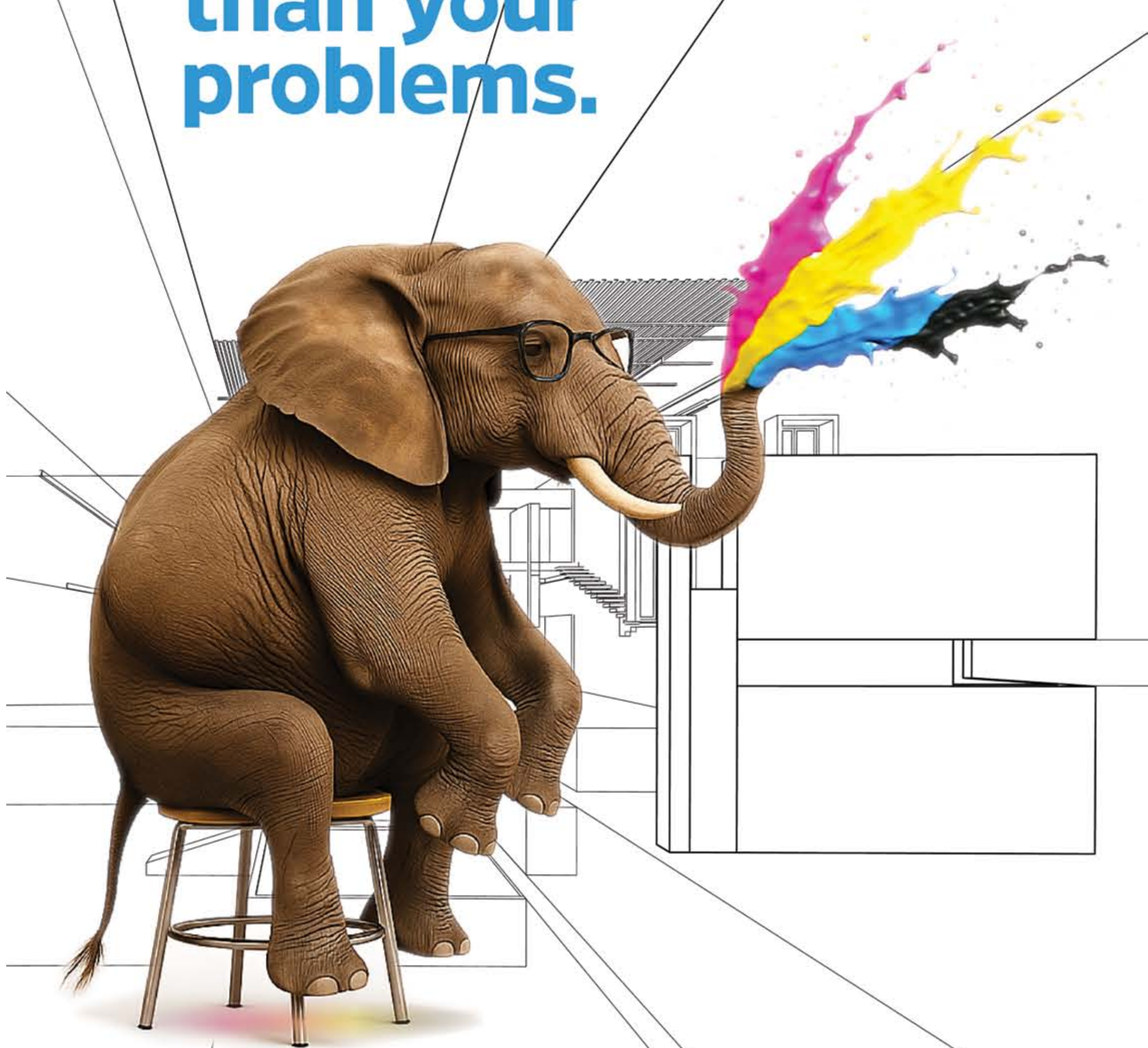


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Foundation stone laid for National Centre of Genomics and Human Data

The Centre will be built on a total area exceeding 10,000 square metres, and the project's implementation period will take 9 months, in addition to 45 days for equipment and preparation works



MUSCAT: The Ministry of Health on Wednesday celebrated the laying of the foundation stone for the National Centre for Genomics and Human Data (Omani Genome) in the Wilayat of A'Seeb, Muscat Governorate, at a construction cost exceeding OMR4.20 million.

