

Times

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51

YEARS OF
LEGACY

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TÜRKIYE AND MALAYSIA

HM sends greetings

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Türkiye on the occasion of Victory Day.

In the cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Erdogan and the Turkish people.

His Majesty lauded the depth of relations and ties between the two countries, affirming the keenness to enhance and develop them to serve mutual interests.

His Majesty the Sultan has sent a cable of greetings to King Sultan Ibrahim of Malaysia on his country's National Day.

His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to the King and the Malaysian people. His Majesty lauded the strong relations between the two countries and affirmed the keenness to enhance and develop them to serve the interests of the peoples of both countries. -ONA

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN Doctors, nurses join specialised training

1 The number of enrollees in specialised training programmes for the academic year 2026/2027 at Oman Medical Specialty Board (OMSB) reached 388 male and female doctors and nurses from various health institutions. >A2

OMAN Jabal Akhdar Festival woos over 300,000

2 Jabal Akhdar Festival 2026, held in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, has attracted over 300,000 visitors from within the Sultanate of Oman and abroad over 45 days of diverse programming. >A3

MARKET Power generation in Oman rises by 4.5%

3 Total power output in Oman rose by 4.5% by 2026 July end to reach 31,732.5 gigawatt hours, compared to 30,354.6 gigawatt hours over the corresponding period. >B1

Nepal floods death toll climbs to 788

A7

‘EVERYONE THOUGHT I WAS LOST IN THE FLOODWATERS’

OMANI WOMAN RESCUED AFTER 72 HOURS FROM NEPAL MOUNTAIN

CLOSE SHAVE: Fathiya Al Zadjali and fellow survivors aboard a helicopter after being rescued from the flood-hit areas of Nepal.

From the mountain, Fathiya watched helplessly as floodwaters swept the villages below

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MUSCAT: “Everyone thought I was lost in the floodwaters.” Those were the words of 51-year-old Omani mountain adventurer, Fathiya Al Zadjali, who was rescued after spending 72

hours stranded on a mountain top following the devastating floods and landslides in Nepal.

Al Zadjali was among the foreign nationals caught in the catastrophic disaster, which has killed at over 780 people, while more than 3,000 remain missing. Rescue operations are continuing in the affected areas amid difficult conditions and further flood warnings.

Speaking to *Times of Oman* from Kathmandu after her rescue, Al Zadjali described the terrifying moment she watched the disaster unfold below her.

“On the morning of the 21st August, I went trekking to Yala Peak, which is about 5,500 metres above sea level. While I was coming down from Yala Peak on 26th August, I could see this monster thing coming down. At that point, I didn’t know if it was water,” she said.

From the mountain, she watched helplessly as floodwaters swept through the village below.

“I saw my hotel and the village being swept away in the flood. Along the way, houses were coming down. It was bringing down homes,” Al Zadjali said.

She said she could also hear the screams of people being swept away by the raging waters.

“I could hear the screams of people who were being swept away by the floodwaters below. I saw death right in front of my eyes,” she said.

Al Zadjali spent three nights on the mountaintop before Nepalese authorities finally rescued her.

“I was transported back in two helicopters along with my guide, Deepak,” she said.

Recalling the ordeal, she said she had little idea whether she would survive. “The fact that we survived is nothing short of a miracle,” she added.

The disaster triggered massive flooding and landslides in the Himalayan region, destroying homes, roads, bridges and other infrastructure and leaving thousands of people stranded.

For Al Zadjali, what began as a mountain trekking adventure turned into a fight for survival as she watched the devastation unfold below her and waited three days to be rescued.

• Read her full interview >A3

Survey to promote lifelong learning begins in Oman

MUSCAT: The proceedings of the survey on promoting lifelong learning in the Sultanate of Oman began yesterday, implemented by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) in cooperation with Sultan Qaboos University and Oman National Commission for Education, Culture and Science.

The survey is part of the research project “Promoting Lifelong Learning through Learning Cities in the Sultanate of Oman.”

The survey aims to measure the level of lifelong learning among members of Omani society in the targeted wilayats of Muscat, Nizwa, and Sur, identify available learning and training opportunities and their accessibility, measure their participation levels, monitor associated competencies, and study the relationship between the availability of these opportunities, their utilisation, and their reflection on competencies and individuals.

The survey is conducted through telephone interviews with a random sample of 1,200 Omani citizens aged 18 years and above across the targeted wilayats.

Hood Ibrahim Al Balushi, Acting

Director of the Public Opinion Poll Department at the National Centre for Statistics and Information, stated that the survey represents an important step toward providing data that contributes to forming a more comprehensive picture of the reality of continuous learning in Omani society, in terms of

opportunities available to individuals, their participation levels, and the skills they possess.

He added that the survey results will contribute to identifying strengths and future needs, supporting planning and the development of relevant initiatives and programs, and providing indicators that can be utilised to enhance community members’ access to learning opportunities and support national efforts aimed at keeping pace with cognitive and digital changes.

The project is expected to contribute to building a national database that can be relied upon for future measurements, producing usable indicators, and yielding practical recommendations that contribute to developing learning opportunities in the Sultanate of Oman.

For his part, Dr. Mahmoud

Abdullah Al Abri, Secretary-General of the Omani National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, pointed out that this survey comes within national efforts aimed at promoting lifelong learning as a primary driver for elevating learning quality and improving life and societal well-being.

He affirmed that the survey will provide reliable data and indicators that contribute to supporting planning, policy-making, and the development of relevant initiatives, and its results will also enhance the efforts of the cities of Muscat, Sur, and Nizwa within the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities through a deeper understanding of the learning reality and the identification of priorities and future needs to support sustainable development in the Sultanate of Oman.

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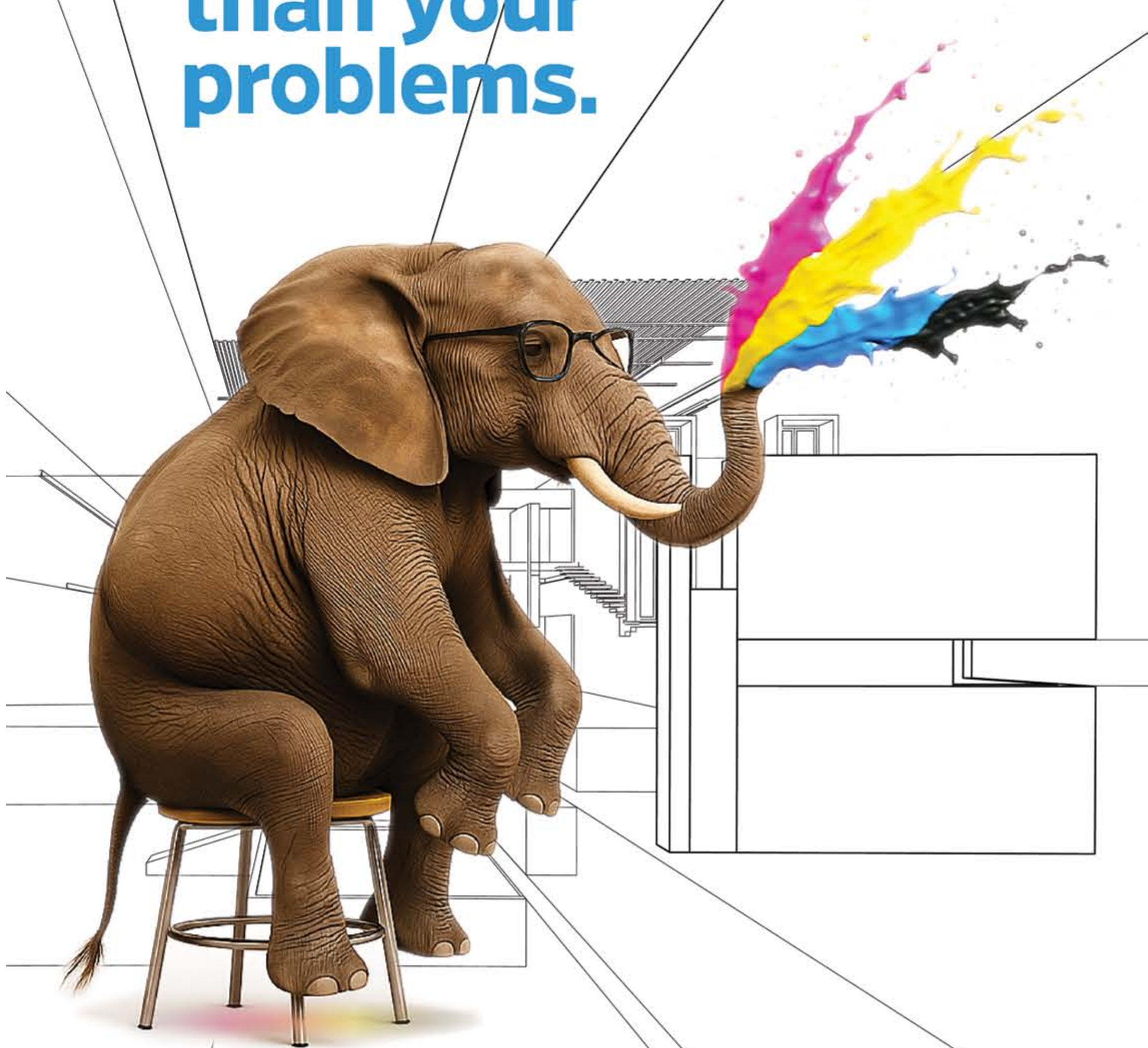
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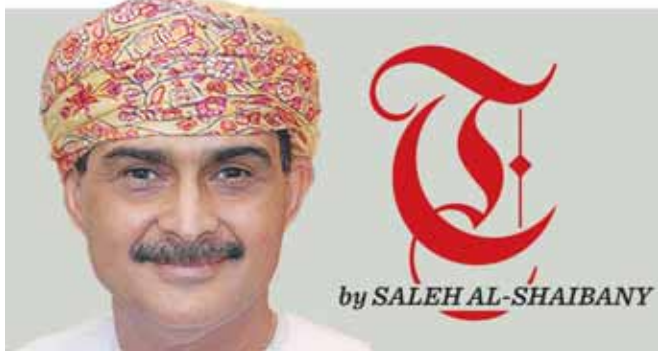
Dancing in the wind of despair

I watched the dry leaf dropping from a branch. But before it hit the ground it danced with the gentle wind. It was very elegant in its flight enjoying what I thought the last few seconds of its grace.

It could not hang up there in the air for long. It landed on the dirty soil and the black ants moved for it. The last fling had come to an end. That reminded me of a particular ageing lady whose feet never touched the ground in her younger days. She 'played' with her youth in a tune composed by many of her friends.

Now alone in an empty house, she tells people that 'a day is like an eternity for me.' Just a few years ago, she would never open her door to any visitor. Now, she cannot even have a wandering soul walking the direction of her house. What went wrong in her life? We know sometimes circumstances dictate our lives to move to a wrong direction. However, in one instant or another, we all have some power, though not an absolute one, to change what we don't like in our lives.

But as she says now, "I found a refuge in the Satan" and he took her where the angels never bothered to go for her rescue. Rich in both financial terms and relatives, but none of the two blessings work for her now. How can they when she took for granted every penny and shun her family? Now frail with tears easily flowing down her



by SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

wrinkled cheeks, she complained endlessly about how cruel the world is.

For most of you reading this column would identify somebody like her. Every youth would like to think they have time and the world will forgive them for the many unrepented mistakes. As years rolled by, we pay no attention to the minutes of the day that pushed them forward. Minutes that we largely ignore and when they pass, they always leave their history behind, the history that would haunt us just a few decades later.

The other day, as I was slowing down at a busy junction, I noticed a little mouse ducking cars. It was trying to cross the road and the twenty yard journey was a matter of life and death for the little creature. I found it highly amusing the way it tangoed with the road, avoiding cars. None of the driver cared about killing a mouse.

It did cross the road safely to disappear under a rubble

of concrete and I could not help wandering that it might attempt a similar adventure another day. Either out of necessity or just for pure thrill, we, too, find ourselves venturing in the danger. The problem is that we use all the reckless moments as an excuse to feel alive.

I for one, know that I have been responsible for a few harsh decisions in the past. Some of them are beginning to haunt me but then what is the use of dwelling in the past? As long as there is that last heave of breath left in us, there is always a second chance. I know we can never relive what is lost but we can gain what we never had. Relatives or friends, if you shun them those days, would come back if you reach for them now.

If you are a youth now, then I suggest you learn a thing or two from old timers. They may not like to talk about it but with a little encouragement they might do it for your benefit.

388 doctors, nurses join specialised training sessions



The new batch includes 207 male and female doctors who joined local residency programmes in 21 specialties, alongside 10 doctors who joined seven local fellowship programmes



of the training phase joined by the doctors and nurses, and the Board's role in providing an integrated academic and training environment that contributes to developing their professional and scientific knowledge and skills, reflecting positively on the quality of healthcare provided in the Sultanate of Oman.

Dr. Hilal Ali Al Sabti, Minister of Health and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, also attended the induction day event and delivered a speech to the trainees joining the Board this year.

During the speech Al Sabti affirmed the importance of science and continuous learning as a fundamental pillar for developing the health sector and elevating the quality of its services.

He urged the trainees to seize the educational and training opportunities provided by the Board, embody responsibility and perseverance, and constantly strive toward excellence, thereby contributing to building qualified national competencies capable of keeping pace with health sector developments, meeting its needs, and effectively contributing to enhancing healthcare quality and serving society.

This year, doctors join 21 residency programmes in the specialties of histopathology, anesthesia, clinical biochemistry, dermatology, emergency medicine, family medicine, general dentistry, general surgery, hematology, internal medicine, medical microbiology,

neurology, obstetrics and gynecology, ophthalmology, oral and maxillofacial surgery, otorhinolaryngology, orthopedic surgery, psychiatry, pediatrics, radiology and urology.

Local fellowship programmes also include the specialties of adult cardiology, otology, pediatric hematology and oncology, pediatric cardiology, pediatric intensive care, adult hematology, and medical genetics, in addition to the General Foundation Program joined by general practitioners following the internship year.

The specialised postgraduate diploma includes nine programmes comprising postgraduate diplomas in pediatric and neonatal critical care nursing, mental health nursing, adult critical care nursing, emergency nursing, infection prevention and control, renal nursing, community health, health services management, and midwifery.

Oman Medical Specialty Board is considered the leading entity in the field of advanced medical education in the Sultanate of Oman, offering programmes internationally accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education - International (ACGME-International) in the United States of America according to the latest global standards, contributing to raising the efficiency of health cadres and improving the quality of healthcare provided to patients. -ONA

CLIMATE CHANGE

Symposium to address water resources related challenges

SALALAH: A two-day symposium titled "Water Resources Sustainability: Water and Climate Change" began in the Wilayat of Salalah on Sunday.

The symposium is organised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in partnership with Dhofar Municipality and Nama Dhofar Services company, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Oman Water Society and Oman National Commission for Education, Culture and Science.

The opening ceremony was held under the auspices of HH Sayyid Marwan bin Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar.

The symposium seeks to address the challenges related to water resources sustainability amid ongoing climate change, in addition to enhancing cooperation and the exchanging expertise in the fields of water management



and adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

The main paper of the symposium focuses on the contributions of the "Arab Network for the Management of Water Resources in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions (Arab G-WADI)" to sustainable water resources management and adaptation planning.

