

O M A N
Observer
D A I L Y



VOL. 44, NO. 347
PAGES 20 BAISAS 200

SUNRISE 06:09 AM
PRAYER TIMINGS
FAJR 04:53 AM
DHUHR 11:56 PM
ASR 03:12 PM
MAGHRIB 05:37 PM
ISHA 06:49 PM



20
FIGHTING TO
RESTORE THE
ROAR OF THE
MALAYAN TIGER

INBRIEF

HM SENDS CABLES TO AUSTRIA, THAILAND

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Dr Alexander Van der Bellen, of the Republic of Austria, on the occasion of his country's National Day. His Majesty expressed his sincere greetings to the President and the Austrian people, wishing this friendly country continued progress and development, and hoping that the relations between the two countries would continue to grow and achieve mutual cooperation. His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to King Maha Vajiralongkorn of Thailand on the death of his mother, Queen Sirikit. His Majesty expressed his sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy to the King and the friendly people of Thailand.



IRONMAN 70.3 CHAMPIONSHIP IN SALALAH

The Dhofar Municipality Ironman 70.3 Championship concluded on Saturday at the Hawana Salalah Resort, with the participation from more than 60 countries, including the Sultanate of Oman, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, France, Germany and the United States of America. British competitor Jamie Price won the Ironman title, while Polish competitor Amelia Sangilinan took first place for the women. The event also featured a showcase of the most notable moments from the race, along with a variety of musical and entertainment performances.

METEORITE CORNER OPENS IN DUQM

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism inaugurated the Meteorite Corner on Saturday, at the Crowne Plaza Duqm Hotel in Al Wusta Governorate as part of its efforts to utilise geological heritage and enhance the tourism and cultural experience in the Sultanate of Oman. The corner features a collection of rare meteorite samples from the Jiddat Al Harasis meteorites, allowing hotel visitors the opportunity to view them up close and learn about their history and scientific value, as well as the Sultanate of Oman's efforts to preserve them as an important cultural heritage. The Meteorite Corner contains a distinctive sample from the Jiddat Al Harasis 91 meteorite, the largest meteorite fall discovered to date in the Sultanate of Oman. **DETAILS ON P3**

\$10bn investments power Duqm's transformation

AL DUQM: OQ, Oman's global energy investment company, has become a driving force behind the rapid growth of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), transforming it into one of the nation's most dynamic engines of industrial and economic development. With cumulative investments exceeding \$10 billion,

OQ has built an integrated energy ecosystem in Al Duqm that spans refining, petrochemicals, storage, utilities and global trade - redefining Oman's place on the international energy map. At the heart of this transformation lies OQ8, a \$9 billion joint venture between OQ and Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI). With a refining

capacity of 255,000 barrels per day, OQ8 represents one of Oman's largest and most advanced industrial assets. Since achieving full operations, it has exported more than 560 shipments to international markets without a single operational incident, underscoring world-class safety and reliability. The refinery also completed

its Lenders Reliability Test (LRT) on the first attempt within ten months, demonstrating exceptional technical performance and readiness for global competition. OQ8 has since positioned Al Duqm as a regional benchmark for efficiency, innovation and sustainable industrial operations. **DETAILS ON P13**

Focus on level of progress in meeting vision's targets

F O U R T H O M A N V I S I O N 2 0 4 0 R E P O R T O N M O N D A Y



The report focuses on analysing the indicators that are effective in the vision.

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, OCT 25

OMAN VISION 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit will release the fourth periodic report on the vision for 2024-2025 on Monday, which provides an analytical reading of the level of progress in achieving the vision's targets, based on the efforts made in various sectors and the levels of achievement in national priorities. This report is a continuation of the unit's efforts to follow up on the implementation

of the Vision's targets, highlighting what has been achieved within the 12 national priorities emanating from the four pillars of the Vision: People and Society, Economy and Development, Sustainable Environment, and Governance and Institutional Performance. The report focuses on analysing the indicators that are effective in the Vision, as well as reviewing the most prominent national efforts and initiatives that support the implementation of the Vision. The fourth report reflects the progress made in a number of areas closely linked

to Oman Vision 2040, such as education, health and social protection, as well as efforts towards economic diversification and financial sustainability, private sector empowerment, and strengthening the governance system and digital transformation. The report also addresses the most notable national efforts in the environment, provincial development, and infrastructure and service development, emphasising the importance of integration and partnership between different sectors to achieve the Vision's objectives.

19 Palestinians killed in Israeli military operations

GAZA CITY: Nineteen Palestinians were killed and seven others injured in the past 48 hours as a result of the ongoing operations carried out by the Israeli occupation forces in various areas of the Gaza Strip. Official health sources in Gaza reported that four were killed as a result of direct targeting, while 15 bodies were recovered from under the rubble. Sources indicated that a

number of victims remain under the rubble or on the streets, as ambulance and civil defence crews are unable to reach them. The total number of Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip since the outbreak of the war on October 7, 2023, has risen to 68,519, while the number of wounded has reached 170,382. Health sources also added that since the ceasefire was declared on October 10, the



A photograph shows tents at a makeshift displacement camp in the Mawasi area of Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip. — AFP

death toll has reached 93, the number of wounded stood at 324, and 464 bodies have been recovered from various sites. The source also said that 220 new names were added to the cumulative death toll, after their data was completed by the Judicial Committee in charge of the missing persons file and reports, during the period between October 17 and 24. Health sources reported that 64 of the 195 bodies recently handed over to the

Palestinian side by the Israeli occupation army have been identified so far. The United Nations and international relief organisations estimate that the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip remains catastrophic, with a continuing shortage of basic services and the obstruction of relief operations, despite more than two years having passed since the start of the military escalation in the Strip. — Agencies



Experience Better

Their future starts today!

Change to AWASR, Fastest Internet In Oman

Get Ashel Educational Platform for free!

Unlimited data for all plans





SUBSCRIBE NOW!
WhatsApp
80001000
Website: awasr.om

SHORT TAKES



The advanced surgical laser initiative is part of the ongoing plan to enhance surgical services and patient care.

AL BURAIMI HOSPITAL INTRODUCES ADVANCED LASER DEVICE

AL BURAIMI: The Ministry of Health has launched an advanced surgical laser device at Al Buraimi Hospital for treating anal fistulas, hemorrhoids, and pilonidal sinus. The initiative is part of the hospital’s ongoing plan to enhance surgical services and patient care.

The laser device represents the latest in microsurgery technology, reducing post-operative pain, bleeding, infection risks and recovery times. During the trial period, which began on September 17, eleven operations were conducted at a rate of three to four cases per week.

Dr Majid bin Rashid al Muqbali, Director-General of Health Services, highlighted the hospital’s consistent efforts to develop healthcare services by providing qualified personnel and modern equipment.

Dr Mozan bint Ali al Ghaithiyah, a general surgeon, noted that the device enables delicate surgeries, improving outcomes and accelerating recovery.

Senior Consultant Dr Yasser Abbas added that the device minimises hospitalisation time and expedites wound healing. Patients undergoing laser procedures reported minimal discomfort and faster return to daily activities. — ONA

OMAN ENDOWMENT CONFERENCE 2025 TO BEGIN ON DEC 9



Officials at the press conference to announce the second edition of Oman Endowment Conference.

MUSCAT: The second edition of the Oman Endowment Conference 2025 is set to begin on December 9 under the theme ‘Endowment and Enhancing Economic Diversification.’ The event, organised jointly by the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs and the Bausher Endowment Foundation, will be held over two days at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Dr Ahmed bin Ali al Kaabi, Director-General of Endowments, Funds, Mosque Construction and Quran Schools, emphasised at a press conference that empowering the endowment sector is a shared responsibility involving civil society and endowment institutions. He noted that such initiatives stem from society itself, which carries the responsibility for leadership, development and societal advancement.

Dr Al Kaabi stressed that reviving specialised scientific conferences in the field of endowments represents an important step toward restoring the authentic role of this sector. These conferences serve as platforms for exchanging expertise, presenting specialised studies and launching initiatives aimed at developing and activating the endowment sector in line with modern requirements.

He commended the Bausher Endowment Foundation for setting a model in institutional endowment work. Despite its relatively short existence, the foundation has successfully aligned its objectives with national priorities. — ONA

EVENT TO SUPPORT HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS HELD

MUSCAT: The National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking (NCCHT) organised an event titled Meeting for Recovery and Self-Love, in cooperation with the Learn and Inspire Centre, on Saturday.

The event is part of the Sultanate of Oman’s ongoing efforts to protect victims of human trafficking and enhance psychosocial support programmes.

The event aimed to empower victims psychologically and emotionally, helping them regain self-confidence and a sense of security, within a national



The event aimed to empower victims psychologically and emotionally, helping them regain self-confidence. — ONA

approach that protects humans and preserves their dignity.

Attended by specialists in psychological and social support,

the event included interactive and counselling sessions focused on the concept of self-love and inner recovery.

The aim was to create a safe and stimulating environment that helps victims build a new, more stable and confident life. The event was part of a series of activities carried out by the national campaign Safety for Every Human Being to highlight the Sultanate of Oman’s efforts to protect and support human trafficking victims in accordance with the highest humanitarian and legal standards. — ONA

Oman fosters fair work environment for women

BALQEES AL ORAIMI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

Line with its steadfast commitment to empowering women and strengthening their participation in national development, the Sultanate of Oman continues to advance policies that promote a fair and supportive work environment. These policies are designed to help women excel in their professional roles while fulfilling their family responsibilities — reflecting the country’s vision of equality, balance, and social justice.

Oman’s approach to gender equality is rooted in a comprehensive legal framework that ensures women’s rights in the workplace. One of the most notable of these is the maternity leave entitlement of 98 fully paid days, which stands among the most generous in the region. This period can begin before or after childbirth, depending on the mother’s choice — allowing her to manage both personal and professional commitments with greater ease.

Understanding that motherhood requires continued care beyond childbirth, Omani law allows female employees to request an additional unpaid leave of up to 98 days, subject to the employer’s approval and continued social insurance contributions. This ensures job security and social protection even during extended periods of absence.

An outstanding feature of Oman’s social protection framework is its continuity of maternity benefits. If a woman changes her workplace during her maternity leave, she retains the right to continue her remaining leave with the new employer. This progressive policy ensures that motherhood



Oman’s approach to gender equality is rooted in a comprehensive legal framework that ensures women’s rights in the workplace.

does not become a barrier to professional mobility or job stability.

Oman’s labour laws also recognise the role of fathers in early childcare. Male employees are entitled to seven days of paid paternity leave, which can be taken within 98 days from the date of childbirth. This provision promotes shared parenting, reduces pressure on mothers, and strengthens family cohesion.

In cases of maternal death during childbirth, the father inherits the remaining maternity leave to care for the newborn. This compassionate measure demonstrates Oman’s human-centred legislative approach and its dedication to preserving family welfare in all circumstances.

Women in Oman enjoy strong

employment security during pregnancy and maternity leave. Employers are prohibited from terminating or penalising female employees due to maternity-related reasons. Even if a woman’s employment contract ends during her pregnancy, she continues to receive maternity benefits under the social protection system — a testament to the country’s commitment to long-term welfare and gender equality.

These initiatives reflect Oman’s forward-looking vision that empowering women is not merely a social goal, but an economic and national investment. Omani women play a central role in shaping the country’s progress, excelling in sectors such as education, healthcare, management, research and entrepreneurship.

Expat Keralites welcome Chief Minister

KABEER YOUSUF
MUSCAT, OCT 25

Thousands of expatriates from the state of Kerala, in south India, warmly welcomed their chief minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, who was in town to attend the three-day Indian Community Festival (ICF), the largest of its kind, on Friday.

He arrived in Salalah on Saturday to meet with his compatriots and party workers in Dhofar Governorate and to participate in a couple of events there.

Addressing the large gathering, Vijayan stated that modern Kerala was developed with the support of Malayalis



Pinarayi Vijayan was in Muscat to attend the three-day Indian Community Festival on Friday.

working abroad, including those in Oman, and that the true story of Kerala’s progress is often misrepresented.

During his speech in front

of the expatriates in Oman, the Chief Minister outlined the development projects of the Left government. “The Kerala government is dedicated to

advancing society. It stands by the people and will not falter in the face of opposition. It has been proven that continuous governance contributes to the country’s development,” he said, urging the people to support continuity.

He credited the educational and social advancements in the state to the hardworking expatriates, emphasising that Kerala’s progress is a result of supporting expatriates. He encouraged people to address shortcomings and continue to improve Kerala’s development. The Chief Minister highlighted the accomplishments of various schemes related to expatriates in his speech.

SHORT TAKES



SALALAH AIRPORT RECEIVES BELAVIA FLIGHT FROM BELARUS

SALALAH: Salalah Airport welcomed the first direct flight of Belavia, connecting it to Minsk International Airport in Belarus.

The airline will operate one flight per week as part of Oman Airports’ efforts to enhance direct air links between the Sultanate of Oman and a number of tourist destinations in Eastern Europe.

Uladzimir Barkun, deputy general manager for marketing and International Relations and Commercial Director of Belavia Airlines, said, “The launch of direct flights between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Belarus is an important step in strengthening economic, tourism and cultural relations between the two countries. This route will be very popular among travellers from Belarus to the Sultanate of Oman.”

INTERNATIONAL DATES, HONEY EXHIBITION LAUNCHED



The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Sayyid Ibrahim bin Said al Busaidy, Governor of Musandam. — ONA

MUSCAT: The third edition of the International Dates and Honey Exhibition launched at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Organised by Asas for Business and Development in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, the exhibition will run till October 29.

The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of Sayyid Ibrahim bin Said al Busaidy, Governor of Musandam, in the presence of Dr Saud bin Hamoud al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources and several officials.

The exhibition features participation from 200 local companies and institutions showcasing the finest varieties of Omani dates and honey, alongside 50 international companies representing 20 countries from various world countries.

These participants present the best types of dates, honey, their derivatives, and the equipment and tools specific to harvesting these two products, in addition to various other harvesting tools and equipment. — ONA

Meteorite corner opens at Crowne Plaza Duqm

Al DUQM: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism inaugurated the Meteorite Corner on Saturday, at the Crowne Plaza Duqm Hotel in Al Wusta Governorate as part of its efforts to utilise geological heritage and enhance the tourism and cultural experience in the Sultanate of Oman.

The corner features a collection of rare meteorite samples from the Jiddat Al Harasis meteorites, allowing hotel visitors the opportunity to view them up close and learn about their history and scientific value, as well as the Sultanate of Oman’s efforts to preserve them as an important cultural heritage.

The Meteorite Corner contains



The display of meteorites aims to introduce hotel visitors to the importance of meteorites.

a distinctive sample from the Jiddat Al Harasis 91 meteorite, the largest meteorite fall discovered to date in the Sultanate of Oman. The meteorite’s path extends approximately 52 kilometres, and the number of meteorites collected amounts to more than 700, with a total weight of approximately 4,600 kilogrammes.

Documented scientific studies indicate that this fall in its original location dates back more than 12,600 years. The corner also

includes a meteorite sample from the Jiddat Al Harasis 73 meteorite, which is classified as a stony chondrite of the L6 type.

This meteorite is considered the second-largest meteorite fall discovered to date in the Sultanate of Oman.

Scientific studies indicate that this meteorite continued to travel in the asteroid belt in space, weighing more than 20 tonnes.

Its fall in its original location is estimated to have occurred 15,600 years ago, during the Palaeolithic period. 3,638 pieces from this fall have been documented, with a total weight of 620.9 kilogrammes, with a longitudinal scattering path extending 25.8 kilometres.

Unified GCC visa to boost hotel occupancy in Oman

VINOD R NAIR
MUSCAT, OCT 25

THE Sultanate of Oman, along with other GCC countries, stands to benefit from the GCC Unified Tourist Visa, which aims to simplify travel across member states. The pilot launch of the Unified GCC Visa is expected by the year-end, according to top sources.

Ali Siddiqui, Research Manager, Cavendish Maxwell, said, “Complementing this initiative, the upcoming Oman–UAE Hafeet Rail will improve cross-border connectivity, making it easier for visitors from the UAE to explore Oman.” He added, “For the hospitality sector, this could lead to higher occupancy, longer stays, and increased visitor spending.

The average length of stay for tourists in Oman is between 5 and 6 nights, as per some estimates. By removing barriers and encouraging spontaneous travel, the unified visa is also expected to boost intra-GCC tourism among both non-GCC residents in the region and international tourists visiting the Gulf.”

Cavendish Maxwell recently reported that Oman is set to open 9,600 hotel rooms by 2030 as the country’s hospitality sector enters a new era, which will boost Oman’s existing inventory of 36,000 rooms by more than 25 per cent.

“Oman aims to welcome 11 million travellers annually by 2040, with travellers expected to reach around 6.3 million by 2030. The expansion in room supply reflects



Oman is set to open 9,600 hotel rooms by 2030 as the country’s hospitality sector enters a new era.

By removing barriers and encouraging spontaneous travel, the unified visa is also expected to boost intra-GCC tourism among both non-GCC residents in the region and international tourists visiting the Gulf.

confidence in continued tourism growth and broadly aligns with projected demand, driven by both international arrivals and regional tourism. Overall, if demand continues to grow as expected, the planned increase in hotel capacity appears to be consistent with Oman’s medium-term hospitality needs.”

He added that the bulk of Oman’s upcoming hotel supply is focused on 3- to 5-star hotels, a segment that continues to enjoy higher occupancy compared with other segments.

