

O M A N
عُ مَان
D A I L Y

Observer



12
SINNER, SWIATEK
TESTED AT US OPEN
AS GAUFF SETS UP
OSAKA SHOWDOWN

VOL. 44, NO. 291
PAGES 20 BAISAS 200

SUNRISE 05:49 AM

PRAYER TIMINGS

FAJR 04:32 AM

DHUHR 12:12 PM

ASR 03:39 PM

MAGHRIB 06:30 PM

ISHA 07:42 PM



INBRIEF

HM’S GREETINGS TO PRESIDENTS

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr Shavkat Mirziyoyev of the Republic of Uzbekistan on his country’s Independence Anniversary. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes of success to President Dr Shavkat in realising further achievements and aspirations that serve the people of his country. His Majesty also wished the bilateral relations of cooperation and partnership further expansion and growth in all spheres. His Majesty the Sultan also sent a cable of greetings to President Peter Pellegrini of the Slovak Republic on his country’s National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan wished the Slovak Republic continued stability and growth.

PROPHET BIRTHDAY HOLIDAY ON SEPT 7

On the occasion of Prophet Muhammad’s Birthday (PBUH) anniversary, it has been decided that Sunday (September 7) will be an official holiday for employees of units of the State’s Administrative Apparatus and other legal entities and establishments of the private sector. The Ministry of Labour said that the employers may engage employees on the aforesaid holiday, if deemed necessary, provided they compensate the workers for the holiday.

A BACTERIA-BASED CANCER TREATMENT



Omani student Taif bint Obaid al Qaidiyah from A’Sharqiyah University has developed a scientific project related to cancer treatment using genetically modified bacteria. The project won her first place and a representation of the Sultanate of Oman at the Falling Walls International Forum, which will be held at the German capital, Berlin, in November. The project is based on the use of genetically modified bacteria as a smart tool that can directly access the tumour environment and affect it from within, either by secreting anti-cancer substances or by stimulating the immune system to attack the tumour. **DETAILS ON P3**

1,303 schools welcome pupils for new academic year

KABEER YOUSUF
@kabiyousef

As many as 1,303 schools with 66,379 teachers welcomed 854,540 students of various classes from 1 to 12 across the country on Sunday, according to the statistics revealed by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). The schools accommodate 430,461 boys and 424,079 girls and are further fragmented as schools offering classes from 1 to 4 (357 schools); from 5 to 10 (108 schools);

from 9 to 12 (141 schools); from 11 to 12 (18 schools), and schools offering classes from 1 to 12 (679 schools). The present teacher-student ratio stands at 1:13, while the male-female ratio of teachers is 45,593 (male) to 20,786 (female). In terms of morning and evening schools, there are 364 morning schools for boys, 240 for girls and 564 mixed schools. There are 34 evening schools for boys, 27 schools for girls and 74 for mixed classes. In terms of support staff

in government schools, there are 11,183 administrative and technical staff members, comprising 6,763 females and 4,420 males in public schools. Celebrations were held in various schools at the beginning of the academic year. Teachers welcomed children to their respective classes. At the Imam Al Muhanna bin Sultan School in Bausher, Children were given introductory sessions on the importance of coexistence, mutual understanding and living in unity.

QASIM AL MAASHANI
SALALAH, AUG 31

THE SULTANATE OF OMAN has set out a 10-year ‘Golden Residency’ track to draw foreign capital and specialised talent through seven investment routes starting from RO 200,000. The landmark initiative was launched at a high-level event organised by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP), at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex for Culture and Entertainment, here on Sunday. The event, titled Sustainable Business Environment, was held under the auspices of HH Sayyid Marwan bin Turki al Said, Governor of Dhofar, and was attended by Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, alongside a number of ministers, dignitaries, investors, and senior officials from both the public and private sectors.

The event featured the launch of three major programmes designed to reshape Oman’s investment landscape. These included the unveiling of the Golden Residency Programme for Investors, the announcement of the Elite Companies Initiative, and the introduction of the Commercial Registration Ownership Transfer service via e-authentication on the Oman Business Platform. In addition, several strategic cooperation agreements were signed, particularly aimed at strengthening the construction sector. The programme targets long-term investors and skilled professionals to accelerate private-sector growth, support job creation and deepen knowledge transfer in line with Oman Vision 2040. Successful applicants receive a decade-long residency that also covers first-degree family members without a cap on number or age.



HH Sayyid Marwan bin Turki al Said, Governor of Dhofar, launching the initiative on Sunday.

“The launch of today’s strategic programmes comes within the framework of Oman’s national directions to enhance and sustain a competitive investment environment. The Golden Residency programme, the Elite Companies initiative, digital transformation services through the Oman Business Platform, all constitute key pillars for building a diversified economy founded on knowledge and innovation, fully aligned with the aspirations of Oman Vision 2040

IBTISAM BINT AHMED AL FAROOJIYAH
Under-Secretary

SEVEN WAYS
Applicants may qualify via any one of the following (each at RO 200,000+ unless stated otherwise): Company establishment: At least one year since incorporation, with the applicant’s stake in total assets valued at RO 200,000+. **Property in Integrated Tourism Complexes (ITCs):** Ownership of completed residential, commercial or tourism units with a title deed; if owned via a company, a certified final balance sheet is required. Government Development Bonds: Bonds held in the applicant’s name with ≥ 2 years remaining to maturity. Listed equities: Market value

of shareholdings ≥ RO 200,000, registered to the applicant. **Fixed bank deposit:** RO 200,000+ placed for five years, renewable in five-year blocks through the residency term. **Companies employing 50+ Omanis:** Ownership of a company with at least 50 Omani employees and capital of RO 200,000+. **Foreign Investment Law companies:** Firms registered under Oman’s foreign investment regime with capital ≥ RO 200,000 may nominate a partner or senior professional for investor residency; multiple nominations are permitted as capital scales.

KEY BENEFITS
Fast-track lanes at airports and border points. Family inclusion: First-degree relatives, no limit on number or age. One property outside ITCs (residential/commercial/ industrial), subject to standard restrictions on areas barred to non-Omani ownership; this right is transferable. Permission to employ up to three domestic workers. Ability to issue visit visas for relatives. Earlier, addressing the event, Ibtisam bint Ahmed al Faroojiyah, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion for Investment Promotion, emphasised the national significance of these initiatives, stating: “The launch of today’s strategic programmes comes within the framework of Oman’s national directions to enhance and sustain a competitive investment environment. The Golden Residency programme, the Elite Companies initiative, digital transformation services through the Oman Business Platform, as well as the agreements and partnerships concluded in the construction and energy sectors,...

TURN TO P2

A GLOBAL RECOGNITION



The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) has officially granted Musandam Discovery Diving the prestigious Five-Star Dive Resort certification (PADI 5-Star Dive Resort), recognising its commitment to the highest standards of professional diving education and world-class tourism services. This achievement marks a significant milestone for the centre, elevating its specialised training and diving education programmes while demonstrating its dedication to sustainability in the diving industry and enhancing the overall tourist experience in Musandam. **DETAILS ON P5**

OMAN



by Burjeel Holdings

24399777

www.burjeelhospitaloman.com

Dr. Ramez Albakouni
Specialist Oncology & Hematology

**Hope, Support, and Expertise:
Together Against Cancer**

Dr. Ashok Sebastian
Consultant Medical Oncologist

Burjeel Hospital, Al Khuwair

MOH 3347873/2025

SHORT TAKES

NEW DECISION
CLARIFIES
RETIREMENT RULES
FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES



Eligibility includes holding an official disability card issued by the Ministry of Social Development.

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, AUG 31

Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals and Chairman of the Board of the Social Protection Fund, issued a Decision regarding the applicability of retirement provisions for persons with disabilities.

Published in the Official Gazette (Issue 1611) on Sunday, the decision states that insured individuals entitled to the disability benefit, as per the Executive Regulations of the Social Protection Law, will be covered under the retirement provisions designated for persons with disabilities within the old-age, disability and death insurance branch. The Social Protection Law previously granted persons with disabilities the right to early retirement without deduction, under two conditions: being at least 10 years younger than the statutory retirement age for old-age pensioners, and completing a minimum of 15 years of actual service while living with a disability. This effectively allows eligible individuals to retire at the age of 50. According to the new decision, those seeking early retirement must also meet the criteria for the disability benefit. Eligibility includes holding an official disability card issued by the Ministry of Social Development and having a permanent disability. Recognised categories include: Autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome, Intellectual disability (IQ score below 70, based on a standardised test), Visual impairment (2/60 vision or less in both eyes, after correction and with assistive devices), Hearing impairment (61 decibels or higher in both ears, after correction and with assistive devices), Severe physical disabilities, as assessed through functional performance evaluations.

10-YEAR GOLDEN
RESIDENCY
SET TO ATTRACT
INVESTMENTS

FROM P1
...all constitute key pillars for building a diversified economy founded on knowledge and innovation, fully aligned with the aspirations of Oman Vision 2040.” Global marketing and investor outreach are supported by Alam Al Hijrah (Migration World), a government-accredited consultancy established in 2007 with a network spanning 60+ locations across North America, the Caribbean, South America, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia and Australia. Activities include targeted digital campaigns, participation in major investor events and strategic alliances, in coordination with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

By linking residency to verifiable financial thresholds-bonds, deposits, listed equities, real estate and enterprise formation-the track aims to channel capital into priority sectors, scale high-value projects and reinforce Oman’s position as a predictable, investor-friendly jurisdiction under Oman Vision 2040.

Initiatives to advance
clean transportation

QASIM AL MAASHANI
SALALAH, AUG 31

THE GCC Green Mobility Forum concluded with a series of concrete steps to accelerate the shift to clean transport under the auspices of Shaikh Salem bin Mustahil al Maashani, Adviser to the Royal Court, at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex for Culture and Entertainment in Salalah. The event was attended by Omani and Gulf officials, experts, as well as specialists and interested individuals.

Key initiatives launched during the forum included the establishment of the National Green Mobility Company (NGMC) in collaboration with international partners, agreements to expand charging networks and services, a clean shore power project at Sohar Port, and a concession to build a green ship-recycling complex. Additionally, authorities introduced a national application for electric vehicle (EV) charging and outlined urban plans to incorporate low-emission mobility into Omani cities.

Eng Abdullah bin Ali al Busaidy, Director-General of the Oman Logistics Centre and a member of the net-zero expert team, emphasised the importance of building a modern, smart, clean and inclusive transport system that prioritises people while accelerating sustainability and innovation.

He announced the “Dhofar Green” initiative as a forum outcome to position the governorate as a model for sustainable transport, including pilot electric public transport, fast and home charging stations, support for micro-mobility at tourist sites, and public awareness campaigns.

Al Busaidy outlined near-term plans to expand charging infrastructure, introduce EV incentives across GCC states, and connect major cities through an integrated network. Medium-term goals include starting EV exports from the region, expanding green public transport fleets, and transitioning



The event was attended by Omani and Gulf officials, experts, as well as specialists and interested individuals. — Photo by Almuhallab al Maamari

airports to clean-energy operations. In the long run, he believes transport can drive economic diversification by localising manufacturing, integrating smart mobility solutions and positioning the GCC as a hub for sustainable transport.

Dr Mohammed al Rashidi, Director of Energy at the GCC Secretariat-General, emphasised the strategic importance of green mobility in transitioning to a low-carbon economy. He highlighted GCC initiatives to increase EV adoption, develop related industries and implement smart, AI-enabled transport systems. The Secretariat-General is working with member states to support joint projects, establish unified standards, and share best practices. During the forum, NGMC signed agreements to build an integrated green mobility ecosystem, collaborate with Chinese partners on EV charging and digital mobility solutions, and form local partnerships to support EV adoption and charging infrastructure.

An agreement was also signed to provide clean electrical power to berthed vessels at Sohar Port, reducing emissions and noise pollution in surrounding communities.

Additionally, a concession was awarded to develop a green ship-recycling facility to dismantle end-of-life vessels sustainably and produce low-carbon steel.

In city planning , the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed a strategic cooperation programme to advance smart, sustainable urban mobility as part of the 2050 net-zero strategy. Initiatives include integrating public transport with cycling and pedestrian networks, setting urban design standards for transit-oriented development, regulating EV chargers and preparing plans for achieving net-zero emissions while encouraging investment in green transport.

Dhofar Municipality and Mwasalat agreed to develop smart, sustainable public transport stops to improve daily mobility and connect with micro-mobility options.

Supporting initiatives were announced, including an on-demand transport service using digital platforms to offer flexible, point-to-point trips that reduce congestion and complement traditional public transport options.

September marks Alzheimer’s Month to
raise awareness, tackle dementia stigma

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
MUSCAT, AUG 31

September each year is designated as World Alzheimer’s Month, a global campaign by Alzheimer’s Disease International to raise awareness, challenge stigma, and advocate for better support for people affected by dementia.

The campaign culminates on World Alzheimer’s Day, which is observed on September 21, and in 2025, will focus on the theme ‘#AskAboutDementia’ to encourage conversations and understanding about the disease that affects at least 12,000 people in Oman.

According to Alzheimer’s Disease International (ADI), there were over 55 million people worldwide living with dementia in 2020. ADI stated that the number will almost double every 20 years.

In Oman, during this month, the activities include a discussion session for caregivers of Alzheimer’s patients on September 7 at Intercity Hotel, Bausher, a webinar on Alzheimer’s, to be held on September 10, featuring experts discussing the latest developments in diagnosis and treatment; and finally, the celebration of the Annual



Alzheimer’s Month with the participation of the staff and patients on September 15 at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital.

“There are new methods of diagnosis today,” pointed out Dr Hamed al Sinawi, senior psychiatrist at Sultan Qaboos University Hospital and the chairman of Oman Alzheimer’s Society. “Traditionally, Alzheimer’s diagnosis was based on information collected from the patient and a close family member, followed by a memory test, a routine blood test, and a brain scan, but recently, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a new blood test that offers a less invasive alternative to PET scans or spinal taps.”

When asked about the benefits of early

diagnosis, Dr Hamed replied, “Detecting Alzheimer’s at early stages enables timely consideration of new medications, which are more effective when initiated early. It also allows individuals and families to plan for care, make legal and financial decisions, and potentially access support earlier, which helps in improving long-term outcomes and patient autonomy.”

Alzheimer’s is more than forgetfulness, he pointed out; as the disease advances, patients frequently develop falls and injuries due to mobility and coordination decline. Infections like aspiration pneumonia often occur from swallowing difficulties.

Behavioural and neuropsychiatric symptoms including wandering, agitation, mood swings, delusions, sundowning, anosognosia (loss of awareness), incontinence, speech/language decline, and eating and swallowing issues — requiring increasing assistance.

Some of the late-stage challenges are that they often need full-time supervision due to risk of wandering, inability to recognise danger, loss of ability to self-feed, problems walking or responding to the environment, and sometimes experience “terminal lucidity” (brief clarity before death).

SHORT TAKES



The International Medical Conference on Urology and Nephrology was held in Muscat

GLOBAL EXPERTS SHARE ADVANCES AT UROLOGY & NEPHROLOGY MEET

MUSCAT: The Muscat Family Physicians’ Group, in collaboration with Baby Memorial Hospital Group (India) and Global Treatment Services, organised an International Medical Conference on Urology and Nephrology at City Seasons Hotel, Al Khuwair.

Guest speakers included Dr Krishna Mohan Ramaswami, Senior Consultant in Urology, who highlighted the latest advances in uro-technology such as robotics, minimally invasive prostate therapies, and penile prosthesis solutions.

Dr Sunil George, Senior Consultant in Nephrology, led a case-based discussion on managing high-risk kidney transplant recipients.

The event drew over 50 leading practitioners in Oman, including urologists, nephrologists, family physicians, ER specialists, and practitioners of Ayurveda and homeopathy. The conference concluded with an interactive session. Dr Sanjay Dalal, founder of the Muscat Family Physicians’ Group, thanked the visiting team for their expertise and insights.



The total number of donors from January to June 2025 reached 2,201. — ONA

AL RUSTAQ HOSPITAL BLOOD BANK RECORDS INCREASE IN DONORS

AL RUSTAQ: The Blood Bank at Al Rustaq Hospital in Al Batinah South Governorate recorded a notable increase in blood donors during the first half of 2025 compared to the same period last year. The total number of donors from January to June 2025 reached 2,201, reflecting an increase of 176 donors over the same period in 2024, which recorded 2,025 donors.

Statistics released by the Blood Bank indicate that male donors numbered 2,021, while female donors totalled 180 in 2025. The data shows that Omani nationals led the donor list with 1,974 donors, while non-Omani donors accounted for 227.

In comparison with 2024 figures, male donors numbered 1,841 and female donors 178, while Omani national donors reached 1,850 and non-Omani donors 169. These numbers reflect increased awareness efforts and donation campaigns organised by the hospital in cooperation with various entities.

External donation campaigns played a vital role in achieving these numbers, with 10 campaigns organised across various wilayats of Al Batinah South Governorate during the first half of 2025, compared to 8 campaigns during the same period in 2024. This expansion helped broaden the donor base and facilitate the donation process for citizens and residents. The report notes that 239 individuals presented themselves for donation in 2025 but were deferred or rejected for health or social reasons, compared to 178 in 2024.

Regarding blood types, O+ was the most donated blood type, followed by A+. — ONA

MoE OPENS REGISTRATION FOR LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, AUG 31

The Ministry of Education (MoE) announced the opening of registration for the Literacy and Adult Education programmes for the academic year 2025/2026.

According to the ministry, registration for the literacy programme will take place from September 1 to September 25, while registration for the adult education programme will run from September 1 to October 16.

Applications must be submitted electronically through the ministry’s education portal



(https://eportal.moe.gov.om. The ministry confirmed that registration is only valid during the specified periods, with no late applications to be accepted.

Applicants may register in their governorate of residence, a governorate where they had previously studied, or the governorate of their workplace, provided that they should submit supporting documentation from their employer.

The registration process requires filling in accurate personal details and attaching the necessary documents, including a copy of the civil ID valid for at least six months, a copy of the last school certificate, and — for those employed — a no-objection letter from the workplace.

Students from social security

and low-income families are exempted from tuition fees upon presenting proof of eligibility. For continuous education (adult education), the ministry has set registration fees as follows: RO 5 for first-time registration in Grades 7–11 and RO 10 for Grade 12. Re-registration fees are RO 10 and RO 50, respectively.

The ministry noted that applicants must complete the required forms accurately, as responsibility for errors or missing data rests with the student. Registration is not transferable across governorates unless supported by official documentation. Further details on registration steps and procedures can be accessed by scanning the QR code provided in the ministry’s circular.

8,941 to benefit from rehabilitation centres

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, AUG 31

GOVERNMENTAL, private, and community-based rehabilitation centres across Oman welcomed 8,941 persons with disabilities at the start of the new rehabilitation year 2025-2026.

