

OMAN
Observer
DAILY

VOL. 44, NO. 355
PAGES 20 | BAISAS 200

SUNRISE 06:14 AM

PRAYER TIMINGS

FAJR 04:57 AM

DHUHR 11:55 PM

ASR 03:08 PM

MAGHRIB 05:32 PM

ISHA 06:44 PM

20

SAILING THROUGH
TIME: OMAN'S
ENDURING MARITIME
LEGACY

INBRIEF

HM'S GREETINGS TO
DOMINICA, PANAMA

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Sylvanie Burton of the Commonwealth of Dominica on her country's Independence Anniversary. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to President Sylvanie. His Majesty also wished the people of the Dominica further prosperity and growth. His Majesty the Sultan also sent a cable of greetings to President José Raúl Mulino of the Republic of Panama on his country's National Day. In the cable, His Majesty wished Panama continued stability and growth.

HM HOCKEY CUP
FINAL ON NOV 10

At the behest of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, HH Sayyid Dr Fahd bin Al Julanda al Said, Vice-Chancellor of SQU, will preside over the final of the 55th edition of His Majesty the Sultan's Hockey Cup 2025. The event will take place on November 10 at Oman Hockey Stadium in Al Amerat, starting at 7:00 PM. The final rounds of the tournament commence with the participation of 8 clubs: Ahli Sidab, Seeb, Al Amerat, Salalah, Qurayat, Dhofar, Sohar and Masirah. The final rounds kick off with two matches: the first between Ahli Sidab and Masirah at 6:00 PM, followed by the match between Salalah and Dhofar at 8:00 PM.

His Majesty's visit to boost
bilateral cooperation

H M B E G I N S S T A T E V I S I T T O S P A I N T O D A Y

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik will go on a state visit to the Kingdom of Spain on Monday. A statement, issued by the Diwan of Royal Court to this effect, reads as follows: "In response to an invitation received by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik from King Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain, His Majesty the Sultan will go on a state visit to Spain during November 3-5. The visit comes in a manifestation of ties of friendship between the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Spain. It aims to meet the aspirations of the two countries. "During the visit, the two monarchs will explore areas of cooperation between the two countries in various spheres, and means of promoting them to serve the joint interests. The visit will also address a set of regional and international developments." His Majesty's state visit to the Kingdom of Spain represents a significant international engagement, building upon over five decades of bilateral ties founded on mutual respect and understanding. For the past 50 years, Omani-Spanish relations have been defined by mutual respect and constructive cooperation,

During the visit, the two monarchs will explore areas of cooperation between the two countries in various spheres, and means of promoting them to serve the joint interests. The visit will also address a set of regional and international developments and represents a significant international engagement, building upon over five decades of bilateral ties

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik

King Felipe VI

culminating in a robust partnership across diverse fields, with politics and economics being particularly prominent. This is demonstrated through a consistent exchange of views, high-level meetings and bilateral agreements, including the visit of King Felipe VI of Spain to meet with His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to offer condolences on the passing of the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos. The Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Spain enjoy collaborative ventures in numerous sectors, especially economic and investment fields. Business forums, bilateral agreements, MoUs between public and private entities, and investment funds all contribute to a synergistic relationship that enhances mutual benefits and capitalises on opportunities in renewable energy, tourism, food security, infrastructure, technology and defence. — ONA

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MOH 334/7873/2025

RGO CELEBRATES ANNUAL DAY

THE Royal Guard of Oman (RGO) celebrated its Annual Day, which falls on November 1 every year, under the auspices of Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister.

The celebration included the graduation of a batch of new recruits and a variety of segments, including military formations and a parachute jump, all of which embodied the high level of efficiency and precision achieved by the RGO through continuous development under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander. The celebration, held at the Military Parade Ground at the RGO Command, began with the playing of the Royal anthem.

The parade commander then requested permission from the chief guest to inspect the front row. Following this, the parade presented a silent drill display, which included forming the phrase ‘Far taqi Ham al Sama’ (Ascend to the Apex of the Sky) and a formation of the map of the nation on the parade ground, reflecting the high attention and gracious care the RGO receives from the Supreme Commander. The display also highlighted the high level of mastery and skill possessed by RGO personnel. Subsequently, the parade



RGO celebrated its Annual Day under the auspices of Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy. — ONA



performed a slow march in steady military rows and confident steps to the military musical rhythms of the RGO Band, passing the main dais.

The Foreign Minister handed out certificates of excellence to the top graduates of the new recruits course. On this occasion, the Foreign

Minister, the patron of the ceremony, awarded the RGO Special Service Medal to a number of RGO personnel in recognition of their efforts during their service and in appreciation of their loyalty in serving the nation and His Majesty the Supreme Commander and their dedication to performing their sacred

national duty. Following this, the parade chanted the RGO anthem, accompanied by a parachute display by the RGO Free Fall Team. The graduates then chanted the Pledge of Allegiance and cheered thrice for the life of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander. — ONA



TANMIA GCC Diversified Equity Fund (TATHMEER)

Board of Director Report For the Quarter ended September 30th, 2025.

Dear Unitholders,

On behalf of the board, I am pleased to present the results of TANMIA GCC Diversified Equity Fund (TATHMEER) for the Quarter September 30th, 2025.

Period	Fund Performance	Benchmark Performance
1Q'2025	-0.61%	0.77%
2Q'2025	-1.67%	-0.49%
3Q'2025	1.81%	3.50%
YTD	-0.50%	3.78%
Last 5 Years*	7.76%	7.76%
Since Inception	3.55%	-1.33%

*Annualized

The period under review was challenging. While the world's two largest economies continued trade negotiations and introduced new tariffs, rapid technological growth and increased investments supported market optimism. Despite global debt concerns, the fund managed the environment well by adjusting its asset allocation and stock selection, achieving a quarterly return of 1.81%. Since inception, the fund has outperformed its benchmark by 4.86%. This consistent performance underscores the resilience and adaptability of the fund's investment strategy, even during periods of market turbulence.

Global and GCC Markets Performance

Global equity markets performed strongly in the third quarter of 2025, supported by advancements in AI and technology, as well as the U.S. Federal Reserve's rate cut in September. However, concerns over rising debt levels pushed investors toward safe-haven assets such as gold, which reached new highs. Cryptocurrency markets, in contrast, remained highly volatile during the period.

In the GCC, markets benefited from a mix of regional and local factors. Oman led with a 15.12% gain, supported by attractive valuations, multiple liquidity funds, and increased foreign participation. Saudi Arabia rose 3.07% following the late-September announcement of higher foreign ownership limits, which spurred a quick rally. Qatar increased by 2.89%, driven by strong materials and industrial sectors. Dubai advanced 2.38% on gains in real estate and banking, while Kuwait rose 1.99% due to government initiatives to boost the economy. Abu Dhabi and Bahrain recorded smaller gains of 0.57% and 0.22%, respectively.

Brief Summary of Accounts

Particulars	30 th Sept 2025 USD	30 th Sept 2024 USD
Revenues	549,367	798,392
Total Comprehensive Income	361,148	631,751
Net Asset Value	22,267,887	22,601,116
Fund Capital	19,726,054	18,759,198
NAV per unit	1.131*	1.206

*Adjusted for 6% Dividend

Outlook

In the upcoming period, expectations for further interest rate cuts have increased, while upcoming inflation and labor market data will be crucial in determining market direction, despite delays in their release due to the U.S. government shutdown. At the regional level, outlook for the GCC remains positive, supported by political stability and sustained consumer spending, along with an expected increase in tourist arrivals during the fourth quarter as weather conditions improve. However, weak oil prices and government spending rationalization, particularly in Saudi Arabia, may weigh on the pace of economic growth in some countries. Despite these challenges, the Fund's disciplined approach in stock selection and portfolio management — with a focus on strong, fundamentally sound companies — positions it well to achieve stable and consistent returns over the medium and long term.

Expressions of Gratitude

We pay our tributes to His Majesty, Haitham Bin Tarik, for his inspiring leadership and vision that will continue to lead us further on the path to greater prosperity, would also like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the regulatory authorities and our valued unit holders for their continued support. Special thanks are also due to the Fund Management Company for its consistent efforts in managing the fund with efficiency and dedication.

Said Hilal Al Habsi
Chairperson

Managed By:
Oman National Investment Development Company SAOC
P.O.Box 3028, Postal Code 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman, Tel +968 22 300 400 Fax +968 22 300 420
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Al Kawthar Islamic Shariah Compliant Fund

"Winner of the Best Sharia-Compliant Investment Award for the year 2024."

Board of Director Report For the Quarter September 30th, 2025.

Dear Unitholders,

On behalf of the board, I am pleased to present the results of Al Kawthar Fund (Shariah Compliant) for the Quarter September 30th, 2025

The period under review was challenging. While the world's two largest economies continued trade negotiations and introduced new tariffs, rapid technological growth and increased investments supported market optimism. Despite global debt concerns, the fund managed the environment well by adjusting its asset allocation and stock selection, achieving a quarterly return of 2.44%. Since inception, it has outperformed its benchmark by 0.57% and delivered over 28% in cumulative returns over five years, reflecting the strength and flexibility of its investment strategy during volatile market conditions.

Period	Fund Performance	Benchmark Performance
3Q'2025	2.44%	3.11%
2Q'2025	-2.44%	-2.39%
YTD	-1.04%	0.39%
Last 5 Years*	5.10%	4.72%
Since Inception*	2.46%	1.89%

*Annualized

Global and GCC Markets Performance

Global equity markets performed strongly in the third quarter of 2025, supported by advancements in AI and technology, as well as the U.S. Federal Reserve's rate cut in September. However, concerns over rising debt levels pushed investors toward safe-haven assets such as gold, which reached new highs. Cryptocurrency markets, in contrast, remained highly volatile during the period.

In the GCC, markets benefited from a mix of regional and local factors. Oman led with a 15.12% gain, supported by attractive valuations, multiple liquidity funds, and increased foreign participation. Saudi Arabia rose 3.07% following the late-September announcement of higher foreign ownership limits, which spurred a quick rally. Qatar increased by 2.89%, driven by strong materials and industrial sectors. Dubai advanced 2.38% on gains in real estate and banking, while Kuwait rose 1.99% due to government initiatives to boost the economy. Abu Dhabi and Bahrain recorded smaller gains of 0.57% and 0.22%, respectively.

Brief Summary of Accounts

Particulars	30 th Sept 2025 RO	30 th Sept 2024 RO
Revenues	59,310	332,722
Total Comprehensive Income	(69,267)	157,402
Net Asset Value	6,196,972	6,034,153
Fund Capital	5,989,458	5,332,790
NAV per unit	1.035	1.132

Interim unaudited statement of financial position as at 30 September 2025 (Expressed in Omani Rials)

	30 Sept 2025	31 Dec 2024	30 Sept 2024
	Unaudited	Audited	Unaudited
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Investments at fair value through profit or loss	5,547,663	5,761,377	5,770,132
Receivables	313,624	44,147	25,376
Cash and cash equivalents	385,603	193,755	334,547
Total assets	6,246,890	5,999,279	6,130,055
UNITHOLDERS' FUNDS			
Fund capital	5,989,458	5,331,687	5,332,790
Retained earnings	207,514	569,554	701,363
Total Unitholders' funds	6,196,972	5,901,241	6,034,153
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Redemption payable	0	0	0
Accruals and other payables	21,683	70,790	51,508
Due to a related party	28,235	27,248	44,394
Total liabilities	49,918	98,038	95,902
TOTAL UNITHOLDERS' FUNDS AND LIABILITIES	6,246,890	5,999,279	6,130,055
Net asset value per unit	1.035	1.107	1.132

Interim unaudited statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the nine months period ended 30 September 2025 (Expressed in Omani Rials)

	(9 Months) 30-Sep-25 Unaudited	(9 Months) 30-Sep-24 Unaudited
INCOME		
Dividend income from financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	166,545	175,097
Realised gain on sale of financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	(193,301)	122,734
Unrealised gain on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	7,683	31,146
Foreign exchange gain	22,383	3,745
Other income	56,000	-
	59,310	332,722
EXPENSES		
Management, performance, custodian and fund administration fees	(92,041)	(93,908)
General and administrative expenses	(36,536)	(81,412)
	(128,577)	(175,320)
Net profit for the period	(69,267)	157,402
Taxation	-	-
Net profit / (loss) for the period	(69,267)	157,402
Earnings per unit	(0.012)	0.030

Rashid Al Musalhi
Chairperson of the fund

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PROMISEFULFILLED



Yuthar al Rawahi

CANCER CONGRESS
BEGINS TODAY

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
MUSCAT, NOV 2

The World Cancer Congress Summit and Exhibition 2025, with the title, ‘A promise fulfilled, A dream come true’, organised by Oman Cancer Association, begins on November 3 to 6 at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The founder of Oman Cancer Association, Yuthar al Rawahi, explained, “Our goal was to transform cancer from a taboo subject within the community into an accepted reality, and to convince people of the importance of cancer prevention and early diagnosis through awareness, education and screening.”

She pointed out that the unique world congress offers a platform for a holistic approach to cancer prevention, awareness, screening and management.

The summit is expected to provide opportunities for global interaction, networking and guidelines to the needs of each participating country.

Dr Wahid bin Ali al Kharousi, President, Oman Cancer Association, said, “There has been a complete paradigm shift through our awareness campaigns, screening programmes, education, training, human resource development, research, and many other landmark projects and special programmes dedicated to serving cancer patients, their families, and the wider community.” The exhibition is to showcase the latest facilities and technologies available for cancer management. The exhibition will see participation of pharmaceutical companies, equipment manufacturers, international and local hospitals managing cancer, and paramedical treatment and rehabilitation institutions. The exhibition will be open to the public in the afternoons.

“This achievement has only been possible because of the unwavering support of the government, public and private sectors, individuals, researchers, caregivers, volunteers, donors, staff, the media, patients and their families,” noted Yuthar, a four-time cancer survivor.

OHRC
WELCOMES
LANDMARK
DISABILITY
RIGHTS LAW

MUSCAT: The Oman Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has expressed its appreciation for the issuance of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities under Royal Decree No 92/2025, describing it as a qualitative milestone in advancing human rights in Oman – particularly for priority groups.

The Commission noted that the law reinforces the principles of human dignity, equality and non-discrimination among all members of society. It further emphasised that the law aligns with the provisions

of the Basic Statute of the State and reflects Oman’s international commitments, especially under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as best practices and standards adopted by United Nations bodies.

The OHRC commended the inclusion of several practical measures that ensure effective implementation, such as the establishment of a National Register for Persons with Disabilities, issuance of an official identification card, provision of reasonable

accommodation, sign language interpretation and electronic services in Braille.

The law also mandates universal design standards in buildings, roads and public facilities, and sets an employment quota for persons with disabilities across both public and private sectors. Additionally, it grants exemptions, fee waivers, and financial incentives to institutions supporting inclusion. In accordance with its mandate, the Commission affirmed that it will closely monitor the implementation of the law.

Landmark law to empower
persons with disabilities

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

OMAN has issued the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aimed at ensuring empowerment, integration and participation in sustainable development.

The law guarantees persons with disabilities full rights without discrimination, in line with national policies and international agreements. It seeks to promote equal opportunities across education, employment, health and social participation while strengthening protection and care frameworks.

According to the Ministry of Social Development, the law consists of 77 articles across five chapters, covering definitions, general provisions, civil and human rights, rehabilitation, the National Committee for Persons with Disabilities and penalties.

Hamoud bin Mardad al Shabibi, the ministry’s spokesperson, said the new law reflects His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik’s commitment to safeguarding the rights of all citizens and advancing the services offered to people with disabilities. “This law enriches Oman’s legislative system, aligning with international standards and ensuring inclusion across all aspects of life,” he said.

The law defines a person with a disability as anyone facing long-term physical, mental, intellectual, sensory, or social impairments that hinder their full participation in society. It guarantees protection



The law guarantees persons with disabilities full rights without discrimination.

from all forms of exploitation and discrimination, ensuring independence, dignity and equal access to opportunities.

A National Register for Persons with Disabilities will be established, with official identification cards issued to those registered. Government entities are required to provide sign language interpreters, Braille-compatible digital services, and allocate financial resources to enhance accessibility.

Education receives special focus, guaranteeing persons with disabilities equal access to all levels of learning. The law mandates inclusive education programmes, scholarship allocations and specialised support for learners aged 4 to 22.

In healthcare, it ensures access to preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitative ser-

vices, including maternal care for women with disabilities. Authorities must conduct early screening for genetic disorders and provide essential medical equipment.

Economically, the law grants customs and tax exemptions on aids, equipment and vehicles for persons with disabilities, as well as fee waivers for legal cases and construction permits for accessible facilities. Employment provisions reserve 5 per cent of jobs in public and private institutions with over 40 employees, along with reduced working hours for employees with disabilities or their caregivers.

Socially, the law affirms the right to marry and form a family, prohibits child-parent separation on grounds of disability, and ensures priority access to land, housing and monthly stipends.

Forum unlocks bioeconomic potential

KAUSHALENDRA SINGH
@patkaushal

The Third Economic Forum on Genetic Resources, titled ‘GenoBusiness Forum’, highlighted the fundamentals of natural resources in Dhofar and called for necessary innovation to tap the resources.

The event, held at the Salalah Rotana Resort, was opened under the auspices of Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim al Mahrouqiyah, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

Organised by the Oman Centre for Animal and Plant Genetic Resources (MAWARID) in collaboration with Dhofar University, the forum brought scientists, researchers, and entrepreneurs from Oman and across the world – including the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, Sri Lanka, Singapore and South Africa – underscoring its global scope and collaborative spirit.

The two-day event focuses on strategies to enhance the economic



The two-day event focuses on strategies to enhance the economic value of Oman’s genetic resources.

value of Oman’s genetic resources and promote biodiversity as a foundation for innovation and sustainable industry growth.

Building on its previous editions, the forum serves as a national and international platform for exploring how Oman’s rich biodiversity can be transformed into competitive, high-value industries spanning biotechnology, health, nutrition, cosmetics, perfumes and ecotourism.

In her opening address, Najah bint Mohammed al Rashidiyah, Director-General of the Innovation Centre, emphasised that the forum aligns with Oman Vision 2040, which positions innovation and

the knowledge economy at the heart of national progress.

She highlighted that investing in genetic resources represents a practical opportunity to transform Oman’s natural wealth into viable economic ventures, particularly in health, food and biotechnology sectors.

