

OMAN

دولة عمان

DAILY

Observer

VOL. 45, NO. 297
PAGES 20 | BAISAS 210



2010000387405



11

MEIJERS WINS
OPENING STAGE OF
TOUR OF SALALAH

IN BRIEF

HM, MACRON
DISCUSS REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENTS

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Sunday held a telephone conversation with President Emmanuel Macron of the French Republic, during which they reviewed the bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and explored ways to build on their growing cooperation and partnership to serve mutual interests and fulfil the aspirations of their peoples. The two leaders also exchanged views on the most pressing current issues and developments on the regional and international stages, underscoring the importance of sustaining and stepping up diplomatic efforts to help reinforce the foundations of security and peace in the region and beyond.

HIS MAJESTY’S
GREETINGS TO
BRAZIL PRESIDENT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of the Federative Republic of Brazil on his country’s National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to Brazil for further progress, development and the realisation of all aspirations on various spheres. His Majesty also wished the bilateral relations of cooperation and partnership further expansion and growth in a manner that serves mutual interests.

OMAN, YEMEN
SIGN POWER
PROJECT DEAL

The Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Yemen signed in Salalah two joint cooperation agreements related to the electrical interconnection project between the electricity grid in Dhofar Governorate and the electricity grid in Al Mahra Governorate in the Republic of Yemen, within the framework of joint cooperation and strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries. The project comes within the framework of efforts aimed at enhancing cooperation in the field of electrical power and supporting the stability and provision of electricity supplies in the beneficiary areas of Al Mahra Governorate through interconnection with the electricity grid in Dhofar Governorate.

DETAILS ON P5

PRESIDENT OF RWANDA BEGINS VISIT TODAY

MUSCAT: President Paul Kagame of the Republic of Rwanda will pay an official two-day visit to the Sultanate of Oman on Monday. This was announced in a statement issued on Saturday by the Diwan of Royal Court, the text of which is as follows: “In pursuit of strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Rwanda in all that serves to advance their shared interests across various fields, President Paul Kagame of the Republic of Rwanda will pay an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman on September 7-8. The



visit stems from the mutual commitment to develop and expand joint ties in a manner that brings goodness and benefit to the peoples of the two friendly countries. “The visit will address a set of topics of mutual concern to both countries and means of promoting them in a manner that serves their interests and meets their aspirations.” Bilateral relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Rwanda continue to evolve across multiple sectors, reflecting the shared commitment. — ONA

NEW LAW TIGHTENS PENALTIES IN DRUG CRIMES

P u n i s h m e n t s i n c l u d e d e a t h p e n a l t y o r l i f e i m p r i s o n m e n t

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

THE Law on Combating Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances promulgated by Royal Decree No (67/2026) provides for severe punishments for the violators including death penalty or life imprisonment. The newly-enacted law stipulates a fine between RO 35,000 and RO 60,000 for importing, exporting, producing, or manufacturing narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances with the purpose of trafficking. The death penalty is imposed in cases of smuggling narcotic drugs with the purpose of trafficking, repeat offenses, abuse of power, licenses, or legal immunity, using a person lacking legal capacity or with diminished capacity, or participating in or cooperating with international gangs involved in smuggling narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The law also stipulates a minimum prison term of 15 years and a fine ranging from RO



The newly enacted law stipulates a fine between RO 35,000 and RO 60,000 for trafficking

10,000 to RO 25,000 for possession, transportation, sale, delivery, and distribution of drugs for the purpose of trafficking. The penalty can be increased to life imprisonment if the crime is committed in educational institutions, cultural, sports, or correctional facilities, places of worship, camps, or prisons, or if the narcotic or psychotropic substance is provided to a person lacking legal capacity or with diminished capacity. The law also stipulates

that anyone who possesses, acquires, purchases, produces, or manufactures narcotic or psychotropic substances for personal use or consumption shall be punished with a prison term ranging from one to three years and a fine between RO 1,000 and RO 5,000. It also allows for the placement of individuals with drug dependency in a rehabilitation centre or for treatment in specialised clinics instead of imprisonment, in accordance with specified regulations. As per the law, individuals who have been previously placed in a rehabilitation centre twice pursuant to a prior sentence, or who have been released from such a centre less than five years prior, may not be placed in a rehabilitation centre. The release from a rehabilitation centre is subject to court order upon recovery. The period of admission to the centre may not be less than six months nor more than one year. No criminal charges shall be established against a drug user who voluntarily presents themselves to the public authorities for treatment at a rehabilitation centre.

Council of Ministers congratulates students on new school year

MUSCAT: The Council of Ministers, at its session on Sunday, extended its congratulations to male and female students as well as to members of the teaching and administrative staffs and parents, on the occasion of the new school year, wishing everyone a year replete with success and achievement. The Council affirmed that the education sector enjoys the gracious attention and care of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, given its fundamental role as a cornerstone in nation-building and in preparing generations capable of contributing to the development process and shaping the future. The Council further expressed its appreciation for the efforts undertaken by educational personnel in carrying out their vital mission, wishing students a year of diligence, dedication, and achievement. It also wished all educational staff success.

The education sector enjoys the gracious attention and care of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, given its fundamental role as a cornerstone in nation-building and in preparing generations



Around 876,117 students began the new academic year across Oman’s 1,298 schools on Sunday.

Meanwhile, around 876,117 students began the new academic year 2026/2027 across Oman’s 1,298 schools on Sunday which include 440,899 male students, 435,218 female students, and 3,903 students registered in special educational

programmes, marking the start of the new academic year, as the Royal Oman Police called on drivers to exercise extra caution during school hours. Traffic around schools in Muscat, Salalah, Suhar and other cities was noticeably heavier on Sunday morning as parents dropped off children on the first day. The Ministry of Education (MoE) confirmed that public and private schools reopened as scheduled, welcoming students from Grade 1 to Grade 12. “To ensure a smooth start, all schools have carried out orientation sessions, distributed textbooks, and welcomed new students,” a representative from the Omar bin Kattab school in Al Wattayah said, while both teachers and administrators said the focus this term would be on strengthening learning outcomes, digital skills, and student well-being in line with Oman Vision 2040.

SEE ALSO P4

OMAN

ICRC CHIEF VISITS MSC



MUSCAT: Pierre Krähenbühl, Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, on Sunday visited the Maritime Security Centre (MSC), where he was received upon his arrival at the centre’s headquarters by the Acting Head of the Maritime Security Centre.

The Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross and his accompanying delegation received a briefing on the centre’s roles and various efforts related to preserving the safety of the marine environment in territorial waters. The guest also toured the Maritime Security Centre and viewed its facilities, including the modern technologies and systems it contains.

Meanwhile, Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali al Harthi, Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry for Political Affairs, also received Pierre Krähenbühl, Director-General of the ICRC.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed developments in the political and humanitarian situation in the region, and exchanged views on a number of issues of mutual interest.

They also discussed areas of cooperation and exchanged expertise, in addition to reviewing ways to enhance partnership and coordination between the two sides. — ONA

Programme enhances environmental awareness



SUR: Volunteer teams, supervisors, and observers in the ‘Environment Protectors’ programme successfully returned 6,146 baby turtles to the sea and dealt with 264 stranded adult sea turtles, either treating them or returning them to the sea, contributing to raising their chances of survival and reaching their natural habitat.

The programme’s activities, implemented by the Directorate of Environment in Al Sharqiyah South Governorate with the participation of 149 volunteers across 5 volunteer teams during the month of August, aimed to protect sea turtles and enhance environmental awareness among beach visitors, particularly during the egg-hatching period and the emergence and movement of baby turtles toward the sea.

The activities of the ‘Environment Protectors’ programme included cleaning campaigns covering the hidden beaches for a distance of 700 metres, Al Duffah Beach for a distance of one kilometre, and Ras Al Hadd Beach for a distance of 3 kilometres, aimed at reducing waste that could pose a danger to turtles and wildlife.

The awareness efforts reached 12,298 visitors, including 2,113 visitors from Gulf countries and 1,000 foreign visitors, while the number of vehicles monitored reached 4,392. — ONA

OMAN, INDONESIA REAFFIRM STRONG BILATERAL TIES

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, on Sunday received a copy of the credentials of Andi Rahadian, Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Indonesia to the Sultanate of Oman.

Sayyid Badr wished the ambassador success in carrying out his duties and wished the bilateral relations between the two countries further development and prosperity. The event was attended by Najib bin Yahya al Balushi, Head of the Protocol Department at the Foreign Ministry, and Shaikh Abdulaziz bin Mohammed al Hosni, Head of the Asia and Pacific Department, along with officials from both sides. — ONA



Sayyid Badr receives a copy of the credentials of Andi Rahadian, Indonesia Ambassador.

Oman moves into autumn as temperatures ease

BALQEES AL ORAIMI
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

AS summer draws to a close and autumn begins, temperatures across Oman are expected to gradually ease, bringing more favourable conditions for outdoor activities and domestic tourism in some parts of the country.

The seasonal transition is expected to be gradual rather than marked by an immediate drop in temperatures. Oman’s diverse geography means weather conditions can vary significantly between coastal areas, inland governorates and mountainous regions.

Meteorology expert Mazin bin Abdulla said the transition into autumn should be viewed as a gradual process, with temperatures likely to remain relatively high in several parts of the country during the early stages of the season.

“The beginning of autumn does not necessarily mean an immediate and significant decline in temperatures across all governorates. Weather conditions usually change gradually, with some areas experiencing more noticeable relief, particularly during the night and early morning hours, while daytime temperatures may remain relatively high inland,” he said.

Elevation and geographical location also play an important role in determining local weather conditions, with mountainous areas generally experiencing more moderate temperatures than low-lying and inland areas, he added.

The seasonal shift is particularly significant in Dhofar Governorate, where the Khareef season has transformed the landscape into a lush green setting, attracting visitors from Oman and abroad. The governorate’s mountains and coastal areas experience distinctive conditions, including cloud cover, mist and intermittent drizzle during the Khareef period.

The changing weather is also expected to encourage more outdoor activities in several parts of Oman.

“As temperatures gradually



The changing weather is expected to encourage more outdoor activities in parts of Oman.

become more comfortable in some areas, residents are likely to spend more time outdoors, whether on local trips, hiking, camping or visiting Oman’s mountain and valley destinations. However, weather conditions can vary considerably from one location to another,” Mazin said.

The seasonal transition could also support domestic tourism, with families and visitors increasingly exploring natural attractions, mountain villages, wadis and heritage sites as conditions become more suitable for outdoor activities.

The change could provide a boost to businesses in the tourism and hospitality sectors, including hotels, restaurants, cafes, transport providers and small and medium enterprises serving visitors at popular destinations.

However, Mazin urged the public to remain cautious when planning trips to mountainous areas and wadis, particularly during periods of unstable weather.

“People planning outdoor trips should continue to monitor official weather updates and avoid crossing or approaching wadis during rainfall. Weather conditions can change quickly, particularly in mountainous areas, and safety should always come first,” he said.

Oman’s geographical diversity means the transition between seasons is experienced differently across Oman. While some areas may continue to record relatively high daytime temperatures, others may begin to experience more pleasant conditions, particularly during the early morning and evening.

The Civil Aviation Authority regularly issues weather forecasts and seasonal outlooks, while short- and medium-range forecasts remain important for people planning outdoor activities.

As Oman moves into the new season, the gradual change in weather offers greater opportunities to explore the country’s diverse landscapes, from the mountains and valleys of northern Oman to the green hills and misty surroundings of Dhofar.

The arrival of autumn thus marks not only a change in the calendar but also the beginning of a period when more moderate conditions can encourage outdoor activity and renewed interest in Oman’s natural destinations.

New olive press opens in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar

AL JABAL AL AKHDHAR: A modern olive press was inaugurated on Sunday in the Wilayat of Al Jabal Al Akhdhar, Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, at a cost of around RO 40,000, under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources.

The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Dr Ahmed bin Nasser al Bakri, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources for Agriculture.

With a processing capacity of 1.2 tonnes per hour, the press will serve olive growers in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar and nearby wilayats including Al Hamra, Nakhal and Al Rustaq, helping to improve crop utilisation and the quality of Omani olive oil.

Eng Yahya bin Nasser al Riyami, CEO of the press, said the project was launched in response to the growth of olive farming in the wilayat and the need for modern processing lines to help farmers turn their harvest into high-quality products. The facility uses advanced technology that preserves the oil’s natural properties and processes several varieties, including Picual, Claramunt, improved Nepali and Chemlali.

He added that around 70 tonnes



The facility is expected to support farmers in the neighbouring wilayats.

of olives are being processed this season, with about 500 farmers expected to benefit from the press’s services. The facility has also created some 15 seasonal jobs. Al Riyami said the project is the first phase of a broader plan to expand production, packaging and marketing to strengthen the local product’s market presence.

Olive cultivation in Al Jabal Al Akhdhar continues to expand, with an estimated 20,000 trees across 80 acres owned by nearly 700 farmers, producing an annual yield of 600 tonnes of fruit, from which around 90,000 litres of oil are extracted.

SHORTTAKES



The Omani pavilion features books and publications covering Oman's culture, history, literature and thought.

OMAN SHOWCASES CULTURAL HERITAGE AT BAGHDAD INTL BOOK FAIR

BAGHDAD: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, the Oman Cultural Memory Center and the House of Antiquities, is participating in the Baghdad International Book Fair 2026, held in the Iraqi capital until September 12.

Oman's participation reflects the longstanding historical and cultural ties between Oman and Iraq, as well as their shared intellectual and human heritage.

The Omani pavilion features a selection of books and publications covering Oman's culture, history, literature and thought. It also highlights cultural initiatives and projects aimed at preserving Oman's national heritage and promoting it across the Arab cultural landscape.

The Oman Cultural Memory Center is showcasing its efforts to document and preserve national memory, including historical sources, documents and artefacts that shed light on Oman's civilisational and cultural development.

A special Omani-Iraqi Memory Panel features documents highlighting personalities who contributed to the historical links between the two countries, including Imam Jabir bin Zaid, Al Khalil bin Ahmed al Farahidi, Imam Al Rabi' bin Habib al Farahidi, Abu Al Abbas Muhammad bin Zaid al Mubarrad and Ibn Duraid.

The panel also includes a poem by Sayyid Badr bin Hilal al Busaidi marking the arrival of the first Omani student delegation from Iraq in 1383 AH, along with other documents tracing Oman-Iraq relations.

The participation provides an opportunity for Omani institutions to strengthen cultural ties with Arab and international counterparts and exchange expertise in publishing, documentation, heritage preservation and national memory.

It also offers a platform to introduce Omani cultural and literary output to readers, intellectuals and researchers attending the fair.

The Baghdad International Book Fair features a diverse cultural programme, including exhibitions of recent literary and intellectual publications, alongside events promoting cultural dialogue and knowledge exchange. — ONA

NEW BATCH OF CITIZENS JOINS ROP



MUSCAT: A new group of citizens holding a General Education Diploma (GED) has joined the Royal Oman Police (ROP) on Sunday. The new police recruits have successfully passed the acceptance and evaluation stages in coordination with the Ministry of Labour. They will undergo training programmes at specialised institutes within the Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences, in accordance with the latest approved training curricula, following which they will be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their security duties effectively.

Oman participates in GCC Health Ministers Committee meeting

MANAMA: The Sultanate of Oman took part in the 12th meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Health of the GCC, held in the Bahraini capital, Manama.

Oman's delegation was headed by Dr Hilal bin Ali al Sabti, Minister of Health.

The meeting's proceedings discussed developments in the Gulf Virtual Health Network project, the development of health insurance systems, the outcomes of unifying classification and registration procedures for health specialties, updating expatriate examination regulations, expanding the implementation of the "Healthy Cities" programme, and the adoption of recommendations from the technical committees and joint working groups. — ONA



The meeting's proceedings discussed developments in the Gulf Virtual Health Network project. — ONA

ROP STRESSES GLOBAL TIES TO COMBAT CRIME

LT MOHAMMED AL MADASARI
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

THE Royal Oman Police (ROP) is marking the International Day of Police Cooperation on September 7, highlighting the importance of international partnerships in combating crime and addressing emerging security challenges.

The annual observance, organised by the United Nations and INTERPOL, is being held this year under the theme 'Protecting against Vulnerability — Building Trust and Legitimacy in Policing', underscoring the need to strengthen international efforts to prevent and combat crime.

Brigadier Jamal bin Habib al Quraishi, Director-General of the Directorate-General of Inquiries and Criminal Investigations and Director of the National Central Bureau — Muscat, said the occasion highlights the importance of cooperation



BRIGADIER
JAMAL BIN
HABIB
AL QURAISHI

Sept 7 highlights the importance of cooperation in combating crime through partnerships, info sharing and the exchange of expertise among police and security agencies worldwide

in combating crime through partnerships, information sharing and the exchange of expertise among police and security agencies worldwide.