The pipeline also includes hotel apartments and other mid-market options, which are popular with longer-stay travellers, corporate visitors, and families seeking self-catering facilities.

With regards to hotel apartments, he said, “It is essential to maintain defined standards and implement robust quality control measures.

Inconsistent housekeeping, outdated furnishings, lack of operating procedures, and insufficient staff training can undermine the guest experience and reduce repeat business. While demand for hotel apartments remains intact, particularly from business travellers on extended stays, families, and cost-conscious visitors seeking more space and flexibility, the overall projection for this segment remains steady, given the underlying demand drivers.”

OMSB promotes ‘Health in October’ two-day campaign

MUSCAT: The Oman Medical Specialty Board (OMSB), in cooperation with the Oman Lipid and Atherosclerosis Association, organised an awareness campaign titled ‘Health in October’ to mark World Health Days.

The two-day campaign, held at Muscat Mall in Al Seeb, aims to promote health awareness among community members and encourage healthy lifestyles. It also seeks to strengthen the culture of disease prevention by focusing on key health issues highlighted during October, contributing to a healthier society.

Resident physicians from OMSB’s training programmes in various medical specialities participated, including ophthalmology, orthopaedics,

family medicine, emergency medicine, general surgery, haematology, paediatrics, psychiatry and dermatology.

The campaign featured an educational exhibition with advisory booths offering free medical checkups, including blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, BMI and vision tests.

Visitors also received hands-on training in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Sections such as Family Medicine emphasised physical activity and nutrition, while Paediatrics focused on hyperactivity, attention deficit disorder, stuttering, and polio.

The Ophthalmology corner, supported by the Oman Optical



An awareness campaign was held in Al Seeb to mark World Health Days

Club and University Medical City, offered detailed eye screenings and preventive guidance.

Orthopaedics experts addressed osteoporosis and arthritis prevention, while Dermatology specialists raised awareness of psoriasis and skin cancer.

The General Surgery corner highlighted breast cancer awareness as part of the Pink October initiative, and Haematology and Mental Health specialists provided insights on hereditary blood diseases and elderly wellness.

The campaign also featured the ‘Wiqaa’ media initiative launched by OMSB earlier this month under the slogan ‘Your Awareness is Prevention.’ Through social media, publications, and radio broadcasts, the initiative promotes prevention as a way of life.

The event was sponsored by Daleel Petroleum and Oman LNG, supporting OMSB’s efforts to enhance public health and community awareness. — ONA

OMAN

SHORT TAKES



The Environment Authority campaign continues until October 30

DHOFAR LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT TREES

SALALAH: The Environment Authority in Dhofar Governorate has initiated the third phase of a campaign to combat pests in perennial trees, in cooperation with Dhofar Municipality and the Awareness Initiative team, with active local community participation. The campaign will continue until October 30.

Hatem bin Salem Kalshat al Mahri, Director of the Vegetation Cover Development Department, said this phase targets two major pests threatening rare plant species: the stem borer and termite. The campaign prioritises the protection of wild fig trees (Tiq-Ghaydit), valued for their environmental, aesthetic and historical significance. The teams are employing a dual approach combining safe use of specialised pesticides with minimal environmental impact and manual traditional methods to remove localised infestations. This approach ensures effective pest control while preserving the trees and surrounding ecosystem.

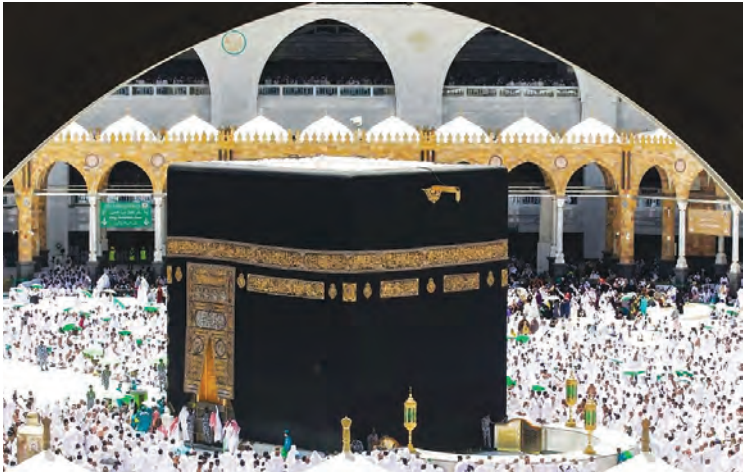
Al Mahri noted that the campaign builds on the success of the previous two phases, which have already yielded tangible results in restoring tree vitality and reducing pest spread. He emphasised that such efforts are critical for maintaining biodiversity, preserving native plant species, and sustaining the ecological balance that supports local fauna. — ONA

Haj, Umrah conference ends on positive note

THE SECOND Haj and Umrah Conference and Exhibition concluded and came up with several recommendations in the fields of organisation, technology, awareness-raising, economy and health. The recommendations aim to develop the Haj and Umrah system and enhance the quality of services provided to the pilgrims keeping pace with modern transformations and enhancing integration between various stakeholders inside and outside the Sultanate of Oman.

In the organisational and administrative fields, the conference emphasised the importance of enhancing coordination and integration between government and private entities involved in Haj and Umrah affairs and enhancing the participation of those in charge of the sector in the regional and international forums to exchange experiences. It also seeks to develop Haj-related regulations and address the challenges facing the Haj schedule to ensure quality of services and save effort, time and money.

In the technical and smart services area, the conference recommended moving forward to complete the digital transformation of Haj and Umrah services, from registration to return. This includes the use of artificial intelligence technologies to improve logistical needs, and the implementation of a smart tracking system for pilgrims and



The conference aimed to strengthen partnerships among all Haj and Umrah partners in the Sultanate of Oman and abroad, provide opportunities for competition among service providers to the pilgrims and Umrah performers from the Sultanate of Oman.

Umrah performers using GPS, smart bracelets and mobile applications. This ensures the speed and accuracy of procedures and the safety of pilgrims and Umrah performers.

On the awareness and legal front, the conference recommended the implementation of comprehensive awareness programmes before pilgrims depart for the Haj rituals, the production of high-quality media content that enhances religious, administrative, and health awareness, the encouragement of academic research on the history of Omani Haj, the documentation of the oral history of Haj companies, and the establishment of a miniature Haj museum in the next conference. It also called for expediting the issuance of Umrah regulations to achieve full governance of the sector.

On the economic and investment front, the conference called

for encouraging public-private partnerships to develop support services for pilgrims and Umrah performers and Umrah performers, stimulating national investment in transportation, accommodation, and food, supporting Haj companies with flexible financing programmes, developing smart solutions for electronic payments, and enhancing transparency in roaming service.

The conference aimed to strengthen partnerships among all Haj and Umrah partners in the Sultanate of Oman and abroad, provide opportunities for competition among service providers to the pilgrims and Umrah performers from the Sultanate of Oman, encourage the use of technology in providing quality services to pilgrims and Umrah performers and facilitate the provision of services, among other objectives.

The Omani Haj Mission announced the launch of a package of initiatives for the 1447 AH season, including the 'Endowment for the House of Ribat' initiative of approximately RO 200,000 to support eligible social security beneficiaries for the 1447 AH Haj season. This is in addition to the initiative aimed at measuring the readiness of Haj companies to ensure the highest standards of efficiency and quality and improve company performance, as well as the 'Airline' and 'Housing' initiatives. — ONA



Head Office: P.O. Box No. 1706, Ruwi, Postal Code 112, Sultanate of Oman
Tel: 24470000
info@nationalfinance.co.om
nationalfinance.co.om

Directors' Report

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we are pleased to present to you the financial results of the Company for the nine-month period ended September 30, 2025.

During the third quarter of 2025, regional business sentiment remained cautious, amid ongoing geopolitical and economic uncertainties. The Sultanate of Oman's steady fiscal management and progress on diversification under Oman Vision 2040 have provided a more stable domestic foundation. Within this environment, our focus remained on prudent growth, operational efficiency, and leveraging areas of resilience within our core business segments to ensure that resilience and innovation continue to define our competitive advantage.

With a well-diversified geographical presence across the Sultanate of Oman (23 branches), coupled with a broad product profile, your Company is well positioned to provide innovative and financial solutions for both Retail and SME segments. Your Company continues to improve its technological capabilities to be aligned with the digital transformation happening across the world in order to provide solutions that deliver best in class customer experience.

National Finance continues to adopt a prudent approach to credit approvals keeping in view the overall macroeconomic scenario and perceived increase in credit risk. Within this policy, our approach has been to target customers who satisfy our credit risk appetite. We anticipate a reasonable growth to our asset base in the medium term.

National Finance's total regulatory capital of RO 147.93 million is the highest among Finance and Leasing Companies (FLCs) which gives us a strong base on which to build our business. Your Company remains the largest Finance and Leasing Company

in the Sultanate of Oman in terms of asset size, branch network, revenues and profit.

The operating profit (profit before provision and tax) was at RO 19.32 million (RO 13.48 million in September 2024), with an increase of 43.33% during this period. The Net Investment in Lease was at RO 638.74 million (RO 578.87 million in December 2024), showing a growth of 10.34% during the period. Profit after tax was RO 11.01 million as compared to RO 8.75 million in September 2024 reflecting an increase of 25.77%.

The Company remains committed to Omanisation and as of September 30, 2025, the number of Omani employees was 372 out of the total workforce of 405. The Omanisation percentage works out to 91.85% which is higher than the given target of 90%. Your Company continues to remain committed to supporting the career growth and development of Omani nationals through ongoing training programs in line with their job requirement. We remain committed to maintaining momentum through ongoing employee engagement initiatives, future skills development, and the enhancement of managerial and leadership capabilities to support our employees' professional growth.

Sustainability remains central to our long-term business strategy, guiding how we create value responsibly and ensuring our growth contributes positively to the economy, society, and the environment. During the Quarter, we continued advancing the implementation of our sustainability strategy, built around four pillars: Environment, Social, Operations, and Governance. We remain focused on responsible lending through our sustainable finance offering, integrating ESG into our operations and continuously targeting segments that promote inclusive economic growth and long-term resilience. Our

CSR initiatives remained active with key partnerships, reinforcing the social pillar by supporting SMEs, youth and children. In governance, we continued to strengthen our internal frameworks, policies, and transparency practices to ensure accountability and alignment with evolving ESG standards. Our efforts are aimed at delivering long-term value to all stakeholders while advancing the broader goals of sustainable development.

This quarter also saw your Company receive several industry recognitions and awards, namely - Best Performing Company in Large Cap at the Alam Al Iktisaad Awards, Excellence in Branding in Financial Services at the Oman Leadership Awards 2025, Innovation in Digital Payments and Customer Experience Award at the Muscat Daily Cybersecurity and Cloud Solutions Conference and Awards 2025, and Best Leasing and Financing Company in Oman 2025 by Global Business Outlook Awards. These awards underscore our ongoing commitment to excellence, innovation, and leadership in the financial sector.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all stakeholders especially the regulators and customers for the support extended towards the growth of the Company. On behalf of the Board of Directors, we also thank our employees for their dedication and hard work which has enabled us to establish ourselves as the most trusted company in the sector.

Hani Muhammad Al Zubair
Chairman

Unaudited Condensed Interim Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For The			
	Nine months ended 30 September 2025 RO '000	Nine months ended 30 September 2024 RO '000	
Income			
Income from financing activities	52,853		43,875
Finance cost	(23,195)		(21,232)
Net finance income	29,658		22,653
Other operating income	2,451		2,050
	32,109		24,703
Expenses			
Operating expenses	(11,886)		(10,332)
Depreciation	(817)		(615)
Amortisation	(84)		(274)
Net impairment loss on finance leases, working capital finance and factoring receivables	(5,310)		(3,037)
Bad debts written off	(1,063)		(147)
Total expenses	(19,160)		(14,405)
Profit before tax	12,949		10,298
Income tax expense	(1,942)		(1,545)
Profit after tax	11,007		8,753
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss			
Movement on revaluation of Land & Building - net of tax	15		15
Items that are or may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss			
Change in fair value of cash flow hedge	(96)		(429)
Other comprehensive loss	(81)		(414)
Total comprehensive income	10,926		8,339
Basic and diluted earnings per share (RO)	0.016		0.014
Unaudited Condensed Interim Statement of Financial Position As At			
	30 Sept 2025 RO '000	30 Sept 2024 RO '000	31 Dec 2024 RO '000
ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	12,345	7,496	7,577
Net investment in finance leases	502,741	448,917	458,363
Working capital	135,597	116,496	120,041
Factoring receivables	404	510	465
Advances, prepayments and other receivables	7,674	6,187	4,600
Asset held for sale	1,500	1,500	1,500
Goodwill	5,950	5,950	5,950
Intangible assets	198	231	158
Property, equipment and right-of-use assets	7,464	7,454	7,587
Statutory deposit	250	250	250
Total assets	674,123	594,991	606,491
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY			
LIABILITIES			
Creditors and accruals	23,990	15,553	12,665
Tax liabilities	2,733	2,096	2,516
Bank borrowings	417,767	381,514	385,512
Fixed deposits	79,946	50,570	58,489
Deferred tax liabilities	1,029	861	1,032
Provision for employees' end of service benefits	705	701	674
Total liabilities	526,190	451,295	460,888
EQUITY			
Capital and reserves			
Share capital	60,813	57,370	57,370
Share premium	5,786	5,786	5,786
Revaluation reserve	1,384	1,405	1,399
Cash flow hedge reserve	6	197	102
Impairment reserve	8,670	7,717	8,670
Legal reserve	12,699	11,487	12,699
Retained earnings	23,575	24,734	24,577
Total shareholders' equity attributable to the equity holders of the company	112,933	108,696	110,603
Perpetual bonds	35,000	35,000	35,000
Total equity	147,933	143,696	145,603
Total liabilities and equity	674,123	594,991	606,491
Net assets per share (RO)	0.186	0.189	0.193
Note: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who requests the Company in either Arabic or English within 7 days of receipt of the request. The full set of financials are available on the website of Muscat Stock Exchange.			

WORLD

SHORT TAKES



The decommissioned nuclear power plant Gundremmingen in Gundremmingen, southern Germany, prior to the controlled demolition of the plant's two cooling towers and after the controlled demolition. — AFP

COOLING TOWERS AT FORMER N-POWER PLANT DEMOLISHED

AUGSBURG: The two 160-metre-high cooling towers at the former Gundremmingen nuclear power plant in southern Germany were demolished on Saturday, almost four years after the last reactor was shut down. At 12 noon sharp, the colossal structures, consisting of a total of 56,000 metric tonnes of reinforced concrete, collapsed.

Thousands of onlookers, mainly from the states of Bavaria and neighbouring Baden-Württemberg, watched the spectacular destruction of a symbol of the nuclear age. The demolition went exactly as the demolition company commissioned to carry out the work had planned. There was a time difference of about 15 seconds between the two detonations of the explosives needed to destroy the two towers. The cooling towers each tilted slightly to one side and then collapsed vertically.

The Günzburg district administration had established a large restricted zone for the demolition. The operator, RWE, and the demolition company had been preparing for the operation for more than a year. More than 1,000 holes were drilled into the structures for the explosives. — dpa

PAKISTAN CAUTIONS AFGHANISTAN AMID RISING BORDER TENSIONS

KARACHI: Pakistan's defence minister said on Saturday he believes Afghanistan wants peace but that failure to reach an agreement during talks in Istanbul would mean 'open war,' days after both sides agreed to a ceasefire following deadly border clashes.

The talks in Istanbul, which began on Saturday and are expected to continue into Sunday, mark the latest attempt by Pakistan and Afghanistan to prevent a relapse into violence after the worst border fighting since the Taliban's 2021 takeover of Kabul.

The talks are meant to devise a mechanism to enforce the Doha ceasefire longer term.

Khawaja Muhammad Asif said there had been no incidents in the four to five days since it was agreed, and both sides were complying with the truce.

"We have the option, if no agreement takes place, we have an open war with them," he said in televised remarks from Pakistan. "But I saw that they want peace."

The clashes erupted earlier this month after Islamabad demanded that the Taliban curb fighters it says are attacking Pakistan from sanctuaries inside Afghanistan.

Pakistan launched air strikes across the border and both sides exchanged heavy fire, killing dozens and prompting the closure of key crossings that remain shut. — Reuters

UP IN THE SKY

Balloons temporarily disrupt flights



Flight operations at Lithuania's two largest airports were disrupted for a few hours late due to the presence of what are believed to be weather balloons coming from Belarus. Flights resumed during the night. The two airports were in the capital Vilnius and the country's second city Kaunas. The balloons are typically used by smugglers to illegally transport from the authoritarian neighbouring country Belarus into Lithuania. — dpa

THAI MOURNERS WEEP FOR FORMER QUEEN SIRIKIT

BANGKOK: Around a dozen Thai mourners dressed in black sat outside a Bangkok hospital where the former Queen Sirikit, whose death was announced early on Saturday, had been receiving treatment.

Among them was store owner Tanyaporn Arammetha, 65, who was 15 when she first met the former queen during a royal visit in Chonburi province south of Bangkok.

She recalled Queen Sirikit calling

her 'little girl' and asking her if she had eaten — a gesture that left a lasting impression of her warmth.

Like many across Thailand, she heard the news of the death of Queen Sirikit, the mother of King Maha Vajiralongkorn, at around 2 am on Saturday.

The royal family is venerated in Thailand, treated by many as semi-divine figures and lavished with glowing media coverage and portraits hanging in public and in private homes.