She also pointed to initiatives such as the Manfa’a programme, which empowers innovators to convert their research into successful commercial projects.

“The outcomes of this forum will contribute meaningfully to Oman’s economic diversification and to empowering youth as key drivers of innovation and sustainable growth,”

she noted.

Dr Mohammed bin Nasser al Yahyai, Director of MAWARID, stressed that the forum coincides with preparations for Oman’s next five-year development plan. He explained that the focus now lies in strengthening national and global partnerships to turn Oman’s genetic resources into sustainable products with both scientific and economic value.

He stated, “We are building a solid foundation for preserving and documenting Oman’s genetic heritage while opening new horizons for research and application in the life sciences.” Citing global innovation trends and recent Nobel-winning research, Dr Al Yahyai expressed confidence that Oman’s genetic assets can become globally competitive products that drive future industries.

He also praised the participation of young Omani innovators, saying: “The new generation is proving that knowledge can indeed be transformed into products, projects and tangible economic value.”

Tender

مدائن
madayn

The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) announces to extend the date of buying for the following Tenders:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Last date of Buying	Date of Submission	Type of Work	Register Degree	Fee (R.O)
8/2025/ PEIE/ HQ-8	CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES (FACILITY BUILDING, PLUG & PLAY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, GREENHOUSES) AT SUWAIQ INDUSTRIAL CITY (PHASE-1) AL BATINAH NORTH GOVERNORATE	13-11-2025	30-11-2025	Construction	Excellent	2500
9/2025/ PEIE/ HQ-9	CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES AND PLUG & PLAY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AT MADHA INDUSTRIAL CITY AT MUSANDAM GOVERNORATE	13-11-2025	30-11-2025	Construction	Excellent	500

Interested Companies registered with Projects, Tenders & Local Content Authority may obtain the Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against non-refundable payment as mentioned above for each set of document. Tenders shall be submitted on line on the given website enclosing an **electronic copy of the bid bond** in the form of a **bank guarantee** issued by one of the banks operating in the Sultanate of Oman, amounting to **1% of the bid value**, valid for **120 days** from the date of submission of the bids, and addressed to the **Chairman of the concerned committee** as per the tender documents.

1. **Tender Inquiry:** All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online on eTendering System.

2. **eTendering System Inquiry:** All correspondence pertaining to the eTendering System technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: etenderhd@ita.gov.om and +968 24166670, 24166609

Madayn is not bound to accept the lowest or any other Offer and has the right to cancel these tenders and the tenderers have no right to claim for any compensations.

Note: Bidders must comply with Omanization requirements specified by Ministry of Work.

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SOCIALPROJECT



ALECSO delegation visited Hind Bint Omar Basic Education School in Al Suwaiq.

ALECSO PRAISES OMANI SCHOOL FOR SDG EFFORTS

AL SUWAIQ: A delegation from the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) visited Hind Bint Omar Basic Education School in the Wilayat of Al Suwaiq.

The visit formed part of the pilot phase of the ‘Stories on Sustainable Development’ project implemented by the organisation.

The delegation aimed to observe the school’s initiatives in promoting awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among students through educational stories and interactive activities designed to enhance environmental and social responsibility while encouraging sustainable practices within the school environment.

During the visit, the ALECSO team reviewed several student-led educational activities and toured an exhibition showcasing projects in scientific, educational and professional fields. Students also presented cultural and artistic performances highlighting Omani heritage and national identity. The visit also served as an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss best practices in integrating sustainability concepts into school curricula. — ONA

‘Youth Ambassadors’ programme launched

SAUD AL ANSARI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

UNDER The auspices of Abdullah bin Salim al Harthy, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth has launched the third edition of the ‘Youth Ambassadors’ programme, a live United Nations simulation featuring 103 participants from 14 Arab countries.

The initiative aims to cultivate a new generation of young Arab leaders capable of representing regional identity in international forums while contributing to comprehensive political, economic, social and environmental development.

Hilal al Siyabi, Director-General of Youth at the Ministry, stated that the programme allows participants to refine leadership and diplomatic skills, enhance dialogue, negotiation, and teamwork abilities, and gain an in-depth understanding of the UN system. “Youth are not merely an age group; they are a renewable force and genuine partners in shaping the nation’s present and future prosperity,” he added. This year, participants engaged directly with international



Participants praised the programme for fostering intercultural exchange.

The initiative aims to cultivate a new generation of young Arab leaders capable of representing regional identity in international forums while contributing to comprehensive political, economic, social and environmental development.

organisations through sessions led by experts from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), preparing them to undertake official roles that amplify their positive impact on global issues.

Al Siyabi emphasised that collaboration with the Foreign Ministry, the Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science, and the Ministry of Finance was instrumental in the programme’s success.

Salmah al Rashdi, a member of the project team, highlighted that the programme equips youth with public-speaking and media skills, practical knowledge of diplomatic mechanisms, and an understanding of UN councils. The curriculum

included training workshops on negotiation, diplomacy and drafting national positions, as well as simulations of the Human Rights Council and Security Council with a focus on climate change.

Cultural and tourism activities supplemented the diplomatic training, offering participants an immersive experience of Omani heritage. Participants praised the programme for fostering intercultural exchange, building confidence and strengthening professional networks across Arab nations. Sulaiman al Salhi, an Omani participant, said, “The programme equips us with vital diplomatic competencies to represent our countries effectively at regional and international levels.”



SAF CHIEF RECEIVES UK OFFICIAL

MUSCAT: Vice Admiral Abdullah bin Khamis al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (SAF), received on Sunday in his office at Muaskar Al Murtafaa Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Knighton, Chief of Defence Staff of the United Kingdom (UK). During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views and discussed several matters of mutual interest.

— ONA

TENDER NOTICE

وزارة الزراعة والثروة السمكية والمياه
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources Announces the following Tenders:-

Tender No.	Tender Title	Tender Document Sales Start Date	Tender Document Sales End Date	Bid Submission Closing	Companies that are Eligible to Participate	Tender Document Fee (R.O)
712/2025/MAFWR/HQ-81	Maintenance Works of Wared Recharge Dam in Wilayat Ibra Governorate of North Al-Sharqiyah	Wednesday 22/10/2025	Tuesday 11/11/2025	Monday 1/12/2025	Specialized companies registered with Excellent, First grades	(100/-) Omani riyals for local companies ----- (10/-) Omani riyals for SMEs
715/2025/MAFWR/HQ-82	Digital Transformation Services	Thursday 23/10/2025	Thursday 13/11/2025	Tuesday 2/12/2025	Specialized companies registered with Excellent, First Second, Third, Fourth grades	(25/-) Omani riyals for local companies ----- (10/-) Omani riyals for SMEs
721/2025/MAFWR/HQ-83	Consultancy Services for Design Review and Supervision of Flood Protection Dam at Wadi Mehmum in Wilayat Saham, North Al Batinah Governorate	Monday 27/10/2025	Sunday 16/11/2025	Sunday 7/12/2025	Specialized companies registered with Excellent, First grades	(300/-) Omani riyals for local companies ----- (10/-) Omani riyals for SMEs
722/2025/MAFWR/HQ-84	Rehabilitation and Improvement of Falaj Al AL Najid in the town of AL Najid , Wilayat of Ibra, Al Dhahirah Governorate	Monday 27/10/2025	Sunday 16/11/2025	Sunday 7/12/2025	Specialized companies registered with Fourth grades	(25/-) Omani riyals for local companies ----- (10/-) Omani riyals for SMEs
723/2025/MAFWR/HQ-85	Design & Build of the Sheltered Boat Ramp at Qantab in Muscat Governorate	Monday 27/10/2025	Sunday 16/11/2025	Sunday 7/12/2025	Specialized companies registered with Excellent, First grades	(25/-) Omani riyals for local companies ----- (10/-) Omani riyals for SMEs

- Interested Companies registered with The General Secretariat of the Tender Board, (in the above mentioned Grade) may obtain Tender documents from the E-Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>.

- The value of the document will be paid & submitted on line on given website.

- The Tenderer should attach Bid Commitment Declaration for local companies.

- All correspondence pertaining to the tender inquiry must be online at e-tendering System.

- All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering System technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: +968 24402244 or etenderhd@ptlc.gov.om.

TENDERS COMMITTEE

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources

Arabia Falcon Insurance

التأمين العربية
فالكون

CONDENSED UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE THIRD QUARTER 2025

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE THIRD QUARTER 2025

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Arabia Falcon Insurance SAOG, I have the pleasure of presenting to you the financial results of the company for the third quarter ending September 30, 2025.

Business overview

The macroeconomic outlook has improved driven by stable oil prices and improvement in government finances, accordingly, the insurance sector started to show improvement in 2025 in terms of higher insurance premium and better profitability compared with the same period last year.

The insurance sector is expected to continue growing during the year driven by the growth in Life insurance. However, the growth in claims may continue as well in 2025, especially in the Motor insurance segment. For the company, Motor results are expected to improve in the fourth quarter of the year as measures are being implemented to control claims while growing premium to reach a more controlled and sustainable profitability level.

During the first three quarters of 2025, the insurance industry observed a growth in premiums compared to the same period of last year. The total premium underwritten by the insurance companies was up by 4% to RO 447 million in the first nine months of 2025 against RO 429 million in the same period last year (source: Financial Services Authority portal).

Income and Technical Results

a. Gross written Premium increased by 3% from RO 22.304 million in Q3 2024 to RO 22.886 million in Q3 2025.

b. Net insurance service results inclusive of net insurance finance expenses declined by 79% from RO 285K in Q3 2024 to 60k in Q3 2025.

c. Investment income increased by 36% from RO 1.551 million in Q3 2024 to RO 2.105 million in Q3 2025 primarily driven by the increase in the size of the investment portfolio due to active working capital management and by the increase in the yield on equity and bond portfolios.

d. The net profit for the first nine months was RO 1.369 million compared with RO 1.145 million in the same period previous year, an increase of 20%.

e. The shareholder's Equity was RO 22.773 million on September 30th, 2025, compared with RO 21.663 million on September 30th, 2024.

f. Dividends of 10 Baiza per share totalling RO 1.033 million approved by the AGM on March 27th, 2025, and paid in April 2025.

Outlook for 2025

Overall, this year is expected to be challenging in terms of the increase in reported Motor claims and promising in terms of growth in Life business and overall profitability. During the past few years, management has taken necessary measures to tackle the increase in motor claims and has been reviewing the pricing to bring the claim ratio to acceptable levels. Property and casualty are expected to continue in steady growth and profitability.

The Management is committed to grow both insurance revenues and investment income and keep control over technical and operating expenses with the main objective of delivering higher profit at year-end.

The company remains committed to its digital transformation strategy, through significant investments planned in this year to enhance market leadership, digitalization and service excellence.

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq bin Taimur for continued success in leading Oman toward greater development and prosperity. We would like to thank the Financial Service Authority and all Regulatory bodies for their continuous guidance and support.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would also like to thank the management team and all the employees of the company.

We sincerely thank our shareholders for their continued confidence and trust in the company and its board and for their support over the years.

For & on behalf of the Board of Directors of Arabia Falcon Insurance SAOG

H.H Sayyida Meyyan bint Shihab bin Tariq Al Said
Chairperson of the Board of Directors

Unaudited condensed interim statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the nine-months period ended 30 September 2025

	30 Sept 2025 RO	30 Sept 2024 RO
Insurance revenue	17,518,495	16,758,494
Insurance service expenses	(12,448,630)	(12,409,302)
Insurance service results before reinsurance contracts held	5,069,865	4,349,192
Net income or expense from reinsurance contracts held	(4,551,598)	(3,592,911)
Insurance service result	518,267	756,281
Finance expenses from insurance contract held	(976,819)	(686,197)
Finance income from reinsurance contract held	518,727	214,782
Net Insurance finance expenses	(458,092)	(471,415)
Investment income	2,104,886	1,550,647
Other income	243,496	258,457
Net investment and other income	2,348,382	1,809,104
Non attributable general and administrative expenses	(880,816)	(752,191)
Net profit before tax	1,527,741	1,341,779
Income tax	(158,605)	(198,342)
Net profit after tax for the period	1,369,136	1,145,437
Net Finance expense from insurance and reinsurance contracts	(321,626)	182,614
Changes in fair value of investments through other comprehensive income	547,990	368,827
Total comprehensive income for the period	1,595,500	1,696,878
Basic and diluted earnings per share	0.013	0.011

National Bank of Oman GCC Fund

Investment Manager Report
For Quarter 3 2025

GCC equity markets recovered in Q3 FY 2025, with the S&P GCC Price Index posting a gain of 3.5% after two consecutive quarters of flat returns. Notably, Saudi Arabia's stock market posted its largest daily gain since 2020, with the benchmark index climbing over 5% on 24 September 2025 to its highest level since May. The rally followed reports that regulators may ease the 49% cap on foreign ownership of listed companies — a measure expected to enhance investor confidence and attract further foreign inflows. The regulatory change is anticipated to be implemented before the end of 2025.

Country-Wise Highlights:

Saudi Arabia (Tadawul Index: +3%) – Late-quarter rally driven by expectations of relaxed foreign ownership limits, resulting in strong foreign inflows. **United Arab Emirates (Dubai: +2.3%)** – Profit-booking seen toward quarter-end; foreign funds shifted from UAE to Saudi market. **Kuwait (+4.05%)** – Gains supported by optimism around the passage of the Mortgage Law and increased government borrowing following the Debt Law. **Qatar (+2.82%)** – Credit growth remains subdued, though banking sector performance stayed resilient. **Oman (+15.1%)** – Best-performing GCC market, supported by strong domestic liquidity and regulatory liquidity-support measures.

Index-Level Performance: S&P GCC Total Return Index: +4.48% in Q3 FY 2025. Reflects strong capital gains led by Saudi Arabia and robust dividend distributions across the region.

Brent crude: Prices were largely flat for the quarter, averaging around USD 68 per barrel. Volatility increased due to OPEC+ production announcements, global growth concerns, trade tensions, and regional geopolitical risks.

Portfolio Performance vs Benchmark :
S&P GCC 500 Price Return Index – 3.78%
Portfolio Return – 3.75%

Overall, we remain confident that the portfolio is well positioned to benefit from ongoing structural reforms and market liberalization across GCC economies. Our focus continues to be on maintaining quality exposure, optimizing diversification, and delivering sustainable, long-term returns to our unit holders.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025				
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION				
	30 Sept 2025	30 Sept 2024	31 Dec 2024	
	RO	RO	RO	
ASSETS				
Investments at fair value through profit or loss	11,145,220	11,762,233	11,565,847	
Cash and cash equivalents	826,226	674,000	559,493	
Dividend receivable	8,744	8,025	--	
Total assets	11,980,190	12,444,258	12,125,340	
LIABILITIES				
Current liabilities				
Dividend payable	695	2,771	--	
Accruals and other payables	118,593	51,029	49,991	
Total liabilities	119,288	53,800	49,991	
Total net assets attributable to the Unitholders	11,860,902	12,390,458	12,075,349	
Net asset value per unit	1.075	1.094	1.094	
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
	30 Sept 2025	30 Sept 2024	31 Dec 2024	
	RO	RO	RO	
	(9 months)	(9 months)	(12 months)	
INCOME				
Dividend income	323,572	302,988	337,636	
Fair value changes in investments at fair value through profit or loss	509,079	1,196,696	1,133,888	
Net realized loss on investments at fair value through profit or loss	(249,077)	(210,476)	(127,353)	
Other income	97,270	361	646	
	680,844	1,289,569	1,344,617	
EXPENSE				
Management fees	98,816	105,485	140,216	
Fund Management Body fees	35,000	35,000	35,000	
Brokerage expenses	47,391	33,398	45,951	
Administration fees	13,475	14,384	19,120	
General and administration	16,670	18,911	24,443	
Custodian fees	8,124	8,573	11,577	
Foreign exchange loss	--	7,234	8,346	
	219,476	222,985	284,653	
Net profit and				
Total comprehensive income for the period / year	461,368	1,066,584	1,059,964	
Net profit per unit	0.042	0.094	0.094	

Investment Manager & Administrator



Note: The complete accounts, in Arabic or English as requested, will be sent by mail to any shareholder within 7 days of a written request addressed to the Administrator, Investment Banking Operations, National Bank of Oman, P.O.Box:751, PC 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman. Tel: 24778757, Fax: 24778993 Email: GCCFund@nbo.co.om

Revival of Arabica coffee cultivation

SALALAH: The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources launched the Arabica Coffee Cultivation Project in Dhofar Governorate, in celebration of Omani Agriculture Day on October 31. The initiative aims to boost agricultural production, diversify economic crops and support sustainable mountain farming in the region.

The project seeks to revive Arabica coffee cultivation in Dhofar's moderate climate zones by providing high-quality seedlings, technical guidance, modern farming training, and support for pit preparation and modern irrigation systems, helping farmers optimise water use and minimise losses.

Eng Radwan bin Abdullah al Ibrahim, Director of the Agricultural Development Department and Project Manager, said the initiative builds on the



success of previous projects, including the Turmeric Cultivation Project (2022) and the Ginger Cultivation Project (2023). Earlier trials in the Qirun Hirti area demonstrated promising yields with Arabica varieties such as Al Adini and Al Dawairi.

The project is expected to increase farmers' incomes, add value to the agricultural sector, and deliver environmental and economic benefits through sustainable cultivation practices. The initiative targets 30 farmers in Salalah, Taqah and Mirbat. — ONA

National Real Estate Development and Investments Co. (SAOG)

P.O. Box 84, Muscat-100, Sultanate of Oman - Phone: 24702133/24701454, Fax: 24703826, C.R. No. 1/02478/7

DIRECTOR'S REPORT FOR THE NINE - MONTH ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025

Respected Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I present herewith the result of National Real Estate Development and Investments Co (SAOG) for the first Nine-month period ended 30th Sep 205

Operational Result

The Company recorded an un-audited net profit of RO 72,926. up to the 3rd quarter ended Sep 2025 versus (2024: RO 18,902 loss).

Finally, on behalf of the shareholders and the Board I wish to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tareq Bin Taimour for his wise leadership and guidance.

For the Board of Directors
Chairman.

NOTE: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder on request either in Arabic or English within 7 days of receipt of the request.