Under the guidance of the Ministry of Social Development, these centres aim to empower beneficiaries and support their integration into society, with advanced rehabilitation services and programmes already in place.

Of the total, 3,586 participants enrolled in government centres, 4,756 in private centres, and 599 in community-based units.

Oman’s rehabilitation network includes 126 centres: 43 government centres (including Al Wafa Centres, the National Centre for Autism, Early Intervention Centre, Centre for Intellectual Disability and Down Syndrome, Center for Cerebral Palsy and Physical Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, and Mobile Units), 72 private centres, and 11 community centres.

The number of technical specialists in rehabilitation has reached 1,417, offering services in special education, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, psychological and behavioural rehabilitation, hydrotherapy, as well as workshops, sports, arts and family counselling.

Mohammed bin Ahmed al Mahrouqi, Director-General of the General-Directorate of Persons with Disabilities, affirmed the readiness of technical and administrative



Oman’s rehabilitation system continues to expand and modernise

The ministry provides e-services via the Ta’heel platform, allowing families and beneficiaries to submit applications

staff to serve applicants across age groups and disabilities.

Rehabilitation centres are implementing professional development programmes to enhance specialist competence and ensure high-quality, integrated rehabilitation services.

The ministry also provides electronic services via the Ta’heel platform, allowing families and beneficiaries to submit applications and track individual rehabilitation plans and reports. Additionally, five new hydrotherapy units will open this year at Al Wafa Rehabilitation Centres, further supporting motor skill development for individuals with physical disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and Down syndrome.

Dr Nadia bint Ali al Ajmiyah, Director of the National Autism Centre, highlighted that the centre welcomed approximately 220 cases this year. The centre offers morning and evening shifts to provide flexible, high-quality programmes tailored to individual needs.

Services also include healthcare provisions, such as dental and general medical care, as well as international training programmes for professionals and families, alongside year-round support sessions.

Oman’s rehabilitation system continues to expand and modernise, reinforcing its commitment to enabling persons with disabilities to thrive and integrate fully into society.

Omani student develops bacteria-based cancer treatment

MUSCAT: Omani student Taif bint Obaid al Qaidiyah from A’Sharqiyah University has developed a pioneering scientific project using genetically modified bacteria to treat cancer. Her project won first place nationally and earned her the opportunity to represent Oman at the Falling Walls Laboratory International Forum in Berlin this November.

The innovation uses genetically engineered bacteria to directly target tumour environments, either by secreting anti-cancer substances or stimulating the immune system to attack the tumour.

The approach aims to precisely target cancer cells, minimise chemotherapy side effects, and offer new hope for advanced cases



TAIF BINT OBAID AL QAIDIYAH
A’Sharqiyah University



Taif bint Obaid al Qaidiyah’s project combines biotherapy with genetic technology

unresponsive to conventional treatments. Al Qaidi explained that the bacteria selectively attack tumour tissue, sparing healthy cells, and enhancing the likelihood of controlling or reducing tumour size.

Unlike traditional chemical or radioactive therapies, her project combines biotherapy with genetic technology, paving the way for personalised treatments tailored to each patient’s specific tumour.

Future goals include developing a prototype for clinical trials, collaborating with international research centres, expanding research to multiple cancer types, and registering a patent, marking a significant Omani contribution to cancer treatment innovations.

— ONA

SPOTLIGHT

SAFER RIDES
TOP PRIORITY FOR STUDENTS

AFRAH AL BALUSHI

WITH THE START of the new academic year, the Royal Oman Police has released a film titled ‘Our Priority is Your Safety’ to highlight the importance of student safety. Ensuring safe school transportation is a shared responsibility between families, schools and transport providers.

For many parents, the first days of school - especially for students in grades 1 to 4 - are often challenging until children become familiar with bus routines.

Parents must play their part by teaching children bus rules and stressing the importance of following driver instructions. Schools, in turn, are urged to organise awareness programmes, safety campaigns and evacuation drills to instil correct behaviour. Coordinating with transport authorities and ensuring buses comply with standards is critical.

A safe school journey also depends on strict adherence to safety rules by drivers and bus operators.

This includes using side lights when stopping, ensuring doors are closed before moving, stopping only at safe points and clearing buses of students before departure. Owners are required to sign off on safety checks and follow up on compliance daily.

Hundreds of buses across Oman operate daily, linking homes and schools. But challenges persist: a shortage of buses, overcrowding, lack of specialised driver training and air-conditioning issues during extreme heat. These factors heighten safety concerns and demand urgent solutions.

Despite difficulties, many drivers work hard to create a welcoming atmosphere, helping to manage student behaviour and making journeys more enjoyable.

RESPONSIBILITY

Schools also bear responsibility for instilling discipline by demonstrating practical boarding instructions and providing drivers with workshops on safety measures.

Recognising the importance of safe student transport, the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology is upgrading bus fleets with GPS tracking, cameras and monitoring systems to ensure driver compliance.

It is also rolling out training programmes focusing on safe driving practices and emergency preparedness.

With modern equipment, trained staff and community awareness, school buses can evolve from simple transport to safe, trusted and comfortable extensions of the classroom - giving parents greater confidence in the education system.



Parents, schools and bus operators must work together to ensure student safety

Shortage of buses, overcrowding, lack of driver training and AC issues remain major concerns

The ministry is modernising fleets with GPS, cameras and training programmes to improve safety standards

467 STUDENTS
BEGIN
NEW YEAR
AT UTAS
AL MUSANNAH

AL MUSANNAH: The University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS) in Al Musannah welcomed 467 new students enrolled in the Fall Semester of the academic year 2025-2026.

The students are distributed across the College of Engineering and Technology, the College of Computing and Information Sciences, and the College of Economics and Business Administration.

Dr Saeed bin Hamad al Rubaie, Vice-Chancellor of UTAS, congratulated the students and emphasised the university's



New students being welcomed at UTAS Al Musannah

commitment to providing a supportive learning environment that empowers them to succeed and contribute to national development.

Dr Nasser bin Salem al Baimani, Assistant Vice-Chancellor, UTAS Al Musannah, encouraged the students to work hard, manage their time effectively, and make the most of their academic journey to develop both scientific and research skills.

The programme included an introductory presentation on the university's vision, mission, goals,

colleges and departments, along with an overview of the facilities available at Al Musannah branch.

Students were also introduced to academic and administrative regulations, in addition to a motivational session on self-development, capacity building and harnessing potential.

The orientation week also provided a briefing on the General Foundation Programme, covering placement tests, attendance and assessment systems in English, Mathematics and Computing.

SHORT TAKES

Global Shapers Muscat
Hub expands bilingual
youth programme

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, AUG 31

Oman's youth are stepping forward with a bold initiative to tackle some of today's most pressing challenges — from climate change and mental health to financial literacy and digital skills — through the Young Shapers Programme, led by the Global Shapers Community – Muscat Hub, an initiative of the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Now in its second year, the programme delivers bilingual workshops across five key themes — Diversity and Inclusion, Mental Health and Well-being, Climate Change, Financial Literacy, and Upskilling Youth in the Digital Age.



So far, six outreach trips have reached more than 100 young people, including school and university students, job-seekers and budding entrepreneurs. The hub measures its impact through pre- and post-programme surveys, refining each edition for stronger outcomes.

Co-led by Saad al Mugharby, the youngest member of Muscat Hub and an undergraduate engineering student at the National University of Science and Technology, and Qais al Jeydani, co-founder and CEO of Madad — a project recognised among the Top 35 in the National Youth Programme for Skills Development by the Diwan of Royal Court — the initiative reflects the growing role of Oman's youth in driving social and economic transformation.

“This programme is about equipping Oman's youth with the mindset, skills and confidence to shape the future,” said Saad, who also co-founded Starframe, an AI automation agency, and is a seasoned football coach.

AL MUSANNAH
SEWAGE PROJECT IS
78% COMPLETE



The project is expected to be completed by May 2026

AL MUSANNAH: The execution rate of the project to complete the sewage network, treatment plant and irrigation pipeline in the Wilayat of Al Musannah, Al Batinah South Governorate, has reached 78 per cent. The total cost of the project is RO 9.877 million, covering all its facilities and components.

Nama Water Services affirmed that the project sites are witnessing significant progress across various stages, in line with the company's vision to enhance sewage treatment capacity and keep pace with demographic and urban growth in regional governorates.

Eng Hassan bin Abdullah al Farsi, Senior Projects Manager for Regional Governorates at Nama Water Services, said that the project aims to serve the community by connecting approximately 2,000 residential units in the area, as per the plans. The project covers Al Shuaibah and Al Tareef areas in the Wilayat of Al Musannah.

The project began in November 2023 and is progressing according to the prepared timeline, with full completion and handover expected in May 2026. — ONA

Musandam Dive Centre
earns 5-star certification

THE Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) has awarded the Musandam Dive Exploration Centre a 5-Star Dive Resort certification, recognising its commitment to the highest standards of professionalism in dive education and the delivery of world-class tourism services.

This achievement marks a qualitative leap for the centre, elevating its specialised diving training and education programmes while reflecting its dedication to sustainability in the diving industry and enhancing the tourism experience in Musandam Governorate - a leading destination for adventure tourism and marine activities in Oman.



SAYYID IBRAHIM
BIN SAID AL
BUSAILY

Governor of
Musandam

The organisation enables millions of people annually to learn diving and participate in ocean and marine life conservation



The dive centre solidifies the governorate's position on the international tourism map

Musandam Dive Exploration Centre as a PADI 5-Star Dive Resort solidifies the governorate's position on the international tourism map.

“This accomplishment builds on Musandam's successive achievements in the tourism sector, including the remarkable success of the Musandam International Diving Festival, which garnered significant local and international attention. Such milestones highlight the governorate's unique offerings and reflect the integrated efforts to promote sustainable tourism development in line with Oman Vision 2040.”

Badr bin Mohammed al Shehi,

Director of the Musandam Dive Exploration Centre, said: “Receiving the PADI 5-Star Dive Resort certification is the culmination of years of hard work and adherence to global standards. We are proud to join the global PADI network and aim to deliver exceptional diving experiences that showcase Musandam's unique natural and marine attractions. We also reaffirm our commitment to contributing to marine conservation and promoting sustainable tourism in Oman.”

PADI emphasised that the inclusion of the Musandam Dive Exploration Centre in its global network of dive centres. — ONA

**GOVERNORATE OF MUSCAT
MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY**

Advertisement No. (30/2025)

In reference to Advertisement No. (26/2025), Muscat Municipality informs you of the modification of the dates related to the Bid as follows:

Serial	Bidding No.	Bidding Description	Document Fee	Deadline for Obtaining Docs.	Deadline for Inquires	Deadline for Submission
1	11/2025	Investment of Plot No. (1578), Block (M/3), in the Al-Mistfah Area, Wilayat Bousher, Designated for Truck Parking.	228/- OMR	01/9/2025	03/9/2025	07/9/2025

Registered companies with Muscat Municipality which are Specialized in above bids are invited to participate as per the following procedures:

- Company registration with Muscat Municipality must be valid to obtain the bid document.
- Pay the specified document fee for the requested bid via bank deposit to Muscat Municipality's Bank account as follows:

Bank Muscat **0423010702710024**
- A copy of the transaction's receipt MUST be send to the following e-mail (**SQ.QS@mm.gov.om**), provided with the company data (name and bid number, delegate name,office phone number, mobile number, email address approved by the company and commercial registration number of the company).
- The tender document will be provided to the company via email.
- 2:00 PM** on the above mentioned dates, is the last timing for obtaining Bidding Documents.
- Documents must be enclosed in a plain closed envelope (without any company information) and place in the box located in On the first floor of the Quantity Survey and Contracts Department building (**A**) in Muscat Municipality, Head Office, Darsait.

NOTES:

- Companies which are not registered in Muscat Municipality or their registration has been expired shall register through the municipality's website (**www.mm.gov.om**).
- For technical support, please contact Muscat Municipality through this email (**crm@mm.gov.om**).
- If the bidders have any inquiries regarding the scope of the work, they have to sent their inquiries through the following e-mail (**SQ.QS@mm.gov.om**)
- 10:00 AM** on the above submission mentioned dates, is the last timing for receving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & time shall not be accepted for any reason.
- Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason..

Website: www.mm.gov.om

**GOVERNORATE OF MUSCAT
MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY**

Advertisement No. (31/2025)

In reference to Advertisement No. (22/2025), Muscat Municipality informs you of the modification of the dates related to the Bids as follows:

Serial	Bidding No.	Bidding Description	Document Fee	Deadline for Obtaining Docs.	Deadline for Inquires	Deadline for Submission
1	2/2025	Design, implementation, and management of various events and activities accompanying Muscat Festival 2026	25/- OMR	01/09/2025	04/09/2025	11/09/2025
2	3/2025	Design and construction of Omani sweets for the production and sale at the Muscat Festival 2026	25/- OMR	01/09/2025	04/09/2025	11/09/2025
3	4/2025	Implementation and management of inflatable games at Al Amerat Public Park for the Muscat Festival 2026	25/- OMR	01/09/2025	04/09/2025	11/09/2025
4	5/2025	Design and construction of Horror City, Al Naseem Park, Al Amerat, Muscat Festival 2026	25/- OMR	01/09/2025	04/09/2025	11/09/2025

Registered companies with Muscat Municipality which are Specialized in above bids are invited to participate as per the following procedures:

- Company registration with Muscat Municipality must be valid to obtain the bid document.
- Pay the specified document fee for the requested bid via bank deposit to Muscat Municipality's Bank account as follows:

Bank Muscat **0423010702710024**
- A copy of the transaction's receipt MUST be send to the following e-mail (**SQ.QS@mm.gov.om**), provided with the company data (name and bid number, delegate name,office phone number, mobile number, email address approved by the company and commercial registration number of the company).
- The tender document will be provided to the company via email.
- 2:00 PM** on the above mentioned dates, is the last timing for obtaining Bidding Documents.
- Documents must be enclosed in a plain closed envelope (without any company information) and place in the box located in On the first floor of the Quantity Survey and Contracts Department building (**A**) in Muscat Municipality, Head Office, Darsait.

NOTES:

- Companies which are not registered in Muscat Municipality or their registration has been expired shall register through the municipality's website (**www.mm.gov.om**).
- For technical support, please contact Muscat Municipality through this email (**crm@mm.gov.om**).
- If the bidders have any inquiries regarding the scope of the work, they have to sent their inquiries through the following e-mail (**SQ.QS@mm.gov.om**)
- 10:00 AM** on the above submission mentioned dates, is the last timing for receving bids. Offers submitted after the above mentioned date & time shall not be accepted for any reason.
- Muscat Municipality has the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning any reason.

Website: www.mm.gov.om

WORLD

MONSOON

SUFFERING



This aerial view shows makeshift shelters built for flood-affected people in Chung. — AFP

FLOODS LEAVE
WOMEN STRUGGLING
IN PAKISTAN

CHUNG: In a former classroom, now a makeshift relief camp, pregnant women take refuge from the floods that have ravaged eastern Pakistan, their bodies aching, eyes heavy with exhaustion and silent despair. Waiting for the water that swallowed their homes to recede, women in Chung, a settlement on Lahore’s outskirts, have limited access to essential medicines, including pregnancy-related care. Shumaila Riaz, seven months pregnant with her first child, spent the past four days in the relief camp, enduring pregnancy cramps. “I wanted to think about the child I am going to have, but now, I am not even certain about my own future,” she said.

Clad in dirty clothes they have worn for days and with unbrushed hair, women huddle in the overcrowded school hosting more than 2,000 people, surrounded by mud and stagnant rainwater. “My body aches a lot and I can’t get the medicines I want here,” said Fatima, mother to a one-year-old daughter and four months pregnant. “I used to eat as I please, sleep as I please, walk as I please — that is all gone now. I can’t do that here,” added Fatima.

Monsoon rains over the past week swelled three major rivers that cut through Punjab province, Pakistan’s agricultural heartland and home to nearly half of its 255 million people. The number of affected people rose on Sunday to more than two million, according to provincial senior minister Marriyum Aurangzeb. Around 750,000 people have been evacuated, of whom 115,000 were rescued by boat — making it the largest rescue operation in Punjab’s history, according to the provincial government.

The flooded rivers have affected mostly rural areas near their banks but heavy rain also flooded urban areas, including several parts of Lahore — the country’s second-largest city. While South Asia’s seasonal monsoon brings rainfall that farmers depend on, climate change is making the phenomenon more erratic and deadly across the region. Landslides and floods triggered by heavier-than-usual monsoon rains have killed more than 850 people nationwide since June. The latest downpour has killed at least 32 people, the provincial minister said on Sunday.

The pregnant women are also vulnerable to infectious diseases, according to doctors in the medical camp set up by a local NGO. “I receive around 200 to 300 patients every day with different infections and water-borne diseases,” said Fahad Abbas, 27, a doctor at the medical camp. “There are a lot of patients here who are going through psychological trauma, especially women and children, after losing their homes.” — AFP

LEBANON
PARLIAMENT
CALLS FOR
DIALOGUE
OVER
HEZBOLLAH
WEAPONS

BEIRUT: Lebanon’s Speaker of Parliament Nabih Berri, an ally of Hezbollah, called for dialogue over its weapons, days before the government is expected to approve an army plan to disarm the group. Months after Hezbollah’s devastating war with Israel and under heavy US pressure, Lebanon’s government this month tasked the army with drawing up a plan to disarm Hezbollah by the end of the year. Hezbollah strongly opposed the

decision, and ministers, including representatives from the group and Berri’s Amal Movement, withdrew from the last government session in protest. “We reiterate that we are open to discussing the fate of those weapons... in a calm and consensual dialogue,” Berri, an influential leader, said in a speech commemorating the 1978 disappearance of Amal founder Musa al Sadr. Lebanon’s ministers are set to meet again on Friday after receiving the army’s plan.

Berri criticised the government’s moves, which are based on a US proposal. “What is proposed in the American paper goes beyond the principle of (a state) weapons monopoly, and rather appears as an alternative to the November ceasefire agreement,” he stated. Hezbollah emerged heavily weakened from a devastating war with Israel that ended in a ceasefire signed in November. Israel has kept up attacks in Lebanon despite the truce. — AFP

Indonesia accepts demands
to cut lawmakers’ perks

INDONESIAN political parties have agreed to revoke a number of perks and privileges for parliamentarians, President Prabowo Subianto said, in a bid to calm anti-government protests that have left five people dead and caused the worst violence in decades in Southeast Asia’s largest economy. Protests began on Monday over what demonstrators called excessive pay and housing allowances for parliamentarians. The unrest escalated into riots on Friday after a motorcycle rideshare driver was killed during police action at a protest site.

Homes of political party members and state buildings were ransacked or set ablaze, sparking widespread concern. Investor sentiment took a hit as the protests led to a steep selloff in Indonesia’s stocks and currency on Friday.