Tanyaporn arrived at Chulalongkorn hospital about three hours after hearing of the death of the late queen, who was 93, joining other mourners holding youthful portraits of her. She said she was "confused" when she first heard the news.

"I had just participated in her birthday event this August. I didn't think this day would come," Tanyaporn said, tears welling in her eyes.

— AFP

Trump aims to clinch deal with Xi during Asia trip

US President Donald Trump will test his deal-making capabilities on a trip to Asia, a region battered by his trade policies, while doubts hang over his highly anticipated meeting with China's Xi Jinping.

Trump, who left Washington on Friday night, is set for a five-day trip to Malaysia, Japan and South Korea, his first to the region and longest journey abroad since taking office in January.

The Republican leader hopes to pile up trade, critical mineral and ceasefire deals before turning to the toughest challenge, a face-to-face with Xi on Thursday in South Korea. Trump is also working to maintain the signature foreign policy achievement of his second term, a fragile ceasefire he helped to negotiate in the Israel-Gaza conflict, while the Russian war in Ukraine and a trade war with China continue.

Washington and Beijing have hiked tariffs on each other's exports and threatened to halt trade in critical minerals and technologies.

The trip was formally announced by the White House on Thursday. Details remain in flux, including the meeting between leaders of the world's two largest economies.

Neither side expects a breakthrough that would restore terms of trade that existed before Trump's second-term inauguration in January, according to a person familiar with the conversations.

Instead, talks between the two sides to prepare for the meeting focused on managing disagreements and modest improvements.



US President Donald Trump speaks to the media aboard Air Force One on the way to Malaysia for the Asean summit. — AFP

Trump tests deal-making prowess in tariff-hit region as five-day trip spans Malaysia, Japan and South Korea

An interim agreement could include limited relief on tariffs, an extension of current rates, or China committing to buy US-made soybeans and Boeing airplanes.

Beijing reneged on similar promises in a 2020 deal with Trump. Washington could let more high-end computer chips flow to Beijing, which in turn could loosen controls on rare earth magnets that have angered Trump.

Or, nothing could come of the talks.

On Wednesday, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the Trump-Xi talk would be a "pull-aside," suggesting nothing formal.

Trump later told reporters the two would have "a pretty long meeting," allowing them to "work out a lot of our questions and our doubts and our tremendous assets

together." China has not confirmed a meeting is planned.

Mira Rapp-Hooper, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution and former Biden administration official, said Trump's Asia policy has been defined by intense pressure on countries' trade policies and defence spending.

"The high-level question on this trip is really, who does the United States stand with, and what does it stand for," she said.

Trump is expected at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit, which starts Sunday in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. En route to Malaysia, Trump was due to make a refuelling stop in Qatar, where he would briefly meet its emir and prime minister on board Air Force One, according to a White House official. — Reuters

IRELAND 'S CONNOLLY SET TO BE PRESIDENT

Counting of ballots takes place in the Irish Presidential election at the RDS count centre in Dublin City centre in Ireland. Ireland's Catherine Connolly, an independent left-winger, was poised to become the country's new president after her only rival in the election conceded defeat, Irish national broadcaster RTE said.

Heather Humphreys, of the centrist Fine Gael party, congratulated Connolly on 'becoming the next president of Ireland' after early counting showed the latter was on course for a landslide victory.

The Irish are expected to know their new president by the end of Saturday, who will succeed Michael Higgins, 84, for seven years, after two terms since 2011 in this essentially ceremonial position. — AFP

ENCROACHING BEARS

Film about man-eating bear delayed



A recent string of deadly bear attacks has prompted Japanese film-makers to postpone the release of a gory horror movie with the same theme.

Bears have killed at least nine people in Japan so far this year, an unwanted record that the government has described as a "serious problem".

The film, titled 'Brown Bear!' and featuring depictions of an animal 'attacking and eating' humans, was initially set to hit cinemas. — AFP

I COAST POLLS

Ouattara tipped for fourth term as president



Ivorians voted on Saturday between incumbent President Alassane Ouattara, the overwhelming favourite seeking a fourth term in power, and an opposition hobbled by the barring of leading candidates.

Ouattara, 83, has wielded power in the world's top cocoa producer since 2011, when the country began reasserting itself as a West African economic powerhouse. Turnout will be key. — AFP

The stars, now closer through robotic eyes



KENNETH CHANG

The author is a Science Reporter at The New York Times

DURING the day, this patch of land in sparsely populated Central Texas is not remarkable. Eleven buildings, nearly identical, look like bland, oversize backyard sheds. Several large recreational vehicles are parked nearby.

Not long ago, cows grazed here. But as the sun sets on a clear day, the buildings groan and creak as the roof of each shed rolls back, like the sliding lid on a wooden box.

Revealed within the sheds are hundreds of telescopes, which intermittently twitch and pirouette, a robot army awakening. Their owners are nowhere to be seen.

This is Starfront Observatories. If you want to explore the universe but do not want to go outside, this might be the place for you. In an age of digital cameras and state-of-the-art Internet, amateur astronomy can now be a remote-controlled hobby, and a far more sophisticated one.

Today's telescopes provide much more than a magnified view of the night sky. For many practitioners, the name of the game is astrophotography — taking exquisite, long-exposure photographs of objects too dim to be seen with the naked eye.

“It’s the most efficient way for astronomy to be done,” said Dustin Gibson, one of the company’s founders.

The romantic notion of an astronomer trekking to the top of a distant mountain to observe the universe through the eyepiece of a telescope has been fading for decades. Now, many professionals set up observation campaigns from their own offices, sometimes half a world away. The next morning, they go to work and look at the new images and data awaiting them on their computers.

That trend has reached amateurs, too, with remote observatories popping up in Utah, New Mexico, Chile and elsewhere. But those largely cater to the most obsessed hobbyists, who seek the clearest, darkest skies for big, expensive, high-end equipment.

Gibson and the other three founders of the company — Bray Falls, Nathan Hanks and Josh Kim — wanted to build something within reach of more people. Since it opened for business a little over a year ago, Starfront has grown quickly and now houses more than 550 telescopes. That is, by far, the most of any such facility in the world, the company says.

The telescopes include tiny ones that look like security cameras as well as a behemoth with a 2-foot-wide mirror that belongs to Gibson.

“Our mission is to make space exploration, and space in general, more accessible to everyone,” Kim said.

But it is not a cheap hobby — a good telescope can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars — nor an easy one. Most people live

If you want to explore the universe but do not want to go outside, this might be the place for you. The name of the game is astrophotography — taking exquisite, long-exposure photographs of objects too dim to be seen with the naked eye

in urban and suburban areas where the night skies, flooded by artificial lighting, never get very dark. Clouds can also get in the way, and in places up north, standing outside in winter can be uncomfortably cold.

The founders of Starfront say there is a better way: ship the telescope to Texas, along with a digital camera and a computer. At Starfront, a technician will install the device onto a steel mount in one of the sheds.

It is like renting a parking spot for your telescope, albeit one with a high-speed data connection. The cost starts at \$99 a month for the smallest telescope.

The telescopes can track the same part of the sky over many nights. Over that time, digital camera sensors can gather enough photons to reveal objects that are otherwise invisible. Amateurs typically use telescopes with a wide field of view and thus spot things missed by giant professional observatories, which focus on a speck of the night sky.

“Most of the stuff I look at is bigger than the moon in this sky, but it’s just so faint that people don’t really photograph them at all,” Falls said.

The four founders of Starfront had crossed paths through various earlier business ventures and a shared interest in astronomy. Gibson, Hanks and Kim had all worked at a startup, OurSky, which provides a software development platform for space data applications. — The New York Times

The Louvre’s attraction is its history. Also its weakness

HOW do you solve a problem like the Louvre? Perhaps you can’t.

The world’s most famous and most-visited museum started as a medieval military fortress, then became a palace. It took a revolution to turn it into a museum. Royals and rulers renovated it more than 20 times, satisfying their vanity but leaving behind an incoherent structure that sits on 25 different levels and stretches for half a mile. It exhibits over 30,000 of its 500,000 artworks in more than 400 rooms.

And it is this convoluted history and identity that make the Louvre a structure that is so difficult to monitor, oversee and protect.

The brazen and seemingly effortless robbery on Sunday morning of eight pieces from the collection of crown jewels at the museum has wounded its leadership and put a spotlight on the Louvre’s security protocols, which have been tested over the years by break-ins and thefts.

Not since Vincenzo Peruggia, an Italian who had worked as a glazier at the Louvre, stole the Mona Lisa in 1911 has the reputation of the museum been so damaged by a security blunder.

Since Sunday, charges of lax protection at the Louvre have been so relentless that the French Senate has called Laurence des Cars, the museum’s director, to explain herself in a hearing on Wednesday. In her testimony, she pointed to a lack in outside surveillance cameras but said the security system worked once the thieves entered the building.

A confidential draft report by the Cour des Comptes, France’s highest-level auditing institution, faults the Louvre for an inadequate video surveillance system in all three of its wings, huge reductions and delays in spending for security in recent years, and a flawed sense of overall priorities. The document indicates that spending on security in 2024 was far lower than it was 20 years ago.



The convoluted history and identity make the Louvre a structure that is so difficult to monitor, oversee and protect

In the Richelieu wing, which holds paintings by Poussin, Dürer and Vermeer, as well as the ancient Persian and Mesopotamian collections, only 25 per cent of 182 rooms are covered by surveillance cameras, according to the report.

The jewels under the Louvre’s care reflect the ups-and-downs of French history through the centuries that the building has endured. From François I to Marie Antoinette, Napoleon Bonaparte and the Empress Eugénie, French royals amassed a mountain of gems. They wore them in crowns, rings, brooches, bracelets, earrings and necklaces, placed them atop scepters and on thrones, or closeted them away. Through wars and royal rivalries and revolutions, tens of thousands of these jewels remained with the French state.

They have long been a target of thieves.

As for thefts inside the Louvre,

The brazen robbery on Sunday has put a spotlight on security protocols in the sprawling museum, which have been tested over the years by break-ins and thefts.

a break-in that was in some ways similar to the one on Sunday happened in December 1976 when three masked burglars broke into the museum at dawn. They climbed a cleaning crew’s scaffolding, smashed unbarred windows, clubbed two guards, broke a glass showcase, and grabbed a diamond-studded sword that had belonged to King Charles X, who ruled in the early 19th century, during a period when the monarchy was restored.

The sword has never been recovered. It is listed on the Louvre website as “not on display.” In 1998, a thief removed “The Path of Sèvres,” a small landscape painting by Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, from its frame in broad daylight. It hung in a room without a surveillance camera. The thief escaped; the painting, valued at an estimated \$1.3 million, was never recovered.

As scores of investigators continue to search for the

perpetrators of Sunday’s heist, they are also struggling to understand what went wrong with the Louvre’s security.

The Louvre is protected by a double layer of human security: a staff of guards (almost 1,200 in 2024, according to the Louvre) and a permanent 52-member force of firefighters, who are part of the French military.

The theft on Sunday has depleted what was already a diminished collection of crown jewels.

In the years after the founding of the Third Republic, the parliamentary government created in 1870 from the ashes of Napoleon III’s empire, an anti-monarchical republican fervor swept France. In 1887, France held a grand 11-day public auction of most of its crown jewels.

Gems were torn from their settings; jeweled ornaments were broken up.

— The New York Times

OPINION

When parenthood becomes a moral dilemma



DR HAMED
AL SINAWI

The writer is a senior consultant psychiatrist at SQU Hospital

MRS A is a 44-year-old housewife and a mother of three daughters. She was diagnosed with depression following the birth of her middle daughter, who had autism. At a recent consultation, Mrs A informed me that her husband wants another baby, specifically, a boy, so he can become a protector and guardian for his autistic sister when the parents die. He suggested undergoing in vitro fertilisation (IVF) to ensure that the mother would become pregnant with a boy.

Mr A expressed unease and moral confusion about the suggestion, while she understands her husband’s desire to secure the well-being of a vulnerable child. Yet she was concerned about the ethics of bringing a new child into this world with a specific, predetermined mission.

Parents of children with disabilities often worry about the long-term future. What will happen when they are no longer around to provide care and advocacy? In many cultures, the family remains the primary support system, and the idea of a sibling assuming that role may seem natural or even expected.

Parenthood ideally begins with unconditional love and acceptance of a new life for its own sake, not as a means to an end. When the intention behind conception is using a potential child as a “future caregiver”, it risks turning that person into a tool for solving a family problem, rather than an individual with their own right to autonomy and self-determination.

There are also practical and emotional uncertainties. What if the new child is not interested in caregiving or develops challenges of his own? Burdening a child with the lifelong expectation to care for a sibling can be psychologically damaging. It may also strain the future sibling relationship that is built on moral obligation.

Mrs A’s hesitation is also coloured by her age and emotional state. At 44, pregnancy carries medical risks, and she is already struggling with depression.

The emotional and physical toll of pregnancy, during which she has to stop her medication for at least the first three months, combined with the demands of raising a newborn and caring for a child with autism, could worsen her mental health.

Parents of children with disabilities often worry about the long-term future. What will happen when they are no longer around to provide care and advocacy?

Her needs and well-being deserve as much consideration as her husband’s fears.

Perhaps the most ethical approach lies not in creating another life for a specific purpose, but in strengthening the support systems that already exist.

Families like Mrs A’s should not have to rely solely on future siblings for care. Society — through inclusive education, adult support programmes and community networks — has a collective moral duty to ensure that individuals with autism can live dignified, independent and supported lives.

Mrs A’s story is not unique, and it forces us to confront a painful but necessary truth: love can sometimes blur ethical boundaries. Her husband’s wish comes from love; her resistance comes from conscience. Between them lies a moral terrain where intentions are noble but consequences complex.

In my opinion, perhaps the question is not whether to have another child, but how to ensure that people with autism are cared for with compassion, dignity and shared responsibility, without placing the weight of that future on the shoulders of an unborn child.

LABOUR DY LEADER CALLS FOR FOCUS ON LEFT-WING VALUES

ALISTAIR SMOUT & DAVID MILLIKEN

Britain’s governing Labour Party on Saturday said Lucy Powell had won a vote of members to become the party’s deputy leader, a victory for a candidate whom Prime Minister Keir Starmer sacked as a government minister last month.

Powell defeated education minister Bridget Phillipson by a 54-46 margin on a low 17 per cent turnout, and called on Starmer to stop courting voters tempted by right-wing immigration policies and instead focus on bolstering left-wing support.

“We won’t win by trying to out-Reform Reform, but by building a broad progressive consensus,” Powell said in her victory speech, saying the party needed to focus on its traditional values around reducing inequality. Labour lost a seat in the Welsh parliament on Friday to the left-leaning Welsh nationalist Plaid Cymru party, and was pushed into third place by former Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage’s Reform UK party, which is focused on cutting immigration.

The election of a new deputy Labour leader followed the resignation of Angela Rayner in September after she breached ministerial rules by mistakenly failing to pay the correct tax when buying a house.

Powell lost her job in Starmer’s government in a ministerial reshuffle after Rayner’s resignation. She has suggested she might have been sacked from her job overseeing the government’s legislative agenda for letting Starmer know that things such as planned welfare cuts were unpopular with the party.

Speaking on Saturday, Powell said the party’s leadership needed to change its culture to re-engage with members and lawmakers and drop a “command and control” approach.

Unlike Rayner, Powell will not serve as deputy prime minister as Starmer appointed justice minister David Lammy to that role after Rayner’s resignation. Powell has promised to be “a strong independent voice”, after the party’s tough first year in government during which its popularity has decreased.

Responding to Powell’s victory speech, Starmer welcomed her election as “a proud defender of Labour values” and said Friday’s defeat in Wales highlighted the urgency of delivering visible improvements to voters.

Meanwhile, Powell’s election follows a bruising few days for Starmer after the chaos in the grooming gangs inquiry, the return of a small boat migrant who was sent to France under the one in, one out deal, the blunder which saw Hadush Gerberslasie Kebatu released from prison, and defeat for Labour in its Welsh stronghold of Caerphilly. — Reuters/apa

Trump’s phoney peace deal

DONALD Trump’s latest “peace proposal” for Gaza marks the sixteenth such initiative since 1948. Beneath its diplomatic language lies a familiar pattern: promises of stability and reconstruction masking deeper Zionist ambitions.

Trump’s plan envisions turning Gaza into a “peaceful, terror-free” zone focused on rebuilding and economic growth. It calls for an immediate ceasefire, with both sides halting attacks and Israeli forces withdrawing to agreed positions.

Within 72 hours, all hostages — alive or deceased — had to be returned. In exchange, Israel would release 250 prisoners serving life sentences and 1,700 Gazans detained after October 7, 2023, including all women and children. For every deceased Israeli hostage returned, Israel would hand over the remains of 15 Gazans.

A temporary administrative committee, composed of Palestinian professionals and international experts, would manage essential services such as water, electricity and healthcare. Oversight would come from a newly formed “Board of Peace”, chaired by Donald Trump and including figures like Tony Blair. This Board would ensure governance standards and prepare for the Palestinian Authority to assume leadership. All armed groups must disarm and cease all military operations. Those who comply would receive amnesty, while others could leave their homeland safely. Security would be maintained by a US-led International Stabilisation Force, working alongside Egypt, Jordan and trained Palestinian police. This force would oversee border control, prevent arms smuggling and train local security personnel.