UNAUDITED & PROVISIONAL BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025

	2025 RO	2024 RO
EMPLOYMENT OF FUNDS:		
Non Current Asset	1,631,720	6,150,000
Current Assets	2,482,804	57,437
Current Liabilities	390,173	4,901
Net Current Assets	2,092,631	52,536
	3,724,350	6,202,536

FUNDS EMPLOYED:

Share Capital	1,762,500	1,762,500
Legal Reserve	587,500	587,500
Revaluation Reserve	7,637,254	7,637,254
Retained Earnings	(6,808,921)	(4,706,126)
	3,178,333	5,281,128

Non-current Liabilities

	546,016	921,408
	3,630,037	6,202,536

UNAUDITED & PROVISIONAL PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE PERIOD 1st JANUARY TO 30th SEP 2025

	2025 RO	2024 RO
Sales		
Cost of Sales	-	-
Gross Profit	-	-
Other Operating Income	636	1,664
Sale Proceed Land	488,320	-
Fair Value Gain on Revaluation	36,890	(20,566)
Investment Pro	-	-
Expenses before Tax	(452,920)	-
Profit before Tax	72,926	(18,902)
Depreciation	-	-
Net profit / (loss) after Depreciation	72,926	(18,902)



وزارة التنمية الاجتماعية
Ministry of Social Development



Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender committee of **Ministry of Social Development** hereby announces the following tender :-

Tender No.	Tender Subject	Grade	Last date for obtainment of Tender Document	Last date for Tender Submission	Tender Document Price (non-retundable)	
					Small and Medium Companies	Local Companies
574/2025	Maintenance of two central and backup computers and a backup system	Companies specialized in the field of Supplying maintenance of information programs and systems registered with the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority with excellent or first or second or third or fourth degree	Monday 17-11-2025 02:00 PM	Tuesday 02-12-2025 10:00 AM	10 R.O	25 R.O
575/2025	Supply of tools and equipment for the oil distillation workshop at Al-Wafa Center for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities at Bidbid	Companies specialized in the field of Supply of office and educational tools, materials and supplies or supply of sports equipme, Electrical machinery and equipment registered with the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority in the excellent, first, second, third or fourth degree.	Monday 17-11-2025 02:00 PM	Tuesday 02-12-2025 10:00 AM	10 R.O	25 R.O
576/2025	Supply of tools and equipment for the textile workshop of Al-Wafa Center for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities at Bidbid	Companies specialized in the field of Supply of office and educational tools, materials and supplies or supply of sports equipme, Electrical machinery and equipment registered with the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority in the excellent, first, second, third or fourth degree.	Monday 17-11-2025 02:00 PM	Tuesday 02-12-2025 10:00 AM	10 R.O	25 R.O
577/2025	Supplying machines and equipment for a paper recycling workshop to the Al-Wafa Center for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities at Bidbid	Companies specialized in the field of Supply of office and educational tools, materials and supplies or supply of sports equipme, Electrical machinery and equipment registered with Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority in the excellent, first, second, third or fourth degree.	Monday 17-11-2025 02:00 PM	Tuesday 02-12-2025 10:00 AM	10 R.O	25 R.O

- ❖ Specialized Companies, registered with the **Tender Board** may obtain the Tender documents at the Tender Board e-tendering digital portal link (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>). On **Monday 03/11/2025**.
- ❖ For Inquiry, please contact though the e-tendering website (reg@tenderboard.gov.om) tel. (24402200).

“ The lowest or any other tender shall not be binding to the Ministry”

WORLD

SHORT TAKES



Ahmed al Sharaa

SYRIAN LEADER TO DISCUSS CRITICAL ISSUES IN US VISIT

MANAMA: Syria’s president will discuss issues including lifting remaining sanctions, reconstruction and counter-terrorism when he becomes the country’s first leader to pay an official visit to Washington later this month, the foreign minister said. Ahmed al Sharaa is expected in the US capital in early November, Syria’s top diplomat Asaad al Shaibani told a panel at the Manama Dialogue in Bahrain.

“This visit is certainly historic,” he said. “Many topics will be discussed, starting with the lifting of sanctions,” Shaibani said, adding: “Today we are fighting (the IS)... any effort in this regard requires international support.” Discussions will also revolve around reconstruction after more than a decade of war, he said. The foreign ministry in Damascus confirmed the trip would be the first ever visit to the White House by a Syrian president.

US envoy to Syria Tom Barrack said Sharaa was heading to Washington “hopefully” to sign an agreement to join the international US-led alliance against the IS. It will be the second to the US after a landmark UN trip in September, where he became the first Syrian president in decades to address the UN General Assembly. — AFP

PHILIPPINES, CANADA SIGN VISITING TROOPS DEAL



Philippines’ Secretary of National Defence Gilberto Teodoro (R) shakes hands with Canadian Minister of Defence David McGuinty, in Manila. — AFP

MANILA: The Philippines signed a visiting forces agreement with Canada on Sunday, the latest in a series of pacts. The Royal Canadian Navy last year began taking part in joint maritime patrols in the area with its US, Australian, Japanese and Philippine counterparts. The visiting forces deal would allow Canadian troops to participate in joint exercises on land as well.

Canadian Defence Minister David McGuinty said the agreement would deepen the relationship with the Philippine military while advancing Ottawa’s Asia-Pacific strategy, which calls for “a forward presence in the region”. “(We) will be moving forward on training fronts, on exchanges with our military colleges, information sharing, understanding cyber security,” he told a joint news briefing in Manila. He added that Canada hoped to take part in the archipelago nation’s annual Balikatan military exercises next spring.

Manila, a US treaty ally, signed a visiting forces pact with New Zealand earlier this year and already had agreements in place with the United States, Australia and Japan. A similar deal is in the works with France. — AFP

PENDING INVESTIGATION

Libya detains minister over books scandal



Libyan prosecutors have announced they are detaining the country’s education minister for negligence over a scandal involving school textbooks. The minister, Ali al Abed, is serving in an interim capacity after taking over from Moussa al Megarief. The prosecutor general’s office said that it had ordered the preventative detention of Abed and “pending an investigation into harm to the public interest and violation of the right to education”. — AFP

IRAN VOWS TO REBUILD NUCLEAR SITES ‘STRONGER THAN BEFORE’

TEHRAN: Iran said on Sunday that it would rebuild nuclear sites damaged by Israeli and US strikes “stronger than before”. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, in a visit to the country’s nuclear organisation, said Tehran “will build (the destroyed sites) stronger than before”. “By destroying buildings... we will not be set back,” he said in a video posted to his official website, adding that Iranian scientists still had the necessary nuclear know-how. Pezeshkian did not elaborate. In similar remarks in February before the strikes, he said Tehran would rebuild its sites if they came under attack. Israel launched an unprecedented



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian visits the Iranian Atomic Energy Organisation in Tehran. — Reuters

bombing campaign against Iran in June, kicking off a 12-day war that saw it target nuclear and military facilities - as well as residential

areas - and kill many top scientists. Iran retaliated with ballistic missile barrages aimed at Israeli cities. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in July, after the United States announced a halt in fighting, that the damage in Iran was “serious and severe”. Iranian government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani said on Sunday that Tehran “has received messages” on resuming diplomacy, without providing further details. Iran has faced the return of UN sanctions after Britain, Germany and France triggered the “snapback” mechanism over Tehran’s alleged non-compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal. — AFP

Türkiye to call for urgent action on war-torn Gaza

TURKISH Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan is expected to call at a

meeting in Istanbul on Monday for arrangements to be made as soon as possible to ensure the security and administration of Gaza by Palestinians, a foreign ministry source said on Sunday. The foreign ministers of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Pakistan and Indonesia are set to join the meeting on ceasefire developments and the humanitarian situation in Gaza, the Turkish foreign ministry source said. The source said Fidan was expected to “emphasise the importance of coordinated action by Muslim countries for the ceasefire to evolve into a lasting peace.”

Countries taking part in the Istanbul talks all attended a meeting with US President Donald Trump in New York in September on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. The US-brokered Gaza truce, which left thorny issues like the disarmament of Palestinian group Hamas and a timeline for Israeli withdrawal from Gaza unresolved, has been tested by periodic violence since coming into force.

The source said Fidan is set to tell the meeting that Israel is “making excuses” to end the ceasefire and emphasise the need for the international community to “take a resolute stance against Israel’s



A machinery operates next to a Red Cross vehicle, in Gaza City. — Reuters

The source said Fidan is set to tell the meeting that Israel is “making excuses” to end the ceasefire and emphasise the need for the international community to “take a resolute stance against Israel’s provocative actions”

provocative actions”. He was also set to say that humanitarian aid entering Gaza is insufficient and Israel has not fulfilled its obligations in this regard. Relations between Türkiye and Israel have hit new lows during the Gaza war, with President Tayyip Erdogan harshly criticising Israel’s attacks on the enclave. Türkiye helped persuade Hamas to accept Trump’s peace plan and has expressed a willingness to take part in an international task force to monitor ceasefire implementation. However, Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said last Monday that Israel won’t accept the presence of Turkish armed forces in Gaza under the US plan to end the war.

On Saturday, the partial remains

of three deceased individuals handed over to Israel by Hamas in Gaza overnight are not those of any of the hostages held in the Palestinian territory, Israeli media reported. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli government on the reports. The International Committee of the Red Cross said late on Friday it had facilitated the transfer of the remains from the Gaza Strip to Israeli authorities for identification.

Hamas said in a statement on Saturday that it had initially offered three samples from unidentified bodies to Israeli authorities for testing. Israel refused insisting on the full remains, a condition the group agreed to. — Reuters



VIETNAM FLOOD DEATH TOLL RISES TO 35

HANOI: Record heavy rains and flooding in central Vietnam this week have killed 35 people, disaster management officials said, with five more still missing in the deluge. Heavy rain has pummelled Vietnam’s coastal provinces since last weekend, with a record of up to 1.7 metres falling over 24 hours spanning last Sunday and Monday. The 35 fatalities took place in Hue, Da Nang, Lam Dong and Quang Tri provinces, the Vietnam Disaster and Dyke Management Authority (VDDMA) said in a report.

Hoi An’s ancient town that is a Unesco world heritage site has been inundated with waist-deep water, with residents navigating the city by wooden boats after a major local river overflowed at a 60-year high. More than 16,500 houses are currently flooded, the VDDMA says, while more than 40,000 poultry and livestock have been swept away and more than 5,300 hectares of cropland submerged. — AFP

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Djibouti removes presidential age limit



Djibouti’s parliament removed the age limit for presidents. Lawmakers approved the change to the constitution to remove a bar on running for president past the age of 75. “The National Assembly ratified the removal of the age limit today, so it is official,” said parliament speaker Dileita Mohamed Dileita. Dileita added that the constitutional change was necessary to ensure “the stability of the small country, in a troubled region”. — AFP

DEVASTATING FLOODS

Kenya landslide death toll rises to 22



The death toll from a landslide in western Kenya’s Rift Valley has risen to 22, a spokesperson said, following heavy rains. Twenty-nine people were still missing and 21 others were receiving treatment after devastating floods in Elgeyo-Marakwet County, government spokesperson Isaac Mwaura said in a statement. The government has deployed military planes and disaster response specialists to conduct a search and rescue operation. — Reuters

AMBITIOUS PROGRAMME



An Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) rocket LVM3-M5 blasts off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. — AFP

INDIA SPACE AGENCY LAUNCHES ITS HEAVIEST SATELLITE

SRIHARIKOTA: India launched its heaviest ever communication satellite on Sunday, the latest step in the country’s ambitious space programme.

The CMS-03 satellite blasted off from Sriharikota in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh at 5:26 pm. “Our space sector continues to make us proud!” said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who wants to send an Indian astronaut to the Moon by 2040. Weighing about 4,410 kilograms, it is “the heaviest communication satellite” launched in the country, the Indian Space Research Organisation said on Thursday.

The Indian Navy said the satellite would help “secure communication links between ships, aircraft, submarines”. The CMS-03 satellite was sent into orbit from the towering 43.5 metre tall LVM3-M5 launch vehicle. It is an upgraded version of the rocket that launched India’s unmanned craft that landed on the Moon in August 2023. Only Russia, the United States and China have previously achieved a controlled landing on the lunar surface.

The country has flexed its spacefaring ambitions in the last decade, with its space programme growing considerably in size and momentum.

Shubhanshu Shukla, a test pilot with the Indian Air Force, this year became the second Indian to travel to space and the first to reach the International Space Station — a key step towards India’s own crewed mission planned for 2027. — AFP

US SEEKS TO REBOOT MILITARY CHANNELS WITH CHINA

WASHINGTON: US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said that during talks with his Chinese counterpart, the two sides had agreed to reboot military-to-military links to “deconflict and de-escalate”. Hegseth met with China’s Defense Minister Dong Jun on the sidelines of a regional summit in Malaysia, a day after leaders Xi Jinping and Donald Trump held talks in South Korea.

“I just spoke to President Trump, and we agree — the relationship between the United States and

China has never been better,” Hegseth said in a post on X, adding that he had spoken with Dong again since their face-to-face meeting.

“The Admiral and I agree that peace, stability, and good relations are the best path for our two great and strong countries,” he said, touting a path of “strength, mutual respect, and positive relations.”

The Pentagon chief said Dong and he “also agreed that we should set up military-to-military channels to deconflict and de-escalate any problems that arise.” Such channels

have existed for years but at times fallen out of use. “We have more meetings on that coming soon,” Hegseth said without elaborating.

According to a Chinese defence ministry readout of their meeting in Malaysia, Dong had told Hegseth the countries should “strengthen policy-level dialogue to enhance trust and dispel uncertainty”, and build a bilateral military relationship “characterised by equality, respect, peaceful coexistence and stable positive momentum.” — AFP

UK police probe mass train stabbing, 10 injured

BRITISH police were on Sunday investigating a mass stabbing on a London-bound train that left at least 10 people wounded, including nine critically, with two people arrested. Police were alerted to an emergency on board a train between Doncaster, a town in northeast England and London’s King’s Cross Station at around 7:40 pm on Saturday night. The train was stopped at Huntingdon station in Cambridgeshire, where armed officers boarded the train as police cars, a fleet of ambulances and two air ambulances swarmed the station in the market town in eastern England. Local MP Ben Obese-Jecty said he had “never seen as big a response” to an emergency incident as he attended the scene. Ten people were taken to the hospital, with “nine believed to have suffered life-threatening injuries”, British Transport Police said in an update in the early hours of Sunday.

Witnesses on board the train have described scenes of chaos and horror as an attacker with a large knife stabbed passengers on board. Witness Olly Foster told the BBC that he heard people shouting “run, run, there’s a guy literally stabbing everyone,” and initially thought it was a Halloween-related prank. But passengers then started pushing through the carriage, Foster said, adding that his hand was left “covered in blood” that had spilled onto the chair he had been leaning on.



Police officers and members of the Emergency services search the track beneath an LNER Azuma train at Huntingdon Station in Huntingdon, eastern England. — AFP

Police “arrested two people in connection to the incident who have been taken to police custody.” The identity of the suspects is not yet known, nor is the motive behind the attack. The police and the government have urged the public not to speculate about who was behind the attack and why. Police declared it a “major incident” and counter terror police is aiding the investigation, which continued on Sunday as Huntingdon station remained closed and cordoned off to the public.

Defence Secretary John Healey said on Sunday the early assessment was that the incident was an “isolated attack”. “So there’s no reason for the rest of us not to get on with our lives, get on and travel to the places we need to get to,” Healey told Sky News. Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the “appalling” incident was “deeply concerning”. London North Eastern Railway, which operates along the route, urged customers not to travel on Sunday due to ongoing disruptions, saying services may be cancelled at short notice.

Britain’s King Charles III and his wife Queen Camilla said on Sunday they were “truly appalled and shocked to hear of the dreadful knife attack” on a London-bound train. “Our deepest sympathy and thoughts are with those affected, and their loved ones,” the British monarch said following Saturday’s attack in which 10 people were initially hospitalised. The king also thanked emergency services for their response. — AFP

Two children among dead in blitz on Ukraine

KYIV: Russia fired a wave of drones and missiles at Ukraine overnight, killing at least six people including two children and cutting power to tens of thousands, officials said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said the attacks, which also wounded a dozen other people, showed Moscow aimed to “inflict harm” on civilians. Russia has rejected US calls to halt its nearly four-year attack on Ukraine, instead pushing forward with its ground assault while renewing its campaign of strikes against Ukraine’s energy grid.

Kyiv announced on Saturday it had deployed special forces to the eastern city of Pokrovsk, where it is under pressure from an intense Russian assault involving thousands of troops. “Russian forces attacked the Dnipropetrovsk and Odesa regions. Six people died, including two children,” the office of Ukraine’s prosecutor general said on Telegram.

The children were two boys aged 11 and 14, Ukraine’s human rights commissioner Dmytro Lubinets said. Russia’s attacks cut power to the entire eastern Donetsk



Apartment buildings damaged by a Russian military strike, in the frontline town of Kostiantynivka in the Donetsk region, Ukraine. — Reuters

region, as well as almost 58,000 households in the southern Zaporizhzhia region, the regions’ governors said. Kyiv says the strikes on energy infrastructure are primarily aimed at wearing down the country’s civilian population, a charge Russia denies. The overnight attacks came a day after Ukraine’s top military commander announced he had deployed special forces to the eastern city of Pokrovsk, where Kyiv is under pressure from a Russian army thousands strong. Hundreds of Russian soldiers have infiltrated the logistics hub, Kyiv said earlier this week. Others are closing in on its outskirts in a

pincer-shaped movement, according to battlefield maps published by the Institute for the Study of War.

The city’s capture would provide a major propaganda boost for the Kremlin, which has rejected calls for a peace deal on the current front lines. “A comprehensive operation to destroy and displace enemy forces from Pokrovsk is under way,” Ukrainian commander-in-chief Oleksandr Syrsky said in a post on Facebook on Saturday. Videos published on social media purported to show helicopters flying towards the city, while another purportedly taken by a Russian drone showed figures scrambling from a

helicopter that had landed in a field.

Ukraine has responded to Moscow’s attacks on its energy grid with retaliatory strikes on Russian oil and gas infrastructure. A Ukrainian drone attack on Russia’s Black Sea port of Tuapse early on Sunday set an oil tanker ablaze and damaged port infrastructure, regional authorities said. A source in Ukraine’s SBU security services said the attack also damaged the Tuapse oil terminal, which belongs to Russian oil major Rosneft. “Hits by five drones were recorded,” the source said. Images published on social media purported to show various blazes at the port. — AFP

University Medical City

RENT OF STORE

University Medical City is interested to Rent a Store for Sultan Qaboos University Hospital as the following Conditions:

- The store should be located at area within 20 Kilometers from Sultan Qaboos University Hospital.
- Store area should be around 1500 square meter.
- Store should include (10) offices with pantry and toilets.
- Store should include Security room with toilet.
- Parking for (20) cars.
- Security and safety requirements as per Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority.
- Internet and server’s requirement.