Prabowo, speaking at a news conference at the Presidential Palace and flanked by the leaders of various political parties, said he had ordered the military and police to take stern action against rioters and looters, warning that some of the actions were indicative of “terrorism” and “treason”. “Leaders in parliament have conveyed that they will revoke a number of parliament policies, including the size of allowances for members of parliament and a moratorium on overseas work trips,” Prabowo said. “To the police and the military, I have ordered them to take action as firm as possible against the destruction of public facilities,



Indonesian army members load burned police vehicles, in Jakarta. — AFP

Leaders in parliament have conveyed that they will revoke a number of parliament policies, including the size of allowances for members of parliament and a moratorium on overseas work trips

PRABOWO
SUBIANTO

looting at homes of individuals and economic centres, according to the laws,” he added.

The protests represent the most significant challenge to Prabowo’s government, which has faced little political opposition since taking office nearly a year ago. Prabowo, who cancelled a high-profile trip to China due to the unrest, on Sunday met with political leaders and key members of his cabinet at the Presidential Palace to discuss the situation. Many ministers and political leaders arriving at the Palace used civilian number plates instead of special ones given to officials, a witness said, in an apparent precaution against public anger. The military was deployed

to guard the Palace on top of the usual secret service detail. Many key ministers’ homes and government installations were also seen guarded by the military on Sunday.

It remains unclear who is behind the rioting and looting that followed the protests, initially organised by student associations. Muzammil Ihsan, head of the All Indonesian Students’ Executives Body, the country’s largest student umbrella group, said that cutting lawmakers’ perks was “not enough” and said further demonstrations were being “considered”. “The government must resolve deep-rooted problems. The anger on the streets is not without cause,” Ihsan said.

— Reuters



GRETA THUNBERG JOINS FLOTILLA HEADING TO GAZA

BARCELONA: Climate campaigner Greta Thunberg joined a flotilla of boats loaded with aid for Gaza as they set sail from Barcelona on Sunday, aiming to break Israel’s naval blockade and deliver food and other humanitarian supplies to the shattered enclave. Thousands of supporters gathered at Barcelona’s port to see off the boats, many of them waving Palestinian flags and chanting “Free Palestine” and “It’s not a war, it’s a genocide”.

“This is a mission to challenge the extremely violent, business-as-usual international system that is failing to uphold international law,” Thunberg told the crowd before the departure of the flotilla of dozens of boats, set to be joined by more along the way. Organisers of the flotilla blamed global leaders for failing to put pressure on Israel to allow aid to pass after a global hunger monitor said part of Gaza was suffering from famine. — Reuters

ROAD TRAGEDY

Namibia deadly road crash kills 16



A police vehicle collided with a correctional services van in southern Namibia, killing 16 people. The crash occurred on a motorway near the town of Mariental, approximately 270 kilometres south of the capital, Windhoek, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security. Images from the scene published by the media showed the mangled wreckage of the overturned vehicles. Most victims were officials, but at least two were civilians. — AFP

MOST-WANTED CRIMINALS

Sri Lanka extradites suspects from Indonesia



Sri Lanka’s most-wanted man was extradited from Indonesia along with five other criminal suspects arrested in a joint operation, police said. Mandinu Padmasiri Perera is accused of organising the February courtroom murder of a rival in Colombo and is also wanted for a dozen other killings and drug-related crimes. He and four others were flown on Saturday and were received at Colombo International Airport by Public Security Minister Ananda Wijepala. — AFP

VIOLENT OFFENSIVE

RSF shelling kills 7, wounds 71 in Sudan city



Shelling by Sudan’s Rapid Support Forces killed at least 7 people and wounded 71 others in El Fasher as the paramilitary group launched its fiercest offensive yet on the besieged city. The source said the true toll was “likely higher”, as many injured have been unable to reach one of the western city’s few operating hospitals due to the intensity of the strikes. The attack struck several densely populated neighbourhoods in the west. — AFP

SHORT TAKES



Protesters hold a banner during an anti-immigration rally in Melbourne. — AFP

THOUSANDS IN AUSTRALIA MARCH AGAINST IMMIGRATION

SYDNEY: Thousands of Australians joined anti-immigration rallies across the country on Sunday that the centre-left government condemned, saying they sought to spread hate and were linked to neo-Nazis. March for Australia rallies against immigration were held in Sydney and other state capitals and regional centres, according to the group’s website. “Mass migration has torn at the bonds that held our communities together,” the website says. The group posted on X on Saturday that the rallies aimed to do “what the mainstream politicians never have the courage to do: demand an end to mass immigration”.

The group also says it is concerned about culture, wages, traffic, housing and water supply, environmental destruction, infrastructure, hospitals, crime and loss of community.

“We absolutely condemn the March for Australia rally that’s going on today. It is not about increasing social harmony,” Murray Watt, a senior minister in the Labor government, told Sky News television, when asked about the rally in Sydney, the country’s most-populous city.

“We don’t support rallies like this that are about spreading hate and that are about dividing our community,” Watt said. — Reuters

POPE URGES END TO ARMS



Pope Leo XIV called for an end to the “pandemic of arms” as he prayed for “countless” children killed by firearms and in conflicts globally. The US pontiff repeated his calls at the end of the Angelus prayer for a ceasefire in Ukraine. He also noted the recent shooting during a school mass in Minnesota in the United States, in which two children were killed.

“We include in our prayers the countless children killed and injured everyday around the world. Let us plead God to stop the pandemic of arms, large and small, which infects our world,” he said. — AFP

FRANCE CONDEMNS OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE IN GREENLAND

NUUK: France considers recent outside interference in Greenland “disrespectful and unacceptable”, Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said on Sunday, on a visit to the autonomous Danish territory. US President Donald Trump has said he wants to take control of Greenland, and Danish television revealed this week that at least three Americans have been conducting influence operations on the Arctic island. Barrot, visiting the Greenland capital Nuuk, announced that

France would send a team to help Denmark better map the territory’s mineral resources, which are rich but under-exploited and coveted by Trump. “The recent manoeuvres are unacceptable and disrespectful,” he said. Barrot said his visit would “send a message of European solidarity and French support to Denmark, Greenland, and the Greenlandic people.” “Greenland is not for sale,” he added, echoing remarks by Emmanuel Macron, who came to express his solidarity

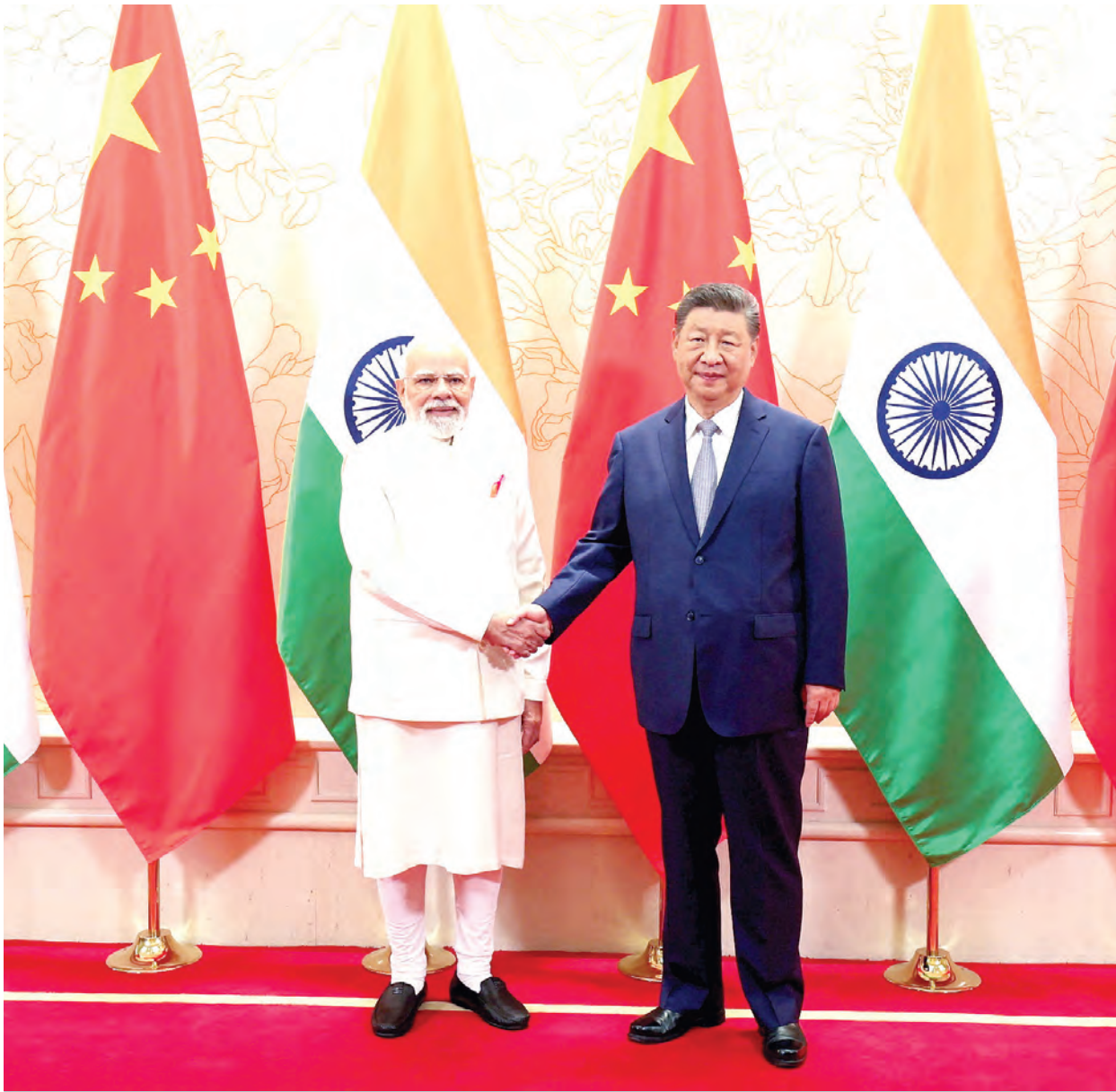
with Greenland in mid-June. France’s foreign minister has arrived in Greenland to express his nation’s “solidarity” with the Danish autonomous territory, the ministry said. Jean-Noel Barrot’s two-day visit from Saturday comes days after Danish public television reported that at least three US officials close to President Trump had been in Greenland trying to identify people they could use in anti-Denmark influence campaigns. — AFP

India, China committed to improving ties, says Modi

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi said New Delhi was committed to improving ties with China in a key meeting with President Xi Jinping on Sunday, as both leaders discussed the need to expand trade and investment ties against the backdrop of US tariffs. Modi is in China for the first time in seven years to attend a two-day meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, along with Russian President Vladimir Putin and other leaders from Central, South and Southeast Asia and the Middle East, in a show of Global South solidarity.

The meeting comes days after Washington imposed 50 per cent tariffs on Indian goods in response to New Delhi’s purchase of Russian oil, a move analysts say has pushed Modi and Xi to align against Western pressures. Modi said India and China pursued strategic autonomy, and their ties should not be seen through the lens of a third country, according to an Indian foreign ministry readout of the meeting.

Modi emphasised reducing India’s trade deficit with China and expanding cooperation on regional and global issues, including terrorism and fair trade practices, the ministry added. The leaders also discussed expanding common ground on bilateral, regional, and global issues, and challenges like terrorism and fair trade in multilateral platforms, the Indian statement said.



India’s PM Narendra Modi shakes hands with Chinese President Xi Jinping, in Tianjin. — Reuters

“We are committed to progressing our relations based on mutual respect, trust and sensitivities,” Modi told Xi during the meeting on the sidelines of the summit, according to a video posted on his official X account. At a reception for the summit Xi told leaders that the SCO now bears “greater responsibilities” for safeguarding regional peace and stability, and for boosting development of various countries, Chinese state news agency Xinhua reported on Sunday.

Modi said an atmosphere of

The operation, launched just days after a ceasefire paused fighting in Gaza, has left at least 10 Palestinians dead. Israeli officials have said the raid is part of a broader campaign against militants in the occupied West Bank

“peace and stability” has been created on their disputed Himalayan border, the site of a prolonged military standoff after deadly troop clashes in 2020, which froze most areas of cooperation between the nuclear-armed strategic rivals. He added that an agreement had been reached between both nations regarding border management, without giving details. The neighbours share a 3,800 km border that is poorly demarcated and has been disputed since the 1950s.

“We must ... not let the border

issue define the overall China-India relationship,” Xinhua reported Xi as saying.

China-India ties could be “stable and far-reaching” if both sides focused on viewing each other as partners instead of rivals, Xi added. Both leaders had a breakthrough meeting in Russia last year after reaching a border patrol agreement, setting off a tentative thaw in ties that has accelerated in recent weeks as New Delhi seeks to hedge against renewed tariff threats from Washington. — Reuters

Ukraine vows to retaliate after Russian attacks on power sector

KYIV: Russian drone attacks on power facilities in northern and southern Ukraine overnight left nearly 60,000 customers without electricity, with President Volodymyr Zelensky vowing to retaliate by ordering more strikes deep inside Russia. Three and a half years into the war, Russia and Ukraine have both intensified airstrikes in recent weeks. Russia has targeted Ukraine’s energy and transport systems, while Ukraine has been attacking Russian oil refineries and pipelines.

“We will continue our active operations in exactly the way needed for Ukraine’s defence. The forces and resources are prepared. New deep strikes have also been planned,” Zelensky said

on X after meeting Ukraine’s top general, Oleksandr Syrsky, without giving further details of the plans. Ukraine’s largest private energy company, DTEK, said Russian drones had attacked four energy facilities in the Odesa region during the night, and local authorities reported that 29,000 people were left without electricity early on Sunday.

Hardest hit was the port city of Chornomorsk, just outside Odesa, where residential houses and administrative buildings were also damaged, said Oleh Kiper, the governor of the broader Odesa region. “Critical infrastructure is operating on generators,” Kiper said on the Telegram messaging app, adding that one person had been injured as a result of the attack.



Workers repair power line next to damaged houses, in Sloviansk. — AFP

The DTEK power company said emergency repair work would begin as soon as the military gave it the all-clear. In waters close to the large and strategically important port, a civilian bulk carrier flying the flag of Belize sustained minor damage after hitting an unknown explosive device, two sources said on condition of anonymity. Chornomorsk is one of three Ukrainian ports operating in a maritime transport corridor linking the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

Russian drones also targeted Ukraine’s northern Chernihiv region early on Sunday, damaging energy infrastructure and leaving 30,000 households without electricity, including part of the city of Nizhyn, said Governor Chaus. — Reuters

OPINION

Reviving the lost art of reading in a digital age



SANDHYA RAO MEHTA

The writer is Associate Professor, Sultan Qaboos University

A REPORT released last week suggests that reading for pleasure has seen a massive 40 per cent dip over the last two years. Based on a study by the University of Florida, the study found that, while reading among the young reached a peak in 2004, it has seen a steady decline of 3 per cent per annum over the last 15 years. This study has been duplicated in other places and the data is not more encouraging. According to an Indian newspaper, “Today, reading feels almost like a lost art. Once, the aisles of libraries were utopian realms where curiosity thrived and imagination soared,” but it no longer feels this way. In the Middle East, initiatives to encourage reading in schools point to a recognition of the problem as gradually increasing. We don’t have to look very far to know the reasons for this falling trend: wide access to technology and social media, reduced access to public libraries, a heavy school syllabus that makes reading for pleasure difficult, and the general perception that reading is ‘a

waste of time’, all contribute to this malaise. Nor are we unaware of the results of such fall in reading habits: a lack of general knowledge, and human empathy, reduced attention span and a general inability to process information in various subjects. But while there is much focus on how trends in reading are falling massively, there is less attention paid to how this issue can, and must be addressed. The solutions are not beyond us as individuals. A non-negotiable tactic is setting up an example. As parents, siblings, and other role models, it is of utmost importance that we encourage a healthy reading habit by just doing it ourselves. There is no way that children will learn to spend quiet moments with a book if parents are seen to be chatting on the phone or watching a movie online. Reading aloud, night time reading and having conversations about reading on the dinner table must be important parts of family life. Listening is essential too. Following up on what children or young adults are reading gives us a window to their thoughts. This

Reading aloud, night time reading and having conversations about reading on the dinner table must be important parts of family life.

means listening to them, and not with just one ear. Making reading a fun activity and not a chore is the most important task of an adult. This can come in many ways – having scrapbooks, encouraging drawing or painting based on readings if the child is so inclined, and even encouraging songs and jingles can be an entertaining way to include reading in the daily routine. Supervised online activity with engagement in social media can be another way of encouraging children to read. Online platforms introduce youngsters to other children their age who could share reading suggestions and engage in short conversations. Once this is supervised, the move towards independent involvement in online book clubs could be smoother. Reading is one of the most entertaining and informative ways of knowing about our world. That this is a falling trend should worry us all enough to come up with practical solutions that take into account local and cultural sensitivities.