The symposium elaborates on four main themes: Sustainability of water resources in view of climate change; Water resources management and plans to address climate risks; Modern technologies to ensure water sustainability; and Policies and partnerships in supporting water sustainability. -ONA

OMR151 MILLION PROJECT

Dibba-Lima-Khasab road completion rate nears 76%



KHASAB: The completion rate of the Sultan Faisal bin Turki Road project (Dibba-Lima-Khasab) in the Governorate of Musandam has reached approximately 76 percent.

The project, valued at OMR151 million, being executed by the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology, is among the strategic infrastructure initiatives aimed at enhancing the road network and strengthening connectivity between the governorate's wilayats.

The road extends over a total length of 72 kilometres and comprises three segments.

The first segment runs from the Wilayat of Khasab to Lima area, covering a distance of 20 kilometres.

The second segment extends within Lima for 8 kilometres, while the third segment connects Lima to the Wilayat of Dibba over a length of 44 kilometres.

The journey between Khasab and Dibba is expected to take approximately 55 minutes, while the

trip between Lima and Khasab is projected at around 20 minutes, compared to the previous travel time of approximately two and a half hours.

Upon completion, the road is expected to enhance interconnectivity across the various regions of the Governorate of Musandam, facilitate smoother traffic flow, and contribute to the revitalisation of economic and tourism activity, while bolstering investment and development opportunities in the communities it serves. -ONA

QUALITATIVE LEAP

Samail Hospital project reaches 89% completion

SAMAIL: The completion rate of the new Samail Hospital project in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate has surpassed 89 percent, marking a qualitative leap in the governorate's healthcare system, as the facility will provide integrated and specialised health services with significantly greater capacity compared to the existing hospital.

The project is being developed on a land area of approximately 250,000 square metres, with a total built-up area of around 66,000 square metres, at an overall cost of nearly OMR45 million.

The hospital will initially operate with a bed capacity of 170 inpatient beds, totaling 252 beds, with the potential for future expansion to reach 300 beds.

The main building comprises a basement and four floors, and houses five operating theaters, an emergency and accident department, outpatient clinics, radiology and imaging services, central laboratories, dialysis units, physiotherapy facilities, a burn unit,



specialised centres, an operating and endoscopy wing, as well as intensive care units for adults, pediatrics, neonates, and cardiac patients. The project is expected to be substantially completed by the end of this year (2026), in line with the existing schedule.

The commencement of patient

services, however, will be contingent upon the finalisation of construction works, the installation of medical and technical equipment, the successful completion of testing and commissioning, and the fulfillment of all operational readiness requirements.

-ONA

‘A mountain trek that saved my life’



Fathiya Al Zadjali had a close shave during the landslides in Nepal recently

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MUSCAT: Her love for trekking in the mountains may have saved 51-year-old Omani citizen Fathiya Al Zadjali from the devastating floods that swept through Nepal.

“If I hadn’t gone trekking to Yala Peak on 21 August, something bad could have happened to me,” Al Zadjali told *Times of Oman*, recounting the terrifying ordeal that left her stranded for three nights before she was rescued.

Al Zadjali was coming down from Yala Peak when she witnessed floodwaters and debris rushing through villages below.

“When I went to the top of Subra village after three hours of trekking, we saw the river eating up everything that was coming in its way. From the mountaintop, we could see that something was happening down in Subra. Then we panicked,” she said.

“We saw the area where our hotel was, the village and the people we had met — everything was gone.”

Soon afterwards, they received a warning telling them not to descend. “We got a call saying, ‘Please stay here, don’t go down. The situation is very bad,’” she said.



The group remained stranded at the top of the mountain, watching rescue helicopters operating in the area but unable to reach them.

“Normally, trekking down from the mountain takes only two or three hours. But we were stuck in the village. We could see the rescue operations and helicopters coming and going, but we were too far away and we were at the top,” she said.

No power, no communication

As the disaster unfolded, a group of Nepalese police officers from Kathmandu also became stranded in the same village. They had drones and had been trying to search for people affected by the disaster.

“They were also stuck because there was no electricity, no charging and all the bridges were broken,” Al Zadjali said.

“On the first day, the priority was naturally given to the people who really needed rescue. We were still fine. But the problem was that we could not contact anyone. It was very difficult to find a signal. There was no electricity, nothing,” she said.

Meanwhile, her family in Oman began contacting authorities after losing contact with her.

“My family started calling the police. Even some of my TikTok followers started sending messages to the government of Nepal asking about me,” she said.

The situation became even more confusing because Al Zadjali had originally been expected to be in the area a day earlier.



“There was one woman who was thought to have died. They didn’t know where she was or what had happened to her. I was supposed to be there that day, but I delayed my trip by one day. They thought I was gone,” she said.

“I believe this was what God had written for me. Something could have happened to me, but I was still there with the other people.”

Dramatic rescue

Her rescue finally came on the second or third day, when a helicopter arrived around noon.

“It was a small helicopter, but it

was moving left and right because there was a village and farmland, and there was hardly any space to land. It was very dangerous,” she said.

“Finally, the helicopter managed to land somewhere, and we were rescued.”

But the rescue did not take them directly to Kathmandu.

“People started asking me, ‘Are you from Oman?’ My name was already with the government. They gave me a microphone to speak to someone and asked, ‘Are you fine? Is everything OK?’ I said I was fine,” she said.

Nepalese army personnel then

secured the group and asked if they needed food, water or shelter.

“I said no, I was fine. I just wanted to move from there because we were stuck,” she said.

She was then taken to a nearby army base. “All the army was there. Everybody was running. It was something like a war. It was unbelievable,” she said.

Army personnel recorded her details, including her name, country and age, and repeatedly asked if she needed food or water.

“They were helping people everywhere. I saw people rescuing others. The roads were blocked. Even some of the army personnel were injured. It was not easy to see, and it is not easy to explain. I will explain whatever I can,” she said.

After waiting for about 20 to 30 minutes, she was shifted by helicopter towards a location closer to Kathmandu.

“The first helicopter flight was about 10 minutes and the second was around 20 to 25 minutes. It was a big helicopter,” she said.

The helicopter was carrying not only Al Zadjali but also local Nepalese people, including elderly women. “We were all together,” she said.

‘I was safe’

The group eventually reached a military base camp, where Al Zadjali was examined by doctors.

“They asked my name, where I was from, my age and all that. There were doctors who came and spoke to me. They told me, ‘We know you are panicking. Take a breath,’” she said.

She was given water and biscuits. “I said I was fine and there was no risk,” she said.

The authorities then planned to take her to Kathmandu by helicopter,

but Al Zadjali decided to travel by road instead.

“I said no, we were going to go by bus because we were already safe. We were not injured,” she said.

Asked when she plans to return to Oman, Al Zadjali said: “My tickets have not yet been booked, but hopefully it will be done soon.”

A love for the Himalayas

Despite the terrifying experience, Al Zadjali’s passion for Nepal’s mountains remains strong.

“This is not my first time going to Nepal. I’m a big fan of the Himalayas. I’m a trekker and mountain climber,” she said.

Her journey in Nepal began in 2019. “I have done 10 trips to Nepal since 2019. Whenever I have a chance, I just go to the mountains in Nepal,” she said.

But this trip was unlike anything she had experienced before. “What I saw this time was not a normal situation. If you see the situation with your own eyes, you are going to cry,” she said.

“I have never seen anything like this. Honestly, even a war did not feel like a normal situation to me.”

The emotional impact of the disaster continues to haunt her. “Until now, I am trying to recover because when you see people — nice people — suddenly everything is gone,” she said.

“Remember the lady who ran the shop where I bought my trekking sticks and shoes. Her shop is gone. And the man I bought chocolate from — I don’t know if he is alive.”

For Al Zadjali, the mountains that she has loved for years became the place where she witnessed unimaginable destruction — but also, ultimately, the place that kept her alive.

OVER 45 DAYS

Jabal Akhdar Festival attracts more than 300,000 visitors

JABAL AKHDAR: Jabal Akhdar Festival 2026, held in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, has attracted over 300,000 visitors from within the Sultanate of Oman and abroad over 45 days of diverse programming.

Attendees were distributed across festival venues, villages, and various tourist destinations throughout the Wilayat of Jabal Akhdar.

The festival, which ran from 15 July to 29 August, featured a multifaceted program encompassing cultural, entertainment, sporting, and family-oriented



events, alongside adventure programs and activities tailored to the unique natural environment of Jabal Akhdar. -ONA

IN SALALAH

School Beach Games begins

SALALAH: The competitions of the fifth edition of the School Beach Games Championship commenced on Sunday on the sand courts at the Sultan Qaboos Youth Compound for Culture and Entertainment in Salalah.

The tournament, organised by Oman School Sports Association, will run until 3 September.

The championship features 102 male students representing various educational directorates, competing in beach handball and beach volleyball categories. -ONA



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Rustaq strengthens its position as a major historic, tourism destination

The development drive is aimed at improving infrastructure, enhancing tourism services and supporting economic activity

RUSTAQ: The Wilayat of Rustaq in South Al Batinah Governorate is continuing to strengthen its position as one of Oman's prominent historical, tourism and development destinations, benefiting from its status as the administrative centre of the governorate and its combination of rich heritage, mountainous landscapes, springs, valleys and agricultural areas, alongside a growing network of infrastructure and service projects.

The development drive is aimed at improving infrastructure, raising quality of life, enhancing tourism services and supporting economic activity, while making greater use of Rustaq's historical and natural assets.

Dr. Yahya bin Sulaiman Al-Nadabi, wali of Rustaq, said the wilayat is moving steadily to strengthen its development and service infrastructure and make better use of its historical, tourism and natural potential.

He noted that projects involving roads, public facilities, services and the development of tourist sites reflect the government's interest in creating an integrated environment that serves residents and visitors while supporting economic activity.

He said Rustaq's diverse assets provide an important foundation for developing the tourism sector. The combination of historical sites with springs, valleys, mountain villages and natural trails creates broad opportunities to diversify tourism products and increase the economic returns generated by these resources.

He stressed the importance of continuing to develop tourist sites and improve related services in a manner that reflects the status and distinctive assets of the wilayat.

Rich historical and natural heritage

Rustaq is home to some of Oman's most prominent historical landmarks, particularly Rustaq Castle and Al Hazm Fort, which represent important elements of the Sultanate's historical and cultural heritage.

The wilayat also contains several natural and water attractions, including Ain Al Kasfa, Ain Al Huwait and Al Khaba Al Zarqa, in addition to Falaj Al Maysar, which reflects Oman's longstanding agricultural heritage and traditional irrigation systems.

Rustaq's natural landscape extends across a number of valleys and sites, including Wadi Bani Ghafir, Wadi Al Hawqain, Wadi Al Sahtan, Wadi Bani Awf, Wadi Al Sin, Wadi Al Haymali and Wadi Bani Hani.

The Al Hawqain waterfalls are among the wilayat's notable natural attractions, while mountain villages such as Balad Seet, Jammah in Wadi Al Sahtan and Al Khadha offer distinctive architectural and environmental characteristics that provide opportunities for tourism experiences centred on nature, exploration and local heritage.

These attractions form part of Rustaq's broader tourism potential, with its historical landmarks, hot springs, wadis and mountain communities located within a relatively interconnected geographical area.

Health and education services

Rustaq has a network of 10 health



institutions distributed across different areas and villages, helping bring healthcare services closer to population centres.

The health system includes Rustaq Hospital, Wadi Al Haymali Hospital, Wadi Bani Ghafir Hospital and Rustaq Health Complex, in addition to six health centres: Rustaq Health Center, Al Hawqain Health Centre, Al Razi Health Center, Balad Seet Health Centre and Wadi Bani Awf Health Centre.

The distribution of these facilities supports residents across the wilayat's diverse geographical environment, which includes urban, mountain and rural communities. In education, Rustaq has 50 government schools distributed across its different areas and villages, providing education at various levels and supporting communities across the wilayat.

Major infrastructure projects underway

Rustaq is currently witnessing several service and development projects designed to improve infrastructure, increase road efficiency, enhance public facilities, improve the urban landscape and develop tourism destinations.

Among the key projects is the internal roads design and paving project, which covers a planned 40 kilometres of roads. Around 33

kilometres have been completed, bringing the project's completion rate to 80 percent.

Work on box culverts is also progressing at several locations. Works have been completed at Samia and Al Falaj Al Hadith, while box-culvert works at Al Hawqain have also been completed. Overall, the project has reached approximately 90 percent completion.

Rustaq City Walk

The Rustaq City Walk project is among the most prominent urban development initiatives underway in the wilayat.

The project is intended to create a destination combining social, recreational, service and commercial activities, while improving the quality of life for residents and providing visitors with a new urban attraction.

The project has reached 50 percent completion and is expected to contribute significantly to Rustaq's urban landscape once completed.

The City Walk project is part of a wider effort to create integrated destinations that can support tourism and local economic activity. Earlier reporting on the project described plans for a mix of commercial, recreational, hospitality and public spaces, including landscaped areas and gathering spaces.

Improving entrances and public spaces

Work on the Aqaba Al-Rustaq Gate development project has reached 60 percent completion.

The project forms part of efforts to improve the entrances to the wilayat and enhance locations of visual and geographical importance, while presenting a stronger identity for Rustaq and improving the experience of visitors arriving in the area. The project was launched as part of broader efforts to upgrade the Rustaq entrance and provide facilities for visitors.

Construction is also continuing on parks in the middle of residential neighbourhoods at Al Hawqain, Amq and Jammah, with the project currently 60 percent complete.

The neighbourhood parks are intended to provide additional recreational and community spaces for residents while contributing to the improvement of the urban environment.

Development of Ain Al Kasfa

Development work has begun on the third phase of the Ain Al Kasfa project, one of Rustaq's best-known natural and tourism attractions.

The latest phase is aimed at continuing efforts to improve the site and enhance its role as a



visitor destination.

Ain Al Kasfa is among Rustaq's notable natural attractions, with its warm springs forming an important part of the wilayat's tourism identity.

Road rehabilitation

In the transport sector, the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology is implementing a project to rehabilitate the existing road connecting Al Hazm village and Al Washil village. The road stretches for approximately 11 kilometres.

The project is intended to improve road efficiency, strengthen safety and traffic flow, facilitate movement between villages and connected areas, and support population and economic activity.

Recently completed projects

Rustaq has also completed several projects during the recent period.

These include the development of the Al Hazm entrance, repairs to damage caused by weather conditions, maintenance of the Rustaq vegetable and fruit market, installation of internal lighting poles at Rustaq Public Park, and the installation of lighting poles at several other locations across the wilayat.

Together, these projects contribute to improving public infrastructure and the visual and functional quality of Rustaq's urban areas.

Tourism offers major investment opportunities

Tourism remains one of the sectors with significant potential for further development in Rustaq.

The wilayat's combination of historical, natural, water and mountain attractions creates opportunities for integrated tourism programmes that could bring together visits to castles and forts, springs and valleys, mountain trails and heritage villages.

The diverse assets also provide opportunities for the private sector to develop a range of tourism-related projects and services, including hospitality facilities, restaurants, cafés, recreational activities, adventure tourism and mountain excursions.

Such investments could increase the economic value generated by tourist sites while creating opportunities for small and medium enterprises and local business owners.

The wali said Rustaq possesses the components necessary to become an integrated tourism destination.

He stressed that investing in historical and natural sites, alongside developing infrastructure and tourism services, represents an important means of maximizing the benefits of the wilayat's comparative advantages.

Government, private sector and community cooperation

Al-Nadabi said the next stage will require greater integration between government institutions, the private sector and the local community.