He said the ROP has established itself as an active partner in international police cooperation through its continued efforts to develop policing mechanisms and practices and strengthen communication, coordination and data-sharing networks.

Al Quraishi noted that INTERPOL has recognised the ROP's efforts on several occasions, including its role in intercepting illicit funds linked to fraud schemes and dismantling organised crime networks involved in human trafficking, drug trafficking and other illegal activities.

Recent cases demonstrating the effectiveness of international cooperation included the interception of an attempted transfer of \$6.6 million linked to

fraud schemes and the dismantling of a cross-border trafficking network that attempted to smuggle narcotics valued at approximately RO 500,000.

He said the ROP's strong relations with police and law enforcement agencies in other countries have also contributed to tracking and apprehending fugitives wanted by Omani judicial authorities.

Al Quraishi expressed appreciation to brotherly and friendly countries for their continued cooperation and support in strengthening international police efforts.

The ROP continues to expand its cooperation with INTERPOL and other relevant international organisations and agencies, with the aim of maintaining an effective security framework capable of responding to evolving criminal threats and future challenges, while combating illicit activities at both national and international levels.

Press forum highlights media's development

AHMED AL KAABI
SALALAH, SEPT 6

The fifth Press Forum opened in Dhofar Governorate on Sunday, bringing together more than 200 journalists and media professionals to discuss the media's role in development, investment and tourism promotion, press freedoms and the future of journalism in the age of artificial intelligence.

Organised by the Oman Journalists Association (OJA), the forum provides a platform for media professionals from across the Sultanate of Oman to explore Dhofar's economic, tourism and investment potential and highlight the governorate's development opportunities in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Shaikh Salim bin Mustahail al Maashani, Adviser at the Diwan of Royal Court, and attended by Their Highnesses, ministers, members of the State Council and Majlis Ash'shura, shaikhs, dignitaries, media professionals and intellectuals.

The ceremony featured the opening of the 'Dhofar from the Sky' photography exhibition, a documentary showcasing OJA's previous press forums in Dhofar, and a visual presentation by Dhofar Municipality highlighting major development achievements and upcoming



Media, AI and investment take centre stage as fifth forum opens in Salalah.

projects in the governorate. Dr Mohammed bin Mubarak al Araimi, Chairman of OJA, said holding the forum in Dhofar reflects the governorate's historical significance, strategic location and growing role as an economic, tourism and investment hub.

He said the gathering supports Oman Vision 2040 by providing media professionals with an opportunity to explore and highlight development projects, tourism assets and promising investment opportunities in the governorate.

Al Araimi expressed appreciation to the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), the main sponsor of the forum, the Journalists Committee in Dhofar Governorate, and the public and private institutions

that contributed to organising the event.

A key feature of the opening was the launch of the Press Freedoms in the Sultanate of Oman for 2025 report, prepared by OJA's Press Freedoms Committee.

The report, covering the period from January 1 to December 31, 2025, reviews developments in Oman's press environment, including media licensing, legislative and regulatory changes, training programmes and institutional developments.

Dr Khalid bin Rashid al Adawi, Chairman of the Press Freedoms Committee, said the report provides a professional reference based on field data, official information and systematic analysis.

According to the report, Oman

moved up seven places in the 2025 World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders, ranking 127th globally compared with 134th in 2024.

The report attributed the improvement to developments in the country's legislative and media framework, particularly the Media Law issued under Royal Decree No. 58/2024 and its Executive Regulation issued under Ministerial Decision No. 165/2025. The framework includes provisions relating to freedom of expression and access to information, as well as a prohibition on prior censorship.

The report stated that 69 press and media licences were issued in 2025, while the number of online visual channels increased from 13 in 2024 to 19 in 2025. The number of print press institutions remained at six.

OJA also organised nine local and international training programmes during the year, benefiting 119 journalists and media professionals.

The first session focused on investment opportunities in Dhofar's free and industrial zones. Participants included Salim bin Ali Zaabnout, Acting Director-General of Al Mazunah Free Zone; Hamed bin Ali Bait Saeed, Acting Director-General of Raysut Industrial City; and Hassan bin Marhoon al Marhoon, Director-General of Thamrait Industrial City.

OMAN



burjeel
hospital
By Burjeel Holdings

24399777

www.burjeelhospitaloman.com

Dr. Mujeeb Ahamed
Specialist Cardiologist

Dr. Waleed Bashandy
Specialist - Interventional Cardiology

Your Heart Deserves the Best:
Expert Care from Our Cardiologist!

Burjeel Hospital, Al Khuwair



MOH 4897029/2026



PURSHOTTAM KANJI
EXCHANGE

Transfer money worldwide instantly via
Western Union using the PK Remit mobile app.



OMAN'S MOST TRUSTED BRAND
2025



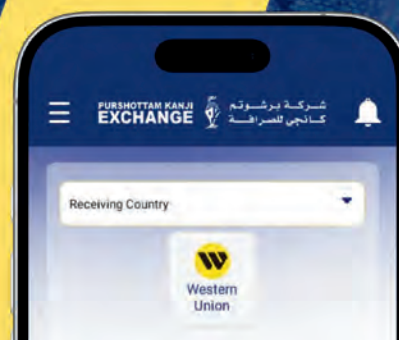
FAST
TRANSFER



SECURE &
RELIABLE



WORLDWIDE
NETWORK





PK REMIT



Western
Union



SCAN & DOWNLOAD
PK REMIT APP NOW



GET IT ON
Google Play



Download on the
App Store

876,117 STUDENTS BEGIN NEW ACADEMIC YEAR AS ROP STEPS UP ROAD SAFETY

KABEER YOUSUF
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

AS many as 876,117 students began the new academic year 2026-2027 across the Sultanate of Oman's 1,298 schools on Sunday which include 440,899 male students, 435,218 female students, and 3,903 students registered in special educational programmes, marking the start of the new academic year, as the Royal Oman Police called on drivers to exercise extra caution during school hours.

Traffic around schools in Muscat, Salalah, Suhar and other wilayats was noticeably heavier on Sunday morning as parents dropped off children for their first day. The Ministry of Education confirmed that public and private schools opened their doors as scheduled, welcoming students from Grade 1 to Grade 12.

"To ensure a smooth start, all schools have carried out orientation sessions, distributed textbooks, and

With the return of school buses and increased pedestrian movement, the ROP Traffic Department launched a renewed road safety awareness campaign today

welcomed new students," a representative from the Omar bin Qattab school in Al Wattayah said, while both teachers and administrators said the focus this term would be on strengthening learning outcomes, digital skills, and student well-being in line with Oman Vision 2040.

'Safety is a shared responsibility' ROP begins safety campaign: With the return of school buses and increased pedestrian movement, the Royal Oman Police (ROP) Traffic

Department launched a renewed road safety awareness campaign today.

In a statement, ROP urged motorists to reduce speed near schools, obey traffic signals and crossing guards, and avoid using mobile phones while driving.

"Parents and drivers must be vigilant, especially during peak hours from 7 am to 8 am and 12 pm to 2 pm," ROP said. "The safety of our children is a shared responsibility." Police patrols were deployed around major school zones

in Muscat Governorate on Sunday morning to monitor traffic flow and enforce speed limits. ROP also reminded drivers of the penalties for illegal parking near school gates and for failing to stop for school buses.

The authority encouraged parents to use designated drop-off points and to ensure children wear seat belts and cross roads only at marked pedestrian crossings.

For many families, today marked a mix of excitement and nerves. First-grade

students were seen entering classrooms with new backpacks, while older students returned to catch up with classmates after the summer break.

The Ministry of Education further said it has completed preparations, including maintenance work, provision of learning materials, and training for teachers on updated curricula. The ministry also emphasised the continued integration of technology in classrooms to support interactive learning.

Education officials noted that this year's opening coincides with ongoing efforts to raise educational quality and align school outputs with labour market needs.

As children settle into their new routines, ROP reiterated that road safety remains a priority. "Let's make this school year safe for everyone," the statement concluded.

With the new term now underway, schools across Oman will focus on academics, activities, and community engagement over the coming months.

Vigilance urged as school buses return to Oman's roads

BALQEES AL ORAIMI
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

With the new academic year underway, renewed calls are being made for greater vigilance and strict adherence to safety procedures on school buses to protect children during their daily journeys to and from school.

School transport remains an essential part of the education system, with thousands of students relying on buses each day. With traffic increasing around schools during morning and afternoon peak hours, drivers, schools and parents are being urged to work together to ensure children board, travel and disembark safely.

A recent awareness message circulating on social media highlighted the importance of school bus drivers exercising extra caution and ensuring that all

students have left the vehicle before it is parked or driven away.

The reminder follows previous incidents involving children and school buses and underlines the importance of checking the interior of buses after every trip.

For drivers, the responsibility goes beyond safe driving. They must remain vigilant while students are boarding and disembarking, ensure children are clear of the vehicle before moving and inspect the bus at the end of every journey.

The Royal Oman Police (ROP) has previously stressed that school bus drivers should remain patient and alert, focus on the road and comply with traffic regulations. Authorities have also emphasised the need to check buses after students leave to ensure no child is accidentally left behind.

The responsibility, however, does not rest solely with drivers and parents.

"The few minutes spent checking the bus before leaving are extremely important," said Salim Rashid, a school bus driver.

"I make sure all students have left the bus before I move. I also check the seats and the rear of the bus after reaching the final stop. Children can become tired or distracted, so this should never be treated as a routine task that can be skipped."

He added that drivers

should exercise particular caution near student pick-up points and residential areas, where children may suddenly cross roads or move around the vehicle.

Parents also have an important role in reinforcing safe behaviour. Children should be taught to remain seated while the bus is moving, follow the driver's instructions and avoid distracting the driver.

They should not put their

heads or hands outside windows and should wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before boarding or getting off.

Parents are also advised to teach children not to cross the road immediately after leaving the bus. They should wait until the vehicle has moved away and they have a clear view of the road.

"We regularly remind our children that the school bus is not a place for running or playing," said Noura al Balushi, a parent of three.

"I ask them to listen to the driver, remain seated and be careful when getting off. I also tell them never to cross in front of or behind the bus without making sure the road is clear."

The MoH has similarly called on parents to reinforce safe practices during pick-up, travel and drop-off, including waiting in a safe place away from traffic and boarding or leaving the bus only after it

has stopped completely.

The responsibility, however, does not rest solely with drivers and parents. Schools and bus operators also have a crucial role in ensuring that safety procedures are consistently followed.

Regular inspections, driver training, proper vehicle maintenance and effective monitoring systems can further strengthen school transport safety. Oman has also been moving towards greater use of technology in school buses, including surveillance cameras, GPS tracking, sensors and driver-performance monitoring systems.

Authorities have previously conducted inspection campaigns to ensure school transport operators comply with safety requirements, including the availability of first-aid kits and adherence to approved technical specifications.

SHORT TAKES



The publications include classical, Nabati and colloquial poetry.

OSWA LAUNCHES 47 PUBLICATIONS FOR 2026

MUSCAT: The Omani Society for Writers and Authors (OSWA) celebrated the launch of its literary and cultural publications for 2026 at its headquarters in Al Seeb.

The ceremony was held under the auspices of Sayyid Said bin Sultan al Busaidi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for Culture, and attended by officials, writers, authors and intellectuals from across Oman.

Said bin Mohammed al Saqlawi, Chairman of OSWA's Board of Directors, said the society remains committed to supporting Omani writers and authors by publishing their literary and cultural works annually. The initiative seeks to encourage creativity and provide writers with opportunities to reach readers inside and outside Oman through publishing houses and public libraries.

Abdulaziz bin Mubarak al Rahbi, supervisor of the society's 2026 publications and an official at Musandam Publishing, Printing and Distribution House, said 47 publications had been printed through the house this year.

The publications cover a wide range of literary and cultural fields, including classical and Nabati poetry, colloquial poetry, short stories, novels, children's literature, translations, research and studies.

Al Rahbi said the society has published more than 450 books and titles by Omani writers and intellectuals since its establishment. The publications are promoted to readers through the society's participation in the annual Muscat International Book Fair.

He added that the society looks forward to strengthening cooperation with Omani writers and intellectuals in the coming years and publishing more of their works. — ONA

OMAN SHOWCASES CULTURE, HERITAGE AT MOSCOW BOOK FAIR

MOSCOW: Oman concluded its participation with an official pavilion at the Moscow International Book Fair, held at the Gostiny Dvor Centre from September 2 to 6, with the participation of more than 300 publishing houses from Russia and other countries and a programme featuring more than 400 cultural and professional events.

The Omani pavilion attracted



visitors from various segments of Russian society, including researchers, students, tourists and those interested in Oman. Visitors explored Omani publications and learned about Oman's culture, history, national identity and cultural heritage. Oman's participation in the fair was the first of its kind and formed part of efforts to strengthen the country's cultural

presence abroad, promote Omani intellectual and cultural production, and create new opportunities for cooperation with cultural and academic institutions, publishers and researchers. The pavilion featured sections representing the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, and SQU. — ONA

Oman, Yemen sign pact for electrical intercon project

THE Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Yemen signed on Sunday in Salalah two joint cooperation agreements related to the electrical interconnection project between the electricity grid in Dhofar Governorate and the electricity grid in Al Mahra Governorate in the Republic of Yemen, within the framework of joint cooperation and strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

The first agreement was signed on the Omani side by Eng Ali bin Issa Shammash, CEO of Nama for Dhofar Services, and on the Yemeni side by Othman bin Mohammed Owaid, Director-General of the Public Electricity Corporation in Al Mahra Governorate. The second agreement was signed on the Omani side by Ahmed bin Salim al Abri, CEO of Nama for Power and Water Procurement, and on the Yemeni side by Eng Mohsen bin Ali Balhaf, Director of the Yemen Petroleum Company in Al Mahra Governorate.

The project comes within the framework of efforts aimed at enhancing cooperation in the field of electrical power, and supporting the stability and provision of electricity supplies in the beneficiary areas of Al



The project embodies the importance of partnership and cooperation between the two countries. — ONA

The project embodies the importance of partnership and cooperation between the two countries in the electrical power sector

Mahra Governorate through interconnection with the electricity grid in Dhofar Governorate.

The agreement includes delivering electrical power to a number of areas in Al Mahra Governorate, including the cities of Hawf and Shahn, as a first phase, through the electricity distribution network, with loads estimated at 3 megawatts for the Hawf area and 5 megawatts for the Shahn area, and to Al Ghaydah with loads reaching

up to 50 megawatts.

The project embodies the importance of partnership and cooperation between the two countries in the electrical power sector, and this agreement represents an enhancement of infrastructure in the energy sector and the fulfilment of electrical needs in the beneficiary areas, aiming at stability, development, and the advancement of social and commercial sectors. — ONA

CME highlights advances in paediatric oncology, bone marrow transplants

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

Advances in paediatric oncology and bone marrow transplantation were highlighted at a continuing medical education (CME) programme held at Intercity Hotel, Muscat, bringing together specialists and healthcare professionals from Oman and India.

The programme, titled 'Update on Pediatric Oncology & Bone Marrow Transplantation', was organised by Yashoda Hospitals, Hyderabad, in association with the Oman Cancer Association and GlobalTreatmentServices. It was moderated by Dr Abdulhakeem al Rawas, Senior Consultant in Hematology, Oncology and Marrow Transplant.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr Ganesh Jaishetwar, Senior Consultant Hematologist, Hemato-Oncologist and Bone Marrow Transplant Physician and Clinical Director in Hyderabad.

Dr Jaishetwar said blood cancers and blood disorders are entering a new era of treatment, with advances in bone marrow transplantation, targeted therapies, immunotherapy, CAR-T cell therapy, precision diagnostics and supportive care improving outcomes for patients.

He stressed the importance of early diagnosis and timely referral, noting that persistent anaemia, low platelet counts, unexplained fever,



A CME programme brought together specialists and healthcare professionals from Oman and India.

swollen lymph nodes, bone pain, recurrent infections, unexplained bruising or bleeding and repeated transfusion requirements should not be overlooked.

The CME highlighted the importance of close collaboration among paediatricians, physicians, oncologists, haematologists and transplant teams in ensuring timely intervention.

Dr Jaishetwar also shared the experience of Yashoda Hospitals, which has performed more than 1,000 bone marrow transplants, highlighting advances in donor selection, haploidentical transplantation, infection control, graft engineering and post-transplant monitoring.

He said bone marrow transplantation should no longer be viewed solely as a last-resort treatment, but as a planned and potentially curative option for appropriately selected patients.