- Quotations shall be presented in a sealed envelope; the tender number and the name of the tender shall be mentioned. It is not accepted to indicate or mention the name of the company or its logo on the envelope.
- Quotations should be addressed to Director of Tender Committee; Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, and deposited in the tender box located in the Procurement Department not later than 1/12/2025 at 12pm.
- Specification documents are available at Procurement Department; which can be collected during office hours from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm from the Procurement Department/ Sultan Qaboos University Hospital.
- University Medical City is not bound to accept the lowest bid or any other bid.
- For any further details, please contact 99233144 or 99469639 or 91137770.

OPINION

Ethical questions remain as universities embrace AI



SANDHYA RAO MEHTA

The writer is an Associate Professor, Sultan Qaboos University

AN anecdote in a leading journal has recently created buzz in higher education. A student just ‘asked for a little help’ in writing a paper due the next morning. Within seconds, she got a ready paper on her screen. This made the student panic as she wasn’t sure what to do next. Could she submit the paper as is? Even if she edited it, would it be ethical to submit a paper prompted by AI? While the prompts were hers, the language was not.

In a world that is increasingly driven by Artificial Intelligence (AI), such ethical questions are becoming urgent. What is an original work? If continuous prompts are being given to an AI platform to improve and customise an essay, a poem or an engineering project, can that final work be considered original?

These are increasingly difficult but necessary questions to ask in higher education.

Policies around AI in higher education suggest that students need to be introduced and trained to use such technologies

responsibly. But that is easier said than done. AI tools can assist students to brainstorm ideas or create an outline, but it can also be used to download an entire paper without genuine understanding. The line between assistance and automated production is getting blurred when AI is used to solve problems or create code.

An interesting example points to issues of critical thinking. Any AI platform can be asked how to ensure that cheese doesn’t fall from a pizza. Glue was the quickest answer. The answer may be literally correct but contextually wrong. An automated response cannot be taken without appropriate thought which needs basic human education and intervention.

Privacy of data is another crucial aspect of AI usage of which we are not sufficiently aware. The new information that a platform is generating is coming from our questions and prompts. AI is developing more because we are using it more. Who owns this data then? The clearest answer is that it is owned by the companies who host such platforms. Our

A blanket usage of AI technologies may be tempting, it may not be beneficial for young learners

original work is going into a dataset that will churn the same material in new ways. Again, institutions of higher education do not, so far, have official policies on protecting such data.

If not managed properly, this data could be misused, leading to breaches of privacy or biased decision-making. Research has already shown that algorithms tend to show us what we are already sympathise with in terms of personal leanings. This makes critical thinking even more problematic as we need to go out of our way to confront opposing ideas. Universities need to educate learners of such digital divides. Responsible implementation of AI lies at the core of teaching and learning. While a blanket usage of AI technologies may be tempting, it is not beneficial for young learners. It is preempting critical thinking and original problem-solving that remain at the core of higher education.

Crafting policies that focus on ethical literacy and train teachers and students on responsible use of AI through thoughtfully curated policies is the only way forward.

HURRICANE MELISSA UPENDS LIFE FOR JAMAICANS

ANDRE RICH

In the north coast parish of St Ann, almost all residents are without power — and many of them woke up without a roof over their heads after Hurricane Melissa tore through Jamaica, downing trees, utility poles and anything in its path.

Fisherman George “Larry” Brown of the community of Priory said the morning was quiet on the day of the storm. “Just a little rain,” the 68-year-old recalled.

But by 5 pm on Tuesday, the rain and wind gusts grew heavy and soon, he said, his roof peeled away.

“I just heard a sound, and it just started to tear off,” Brown recalled. He described Melissa as the worst he’s ever experienced.

Hurricane Melissa smashed into Jamaica as a ferocious top-level storm, with sustained winds peaking at nearly 300 kilometres per hour while drenching the nation with torrential rain.

“Gilbert is no match to this,” Brown said, referring to the 1988 hurricane used by many Jamaicans as a benchmark for devastation.

In fact, Hurricane Mar-old jaelissa tied the 1935 record for the most intense storm ever to make landfall, according to an analysis of meteorological data — on par with the Labour Day Hurricane that devastated the Florida Keys 90 years ago.

Brown’s neighbour Kayan Davis, a mother of three who said her roof lifted off sometime after 11 pm, said she has been left temporarily homeless.

“I have nowhere to sleep... I am going to have to contact the authorities,” Davis said.

Marvin Thomas, another resident of Priory, suffered the same fate when a tree fell on his home around 8 pm. “The tree dropped... and the housetop started to demolish,” he said. “I had to run out and go to a friend’s home.”

Thomas, a 40-year-old janitorial services worker, said the challenge of finding money to begin picking up the pieces is daunting.

“You know money is not at one place, I have to go out there to hunt now, to try to rebuild up myself.”

There were similar stories in the neighbouring parish of Trelawny.

“What we had was high rising of water and then it started to take the membrane of my roof and it damaged my fence as well,” Sandra Scott, a security supervisor, said of her home in the community of Salt Marsh.

“We had to use sandbags and sheets to prevent the water from coming in,” she explained.

The hurricane also brought extensive damage to infrastructure across Trelawny, including William Knibb High School, the alma mater of legendary Olympic sprinter Usain Bolt, according to parish police chief Velonique Campbell. — AFP

Handshake diplomacy: Trump, Xi and the truce

IN the shadow of South Korea’s bustling APEC summit, Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping sat down on October 30 in Busan for their first face-to-face talks in six years. It was a meeting that cut through the bluster of recent months, when tariffs soared and supply chains frayed.

Trump called it “amazing,” rating it a 12 out of 10. Xi struck a measured note, saying the two nations should be “partners and friends.” Amid handshakes at Gimhae Air Base, they hashed out real issues: tariffs, soybeans, fentanyl precursors, and rare earth minerals. For a world weary of economic brinkmanship, this felt like a pause, not a panacea.

Let’s be clear about the stakes. Trump returned to office vowing to shield American workers from what he sees as unfair Chinese competition. Tariffs on Chinese goods had climbed to 57 per cent, layered on top of fentanyl-related penalties. China hit back with restrictions on rare earth exports, those obscure minerals vital for everything from iPhones to fighter jets.

American farmers watched soybean sales plummet as Beijing turned to Brazil and Argentina. Global markets jittered, with supply chains from Detroit to Dongguan straining under the weight. Then came Busan: Trump announced an immediate tariff cut to 47 per cent. China pledged to resume ‘tremendous’ soybean purchases right away. Fentanyl tariffs drop to 10 per cent from 20, with Xi committing to crack down on precursor chemicals. And rare earths? A one-year deal to keep exports steady, averting a crisis in tech manufacturing.

These are practical wins. Lower tariffs mean cheaper electronics and clothes for US families, a small relief from inflation’s bite. Chinese exporters regain US market access, steadying factories in Guangdong. Farmers in Iowa get breathing room after years of pain.



Trump and Xi meet during the APEC forum in Busan, South Korea. — AFP



DR IMRAN KHALID

The writer is a freelance columnist on international affairs

Two leaders from different systems found common ground on pocketbook issues. If they build on it, 2026 could see steadier growth

On fentanyl, the crisis killing tens of thousands of Americans yearly, Xi’s pledge could save lives if enforced. Rare earth stability reassures Silicon Valley and Shenzhen alike, fuelling innovation in EVs and AI without hoarding panic. Trump even floated Nvidia chip talks and a trip to China in April, with Xi possibly following. It’s the kind of deal-making Trump loves: tangible, quick, and braggable.

But step back, and the bigger picture emerges. The US and China account for 43 per cent of global GDP. Their rivalry defines our era, from Taiwan straits to tech dominance. Taiwan didn’t come up today, Trump noted, but it looms. Chip curbs persist; broader tech decoupling rolls on. This is crisis management, not a reset. Both men need it. Trump faces domestic gridlock and wants victories to tout. Xi, post his party plenum, seeks stability for China’s sluggish recovery. Markets rallied briefly on the news, Asia-Pacific indices steadying, but volatility lingers. Investors know these truces can unravel.

Think about the ripple effects.

Stable US-China trade eases pressure on everyone else. Europe dodges higher input costs; Southeast Asia’s factories hum with intermediate goods flowing freely. The Global South, from Brazil’s soy fields to Pakistan’s textile mills, benefits from calmer commodity prices and fewer disruptions.

Even Ukraine surfaced, with Trump saying they’ll “work together” on it. That’s faint, but notable in a divided world. Yet challenges persist. Implementation demands trust, scarce between Washington and Beijing. US hawks grumble about concessions; Chinese nationalists decry yielding to pressure. Personal chemistry helped today, Trump escorting Xi to his car, but diplomacy is fickle. What does this say about global order? Power abhors a vacuum, but it also craves predictability. Trump’s style, blunt and transactional, meshed with Xi’s long-game patience. They avoided escalation, buying time. For the West, it’s a reminder: compete fiercely, but manage the competition. Blind decoupling risks self-harm; pure confrontation invites chaos.

Where the world meets for coffee



ABDULAZIZ AL JAHDHAMI

The writer is author, translator and a communications professional

SOMEWHERE, right now, someone is falling in love with a morning, with an idea, with themselves again over a cup of coffee. It always begins this way. Coffee doesn't care who you are or where you come from. It simply invites you to pause, sip and be present. Coffee is more than just a drink. It is a ritual that threads through humanity — a language spoken in the hush of early mornings, in the laughter of cafés, in the bold plans sketched between sips. As Jackie Chan once said, "Coffee is a language in itself." So, let it speak to you.

The daily coffee ritual is deeply personal. Some grind fresh beans each morning; others visit their favourite café. The coffee you drink says something about you. Are you a simple who takes it black, a creative who orders oat milk lattes, or a traditionalist who enjoys a slow espresso? Coffee choices have become a form of self-expression — a kind of personal branding in a cup.

People choose their favourite cafés not just for the quality of the coffee, but also for the ambiance, music and décor. Modern coffee shops have become popular hangouts, remote workspaces and meeting hubs, especially for the younger generation.

In fact, coffee culture fosters connection. First dates, job interviews and deep conversations with friends often happen over a cup of coffee. Even how people interact with coffee reveals how deeply it is merged into their lifestyles and attitudes.

There is a quiet magic in the moment you hold your morning coffee. Not just in the rising heat or the bitter-sweet taste dancing on your tongue, but in the invisible journey that brought that cup to you. Before it ever reaches your lips, your coffee has already crossed oceans, borders and the lives of many strangers. That alone makes it sacred.

Long ago, in the sun-spotted mountains of Ethiopia, a young goat herder named Kaldi wandered with his herd. His goats, usually slow and sleepy in the afternoon sun, suddenly jumped to life after chewing on strange red berries from a nearby plant. They kicked, danced and leapt like wild flames, filling the mountains with their joy.

Curiously, Kaldi tasted the berries himself, and the world sharpened, his heartbeat drummed steady and strong, and his spirit felt awake. He ran back to his village, handfuls of berries and eyes wide with wonder. The elders were doubtful, and the religious were fearful. They threw the berries into the fire and then something miraculous

People choose their favourite cafés not just for the quality of the coffee, but also for the ambiance, music and décor. Modern coffee shops have become popular hangouts, remote workspaces and meeting hubs, especially for the younger generation

happened. The scent rose like a phoenix: smoky, bold and sacred. The air grew thick with a fragrance so rich and deep it felt like music. They pulled the roasted beans from the coals, ground them with stones, boiled them in water, and drank the world's first cup of coffee under a sky blooming with stars.

Coffee is present in life's ordinary and extraordinary moments — it is connection in liquid form. Whether you enjoy it black, with cream and sugar, or iced with oat milk, coffee has a way of bringing people together. So, when you sip your next cup, remember that you are holding more than liquid. You are holding centuries of connection, stories of resilience, and the quiet power of a global community reaching out — one cup at a time.

Yet behind every comforting cup is a story rarely told. Hands, often worn and weather-beaten, work long before dawn to harvest these beans — the hands of farmers who may never taste the drink they make possible. They carry the earth's gift through heat and hardship, their lives shaped by climate and the shifting tides of global markets.

So tomorrow morning, when the sky is still dim and your eyes are soft with sleep, remember that you are not just making coffee. You are holding history, ritual and resilience.

FDA AUTISM DRUG MOVE SPARKS FRENZY, BUT DATA LAGS BEHIND

Julie Steenhuisen

US President Donald Trump's embrace of an old generic drug called leucovorin for use against a rare disorder that causes autism-like symptoms has triggered a surge in demand from parents who believe it could unlock speech and social connection in their autistic children.

That has become a challenge for paediatricians and specialists who caution the science on leucovorin in people with autism is limited and does not support widespread use.

In the month since Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Marty Makary promoted the decades-old drug from GSK, saying it could help "hundreds of thousands" of children with autism, doctors and researchers say they have been inundated by parents seeking information.

"My Facebook feed is flooded with parents swearing that leucovorin works," said Dr David Mandell, a professor of psychiatry and autism researcher at the University of Pennsylvania.

Tens of thousands of people have joined a Facebook group called Leucovorin for Autism, started in May by Keith Joyce, legal guardian to four-year-old Jose, who is taking the drug.

Joyce credits Jose's improvements in verbal communication and social awareness to leucovorin. The site gained 5,000 members on the day of Trump and Makary's White House announcement and now has 84,000.

Mandell and other scientists and doctors say FDA's endorsement without requiring large, randomised clinical trials leaves practitioners facing emotional pleas from families while lacking data, guidance or confidence to prescribe the drug responsibly. Leucovorin is approved to treat chemotherapy side effects, but can be prescribed off-label for autism symptoms.

"It puts physicians in a very tough position because they're being asked to prescribe something that is not evidence-based," said Dr Shafali Jeste, an autism expert and head of paediatrics at UCLA, who does not prescribe leucovorin despite repeated requests. Last Friday, the American Academy of Paediatrics said it does not recommend leucovorin for routine use in children with autism.

Autism rates have risen to 1 in 31 8-year-olds, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported in April. Finding the condition's root cause and potential treatments is something Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr and Trump have championed. Despite the FDA commissioner's broad comments, his agency proposed a narrower expanded approval tied to cerebral folate deficiency (CFD), a genetic condition that can cause autism-like symptoms. It affects roughly one in 1 million children worldwide. The argument for wider use is built on small studies suggesting many children with autism have autoantibodies that block folate — a vitamin important for brain signalling — from entering the brain, causing a deficiency similar to CFD. — Reuters

How social protection can accelerate climate action

AHEAD of this year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil, countries

are being urged to embrace an approach to climate action and finance with social protection at its heart. Making this connection could not be more important for protecting human dignity, building community resilience and maximising the impact of limited funds.

At COP29 last year, developed economies agreed to mobilise at least \$300 billion per year in climate finance for developing countries by 2035, as part of the New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance. But least-developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states have rightly criticised the target as vague, unenforceable and inadequate. In fact, this figure falls far short of need, especially because climate-finance delivery is often highly inefficient. For example, just 0.8 per cent of tracked funds reach small-scale agricultural systems.

This is where social protection comes in. A 2019 study by the LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR) showed that social-protection initiatives can play a powerful role in building climate-resilient communities. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report, released in 2023, echoed this finding. Now, a joint review of 23 Green Climate Fund-funded projects, carried out by the GCF and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO), has shown that the integration of climate objectives into social-protection systems can go a long way towards delivering limited finance where it is needed most.

There are plenty of proven social-protection models that advance inclusive climate action. For example, Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme supports over eight million people — including the country's most climate-vulnerable communities — through cash and food transfers, while responding to short-term shocks like droughts and restoring degraded landscapes.



TRACY KAJUMBA

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Similarly, India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, which reaches more than 60 million rural households, funds climate-smart solutions like rainwater harvesting and afforestation (tree-planting), which protect communities against droughts and floods. Brazil's Bolsa Verde links income support to environmental stewardship, incentivising sustainable land use and forest conservation among low-income families in protected areas.

The 23 GCF projects sampled in the recent FAO-GCF review show similar promise. Paraguay's Poverty, Reforestation, Energy and Climate Change Project, which receives technical support from the FAO, ties conditional cash transfers to social-welfare goals, such as the establishment of climate-sensitive agricultural and forestry systems, and emphasises indigenous participation. Botswana's Ecosystem-Based Adaptation and Mitigation in Communal Rangelands project aims to advance similar goals, with women comprising 60 per cent of its participants.

But, despite some successes, inclusion remains a formidable challenge.

As it stands, almost half of the world's population — including many of those most exposed to the effects of climate change — lacks access to any kind of social safety net. This helps to explain why only three of the projects reviewed in the FAO-GCF report were in low-

income countries. Moreover, only six of those projects included people with disabilities, a mere four incorporated young people, and none involved migrants. Of the seven project areas where indigenous peoples were present, only four included them.

Outcomes, too, fell short. For example, the FAO finds that heat stress widens the income gap between female-headed and male-headed households by \$37 billion a year, and floods by \$16 billion. But while several of the 23 GCF projects were gender-responsive, none was transformative. In addition, fewer than half of the GCF projects included efforts to strengthen existing social-protection systems, undermining their long-term sustainability and scalability. Social-insurance mechanisms were absent.

Improving outcomes will require a fundamental shift in the prevailing approach to designing, financing and implementing social protection. Rather than continue to depend on short-term project-based grants — the scale of which is necessarily limited — we must emphasise longer-term, coordinated initiatives, focused on building national systems and capabilities, while supporting locally led adaptation.

A whole-of-government approach, involving ministries responsible for climate, social protection and emergency management, is essential. And inclusion must be built into every stage of the process.

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SPORTS

SHORT TAKES



Seeb Club player, Muhannad al Balushi, clinched the title of 2025 Oman Men's Singles Table Tennis Championship title.