The Centre will be built on a total area exceeding 10,000 square metres, and the project's implementation period will take 9 months, in addition to 45 days for equipment and preparation works.

The ceremony was held under the patronage of Dr. Hilal Ali Al Sabti, Minister of Health.

Dr. Khalid Al Rasadi, Professor at the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, Sultan Qaboos University, and Supervisor of the Omani Genome Programme, affirmed in his speech that the project embodies the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

Its importance, he said, lies in studying the composition of the genomic map of Omani society and establishing a reference database that enhances the Sultanate of Oman's standing as a scientific centre in genomic research, supports the knowledge economy, and

advances strategic treatments.

Dr. Ali Al Lawati, Adviser to the Minister of Health for Engineering Affairs, gave an introductory overview of the project from the engineering and technical standpoints. He explained that given the importance of this national project, the Centre has been designed and will be built according to the latest construction technologies and biosafety laboratory design standards, taking into account biosafety requirements, energy efficiency, smart building management systems, and future expandability.

He noted that the Centre will be equipped with the latest high-throughput whole genome sequencing devices, and with an automated national biobank for sample preservation with a capacity of more than one million samples at ultra-low temperatures reaching 80 degrees Celsius below zero and in liquid nitrogen, with round-the-clock monitoring and surveillance systems and backup power that ensure the safety of samples for decades.

On the details of the project, he explained that it is being established in the Wilayat of A'Seeb

in Muscat Governorate on a total area of 10,625 square metres, within a shared plot of land with the Central Public Health Laboratory covering 53,000 square metres. It consists of the main laboratory building with an area of 3,000 square metres, and the services building with an area of 600 square metres linked by a concrete services tunnel, in addition to a power station, parking and external services.

The National Centre for Genomics and Human Data is the foundational infrastructure of the Omani Genome Programme, which aims in its first phase (2025-2030) to read the complete genomic sequence of twenty thousand citizens representing the spectrum of Omani society and geography, and will expand in its next two phases to reach 100 thousand participants by 2040, in order to build a reference genetic database for Omani society.

This database contributes to supporting the precision personalised medicine system, providing therapeutic and preventive solutions tailored to the individual's genetic makeup, raising the effi-



ciency of early detection of hereditary and chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer, enhancing premarital and newborn screening programmes, and providing decision-makers with accurate data and evidence to support future health planning.

The laying of the foundation stone constitutes an actual launch for the establishment of this advanced infrastructure in the campus of the Central Public Health Laboratory, ensuring the integration of advanced laboratory testing with modern genetic sequencing technologies and big data analysis under one umbrella.

The Programme gives priority

to building and qualifying young national cadres in genomics and bioinformatics sciences, in partnership with Sultan Qaboos University and academic and research institutions. It also opens the door to discovering new therapeutic targets and drugs for hereditary diseases, and to international research partnerships and emerging biosciences industries that support the knowledge economy sought by Oman Vision 2040.

The project embodies the Ministry's commitment to investing in future technologies and fostering medical innovation, and will operate according to the highest standards of privacy, security and

ethical governance to protect national genomic data, on the basis of voluntary participation with informed consent.

It is expected to bring about a qualitative leap in the level of healthcare provided to citizens, by linking genetic analysis results to national health records and establishing an integrated biobank, thereby consolidating the Sultanate of Oman's position as an advanced regional centre in the field of medical and genomic research.

The ceremony was attended by a number of senior officials, specialists in the health and academic sectors, and experts in research and biosciences.

SULTAN QABOOS UNIVERSITY



SQU launches 'Our Values, Our Digital Identity' campaign

MUSCAT: Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) organised on Wednesday the launch forum of the awareness campaign "Our Values, Our Digital Identity".

The event was held under the auspices of HH Sayyid Dr. Fahad Al Julanda Al Said, Vice-Chancellor of the University.

The campaign aims to enhance Omani values and identity in the digital environment, promote a culture of digital citizenship, raise awareness about the safe and responsible use of technology, and protect privacy and digital identity, alongside raising awareness about the dangers of cyberbullying, extortion, and harmful content, and developing critical thinking in dealing with digital news and information.