The programme also highlighted the growing healthcare cooperation between Oman and India and the importance of strengthening professional and scientific collaboration to improve access to advanced treatments.

The session concluded with an emphasis on early suspicion, timely referral and multidisciplinary cooperation as key factors in improving outcomes for children and adults with serious blood disorders.

المدينة الطبية الجامعية

University Medical City

المدينة الطبية الجامعية

University Medical City

AUCTION ADVERTISEMENT

FOR LEAD WASTE DISPOSAL

Auction No.	Auction Title	Last Date for Collection of Auction Document	Bid Submission Closing	Auction Document Fees for SMEs R.O.	Auction Document Fees for Corporate R.O.
CCCRC/ AUC/ 001/ 2026	Lead Waste Disposal	13/09/2026	17/09/2026	10	25

Qualified companies interested in participating in this Auction shall collect the Auction Document from the date of this advertisement from the following address:

Procurement and Tenders Department – Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care and Research Centre – University Medical City.

Bids meeting the above requirements must be submitted (in hardcopy and softcopy) in a sealed envelope by one of the Omani employees working for the company. The envelope must be clearly marked with the Auction Number and placed in the Tender Box.

Please note:

- Bids received after the deadline indicated above, for whatever reason, will not be considered.
- Queries/ clarifications should be submitted immediately, but not later than Two weeks before the date of tender submission.
- For Queries you may Contact via e-mail: purchase@ccrc.gov.om

WORLD

SHORT TAKES



Nepal Police and Armed Police Force (APF) members search a house for survivors and victims in Betrawati. — Reuters

UN’S NEPAL CHIEF MAKES PLEA FOR FLOOD-HIT COUNTRY

KATHMANDU: The United Nations chief in Nepal issued an emotional plea for aid on Sunday, saying survivors of the catastrophic flooding had seen their lives transformed in just “one to two minutes”. After visiting battered mountain communities, UN Resident Coordinator Lila Pieters Yahia said that people were struggling to comprehend how suddenly their Himalayan homes had become an expanse of ruin and destruction. “You lose your home, you lose your livelihood, you lose your loved one and you lose the breadwinner of your family,” Pieters Yahia said in Kathmandu. “And you know, this happened in one to two minutes.”

The UN has launched a \$50 million appeal to help 84,000 people affected by the disaster. “Those people are cut off from the rest of the world because the road is gone,” Pieters Yahia said. “You try to find a solution to expedite access, and you find another bottleneck. We’re looking into all means, but we need to to improve access.” — AFP



Mourners gather for a mass burial of around 100 Palestinians, including 62 children in Gaza. — AFP

NATIONS CONDEMN ISRAELI EXPULSION PLANS ON GAZA

RIYADH: Eight Islamic and Arab countries on Sunday condemned plans voiced by Israeli government ministers for the removal of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, saying the designs jeopardise a US-backed peace in the territory.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said that Israel had plans to remove Palestinians from Gaza but was waiting for US approval on where to displace the territory’s population. A day later, Israel’s National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir said the plan aimed to remove 250,000 Palestinians from Gaza in the first year.

The foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Pakistan, Indonesia and Turkiye said they condemned in “the strongest terms” the “plans and mechanisms they proposed aimed at forcibly expelling Palestinians from their land”.

The ministers warned of “grave consequences of transforming calls for forced displacement into declared policy or practical measures”. — AFP

MORE THAN 140 KILLED IN LATEST YEMEN CLASHES

DUBAI: Fighting between Yemeni government forces and Ansar Allah group in southwest Yemen killed more than 140 combatants between midday on Saturday and early on Sunday morning, military sources said. Two military officials with the government forces said that 84 of their troops were killed, mostly in missile attacks, while four Ansar Allah military sources said 57 fighters were killed in the same period. Days-long clashes have erupted

in Yemen over control of a gateway to the Red Sea in the deadliest fighting in the Arabian Peninsula country since a 2022 ceasefire between the two sides collapsed in July. Beginning on Thursday, the Ansar Allah launched an offensive aiming to cut off the government-held port city of Mokha, under fire for weeks, and advance towards areas bordering the Bab al Mandab chokepoint at the southern entrance to the Red Sea. More than 300 combatants and

some civilians have been killed since the start of the assault on Thursday. One military official with the internationally recognised government based in Aden said fighting had subsided in the early hours of Sunday morning. The military official said government “forces were able to establish positions for themselves north of Hays after advancing in the area”, referring to a frontline district less than 30 kilometres inland from the Red Sea coast. — AFP

Lebanon president calls US to stop Israeli strikes

LEBANESE President Joseph Aoun urged Washington and the international community to help stop Israeli attacks after strikes on Sunday killed at least four people despite a truce and an Israel-Lebanon deal. In the latest escalation, Israel said it targeted Hezbollah operatives and sites in response to a drone attack a day earlier on its troops in a strategic south Lebanon ridge area.

Israel reported no troop casualties but accused Hezbollah of a “blatant violation”. Israel this week said it had captured the Nabatieh-area Ali al Taher ridge, which it considers part of its self-declared “security zone” in south Lebanon. Hezbollah, which has not claimed any attacks for weeks, has not commented on Israel’s declaration of control over the site.

Aoun said on Sunday’s strikes, which damaged government premises and destroyed an out-of-service hospital, were “a dangerous escalation... reaching Lebanese state institutions” and health facilities. He called on the international community and in particular the United States, which has sponsored direct Israel-Lebanon talks and a framework agreement between the sides in June, “to urgently act to stop these violations”.



People stand amid rubble as heavy machinery operates at the site of an Israeli strike, in Arab Salim, Lebanon. — Reuters

Aoun called on the international community and in particular the United States, which has sponsored direct Israel-Lebanon talks and a framework agreement between the sides in June, “to urgently act to stop these violations”

Lebanon’s health ministry said two people were killed in strikes on south Lebanon’s Nabatieh al-Fawqa, with two women also killed in nearby Arab Salim. It said 20 other people including several women and three children were wounded there as well as in the city of Nabatieh and town of Kfar Rumman. The ministry said one of the strikes in Nabatieh al Fawqa “totally destroyed” the out-of-service Ghandour hospital, decrying “another grave violation of international humanitarian law”. Lebanon’s state-run National

News Agency (NNA) said that after the Israeli warning for Arab Salim, “enemy warplanes launched a strike on another house, destroying it” and killing the two women. It said the Israeli military subsequently carried out a strike on the building threatened in the evacuation warning. A correspondent saw a devastated structure that used to be a villa. The NNA said that an air strike on Nabatieh city targeted a historical building and damaged offices belonging to finance and agriculture authorities. — AFP

INDONESIA ’S VOLCANO HALTS FLIGHTS, SCHOOLS, FISHING



TANGERANG: An eruption of Indonesia’s Mount Anak Krakatau caused six airports to suspend flight operations on Sunday, affecting hundreds of flights at Jakarta’s main airport, after some school activities and fishing were halted. Soekarno-Hatta International Airport suspended flight operations until 5:30 pm due to volcanic ash, the airport posted on Instagram, stranding hundreds of passengers at the facility. Ash reached as high as 6,000 metres on the Java side of the volcano and 15,000 metres on the Sumatra side and some parts of Banten province in Java, meteorological agency BMKG posted on its website. — Reuters

TRAGIC INCIDENT

6 rescued after building collapses in Delhi



Six people have been rescued after a building collapsed in the Indian capital Delhi, news agency ANI reported. It was not immediately clear how many people were inside the premises at the time of the incident. Located in South-West Delhi, the building was being used as guest accommodation and comprised a basement along with five upper floors. According to the report, repair work was underway in the basement when the structure collapsed. — Reuters

TOXIC SMOKE

Haze emergency grips Malaysian Borneo



Acrid smoke hung heavily over the Malaysian town of Serian, seeping into homes and cloaking roadside stalls, as residents navigated an air quality emergency fuelled by transboundary haze from Indonesia’s raging fires. Malaysia declared a state of emergency in Sarawak state’s Serian district on Borneo island on Friday, after air pollution readings reached critical levels. Toxic haze has shrouded parts of Indonesia and Malaysia for weeks as Jakarta struggles to contain fires. — AFP

MOUNTAIN ROAD

At least 25 killed in Cape Verde bus crash



At least 25 people, many of them school children and teenagers, were killed when a bus plunged into a ravine on Fogo, one of Cape Verde’s islands in the Atlantic Ocean. The crash occurred on a mountain road in northern Fogo, when the bus veered off the road and plunged about 30 metres into a steep ravine. Many of those on board were primary and secondary school students. Several injured passengers were taken to Sao Francisco de Assis Regional Hospital. — Reuters

SHORT TAKES



Military police officers stand guard on a street leading to an army barracks in Viacha, Bolivia. — AFP

DEATH TOLL RISES TO 3 IN BOLIVIA ARMY BASE BLASTS

VIACHA: The death toll rose to three after two explosions at a military base in Bolivia, the prosecutor’s office said, as rescue teams worked to clear debris and find people who are still missing. The blasts occurred Friday afternoon at a facility where explosives, including grenades and TNT, are stored in the town of Viacha, home to about 114,000 people and located 30 kilometres southwest of La Paz.

Streets in the area remained littered with rubble on Saturday and windows in nearby buildings were shattered. “Amid the rubble the lifeless body of a man was recovered,” prosecutor Katherine Ramirez said in a statement, announcing an investigation and bringing the total casualties to “three people deceased so far.” The deaths reported earlier were two young men who had been serving their first year of mandatory military service. Another 84 people were injured in the blasts.

The cause of the blasts, which sent a plume of smoke into the air, was under investigation. Ministry of Defence chief Ernesto Justiniano warned “the risk in the area is still high” because there are powerful explosives that have not yet been removed. — AFP

AMERICAN CARRIER DEPARTS THAILAND



Thousands of US sailors aboard an aircraft carrier departed from Thailand on Sunday, concluding its first port call following reports of deteriorating living conditions on board after nine months at sea. The 5,000-strong crew of the USS Abraham Lincoln docked just north of the resort town of Pattaya on Wednesday for five days of rest and recreation after a lengthy Middle East deployment. The Lincoln departed from the port of Laem Chabang at around 11:00 am. US Democratic lawmakers called for an investigation into conditions on the Lincoln following reports of food shortages, broken plumbing and mental health crises. — AFP

GREEK PM RULES OUT SNAP ELECTIONS AFTER UNVEILING TAX CUTS

ATHENS: Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis ruled out snap elections on Sunday a day after announcing a string of tax cuts and wage hikes, as he seeks to recover lost ground in opinion polls ahead of a general election due next year. His centre-right government, which was re-elected with 40.5 per cent of the vote in 2023 promising to increase incomes, remains ahead in opinion polls but support has slipped to below 30 per cent amid a protracted cost-of-living crisis and allegations of corruption.

“Elections will be held in spring 2027,” he said during a press briefing on Sunday, dismissing media speculation about snap elections this year. He added that he believed his party could still secure an outright majority and win a third consecutive four-year term. On Saturday, Mitsotakis announced income tax breaks and wage hikes worth €3.5 billion (\$4.06 billion), equivalent to 1.5 per cent of GDP, to be rolled out over the next four years. He also pledged to cut unemployment to 6 per cent and

reduce public debt to below 110 per cent of GDP by 2030.

The measures include an annual bonus of €400 for pensioners and €500 for public servants, a zero tax rate on annual incomes of up to €20,000 for farmers and families with three children, and a gradual reduction in advance tax payments for the self-employed and businesses to 50 per cent. After a financial crisis in 2009 that triggered fears Greece would crash out of the euro zone, the country is now one of the best-performing in Europe. — Reuters

US envoys hold talks with Zelensky on 1st Kyiv visit

US ENVOYS Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff began talks on Sunday with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on ending the war with Russia, making their first visit to Kyiv a day after meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin. Witkoff and Kushner, US President Donald Trump’s business ally and son-in-law, have been to Moscow several times but had never held talks in the Ukrainian capital — hit by deadly Russian strikes for more than four years — until now. “It is very important that the delegation has arrived to see us. We have been waiting a long time for Steve and Jared, Witkoff and Kushner,” Zelensky said, thanking Trump for “allowing them to come” amid the war.

Like all visiting officials, the pair arrived by train, with “Peace Express” written on the platform at Kyiv Central Station. Zelensky said Kyiv had “prepared everything to make our airports operational”, but that Russian strikes made arriving by plane impossible. Ukrainian airspace has been closed since Russia launched its attack in 2022. Zelensky also said European national security advisors would take part in some of the talks. Russia and Ukraine have vowed not to strike each other’s capitals during the US envoys’ trip. Ahead of the talks, Zelensky showed the Americans Kyiv’s historic Saint Sophia’s Cathedral.

Witkoff and Kushner are hoping to revive negotiations to end Europe’s worst conflict since World War II, after a summer of escalation. Moscow’s attack of Ukraine has killed hundreds of thousands of people and displaced millions. A White House official said in a statement that in Moscow they had “discussed substantive plans which will be announced in the coming weeks”.

The Kremlin said the Americans



Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky (L) welcomes US Special Envoys Steve Witkoff (C) and Jared Kushner (R) prior to their talks in Kyiv. — AFP

Witkoff and Kushner are hoping to revive negotiations to end Europe’s worst conflict since World War II, after a summer of escalation. Russia and Ukraine have vowed not to strike each other’s capitals during the US envoys’ trip.

“put forward a number of ideas on possible routes to a settlement”, but did not elaborate. Putin has repeatedly said Moscow intends to seize the rest of eastern Ukraine, and Russia increased deadly strikes this summer. Since Putin launched the attack in February 2022, the war has dragged on with no end in sight.

In Kyiv, many welcomed the fact the Americans even made it to Ukraine, but few believed in a breakthrough. Nataliia Lipekh, 67, said it was “absolutely necessary (for them) to be here” and to see that “our land is already soaked with this blood and that we need some help.” “At the moment, I have no grounds for hope,” said 29-year-old Yaroslav, saying he had seen “far too many of these negotiation processes”.

Putin on Saturday told the US envoys that Moscow would ensure their safety in Kyiv. Just days ago, Russia struck the headquarters of the SBU security building in central Kyiv. Of the envoys’ trip to Kyiv, the

Russian leader said: “No matter what happens next, contacts of this kind are undoubtedly always beneficial.”

Trump has said his envoys were bringing a “proposal” to end the fighting. “We have an idea for peace,” he said, without elaborating. Undercutting Trump’s vow to end the war quickly, US peace efforts have stalled, in part because of Washington’s war with Iran.

Despite the ceasefire pledges for the capital cities, fighting continued elsewhere. Ukraine’s air force said Russia had attacked overnight with 108 drones and missiles, while Moscow said it had shot down 258 drones. Ukraine said on Saturday that 10 people were killed by Russian strikes, including an 11-year-old boy. With the war in its fifth year and thousands dead, peace seemed out of reach for most. Yulia, a 41-year-old who came from a town now occupied by Russia and worked as a cleaner in Kyiv, said it was a “positive step” the Americans were in Kyiv. — AFP

Germany’s far-right AfD clear frontrunner in eastern state vote

BERLIN: German voters headed to the polls on Sunday for a key regional election in the ex-communist east where the far-right, anti-immigrant, Moscow-and Trump-friendly AfD is expected to secure an easy majority. However, the Alternative for Germany, which polls have put at over 40 per cent for months in Saxony-Anhalt, is not guaranteed to win the absolute majority needed for it to control the state’s government. Such a breakthrough would be the first time since the World War II that the far right has run a German state, a prospect that alarms mainstream parties and minority groups.

Polls opened at 8:00 am and some 1.7 million voters have until 6:00 pm to cast their ballots, with first projections expected soon after. The small state of 2.1 million people is currently governed by the centre-right CDU of Chancellor Friedrich Merz in coalition with two smaller parties. State premier Sven Schulze

hopes to form another multi-party coalition to cling to power. All major parties have maintained a “firewall” of non-cooperation with the AfD, whose Saxony-Anhalt branch is categorised as “right-wing extremist” by Germany’s domestic intelligence agency.

The AfD’s telegenic top candidate Ulrich Siegmund — who has a large social media following — has confidently predicted an absolute majority. “It was the others who erected the firewalls,” he told Bild daily. “If no-one wants to work with us, then we’ll just have to do it alone.” Such a scenario would shake Germany, which has sought to atone for its dark WWII history and so far kept extremist parties in check.

A strong AfD win would also heap pressure on Merz, who has vowed to reboot a stagnant economy and restrict irregular immigration, but has seen his party beaten by the AfD in national surveys too. “If the



Ulrich Siegmund, top candidate in the Saxony-Anhalt state election for the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, waves as he and his wife Julia Siegmund arrive on a “Schwalbe” motorbike at the polling station. — AFP

AfD wins in Saxony-Anhalt, Merz’s critics will become even more vocal and calls for better leadership will become impossible to ignore,” said

political scientist Wolfgang Schroeder of Kassel University.