KENYAN HUNTER-GATHERERS FIGHT FOR RIGHTS

JULIE CAPELLE

Fred Ngusilo stooped to pick up a leather pouch, once used to collect honey, and a discarded shoe from the Mau Forest floor, painful reminders that his hunter-gatherer community once flourished in southern Kenya, before they were evicted and their homes destroyed. Ngusilo belongs to the Ogiek group, which is among the last hunter-gatherer communities in Africa and one of the most marginalised in Kenya. He described how their ancestral lands were seized by the government in the name of conservation at the end of 2023, when men armed with hammers and axes suddenly appeared, violently evicting them from their homes. “When I come here, I’m so sad. Tears are coming out of my eyes,” Ngusilo said, looking at the remains of his father and grandfather’s house. Bees buzz behind the 38-year-old human rights activist, and some of his community peacefully weave their cattle through the trees — despite a ban on livestock, brutally enforced by Kenyan Forestry Service (KFS) rangers. In December, a herder drowned while fleeing from the rangers, Ngusilo said. The calm of the Mau Forest contrasts with stories of decades of persecution and dispossession recounted by its indigenous people — all in the name of conservation. The African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights (AfCHPR) ruled in 2017 and 2022 that the evictions were illegal, ordering Nairobi to pay reparations equivalent to more than \$1 million and to recognise their ancestral lands. But Kenya has still not complied. Deprived of their livelihoods, they recount a difficult daily existence that is slowly but surely destroying their traditions and their language. “Before, in the forest, we could survive — eat honey, hunt, live,” Ngusilo’s grandmother, Janet Sumpet Ngusilo, 87, said. “Now, out here, we are suffering greatly.” At a festival earlier this month, hundreds of community members rallied to keep the ceremonies and traditional songs alive, but also to remember what they have lost. “I survived on meat and honey. Young people today don’t know that life,” said Salaton Nadumwangop, describing how he would sleep beneath the trees. “The forest is our life,” the 55-year-old Nadumwangop, dressed in traditional costume and a fur hat pinned with beads evoking bees, said. — AFP

How the Earth leaves its mark on us

STAND IN A BUSY market and look around: every face, body, and gesture tells a story written by the land. Skin holds the warmth or coolness of its climate, eyes reflect distant seas, and even the way we walk or dress whispers where we come from. We don’t just live in a place; the place lives in us. Look in the mirror and you are not just seeing “you”, you are seeing a map. This is what scientists call biogeographic adaptation, one of the clearest ways our environment leaves its mark. One of the clearest examples is skin colour. Across the world, human skin pigmentation follows one of the most consistent patterns in biology: the closer a population lives to the equator, the darker the average skin tone, and the farther away, the lighter it gets. But here is the important detail: this isn’t really about latitude. It’s about ultraviolet (UV) radiation, specifically UVB, which varies with altitude, cloud cover, and ozone as much as with latitude. Darker skin in high-UV areas protects folate, an essential vitamin for healthy reproduction, from being broken down by sunlight. Lighter skin in low-UV areas lets the body produce enough vitamin D in weaker sunlight. Climate has also shaped our noses. A 2017 study found that people from colder, drier regions tended to have narrower nostrils, while those from warmer, more humid areas had wider ones. Narrower passages may help warm and humidify cold, dry air before it reaches the lungs; wider nostrils may make breathing easier in hot, moist climates. Body shape follows similar rules. More than a century ago, Carl Bergmann and Joel Allen observed that warm-blooded animals in colder climates tend to be bulkier (to conserve heat), while those in warmer climates are slimmer (to



KHALFAN AL HARRASI

The author is an academic and researcher

release heat more efficiently). Longer limbs in warm climates help shed heat, while shorter limbs in cold climates help keep it in. Large-scale studies still find these trends in human populations, although modern housing and clothing have softened the effect. Geography also shapes genes through proximity. A study in Northern Kenya found that people living closer together were more genetically similar, showing how location influences gene flow and variation. And if we zoom out even further, environmental instability over thousands of years (shifting climates, changing landscapes) has been a powerful driver of human evolution. Adaptations in brain size, metabolism, and endurance have been linked to these environmental pressures. If our genes carry the story of where we come from, our culture is the outfit we dress that story in. Traditional clothing reflects climate, resources, and cultural meaning. Loose, breathable fabrics dominate hot, dry regions, while layered, insulating materials are common in cold places. This is part of what anthropologists call cultural ecology: how human societies adapt

to their environments through both biology and culture. Language, too, carries geography in its sounds and words. Some linguists suggest that climate can influence sound patterns; for example, humid air may preserve high-frequency sounds better, shaping the ‘music’ of local languages. Geography also shapes vocabulary. Arctic communities have dozens of words for snow, while island cultures develop rich terminology for winds and waves. Even the way we stand, walk, and gesture (what sociologist Pierre Bourdieu called habitus) reflects our environment. Sunny, social plazas can foster close personal space and animated gestures, while colder, more enclosed environments often encourage more restrained body language. In the end, we are walking archives: part museum of ancient landscapes, part gallery of living culture. The sun, the wind, the mountains, and the markets have all left their mark on us. Long after we leave a place, it stays stitched into our skin, woven into our words, and folded into the way we move through the world. Geography may be silent, but in us, it speaks.

It’s not just another Monday!



ABDULAZIZ AL
JAHDHAMI

The writer is author,
translator and a
communications
professional

MORNINGS ARE MORE than just a time to wake up. They provide a strong opportunity to set the tone for your entire day. Perhaps the first 30 to 60 minutes after you wake up can influence your mood, energy levels, focus, and even your ability to handle stress. While many people start their day in a rush mood, checking their phones, skipping breakfast, or hitting the door, there is a better way to make your day.

Let’s be honest as most of us don’t wake up! Instead, we restart the disorder with eyes open, brain twists and the phone flashes. Just like that, we are off racing with time, chasing deadlines and looking for the version of ourselves we promised we would be last week. But what if we stopped that? Just for a moment to make our mornings more meaningful and purposeful.

Remember that how you start your day is often how you start your life on autopilot or in alignment. Every morning, the universe hands you a blank canvas and whispers to you to paint wisely. However, most of us start splashing stress on it before we even put our feet on the floor.

That is why mornings set the tone for everything that follows. The way you start your day can either energise you with purpose or bring you down with anxiety. Imagine beginning each morning not with stress or snooze buttons, but with clarity, calm and confidence. That is the power of

positive morning rituals — intentional actions that align your body, mind and spirit for the day ahead.

Developing a set of positive morning rituals can help you regain your morning and approach each day with clarity and purpose. These rituals don’t need to be long or complicated; what matters is that they are consistent and aligned with your goals. But why do morning rituals matter?! In fact, science and psychology support the idea that our early-morning habits significantly shape our emotional and mental states.

Science tells us our brains are most absorbent in the first hour after waking. That makes mornings fertile ground for focus, gratitude and clarity. What you plant in those early moments grows throughout the day.

Likewise, research shows that individuals with regular morning routines report lower levels of stress, greater productivity and improved emotional attitude. In contrast, beginning the day in a reactive state — for example, immediately checking e-mails or news alerts — can increase anxiety and decrease decision-making ability throughout the day.

It is true that there will be days when things don’t go as planned. You might oversleep or miss an important appointment, but that is okay. The goal is not achieving perfection, but maintaining consistency over time. Small, repeated

Remember that
how you start your
day is often how
you start your
life on autopilot
or in alignment.
Every morning, the
universe hands you
a blank canvas and
whispers to you to
paint wisely

actions create big changes. Begin with just two or three practices or rituals and build on them as you go. The most effective rituals are the ones that feel natural and sustainable.

Every morning gives you a fresh start. You have a choice to either rush into your day reacting to demands or to rise with intention, positivity and clarity. Morning rituals are not about being productive for productivity’s sake. They are about honouring your time, your body and your mental space, so that you can lead the rest of your day with purpose and success.

Great mornings don’t begin when the alarm rings; they begin the night before. Hence, before going to bed, ask yourself: How do I want to feel tomorrow morning? And the next morning, stand in the silence of the new day and whisper to yourself: This is my life. I get to choose how it begins. Then, you walk into your life with your shoulders back and your heart open; not because it is perfect, but because it is yours. Mornings are not about control; they are about creation.

Just like every muscle in the body, the mind needs to be trained to gain strength. It needs to be worked consistently to grow and develop over time. If you don’t proactively push yourself in little ways every morning, of course, you will struggle later on when things don’t go your way.

DOES A COMMON HEART ATTACK PILL HELP EVERYONE?

NANCY LAPID

A decades-old pill remains helpful for heart attack patients even with modern treatments that can prevent lasting damage to heart muscle, two large trials have shown. Still unclear is whether all patients, or only some, benefit from so-called beta-blocker drugs, which are typically prescribed to everyone after a heart attack. Two sharply contradictory reports were presented at a large cardiology meeting in Madrid and published in The New England Journal of Medicine.

“It is not unusual for trials to yield different results,” said Dr Borja Ibanez of Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Cardiovasculares Carlos III in Madrid, who led one of the trials.

“Somewhat uncommon is to see two trials with apparently divergent findings presented on the same day.”

Most important, Ibanez said, is the finding both teams agree on, which is that beta-blockers reduce the combined risk of another heart attack, heart failure, or death in patients without heart failure but with mildly impaired heart function.

The question is whether the pills are beneficial or useless for those with normally functioning hearts, who account for about 80 per cent of patients after a first heart attack.

Beta-blocker manufacturers include Mylan, Novartis, Pfizer, Abbott, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, Amneal Pharmaceuticals, Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Lupin, ANI Pharmaceuticals and Eagle Pharmaceuticals.

The drugs work by inhibiting the hormones epinephrine and norepinephrine, thereby lowering heart rate and blood pressure, decreasing the workload on the heart and reducing its oxygen demand.

Both new trials involved heart attack survivors whose hearts were still contracting normally, that is, the left ventricle was pumping out at least 40 per cent of its blood with each beat. Both trials followed patients for roughly 3.5 years.

Among 5,574 volunteers in the BETAMI-DANBLOCK study from Norway and Denmark, the drugs showed a clear benefit. Patients randomly assigned to receive beta-blockers had a 15-per cent lower risk of death or major adverse cardiovascular event, particularly a repeat heart attack, compared to patients not taking these pills, investigators found. But among the 8,438 participants in the REBOOT trial conducted in Italy and Spain, beta-blockers had no effect on the incidence of death from any cause, a repeat heart attack, or hospitalisation for heart failure, according to a separate report.

Some of the differences may be due to the fact that patients didn’t all receive the same beta-blockers, and the Scandinavian patients might have been more prone to adverse events because they were slightly older than patients in Spain and Italy, and more of them had mild heart dysfunction, said Dr Dan Atar of the University of Oslo, who led one of the trials. — Reuters

India’s climate-finance gap is smaller than it seems

INDIA FINDS itself at a critical juncture: it must accelerate economic growth while meeting its climate commitments. Estimates of the country’s climate-financing needs have ranged from \$160 billion to \$288 billion annually through 2030, but these top-down figures rely on broad assumptions and often fail to reflect sector-specific realities.

In a recent study, we take a different approach, using a bottom-up methodology to provide a more accurate estimate of India’s climate-finance requirements. We focus on four of the country’s highest-emitting sectors: power, steel, cement and road transport. Importantly, our study measures only the additional capital expenditure required to fund climate mitigation, over and above the investments already expected under a business-as-usual scenario.

We estimate that these four sectors will require a total of \$467 billion in climate finance by 2030, averaging \$54 billion annually, or roughly 1.3 per cent of India’s GDP. This figure is significantly lower than the hundreds of billions of dollars per year suggested by earlier studies.

Although much of the climate debate, both globally and in India, has focused on the costs of the energy transition, our study shows that India’s climate-finance needs are relatively modest. Between 2023 and 2030, the additional capital expenditure required in the power sector is estimated at \$57 billion: \$47 billion for shifting from fossil fuels to renewables and \$10 billion for pumped hydro and battery storage.

Our projections are significantly lower than those in many other studies, primarily because the per-unit cost of renewable capacity has fallen below that of coal-based plants. Today, building a solar power plant costs about half as much as a coal-based facility, while setting up a wind farm costs roughly one-third.

India’s steel and cement industries face far greater climate-finance requirements: \$251 billion and \$141 billion, respectively. This demand is driven by two main



India’s steel and cement industries face far greater climate-finance requirements.



JANAK RAJ

The writer is Senior
Fellow at the Centre
for Social and
Economic Progress



RAKESH
MOHAN

The writer is a
former deputy
governor of the
Reserve Bank of
India, is President
Emeritus and
Distinguished Fellow
at the Centre for
Social and Economic
Progress

factors. First, both sectors are projected to expand rapidly: steel manufacturing is expected to surge by about 80 per cent, from 125 million tonnes in 2022 to 225 million tonnes by 2030, while cement production is set to climb from 370 million tonnes to 670 million tonnes over the same period.

Second, India’s steel industry emits approximately 2.4 tonnes of carbon dioxide per tonne of steel, well above the global average of 1.85, due to carbon-intensive production methods. By contrast, the cement sector is less carbon-intensive, emitting 0.44 tonnes of CO₂ per tonne of cement, compared with a global average of 0.6.

As a result, India’s average annual capital-expenditure requirements for steel (0.7 per cent of GDP) and cement (0.5 per cent of GDP) are the highest among the G20’s ten emerging-market economies. Decarbonising these industries is particularly challenging, since the only available technological solution – carbon capture and storage – remains prohibitively expensive.

When it comes to road transport, we estimate India’s additional financing needs at \$18 billion: \$10 billion for shifting from internal-combustion-engine

vehicles to electric ones, and \$8 billion for developing EV charging infrastructure. Directing climate finance towards these four sectors could reduce India’s coal use by 291 million tonnes and cut petrol and diesel consumption by 72 billion litres by 2030, lowering CO₂ emissions by 6.9 billion tonnes.

But is such climate financing from external sources macroeconomically feasible? After accounting for the current-account deficit, total net capital and financial inflows to India under the business-as-usual scenario are expected to reach \$530 billion by 2030 – roughly 1.4 per cent of GDP annually. With the expansion of India’s monetary base and projected annual GDP growth of 10.5 per cent, India could absorb up to \$470 billion in capital and financial inflows, net of the current-account deficit, over the same period. This suggests that under business-as-usual conditions, the Reserve Bank of India will need to manage external climate finance very carefully. To absorb the required inflows without jeopardising financial stability, the government could raise the current-account deficit to around 2.5 per cent of GDP.

© Project Syndicate, 2025

SPORTS

SHORTTAKES



The Omani runners have successfully completed the UTMB an annual race

OMAN’S RUNNERS PARTICIPATE IN UTMB ALPINE RACE

MUSCAT: Five Omani runners have successfully completed the Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc (UTMB), an annual race held in Chamonix, France, that draws thousands of runners from around the world.

Khalid bin Sulaiman al Hatmi and Khusaif bin Marhoon al Zakwani finished the longest distance of 175 km, ascending over 10,000 metres across a route that spans France, Italy and Switzerland before returning to Chamonix.

Meanwhile, runners Yaqoub bin Khalfan al Nadabi, Talal bin Hilal al Mahrrouqi, and Khalid al Farsi completed the 100 km race, which featured an elevation gain of over 6,000 metres. The race stages were marked by challenging weather, including heavy rain, strong winds, and temperatures dropping to around 4 degrees Celsius. These conditions compounded the difficulty of the rugged mountain terrain, turning trails into muddy streams and treacherous slopes.

PSG EDGE TOULOUSE 6-3 IN FRENCH LIGUE 1



Paris St Germain's Ousmane Dembele celebrates scoring their fourth goal. — Reuters

PARIS: Joao Neves scored a stunning hat-trick as Paris Saint-Germain maintained their perfect start to the French Ligue 1 season in spectacular fashion on Saturday, winning 6-3 away to Toulouse.

Ousmane Dembele netted two penalties and Bradley Barcola was also on target for PSG, while Charlie Cresswell, Yann Gboho and Alexis Vossah all scored for the home side, who also missed a spot-kick.

The win for Luis Enrique’s side follows successive 1-0 victories in their opening two domestic outings of the campaign, away to Nantes and at home to Angers.

Despite having just one week’s pre-season training off the back of their run to the Club World Cup final in the United States in July and a short break, PSG have already won the UEFA Super Cup this season and are clear at the top of Ligue 1.

They lead with the maximum nine points and are two ahead of Lille, who won in even more prolific fashion on Saturday, 7-1 away at Lorient.

Neves, the 20-year-old Portugal midfielder who scored three goals in the whole of last season in Ligue 1, got the early breakthrough at Le Stadium in Toulouse when he controlled the ball on his chest before sending an overhead kick arrowing into the top corner from close range.

His second goal arrived before the quarter-hour mark and was even better, another ball controlled on the chest and another overhead kick, this time from further out and into the opposite corner of the net. — AFP

Oman, Uzbekistan play out a 1-1 draw

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, AUG 31

THE OMAN NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM began their campaign at Central Asian Football Association (CAFA) Nations Cup with a solid 1-1 draw against the hosts Uzbekistan on Saturday night at the Olympic Stadium in Tashkent. The highly competitive encounter, which drew a large crowd, showcased the team's strong discipline, tactical balance, and fighting spirit against a qualified team to the upcoming World Cup with Fifa ranking of 55 globally. Oman will face Kyrgyzstan on Tuesday, before concluding the group stage against Turkmenistan on Friday. The final and third place playoff matches are scheduled for September 8.

Speaking after the match, Oman head coach Carlos Queiroz expressed his satisfaction with the team's performance, describing the opening result as “a perfect match to learn from.”

“The draw against Uzbekistan in the beginning of our campaign provided many technical outcomes despite missing several scoring chances. We played for the victory and we were supposed to end with a winning result, especially given the opportunities we created. I liked the players' attitude and performance inside the pitch as they showed a top level of effort. Despite the absence of six main squad players, the target remains clear which is to win in every single game. Our ambition is to secure one of the spots to the Fifa World Cup, and we have to be strong as we head into two crucial matches in Qatar.” He ended

Back to the match details, Red Warriors started in style as Nasir al Rawahi put his side ahead in the fourth minute. After a brilliant individual run by Jameel al Yahmadi, Nasir Al Rawahi managed to latch onto the rebound from his initial attempt and slotted home to give Oman



Oman responded with attacking changes as Queiroz did few changes

the early advantage. The goal boosted the team's confidence, with the defense led by Thani al Rushaidi and Ahmed al Kaabi who were displaying strong organisation while the midfield pressed effectively to create attacking opportunities.

Despite Oman's dominance in phases of the first half, Uzbekistan equalised in the 55th minute through Erkinov, who capitalised on a defensive lapse and struck a powerful shot past goalkeeper Ibrahim al Mukhaini. Oman responded with attacking changes as Queiroz did few

changes including Mahmoud Mabrook, Zahir al Aghbari, Musab al Maamari, and Al Mundher al Alawi, all of whom added energy and creativity to the side. Zahir and Salah worked very hard in the dying minutes as al Aghbari came close with a long-range strike, while Salah late crosses threatened the Uzbek defense in the closing stages as the match ended at 1-1 draw.

The other match in the group between Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan ended also at 1-1 draw.

Shi wins first badminton world title as Yamaguchi clinches women’s title

PARIS: World number one Shi Yuqi of China fought from behind to beat Thai reigning champion Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the men's singles badminton world championship final on Sunday, while Japan's Akane Yamaguchi beat Chen Yufei of China in the women's showpiece. Shi beat Kunlavut 19-21, 21-10, 21-18 after one hour and 16 minutes on court in Paris to lift his first world championships crown.

The 29-year-old broke his worlds hoodoo the hard way, saving two match points in his semi-final and enduring three-game matches from the third round. For Kunlavut, it was heartbreak again in the French capital where he claimed silver 12 months on from defeat in the 2024 Olympics final at the same venue.

Despite trailing for most of the first game, Kunlavut surged late on to seize the advantage. Shi handed the Thai the opener by misjudging a lobbed serve which landed inside the line.

Shi set about making amends as he blitzed through the second game to force a decider.

In a neck-and-neck championship game, Shi took an 11-9 lead into the interval.

The top seed then stretched ahead before sealing his maiden title as Kunlavut hit long on



Gold medalist China's Yu Qi Shi celebrates on the podium after winning the men's final. — Reuters

match point.

“I felt the chance to win was very slim (before the tournament). Coming into it as the underdog, winning despite not having results this year, I think that gives it a different kind of value,” Yamaguchi said of her 2025 crown.

While she said she was “delighted” by the victory, Yamaguchi spared a thought for her injured opponent.

