

OMAN
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PRAYER TIMINGS
FAJR 04:58 AM
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TALKS FOCUS ON BROADENING SCOPE OF PARTNERSHIP

HIS MAJESTY AND KING OF SPAIN HOLD PRIVATE MEETING



HM GIVEN OFFICIAL RECEPTION CEREMONY	HIS MAJESTY, KING OF SPAIN REVIEW BILATERAL RELATIONS	TALKS FOCUS ON REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS	LEADERS AGREE TO BROADEN SCOPE OF PARTNERSHIP	OMAN, SPAIN SIGN 4 MOUs ACROSS SECTORS	MOUs COVER GREEN METHANOL, LNG, WATER
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His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain and Queen Letizia held a private meeting at the Zarzuela Palace in Madrid on Tuesday evening.

The meeting served to deliberate upon several political and economic matters of mutual interest to both nations, during which perspectives were exchanged regarding developments in current regional and international affairs. The discussions further emphasised

the paramount importance of broadening the scope of partnership and investment to fortify the economies of both countries.

The meeting was attended from the Omani side by HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tariq al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, and Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister. Representing the Spanish side were Jose Manuel Albares, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Francisco Javier, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to the

Sultanate of Oman.

Earlier, an official reception ceremony was held at the Royal Palace in Madrid for His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq on the occasion of his state visit to the Kingdom of Spain.

ROYAL CAVALRY’S KNIGHTS

Upon the arrival of His Majesty the Sultan’s motorcade at the precincts to the Royal Palace, it was escorted by a cavalcade of the Royal Cavalry’s knights. His Majesty was

then received by King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain and Queen Letizia. The Royal couple welcomed His Majesty the Sultan and extended their wishes for a successful visit and a pleasant stay in the Kingdom of Spain to him and the accompanying official delegation.

Thereafter, His Majesty the Sultan, accompanied by King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia, ascended the dais of honour, during which the Omani Royal Anthem and the Spanish National Anthem were played, while

the artillery fired a 21-gun salute in honour of His Majesty the Sultan. Afterwards, His Majesty inspected the Guard of Honour.

After that, His Majesty the Sultan shook hands with senior Spanish officials who welcomed him, while King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia shook hands with the official Omani delegation. His Majesty the Sultan and the King of Spain then witnessed the March-Past of the Guard of Honour to the accompaniment of military musical pieces. — ONA



HM, King of Spain exchange Orders

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain exchanged Orders and Commemorative Gifts at the Zarzuela Palace in Madrid, on the occasion of His Majesty the Sultan’s visit to the Kingdom of Spain.

In a gracious gesture reflecting the profound relations between the two nations, His Majesty the Sultan conferred upon King Felipe VI the Order of Al Said. His Majesty further bestowed upon Queen Letizia the First Class Order of Oman, and presented Omani Royal orders upon some Spanish dignitaries.

In a reciprocal gesture, King Felipe VI conferred upon His Majesty the Sultan the Order of Isabella, the

highest Royal decoration of the Kingdom of Spain, in recognition of His Majesty the Sultan and in affirmation of the enduring strength of bilateral relations between the two nations. The King of Spain further honoured members of the official delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan with Royal decorations, in addition to the exchange of commemorative gifts between the two sides.

KING OF SPAIN HOSTS DINNER

In a distinguished tribute to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain and Queen Letizia hosted an official dinner at the Royal Palace

in Madrid.

Prior to the dinner, His Majesty the Sultan shook hands with Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain, along with several senior dignitaries. The Royal couple; the King and the Queen, then shook hands with the members of the official delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan.

Subsequently, the King of Spain delivered an address renewing his welcome to His Majesty the Sultan and the accompanying official delegation on this historic visit.

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq likewise delivered an address on this occasion. — ONA

DETAILS ON P4

HIS MAJESTY ACCORDED OFFICIAL



His Majesty's motorcade at the precincts of the Royal Palace was escorted by a cavalcade of the Royal Cavalry's knights. His Majesty was then received by King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain and Queen Letizia.

AN OFFICIAL reception ceremony was held at the Royal Palace in Madrid on Tuesday for His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on the occasion of his state visit to the Kingdom of Spain. Upon the arrival of His Majesty the Sultan's motorcade at the precincts of the Royal Palace, it was escorted by a cavalcade of the Royal Cavalry's knights. His Majesty was then received by King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain and Queen Letizia. The Royal couple welcomed His Majesty the Sultan and extended their wishes for a successful visit and a pleasant stay in the Kingdom of Spain to him and the accompanying official delegation. Thereafter, His Majesty the Sultan, accompanied by King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia, ascended the dais of honour, during which the Omani Royal Anthem and the Spanish National Anthem were played, while the artillery fired a 21-gun salute in honour of His Majesty the Sultan. Afterwards, His Majesty inspected the Guard of Honour. After that, His Majesty the Sultan shook hands with senior Spanish officials who welcomed him, while King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia shook hands with the official Omani delegation. His Majesty the Sultan and the King of Spain then witnessed the March-Past of the Guard of Honour to the accompaniment of military musical pieces. After the conclusion of the official reception protocols, His Majesty the Sultan and the King of Spain held a cordial meeting at the Royal Palace. — ONA



RECEPTION PROTOCOLS IN SPAIN

HM visits Madrid City Council

MADRID: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik visited the Madrid City Council on Tuesday evening within the framework of his state visit to the Kingdom of Spain. Prior to the arrival of His Majesty the Sultan, the motorcade was escorted by a cavalcade of the Royal Cavalry's knights. Upon his arrival, His Majesty was received by Inmaculada Sanz Otero, Deputy Mayor of Madrid. His Majesty then inspected the Guard of Honour, which was formed up alongside a group of cavalymen, to the accompaniment of musical pieces played in welcome of His Majesty the Sultan's visit. After that, His Majesty the Sultan shook hands with senior members of the City Council, while the Mayor of Madrid shook hands with members of the official Omani delegation. His Majesty graciously signed the Distinguished Visitors' Book. The Mayor then accompanied His Majesty the Sultan to the Council Hall, where the Mayor delivered a welcoming address expressing his profound appreciation for the gracious visit and his country's aspiration to strengthen cooperation and partnership with the Sultanate of Oman in service of the mutual interests of both nations. The Mayor of Madrid then presented the Key to the City of Madrid to His Majesty the Sultan, as a symbol of the respect and esteem held for His Majesty, marking his historic visit. His Majesty the Sultan then graciously delivered an address on this occasion, in which he stated: "We have received the key to this magnificent city with profound gratitude, deeply appreciating your abundant goodwill towards us and our nation, the Sultanate of Oman. This gracious gesture demonstrates that your capital, and indeed your country as a whole, extends a welcome to all. It is a destination cherished by tourists, literati, intellectuals and artists who journey here from across the globe, drawn by its rich history, unique architecture, excellent services and captivating beauty. We have been greatly impressed by your system of metropolitan governance, in which you play a central role. You undertake the duties of metropolitan government as the chief executive, through which you supervise the daily operations of this city. We look forward to strengthening the relations between the magnificent city of Madrid and our capital city of Muscat. It is our firm hope that this will lead to a mutually beneficial exchange of the two cities' experiences across various fields, thereby contributing to the development and consolidation of the relations between our two nations." On his turn, His Majesty the Sultan presented a commemorative gift on the occasion of his visit to this city. The gift was received by the Deputy Mayor of Madrid. The meeting was attended by the delegation accompanying His Majesty and members of the Madrid City Council. — ONA



His Majesty graciously signed the Distinguished Visitors' Book and then graciously delivered an address on this occasion.





HM: Ties built on cultural exchange, mutual respect



His Majesty visits Senate of Spain

HIS Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq visited the Senate of Spain in Madrid on Tuesday morning as part of his state visit to the Kingdom of Spain. His Majesty was received upon arrival by Pedro Rollan, President of the Senate, and Francina Armengol, President of the Congress of Deputies. His Majesty subsequently ascended the podium accompanied by the President of the Senate and the President of the Congress, during which the Omani Royal Anthem and the Spanish National Anthem were played.

His Majesty the Sultan then shook hands with some members from both the Senate and the Congress of Deputies, while the two parliamentary speakers shook hands with members of the official Omani delegation.

His Majesty further graced the occasion by signing the Distinguished Visitors' Book. In a gesture of high esteem, His Majesty the Sultan was presented with two commemorative medals by the parliamentary speakers, each engraved with his name in recognition and honour of this noble and gracious visit.

The two parliamentary speakers then escorted His Majesty the Sultan to the main podium within the grand hall of the Senate building, where the President of the Senate delivered a welcoming address. He expressed his profound honour at His Majesty's gracious visit, commending the deeply rooted historical relations between the two nations and underscoring the commitment of both leaderships to strengthening these ties to achieve mutual benefit across all spheres.

His Majesty the Sultan then delivered an address on the occasion of his visit to the Senate, stating: "We feel profound delight at this opportunity to address your esteemed Council in both its chambers – the Senate and the Congress of Deputies – which represent the friendly Spanish people, for whom we hold great respect and appreciation for their honourable positions on the many issues facing the world. We cherish a historic friendship with them, built on mutual respect and productive cooperation – a friendship whose steadfastness the passage of time has only reinforced, making it even more resolute and qualified for further advancement.

From the moment we arrived in your gracious land, we have found welcome from the Spanish people – a response that is characteristic of them, for they have always interacted, and continue to interact, with all civilisations through a unique spirit manifested in the sciences, arts, and archaeological landmarks they have preserved and consider among the most important achievements of historical and civilisational encounter, transforming them into a cultural heritage and historical monuments visited by millions of tourists.

This visit of ours also reveals the strength of the relationship that personally binds us to His Majesty the King of Spain, and demonstrates the solidity of the bond between the Omani people and the Spanish people – relations we are most earnest to support and strengthen to include all political, economic, commercial and cultural aspects. Councils represent the link between the government and society, are the source of laws and legislation, and work to enhance the principle of community participation in decision-making, thereby achieving balanced development and entrenching a spirit of cooperation between the citizen and state institutions. — ONA

In a distinguished tribute to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain and Queen Letizia hosted an official dinner at the Royal Palace in Madrid.

Prior to the dinner, His Majesty the Sultan shook hands with Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain, along with several senior dignitaries. The Royal couple; the King and the Queen, then shook hands with the members of the official delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan.

Subsequently, the King of Spain delivered an address renewing his welcome to His Majesty the Sultan and the accompanying official delegation on this historic visit, expressing his hopes that the visit would fulfill the shared aspirations of both nations in service of their peoples' interests.

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq likewise delivered an address on this occasion, stating: "It is with profound pleasure that we gather in your historic realm, the Kingdom of Spain, which has eternally stood as a bridge of civilization and humanity connecting East and West, and as a beacon of cultural richness and intellectual diversity. As we are graciously hosted as your guests, we feel the genuine warmth of friendship between our nations and hold in the highest esteem the generous hospitality and splendid reception that reflect the noble character of the Spanish people and the profound historical bonds between our two countries.

"Omani-Spanish relations are no fleeting occurrence but are built upon a venerable heritage of cultural exchange and mutual respect. These ties have been consistently strengthened through decades of bilateral engagements and constructive collaboration across numerous fields.

"This visit represents a historic moment to commemorate the distinguished



journey of our nations' cherished relations and reaffirms our personal commitment and steadfast support for advancing these bonds, which have demonstrated remarkable growth across economic, commercial, and investment spheres in recent years. We have been accompanied on this visit by several relevant ministers to further explore cooperative opportunities between our nations.

"In the Sultanate of Oman, we firmly believe that dialogue and openness to cultures and civilizations represent the essential pathway toward building a world of greater understanding, stability, and cooperation. Throughout its distinguished history, the Kingdom of Spain has exemplified this spirit of openness, serving as a destination for scholars, artists,

literati and thinkers from across the world. Your nation has stood as a lighthouse of knowledge and learning that has significantly contributed to shaping human civilization.

"Our partnership manifests clearly through shared values, mutual understanding, and deep respect. We take great pleasure in expressing our appreciation for Spain's role as a leading political force in Europe and the global economy, alongside its significant contributions to promoting peace and justice worldwide.

Looking toward the future, we aspire that through our shared commitment to international principles, we may collaborate in addressing global challenges. We further affirm our dedication to expanding horizons for commercial and investment cooperation, cultural and intellectual exchange, and

fostering dialogue among our peoples, thereby contributing to a more prosperous and tolerant future for generations to come.

"We express our deepest gratitude for the exceptionally warm welcome extended to us and look forward with great anticipation to receiving you in the Sultanate of Oman, where we may continue our constructive dialogue and further strengthen the bonds of cooperation between our two nations.

"With heartfelt wishes for the continued progress and prosperity of the friendly Spanish people, and for the ever-growing strength and flourishing of our bilateral relations."

The dinner was attended by the official delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan and senior civil and military officials in the Kingdom of Spain. — ONA

Omani-Spanish forum explores partnerships

THE Omani-Spanish Economic Forum, held in the Spanish capital, Madrid, reviewed partnership and investment opportunities between the two friendly countries in various economic fields. The forum took place within the context of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik's state visit to the Kingdom of Spain.

The forum reviewed investment opportunities available in the fields of renewable energy, ports and logistics, maritime services, tourism, food industries, digital technology, smart cities and technical education.

Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, stated that the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Spain are business-supportive investment destinations with a governmental commitment to supporting public and private sector partnerships. He noted that the Sultanate of Oman has established an attractive investment environment in accordance with the goals and ambitions of Oman Vision 2040.

He added in his speech that the number of registered Spanish companies operating in the Sultanate of Oman increased from 43 companies in 2023 to 49 companies in 2024, a rise of 14 per cent. He affirmed that these figures reflect the strengthening of commercial relations between the two friendly countries and the growing recognition of the Sultanate of Oman as a strategic market for Spanish expertise.

He emphasised that this new phase will support Spanish companies with plans for international expansion and encourage their entry into the Sultanate of Oman, noting that the two countries share a common goal

of reaching Net-Zero emissions by 2050.

For her part, Amparo López Senovilla, Spain's Secretary of State for Trade, emphasised in her speech the depth of economic relations linking the two friendly countries, noting that trade cooperation between the two sides is witnessing continuous growth in various fields. She highlighted that Spain is one of the most prominent trading partners of the Sultanate of Oman in Europe, exporting a wide range of products to the Omani market.

She explained that the Sultanate of Oman is a reliable energy supplier for the Kingdom of Spain and contributes to providing the Spanish market with essential materials such as aluminium, electrical equipment and plastic products. She pointed out that Oman Vision 2040, with its focus on economic diversification, opens promising horizons for Spanish companies to invest and participate in these vital pathways.

The Spanish Secretary of State for Trade affirmed that the Spanish government, through its various financial tools, will continue its support for expanding areas of trade and investment cooperation with the Sultanate of Oman, contributing to mutual development and enhancing the presence of Spanish companies in the region.

JOINT EFFORTS

Moreover, Faisal bin Abdullah al Rawas, Chairman of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), stated that organising this forum reflects the joint efforts of Omani and Spanish private sector institutions in promoting and creating commercial partnerships, researching promising investment opportunities, and converting them into joint projects that support economic growth and diversify income sources

in line with the objectives and directions of the two countries.