AL BALUSHI EMERGE T T CHAMPION

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

Seeb Club player, Muhannad al Balushi, clinched the title of 2025 Oman Men's Singles Table Tennis Championship title after an intense 3-2 victory over Ahmed al Riyami of Ibri Club in the final match at the main hall of the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher. Ghassan al Ghassani of Seeb Club secured third place after defeating his teammate Asaad al Raisi 3-1 in the third-place playoff. The tournament was under direct supervision of the head coach, Omid Shamas Sharbakki and his assistant Adnan Fawakherji. The coaching staff noted their technical points on the players performances specially who managed to reach into the final rounds. The three-day championship, organised by the Oman Table Tennis Association (OTTA), featured participation of 48 players representing various clubs across the Sultanate of Oman including: Seeb, Ibri, Al Amerat, Saham, Nakhal, Al Rustaq, Al Suwaiq, Taqah, Salalah, Masirah, Al Salam, Ahli Sidab and Al Bashayer. Al Balushi's triumph marks a strong comeback after finishing third in last season's edition. The 2024 champion Bilal al Rashdi ended his participation in the tournament from the quarterfinals after receiving a 3-1 loss against al Ghassani, while last year's runner-up Said al Kharousi was also eliminated at the same stage following a 3-1 defeat to Asaad al Raisi. The championship witnessed three days of thrilling competition, beginning with the preliminary rounds and culminating in highly competitive knockout stages, as players from different clubs vied for supremacy and national ranking points. Muhannad al Balushi's path to victory included several strong performances. He topped his third group which featured from Tariq al Majrafi from Al Amerat and Turki al Abri from Al Rustaq club and he won both games to lead the group. He defeated Sami al Jabri from Taqah Club in last 32, followed by a win over Said al Qarni of Al Rustaq Club in the Round of 16. He then overcame Badr al Jassasi in the quarterfinals, before edging Asaad al Raisi in the semifinals and finally clinching the title against Ahmed al Riyami in the decisive final.

Oman Equestrian Federation signs five partnerships to boost show jumping

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

The Oman Equestrian and Racing Federation (OERF) has signed five partnership agreements with private companies and stables to enhance and promote show jumping for the 2025/2026 season, the agreements were signed in the presence of Sayyid Munther bin Saif al Busaidy, Chairman of the Federation and representatives of the participating entities. The first agreement was signed with Mubasher Company, which will provide innovative media and advertising services to strengthen the digital and promotional presence of equestrian events, representing the company, Ali bin Hussein al Raisi, CEO of Mubasher, "This partnership connects national sports with modern digital platforms to ensure



The agreements were signed in the presence of Sayyid Munther al Busaidy, Chairman of Oman Equestrian and Racing Federation, and representatives of the participating entities.

horse racing reaches its audience effectively and widely." Al Raisi said. The second agreement was concluded with Oman Broadband Company to support the Oman International Show Jumping Championship 2025, as part of its social investment initiatives, Eng Sultan bin

Ahmed al Wahaibi, CEO of Oman Broadband, stated "Sports are a platform for developing Omani talent and empowering youth, aligning with Oman Vision 2040, our support reflects our commitment to sustainable community development." The third partnership was signed with the Majd



Sayyid Munther al Busaidy stressed that these agreements reflect a model partnership between the public and private sectors.

Show Jumping League, launched this season under the federation's supervision and jointly organised by Al Said Stables, the Olympic Equestrian Training Centre, Al Rayan Stables and Horseira Equestrian Club for the 50cm, 70cm and 90cm categories, Khalid bin Said al Wahaibi said "This

collaboration marks a new stage for show jumping, encouraging beginners to compete and preparing them for future local and international events." The fourth agreement was with Oman Masters, which returns this season with a series of local and international tournaments

scheduled for December 2025, January 2026 and March 2026, representatives Hassan bin Mahboob Hashmani and Ahmed bin Awad al Shanfari emphasised the event's role in linking sport, heritage and culture, promoting the noble values of Omani horsemanship. The fifth and final agreement was signed with the Distinguished Equestrian Institute, represented by Munther bin Humaid al Manji, who confirmed the institute will host a show jumping competition in January 2026 for 50cm, 70cm and 90cm heights. At the closing ceremony, Sayyid Munther al Busaidy stressed that these agreements reflect a model partnership between the public and private sectors, enabling the federation to organise international standard events and strengthen Oman's global presence in equestrian sports.

Camel racing season continues with 4th event

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

MOMENTUM AND excitement continued to build in Oman's camel racing season with the launch of the fourth event of the 2025-26 camel racing season on Saturday in the Wilayat of Barka in Al Batinah South Governorate and the Wilayat of Adam in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate. The event drew top camel owners and competitors from across the Sultanate of Oman.

The ongoing season, organised by the Oman Camel Racing Federation (OCRF), has already featured three major events earlier this year. The first event took place from September 20 to 21 in the Wilayat of Barka, the Wilayat of Sinaw, followed by the second event from October 4 to 5 at the same venues. The third event, which combined competitive races, Mazayna, and Milking competitions, was held from October 17 to 23, adding diversity and cultural richness to the season's calendar.

The opening day on Saturday witnessed strong competitions in the Hagayeg category, two year old, over a distance of 3 km. A total of 18 rounds were held at Al Felaj Track and an equal number at Al Bashayer Track, in addition to three rounds of the traditional race (human rider) at Al Felaj Track in Wilayat of Barka, contested over a 2 km distance.

At Al Felaj Track, 'Jaznah' owned by Said bin Salim al Mushyqari captured first place in the opening round, recording the fastest time of the day at 4:44.13 minutes, and received the symbol award.

Where 'Hamoula' owned by Salim bin Mohammed al Farisi secured first place in the



The winner in the second round of the traditional race, human rider.

second round with a time of 4:48.15 minutes, and received the symbol award. 'Al Rahi' owned by Mohammed bin Salim al Hajri claimed first place in the third round, clocking 4:46.82 minutes, and received the symbol award.

The three traditional races (human rider) featured strong performances at Al Felaj Track. 'Al Rawdah' owned by Amer bin Salim al Azri won the first round. 'Takreem' owned by Mohammed bin Said al Jaradi claimed the second round, while 'Saib' owned by Amer bin Salim al Azri secured the third round.

At Al Bashayer Track, 'Hafлах' owned by Ibrahim bin Abdullah al Darai claimed first place in the opening round with a time of 4:37 minutes, and received the symbol award.

'Al Reem' owned by Khalid bin Hamid al Junaibi secured first place in the second round, clocking 4:39 minutes, and received the symbol award. 'Ghazi' owned by Abdullah

bin Nasser al Amri captured first place in the sixth round, recording the fastest time of the day at 4:33 minutes, and received the symbol award. The second day on Sunday featured races in the Lagaya category, three year old, over a distance of 4 km, with 12 rounds held at Al Felaj Track and an equal number at Al Bashayer Track. The competitions will continue on Monday, the third and final day, featuring races for the Elythaa category, four year old, over a distance of 5 km, with six rounds at Al Felaj Track and an equal number at Al Bashayer Track. The Thanaya category, five year old, will follow over 6 km, with three rounds at each track, while the Al Hawl category, six years and above, will compete over 6 km, also with three rounds at each venue. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top ten finishers, while symbols will be presented to first-place winners in the main rounds across all categories.

- SECOND-DAY RESULTS - AL FELAJ TRACK
(Read as: round, camel, owner, time)
- 1, Thameenah, Mohammed bin Said al Rubie, 6:24.08
 - 2, Al Azrah, Mohammed bin Said al Azri, 6:30.55
 - 3, Mushghil, Mohammed bin Said al Rubie, 6:21.06
 - 4, Enthar, Abdullah bin Hamad al Wahibi, 6:28.33
 - 5, Najd, Said bin Ali al Maliki, 6:26.61
 - 6, Shaheen, Abdullah bin Hamid al Amri, 6:24.15
 - 7, Al Gharbyah, Mohammed bin Saif al Harsousi, 6:28.22
 - 8, Eb'ad, Ali bin Rashid al Amri, 6:24.87
 - 9, Darb, Hamad bin Fail al Jamri, 6:33.36
 - 10, Mishnakh, Mohammed bin Saif al Harsousi, 6:27.11
 - 11, Nawaya, Abdullah bin Dhanfar al Hajri, 6:26.24
 - 12, Mutaeb, Hamad bin Shteif al Hashmi, 6:27.55

- SECOND-DAY RESULTS - AL BASHAYER TRACK
(Read as: round, camel, owner, time)
- 1, Mutfiyah, Muthar bin Abdullah al Tanibi, 6:11
 - 2, Amsiyah, Abdullah bin Al Sagheer al Faarzi, 6:10
 - 3, Der'a, Mohammed bin Ali al Darai, 6:06
 - 4, Awaiyed, Saeed bin Ameer al Hajri, 6:10
 - 5, Takreem, Hamood bin Al Qousi al Harsousi, 6:18
 - 6, Sayyaf, Khamis bin Mohammed al Hanbi, 6:13
 - 7, Fakhr, Jannas bin Ali al Ajhafi, 6:13
 - 8, Thun, Sultan bin Hassan al Qaili, 6:15
 - 9, Saib, Hamad bin Sultan al Naqeebi, 6:10
 - 10, Qasaed, Khalifah bin Humaid al Mahri, 6:10
 - 11, Hamoolah, Ahmed bin Salim al Ghafri, 6:11
 - 12, Al Shabiy, Suwaigh bin Mohammed al Harsousi, 6:13

SHORT TAKES



The final is expected to be attended by Mousa bin Khamis al Balushi, President of the OHA, who will honour the winners.

MUSCAT, SEEB TO BATTLE FOR YOUTH HANDBALL TITLE

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

The stage is set for an exciting finale in the 2025/2026 Youth Handball League, as Muscat and Seeb face off tomorrow (Tuesday), in the championship match at the main indoor arena, while Nizwa and Al Oruba will compete earlier in the day for third place.

The final is expected to be attended by Mousa bin Khamis al Balushi, President of the Oman Handball Association (OHA), who will honour the winners and present the awards, reflecting the federation’s continuous support for the development of the sport’s youth base.

Muscat earned their spot in the final after delivering a dominant performance against Al Oruba in the semifinals, claiming a convincing 42–29 victory, from the opening whistle, Muscat displayed a fast paced and well organised game plan, combining a strong defensive structure with sharp attacking transitions, their intensity allowed them to take a commanding 25–9 lead at halftime, effectively controlling the tempo and leaving Al Oruba struggling to keep up.

Despite a spirited attempt from Al Oruba in the second half to narrow the deficit through aggressive pressing, Muscat maintained composure and continued to capitalise on counter attacks, the victory reflected not only the team’s depth and tactical discipline but also the strength of the club’s youth system, particularly after Muscat’s junior team recently secured the national junior league title a testament to the club’s growing investment in young talent.

In the other semifinal, Seeb overcame Nizwa with a solid 31–19 win, the match began evenly, with both sides trading goals and chances in the first half, which ended narrowly in Seeb’s favour 11–10, but the second half saw Seeb shift gears, showing superior stamina and better tactical execution, they dominated possession and space, pulling away steadily to secure a comfortable margin by the final whistle.

With both teams now preparing for tomorrow’s highly anticipated showdown, handball fans can expect a thrilling battle between two of the country’s most promising youth squads, the encounter promises speed, intensity and a showcase of emerging talent that underscores the continued growth of Omani handball.

Meanwhile, Nizwa and Al Oruba will contest the third place match, offering both sides a valuable opportunity to end their campaigns on a positive note after falling short in the semifinals, the day’s matches mark a fitting conclusion to a season that has revealed several rising stars and reinforced the competitiveness of the youth handball scene across the Sultanate of Oman.



Masirah maintained superior performance and scoring across the four quarters.

Masirah girls crowned the Credit Oman Cup title

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

MASIRAH Basketball Club (Girls) clinched the Credit Oman Cup title after defeating Salalah Club 67–51 in the final match held yesterday at the secondary hall of the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher. The Masirah team will officially be crowned on Wednesday at the same venue, following the men’s Credit Oman Cup final.

The match was intense and exciting, with Masirah successfully controlling the game thanks to the players’ focus and well-executed offensive and defensive strategies. Masirah maintained superior performance and scoring across the four quarters, with the second and third periods marked by close competition but with Masirah showing better scoring efficiency and capitalising on key opportunities. Standout performances from several Masirah players played a decisive role in securing the win, led by Shams al Khanji with 20 points, Sandra with 19 points, Fatma al Numani with 12 points, and Malak al Sulaimi with 5 points.

For Salalah, Ghadir al Ismaili topped the scores with 18 points, followed by Buthaina al Maamari with 9 points, and Mina with 6 points.

The match was thrilling from the start, with both sides exchanging attacks and

points throughout the first quarter, which saw several equalising moments. However, Masirah managed to make better use of scoring opportunities through its players, particularly Shams al Khanji, who scored four points during that period, helping the team edge the opening quarter 10–9.

The second quarter witnessed a continued back-and-forth performance from both teams, but Masirah gradually increased the gap despite Salalah’s attempts to reduce it. Masirah scored 24 points to Salalah’s 13, ending the first half with Masirah leading 34–22. In the third quarter, both teams pushed forward offensively , Salalah aiming to reduce the gap and Masirah seeking to extend it. Although Salalah’s defensive performance improved, Masirah added 14 points, while Salalah scored 12, ending the third quarter with Masirah leading 48–42.

The final quarter saw continued exchange of scoring chances, but Masirah again prevailed offensively, adding 19 points, while Salalah scored 17, sealing the match at 67–51 in favour of Masirah.

The game was officiated by international referee Thani al Khalasi as the first referee, Mazin al Hilali as the second, and Taha al Amri as the third.

Masirah’s head coach, Nidal stated that the team entered the final with a clear plan focused on strengthening the defence to prevent Salalah from scoring easily. She

explained that defensive organisation was key and was successfully executed, while the offensive rhythm improved gradually, with scoring starting slowly in the first quarter before stabilising midway through the second. She praised her players for maintaining fighting spirit, enthusiasm, and focus until the final whistle.

Meanwhile, Hiba al Naabi, Board Member of the Oman Basketball Association and Head of the Women’s Committee, explained that the Association has an annual sponsorship agreement with Credit Oman, previously dedicated solely to the men’s competition. This year marks the fourth edition featuring the top four league teams, and a new proposal was submitted and approved to add a women’s competition to promote women’s basketball and expand its presence.

She added that yesterday’s match was dedicated exclusively to the women’s final between Salalah and Masirah, the top two finishers of the recent Ministry Championship. She highlighted that the Association aims to elevate the Ministry Championship by granting its top teams annual qualification to the Credit Oman Cup. The plan is to expand women’s participation from two teams this year to four in the next edition, paving the way for launching a full women’s league in 2026, with a strong focus on developing players and increasing participation.

Oman finish runner-up at 6th West Asia bodybuilding championship

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

Oman’s bodybuilders and physique team members delivered an outstanding performance at the 6th West Asia Bodybuilding and Physique Championship which concluded recently in Bahrain.

The national team finished second overall with a total of 286 points and an impressive 24 medals, including eight gold, ten silver and six bronze, finishing just behind the UAE with 317 points while the hosts Bahrain placed third and followed by Syria and Saudi Arabia.

The three days event in Manama city featured participation of over 200 athletes representing national

federations and residents from across the West Asian region, highlighting an exceptional level of competition.

Oman’s athletes once again showcased their strength and dedication and managed to climb the podium repeatedly and proudly raising the Sultanate of Oman’s flag as the national anthem was played eight times in honour of their victories.

STRONG SHOW IN PHYSIQUE

In the Physique Youth division, Abdulmajeed al Raisi clinched the gold medal, while Abdullah al Amri secured the silver. In the Men’s 170 cm category, al Amri earned another silver, and Ghanim al Maamari took



Oman delivered an outstanding performance at the 6th West Asia Bodybuilding and Physique Championship.

the bronze. In the 182 cm category, Sultan al Yahyai and Al Khaleel al Busaidy claimed silver and bronze, respectively.

In the Open Physique division, Muneer al Luwaihi triumphed with gold, and Mohammed Bahadoor followed with silver. Meanwhile, Fayyadh al Maamari earned silver in the Classic Physique Open category.

DOMINANCE IN BODYBUILDING

Oman’s dominance continued in the Bodybuilding categories as Imran al Zadjali started with silver in the Youth class. Ibrahim al Shanini struck gold in the 171 cm division while Issa Khalfan claimed bronze in 175 cm. Veteran bodybuilder Ahmed al Hadidi won gold in the Masters

category.

In the Youth Open, Fayyadh al Maamari added silver, while Imran al Zadjali took bronze. Moath al Shukaili earned bronze in the 70 kg class. Ahmed al Hadidi captured another gold in the 80 kg category, followed by Haitham al Zadjali with bronze. In the 85 kg class, Ali al Maamari secured gold and Abdullah al Maamari won silver. Asaad al Siyabi took silver in the 90 kg category, while Salim al Riyami capped Oman’s campaign with gold in the 90+ kg division and Mohammed al Ajmi earned silver in the same category. The Omani delegation, led by Imad al Salti, Chairman of the Oman Bodybuilding and Physique Committee.

SPORTS

SHORT TAKES



Tom McKibbin celebrates with the Hong Kong Open trophy.

MCKIBBIN WINS HONG KONG OPEN

HONG KONG: Tom McKibbin will play at the Masters for the first time and also qualified for the British Open after breaking records at the Hong Kong Open to win by seven shots on Sunday.

The 22-year old from Northern Ireland was a model of consistency all week at Fanling, leading from round one to triumph at the prestigious Asian Tour event in dominant fashion.

Belfast-born McKibbin, who won once on the European Tour in 2023 and now plays on the LIV Golf tour, shot an official course-record 60 on the opening day Thursday to ignite his title charge.

In warm and overcast conditions on Sunday, and leading M J Maguire by one shot overnight, McKibbin fired a final-round 63 to finish on 27-under 253.

“I dreamt of doing this since I was a young kid, and they come true if you train hard enough,” said McKibbin, who broke the tournament’s 72-hole low scoring total and matched its biggest margin of victory.

He shot eight birdies in his final round including five in his last nine holes.

McKibbin is a club mate of five-time major winner Rory McIlroy, the current Masters champion.

“It was obviously amazing,” McKibbin said after his second victory as a professional.

“I played some of the best golf I have probably ever played. So, yeah, to have that sort of golf and to shoot those scores around here is pretty special.”

Peter Uihlein was second at 20 under and his fellow American Maguire was tied third another shot back.

The Hong Kong Open is one of the elevated International Series events on the Asian Tour in 2025 and is bank-rolled by the Saudi Arabia-backed LIV Golf.