The Zionists would not annex Gaza but would maintain a “temporary” presence until the region stabilises. Humanitarian aid would flow immediately through the United Nations and the Red Crescent. It promises a



This aerial view shows people on a beach near an installation depicting US President Donald Trump. US President Donald Trump issued a stark warning to Israel over annexing the West Bank in an interview published, as visiting Secretary of State Marco Rubio voiced confidence that a US-backed ceasefire in Gaza would hold. — AFP



KARIM
EASTERBROOK

The writer is a Former Cambridge School Principal and Author

“new economic vision” for Gaza, featuring international investment, job creation and a special economic zone to encourage trade and development. It even includes a call for interfaith dialogue to foster understanding between Israelis and Palestinians.

While the proposal’s language suggests balance, it only favours Zionist interests. The Palestinians are expected to disarm completely, while Israel retains the right to maintain a “temporary” security presence, an arrangement that history shows becomes permanent. There is no reciprocal requirement for Israel to halt its military operations or dismantle settlements or disarm. The plan demands Palestinian compliance without offering guarantees of sovereignty or protection. The release of 1,700 women and children from Israeli prisons highlights another grim reality: the long-standing detention of Palestinians, many without trial. Yet the plan treats their release as a concession rather than a correction of injustice.

Moreover, while it specifies prisoner exchanges for deceased Israeli hostages, it omits any mechanism for accountability regarding Zionist genocide. Trump’s plan is less about peace and more

about political theatre. It allows both Trump and Netanyahu to project an image of leadership while avoiding the core issues of illegal occupation and Palestinian statehood. Netanyahu, embattled by domestic challenges, gains international cover and time to pursue his government’s broader territorial ambitions.

Trump, meanwhile, positions himself as a global dealmaker. The plan’s structure mirrors earlier “peace” initiatives that sought to conquer rather than resolve. Each condition has demanded Palestinian concessions while rewarding Israeli expansion. This latest version, despite its polished presentation, continues that legacy. It offers Palestinians no genuine sovereignty and no political freedom. Trump’s Gaza peace proposal, presented as a road map to stability, is in reality a carefully staged performance. It promises humanitarian relief and reconstruction, but entrenches illegal Zionist occupation of Palestinian territory. By demanding Palestinian disarmament without ensuring their protection, it perpetuates the cycle of occupation under the guise of peace. As with so many plans before it, this one will not end the conflict. The conflict will only end when Palestine is free.

Who wants to be a millionaire?



RAY PETERSEN

The writer is a media consultant

EVERYBODY wants to be an entrepreneur, be a ‘businessman’, and become a millionaire, or at least become rich with all the trappings that go with it. But how many have the skills, qualities and resilience to be successful in what may look easy, but can be a genuine ‘dog-eat-dog’, 24/7, environment?

First, let’s define entrepreneurship, a long, almost intimidating word, in Arabic ‘raid amal’, an organiser. Its origins lie in the French verb ‘entreprendre’ which means ‘to undertake’, and by extension denotes someone who is constantly ready to ‘carpe diem’, or seize the day, seize the opportunity. Why? Because opportunity is so often a fleeting, fickle thing that rarely waits for us... and if you don’t grab that opportunity, someone else will. It means you must be something of a risk-taker, seeking opportunities, either creating wealth from those opportunities or having sufficient wisdom to evade the traps that lesser opportunists would fall into.

Management consultant Peter Drucker says it is “neither a science, nor an art form, but is born of practice.” So, any would-be entrepreneur would need to be creative, as, even if they are not actually designing or inventing, it’s often about improving something so you can maximise its potential, and consequently, your profit. They don’t just look, but search avidly for what they can change, and how they can make money

from change. They must be risk-takers, because many opportunities exist within a very short window. Virgin Airlines Richard Branson says, “If you are offered an amazing opportunity, but you aren’t sure whether you can do it, say yes! Then learn how to do it!” In fact, most of what Branson ever says to aspiring entrepreneurs is time-bound, as his key phrase is the old, established, “time is money”, essential to business and commerce, whether entrepreneurial by nature, or logistical.

Determination and resilience are essential, as not every opportunity works, or makes money, and if you aren’t making money, you aren’t a very good entrepreneur, are you? In fact, Steve Jobs, the Apple Inc supremo, once said he was convinced that only perseverance separates successful entrepreneurs from those less successful. Both he and Branson have frequently commented along the lines that even working hard, putting everything into it, ‘fighting tooth and nail’, you may not succeed, but that most success stories are a result of true entrepreneurs who have picked themselves up, brushed themselves off, and started all over again.

It has been said that an entrepreneur lives several years of their life in a way that most people would never choose, to later live in a manner that most people cannot! Think about the single-mindedness required for the lifestyle you want. Are you prepared to do the ‘hard yards?’ I guess the hallmark therefore, of most entrepreneurs then, is confidence, and the ability to be able to juggle challenges,

Determination and resilience are essential, as not every opportunity works, or makes money, and if you aren’t making money, you aren’t a very good entrepreneur, are you?

job roles, responsibilities, staff, resources, and above all else, finance. There’s no room for one-trick-ponies!

Naveen K Jain knows all about the ups and downs of entrepreneurship, as he was once one of the richest men in the world during the 1990’s, as the CEO of InfoSpace the American Internet provider. But Jain very much fell from grace during the ‘dot com crash’, of 2000, and lost, personally, and with his investors, an estimated \$282 million. He has bounced back since, and with the establishment of Intelius in 2003 and its sale in 2015, TalentWise (2005) sold in 2013, Moon Express established in 2010, and Blue Dot established in 2013, he has again accumulated significant wealth, being credited with now being a bona fide billionaire, widely recognised in society for his philanthropy and charitable works.

Jain says, “Great entrepreneurs focus intently on opportunities where others see no prospects, and that level of focus and intensity helps eliminate wasted effort and distractions.” He has also been adamant that many ventures fail due to trying to do too much at one time, rather than focusing on their key areas of strength and doing those things well. So, being a ‘businessman’, or an entrepreneur, or more impressively, a millionaire, is a lot more than owning a barbershop or a food stand, having a nice car and business cards. It’s about being aware, and awake, respectful and confident, yet prepared to be humble, 60/24/7/52/life. Then at least, you will give yourself a chance.

SETTLER VIOLENCE DISRUPTS WEST BANK OLIVE HARVEST

LOUIS BAUDOIN-LAARMAN

The scene shocked many and highlighted the violence of this year’s olive harvest in the Israeli-occupied West Bank: a young masked man clubs an older Palestinian woman picking olives, who then collapses on the ground.

The incident during an attack by Israeli settlers, filmed by an American journalist, took place in the town of Turmus Ayya near Ramallah, a hotspot of violence this year.

“Everybody was fleeing because the settlers attacked suddenly, maybe 100 of them,” witness Yasser Alkam said, adding that one Swedish activist also had his arm and leg broken by settlers.

Alkam, a Turmus Ayya city official, said that the woman, 55-year-old Um Saleh Abu Aliya, was struck as she was waiting for her son to drive her away from a mob of settlers.

“Fighting back would only bring more violence, sometimes with the army’s backing,” lamented Nael al Qouq, a Turmus Ayya farmer who was prevented from reaching his olive trees that same day. Not far from the scene, an Israeli flag flapped in the wind at a settlement outpost, illegal even under Israeli law.

The army eventually arrived in Turmus Ayya and dispersed the crowd with tear gas, an AFP journalist witnessed. But not before the youths who descended on the village burned at least two cars. The head of the West Bank’s Israeli police, Moshe Pinchi, told his district commanders to find the man who attacked Abu Aliya, according to a leaked WhatsApp message reported by Israeli media.

The Israeli army said that it “works in coordination with the Israel Police to enforce the law concerning Israelis involved in such incidents”.

But Turmus Ayya is far from an isolated case, and journalists have witnessed at least six different instances of Palestinians being denied access to their land, attacked by settlers, or being victims of vandalism during the 2025 olive harvest.

Clashes in rural areas reached new heights this year, prompted by ever-expanding Israeli settlements and a growing number of settlers — not all of whom engage in violence against Palestinians. More than 500,000 Israelis live in settlements in the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967.

All settlements in the West Bank are illegal under international law. Near Turmus Ayya, in the village of Al Mughayyir, one villager was prevented from harvesting altogether.

“I own ten dunams (one hectare) of olives. All I have left are the olive trees in the garden of the house... They uprooted it all,” Abdul Latif Abu Aliya, 55, said. Abu Aliya’s land borders a road on the other side of which three trailers make up a recently-installed settlement outpost. — AFP

Economic centrism in a polarised world

IT’S not easy being a centrist economist in today’s polarised, social-media-driven world, where every idea is quickly forced into one ideological camp or another. To paraphrase a remark often attributed to Leon Trotsky, centrist economists may not be interested in war, but war is interested in them.

My 2016 book ‘The Curse of Cash’, which explored the past, present and future of money, is a case in point. After its publication, I received more than 20 death threats, some clearly from drug dealers and gun owners outraged by my call to phase out \$100 bills, and others from crypto evangelists who considered my support for regulation an act of treason. Oddly enough, I didn’t mind the threats as much as one might expect. As unhinged as some of these people were, at least they had understood the book’s arguments; they just vehemently disagreed with them.

The same cannot be said of the 2013 uproar over my work with Carmen M Reinhart. That episode began when three University of Massachusetts Amherst economists argued that our six-page 2010 conference paper “Growth in a Time of Debt” contained multiple “errors” that had supposedly misled policymakers in Europe and the United States into adopting harmful austerity measures in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. The ensuing outrage fostered a false narrative that persists to this day.

In reality, our paper contained only a single error. Critically, that error did not appear in the full-length edited journal version, published in 2012, which was based on a much larger and more complete dataset. As Stanford’s Michael J Boskin observed at the time, it is hardly unusual for preliminary research to undergo corrections during the revision process. Both versions of the paper reached the same general conclusion: across advanced



There are solid theoretical reasons why high debt can impede growth.



KENNETH ROGOFF

The writer is a former chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, is Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Harvard University and the recipient of the 2011 Deutsche Bank Prize in Financial Economics

economies, periods of very high public debt tend to coincide with slower economic growth. Of course, this finding does not mean that running deficits harms short-term growth any more than borrowing to buy something you enjoy makes you unhappy. It simply means that the long-term burden of debt can weigh on future prosperity.

Our analysis divided countries into two groups: those with debt levels over 90 per cent of GDP and those below. But the 90 per cent mark was never a “threshold” where growth suddenly collapses; it was merely a divide to illustrate that high-debt countries as a group underperform, on average. As we explained repeatedly, having debt reach 90 per cent of GDP does not imply growth collapse any more than people who drive slightly over the speed limit or whose cholesterol levels are just above the recommended range see a sudden jump in risk. There are solid theoretical reasons why high debt can impede growth. Heavy government borrowing can crowd out private investment, while the taxes required to service that debt are often distortionary. And when

debt is already high, governments have less fiscal space to respond to crises or invest in infrastructure.

Once the controversy subsided and researchers began examining our data, along with newer datasets, the evidence that emerged largely supported our original conclusions. Notably, we never claimed causality, though as the literature continues to evolve, that question will likely be resolved as well. The most pernicious misrepresentation was that we somehow advocated austerity, when neither the concept nor the word appeared anywhere in our work. In truth, our real offence was suggesting that there might be a trade-off between debt and growth. While stimulating the economy during a downturn is important, the size of the stimulus needs to be calibrated, especially if it leads to very high debt. In fact, our 2009 book ‘This Time Is Different’ (written before we later tackled debt and growth) showed that financial crises almost always necessitate a sharp increase in government debt – a finding many economic policymakers used to argue for greater stimulus in the wake of the 2008 crisis. ©Project Syndicate, 2025

SPORTS

SHORTTAKES



The closing ceremony was held under the auspices of Abu Bakr bin Ahmed al Jahwari, Vice-President of the Oman Basketball Association.

15 COACHES FINISH OBA’S PROGRAMME

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

The Oman Basketball Association (OBA) celebrated the graduation of 15 male and female coaches representing various clubs and sports institutions, after successfully completing the Level 2 Sports Performance Specialist Course, organised by the OBA in cooperation with the International Basketball Federation (FIBA).

The three-day course concluded yesterday and included both theoretical and practical sessions held at Seeb Sports Club Hall and Wawan Hall in Al Hail, conducted by international instructor Amir Eid.

The closing ceremony was held under the auspices of Abu Bakr bin Ahmed al Jahwari, Vice-President of the Oman Basketball Association and Chairman of the Technical Development Committee, who praised the participants' active engagement throughout the course, saying:

The course was highly fruitful and helped participants acquire advanced skills in strength and conditioning. It builds upon the success of the Level 1 course previously conducted and represents a significant step forward in equipping our national coaches with the scientific and technical knowledge needed to enhance players' physical performance and reduce common injuries.

Al Jahwari added that organising the course in collaboration with national institutions such as Seeb Sports Club and Wawan Hall demonstrates a successful model of integration between the federation and both the sports and private sectors. He emphasised that the main goal of the programme is to build a strong base of qualified national coaches capable of improving the physical and technical standards of basketball in Oman.

The course programme featured a combination of theoretical lectures and hands-on applications, covering advanced concepts in physical training, load management, injury prevention, and designing specialised training programs for basketball teams.

At the conclusion of the course, participants took a final evaluation test, after which Abu Bakr al Jahwari presented certificates of participation to the graduates and offered a commemorative gift to international instructor Amir Eid in recognition of his valuable contribution to the programme's success.



The programme featured 15 male and female coaches representing various clubs and sports institutions across the Sultanate of Oman.

Al Shamsi, Al Balushi reach athletics finals

SPORT REPORTER

OMAN'S NATIONAL athletics team achieved another milestone at the 3rd Asian Youth Games hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain until October 31, as athletes Al Yazn al Shamsi and Raed al Balushi advanced impressively to the finals of the 800m and 200m races, each setting new personal bests that reflect the growing progress of Omani runners on the continental stage. In the 800m race, Al Shamsi clinched first place in Heat 2 with a time of 1:56.20, setting a personal record ahead of Saudi runner Khalaf al Balushi (1:57.89) and Sri Lanka's Nathin Waladara (1:58.07), in a highly competitive race featuring excellent times. In the 200m sprint, Raed al Balushi also secured his place in the final after recording a new personal best of 21.94 seconds, confirming the strong readiness of Oman's athletes and their ambition to compete for medals.

COACH AND ATHLETE REACTIONS

National coach Ahmed bin Khamis al Siyabi expressed his delight with Al Shamsi's qualification, saying the success was the result of tremendous effort during the preparation phase, and that the goal now is the final, with the ambition to reach the podium and raise Oman's flag high. For his part, Al Yazn al Shamsi said he was proud to have qualified and to set a new personal record, adding that he will give his all in the final to win a medal for Oman despite the tough competition, and that he feels mentally and physically ready for the challenge.

EQUESTRIAN TEAM KICKS OF INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION

The national equestrian team will begin its individual events on Sunday, hoping to achieve results that reflect the steady progress of equestrian sports in Oman.

Representing the Sultanate of Oman are Sayyid Abdulaziz bin Fahd al Busaidy, Taha bin Ziyad al Balushi, and Sarah bint Suhail al Kathiriyah, all competing in the 120cm category. The riders aim to make up for their earlier team results and deliver a performance worthy of Oman's reputation.

GOLF TEAM CONTINUOUS WITH STEADY PROGRESS

Oman's national golf team finished the



The national equestrian team will begin its individual events on Sunday, hoping to achieve results that reflect the steady progress of equestrian sports in Oman.

second round of the boys' team competition in 12th place out of 16 nations, with a total of 319 strokes (31 over par). Despite the tough field of elite Asian teams, Omani players showed noticeable improvement over their first-round performance, narrowing the gap and recording better scores.

Ahmed bin Faisal al Jahdhami, Secretary-General of the Oman Golf Association, said the participation aligns with the federation's vision to nurture national talents and give them valuable international experience, expressing hope for a strong finish in the final round.

TAEKWONDO AND SWIMMING PARTICIPATION

The taekwondo team continues its campaign, with athletes Qaboos al Balushi and Al Mutasim al Hajri set to compete on Sunday morning.

Meanwhile, Shahnaz al Maawali and Fida al Barwani exited the competition after losing to their counterparts from Vietnam and Tajikistan, respectively, leaving hopes with the male athletes to achieve positive results.

The swimming team has also arrived in Bahrain ahead of its events beginning Monday, represented by Mohammed bin



Al Shamsi clinched first place in Heat 2 with a time of 1:56.20, setting a personal record.

Khamis al Wahaibi, who will compete in the 50m backstroke, 100m backstroke, and 50m butterfly, under coach Abdulhafidh Rahmani Qoudri.

E-SPORTS TEAM DRAWN IN STRONG GROUP

The national e-sports team was placed in Group A alongside Tajikistan, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Indonesia, Jordan and Kazakhstan, in a tournament featuring 20 Asian National Olympic Committees, competing across 24 sports and 253 events hosted at major venues including Isa Sports City, Khalifa Sports City, Bahrain International Exhibition Centre, Endurance Village, and Sama Bay Zone.

RENEWED OMANI HOPES

Oman's national teams continue to represent the Sultanate of Oman with pride among more than 5,000 athletes from 45 Asian National Olympic Committees, competing across 24 sports and 253 events hosted at major venues including Isa Sports City, Khalifa Sports City, Bahrain International Exhibition Centre, Endurance Village, and Sama Bay Zone.