Sheikh Ahmed Ali Al Shehhi, Wali of A'Seeb, affirmed that launching the campaign comes in response to the challenges posed by rapid digital transformations, pointing out that building a conscious personality and enhancing digital citizenship is a joint responsibility among the family, school, university, and cultural, media, and community institutions. Dr. Wafa Said Al Maamari, Associate Professor and Head of the Sociology and Social Work Department at the university, explained the importance of reinforcing values and ethics among students to safeguard

their psychological and intellectual security, and preserve cultural identity as well as religious and national values, emphasising the importance of building a generation guided by knowledge, protected by values, and capable of distinguishing between beneficial and harmful content in the digital world.

The campaign is based on a set of values, including belonging, safety, credibility, respect, responsibility, dialogue, and balance, emphasizing that digital citizenship transcends the proper use of technology to making an individual's presence in the digital world an extension of their values, identity, and responsible behavior in society.

The campaign will run for six months and will initially be implemented in four schools, targeting 500 male and female students and 140 parents through awareness, interactive, school, and community activities.

The campaign comes in partnership between the university, represented by the Department of Sociology and Social Work at the College of Arts and Social Sciences, the Parents' Council in the Wilayat of A'Seeb, and the Cultural Citizenship Salon, with the participation of relevant authorities and institutions concerned with values, identity, upbringing, and digital citizenship. — **ONA**

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

State Council participates in 153rd IPU General Assembly in Tanzania

ARUSHA: The State Council participated, as part of the Council of Oman delegation, in the 153rd General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), held in the city of Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania.

Under its general theme, "Enhancing Good Governance and Empowering Communities Through Inclusivity, Trust, and Opportunities for All," the General Assembly discussed a number of issues related to governance, community participation, international peace and security, sustainable development, democracy, and human rights.

Dr. Shamsa Masoud Al Sheibani, Member of the State Council and Member of the IPU Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, affirmed in a speech delivered during her participation in the committee's meeting the Sultanate of Oman's support for efforts aimed at safeguarding human dignity and promoting peace, justice, equality, and fundamental rights and freedoms, pointing out that human beings represent the core and goal of development, as embodied in Oman Vision 2040 through the priority of human and society.

She highlighted the importance of moving beyond talking about human rights to achieving a tangible impact on human life and translating recommendations into actionable and measurable programs that enhance child security, fairness of opportunities, safeguarding labor rights, empowering persons with disabilities, and enabling youth to participate in shaping their future, emphasizing that dialogue, understanding, and international cooperation represent the ideal path to addressing challenges and promoting peace and stability.

The State Council also participated in the 218th Session of the Governing Council of the IPU, which discussed several topics related to the IPU's work, organisational and administrative matters, and electoral dues, as well as exploring ways to enhance cooperation among member parliaments.

The participation also included the meetings of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP), which discussed



Secretary-General of the Council, and Dr. Aisha Said Al Ghabshi, as part of the Council's keenness to enhance its presence in international parliamentary forums, exchange expertise, and learn about best practices in parliamentary and legislative work.

The State Council's participation reaffirms the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in promoting dialogue and exchanging expertise among parliaments, as well as contributing to the discussion of issues of mutual interest, thereby enhancing the Sultanate of Oman's presence in international parliamentary forums and supporting joint parliamentary efforts in service of peace and sustainable development. — **ONA**

exchanging expertise and practices in managing parliamentary institutions, developing working methods, and strengthening cooperation among parliamentary bodies and services.

The State Council delegation included Khalid Ahmed Al Saadi,

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RBI rate hike: Higher EMIs, better FD returns—What NRIs need to know

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) 25 basis points repo rate hike to 5.50 per cent is set to have a mixed impact on Non Resident Indians (NRIs) —loan EMIs could become costlier, while their deposits may earn better.

Speaking to Times of Oman, R. Madhusoodanan, former SBI official and Muscat-based financial expert, said the rate hike was widely expected. The hike marks the first increase in the repo rate since February 2023, a gap of almost 4 years. The RBI has also shifted its policy stance from neutral to “calibrated tightening.”

Indian banks could raise lending rates following the RBI's repo

rate increase. NRIs who have taken housing, vehicle, mortgage, personal or other floating-rate loans in India could therefore see their equated monthly instalments (EMIs) rise as lenders transmit the higher policy rate to borrowers.

“For a housing loan of Rs50 lakh with a tenure of 25 years, the additional monthly burden could be around Rs800, depending on the existing interest rate and the extent of transmission by the lending institution,”

While the increase in the monthly EMI may appear modest, the cumulative impact over the remaining tenure of a long-term loan can be significant. Borrowers, particularly NRIs servicing Indian loans from overseas, should en-



sure that the revised EMIs are paid promptly.