It is also one of a select number of national opens around the world that were granted status as qualifiers for next year’s US Masters at Augusta and the British Open at Royal Birkdale. — AFP



Tom McKibbin Northern Irish professional golfer.



Italy’s Jannik Sinner celebrates with the trophy after winning the men’s singles final match of the Paris ATP Masters 1000 tennis tournament. — AFP

Sinner wins Paris Masters, reclaims world number 1 ranking

JANNIK SINNER won the Paris Masters for the first time by defeating Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) on Sunday as the four-time Grand Slam champion reclaimed his position atop the world rankings.

The 24-year-old’s maiden crown in Paris, coupled with incumbent world number one Carlos Alcaraz of Spain crashing out early in the tournament, will see Sinner return to the pinnacle of men’s tennis when the ATP rankings are updated on Monday.

The Italian first claimed the number one ranking in June last year and held it for 65 weeks until he lost the US Open title-match to Alcaraz in September.

Reclaiming top spot from his rival in Paris will taste even sweeter for Sinner after he went down in a remarkable five-set final to Alcaraz at Roland Garros earlier in the season.

Despite missing three months at the start of 2025 after twice testing positive for traces of clostebol in March last year, Sinner has now won five titles this season — including the Australian Open and Wimbledon.

Sunday’s victory was, however, his first

1000-level title since Shanghai last October.

For Canadian ninth seed Auger-Aliassime, defeat at the last hurdle in the French capital prevented him from sewing up his spot at the ATP Finals later this month.

Auger-Aliassime is, however, favourite to claim the eighth and final berth for the season-ending tournament as his run to the title-match leapfrogged him ahead of Italy’s Lorenzo Musetti in the race to Turin.

Despite being unable to add a fourth title to his list of achievements so far this season, the 25-year-old has enjoyed a renaissance in 2025 and cemented his place back amongst the world’s top 10.

POWER-HITTING

In menacing form after dropping only one game in his semifinal win against third seed Alexander Zverev on Saturday, Sinner picked up immediately where he left off as he broke Auger-Aliassime in the opening game to seize the advantage.

The Canadian did not allow himself to be cowed by the second seed’s power hitting from the baseline and dug in to force Sinner to serve out the opening set, which he did in typically efficient fashion.

The break point converted by Sinner at the start of the match was the sole one either player managed to fashion in a first set characterised by impeccable serving.

Sinner then forced a couple of break opportunities at the very start of the second frame but Auger-Aliassime rallied to save himself on each occasion with a huge first serve. Both men were striking the ball cleanly as the number of winners continued to climb. Auger-Aliassime displayed grit to save three break points in the seventh game as Sinner looked to have finally worn the Montreal-native down with the relentless pace and accuracy of his groundstrokes.

Leading 5-4, Auger-Aliassime made a sudden charge on Sinner’s serve, taking the game to deuce before an overcooked forehand and a net-cord, which landed on the wrong side of the court for the Canadian, saw the opportunity to force a decider pass him by as the set rumbled towards a tie-break.

In the breaker, Sinner got ahead at 3-2 and never looked back as he raced to the trophy and the top of the world rankings, sealing both with a blistering backhand down the line on his first championship point. — AFP

Celtic beat 10-man Rangers to reach Scottish League Cup final

GLASGOW: Celtic beat bitter rivals Rangers 3-1 to reach the Scottish League Cup final on Sunday and maintain Martin O’Neill’s perfect start since returning as interim manager.

O’Neill was taking charge for just the second game of his second spell after Brendan Rodgers resigned on Monday amid acrimonious relations with the club’s board.

Celtic were on course to cruise towards the final against St. Mirren next month when Jonny Kenny opened the scoring and Thelo Aasgaard was sent-off before half-time.

But Rangers rallied to send the game to extra-time through James Tavernier’s penalty.

Callum McGregor’s long-range

strike restored Celtic’s advantage before teenager Callum Osmand steered in his first goal for the club.

Both sides of the Glasgow divide are under new management after poor starts to the season that has allowed Hearts to open up a nine-point lead in the Scottish Premiership.

Rangers boss Danny Rohl is also less than two weeks into his role and was given another example of the job he has to turn around a side that is 14 points behind Hearts in the league and bottom of the Europa League table.

The struggles of both teams showed in a tepid 0-0 draw in August, but the fire often associated with this fixture was back in abundance at Hampden.



Celtic’s Liam Scales in action with Rangers’ John Souttar. — Reuters

Rangers escaped conceding a calamitous opener when Nasser Djiga blasted a clearance off team-mate Nico Raskin and the ball rebounded into the net.

However, a VAR review spotted an offside against Daizen Maeda in the build-up.

Celtic did take the lead midway through the first half when Kenny headed in Arne Engels’ corner.

The holders appeared on course for a comfortable passage to the final when Aasgaard was then shown a straight red card for a wild studs-up challenge on Anthony Ralston.

Celtic were lucky not to also be reduced to 10 men before half-time when Auston Trusty caught Rangers goalkeeper Jack Butland on the head.

The unhappy final days of Rodgers’ reign were beset by his frustration at Celtic’s failure to add more quality in the final third during the transfer window.

That flaw remains very much an issue despite the departure of the former Liverpool boss as O’Neill could not contain his frustration at Celtic’s inability to put the game beyond the 10 men in the second period. A lack of killer instinct came back to haunt the Scottish champions when Ralston was penalised for handball 10 minutes from time. Tavernier fired home the resulting penalty to send the game to extra-time. However, Celtic finally made the man advantage count against a tiring Rangers in the extra 30 minutes. — AFP

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MSX upgrade gains momentum

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

THE Sultanate of Oman is accelerating capital-market reforms to deepen liquidity, broaden sector representation and secure an upgrade of Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) from frontier to emerging market status, moves aimed at drawing foreign inflows and aligning the bourse more closely with the real economy, according to Abdullah bin Salim al Salmi, Executive President of the Financial Services Authority (FSA).

Speaking exclusively to the *Observer*, Al Salmi highlighted the MSX's upbeat performance, underpinned by strong primary issuances of more than RO 4 billion in 2024, averaging RO 2.1 billion annually since 2022.

This wave of new listings and offerings expanded the retail investor base by nearly 97% from its 2022 baseline and strengthened MSX representation in energy, logistics and financials, though gaps remain in mining, agriculture and



The MSX is already considered one of the region's most open markets and is courting foreign investors accordingly.



ABDULLAH BIN SALIM AL SALMI

Executive President
— Financial Services
Authority (FSA).

fisheries, tourism, healthcare and education.

To support fair pricing and continuous trading, the FSA has introduced market makers and liquidity providers; and is encouraging an active role for retail investors alongside long-term

institutions.

Liquidity is inseparable from robust disclosure and timely information flows, he emphasised. Product diversification is also advancing.

The framework now accommodates green and sustainable bonds and sukuk, plus ESG-linked bonds, with derivatives and futures under study as ecosystem readiness improves.

The regulator's role is to enable issuance while keeping rules "open and responsive" to demand.

The MSX is already considered one of the region's most open markets and is courting foreign investors accordingly. Classification work towards emerging market status is coordinated among the FSA, MSX, Ministry of Finance and the Oman Investment Authority to enhance liquidity, diversify products and raise international visibility, Al Salmi said.

At the policy level, diversified, deep and liquid markets represent the cornerstone of efficiency, measured by the ability to reflect true economic value, underscoring why disclosure, information quality and active participation remain non-negotiable, he added.

Gold output from Oman mine tops 100 kg

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, NOV 2

GOLD production from the Al Wash-hi-Majaza mine in the Wilayat of Al Mudhaibi in Oman's Al Sharqiyah North Governorate is estimated to have totalled around 100 kilogrammes to date — a quantity that, while still minuscule in global production terms, underscores the Sultanate of Oman's promising mineral resource potential, particularly with regard to precious metals.

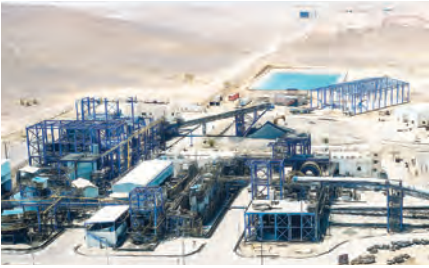
Gold occurs in association with copper at the Al Wash-hi-Majaza mine, operated by Al Hadeetha Resources LLC (AHRL), a joint venture 51 per cent owned by Australian-based mining firm Alara Resources.

Since operations began in early 2024, followed by the first shipment of copper-gold concentrate in May that year, well over 100 kilogrammes of the precious metal have been exported in a total of 28 parcels via SOHAR Port and Freezone as of October 31, 2025.

Exports of copper metal have totalled a significant 6,218 metric tonnes to date, affirming Oman's growing importance as a producer of this strategically vital commodity.

Notably, around 3,707 dry metric tonnes of copper-gold concentrate were exported during October alone — representing the highest monthly outflow for the company. These volumes were shipped in three parcels to global commodity trading company Trafigura under a long-term offtake agreement.

Gold yields have fluctuated from parcel to parcel, ranging from a low of 1.7 kg in Parcel 19 to a high of 6.6 kg in Parcel 9. With global gold prices at record



Al Hadeetha's copper concentrator plant at the Al Wash-hi-Majaza mine.

levels, even these modest yields contribute positively to the company's bottom line.

Majority shareholder Alara Resources welcomed the mine's performance during the 12 months ended June 30, 2025, highlighting in particular buoyant copper prices in international markets.

"While short-term volatility in copper prices has been influenced by global factors such as potential tariff changes and a moderated economic outlook in China, the long-term fundamentals of copper remain exceptionally strong", Alara noted in its Chairman's Report for the year.

"The megatrends of electrification, energy transition and digitalisation are driving sustained global demand. Analysts, including Goldman Sachs, continue to project copper prices in the range of \$10,000–11,000 per tonne — a robust outlook that underpins our optimism. 2025 has been a milestone year for Alara", Atmavireswar Sthapak, Managing Director; and John Shingleton, Chairman of Alara Resources, jointly stated in the report.

While its focus remains on the Al Wash-hi-Majaza Copper-Gold Project, Alara says it continues exploration activities at its other Omani projects.

تاجير للتصويل Taageer Finance Co. S.A.O.G			
Board of Directors' Report for the period ended 30 September 2025			
	UN-AUDITED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2025		
		Sep-2025 RO'000	Sep-2024 RO'000
Dear Shareholders, On behalf of the Board of Directors of Taageer Finance Company SAOG, I am pleased to present the un-audited financial statements for the period ended 30 September 2025.	Dec-2024 RO'000		
	ASSETS		
Performance Summary The Company continued to deliver excellent results in the first nine months of 2025, achieving consistent growth in its financing portfolio and profitability. Profit before tax rose to RO 5.25 million compared to RO 4.10 million for the same period in 2024, an increase of 29%. Net profit stood at RO 4.46 million, up 29% from RO 3.46 million recorded in the previous year.	Cash and bank balances		
	11,717		
Total finance income grew to RO 26.67 million from RO 22.05 million in September 2024, a healthy 21% rise driven by higher disbursements. Net finance income, after interest expenses, increased by 35% year-on-year to RO 15.58 million. Other income also improved to RO 2.75 million from RO 2.23 million, reflecting better fee-based earnings.	Net investment in finance leases, working capital finance and factoring receivables		
	298,693		
Operating expenses amounted to RO 5.39 million, up 16% from RO 4.64 million in the same period last year. The Company made an impairment provision of RO 7.36 million, compared to RO 4.79 million in the prior year, reflecting a prudent approach to credit risk management alongside portfolio expansion.	Other receivables and prepayments		
	1,298		
The Company's balance sheet remains robust, with total assets increasing to RO 312.95 million from RO 276.24 million a year earlier — a growth of 13%. The net investment in finance leases, working capital finance, and factoring receivables reached RO 298.69 million, up from RO 255.24 million, demonstrating continued business momentum and strong credit demand.	Vehicles, equipment and right-of-use assets		
	850		
In terms of funding and liquidity, the Company maintained a well-balanced borrowing structure. Total bank borrowings amounted to RO 138.75 million (September 2024: RO 136.43 million). Corporate and security deposits increased to RO 73.48 million from RO 51.88 million, underlining investor confidence in the Company.	Intangible assets		
	58		
Market Outlook The Board remains confident in the economic prospects and future growth potential of Oman's finance sector. The Company will continue to expand its financing activities through customer-focused and technology-driven strategies, while ensuring asset quality and sound risk management. The focus remains on creating sustainable value for shareholders through steady and profitable operations.	Deferred tax asset – net		
	79		
Acknowledgement The Board extends its sincere appreciation to the Central Bank of Oman, the Financial Services Authority, shareholders, customers, and employees for their continued trust, support, and contribution to the success of Taageer Finance Company SAOG.	Statutory deposit		
	250		
On Behalf of the Board of Directors	Total assets		
	312,945		
Said Safran Chairman	LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
	LIABILITIES		
Note: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who requests them in Arabic or English as requested, within 7 days of receipt of the request.	Creditors, accruals and other liabilities		
	4,151		
	Short-term loans		
	38,224		
	Tax payable		
	807		
	Provision for employees' end of service benefits		
	298		
	Unsecured non-convertible bonds		
	15,237		
	Corporate and security deposits		
	73,481		
	Long-term loans		
	100,524		
	Total liabilities		
	232,722		
	EQUITY		
	Share capital		
	27,922		
	Legal reserve		
	6,768		
	Impairment reserve		
	2,222		
	Fair value reserve		
	(441)		
	General reserve		
	727		
	Retained earnings		
	18,025		
	Total shareholders' equity attributable to the equity holders of the Company		
	55,223		
	Perpetual bonds		
	25,000		
	Total equity		
	80,223		
	Total equity and liabilities		
	312,945		
	Net assets per share (baizas)		
	198		
	UN-AUDITED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025		
		Sep-2025 RO'000	Sep-2024 RO'000
	Income		
	Finance income		
	26,670		
	Interest expense		
	(11,085)		
	Net finance income		
	15,585		
	Other operating income		
	2,755		
	18,340		
	Expenses		
	Operating expenses		
	(5,389)		
	Depreciation and amortization		
	(341)		
	Impairment on net investment in finance leases, working capital finance and factoring receivables		
	(7,358)		
	(13,088)		
	Profit before taxation		
	5,252		
	Taxation		
	(788)		
	Profit for the year		
	4,464		
	Basic and diluted earnings per share (baizas)		
	21.3		

ADVERTORIALS

SHORTTAKES



The recognition highlights the bank’s pioneering efforts in enhancing the work environment, empowering national talent and adopting sustainable corporate change methodologies.

BankDhofar recognised for excellence in corporate innovation

MUSCAT: Reflecting its commitment to fostering a culture of innovation and adopting leading corporate practices, the Ministry of Labour honoured BankDhofar during the 4th Corporate Innovation and Change Management Forum.

The recognition highlights the bank’s pioneering efforts in enhancing the work environment, empowering national talent and adopting sustainable corporate change methodologies.

The forum showcased best administrative practices across government entities and private sector institutions, as well as outstanding research and studies contributed by both government and private participants.

The Ministry of Labour also recognised leading organisations, research firms and researchers for their success in implementing effective administrative practices and research that enhance corporate performance, shape the future of work and accelerate institutional development.

Dr Khalid bin Salim al Hamdani, Head of Human Resources at BankDhofar, receiving the award on behalf of the bank.

He expressed his pride in this recognition, emphasising that BankDhofar places innovation and development at the core of its corporate strategy and remains committed to investing in human capital in alignment with Oman Vision 2040.

Dr Al Hamdani stated, “This award reaffirms BankDhofar’s commitment to fostering a culture of positive change, embracing digital solutions and developing leadership skills — all of which contribute to enhancing institutional performance and driving excellence in Oman’s banking sector”.

BankDhofar has launched several high-impact initiatives in institutional development and training, such as the Leadership Development Programme, designed to prepare a new generation of leaders capable of navigating rapid change and promoting innovation within the banking industry.

The Ruwwad Programme, launched eight years ago, remains one of the bank’s flagship initiatives, supporting the development of recent graduates from diverse disciplines and equipping them with leadership, financial, communication and digital skills to perform with high efficiency and professionalism.

The Oman Society for Human Resource Management (OSHRM) has commended BankDhofar’s role as a digital innovator in human resource practices. The bank has also received numerous accolades from leading HR organisations, including the Digital Transformation in HR Management Award (private sector) and the Excellence in HR for People Development Award.

OMAN TO
SHOWCASE
TOURISM
STRENGTHS
AT WTM IN
LONDON

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman is set to take part in the World Travel Market (WTM) in London, one of the world’s premier travel and tourism events, taking place from November 4 to 6.

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism will lead the Omani delegation as part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen Oman’s global standing as a distinctive and attractive travel destination.

The participation aims to highlight Oman’s rich cultural heritage, diverse natural landscapes



and wide range of tourism experiences. The Ministry also seeks to establish international partnerships and agreements

that will help develop the tourism infrastructure and increase the sector’s contribution to the national economy.

Oman’s pavilion will feature major national partners, including Omran Group, Oman Air, Oman Airports, the National Travel Operator, the Oman Across Ages Museum, the National Museum and the Royal Opera House Muscat.

They will be joined by 29 private tourism establishments, such as hotels, travel agencies and tour operators.

National Finance posts exceptional Q3 results

UNDERSCORING its sustained leadership as the Sultanate of Oman’s leading finance company, National Finance has reported a remarkable performance for the third quarter of 2025.

Demonstrating resilience, the company’s results reflect robust fundamentals, prudent risk governance and a forward-looking growth strategy anchored in customer-centricity.

With its strong network of 23 branches across the country, National Finance continued to enhance its portfolio quality and operational efficiency while accelerating its digital transformation journey.

The company remains committed to long-term sustainability and to supporting the growth of the nation’s financial ecosystem in line with economic priorities.

Maintaining its growth momentum, National Finance



TARIQ BIN
SULAIMAN AL
FARSI

Chief Executive Officer
of National Finance

achieved a 43.33% year-on-year increase in operating profit, reaching RO 19.32 million for the period ended September 30, 2025, compared to RO 13.48 million during the same period last year.

Profit after tax was RO 11.01 million, marking a 25.77% increase, driven by higher net finance income and enhanced operational efficiency.

