two thirds of global warming: study



THE WORLD’S wealthiest 10 per cent of individuals are responsible for two thirds of global warming since 1990, researchers said on Wednesday.

How the rich consume and invest has substantially increased the risk of deadly heatwaves and drought, they reported in the first study to quantify the impact of concentrated private wealth on extreme climate events.

“We link the carbon footprints of the wealthiest individuals directly to real-world climate impacts,” lead author Sarah Schoengart, a scientist at ETH Zurich, said. “It’s a shift from carbon accounting towards climate accountability.”

Compared to the global average, for example, the richest one per cent contributed 26 times more to once-a-century heatwaves and 17 times more to droughts in the Amazon, according to the findings, published in Nature Climate Change.

Emissions from the wealthiest 10 per cent in China and the United States — which together account for nearly half of global carbon pollution — each led to a two-to-threefold rise in heat extremes.

Burning fossil fuels and deforestation have heated Earth’s average surface by 1.3 degrees Celsius, mostly during the last 30 years.

Schoengart and colleagues combined economic data and climate simulations to trace emissions from different global income groups and assess their impact on specific types of climate-enhance extreme weather.

The researchers also emphasised the role of emissions embedded in financial investment rather than just lifestyle and personal consumption.

“Climate action that doesn’t address the outsized responsibilities of the wealthiest members of society risk missing one of the most powerful levers we have to reduce future harm,” said senior author Carl-Friedrich Schleussner, head of the Integrated Climate Impacts Research Group at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis near Vienna.

Owners of capital, he noted, could be held accountable for climate impacts through progressive taxes on wealth and carbon-intensive investments.

Earlier research has shown that taxing asset-related emissions is more equitable than broad carbon taxes, which tend to burden those on lower incomes. Recent initiatives to increase taxes on the super-rich and multinationals have mostly stalled, especially since Donald Trump regained the White House.

Last year, Brazil — as host of the G20 — pushed for a two-per cent tax on the net worth of individuals with more than \$1 billion in assets. — AFP

QUICK FEATURES



HERITAGE

Members of a samba team cheer for a group carrying a portable shrine during the Kanda Festival in the shopping area of Akihabara district of Tokyo. — AFP



ENTERTAINMENT

MTUS actress Sherry Cola attends Gold House 4th Gold Gala, the annual gathering of top Asian Pacific and multicultural leaders, at the Music Centre in Los Angeles. — AFP



TRAVEL

The National Palace of Culture’s underpass is illuminated by the light installation called “Cosmic Echos”, as part of the “Lunar” Festival of Lights in Sofia, Bulgaria. — Reuters

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



Out in the Wild



Beauty of Oman's Culture

SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

We select photos daily for our Instagram Top Picks of the Day. To be selected, follow us on Instagram and every time you upload or share your photos, make sure to tag us and use #OmanObserver and #BeAnObserver.

‘Mediterranean Blue Diamond’ could fetch \$20 million at auction



A 10-CARAT blue diamond which could fetch \$20 million when it goes under the hammer later this month was presented by auction house Sotheby’s in Geneva on Thursday.

The cushion-shaped piece, known as the “Mediterranean Blue Diamond,” was mined in South Africa and displayed a rare colour that qualified as fancy vivid blue, Sotheby’s said.

“The market for coloured diamonds continues to go from strength to strength,” said Jessica Wyndham of Sotheby’s, added that she expected a price in the region of \$20 million.

In 2016, another vivid blue diamond sold for 56.8 million Swiss francs (\$68.7 million) at a Christie’s auction in Geneva.

Sotheby’s high jewellery collection, which includes other coloured gemstones, was presented to journalists in

Geneva ahead of a live auction scheduled for May 13 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel.