Such cooperation, he explained, will be important to ensuring the sustainability of development projects and maximizing their economic and social impact.

He also emphasized the role of Rustaq's residents as partners in the development process and in benefiting from the opportunities created by new projects and the wilayat's local resources.

A destination combining heritage and modern development

Concluding his remarks, Al-Nadabi highlighted Rustaq's distinctive ability to combine history, nature, public services and modern development. He said Rustaq Castle and Al Hazm Fort, its springs and aflaj, valleys, mountain villages and tourism routes should not be viewed as isolated attractions. Rather, they constitute an interconnected system that can serve as the foundation for a more diverse tourism and economic experience.

The development of this integrated system could strengthen Rustaq's presence on the map of domestic tourism and local investment, while creating new opportunities for businesses and communities and supporting the wilayat's wider development objectives.



HAWANA SALALAH HOTELS: WHERE KHAREEF, COASTAL EXPERIENCES AND EVENTS COME TOGETHER

SALALAH, OMAN: As Khareef season reaches its peak, Salalah is revealing one of the Arabian Peninsula's most spectacular natural transformations.

From now through the end of September, seasonal rains bring the Dhofar mountains to life with lush greenery, flowing waterfalls, mist-covered valleys and refreshing weather.

At the heart of this seasonal experience is Hawana Salalah, Oman's largest integrated tourism destination, ideally located along the Arabian Sea and offering a diverse range of hospitality, dining, leisure and event experiences.

Hawana Salalah brings together four distinctive hotels, including Salalah Rotana Resort, Fanar Hotel & Residences, Juweira Boutique Hotel and The Club by Fanar, offering a variety of experiences for leisure travellers, couples, families and groups.

Beyond leisure, Hawana Salalah is also an ideal destination for meetings, corporate gatherings and events. Salalah Rotana Resort features five meeting and event

spaces, including a ballroom, complemented by expansive outdoor, beach-facing venues. The Club by Fanar has recently hosted key group engagement events from the UAE market, demonstrating its ability to combine professional event facilities with memorable resort experiences.

Guests and groups can also enjoy the marina, restaurants and cafés, coastal experiences and attractions including Hawana Aqua Park, creating opportunities to combine business with leisure and destination experiences.

Whether visiting for a family getaway, romantic escape, corporate gathering or group event, Hawana Salalah offers an ideal setting to experience the unique beauty of Khareef while creating memorable moments along the coast of Dhofar.

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY

TRA issues new regulation for telecom number portability

MUSCAT: The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has issued the Number Portability Regulatory Framework, a strategic move designed to empower end-users to select the telecommunications service provider that best aligns with their requirements in terms of pricing, service quality, and network coverage, while retaining their existing numbers.

The framework further seeks to regulate and govern number portability procedures, ensuring their seamless execution and thereby fostering fair competition within the telecommunications market.

The regulation aims to institutionalise and standardise number portability processes, automate transfer operations, and establish a clear time-bound framework for service completion—thereby accelerating number transitions, streamlining procedures, and enhancing the overall user experience.

Concurrently, it reinforces equitable competition among licensees and solidifies the Authority's supervisory role in monitoring service delivery in accordance with the highest regulatory standards.

The regulation addresses both licensed telecommunications service providers and end-users, delineating the roles, obligations, and entitlements of each party, so as to ensure more efficient and transparent service provision, bolster user confidence in the telecommunications market, and keep pace with the sector's ongoing evolution within the Sultanate of Oman. The Sultanate of Oman first introduced number portability services in 2006, enabling end-users to switch between telecommunications service providers



while retaining their numbers. In 2008, the Authority issued the inaugural regulatory instrument governing licensees' obligations concerning the provision of this service. However, with the expansion of the telecommunications market and the concomitant increase in the number of licensees, the need to overhaul the regulatory framework became evident, following the identification of several practices that had adversely affected the efficiency of number portability operations—including delays in processing requests.

This necessitated the automation of the process and the establishment of a centralised system to ensure both expeditious and equitable procedures. — ONA

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IN TASHKENT

Omani refereeing team to officiate IHF Women's Handball World Cup

MUSCAT: The committee tasked with the International Handball Federation (IHF) selected an Omani continental refereeing team (consisting of Sultan bin Saif Al Siyabi and Salim bin Saif Al Siyabi) to run the competitions of the IHF Trophy for women. The competitions will take place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from 13 to 17 October 2026.

The step reflects confidence in the ability of Oman's national cadres to officiate tournaments and events organized by the IHA. It constitutes a new milestone



in the Omani refereeing team's presence in the global arena, as well as an embodiment of the development taking place in the sports sector in the Sultanate of Oman. — ONA

MILITARY TECHNOLOGICAL COLLEGE

MTC organises orientation week for 14th batch of students

MUSCAT: The Military Technological College (MTC) organised on Sunday the orientation week activities for students of the 14th batch for the academic year (2026/2027), comprising General Education Diploma students from the Higher Education Admission Centre programme and applicants via training and educational programmes coupled with employment in coordination with the Ministry of Labour, to supply the

Ministry of Defence, the Sultan's Armed Forces, and security and civil entities with qualified national technical competencies.

Scientific edifice

Brigadier Ahmed Khalfan Al Hadidi, Dean of the Military Technological College, welcomed the students of the 14th batch, emphasising the importance of this stage and their joining of this military and scientific edifice. — ONA



CONSUMER PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Oman bans trade in 21 types of used vehicle spare parts

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's Consumer Protection Authority (CPA) has issued a new decision regulating the trading, sale, installation and use of used vehicle spare parts. The decision introduces a list of components prohibited from being sold or traded and strengthens warranty and disclosure requirements for consumers.

The decision applies to vehicle repair, maintenance, painting and bodywork workshops and centres, as well as businesses involved in trading used vehicle spare parts.

Under the new rules, suppliers are prohibited from trading in the used spare parts listed in the accompanying annex. The list includes safety- and performance-related components such as brake pads, brake linings, wheel hub bearings, clutch discs, spark plugs, air filters, and engine and gearbox oil filters.

The ban also covers certain components based on their period of use, including shock absorbers, engine mounts, gearbox mounts and catalytic converters that have been used for more than one year.

The decision requires suppliers to provide a warranty for used spare parts that are sold or installed, according to the terms agreed between the supplier and the consumer.

The warranty must cover defects arising from the part being unsuitable, failing to meet specifications, or not being fit for the agreed purpose.

During the warranty period, suppliers must, as applicable, repair the defect, replace the part or



refund its value without imposing any additional financial costs on the consumer. According to the new decision, suppliers must provide consumers with an invoice containing key information about the transaction.

The invoice must include the supplier's name and commercial details, the name and description of the spare part and its source, as well as vehicle information including its type, year of manufacture and country of origin.

It must also state the total price, including installation costs, the warranty period, the condition of the part and any defects or damage, and the date on which the part was installed or the repair was carried out.

The new regulations also prohibit suppliers from starting repair work or replacing or installing any part without obtaining the consumer's prior written approval.

The approval must specify the work to be carried out, the parts to be replaced, the type of spare

parts to be installed, the repair cost and the estimated time required to complete the work.

If a supplier purchases a spare part from another supplier, the consumer must also be informed, with the supplier required to provide evidence of the purchase.

Violators may face an administrative fine of up to OMR 1,000, in addition to any criminal penalties provided for under Oman's Consumer Protection Law. The administrative fine will be doubled in the event of a repeated violation.

If the violation continues, an additional administrative fine of up to OMR50 per day may be imposed, provided that the total fines do not exceed OMR2,000.

The measures are aimed at strengthening consumer protection in the vehicle repair and spare-parts sector by improving transparency, ensuring consumers are informed about the parts being installed, and establishing clear responsibilities for suppliers.

NORTH AL BATINAH

Police arrest seven over livestock theft

MUSCAT: The North Al Batinah Governorate Police Command has arrested seven individuals with prior criminal records for

allegedly stealing more than 130 heads of livestock from several farms and estates in the wilayats of Sohar, Al Suwaiq and Al Khabu-

rah. Police said the suspects were apprehended in connection with the thefts, and legal procedures are being completed against them.

MUSCAT GOVERNORATE

MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY

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Muscat Municipality at Al Seeb invites Companies specialized in the field and registered with General Secretariat of Tender Board, to participate and obtain tender documents from the website via the following link: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> starting from the date of this announcement and until the end of deadline stipulated below.

NO	Tender Number	Description of Tender	Last date to collect the tender	Tender return date
1	PRES/26/005	Supply, installation and completion of UPVC Pipe for future ducts at Wilayat A'Seeb	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
2	PRES/26/006	Framework Unit Rate Contract for Wadi Alignment and Mortared Riprap Protection Works at Various Locations in Wilayat Seeb (Phase 1)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
3	PRES/26/007	Framework Unit Rate Contract for Wadi Alignment and Mortared Riprap Protection Works at Various Locations in Wilayat Seeb (Phase 2)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
4	PRES/26/008	Framework Unit Rate Contract for Wadi Alignment and Mortared Riprap Protection Works at Various Locations in Wilayat Seeb (Phase 3)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
5	PRES/26/009	Framework Unit Rate Contract for Wadi Alignment and Mortared Riprap Protection Works at Various Locations in Wilayat Seeb (Phase 4)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
6	PRES/26/010	Design and Build of Road Level Adjustment and Surface Runoff Management Works at Al Hail North in Wilayat Seeb (Phase 1)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
7	PRES/26/011	Design and Build of Road Level Adjustment and Surface Runoff Management Works at Al Hail North in Wilayat Seeb (Phase 2)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
8	PRES/26/012	Design and Build of Road Level Adjustment and Surface Runoff Management Works at Al Hail North in Wilayat Seeb (Phase 3)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
9	PRES/26/013	Design and Build of Road Level Adjustment and Surface Runoff Management Works at Al Hail North in Wilayat Seeb (Phase 4)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
10	PRES/26/014	DESIGN AND BUILD OF STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN WILAYAT SEEB (Phase 1)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
11	PRES/26/015	DESIGN AND BUILD OF STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN WILAYAT SEEB (Phase 2)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026
12	PRES/26/016	DESIGN AND BUILD OF STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN WILAYAT SEEB (Phase 3)	17.09.2026	08.10.2026

- Bidders shall submit their offers electronically.
- Clarification and Support:
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[Website: www.mm.gov.om](http://www.mm.gov.om)

Nepal floods death toll climbs to 788, over 3,000 people still missing

Out of the total missing persons, NDRRMA stated that 933 are workers from regional hydropower projects, 592 are foreign nationals, and 127 are Nepali citizens travelling with foreign groups

KATHMANDU: The total number of bodies recovered following the devastating flash floods in Nepal has reached 788 as of 3 PM on Sunday, Nepal Police announced. According to the updated data, the highest number of fatalities has been recorded in Chitwan with 264 deaths, followed by Nawalparasi East with 194, Nawalparasi West with 120, Gorkha with 58, Nuwakot with 52, Dhading with 50, Tanahun with 37, and Rasuwa with 13. Earlier, Nepal's National Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Authority (NDRRMA) announced that as of 1 PM, 3,000 individuals remain missing as rescue operations continue across multiple affected areas. Unidentified bodies are being stored at 21 hospitals nationwide while authorities work on identification procedures. Out of the total missing persons, NDRRMA stated that 933 are workers from regional hydropower projects, 592 are foreign nationals, and 127 are Nepali citizens



travelling with foreign groups. Dozens of missing reports also include personnel from the Nepal Police, Nepal Army, Armed Police Force, Customs Office, and Immigration Office. Authorities report 239 injured individuals are currently receiving care or have been discharged, supported by six surgical medical teams deployed to the disaster zone. Nearly 20,000 security personnel have been deployed, leading to 8,730 total rescues by ground forces. Air crews have conducted 363 helicopter flights, airlifting 3,081 people, including 236 foreigners, and rescuing 279 individuals directly from a flooded hydropower tunnel over recent days. NDRRMA further stated that the Government of Nepal has disbursed emergency cash support, including NPR 10 million each to Rasuwa and Nuwakot, NPR 5 million to Dhading, and NPR 67.5 million to 15 local governments. Relief operations have dispatched 50 transport vehicles alongside eight helicopter flights carrying food, communication units, and emergency supplies to isolated communities such as Uttargaya and Dhunche. Fuel reserves are also being actively managed to sustain continuous air and land operations. Relief materials

are being dispatched from Kathmandu to flood-affected areas. Meanwhile, families and relatives of those missing in the floods continue to reach out to the morgue at Tribhuvan University Institute of Medicine, where the bodies of victims are being brought. Agonising uncertainty also continues for the families of workers stranded deep inside the Trishuli 3A Hydropower Project tunnel, as ongoing search and rescue efforts race against time. Speaking with ANI, Sher Bahadur Shahi, whose son is trapped in the tunnel, said, "My son is not among the rescued individuals. He is a mechanical engineer on the Trishuli 3A project... They are all trapped inside the tunnel. We haven't been able to communicate with them. The government should have mobilized the necessary capacity and expertise for the rescue operation immediately... Even though the Nepal Army reached the tunnel site, they needed the right capabilities and technicians... Whether it is India or America, everyone is a brother and a neighbor; we are also grateful to the Indian government for the rescue operation." Earlier on Saturday, the Ministry of External Affairs stated that four Indian nationals trapped at



a hydropower project in Rasuwa were rescued today as search and emergency operations intensify across Nepal following catastrophic flash flooding. The rescued individuals, identified by the Ministry as Ripu Kumar, Chaneshwar Narzary, Kripa Shankar, and Mohammed Minhajuddin, are being transported to Kathmandu. Rescue teams are focusing on several hydropower projects on the Trishuli River, where more than 900 workers went missing during the floods. At one of the sites on Saturday

night, army teams used drills to break into the upper part of a mud-swamped tunnel to pump oxygen and deliver a camera inside. Nepal's prime minister's office said that teams faced "continuous rainfall and difficult conditions" but had worked nonstop overnight, "making tireless efforts to search for and rescue those who may be trapped." Specialised teams from India and China have joined the rescue effort, along with Nepal's mountain rescue squad, which helps climbers on the world's highest peaks, including Everest.

Nepalese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lok Bahadur Chhetri said the country needed assistance in such areas as tunnel rescue, DNA testing and identifying the victims. The US State Department wrote on X that it would provide \$3.6 million (€3.1 million) in "life-saving humanitarian assistance" to Nepal, including up to three months of emergency food aid for up to 10,000 flood-affected households. The Red Cross estimates that more than 90,000 people are likely to have been affected by the disaster. — ANI

DELEGATION-LEVEL TALKS

Uzbekistan introduces 30-day visa-free entry for citizens of India

TASHKENT: Uzbekistan on Sunday introduced a 30-day visa-free regime for Indian citizens, with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev saying the move will make a significant contribution to strengthening people-to-people contacts, tourism and business exchanges between the two countries. Mirziyoyev made the announcement during the delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Tashkent, as part of the latter's two-day State visit to Uzbekistan. Highlighting the growing momentum in India-Uzbekistan relations, the Uzbek President described India as a "reliable strategic partner" and pointed to rising bilateral trade, joint ventures and connectivity between the two countries. "India is our reliable strategic partner. Last year, our bilateral trade exceeded USD 1 billion for the first time. In recent years, the number of joint ventures has increased sevenfold. There are now 14 direct flights between our countries every week," Mirziyoyev said.