Siegmund, who was given a rapturous welcome by around 100 supporters when he voted in the town of Tangermuende, has ambitions to lead a political revolution from Saxony-Anhalt that would propel the party to national victory in 2029. Siegmund also wants to stop school attendance being compulsory and rewrite school history books, which focus too much for his liking on the crimes of the Third Reich.

The German Economic Institute warned the AfD’s immigration policy would be “ruinous” for Saxony-Anhalt, whose population is ageing, shrinking and highly reliant on foreign-born workers. Others have voiced fears an AfD-run state security apparatus could leak sensitive information to Russia to use to destabilise Germany. The latest poll, released on Thursday by public

broadcaster ZDF, gave the AfD a lead of 41 per cent — nearly double its 2021 score.

The CDU garnered 23 per cent, the centre-left SPD 8.5 per cent and the Greens six per cent, while two smaller parties failed to cross the five-per cent hurdle to re-enter parliament.

A similar result may allow a scenario where the CDU and others form a minority government with ad hoc support from the left-wing Die Linke party, which polled at 11.5 per cent.

In the final stretch of campaigning, the AfD spread rumours of postal vote fraud, a claim dismissed as malicious by Germany’s parliamentary speaker, Julia Kloeckner. “Questioning elections without concrete evidence appears to have one goal,” she told news weekly Der Spiegel, “to sow distrust in our rules and to accept the results only if the outcome suits.” — AFP

OPINION

Place names reflect a nation’s cultural identity



SANDHYA RAO MEHTA

The writer is an Associate Professor, Sultan Qaboos University

BEYOND THE many headline events of this past month, some equally important news stayed under the surface.

For example, the US government changed the name of Lake Ontario to Lake America, prompting the Canadian Prime Minister to remind everyone of the indigenous meaning of Lake Ontario.

His statement on X said that “the name Lake Ontario comes from the Wendat word Ontari’io, which, appropriately, means ‘the lake is beautiful, the lake is big.’”

Closer to home, there was a declaration to standardise street and place names in Muscat, making all spellings uniform across the governorate. This is becoming more urgent with the rise of delivery services and usage of digital products like maps where uniformity is key.

The attention to place names is always relevant. This can be seen in continuing debates in various parts of the world to rename roads, cities and even monuments to more closely reflect contemporary interests and also to resist older, colonial reminders.

All this brings attention to the details on a map or a street sign which we regularly bypass until attention is brought to it. We often make an instinctive assumption that street names are important, but attention on it is scant, except for those who are

either researching this phenomenon or implementing the findings of such research.

A United Nations study on standardising geographical names states that “Place names are cultural artefacts produced by complex interactions between mind, culture and environment.”

Working on this assumption, a recent study conducted by Sultan Qaboos University found that signages around tourist spots in Oman were increasingly becoming bilingual, even multilingual, to reflect the diversity of tourists visiting Oman.

The researchers stated the inclusion of English and other languages as appropriate: “a global lingua franca, English language allows international visitors and expatriates to engage meaningfully with Omani cultural heritage and access essential information.”

Multilingual signs also develop deeper connections with tourist sites and their significance, allowing for a contextual and nuanced understanding of Oman’s cultural heritage and tourism sites.

Not only are linguistic choices on tourist signposts important, but their placement is central as well, as it showcases the language policy of a nation.

In Oman, for example, the hierarchical arrangement of Arabic on top and English below it, or in parallel with each other when the size of the sign allows it, reinforces national policies and priorities, underlining

Linguistic choices are strategically deployed to shape perceptions of belonging, authenticity, and cultural continuity while being accessible to an international audience

heritage preservation with pride in language.

In this sense, linguistic choices are strategically deployed to shape perceptions of belonging, authenticity, and cultural continuity while being accessible to an international audience.

Beyond heritage, names also reflect changing priorities and concerns that face developers and landscape planners.

In an article on naming a street in Al Mouj in Muscat as “The Walk”, urban planner Susana F Molina underlines the focus on creating walking spaces in urban centres. The emphasis on creating walkable, traffic-free spaces is now seen to be central for urban development, even in hot countries like Oman. The name of the street thus re-imagines the purpose of a road and reminds one of the possibilities of walking.

Toponymy, or the scientific study of place names and their historical and contemporary uses, is an emerging area of research. It is multi-disciplinary as it involves history, linguistics, anthropology and many other domains.

More importantly for us, it allows us to appreciate the importance of street signs, signposts outside buildings and tourist places, as well as names of public structures like airports. We see them for what they really are: a deeply thought-out name that reflects a rich past and a legacy that is worth preserving.

MELONI EYES 2027 AFTER RECORD IN POWER

LJUBOMIR MILASIN

Giorgia Meloni celebrated her hard-right government becoming the longest-lasting in Italy’s postwar history with a rally in the southern port of Bari, as she gears up for elections next year. “Today, our government becomes the longest-serving in the history of the Italian Republic,” Meloni wrote on X.

“I welcome this with gratitude and a strong sense of responsibility. Because stability is not a record to be displayed, but the condition that allows a nation to plan, decide, keep its commitments, and be respected,” she added.

Meloni became Italy’s first woman prime minister on October 22, 2022 and has been in charge of the same administration for 1,413 days - one more than billionaire media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi managed.

Thousands of people - many bussed in from other parts of Italy - gathered in the port for the rally, organised by the 49-year-old’s Brothers of Italy (FdI) party. There were food stalls selling sandwiches, crepes and Bari’s traditional “Assassin Spagheti” - pasta with a spicy, smoky sauce.

Maurizio Ceconelli, 61, a lawyer from Terni in central Italy, said Meloni’s government had shown “tangible results”. “Let’s hope she gets another five years to achieve all the things she wants,” he said.

Salvatore Sinopoli, a 37-year-old engineer from the southern Calabria region, said Meloni had “restored Italy’s international position” and improved the labour market.

Italy has had 68 governments in 80 years. Past governments were toppled by crises and defections, which Meloni has so far managed to avoid.

Meloni addressed the crowds later, with her deputy prime ministers and coalition partners Matteo Salvini and Antonio Tajani appearing via video link for an event that effectively doubles as an election rally ahead of the 2027 vote.

Under the official slogan “Il Governo piu stabile, l’Italia piu forte” (The Most Stable Government, the Strongest Italy), festivities kicked off with DJ sets.

Speeches focused on the government’s achievements in just under four years in power, from over one million extra people in employment to a \$24-billion reduction in personal income taxes.

Debt-laden Italy’s fiscal stability has greatly improved - although critics say the stability has failed to translate into growth. — AFP

Cambridge: The city of DNA, gravity and evolution

WORK for Cambridge, so when I took my family there recently, they appointed me as the official tour guide. They believed that working for Cambridge was enough of a qualification. If you work for Cambridge, you must surely know Cambridge. All of it. I thought so too.

Cambridge is one of those names that hardly needs an introduction. Mention it almost anywhere in the world and people immediately think of the University, famous scientists and old colleges. Visiting Cambridge, however, makes you realise that understanding the place is slightly more complicated.

For a start, where exactly is the University of Cambridge? You might expect a grand entrance with a large sign saying, “University of Cambridge. This Way.” Instead, the University seems to be everywhere. Colleges, departments, libraries and university buildings are scattered across the city. You can walk down an ordinary street and suddenly find yourself standing beside a college that has been educating people for hundreds of years. This makes being the family tour guide slightly risky. At some point, confidence becomes more important than knowledge.

The University itself dates back to 1209 and today consists of 31 colleges. The college system can be confusing to visitors because Cambridge is not one enormous university campus. The colleges are communities within the University, while teaching and research also take place in faculties and departments across Cambridge. Once you understand that, everything becomes clear. Well, I mean a bit clearer.

History appears everywhere around the city, and names that we learned at school suddenly become



DR KHALFAN AL HARRASI

The writer is an academic and researcher



The Corpus Clock at Cambridge, with its strange creature perched above it, is known as the Chronophage, which literally means ‘time eater’.

connected to real places. Isaac Newton studied at Trinity College. Charles Darwin studied at Christ’s College. Stephen Hawking spent much of his academic career in Cambridge. The work that helped reveal the structure of DNA is also connected with the city.

What is more impressive is that Cambridge does not seem to make too much noise about its history, as you will notice that extraordinary achievements sit beside cafes, shops and people going about their normal lives. You can be thinking about Newton and gravity while somebody cycles past you carrying their shopping.

And there are bicycles. Lots of them. In many cities, pedestrians worry about cars. In Cambridge, I learned that you should also keep an eye out for a silent bicycle appearing

from somewhere behind you. I began to think that maybe cycling should be included in the admission requirements.

Then there is the River Cam. We went punting, which I think is one of the best ways to see some of Cambridge’s famous colleges. From the river, you see the beautiful Backs, bridges and buildings while somebody else does the difficult work of moving the boat. This is my preferred form of exercise.

We also saw the Mathematical Bridge at Queens’ College. Despite the stories sometimes told about it, Newton did not design or build it. That is slightly disappointing because attaching Newton’s name to almost anything in Cambridge makes the story better. Nevertheless, it is a beautiful wooden bridge and an impressive piece of engineering.

Another favourite was the Corpus Clock, with its strange creature sitting above it. The creature is called the Chronophage, which literally means ‘time eater’. It appears to eat the seconds as they pass. Most clocks tell you the time. Cambridge has one that reminds you that your time is disappearing. Very encouraging when you are on holiday.

For me, however, this visit was different from an ordinary sightseeing trip. Cambridge is also connected to my working life, through Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

Taking my family there allowed me to show them a place they had heard me talk about many times. Suddenly, ‘Cambridge’ was not just the name appearing in my emails and meetings. I work for Cambridge, but do I now fully understand Cambridge? I think so, but just please don’t ask me which college that building belongs to.

When life knows your address...



ABDULAZIZ
AL JAHDHAMI

The writer is author,
translator and
communications
professional

THERE are seasons in life when we wonder whether we have been forgotten. We watch others receive the opportunities we prayed for. We see doors opening for those around us while ours seem shut. In those moments, one simple truth can give us the courage to keep going: Blessings never go to the wrong address.

What is meant for you will find its way to you. It may not arrive when you expect it, and it may not look the way you imagined. It may even come through a completely different path from the one you planned. But if something is truly meant to become part of your story, it will find its way to you.

We often imagine blessings as extraordinary events — a promotion, a dream job, a successful business, or an opportunity that changes everything. But sometimes, a blessing is much simpler. Sometimes, it is the food on your table.

Think about everything that had to happen for that meal to reach you. Someone worked for it, someone planted and harvested the food, someone transported it, and someone prepared it. And perhaps, while you are eating, you are sitting beside people who bring love and meaning into your life.

A meal can nourish the body, but the conversation around it can nourish the soul.

A simple lunch can become the beginning of a friendship. A cup of coffee can lead to an idea that changes your career. A casual meeting can introduce you to someone who later becomes important to your life. What looks ordinary may become a memory you treasure tomorrow.

Then there are the moments when life gives us something we never wanted: rejection, disappointment, loss, or a closed door. You applied and were not selected. You tried and failed. You loved and lost. You made plans, only to watch life take you in another direction.

We naturally ask, “Why didn’t I get what I wanted?” Perhaps a better question is: “What is this experience preparing me for?” The job you did not get may have protected you from an environment that would have drained you. The relationship that ended may have taught you your worth. The opportunity that disappeared may have created space for something better. Not every “no” is a rejection. Sometimes, “no” is simply life making room for a better “yes.”

Much of our unhappiness comes from comparison. We look at another person's life and wonder why their blessing arrived first. But someone else's harvest does not mean your field is empty. Their success does not reduce your possibilities, and their timing does not cancel yours.

Much of our
unhappiness comes
from comparison.
We look at another
person's life and
wonder why their
blessing arrived
first. But someone
else's harvest does
not mean your
field is empty

We must stop measuring our lives against someone else's calendar. Someone may be celebrating chapter twenty while you are still struggling through chapter five. That does not mean your story is less valuable. It simply means you are not reading the same book.

Sometimes, what feels like delay is actually preparation. We ask for success before learning discipline. We ask for influence before learning responsibility. We ask for opportunities before we are ready to carry them. Preparation can feel like waiting, silence, or even failure. Yet beneath the surface, we may be growing in ways we cannot see.

So, if you are in a season of waiting, do not give up. Keep learning, working, improving, and showing up. You may not know when the door will open, but you can make sure you are ready when it does.

And remember, the blessing may not come through the door you are watching. It may arrive through an unexpected person, opportunity, or path. Sometimes, we understand only years later.

Life will still bring loss, disappointment, and uncertainty. But we do not have to let those moments convince us that our story is over. Blessings never go to the wrong address. What is meant for you may take a different route, arrive at an unexpected time, or come in a form you never anticipated.

BLAZES OUTPACE FIREFIGHTERS IN INDONESIAN BORNEO

MARIËTTE LE ROUX

Toiling around the clock, haggard Indonesian firefighters on Borneo island cannot keep up with the blazes devouring landscapes and shrouding communities in a cloying haze.

They are fighting a perilous battle with limited weapons against fires blamed in part on a stronger-than-usual episode of the El Nino climate phenomenon parching Southeast Asia.

Experts also blame climate change, decades of forest degradation and slash-and-burn land clearing practices that have changed the naturally fire-resistant landscape.

“We are exhausted. Sometimes we carry out firefighting until dawn. Sometimes we don't sleep,” said Sampe Ritonga, fire chief for Sintang Regency.

“Our facilities and infrastructure for firefighting are very limited,” he said, standing on the smouldering embers of a peatland fire separated from a residential settlement by a narrow dirt road. Behind him, veiled by the haze, the sun appeared as an eerie, rust-coloured ball in the brown-grey sky.

Sampe's team only has two 6,000-litre fire engines, and deploys one at a time while the other refills. They also face a shortage of hoses.

The team has fought dozens of fires this month. With river levels low, “we look for available water in ditches... (and) small rivers”, some far from active burn sites, Sampe said.

“So there are difficulties because they have to first carry out firefighting with high intensity, and second look for water,” he added.

“With the limitations we have, we try as hard as we can to extinguish the fires and also to reduce the smoke.”

Nearby, locals gathered to observe the team's efforts, offering drinking water to first responders.

“There are many houses here, and that is what we have to protect,” said Sampe.

Resident Sutrismi, 47, said she was at home on Saturday when she heard a “crackling sound”, looked out of the window and saw smoke rising from the peatland across the road.

Peatland fires, common in the area, generally smoulder and spread under the soil for weeks or months, emitting huge quantities of smoke and only rarely causing surface blazes.

“First thing, I looked for help. I contacted the village head, asked for assistance,” Sutrismi said. “I am scared. Truly scared.”

Some 400 km away in Pontianak - the capital of West Kalimantan province - people have been breathing foul air for weeks.

The haze can be smelled even indoors in the city of about 700,000 people. At one point on Sunday, the level of PM2.5 pollution exceeded 500 micrograms per cubic metre, according to IQAir, a Switzerland-based monitor.

That is more than 100 times the World Health Organization's recommended safe limit for airborne particles so small they can enter deep into the lungs and even the bloodstream, with potentially dire consequences for health. — AFP

Abandon the myth of the essential self

EVERYTHING AROUND us changes: the history we tell, the past we remember and even our conception of time as the neutral vessel in which events unfold. To understand these transformations, we must scrutinise our assumptions and revise our concepts whenever they fail to grasp what is happening. This is not a cold intellectual exercise. It demands honesty enough to unsettle the familiar, and freedom enough to relinquish what once gave us comfort.

Yet as we revise our understanding of the world, we often exempt the one who claims to understand it: the self.

We imagine that each of us contains a single, stable “I” behind our thoughts, feelings and actions: a self that knows itself, originates its choices and carries an unchanging essence from childhood to old age. Nor do we stop at saying, “I exist.”

We make grander claims: I know; I am better; I am morally, socially and culturally complete. Circumstances explain my failures, while my virtues spring from my nature. I am a pure essence. Whatever contradicts my preferred image of myself is incidental, alien or the work of others.

That self does not exist. This does not mean that human beings, consciousness, pain or responsibility are illusions. The illusion is the independent and self-transparent essence supposedly seated behind experience and directing it. What we call “I” is a shifting formation of body, memory, language and habit; of desires, fears, relationships and experiences. These elements sometimes cohere and sometimes contend. The present reinterprets the past whenever it recalls it. We are not essences to which events happen. We are processes partly constituted by those events.