The company’s net investment

in leases expanded to RO 638.74 million, reflecting a 10.34% growth since December 2024. Backed by a strong regulatory capital base of RO 147.93 million — the highest among finance and leasing companies in the Sultanate of Oman — National Finance remains well-positioned to pursue sustainable portfolio expansion, support the nation’s diversification agenda and deliver consistent value to its shareholders and stakeholders alike.

Commenting on the results, Tariq bin Sulaiman al Farsi, Chief Executive Officer of National Finance, stated, “Our third-quarter performance reflects not only the strength of our business fundamentals but also the depth of our strategic foresight and operational discipline.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our Chairman and the Board of Directors for their steadfast leadership and guidance, which

continue to strengthen our strategic direction and drive our collective success.

At National Finance, we view growth through the lens of long-term value creation, balancing profitability with purpose.

In alignment with Oman Vision 2040, we remain committed to advancing national development, fostering entrepreneurship and empowering communities through responsible lending and innovation.

With a solid capital foundation and a digitally enabled business model, our focus remains on building resilience, driving customer service excellence and advancing sustainable economic transformation”.

Reflecting its strong commitment to local talent development, National Finance maintained an Omanisation rate of 91.85% as of September 30, 2025, consistently exceeding the industry benchmark.

NBO HOSTS HEALTH WEEK TO PROMOTE EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

MUSCAT: In line with its ongoing commitment to employee wellbeing and promoting balanced lifestyles, the National Bank of Oman (NBO) organised a dedicated Health Week at its Head Office.

The event brought together leading clinics, fitness experts and healthcare professionals for a full week of health-focused activities. The Health Week also featured a health exhibition with participation from top clinics and hospitals across Oman, offering free consultations, health checks and wellness advice to NBO employees.

As part of the initiative, a live fitness show conducted by professional trainers demonstrated practical exercises suitable for both office and home environments. The session also emphasised the



The event brought together leading clinics, fitness experts and healthcare professionals for a full week of health-focused activities.

importance of movement and physical activity as part of a sustainable wellness routine.

In addition, two awareness sessions were held focusing on mental health and breast

cancer awareness, reinforcing NBO’s commitment to holistic wellness. These sessions aimed to empower employees with knowledge, promote early detection and encourage a culture of open dialogue around health.

Going further, an inspirational talk was also delivered, shedding light on preventive healthcare, mental wellness and achieving lifestyle balance. The session resonated strongly with attendees and highlighted the importance of proactive self-care.

NBO continues to invest in the wellbeing of its workforce through initiatives that foster a positive workplace culture, in alignment with its broader commitment to responsible corporate citizenship and Oman Vision 2040.

Bank Muscat launches waiver on credit card annual fees

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat’s credit cards are an ideal choice for customers as they open a world of opportunities and unrivalled benefits, making them one of the most popular banking options in Oman.

To further enhance its pioneering role in providing the best banking services, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has launched a special offer of a first-year annual fee waiver on Bank Muscat Oman Air Visa Platinum Credit Card, Bank Muscat Visa Gold Credit Card and

New credit cards.
No annual fees
for the first year.



The offer is applicable for all customers who meet the Bank Muscat credit card criteria and eligibility.

the LuLu Bank Muscat Titanium Mastercard Credit Card. The offer is applicable for all customers who meet the Bank Muscat credit card criteria and eligibility; and is valid until November 30, 2025 for both new primary and supplementary credit card applications.

Customers can apply for credit cards through Mobile Banking, Internet Banking or Bank Muscat branches with the option to have the card delivered to them directly via complimentary courier service. This offer comes as part of Bank

Muscat’s strategy to provide special offers to its cardholders who can enjoy a number of benefits as well as safe and secure payment options in and outside the Sultanate of Oman, providing a seamless experience.

Bank Muscat Visa Gold Credit Cardholders can make the most of free travel insurance and the financial flexibility of the Bank’s Easy Payment Plan for their purchases. The Bank Muscat Oman Air Visa Platinum Credit Card helps customers make the most of their travels with the exclusive reward of

earning 2 Sindbad Miles for every RO 1 spent with the card, as well as welcome bonus Sindbad miles with the first usage of the card.

The credit card also facilitates complimentary visits to airport lounges worldwide as well as complimentary chauffer service to and from Muscat and Salalah Airports. Cardholders also have the unique benefit of being able to fast track to Sindbad Silver tier upon completion of 2 return trips through Oman Air within 6 months of getting the card.

SHORTTAKES



The United Kingdom accounted for 2.9 per cent of Oman's total trade in 2024.

TRADE BETWEEN OMAN AND UK HITS RO 846 MILLION

SAEED AL MASHARFI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

TRADE relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Kingdom continued to strengthen in 2025, with total trade in goods and services reaching £1.8 billion (approximately RO 846 million) in the four quarters to the end of Q2 2025 — a rise of 14.7% compared with the same period a year earlier, according to the latest UK Department for Business and Trade factsheet.

UK exports to Oman totalled £1.3 billion (approximately RO 611 million), up 9.1%, while imports from Oman climbed by a notable 31% to £533 million (approximately RO 250 million). The growth was mainly driven by higher exports of mechanical power generators, cars, industrial machinery and electrical goods, while Oman's key exports to the UK included refined oil, power generators and non-ferrous metals.

and electrical goods, while Oman's key exports to the UK included refined oil, power generators and non-ferrous metals.

The report also highlighted that Omani foreign direct investment (FDI) in the UK reached £140 million (approximately RO 66 million) at the end of 2023 — an impressive 109% increase from the previous year.

In terms of market share, the UK accounted for 2.9% of Oman's total trade in 2024 — a slight decline of 0.3 percentage points from 2023.

Goods represented 1.7%, while services accounted for 6.6% of Oman's trade with the UK.

Meanwhile, approximately 2,300 UK-registered businesses exported goods to Oman in 2024, compared with 300 UK firms importing from Oman, underlining a growing commercial relationship supported by both governments' efforts to deepen bilateral economic cooperation.

RO 35 MILLION NEW INVESTMENTS IN SAMAIL INDUSTRIAL CITY

MUSCAT: Samail Industrial City, one of the key industrial hubs managed by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), has attracted 19 new projects worth over RO 35 million during the first half of 2025, out of 26 investment applications received in the same period.

The new projects, covering more than 470,000 square metres, will operate across various industries, including metals, paper products, food processing, cement, automotive components, machinery and kitchen

manufacturing.

These investments are expected to boost local production and support value-added industries within Oman.

Engineer Yasser bin Ibrahim al Ajmi, Director General of Samail Industrial City, revealed that total investments in the city exceeded RO 243 million by mid-2025, with a total leased area of 2.7 million square metres out of more than 11.8 million available.

Employment in the city reached 3,378, including around 800 Omani nationals.

Al Ajmi also highlighted several ongoing development projects, including an RO 11 million water supply project implemented in collaboration with Nama Water Company, expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2026.

The city is also preparing to offer land for investment in a planned residential area and a new Medical Fitness Examination Centre.

The medical centre will cater to workers in the industrial city and nearby communities, offering laboratory, clinical and diagnostic services. — ONA

Oman invites global bids for key road projects

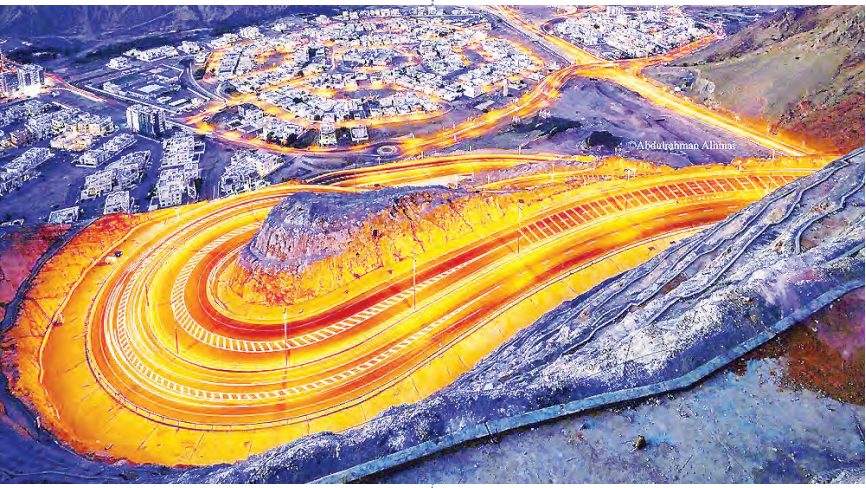
JOMAR MENDOZA
MUSCAT, NOV 2

THE Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MoTCIT) has announced a major invitation for investment proposals from both local and international companies to participate in the design, build, finance, operate and transfer (DBFOT) of several key road projects across the Sultanate of Oman. This initiative underscores the government's ongoing commitment to enhancing road infrastructure and connectivity through public-private partnerships (PPPs).

According to the announcement, the ministry is seeking experienced companies with proven expertise in road construction and infrastructure development to submit bids for three major projects.

These include the Salalah-Thamrait Road, the Muscat-Al Dakhiliyah Road (Al Maabela-Thumayd) and the Bausher-Al Amerat Tunnel Road alongside the Al Amerat-Dima W'attayeen Road.

Each project is expected to serve as an alternative route to existing roads, offering improved efficiency, safety and reduced travel times for commuters and freight



The DBFOT model will enable the government to accelerate infrastructure delivery while ensuring long-term operational efficiency.

transport.

The DBFOT model, which combines private investment with public oversight, will enable the government to accelerate infrastructure delivery while ensuring long-term operational efficiency.

This approach is aligned with Oman Vision 2040 goal of developing world-class transport networks that support economic diversification, trade facilitation and regional integration.

For the Muscat-Al Dakhiliyah Road (tender number 5/2025), interested companies can purchase bidding documents from November 3 to December 15, 2025. The clarification period will run from December 15-29, 2025, with the closing date for

submission set for February 23, 2026 at 12:00 pm.

The non-refundable document fee for this project is set at RO 400. Similarly, the Salalah-Thamrait Road project (4/2025) also carries a document fee of RO 400, while the Bausher-Al Amerat and Al Amerat-Dima W'attayeen Road project (6/2025) requires a RO 500 fee.

The ministry has invited all interested and qualified companies to submit a participation request, along with a copy of their commercial registration, to the email address investment@mtcit.gov.om.

The MoTCIT's Internal Investment Committee will oversee the evaluation and selection process, ensuring

transparency and adherence to international procurement standards.

These projects are expected to generate significant investment opportunities in Oman's road sector, offering potential for advanced engineering solutions, innovative construction technologies and sustainable design practices.

The emphasis on alternative routes also reflects a strategic effort to improve road safety, reduce congestion and enhance logistics efficiency — particularly important for supporting Oman's expanding industrial zones and tourism corridors.

In addition to economic benefits, the projects will likely create local employment opportunities, support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) involved in construction supply chains and boost overall regional development.

The ministry's approach also highlights Oman's readiness to collaborate with international partners to deliver large-scale infrastructure projects under robust financial and operational frameworks.

This open call for bids reinforces the Sultanate of Oman's vision of becoming a regional logistics hub by strengthening its transport infrastructure through sustainable and investor-friendly initiatives.

ETCO Space inks cooperation pact with Polish university

HIBBA AL KINDI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

ETCO Space, the company behind Oman's first satellite 'Aman-1', announced that it has signed a cooperation agreement with Poland's Wroclaw University of Science and Technology, during a visit to Wroclaw last week.

According to an official statement, the agreement will support knowledge transfer and research and development



Officials from ETCO Space and Wroclaw University of Science and Technology at the signing in Poland.

programmes in the field of Earth observation technologies and satellite data analytics.

“The partnership seeks to develop joint initiatives to transfer knowledge and train national specialists in several areas, including data analysis, remote sensing, artificial intelligence; and the operation and management of ground stations”, the company said. “This step reinforces the company's efforts in satellite-based Earth observation and

supports the empowerment of Omani professionals in the sector, in line with Oman Vision 2040 objectives to enhance the Sultanate of Oman's capabilities in space and AI technologies and to support national space infrastructure projects”, the statement added. In November 2023, ETCO Space launched Oman's first satellite 'Aman-1' in collaboration with Polish data analysis and solutions provider Tuatara and nanosatellite manufacturer SatRevolution.

Data from the satellite is currently being used to monitor Oman's natural gas transportation system, operated by OQ Gas Networks (OQGN).

Last year, the company also announced the establishment of a satellite manufacturing venture, “Spazers”, in partnership with SatRevolution and Tuatara.

The joint venture is expected to manufacture satellites and build and operate ground stations in Oman and the wider Middle East.

OIL OUTPUT

Opec+ eyes modest increase



Opec+ is expected to agree on another modest oil output hike, according to three sources familiar with the talks.

The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries has already raised targets by more than 2.7 million barrels per day since April, or 2.5 per cent of global supply, but slowed the pace in recent months amidst concerns of an oversupply and weakening global demand. — Reuters

KOREA INVESTMENT

Utilities spending at 4-year high



Utilities investment in South Korea reached its highest level in four years during the first nine months of 2025, driven by strong demand from the automotive and semiconductor industries.

The utilities investment index rose by 4.3% year-on-year from Jan to Sept, marking the biggest increase since 2021, when it surged by 11.3% , according to the Ministry of Statistics. — ONA

TRADE TENSIONS

EU seeks to ease rare earth reliance



The European Union is accelerating talks with China to resolve a dispute over rare earth mineral exports, aiming to reduce dependence on Chinese supplies.

The US recently announced progress in its own negotiations, with Presidents Trump and Xi reaching a preliminary deal. However, Brussels said it remains unclear if the US-China accord will influence ongoing discussions. — ONA

Climate change mitigation pathway: The 24-hour economy



DR MYTHILI KOLLURU

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

AS the sun soars and global cities set record temperatures, climate change is rewriting daily schedules and routines. The 24-hour economy is no longer a buzzword; it is an evolving adaptation of city functionality in the face of rising temperatures and shifting work patterns, from Bangkok to Paris, Accra to Melbourne.

Public spaces, transportation and businesses are searching for cooler evening hours. This emerging trend is more visible in the Global North compared to the Global South. The development and adaptation of the 24-hour economy are influenced by local needs for climate action, economic participation and social inclusion in a rapidly urbanising environment.

As of 2025, 80 cities across 60 countries have adopted the 24-hour economy framework. The shift in the economic pattern of functionality could aid in addressing climate change, promote energy efficiency and help face rising temperatures.

According to UN Habitat, if the world shifts to an around-the-clock urban system, we can balance energy demand, reduce emissions and increase climate resilience.

With rising temperatures and frequent heat waves, more commercial activities are shifting to cooler evening hours to reduce

reliance on air conditioning in cities like Paris and Seoul. Public parks, plazas and libraries are open in the evenings to provide thermal comfort and safe spaces.

In Ghana's smart grid integration, there is a facility for off-peak tariffs and a time-of-use energy system to reduce grid overload. The 24 economy will also reduce the underutilisation of infrastructure, support the circular use of resources, enable shared nighttime infrastructure and allow multiple uses of transportation and storage. Nighttime activities help mitigate extreme heat and enhance urban residents' quality of life.

This economy will diversify business models, support MSMEs and promote the creative sector by providing employment opportunities through multi-shifts, to drive economic activity beyond daylight hours and by aligning with decent work and economic growth (SDG 8).

This shift promotes safer, inclusive urban environments, transport and services for community residents, aligning with sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11). Opportunities will be created for marginalised and shift work populations to reduce inequalities (SDG 10) by distributing energy demand through night operations, which support resilience to heat waves and align with climate change (SDG 13).

The development and adaptation of the 24-hour economy are influenced by local needs for climate action, economic participation, and social inclusion in a rapidly urbanising environment.

The 24 economy reflects cultural and economic shifts and pressures. Though the sector is growing, it is also facing many challenges, including shrinking profits, rising operational costs and inflation.

Many countries worldwide have reported that nighttime participation is declining, especially among younger demographics, due to economic pressures and safety concerns.

The 24-hour economy is a pathway to mitigating climate change, fostering inclusive growth and advancing overall economic development. For the 24 economy to thrive and grow, integrating governance is crucial to ensuring the safety of community residents.

Ensuring that public places are well lit and adequate and safe transportation is available during the nighttime is very important for the sustainability of the 24-hour economy. The 24-hour economy could also strengthen cross-sector collaborations.

A vital call for action is to improve street lighting, provide safety and increase the availability of low-cost transportation. A 24-hour economy is a pragmatic climate solution, as it presents opportunities for energy optimisation, spreads energy consumption and strengthens urban resilience. It is increasingly perceived as an integrated sustainability solution for transforming how global cities function.

TRUMP-XI CONFAB DELAYS FULL RECKONING ON TRADE

HUDSON LOCKETT

The latest stopgap Sino-American pact underscores how intractable issues central to the broader bilateral relationship have become. US President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping struck a positive tone on Thursday as both leaders rowed back on export controls and more.

That should help keep further escalation in check. Yet this strategic can-kicking does little to resolve trade hostilities between the world's largest economies.

After more than a month of tit-for-tat escalation on US sanctions, shipping fees, rare earths and more, expectations were already low heading into the meeting in South Korea. Per early readouts on the agreement, Washington halved fentanyl-related tariffs to 10% — bringing tariffs imposed on Chinese imports to 47%, from 57%, according to Trump — and suspended expanding its sanctions framework by one year.

Outstanding issues that have yet to be addressed include tariffs in both directions that cover virtually all of \$580 billion in bilateral trade; export controls on sales of Nvidia's advanced Blackwell AI chips and other advanced tech to China; Beijing's ongoing probes into US firms' Chinese operations; Trump's long-held conviction that low-cost Chinese exports hobble his country's manufacturers; and the status of Taiwan, to name a few.

so-called Phase One agreement signed during Trump's first term. Still, this breather benefits the negotiators more than either country or markets.

For Xi's team the meeting provided a symbolic chance to stabilise relations and demonstrate the country's rare earths leverage in negotiating for better trade terms.

Trump meanwhile gets to score political points at home with farmers and help limit supply chain disruptions for American multinationals.

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Business confidence hits new low as Budget looms

BUSINESS confidence in the UK fell to a fresh record low, as fears of another cost squeeze stoked up an already dire operating environment that was found to have "worsened across the board".

According to an Institute of Directors (IoD) poll, private sector optimism plunged to the lowest level since the industry body started collecting data a decade ago, piling fresh pressure on new business secretary Peter Kyle and the Chancellor Rachel Reeves, as she prepares her second Budget.