Failure to service the revised EMI could result in the loan account becoming irregular. This may attract penal charges and, if the account remains overdue, could eventually affect the borrow-

er's credit profile and result in the account being classified as a non-performing asset (NPA).

The rate hike is also likely to increase the cost of borrowing for businesses. Higher interest expenses on working capital and other business loans could put pressure on their profit margins.

Businesses may seek to offset higher financing costs by raising prices of goods and services thereby passing the burden on consumers. At the same time, higher borrowing costs could moderate consumption and investment, potentially slowing the pace of economic activity.

The RBI's real GDP growth of 7.6 percent projected for 2026-27, will therefore remain an important fac-

tor in assessing the broader important. The rate increase, however, has a positive side for depositors, including NRIs. Banks may also raise deposit rates and the extent may differ from banks to banks. This will be a huge relief to the senior citizens, pensioners and others who depend on interest income.

However the higher rate will be applicable to fresh deposits and for those maturing. The existing deposits will carry the contracted rate till their maturity. All fixed income investments will also benefit out of this hike.

The RBI's shift in stance to “calibrated tightening” also assumes significance. RBI stance says future rate cuts are off the table. Though the rate hike was ex-

pected, the shift in the stance was unexpected. The future trajectory of interest rates will depend on a range of domestic and global factors, including inflation, crude oil prices, global interest-rate movements, currency fluctuations and international economic developments. Both the stock market and the forex market have not reacted positively to the RBI's policy. The Indian rupee nosedived to an intraday low of Rs96.91 against the US dollar, despite the RBI's hawkish stance.

For NRIs, the rate hike therefore presents a mixed picture, with higher repayment obligations on loans on the one hand and the possibility of improved returns on rupee deposits on the other.

Oman promotes campus innovation



The seminar also reviewed successful models and experiences, stimulated entrepreneurial thinking among students and faculty members

MUSCAT: The Entrepreneurship and Startups Seminar for the Education Sector, held under the title “From Idea to Impact: Building an Entrepreneurship and Startups Ecosystem in a Sustainable University Environment,” discussed means of rising awareness of entrepreneurship in the university environment and its role in achieving the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

The event also shed light on the role of academics and administrators in supporting innovation and startups, reviewed successful models and experiences, stimulated entrepreneurial thinking among students and faculty mem-

bers, and drew on global expertise in the field of university entrepreneurship.

The opening of the seminar was held under the patronage of Dr. Abdullah Ali Al Shibli, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education for Higher Education.

It was organised by the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Riyada), on Wednesday in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Research and Innovation Authority, Sultan Qaboos University and the Future Fund Oman. It focused on facilitating students' and academics' access to support services, enhancing integration among entities and universities, and linking university research outputs to market needs.

The second session reviewed “From Idea to Market: Local and Global Models in Incubating University Innovation,” covering the experiences of universities and colleges in establishing business incubators and building ecosystems conducive to entrepreneurship, as well as the experience of the Middle East College and global experiences in attracting university innovation.

The third session shed light on promoting a culture of innovation in the university environment, through working papers discussing the development of academic curricula and their linkage to the business sector and emerging technologies, and the use of real-world projects in developing entrepreneurial thinking, as well as reviewing modern approaches for moving entrepreneurship from theoretical concepts within classrooms to applicable projects and startups. — ONA

entities supporting the entrepreneurship and startups ecosystem in the university environment, with the participation of representatives from Riyada, the Ministry of Education, the Research and Innovation Authority, Sultan Qaboos University and the Future Fund Oman. It focused on facilitating students' and academics' access to support services, enhancing integration among entities and universities, and linking university research outputs to market needs.

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ONGOING PROJECTS

Major urban, tourism projects take shape across Oman

<FROM A1 Eng. Mohamed Ali Al Wardi, Director of the Projects Department in A'Dakhiliyah Governorate, stated that the governorate's participation aims to review its experience in urban renewal, introduce its most prominent development projects being executed, and showcase available investment opportunities across the governorate's various wilayats.

He explained that the number of ongoing projects under execution through the end of September 2026 reached 33 projects, with a total cost of approximately OMR 34 million. These include road projects, development of destinations, public facilities, markets, parks, and entrances, alongside a number of tourism and service projects.

Al Wardi added that the A'Dakhiliyah Square in the Wilayat of Nizwa represents one of the governorate's most prominent projects, covering an area of more than 140 thousand square meters at a cost of approximately OMR 8.373 million, with a completion rate of 71 percent. It features green spaces, recreational facilities, an event arena, investment sites, and sales outlets.