The announcement comes during PM Modi's two-day State visit to Uzbekistan, aimed at further deepening bilateral ties and expanding cooperation across multiple sectors. India and Uzbekistan established diplomatic relations on March 18, 1992, when the protocol establishing diplomatic ties was signed in Tashkent. India was among the first countries to recognise Uzbekistan's sovereignty following its independence. The two countries elevated their relationship to a Strategic Partnership in 2011. The partnership is supported by several institutional mechanisms at the political and official levels to ensure regular engagement. PM Modi's current visit, from August 29 to August 30, follows his previous visit to Uzbekistan in 2015, as well as his visits in 2016 and 2022 to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summits.

The Uzbek President noted that the philosophy and practice of Yoga have become increasingly popular in Uzbekistan, with a dedicated Yoga Federation operating in the country since 2018. He also said that a nationwide Yoga Festival was held across Uzbekistan in June this year. "The introduction of a 30-day visa-free regime for Indian citizens will make a significant contribution to the development of people-to-people contacts, tourism, and business exchanges," Mirziyoyev added.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER

Norway's new King Haakon VIII makes first speech to the nation

OSLO: King Haakon VIII of Norway paid tribute to his late father, King Harald V, calling him "such a wonderful papa" in his first address to the nation as monarch. "Above all, you were a person who remained committed to your values and dedicated to your duties," Haakon said on Saturday in a televised speech. "We greatly mourn his loss. At the same time, it gives us consolation and strength to know that there are so many who are grieving with us." Norway's King Harald died at 89, after more than three decades on the throne, during which time he became known as a reformer and a popular monarch. In a televised speech from the palace, Haakon praised his father as a "warm and devoted family man." Haakon became emotional while speaking about his widowed mother, Queen Sonja. He noted that his parents would have celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary on Saturday. Earlier on Saturday, Haakon met at the palace with leaders of the Church of Norway, parliament and the Supreme Court. He also received Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store, who viewed the late king's casket after it was brought to the palace from Oslo University Hospital on Friday evening. Flags flew at half-mast Saturday



as mourners continued to gather at the palace, laying flowers alongside tributes left the previous day by more than 20,000 people. **Haakon stresses he will do things 'his own way'** Haakon said he would follow his own path, as his father did before him, while reaffirming the principles of Norway's constitutional monarchy. He is due to swear an oath in parliament on Tuesday to uphold the country's constitution and laws. "We believe in our system of self-governance — and in democracy. We believe in a society built on the rule of law, where every individual has equal worth," he said. Haakon automatically became

king following his father's death. Norway does not hold coronations, which were abolished by parliament in 1908. But, like his father and grandfather before him, Haakon could opt for a consecration ceremony at Trondheim Cathedral, where Norwegian monarchs were crowned between 1814 and 1906. The Norwegian prime minister told Reuters news agency that Haakon shared many of his father's qualities, particularly his "ability to create an atmosphere of togetherness." **Mourning and challenges for the royal family** A national period of mourning has been declared, with no

date yet set for Harald's funeral. Churches across Norway will hold memorial services Sunday, including one in Asker, south of Oslo, which the royal family was scheduled to attend. **Modest monarchy** Harald was widely regarded as a symbol of an open and tolerant Norway and praised for leading a modern, modest monarchy. The king had been hospitalised in Oslo since August 17 with hemolytic anemia, a condition that causes the rapid destruction of red blood cells and can lead to fatigue and shortness of breath. His health had deteriorated in recent years, forcing him to reduce his official duties. — DW

VEHICLE CARRYING CHURCHGOERS

Zimbabwe crash involving minibus kills 27

HARARE: At least 27 people were killed in a minibus crash in central Zimbabwe after the vehicle carrying churchgoers collided head-on with a truck, police said on Saturday. Seven people were injured. Police spokesperson Paul Nyathi said members of a popular Indigenous African Christian denomination, known for wearing white robes, were traveling to a conference on Friday when their minibus collided with a truck on

a major highway near the town of Chivhu, about 140 kilometres (87 miles) south of the capital, Harare. The foreign-registered haulage truck was overtaking another vehicle when it collided with the minibus. Both vehicles were carrying an "unspecified" number of passengers, Nyathi said in a statement. Footage shared on social media by public broadcaster ZBC showed the mangled minibus

charred to a shell. **Zimbabwe faces road safety crisis** Authorities say 94% of road accidents occur due to human error. Many Zimbabweans rely on privately operated minibuses taxis, known locally as kombis, for everyday transportation. The vehicles are often criticized for carrying more passengers than allowed. Zimbabwe's roads are also rid-

dled with potholes after years of underfunding and neglect, while driving standards can be poor. In April, at least 18 people were killed when a minibus burst into flames on a highway in southern Zimbabwe. Earlier that month, a woman and her five children were killed when their vehicle collided with a haulage truck on another highway linking Zimbabwe and South Africa.

SPORTS

Captain's knock by Shukla as Oman off to a winning start

Vinayak Shukla's 88 and Mujibur Ali's 71 powered Oman to a 131-run victory over Singapore, with spinner Shakeel Ahmed and pacer Hassnain Shah claiming three wickets apiece



Shakeel Ahmad in action against Singapore on Sunday. Right, Oman skipper Vinayak Shukla with the player of the match award.

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman began their ACC Men's Premier Cup campaign in emphatic fashion on Sunday, overcoming an early wobble with a powerful batting recovery before their bowlers completed a comprehensive 131-run victory over Singapore in their Group B opener at the Bayuemas Oval in Malaysia. After Singapore won the toss and opted to field, Oman were

quickly reduced to 9 for two and later slipped to 52 for three with the dismissals of Hasnain Ul Wahab, Jatinder Singh and Karan Sonavale. But the middle-order trio of Hammad Mirza, Mujibur Ali and captain Vinayak Shukla combined to turn the innings around, lifting Oman to an imposing 316 for nine from their 50 overs. Mirza was central to the recovery, sharing a valuable 75-run fourth-wicket partnership with Mujibur. He brought up a com-

posed half-century from 60 balls, hitting five fours and a six, before falling for exactly 50. **Rebuilding job** Mujibur continued the rebuilding job and then accelerated, scoring a fluent 71 from 80 deliveries with 10 fours. His dismissal at 192 ended another important stand, this time a 65-run fifth-wicket partnership with Shukla. The Oman captain then took centre stage. Shukla, leading the

side in his first major assignment as captain, produced the innings' defining assault, smashing 88 from only 56 balls. His knock contained nine fours and three sixes and came at a strike rate of more than 157 as Oman transformed a competitive total into a formidable one. Jay Odedra added an unbeaten 29 from 25 balls and Hassnain Shah chipped in with 18 from 13 balls, helping Oman add useful runs in the closing overs.

Singapore's chase never gained sustained momentum. Skipper Manpreet Singh top-scored with 49 from 56 balls, while opener Suryansh Gulecha provided a brief burst with 30 from just 16 deliveries. Pranav Sudarshan also struck a quick 23 from 13 balls, but Singapore repeatedly lost wickets before any partnership could develop into a serious challenge. Oman's left-arm spinner Shakeel Ahmed was particularly impressive, claiming three wickets for 35

runs from his 10 overs, including a maiden, to keep the Singaporean middle order under pressure. He was matched by pacer Hassnain Shah, who also finished with three wickets, conceding only 29 runs in seven overs. Their combined figures of six wickets for 64 runs effectively broke the back of the chase. Jitenkumar Ramanandi added one wicket for 17 from five economical overs, while Karan Sonavale took one for 31. Singapore were eventually bowled out for 185 in 42.3 overs. The result gave Oman two points from their opening Group B fixture and underlined the strength of their all-round performance. Shukla was named the player of the match. The manner of the win gives Oman an ideal platform as they continue their group campaign with the 2027 Asia Cup qualification race firmly in focus. Oman next play Qatar in Bangi on September 2 before taking on Kuwait (September 5) and UAE (September 8) in Group B. **Brief scores:** Oman 316/9 (Vinayak Shukla 88, Mujibur Ali 77, Hammad Mirza 50, Jay Odedra 29; Harsh Venkataram 3/64; Daksh Tyagi 2/47) beat Singapore 185 in 42.3 overs (Suryansh Gulecha 30, Manpreet Singh 49, Riaan Naik 26; Shakeel Ahmed 3/35, Hassnain Shah 3/29).

SECOND TEST

Lawrence drives England to imposing lead on rain-ravaged day



LONDON: Dan Lawrence defied some brutal conditions and numerous rain interruptions to maintain England's stranglehold on the second Test against Pakistan at Lord's on Saturday. Mohammad Abbas capitalised on an up-and-down pitch offering prodigious lateral movement to claim three wickets, but with England already so far ahead on first innings and Lawrence digging in for an unbeaten half-century, their task looked nigh on insurmountable at the end of a gloomy third day. Play didn't start until 2.20pm after persistent rain, with England already 261 runs ahead having bowled their opponents out for

just 110 on day two. The hosts resumed on 81 for 3 with Emilio Gay unbeaten on 30, while Harry Brook was not out 7. But England were four-down within 10 balls of the re-start, when Gay was pinned on the shin by a Abbas delivery which kept so cruelly low there was no way out. With the ball nipping around, wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan wore a few awkwardly on the hands and body either side of another rain delay lasting about 15 minutes. Brook fell to one which leapt a little more than expected, kissing the splice of the bat as it flew through to Rizwan to give Abbas his second, before Jamie Smith, top scorer in the first innings,

miscued an Abbas nip-backer to square leg. All the while Lawrence showed real poise, despite the stop-start nature of a weather-ravaged innings. He struck back-to-back fours off Khurram Shahzad - when the bowler erred slightly on length. Lawrence then hit Mohammad Ali for four and six in consecutive balls, the latter an authoritative lofted drive which cleared deep extra cover. More rain forced tea to be taken a couple of minutes early with Lawrence ticking along encouragingly at 37 not out from 57 balls. Gus Atkinson was nailed low on the front pad on the third ball after the interval, playing

across one which nipped into him from Mohammad Ali. Lawrence moved to within a stroke of his sixth Test fifty by dropping to one knee to slog-sweep Ali Usman into the stands beyond deep midwicket, and he brought up the milestone pulling Mohammad Ali for a single to deep square leg in the next over. Play was abandoned just after 6.30pm with the official reason given as bad light although there was the potential for almost an hour of play still available and, bizarrely, sunlight bursting through on the horizon. **Brief scores:** England 290 and 177/7 (Lawrence 50*, Abbas 3-48) lead Pakistan 110 by 357 runs. - Agencies



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SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION

Meta and other social media platforms face lawsuits alleging they foster addictive use among young people. Now regulators are struggling to rein in their engagement-driven business models.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 7,577.85 points, up by 0.60% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.76% at 610.64 points. Al Madina Investments, up 9.23%, was the top gainer while, Al Hassan Engineering, down 16.67%, was the top loser.

Total electricity generation in Oman jumps 4.5% by July end

Statistics showed that Muscat Governorate recorded the highest growth rate in total electricity production at 197.4 percent, followed by Al Dakhiliyah Governorate at 41.8 percent, Dhofar Governorate at 5.4 percent, Al Wusta Governorate at 8 percent, and the Governorates of North Al Batinah, South Al Batinah, and Al Dhahirah at 5.6 percent

MUSCAT: Total electricity generation in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 4.5 percent by the end of July 2026 to reach 31,732.5 gigawatt hours, compared to 30,354.6 gigawatt hours during the corresponding period of 2025, according to the latest preliminary data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI). Statistics showed that Muscat Governorate recorded the highest growth rate in total electricity production at 197.4 percent, followed by Al Dakhiliyah Governorate at 41.8 percent, Dhofar Governorate at 5.4 percent, Al Wusta Governorate at 8 percent, and the Governorates of

North Al Batinah, South Al Batinah, and Al Dhahirah at 5.6 percent. Conversely, total electricity production decreased in the Governorates of North Al Sharqiyah and South Al Sharqiyah by 15.1 percent, and in Musandam Governorate by 2.8 percent. Regarding net electricity production—which includes purchases by Oman Power and Water Procurement Company and purchases by the Rural Areas Electricity Company according to regions—data clarified that it rose by 4.9 percent by the end of July 2026, reaching 30,866.7 gigawatt hours compared to 29,421.5 giga-



watt hours during the corresponding period of 2025. Muscat Governorate recorded the highest growth rate in net electricity production, reaching 197 percent, followed by Al Dakhiliyah Governorate at 42 percent, Dhofar Governorate at 8.8 percent, Al Wusta Governorate at 8.7 percent, and the Governorates of North Al Batinah, South Al Batinah, and Al

Dhahirah at 5.5 percent. In contrast, net electricity production declined in the Governorates of North Al Sharqiyah and South Al Sharqiyah by 15.3 percent, and in Musandam Governorate by 2.8 percent. In the water field, total production decreased by 3.2 percent by the end of July 2026 to reach 287,484.3 cubic metres, compared

to 296,874.8 cubic metres during the corresponding period of 2025. At the governorate level, water production in Muscat Governorate decreased by 5.9 percent, dropping from 118,160 cubic metres by the end of July 2025 to 111,241 cubic metres by the end of July 2026. Water production in other governorates also dropped by 3 percent to reach 130,536.1 thousand

cubic metres, compared to 134,613 cubic metres during the corresponding period of 2025. On the other hand, water production in Dhofar Governorate rose by 3.6 percent to reach 45,707.1 cubic metres during the period from January to July 2026, compared to 44,101.8 cubic metres during the corresponding period of 2025. -ONA

GAINS FRESH MOMENTUM



Uzbekistan-India ties enter new phase of strategic and economic cooperation

NEW DELHI: Relations between Uzbekistan and India have gained fresh momentum under the leadership of Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, evolving from primarily political engagement into a broad strategic partnership spanning trade, industry, healthcare, digital technology, education, security and transport. Bilateral trade has expanded sharply, rising from \$366 million in 2016 to \$1.3 billion in 2025, a roughly 3.6-fold increase. The two countries are now seeking to move beyond trade in finished goods toward localisation, technology transfer and joint industrial production. Transport connectivity is emerging as a key priority. The India-Chabahar-Iran-Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan route could provide India with greater access to Central Asia and give landlocked Uzbekistan an important gateway to the Indian Ocean. Regular container services, integration with the International North-South Transport Corridor and the Ashgabat Agreement could further strengthen the route. Digital cooperation also offers major opportunities. Uzbekistan's IT services exports reached \$545.3 million in January-June 2026, up 12.8% year-on-year. The country aims to raise IT exports to \$5 billion by 2030, creating 300,000 jobs. Indian companies could expand IT outsourcing, AI, cybersecurity and BPO operations in Uzbeki-

stan, while benefiting from its young workforce and access to Central Asian markets. Pharmaceuticals and healthcare represent another major area of potential. India, a global leader in generic medicines, could support Uzbekistan in moving from pharmaceutical assembly and packaging toward API production, vaccines, diagnostics, medical equipment, clinical research and telemedicine. The partnership could also deepen in agriculture and water-saving technologies, including drip irrigation, digital farming, cold chains and food processing; critical minerals and green energy, through joint processing and manufacturing; and education and skills, through research centres, double-degree programmes and industry-linked training. The four Indian university branches already operating in Uzbekistan—Amity, Sharda, Sambhram and Acharya—provide an existing foundation for expanding educational and technological cooperation. The upcoming visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Uzbekistan is expected to provide further impetus to bilateral ties, with the two sides likely to consolidate existing agreements and identify new areas of cooperation. The emerging partnership could position Uzbekistan as a key Central Asian gateway for Indian investment and technology, while strengthening India's economic and strategic connectivity with Central Asia. -Agencies