Al Rawas emphasised the importance of leveraging the attractive investment environment in the Sultanate of Oman and the competitive advantages and qualitative opportunities it offers to Spanish investors, thanks to its vital strategic location, economic stability, developed infrastructure, and diverse economic and free zones. He expressed hope that the forum will contribute to strengthening commercial and investment partnerships and expanding cooperation horizons between the two countries, positively impacting sustainable development and enhancing mutual interests.

José Luis Bonet, President of the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, explained that the forum reviewed the investment opportunities and advantages enjoyed by the two friendly countries in various fields, in addition to the great potential that would develop bilateral economic relations between the two sides.

He pointed out that Spanish companies have strengthened their presence in the Sultanate of Oman over the past few years through projects in infrastructure, the oil and gas sectors, water desalination, water and waste treatment, and other sectors. He affirmed that the two friendly countries are establishing a favourable economic cooperation framework for joint partnerships through agreements and Memoranda of Understanding signed by both sides.

During the forum, a visual presentation on "Invest Oman" was delivered, covering the available investment opportunities, advantages, incentives and facilities offered by the Sultanate of Oman to investors. — ONA



The forum reviewed investment opportunities available in the fields of renewable energy, ports and logistics, maritime services, tourism, food industries, digital technology, smart cities and technical education. — ONA

Oman, Spain sign four MoUs across various sectors

THE Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Spain signed four memoranda of understanding (MoUs) in the fields of green methanol, liquefied natural gas (LNG), water and wastewater management, and economic cooperation to develop trade and investment relations between the business communities of the two countries. The signings took place in Madrid within the context of the state visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to the Kingdom of Spain.

The first MoU was signed between the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Navigation. It aims to expand cooperation between the private sectors in both countries, encourage the exchange of trade delegations, organise joint exhibitions and seminars, exchange economic and commercial information, and support bilateral investments.

The second MoU, signed by Nama Water Services with the Spanish company 'Agua de Valencia', aims to enhance cooperation in water and wastewater management and implement innovative solutions based on artificial intelligence to improve service quality, reduce water loss and enhance infrastructure efficiency.

Under this MoU, a pilot project for leak detection in the water network of Nama Water Services will be implemented, along with a study of non-revenue water from technical, commercial and operational perspectives. Subsequent discussions will focus on establishing a long-term partnership of up to 10 years for implementing comprehensive projects in water and wastewater networks.

This cooperation falls within the framework of enhancing the exchange of expertise and modern technologies between Oman and Spain in the water and wastewater sector,

supporting efforts to develop sustainable and smart water resource management.

The third MoU, signed by Oman LNG Company with the Spanish company 'Naturgy', aims to explore and discuss a long-term LNG sale and purchase agreement, which may include the supply of up to one million tonnes annually for 10 years starting from 2030.

Pursuant to the MoU, the two companies will also seek a joint investment in building an LNG carrier in cooperation with Asyad for maritime transport, purchase LNG shipments from 'Naturgy' to continue meeting the needs of the European market, and study opportunities for access to European regasification terminals and associated gas pipeline networks to enhance LNG imports and subsequent sales, cooperating in this field to develop global commercial opportunities.

The fourth MoU was signed by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology with an international consortium of companies comprising HIF EMEA, ACCIONA and Nordex Green Hydrogen and Al MEERA Investment. It aims to explore and develop a project for producing and supplying ships with low-carbon green methanol in Dhofar Governorate, enhancing Oman's efforts to achieve carbon neutrality and establishing Dhofar as a leading hub for green fuel and ship bunkering in the Middle East region.

Under this MoU, the two parties will collaborate on assessing the necessary technical, regulatory and commercial aspects for establishing a major facility to produce green methanol, leveraging renewable energy sources and the advanced infrastructure that characterises Oman. The consortium will conduct feasibility studies and economic and technical analyses to explore the potential for ship bunkering and exporting the green methanol produced in Dhofar. — ONA



The forum reviewed investment opportunities available in the fields of renewable energy, ports and logistics, maritime services, tourism, food industries, digital technology, smart cities and technical education. — ONA



RECALL DATE: 05/11/2025

Recall

TOYOTA
FORKLIFT

Brand of Commodity	Year of Production*	#Number of Affected Commodities
Toyota Forklift	2016-2023	70

*Not all vehicles in this production period, are affected.
#Subject to revision, based on the information received from the manufacturers, from time to time.

Recall consequence The subject vehicles are certain electric Forklifts. There is a possibility that it may cause the welded part of the overhead guard to get cracked. Moreover, in case of continuing to use the forklift vehicle with the cracked welded part of the overhead guard, there is a possibility that it may cause the welded part to get fractured and the component of the overhead guard to fall off.

Recall Action To replace the overhead guard roof bar



To check the serial number of the affected items, please visit the Recall and Warnings website by scanning the QR code



Contact details: Toll free - 800/3000
Working days: Sunday - Thursday
Working time: 8:00 - 17:00 hrs.



Consumers Protection Authority
سلطة حماية المستهلكين والعملاء

التاريخ: ٥ نوفمبر ٢٠٢٥

الرجوع: ٠٥

الرجوع: 093-083

OMAN



The ceremony included the graduation of batches of university officers and executive officers and a batch of new recruits, in addition to presenting various military displays. — ONA

Sayyid Theyazin patronises over RNO’s Annual Day celebration

HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, on Tuesday patronised the celebration of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) on its Annual Day, which falls on November 3 every year. The ceremony, held at the Military Parade Ground at Said Bin Sultan Naval Base, included the graduation of batches of university officers and executive officers (holders of the General Diploma) and a batch of new recruits, in addition to presenting various military displays.

These displays reflected the skill and efficiency of the RNO personnel and the supreme attention the RNO receives from His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander, as it takes confident strides towards further modernisation, development, and armament in equipment, materiel, and human competencies, thereby strengthening its military capabilities to carry out its immense national responsibilities.

The celebrations commenced with the playing of the Royal Anthem. HH Sayyid Theyazin, the patron of the occasion, then reviewed the graduates’ parade. Following this, the parade performed a display of



regular and slow military march, passing the main dais and rendering the military salute to the chief guest. The RNO Music Band then presented a diverse musical display and musical artistic formations.

Subsequently, the participants in the parade formed a symbolic sailing ship representing the shape of the RNO vessel “Shabab Oman II”.

This was followed by a demonstration of pole-climbing skills accompanied by enthusiastic

naval chants. After that, HH Sayyid Theyazin, presented the Sword of Honour to Officer Cadet Said bin Hamed al Anboori, who achieved first place in the Executive Officers Course. He also honoured Officer Cadet Al Munthir bin Said al Maamari, who achieved first place overall in the University Cadet Officers Course.

The participants chanted the RNO anthem (“Bahriyat Al Majd” - Navy of Glory), then took the oath



of allegiance and chanted the call of support, and cheered three times for the life of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander. The parade then advanced in review formation, followed by the playing of the Royal Anthem, marking the conclusion of the RNO Annual Day ceremony.

Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman, stated: “The Third of November has dawned upon

us, and we are cloaked in glories immortalised by history – a glory that testified that the Omanis are the masters of the sea and its great sailors. They etched the most magnificent meanings of sacrifices and heroism upon the waves. We follow in their footsteps with an ancient legacy and firm resolve, drawing inspiration and vision from a leader who willed us to be a modern naval force highly regarded by all.” — ONA

ROYAL NAVY OF OMAN CHIEF PRESENTS CERTIFICATES TO OFFICERS



MUSCAT: Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO), on Tuesday presented the Royal Commission Certificate and graduation certificates to the officer batches (General Diploma holders and university graduates) at Said Bin Sultan Naval Base, on the occasion of their graduation and the RNO’s Annual Day celebration. — ONA

SHORT TAKES



PROGRAMME LOOKS AT CLIMATE CHANGE

SAUD AL ANSARI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

The third day of the Youth Ambassadors Programme, held under the theme ‘Climate Change’, featured a simulation session of the United Nations Security Council and the Human Rights Council.

The goal was to provide young people with the opportunity to engage in diplomatic discussions that mirror real international debates on significant environmental and humanitarian issues.

Continuing its mission of promoting a culture of diplomatic dialogue and collective thinking among Omani youth, this edition builds on the success of the previous two editions.

It reaffirms the programme’s role as a pioneering national initiative dedicated to preparing a generation that is well-informed about global issues.

The Youth Ambassadors Programme aims to train 100 participants in leadership and diplomacy, enhancing their skills in negotiation, persuasion and the drafting of official positions. It also aims to familiarise them with the mechanisms and operations of the United Nations and its various councils.



DUST AFFECTS MUSCAT AND OTHER AREAS

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
MUSCAT, NOV 4

Low cloud formation and fog are likely over parts of Oman, leading to low horizontal visibility, according to the Oman Met Office.

On Tuesday, dust flow affected the atmosphere of Al Batinah North, Musandam, and parts of Muscat Governorate, and is expected to continue on Wednesday. The dust flowing over the Sea of Oman is caused by cold northeast winds coming from the direction of Iran.

The maximum temperature recorded was 37.6 degrees Celsius in Mahout.

Earlier, satellite images showed dust flow over the coastal areas of the Sea of Oman.

The weather forecaster at the Oman Met Office, while speaking to the Observer, said the temperature will continue to be pleasant, but no rain is expected. The coolest temperature was recorded in Saiq, with a low of 10 degrees Celsius.



200 artists will take part in the event. — ONA

ART EXHIBITION FROM TODAY

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth will host the Muscat Art Exhibition 2025 from Wednesday under the slogan “Elements That Build the Narrative”, in partnership with the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

As many as 200 artists from more than 15 Arab and foreign countries will take part in the event.

— ONA

KHAREEF DHOFAR CROWNED ‘LEADING TOURISM DESTINATION OF 2025’ AWARD

LONDON: The Khareef Dhofar Season has been awarded the “Leading Tourism Destination of 2025” prize at the Arab Tourism and Travel Awards, organised by the Arab London Foundation in London. The event saw participation from several prominent figures and institutions in the global tourism sector.

This award crowns the successful journey of the Khareef Dhofar Season over the past years and its remarkable regional and global presence, thanks to its unique natural assets and exceptional climate that make Dhofar Governorate a renewed tourist destination throughout the year.



HH Sayyid Marwan bin Turki al Said, Governor of Dhofar, stated that this achievement embodies the growing stature of the Khareef Dhofar Season on the global tourism map and reflects the continuous efforts made by the Sultanate of

Oman to promote sustainable tourism development. Dr Ahmed bin Mohsin al Ghassani, Chairman of Dhofar Municipality, who received the award, explained that this international accolade is the result of integrated efforts among various authorities concerned in the governorate. He affirmed that the Arab London Foundation based its selection of the Khareef Dhofar Season on a set of qualitative indicators, including the growing international turnout for the season, the diversity of tourism, cultural, and environmental events and activities, alongside the level of services and supporting tourism infrastructure. — ONA

Cancer Congress: Call for global collaboration

MOHAMED AL BATTASHI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

THE World Cancer Congress, organised by the Oman Cancer Association (OCA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, continued for the second day, offering the participants a rich blend of science, innovation and community engagement through three sessions.

Dr Taha bin Mohsen al Lawati, Senior Consultant General Surgeon at Muscat Private Hospital, presented findings on the role of sentinel lymph node biopsy in post-neoadjuvant chemotherapy. He explained that nearly two-thirds of patients with lymph-node involvement were cured without requiring dissection, improving outcomes and quality of life.

“Breast cancer surgery today preserves femininity while effectively removing the tumour,” he said, urging women to seek early consultation and care. He added that working together with Italian colleagues on breast reconstruction after silicone implants led to “excellent results that restore confidence as well as recovery,” showing how international teamwork can improve patient care.

Dr Zahid bin Abdullah al Mandhari, Senior Consultant Radiation Oncologist at the Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care and Research Centre (SQCCCRC) and board member of OCA, discussed a clinical study titled “Pre-operative Boost Radiotherapy for Early Breast Cancer (Pre-BREC)”.

He explained that the new method could improve treatment control, give better cosmetic results and make surgery easier for patients. He also emphasised the importance



of technologies such as the CyberKnife and the upcoming MR-Linac system that enable precise tumour targeting and fewer side effects. “Collaboration makes research more powerful and results are more meaningful for patients,” he noted, adding that the centre is inviting other institutions to join the study to build a stronger regional research network.

Dr Annie S Anderson, Professor of Public Health Nutrition at the University of Dundee in Scotland, spoke on “Lifestyle and Cancer: Shaping Outcomes through Behaviour Change with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)”.

She stressed that effective prevention depends on shared responsibility: “We cannot only look to our governments to fund

and sponsorship programmes. We need to work in partnerships in an equitable way so that everybody can benefit.”

She said that NGOs have a special role in turning scientific findings into real community action, and that working with universities helps ensure reliable guidance for changing health habits. “It’s inspiring to learn from cultural perspectives here in Oman and the Gulf region — how communities can address lifestyle risk factors and develop local routes for awareness,” she added. As the sessions concluded, participants agreed that collaboration across science, technology and community action remains the strongest path towards a future with reduced cancer burden.

Youth dialogue looks at ambition, innovation

SIHAM AL SAIDI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

THE Youth Centre recently concluded a series of inspiring dialogue sessions in Suhar that reshape the future of the youth under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth.

The sessions, held at Sohar Fort, brought together young leaders and innovators to share experiences and discuss the evolving role of youth in shaping Oman’s future.

The forums explored key themes under the titles ‘From Hobby to Professionalism’, ‘Youth Entrepreneurship... From Idea to Impact’ and ‘Youth Energy Towards Independent Work’. Each session shed light on the growing influence of Omani youth in sports, entrepreneurship and creative industries.

During the session on independent work, Redha al Ajmi, founder of Fotaj Creative Labs, emphasised that freelancing offers one of the



best spaces for turning ideas into productive sources that contribute to the local economy. “Independent work enhances individual stability and, in turn, family stability, the foundation of society,” he said. However, Al Ajmi pointed out key challenges, including misconceptions about freelancing, the lack of long-term vision, slow administrative procedures, and the need for clearer financial plans and funding structures.

Fatma al Matoua, CEO of Clay World, highlighted that freelancing enables youth to acquire modern skills, diversify income sources and enjoy flexible work-life balance.

She noted that young freelancers face challenges such as limited guidance, time management issues, unstable income and insufficient market knowledge. “Young people need supportive environments and training programmes to help

them manage their projects efficiently,” she said.

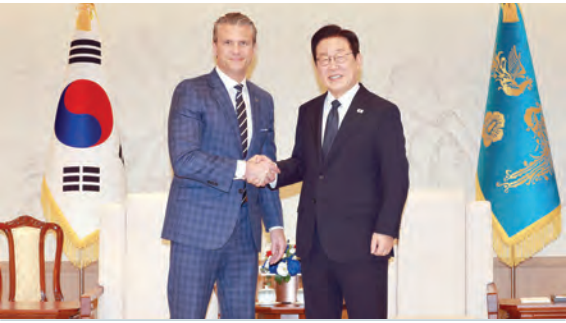
In the sports dialogue, diver Omar al Ghailani had discussed the journey from passion to professionalism, stressing that continuous training, self-belief and supportive environments are crucial for athletes aiming to compete globally.