He pointed out that the governorate is also executing the first phase of the Jabal Shams Waterfront in the Wilayat of Al Hamra at a cost of about OMR 2.9 million, alongside the Eastern Mountain Oasis covering an area of nearly 10 thousand square meters, which includes pedestrian walkways, shades, play areas, and afforestation, with a completion rate of 90 percent. He noted that internal road projects represent a major aspect of ongoing works, including packages in the wilayats of Nizwa, Al Hamra, Izki, Samail, Bidbid, and Manah, in parallel with developing and rehabilitating several markets, parks, entrances, and public facilities across the governorate's wilayats.

He stated that the governorate is currently working on finalizing tendering, awarding, and contracting procedures for nearly 9 projects at an estimated cost of approximately OMR 10 million, including the design and imple-



mentation of the Al Washhi-Al Tasawir road in the Wilayat of Izki, the second phase of internal roads in the Wilayat of Samail, the rehabilitation and maintenance of several damaged internal roads, the development and rehabilitation of the entrance to the Wilayat of Bidbid, and the design and implementation of the Al Suwayrij Walkway in the Wilayat of Samail.

Eng. Mohamed Al Wardi emphasized that the projects executed by the governorate include, alongside their developmental and service components, investment and commercial opportunities across various locations, allowing private sector participation and leveraging the tourism and economic potentials characterizing the wilayats of A'Dakhiliyah Governorate.

He noted that the governorate is proceeding with completing its development projects and programs, launching new projects, and developing associated investment opportunities, thereby contributing to infrastructure and public

facility development and supporting tourism and economic activity across the governorate's various wilayats.

For her part, Eng. Maryam Abdullah Al Alawi from the Projects Department at South A'Sharqiyah Municipality said that South A'Sharqiyah Governorate is executing several development projects across its wilayats and is showcasing four development projects during its participation in the Urban October conference.

These include the Al Ashkharah Beach Waterfront Development Project in the Wilayat of Jaalan Bani Bu Ali, where the completion rate has reached about 76 percent, and the Ras Al Hadd Waterfront Development Project, which is currently in the tendering phase, alongside the Waterfront Walkway Project in the Al Barr area in the Wilayat of Sur, with a completion rate of about 55 percent, and the Qahwan Walkway Project in the Wilayat of Jaalan Bani Bu Hassan, with a completion rate of



about 15 percent.

She noted that these projects fall within the governorate's efforts to develop tourism destinations, waterfronts, and walkways, and to enhance facilities and services to contribute to improving quality of life, serving the community and visitors, and utilizing the natural and tourism potentials characterizing the governorate.

She added that execution works on existing projects are continuing during the remainder of the current year, with expectations to complete the Al Ashkharah Beach Waterfront Development Project and the Al Barr Waterfront Walkway Project during the first quarter of 2027, according to the executive work schedule.

She explained to Oman News Agency that the governorate continues to prepare and study a number of development projects based on priorities and the needs of the wilayats, with projects that complete their procedures and approvals to be announced during the upcoming period in accordance with established procedures.

On his part, Muflih Said Masan, Head of the Investment Development Department at the Office of the Governor of Dhofar, told Oman News Agency that the participation aims to present the governorate as a model for integrated development planning in alignment with the goals of Oman Vision 2040, as well as introducing available investment opportunities and building bridges of communication with investors and developers from within and outside the Sultanate of Oman.

He added that the strategy stems from a vision for Dhofar to be a sustainable global destination proud of its identity, enjoying prosperity, and based on a mission centered on optimizing the unique geographical location and natural resources, enhancing environmental diversity and innovation, and preserving cultural heritage. The strategy operates across six pillars: human resource development, economic enhancement and diversification, improving the business and investment environment, sustainable urban planning and humanizing cities, social and cultural development, and environmental sustainability.

He pointed out that the pillar of sustainable urban planning and humanizing cities aligns directly with the Urban October slogan "Vibrant Cities with Their People," reflecting the governorate's direction toward cities that place human beings at the heart of development.

Muflih bin Said Masan explained that the pavilion at the exhibition showcases four investment opportunities offered by the governorate, represented by Dhofar Municipality in the wilayats of Salalah and Mirbat. These opportunities include an international restaurant, a truck park project, a tourist resort, and an event hall.