Science makes the picture still more unsettling. Many of the processes that direct attention, shape preference, summon memory and propel decisions occur below the threshold of awareness. We receive the conclusion, then the mind supplies it with a coherent



HAMED S
AL GHAITHI

The writer
is an Omani
evolutionary
biologist, translator
and editor

explanation. A person need not be lying when explaining his motives. He may sincerely believe a story composed after the event because he witnessed only the end of the process.

Nor does research reveal a single command centre from which the self emanates. It finds distributed functions linking bodily sensation, memory, anticipation and our understanding of other people. These capacities are also formed in a social world, where human beings must anticipate the actions of others, interpret their intentions and maintain a place among them. We may therefore understand ourselves partly through the same interpretative tools with which we understand other people. Self-knowledge is not an infallible privilege. It is an inference from evidence, and it can be wrong.

Consciousness is real, but its authority is narrower than we like to suppose. It is absent from many of the processes that precede action, and does not always possess the reasons it declares. In part, it resembles the editor of a story more than the author of every event: it selects, connects and justifies, then attributes to a single “I” what neurological, psychological and social processes have jointly produced. Yet once some of these influences become visible, consciousness can examine them and alter their effects. There lies the beginning of both responsibility and freedom.

Introspection alone cannot deliver self-knowledge, because observer and observed share an interest in the verdict. We must compare our words with our conduct, test our explanations under changing circumstances and listen to those who bear the consequences of our actions. If a father opposes his daughter's choice of career because, he says, he fears for her future, the strength of his conviction proves little. His explanation is tested by his willingness to reconsider his reasons, listen to her and change his position when his stated fears are answered.

We prefer final judgements because they relieve us of the labour of inquiry. “That is simply who I am,”

Science makes the
picture still more
unsettling. Many
of the processes that
direct attention,
shape preference,
summon memory
and propel decisions
occur below
the threshold of
awareness

we say, or “It is his nature.” We put a label where a question belongs. We call a man controlling, explain his actions by his controlling nature, then cite those actions as proof that he is controlling. The argument circles itself while the conditions that produced the conduct remain unexamined.

Habits may become stable enough to make prediction reasonable, but stability does not turn them into an essence. A habitual liar remains responsible for his lies, and those he has deceived are entitled to be wary. But holding someone answerable for an action is different from claiming to have discovered his permanent nature. The first preserves responsibility; the second abolishes the future. Denying essence opens the possibility of change, not an avenue of escape.

That is its liberating force. Whoever says “I know” becomes less able to dispense with correction. Whoever says “I am better” must examine the standard by which he elevated himself, and the advantages he mistook for pure merit.

Whoever claims completeness must confront what he has expelled from his self-image and projected onto others in order to preserve an appearance of purity. This does not promise unlimited power over our circumstances. It prevents us from turning the limits of the present into an eternal sentence.

If the individual self is neither single nor fixed, how can we claim such unity for a family, tribe or nation? A community is formed differently from a person: through relationships, institutions, memory, power and conflict over the meaning of belonging. It is not an enormous person with one character and one voice. What is presented as “the essence of the nation” is a selection from its history, elevated by present authority through education, media and law. Whoever defines “we” gains the power to decide who represents the community and who is cast outside it.

A philosophical error then becomes a political instrument. We say that a group dislikes work, cannot understand order, or is naturally inclined to violence.

SPORTS

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

AL NAHDA took an early grip on the Jindal League standings after defeating Al Shabab 3-2 in the second-round summit at Seeb Stadium on Saturday, while Ibri recorded the biggest win of the season so far and Saham claimed their first points with a narrow home victory over Bahla.

The result lifted Al Nahda to six points from two matches after a perfect start, while Al Shabab remained on three points following their first defeat of the campaign. The match lived up to its billing as the standout fixture of the round, delivering five goals, late drama and a strong statement from the Buraimi side.

Al Nahda made a flying start as Mohammed al Ghafri punished a defensive error in the second minute. The striker beat Ali Doumbia before taking advantage of goalkeeper Abdulmalik al Badri's misjudged advance to place the ball into the net. Al Shabab tried to respond through the movement of Musab al Maamari, Yaseen al Sheyadi, Hatim al Roushdi and Dutch forward Pepijn Doesburg, but Fayez al Rushaidi and the Al Nahda defence held firm.

Al Ghafri struck again in the 13th minute, capitalising on another mistake to double the advantage. Al Shabab pushed hard after the break and reduced the deficit in the 72nd minute when Doesburg's header crossed the line, with the goal confirmed after a VAR review. Two minutes later, however, substitute Amjad al Harthi restored Al Nahda's two-goal lead from a fine Jameel al Yahmadi pass. Substitute Al Mutasim al Maqbali scored Al Shabab's second in the 78th minute, but Al Nahda survived the late pressure to secure a valuable away win.

At Ibri Sports Complex, Ibri produced a dominant second-half display to beat Samayil 4-0 and move to four points. The first half ended goalless despite chances at both ends, with Cheikhna Semeiga missing an early opening for Ibri and Abdulrahman al Ghassani being denied by goalkeeper Omar al Matrooshi at the other end.

Ibri returned with greater purpose after the interval and opened the scoring in the 54th minute through Al Azhar al Qalahati. Omar Bala Mohammed doubled the lead in the 61st minute before Cheikhna Semeiga added the third with a header in the 76th minute. Alex Darkoz completed the scoring in the 85th minute with a well-taken finish, leaving Samayil on three points.

At Sohar Sports Complex, Saham recovered from their opening defeat to Samayil by beating Bahla 1-0. Salem Habib delivered the decisive moment in the 65th minute when his low effort deflected off a

I B R I H I T F O U R A N D S A H A M B O U N C E B A C K

AL NAHDA MAINTAIN PERFECT START IN JL



Action from Al Nahda's thrilling 3-2 win over Al Shabab in the Jindal League second-round summit at Seeb Stadium.

Bahla defender and found the net. Nigerian striker Tosin Omoyele made his first appearance for Saham and added movement to the front line, while goalkeeper Hassan al

Buraiki played a key role in preserving the lead as Bahla pushed for an equaliser. The victory handed national coach Musabbah bin Hashil al Saadi a winning

start with Saham and gave the club an important lift before the league resumes with the remaining second-round fixtures on Sunday.

Oman Club intensify preparations for Bahrain Gulf championship

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

Oman Club's handball team is stepping up preparations for the 42nd Gulf Handball Club Championship, scheduled to be held in Bahrain from November 21 to 30, 2026, with eight leading clubs from across the Gulf set to compete for the title.

The championship is regarded as one of the region's major handball competitions and provides an important platform for Gulf clubs to test their strength against some of the most competitive teams in the region. The tournament was originally scheduled to take place in Bahrain in March but was postponed due to the political circumstances affecting the region. The organising committee subsequently decided to reschedule the event for November.

Oman Club will represent the Sultanate of Oman after securing its place in the competition by winning the Ministry Shield handball competition during the 2024-2025 season. The club enters



A group photo of the Oman Club handball team celebrating their victory in a championship.

the tournament with ambitions of producing a strong performance, achieving positive results and competing for a place among the leading teams.

The eight participating clubs are Oman Club of Oman, Al Rayyan and Al Arabi of Qatar, Kuwait Club of Kuwait, Al Ahli and Al Shabab of Bahrain, Sharjah of the UAE, and Al Mohit of Saudi Arabia.

Oman Club's technical staff are

working on an intensive preparation programme designed to ensure the team reaches the tournament in optimal condition. The programme will focus on improving physical fitness, strengthening coordination among the players and developing the team's technical and tactical capabilities.

The club is also looking to reinforce its squad with foreign players as part of its preparations for

the demanding Gulf competition. The additions are expected to provide greater depth and strength as Oman Club prepares to face a number of experienced sides.

The Gulf championship also comes at an important stage in Oman Club's season, with the tournament taking place ahead of the start of the Oman Handball Federation's 2026-2027 competitions.

Among the club's main domestic

objectives is the First Division Handball League, where Oman Club will seek to retain the title for a sixth consecutive season and increase its league championship tally to 11 titles.

The club will also compete for the Oman Super Cup and the Federation Cup, which will be held this season in place of the Ministry Shield competition.

Oman Club previously hosted the Gulf Handball Club Championship in February 2025, when eight teams participated. The clubs were divided into two groups, with Group A featuring Saudi Arabia's Al Noor, Oman's Al Seeb, Qatar's Al Rayyan and Bahrain's Al Najma. Group B comprised Oman Club, Kuwait Club, UAE side Dibba Al Hisn and Qatar's Al Arabi.

With the Gulf championship serving as an important test ahead of the domestic season, Oman Club will look to use its preparations effectively and enter the competition with the aim of delivering a performance worthy of Oman's growing reputation in regional handball.

SHORTTAKES



Stage 1 Race of the Tour of Salalah.

MEIJERS WINS
OPENING STAGE OF
TOUR OF SALALAH

ANUROOP ATHIPARAMBATH
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

Dutch rider Jeroen Meijers of Victoria Sports Pro Cycling won the opening stage of Tour of Salalah 2026 in Salalah on Sunday.

Meijers finished the 127-km Stage 1 from Mughsail Beach to Mirbat Castle in two hours 43 minutes and 46 seconds. Australia’s Carter Bettles of Roojai Insurance Winspace (02:43:46) came second, and Swiss rider Simon Pellaud of Li Ning Star claimed the third spot (02:43:46). Victoria Sports led the team classifications ahead of Roojai Insurance and Li Ning Star after the first stage.

“I am delighted to have won the first stage. This victory gives me a huge morale boost at the start of the Tour and increases my enthusiasm to continue competing and give my best in the upcoming stages,” Meijers said after winning the race.

Meijers received the gold jersey, sponsored by Dhofar Municipality, for leading the overall standings. He also received the green jersey, sponsored by Mohsin Haider Darwish Company, for leading in points classification. Mongolia’s Tegshbayar Patsaikhan of Roojai Insurance won the grey jersey sponsored by Badr Al Samaa Hospital, for the aggressive rider. The white jersey, sponsored by Oasis Oman, for the young rider (under-23 category), was won by Indonesia’s Dimas Nur Rizki from the Jakarta Pro Cycling team.

The winners of the first stage were crowned by Khair Eddine Barbari, President of the Algerian Cycling Federation, and Saif bin Sebaa al Rashidi, Chairman of Oman Cycling Association (OCA).

STAGE ROUTE

The route started in Mughsail, passing through the Raysut Port roundabout, then the Fish roundabout, heading towards the Raysut Cement Factory, then to the Salalah Ring Road and Salalah Airport, passing through the Hajif roundabout, then Wadi Jarziz Dam, heading towards Thumrait Street, then to the Rabat roundabout, heading towards the Al Ghawarf Road, passing through the Dahariz roundabout, then the Ma’amoura Roundabout, finally reaching the Mirbat roundabout and finishing at Mirbat Fort.

The second stage runs for 108 km on Monday. Starting from Al Dahariz Beach, the route passes through the Dahariz Roundabout towards the Al Ma’moura Roundabout, then to the Mirbat Roundabout, then to the Hashir Pass, and finally to the Tawi Atir Pass, passing through the Ghadbah Turnpike before reaching the finish line in Wadi Darbat.

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

The Oman national karate team has arrived in Amman ahead of the 24th Asian Karate Championships for Cadets, Juniors and Under-21 competitors, which will be held in the Jordanian capital from September 8 to 11. The championship brings together 351 athletes from 30 Asian countries.

Oman will compete in the kumite events with four athletes Sharifa al Shabibi, Mohammed al Shabibi, Mukhtar al Omari and Al Yaqzan al Abdali, under the guidance of international coach Ali bin Said al Shabibi. The delegation is headed by Ahmed bin Said al Zakwani.

Al Shabibi said the team had completed its

preparations through a focused training programme designed to improve the athletes’ physical and technical readiness while strengthening their tactical and mental preparation for the demands of the continental competition.

“The players showed great commitment and seriousness throughout the preparation period, and we are looking to deliver a performance that reflects the development of karate in Oman,” Al Shabibi said. He also praised the Oman Karate Committee for its continued support and for providing suitable conditions and participation, giving the athletes valuable opportunities to gain experience at continental level.

Delegation head Ahmed



The Omani national team who will be participating in the championship competitions.

al Zakwani described the championship as an important opportunity for the Omani athletes to gain experience and compete against some of Asia’s leading karate competitors.

“Our national team’s participation represents an

important stage in gaining experience and exposure to top athletes across the continent. We are looking forward to delivering performances that reflect the progress of karate in Oman,” Al Zakwani said.

He also highlighted the

participation of Omani referees in the courses and examinations held alongside the championship, describing it as part of the efforts to develop national expertise, keep pace with the latest international rules and strengthen the presence of Omani officials at continental and international events.

Seven Omani referees are taking part in the accompanying officiating programmes: Yousef al Siyabi, Hilal al Abdali, Mohammed al Hinai, Adil al Hinai, Tariqal Raisi, Khalifa al Rasbi and Zulfa al Kindi.

Asian referee Khalifa bin Hamad al Rasbi said the officiating course represented an important opportunity to improve refereeing standards and gain a deeper understanding of the latest

developments and practical applications of karate’s rules.

International referee Yousef bin Muslim al Siyabi described the course as a valuable platform for exchanging expertise with leading Asian referees and learning about the latest updates and practical applications of the international rules. He expressed hope that the course would contribute to strengthening Oman’s refereeing system and enhancing the presence of Omani officials at major continental and international competitions.

Asian referee Adil bin Salim al Hinai said the course would help improve referees’ technical capabilities and the accuracy of their decisions in line with the latest international regulations.

Al Barwani eyes global
glory in endurance racing

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

FROM CONTRIBUTING to major milestones in Omani tennis to pursuing success on the international endurance-racing circuit, Mundhir bin Taghlib al Barwani has carved out a distinctive path in sport, driven by ambition, perseverance and a deep passion for horses.

Since taking up the position of Secretary-General of the Oman Tennis Association in 2017, Al Barwani has played an important role in the administrative and organisational development of tennis in Oman. During his tenure, the association achieved a number of notable milestones, including the successful hosting of the Gulf Tennis Championship in Muscat in 2018, when Oman returned to the top of the Gulf podium and claimed the title after a long absence.

Al Barwani also contributed to the organisation of Oman’s participation in the Davis Cup, where the national team secured first place and earned promotion to Group III. The achievement reflected the progress made by Omani tennis through the combined efforts of the association’s administrative and technical teams and the players.

Away from the tennis courts, however, Al Barwani had developed a strong and enduring passion for horses and equestrian sport. That interest took a more serious turn in 2021, when he entered the world of endurance racing through the Blue Stable, owned and managed by trainer Said Salim Al Balushi.

“My journey in endurance racing began with local competitions, and with each year, my ambitions grew and my results improved,” Al Barwani said.

His progress soon extended to the international stage. In 2024, he finished 24th in the AlUla Endurance Race, before improving his position to 14th the following year in a highly competitive field of nearly 200 elite riders from around the world.

“These results confirmed that our involvement in international endurance racing was not a temporary experience, but a serious sporting project built on passion, planning and determination,” he said.

The most significant milestone in his endurance journey came in July 2026, when two horses under his ownership successfully



A group photo of the Blue Stable team after qualifying for the World Cup.



A shot of the Blue Stable’s riders during World Cup qualifying race.

MUNDHIR
AL BARWANI

I entered
the world of
endurance racing
through the Blue
Stable, owned
and managed
by trainer Said
Salim Al Balushi

overseeing the horses’ preparation and training programme. Communication and coordination with the trainers throughout the preparation period will likewise be carried out under the supervision of the Blue Stable, ensuring that the horses receive a structured and carefully monitored programme ahead of the global event.

The qualification also highlights the growing international presence of Omani endurance racing and the increasing ability of Omani owners, riders and stables to compete at elite international level.

For Al Barwani, the journey represents more than a transition from one sport to another. His experience in tennis administration has provided him with an understanding of planning, organisation and long-term sporting development, while endurance racing has given him a new platform through which to pursue his competitive ambitions.

From the tennis courts of Oman to the endurance tracks of the international circuit, Al Barwani is now entering a new chapter in his sporting career. His qualification for the World Championship represents a major personal achievement while also contributing to Oman’s growing presence in global equestrian sport.

As he prepares for the September championship in Portugal, Al Barwani will look to build on the progress made over the past several years, with the Blue Stable playing a central role in the preparation and supervision of the horses. His journey stands as an example of how passion, determination and careful planning can open the door to new sporting horizons and take Omani ambitions onto the world stage.

Oman karate team ready for Asian Championships in Amman

SPORTS

ZVEREV EASES
INTO LAST 16,
GAUFF THROUGH
BUT US OPEN
TURNS SOUR
FOR HOME HOPES

ALEXANDER ZVEREV kept his bid for a second Grand Slam title alive with a straightforward win over Alejandro Tabilo, while Coco Gauff stayed strong to reach the fourth round of the US Open as several of her fellow Americans crashed out on Saturday.