MADAYN INITIATIVE

Awareness forum on institutional integrity and public funds organised

MUSCAT: Acting in cooperation with the State Financial and Administrative Audit Authority, the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) is organising the first awareness forum on institutional integrity. The two-day event, which began on Sunday, aims to familiarise participants with legislation and regulations related to the protection of public funds. The forum elaborates on ways to support institutional practices that contribute to upgrading the efficiency of performance, the better use of resources, the avoidance of conflict of interest and integration between the State Financial and Administrative Audit Authority and internal audit units, in addition to the establishment of a work environment based on responsibility, commitment and institutional discipline—in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. The first day of the forum included working papers on the role



of transparency in protecting public funds, job rights and responsibilities and an analysis of the "Law on Protecting Public Funds and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest". More working papers will focus

on integration between the State Financial and Administrative Audit Authority and internal audit units and procedures of filing complaints and reports. Through this forum, Madayn

seeks to raise public awareness about the role of transparency in boosting integrity and enhancing accountability and protecting public funds, in addition to other institutional practices. -ONA

WEAKENING ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

US consumer sentiment falls 6% in August

NEW DELHI: US consumer sentiment fell 6.3 per cent month-on-month to 51.7 in August, extending concerns over inflation and weakening economic prospects, according to the final reading from the University of Michigan's Surveys of Consumers. The index was also 11.2 per cent lower than a year earlier. The decline was broad-based, with sentiment falling across all political groups and particularly sharply among Republicans, Surveys of Consumers Director Joanne Hsu said. Consumers who are generally less equipped to absorb higher living costs, including older people, lower- and middle-income households and those without stock holdings, also recorded stronger declines in sentiment. The Current Economic Conditions Index fell 5.3 per cent from July to 51.9 in August, while the Index of Consumer Expectations declined 7 per cent to 51.5. Compared with August 2025, the two indices were down 15.9 per cent and 7.9 per cent, respectively. Persistent inflation concerns



remained a key drag on consumer confidence. Hsu said consumers continued to worry that inflation would remain elevated for the foreseeable future, with uncertainty over policy and the Iran conflict adding to concerns about gasoline prices in both the short and long term. Despite the broader concerns about prices, consumers' year-ahead inflation expectations eased marginally to 4 per cent in August from 4.2 per cent in July. However,

the latest reading remained well above the 3.4 per cent recorded in February, before the Iran conflict began, and was higher than all readings recorded during 2024. Long-run inflation expectations were unchanged at 3.3 per cent for the third consecutive month. The measure remained above the 2.8 per cent-3.2 per cent range recorded during 2024, pointing to continued concerns about inflation over the longer term. The survey also showed grow-

The decline was broad-based, with sentiment falling across all political groups and particularly sharply among Republicans

ing anxiety about economic conditions beyond household finances. Expectations for business conditions over the next year fell 10 per cent, while the five-year outlook dropped 13 per cent. Hsu said a renewed escalation in trade tensions could worsen these trends, as consumers increasingly perceive risks to the broader economy alongside concerns about their own purchasing power. The August survey covered interviews conducted between July 28 and August 24, providing a final assessment of consumer sentiment amid continued concerns over inflation, energy prices and the economic outlook. -ANI

MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Al Madina Investments, up 9.23%, was the top gainer while, Al Hassan Engineering, down 16.67%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 7,577.85 points, up by 0.60% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.76% at 610.64 points. Al Madina Investments, up 9.23%, was the top gainer while, Al Hassan Engineering, down 16.67%, was the top loser. Shares of OQBI were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 8595 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 46.78 million, with more than 182.18 million shares changing hands. Out of 76 traded securities, 33 advanced, 18 declined, and 25 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for RO 3151K while domestic investors were net buyers for RO 2538K, followed by foreign investors for RO 613K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 13,298.16 points, down -0.64%. Prices of Al Madina Investments, DIDIC, Al Sharqia Investment, Sohar International Bank, Al Ma-

dina Takaful were up by 9.23%, 2.17%, 2.02%, 1.63%, 0.92% respectively. Prices of Ahli Bank, Financial Corporation, Takaful Oman, Oman United Insurance, Al Batinah Development Company were down by 8.37%, 1.92%, 1.59%, 1.56%, 1.33% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 9,584.25 points, up 1.05%. Prices of Salalah Mills, Al Maha Ceramics, Oman Packaging, Construction Materials, Voltamp Energy were up by 8.29%, 3.85%, 2.27%, 1.45%, 1.16% respectively. Prices of Al Hassan Engineering, Gulf International Chemicals were down by 16.67%, 1.41% respectively.

Services Index was up by 0.93% before closing at 3,042.17 points. Prices of National Gas, Oman Telecom, Al Maha Marketing, Al Maha Marketing, Al Suwadi Power were up by 4.59%, 2.19%, 1.67%, 1.67%, 1.09% respectively. Prices of Sharqiyah Desalination, SMN Power Holding, Al Jazeera Services, Phoenix Power, OQ Exploration & Production were down by 0.59%, 0.53%, 0.39%, 0.36%, 0.21% respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	7,581.75	7,531.41	7,577.85	7,532.53	45.32	0.60
FINANCIAL INDEX	13,399.14	13,229.68	13,298.16	13,383.28	-85.12	-0.64
Industry Index	9,584.25	9,484.53	9,584.25	9,484.53	99.73	1.05
Services Index	3,042.26	3,014.13	3,042.17	3,014.13	28.03	0.93
MSX Shariah Index	610.64	606.01	610.64	606.01	4.63	0.76
MSX TR INDEX	11,729.84	11,651.96	11,723.81	11,653.69	70.11	0.60
FINANCIAL TR IDX	16,473.54	16,265.20	16,349.40	16,454.05	-104.65	-0.64
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	12,275.00	12,147.27	12,275.00	12,147.27	127.73	1.05
SERVICES TR IDX	4,076.06	4,038.37	4,075.93	4,038.37	37.56	0.93
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,253.83	1,253.83	1,253.83	1,253.83	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
182,182,019	46,779,020	8,595	38,514,033,864	33	18	25	76

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

SECURITY NAME

VOLUME

TURNOVER

TRADES

OPEN PRICE

HIGH

LOW

CLOSE PR.

PREV. CLOSE

DIFF (RD)

DIFF %

LAST PD

LAST MD

LAST OFFER

P/B VALUE

MARKET CAP

REGULAR MARKET

OM0000010120	ASYAD SHIPPING	7,732,775	1,846,650	618	0.236	0.242	0.236	0.242	0.235	0.007	2.979	0.242	0.243	0.242	0.000	1,260,516,116
OM0000009908	OQBASE INDUSTRIES (SFP)	64,974,620	16,489,004	1790	0.250	0.256	0.250	0.256	0.250	0.006	2.400	0.256	0.255	0.256	0.040	885,629,658
OM0000009026	OMAN TELECOM	2,253,913	3,104,725	115	1.370	1.400	1.370	1.400	1.370	0.030	2.190	1.400	1.385	1.400	0.100	1,050,000,000
OM0000001509	DHOFAH INT'L DEVELOPMENT & INVEST	133,827	37,501	17	0.282	0.282	0.278	0.282	0.276	0.006	2.174	0.282	0.276	0.282	0.100	139,887,832
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	61,067	6,111	9	0.099	0.101	0.099	0.101	0.099	0.002	2.020	0.101	0.100	0.101	0.100	9,090,000
OM0000000072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	23,296,901	5,244,532	1,563	0.223	0.228	0.222	0.227	0.223	0.004	1.794	0.227	0.201	0.227	0.100	983,515,000
OM0000003000	AL MAHA PETROLEUM PRODS MRKTNG	500	610	2	1.200	1.230	1.200	1.230	1.200	0.030	1.667	1.220	0.000	1.220	0.100	84,180,000
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	49,549,893	9,159,111	1,550	0.184	0.187	0.182	0.187	0.184	0.003	1.630	0.187	0.182	0.187	0.100	1,435,413,061
OM0000003961	VOLTAMP ENERGY	36,910	6,402	21	0.172	0.175	0.172	0.174	0.172	0.002	1.163	0.174	0.172	0.174	0.010	174,000,000
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	13,228	2,448	4	0.184	0.187	0.184	0.186	0.184	0.002	1.087	0.186	0.182	0.186	0.100	132,878,579
OM0000003968	OQREDOO	109,318	34,795	24	0.318	0.321	0.318	0.321	0.318	0.003	0.943	0.321	0.319	0.330	0.100	208,953,098
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	48,844	5,340	12	0.109	0.110	0.109	0.110	0.109	0.001	0.917	0.110	0.108	0.110	0.100	19,250,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	107,282	29,534	13	0.275	0.277	0.275	0.277	0.275	0.002	0.727	0.277	0.275	0.279	0.100	65,485,570
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	150,389	21,804	46	0.145	0.146	0.144	0.146	0.145	0.001	0.690	0.146	0.144	0.145	0.100	326,595,143
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGG & INVESTMENT	2,000	302	1	0.151	0.151	0.151	0.151	0.150	0.001	0.667	0.151	0.146	0.151	0.100	22,650,000
OM0000001722	ALBATINAH POWER	48,904	9,030	12	0.184	0.185	0.184	0.185	0.184	0.001	0.543	0.185	0.185	0.189	0.100	124,854,175
OM0000001722	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	6,287	1,178	3	0.185	0.188	0.185	0.188	0.187	0.001	0.535	0.188	0.179	0.188	0.100	57,811,790
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	11,635,237	4,743,742	1,079	0.408	0.411	0.404	0.410	0.408	0.002	0.490	0.410	0.410	0.410	0.100	3,077,622,795
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	496,057	203,035	251	0.409	0.411	0.407	0.411	0.409	0.002	0.489	0.411	0.411	0.411	0.100	316,552,200
OM0000004735	SEMBOOR SALALAH	17,200	4,405	10	0.256	0.257	0.256	0.256	0.255	0.001	0.392	0.256	0.255	0.257	0.100	244,570,419
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	5,000	2,450	1	0.490	0.490	0.490	0.490	0.490	0.000	0.000	0.490	0.484	0.494	0.100	796,713,714
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	20,217	8,417	4	0.400	0.417	0.400	0.401	0.401	0.000	0.000	0.401	0.401	0.417	0.100	450,264,420
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	3,852	496	4	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.000	0.000	0.130	0.121	0.141	0.100	16,635,938
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	519	1,765	1	3.400	3.400	3.400	3.400	3.400	0.000	0.000	3.400	3.396	3.405	0.100	394,800,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	862	512	2	0.594	0.594	0.594	0.594	0.594	0.000	0.000	0.594	0.581	0.653	0.100	196,538,390
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	25,000	22,475	3	0.899	0.899	0.899	0.899	0.899	0.000	0.000	0.899	0.882	0.899	0.100	112,283,266
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	3,405	1,457	1	0.428	0.428	0.428	0.428	0.428	0.000	0.000	0.428	0.428	0.440	0.100	21,546,537
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	2,724	241	2	0.089	0.089	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.100	31,339,202
OM0000002804	ASAFA FOODS	1,200	899	2	0.748	0.750	0.748	0.750	0.750	0.000	0.000	0.750	0.728	0.750	0.100	90,000,000
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	10,000	640	1	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.000	0.000	0.154	0.162	0.164	0.100	12,385,608
OM0000009759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	6,320,007	2,981,112	306	0.470	0.474	0.469	0.469	0.470	0.001	0.213	0.469	0.468	0.469	0.100	3,732,000,000
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	239,754	67,249	20	0.280	0.282	0.280	0.280	0.281	0.001	0.356	0.280	0.280	0.284	0.100	409,528,409
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	13,138	3,342	7	0.283	0.285	0.283	0.284	0.285	0.001	0.392	0.284	0.254	0.254	0.100	10,884,120
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	1,500	294	1	0.189	0.189	0.189	0.189	0.190	0.001	0.526	0.189	0.189	0.000	0.100	37,731,128
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	3,150	498	1	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.158	0.159	0.001	0.629	0.158	0.157	0.169	0.100	25,280,000
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAH	232,170	50,583	9	0.218	0.218	0.217	0.217	0.219	0.002	0.913	0.217	0.212	0.217	0.100	659,636,281
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	51,283	16,157	13	0.315	0.315	0.315	0.315	0.320	0.005	1.563	0.315	0.311	0.315	0.100	33,075,000
Total	167,608,853	44,118,832	7,520													

Parallel Market

OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	194,742	13,663	36	0.069	0.071	0.068	0.071	0.065	0.006	9.231	0.071	0.065	0.071	0.100	3,060,100
OM0000001889	SALALAH MILLS	23,330	13,377	7	0.560	0.575	0.560	0.575	0.531	0.044	8.286	0.575	0.550	0.580	0.100	35,916,262
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	1,276,605	144,810	119	0.110	0.116	0.110	0.114	0.109	0.005	4.587	0.114	0.114	0.114	0.100	9,990,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	25,000	6,725	14	0.260	0.270	0.260	0.270	0.260	0.010	3.946	0.270	0.251	0.296	0.100	14,800,000
OM0000001608	OMAN PACKAGING	1,000	225	1	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.000	0.000	0.225	0.225	0.242	0.100	7,298,069
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	4,246	294	2	0.069	0.070	0.069	0.070	0.069	0.001	1.449	0.070	0.064	0.070	0.100	4,375,000
OM00000010823	OMAN GATEWAY FUND	340	351	1	1.032	1.032	1.032	1.032	1.032	0.000	0.880	1.032	1.028	1.032	0.000	28,302,437
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	700	409	3	0.585	0.585	0.580	0.585	0.580	0.005	0.862	0.585	0.585	0.638	0.100	101,581,594
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	4,629	643	2	0.139	0.139	0.139	0.139	0.138	0.001	0.725	0.139	0.130	0.139	0.100	13,761,000
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	91,923	12,767	17	0.140	0.140	0.137	0.139	0.138	0.001	0.725	0.139	0.136	0.150	0.100	30,580,000
OM0000011151	OMIFCO	9,770,299	1,987,628	600	0.203	0.205	0.203	0.205	0.204	0.001	0.490	0.205	0.201	0.205	0.000	1,371,321,875
OM0000001426	OMAN REFRESHMENT	4,000	4,400	5	1.100	1.100	1.100	1.100	1.100	0.000	0.000	1.100	1.000	1.100	0.100	55,000,000
OM0000002341	OMAN CHLORINE	117,080	18,277	7	0.158	0.160	0.156	0.156	0.156	0.000	0.000	0.156	0.158	0.156	0.100	11,155,379
OM0000003221	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	1,675,559	248,021	81	0.148	0.149	0.147	0.148	0.148	0.000	0.000	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.100	30,041,994
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	530,000	137,270	61	0.259	0.259	0.259	0.259	0.259	0.000	0.000	0.259	0.259	0.259	0.100	518,702,531
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	1,081	91	1	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.088	0.000	0.000	0.088	0.080	0.090	0.100	13,688,435
OM0000006447	OMAN REIT FUND	76,092	8,060	17	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.106	0.001	0.906	0.107	0.106	0.107	0.100	8,222,313
OM0000009868	THE PEARL REIF	5,100	837	3	0.183	0.184	0.183	0.184	0.184	0.000	0.000	0.184	0.182	0.184	0.100	108,824,386
OM0000005959	JABAL REIF	31,300	3,349	4	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.000	0.000	0.107	0.101	0.107	0.100	18,818,000
OM0000004669	SHARQIYAH DESALINATION	10,000	1,700	5	0.170	0.170	0.170	0.170	0.171	0.001	0.585	0.170	0.170	0.173	0.100	16,636,367
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	8,000	560	3	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.071</							

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‘Confront your true enemy,’ says Iran’s Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei

In a series of X posts on Sunday, Khamenei said the “enemy of Islam” seeks to exploit racial, cultural, social, economic, political and geographical differences to sow division among Muslims and weaken their strength



Highlighting the duties of a service-oriented administration, the supreme leader, in a post on X, framed economic resilience not merely as a policy choice, but as a mandatory national framework to counter external financial pressure and achieve long-term stability

TEHRAN: Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Sayyid Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei has called for unity among Muslims and urged Islamic countries to identify and confront what he called their “true enemy”.