Al Musannah to round of 16 of HM Football Cup

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

Al Musannah Club booked their place in the Round of 16 of the His Majesty's Cup Football Championship after a thrilling victory over Fanja Club in a knockout match that ended in a penalty shootout on Friday evening. From the start, Al Musannah imposed their rhythm and dominated the first half, controlling possession and creating several dangerous opportunities, their efforts paid off midway through the half when Ahmed al Balushi scored the opening goal with a well placed strike that gave his side the lead.

Al Musannah continued pressing for a second goal and came close on multiple occasions, but poor finishing denied them the chance to extend their advantage, Fanja, meanwhile, had two half chances during the opening 45 minutes, but they posed little threat to the solid Al



Al Musannah and Fanja players in action

Musannah defense, the first half ended with Al Musannah leading 1-0.

The second half saw a more determined performance from Fanja, who came out with greater energy and better ball control, their persistence was rewarded when Mohammed Faraj equalised with a precise shot, bringing the score to 1-1 and reigniting the contest.

After the equaliser, Al Musannah appeared to lose some momentum and sat deeper in defense, allowing Fanja to push forward in search of a winner, in the closing minutes, Mohammed Faraj nearly scored again for Fanja, but his effort narrowly missed the target, With no further goals scored, the match ended in a 1-1 draw,

sending the tie to penalty kicks.

In the shootout, Al Musannah kept their composure and converted their spot kicks with confidence, ultimately securing victory and a place in the Round 16, where they will face Al Nahdha Club in what promises to be another exciting encounter.

In another fixture, Al Wahda Club edged past Al Mudhaibi in a five goal thriller, winning 3-2 to secure qualification to the next stage, Naif al Ghailani opened the scoring for Al Wahda, while Nasib al Ghailani netted twice to complete the team's tally, For Al Mudhaibi, Osama al Habsi and Al Basel al Habsi scored their side's two goals in a close fought contest.

With this result, Al Wahda Club will now meet Oman Club in the next round, as the prestigious His Majesty's Cup continues to deliver drama and excitement across the Sultanate of Oman.

SHORTTAKES



Al Shabab players celebrate after scoring the goal.

AL SHABAB SHINE
IN AFC CHALLENGE
LEAGUE

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

Oman's Al Shabab Club began their continental journey in style as they claimed a historic 1-0 victory over hosts Paro FC of Bhutan in their debut appearance at the 2025/2026 AFC Challenge League (ACGL) Group A opener on Saturday.

At the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu city in Bhutan, Al Shabab player Kenean Maleko managed to find the net of the opponent through a penalty shoutout in the 26th minute of the first half. The victory marked a memorable start for the Sultanate of Oman's representatives as they secured three crucial points to strengthen their chances of advancing to the next stage of the Asian competition. The next match of Al Shabab will be against Abdysh-Ata from Kyrgyzstan on Tuesday and they will conclude group matches on Friday as they will meet Altyn Asyr from Turkmenistan.

Al Shabab's striker Kenean Maleko netted the only goal of the encounter in the 26th minute from the penalty spot after Yousuf al Malki was fouled inside the area by Tshelthrim Namgyel. Maleko confidently sent the ball beyond the reach of Paro's goalkeeper Jeffrey Baltus to put the visitors ahead. The early stages saw Al Shabab pushing for an opener as Opa Nguette going close when his header was denied by Baltus following a fine setup by Hatim al Roshdi.

After taking the lead, Al Shabab displayed defensive composure to absorb Paro's attempts for an equalizer. The hosts thought they had drawn level in the 36th minute when Timothy Okereke found the back of the net but the goal was disallowed as Evans Asante's pass had crossed the touchline before the cut-back.

The hosts Paro FC, five-time Bhutan Premier League champions, continued to press in the closing minutes of the first half but failed to capitalize with Kezang Dorji and Riku Ichimura both sending efforts off target.

After the restart, the hosts showed renewed energy. Substitute Richard Sagna rattled the crossbar with a thunderous 30-yard free-kick and followed shortly by Kareem Omolaja's powerful effort that also struck the bar a double warning for the Omani side.

Al Shabab under directions of the head caoch Hassan Rustam remained organized and created further opportunities to seal the win as Ahmed al Riyami tested the keeper with a low drive in the 67th minute while Musab al Maamari's volley forced another fine save seven minutes later. In added time, Mahmood al Khusaibi missed a golden chance to double the lead, shooting wide from close range, before Sagna fired over the bar in the dying seconds to end a thrilling contest.

Oman secure first-ever
victory at Asian Rugby

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

THE Oman national rugby team achieved a historic milestone by securing its first-ever victory in the championship, defeating Palestine 22-7 on the opening day of the Asian Rugby Emirates Sevens Trophy, hosted by the Sultanate of Oman on October 25-26 at the Royal Oman Police Stadium in Al Wattayah. The tournament features 18 teams representing 15 Asian nations and is organised under the supervision of the Oman Rugby Committee. The event concludes on Sunday, under the auspices of His Highness Sayyid Azzan bin Qais al Said, President of the Oman Olympic Committee.

OPENING DAY RESULTS
The opening day witnessed intense and exciting matches among participating teams. Oman began its campaign with a 0-24 loss to Jordan, before bouncing back to claim a 22-7 win over Palestine, marking the country's first-ever rugby victory.

In other matches: Iran defeated Iraq 26-0, Saudi Arabia beat Kyrgyzstan 22-0, Afghanistan edged Lebanon 14-12, Qatar overcame Palestine 29-0, Bahrain routed Iraq 45-0, Kazakhstan dominated Kyrgyzstan 44-0, Uzbekistan beat Lebanon 14-10, Jordan topped Qatar 17-5, Bahrain edged Iran 21-19, and Kazakhstan triumphed over Saudi Arabia 27-0. Matches continue on Sunday from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm.

ORGANISATIONAL READINESS
Oman earned the Asian Rugby Federation's trust to host this edition thanks to its strong organisational capabilities and world-class sports infrastructure, notably the Royal Oman Police Stadium in Al Wattayah. Over the past months, the Oman Rugby Committee has completed all logistical and technical preparations related to venues, accommodations and facilities in compliance with Asian Rugby and World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) standards, as well as international medical requirements.

DEVELOPMENT VISION
By hosting this championship, the Oman Rugby Committee aims to promote rugby culture locally and introduce the sport in schools through collaboration with the Ministry of Education, offering students free entry to matches to help them learn the rules and inspire participation.

The committee has also developed a strategic plan to train Omani coaches and referees with Asian Rugby's support and to build partnerships with regional and international federations to exchange expertise and develop technical and administrative competencies, laying a solid foundation for Omani rugby's future competitiveness.

The committee emphasised that the successful organisation of this event represents a first step toward hosting larger regional and global tournaments, positioning Oman as a rising sporting



The tournament features 18 teams representing 15 Asian nations and is organised under the supervision of the Oman Rugby Committee.



Oman and Palestine players in action

destination in Asia and internationally. This contributes to enhancing Oman's global sports reputation and achieving significant benefits for Omani sports in general and rugby in particular.

ASIAN REFEREEING EXCELLENCE
A diverse panel of Asian referees is officiating the tournament, including nine main referees (three women and six men) from seven countries, and four assistant referees from four countries, under the supervision of internationally accredited

technical evaluators.

Among the key referees are: Ayman Grigi (Saudi Arabia), Thomas Ngan (Hong Kong), Ravin Alexander and Ishanka Abeykoon (Sri Lanka), Liu Wei Liang and Adeline Choo (Singapore), Lawrence Ishuga (UAE), Priya Bansal (India), and Joanna Bezuidenhout (Qatar).

Technical evaluation is overseen by Simon Daoud (UAE) and Anil Jayasinghe (Sri Lanka), reflecting the Asian Rugby Federation's commitment to advancing refereeing standards and nurturing emerging talent.

Green sports champions celebrated by Bank Muscat

MUSCAT: In emphasis of its pioneering role in corporate social responsibility, community development and the youth, Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, recently organised an event celebrating the 20 winning teams for this year's 14th edition of the "Green Sports" programme.

The event was held under the auspices of Sayyid Sulaiman bin Hamoud al Busaidy, Chairman of Oman Football Association (OFA) and attended by executives from the Bank and representatives of the winning sports teams. Since its inauguration in 2012, the programme has benefitted 223 teams with over 77,000 members across Oman.



The Green Sports programme is one of the Bank's flagship CSR programmes aiming at sporting skills of the Omani talented youth in the sports and cultural domains.

The Green Sports programme is one of the Bank's flagship CSR programmes aiming at sporting skills of the Omani talented youth in the sports and cultural domains. The support provided by the programme includes greening of football

pitches, water desalination and lighting. This year, over 90 teams have competed, thereby asserting the programme's success and popularity among Omani youth.

During the celebration, Hamza bin Abbas al Ajmi, Deputy General

Manager — Credit, Bank Muscat, said: "Local sports teams play a crucial role in the Sultanate of Oman, empowering talented Omani youth and supporting their aspirations. The Green Sports programme, developed over 14 years, underscores this importance, making a significant impact on social responsibility and sustainability initiatives. It has fostered new strategies to enhance local teams and benefit the community, while improving infrastructure for organised sports and social events and competitions."

Expressing his happiness and pride, Eng Khalid bin Said al Zaabi, Team Head of Al Shati Sports Cultural Team from Al Suwaiq, said: "We would like to express our

heartfelt gratitude for Bank Muscat for their Green Sports programme and the generous support extended to our team. This initiative exemplifies the Bank's dedication to empowering youth and improving sports infrastructure, ultimately fostering a sustainable environment that inspires excellence. We are committed to continuing the hard work put into this project to support various activities and programmes that benefit the community".

Said bin Khalfan al Jahdhami, Team Head of Al Qadisiyah Sports Team from Al Mudhaibi, said: "The lighting project for our team's fields represents not only an upgrade to the infrastructure, but a significant transformation for the local community."

SPORTS

SHORT TAKES



Sohar player prepares the ball.

SOHAR, SEEB LEAD THEIR GROUPS IN VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

The preliminary round of the First Division Volleyball League for the 2025–2026 sports season concluded on Friday evening, with four matches played across Groups A and B, showcasing high levels of performance and intense competition among the clubs ahead of the final stage of the championship.

GROUP A
In Group A, Masirah secured a well-deserved straight-sets victory over Soham (3–0) after delivering a balanced performance in both defence and attack. The set scores were (25–21, 25–15, 25–21). This win reaffirmed Masirah’s full readiness for the next stage, giving the team a strong morale boost at the end of the preliminary phase.
In the group’s second encounter, Sohar and Majees produced one of the most thrilling matches of the round, which extended to a full five sets. Sohar ultimately triumphed 3–2 with set scores of (23–25, 25–20, 15–25, 25–21, 15–8). Both teams displayed a high level of competitiveness and determination, but Sohar’s experience made the difference in the decisive set, securing their place at the top of Group A.

GROUP B
In Group B, Seeb dominated Al Bashayer with a clean 3–0 win, taking the sets (27–25, 25–18, 25–18). Seeb thus continued its perfect winning streak through the preliminary round.
The other match featured Salalah against Taqah, where Salalah managed to come from behind after losing the first set to claim a 3–1 victory (23–25, 26–24, 25–21, 25–23). Salalah’s players put on a strong display, particularly in the third and fourth sets, excelling with quick attacks and an effective blocking wall.

STANDINGS GROUP A
Group A concluded with Sohar leading the standings with 15 points, having won five out of six matches. Masirah followed in second place with 11 points after a consistent and impressive performance throughout the rounds, while Majees ranked third with 10 points. Soham came in fourth with 6 points, and Al Shabab finished last without any points after a string of poor results.
The group witnessed fierce competition from the outset, but Sohar and Masirah emerged as the main contenders to continue their pursuit of the title.

STANDINGS GROUP B
In Group B, Seeb finished the preliminary stage at the top with a perfect record of 18 points from six consecutive wins, confirming its dominance. Al Bashayer took second place with 12 points after delivering consistent performances that secured its qualification alongside Seeb to the final round. Salalah finished third with 6 points from two wins, while Taqah ended bottom of the table without any points after losing all six of its matches.

Luka Doncic pours in 49 to carry Lakers past Timberwolves

NEW YORK: In their first game since guard Terry Rozier was arrested in an FBI sports gambling probe, his Miami Heat teammates unleashed a scoring barrage in a 146-114 NBA win at Memphis on Friday.
Bam Adebayo scored 24 points and reserve Nikola Jovic added 20 to lead eight double-digit scorers as the Heat (1-1) produced the third-highest one-game point total in team history.
Miami also scored a one-half team record 86 points in the first two quarters in taking a 86-47 halftime lead, the largest in Heat history dating to 1988.

As the scandal swirled around the league on the fourth day of the 2025-26 campaign, Adebayo made it clear Rozier has Heat players’ backing him. “We stand behind him. Full support,” Adebayo said. “You support him through and through. That’s our brother at the end of the day.”
Rozier and Portland head coach Chauncey Billups were placed on indefinite leave by the NBA after being arrested Thursday in the gambling investigation.
Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said the hectic NBA schedule leaves the team no choice but to move ahead quickly



Los Angeles Lakers guard Luka Doncic (77) shoots the ball against Minnesota Timberwolves guard Terrence Shannon Jr. (1) and forward Jaden McDaniels (3).

without Rozier, who didn’t play in a season-opening loss on Wednesday.
“Terry is somebody who is very dear to all of us,” Spoelstra said. “He’s had a real positive impact on our locker room... We send our thoughts and our care for him as he goes through this.”
Portland routed visiting Golden State 139-119 in the first Trail Blazers contest since Billups was arrested, with Brazilian Tiago Splitter guiding the effort as Portland’s interim head coach.
“We all had great experiences with Chauncey and how he coached,”

Splitter said. “We’re thinking of him and his family but we have a job to do.”
Israeli forward Deni Avdija’s 26 points led eight Trail Blazers scorers in double figures.
“It’s a tough moment but I got to do my job,” Splitter said. “I’m looking forward to showing my skills and leading a team... I wasn’t expecting this but I have to be ready.”
At Los Angeles, Luka Doncic scored 49 points, grabbed 11 rebounds and passed off eight assists to lead the Los Angeles Lakers over Minnesota 128-110. — AFP



Dhofar player controls the ball.

Nizwa, Dhofar, Masirah and Rustaq shine in HM Hockey Cup

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

THE PRELIMINARY rounds of the 55th edition of HM Hockey Cup 2025 continued across several venues in Oman, as Nizwa, Dhofar, Masirah, and Al Rustaq recorded impressive victories that strengthened their chances of advancing to the final stages of the prestigious tournament.

NIZWA 5 × 2 MUSCAT
In Group 2, Nizwa Club maintained its strong form with a convincing 5–2 win over Muscat Club in the match held on Friday, at the Oman Hockey Stadium in Al Amerat.
Nizwa started aggressively, dominating the first quarter with tactical discipline and quick attacking play, finishing it with a 4–0 lead. The goals came from Sami al Saqri (7’) and Ahmed al Balushi (8’), before Al Balushi added two more in the 12th and 13th minutes from penalty corners.
In the second and third quarters, Muscat tried to get back into the game and managed to reduce the gap through Luay Nasser (36’) from a



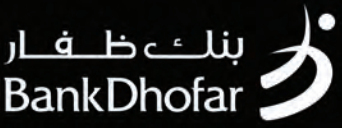
Dhofar and Fanja players in action.

penalty corner. However, Nizwa extended their lead again with a fifth goal scored by Islam al Saqri (44’). Muscat’s Badr Qais scored in the final minute, ending the match 5–2 in favour of Nizwa. With this win, Nizwa raised their tally to 4 points, temporarily moving to second place in the group, while Muscat remained without points after suffering their third consecutive loss.
DHOFAR 4 × 0 FANJA
In Group 3, Dhofar Club earned an important 4–0 victory over Fanja Club in the third-round

match held at the Sultan Qaboos Youth, Culture, and Entertainment Complex in Salalah.
Dhofar opened the scoring early through Aseel Amin Arafah (2’) and doubled the lead via Mohammed Ghalib Obaid (6’) to end the first quarter up 2–0. The score remained unchanged until the final quarter, when Abdullah al Raa scored twice in the 49th and 59th minutes, confirming Dhofar’s dominant four-goal win.
This victory strengthened Dhofar’s position at the top of

Group 3 with a perfect 9 points from three straight wins, while Fanja remained bottom of the group with no points.
AL RUSTAQ 5 × 0 IBRI
In another fixture, Al Rustaq Club was awarded a 5–0 victory by default after Ibri Club withdrew from the match.
With this result, Al Rustaq moved up to 4 points in second place, while Ibri remained without points after suffering their third loss in the preliminary round.
MASIRAH 10 × 1 AL NAHDA
At the Sohar Sports Complex, Masirah Club produced a stunning attacking display, crushing Al Nahda Club 10–1, in one of the biggest scorelines recorded so far in the tournament.
Masirah dominated from start to finish, showcasing excellent teamwork and sharp offensive play, reaffirming their readiness to compete seriously for qualification to the final rounds. With this emphatic win, Masirah maintained the top spot in their group with 9 points, while Al Nahda remained at 4 points, having won one game and lost two.

BUSINESS



بنك ذوفار
BankDhofar

*Terms & Conditions apply

www.bankdhofar.com

2479 1111

CREDIT CARDS

=

50% OFF*

AT VOX & CINEPOLIS CINEMAS





APPLY NOW

SHORTTAKES



The project marks a major step in expanding Madayn's network of industrial cities.