The creative industries session showcased the transformative power of youth in cinema and digital content. Film-maker Mustafa al Lawati and content creator Hamad al Kalbani spoke about storytelling as a tool for cultural expression, while Mohammed bin Abdullah al Ajmi, Chairman of the Oman Film Society, praised young creators for their ability to turn local stories into global works that align with Oman Vision 2040.

The sessions concluded with a call to empower young Omanis through innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity, reaffirming that their energy remains the driving force behind the nation’s progress.

WORLD

SHORT TAKES



US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth shakes hands with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, at the Presidential Office in Seoul. — Reuters

HEGSETH STRESSES US-SOUTH KOREA ALLIANCE ON NORTH

SEOUL: The United States will look at “flexibility” for its troops stationed in South Korea to operate against regional threats, but the focus of the alliance will remain on deterring North Korea, US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said. He spoke alongside his South Korean counterpart during a visit to South Korea that earlier included a trip to the Demilitarised Zone on the border with North Korea. When asked whether the 28,500 US troops stationed in South Korea might be used in any conflicts beyond the peninsula, Hegseth told a briefing that protecting against nuclear-armed North Korea is the goal of the alliance. “But there’s no doubt that flexibility for regional contingency is something we would take a look at,” he said. President Lee Jae Myung, in a meeting with Hegseth, said a key goal of his administration is achieving such “operational control” of allied forces in the event of a conflict, which could help the United States focus on other regions. “If the capabilities of our military are greatly strengthened and South Korea takes the lead in defending the Korean Peninsula, the defence burden of the United States in the Indo-Pacific region will also be reduced,” Lee said. — Reuters

UN CHIEF URGES END TO ‘NIGHTMARE OF VIOLENCE’ IN SUDAN



Displaced Sudanese rest in the camp of Um Yanqur, in Sudan’s western Darfur. — AFP

DOHA: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday called for a halt to fighting in Sudan, warning that the crisis was rapidly deteriorating after paramilitaries overran a key city. Guterres urged the warring parties to “come to the negotiating table, bring an end to this nightmare of violence – now”. “The horrifying crisis in Sudan... is spiralling out of control,” he told reporters on the sidelines of the World Summit for Social Development in Doha. Reports have emerged of executions, violence, looting, attacks on aid workers and abductions in and around El-Fasher, where communications remain largely cut off. “El-Fasher and the surrounding areas in North Darfur have been an epicentre of suffering, hunger, violence and displacement,” Guterres said. “And since the Rapid Support Forces entered El-Fasher last weekend, the situation is growing worse by the day,” he added. “Hundreds of thousands of civilians are trapped by this siege. People are dying of malnutrition, disease and violence.” Guterres also said there were “continued reports of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights”. — AFP

REPORTED CASUALTIES

Afghan earthquake death toll rises to 27



An earthquake in northern Afghanistan has killed at least 27 people and injured nearly 1,000, the health ministry, announcing the end of rescue operations. Most of the casualties from the 6.3-magnitude quake were reported in the provinces of Balkh and Samangan, ministry spokesman Sharafat Zaman said. “Thanks to the significant efforts and rapid response of all relevant institutions, the authorities have completed rescue operations in the affected areas.” — AFP

PERU BREAKS OFF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MEXICO

LIMA: Peru has decided to break off diplomatic relations with Mexico, the Andean nation’s foreign minister said on Monday, after Peru’s former prime minister holed up in the Mexican embassy in the country to request asylum. Foreign Minister Hugo de Zela told journalists that Peruvian officials learned earlier in the day that former Prime Minister Betssy Chavez, who served under President Pedro Castillo, had fled to the embassy. Mexico’s foreign ministry

did not immediately respond to a request for comment. “In response to this unfriendly act, and taking into account the repeated occasions in which the current and former presidents of that country have interfered in the internal affairs of Peru, the Peruvian government has decided today to break diplomatic relations with Mexico,” de Zela said. Chavez was facing criminal charges for her alleged role in Castillo’s attempt to dissolve Congress in late 2022.

Castillo was ousted and remains under arrest. Chavez had been imprisoned since June 2023, but was released by a judge in September while her trial was underway. Her lawyer, Raul Noblecilla said that he had not heard from his client in several days. Chavez’s driver previously testified that she requested he take her to the Mexican embassy as Castillo’s bid to break up Congress was underway, before returning to her office. — Reuters

Brussels backs advancing Ukraine efforts to join EU

THE EU’s executive urged the bloc to move ahead with Ukraine’s membership push and slammed Georgia for backsliding, as Brussels unveiled its annual scorecard for countries seeking to join. Russia’s attack of Ukraine has breathed fresh life into long-stalled efforts to incorporate more members into the 27-nation EU. Brussels sees enlargement as a geostrategic priority in the face of the Kremlin’s aggression and increasing competition with China.

Ten countries are currently angling to join the club — though some such as Türkiye are essentially frozen in their tracks. Leading the pack of EU hopefuls are the Balkan duo Montenegro and Albania, while Ukraine and Moldova have made key strides after lodging their applications in 2022. “Given the pace of some candidate countries, a successful enlargement is a realistic possibility within the coming years,” EU enlargement commissioner Marta Kos told lawmakers. “The coming year will be a moment of truth for all candidate countries.” Brussels says it wants the green light this year for Ukraine and Moldova to press on with formal negotiations, but Hungary’s Russia-friendly leader Viktor Orban has been stalling on Kyiv’s bid. “Amid the challenges caused by Russia’s war of aggression, Ukraine has demonstrated its commitment to its EU path, moving forward on key reforms,” Kos said. “It will be essential to sustain this momentum and prevent any risk of backsliding, in particular on anti-corruption,”



Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky poses for a picture together with service members, in the town of Dobropillia in Donetsk region. — Reuters

she said. Joining the EU involves years of painstaking negotiations and major reforms, and countries can be stymied by political blockages. Montenegro says it wants to complete talks by end 2026, while Albania is pressing to wrap them up in 2027 and Ukraine and Moldova are eyeing 2028. Even once a candidate country clears all negotiating hurdles, joining still requires unanimous support from the EU’s existing member states. While there was positive feedback for some in the annual review, the picture for Caucasus nation Georgia was grim as the government has cracked down on opponents and shifted towards Moscow. The EU has already de facto halted the country’s bid despite widespread backing among the population for the European aspirations.

Given the pace of some candidate countries, a successful enlargement is a realistic possibility within the coming years. The coming year will be a moment of truth for all candidate countries

MARTA KOS

“In Georgia, the situation has sharply deteriorated, with serious democratic backsliding,” Kos said. “The commission considers Georgia a candidate country in name only.” Elsewhere, she said, the pace of reforms in Serbia “has slowed down significantly” despite the insistence from officials that Belgrade remains intent on joining. While the EU eyes admitting more members in the coming years, it is also seeking to push ahead with reforms to ensure the bloc can still function. Kos said that Brussels would seek to impose “stronger safeguards” in any future accession treaties signed with new countries to ensure they do not slide away from democracy once they are members. The EU has learned a painful lesson as countries such as Hungary have stymied the bloc’s working while backtracking on rule of law. — AFP



FOOD PARCELS DELIVERED TO ONE MN GAZANS

GENEVA: The United Nations said that it had distributed food parcels to one million people in Gaza since the ceasefire, but warned it was still in a race to save lives. The UN’s World Food Programme stressed all crossing points into the Gaza Strip should be opened to flood the famine-hit Palestinian territory with aid, adding that no reason was given why the northern crossings with Israel remained closed. “Three and a half weeks into the ceasefire in Gaza, we have distributed food parcels to around one million people across the Gaza Strip,” said the WFP’s Middle East spokeswoman Abeer Etefa. “That’s part of the broad operation to push back hunger in Gaza,” she told reporters in Geneva, speaking from Cairo. WFP aims to reach 1.6 million people in the territory with parcels, which provide enough food for a family for 10 days. However, to get operations running at the level required, “we really need more access, more border crossings to be opened and more access to key roads inside Gaza,” said Etefa. — AFP

POWERFUL VETERAN

Former US VP Dick Cheney dies at 84



Former US vice president Dick Cheney has died aged 84. Cheney was the 46th vice president, serving under Republican president George W Bush for two terms between 2001 and 2009. The former congressman and defence secretary “died due to complications of pneumonia and cardiac and vascular disease,” according to the family’s statement cited by US media. Cheney is considered to have been one of the most powerful vice presidents in US history. — AFP

SEVERE WEATHER

Flooding strands thousands in Philippines



At least 26 people have been killed and hundreds of thousands displaced as rains driven by Typhoon Kalmaegi flooded swathes of the central Philippines. Entire towns on the island of Cebu have been inundated, while cars, trucks and even massive shipping containers could be seen swept along by muddy floodwaters in videos. In Cebu alone, 21 people were now confirmed dead, civil defence deputy administrator Rafaelito Alejandro said. — AFP

Ensure education is inclusive for children in Gaza



SAMUEL KUTTY

The writer is a freelance journalist and author who worked in Oman and India

It is encouraging to see schools in the conflict-ravaged Gaza Strip reopening, with children gradually returning to their classes despite significant challenges such as a shortage of adequate classrooms, textbooks, notebooks and other supplies. Reports quote UN Palestine refugee agency UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini as saying that the agency is expanding its “Return to Learning” programme in Gaza, offering both in-person and online education. She said that more than 25,000 schoolchildren had already joined the agency’s “temporary learning spaces,” while approximately 300,000 would participate in online classes. She added that “8,000 teachers are contributing to the provision of these services to the children of Gaza who have suffered the ravages of war.” The education system plays a crucial role in strengthening Palestinian identity. It serves not only as a means of acquiring knowledge but also as a vital tool for the survival of the Palestinian people. Additionally, it is regarded as one of the fundamental elements that bolster their resilience and resistance to the Israeli occupation. Nonetheless, the conflicts have shattered those dreams through widespread destruction. Palestinians have been profoundly affected by the devastation in Gaza and the disruption of education. Reports

indicate that parents striving to create a safe learning environment for their children are currently experiencing significant mental stress. Between 90 and 97 per cent of school facilities in Gaza have been damaged or completely destroyed. All 12 universities in Gaza have also suffered significant damage or destruction. The few remaining buildings are often used as shelters for displaced families, making them unsuitable for educational purposes. This is despite the fact that attacks on schools constitute a grave violation of children’s rights during conflicts. Thousands of students and educational staff have been harmed or have lost their lives. By late 2024 and early 2025, reports indicated that more than 12,000 students and 490 education staff members had died, with many others injured or suffering from permanent disabilities. The intense violence, upheaval, and loss of loved ones and homes have inflicted profound psychological trauma on nearly all children in Gaza. This trauma significantly impairs their ability to concentrate, learn, and maintain a sense of normalcy, hindering any potential academic progress. Those students who are expected to go to school carry significant responsibilities well beyond their age. Survival takes precedence over education, as numerous young people are now found working in markets and on streets or waiting in line at soup kitchens for

The intense violence and loss of loved ones and homes have inflicted profound psychological trauma on nearly all children in Gaza. This significantly impairs their ability to concentrate, learn and maintain a sense of normalcy, hindering any potential academic progress

small food and water portions. In some cases, they have become the primary providers for their families after Israeli military operations resulted in the deaths of their relatives. This situation highlights a harsh reality: it is not only the loss of educational opportunities but also the lack of security and stability that adversely impacts learning. If education in Gaza represents the only hope for survival, it critically requires both local and international support. There is an urgent need for adaptable and innovative educational systems that can respond to wartime conditions and ensure continuity, whether through online platforms or creative programmes. The remaining schools require immediate restoration. Without increased funding and greater access to learning, structured play, and other forms of support, the long-term repercussions for Gaza’s next generation will only worsen. Therefore, global organisations must provide essential assistance to rebuild Gaza’s educational institutions and ensure consistent academic support. They should also supply the necessary tools to facilitate online education. This initiative should prioritise creating a safe and sustainable learning environment that allows children to grow and thrive despite challenging and constantly changing conditions.

STATE ELECTIONS OFFER EARLY TEST OF TRUMP’S AGENDA

JOSEPH AX

Voters in New Jersey and Virginia will choose their next governors on Tuesday in a pair of races that will serve as an early gauge of the American electorate’s response to President Donald Trump’s norm-shattering nine months in office. Meanwhile, in New York City’s mayoral race, Democratic nominee Zohran Mamdani, a 34-year-old democratic socialist, faces 67-year-old former Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo, who is running as an independent. The campaign has laid bare the Democratic Party’s generational and ideological divides as it seeks to rehabilitate its damaged brand. And in California, voters will decide whether to give Democratic lawmakers the power to redraw the state’s congressional map, expanding a national battle over redistricting that could determine which party controls the US House of Representatives after next year’s midterm elections. Polls close first in Virginia at 7 pm ET (0000 GMT), followed by New Jersey, New York and California throughout the evening. Democrats in particular will be watching Tuesday’s results carefully, with the party locked out of power in Washington and struggling to find consensus on the best path out of the political wilderness. Underscoring the stakes for Democrats, former President Barack Obama - still the party’s most popular figure - headlined 11th-hour rallies over the weekend in New Jersey and Virginia, exhorting voters to elect Democrats to counter what he branded the Republican Trump’s “lawlessness.” “The state of the Democratic Party is poor,” said Larry Sabato, the director of the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia. “They need as much encouragement as they can get.” Voter enthusiasm appears high. More than 3 million people voted early in Virginia, New York and New Jersey, in each case far exceeding the totals from four years ago. In New York City, there were 735,000 ballots cast, according to the city elections board, more than four times the number in 2021. The New Jersey race has emerged as the most hotly contested campaign, with opinion polls showing Democrat Mikie Sherrill, a congresswoman and former Navy pilot, holding a narrow lead over her Republican challenger, former state lawmaker and small-business owner Jack Ciattarelli. The campaign has shattered statewide spending records, with both national parties pouring millions of dollars into the race. The evening’s other races appear less competitive. In Virginia, former Democratic US Representative Abigail Spanberger has a comfortable lead over Republican Lieutenant Governor Winsome Earle-Sears, according to opinion polls. — Reuters

Asean’s moment of truth

For decades, integration into the global trading system has been vital to economic growth and development. Now, however, integration implies vulnerability, as powerful actors – beginning with the United States – wield tariffs, export restrictions, and financial sanctions. For Southeast Asia, this turn of events represents both a warning and a call to action: countries must work together to shape their own destiny – or others will decide their fate for them. As it stands, the 11-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ potential as an integrated production system and consumer market remains largely untapped. Internal trade accounts for less than a quarter of Asean’s total trade – far below the roughly 60 per cent in the European Union and even the 45 per cent in North America under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). This lack of integration amounts to a major structural weakness, as investors continue to view Southeast Asia as a collection of individual markets, not a single economic bloc. The costs of going it alone are mounting. As the world’s major powers weaponise trade and technology flows, and use industrial subsidies to distort the competitive landscape, smaller economies have few options for protecting their interests. Southeast Asian countries’ vulnerability has been on stark display during bilateral trade negotiations with US President Donald Trump’s administration, during which leaders have often had little choice but to make significant concessions. Together, however, Southeast Asian countries constitute a formidable economic player. Asean boasts a combined GDP of roughly \$4 trillion – making it the world’s fifth-largest economy – and a population of over 680 million. Now, these countries must leverage their collective strength to build resilience. In the short term, this means putting in place stronger shock absorbers, which can stabilise regional trade flows in times of disruption. To this end, rules of



Internal trade accounts for less than a quarter of Asean’s total trade.