In a series of X posts on Sunday, Khamenei said the “enemy of Islam” seeks to exploit racial, cultural, social, economic, political and geographical differences to sow division among Muslims and weaken their strength.

“The enemy of Islam strives to turn racial, cultural, social, economic, political, and geographical

difference into a pretext for sowing division among the Muslims to see the erosion of their strength, as he waits for an opportune moment to impose his dominance over them,” Khamenei said.

“Anyone in any position who does an action that leads to a division among the Muslims and creates strife within the Islamic community - whether this is done knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or unintentionally - has advanced the agenda of the enemies of Islam,” he said.

“And in this day and age, how

could anyone attribute this act to ignorance or negligence, when the world’s tyrants, with the criminal US at their forefront, have stripped the deceptive, flimsy masks from the hideous face of their colonial objectives & arrogant, domineering plots?” Khamenei said.

Referring to Palestine, he questioned whether the situation would have been the same had Muslims been united.

“If the Muslims had been a single, united hand, which is clenching its fist with firm resolve, would the nation of Palestine have been

left so defenceless in this way and subjected to the oppression and crimes of the occupiers?” he said.

Khamenei also called for unity among nations and governments on the shores of the Arabian Gulf.

“If the nations and governments on the shores of the Arabian Gulf had firmly established their unity under the banner of Islam, would corrupt, unprincipled scoundrels have dared to covet their lands and wealth from thousands of kilometres away?” he said.

He urged the rulers of Islamic countries, particularly those in

West Asia and along the Arabian Gulf, to identify their “true enemy”.

“My repeated, emphatic recommendation to the rulers of Islamic countries, particularly those in the West Asian region and along the Arabian Gulf, is that you must know who your true enemy is, understand their plots, and confront them,” he said. “The solution to the Islamic Ummah’s problems lies in maintaining unity, friendship, and cooperation in the pursuit of goodness and virtue,” Khamenei said.

He also identified the United States and Israel as opponents of

Muslim unity and friendship. “The criminal rulers of the US and the illegitimate Zionist regime are the sworn enemies of this unity [among Muslims] and friendship,” he said.

“The criminal rulers of the US and the illegitimate Zionist regime hold an enmity toward the entire Islamic Ummah. In this regard, not even the rulers of these countries - many of whom are considered to be their allies - are exempt,” Khamenei said.

“And the blatant disrespect and derogatory remarks of the leaders of Global Arrogance directed toward certain leaders of Islamic countries are still fresh in your memory and ours,” he said.

Earlier on Saturday, in an address outlining state economic strategy, Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei said boosting domestic production and reducing reliance on the US dollar in key transactions are essential to building a self-reliant “Resistance Economy”.

Highlighting the duties of a service-oriented administration, the supreme leader, in a post on X, framed economic resilience not merely as a policy choice, but as a mandatory national framework to counter external financial pressure and achieve long-term stability.

His remarks came as, on August 24, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced the launch of “Operation Economic Outcast”, saying the campaign aims to sever Iran’s financial connections around the world and cut off revenue sources supporting the Iranian regime. — ANI

FINAL REFERENDUM RESULTS



Iceland voters reject EU accession talks

REYKJAVÍK: Icelandic voters have rejected a plan to restart accession talks with the European Union, final referendum results showed on Sunday.

The ‘No’ camp secured victory with 52.8% of the votes, while the ‘Yes’ camp garnered 47.2% support, the official count published by public broadcaster RUV showed.

The capital, Reykjavik, was the only area in the island nation of 400,000 people to support the referendum.

Some 270,000 Icelanders were eligible to vote. There was no information yet about voter turnout.

Neck-and-neck vote after long debate

Iceland has spent the better part of two decades wrestling with the question of becoming a member of the bloc.

The Nordic country originally applied to join the EU in 2009

following the global financial crisis, which hit the country particularly hard.

Accession talks were suspended in 2013 after a euroskeptic government took office.

Iceland’s current left-leaning government, elected in 2024, originally vowed to hold a referendum next year but brought the vote forward because of rising geopolitical tension over Russia’s war in Ukraine and Greenland.

The decision puts to bed concerns among many voters that joining the bloc would undermine Iceland’s sovereignty, with fishing rights a major concern.

The fisheries sector has been fiercely opposed to joining the bloc, with 90% of industry players against the idea.

The result is a disappointment to Brussels, which had appeared willing to compromise on thorny issues, including fishing and farming, to facilitate Iceland’s accession.

HIGHEST AWARD

Indian PM receives Uzbekistan’s top State honour ‘Oliy Darajali Dustlik’

TASHKENT: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday received Uzbekistan’s highest state honour, the Order of “Oliy Darajali Dustlik” from its President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and thanked his “brother” for the honour, saying India and Uzbekistan will work together for the welfare of the Global South and humanity.

Addressing President Mirziyoyev as his friend and expressing gratitude for the warmth extended to him and his delegation during his two-day State visit, PM Modi said the visit would remain memorable for him.

“My friend, the father of the economic revolution in Uzbekistan, who has served as a role model across this entire region in scaling new heights of development- this two-day visit of mine will always be remembered,” PM Modi said.

“The warmth with which my delegation and I were welcomed made us feel right at home, and for this, I express my deepest heartfelt gratitude to the President,” he added.

Reflecting on the honour, PM Modi said the words used by President Mirziyoyev captured India’s heritage, its spirit of universal brotherhood and the efforts of its 1.4 billion people.

“The words you just used for me and the generosity you expressed- I believe you have captured in



very few words India’s thousands-of-years-old heritage, the identity of an India that lives by the spirit of universal brotherhood (Vishwa Bandhutva), and the enterprise of 1.4 billion fellow citizens,” he said.

“I may only be a medium for all your words, but the true recipients are my thousands-of-years-old heritage, and the perseverance and hard work of 1.4 billion countrymen- they are the true deserving bearers of this honour,” PM Modi added.

Calling the award a moment of “immense pride”, the Prime Min-

ister highlighted the significance of the word “Dostlik”, meaning friendship, and said it reflected the core sentiment of India-Uzbekistan relations.

“Being conferred with Uzbekistan’s highest award is a moment of immense pride for me. And you used a word with which the people of India are also very familiar- ‘Dostlik,’” he said.

“Dostlik” means friendship. This single word exquisitely captures and expresses the sentiment that lies at the very core of relations between India and

Uzbekistan,” PM Modi said.

PM Modi said the honour belonged not only to him but to the people of India, and dedicated it to the longstanding friendship and shared heritage between the two countries.

“This honour does not belong to just one individual; it belongs to 1.4 billion people of India. On behalf of all the people of India, I express my sincere gratitude to the people of Uzbekistan, its government, and my friend, the Honourable President,” he said.

“I accept this highest honour with utmost humility and humbly dedicate it to the centuries-old friendship and our shared heritage between both nations,” he added.

The Prime Minister also credited President Mirziyoyev’s leadership and friendship with India for the steady strengthening of bilateral ties, noting that the relationship has now been elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

“Excellency, under your visionary leadership and your friendship toward India, our relations have grown consistently stronger. They continue to successfully scale new heights at every step. As a result, our ties have today been elevated to the new level of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership,” PM Modi said.

— ANI

MANDATORY SERVICE

South Korea leans toward military conscription for women

SEOUL: Nearly 60% of South Koreans are now in favour of young women serving mandatory military service alongside their male counterparts, according to a recent survey, representing a significant shift in the long-held taboo against women being obliged to defend the nation.

Thousands of women already serve in the South Korean armed forces on a voluntary basis, but the debate over mandatory service has always been delicate.

Now, for a series of reasons that include a falling birth rate and shrinking number of recruits as well as an insistence that social equality means that women should also serve, the issue has re-emerged ahead of a reform of the national defense plan scheduled to

be released this autumn.

Yet, there are still those who insist women should be kept away from the front lines and, instead, that South Korea should invest more in drones and other advanced technologies. “South Korea’s male-centered conscription system has long been closely connected to traditional gender roles,” said Hyobin Lee, a professor at Sogang University in Seoul.

“Men were generally expected to protect the country and the family and to fight in wartime, while women were expected to take primary responsibility for childbirth, childcare and the household,” she told DW.

A second factor is the intensifying debate about gender equality, a debate in large part driven



by young men, she said.

Warfare moves beyond the physical

“South Korean men generally perform their military service in their early 20s, which interrupts their education, employment or early

career development,” Lee said.

“At the same time, gender equality has become an increasingly important social value, and women’s opportunities in education and employment have expanded.”

“As a result, some younger men ask a very simple question: If soci-

ety expects equality in rights and opportunities, why does one of the country’s most significant civic obligations — military service — still fall only on men?”

Another contributing factor is the change in the nature of the military itself, with a shift away from physically demanding combat roles that were perceived as being more suited to men and the emergence of a national defense more heavily reliant on technology.

This includes unmanned systems, cyber capabilities, information and communications technology and others that do not require physical strength.

What does the study show?

According to the study, carried out by the Reform Institute, the policy

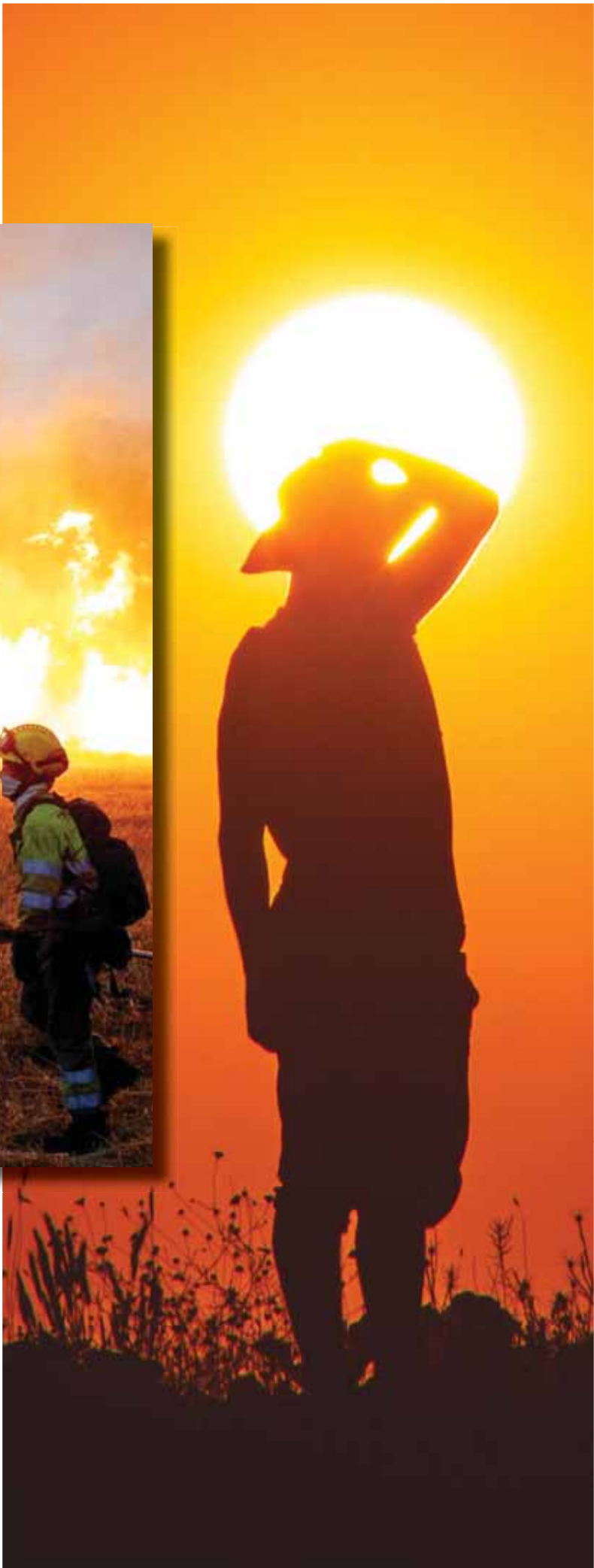
research arm of the conservative-leaning Reform Party, and published on August 20, almost 60% of the respondents were in favor of changing the law to require women to undergo national service. Just 34% were opposed to the idea.

Nearly 65% of men were in favor — a figure that rose to 71.7% among men in their 20s and 30s — with 54.5% of women across all age groups similarly supportive.

At present, all able-bodied men are required to complete a minimum of 18 months and up to 21 months of service and can be called back into service in the event of a national emergency, such as war breaking out on the tense Korean Peninsula. — DW



WAS THE HEAT OF THIS SUMMER REALLY ‘NORMAL?’



Some political messaging denies the role of human-caused climate change in this summer’s extreme heat. The science tells a different story

As a summer of European extreme heat draws to a close, politicians are looking back at the toll. Germany recorded around 14,000 heat-related deaths, almost two-thirds in one scorching week of June alone. A Dutch bank estimated summer heat will cost the EU €180 billion (\$209 billion) in lost GDP. And in June, European farmers lost approximately 9 million tonnes in grain crops.

Climate change, long a politically charged topic, has become a daily reality for people around the world. These effects and more are making it increasingly difficult to challenge what people are seeing with their own eyes.

Yet that hasn’t stopped the global populist right from trying. Richard Tice, deputy leader of the UK’s far-right Reform Party said “climate change has always happened, it always will,” adding that it was arrogant to try to stop it. He encouraged the British public to enjoy the heat.

In the United States, Harriet Hageman, a Republican politician and potentially Wyoming’s next senator, told far-right channel Real America’s Voice that Europe’s heatwave was business as usual. “It’s called summer. Some years are hotter than others and some years are colder than others,” she said. “But that’s just the cyclical nature of weather.”

And Tino Chrupalla, co-leader of Germany’s far-right AfD party told a journalist in recent days that it’s been a “completely normal summer.” He dismissed climate change as “hype.”

But claims like these don’t stand up to scientific scrutiny.

As NASA states plainly: “Scientific evidence continues to show that human activities (primarily the human burning of fossil fuels) have warmed Earth’s surface and its ocean basins, which in turn have continued to impact Earth’s climate.”

This was not ‘a completely normal summer’

This summer has been historically hot. Independent climate monitoring bodies, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in the US, the Copernicus Climate Change Service in the European Union and the Japan Meteorological Agency, all called last month either the joint-warmest or joint-second warmest month on record.

The conditions have led energy plants to halt production, outdated concrete motorways blowing up, and older buildings overheating during the day and barely cooling down at night – threatening inhabitants with exposure to heat stress.

The extreme heat was felt almost everywhere on the globe. According to NOAA’s data, it was the warmest July ever for North America, Africa and Asia.

The continental United States just surpass edits warmest July records. They were previously set in 1936, during the infamous Dust Bowl that scorched the US Great Plains with extreme temperatures, and in 2012, when North America suffered an extreme heatwave.