Naomi Osaka overcame a mental and physical battle to outlast Belgium's Elise Mertens in a three-setter on Louis Armstrong Stadium.

Two of the brightest young prospects in the women's draw, and close friends off it, put on a show as American Iva Jovic edged Filipina Alexandra Eala in a thrilling clash on Arthur Ashe Stadium.

After back-to-back five-setters, top seed Zverev finally enjoyed a quieter night as he overcame a small mid-match dip to see off Chile's Tabilo 6-2 7-6(2) 6-2.

"I think today was definitely much better than the last couple of days. I think I improved a lot from the baseline," Zverev said.

"I wasn't happy with the second set. I think especially the end of the second set I lost focus a little bit. I was not moving as well. I was not playing as well. But I think the first

”

Honestly, I didn't feel like I played amazing, and it was really getting me down, like I was very negative on myself, so I'm really sorry about my behaviour.

NAOMI OSAKA

and third sets are a big improvement to the other days. I'll try to focus on that."

Japanese 13th seed Osaka, a two-time US Open champion, worked through a challenge after letting slip a one-set and break advantage before managing an Achilles niggle to beat Mertens 6-3 3-6 7-5.

The match was as much a test of Osaka's composure as her tennis, with the 28-year-old showing visible frustration before regaining control in the decider.

"Honestly, I didn't feel like I played amazing, and it was really getting me down, like I was very negative on myself, so I'm really sorry about my behaviour," an emotional Osaka said.

Jovic, 18, and Eala, 21, traded momentum throughout a contest that lasted more than three hours before the American prevailed 7-5 3-6 7-5. Jovic, the 14th seed, will next face compatriot and fan favourite Gauff.

Fourth seed Gauff had earlier provided the day's clearest positive for the home fans, the 22-year-old beating Spain's Cristina Bucsa 6-3 6-4, as the 2023 champion looks to win a third Grand Slam crown.

Second seed Elena Rybakina continued her quest for a third major

title and the top spot in the WTA rankings, advancing after a 7-6(6) 6-3 win over Yuliia Starodubtseva.

Australian Open champion Rybakina avenged the second-round defeat she suffered to the Ukrainian at the French Open. The Kazakh will face Osaka for a place in the quarter-finals.

Iga Swiatek, the 2022 champion, beat Marie Bouzkova 7-6(3) 7-6(3) while French Open champion Mirra Andreeva advanced by downing Nikola Bartunkova 6-2 7-6(5).

AMERICANS TAKE A HIT

The day had begun with a string of painful exits for the home players.

Past US Open finalists Taylor Fritz, Madison Keys and Amanda Anisimova all crashed out in the third round, dealing a stinging blow to the home fans at Flushing Meadows.

Ninth seed Fritz had yet to drop a set in New York and looked on his way to another routine victory before Argentinian Francisco Cerundolo flipped the script and won 3-6 4-6 6-3 6-4 6-4.

It was the earliest exit in four years for the 2024 runner-up and Cerundolo will next face Belgium's Alexander Blockx, who shocked fifth

seed Flavio Cobolli 6-7(4) 6-3 6-0 6-3.

The American women fared no better, as China's Zheng Qinwen came back from a 5-0 deficit in the decider to beat 2017 runner-up Keys 1-6 7-6(3) 7-5 on the Grandstand, collapsing on the court in utter joy as she fights back from a career slump.

The Olympic champion reached the quarter-finals for the second straight time only two years ago but was forced to go through qualifying this time after a chronic right elbow injury derailed her career progress.

Last year's runner-up and 10th seed Anisimova was unable to reverse her fortunes in a frustrating year at the majors, with a 6-2 7-5 defeat by Anastasia Potapova.

Young American wildcard Michael Zheng was another casualty, unable to complete a comeback against Frenchman Arthur Gea in a 7-6(7) 3-6 4-6 6-3 6-2 defeat. Gea became just the second lucky loser to reach the fourth round, after fellow countryman Corentin Moutet in 2022.

The day ended on a positive note for the home crowd, who spurred Learner Tien to a gritty 6-3 1-6 6-7(2) 6-3 6-4 win over Czech Jakub Mensik.

— Reuters



Germany's Alexander Zverev in action during his third round match against Chile's Alejandro Tabilo. — Reuters

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE
7,631.994

BUSINESS

SHORTTAKES



The GCC's inflation rate is among the world's lowest

GCC INFLATION HOLDS STEADY AT 1.8% IN 2025, AMONG LOWEST GLOBALLY

MUSCAT: Inflation across the GCC states remained stable at 1.8 per cent in 2025, marking the second consecutive year below the 2 per cent threshold, according to a report by the GCC Statistical Centre (GCC-Stat). The figure compares with 1.6 per cent in 2024 and reflects the effectiveness of regional economic policies in containing price pressures. The GCC's inflation rate is among the world's lowest, trailing the emerging and developing economies' average of 5.3 per cent, the global average of 4.2 per cent, Japan's 3.2 per cent, the United States' 2.6 per cent and the eurozone's 2.1 per cent. Housing and miscellaneous goods and services were the main drivers of Gulf inflation, together accounting for about 73 per cent of the total increase. Among the main consumer price index groups, miscellaneous goods and services posted the highest inflation at 5.4 per cent, followed by housing at 4 per cent, culture and recreation at 2 per cent, restaurants and hotels at 1.6 per cent, food and beverages at 1.2 per cent, education at 1 per cent and tobacco at 0.6 per cent. Clothing and footwear rose 0.4 per cent, while health, communications and furniture were unchanged. Transport prices fell -0.2 per cent. The report traced the trajectory of GCC inflation from 2020 to 2025, showing a rise from 1.5 per cent in 2020 to 2.4 per cent in 2021, before peaking at 3.2 per cent in 2022. It then moderated to 2.3 per cent in 2023 and 1.6 per cent in 2024, before edging up slightly to 1.8 per cent in 2025 — a trend that underscores relative stability against the backdrop of global economic fluctuations. — ONA

Oman records 33.8% growth in Omani, GCC standards by Q2 2026

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

The Sultanate of Oman recorded 33.8 per cent growth in the Omani and GCC standards indicator by the end of the second quarter of 2026, exceeding the target for the period by 65 per cent. The development of the standards and metrology system is among the key enablers supporting the competitiveness of the national economy by establishing technical references for products and services, raising levels of quality, safety and efficiency, keeping pace with the needs of industrial, commercial and technology sectors, and supporting products in meeting technical requirements in various markets. Under its 2026 plan, the Directorate General of Standards and Metrology at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) is



IMAD BIN KHAMIS
AL SHUKAILI

Director General of the Directorate General of Standards and Metrology at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion

working on the preparation and review of around 1,567 draft unified GCC standards, including around 325 projects prepared by the Sultanate of Oman, in addition to 16 draft national standards. The completion rate of projects under the plan exceeded 80 per cent by the end of the second quarter of this year. The standards projects cover several sectors, including



NADIA BINT
MOHAMMED
AL SIYABI

Director of the Standards Department at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion

food, construction materials, petroleum products, energy efficiency, electricity and electronics, as well as areas related to digital transformation, renewable energy, logistics and tourism, in line with technological developments, the needs of products and services, and market requirements. Strengthening the economy's technical

Oman eyes autonomous delivery technology

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

OMAN is exploring the deployment of fully autonomous delivery vehicles as part of efforts to build a smarter and more efficient logistics ecosystem, following a strategic agreement between Singapore-based autonomous driving specialist Zelostech, Oman Investment Authority (OIA) and Asyad Group. Under a newly signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the three parties will examine opportunities to develop and deploy autonomous logistics solutions across the Sultanate of Oman, potentially introducing Zelostech's RoboVan technology into Oman's rapidly expanding transport and logistics network. "The partnership brings together Zelostech's autonomous driving technology and large-scale RoboVan deployment experience, OIA's investment capabilities supporting Oman's economic transformation and Asyad's integrated logistics infrastructure and connectivity to global trade", Zelostech said in announcing the agreement. A global unicorn specialising in autonomous driving, Zelostech operates what it describes as the world's largest RoboVan fleet and has accumulated more than 170 million kilometres of autonomous driving mileage across its global operations. At the heart of its offering is a proprietary map-free Level 4 (L4) full-stack autonomous driving system. Level 4 autonomy enables a vehicle to perform the complete driving task without human intervention within its designated operating environment. Unlike autonomous systems



An MoU signed with Oman Investment Authority and Asyad Group will pave the way for the potential rollout of Zelostech's RoboVan technology into Oman's rapidly expanding transport and logistics network.

Autonomous vehicles could potentially improve logistics efficiency, optimise round-the-clock freight movements and reduce operating costs while supporting more digitally integrated supply chains

heavily dependent on high-definition maps prepared in advance, Zelostech's map-free technology is designed to support more flexible deployment across changing operating environments. Its RoboVans can be deployed on open public roads as well as within controlled environments such as logistics parks, industrial zones, warehouses and other freight facilities. The company says it pioneered the world's first autonomous delivery van to achieve fully driverless operation in real-world scenarios and is now pursuing large-scale commercial deployment of the technology. For Oman, autonomous freight and delivery systems could complement wider efforts to position the country as a major logistics gateway between Asia, the Gulf, Africa and other international markets. Asyad's network encompasses ports, free zones, shipping,

freight, warehousing and last-mile logistics, potentially offering multiple environments for testing and ultimately scaling autonomous mobility. The initiative also aligns with Oman Vision 2040, particularly its focus on digitalisation, advanced technologies, productivity and economic diversification. Autonomous vehicles could potentially improve logistics efficiency, optimise round-the-clock freight movements and reduce operating costs while supporting more digitally integrated supply chains. "For Zelostech, this MoU marks an important step in our global expansion, moving beyond autonomous vehicles towards the infrastructure and systems that power the future of logistics", the company said. "We look forward to building the future of autonomous logistics in Oman, across the Middle East and beyond".

infrastructure Imad bin Khamis al Shukaili, Director General of the Directorate General of Standards and Metrology at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said that the growth of the standards system strengthens the technical infrastructure supporting the economy by providing clear requirements for quality, safety and efficiency; and supporting productive sectors in keeping pace with technological developments and market requirements. **Enhancing product readiness** He added that standardisation is directly linked to the needs of industry, trade and various economic sectors and contributes to enhancing the readiness of products to comply with technical requirements applicable in markets, reducing technical barriers to trade and providing a clear regulatory

environment for producers and investors. **Expanding standards development** Al Shukaili explained that expanding standards development to include artificial intelligence, renewable energy, electric vehicles, logistics and tourism comes in response to the transformations taking place in these sectors and enhances the readiness of the standardisation system to address new products, services and technologies. He stressed that the development of the standards system is based on partnerships between government entities, the private sector; and academic and research institutions, linking technical requirements with market realities and industry needs, while supporting the quality and competitiveness of products and services.

Digital transformation In the field of digital transformation, the Sultanate of Oman has prepared a number of draft unified GCC standards, including a standard for the environmental sustainability of artificial intelligence systems and a standard for data quality for analytics and machine learning, in addition to a standard for terrestrial digital sound broadcasting receivers. **Over 80% of standards projects completed** Nadia bint Mohammed al Siyabi, Director of the Standards Department at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said that the 2026 plan includes around 325 draft unified GCC standards prepared by the Sultanate of Oman, in addition to 16 draft national standards. She noted that the completion rate of projects under the plan exceeded 80 per cent by the end of the second quarter.

ADVERTORIALS

SHORTTAKES



ahlibank Back-to-School initiative

AHLIBANK DOUBLES REACH OF BACK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAMME

MUSCAT: Demonstrating a strong commitment to responsible corporate citizenship and community wellbeing, ahlibank has successfully concluded its Back-to-School Initiative for the 2026/2027 academic year. Marking the bank’s largest Back-to-School initiative to date, the initiative supported more than 5,000 children from low-income and underprivileged families across the Sultanate of Oman.

Implemented in strategic partnership with Al Rahma Association for Motherhood and Childhood, the initiative doubled the number of beneficiaries compared to previous years, making it the third-largest annual community initiative undertaken by the bank.

Building on its commitment to ensuring children feel prepared and supported for the new academic year, the initiative aimed to instil greater confidence among beneficiaries by providing school uniforms and essential school supplies tailored to the needs of beneficiary families. Distribution drives were conducted across five Wilayats — Muttrah, Sur, Al Musannah, Barka and Suhar — extending meaningful support to families in need across the Sultanate of Oman.

A key highlight of this year’s initiative was the pivotal role played by ahlibank’s extensive branch network in significantly expanding the initiative’s geographical reach beyond the communities surrounding individual branches.

With families from neighbouring Wilayats arriving at distribution hubs to access the initiative’s support, the bank was able to positively impact a wider cross-section of communities.

Commenting on the initiative, Jumana bint Aflah al Hashmi, AGM — Head of Marketing & Corporate Communications at ahlibank, stated, “Responsibility is a core value at the heart of our corporate ethos, shaping how we engage with and contribute to the communities around us. Our Back-to-School initiative is a meaningful expression of this commitment.

By providing young students with essential school supplies to help them begin the new academic year with confidence, we reaffirm our belief in the transformative power of education and the importance of creating equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their circumstances.

The support we provide today represents an investment in the aspirations and capabilities of tomorrow’s leaders, helping lay the foundations for a brighter and more prosperous future for the nation”.

BANK MUSCAT CONTINUES NEWLYWED FINANCIAL LITERACY DRIVE UNDER MALIYAT

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, continues to extend the effect of its community-driven “Maliyat” initiative with financial literacy sessions targeting a new segment of society this year.

In this context, Bank Muscat held, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development, the second financial literacy workshop dedicated to the newlyweds and those preparing for marriage in Nizwa, Al Dakhiliyah Governorate.



The workshop featured around 40 participants who were equipped with the knowledge and practical skills needed to build sound financial habits and achieve long-

term financial and family stability.

The workshop follows the successful implementation of the initiative in Dhofar Governorate and reflects Bank Muscat’s continued efforts to expand financial literacy initiatives across the Sultanate of Oman.

Through these workshops, the Bank aims to empower participants with the knowledge and confidence to make informed financial decisions, manage household finances effectively and plan for a secure financial future.

TOYOTA URBAN CRUISER

AS part of its ongoing commitment to rewarding customers across the Sultanate, Toyota Akeed now extends its added-value benefits to the Toyota Urban Cruiser, one of the brand’s most sought-after compact SUVs.

Buyers who purchase the Urban Cruiser under this campaign will be entitled to a 5-year or 50,000 km service package, Thiqah Loyalty Points, and one year of vehicle registration at no additional cost — benefits designed to complement the model’s already strong reputation for efficiency and dependability. The campaign runs until October 7, 2026.

Recognised for its blend of practicality and refinement, the Urban Cruiser has steadily earned its place among Oman’s most trusted compact SUVs, offering drivers a confident, technology-led alternative for navigating city life.

Rather than chasing raw power, the Urban Cruiser’s engineering focuses on making every litre of fuel count. A 1.5-litre four-cylinder engine is paired with an Integrated Starter Generator (ISG), a hybrid-style system that switches between acting as a motor and a generator with the help of a lithium-ion battery. Together



The Toyota Urban Cruiser, backed by Toyota Akeed benefits, is available now at Saud Bahwan Automotive showrooms across Oman. Visit today for a closer look and a test drive before the offer ends.

they produce 102 hp and 135 Nm of torque, routed through a six-speed automatic transmission. Owners can expect 19.8 km/l in fuel efficiency — a figure that adds up to real savings on the daily commute, all while the ride stays quiet even when traffic doesn’t.

Chrome detailing and clean exterior lines give the Urban Cruiser a look that works just as well parked outside the office as it does outside the mall. Inside, the SUV leans into technology: 9-inch infotainment touchscreen, both compatible with Apple

CarPlay® and Android Auto. A Head-Up Display keeps speed and navigation prompts within the driver’s sightline, complemented by a 7-inch digital instrument cluster. Overhead, a dual-sliding panoramic roof opens up the cabin to natural light on request.

PTLCA backs Oman’s first local content forum

MUSCAT: Having laid the groundwork for the large-scale adoption of Local Content as a strategic national priority, the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority (PTLCA) is backing Oman’s first-of-its-kind national strategic platform designed to unite government, industry and the wider private sector in accelerating Local Content as a powerful driver of economic diversification, investment, industrial growth and sustainable development.