The Mediterranean Blue Diamond’s allure stems from its stunning, vibrant blue colour and rarity. Known for its captivating hue, the diamond is among the rarest fancy coloured diamonds, making it highly sought after by collectors and investors alike. Its large size, high clarity and exceptional cut further elevate its status in the luxury jewelry market. Blue diamonds have long symbolised prestige and exclusivity; and the Mediterranean Blue variant is no exception. With limited availability and unparalleled beauty, this gemstone continues to command premium prices and remains a coveted treasure in the world of fine jewelry. — Reuters



Miu Miu Brings a Show to New York, and Everyone Can Go

SINCE 2011, Miuccia Prada, the patron saint of smart, messy women everywhere, has been using her Miu Miu line as a platform to commission short films by female filmmakers from around the world, including Janicza Bravo, Mati Diop and Haifaa al Mansour. For Prada, the films, which sometimes air during her fashion shows, serve as a backdrop to her clothes, which have always explored the chaotic lives of mothers, sisters, rebels, poets and punks without ever trying to reconcile their contradictions. That has made Miu Miu the darling of the fashion industry, the rare fashion brand to experience explosive growth at a time when sales in general are slowing.

Last year, during Art Basel Paris, Prada decided it was time to bring all the films together and she enlisted Polish artist Goshka Macuga to help. The result was an immersive performance piece of sorts that involved a cast of 35 characters from the films, brought to life by 105 actors. It was such an unexpected hit, with 11,000 people visiting the Paris show during its five-day run, that she and Macuga decided to re-create it this weekend for Frieze New York.

The new show, titled “Tales & Tellers,” is being staged in the Terminal Warehouse, the cavernous late-19th-century building on the Far West Side of Manhattan, latterly home to the Tunnel nightclub. And it is an altogether darker take on the state of women than the Paris event was. (Still, wardrobe by Miu Miu.)

Prada and Macuga Zoomed in to explain. The conversation has been edited and condensed.

Q: THERE HASN’T BEEN A MIU MIU SHOW IN NEW YORK IN DECADES, BUT NOW THERE IS. SORT OF. WHY THIS?

MIUCCIA PRADA: The clothes are an excuse to have the support of the company to create these projects where women are talking about themselves, which is very important. In my work, I have always embraced the complexity of women, the

complexity of our lives, how we can succeed in developing our abilities. So it’s fundamental to know what women do, what they think, in different contexts.

GOSHK MACUGA: All these different stories represent different social problems for women in different countries. Like, for example, the film which I feel very close to, “Nightwalk” by Małgorzata Szumowska, was filmed in Poland at a time when gender issues were really repressed by our government. It was talking about this idea of liberation within a context that was not sympathetic to difference.

Q: THAT SOUNDS LIKE THE CURRENT STATE OF AMERICA. IS THAT WHY YOU WANTED TO BRING THE SHOW HERE?

PRADA: Not just America. Conservatism is everywhere in Europe. We are facing these really great problems and this moment is really scary. So it’s a very crucial argument — that everybody has the right to their voice.

MACUGA: We are taking it to the American, or New York, street at night and trying to imagine how a woman exists within this context. It’s more threatening, it’s more surreal. We’re looking at the concept of inside and outside, the idea of individuals coming together in a group and being empowered. How all these individual voices can come together and make a big impact.

Q: IS THIS ALSO THE WAY YOU RAISE YOUR VOICE?

PRADA: It’s hard for me to talk about politics because I am a representative of luxury. That’s a very privileged group of people, so to translate that in a real democratic way is not obvious. So I try in my own way to be political, but I have to be very careful how I make it public.

MACUGA: Artists can use language that allows certain narratives to still be present, but maybe present under the umbrella of a more coded language. You’re not directly addressing anything or making a statement, but you’re creating the possibility for people to project

certain ideas into it.

PRADA: What I hope is that people who come to the show feel they can express themselves — their ideas, their problems, their weakness, their struggle. We are basically saying that change or building relationships or empowerment happens on a human level, in the instantaneous relationships that we make with other people.

Q: WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT NOW?

MACUGA: Clearly we cannot take for granted certain positive things that happen for women in society. Governments change, politics change and the situation of women changes with that.

PRADA: Women’s liberation is not concluded at all. Sometimes, it looks like we are going backward. There is still a lot of work to do.

Q: IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO CONVEY WITH CLOTHES?