MADAYN OPENS TENDER FOR MADHA INDUSTRIAL CITY INFRASTRUCTURE

MUSCAT: The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) has announced the launch of the tender for the infrastructure and industrial complexes project at Madha Industrial City in the Wilayat of Madha, Musandam Governorate.

The project marks a major step in expanding Madayn's network of industrial cities, which aim to generate jobs, stimulate entrepreneurship and attract investment through advanced infrastructure and competitive incentives.

Engineer Saleh bin Salman al Abri, Director General of Facilities and Infrastructure at Madayn, stated that the project will fully develop Madha Industrial City, which covers an area of 359,414 square metres. It includes the construction of internal roads, water, electricity, sewage networks and other essential facilities.

He added that six industrial spaces will be established under the Madayn Entrepreneurial Clusters initiative in cooperation with the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development. This initiative seeks to empower local entrepreneurs by providing ready-built facilities and support services that enable innovation and business growth.

Since the Royal directive of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik during his visit to Musandam Governorate in January 2024 to establish an industrial city in Saih Al Wasat, Madayn has completed the general detailed plan, final designs and consulting studies such as soil, traffic and topographical assessments. These efforts culminated in the preparation of the tender documents for the implementation of the project.

\$10 bn investments power Duqm's transformation

OQ, Oman's global energy investment company, has become a driving force behind the rapid growth of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD), transforming it into one of the nation's most dynamic engines of industrial and economic development.

With cumulative investments exceeding \$10 billion, OQ has built an integrated energy ecosystem in Duqm that spans refining, petrochemicals, storage, utilities and global trade — redefining Oman's place on the international energy map.



OQ has built an integrated energy ecosystem in Duqm that spans refining, petrochemicals, storage, utilities and global trade — redefining Oman's place on the international energy map.

OQ8: THE CORNERSTONE OF DUQM'S INDUSTRIAL FUTURE

At the heart of this transformation lies OQ8, a \$9 billion joint venture between OQ and Kuwait Petroleum International (KPI).

With a refining capacity of 255,000 barrels per day, OQ8 represents one of Oman's largest and most advanced industrial assets. Since achieving full operations, it has exported more than 560 shipments to international markets without a single operational incident, underscoring world-class safety and reliability.

The refinery also completed its Lenders Reliability Test (LRT) on the first attempt within ten months, demonstrating exceptional technical performance and readiness for global competition. OQ8 has since positioned Duqm as a regional benchmark for efficiency,

innovation and sustainable industrial operations.

RAS MARKAZ: OMAN'S ENERGY GATEWAY TO THE WORLD

Supporting OQ8's operations, the Ras Markaz Crude Oil Storage Terminal — run by Oman Tank Terminal Company (OTTCO), an OQ subsidiary — has emerged as a vital global logistics hub. With a total storage capacity of 26.7 million barrels, including 5.2 million barrels dedicated to OQ8, the terminal connects to the refinery through an 80-km pipeline.

Since beginning operations in 2023, OTTCO has handled more than 176 million barrels of crude oil via 98 vessels, placing Duqm at the crossroads of regional and global energy trade. OTTCO has also forged major partnerships — with Royal Vopak of the Netherlands to

create a unified energy storage and export platform, and with Iraq's State Oil Marketing Organisation (SOMO) to develop a new integrated storage project at Ras Markaz.

These alliances will further position Oman as a logistics and energy hub of international significance.

OQ TRADING: LINKING DUQM TO GLOBAL MARKETS

Completing OQ's value chain is OQ Trading (OQT), the Group's marketing and trading arm that manages the sale of OQ8 products and oversees global energy flows.

Operating from Muscat, London and Singapore, OQT enhances the competitiveness of Omani oil and petroleum products while strengthening Oman's energy footprint across Asia, Europe and Africa.

Through strategic supply chain management and trading expertise, OQT

integrates Duqm's production, storage and export activities into a seamless commercial system that translates operational efficiency into tangible national value.

MARAFIQ: POWERING INDUSTRIAL GROWTH SUSTAINABLY

Among OQ's key Duqm investments, Marafiq plays a crucial role as the utilities backbone of SEZAD. It operates a 326 MW gas turbine power plant and a 36,000 m³/day desalination plant, ensuring uninterrupted energy and water supply to OQ8 and neighbouring industries.

Since commercial operations began in March 2024, Marafiq has achieved 100% operational readiness, delivering over 85 GWh of electricity and 710,000 m³ of water. The company is also building seawater intake facilities with a capacity of 1.4 million m³/day.

Meanwhile, OQ Gas Networks (OQGN) supports Duqm's industries through an 80-km gas pipeline with a capacity of 25 million m³/day, ensuring consistent energy supply for future expansion.

BOOSTING LOCAL ECONOMY AND IN-COUNTRY VALUE

Beyond infrastructure, OQ's investments have delivered broad economic and social benefits. Between January 2024 and June 2025, OQ and its partners generated \$1.57 billion in In-Country Value (ICV), with over \$1 billion spent locally — equivalent to 64% of total expenditure.

Al Sharqiyah South sees surge in commercial growth

SUR: Al Sharqiyah South Governorate has recorded robust growth in trade, industry and investment promotion during the second quarter of 2025, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion.

The figures underscore the governorate's growing importance as a dynamic contributor to Oman's economic diversification. Khalid bin Hamad al Saadi, Director of the Department of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion in Al Sharqiyah South, said that economic indicators point to strong activity in construction, contracting; and small and medium-sized industries, especially in the wilayats of Sur, Jaalan



KHALID BIN HAMAD AL SAADI

Director of the Department of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion in Al Sharqiyah South.

Bani Bu Ali and Masirah.

He attributed the progress to the governorate's strategic location, its industrial and tourism assets; and the advantages of the blue economy, which continues



Official data shows that 348 new commercial registrations were recorded in the second quarter of 2025, bringing the total to 20,044 by mid-year.

to attract investors.

He added that the Department is working to enhance communication with entrepreneurs and investors through various support, promotion and awareness programmes.

These efforts are designed to foster business sustainability and diversify sources of local income, in line with Oman Vision 2040.

Official data shows that 348 new commercial registrations were recorded

in the second quarter of 2025, bringing the total to 20,044 by mid-year. Construction and contracting activities topped the list with 300 new licences — an increase of more than 229 per cent compared with 91 licences in the same period in 2024.

This reflects strong urban expansion in Sur, Jaalan Bani Bu Ali, Jaalan Bani Bu Hassan, Al Kamil W'al Wafi and Masirah.

In total, 3,617 commercial licences were issued in the governorate in the second quarter, with cumulative licences reaching 51,596 by the end of June. Automatic licences also grew to 53,865, while industrial licence applications reached 850 for the quarter, raising the cumulative total to 18,990.

Additionally, 23 new foreign investment records were registered in the second quarter, representing 1.54 per cent of all national investment licences.

This highlights Al Sharqiyah South's growing appeal as a hub for new projects in production and services.

The governorate is expected to see continued expansion in construction, tourism and industry in the second half of 2025, supported by increasing investment in Masirah and coastal areas, particularly in fisheries and logistics. These developments are set to strengthen Al Sharqiyah South's role as a key driver of Oman's sustainable development. — ONA

ADVERTORIALS

SHORTTAKES



With this launch, Sohar International becomes the first bank in Oman to enable salary payments through a corporate mobile app.

Sohar International’s corporate mobile app now a financial command centre

MUSCAT: Reaffirming its commitment to advancing innovation and operational excellence across Oman’s financial ecosystem, Sohar International has launched an enhanced version of its Corporate Mobile App, designed to meet the evolving needs of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and corporates seeking greater efficiency and control over their financial operations.

The upgraded app introduces a suite of powerful new features — including transaction initiation and authorisation, salary payments and bill management — all accessible within a single, secure and mobile-first platform.

With this launch, Sohar International becomes the first bank in Oman to enable salary payments through a corporate mobile app, empowering businesses to streamline payroll, enhance cash flow management and execute key banking activities anytime, anywhere.

This milestone, introduced under the bank’s “Always a Step Ahead” digital capability campaign, underscores Sohar International’s ongoing support for the SME sector — a cornerstone of Oman’s economic diversification — while aligning with the national digital transformation agenda and the broader aspirations of Oman Vision 2040.

Commenting on the launch, Abdulwahid bin Mohamed al Murshidi, Chief Executive Officer, said: “Empowering corporates and SMEs remains pivotal to accelerating national growth and achieving the ambitions of Oman Vision 2040.

At Sohar International, we view digital innovation not merely as an enabler of efficiency, but as a catalyst for economic diversification and sustainable progress. The enhanced Corporate Mobile App reflects our continued commitment to strengthening the business ecosystem, fostering financial inclusion and supporting enterprises to lead with confidence in a rapidly evolving digital economy”.

Evolving from an approvals-only platform into a comprehensive financial command centre, the enhanced app provides business owners with real-time visibility, secure authorisation and greater autonomy over their daily operations.

Designed for executives and decision-makers managing diverse operations, the enhanced Corporate Mobile App provides greater autonomy and control over key financial processes.

KHEDMAH LAUNCHES LOYALTY PROGRAMME TO REWARD CUSTOMERS

MUSCAT: Khedmah announced the launch of the ‘Khedmah Rewards’ programme, a loyalty programme for its valued customers using the Khedmah and Khedmah Delivery applications.

This programme aims to enhance the customer experience and recognise their loyalty through an integrated rewards system.

The launch ceremony was held in the presence of Said bin Ahmed Safrar, Chief Executive Officer of Dhofar International Development and Investment Company (Dhofar Investments), along with several



company officials and staff members.

The launch of the ‘Khedmah Rewards’ programme reaffirms Khedmah’s commitment to rewarding its valued customers

and providing innovative digital solutions that meet their needs and add real value to their daily experiences.

The programme allows customers to earn points for every transaction made through the Khedmah or Khedmah Delivery applications, which can be redeemed for various rewards across a wide network of partner restaurants and retail stores.

Customers can also utilise these points to reduce the value of transactions completed through the two applications.

Pact to develop premium residential destination

TATHMEER

properties has announced the signing of an agreement with Al Mouj Muscat to develop a new project named “Tathmeer Parks”, a residential complex (ITC) that blends modern luxury with coastal living in the heart of Al Mouj Muscat.

Spanning over 9,400 square metres land with built up area of 43000 sq m, the project features two residential towers comprising 282 diverse residential units including 8 exclusive chalets offering breathtaking views.

Designed to deliver a refined coastal lifestyle, also, 19 units with special and private garden on the ground floor that reflect privacy of separate houses in a building, 11 other flats with private view in the first floor to the public pools and garden of the project; and the project reflects Al Mouj Muscat’s signature blend of sophistication, comfort and community.

“Tathmeer Parks” is



Abdulrahim al Kharusi, CEO and founder of Tathmeer and Nasser bin Masoud al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat.

thoughtfully planned to meet the aspirations of investors and the evolving needs of Oman’s dynamic real estate market.

It includes 386 parking spaces and a spacious central courtyard garden connecting the two towers, complete outdoor swimming pools, creating a serene environment that balances comfort, privacy and recreation. With a great integration value with the community the project provides public gym with its facilities,

multipurpose hall and kids play zone.

The development also features a distinctive interior design, elegant entrance lobbies and a range of leisure and lifestyle amenities. Every apartment offers residents a truly holistic living experience in an upscale environment with panoramic vistas.

Commenting on the partnership, Abdulrahim al Kharusi the CEO and founder of Tathmeer stated: “Tathmeer

Parks reflects our philosophy of developing integrated projects that strike a balance between investment value and exceptional living experiences.

Through this collaboration with Al Mouj Muscat, we aim to deliver a real estate product that exceeds expectations and enhances Oman’s attractiveness to both local and international investors”.

Nasser bin Masoud al Sheibani, CEO of Al Mouj Muscat, said: “This project is a strong example of effective collaboration within Oman’s real estate sector. As an industry leader, we continue to empower local and emerging developers to contribute and be pat of the success story of Al Mouj Muscat and the broader growth of the real estate landscape”.

This “Purchase and Development” agreement sets a new standard for strategic collaboration in the sector, reflecting both parties’ shared commitment to advancing real estate sector, fostering investment and enhancing quality of life in support of Oman’s sustainable economic development.

SAMSUNG URGES CAUTION OVER FAKE QLED TVS

MUSCAT: Consumers in the Gulf are being warned to verify that the televisions they buy are genuine QLED models, as some brands have been marketing non-QLED units as offering the same technology.

Mohamad Sharif Oubaid, Director and Head of Visual Display at Samsung Gulf Electronics, advised buyers to research QLED technology before making a purchase. “If consumers want the best picture quality, they must ensure they’re buying the right TV”, he said. “Retailers should help customers identify authentic QLEDs



Mohamad Sharif Oubaid, Director and Head of Visual Display at Samsung Gulf Electronics.

to avoid disappointment later”.

True QLED TVs use ‘quantum dot’ technology, requiring at least 3,000 ppm of quantum dots to deliver superior colour and brightness.

They must also be free from cadmium for safe viewing. Some models, however, are being sold under the QLED label without meeting these standards.

Oubaid warned that TVs built with lower-grade panels can lose colour quality and durability over time. “The more you use it, the more you’ll notice the colours fade”, he

explained.

Electronics retailers across the UAE confirmed that QLED TVs have driven strong sales growth in recent years, thanks to falling prices and new AI-enhanced features. “The shift to QLED has been one of the biggest trends in the regional TV market”, said one retailer.

Samsung, which first introduced QLED TVs in 2017, continues to emphasise the importance of quality and authenticity to ensure customers enjoy the full promise of next-generation picture performance.

Ford genuine parts, the best companion for your Ford!

MUSCAT: Safety for your family on every journey should never be about short cuts or compromises. That is why every Ford vehicle is built with precision engineering and tested to deliver confidence on every journey.

To ensure that this quality continues throughout the ownership period, experts at Arabian Car Marketing Company, the distributors for Ford vehicles in Oman, strongly recommend the use of Ford Motorcraft Genuine Parts, the only parts designed, tested and approved by Ford Motor Company.

Speaking about the importance of using genuine components, a senior official from Arabian Car Marketing Company said “Our customers trust



To ensure that this quality continues throughout the ownership period, experts strongly recommend the use of Ford Motorcraft Genuine Parts.

Ford for its reliability and safety.

Ford Genuine Parts are created to the same exacting standards as the vehicles themselves, ensuring a perfect fit, long-term performance and above all, safety for all travellers in a Ford vehicle. Choosing genuine parts means choosing peace of mind, a truly stress-free driving experience”.

Ford Genuine Parts are specifically engineered to integrate seamlessly with Ford vehicles, making them the perfect companion for every model. Unlike non-genuine alternatives that may offer short-term savings but compromise on performance and safety, Ford Genuine Parts are built

to last, reducing wear and tear and maintaining vehicle efficiency for years.

Each Ford Genuine Part undergoes rigorous testing under real-world conditions to meet Ford’s global safety and quality benchmarks. This ensures that every component performs flawlessly, whether it is the brake pads, filters, or body panels, giving Ford owners continued confidence and worry-free journeys.

In addition to safety and reliability, customers using Ford Genuine Parts benefit from greater value in the long run, thanks to better durability and optimised performance.

SHORTTAKES



The event will gather global experts, investors and policymakers to discuss investment opportunities and the future of sustainable development.

Duqm Economic Forum to spotlight innovation, investment

MUSCAT: The Duqm Economic Forum 2025, themed “Duqm Leading Change”, will open on October 27 at the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD). The two-day event, held under the auspices of Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance, will gather global experts, investors and policymakers to discuss investment opportunities and the future of sustainable development.

Eng Ahmed bin Hassan al Dheeb, Deputy Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones and Chairman of the Forum’s Supervisory Committee, said the event serves as a platform to attract major multinational projects, particularly in tourism, urban development and smart industries. It will also explore how artificial intelligence can enhance key investment sectors such as sustainable manufacturing and green finance.

This year’s forum will feature over 400 participants, including 54 speakers and moderators — 23 international experts and 19 Omani professionals representing more than 50 nationalities. The discussions will revolve around three main themes: “Integrated Tourism and Lifestyle Development”, “Green Manufacturing and Renewable Industries” and “Smart Cities Powered by Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation”.

The first day will include four key sessions. “Unlimited Opportunities”, “The Duqm Experience”, “Building a Renewable Tourism Model” and The Green Plan”. On the second day, discussions will explore industrial resilience, smart infrastructure and community empowerment through tourism and innovation. The forum aims to reaffirm Al Duqm’s position as a hub for global investment and a model for sustainable, technology-driven growth in Oman. — ONA

MoU in minerals bolsters Oman–Türkiye ties

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, OCT 25

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by Oman and Türkiye during the state visit of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of the Republic of Türkiye last week is set to expand cooperation into mining and critical minerals exploration, among a range of other sectors.

Eng Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Oman’s Minister of Energy and Minerals, signed the MoU with Alparslan Bayraktar, Türkiye’s Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. The signing was witnessed by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and President Erdoğan, along with officials from both countries.

In a post following the signing, Bayraktar stated: “With this agreement, we will encourage new collaborations and joint investments between public and private companies of both countries and enhance experience sharing in the field of earth sciences to explore new opportunities in mineral exploration and production. Our goal is to strengthen our strategic cooperation in this field through concrete projects that will benefit both countries”.

Under the MoU, Oman and Türkiye commit to sharing information and data on mining licence areas and existing investment opportunities.

Joint investments in mineral exploration and production will be encouraged between public and private sector companies. The two sides will also exchange know-how and data in the fields of mining, critical minerals and earth sciences.