And the daily average sea surface temperature hits highest level since records began in 1979 – reaching 21.1 degrees Celsius (70 degrees Fahrenheit) this month. That’s a result of both human-driven warming as well as El Nino, a climate cycle that weakens trade winds and warms tropical Pacific surface temperatures.

How climate change supercharged this summer’s fires

In Spain, the far-right Vox party said fires – which burned more than 254,000 hectares of land across the country this season – were not connected to climate change.

Yet experts agree rising global temperatures played a major role in the intense wildfire season that also scorched large parts of France and Canada. That’s because extreme heat creates ideal conditions for wildfires to start and spread.

A field of climate research called attribution science explores the extent to which climate change exacerbates extreme weather events like this summer’s wildfires. Using models, researchers compare the likelihood and intensity of an event in today’s climate with a simulated world in which there is no human-caused warming.

Analyses done this summer show that hotter global temperatures created conditions that made the wildfires in Spain 20 times more likely to happen, and twice as probable in France.

This is due to a phenomenon known as weather whiplash, where ecosystems swing dramatically between wet and dry conditions.

When the planet warms, the atmosphere holds more moisture, rainfall is intensified, and plants grow. Then, in summer, that same warm atmosphere draws water from soil and plants, worsening drought and drying out vegetation, turning it into the perfect fuel for fires.

“We know – and this is mathematically proven – that the probability of having fire weather that can sustain and create this kind of event has been altered by climate change,” Francesca Di Giuseppe, a fire forecast project coordinator at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, told DW about this summer’s fires in Spain and France.

Climate change’s ripple effects

Overall, this summer has left its mark in numerous ways that are impossible to ignore.

Bodies of water across Europe are drying out under the intense heat. Parts of the Rhine, Danube and Po rivers have fallen to historically low levels, making it impossible for ships to pass through in some spots.

This has a number of knock-on effects. Drinking water costs could rise dramatically as much of Germany’s clean water first passes through reed-filled riverbanks that are crucial for filtration.

Supply chains are also be disrupted, as vessels can’t carry as much cargo when water levels are lower, increasing prices across the economy in products like steel or petroleum.

In America, drought conditions are wreaking havoc on crops and livestock. In June, the US Department of Agriculture said the 10-month stretch from August 2025 to May 2026 was the nation’s driest period since 1976-77.

Now, 59% of the country’s sorghum is being grown in areas experiencing drought. More than half the nation’s cattle production and almost two-thirds of spring wheat production is happening under water scarcity.

Such conditions can put direct strain on the country’s food supply, increase prices and threaten rural livelihoods.

By any measurement – thermometers, drought maps, or death tolls – and in much of the world, this summer has been historically extreme. -bw

SPORTS

Newcastle condemn Spurs to second successive defeat

Roberto De Zerbi's side conceded twice in the second half in north London to extend its dismal start to the Premier League season



LONDON: Big-spending Tottenham crashed to a second successive Premier League defeat as Anthony Elanga and Yoane Wissa inspired Newcastle's 2-0 win on Saturday. Roberto De Zerbi's side conceded twice in the second half in north London to extend its dismal start to the season. Elanga put Newcastle ahead before Wissa killed off lacklustre Tottenham as their frustrated fans streamed to the exits long before the final whistle. Newcastle manager Matthias Jaissle was able to celebrate his maiden Premier League win after a 2-2 draw against Liverpool in the German's first game following his surprise appointment as Eddie Howe's replacement. It was another chastening result

for De Zerbi, whose expensively assembled team suffered an embarrassing 3-0 defeat at Brentford in the opening game of the season last weekend. Tottenham have spent over £300 million (\$406 million) in the close season as De Zerbi overhauled a squad that narrowly avoided relegation on the final day of last term. But for the first time since 1992-93, Tottenham have failed to score in its first two games of a league season. Omar Marmoush, the latest new recruit, was handed his Tottenham debut after joining on loan from Manchester City this week. However, the Egypt forward, who struggled to make an impact with City, was unable to spark Tot-

tenham, who was without Savio, another recent signing from City, due to a muscular injury. A 5-1 rout of Championship side Charlton in the League Cup second round in midweek proved a false dawn for woeful Tottenham. **Tonali taunts** Elanga nearly gave Newcastle the perfect start with a first-minute lob that Tottenham scrambled to safety just before it crossed the line. That was the spark for a period of Tottenham dominance. Mathys Tel's curler from the edge of the area was clawed away by Newcastle keeper Lukas Hrnicek. Pedro Porro and Marmoush both volleyed narrowly wide in quick succession after Newcastle

failed to deal with testing corners. Hrnicek kept out Andrew Robertson's drive and Jan Paul van Hecke's header. Tottenham midfielder Sandro Tonali was taunted by Newcastle fans in his first appearance against his former club since his £100 million move in July. The Italian squandered a golden opportunity to silence the Newcastle jibes when he scuffed wide from close range on the stroke of half-time. De Zerbi's side appealed in vain for a penalty after Malick Thiaw clipped Marmoush in the opening moments of the second half. Tottenham paid for their profi-gacy in the 62nd minute. After bagging his first league

goal for Newcastle against Liverpool on Sunday, Elanga was back on the scoresheet, controlling Amar Dedic's cushioned header with a superb turn before unloading a lethal finish from just inside the area. Hrnicek tipped Porro's strike over the bar as Tottenham tried to vain to mount a response. Wissa wrapped up the points for Newcastle in the 72nd minute, finishing with a clever over-the-shoulder flick from close range after Nick Woltemade headed a corner towards the DR Congo forward. Providing a fitting coda to a dispiriting afternoon for Tottenham, Tonali was hauled off with the jeers of the Toon Army ringing in his ears in the closing stages.

Hull beat Coventry Coventry and Hull had played two goalless draws in the second-tier Championship last season, but this time Hull took all three points after Liam Millar scored the winner in the 82nd minute. The goal came against the run of play from a Coventry corner, which was cleared before Mohamed Bel-loumi released Millar from inside his own half and the Canadian had only the goalkeeper to beat to silence the home crowd. Another weekend, another painful stoppage-time concession by Bournemouth. James Tarkowski's goal in the first minute of added on time secured Everton a 1-1 draw and came a week after Bournemouth lost 2-1 at Manchester City. - Agencies

EUROPEAN LEAGUES

Atletico win without Álvarez; Elversberg upset Leverkusen

MILAN: Atletico Madrid put their off-the-field problems behind it to win 3-1 at Sevilla in their Spanish La Liga game on Saturday. In Germany, Elversberg got their first ever season in the Bundesliga off to a great start with a 3-2 win over 2024 champion Bayer Leverkusen. Elsewhere, there were further losses for Fiorentina in Italian Serie A. In Spain, Julián Álvarez was not even on the bench as Atletico Madrid strolled to victory in Sevilla. In the forward's absence, Álex Baena scored twice and Ademola Lookman the other as Atletico raced into a 3-0 halftime lead.



Dream Bundesliga start American forward Cole Campbell scored in his first league match for Elversberg, which came close to giving up a three-goal lead. Elversberg, a town with 13,000 inhabitants in the southwest German state of Saarland, was hosting their first Bundesliga match and got off to a great start with goals from Lukas Petkov and Campbell, with less than nine minutes on the clock. David Mokwa extended the hosts' advantage right at the start of the second half but Patrik Schick cut the deficit with a backheeled goal in the 77th and Christian Kofane scored at the start of stoppage time to set up a nervy finale. Elversberg, who were playing at fourth-tier level until 2022, finished runner-up in Germany's second division last season to earn

promotion to the Bundesliga for the first time. Leverkusen won the league and cup double while remaining unbeaten in 2024. Elsewhere, last year's runner-up Borussia Dortmund kicked off their season with a 2-0 win over Hamburg. Dortmund forward Samuele Inácio was sent off in the 77th minute for a dangerous tackle, just three minutes after coming off the bench.

100th anniversary celebrations ruined Fiorentina's centenary was spoiled by another hefty loss as they were humiliated 3-0 at home by Frosinone. Juventus' subs were decisive in a 2-0 win over Parma to join AC Milan with a perfect six points. Nico Gonzalez and Teun Koopmeiners both scored a few minutes after coming off the bench. - Agencies

MLS

Messi scores four as Inter Miami trounce Montreal

MIAMI: Lionel Messi scored four goals as Inter Miami thrashed Montreal 7-1 in Major League Soccer (MLS) on Saturday to end their run of bad form. Miami had won just once in seven games across all competitions since Messi came back from the World Cup earlier this month, but returned to winning ways thanks to a vintage performance from the 39-year-old. Argentina captain Messi put Miami 2-1 up with a deflected free-kick prior to half-time, before taking control of the match in the second half. The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner added his second following a weaving run, secured his hat-trick with a dink over the on-rushing goalkeeper, before adding a fourth in added time with another trademark free-kick. Messi also assisted Luis Suarez's strike, with Miami's scoring rounded off by goals from Casemiro and Alexander Shaw. It was the first time Messi had scored four goals in an MLS match and the ninth occasion he has hit four or more in a game during his illustrious career. He now has 18 MLS goals for the season, taking him past FC Dallas' Petar Musa as the league's top scorer. Defending MLS Cup champions Miami remain second in the Eastern Conference, 10 points behind Nashville FC. Messi's performance left Inter



Miami interim coach Guillermo Hoyos struggling for a description. "There are no words to describe such footballing beauty," Hoyos said. "So much is going on that words simply fall short. "He is constantly looking for that goal, that play, that pass; I

don't think he's an ordinary footballer. Analysing him, both as a player and as a person, goes so deep that you run out of words." Earlier this month, Messi said he was unsure how much longer he would continue playing football following the death of his father Jorge. - Agencies

PREMIER LEAGUE

Chelsea sign Argentina's World Cup winner Martínez from Villa

LONDON: Chelsea made official the signing of Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez on Sunday. The English club said the 33-year-old goalkeeper, who won the World Cup in 2022, has signed a three-year deal, joining from Aston Villa. "Coming to Chelsea, for me and my family, was an easy decision to make and I'm just over the moon. I can't wait to get started," Martínez said. "I want to be successful here. I'm someone who wants to win at everything I do and I want to bring that here to this football club because it's a football club that wins titles, so I think it's a good match." Martínez is set to take over the starting goalkeeping spot in Xabi Alonso's squad. Villa earlier this month signed US-born Japan goalkeeper Zion



Suzuki from Parma, opening the doors for Martínez's departure. Martínez has been Argentina's regular starter since 2021, earning 67 caps. He helped his country win the Copa America in 2021 and 2024, and reach this year's World Cup final. Martínez won the Yashin Trophy, at the 2023 and 2024 Ballon d'Or ceremonies. - Agencies

INFANTINO UNDER PRESSURE

Dutch football federation to withdraw support for FIFA chief

AMSTERDAM: The Dutch football federation became the latest nation to call for new leadership at FIFA on Sunday. In a statement, the federation said it "no longer has confidence" in FIFA President Gianni Infantino. It offered to host an international summit to discuss the future of FIFA. "We believe FIFA needs new leadership from 2027 onwards. But a new president alone is not enough. The way FIFA is governed must change as well," it said. "We see too much power concentrated around the FIFA president and insufficient separation between the president and the FIFA administration," the federation said. "The process surrounding the now-withdrawn FIFA Forward Enterprise proposal was a turning point for us. Withdrawing the proposal was necessary, but it does



not restore the trust that has been lost." The federation said it shared "this position and our vision for the future of FIFA" in a letter to UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin. UEFA, the European football confederation, is spearheading the backlash against Infantino

over his failed World Cup sell-off plan that created a deep rift in the sport. Many of its other member federations have withdrawn their support for the FIFA leader, who is up for re-election in March 2027. Some have called for his resignation.

The Dutch federation said there is a need for a "new FIFA," not just a new president. "For us, this discussion must be about more than Gianni Infantino. The key question is: what kind of FIFA does football need?" the federation said. "Our ambition is clear: a strong and credible FIFA that belongs to football, serves its members and develops the game around the world." It said "this should not be a European plan for the rest of the world. We want to develop this new direction together with FIFA's 211 Member Associations and the confederations from all parts of the world." The Dutch federation said it sees three priorities: improved governance with a better balance of power, putting soccer's social power at the heart of FIFA and investing more in football worldwide. - Agencies

Tearful Roger Federer inducted into International Tennis Hall of Fame

The Swiss great won 20 Grand Slam singles titles

NEWPORT: Swiss great Roger Federer has been inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame, describing the moment as “one of the greatest honours” of his life.

The 20-time Grand Slam singles champion, who retired in 2022, was tearful at the ceremony in Newport, Rhode Island, as he reflected on his glittering career in front of tennis greats including Billie Jean King and John McEnroe.

After make his debut in 1998 at the age of 16, Federer won a men’s-record eight Wimbledon titles, six Australian Open crowns, five US Opens and one French Open.

“This is one of the greatest honours of my life,” Federer, 45, said.

“They call this the Hall of Fame, but fame was never the goal. My goal was to spend my life doing something I love, with people who love it as much as I do.”

Only Spain’s Rafael Nadal, with 22 majors, and Serbia’s Novak Djokovic, with 24, have won more men’s Grand Slam singles titles than Federer.

He won his first Grand Slam title



at Wimbledon in 2003 and spent 310 weeks as the world No.1- a record until he was surpassed by Djokovic.

Alongside his 20 Grand Slams, Federer won Olympic doubles gold for Switzerland with Stan Wawrinka at Beijing 2008 and singles silver at London 2012.

He was also part of the Swiss team that won the Davis Cup for the first time in 2014.

Federer, who started out as a 13-year-old ball boy at an ATP

tournament in Basle, reflected on the lesser-known statistics from his career during his speech.

“I’m talking about the numbers that really paint a picture. Between 1998 and when I first went on the ATP Tour, and when I retired in 2022, I wore more than 5,000 headbands,” said Federer.

“That’s more than [Bjorn] Borg and [John] McEnroe combined.

“And if you think that’s impressive, I wore probably over 7,000 pairs of socks. That’s probably

twice as many as most of my opponents, because I doubled them up.

“But really, there’s no way to measure what it means to be here. It’s hard to put it into words.”

Federer wiped away tears as he thanked his wife Mirka, tennis idol Stefan Edberg and “every ball kid who ever stood through” his matches.

Federer also said he was “incredibly lucky” to have played with different generations of tennis players, from Andre Agassi and



Lleyton Hewitt to Andy Roddick, Nadal and Djokovic.

“I need tissues and sunglasses and everything to protect me right now. This is such a mess,” Federer joked.

“As you can tell, I’m still writing my love letter to tennis. My time as a player is done, but tennis will always stand at the intersection of everything I care most about: my family, our friendships, the past 40 years, the future we’re building. “Tennis for me is responsible for it all.”

The Swiss added that his induction was not only an opportunity to look back on his career, but also ahead to the future of the game.

“We all leave the court eventually, but the sport keeps evolving,” said Federer. “And as the pace of professional tennis speeds up,

as the sport becomes even more global, I so hope it will keep some of that amateur spirit. Keep the camaraderie among the players.

“I hope the players will stay young at heart and stay true to their authentic selves, and always remember, never stop asking questions or taking risks.

“Do things with the game, we’ve never seen before. Keep pushing this sport we love to the next level and keep getting better, better, and better.”