MARI ELKA PANGESTU

The writer is Special Envoy on International Trade to Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto



TAN SRI REBECCA FATI-MAH STA MARIA

The writer is a former secretary-general at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia and a former executive director of the Apec Secretariat

origin must be clearly defined and better enforced; trans-shipment loopholes must be closed; and trade-diversion safeguards must be coordinated across borders, so that sanctions or export restrictions do not paralyse regional supply chains. In the medium term, Asean must become more deeply integrated. Much of the machinery already exists. The Asean Trade in Goods Agreement focuses on facilitating the free flow of goods within the bloc, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership seeks to lower trade barriers and improve market access among the Asean countries and their five free-trade partners (Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea). The Asean Single Window streamlines customs processes by permitting electronic exchange of trade-related documents. And the emerging Asean Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) offers a road map for establishing an open, secure, competitive, and inclusive regional digital economy. But implementation is lagging, and the full potential of these instruments is not being fulfilled. Commitments to upgrade the Trade in Goods Agreement, completing the DEFA, and harmonising standards need to be followed by actions, so that Asean can encourage

intra-regional sourcing, enable companies to scale up more easily, reduce the cost of doing business, and make the region a far more credible hub for manufacturing and services investment. The Asean Geoeconomics Report 2025 – presented last week at the first formal meeting of Asean Foreign and Economic Ministers in over 20 years and set for publication in November – urges members to do precisely that. Crucially, it also proposes the creation of a high-level task force for geoeconomics, which would include economic and security officials. Institutionalising this connection between economic and security pillars – domains that are vital to resilience – would enable the region to act quickly and speak with one voice when shocks occur. Asean also reforms its decision-making framework. While the bloc’s consensus-based approach has so far preserved harmony, it is impeding action at a time when agility is badly needed. Moving toward a “consensus-minus-one” or qualified-majority approach in selected areas could advance progress without eroding unity. “Sandbox” pilots and “pathfinder” initiatives could do the same. Deeper integration requires more robust institutions. ©Project Syndicate, 2025

SPORTS

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE



Manchester City's Norwegian striker #09 Erling Haaland arrives for a press conference at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester. — AFP

WHICH RECORD? HAALAND WARNS HE CAN GET EVEN BETTER

MANCHESTER: Erling Haaland has warned opponents he is still not the finished article despite his phenomenal goalscoring record for Manchester City.

The Norwegian forward, who faces former club Borussia Dortmund in the Champions League on Wednesday, has netted a staggering 26 goals in 16 games for club and country this season.

Former England striker Alan Shearer said last month that if Haaland stays long enough, he will “no doubt” shatter his own all-time Premier League record of 260 goals.

Haaland, 25, was asked at City's pre-match press conference on Tuesday whether he could beat his record for goals in a season. “Not to sound arrogant, but which one?” he asked.

The reporter clarified that he was asking about Haaland's tally of 52 goals for City in 2022/23, when the club won the Treble of Champions League, Premier League and FA Cup.

In a scary message for his opponents, Haaland said he was improving as a player, adding that he had been working on his headers.

During that season, Haaland's first in England, he scored 36 Premier League goals — setting a new record for a single campaign. The marauding 1.95-metre (six feet, five inches) striker admitted he was “in a good way” this season but said he was more focused on the team than individual records.

“I can't think about records I can break,” he said. “That's the last thing I think of. I try to help the team win football games. That's my job and that's my main focus.

“I know it's boring. I know you want me to say the complete opposite, but that's not how it is.”

In a scary message for his opponents, Haaland said he was improving as a player, adding that he had been working on his headers.

“I think you can always get better and better,” he said. “So there's something I try to practise still and you can see I'm getting better and better and there's still a long way to go.”

City boss Pep Guardiola made Haaland part of his leadership team this season and described him at his own press conference on Tuesday as a “real world-class player who is incredibly humble”.

“I know he wants to score goals, but I have the feeling he always wants what is best for the team,” he said. “And that is difficult to find.

“He has this ability, talent, kindness, whatever you want to say. Of course he has to score goals, that's the best way to help us, that is perfectly clear, but he signed a contract for 10 years and he is involved in many things.”

Haaland himself, who became a father last year, said he was “still the same kid”, just with more experience. “I'm still the same kid in some situations, and I'm still that kid from Bryne (in Norway), but with much more experience in life,” he said. — AFP

Al Amerat crush Qurayat 14-4, Sohar edge Seeb

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

SOHAR and Al Amerat Clubs succeeded in claiming victory on Monday at the start of the first-round matches of Group Six in the final stages of the 55th edition of His Majesty's Hockey Cup 2025.

In the match between Al Amerat and Qurayat, Al Amerat earned a sweeping 14-4 win at the Hockey Oman Stadium in Al Amerat, reaffirming their ambition to defend the prestigious title they won last season.

Al Amerat started the match with clear attacking pressure, which resulted in an early goal in the second minute, scored by Uttam Singh from a penalty corner, giving his team a 1-0 lead.

Just three minutes later, in the fifth minute, Aliyas bin Sulaman al Nofali doubled the score with a fine field goal, making it 2-0.

Qurayat did not give up and quickly narrowed the gap in the same fifth minute through the experienced Mohammed bin Mobassher al Bulushi with a field strike, before equalising in the 13th minute through Hamza Ali from a penalty corner, bringing the match back level at 2-2.

However, Al Amerat responded strongly, as Jonghyun Jang scored twice in the 13th and 15th minutes with brilliant field goals, ending the first quarter with Al Amerat leading 4-2.

Al Amerat continued their attacking power, adding a fifth goal through Uttam Singh in the 22nd minute after a successful follow-up inside the circle. Jonghyun Jang returned to score from a penalty corner in the 25th minute, ending the second quarter with a comfortable 6-2 lead.

In the 33rd minute, Uttam Singh extended the gap with the seventh goal from a field attack, before adding his team's eighth goal in the 36th minute, confirming his dominance and completing a ‘super hat-trick’.

Qurayat reduced the gap with two goals scored by Mohammed al Bulushi and Ashraf al Nasri, ending the quarter with Al Amerat ahead 8-4.

In the final quarter, Al Amerat added further goals through Jonghyun Jang, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Uttam Singh and Osama Nasab, sealing a resounding 14-4 victory.



Qurayat and Al Amerat players fight for the ball at the Hockey Oman Stadium.



Sohar and Seeb players in action during the HM's Cup match.

SOHAR PREVAIL IN THRILLER
On the same pitch, Sohar defeated Seeb 4-3.

Sohar did not allow Seeb much time to enter the match rhythm, opening the scoring early in the first minute through

Pratap Lakra from a penalty corner to make it 1-0.

Seeb responded quickly with an equaliser in the fourth minute, scored by Abdullah Waleed al Hasan with a fine field goal after a well-organised attacking play, bringing the score to 1-1.

Sohar regained the lead in the 10th minute through a field goal by Omar Mubarak al Maamari, ending the first quarter 2-1 in their favour.

The second and third quarters saw a balanced exchange of control and attacking attempts from both teams. Seeb managed to equalise again in the 22nd minute through Fahad Hassan al Lawati from a penalty corner, making it 2-2.

Sohar responded immediately in the same minute with a third goal through Omar Mubarak al Maamari from a field strike, before Pratap Lakra added another penalty-corner goal in the 26th minute to extend the score to 4-2 for Sohar.

Seeb entered the final quarter determined to come back and succeeded in reducing the gap in the 35th minute through Mandeep from a penalty corner, igniting the closing minutes of the match. Despite Seeb's intense attempts to equalise, Sohar's defence and goalkeeper stood firm to protect the lead until the final whistle.

Al Nahda eye first win in Gulf Cup Champions League

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

Oman's Al Nahda will aim to secure their first win in the 2025-2026 AGCFF Gulf Cup Champions League as they will host Yemen's Tadhmon Hadhramout on Wednesday in the third round of Group B fixtures. The highly anticipated match will kick off at 6 pm at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher.

Al Buraimi-based side heads into the contest determined to convert their positive performances into a full three points after drawing both of their two matches. Al Nahda began their campaign with a 1-1 draw against Saudi Arabia's Al Shabab in Riyadh, followed by another 1-1 stalemate against Qatar's Al Rayyan in Muscat on October 23.

Currently, Al Nahda are positioned third in the group standings with two points. Al Rayyan lead Group B with four points, followed



Al Nahda will enter the continental clash in excellent domestic form, having recently defeated Sur 4-2 in the Jindal League.

by Tadhmon Hadhramout in second with three points, while Al Shabab are in fourth place with one point. A victory on Wednesday could see Al Nahda climb to the top of the group, depending on the result of the other fixture between Al Rayyan and Al Shabab in Doha.

Head coach Naseef al Biawi's battalion is in full readiness mentally and physically to deliver a strong performance.

The Omani side will rely on several key players including national team goalkeeper Fayez al Rushaidi, midfield maestro Harib al Saadi and attacking talents Ahed al Mashakheyi and Hamed al Habsi. The team's professional players including Kebbama Odeiev, Beri Olomo, and others are also expected to play a crucial role in leading Al Nahda's attacking charge. The team will have an advantage

of playing the match at home with fans support.

Al Nahda will enter the continental clash in excellent domestic form, having recently defeated Sur 4-2 in the Jindal League. The win maintained their position at the top of the domestic standings with 13 points, underscoring their consistency and confidence heading into regional competition. Meanwhile, Tadhmon Hadhramout arrived in Muscat full of confidence following their 2-0 victory over Al Shabab in the previous round. The result revitalised their qualification hopes after a tough opening defeat against Al Rayyan.

Under the guidance of Saudi head coach Bandar Basareeh, the Yemeni side will look to build on their momentum, with key players such as Ali al Jamal, Nadir Sahal, Amara Baghaukyu and Adil Abbas expected to feature prominently.

IMPRESSIVE WIN



Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina in action during her group stage match against Poland's Iga Swiatek in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. — Reuters

RYBAKINA DOWNS SWIATEK TO REACH SEMIFINALS OF WTA FINALS

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia: Elena Rybakina punched her ticket to the WTA Finals last four with an impressive 3-6, 6-1, 6-0 victory over second-seeded Iga Swiatek in round-robin play in Riyadh on Monday.

After cruising past Amanda Anisimova in her opener on Saturday, Rybakina claimed her second win of the week to guarantee herself the top spot in the Serena Williams Group.

Also on Monday, Anisimova rallied back from a set and a break down to triumph 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 in her all-American battle with seventh-seeded Madison Keys, who has been eliminated from the competition.

“Madi was playing so well, it was quite a battle out there,” said the fourth-seeded Anisimova.

“I’m happy I turned things around in the second set and kind of turned the frown upside down. It was an exciting match and it was nice to have a little bit of a fight out there.”

Rybakina was the last of the eight singles players to qualify for this season's WTA Finals, and she did so by clinching the title in Ningbo and reaching the semifinals in Tokyo in the last two weeks of qualifying tournaments of the regular season.

She has now won each of the last eight matches she has played.

“I’ve been playing really well the last few weeks. I was improving each match and of course the results were following after,” said the 2022 Wimbledon champion.

“It’s a great opportunity to play here against the top players. I’m really excited about the next matches and hopefully I can bring the same intensity and the same game.”

Rybakina went into the clash having lost all four of her previous meetings with Swiatek in 2025, and it looked like she might suffer a fifth straight defeat to the Pole when she dropped the opening set in 35 minutes.

‘AGGRESSIVE’

But the Kazakh sixth seed adjusted tactically, utilising her kick serve and big forehand to maximum effect to sweep 12 of the next 13 games and complete the upset in one hour and 37 minutes. “It’s always very tough to play against Iga, she brings so much intensity on the court. In the second set, I pushed myself, the serve improved and I’m happy I stepped in and played much better,” said Rybakina.

“Mentally I’m happy I stayed focused no matter if I lost the first set, I was still trying to stay aggressive.”

Swiatek will have to battle it out with Anisimova to secure second place in the Serena Williams Group and a place in the final four.

“I will have to watch and analyse but I just think I wasn’t that solid in getting back those fast long shots,” said Swiatek.

“And she was more aggressive and also more solid in finishing the rally. But I will have to watch to understand fully.”

Making her WTA Finals debut this week, Anisimova was down a set and 1-3 before she seized the momentum by taking the next seven games en route to a one-hour 43-minute victory.

The result means Keys has no chance of advancing to the semifinals. The Australian Open champion hadn’t played in two months before coming to Riyadh as she dealt with an adductor injury. — AFP



Muscat Club claimed the Youth Handball League title for the 2025-26 season after defeating Seeb 28-23 in a thrilling final. — Abdulwahid al Hamadani

Muscat crowned Youth Handball League champs

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

In an electrifying atmosphere at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher, Muscat Club claimed the Youth Handball League title for the 2025-26 season after defeating Seeb 28-23 in a thrilling final held at the complex's secondary hall.

The match began with both teams evenly matched in skill and intensity, trading goals and maintaining a tight scoreline throughout the first half. Muscat gained a slight edge midway through the period, while Seeb fought back late in the quarter to narrow the gap. The first half ended with Muscat leading 13-11 after a balanced and fast-paced contest. The second half opened with great excitement as Seeb scored the first goal, raising hopes of a comeback. However, Muscat soon regained control through precise teamwork and quick counter-attacks, extending their lead steadily. With disciplined defence and effective finishing, Muscat secured a 28-23 victory to lift the championship trophy amid loud cheers from the passionate crowd.

Qais al Hasani, Muscat's assistant coach, praised his players' composure and tactical



Muscat stood out with disciplined defence and effective finishing.

execution, saying: “The team showed excellent focus and discipline, especially in the second half. They followed instructions perfectly and proved their physical and technical readiness for such a final.”

Team captain Maamoun al Hasani expressed gratitude for the remarkable fan turnout, adding: “Our biggest motivation was the incredible support from the fans. It was the first time we witnessed such a large crowd in youth handball games and their

energy pushed us to victory.”

Guest of honour Ahmed bin Abdullah al Owaisi, Chairman of Al Shabab Football Club, commended the organisation and quality of the final, saying: “It was an impressive event that reflects the growth of Omani handball. We’re seriously considering forming a handball team at Al Shabab Club to participate next season.”

On the other side, Seeb's coach Ali al Balushi attributed the loss to minor tactical lapses, stating:

“The players rushed their attacks in the second half and struggled to hear instructions due to the crowd noise, but we’ll address these issues in our upcoming review session.”

Meanwhile, Moosa bin Khamis al Balushi, Chairman of the Oman Handball Association (OHA), praised the high level of competition, noting: “It was a strong final between two excellent teams. Interestingly, this is the second Muscat-Seeb final this season after the under 17 title, which Muscat also won. We encourage all clubs to participate actively to strengthen the league's success.”

Earlier in the day, Nizwa defeated Al Oruba 44-34 to secure third place, while Al Oruba finished fourth, concluding a highly competitive and entertaining season.