Oman has real and growing



Oman has real and growing potential in critical minerals — particularly copper, chromite, silica and other industrial minerals; and salts.

potential in critical minerals — particularly copper, chromite, silica and other industrial minerals; and salts — alongside promising but still-developing prospects for lithium, nickel, cobalt and certain rare-earth elements.

The government has moved from policy to action through new concessions, state investment initiatives and downstream project MoUs. However, much of the lithium and rare-earth activity remains at the exploration, feasibility, or early investment stage.

The latest MoU builds on the growing partnership between the two countries across the energy and mining sectors. Both sides view mining as a key area of cooperation — Türkiye brings extensive mining experience, while Oman possesses rich mineral resources.

The Oman–Türkiye Joint Investment Fund, established in July with a capital of \$500 million, identifies mining and metals as priority areas for cooperation.

Additionally, Oman’s Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) has signed a cooperation programme with Türkiye’s Gebze Organised Industrial Zone (GOSB) to replicate the Turkish industrial-zone model in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD). Key joint investment sectors include mining, petrochemicals, food and logistics.

During an earlier visit by Türkiye’s energy minister, Bayraktar, to Muscat in July, another MoU was signed to strengthen partnership, technical cooperation and investment in the energy sector.

The MoU covers: oil and gas (exploration, production and transport); trade in liquefied natural gas (LNG); renewable energy, energy efficiency and alternative fuels; green hydrogen and carbon-capture technologies; and the exchange of technology, expertise, joint projects and regulatory cooperation.

Additionally, Türkiye’s state-owned Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) signed a tripartite agreement with Oman’s Ministry of Energy and Minerals and OQ Exploration and Production New Ventures (OQEP), granting TPAO exclusive short-term rights to assess certain Omani oil and gas fields.

Furthermore, TPAO and OQEP signed a cooperation agreement to explore new business opportunities across the upstream energy segment.

Pact inked for Oman-UAE cross-border freight rail service

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, OCT 25

NOATUM Logistics, an AD Ports Group company, announced on Friday that it signed a preliminary agreement with Hafeet Rail, developer and operator of the first cross-border railway network connecting Oman and the UAE, to establish a new rail service between Suhar in Oman and Abu Dhabi in the UAE.

The agreement was formalised at the Global Rail 2025 exhibition in Abu Dhabi and marks a significant step towards launching a dedicated freight rail corridor between the UAE and Oman.

Under the agreement, Noatum Logistics would run a daily rail service leveraging Hafeet Rail’s network, once completed. The



Under the agreement, Noatum Logistics would run a daily rail service leveraging Hafeet Rail’s network, once completed.

service would run seven container trains per week, each with a capacity of 276 TEUs, equating to an annual throughput of 193,200 TEUs.

The agreement secures dedicated trains for 20-foot, 40-foot and 45-foot containers, ensuring reliable and consistent capacity from the very first day of operations.

These flows will cover a wide portfolio of goods currently traded between the two countries, including general cargo, manufactured goods, food products, pharmaceuticals, agrifoods and other essential supplies.

“Our partnership with Hafeet Rail marks a significant milestone in our mission to deliver integrated logistics solutions across the Middle East. By linking two of the region’s most strategic hubs via rail for the first time, we are extending the

reach of our service and enabling customers to benefit from a mode of transport that is cost-effective, scalable and sustainable.

Beyond its operational impact, our agreement would reinforce regional supply chains, unlock new opportunities and support the economic integration of the UAE and Oman through infrastructure-led collaboration”, said Samir Chaturvedi, CEO, Noatum Logistics, AD Ports Group.

As sustainability becomes a priority for global and regional supply chains, rail freight forwarding introduces a greener, more efficient mode of cargo transport. Compared to traditional road transport, a rail service offers a more predictable and cost-efficient solution for moving high volumes of containerised and bulk cargo across

medium to long distances. Its ability to move large loads with lower fuel consumption also translates into significantly reduced carbon emissions per tonne, helping customers meet sustainability targets while optimising operational performance.

“As part of our continuous engagement with key logistics players in Oman and the UAE, this agreement with Noatum Logistics marks a new major milestone as we are progressing with the development of the cross-border railway between the two nations.

With dedicated rail service, we enable reliable, efficient cross-border container transport between Oman and the UAE, strengthening trade and driving sustainable growth”, said Ahmed Al Musawa al Hashemi, CEO of Hafeet Rail.

TRADE TALKS

US, China hold constructive trade talks



US and Chinese economic officials concluded a “very constructive” first day of talks in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday, seeking to prevent further escalation of their trade war.

The discussions, held on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit, aim to pave the way for a meeting between Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping next week after Trump’s threat to impose 100% tariffs on Chinese goods. — Reuters

INFLATION EASES

US inflation slows in September



US consumer prices rose less than expected in September, signalling easing inflation pressures as rising gasoline costs were offset by slower rent increases. The data supports expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates again next week.

The Labour Department said softer prices for fares, hotel stays and used vehicles also helped restrain overall inflation during the month. — Reuters

OIL SANCTIONS

Putin unmoved by US oil sanctions



Russian President Vladimir Putin remained defiant after the US imposed sanctions on Russia’s two biggest oil companies to pressure Moscow over the Ukraine war, pushing global oil prices up 5%.

The sanctions prompted Chinese state oil firms to temporarily halt Russian crude purchases, while Indian refiners plan sharp cuts in imports, trade sources revealed on Thursday. — Reuters

OPINION

What will Oman’s innovation landscape look like by 2030?



DR HILAL
AL SAWAI

The writer is local content, sustainability and innovation expert.

MORE connected, more circular and much more home-grown. The longer answer is how the Sultanate of Oman leverages its geographic advantages and cultural pragmatism to develop a tech economy that is differentiated from others by solving local problems first and then scaling them over the Indian Ocean rim.

Energy will continue to be the flywheel. By 2030, large scale solar in the interior and wind along the coast will be the anchors of an export-class green hydrogen ecosystem.

The innovative edge will not just be in the electrolyzers, but in the software that choreographs variable renewables, water use and port logistics.

Look out for startups that model salt water intake, brine management and desalination loads as profit centres. Ammonia, green steel and e-fuels will be used downstream as test beds for process AI, sensors and robotics; and the industrial tech will be Omani.

Next, Oman’s ports — Duqm, SOHAR and Salalah — become test centres for “gray-to-green” logistics. By 2030, seamless paperless trade corridors will be possible, including digital customs, secure stamped shipment IDs and AI inspections. The interoperability trick is modularity: SMEs design modular apps that connect and disconnect from global platforms.

Think of a Muscat startup predicting refrigerated (cold-chain containers) for a Sur team. Optimising last miles is fishing towns micro-fulfilment hubs. Now, logistics

is a software story as much as it is an infrastructure story. Next, health and climate change adaptation finally align. Heat stress maps, tele-cardiology across remote wilayats and systems predicting asthma and dust storm events are integrated with privacy-preserving health data vaults.

Scale is Oman’s advantage: small enough for national pilots and large enough for meaningful statistics. By 2030, an Omani company will export a “clinic-in-a-box” model — diagnostics, AI triage and pharmacy e-dispense. It will have served scattered communities as its core market.

To begin with, the development of AI with a focus on the Arabic language is progressing well. The tailored large language models for the Gulf dialects, Omani Arabic and particularly the legal and financial domains, opens up productivity possibilities within the public sector as well as tools for SMEs. The best products developed go beyond simple chatbots.

They include compliance copilots for family businesses, land-use planners that integrate GIS and Arabic; and procurement aids that analyse tenders like a seasoned officer.

Look out for a growing number of companies offering invisible AI that greatly enhances workflow efficiencies.

The focus of tourism technology on unique, sustainable experiences continues to grow. The development of eco-lodges, carrying-capacity analytics for wadis and turtle beaches, augmented reality storytelling

Energy will continue to be the flywheel. By 2030, large scale solar in the interior and wind along the coast will be the anchors of an export-class green hydrogen ecosystem. The innovative edge will not just be in the electrolyzers, but in the software that choreographs variable renewables, water use and port logistics.

at forts and storytelling create high-value experiences while minimising overcrowding. Startups will sell “impact APIs” to hotels: carbon, water and biodiversity ledgers that integrate with guest’s apps and corporate ESG reports. Culture is not an add-on; it is a design system.

Education, a key element of the underlying quiet revolution, will also advance significantly. By 2030, the new vocational tracks in mechatronics, maritime technology and data engineering will operate alongside employers.

Micro-credentials will stack towards degrees and the omnipresent AI lesson planners on Omani curricula will greatly help teachers. The outcome is not purely academic — the denser layer of technical founders and operators will be able to ship.

Policies are designed to be responsive. Instead of temporary, testing and scaling can be a permanent route for regulatory sandboxes for fintech, health data and drone corridors.

For procurement, outcome-based tenders and split awards will give SMEs a fighting chance, while sovereign funds will act as catalytic LPs and co-invest with regional venture firms on clear milestones. Personal trying and fail fast will be encouraged by IP rules and bankruptcy reforms.

Finally, the 2030 flavour of Omani innovation is practical. It is anchored to the appreciation of reliability versus hype, preference of partnerships versus solo heroics and eschew of vanity metrics in favour of exportability.

Oman’s space launch approval: New gateway for global space access



NAJAH
AL RIYAMI

The writer is a Media and Communication Master’s graduate.

WHEN Oman’s Civil Aviation Authority published Directive CAD 5-01 in August 2025, it might have seemed like another piece of regulatory housekeeping.

But in reality, the move could reshape how launch companies around the world think about access to orbit.

For decades, the bottleneck in space has not just been building rockets — it has been getting permission to launch them.

In most major launch jurisdictions, launch approval processes can stretch six to eighteen months, with each mission requiring multiple approvals.

For commercial players, this often means being pushed to the back of the line behind government satellites and strategic payloads.

Oman has chosen a different path. Instead of introducing a lengthy licensing regime, it has adopted a leaner approval model. Launch service providers applying to launch from Omani territory can now receive approval in 45 days.

That makes it one of the most agile systems in the world.

This isn’t just a technicality. In a global environment where operators are talking more and more about responsive launch — the ability to put satellites into orbit quickly, sometimes in response to sudden demand — Oman is placing itself directly in the middle of an unmet need.

If a satellite operator requires urgent replacements, or a commercial constellation needs urgent deployment, Etlaq Spaceport can theoretically provide a green light far faster than other established launch pads.

The implications are both regional and global. For Oman, it positions the country as the Gulf’s first mover in space launch regulation, potentially attracting investors, aerospace suppliers and regional partnerships. For the global launch industry, it offers an alternative to congested spaceports, lengthy approval processes and procedural delays and red tapes.

Early interest in launching from Oman is already coming from international commercial launchers, such as the Spanish launch service provider PLD Space.

Earlier in 2025, during the Etlaq Launch Conference, PLD Space announced that Etlaq Spaceport will be its second global launch base for the MIURA launch vehicle family.

Trust: How Oman rebuilt its credit reputation

TRUST isn’t a press release. It’s the interest rate on a bond, the colour on a ratings screen and the quiet confidence that tells an investor: “Your money is safe here”.

Over the past five years, Oman has treated trust like national infrastructure — built brick by brick, with discipline and patience. You can see the result not in slogans, but in prices, ratings and real projects breaking ground.

When His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik took the helm in 2020, the backdrop was difficult: volatile oil prices, rising debt, jittery markets. The response was steady rather than flashy — tighten the public purse, improve how the state manages its finances and retire obligations on time. That approach has now matured into a reputation: Oman does what it says, when it says it.

Credit agencies — those gatekeepers of global capital — have noticed. In July 2025, Moody’s lifted Oman to Baa3 (stable). By late September, S&P affirmed BBB-/A-3 (stable). Ratings don’t build roads or factories on their own, but they decide which investors are allowed to buy your debt and at what cost. In plain terms: better ratings mean cheaper money, longer horizons and fewer surprises.

Debt tells the same story. By the second quarter of 2025, public debt had eased to about RO 14.1 billion, roughly a third of GDP. Then, in October, the government issued a \$1 billion sukuk and simultaneously bought back \$303 million of 2026 notes.

That’s not theatre; it’s housekeeping — spreading out maturities, cutting near-term refinancing risk and signalling to the market that Oman is managing its liabilities, not being managed by them.

Price stability matters to families and financiers alike. Official figures put inflation at just 1.1% year-on-year in September 2025,



Energy transition is where trust turns into bankable contracts.

averaging 0.8% for the first nine months. Low, predictable inflation protects real incomes, steadies business planning; and helps banks and investors price ten-year commitments without guessing what groceries will cost next summer.

Growth is gradually changing shape, too. The IMF projects real GDP growth of 2.9% in 2025, up from 1.7% in 2024. More importantly, non-oil activity — manufacturing, logistics, tourism, technology — has become the stabiliser. Diversification, so often promised in the region, is becoming a lived reality: a wider base carrying more of the load.

Energy transition is where trust turns into bankable contracts. Hydrom has shifted hydrogen from concept to pipeline: nine major projects awarded, more than \$50 billion in committed investment and a ~1.4 million tonnes per year target by 2030. The model is the quiet hero here — transparent auctions, defined land blocks, shared infrastructure for water and power and a clear regulatory path. That reduces risk premiums and invites serious, long-term capital.

Foreign investors are responding. FDI stock reached RO 30.6 billion by the first quarter of 2025, up on the year. Oil and gas still anchor the totals — naturally — but we’re seeing broader interest in renewables, industrial estates and financial services. The next step is to tilt



QASIM
AL MAASHANI

The author is the head of the Business and Politics department at Oman Observer.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

PROJECT ASSISTANT
Female, well-versed in **Project Administration** with 13 years of proven experience in training, recruitment, administration, finance, and secretarial support.
As an **Executive MBA** holder, I can contribute effectively to your organizational goals and looking forward to an interview call and the opportunity.
Contact: 98260708 | meena.v24@gmail.com

CARS FOR SALES

Mercedes -
Benz E300
model 2014
is for sale.
You may visit
the Embassy
of Islamic
Republic
of Iran to
inspect the car
between 8am
& 4pm. Contact
us on 24696947.

المرکز التجاري للكمبيوتر
CETRAL
Electrical Trading LLC
OFFICIAL ADDRESS :
P.O. Box: 397, P.C.: 117
Tel: +968 24832308 / 24832053
Fax: +968 24832309
Mob.: +968 99252965 / 99491438
E-mail: sales@cetoman.com
Web: www.cetoman.com

Switchgear Division:- Tel. +968 24830952
Equipment Division:- Tel. +968 24830947
Sohar Division:- Tel: +968 22405243
E-mail: sohar@cetoman.com

SIT. WANTED

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PEST CONTROL OMAN CO. L.L.C.

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

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

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

We Are Hiring

A reputed Organization is looking for a **Property Manager & Real Estate Developer**
✔ Experience not less than 5 years

Apply Now

Send your C V to **recruitmentalf70@gmail.com**

To advertise on our social media platforms and website

Please Contact our Team

95210257

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

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

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

JOB VACANCY
Furniture company requires for immediate placement:-
1- Accountant with at least 3 years experience
2- Outdoor sales, 5 years experience in furniture and wall to wall carpets, Oman driving license
3- Driver with heavy driving license
Please send CV to **Email: wm8457577@gmail.com**
And mention in subject **Job number 1 or 2 or 3**

FOR RENT/SALE
Fish Plant & Accommodation Building FOR RENT/SALE
LOCATION: MULANDHA INDUSTRIAL AREA
3511 sqmt Plant with Cold Store / Blast Freezers / Office & Other facilities
1663 sqmt with number of Offices
3084 sqmt Accommodation Block with Flats, Restaurants, Stores & other facilities.
Contact Nos.: 99643760/ 92192020

SIT. VACANT

JOB VACANCY:
Operations Manager (Lifting Inspection Company)
Required Qualifications:
-ASNT Level II (minimum requirement).
-LLEA or ASNT Foundation certification.
-Diploma in Lifting Accessories.
-Diplomas in the following equipment:
Mobile Crane
Overhead Crane
MEWP (Mobile Elevating Work Platforms)
Forklift
Gantry Crane
Additional Advantage:
ASNT Level III certification
Send all your CVs & certificates on below email:
pipe2566@yahoo.com

FLAT FOR RENT

- Flat in Mumtaz 2bhk & 1bhk. Contact 99341138/ 90991079

.....