Apart from Federer, broadcaster Mary Carillo was also inducted into the Hall of Fame. Family, friends, fans, and 33 Hall of Famers joined in on the celebrations honouring the two, as they became the 271st and 272nd legends enshrined for cementing their legacy and impact on tennis. - Agencies

Tadej Pogacar to have surgery after crash



MADRID: Tadej Pogacar will have surgery after suffering a fractured collarbone in the crash which forced him to abandon the Vuelta a Espana, his UAE team said on Saturday.

The five-time Tour de France champion hit the tarmac with 31km remaining in the eighth stage, ending his bid to complete a career clean sweep of the three Grand Tours.

Pogacar had been leading by a massive three minutes and 50 seconds a week into the race and was the overwhelming favourite for victory.

Spaniard Enric Mas inherited the overall leader’s red

jersey, 71 seconds clear of Felix Gall of Austria.

“He is stable, and following a thorough medical assessment at hospital, Tadej has been diagnosed with a concussion, displaced left clavicle fracture, a stable C7 cervical fracture, and multiple abrasions,” UAE’s team medical director Adrian Rotunno said in a statement.

“Fortunately, no other major injuries and no neurological fallout. He will require clavicle surgery which will be delayed due to concussion precautions. “Tadej remains under the care of our medical team and we’ll provide further updates following the surgery.” - Agencies

US OPEN

Fighting to stay No 1: Sabalenka

NEW YORK: All was bright in Aryna Sabalenka’s world when she completed a rare ‘Sunshine Double’ earlier this season.

Becoming only the fifth woman to win the Indian Wells and Miami titles back-to-back, Sabalenka emphasised her position as the dominant player on the WTA Tour and created a 3,000-point lead at the top of the world rankings.

But a difficult period quickly followed - seemingly out of nowhere - leaving the 28-year-old Belarusian clinging on to her position going into the US Open.

Two-time defending champion Sabalenka returns to New York with a 17-7 win-loss record since the Miami triumph, including a chastening French Open quarter-final exit and a disheartening defeat in the Wimbledon fourth round. It is a record far below the four-time major winner’s lofty standards.

With 2,000 points to defend at Flushing Meadows and Kazakhstan’s Elena Rybakina now trailing by only 434, Sabalenka must win again to extend her 99-week run as the world No.1.

Asked if she felt confident she can rediscover her mojo on the hard courts on which she has thrived, Sabalenka said: “Absolutely. These tough lessons are definitely going to make me way, way stronger and working even harder.”

Sabalenka’s four Grand Slam singles titles - two Australian Open and two US Open triumphs, all on



hard courts - are more than most players can dream of.

However, she has also lost four major finals and six semi-finals, despite a consistency on the biggest stages that is unrivalled among her peers. The concern in recent months has been Sabalenka’s mental focus disappearing in less pressurised situations.

This was most recently apparent in her Cincinnati Open fourth-round defeat by 20-year-old Czech opponent Sara Bejlek. Sabalenka led 5-1 in a first-set tie-break and 4-1 in the second set, but continued to lack composure in the rallies as Bejlek rallied to win 7-6 (9-7) 6-4.

At her previous tournament in Toronto, she lost to Russian world No.19 Ekaterina Alexandrova in

the last 16 as her serve crumbled.

During the clay-court swing, Sabalenka capitulated after winning the first set against Hailey Baptiste in Madrid, Sorana Cirstea in Rome and, most notably, Diana Shnaider at Roland Garros.

“I work on my mental side of the game. I’ve been trying to reset my mind and to come back stronger,” a bullish Sabalenka said in New York. “It’s only a matter of time for me to come back.”

Sabalenka is the top women’s seed at the US Open, followed by Elena Rybakina, Jessica Pegula, Coco Gauff, Mirra Andreeva, Linda Noskova, Karolina Muchova and Iga Swiatek

‘Sincaraz’ injury issues?

For the third Grand Slam in a row,

the rivalry between Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz has been put on hold. The pair swept all eight major titles between them in 2024 and 2025, with Alcaraz extending that run with victory at this year’s Australian Open.

But the pair have not competed at the same Grand Slam since.

Alcaraz missed the French Open and Wimbledon with a wrist injury, and makes his comeback from a four-month absence in New York.

A day after the 23-year-old Spaniard announced his plan to return, Sinner revealed he had been ruled out with a knee issue.

“It’s kind of weird. We are not going see each other for, like, six months now, seven months,” said Alcaraz.

Sinner’s absence and the uncertainty around Alcaraz’s fitness will galvanise the rest of the chasing pack - particularly 39-year-old Novak Djokovic.

Djokovic is a four-time US Open champion and reached the semi-finals last year, where he lost in straight sets to Alcaraz

The Serb great, a 24-time Grand Slam champion, insists he has not put an “expiry date” on his extraordinary career. He continues to put himself in the mix for titles as he looks to finally land a standalone record 25th victory which would move him clear of Australia’s Margaret Court on the all-time list. He has reached at least the semis in six of the past seven Slams, but has not gone all the way since triumphing at the 2023 US Open. - Agencies

TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP

Hovland emerges as sole leader as Gerard, Scheffler trail

ATLANTA: Viktor Hovland will head into the final round of the PGA Tour’s \$40m Tour Championship in Atlanta on Sunday with a one-stroke lead.

The season-ending event will also crown the FedEx Cup champion, which was won by Hovland in 2023.

The Norwegian, who came into the third round tied for the lead on 10 under with American Ryan Gerard, birdied the 17th and 18th holes to post a five-under-par 65 to improve to 15 under.

Gerard also birdied the final hole to finish one back on 14 under after a round of 66.

“I mean, 65 out there, especially with that finish, super happy with that,” said Hovland.

“It’s been just one of those weeks where I’ve been able to put it together every single day for three days.

“It’s pretty bunched up around 11 and 12-under-par. You’ve seen some 62s out there, you can take it low. So it was nice to get a little

bit of distance, especially from the group of guys that are around that number.”

Lurking in the chasing pack are the world’s top two players, with No.1 Scottie Scheffler, the 2024 champion, producing a serene bogey-free round of 66 to finish three adrift on 12 under.

Back-to-back Masters champion Rory McIlroy - a record three-time FedEx Cup winner in 2016, 2019 and 2022 - catapulted himself into contention with a hugely impressive 63 to sit five shots off the lead.

The 37-year-old found form with his putter as he holed nine birdies, including three in a row on 15, 16 and 17 to post the joint lowest round of the day.

“I just left myself in better spots on the greens,” said McIlroy.

“I gave myself easier putts, putts that didn’t break two ways. When I got it rolling there on the back nine, every putt was like a cup right or a cup left.

“It’s the last round of the PGA

Tour season. I’ve still got a lot of golf left this year, but it will be nice to go out and give it a really good run tomorrow to finish this season over in the States.”

Australia’s Adam Scott, 46, who won the Tour Championship 20 years ago is alongside Scheffler after also carding a 66, while Sweden’s Ludvig Aberg posted a 65 to also finish on 12 under.

McIlroy is joined on 10 under by Players Championship winner Cameron Young.

England’s Justin Rose and Matt Fitzpatrick are probably too far back to challenge or the title at eight under par.

Defending champion Tommy Fleetwood and fellow Englishman Alex Fitzpatrick are a shot further adrift after both signed for 67s. Scotland’s Robert MacIntyre, first out and playing on his own in the 29-man field (reduced from 30 because JJ Spaun pulled out injured during round one) whipped round in 63 shots to improve to joint 25th on four under par. - Agencies



ROUND-UP

Lexus LX 700h brings premium benefits to customers in Oman

As part of the ongoing Lexus Benefits Campaign, “Crafted Beyond Measure...Rewarded Beyond Expectations,” owners of the flagship SUV can enjoy a 10-year/100,000 km service package, one-year vehicle registration and NUQHBAH Loyalty Points worth OMR 100 redeemable against future servicing, valid until 7 October



MUSCAT: In a market that continues to demand more from luxury, the Lexus LX 700h stands apart at Saud Bahwan Automotive showrooms across Oman, now paired with a set of privileges designed for those who expect nothing less than the exceptional.

As part of the ongoing Lexus Benefits Campaign, “Crafted Beyond Measure...Rewarded Beyond

Expectations,” owners of the flagship SUV can enjoy a 10-year/100,000 km service package, one-year vehicle registration and NUQHBAH Loyalty Points worth OMR 100 redeemable against future servicing, valid until 7 October 2026. (Terms & Conditions Apply)

The LX 700h represents the pinnacle of the Lexus range, where uncompromising craftsmanship

meets hybrid performance to create an experience reserved for the few. For those ready to claim it, a visit to the nearest Saud Bahwan Automotive showroom is all it takes to explore the offer before it concludes.

At its core, the LX 700h is driven by a 3.5L Twin-Turbo V6 hybrid powertrain delivering 457 hp and 650 Nm of torque, with fuel efficiency rated at 10.8 km/l. As the

first hybrid ever offered in the LX lineup, it commands a 10-speed automatic transmission alongside Multi-Terrain Select, translating power into poise across any terrain.

Step inside, and the cabin reveals the full extent of Lexus artistry — premium leather upholstery, ambient lighting, and ventilated seating across all three rows, crafted for those who consider comfort non-negotiable. Wireless

charging, a premium audio system, and seamless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto integration keep every passenger connected, while a head-up display and driver-focused cockpit put command at the fingertips.

Confidence comes built in, courtesy of the Lexus Safety System+ 3.0 — a suite that includes a Pre-Collision System, Dynamic Radar Cruise Control, Lane Tracing As-

sist, and Adaptive High-beam system, engineered to anticipate the road ahead.

The LX 700h stands today as the clearest expression of what Lexus represents — a legacy of prestige, now matched with rewards worthy of it. Those ready to experience it can visit the nearest Lexus Oman showroom, where a dedicated team awaits to guide the journey from first look to final drive.

RECOGNITION

Bank Muscat named Company of the Year for Excellence in Women Empowerment in Workplace



MUSCAT: In recognition of its continued commitment to developing and enhancing human resources and promoting women empowerment in the workplace, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has been awarded the “Company of the Year for Excellence in Women Empowerment in the Workplace 2026” title at The Origin Awards ceremony, organised by Muscat Media Group Muscat at JW Marriott Hotel Muscat.

The event was held under the patronage of Lujaina Mohsin Darwish Al Zaabi, Chairperson of MHD – ITICS, and attended by prominent female executives, board members, and professionals from a range of sectors. Wafa Ibrahim Al Ajmi, Assistant General Manager of Transaction & Government Banking received the award on behalf of Bank Muscat.

The Origin is a leading platform celebrating inspiring women and organizations that contribute to creating meaningful and tangible change in society. This year's event featured panel discussions led by prominent women from the fields of business, science, sports, the arts, and other sectors, while

highlighting experiences and initiatives that strengthen women's roles and contributions across various fields.

Panel discussion

Bank Muscat participated in the panel discussion titled “Beyond Expectations: Women at the Forefront of Progress,” during which Wafa Ibrahim Al Ajmi highlighted Bank Muscat's role in empowering women throughout their professional and leadership journey, as well as the tools needed to turn potential challenges into opportunities for growth and development. She also discussed the role financial institutions can play in supporting women, not only as employees but also as entrepreneurs and active contributors to the national economy, and emphasized the importance of providing an integrated ecosystem of solutions, services, and opportunities that enables women to achieve their economic and professional aspirations.

Additionally, the importance of collective efforts by institutions and society was highlighted to showcase how this relationship is central to overcome barriers that

may limit women's access to leadership positions and to develop a new generation of confident, future-ready Omani female leaders.

Commenting on the achievement, Wafa Ibrahim Al Ajmi, Assistant General Manager of Transaction & Government Banking at Bank Muscat, said: “This recognition reflects Bank Muscat's leadership in establishing a corporate culture that supports women empowerment and strengthens their role in achieving success at both the professional and personal levels, while enabling them to make an active contribution to sustainable social and economic development in the Sultanate of Oman. Omani women today have attained a prominent position in society, enabling them to take on key roles and responsibilities, as well as overcome challenges and obstacles. We are proud of all efforts that Bank Muscat puts into the empowerment of its female employees and, therefore, would like to reaffirm the Bank's commitment to providing an exemplary workplace that encourages creativity and innovation for all employees through diverse training opportunities and ongoing development programmes.”

At Bank Muscat, Omani women play a pivotal role in developing the banking sector and supporting the Bank's growth and performance across its various operations. Female employees account for more than 46% of the Bank's total workforce, which comprises more than 4,000 employees across its departments and branches throughout the Sultanate of Oman. Bank Muscat supports women's empowerment through initiatives focused on professional development, financial inclusion, and women's entrepreneurship. These include training programmes, scholarships, and a supportive workplace environment designed to attract young Omani female talent and develop their capabilities.

The Bank also provides specialized financial solutions and services for women entrepreneurs through its Najahi Business Banking Unit, helping them establish and develop their businesses and strengthen their sustainability. These initiatives are aligned with the Bank's commitment to supporting women and enhancing their contribution to the national economy.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT



Annual Merit Award Ceremony celebrates excellence at Indian School Al Maabela

MUSCAT: A vibrant celebration of academic achievement, perseverance and all-round excellence unfolded at Indian School Al Maabela (ISAM) on 22 August, as the school hosted its Annual Merit Award Ceremony for the academic year 2025–26. The ceremony brought together distinguished dignitaries, members of the School Management Committee (SMC), parents, teachers and students to honour outstanding achievement and inspire continued excellence.

The highlight of the ceremony was the felicitation of CBSE toppers, centum scorers and subject toppers from Classes X and XII, along with students recognised for excellence in Classes IX and XI. Students of Classes VI, VII and VIII were also honoured, including the Best Outgoing Student of Class VIII. Achievers in the Sastra Pratibha Contest were likewise felicitated.

Among the Class XII school toppers were Maryam Mustafa (Class XII, Science) with 98.8%, Sneha Sahjwani (Class XII, Science) with 98.2%, Sayooj Santhosh (Class XII, Science) and Bhargavi Vaidya (Class XII, Science) with 98.0% each; Amaan Khalid Malik (Class XII, Commerce) with 100%, Vaishakhi Anil (Class XII, Commerce) with 98.2%, P Sreepathi (Class XII, Commerce) with 97.4%; Zahraa Khalil (Class XII, Humanities) with 99.6%, Anagha Mundarath (Class XII, Humanities) with 97.8% and Sreya S Nair (Class

XII, Humanities) with 96.6%.

The Class X toppers were Kaunain Fatima (Class X) with 497/500 (99.4%), Anirudh Manoj (Class X) with 496/500 (99.2%), and Allen Biju (Class X) and Maryam Niamat (Class X) with 495/500 (99.0%) each.

The ceremony was graced by Chief Guest Fatima Zahra Biqach, Head of Cabin Crew Operations, Flight Operations, Oman Air; Guest of Honour G. V. Ramakrishna, Finance Director, Board of Directors, Indian Schools in Oman; and Special Guest Manal Al Hassani, Officer of Corporate Communications, Media and Communication Office, Oman Air.

The SMC delegation included Vice President, Syed Najeeb Rafiq and other members of the School Management Committee Naushad Aliyar Kutty, Shameem Hussain, Dr. Masood Alam, Pallavi Venkat Rao, Rajesh G., Riyas Koruvallappil, and Shameem Kalathil. The delegation was welcomed by Bala Reddy Ambati, Principal, ISAM.

Addressing the gathering, SMC Vice President Syed Najeeb Rafiq encouraged students to view every achievement as a stepping stone towards greater challenges, opportunities and responsible leadership. He emphasised the importance of discipline, determination and sustained effort in making success truly meaningful.

The programme was enriched by a motivational musical presentation and semi-classical dance.



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