“Chen Yufei got injured on Saturday, so it wasn’t easy. I hadn’t anticipated it, but I suppose this kind of score difference was inevitable given her condition.”

Chen, a Tokyo 2020 Olympic



Yamaguchi cruises to third badminton world title

gold medalist, battled past top seed and reigning champion An Se-young of South Korea in a semi-final win marked by a nasty-looking ankle twist early in the second game.

The 27-year-old received treatment on the court Saturday and went immediately to have her ankle examined after the match.

In Sunday’s final, Chen appeared hampered in her movement and Yamaguchi took full advantage in the opening game.

“I think there were moments she (Chen) couldn’t react, so I did hit a bit more aggressively,” admitted Yamaguchi.

The fourth seed dug in to stay with Yamaguchi in the second game until the 28-year-old pulled away after the interval to condemn Chen to a second world silver medal.

“It’s still quite swollen,” Chen said of her ankle.

“Since last night I’ve been undergoing treatment, icing it and so forth. Before taking to the stage just now (to receive her medal), I’d already taken eight painkillers.

“I believe it’s about respecting myself and respecting my opponents. Though there are (injury) issues, I feel I can still walk and stand on this court. So I want to keep fighting for it,” added Chen, who lost her previous world final to Yamaguchi in Tokyo three years ago.

Earlier, Malaysian fourth seeds Chen Tang Jie and Toh Ee Wei claimed a dominant 21-15, 21-14 victory over second-seeded Chinese pair Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin in the mixed doubles final.

In a women’s doubles final between representatives of the same two nations, China took their revenge as top seeds Tan Ning and Liu Shengshu beat second seeded Malaysians Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan 21-14, 20-22, 21-17. — AFP

SHORTTAKES



Team Visma-Lease a bike's Danish rider Jonas Vingegaard celebrates crossing first the finish line of the 9th stage of the Vuelta a Espana. — AFP

VINGEGAARD
MAKES MOVE AS
HE POWERS TO
VUELTA STAGE 9 WIN

EZCARAY, Spain: Jonas Vingegaard claimed stage nine victory in the Vuelta a Espana on Sunday with a strong finish which helped him eat away at Torstein Traen's general classification lead.

The Danish star, favourite to win the Grand Tour, also earned nearly half-a-minute on his likely closest contender Team UAE's Joao Almeida.

Visma-Lease a Bike's Vingegaard had said he and his team were saving their legs for the second and third weeks, but took two minutes out of Traen and trails by just 37 seconds overall.

It took a long time for the day's break to form on the hilly 195.5 kilometres ride from Alfaro to the Valdezcaray ski resort, with several attacks quickly reeled in.

Five riders, including Michal Kwiatkowski, eventually carved out a two-and-a-half minute lead on the peloton although there were no general classification contenders in the break.

They were swallowed up as they reached the day's only categorised climb to finish the race.

Two-time Tour de France winner Vingegaard went solo with 10 kilometres remaining, chased by Almeida and Briton Tom Pidcock.

Traen crossed the line under two minutes behind Vingegaard and retains the red jersey. Almeida is third overall, one minute 15 behind Traen, while Pidcock is fourth after one of his best climbing performances.

"I felt super great today, and then on the last climb, I also felt really good, and I (asked) my team if they could speed up, and they did so I tried," said Vingegaard.

"They did super well. That was amazing team work, and I was really happy that I could finish it off. I couldn't do it without them...

"Maybe I didn't do my homework good enough because I thought it was closer to the finish when I attacked, and I was a bit surprised when I saw the ten kilometre banner... but at that moment I had the gap, and I had to keep going."

Monday is a rest day for the riders before a largely flat stage 10 on Tuesday, which stretches 175 kilometres from Sendaviva natural park to the ski resort in Larra-Belagua. — AFP

Piastri widens lead as
Norris falters at Dutch GP

OSCAR

PIASTRI powered to victory at an incident-packed Dutch Formula

One Grand Prix on Sunday, with home favourite Max Verstappen claiming second place as Piastri's McLaren teammate Lando Norris suffered a dramatic breakdown late in the race.

Piastri led from pole to chequered flag at the Zandvoort circuit in a race that saw the safety car deployed three times to stretch his lead over Norris to 34 points in the championship race.

Racing Bulls' 20-year-old French rookie Isack Hadjar finished third to become the fifth youngest podium finisher of all time.

It was Piastri's sixth Grand Prix victory of the season and cemented the Australian's status as the man to catch in this year's drivers' championship.

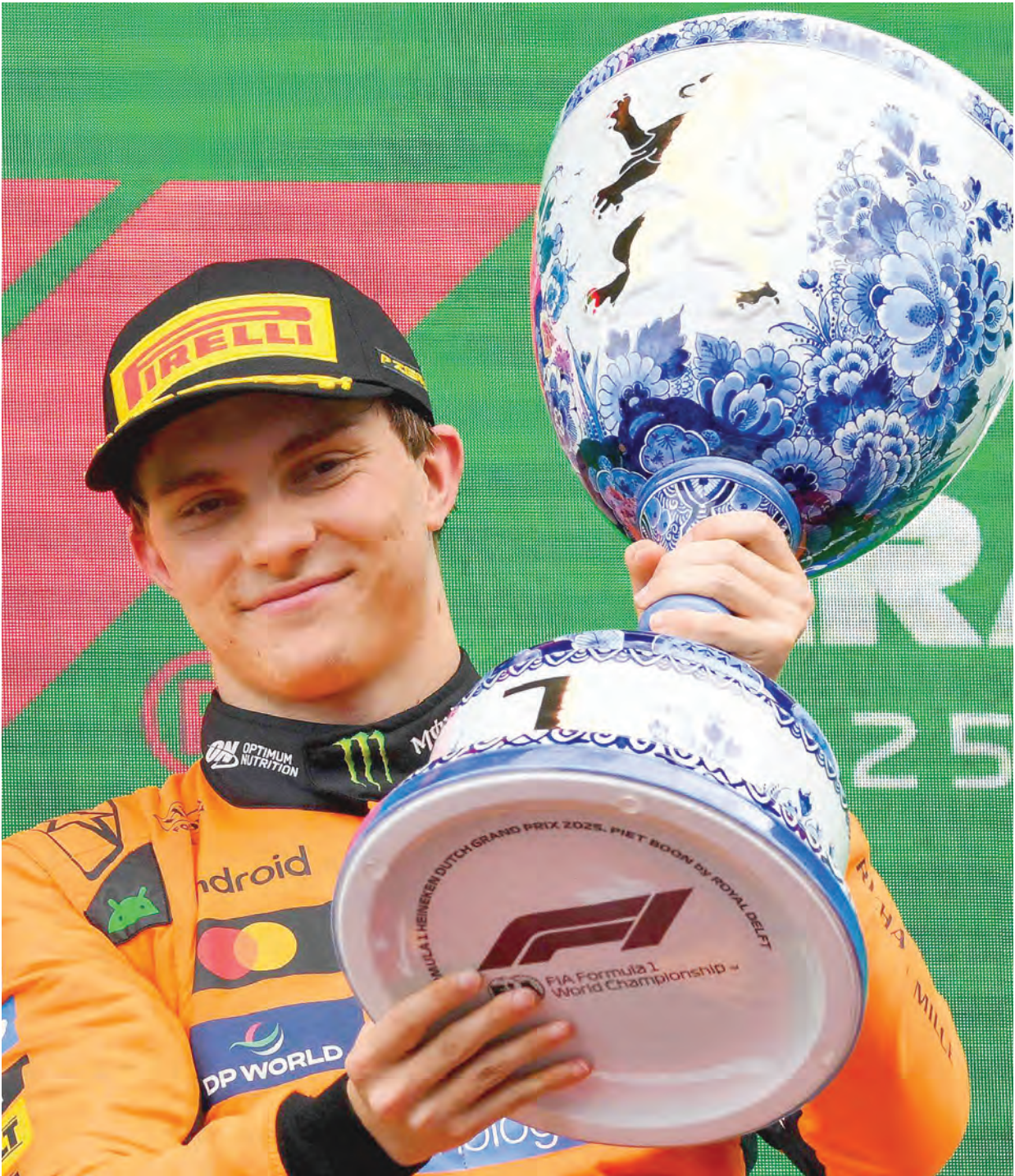
"I felt like I was in control of that one and just used the pace when I needed to," said Piastri.

"If we can keep it running then that'd be great but there's a long way to go yet and we keep doing it one race at a time," added the Australian.

A thrilling start saw Verstappen, who started third on the grid, overtake Norris before briefly losing control of his Red Bull.

To the cheers of tens of thousands of his "Orange Army" fans, Verstappen recovered brilliantly to settle in behind Piastri, who got off to a clean start.

But the faster race pace of the McLaren quickly told and Norris passed the Dutchman on his left-hand side in lap nine to restore the one-two for the papaya team.



Winner McLaren's Australian driver Oscar Piastri celebrates on the podium following the Formula One Dutch Grand Prix at The Circuit Zandvoort, western Netherlands. — AFP

Piastri now 34 points clear with nine rounds left

Australian's seventh win of campaign

Title rival Norris suffers smoky late retirement

Verstappen second, Hadjar third for first podium

Both Ferraris crash out

LET'S GET OSCAR

With the rain stopped and most drivers on fresh tyres, McLaren engineers on the Norris side of the garage told their man "let's go get Oscar".

Since Zandvoort returned to the Formula One circuit in 2021, the driver who started on pole has won every time, the track notoriously difficult for overtaking.

And Norris struggled to get close enough to his teammate Piastri, who kept a typically cool head to produce solid, error-free laps.

But with 18 laps to go, there was more drama as Leclerc and Mercedes driver Kimi Antonelli touched wheels during an overtaking manoeuvre, sending the Ferrari spinning into the barriers to complete a catastrophic weekend for the scuderia.

With the cars bunched up again after the safety car, Piastri pulled

out his fastest lap when it mattered to take control of the race once more.

Then with only six laps to go, Norris reported smoke in his cockpit, immediately crawling to a halt, his race over in heartbreaking fashion.

That left Piastri to hold off a last-ditch challenge by Verstappen in the closing laps to take the chequered flag.

A delighted Hadjar jumped into his team's arms at the end of the race before climbing onto the podium for the first time.

"This was always the target since I was a kid. So this is the first step, my first podium and hopefully much more," he said.

The Grand Prix circus next moves to Monza in Italy on September 7 when the Ferrari fans will be out in numbers, hoping for a better weekend for the team. — AFP

Man City rocked by Brighton as West Ham ease pressure on Potter

LONDON: Manchester City blew the lead in a shock 2-1 defeat at Brighton that extended their troubled start to the Premier League season, while Liverpool braced for their blockbuster clash with title rivals Arsenal on Sunday.

City striker Erling Haaland marked his 100th Premier League appearance with his 88th goal in the competition since joining from Borussia Dortmund in 2022.

But the 25-year-old's third goal this season wasn't enough to help Pep Guardiola's side bounce back from last weekend's 2-0 home defeat against Tottenham.

James Milner's second half penalty hauled Brighton level before Brajan Gruda's late strike completed City's collapse.

Spain midfielder Rodri made his first league start for City since suffering a serious knee injury against Arsenal in September 2024.

But Ballon d'Or holder Rodri, who had also started a Club World Cup match in the summer, was unable to inspire City to their second win of the season.

Haaland should have given City an early lead after racing clean through, but he scuffed a tame shot straight at Bart Verbruggen.

He also lashed just wide from 18 yards after a flowing City move.

The Norway striker missed another chance with a weak header from Rayan Ait-Nouri's cross, allowing Verbruggen the chance to claw it to safety. Haaland persevered and finally pierced the Brighton



Manchester City's Rodri in action with Brighton & Hove Albion's Diego Gomez. — Reuters

defence in the 34th minute, stabbing past Verbruggen from close-range after Omar Marmoush prodded the ball into his path.

Haaland forced Verbruggen into a miscued clearance just before half-time, but Rodri blazed the chance over.

Matheus Nunes handed Brighton a lifeline in the 67th minute.

Lewis Dunk shrugged off Bernardo Silva's attempt to mark him and blasted a shot that Nunes blocked with his arm away from his body.

Milner sent James Trafford the wrong way with a clinical penalty before copying Diogo Jota's goal celebration in tribute to his former Liverpool team-mate who died in a car crash in July.

It was the 39-year-old's first Premier League goal since 2019, making him the second oldest scorer in the competition's history behind Teddy Sheringham, who was 40 when he set the record.

City were in disarray and German youngster Gruda made them pay in the 89th minute, breaking into the area before delivering a composed finish to spark wild celebrations as Guardiola looked on in disbelief.

In Sunday's other early game, West Ham eased the pressure on boss Graham Potter with a 3-0 win against Nottingham Forest.

Potter had faced calls for his sacking after West Ham conceded eight goals in two successive top-flight defeats, then crashed out of the League Cup at Wolves. — AFP

Italy's Jannik Sinner plays a backhand return to Australia's Alexei Popyrin during their men's singles second round tennis match on day five of the US Open. — AFP



SINNER, SWIATEK TESTED AT US OPEN; GAUFF EYES OSAKA SHOWDOWN

JANNIK SINNER kept his US Open title defence on track on Saturday as Iga Swiatek struggled through to the last 16 and home favourite Coco Gauff booked a blockbuster clash with Naomi Osaka. Sinner rallied from a set down to beat Canadian 27th seed Denis Shapovalov 5-7, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 and is trying to become the first man to retain the title in New York since Roger Federer in 2008. “I was in a very difficult moment,” said Sinner. “The scoreline was a bit against me today, but I just tried to stay there mentally.” World number one Sinner will face either US 14th seed Tommy Paul or Kazakhstan’s Alexander Bublik in the next round. “Week two is completely different. It’s getting tougher and tougher, also physically and mentally,” said Sinner. Third seed Alexander Zverev fell to his earliest US Open exit in seven years at the hands of an inspired Felix Auger-Aliassime. Canada’s Auger-Aliassime belted 50 winners but was a point away from going two sets down before outduelling Zverev 4-6, 7-6 (9/7), 6-4, 6-4. “The tournament’s still going, the job’s not done but this means a lot to me,” said Auger-Aliassime, the 25th



Poland's Iga Swiatek in action during her third round match against Russia's Anna Kalinskaya. — Reuters

seed who takes on Andrey Rublev next. Rublev put an end to the fairytale run of Hong Kong’s Coleman Wong in five sets. There were three more retirements in the men’s draw on Saturday after the injury-induced exit of sixth seed Ben Shelton the day before. Alex de Minaur, Lorenzo Musetti

US OPEN RESULTS

MEN 3ROUND

Jannik Sinner (ITA x1) bt Denis Shapovalov (CAN x27) 5-7, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3

Alexander Bublik (KAZ x23) bt Tommy Paul (USA x14) 7-6 (7/5), 6-7 (4/7), 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 6-1

Lorenzo Musetti (ITA x10) bt Flavio Cobolli (ITA x24) 6-3, 6-2, 2-0 - retired

Jaume Munar (ESP) bt Zizou Bergs (BEL) 6-1, 6-4, 6-4

Felix Auger-Aliassime (CAN x25) bt Alexander Zverev (GER x3) 4-6, 7-6 (9/7), 6-4, 6-4

Andrey Rublev (RUS x15) bt Coleman Wong (HKG) 2-6, 6-4, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3

Leandro Riedi (SUI) bt Kamil Majchrzak (POL) 5-3 - retired

Alex de Minaur (AUS x8) bt Daniel Altmaier (GER) 6-7 (7/9), 6-3, 6-4, 2-0 - retired

WOMEN 3ROUND

Marta Kostyuk (UKR x27) bt Diane Parry (FRA) 3-6, 6-4, 6-2

Karolina Muchova (CZE x11) bt Linda Noskova (CZE x21) 6-7 (5/7), 6-4, 6-2

Naomi Osaka (JPN x23) bt Daria Kasatkina (AUS x15) 6-0, 4-6, 6-3

Coco Gauff (USA x3) bt Magdalena Frech (POL x28) 6-3, 6-1

Amanda Anisimova (USA x8) bt Jaqueline Cristian (ROM) 6-4, 4-6, 6-2

Beatriz Haddad Maia (BRA x18) bt Maria Sakkari (GRE) 6-1, 6-2

Ekaterina Alexandrova (RUS x13) bt Laura Siegemund (GER) 6-0, 6-1

Iga Swiatek (POL x2) bt Anna Kalinskaya (RUS x29) 7-6 (7/2), 6-4

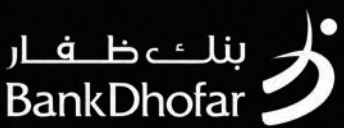
and 435th-ranked Swiss qualifier Leandro Riedi all moved on when their opponents threw in the towel. Eighth seed De Minaur led Daniel Altmaier 6-7 (7/9), 6-3, 6-4, 2-0 when the German retired, while 10th seed Musetti held a two-set lead over Flavio Cobolli before the latter quit because of an arm injury. “I didn’t want to finish like that, especially against Flavio. He’s probably one of my best friends on tour,” said Musetti. Riedi became the lowest-ranked man to reach the fourth round of a major since 2002 as Polish opponent Kamil Majchrzak retired after eight games due to injury.

SWIATEK FIGHTS BACK Swiatek showed great resolve to dig herself out of trouble against Russian 29th seed Anna Kalinskaya under the lights of Arthur Ashe Stadium. The world number two slid 5-1 behind in the opening set but saved four set points and won a tiebreak before eventually seeing off Kalinskaya 7-6 (7/2), 6-4. Swiatek, the 2022 US Open champion and six-time major winner, was far from her best but scrambled through to a last-16 meeting with Ekaterina Alexandrova. “I felt like I had nothing to lose because I was losing pretty bad. So in the end I just went for it because what else can you do?” Swiatek said of her fightback. Russian 13th seed Alexandrova has never made it past the fourth round at a Grand Slam but destroyed Laura Siegemund 6-0, 6-1 and has surrendered just 10 games en route to the second week at Flushing Meadows. Gauff swept past Polish 28th seed Magdalena Frech 6-3, 6-1 in her most polished display of the tournament to boost her hopes of collecting a second US Open title. After battling to a tearful victory in the previous round, a much more composed Gauff dispatched Frech with relative ease. — AFP



MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE
4,608.841

BUSINESS



بنك ظفار
BankDhofar

[www.bankdhofar.com](#) | 2479 1111

CREDIT CARDS
=
AIRPORT PRIVILEGES



SHORTTAKES

‘EXCELLENT COMPANIES’ INITIATIVE TO SPUR GROWTH

QASIM AL MAASHANI
SALALAH, AUG 31

Oman’s Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) has launched the “Excellent Companies” initiative, in partnership with the Tax Authority and the Ministry of Labour, to back high-performing firms with incentives aimed at boosting productivity, value addition and regional expansion.