PRADA: I try to make my contribution with the instrument I have. When you make clothes, you are suggesting possible ways of being. I am fixated on the word “useful.” I want to try to be useful. Basically, I have the Prada Foundation, our museum. I have the fashion lines. And this is something in between that seems the most promising because it is simple. There’s more excitement, less pressure, attached to it.

Q: WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

PRADA: First, when we made these little movies, no one cared one bit. We showed them at the Venice Film Festival, in a very serious environment. Then I wanted to do an exhibit at the Prada Foundation about feminism, but while curators are used to curating objects and art, there are no curators for ideas, so it’s very difficult.

But adding the fashion environment attracts many more people and allows this idea to become much more popular, much more diffused. Suddenly, with this, everybody immediately understood. It somehow accelerated the process and we wanted to push that. This is one of the miracles of fashion.

FEATURES



WHEN A FORMER
MISS UNIVERSE
DISCOVERS
MUSANDAM



BY YERU EBUEN

FORMER Miss Universe Pia Wurtzbach has recently taken everyone by surprise when she did a quick side trip to Oman finding herself in the stunning Musandam Peninsula.

Accompanied by her husband, Jeremy Jauncey, a well-known luxury travel entrepreneur and a few other family members, the group explored the beautiful, rugged coastline of Oman.

Pia's trip was all about hitting pause, taking a much-needed break from her busy life. She spent a few days at the luxurious Six Senses Ziggy Bay, a resort famous for its privacy, natural beauty and top-notch service.

She shared her experience on social media, with her followers — over 20 million across her different accounts — getting a glimpse of her trip. Her pictures showed clear blue waters, golden beaches and heartfelt captions about how much she loved the peaceful mornings, salty breezes and the natural charm of Musandam.

The fjords of Musandam are notoriously stunning and offer an authentic experience for those tired of crowded tourist spots. It's a quiet, breathtaking place where visitors can really disconnect, marvel at nature's artistry and create memories that last. The region's mix of towering cliffs, hidden coves and crystal waters make it a perfect escape for families, couples, or anyone seeking peace and adventure.

Nicknamed the “Norway of Arabia,” Musandam has been praised because of its dramatic fjords and cliffs.

In her husband's story during the visit, the group can be seen taking a cruise in crystal clear waters where playful dolphins are usually seen.

Pia couldn't help but share her feelings, posting a sweet comment: “Oh man... didn't wanna leave #Oman.” It's clear she found something special in Oman's untouched wilderness and raw natural beauty.

Over the years, Musandam's Ziggy Bay has become a favourite for many high-profile visitors — royalty, celebrities and seasoned travellers all seeking a break from busy city life. Its unique blend of rustic charm and luxury makes it an ideal place to unwind and reconnect. And now, with Pia sharing her experience, Oman's natural beauty is getting even more attention from her millions of followers worldwide. Her stunning photos and heartfelt posts inspire many to consider Oman as their next holiday destination.

Pia, who is also a successful fashion endorser for luxury brands, has a history of influencing millions through her social media. Her recent trip to Oman has already made waves, with many fans expressing their admiration and curiosity. Comments like “Beautiful place! Looks so peaceful,” flooded her feeds and others said, “Really thinking of visiting Oman now, thanks to Pia!” Her heartfelt caption — talking about missing the quiet mornings and salty air — really resonated with her followers. It's clear her trip has sparked a new interest in Oman and its serene coastal landscapes.

Her trip shows Oman's growing reputation as a top destination for eco-tourists and luxury travellers alike. The country has been investing heavily in sustainable tourism and making sure visitors get authentic experiences amidst beautiful surroundings. From her posts, it's obvious that Oman's hospitality, natural beauty and friendly people left a lasting impression on Pia and Jeremy.

After the trip, Pia shared her feelings describing it as a “serious reset” and a wonderful family escape. Her trip not only highlights Oman's stunning scenery but also its potential to attract more visitors in the future.

With her influence, more people might just start dreaming of sandy beaches, turquoise waters and dramatic fjords, just like Pia did. And honestly, who wouldn't want to experience Oman's magic for themselves after seeing her pictures and reading her words? It might just be time to add Oman to your travel plans too.

Photos from Instagram @piajauncey.