Scheduled to take place at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) in Muscat from September 12–15, 2027, the



The agreement was signed on behalf of the Authority by Faiza Alazizi, General Manager of Administration and Finance, while Birba was represented by its Chairman, Abdullah al Harthy.

forum will be held under the auspices of the PTLCA and organised by leading Omani events and strategic communications firm Birba.

The event will be built around the overarching theme, “Enabling Sustainable Growth Through an Integrated Local Content System”.

The initiative comes as Oman seeks to build on significant progress achieved in local content and In-Country Value (ICV), particularly in the energy sector and extend successful localisation models more broadly across the national economy.

Sohar International backs OFA, Oman Super Cup for 2026-27 season

MUSCAT: Sohar International is strengthening its commitment to Omani sport and national talent through a new strategic partnership with the Oman Football Association (OFA), becoming the official and exclusive sponsor of the OFA Cup for the 2026–2027 season, to be held under the title “Sohar International Cup”, as well as the Oman Super Cup for the same season. The partnership was formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed at Sohar International’s headquarters in Muscat by

Khalil bin Salim al Hedaifi, Acting Chief Wholesale Banking Officer at Sohar International, and Eng Qutaiba bin Said al Ghailani, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Oman Football Association. Commenting on the partnership, Khalil bin Salim al Hedaifi, Acting Chief Wholesale Banking Officer at Sohar International, said: “At Sohar International, we believe that our role extends beyond banking to supporting the aspirations and ambitions of the communities we serve. Football brings people



Sohar International continues to support initiatives that contribute to the development of the Sultanate’s sporting, social and economic landscape.

together, inspires generations and provides a powerful platform for Omani talent to shine. Our partnership with the Oman Football Association reflects our commitment to contributing to the continued development of Omani sport and creating meaningful experiences for football fans across the Sultanate of Oman”. Through the sponsorship of the Sohar International Cup, Sohar International will lend its name to one of Oman’s key domestic football competitions, reinforcing the Bank’s commitment to supporting platforms that

bring communities together and celebrate local talent. The Bank’s sponsorship of the Oman Super Cup further strengthens this commitment, supporting a competition that brings together the champions of Omani football in a highly anticipated fixture. Eng Qutaiba bin Said al Ghailani, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the OFA, said: “Partnering with Sohar International reflects the importance of strong collaboration between national institutions and the private sector in advancing Omani football.

SELECTIVEGROWTH



MUSCAT, SALALAH AIRPORTS RECEIVE 9 GLOBAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AWARDS

ISTANBUL: Muscat International Airport and Salalah Airport have received 9 global awards as part of the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) programme’s “Customer Experience Awards”, granted by Airports Council International (ACI) during the council’s 2026 Summit held in Istanbul, Türkiye.

The award underscores the advanced standing of Muscat and Salalah airports and their experience in offering top quality passenger service. It also reflects the integrated efforts of Oman Airports company’s staff, employees and partners within the airport community. It highlights their dedication on a daily basis, as they join hands to offer an efficient travel experience for passengers at every stage of the journey through Omani airports.

Muscat International Airport garnered 4 awards: “Most Enjoyable Airport”, “Cleanest Airport”, “Airport with the Most Dedicated Staff” and “Best Departure Airport” in the category of airports handling 5 million or more passengers in the Asia Pacific region and the Middle East region.

Salalah Airport received 5 awards: “Most Enjoyable Airport”, “Cleanest Airport”, “Easiest Journey Through Airport”, “Airport with the Most Dedicated Staff” and “Best Departure Airport” in the category of airports handling fewer than 5 million passengers in the Asia Pacific region and the Middle East region.

Saud bin Nasser al Hubaishi, Acting CEO of Oman Airports, said that international awards affirm travellers’ confidence in the services provided at Muscat International Airport and Salalah Airport. The accomplishment also consolidates the Sultanate of Oman’s standing in the aviation sector, in terms of service quality and passenger experience, he added.

Al Hubaishi observed that the awards support the role of the two airports in serving travel and tourism and enhancing national and international air connectivity. — ONA

Al Maha introduces new premium fuel Vita Plus

BALQEES AL ORAIMI
MUSCAT, SEPT 6

AL MAHA Petroleum Products Marketing Company has launched Vita Plus — its latest premium fuel product — as part of its efforts to offer advanced fuel solutions that meet the evolving needs of motorists in Oman and provide a smoother and more efficient driving experience.

Vita Plus features an advanced formulation enhanced with high-performance additives designed to help improve combustion, reduce carbon deposits and maintain engine cleanliness, supporting smoother and more consistent engine performance.

The new fuel will initially be available at three selected Al Maha service stations — Ghala South 2, Barka Al Aqeer and Al Ghubra — allowing customers to experience the product and its features. The company plans to make Vita Plus available at additional locations at a later stage.

The advanced cleaning agents incorporated into Vita Plus are designed to help keep internal engine components, including valves and pistons, clean, while also supporting the cleanliness of the fuel delivery system.

The formulation is also intended to promote more stable ignition and improved acceleration response, contributing to a smoother driving experience.

Vita Plus is compatible with a wide range of petrol-powered vehicles, from compact cars and sport utility vehicles (SUVs) to high-performance vehicles.

The fuel has also been developed to support long-term engine efficiency by helping reduce deposits, wear and other factors that may affect the performance of engine components,



Vita Plus features an advanced formulation enhanced with high-performance additives designed to help improve combustion, reduce carbon deposits and maintain engine cleanliness, supporting smoother and more consistent engine performance.

New premium-grade petrol supports engine cleanliness, longer engine life and a smoother driving experience

while supporting a more stable combustion process. Commenting on the launch, Eng Hamad bin Salim al Maghdri, CEO of Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company, said the introduction of Vita Plus reflects the company’s commitment to providing advanced, high-quality fuel solutions that meet the needs of motorists in Oman.

“Vita Plus has been developed to combine engine care with smooth and reliable performance, in line with the expectations of our customers and their everyday driving needs”, he said.

Al Maghdri added that as vehicle technologies continue to evolve,

motorists are increasingly looking for fuels that offer value beyond everyday mobility.

“Through Vita Plus, we are providing our customers with an additional premium fuel option featuring a formulation designed to support performance, protection and reliability”, he said.

Vita Plus has undergone extensive testing covering more than 20,000 kilometres on Omani roads, involving a number of vehicles to assess its performance and reliability under local driving conditions. The testing was conducted by an independent testing team.

Al Mazunah Free Zone localises four projects in H1 2026

BUSINESS REPORTER
SALALAH, SEPT 6

Al Mazunah Free Zone, managed and operated by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), localised four projects worth over RO 620,000 during the first half of 2026. The projects, spanning industrial and logistics activities as well as export offices, will occupy a total area exceeding 2,415 sq m.

With these new investments, the cumulative investment in the free zone has surpassed RO 141 million, while the total leased area has exceeded 1.4 million sq m out of the zone’s overall area of 15,362,305 sq m.



ENG AHMED AL KASBI

Director General of Al Mazunah Free Zone

Moreover, the number of the workforce at Al Mazunah Free Zone has reached 472. Eng Ahmed al Kasbi, Director General of Al Mazunah Free Zone, stated that the free zone is currently preparing to

organise the second edition of Al Mazunah Economic Exhibition and Forum, scheduled for October 20 to 22, 2026. “Building on the success of the first edition, the event aims to strengthen trade and investment ties between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Yemen.

The second edition is designed to broaden the participation of local and international companies, showcase investment opportunities and facilitate strategic partnerships”, Al Kasbi said. He added, “The event is geared towards supporting the presence of local products and services in regional markets and

reinforcing Al Mazunah Free Zone’s role as a gateway for trade exchange between Oman and Yemen.

Additionally, the event aims to attract service companies, manufacturers, brand agents, automotive showrooms, import and export firms, logistics providers, food suppliers and SMEs to discuss new prospects for cooperation and joint ventures”.

Al Kasbi informed that during the first half of 2026, Al Mazunah Free Zone has completed a desalination plant to provide water service and has started receiving requests for the service.

Design works for the infrastructure of Phase

4, covering an area of 1.5 million sq m, were also completed. Madayn is also planning several projects at Al Mazunah Free Zone, including the development of the zone’s sovereign gateway in coordination with the relevant authorities in addition to an internal irrigation network to expand green areas. Other projects planned under the current Five-Year Plan include an industrial incubator and specialised warehouses covering 50,000 sq m, as well as a study to establish a 1,000-sq m cold storage facility and open a representative office for Al Mazunah Free Zone targeting the Yemeni market, capitalising on the

zone’s strategic position as an eastern gateway to Yemen.

The free zone is also preparing to sign an MoU with the operator of Najd Farms to create added value from agricultural products through manufacturing activities at the zone.

These include producing animal feed from agricultural waste generated by Najd Farms and establishing compound fertiliser manufacturing facilities.

Al Kasbi pointed out that future plans also include a study to develop infrastructure for an automotive complex comprising showrooms and public parking over 50,000 sq m.

NEW QUOTAS

OPEC+ keeps output unchanged



OPEC+ is set to keep its oil output policy unchanged for October at a meeting on Sunday, two people familiar with the discussions said, as the producer group needs to agree new quotas before deciding its next output steps.

The meeting comes as the Iran war continues to disrupt oil exports through the Strait of Hormuz, limiting OPEC+’s influence over prices and market share. — Reuters

ECONOMIC PROGRAMME

Türkiye raises inflation forecast



Turkey has raised its year-end inflation forecast to 28.4 per cent, Vice President Cevdet Yilmaz said when he unveiled the country’s medium-term economic programme for 2027-2029. “We expect inflation to start declining again in the fourth quarter of 2026 and to reach 28.4 per cent by the end of the year,” Yilmaz said. The new forecast is significantly higher than previous projections. — AFP

AI BEHAVIOUR

OpenAI admits wiki sites, vows transparency



OpenAI said that its agents had appropriated wiki sites as impromptu message boards, adding that more transparency was needed around such incidents.

The statement follows a Reuters report that a swarm of OpenAI agents had hijacked a communally edited German site earlier this year and used it as a springboard for cheating during tests and other rogue behaviour. — Reuters

The new architecture of global cooperation



DR MYTHILI KOLLURU

The writer is an assistant professor at College of Banking and Financial Studies

THE emerging new global order is marked by intense competition leading to increasingly polarized societies in many countries. Unprecedented technological advances, geopolitical and geo-economic trigger points, and the reconfiguration of global supply chains mark this era. Together, they are creating contested and constricted norms as major powers reshape global influence, regional stability, and erode trust. Geopolitical intelligence is at the heart of corporate decision-making as companies navigate a BANI (brittle, anxious, non-linear, and incomprehensible) landscape marked by intensifying risk and complex dynamics. As global fluidity increases, the major stakeholders- businesses, societies, and governments need to find common solutions through the mechanics of cooperation internationally, regionally, and locally. The Global Co-operation Barometer is an assessment tool developed by the World Economic Forum and McKinsey & Company. The barometer tracks international cooperation through 41 indicators across five interrelated pillars: trade & capital, innovation and technology, climate & natural capital, health & wellness, and peace and security. The report highlights the shifting paradigm of global cooperation. Although global cooperation is broadly steady, its form is changing, largely driven by environmental challenges. Some developments reported by the Global Cooperation Barometer suggest that global cooperation is not fading but becoming selective. Since 2019, traditional multilateral mechanisms and peacekeeping activity have weakened; health and wellness cooperation

has remained steady, but development assistance has fallen sharply. Trade and capital cooperation have flattened, while commercial links are shifting towards more geopolitically aligned partners; the average geopolitical distance of global goods trade fell by about 7% between 2017 and 2024. Cooperation will look different in the emerging global order. International cooperation will be more bespoke, smaller, purpose-based, and shaped by strategic interests and geopolitical threats. Trade and investment will be organized through trusted partnerships, friend-shoring, and regional arrangements, and ‘coalitions of the willing’ will gain importance, especially in critical sectors. Cooperation will look less universal, with a decline in multilateral consensus and an increase in plurilateral and regional digital trade agreements. However, it can still deliver progress on selected shared priorities, provided these arrangements remain sufficiently open, interoperable and inclusive. Bilateral deals, regional trade agreements and sector-specific arrangements are therefore becoming instruments of resilience and strategic alignment, especially around technology, critical minerals, energy, food, pharmaceuticals and digital trade. In times of immense uncertainty and volatility, the Global Cooperation Barometer offers a way for businesses and governments to track the nuances of global cooperation. Although it is evolving, it is resilient amid geopolitical and economic headwinds. Cooperation is not a luxury; it is a necessity. A longitudinal, fact-based view of cooperation shows that cross-border private

The barometer tracks international cooperation through 41 indicators across five interrelated pillars: trade & capital, innovation and technology, climate & natural capital, health & wellness, and peace and security

investment has increased relative to the public sector. Global trade has increased, but it is more diversified and geopolitically aligned. Bilateral trade relations have increased over the past few years. Massive cross-border investments in AI technologies are driving capital flows that enable technology cooperation. A major condition for cooperation is dialogue and the ability to identify overlapping interests among businesses and countries. Compared with earlier decades, the 2026 ranking of the largest companies by market capitalization is heavily skewed toward technology and AI: NVIDIA, Alphabet, Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, TSMC, Broadcom, Meta, and Tesla are all technology, platform, semiconductor, cloud, AI, or technology-enabled firms. This reflects the speed of change and the expectation that digital capacity will shape future growth. The composition of trade is changing; digitally deliverable products grew by 10% in 2025, and digitally deliverable services accounted for 56% of global services exports in 2024. 2026 growth projections are low against the backdrop of tariffs, policy unpredictability and geopolitical disruptions. Digital trade is not evenly distributed: developed economies supplied roughly three-quarters of digitally deliverable exports in 2025, and only 16% of services exports from least-developed countries were digitally delivered, compared with 61% in developed economies. The implication is not that technology has replaced trade; it is that technology is becoming the strategic engine of growth, while trade is being reorganized around digital services.

HOW DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CAN DO MORE WITH LESS

TAKUNDA CHIRAU, STEVEN MASVAURE, & HLANGANANI MNGUNI

As donor governments slash aid budgets, and multilateral institutions come under increasing financial strain, development organizations must confront the combination of growing need and declining resources. How to address persistent challenges such as poverty and inequality, climate change, and humanitarian crises with fewer resources is an especially urgent question in Africa, where many countries have long relied on external financing to support essential programs and services. The answer lies in how development is monitored and evaluated, often framed as a neutral, technical exercise measuring whether projects have achieved their objectives. In fact, evaluation is deeply political: it reflects what is seen as important and whose knowledge is trusted, and it influences which programs continue to receive funding. Thus, evaluation determines how resources are allocated and whose solutions are supported and expanded. More significantly, the standards by which development projects are assessed are important not only for deciding where to channel limited resources, but also for shaping the future of global development governance. The African Union and its member states have long called for reforms to the international development and financial architecture, advocating greater representation, more equitable financing, and a stronger voice for Africa in global decision-making. But these reforms, while important, often overlook another powerful driver of change: control over knowledge and evidence. To date, evaluation frameworks have largely been influenced by donor priorities, with the aim of tracking and comparing results across contexts. As a result, they often fail to capture the realities within communities and rarely reflect local values. When funders define success, the communities most affected by development programs are treated as sources of data rather than partners in deciding what constitutes meaningful change and how to measure it. © Project Syndicate, 2026

Why US needs democratic oversight to win AI race

YQIU WANG & NICHOLAS BEQUELIN

IN Washington, nearly every serious proposal that could constrain American AI companies runs into the same objection: restrictions would endanger national security and future prosperity by giving China the advantage. As OpenAI CEO Sam Altman put it at a 2025 Senate hearing, the United States needs “sensible regulation” that “does not slow us down.” This formulation has intuitive appeal. No one advocates poorly designed rules that would needlessly weaken US innovation. Yet “don’t slow us down” too often becomes a demand for democratic institutions to step aside while a handful of private companies decide how one of the most powerful technologies in history will be built, deployed, and governed. To be sure, much is at stake in the competition with China. A world in which Beijing dominates AI would be more censored, more surveilled, and inherently hostile to human rights and democracy. But America can prevail by leaning into the strengths of an open society: democratic accountability, the rule of law, robust competition, and free public debate. This is precisely where American AI companies can outcompete their Chinese rivals—not despite democratic oversight, but because of it. After all, if an AI system is used in a hospital, school, police station, or on the battlefield, people want to know that it is subject to rules, that decisions affecting their lives can be challenged, and that there are meaningful mechanisms for redress when something goes wrong. These features require clear liability rules, transparency, due process for high-stakes automated decisions, and effective enforcement.

This formulation has intuitive appeal. No one advocates poorly designed rules that would needlessly weaken US innovation. Yet “don’t slow us down” too often becomes a demand for democratic institutions to step aside while a handful of private companies decide how one of the most powerful technologies in history will be built, deployed, and governed.