The programme targets three goals — growth, diversification and employment — by helping Omani firms compete globally, amplify local success stories and guide SMEs onto a structured path of capability building.

Who qualifies

“Excellent Companies” are firms registered in Oman under the Commercial Companies Law (Royal Decree 18/2019) that make a direct contribution to national priorities by hiring Omani talent and applying international practices and modern technologies to ensure quality and sustainability.

Basic eligibility: the company must be registered and active in Oman with an office; comply with national laws and regulations; employ at least one Omani; and meet at least three of the evaluation criteria.

How assessment works

Evaluation proceeds in two phases. The first uses five primary criteria: company age; branch/market footprint; exports; workforce & Omanisation; and revenues. A second phase adds digital transformation, local content and ESG (environment & society).

Data are verified through government systems: company registry (age/branches), Customs (exports), Ministry of Labour (workforce/ Omanisation) and the Tax Authority (audited annual revenues). Companies receive a composite score that sets their growth stage and incentive tier.

INDICATIVE GROWTH STAGES

- **Start-up/Emerging:** revenues RO 100k–500k; 10–50 employees; ~10% Omanisation; 1–5 branches; 5–10 years old.
- **Mature:** RO 500k–3m; 51–200 employees; ~20% Omanisation; 6–20 branches; 11–25 years.
- **Sustainable/Advanced:** > RO 3m; 201+ employees; ~35% Omanisation; 21+ branches; 26+ years. (Companies are classified into Category A, B or C based on total points).

Omani platform to invest RO 29m in green mobility

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, AUG 31

THE launch of the National Green Mobility Company (NGMC), a public–private platform designed to accelerate the transition to electric transport, was officially announced yesterday, August 31, with investments estimated at RO 29 million (\$75 million).

The company will launch an innovative ecosystem for electric vehicles, encompassing electric cars, charging infrastructure, digital platforms and technical services. NGMC is being established through a partnership between HK Ventures (Oman) and the China–Middle East Development Group.

The announcement was made at a ceremony held under the auspices of Shaikh Salim bin Mustahail al Mashani, Advisor at the Diwan of Royal Court and attended by a number of ministers and senior officials.

The launch took place as part of the 3rd Green Mobility Forum in Dhofar Governorate, reflecting Oman’s ambitious vision for a fully integrated green economy and a sustainable transport future.

Eng Said bin Hamoud al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, affirmed that the launch of the National Green Mobility Company reflects Oman’s commitment to building a modern and environmentally friendly transport system.

He explained that it is not merely an electric mobility initiative, but rather a national platform that supports industrial innovation and opens broad horizons for creating job opportunities, thereby strengthening Oman’s position as a regional hub for clean technologies.

To reinforce the sector’s standing, the company has laid out



New platform to distribute around 500 EV cars across Oman starting in 2026. (Picture for illustration only)



The project is expected to make a significant contribution to environmental preservation by reducing approximately 4.6 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per vehicle, translating to nearly 46,000 metric tonnes annually by 2032

HILAL BIN ALI AL KHAROUSI

Co-Founder of the National Green Mobility Company

an ambitious road map, beginning with the distribution of 500 electric vehicles (EVs) in Muscat and other governorates in 2026, followed by the establishment of a National Research and Innovation Centre in 2027.

By 2032, the project aims to operate more than 10,000 electric vehicles and 200 fast-charging stations across the Sultanate of Oman. Looking ahead to 2035, the initiative will progress towards industrial localisation, with Oman positioned as a regional destination for the manufacturing and assembly of electric vehicle components.

The road map also includes the localisation of charging equipment and the development of light mobility solutions such as e-bikes, further enhancing Oman’s role as a regional hub for green transport technologies.

The ceremony also witnessed the signing of a partnership between the Omani company and the Chinese company, signed by Hilal bin Ali al Kharousi, Co-Founder of the National Green Mobility Company and CEO of HK Ventures; and on behalf of the Chinese company, China–Middle East Development Group, by Jessica Liu representing the CEO. Al Kharousi noted that the

company was designed from the outset to be fully prepared financially and operationally. He stressed that the new ecosystem will have a tangible impact on both individual lives and the national economy.

He added: “The project is expected to make a significant contribution to environmental preservation by reducing approximately 4.6 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per vehicle, translating to nearly 46,000 metric tonnes annually by 2032.

This reduction is equivalent to the environmental impact of planting two million trees. By supporting cleaner transport, the initiative aligns with Oman Vision 2040 and the Net-Zero Emissions by 2050, while also contributing to improved air quality and sustainable urban living.

The NGMC will create no fewer than 500 jobs for Omanis in the initial phase of the project, with employment opportunities expected to grow as the ecosystem expands.

In addition to direct job creation, the company will launch specialised training programmes to prepare national talent for careers in the electric mobility sector.

These programmes will focus on the latest EV technologies, enabling Omanis to develop expertise in vehicle maintenance, charging systems and digital platform management; and ensuring long-term capacity building within the Sultanate of Oman.

He further pointed out that the company will open the door to wide opportunities for local manufacturing, whether in electric vehicle components, charging equipment, or even light mobility solutions such as e-bikes, enhancing the Oman’s standing as a regional hub in this promising sector.

MoTCIT hosts specialised green mobility workshops in Salalah

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology organised two specialised workshops yesterday as part of the Gulf Green Mobility Forum. The workshops gathered experts and representatives from Oman and the GCC countries to support the transition to a sustainable transport system.

The first workshop, titled “Green Corridors Among GCC Ports”, focused on international best practices in implementing green corridors, opportunities to enhance maritime integration among GCC states and strategies to reduce carbon emissions in line with IMO guidelines and national



The workshops gathered experts and representatives from Oman and the GCC countries to support the transition to a sustainable transport system.

zero-emission objectives. Eng Mohammed bin Abdullah al Rawahi, Assistant Director-General

for Maritime Affairs, highlighted that the workshop aims to propose practical pilot corridors,



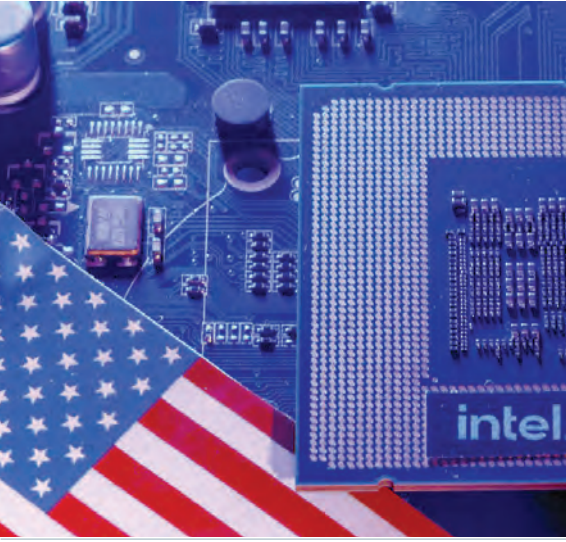
The “Gulf Youth Leading Sustainable Mobility” workshop focused on raising awareness of electric vehicles (EVs) as part of the shift to sustainable energy.

exchange technical expertise on environmental incentives and establish technical coordination

points to advance the initiative. The second workshop, “Gulf Youth Leading Sustainable Mobility”, focused on raising awareness of electric vehicles (EVs) as part of the shift to sustainable energy. It included interactive sessions on EV technologies, practical demonstrations of charging stations and test drives, allowing participants to experience the technology firsthand. Additionally, a youth challenge was launched to develop innovative initiatives promoting EV adoption through awareness campaigns and technical innovation. — ONA

ADVERTORIALS

SHORTTAKES



The Commerce Department said it plans to grant licences to allow the companies to operate existing facilities in China but does not intend to grant licences to expand capacity or upgrade technology.

— Reuters

US MAKES IT HARDER FOR SK HYNIX, SAMSUNG TO MAKE CHIPS IN CHINA

The United States is making it more difficult for chipmakers Samsung and SK Hynix to produce chips in China by revoking authorisations that allowed the companies to receive American semiconductor manufacturing equipment there, according to the Federal Register.

The US Commerce Department had previously given the companies exemptions to sweeping restrictions created in 2022 on the sale of US semiconductor equipment to China.

The companies will now need to obtain licences to buy the equipment for China. The federal filing also included Intel, although Intel sold its Dalian, China, unit in a deal finalised earlier this year. The revocations will take effect in 120 days.

The Commerce Department said it plans to grant licences to allow the companies to operate existing facilities in China but does not intend to grant licences to expand capacity or upgrade technology.

SK Hynix said it “will maintain close communication with both Korean and US governments and take necessary measures to minimise the impact on our business”. Samsung did not respond to a request for comment.

South Korea’s government emphasised to the Commerce Department “the importance of stable operation of our semiconductor companies in China for the stability of the global semiconductor supply chain” and said discussions with Washington will continue to minimise the impact on South Korean companies.

A spokesperson for China’s commerce ministry said Beijing “opposes the US move” and “will take necessary measures to resolutely safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of enterprises”.

The licensing change is likely to reduce sales to China by US equipment makers KLA Corp, Lam Research and Applied Materials. Shares of Lam fell 4.4%, Applied Materials dropped 2.9% and KLA shares were down 2.8%.

Analysts say the move may benefit domestic Chinese equipment makers and US competitor Micron. “This move will make it harder for Korean chipmakers with facilities in China to continue producing more advanced chips”, said Chris Miller, author of Chip War.

Foreign chipmakers like Samsung and SK Hynix previously had Validated End User (VEU) status, which allowed US suppliers to ship goods more easily, quickly and reliably. — Reuters

Bank Muscat Green Sports reaches 77,000 youth

SINCE its launch in 2012, Bank Muscat’s Green Sports Programme has played a pioneering role in nurturing the sporting skills of Omani youth and supporting local sports teams.

Over 14 years, the programme has benefitted 223 teams and more than 77,000 participants across the Sultanate of Oman, reinforcing the Bank’s commitment to social responsibility, sustainability and community development.

This year, Bank Muscat announced the 20 winning teams from different governorates. Winners in the lighting system category include Izki Jernan Sports Team (Izki), Al Shati Sports Cultural Team (Al Suwaiq), Al Ahly Sports Cultural Team (Saham), Al Yarmouk Sports Cultural Team (Al Khabourah), Al Nahda Sports Cultural Team (Suhar), Al Khalij Sports Cultural Team (Shinas), Al Shala Sports and Cultural Team (Al Rustaq), Ithadh Hadra Sports Team (Jaalan Bani Bu Hassan), Al Aruba Sport Team (Nizwa), Al Shuaiba Sports Cultural and Social Team (Al Musannah), Al Qadisiyah Sports Team (Al Mudhaibi) and Al Bahri Sports and Cultural Team (Liwa). Winners in the natural turf category include Nujoom Blad Al Shahoum Sports Social and Cultural Team (Ibri), Al Mazzarra Sports Team (Qurayat), Al Sahwa Sports Team (Bidbid), Al Habil Sports and Cultural Team (Al Hamra), Al Ahly Sports and Cultural Team (Al Awabi), Al Zamalek Sports Team (Al Seeb) and Al Kor Sports Team (Bahla). Al Ahed Sports and Cultural Team (Sur) won in the artificial

By empowering Omani youth to develop their skills and pursue their passions, the Green Sports Programme contributes to the broader goal of building a vibrant, active and engaged generation capable of contributing positively to society and the national economy.



The programme has established itself as a flagship CSR initiative, consistently promoting skill development, sports participation, teamwork and social engagement among Omani youth.

turf category. The programme has established itself as a flagship CSR initiative, consistently promoting skill development, sports participation, teamwork and social engagement among Omani youth.

By improving local sports infrastructure, including football pitch greening, lighting systems and water desalination, the programme ensures young athletes have access to safe and modern facilities.

This year, 94 teams participated, reflecting the initiative’s growing popularity and positive impact.

Beyond sports, the Green Sports Programme fosters community cohesion by creating venues where children and youth can gather, socialise and engage in constructive

activities.

It encourages healthy competition, cultural exchange and the development of values such as collaboration, discipline and responsibility.

Through this initiative, Bank Muscat continues to demonstrate its commitment to nurturing young talent, fostering sports excellence and supporting community development.

By empowering Omani youth to develop their skills and pursue their passions, the Green Sports Programme contributes to the broader goal of building a vibrant, active and engaged generation capable of contributing positively to society and the national economy.

China’s industrial output improves slightly

BEIJING: China’s factory output ticked up in August but still recorded a fifth straight month of contraction, official data showed on Sunday, as Beijing and Washington press on with trade talks.

The Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) — a key measure of industrial output — was 49.4, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said, slightly up from 49.3 in July. A Bloomberg analysts’ poll had forecast the index at 49.5. The last time China recorded a figure above 50 — indicating growth — was in March. NBS statistician Zhao Qinghe hailed the improvement from a month earlier as evidence that “overall economic



China has struggled to maintain a strong economic recovery since the pandemic, facing a debt crisis in the crucial property sector. — AFP

prosperity continues to expand”. “The business climate has improved”, he said. In July, the NBS attributed manufacturing struggles to severe weather, including floods and high temperatures.

China has struggled to maintain a strong economic recovery since the pandemic, facing a debt crisis in the crucial property sector, chronically low consumption and elevated youth unemployment.

“Economic momentum slowed in the third quarter as domestic demand remains weak”, Zhiwei Zhang, chief economist at Pinpoint Asset Management, said on Sunday.

“The macro outlook for the

rest of the year largely depends on how long exports can stay strong and whether fiscal policy will become more supportive”.

China’s bruising trade war with the United States — now on hold pending a deal — threatens the export-dependent economy. Beijing and Washington have extended a truce on most reciprocal duties to November 10 as they continue talks.

Senior Chinese trade negotiator Li Chenggang urged “equal dialogue and consultation” between the two nations after concluding a three-day visit to the United States on Friday, according to a statement from China’s commerce ministry. — AFP

Omani-Thai bilateral meetings focus on trade and investment cooperation

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, AUG 31

A trade delegation from the Kingdom of Thailand, comprising representatives of companies operating in the food security, healthcare, perfumes and cosmetics sectors, is currently visiting the Sultanate of Oman.

The delegation was received by Faisal bin Abdullah al Rawas, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in the presence of Arwuni Pan Karajang, Ambassador of Thailand to Oman.

Discussions emphasised expanding trade and investment cooperation between the two



Faisal bin Abdullah al Rawas, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, meets with Arwuni Pan Karajang, Ambassador of Thailand to Oman.

countries. Bilateral meetings between Omani and Thai business leaders focused on exploring opportunities in key sectors, including food security, healthcare, perfumes and cosmetics. The forum

aligns with the strategic directions of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in line with Oman Vision 2040, aimed at improving the business environment and broadening economic diversification by facilitating private sector partnerships with international counterparts.

Al Rawas highlighted that these meetings open broader avenues for collaboration across multiple sectors, reflecting growing bilateral ties in food products, plastics, fisheries, tourism, healthcare, technology, halal food and industrial cooperation. He emphasised that Oman’s strategic location, advanced infrastructure

and ambitious Oman Vision 2040 provide promising opportunities for investors, including Thai partners, while Thailand’s developmental experience serves as an encouraging model for collaboration.

The Chamber reaffirmed its commitment to supporting and facilitating business efforts in both countries, fostering sustainable, mutually beneficial partnerships.

Ambassador Arwuni Pan Karajang noted that the bilateral meetings reflect the close and growing relations between Thailand and Oman; and underline both sides’ commitment to opening new channels for trade and investment across diverse sectors.

SHORTTAKES

FORUM SHOWCASES
ENGINEERING AND
LOGISTICS SECTORS

BUSINESS REPORTER
SALALAH, AUG 31

The 4th Salalah Engineering Forum commenced here yesterday, Sunday, August 31, under the auspices of Eng Said bin Hamoud al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology.

Organised by the Oman Society of Engineers in collaboration with the Ministry, the forum brought together government officials, academics, economists and specialists in engineering, logistics and supply chains.

It provided a platform to address challenges and explore innovative solutions for Oman's engineering and logistics sector in line with Oman Vision 2040.



ENG FOUAD
AL KINDI

Chairman of the
Oman Society of
Engineers

Discussions focused on the logistics sector's role in economic diversification, integrating engineering and innovation to enhance supply chain efficiency, reduce costs and strengthen Oman's competitiveness regionally and globally.

Development plans for ports, airports and free zones were also highlighted.

Eng Fouad al Kindi,
Chairman of the Oman

Society of Engineers, emphasised the forum's role in showcasing engineering's contribution to logistics and economic diversification.

He highlighted Salalah's strategic location on global shipping routes and stressed the importance of investing in infrastructure and national talent in line with Oman Vision 2040.

Speakers from academia, government and private sectors highlighted partnerships as key to developing Omani professionals, empowering youth and leveraging modern technologies to improve logistics efficiency.

The forum featured 18 technical papers covering resilient logistics networks, sustainable practices, workforce planning, skills development, infrastructure improvement and supply chain optimisation.

The first day concluded with a panel discussion, "Perspectives in Logistics Engineering", moderated by Dr Mansour al Qasbi, with participants from Oman, Bahrain and the United States discussing future challenges and regional cooperation opportunities.

The Salalah Engineering Forum continues to serve as a key platform for knowledge exchange, innovation and advancing Oman's logistics sector towards sustainable growth.

BUSINESS REPORTER
SALALAH, AUG 31

THE State Financial and Administrative Audit Authority hosted a symposium on the theme "Governance and its Role in Protecting Public Funds and Promoting Transparency" at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Complex for Culture and Entertainment in Salalah, Dhofar Governorate, on August 31, 2025.

The event formed part of the Authority's ongoing efforts to instil governance values, strengthen integrity and safeguard public funds.

The symposium was held under the auspices of His Highness Sayyid Marwan bin Turki al Said, Governor of Dhofar, in the presence of Shaikh Ghosn bin Hilal al Alawi, Chairman of the Authority, along with a number of senior government officials.

In his address, Shaikh Ghosn bin Hilal al Alawi commended the role of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and the Omani government in embedding the principles of rule of law and institutional governance; and in promoting transparency as a cornerstone of public fund protection — considered a collective national responsibility.

He noted that this commitment is evident in the restructuring of the state administrative apparatus and the issuance of legislations responsive to present and future needs, which have firmly established the principles of governance.

He further highlighted that Oman Vision 2040 accords special attention to governance, with the "Governance and Institutional Performance" pillar at its core.

This pillar is linked to national priorities across all sectors, including the "Governance of the State's Administrative Bodies, Resources and Projects" and "Legislative, Judicial and Oversight System".

Shaikh Ghosn stressed that governance is a vital pillar for protecting public funds and enhancing transparency, as it



HH Sayyid Marwan bin Turki al Said, Governor of Dhofar, presided over the opening of the symposium hosted by the State Financial and Administrative Audit Authority.