Sohar top group as Majees seal final playoff spot

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

The curtain came down on Monday on the preliminary round of Group One in the First Division Volleyball League, which featured two decisive matches. Sohar firmly secured their place at the top of the group, while Majees snatched the second qualifying spot to the final playoffs after a well-deserved 3-1 victory over Masirah in the decisive clash held at the indoor hall of Sohar Sports Complex.

The match details between Majees and Masirah unfolded as follows: Masirah started strongly and claimed the first set 25-17, capitalising on effective serves and well-timed blocks that caused early confusion in Majees’ formation.

At the start of the second set, Majees reorganised and raised their playing tempo by diversifying attacks from the wings and centre, securing the set 25-21 to level the match.



Sohar continued their strong run with a 3-0 victory over Al Shabab.

Majees then reached their peak performance in the third set, imposing near-complete control thanks to accurate setting and quick transitions from defence to attack, sealing the set 25-12.

The momentum continued into the fourth set, which Majees won 25-18 by exploiting defensive errors from Masirah,

securing a 3-1 victory.

Both teams delivered fluctuating performances throughout the sets, with Majees showing superiority in consistency and focus. Key players Waleed al Badi, Hilal al Maqbali, Hamad al Maamari, Majid al Shibli and Abdullah al Shibli played a decisive role through solid attacking, defensive coverage, and effective blocking.

On the other side, Masirah's trio, Mohammed al Qasmi, Ibrahim al Balushi and Bilal al Farsi, stood out, attempting to revive their team's hopes with strong serves and fast offensive plays, but their efforts were not enough to shift the momentum. As a result, Masirah exited the competition alongside Saham, failing to reach the second phase.

SOHAR CLAIM FIRST PLACE

In the final match of the preliminary round, Sohar continued their strong run with a 3-0 victory over Al Shabab,

concluding the group stage at the top of the standings with 21 points.

Set scores were as follows: Sohar claimed the first set 25-18 after a strong performance in serves and blocking, then maintained their momentum in the second set with a 25-21 win despite Al Shabab's serious attempts to close the gap in the crucial points. Sohar sealed the match comfortably by dominating the third set 25-12, imposing full control over the flow of play to win the encounter in straight sets.

Led by Saeed Juma, Sohar players delivered an outstanding team performance that guided them to an easy win, with notable displays from Mohammed al Jabri, Khalifa al Jabri and Khalfan al Jabri. On the other side, Al Shabab, led by Mazin al Subhi, tried to keep up with their opponents but failed to narrow the gap. Group One concluded its matches with Seeb finishing first and Al Bashayer in second place.

SPORTS

FIRST ROUND



The championship concluded with the crowning of the top five winners in two categories — Sedan (Rear-Wheel Drive) and 4x4.

THRILLING SHOW OF FREE-STYLE DRIFTING AT OAA

MUSCAT: The first round of the Free-Style Drifting Championship concluded recently at the Oman Automobile Association (OAA), with a large crowd filling the stands of the Muscat Drift Arena. The event witnessed intense and thrilling competition among more than 50 participants from both Oman and abroad, who delivered spectacular and professional performances in the art of free-style drifting — one of the most popular forms of motorsport in the region.

The opening round on October 31, attracted an exceptional audience from various segments of society, including families, children and women, creating a vibrant and enthusiastic atmosphere that highlighted the growing popularity of this motorsport in Oman and its ability to attract automotive enthusiasts from across the Sultanate of Oman.

The championship concluded with the crowning of the top five winners in two categories — Sedan (Rear-Wheel Drive) and 4x4.

In the Sedan category, Manea al Ajmi from Oman claimed first place, followed by Ayoub al Shraiqi from Oman in second, Qais al Qarini from Oman in third, Abdullah Quroa from the UAE in fourth and Mazen al Kharousi from Oman in fifth.

In the 4x4 category, Mohammed al Junaibi from the UAE secured first place, followed by Shihab Hamed from Oman in second, Hamad al Balushi from the UAE in third, Ahmed al Shamsi from the UAE in fourth and Yaarub al Hinaï from Oman in fifth place.

The Free-Style Drifting Championship is considered one of the most exciting and distinctive motorsport events held in Oman. With its unique Gulf identity, it continues to attract top professionals and enthusiasts from across the region.

This round reaffirms the Oman Automobile Association’s commitment to organising professional and safe motorsport events that strengthen Oman’s position as a leading destination for motorsport in the region.



In the Sedan category, Manea al Ajmi from Oman claimed first place.



Oman’s Ahmad al Harthy aims to wrap-up the campaign on a real high at the Bahrain International Circuit.

Al Harthy relishes 8-hour Bahrain FIA WEC finale

Ahmad al Harthy targets podium as FIA WEC concludes in Middle East

Bahrain International Circuit to host Rd8 of all-action World Championship

Omani seeking to add to 2025 silverware already achieved in Italy and USA

Al Harthy looking forward to welcoming huge home support from Oman

JUST over eight months since the 2025 FIA World Endurance Championship got underway in Qatar, the category is back in the Middle East this week for the hotly anticipated season finale at Bahrain International Circuit – where Oman’s Ahmad al Harthy aims to wrap-up the campaign on a real high.

Following something of a rollercoaster year for the Sultanate’s number one racing driver and No 46 BMW M4 LMGT3 team-mates Valentino Rossi and Kelvin van der Linde, the trio hopes to conclude the season with a flourish as they bid for a third podium result of 2025.

From the Qatar curtain-raiser through the travels to Imola in Italy, Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium, France’s Le Mans 24 Hours, Interlagos in Brazil, Texas in the USA and Japan’s Fuji Speedway, the season has been packed with superb performances from all three drivers.

Equally, though, they have been beset by more than their share of misfortune as well, which has limited the points



Ahmad al Harthy

scoring potential. Going into the season finale in Sakhir, the squad is eighth in the championship standings for both drivers and teams.

Throughout the year the drive for success and commitment has been undimmed and the brace of podium finishes achieved so far, round two at Imola and round six at the Circuit of the Americas, were sensational performances. At the former, the squad only missed out on LMGT3 victory by a mere 0.3 seconds and in the USA an even smaller two tenths of a second was the difference.

The Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain, which takes place on November 8, is always a sparkling event on the FIA WEC

calendar and being so close to Oman it means Al Harthy will be able to welcome his biggest crowd of friends, family, partners and supporters this season.

His prestigious partner portfolio is set to be heavily represented in Bahrain, with OQ Group, Sohar International, Omantel, Oman LNG, BMW Oman, Oman Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and Experience Oman all providing key support throughout 2025.

Ahmad Al Harthy:

“It’s always a delight to race as close as possible to home, especially after so much travel across the globe all year, so I really cannot wait to be back in Bahrain this week for the final round of the WEC season. We’re expecting a lot of support at the track and we are determined to fight for the best result possible to round out the championship.

“We’ve had some great highlights, mostly the podiums at Imola and at COTA, and I would love to be able to finish the season with another trophy. Actually, we’re only five points away from the top six in the championship so that’s another target, to see if we can at least

match the P6 finish in the points standings we achieved last year.”

Two free practice sessions will be held on November 6, with a third practice on November 7, ahead of qualifying at 16.00 Bahrain time – followed immediately by the Hyperpole session. On November 8, the Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain will get underway at 14.00 local time. Live timing and coverage will be available at [www.fiawec.com](#)

2025 FIA WEC LMGT3 DRIVER STANDINGS (AFTER RD7):

- Riccardo Pera / Richard Lietz / Ryan Hardwick, 105 pts
- Alessio Rovera / Francois Heriau / Simon Mann, 94 pts
- Charlie Eastwood / Rui Andrade / Tom van Rompuy, 81 pts
- Ahmad Al Harthy / Valentino Rossi / Kelvin van der Linde, 52 pts

2025 FIA WEC LMGT3 TEAM STANDINGS (AFTER RD7):

- Manthey 1st Phorm (Porsche 911 GT3 R LMGT3), 105 pts
- Vista AF Corse (Ferrari 296 LMGT3), 94 pts
- TF Sport (Corvette Z06 LMGT3.R), 81 pts
- Team WRT (BMW M4 LMGT3), 52 pts

Oman to face Iraq, UAE and Yemen in Group B of U23 Gulf Cup

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

The Arab Gulf Cup Football Federation (AGCFF) conducted the draw for the Gulf Cup Under-23 Championship on Tuesday at its headquarters in Doha, Qatar, via video-conferencing, with the participation of representatives of the Gulf national teams in addition to Iraq and Yemen.

The draw placed Oman Olympic national team in Group B alongside Iraq, the UAE and Yemen, while Group A included Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Kuwait.

Doha will host the tournament from December 4 to 16, as part of the series of competitions organised by the AGCFF, which also includes the Gulf Cup for senior national

teams, and the youth and Under-17 tournaments recently held in Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The GCC Champions League for clubs, played on a home-and-away basis with the participation of eight clubs, is also part of the calendar, with the final of the current edition scheduled for April 14, 2026.

The Oman Olympic team was crowned champion of the WAFF U23 Championship after defeating Jordan 3-1 in the final held in Muscat on March 26. However, the team later experienced a major setback in the Asian qualifiers for the AFC U23 Asian Cup, exiting the competition with insufficient points after a goalless draw with hosts Cambodia, followed by a 1-0 loss to Iraq, before earning a consolation win over Pakistan by a single goal.



The tournament will serve as an important stage in the team’s long-term development.

The qualifiers were held in Phnom Penh from September 3 to 9.

As part of preparations for the Gulf campaign, the Oman Olympic team will begin a domestic training camp in Muscat Governorate from November 2 to 18, as part of a long-term development plan.

Head coach Badr al Maimani confirmed that this phase is part of

a broader project aimed at building a competitive team for the 2027 Olympic qualifiers, noting that the tournament will serve as an important preparatory stage in the team’s long-term development.

He added that the daily training sessions will include physical and tactical work within a structured methodology designed to gradually develop the players.

For his part, player Jassar al Balushi expressed the players’ ambition to benefit as much as possible from the camp, stressing that the team aims to improve and deliver an honourable performance. He praised the significant efforts of the coaching staff led by Al Maimani and the valuable experience they provide to the players.



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FSA advances fintech and green finance

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

FINTECH IS emerging as a pillar of inclusion, fostered in significant part by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) in collaboration with the Central Bank of Oman, the Ministry of Finance and Oman Investment Authority.

Abdullah bin Salim al Salmi, Executive President of the FSA, highlighted the rapid growth of this technology-driven segment, citing crowdfunding platforms as an example.

These platforms have financed over RO 14.9 million since 2022, recording 81% growth between Q2-2024 and Q2-2025, clear evidence that fast-moving digital channels can complement banks and meet SME funding needs “within minutes”, he said in an exclusive interview.

A joint national sandbox with the Central Bank of Oman, a fintech desk at Invest Oman and temporary licences under Royal Decree 20/2024 aim to test models safely while safeguarding the public interest. Proportionate regulation and openness to international players will widen access and position Oman regionally in digital finance, Al Salmi said.

At the same time, SME channels are broadening beyond banks, according to the official. To this end, the Authority is backing sukuk wadi'ah — investment certificates

These platforms have financed over RO 14.9 million since 2022, recording 81% growth between Q2-2024 and Q2-2025, clear evidence that fast-moving digital channels can complement banks and meet SME funding needs “within minutes”.

ABDULLAH BIN SALIM AL SALMI
Executive President of the FSA

structured on the concept of wadi'ah — meaning safe custody or deposit.

It has also created the Alternative Investment Market (AIM), a lighter-touch listing segment that gives high-growth SMEs exposure to disclosure and market discipline, with the goal of graduating to the main market in MSX.

Cross-border MoUs also facilitate mutual funds and, in some cases, ETFs, giving foreign investors indirect access to Omani opportunities, he said.

Insurance is pivoting beyond motor, with health now the largest line and growing at ~30% annually.Regulators are embedding risk-based supervision, building actuarial capacity and sharpening focus on climate and catastrophe risk across conventional and takaful offerings, while encouraging development in life and professional indemnity.

On the transition pathway, the Sultanate of Oman will fully enforce IFRS Sustainability Standards (S1/S2) by 2029 and is finalising a private-sector Sustainable Finance Taxonomy aligned with the Ministry of Finance and benchmarked to EU/ ASEAN/GCC regimes, anchoring green and sustainability-linked instruments and guarding against greenwashing.

The objective is to make sustainable finance the default while building capacity across the market and within the FSA for Oman Vision 2040 and net-zero 2050, Al Salmi added.

Oman promotes national circular economy agenda

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Economy has launched the third workshop under the “National Circular Economy Project in the Sultanate of Oman”, bringing together experts, policymakers and private sector representatives to accelerate the nation’s transition towards a sustainable, resource-efficient economy.

The two-day workshop, which began on Tuesday, seeks to review Oman’s circular economy road map, assess progress made so far and refine key policies that will guide implementation in the years ahead. Participants also examined baseline findings and feedback from relevant authorities, as well as the results of scenario modelling that evaluates potential strategies and policy interventions.

The event featured a series of presentations highlighting ongoing circular economy initiatives across the Sultanate of Oman, including efforts by government bodies, private sector companies and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

These initiatives underscore Oman’s growing commitment to reducing waste, improving resource efficiency and promoting innovation in sustainable production and consumption.

Interactive sessions allowed participants to

The two-day workshop seeks to review Oman’s circular economy road map.

identify priority policies, key stakeholders and strategic partners essential to advancing circular economy activities across sectors such as industry, energy, agriculture and waste management.

According to the Ministry of Economy, the workshop reflects Oman’s determination to align economic diversification efforts with environmental sustainability — a core pillar of Oman Vision 2040.

Experts and representatives from government institutions, academia and the private sector are contributing their expertise to ensure the project results in actionable outcomes that drive national progress in green growth and sustainability. — ONA

Saudi Aramco profits drop 2.3%

RIYADH: Saudi Aramco reported a 2.3% drop in third-quarter profits on Tuesday as global economic uncertainty and a glut in supply continued to weigh on the market, resulting in lower oil prices. Crude prices have been pinched in recent months by a cloudy outlook for demand owing to global economic headwinds linked to tariffs and recession worries. The oil alliance OPEC+, which Saudi Arabia is a key part of, has overseen an increase in production in recent months, resulting in more oil flooding the market and eroding prices. — AFP



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Dear Shareholders,
On behalf of the Board of Directors of Abraj Energy Services SAOG, I am pleased to present the condensed interim financial statements for the nine-month period ended 30th September 2025.

The Company provides services for Oil and Gas Wells during and post wells construction. From building a wider service portfolio, Abraj now focuses on strategic top-tier services coupled with strong operational efficiency to realize maximum financial returns and sustainable growth. Abraj continues to benefit from the strength of long-term contracts in generating sufficient cash flow for growth.

Abraj Energy services SAOG Performance:
Operational performance:
In Q3 2025, Abraj continued to demonstrate its strong commitment to safety excellence. Impressively, 23 units have achieved Goal Zero for more than three years. Additionally, Rig 207 celebrated 14 years without a Lost Time Injury (LTI), and Rig 209 marked 11 years LTI-free, reflecting the effectiveness of our safety culture and practices. The company also maintained a “Green Band” rating in the PDO HSE Banding Audit.