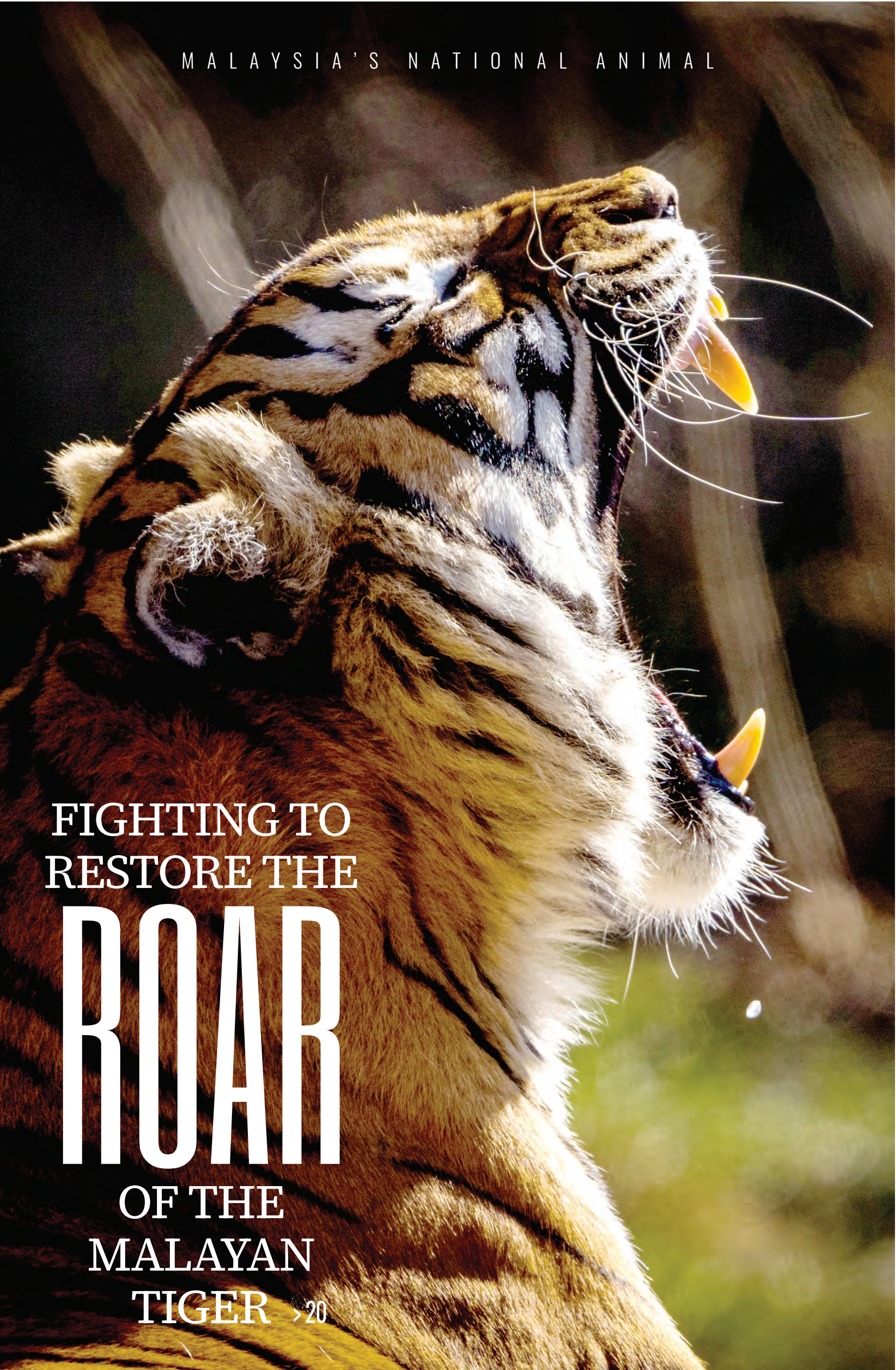
- Flat in Khuwair 2bhk & 1bhk. Contact 99341138 / 90991079

To advertise in Ministry of Information channels

To advertise

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

ART/LIFE

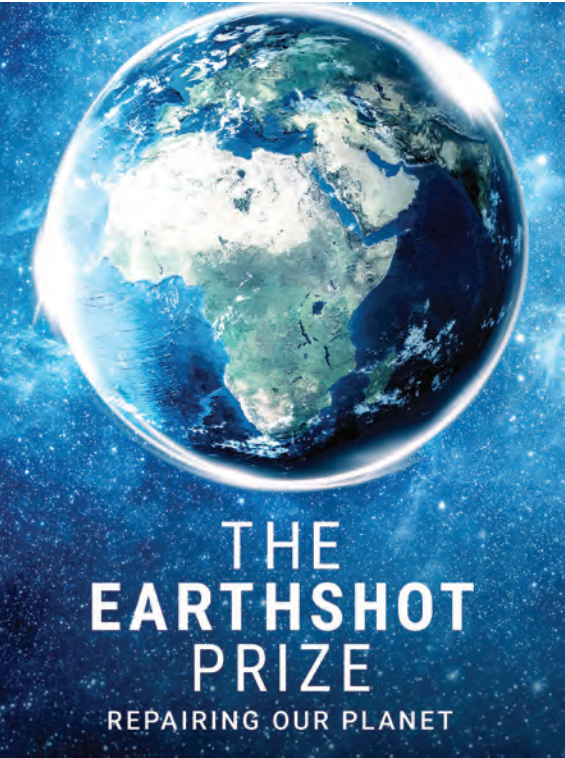


MALAYSIA'S NATIONAL ANIMAL

FIGHTING TO
RESTORE THE
ROAR
OF THE
MALAYAN
TIGER >20

ENVIRONMENT

Celebrities to join Prince William in Brazil for Earthshot Prize



Pop star Kylie Minogue and former Formula One world champion Sebastian Vettel will be among celebrities joining Britain's Prince William for the next month's awards ceremony in Brazil for his multi-million dollar environmental prize.

The British heir to the throne launched the Earthshot Prize in 2020 with the aim of finding innovative solutions to pressing environmental problems. This year's winners will be announced at a star-studded event to be held in Rio de Janeiro on November 5.

Among performers on the night will be Brazilian musicians Gilberto Gil, Seu Jorge and Anitta, along with Canadian pop singer Shawn Mendes and Minogue — who was recently picked out by William's father King Charles as an artist whose music brings him joy, organisers said.

The event will be hosted by Brazilian TV presenter Luciano Huck and other presenters will include gymnast Rebeca Andrade, Brazil's most decorated Olympian, Brazil's most capped soccer player Cafu and four-times F1 world champion Vettel.

The German driver, who had become increasingly outspoken about the environment and sustainability, saying climate change had made him question his job, retired in 2022.

"With two weeks to go, we are thrilled to announce the support of global artists, performers and exceptional Brazilian talent, joining us in Rio", Earthshot's chief executive Jason Knauf said.

As well as announcing details of the awards night, organisers released a "Meet the World's True Action Heroes" trailer which was voiced by Hollywood actor Matthew McConaughey.

The goal of Earthshot is to find innovations to combat climate and other green issues; and awards five winners £1 million each to drive their projects.

This year's ceremony will be held shortly before the UN climate summit COP30 which is also being held in Brazil, which William will attend in place of his father, who has campaigned on environmental issues for more than five decades.

— Reuters

QUICK FEATURES



HOLLYWOOD

Australian TV personality Robert Irwin attends the AFI premiere of 'Nuremberg' at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, California. — AFP



SCENIC

Tourists ride camels across a sand dune during sunset at Sealine Desert in Al Wakrah, south of Doha. — AFP



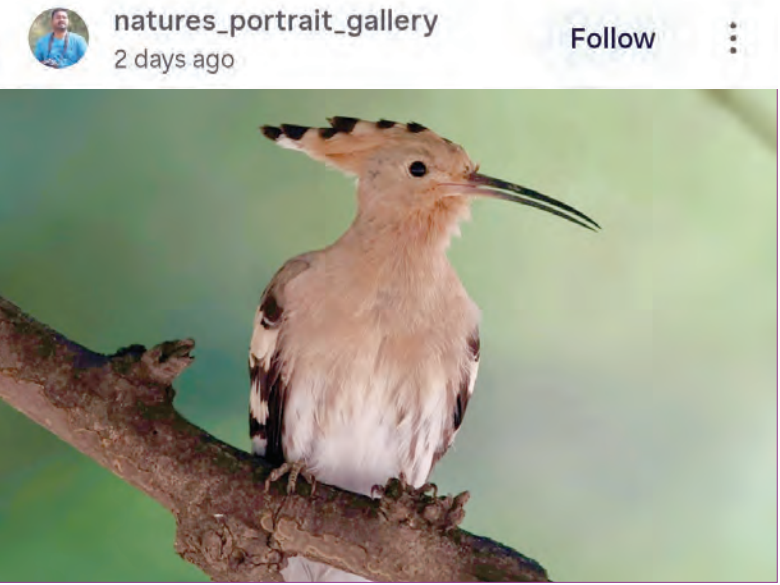
FISHING SEASON

A fisherman tries to catch a fish with a net early on as the annual carp fishing season is underway at the Dolansky pond near Boletice village. — AFP

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



Watchful eyes



Firmly perched

SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

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

How oral hygiene shapes overall health

DR RADHIKA SHETTY

Oral hygiene is not merely about having a bright smile — it is deeply linked to one's overall wellbeing. The mouth serves as a gateway to the body and poor oral health can trigger or worsen several systemic conditions.

According to the World Oral Health Report, the connection between oral and general health is well established. Studies consistently show that oral diseases can both mirror and influence broader health issues. Poor oral hygiene is significantly associated with chronic conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and respiratory infections. Conversely, general health problems can aggravate oral issues, as both share common risk factors like tobacco use, unhealthy diet and stress.

Research also indicates that oral bacteria can enter the bloodstream through inflamed gums or untreated dental infections, potentially causing or worsening systemic diseases.

Likewise, individuals with diabetes are more prone to gum disease, which can further complicate blood sugar control.

Maintaining good oral hygiene goes far beyond brushing and flossing. It involves lifestyle awareness, a balanced diet and regular dental check-ups. Routine visits — at least twice a year — help detect early signs of decay, gum inflammation, or oral lesions that may otherwise go unnoticed. With advancing age, gum recession, dry mouth and reduced salivary flow make teeth more susceptible to decay,



Parents play a vital role in modeling good dental routines that can influence generations

making preventive care even more important.

Simple habits can make a lasting difference. Brushing twice daily with fluoride toothpaste and a soft-bristled toothbrush, flossing once a day and avoiding excessive sugary foods form the foundation of good oral care. Parents, too, play a vital role in modeling good dental routines that can influence generations.

As dental professionals emphasise, preventive dentistry should be part of every wellness plan. The mouth is not separate from the body — it is an integral part of the human system. A healthy smile reflects a balanced lifestyle, proper nutrition and mindful self-care.

Routine professional cleaning, early diagnosis and adherence to good daily hygiene can drastically reduce the risk of cavities, gum disease and associated systemic problems.

(The writer is an endodontist and private practitioner in Muscat)



Jokha al Farsi with the elderly

IDRIS AL BALUSHI

In the heart of Muscat, where compassion becomes action, the Ihsaan Association for the Elderly stands as a haven of mercy, a place that restores comfort, dignity and belonging to those who once devoted their lives to others. Behind this noble initiative stands Jokha al Farsi, one of Oman's first nurses with a recognised degree and a woman who believed that aging does not diminish a person's worth, it deepens their right to care, respect and love.

Her story began with a simple belief, that honouring one's parents is not an occasion to be celebrated once a year, but a way of life. Jokha says, "The International Day of Older Persons isn't really for us Arabs and Muslims. It is meant to remind those who have neglected their parents. We only need to remind ourselves not to get too busy for them". From this conviction, the association's message was born.

On October 1, Jokha organised a special event in collaboration with the Omani Women's Association in the Wilayat of Al Amerat, Muscat Governorate, dedicated exclusively to elderly mothers, because, as she puts it, "Mothers are the most burdened with their children's struggles and the most in need of being celebrated". That day was far from a formal seminar. It was a joyful traditional celebration, bringing together mothers from the wilayats of Muscat, Al Seeb, Bausher, Qurayat and Muttrah, that revived the old Omani wedding procession and henna night with traditional songs, gifts, competitions and laughter that lit up the mothers' faces like a full moon's halo on a dark winter night.

But Jokha didn't stop at celebration. The very next day, she launched an extensive awareness campaign in schools and colleges, focusing on instilling the values of filial piety and teaching students how to treat the elderly, especially those suffering from chronic illnesses like diabetes, Alzheimer's, or physical disabilities. She preferred open dialogue to lectures. During her sessions, she would ask students, "How do you treat your wheelchair-bound father? Have you

A KIND HEART THAT GAVE DIGNITY BACK TO THE ELDERLY



We're not just a healthcare organisation, we're a family. We want to rebuild the bond between children and their parents; and ensure that every elderly person in Oman feels remembered, valued and loved.

JOKHA AL FARSI

visited your grandmother this week? Have you asked your mother how she's feeling?"

Impressively enough, at the association's headquarters, she established a training model room that illustrates how an elderly person's bedroom should look, not isolated in a far corner of the house, but close to the living room, so they remain part of daily family life.

The model room demonstrated the ideal setting for the elderly with medical beds and a real-life sized mannequin dressed in Omani clothing to make the experience more realistic and relevant to visitors.

From there, the association's efforts expanded to include transportation services for patients and the elderly using specially equipped ambulances.

It all began with one vehicle named Kifah (resilience), the first of its kind and gradually grew into a fleet of eight ambulances bearing names filled with optimism, Haiba (Dignity), Ata'a (Giving), Omnia (Wish), Amal (Hope), Afia (Well-being), Rahma (Mercy), Ghaith (Rain) and Athar (Impact). The ninth vehicle, named Athar, was announced as a collaboration with Sohar International Bank and the Athar Foundation, while Ghaith was designated to serve patients in Al Buraimi Governorate in partnership with the youth of the region and the Al Buraimi Healthy City Initiative.

Each of these vehicles doesn't only transport patients to hospitals, they also take them to family visits, social gatherings and even to the airport

when travelling abroad for treatment. Jokha emphasises that the service now covers all governorates reaching wilayats of Qurayat, Sur, Ibri and Al Musannah; and even some islands via ferry.

What sets Jokha apart is her belief that charity is not just about giving money, it's about giving meaning. When a generous benefactor offered her a donation of RO 25,000, she refused to accept it in cash, insisting instead that it be used directly to purchase a new ambulance.

Similarly, when IKEA offered a donation, Jokha requested that the funds be used to redesign the association's facility to enhance both the psychological and aesthetic well-being of the elderly.

Jokha encourages every donor to become an active partner, those who own fuel stations can donate fuel cards, car wash owners can offer free cleaning, repair shops can handle maintenance and those with little to give can still contribute something meaningful.

With a smile full of faith, Jokha says, "We're not just a healthcare organisation, we're a family. We want to rebuild the bond between children and their parents; and ensure that every elderly person in Oman feels remembered, valued and loved".

And thus, Jokha al Farsi transformed from a nurse who healed bodies into a nurse who heals society's spirit. She didn't just treat wounds, she planted compassion, built bridges between generations and turned Ihsaan into a living lesson in humanity, forever engraved in Oman's heart.

M A L A Y S I A ' S N A T I O N A L A N I M A L

FIGHTING TO
RESTORE THE

ROAR

OF THE
MALAYAN
TIGER



Two Malayan tigers fight at the National Zoo in Kuala Lumpur. — AFP

JAN HENNOP

FOR two years, Malaysian conservationists tracked a tiger named 'Bulan' as she raised four cubs. Then a fatal traffic accident made her another statistic in the country's dwindling population.

Malaysia's national animal is in trouble. Poaching, food loss and diminishing habitat have slashed the population from 3,000 in the 1950s to less than 150 roaming free today, according to official estimates.

The government said last month it was ramping up efforts to combat wildlife crime, introducing AI-enabled camera traps and methods to detect smuggling at airports.

But experts and officials admit that resources fall far short of what is needed to protect the country's famed big cat, listed as critically endangered.

Bulan (Moon in Malay) was killed on the East-West Highway, a throughfare notorious for animal traffic incidents.

"We were devastated when we lost her", said Lara Ariffin, president of the Tiger Protection Society of Malaysia (RIMAU).

"Not only that, she was butchered after she was run over", Ariffin said, showing graphic pictures of the animal's carcass.

"They took her canines, they took her claws. For me, it was like desecrating the dead".

The fate of the apex predator's population leapt back into local headlines recently after a dead tiger was found in the back of a car in southern Johor state, sparking public outrage.

Three poachers were later handed seven-year jail sentences and a \$59,000 fine, but experts say the business remains enticing.

'SERIOUS MONEY'

A single Malayan tiger carcass can fetch around \$60,000 on the black market, according to Malaysia's Department of Wildlife and National Parks.

"The pelt alone can fetch around RM100,000 (\$24,000)" the department's national director-general Abdul Kadir Abu Hashim said last month.

Tiger bones go for about \$1,186 per kilogramme, while teeth, claws and even whiskers — used in acupuncture — fetch around \$118 each, Kadir said.

The department did not respond to request for comment.

Even animals that escape poachers can be harmed by snares made from cheap plastic, rope or metal cable.

Camera traps have spotted animals with injuries or even missing limbs.

Research shows Malaysia feeds demand for tiger parts in Vietnam and further afield in China, with cross-border poaching syndicates using drug, gun and human trafficking routes to move their wares.

The first six months of 2025 saw 201 wildlife smuggling arrests and seized illegal assets valued at \$30.5 million,

Malaysia's top internal security and public order police officer told local media. "These figures tell you poaching is no longer a small-scale crime. It is organised, cross-border — and backed by serious money", Azmi Abu Kassim said.

'NO OVERNIGHT SUCCESS'

The Malaysian government admits it has limited manpower, funding and equipment to deal with the challenge, though there are efforts to address the problem.

Joint operations by Malaysian police and wildlife services have resulted in hundreds of arrests and millions of dollars in seizures, officials said.

And community-based ranger programmes run by NGOs like RIMAU employ more than 1,000 local community members.

"Malaysia has made great progress in fighting illegal poaching", said Ariffin, who produced a documentary called "Malaysia's Last Tigers".

POACHING,
FOOD LOSS AND
DIMINISHING HABITAT
HAVE SLASHED THE
POPULATION FROM
3,000 IN THE 1950S TO
LESS THAN

150

ROAMING
FREE TODAY