Shaikh Ghosn stressed that governance is a vital pillar for protecting public funds and enhancing transparency, as it organises relationships among stakeholders and ensures the effective use of national resources. He affirmed that all parties share in this responsibility by working to uphold integrity, justice and transparency in support of Oman's long-term aspirations.

He also underlined that the Authority attaches great importance to governance, with the symposium serving as a platform for exchanging expertise, exploring best practices and developing practical recommendations to support institutional and financial reform.

This includes advancing the National Integrity Promotion Plan 2022-2030, which aims to build a comprehensive legislative framework, improve institutional performance, encourage a

organises relationships among stakeholders and ensures the effective use of national resources.

He affirmed that all parties share in this responsibility by working to uphold integrity, justice and transparency in support of Oman's long-term aspirations.

He also underlined that the Authority attaches great importance to governance, with the symposium serving as a platform for exchanging expertise, exploring best practices and developing practical recommendations to support institutional and financial reform.

This includes advancing the National Integrity Promotion Plan 2022-2030, which aims to build a comprehensive legislative framework, improve institutional performance, encourage a

transparent private sector, strengthen community participation and foster local and international partnerships.

The Authority also took part in the National Symposium organised by the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Sultan's Armed Forces, titled "Governance and its Role in Improving Performance, Enhancing Transparency and Improving Administrative and Financial Oversight".

That forum produced key recommendations, such as issuing guiding regulations and laws to support Oman Vision 2040 goals in the fields of integrity and oversight; and strengthening internal audit units across state institutions to enable them to operate more efficiently and independently.

UK ENERGY GRID RELIES ON FLYWHEELS TO MAINTAIN STABILITY

LIVERPOOL: Britain is turning to an age-old technology to future-proof its electricity grid as traditional power plants close and renewable energy grows. Spinning metal devices known as flywheels, long used to provide inertia in machines, are now being deployed to stabilise renewable-heavy grids.

Inertia, typically supplied by large spinning generators in coal and gas plants, helps maintain steady frequency by smoothing fluctuations in supply and demand.

Renewable sources such as



An engineer works on a flywheel energy storage system at Levistor's workshop in southwest London. — AFP

solar and wind do not provide this stabilising effect, leaving grids more vulnerable to blackouts. Flywheels mimic generator inertia, spinning faster or slower to respond to sudden changes.

"The system is more prone to fluctuations than it would be otherwise", said David Brayshaw, professor of climate science at the University of Reading. "As we get to higher levels of renewables, we need to think about this carefully".

Spain and Portugal suffered a blackout in April after their

renewable-heavy grid could not handle a surge in voltage. A similar outage in Britain in 2019 prompted NESO, the UK grid operator, to launch programmes contracting grid-stabilising projects.

Flywheels, often paired with synchronous compensators, can provide cost-effective, durable synthetic inertia. "They could be a very, very important technology", said Keith Pullen, engineering professor at City St George's and director of flywheel startup Levistor.

Statkraft's "Greener Grid Park"

in Liverpool, operational since 2023, uses two 40-tonne flywheels to supply around one percent of England, Scotland and Wales' grid inertia, without fossil fuels or emissions. Eleven other similar projects were running as of 2023.

Despite progress, experts warn deployment is not fast enough to fully decarbonise the grid.

Britain aims for 95 per cent clean energy by 2030 and complete renewables in the following decade, but gas turbines are still needed to maintain stability. — AFP

NEW MEASURES

California delays refinery profit penalties



California will pause penalties on refinery profits after 2022 gasoline prices topped \$8 a gallon, the Energy Commission said.

Phillips 66 and Valero plan closures amidst falling demand and a shift to zero-emission vehicles. Critics warn of price spikes; officials also adopted measures to stabilise capacity and imports. — Reuters

AI SAFETY

Meta adds AI safeguards for teens



Meta is adding safeguards to its AI products for teens, training systems to avoid flirty or self-harm chats and limiting access to some AI characters. The move follows a Reuters report of inappropriate chatbot behaviour.

Temporary measures are active while longer-term protections are developed, after US lawmakers raised safety concerns. — Reuters

TARGETING TEENS

Forever 21 eyes China, US relaunch



Forever 21 is relaunching in China for the fourth time and seeking a North American partner, Authentic Brands Group said. The US fast-fashion brand filed for bankruptcy in March, winding down domestic operations amidst weak mall traffic and online competition.

In China, it partners with Chengdi to localise operations and target young consumers. — Reuters

The evolving global remote work dynamics



DR MYTHILI KOLLURU

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

FOLLOWING the pandemic, remote work remains mainstream, with sustained growth in flexible arrangements. The statistics are encouraging, reflecting a shift towards remote work, with 40% of the global workforce expected to work remotely in 2025, compared to 28% in 2023 and 20% in 2020.

According to the World Economic Forum’s “Future of Work” report and other global reports, 91% of employees prefer to work fully or mostly remotely, driven by claims of improved work-life balance and enhanced mental health benefits.

The report also states that 83% have successfully transitioned to remote work. Despite these favourable statistics, 83% of CEOs anticipate a full return to the office by 2030. The future is leaner, smarter and more technology-enabled.

Hybrid models are on the rise rather than a complete return to the office option. The hybrid option, which involves 2 to 3 days of remote work, is the norm. With 44% of companies globally integrating AI into remote settings, productivity has increased 35 to 40%.

And 62% of employees feel more productive from home. 80% of the remote workforce have reported better mental health. The top countries offering remote opportunities are Estonia, which has seen

an 80% increase in global postings. The government also permits a digital nomad visa, allowing individuals to stay for up to one year.

In Portugal, hybrid work is adopted by 50% of companies and the country also offers tax benefits, tax incentives and a remote visa.

Although the US has 22.8% of its people working remotely, there is a rise in the return-to-work mandate among tech and finance companies. Spain and Costa Rica are also known for their affordability and nomad visa.

France has adopted remote work post-pandemic, but it remains less common due to the country’s cultural emphasis on collaboration and recent economic challenges.

Although 40% of employees have a remote work option, only 6% of employers actively allow remote work. In Asia, Japan and South Korea have seen an adoption rate of 28 to 30% of remote work, whereas India has seen a 30% growth in hybrid work.

Globally, North America and Europe are leading the way. In the Middle East and the Oceanic regions, remote work is on the rise; however, specific challenges, such as labour laws, infrastructure issues and cultural and economic priorities, hinder the widespread adoption of remote working.

In the Middle East region, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are redefining remote

According to the World Economic Forum’s “Future of Work” report and other global reports, 91% of employees prefer to work fully or mostly remotely, driven by claims of improved work-life balance and enhanced mental health benefits.

work amidst rapid digitalisation. The report stated that 38% of employees feel more motivated with remote work.

Remote work is fostering entrepreneurship and empowering women. In the oceanic region, Australia and New Zealand have one of the highest rates of remote work adoption globally since the pandemic.

Although the area boasts a work-life balance, there is an emerging mandate for a return to the office in many sectors.

In Australia, 26% are hybrid and 14% full-time remote. There is also a push to return to the office from many employers, with 40% of employers now requiring employees to report to work five days a week. 62% of CEOs predict it will be a full return to work within the coming years.

Despite these statistics, 78% report improvement in work-life balance and 58% state they will refuse to return to the office.

The remote work landscape is dynamically reshaping economies by reducing annual emissions by billions of tonnes and significantly reducing transportation expenditures.

Remote work is expected to create 14,000,000 new jobs in the coming years, despite persistent challenges such as the digital divide in the Global North and Global South, which encompasses nations beyond Asia, as well as increasing cybersecurity risks.

US GRAINS GAIN GROUND IN ASIA ON TRADE DEAL

NAVEEN THUKRAL

Southeast Asian nations are reshaping global grains and oilseed flows through US trade deals that raise farm imports, displacing supplies from Australia, Canada and Russia.

Indonesia and Bangladesh have already agreed to higher US purchases under agreements that lower tariffs on their exports to the US, while traders say Vietnam, the Philippines and Thailand may also expand feed grain imports.

“US farm exports are clearly set to gain ground in Asia”, said Ole Houe, director of advisory services at IKON Commodities in Sydney. “Trade deals are creating pressure, but just as important are the lower prices of US wheat, corn and soybeans”.

Asia, a net food importer, accounts for about 30% of global wheat, corn and soybeans imports, USDA data shows. Analysts said greater US shipments could weigh on rivals’ prices and raise their freight costs.

Indonesia, Bangladesh deals Over the past decade, Black Sea and South American suppliers eroded US share. Indonesia’s US wheat imports fell nearly 50% in five years, replaced by Ukraine, Russia and Argentina. But since July, Indonesian millers bought about 250,000 metric tonnes of US wheat after signing a memorandum of understanding to purchase 1 million tonnes annually in return for tariff concessions. The US sold 693,000 tonnes to Indonesia in 2024.

Australia, which shipped 3 million tonnes of wheat to Indonesia in 2024, could lose several hundred thousand tonnes, traders said.

Bangladesh has approved 220,000 tonnes of US wheat and committed to 700,000 tonnes annually, up from virtually no imports in 2024.

Vietnam, one of Asia’s fastest-growing feed markets, is expected to boost US wheat, corn and soybeans imports. In June, its agriculture ministry announced plans for firms to sign memorandums of understanding to buy \$2 billion of US farm produce, including \$800 million from Iowa.

Argentina has been its top supplier, providing over half of corn and 65% of soybeans imports.

For 2024/25, Vietnam imported 1.1 million tonnes of US corn, with another 19,051 tonnes due by end-August. For 2025/26, it has already booked 134,000 tonnes, compared with just 2,000 tonnes at this time last year.

Thailand may buy more than 1 million tonnes of US feed corn to replace Black Sea wheat and Asian corn, traders said. — Reuters

London is finding favour again from investors

INVESTORS are cutting their exposure to American equities and returning to the previously unloved British market, according to the London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG), adding to evidence that President Trump’s unpredictable policies could benefit the City of London.

The chief executive of LSEG, David Schwimmer, said that flows had changed in recent months, reversing a trend that had left the London market out of favour for almost a decade as the Times reported.

While he had not attribute the moves to Trump’s policies, some fund management groups have said the turmoil caused by the president’s trade tariffs this year made investors rethink their big exposure to US equities.

The London stock market has suffered ever since the 2016 vote by the UK to leave the European Union and the subsequent political upheaval in Britain, which unnerved international investors.

This triggered persistent outflows from UK equities, which in turn knocked valuations in the market, leaving London-listed companies vulnerable to takeover bids at bargain prices.

Investors piled into US assets, which outperformed compared with returns on offer elsewhere in the world and fuelled talk of American exceptionalism. Yet recent market volatility caused by the announcement of tariffs by Trump in April, which stunned investors and spurred a sharp fall in the US dollar, threatens to upend this thinking.

Richard Oldfield, the boss of Schroders, said investors wanted to see “resilience” in their portfolios and “that by definition, sees you moving away from a very US-oriented portfolio”.

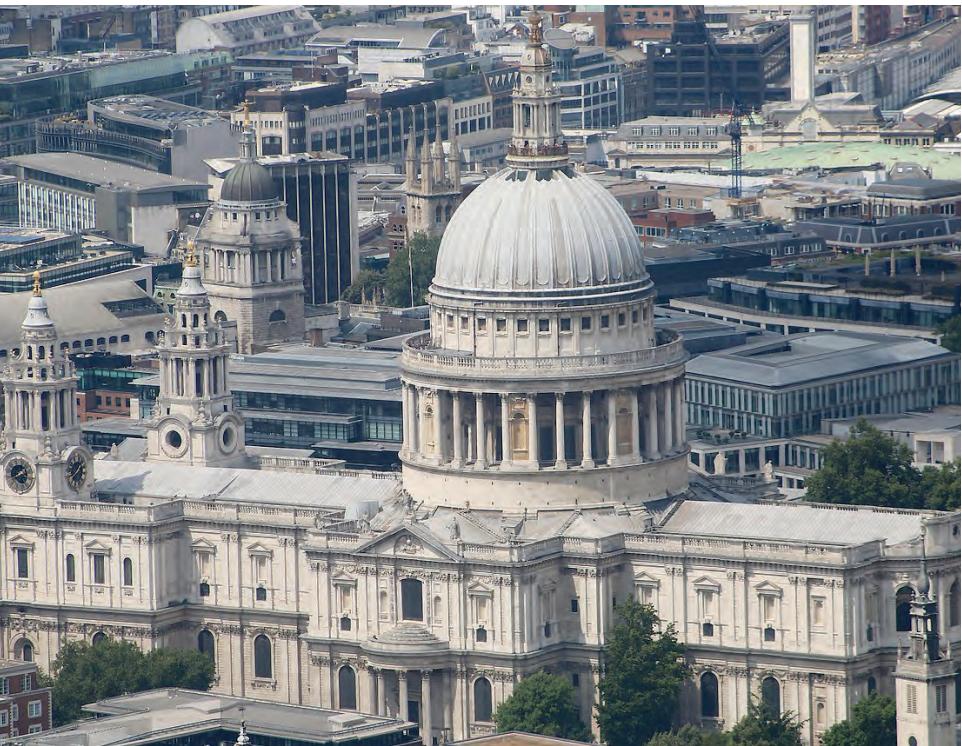
Jupiter Fund management, the British investment group, said shortly after Trump announced his trade policies that there was “early-stage evidence of asset owners and other investors looking to reallocate



ANDY JALIL
andyjalil@aol.com

The writer is our foreign correspondent based in the UK.

Investors piled into US assets, which outperformed compared with returns on offer elsewhere in the world and fuelled talk of American exceptionalism. Yet recent market volatility caused by the announcement of tariffs by Trump in April, which stunned investors and spurred a sharp fall in the US dollar, threatens to upend this thinking.



The London stock market has suffered ever since the 2016 vote by the UK to leave the European Union and the subsequent political upheaval in Britain.

away from the US”. Schwimmer said: “We have seen a shift in flows over the past several months, I don’t know if I would ascribe that specifically to the geopolitics but there has been a growth in flows out of the US and into Europe and into the UK, in particular.

And this follows, frankly many years of outflows coming out of the UK going back really to the Brexit vote”. He was speaking as LSEG posted better-than-expected first-half results which showed pre-tax profits in the six months to the end of June climbed by 43 per cent to £991 million, surpassing the roughly £750 million expected by analysts.

It announced it would return as much as £1 bilion to investors through a share buyback in the second half, on top of £500 million of repurchases in the first. Its interim dividend was raised by 14.6 per cent to 47p-a-share, which will hand back a further £247 million.

While best known as the owner of the London Stock Exchange, the group is a financial services conglomerate that Schwimmer has turned into a leading provider of financial data through its \$27 billion

takeover of Refinitiv in 2021.

Its businesses include majority ownership of the clearing house LCH, the FTSE Russell indices and the Turquoise European trading platform.

The stock exchange has been dogged in recent years by worries of its shrinking and losing listings to other markets overseas.

One way Schwimmer could try to bolster the competitiveness of the exchange is by introducing 24-hour trading, which he confirmed was under consideration. The current trading hours are 8 am to 4:30 pm.

“There are a host of issues that we would have to work through before going down a path like that relating to when companies would issue their news, or their results, to how to think about the technological updates”, he cautioned.

He rejected suggestions the London Exchange was doing less than New York to court private companies that are going public.

“Our team spends a lot of time with companies that are preparing for listing. We don’t publicise that, we respect the confidentiality of those companies”.

CLASSIFIEDS

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



PTC Rent A Car
Travel & Tours

Daily, Weekly,
Monthly Car Rental
Available

 **9345 3444**

**UMP**
UNITED MAWA PROJECTS

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

JOB VACANCY

newrest
WALEED CATERING & SERVICES CO. LLC


شركة الوليد للأغذية والخدمات المحدودة ش.م.م


Newrest Wacasco (Oman) is seeking a dynamic and experienced **Business Development Manager** for Facilities Management Segment. The successful candidate will be responsible for developing and implementing growth strategies, managing client relationships, and overseeing daily facilities management operations to ensure company profitability. Hard and soft maintenance services are at the heart of this expertise, while complying with Group standards and expected quality.

SCOPE & GENERAL PURPOSE:
(1) To guarantee to reach the objectives on the market segment responsible for developing the assets of the company through the signature of new contracts that are not only the results of opportunities, but also the results of a systematic approach.
(2) In charge of management and the supervision of our facilities management segment as well as of the standardization and of the deployment of the company FM processes.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Ensure the knowledge, the analysis and the synthesis of the market segment are accurate. Identifies the areas of lack of knowledge of the market, and with lucidity, take actions to fill these areas
- Responsible for the elaboration of the Development Strategy on this segment. Focuses on acquiring new clients and growing the business through strategic planning and execution
- Identifying new market opportunities, developing and implementing business development strategies, building and maintaining client relationships, and managing the integrated sales process
- Ensure the implementation of MSOP and the response to Invitation to Tenders
- Dealing with clients, managing, and monitoring of Facility management project(s)
- In regards of the marketing tools required for successful sales conclusion, he/she recommends and/or coordinates with the group resources for offer deployment and local market adjustments
- Ensure self-awareness of company QHSE policies & procedures and follow them

PROFILE COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree in engineering or related field.
- Experience in Facilities Management and Business Development. Knowledge of the catering sector is a plus
- Minimum 5 years in FM within an international group
- Project management and good organizational skills
- Computer literate (word, excel, power point, outlook)
- Fluent in English and Hindi (written, read & spoken)
- Manage diverse groups of people and nationalities

Contract Duration: Permanent contract (Full Time)
Starting Date: As soon as possible
Location: Muscat – Sultanate of Oman
Salary: Depending on experience and profile

Interested parties are requested to submit their CVs to:
wacasco@newrest.eu

For more information about the Company visit:
www.newrest.eu

**PEST CONTROL OMAN CO. L.L.C.**

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

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



Tel: 24787606, 24787503
Direct Line: 24786077
GSM: 99382355, 99172309
pcomctom@omantel.net.om
P.O. Box 565, Al Wadi Al Kabir 117, Sultanate of Oman

WJ Towell Group Company



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

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

**أوربيت ORBIT**
Car Rental & Lease

Driving School

Special offers for those wishing to learn driving in (Aziba - Khwair Qurum - Ruwi Al Amirat)

Contact No: 99074072

Looking for reliable engineering solutions in Oman?

Ascend Engineering L.L.C offers expert contracting and consulting across civil, mechanical, and infrastructure projects. With a proven track record in design, project management, supervision, and execution, we serve commercial, industrial, and government sectors with professionalism and integrity.

- Civil & Structural Engineering**
- MEP & Infrastructure Works**
- Turnkey Project Execution**
- Project management & Supervision Services**
- Renovations & Fit-outs**

Contact us today for business enquiries or project discussions:
+968 9731 2026, sdmoshe98@gmail.com; startupoffice25@gmail.com

Build with confidence. Consult with Ascend.