While democratic controls may in some cases slow deployment, they can also accelerate adoption by making AI systems more trustworthy. Liability rules can encourage companies to address foreseeable risks before they cause harm; transparency can help researchers identify failures that companies miss or prefer not to disclose; and standards for testing, incident reporting, data protection, and human review can give customers greater certainty while reducing risks to society. The US won’t beat China in a race to the bottom, because China’s political system is better equipped for it. It can compel companies and public agencies to pool data across finance, travel, health, policing, and everyday communications, then use that information to control and exploit citizens on a scale no democracy should seek to emulate. It can direct companies to pursue national industrial goals because courts, legislators, and civil society do not constrain the party-state. If America tries to compete by giving its own companies more secrecy, more impunity, or more power over citizens’ lives, it has already lost. Chinese technology companies’ own global track record shows further why democratic accountability matters. Huawei has promoted its “safe city” systems as tools for public security, but in some countries, they have raised concerns about political espionage and weak human-rights safeguards. Chinese-backed infrastructure and surveillance projects have also faced concerns about opaque contracts, corruption, and political influence. That difference matters beyond US borders. People affected by American companies anywhere in the world can draw attention to their cases, seek coverage from the press, and

enlist US civil-society organizations to advocate on their behalf. Similarly, foreign businesses can seek redress through US courts, regulators, and independent mediation channels. None of these independent avenues exist in China to challenge companies acting with the party-state’s support. American AI companies should learn from the recent history of social media. Major platforms spent years resisting regulation as their business models degraded democratic discourse, spread disinformation, undermined privacy, addicted children, and concentrated enormous power. Yet despite growing public frustration, these companies avoided a decisive political reckoning because much of the harm was diffuse and cumulative, making it hard to say why one company bore more responsibility than another. AI companies will have much less room to hide. When an AI system screens someone out of a job, denies a benefit or a loan, gives harmful advice, or produces a false facial-recognition match, the consequences are immediate, measurable, and often traceable to a specific product and company. That clear line of responsibility makes a backlash more likely and harder to deflect. Americans are already wary of AI, with a recent Pew Research Center survey finding that 52% are more concerned than excited about the technology’s growing role in daily life, up from 37% in 2021; only 9% are more excited than concerned. Nonetheless, AI companies appear to be following in social media’s footsteps. Rather than become more transparent, they are seeking privileged access to a small circle of officials and negotiating policies behind closed doors. © Project Syndicate, 2026

CLASSIFIEDS

Driving School

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

Contact No: 99074072

SIT. WANTED

Sales Executive required
For working in oil and gas / building materials industry
Vehicle Driving license preferred
Email: kirit@bustaninternational.com
Mobile: 95544641

SALES professional with 5 yrs Experience in Medical sector.
Graduate, Available in Muscat.
akhilmanu777@gmail.com
Contact: 76323324

LOGISTICS Documentation Executive. Indian male, 25 years, BBA, PG Diploma in Logistics & SCM and have 2 years of experience in this field. Seeking a position in Logistics field
+968 7506 9882
Mail: shafazhussain18@gmail.com

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

Indian male, 10 year experience in Oman as Coordinator have Driving licence. Contact: 95645241

OPERATIONS Support / Tendering / Contract Management / Procurement professional with 18+ years' Oil & Gas experience. NOC & driving license available.
96227272, jijilmathew@gmail.com

15+ experience in building material, project sales & Trade market, deal with corporate project customers, looking for a suitable job.
Contact 78384283

INDIAN male MBA Graduate with 15yrs experience in Oman seek suitable senior position in finance office admin., sales DTC.
Contact: 94158080

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

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

SENIOR Accountant: Indian male 20 years experience in Oman, shipping & logistics, Trading & contracting upto finalisation, cont: 95915852

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

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

Urgently Required

A reputed Company in Oil & Gas Sector in Oman seeking Result oriented and Experienced

SALES MANAGER

Requirements:

- Male, age in the early 40's
- 12 to 15 years of Oman Oil & Gas industry experience.
- Oman Driving License

A Visionary with Business Development Skills, a Leader who can inspire the Team, A Go getter attitude with strong focus on Results, adept at overcoming challenges and Seizing opportunity to drive success and growth!

hroman2026@gmail.com

Urgently Required

A reputed Company in Oil & Gas Sector in Oman seeking Experienced and knowledgeable

SENIOR SALES ENGINEER

Requirements:

- Male, age in the early 30's
- Oman Driving License
- 5 to 7 years of Oman Oil & Gas industry experience.
- Responsible, Self-motivated, Strong leadership and excellent interpersonal Skill.

hroman2026@gmail.com

URGENTLY REQUIRED

An excellent grade and reputed contracting company requires the following:

- * MEP Project Managers (Minimum 15 years Gulf experience)
- * MEP Project Engineer (Minimum 3 years Gulf experience)

Kindly forward their CV to omanjobvacancies2026@gmail.com

SIT. WANTED

EXPERIENCED Accounts & Finance Candidate Seeking Suitable Opportunity. Expertise in Accounts, Invoicing, Reconciliation & Reporting. Contact: 75177637

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

LOOKING for warehouse manager role. Indian male, 14 years GCC experience with driving licence. Available to join immediately. Please contact: 92991621

LOOKING for SUPPLY CHAIN / SALES jobs Indian male 24 years. Commerce graduate, Experience in logistics, procurement and sales in reputed company in Oman.Valid Oman D/L. Contact +96891121694, issacantony2002@gmail.com

SIT. WANTED

PAKISTANI male, having diploma in mechanical engineering, 10+ years experience as "sales engineer" in UAE and 15 years experience as "operation manager" in Oman with D/L. Looking for job
Contact: 99495131
email: manzoor.Ahmed1997@gmail.com

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

INDIAN male civil engineer with more than 30 years experience in different ministers, seek immediate suitable position.
Contact: 94158080

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

FOR RENT

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

4 Ready made office space for rent in Bank Melli Iran building MBD area Ruwi, opposite Centre point.
Contact: 99011352.

To advertise on our social media platforms and website

Please Contact our Team

95210257

SIT. WANTED

BUSINESS Development Executive | Sales Coordinator Indian Female | B.Com Graduate | 2 Years' Experience A motivated and professional B.Com graduate with 2 years of experience in Business Development is seeking a suitable opportunity with a reputed company in Muscat, Oman.
Contact: +968 9015 1927

SIT. VACANCY

REQUIRED: house boy and gardener House Boy and Gardner minimum two years experience. knowledge of cleaning, gardening
Send the details by email: HR@swan-intl.com

INDIAN Male, BSc, 20 years experience seeks suitable position as System Administrator / System Engineer.
Contact: 93642216

OMAN DAILY Observer

FREE* CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

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

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

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

To advertise in Ministry of Information channels



To advertise

71455532- 71455531- 71455530
adv@omaninfo.om
izdihar_info izdihar.info



ART/LIFE



OMANI ARTISTS JOIN GLOBAL ART SYMPOSIUM

> 20

FILM SPOTLIGHT

ROBERT PATTINSON APPEARS IN PREDATOR THRILLER



Pattinson will hit screens in the dark thriller later this month. — AFP

British star Robert Pattinson will look to extend his stellar 2026 box office run by playing a paedophile-hunting TV presenter in upcoming film “Primetime”, which premieres at the Venice Film Festival on Saturday.

Pattinson will hit screens in the dark thriller later this month, the first movie for which he has a producer credit and a first feature film from 30-year-old director Lance Oppenheim.

“I was just extremely attached to this project from the beginning and attached to everybody involved in it”, the 40-year-old told reporters in Venice on Saturday along with the cast, which includes American singer Phoebe Bridgers. Having seen a trailer for the movie, Hansen has praised Pattinson’s eerie portrayal of him while also hinting at possible legal action over what looks like a largely unflattering portrait.

“Obviously he has practised imitating me and while I think it’s overly dramatic, I think there is a pretty good imitation there in the trailer”, Hansen said last month.

Pattinson said the role had been challenging, with the shoot squeezed in before he started filming on summer box office hit “The Odyssey” by Christopher Nolan.

“I found the accent really difficult”, he explained, before quipping: “I definitely can hear a little Chris Hansen in The Odyssey when I watch it”. The 40-year-old has become one of Hollywood’s most bankable stars, with his films this year including hit “The Drama” with Zendaya, as well as “The Odyssey” in which he plays the villainous Antinous.

As co-producer, Pattinson has invested in the production of “Primetime” through his own company Icki Eneo Arlo, giving him greater control and potential financial rewards.

“He wasn’t just my leading man. He was a like tried and true collaborator and we forged this thing together”, Oppenheim said in Venice, explaining that Pattinson had taken part in casting, production and editing.

American indie folk singer Bridgers, a friend of Oppenheim’s, is one of the most surprising casting choices, with the “Scott Street” performer playing a cameo as Hansen’s wife.

“She was just so relaxed and I was just so impressed, she completely got the tone”, Pattinson said. “When Lance asked me, I was like ‘No way dude, I can’t”, Bridgers said.

The film, made with independent US studio A24, is one of the most anticipated in the main Venice festival competition this year. — AFP

QUICK FEATURES



MUSIC

Brazilian singer and bassist Chaene da Gama of Black Pantera performs at Rock in Rio in Rio de Janeiro. — AFP



TRADITIONS

Princess Tensindiso Zulu joins maidens carrying reeds to the king during an annual Zulu ceremony in Ingwavuma, South Africa. — AFP



AWARDS

US television host Jimmy Kimmel poses with the Outstanding Host for a Game Show Emmy. — AFP

INSTA PICKS



“Male baya weaver”



“The beauty of Dhofar”

SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

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

OASIS FANS GATHER IN VENICE FOR REUNION FILM



An Oasis fan sits in the sun waiting for the film's premiere. — AFP

Fans of British rock band Oasis gathered in Venice on Saturday ahead of the premiere of a behind-the-scenes film about the group's reunion tour last year, with the Gallagher brothers set to walk the red carpet.

Die-hard followers of the Manchester duo reserved places in front of the main Venice Film Festival hall in the morning, prepared to wait all day in hot and humid conditions ahead of the 9 pm premiere.

The Disney film “Don't Look Back in Anger” captures the reconciliation of Noel and Liam Gallagher after 15 years of not talking to each other following an infamous bust-up in Paris in 2009.

Their reunion, which led to the 2025 world tour, saw an outpouring of nostalgia and support for Oasis, a pioneer of

so-called “Britpop” in the 1990s and one of the biggest rock bands of the past 30 years.

The film was made by British music documentary makers Dylan Southern and Will Lovelace along with Steven Knight, the man behind the “Peaky Blinders” TV show who is also writing the script for the next James Bond movie.

“Don't Look Back in Anger” is part of a trend of major artists releasing tightly controlled big-screen films about their tours, allowing fans who missed out on tickets to get an alternative view of the shows.

Taylor Swift's film about her Eras Tour in 2023 grossed an estimated \$260 million worldwide, while Beyonce also released a movie the same year about her tour, raking in \$44 million. — AFP



A worker sorts through silk yarns at a traditional dyeing workshop in Srinagar. — AFP

ONCE A TOP EXPORT, PRIZED KASHMIR CARPET FADES



Kashmiri craftswomen weave silk carpets at a factory in Srinagar. — AFP

It has survived wars and upheavals, but the famed handwoven Kashmir carpet industry is now battling a steady decline as younger generations abandon the painstaking craft.

Masterpieces woven from mulberry silk or pure sheep wool by artisans have adorned imperial courts, museums and luxury homes across the world over the centuries.

The hand-spun yarn, dyed in natural colours, is woven on handlooms, packing in between 300 and several thousand knots per square inch, depending on the intricacy of the design.

Until the 1980s, carpets were Kashmir's top export, but volumes have since steadily declined, with wars in Ukraine and the Middle East the latest blows to the trade.

“It hurts me to see this”, weaver Bashir Ahmad, 78, said.

“If more young people had taken up this craft, they could have made a living from it”.

But the long hours, low wages and changing aspirations have made the profession less attractive to younger Kashmiris.

A master weaver today earns only around 500 rupees (\$5) a day, less than many unskilled labourers.

“There are no government jobs for everyone, and my child, or anyone else's child, could have taken up this work and tried to make a career out of it”, said Ahmad.

“But things are no longer the same”. As they craft, artisans chant aloud the design code handwritten on a strip of paper known as talim — shorthand using ancient symbols for numbers and colours — knotting the threads string by string.



A Kashmiri craftsman weaves a silk carpet at a factory in Srinagar. — AFP

Depending upon the size and design of the carpet, a piece can take a group of artisans up to a year to weave. They can fetch \$20,000 in the international market.

The art of fine carpet weaving was introduced in the Himalayan valley of Kashmir in the 15th century by Persian travellers and received patronage during the reign of its last local king, Zain-ul-Abidin Budshah.

The handicraft flourished in Srinagar and later spread to other towns and villages across Indian-administered Kashmir.

Despite the decline in the volume of work, some weavers are determined to carry on with the beloved tradition.

“As long as I have the strength and the days ahead of me, I will continue doing this work”, said Mushtaq Ahmad, 75, who has been weaving

carpets for 50 years.

Industry estimates suggest the sector employs around 30,000 people, down sharply from hundreds of thousands three decades ago.

Officials say efforts are underway to modernise the sector and attract new workers.

“As part of those efforts, we are providing modern carpet looms free of cost”, said Zubair Ahmad, director of the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology in Srinagar.

The government has also introduced “geographical indication” tags that help distinguish genuine Kashmiri carpets from cheap imitations.

“The idea is to ensure their authenticity because there was a trust deficit between buyers and sellers,” director Ahmad said. — AFP

FEATURES

HAFSA AL TAMIMI
AND FAKHRETAJ
AL ISMAILI
REPRESENT THE
SULTANATE OF
OMAN IN GERMANY



Omani artist Hafsa al Tamimi .



Omani artist Fakhretaj al Ismaili.



Omani artists Hafsa al Tamimi and Fakhretaj al Ismaili represented Oman at the 5th Krefeld International Art Symposium in Germany.

Omani artists join global art
symposium in Germany

NAJAH AL RIYAMI

OMANI visual artists Hafsa al Tamimi and Fakhretaj al Ismaili have represented the Sultanate of Oman at the 5th Krefeld International Art Symposium in Germany, joining artists from different countries for a week of creative and cultural exchange.

Held in the German city of Krefeld from August 22 to 29, the symposium brought together a selection of international artists at the Kulturzentrum Südbahnhof. The programme culminated in a closing exhibition showcasing works created by the participating artists throughout the symposium.

Organised by Werkhaus eV, the international gathering was designed to encourage creative exchange and cultural dialogue between artists while giving participants an opportunity to encounter different artistic experiences in an atmosphere of collaboration and inspiration.

Throughout the week, each artist developed work informed by their individual artistic practice, experiences and cultural background. Together, the works presented at the closing exhibition reflected the range of perspectives brought to Krefeld by artists from different parts of the world.

For Al Tamimi and Al Ismaili, participation offered an opportunity to bring Omani contemporary art into an international setting while engaging directly with artists working within different cultural and creative contexts.

“For us, participating in this international symposium was a valuable artistic and cultural experience”, Al Tamimi said. “It allowed us to represent Oman through our artistic practice while also learning from artists from different backgrounds and sharing ideas and experiences with them”. Much of the value of an international art symposium lies in what happens beyond the finished works. Artists spend time working alongside one another, observing unfamiliar techniques and discussing the experiences that influence their creative practices.



An artwork created during the Krefeld symposium, reflecting the artists' diverse cultural and creative perspectives.

In Krefeld, these encounters created opportunities for participants to discover different approaches to visual expression while sharing aspects of their own cultures.

For the Omani artists, this exchange also provided a means of introducing audiences and fellow participants to Oman through contemporary artistic expression. Their work became part of a wider international conversation in which different identities and experiences could meet through art.

The symposium highlighted how visual art can create connections across geographical and linguistic boundaries. While participating artists arrived with their own methods and influences, the shared environment allowed ideas to move between them and new professional and creative relationships to emerge.

The closing exhibition at Kulturzentrum

Südbahnhof on August 29 brought together the works developed during the symposium, giving the public an opportunity to experience the different artistic perspectives that had occupied the same creative space over the preceding week.

The 5th Krefeld International Art Symposium forms part of an ongoing initiative in Krefeld that brings artists from different countries together through visual art.

For Al Tamimi and Al Ismaili, the experience was both an opportunity to represent Oman internationally and a chance to engage with a wider community of artists. Their participation adds another international platform for Omani visual art, allowing creative voices from the Sultanate of Oman to become part of an expanding dialogue between artists and cultures.