Optimism among business leaders fell to a score of 74 in September, the survey found, meaning nearly 80 per cent of bosses felt either 'quite pessimistic' or 'very pessimistic' about the outlook for the UK economy over the next year. This was down from a score of -61 in August and eclipsed the previous record — set this July — of -72.

Executives overwhelmingly attributed their dour predictions to fears that the batch of tax hikes expected at this month's Budget will set off another round of heightened price pressures that will drive up the cost of wages and firms' other inputs.

The Chancellor is widely expected to unveil up to £30 billion of tax rises when she publishes her second major fiscal event on November 26. Bosses fear the more constrictive fiscal landscape will drive up staff's wage demands and supply costs in a manner redolent of the months following the government's fateful £25 billion raid on payroll tax last year.

IoD boss Anna Leach, said: "Business confidence had plumbed new depths, following a fleeting improvement at the tag-end of summer. Conditions worsened across the board, with cost expectations hitting a record high, driven notably by employment costs".

The bleak poll adds to a string of similar updates that have laid bare the battle the Chancellor is locked in to revive the UK's economic fortunes.

At the end of September, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) confirmed the economy grew by just



Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves poses with the red budget box outside her office on Downing Street in London, Britain, in this file photo. — Reuters



ANDY JALIL andyjalil@aol.com

The writer is our foreign correspondent based in the UK.

0.3 per cent in the second quarter, while the UK's fiscal watchdog is widely expected to downgrade its all-important productivity forecast, in what would amount to a major blow to the government's tax-and-spend plans.

Leach added: "The Chancellor's conference speech rightly reiterated the role that fiscal credibility has in providing the platform for growth. But we urgently need a genuinely growth-focused Budget that has business at its hearts".

The IoD data was reflected in a similar poll released at the end of September, which also found confidence had slumped as firms braced for the chilling effect of higher taxes. Lloyd's monthly Business Barometer — whose more optimistic findings mean it has been regularly cited by both the Prime Minister and the Chancellor — dropped from 54 to 42 per cent.

Effect on property market: Business confidence along with an unpredictable economic landscape has had an effect on the property market. It has caused a slowdown in house-buying activity, according to

new data.

There were 93,630 residential transactions back in August, two per cent higher than in the same month in 2024 but two per cent lower than July this year, according to HMRC. There has been a "noticeable shift" in sentiment amongst Brits recently, Ryan McGrath, director of Second Charge Mortgages at Pepper Money said.

He added: "In more predictable market conditions, many might have already made decisions to move but economic uncertainty and the financial impact of expiring fixed-rate deals, particularly those secured before 2022, are prompting a reassessment of priorities".

Chairman of Jackson-Stops, Nick Leeming, added that speculation around housing policy reform in the Budget is "already weighing on the market".

Director of MT Finance, Tomer Aboody, said: "Buyers are waiting before they make their move. Fearing wealth tax and an annual property tax, many will wait to see if these come about and whether it is financially viable to move".

Gas agreements worth RO 3.4 bn signed

SAEED AL MASHARFI
MUSCAT, NOV 2

THE Integrated Gas Company (IGC) — the sole aggregator and supplier of natural gas in the Sultanate of Oman — signed a series of strategic gas agreements with local and international companies at a ceremony held under the auspices of Sultan bin Salim Al Habsi, Minister of Finance, on Sunday.

The event, held at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, brought together key stakeholders from the industrial sector to strengthen the integration of the gas value chain and ensure the sustainable

management of natural gas resources in Oman.

During the ceremony, 14 gas sales agreements were signed with local and international companies worth more than RO 3.4 billion, extending over a ten-year investment period. Additionally, three gas purchase agreements were concluded with major producers — Occidental of Oman Inc (OXY) and Energy Development Oman (EDO) — along with two memoranda of understanding with companies and projects under the OQ Group, including the Duqm Petrochemical Complex and OQ Alternative Energy, to enhance joint cooperation.



The strategic gas agreements were signed under the auspices of Sultan bin Salim Al Habsi, Minister of Finance

The agreements involved partnerships with investors from India, China, the United States, France, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, in addition to active participation from Omani firms engaged in energy, petrochemicals, cement, mining,

healthcare, and manufacturing.

Dr Musallam Mahad Qatan, Chairman of the Board for Integrated Gas Company (IGC) and Director General of the Directorate General of Revenues at the Ministry of Finance, explained that IGC is

implementing the government's gas allocation policy and contract management strategy between producers and private sector investors, while enhancing coordination with relevant government institutions.

Abdulrahman bin Humaid Al Yahyaei, Chief Executive Officer of the Integrated Gas Company (IGC), stated that the ceremony marked a turning point for both the company and Oman's gas sector. He said the agreements would strengthen investor confidence in Oman's integrated gas system — both upstream and downstream — encouraging greater global investment in gas exploration and production.

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TOURISM BOOST

Bidiyah’s winter season draws visitors and festive energy



The destination has become a major draw for both domestic and international visitors eager to experience its pleasant climate, desert adventures, and array of seasonal events, particularly on weekends.

The Wilayat of Bidiyah in Al Sharqiyah North Governorate is witnessing a vibrant surge in tourist activity as its winter tourism season, which began in October, continues through the end of March. The destination has become a major draw for both domestic and international visitors eager to experience its pleasant climate, desert adventures, and array of seasonal events, particularly on weekends.

Zubaida bint Salim al Shaithaniyah, official spokesperson for the Al Sharqiyah North Governorate, says that Bidiyah and neighbouring wilayats are experiencing strong tourism movement this year. “Visitors and families from across Oman and abroad converge on Bidiyah to enjoy its unique offerings during this distinctive winter season,” she said.

She added that the influx of tourists has significantly boosted the local economy and revitalised commercial activity. Popular attractions include desert camping, dune trekking, stargazing, paragliding, sand biking, and sandboarding.

Zubaida al Shaithani noted that preparations for the season are coordinated by multiple government bodies and committees under the supervision of the Al Sharqiyah North Governor’s Office and the Bidiyah Wali’s Office, ensuring well-organised events and seamless visitor experiences throughout the six-month period.

Among the season’s major highlights is the Bidiyah Car Challenge Carnival 2025, running from November 19 to 29, organised by the Bidiyah Car Racing Club in celebration of Oman’s National Day. Another anticipated event is the 11th Oman Desert Marathon, scheduled from January 2026, recognised internationally by SheRACES. The marathon offers global participants a thrilling adventure through Oman’s golden dunes and a chance to experience its famed hospitality.

Other events include the ‘Ardhah Camel Races, featuring 22 rounds and stages across various tracks, alongside poetry and music evenings, cultural programs, and social activities spread throughout the season.

The Al Sharqiyah North Governorate is well-equipped to handle the growing influx of tourists, with over 50 licensed hotel establishments offering more than 1,100 rooms, as well as 44 travel offices and 38 tour operators accredited by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MoHT). — ONA

QUICK FEATURES



TOURISM

Fireworks light up the sky during the opening ceremony of the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) in Giza, on the southwestern outskirts of the capital Cairo. — AFP



MUSIC

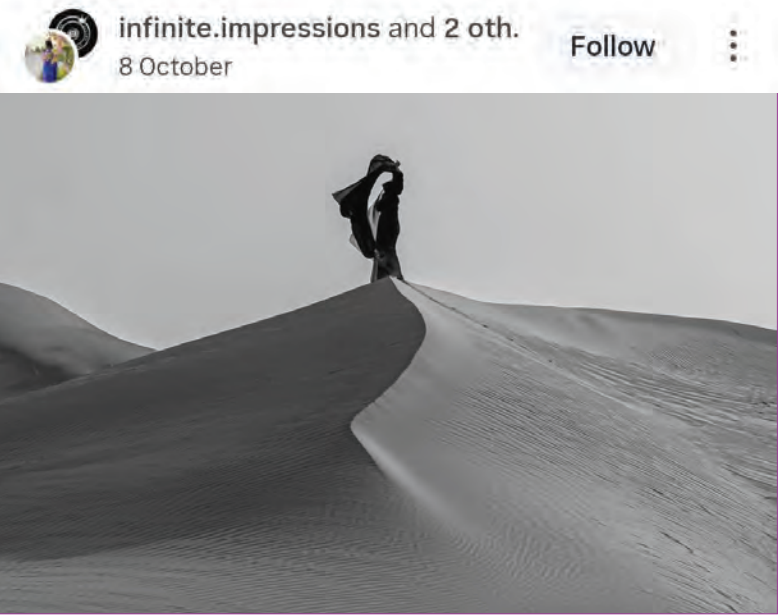
English singer Chris Martin performs at the ‘Global Citizen Festival: Amazonia’ as part of the opening programme of the UN COP30 in Brazil. — AFP



ENTERTAINMENT

Queen Latifah attends the 14th annual Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) Art+Film Gala in Los Angeles. — Reuters

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



Desert launch



Sacred solitude

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Robin Hood returns in new origin series



The series is brought to the screen by co-creators John Glenn and Jonathan English

New TV series ‘Robin Hood’ explores the legendary outlaw’s origins with a personal take and previously unseen historical authenticity.

The latest reimagining tells the tale of how Robin Hood came to be the medieval English folk hero who robbed the rich to feed the poor. Known simply as “Rob”, it sees the Saxon forester’s son and skilled archer transform into a rebel after experiencing devastating losses and injustices.

Australian newcomer Jack Patten follows in the footsteps of several Hollywood stars to portray the hero of Sherwood Forest. But while Patten found his first lead role somewhat daunting, the 28-year-old did not feel weighed down by previous interpretations — he had not seen any of them.

“It’s a weird thing, because I feel like a lot of people have heard of Robin Hood. I was one of those people. I’d heard of Robin Hood, but I’d never seen it”, Patten said at the show’s

London premiere on Tuesday.

“Every generation deserves a Robin Hood and the fact that we get to be this gen’s Robin Hood is pretty awesome”, he said.

The 10-episode first season is set in 12th century post-Norman invasion England and also centres on Rob’s love story with Marian (Lauren), the daughter of a Norman lord, who has taken over the ancestral home of Rob’s ousted Saxon family.

The series is brought to the screen by co-creators John Glenn and Jonathan English, who set out to offer a modern and more intimate depiction of the events and the time period.

“It was the idea of doing an origin story, which we’ve never really seen before, how Robin becomes an outlaw, what happens to him, what happens to his parents”, said English.

The show’s ensemble cast also features actors Sean Bean as the Sheriff of Nottingham and Connie Nielsen in the role of Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine.

— Reuters



Fisherman Welton de Franca fishes in the Tocantins River in the Ilha da praia Alta community near Pedral do Lourenco. — Reuters

ANA MANO & ADRIANO MACHADO

A narrow skiff slides among massive rocky outcroppings on the Tocantins River, where the catfish and peacock bass throng in the eddies during the waxing moon. For most of his life, Welton de Franca has fished like his father before him among these rocks on one of the largest tributaries in the Amazon Basin.

Brazil’s government now wants to blow them up.

Regulators have given the green light to blast a channel through 35 km of rocky rapids, turning this sleepy stretch of the Amazon rainforest into an expressway for Brazil’s booming tropical farm belt.

Opening the Araguaia-Tocantins riverway to barges year-round could clear the way for soy and corn exports through the Amazon Basin to rival the Mississippi River, cutting freight costs and cementing Brazilian supremacy in the global grains trade.

Federal prosecutors, however, are trying to halt the \$7.3 billion project, including another 110 miles of dredging, as they urge courts to consider impacts on riverside communities.

“We can’t go anywhere without our boats. We live from the fish”, said Franca, whose family settled on an island in the river overlooking the rocks when he was 12.

During legal hearings on site in late September, his father and neighbours told three visiting magistrates they worry about hazardous boat traffic replacing their fisheries.

Franca’s father ferries his two grandchildren across the river every day to school. Neighbours in the village of Tauiry cross daily in the other direction to harvest babassu coconuts.

Researchers including Alberto Akama, from the state-funded Emilio Goeldi Museum, warn the river’s biodiversity would also suffer if blasting destroys these rare rapids, where endangered fish gather, turtles breed and river dolphins feed.

Brazilian environmental agency Ibama authorised blasting outside the most sensitive reproductive and migratory seasons, with provisions to monitor and

BRAZIL PLANS AMAZON BLAST FOR GRAIN ROUTE



Fisherman Welton de Franca shows a fish he caught in the Ilha da praia Alta community, near Pedral do Lourenco, a natural rocky formation on the Tocantins River that may be blown up to build the Araguaia-Tocantins riverway, in Nova Ipixuna, Para State, Brazil. — Reuters



The impact on emissions, however, is not so simple, as delegations will discuss in Belem during the United Nations COP30 climate summit

relocate turtle nests.

Transport infrastructure agency DNIT said teams will work to scare animals away from the rocks before blasting.

For advocates including Governor Helder Barbalho of Para state, the advantages of cheaper and cleaner freight far outweigh any drawbacks.

“The state of Para believes it is possible to reconcile environmental preservation with economic development,” he said.

Brazil’s government has forecast that the Araguaia-Tocantins riverway could start carrying some 20 million metric tonnes

of corn and soybeans to northern river ports each year, cutting down on long, polluting truck trips.

The impact on emissions, however, is not so simple, as delegations will discuss over 500 km downriver in Belem in November during the United Nations COP30 climate summit.

Brazil’s main source of greenhouse gases is deforestation, as vast swathes of the Amazon rainforest and neighbouring Cerrado savannah are cleared each year for farmland and ranches.

Nowhere is that farm frontier advancing faster than the so-called Matopiba region around the Araguaia and Tocantins rivers — a trend that cheaper shipping can only encourage.

Maria de Sousa, one of several women in Tauiry who harvest babassu coconuts to crack open and produce cooking oil and flour, said their way of life is already threatened by encroaching farms.

Neighbours have been poisoning the area’s coconut palms as they expand their ranches and farms, forcing the women to cross the river to fill sacks with the small coconuts, she said.

“If they open the waterway, we won’t be able to collect the coconuts”, said Sousa.

Brazilian researchers at the Climate Policy Initiative, a think tank, have found that even investments in less-polluting transport infrastructure such as rail and waterways can drive indirect emissions by spurring deforestation to create farmland.

— Reuters

FEATURES

SAILING THROUGH TIME

OMAN’S ENDURING MARITIME LEGACY



OMAN’S

maritime history is a story of courage, connection and civilisation — a tale that continues to illuminate the nation’s identity as a bridge between cultures. Through centuries of voyages across the Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and beyond, Omani sailors built not only trade routes but also human connections founded on dialogue, peace and shared prosperity.

Omani maritime heritage stands as one of the most deeply rooted aspects of national identity — a living testament to values of honesty, integrity and goodwill. Its traces can still be found across Africa, India, China and Southeast Asia, where Omani sailors once docked their ships and left lasting marks of faith, culture and cooperation. These voyages shaped the Sultanate of Oman’s reputation as a nation of tolerance, openness and cultural exchange.

Shaikh Hamoud bin Hamad

Oman’s sailors carried values of honesty and cooperation, linking Asia, Africa and the Arab world through trade and dialogue

al Ghailani, researcher in Omani maritime history, noted that Omani influence spread naturally through kindness and sincerity rather than conquest.

“The spread of Islam in East Africa and Asia came through good treatment, honest cooperation and trustworthiness”, he said, recalling stories such as that of Al Amiri and the King of Uganda — symbols of the peaceful spread of faith.

Omani seafarers also left their imprint through culture and knowledge. The appearance of Omani Arabic newspapers in East Africa and the rise of figures like Ahmad bin Majid, the celebrated navigator, reflect Oman’s mastery in navigation and learning. These seafarers transformed their experiences into written works that guided global maritime exploration, cementing Oman’s role as a beacon of early scientific inquiry and oceanic wisdom.

Dr Saleh bin Mohammed Al Fahdi, Member of the State Council, described Omani maritime history as “a cornerstone of the nation’s soft power.” He emphasised that Oman’s geographical position — linking East and West — enabled it to foster dialogue among civilisations. Historic ports like Suhar,



Omani sailors carried the nation’s values of peace, honesty and mutual respect to distant shores — shaping Oman’s image as a bridge between civilisations long before the term ‘soft power’ was ever coined

DR SALEH BIN MOHAMMED AL FAHDI
Member of the State Council



The Jewel of Muscat revived the spirit of the Omani sailor — reminding us that our maritime heritage is a living story of cooperation, craftsmanship and enduring human connection

DR BADRIYA BINT MOHAMMED AL NABHANIYAH
Researcher and lecturer in history

Qalhat and Sur served as vital crossroads of trade and culture, where travelers replenished supplies, exchanged knowledge, and shared stories.

Khalid bin Ali al Mukhaini, researcher in maritime studies, poetically described the sea as ‘destiny and identity’ for the Omanis — a vast school that shaped their civilisation. He explained how Omani sailors mastered navigation using stars, monsoon winds, and handmade instruments like the marine astrolabe and wooden compass. Their knowledge transformed ports such as Muscat, Mirbat, and Suhar into bustling global hubs, teeming with ships trading copper, dates, spices, and gold.

Modern Oman has continued to honour this seafaring spirit through historic voyages such as Suhar’s journey to China in 1980 and Jewel of Muscat’s voyage to Singapore in 2010.

Dr Badriya bint Mohammed al Nabhaniyah recalled how the ‘Jewel of Muscat’, built on the initiative of the late Sultan

Centuries of maritime heritage continue to define Oman’s cultural identity and inspire its role in global dialogue today

Qaboos bin Said, revived Oman’s image as a maritime and diplomatic power. “It was not just a ship,” she said, “but a message of friendship sailing across the Indian Ocean”.

Dr Ahlam bint Hamoud al Jahouriyah highlighted that these symbolic voyages embody Oman’s long-standing message of peace. From Shabab Oman I and II to Zeinat Al Bihar, Omani ships continue to represent Oman at international maritime events, fostering friendship and cooperation across the world. Historic vessels like Al Rahmani and Sultana stand as reminders of Oman’s military and diplomatic prowess — the latter having sailed to New York in 1839 to deliver a message of goodwill to the US President.

Today, Oman’s maritime legacy is far more than a chapter in its history; it is a living force shaping the nation’s cultural diplomacy. It represents a deep and enduring connection between past and present — a heritage built not on conquest, but on compassion, trade and dialogue. Through sails that once bridged the horizons of East and West, Oman continues to carry forward a message of peace, humanity, and mutual respect. — ONA