During this period, one LTI was recorded at Rig 106, the incident was promptly addressed, and thorough reviews are underway to reinforce best practices across all sites. Importantly, no systemic issues were identified.

In response to emerging incident trends, the Contractor HSE Forum was conducted with all Level 1 contractors, along with a dedicated engagement session for supervisors. Management has also implemented proactive measures, including monthly site visits to directly engage with personnel and ensure lessons learned are effectively shared across all levels.

Drilling and Workover:
We are pleased to report a notable strategic and operational achievements this period. A five-year contract extension was secured with OXY for four existing rigs, reinforcing long term stability, while a new one-year contract was awarded by ARA for Rig 204, reflecting continued client confidence. Operational performance reached a new high, with 99.24% productive time and just 0.76% non-productive time “NPT” achieving the delivery of all wells ahead of schedule. Underscoring our rigorous planning, disciplined execution, and effective cross functional collaboration. The fleet earned a 97.27% customer satisfaction rating, and Abraj was recognized by WJO in Kuwait with both the Best HSE Performance and Contractor of the Year awards. On the project front, all six new PDO rigs and the additional 3000HP rig for the WJO project are progressing on schedule, while Abraj rig 305 has completed CAT-IV, been successfully mobilized to the BP field, and is set to commence operations on 1st November 2025

Well Services:
Well Services delivered a strong performance during the period, marked by exceptional growth in cementing activities and enhanced positioning of Abraj in high-end cementing operations with PDO. Abraj showcased its technical expertise in complex operations, leveraging in-house capabilities to develop advanced technologies and systems, in close collaboration with our technical partner, SLB.

In parallel, the Company secured the Hydraulic Fracturing scope with BP with a possible extension of an additional five years. This extension would provide a long-term solution for the utilization of the second fracturing fleet.

The successful start-up of the Coil Tubing/Stimulation contract with OQ was executed flawlessly, generating additional revenue streams for the Company’s Well Services.

Operationally, the Well Services team maintained excellent HSE and performance standards, achieving asset utilization above 80% for Well Service as a total and keeping Non-Productive Time (NPT) at 1.05%, both exceeding targets in cementing and hydraulic fracturing operations. Additionally, groundwork is ongoing for the Algeria JV business plan, specifically targeting the Well Services scope.

Key Financials of your company:
1. Revenue has decreased during the nine months ended 30th September 2025, compared to the same period in 2024, by 4.8% from OMR 114.3 M to OMR 108.8 M, primarily attributed to stacked rigs. Efforts are ongoing to re-deploy these rigs back to operation.
2. Total expenses during the nine months of the year 2025 decreased by 4.4% compared to the same period in 2024, from OMR 99.2 M to OMR 94.9 M. This reduction is consistent with the drop in revenue.
3. Profit after tax for the nine months ended 30th September 2025 decreased by 7.0%, from OMR 15.0 M in the same period of 2024 to OMR 14.0M.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):
The Company continues to reinforce its commitment to social responsibility by supporting educational, cultural, and community development initiatives. These contributions reflect the company’s dedication to fostering meaningful impact across its core CSR pillars. In parallel, Abraj is assessing strategic and joint CSR initiatives in collaboration with public and private sector stakeholders to further align its efforts with national development priorities and create long-term shared value.

Acknowledgements:
On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the various stakeholders such as Government agencies, Shareholders, Clients, Management, Employees, Bankers, and Suppliers for their valuable support .

Ayad Al Balushi
Chairman of the Board

CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION As at 30 SEPTEMBER

	30 Sept 2025 (Unaudited) RO '000	31 Dec 2024 (Audited) RO '000
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property and equipment	191,932	201,173
Right-of-use assets	3,220	4,081
Intangible assets	174	173
Deferred expenses non-current portion	98	68
Capex advances	14,582	982
Total non-current assets	210,006	206,477
Current assets		
Trade receivables	45,040	40,135
Advances, prepayments, and other receivables	3,181	2,816
Deferred expenses - current portion	77	25
Inventories	28,450	28,416
Cash and cash equivalents	6,930	5,473
Total current assets	83,678	76,865
Total assets	293,684	283,342
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
Capital and reserves		
Share capital	77,020	77,020
Treasury shares	(110)	-
Reserve on trading of treasury shares	(195)	-
Legal reserve	13,802	12,405
Cash flow hedge reserve	(314)	-
Retained earnings	52,157	56,895
Total equity	142,360	146,320
Non-current liabilities		
Term loans – non-current portion	75,941	74,017
Deferred income - non-current portion	1,562	1,058
Deferred tax liabilities	2,760	3,238
Employees’ end of services benefits	2,291	2,398
Lease liabilities - non-current portion	2,525	3,178
Total non-current liabilities	85,079	83,889
Current liabilities		
Term loans - current portion	15,094	16,801
Lease liabilities – current portion	833	1,012
Short term loan	17,000	-
Trade payables	18,978	16,459
Other payables	10,109	14,453
Derivatives	369	-
Deferred income - current portion	944	660
Income tax payable	2,918	3,748
Total current liabilities	66,245	53,133
Total liabilities	151,324	137,022
Total equity and liabilities	293,684	283,342

CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE NINE MONTHS PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER (UNAUDITED)

	(Unaudited)			
	Three months ended 30 September 2025 RO'000	2024 RO'000	Nine months ended 30 September 2025 RO'000	2024 RO'000
Revenue	35,887	36,347	108,830	114,268
Cost of sales	(26,951)	(27,589)	(81,858)	(85,476)
Gross profit	8,936	8,758	26,972	28,792
General and administrative expenses	(1,850)	(2,204)	(6,054)	(6,353)
Other (expenses) / income - net	(66)	32	(73)	(325)
Operating profit	7,020	6,586	20,845	22,114
Finance costs	(1,617)	(1,534)	(4,600)	(4,517)
Finance income	54	66	200	177
Net finance costs	(1,563)	(1,468)	(4,400)	(4,340)
Profit before tax	5,457	5,118	16,445	17,774
Income tax expense	(819)	(768)	(2,480)	(2,754)
Profit for the period	4,638	4,350	13,965	15,020
Other comprehensive income:				
Items that may be reclassified to profit or loss in subsequent periods:				
Effective portion of changes in fair value of cash flow hedges	(369)	-	(369)	-
Income tax impact on cash flow hedges	55	-	55	-
Other comprehensive loss for the period	(314)	-	(314)	-
Total comprehensive income for the period	4,324	4,350	13,651	15,020
Earnings per share				
Basic and diluted earnings per share-Baiza	6.0	5.6	18.1	19.5

ADVERTORIALS

SHORTTAKES



The Middle East Global Carrier Community Meeting (ME GCCM) 2025 attracted over 1,000 global telecom leaders.

OMANTEL POWERS OMAN’S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

SAEED AL MASHARFI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

THE Middle East Global Carrier Community Meeting (ME GCCM) 2025 took place in Muscat on November 3–4, bringing together more than 1,000 global telecom leaders from over 50 countries and 200 organisations.

Hosted by Omantel, in partnership with Zain Omantel International (ZOI), the event highlighted Oman’s growing position as a regional and global gateway for digital connectivity and innovation.

Held under the theme “Driving Digital Connectivity Together”, the conference featured thought-leadership sessions and masterclasses by AWS, Nokia and Ciena, focusing on emerging opportunities in cloud computing, content delivery, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence.

Over the past decade, Omantel has evolved from a traditional telecom operator into an integrated technology group driving Oman’s digital transformation. Guided by Oman Vision 2040, the company continues to expand its role as a catalyst for innovation and an enabler of the national digital economy, investing heavily in cloud, data and cybersecurity solutions. This transformation is underpinned by one of the region’s most advanced wholesale ecosystems — built on subsea cables, carrier-neutral data centres and strong global partnerships. Eng Yasser bin Redha al Lawati, Director — Marketing and Domestic at Zain Omantel International (ZOI), emphasised that Omantel’s infrastructure lies at the heart of Oman’s growing digital ambitions.

He said the company’s data centres, MC1 in Barka and SN1 in Salalah, developed with Equinix, expand Oman’s capacity to host cloud and content services, alongside investments in more than 20 international submarine cable systems. This ecosystem connects global partners across Asia, Africa, Europe and Australia.

Adding a broader perspective, Al Lawati highlighted how digital progress aligns with Oman’s economic and social goals.

He said that at Omantel, “we believe progress should create value for everyone — for our partners, for our economy and for our communities. Each subsea landing and data centre supports digital growth and contributes to Oman’s Blue Economy. The same waters that once carried trade now carry data, linking Oman’s maritime heritage with its digital future”. Through Zain Omantel International (ZOI), the company further extends its regional reach by combining Omantel’s world-class infrastructure with Zain’s presence in eight markets, serving more than 50 million customers.

This unified and transparent model simplifies how global carriers, hyperscalers and content providers connect to and through the Middle East — offering one partner, one ecosystem and one experience.

Hongqi Ousado: Luxury meets power & innovation

MHD ACERE, the exclusive distributor of Hongqi vehicles in Oman, invites customers to rediscover the exceptional Hongqi Ousado — a luxury sedan that seamlessly blends refined comfort, intelligent technology and dynamic performance. Designed for those who appreciate sophistication and substance, the Ousado continues to stand out as one of the most compelling sedans in its class.

A STATEMENT OF MODERN ELEGANCE
The Hongqi Ousado embodies refined aesthetics with a bold, sculpted exterior that reflects power, confidence and modern luxury. Its strong character lines flow seamlessly across the body, complemented by a distinctive front fascia that gives the sedan an unmistakable presence on the road.

Inside, the cabin exemplifies craftsmanship and harmony. A flowing waterfall-style dashboard, ambient interior lighting and premium materials elevate the driving environment — offering every journey a sense of grace and calm. The 12.3-inch digital display enhances visibility and control, merging functionality with beauty.

POWER, PERFORMANCE & PRECISION
Under the hood, the 2.0L turbocharged aluminium engine delivers an impressive 223 horsepower and 340 Nm of torque, offering a smooth yet responsive drive. The 8-speed automatic transmission ensures effortless acceleration, taking the car from 0 to 100 km/h in just 7.8 seconds



The Hongqi Ousado embodies refined aesthetics with a bold, sculpted exterior that reflects power and confidence.

Inside, the cabin exemplifies craftsmanship and harmony. A flowing waterfall-style dashboard, ambient interior lighting and premium materials elevate the driving environment — offering every journey a sense of grace and calm. The 12.3-inch digital display enhances visibility and control, merging functionality with beauty.

while maintaining remarkable fuel efficiency of 19.6 km/L With Adaptive Driving Beam (ADB) headlights, the Ousado intelligently adjusts illumination for enhanced nighttime safety, while the Semi-Parking Assistant provides ease and precision when parking.

These features reflect Hongqi’s vision of innovation built around driver confidence and comfort.

TECHNOLOGY THAT ENRICHES EVERY DRIVE

- 12.6-inch central control screen supporting Apple CarPlay and Android connectivity
- DYNAUDIO surround sound system with 12 premium speakers for a rich, immersive audio experience
- Large panoramic sunroof (1010x890mm) offering open-sky views day and night
- Wireless charging system for seamless convenience
- Ousado Smart Key with remote

start for advanced access and functionality

The Ousado’s intelligent systems and luxury features work in harmony to provide a personalised, comfortable and safe driving experience for modern motorists.

This comprehensive package reflects Hongqi’s commitment to customer satisfaction and long-term reliability.

Commenting on the model’s continued appeal, Mohsin bin Hani al Bahrani, CEO of MHD ACERE, said: “The Hongqi Ousado continues to capture the essence of modern luxury — where technology, comfort and performance come together seamlessly. It’s a vehicle that speaks to those who appreciate refinement in every detail.

At MHD ACERE, our goal is to ensure that every Hongqi owner enjoys not just a car, but an elevated driving experience backed by outstanding value and peace of mind”.

OAB CEO wins top banking honour at CXO Awards 2025

MUSCAT: Oman Arab Bank (OAB) proudly announces that its Chief Executive Officer, Sulaiman al Harthi, has been awarded the “CEO of the Year — Banking Sector” at the CXO Awards 2025, held at the JW Marriott Muscat.

The event, organised by Apex Media, brought together senior leaders from Oman and the GCC to celebrate outstanding achievements in leadership and corporate excellence.

The award recognises Al Harthi’s visionary leadership, strategic direction and his pivotal role in driving OAB’s growth and transformation.

Since assuming the role of CEO, he has guided the bank through a significant phase of digital innovation, organisational development



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and sustainable progress, thus strengthening OAB’s position as one of the Sultanate of Oman’s most trusted and forward-looking financial institutions.

Commenting on the

recognition, Sulaiman al Harthi said, “This honour reflects the dedication and hard work of the entire Oman Arab Bank family. Together, we continue to build a stronger, more innovative and

customer-centric organisation that contributes meaningfully to Oman’s economic growth and the national vision. I am deeply grateful for this recognition and proud to represent a team that embodies excellence every day”.

The CXO Awards celebrate C-suite executives across various sectors, acknowledging those who have demonstrated exceptional leadership, innovation and impact within their organisations and industries.

OAB’s recognition at this year’s ceremony underscores the bank’s continued commitment to leadership excellence and its efforts to shape the future of banking in Oman through innovation, digital transformation and customer empowerment.

BMW 7 Series Suhail Edition: A tribute to Arabian legacy

MUSCAT: Amidst the serenity and the beauty of the desert of Riyadh in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, BMW Middle East presented one of its most exclusive and poetic creations for the Middle East region to date: the BMW 7 Series Suhail Edition.

Limited to just 50 examples worldwide, this remarkable edition draws inspiration from the Suhail star, a symbol of guidance and brilliance deeply rooted in Arabian heritage. “The BMW 7 Series Suhail Edition is

more than a celebration of automotive excellence, it is a tribute to the cultural legacy, craftsmanship and forward-thinking spirit of the Middle East.

With only 50 examples worldwide, the Suhail Edition represents the potentials of BMW Individual, crafted for those who value meaning, beauty and innovation in equal measure”, said Karim-Christian Haririan, Regional Director — BMW Group Middle East

The Suhail Edition is



The Suhail Edition is a harmonious blend of art, luxury and advanced engineering.

a harmonious blend of art, luxury and advanced engineering.

On the exterior, the vehicle features BMW’s signature crystal headlights paired with the iconic glowing kidney grille, a luminous welcome that exudes modern elegance while a BMW Individual two-tone paint finish, Oxid Grey metallic and Night Blue metallic, creates a sense of fluid motion and timeless sophistication. The Suhail Edition extends its distinctive concept inward,

with its Night Blue interior accents echoing the exterior’s celestial signature and reinforcing the concept of a unified palette.

The interior is a sanctuary of BMW Individual craftsmanship. The Suhail constellation and logo are exquisitely embroidered onto the headrests and cushions and are elegantly crafted onto the C-pillars, side headrests and dashboard, with BMW Sky Lounge enveloping passengers in a subtle celestial narrative.

SHORTTAKES



Shaikh Dr Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ)

AL DUQM’S NEXT CHAPTER: A CITY TO CALL HOME — DR SUNAIDY

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, NOV 4

HAVING successfully laid the foundations of a dynamic industrial and investment destination, Al Duqm is now entering a new phase of development — one focused on making this southeastern Omani city a place that investors, employees, tourists and residents alike can truly call home.