ACCOUNTANT REQUIRED - Real Estate Company (Muscat)

A leading real estate company in Muscat is looking to hire an experienced Accountant.

Requirements:

- Minimum 10 years of experience in accounting, preferably in the real estate sector.
- Proficient in English and Arabic (spoken and written).
- Strong knowledge of accounting principles, financial reporting and ERP systems.
- Ability to manage receivables, payables, reconciliations and statutory compliance.

Salary: Commensurate with experience

Apply to : hr.jobs174@hotmail.com

SIT. WANTED

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

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

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

INDIAN female BSC graduate and Internship Python. Presently in family visa. Seeks suitable placement as admin.
Contact: 94942510

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

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

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

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

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Preference for Omanis

We are one of the leading distributors of mobile devices in Oman and represent various reputed brands. To meet our expansion plans and enhance our professional team, we are on the lookout for qualified, energetic professionals having good communication skills and 3-5 years of experience in telecommunication/FMCG for the following positions.

SL.	Position
1	Outdoor Salesman
2	Digital Marketing Executive
3	B2B Executive
4	Mobile Technician
5	Senior Accountant
6	IT Executive (SAP)

Interested candidates may forward their resume to email: vacantjobsme@gmail.com

SIT. WANTED

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

INDIAN electrical engineer more than 20 years experience in “MEP” counstruction field in Oman seeks suitable job. Contact: 92919281

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

FOR SALE

BUSINESS for Sale -Electrical & Building Materials Company with over 20 years of strong market presence is available for sale. Including: - 2 Showrooms in prime commercial locations - 1000 sqm Warehouse with trailer access - Large inventory* of materials & stock - Fleet of delivery & marketing vehicles - Strong customer base An ideal opportunity for those looking to invest in a stable, reputed business.
For enquiries, contact: 92889110

FLAT FOR RENT

MABELA. Contact: 99888390/ 79939666

FOR RENT

WARE HOUSE AT MISFA . Contact: 99888390 / 79939666

OMAN ديلي Observer

FREE* CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

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

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

To advertise in Ministry of Information channels



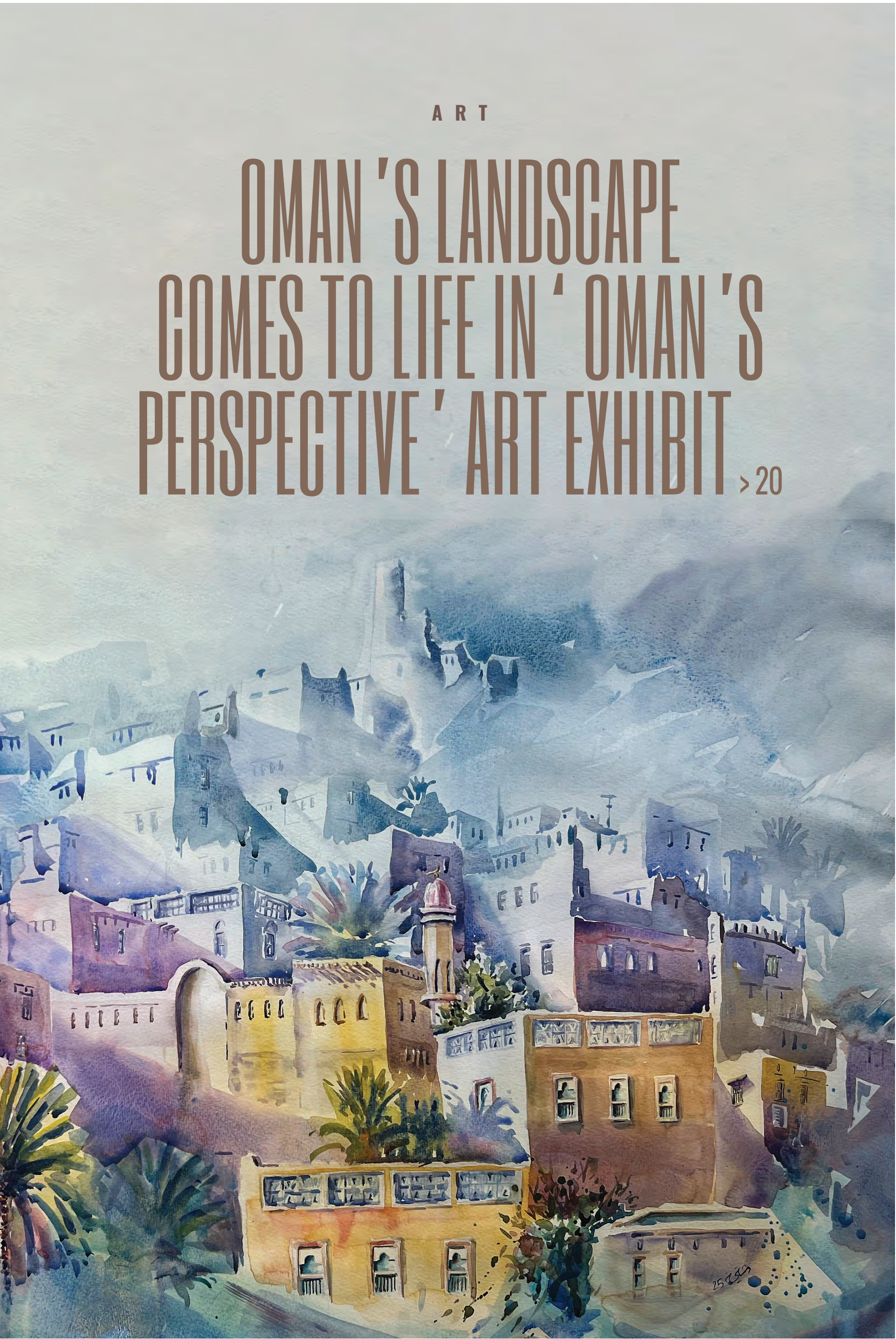
To advertise

71455532- 71455531- 71455530
adv@omaninfo.om
 [izdihar_info](#) [izdihar.info](#)

**اردھار izdihar**

**IZDIHAR_INFO**

ART/LIFE



A R T

OMAN'S LANDSCAPE COMES TO LIFE IN 'OMAN'S PERSPECTIVE' ART EXHIBIT > 20

ENTERTAINMENT

Del Toro delivers his monster, 'Frankenstein', at Venice



MEXICAN director Guillermo del Toro gave birth to another monster on Saturday, his big-budget “Frankenstein” movie, joking that the effort had left him worn out as his creation got its world premiere in Venice.

The last creature he delivered here, the aquatic being in “The Shape of Water”, swam off with the festival’s top prize in 2017 before going on to triumph at the Oscars.

This latest version of the Mary Shelley masterpiece is also among the 21 films in competition for the Venice Film Festival’s Golden Lion.

Del Toro’s film is an elaborate, evocative production the director said he had been dreaming about making since he was a child.

In one early rave review, the Hollywood Reporter said the film “transcends horror in an emotionally charged take on Mary Shelley”. “I’ve been following the creature since I was a kid”, the director told journalists at the Venice Film Festival ahead of the premiere.

“I always waited for the movie to be done in the right conditions, both creatively and in terms of achieving the scope that it needed for me to make it different, to make it at a scale that you could reconstruct the whole world”, Del Toro said.

“And now I’m in post-partum depression”. It was surely no accident that the film got its premiere on what is known as Frankenstein Day — the August 30 birthday of the novel’s author, Mary Shelley.

— Dozens of versions — Starring Oscar Isaac as Victor Frankenstein and Jacob Elordi as his creation, the film is a no-holds-barred Gothic spectacle. Following the scientist obsessed with inventing his own living creature, it explores themes of humanity, vengeance, unbridled will and the aftermath of that all-consuming hubris. The film’s rich visuals include the imposing tower where Frankenstein performs his experiments and the gruesome anatomical parts from which his creature is stitched together. Not everyone was convinced however. “Variety” said the film “cost more than ‘Titanic’ and still looks like it was made for TV”.

For Del Toro, Mary Shelley’s novel tries to answer the question “What is it to be human?”, he told journalists.

“I think that the movie tries to show imperfect characters and the right we have to remain imperfect. And the right we have to understand each other under the most oppressive of circumstances”, he said.

“And there’s no more urgent task than to remain human in a time where everything is pushing towards a bipolar understanding of our humanity”, he said, referring to the modern world. — AFP

QUICK FEATURES



FASHION

A model presents a creation by designer Alexander Arutyunov on a pedestrian bridge at the Zaryadye park during the Moscow Fashion Week. — Reuters



FILM

Italian actress Lucia Mascino attends the Kineo Prize red carpet at the 82nd International Venice Film Festival. — AFP



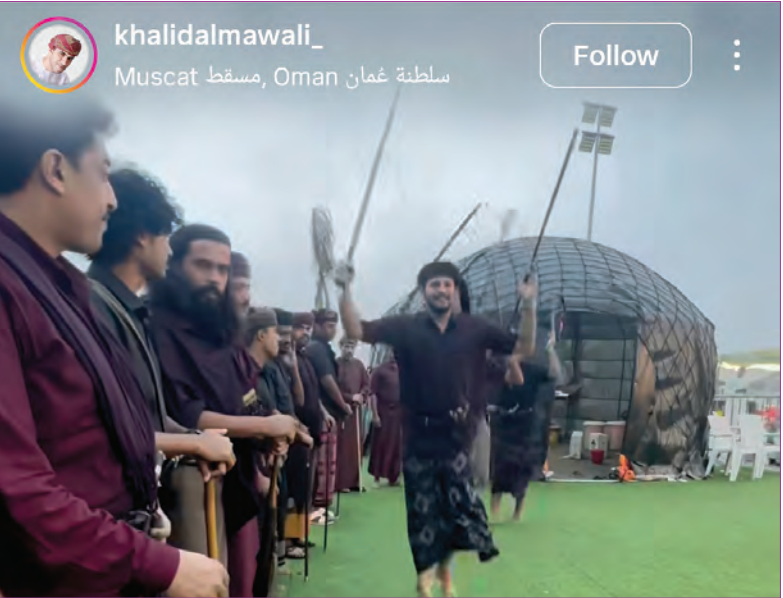
MUSEUMS

Original skeleton of one of the oldest human ancestors is displayed at National Museum in Prague. — Reuters

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



The Watcher



The Joy of a Celebration

SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

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

Japan has QR code for that



JAPANESE toilet giant TOTO has launched a service allowing those caught short in public to locate the nearest washrooms and see how busy they are real-time with a phone and QR code. Japan like other countries struggles with managing long queues outside public toilets, particularly for women, in its teeming train stations and other places. The system launched this month by TOTO — famous for its water-spraying, musical toilets — links consumers up with existing internet-connected facility management systems. This was developed to automatically notify facility staff if a particular cubicle is dirty or occupied for an unusually long time. Now users can scan a QR code with their phones to

access a website showing restroom locations and live congestion levels. “In addition, a QR code inside a restroom stall brings you to a website where a user can report problems, like being unable to flush or something broken”, TOTO spokesman Tasuku Miyazaki said on Thursday. The service is multi-lingual and available in English, Chinese and Korean. The government is also trying to relieve the problem of long queues for women, with the transport ministry seeking extra funds in the budget for the coming fiscal next year. These will be used to set up digital signage displays and movable toilet walls that can increase the number of stalls for women, according to local media. — AFP



Istanbul’s ferries, a beloved link between two continents



FOR nearly two centuries, the white ferries gliding over the Bosphorus Strait have provided an iconic link for countless passengers travelling between Istanbul’s European shores and its Asian side. Despite the increasingly congested waters and competition from the Turkish megacity’s bridges and undersea metro line, the ferries remain very popular. The main operator Sehir Hatlari carries at least 40 million passengers a year. “Any view of Istanbul must include Maiden’s Tower, a ferry and a seagull”, smiled Adil Bali, a specialist on the history of Istanbul’s ferries, referring to a tiny rocky outcrop at the southern entrance to the Bosphorus. “It is one of the few cities in the world that can be crossed by sea, so the ferries are indispensable here”. Their arrival in 1843 transformed the simple fishing villages lining the shores of the Bosphorus into popular holiday destinations where wooden palaces were later built overlooking the water, boosting trade. Until the first Bosphorus bridge was opened in 1973, the only way to cross between Istanbul’s Asian and European sides was by boat — and today, the experience remains an essential part of the city’s charm. ‘A UNIQUE BEAUTY’ At the helm of the Pasabahce, the flagship of Sehir Hatlari’s 30 vessels, Captain Ekrem Ozcelik said the

waters had become increasingly crowded. “There’s a lot more traffic on the water”, he said of the tankers, containers and cargo ships that pass through the strait linking the Black Sea to the Aegean via the Sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles. There are also cruise ships and private yachts navigating what is one of the world’s busiest waterways, where 41,300 vessels passed in 2024, official figures show — an average of 113 per day. “Navigating the waters of Istanbul requires a certain amount of experience”, Ozcelik said of the strait’s powerful currents, whose waters can get particularly tricky when strong southwesterly winds can whip up three-metre (10-foot) high waves. Born into a family of sailors and fishermen, Ozcelik said his boyhood dream was to one day don the white cap and uniform of a captain. Now 52, he enjoys the freedom of sailing and the kudos of his profession. “Being a captain in the heart of Istanbul is a source of great pride”. And even more so on the Pasabahce, which recently escaped being decommissioned and instead underwent a two-year restoration, returning to the Bosphorus in 2022 on its 70th birthday. “It’s harder to manoeuvre than the others. It’s heavier and turning corners is complicated”, admitted first officer Semih Aksoy, 36. But he added he wouldn’t change the iconic ferry for the world, with its trademark wooden tables and old-

world air of faded luxury. “This ship has a unique beauty, a special feel to it”. JET SKIS AND NETS With its nine-man crew, the Pasabahce mainly sails the 20-minute route between the Asian district of Kadikoy and Besiktas on the European side. But even that relatively short trip can be tricky, said Burak Temiz, a 24-year-old sailor. “This summer, people were jumping into the water from Maiden’s Tower for hours. “And then there are the fishing nets”, he said, adding that the ferry’s bows had even been grazed by jet skis in the crowded waters. All the other ferries have a six-man crew and dozens more staff work at the city’s 53 ports, many of whom are known by regulars. Ibrahim Bayus, a 62-year-old engineer born on Buyukada, the largest of the nearby Princes’ Islands in the Sea of Marmara, recalls the familiarity of the ferries. “As a boy, I often forgot to bring money but the captain knew me”, he smiled. With the service only suspended for snow, fog or a violent storm, Captain Ozcelik recalls when three students on Buyukada came to beg for his help. “Traffic had been suspended but they told me if they couldn’t take their exams, they would fail the entire year. So I took them to Kadikoy. And they all passed”, he smiled. And they still come to visit him. — AFP

FEATURES



OMAN'S
LANDSCAPE
COMES TO LIFE
IN 'OMAN'S
PERSPECTIVE'
ART EXHIBIT

BY AHMED AL KAABI
PHOTO BY FAISAL AL BALUSHI

AS VISITORS step into the elegant halls of the Omani Society for Fine Arts in Ghala, they are immediately transported into a visual journey of the country's rich landscapes and vibrant communities. The exhibition, titled "Oman's Perspective", which will be on display until September 9, showcases 22 captivating artworks by ten talented Oman-based artists. The space is thoughtfully curated, with warm lighting that highlights each piece, creating an immersive environment where viewers can connect deeply with Oman's diverse environment — its vast seas, rugged mountains, historic villages and the everyday lives of its residents.

The gallery's walls echo with scenes that reflect the soul of Oman — an intertwining of tradition and natural beauty. The air hums with curiosity and admiration from visitors, many of whom pause longly before each artwork, contemplating the stories they tell. Some are struck by the watercolour paintings that depict ancient houses and bustling markets, while others marvel at the detailed landscapes that showcase the country's natural diversity.

Among the exhibiting artists is Anwar Sonya, whose masterful watercolour works span scenes of Oman's traditional weddings, historic architecture and generations of families. "I hadn't painted with watercolours for some time", Sonya shares, sitting amidst his swirling, translucent landscapes. "Initially, the transparency of watercolours was challenging — I often struggled to control the medium. But with practice, I discovered new depths and now I appreciate how watercolours can convey both the visible and the intangible — a sense of fleeting moments and memories". His works evoke a deep sense of nostalgia, capturing Oman's cultural essence through a vivid,

she explains.

Adding an international dimension, Algerian artists Aziz Abdelhaq and Taher Sayed Ahmed bring fresh perspectives to the exhibition. Abdelhaq, visiting Oman for the first time, is impressed by the level of artistry displayed. "My expectations were high, but I was truly impressed by the professionalism and emotional depth of these works". As Abdelhaq explores the exhibit, he remarked on the way Omani artists capture the landscape's spirit through watercolour is remarkable. Sayed Ahmed echoes this sentiment, praising their technical mastery. "Watercolour remains one of the most demanding mediums — it requires precise control and sensitivity. The artists here demonstrate a strong command, which speaks to their dedication and skill". The exhibition goes beyond just showcasing artistic talent; it offers profound insights into how Oman's environment shapes its people and their stories. Visitors observe how the artworks reflect Oman's natural resilience and cultural continuity amidst rapid modernisation. The shimmering sunlight filling the gallery space illuminates each piece,



fluid palette. Sonya emphasises that the exhibition is more than just showcasing artwork; it reflects the evolving artistic community in Oman. "More young people are now pursuing art seriously, supported by government initiatives that foster creativity and cultural expression. It's encouraging to see Oman's art scene increasingly gaining recognition — both nationally and internationally". Sheikha al Riyami, another featured artist, offers viewers a glimpse into her recent workshop funded by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism. During this dedicated week, local watercolourists explored Oman's varied landscapes — from the high peaks of Al Hajar Mountains to the gentle coastlines — each artist interpreting their environment through personal lenses. Her own focus was on Al Dakhiliyah Governorate's ancient, wind-tuned houses, which she depicts as "inhabited memories" — structures alive with stories and history that transcend time. Her use of delicate colour gradients and transparent washes invites viewers to shift from sweeping vistas to intimate details, fostering a dialogue between the audience and the scene.

Al Riyami underscores the importance of such exhibitions as vital platforms for artistic growth. "They allow emerging artists to learn from each other, share techniques and deepen their understanding of Oman's environment. It's vital for nurturing a sense of pride and connection to our cultural and natural heritage",



symbolising the country's evolving identity — rooted in tradition yet eager to embrace change. The organisers of "Oman's Perspective" see this exhibition as a stepping stone for future artistic collaborations and initiatives. They envision more projects that promote environmental conservation through art, fostering dialogue between artists, ecologists and policymakers. There are plans to expand the exhibition to other cities and to include interactive workshops that engage the public more directly with Oman's landscapes and stories.