According to Shaikh Dr Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), the vision is to transform Al Duqm into “a vibrant city, not merely an industrial zone”.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 2025 Duqm Economic Forum, held recently in the Special Economic Zone, Dr Al Sunaidy explained that while last year’s inaugural forum had focused on themes such as green hydrogen and sustainability — which have since spurred major projects now in various stages of planning and development — the current focus has broadened.

“One key pillar we are concentrating on now is enhancing the quality of life for those living and working in Al Duqm”, he said. “Around the world, successful zones are evolving into places where people not only work but also live, study and raise families. We’re beginning to see that shift here too — flights to Al Duqm now include more families and last year alone about 600 children moved here with their parents. The number of students in Al Duqm schools has grown by nearly 47 per cent over the past three years”.

While the growing number of lodges and accommodation options across the city is encouraging, Dr Al Sunaidy acknowledged that more needs to be done to make Al Duqm an attractive destination for residents, workers and tourists alike.

To this end, OPAZ is collaborating with urban planners and design experts on a comprehensive masterplan for Al Duqm’s 16-kilometre beachfront, stretching from the Crowne Plaza Duqm to the Fisheries Port.

“We are exploring how to model this stretch over the next 50 years — how to make it distinctive, capitalise on its natural beauty and create a central hub where families can gather, relax and enjoy the city”, he noted. “The goal is to attract more companies and residents by showcasing Al Duqm’s full potential as both an economic and social destination”.

Dr Al Sunaidy further emphasised that OPAZ’s vision aligns with global trends. “There are over 7,000 free zones worldwide and most are now transforming into places where people can live as well as work”, he said. “We cannot keep Al Duqm as a workplace alone. After work, people want to enjoy life — to go fishing, to relax, to feel part of a community”.

Crucially, recent regulatory changes are paving the way for permanent settlement and private ownership. “We also want people to own their homes and buildings”, Dr Al Sunaidy added. “The recent Royal Decree now allows property ownership in Al Duqm — and that’s what will truly make a difference”.

CURRENCY TENSIONS

US dollar near three-month high



The US dollar remained close to a three-month high as divisions within the Federal Reserve led traders to scale back expectations of further rate cuts. The yen slipped to 154.38 per dollar, nearing last week’s low, sparking concerns of Japanese intervention.

Meanwhile, the euro fell to \$1.1498 and the pound to \$1.312, amidst mixed signals from Fed officials on economic risks. — ONA

MARKET PRESSURE

Oil prices slide on oversupply fears



Oil prices declined over 1% on Tuesday as Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries’ decision to pause output hikes and a stronger dollar dampened sentiment. Brent crude dropped 1.4% to \$64.10 a barrel, while WTI slid 1.6% to \$60.20.

Analysts linked the fall to weak global manufacturing data and renewed trade tensions, which continue to threaten oil demand recovery. — Reuters

TRADE CONCERNS

Half of Americans see deficit as crisis



Nearly 47 per cent of Americans regard the country’s widening trade deficit as an economic emergency, a poll by the Alliance for American Manufacturing revealed.

The findings come as the Supreme Court prepares to review the legality of tariffs imposed under emergency powers by former President Donald Trump, highlighting deep public concern over the nation’s trade balance. — Reuters

Omani executive coach earns global recognition

HIBBA AL KINDI
MUSCAT, NOV 4

OMANI executive coach Ghaya al Barwani has earned global recognition from the International Coaching Federation (ICF) in the Distinguished Coach category, receiving an Honourable Mention during the ICF Converge Conference held on October 24, 2025 in San Diego, USA.

Al Barwani, who holds the MCC and ACTC credentials, was recognised for her work in coaching senior executives, supporting organisational change and developing national talent, in addition to enhancing the visibility of the ICF Oman Chapter.

Speaking exclusively to the Observer, Al Barwani reflected on her achievement: “Receiving this international recognition from the International Coaching Federation (ICF) is both humbling and deeply meaningful. On a personal level, it affirms my commitment to coaching with heart — combining strategic clarity with empathy and delivering measurable impact with cultural sensitivity”.



This moment is not just about me. It reflects the power of a growing coaching movement in Oman and the wider MENA region.

GHAYA
AL BARWANI
Omani executive coach

She added: “This moment is not just about me. It reflects the power of a growing coaching movement in Oman and the wider MENA region. Whether it’s helping a national hospital raise over \$10 million through a leadership coaching initiative, or empowering young Omani women with over 490 coaching sessions through programmes like Sidrah and Basmat Rahma — this award celebrates the ripple effect of coaching when applied with purpose”.

Al Barwani noted that the recognition also carries wider significance for the profession: “For the coaching profession in our region, this recognition brings global visibility to the quality, ethics and innovation emerging from local coaches and initiatives. It signals to organisations, government bodies and emerging leaders that coaching is not a luxury — it’s a transformative tool for sustainable development. I hope this inspires more investment in coaching as a strategic driver of human potential and societal progress”.

With the accolade, Al Barwani joins a select group of globally recognised coaching leaders celebrated for measurable impact,

ethical practice and advancement of the coaching profession.

ICF Chief Executive Officer Magdalena Nowicka Mook said this year’s honourees represent “excellence in professional coaching and its impact on individuals and organisations worldwide”.

ICF Global Board Chair Shweta Handa-Gupta noted that the awardees “demonstrate how coaching contributes to positive change across societies”.

Al Barwani’s work spans advancing the visibility and growth of the ICF Oman Chapter while driving initiatives that strengthen national talent development. She led the Basmat Rahma — Coaching for Good programme, which delivered over 490 coaching sessions to 120 young Omani women through Lahunna Oman’s Sidrah initiative.

Further details on her programmes and publications are available at [www.ghayabarwani.com](#). She has also supported senior leaders and executive teams through transformation and public-private collaboration, alongside publishing the Leadership Imperative 2025 white paper and developing the Executive Playbook as a strategic resource for organisations.

Treat in Oman: Landmark surgery marks Oman’s rise as healthcare hub

JOMAR MENDOZA
MUSCAT, NOV 4

A successful 11-hour surgery at Aster Royal Al Raffah Hospital in Muscat has become a milestone for Oman’s growing healthcare sector under the ‘Treat in Oman’ initiative, which aims to position the Sultanate of Oman as a destination for advanced medical care and health tourism in the region.

The operation, performed on 38-year-old Nigerian patient Michael Ojabo, involved the removal of a rare skull base tumour — an inverted papilloma — that had spread to his brain and eye socket.

What made the case remarkable was not only its complexity but also the fact that it was carried out entirely by an Omani-led multidisciplinary team, showcasing the country’s medical expertise and world-class facilities.

The extensive procedure was led by Dr Khalil Ibrahim Macki, Senior Consultant ENT, Head and Neck Surgeon at Aster Royal Al Raffah Hospital, supported by experts in neurosurgery, oculoplastic surgery and anaesthesia.

Using a combination of endoscopic and open surgical



(From left to right) Dr Shashivadhanan, Dr Khalil Ibrahim Macki and Michael Ojabo during the media briefing.

techniques; and advanced technologies such as image-guided navigation and real-time monitoring, the team ensured complete tumour removal while protecting critical structures.

“This case reflects the advanced surgical and medical capabilities that Oman now offers”, said Dr Khalil Ibrahim Macki. “Successfully treating such a tumour required close collaboration among multiple specialties and precision throughout the process. Our patient was extubated the same day, discharged within five days and has since resumed a healthy, active life”.

The success story underscores Oman’s growing reputation for delivering

quaternary-level healthcare — the most specialised category of medical care — previously accessible mainly abroad. The initiative aligns with Oman Vision 2040, which emphasises healthcare excellence and medical tourism as part of national diversification efforts.

For patient Michael Ojabo, the experience was transformative. “Choosing to come to Aster Royal Al Raffah Hospital for my treatment was truly life-changing”, he said.

“The doctors took time to explain every detail, which gave me the confidence to move forward. I am forever grateful to the hospital and the incredible medical team for giving me a second chance at life”.

Dr Shashivadhanan, Senior Consultant Neurosurgery at Aster Royal Al Raffah, noted that the surgery’s complexity demanded extraordinary coordination.

“The tumour had breached both the cranial cavity and orbital space, pressing against critical neural structures. What made this case successful was the synergy of specialties and the use of intraoperative technology to ensure total removal while protecting brain function”, he explained.

The operation also highlights how private healthcare institutions like Aster are helping advance the “Treat in Oman” agenda, an initiative supported by the government to attract regional and international patients to the Sultanate of Oman.

Shailesh Guntu, Deputy CEO of Aster Hospitals, UAE & Oman, described the procedure as more than a medical milestone.

“What we have achieved here is proof that patients no longer need to travel abroad for advanced treatment”, he said. “Oman now has the expertise, infrastructure and commitment to deliver world-class outcomes right here at home.”

OPINION

Oman is ready to lead hydrogen infrastructure



DR MUHAMMAD
ABDUL QYYUM

The writer is assistant professor, Department of Petroleum and Chemical Engineering, Sultan Qaboos University

THE global energy system is entering a stage where hydrogen infrastructure will shape economic strength and long-term competitiveness. Countries that move early to build sustainable export corridors, scalable storage and handling capacity, hydrogen-ready ports and trusted certification systems will set the direction. Oman has already established a clear vision and the priority now is to translate that vision into a coordinated hydrogen infrastructure programme.

Oman is developing a structured hydrogen ecosystem where energy, utilities, industry and export infrastructure are planned together. National planning brings shared utility corridors, hydrogen development zones, desalination capacity, renewable energy sites and export-oriented ports under one framework.

This integrated approach moves beyond isolated projects and establishes a platform capable of supporting large-scale hydrogen exports while enabling industrial decarbonisation and high-value economic activity within the country.

Turning this foundation into real results now depends on timely delivery. The focus is to align commercial agreements, expand port and storage capacity; and ensure that offtake and transport systems grow in parallel with hydrogen production. Oman’s planning structure and policy stability provide a strong base for investor confidence. Global

capital responds to markets where strategic intent, regulatory clarity and execution align, so visible progress will reinforce Oman’s position as a preferred investment destination.

Continued focus on supply chain readiness, delivery standards and bankable commercial frameworks will accelerate projects and strengthen credibility as infrastructure scales.

Ports and industrial zones across the Sultanate of Oman are advancing into integrated energy hubs for hydrogen transport, bunkering and export operations. Establishing hydrogen-ready maritime corridors early will position Oman as a preferred link between producing regions and demand centres in Europe and Asia.

Ports that function as energy gateways do more than move molecules. They attract industries, shape trade flows and strengthen national economic influence.

As these hubs take shape, capability on the ground becomes equally important. Building hydrogen infrastructure requires specialised skills and the availability of trained personnel will define the speed and reliability of deployment. International partners entering Oman have a shared opportunity to support this foundation now, rather than waiting for production to scale. Companies that invest early in workforce development, joint training programmes and applied R&D collaboration will secure smoother construction, safer operations

Oman is developing a structured hydrogen ecosystem where energy, utilities, industry and export infrastructure are planned together. National planning brings shared utility corridors, hydrogen development zones, desalination capacity, renewable energy sites and export-oriented ports under one framework.

and stronger long-term performance across Oman’s hydrogen infrastructure projects.

Capability building today also prepares Oman for technologies and demand patterns that will follow the first wave of hydrogen trade. Advanced mobility, aviation, energy storage and heavy industry will increasingly rely on cryogenic systems and liquid hydrogen handling.

Early demonstration projects, rigorous safety frameworks and collaboration with technology developers will build operational maturity ahead of market scale. Connecting these emerging applications with structured offtake pathways will reinforce long-term market confidence and position Oman for both near-term hydrogen trade and the advanced uses that will shape future demand.

Oman now enters a phase where visible delivery will shape its international role in the hydrogen economy. The journey forward requires steady execution, close coordination between public and private stakeholders; and continued investment in skills, technology and research capability.

National priorities are clear: operationalise hydrogen export corridors, align certification pathways with European and Asian markets, expand hydrogen-ready port capacity and deepen specialised workforce strength. Through these efforts, Oman can move beyond participation and establish itself as a reliable anchor in the global hydrogen economy, shaping trade routes and standards as the sector matures.

STARBUCKS BREWS A MURKY CHINA INFUSION

KA SING CHAN

Starbucks’ long-awaited China deal is far too murky. The Seattle-based roastery on Monday announced it will sell control of its mainland retail operations to Boyu Capital in a deal worth \$4 billion.

Yet it also says the whole business is worth three times that amount. Licensing fees can provide an extra shot, but that still leaves a huge disconnect.

As part of the agreement, the \$92 billion coffee group will form a new joint venture in which the Temasek-backed Boyu will hold an “up to 60% interest” while Starbucks will licence the brand and other intellectual property to the entity.

Based on a cash-free, debt-free enterprise value, the retail JV is worth approximately \$4 billion — or just 8 times the \$500 million in EBITDA Starbucks’ China unit is expected to generate this year, according to Reuters.

That’s far lower than the parent’s multiple of 17 times and its nimbler Chinese rival Luckin Coffee’s 11 times — albeit on the over-the-counter market.

The problem is the seller also says it expects the “total value of its China retail business” to “exceed” \$13 billion. Proceeds from Boyu could account for up to \$2.4 billion.

The rest would reflect Starbucks’ own valuation of its retained interest in the joint venture and the net present value of its licensing fees, though the company provides details for neither.

The obfuscation on the numbers suggests Boyu has the better deal. Starbucks boss Brian Niccol will be betting his new partner, whose founders include the grandson of former Chinese President Jiang Zemin, can supersize growth in an ultra-competitive market where the American brand has lost market share. Indeed, Niccol reiterated in a statement on Monday the group’s vision to grow to as many as over 20,000 locations in the world’s second-largest economy, from 8,000 today.

McDonald’s offers a useful blueprint: in 2017, the fast-food chain sold control of its China business in a similar deal; local partners, including Citic Capital, have since helped it triple its presence to more than 7,000 stores. Starbucks will be desperately hoping Boyu will lead it to a similar result. — Reuters

In local hands: The rise of homegrown firms

OMAN is entering a defining chapter in its history. The ambitions of Oman Vision 2040 call not only for economic growth, but also for growth that is sustainable, inclusive and rooted in our national identity.

At this moment, I believe local engineering firms stand as one of the most critical forces in shaping our country’s future. Engineering and construction are often viewed narrowly as technical activities — designing, building and delivering. However, in truth, they are far more.

They are instruments of nation building. The choices we make in how we build our cities, industries and infrastructure will determine whether we create a future that is resilient and distinctly Omani, or one that relies excessively on external systems.

THE POWER OF LOCAL ROOTS

Local firms bring something to the table that international players cannot: a deep sense of ownership. We are not simply contractors completing a project; we are stakeholders in Oman’s destiny. Our knowledge of the terrain, our respect for heritage and our commitment to long-term value creation give us an intrinsic advantage. When we succeed, it is not just a balance sheet that grows it is the nation itself.

SUSTAINABILITY AS A NATIONAL ETHIC

For Oman, sustainability is not optional; it is imperative. Local firms must lead the charge in embedding green practices, developing energy-conscious designs and sourcing responsibly. However, sustainability is also about people about building institutions that will last and preparing the next generation to take the mantle. It is about ensuring that every project we complete leaves behind not just a structure, but also a legacy.

INVESTING IN OMANI TALENT

A cornerstone of this vision is the Talent Elevation Programme (TEP), a structured national



DR AADIL
THOMAS
ALEXANDER

The writer is Executive Director of Al Adrak Group



Engineering and construction are often viewed narrowly as technical activities — designing, building and delivering. However, in truth, they are far more.

initiative designed to build the next generation of trusted, professional Omani leaders in critical positions.

The TEP was launched to address key national priorities such as effective Omanisation, productivity improvement and long-term sustainability of the workforce.

Its mission is to acquire and develop capable Omani talent, transfer knowledge from experienced professionals, provide targeted coaching and ensure smooth succession planning within organisations.

Through structured stages including English and IT skill development, job-specific skills training and performance evaluation TEP aims to elevate local talent to take on significant roles with confidence and competence.

By empowering Omani engineers and professionals through such programmes, firms are not only addressing immediate operational needs but also ensuring that the leadership of tomorrow is authentically local. This aligns directly with Oman Vision 2040 call for sustainable human capital development and reduced dependency on external expertise.

BEYOND COMPETITION: TOWARDS COLLABORATION

The world is changing quickly. Technologies like digital modelling,

AI-driven design and sustainable construction materials are redefining what is possible. To keep pace, Omani firms must not only compete but collaborate with each other, with academia and with global partners.

This spirit of partnership will ensure that our projects are excellent in quality yet authentically Omani in character.

The question before us is not whether local firms can rise to a challenge they already are.

The question is whether we, as a nation, will be bold enough to trust them, invest in them and empower them to lead. Transparent procurement policies, long-term contracts and recognition of local expertise will make the difference between incremental progress and transformative change.

I envision an Oman where the highways, hospitals, universities and industries of tomorrow are not only symbols of modernity, but also monuments to Omani ingenuity.

A nation where our children walk into buildings that stand as testaments to our resilience and vision. Engineering firms may work with steel and concrete, but at their core, they are shaping something far greater: the future of Oman itself.

It is time we recognise them not as service providers, but as architects of the nation’s tomorrow.

LNG shipping rates hit highs

SINGAPORE: Shipping rates for liquefied natural gas have hit multi-month highs on tighter vessel availability, delayed cargo deliveries to Egypt and rising demand ahead of winter, shipping sources said.

The price gains amplify competition for available LNG carriers, reversing the trend of lacklustre shipping rates seen for much of this year.

Prices tumbled to five-year lows in February as fleet additions outpaced demand, though they jumped to an eight-month top in June on tighter vessel supply and as the Israel-Iran conflict led shipowners to hold off chartering vessels.

Atlantic freight rates assessed for vessels with two-stroke engines capable of carrying 174,000 cubic meters of LNG — the most common type in the market — were at \$61,500 per day on Tuesday, coming off Monday's price of \$61,750 per day, according to pricing agency Spark Commodities.

That was their highest since late August 2024 and a more than 50% jump from \$39,750 per day last Monday.

Pacific rates for the same class of ship were at \$42,250 per day on Tuesday, up from \$31,250 last Tuesday and the highest since end-June, the data showed.

“Recent delays to discharge of LNG



LNG tanker is tugged towards a thermal power station in Futtsu, Japan. — Reuters

cargoes into Egypt have been one contributory factor, with knock-on impacts for vessel itineraries”,

said Stephen Gordon, managing director at Clarksons Research. One shipbroker, who declined

to be identified as he was not authorised to speak to the media, said Egypt's request for LNG cargo delivery delays had disrupted vessel scheduling, leading charterers to secure vessels from the market for future loading dates, creating more demand.

Gains in LNG shipping prices are also supported by seasonal demand, as importers in the northern hemisphere like Europe and Japan prepare for the approaching winter season.

“You see various utility companies and traders ramping up inventories ahead of colder months,” said a second shipbroker, who also declined to be identified.

— Reuters

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W I Z A R D S O F B A K I N G

CAKENIG COMES TO MUSCAT > 20

STYLE LEGACY

LATE QUEEN’S FASHION TO GO ON SHOW AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE



Buckingham Palace will next year host an unprecedented exhibition highlighting the fashion legacy left by the late queen Elizabeth II during her 70-year reign.

“The wardrobe of her late majesty is a snapshot of a very long life, a life of duty and in so many ways it’s a time capsule”, said UK designer Erdem Moralioglu.

“It captures a very specific and important moment in history”.

The exhibition “Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Style” will display some 200 items of clothing she wore over the course of her 96 years, half of which have never been exhibited before, the Royal Collection said in a statement on Tuesday.

There will also be some sketches, some with annotations by the designers and even the late queen herself.

Moralioglu, along with fashion designers Richard Quinn and Christopher Kane, will contribute pieces to the exhibition which opens at The King’s Gallery, Buckingham Palace, in April.

Elizabeth’s style and her promotion of British culture had “a huge impact on British fashion”, said Quinn.

“The ultimate stamp of approval: she always shone a light on British designers, highlighting the relevance and significance of British fashion across the world”.

Kane added that “her garments tell the story of Britain and its changing identity through fashion”.

Among the items on display will be an apple-green evening gown designed by Norman Hartnell and worn for a state banquet given at the UK embassy in Washington in 1957 for then president Dwight D Eisenhower.

The queen’s wedding dress and her coronation gown, both also designed by Hartnell will be on view, along with a bridesmaid’s dress she wore in 1934.

There will be practical tailored pieces from the queen’s private wardrobe including riding clothes and distinctive scarves.

One unusual item is a clear plastic raincoat made by the couturier Hardy Amies in the 1960s, which was “strikingly modern for the era”, the Royal Collection said.

“Queen Elizabeth II’s wardrobe was a masterclass in symbolism, tailoring and British craftsmanship”, said curator Caroline de Guitaut.

Tickets for the exhibition, which will run from April 10 to October 18, 2026, go on sale from Tuesday.

Elizabeth died in September 2022. — AFP

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



HOLLYWOOD

American actress Diane Ladd, a triple Academy Award nominee for her supporting roles in “Alice Doesn’t Live Here Anymore”, “Wild at Heart” and “Rambling Rose”, has died at the age of 89.

— Reuters



FASHION

Barbadian singer Rihanna and A\$AP Rocky attend the CFDA (Council of Fashion Designers of America) Fashion Awards at the American Museum of Natural History in NYC.

— AFP



CUSTOMS

People walk underneath a red umbrella during a wedding ceremony at the Meiji Shrine, coinciding with the Autumn Festival on the Culture Day public holiday.

— AFP

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Irregular comet Swan spotted in Oman’s skies

MUSCAT: Oman Society of Astronomy and Space (OSAS) spotted and photographed Comet Swan (C/2025 R2 SWAN) in the skies of the Sultanate of Oman, a rare celestial event and one of the most prominent astronomical phenomena of the last quarter of 2025.

Ibrahim bin Mohammed al Mahrouqi, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of OSAS, said that the observation is part of the OSAS’s efforts to monitor and document significant astronomical events in the skies of the Sultanate of Oman. He added that the C/2025 R2

Swan is an irregular comet originating from the outer reaches of the solar system and is characterized by a long orbital period exceeding 20,000 years, making its appearance a unique event that will not reoccur for thousands of years.

Al Mahrouqi explained that the comet was first discovered on September 11, 2025, by Ukrainian Vladimir Bezugly through images captured by the SWAN (Solar Wind Anisotropies) instrument aboard the SOHO space observatory.

The discovery was ascertained on the following day by Martin Macek using the FRAM telescope in Chile. The name SWAN refers to this



instrument, which is used to study the solar wind and has helped discover a number of previous comets.

He noted that the comet passed its closest point to the Sun on September 12, 2025, at a distance of 0.5 astronomical units (AU), and then approached Earth on October 20, 2025, to a distance of 0.261 AU (approximately 39 million kilometers). In early November, the comet will be visible in the constellation Aquarius as it gradually moves away from Earth, Al Mahrouqi said adding that the comet’s brightness peaked at a magnitude of 6 to 7 during October, then it will gradually decline, reaching a magnitude of 8.2 to 10.75 in November. This made it faint, requiring binoculars or a small telescope to view it from a dark sky. — ONA

Climate shock: Camels replace cows as Kenya battles drought



Camel traders inspect camels gathered for sale at a livestock market, where various animals including camels are traded, in Merille. — AFP

JULIE CAPELLE

“GOD, GOD, protect them”, chanted two herders, their eyes following a dozen camels rushing towards acacia trees, oblivious to the dry riverbed in northern Kenya where it hasn’t rained since April.

Sitting on the edge of a nearby well, Chapan Lolpusike recounted how his cows and oxen “all died” following the worst drought in four decades, caused by a succession of poor rainfall in 2021 and 2022.

After that, the herder made a sweeping change.

“We no longer have cattle at home. We only raise camels”, said Lolpusike, a member of the semi-nomadic Samburu community.

Camels can graze on dry grasses, go more than a week without water and produce up to six times more milk than cattle — making them an increasingly necessary option in northern Kenya, an area particularly vulnerable to climate change.

Samburu county officials launched a camel programme in 2015 following several droughts that killed off at least 70 per cent of the cattle in Kenya’s arid and semi-arid regions.

The die-off had a devastating impact on malnutrition among local pastoralists.

Around 5,000 Somali camels — a larger and more productive breed than the native herd — have since been distributed, including 1,000 in the last year.

Lolpusike, who previously knew nothing about camels, received some in 2023.

In his manyatta — a hamlet of rectangular huts nestled in a shrubby savannah — a dozen camels lay peacefully chewing dry grass.

The goal is for every family in the county to have their own, said village administrator James Lolpusike (no relation).

“If the drought persists, the cattle will not be anywhere anymore”, he said.

Camel herds are at high risk of disease that could lead to losses.

But there are clear, positive changes as they become a regular



Long-necked mammals, which can feed on dry grasses, go more than a week without water and produce up to six times more milk than native cattle, are progressively increasing in northern Kenya, where climate shocks have exacerbated malnutrition and fuelled tensions in recent decades

sight in the region, including healthier children, said the village administrator.

They are certainly popular in the community, for the fact they can be milked up to five times a day.

“Cows are only milked when the grass is green”, said Naimalu Lentaka, 40.

“Camels... during the dry season, they are still milked and that’s the whole difference”. Families now “depend on camels, on those who own them”, she added.

Camel milk contributes up to half the total nutrient intake during droughts among pastoral

communities in the north. The animal is already a star in the region, thanks to a famous endurance race.

At the Maralal International Camel Derby in late September, around 40 camels frolicked before a cheering crowd.

The winner covered 21 km, the equivalent of a half-marathon, in one hour and 22 minutes.

But organisers said the event — whose theme was “peaceful cultural interactions” — was primarily about bringing together communities that used to fight over resources, since, among their many virtues, camels are also a symbol of peace.

Moving cattle herds to more fertile areas during the dry season can spark conflict between herders that have claimed hundreds of lives over the years.

Camels are happy to stay where they are. Even this hardy animal needs some water, however, so locals still pray for rain. “We only pray the situation doesn’t get worse”, said James Lolpusike. — AFP

FEATURES

CAKENIC COMES TO MUSCAT

IDRIS AL BALUSHI



IT BEGAN with a simple thought, why should the world have all the fun? From Instagram reels to TikTok trends, cake picnics had become an international fascination, colourful gatherings where bakers arrive not with baskets of fruit but with towering layers of frosting, bold flavours and edible artistry. And now, for the first time, Oman had its very own. On the bright weekend of the last week of October at Mall of Muscat's Street Walk, an indoor space that feels like a sunlit

into a dreamworld where each cake told a story. Shaazana Mohamed Basheer described it perfectly, "Mind blowing creativity... every cake was unique". Some tables offered nostalgic flavours, others pushed boundaries with bold experiments. The standout creations included the Flavour Frontier Award, which went to Dharini, whose croquembouche hid a surprise, an Indian kheer filling that blended tradition with elegance. The Artistic Achievement Award was



bakers streamed in carrying the stars of the day, cakes in every shape, shade, scent and imagination. It was the first and largest cake picnic the Sultanate of Oman had ever seen and the atmosphere buzzed like a festival made of sugar.

This wasn't just a picnic. It was a movement. The vision behind the event came from Rubeena Ibrahim, founder of Cake Talks Muscat, a thriving support group of nearly 750 bakers who normally swap recipes and encouragement through WhatsApp. But Rubeena, along with her team of dedicated bakers including Cassie Carlo and Reena Mathias, wanted something more human, more electric. "The idea sparked from a love of cakes and a desire not to miss a global trend", she said. "We thought, Oman should experience this too. So we embraced the vibe and turned it into a Muscat edition that would let everyone indulge, connect and celebrate cake on a bigger scale". Instead of staying behind screens, bakers met face to face, sharing techniques, flavours and stories over frosting and laughter. It became the offline heartbeat of an online community.

Planning the gathering took just a month, but it was a whirlwind of decisions, from finding the right location to ensuring that delicate cakes didn't melt in the November warmth. The Street Walk space proved perfect, spacious, bright and cool, with the charm of an outdoor street fair and the advantage of air conditioning.



claimed by Niluka Botheju, who crafted a basket blooming with handmade edible flowers. The Judges' Choice Award crowned Lynn, whose two tier vintage cake infused with kunafa pistachio was as breathtaking as it was delicious.

Each creation drew admirers and sparked collaboration, from traditional bakers to modern cake artists who came armed with edible paints, metallic sheens and sculpted buttercream. Beyond aesthetic marvels, what made the day magical was the human connection. Bakers who had known each other only through WhatsApp usernames suddenly found themselves meeting face to face, hugging, laughing and trading tips as if they had been friends for years.

FIRST PLACE
For many, like AJ Confectionery owner Samar al Obaidani, the experience was a reminder of why they fell in love with baking in the first place. "Participating was amazing", she said. "It was a chance to showcase MyFloralCupcakes, my passion for turning buttercream into art. Being part of the Cake Picnic reminded me why I started, to spread joy through handcrafted treats that tell a story".

The Cake Picnic proved to be more than a trend imported into Oman. It became a catalyst for the country's growing baking culture. Bakers discovered new ingredients, met potential clients and exchanged ideas that could become tomorrow's bestselling flavours. It was a reminder, Rubeena noted, that no one succeeds alone.

TICKET SALES
The mall's supportive management helped amplify the event, turning it into a magnet for crowds. And crowds came, 114 participants behind the tables, surrounded by around 300 eager visitors ready to taste, chat, photograph and marvel. At moments, the turnout was so big that ticket sales paused just to keep the experience enjoyable. The public response, Rubeena said, was "electric". Walking through the rows felt like stepping

and visitor was clear, "Swim higher, collaborate and let your passion shine".

With calls for a winter edition already ringing through the Cake Talks community, this first Cake Picnic seems destined to become an annual celebration, bigger, bolder and even sweeter. If this debut was any indication, Oman has not only joined the global cake picnic wave, it may well set a new standard for what a cake picnic can be.



“
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RUBEENA IBRAHIM
founder of Cake Talks Muscat

Home bakers and cake enthusiasts spent the weekend baking every shape, shade, scent and imagination