He explained that among the projects being executed is the Gold Souq project, where the completion rate has reached 70 percent, while in the Used Car Market project, the work completion rate has reached 52 percent. He noted that the governorate is working with

relevant entities to prepare more qualitative opportunities and offer them sequentially through official channels. He emphasized that monitoring projects under execution receives priority to ensure their completion according to approved schedules, thereby consolidating Dhofar's status as an attractive investment destination.

From his side, Eng. Naseer Ali Al Siyabi, Director General of A'Dhahirah Municipality, affirmed that A'Dhahirah Governorate's participation in the "Home and Building 2026 Expo" contributed to familiarizing visitors with urban and developmental projects in the governorate and highlighting its investment and urban opportunities and potentials, thereby enhancing communication and experience sharing in urban development.

He pointed out that through the governorate's pavilion, the "Ibri Viewpoint" project is highlighted as a model for urban development that utilizes the urban and tourism potentials of the wilayat and contributes to enhancing quality of life, alongside reviewing the governorate's future directions in urban development.

He explained to Oman News Agency that work completion rates in projects being executed in the governorate vary, including the Ibri Public Park project with a completion rate of 45 percent and a total value exceeding OMR 5 million, and the Yanqul Viewpoint project with a completion rate of 79 percent and a construction cost of RO 1.8 million. Work completion rate in the Dhank Viewpoint project reached 85 percent at a cost of over OMR 2 million, in addition to the dualization and commercial area development project in the Wilayat of Dhank over a length of 4.5 km, with a work completion rate of 54 percent and a cost of nearly OMR 3 million.

Eng. Naseer Al Siyabi expected that during 2026 internal road paving projects across the governorate's wilayats will be completed, as well as maintenance projects for roads damaged by weather conditions, in addition to the Yanqul and Dhank Viewpoint projects.

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UNIVERSITY COUNCIL HALL



SQU and OPAZ hold joint meeting

MUSCAT: The joint committee between Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) and the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) on Wednesday held its second meeting in the University Council Hall.

The meeting was attended by HH Sayyid Dr. Fahd bin Al Julanda Al Said, SQU Vice-Chancellor and Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, OPAZ Chairman.

The committee discussed a set of topics on the meeting's agenda, which included following up on the recommendations of the committee's first meeting that have been activated, and the new topics raised by both sides relating to a set of joint initiatives and projects aimed at enhancing integration between education, training, scientific research and the economic zones sector, and strengthening the partnership between the two sides in line with the targets of Oman Vision 2040.

The meeting opened with a presentation delivered by Professor Dr. Salim bin Hamoud Al Harthy, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Community Service, on the student training programme implemented during the past period in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm in coordination with the University, and the results it achieved in equipping students with the required practical experience.

The committee reviewed proposals in the field of training and

qualification, including a proposal to expand student training programmes to encompass the sites of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), alongside the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, and to examine the possibility of direct communication with the companies affiliated with the OPAZ to identify the challenges they face, contribute to finding solutions for them, and determine the skills required to qualify students for the labour market, thereby enhancing the alignment of the University's outputs with the needs of the sector.

In the field of studies and research, the committee reviewed a proposal submitted by the SQU Oman Studies Centre to study the relationship between special zones and free zones and local communities in the Sultanate of Oman, through documenting intangible cultural heritage and monitoring the social and cultural transformations in the surrounding areas, in a manner that contributes to achieving a balance between the requirements of economic development and the preservation of the cultural identity of local communities.

At the conclusion of the meeting, both sides affirmed the importance of continuing joint work and activating the proposed initiatives and recommendations in service of economic, research and community development in the Sultanate of Oman.

— OMA

Oman showcases its pharma investment opportunities in Milan

Omani delegation presented an overview of the investment opportunities available to international companies wishing to establish or expand their operations in special economic, free, and industrial zones

MILAN: The Sultanate of Oman is participating in the Milan Pharmaceutical Industry Exhibition 2026, held in the city of Milan, Italian Republic, with the aim of attracting qualitative investments in the pharmaceutical industries, medical devices, and supplies sector, as well as promoting the capabilities and investment opportunities provided by special economic zones, free zones, and industrial cities in the Sultanate of Oman.

The participating delegation is headed by Eng. Ahmed Hassan Al Dheeb, Vice Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), who affirmed that the Authority



seeks through its participation to present a comprehensive overview of the investment environment and opportunities available to international companies wishing to establish or expand their operations in special economic, free, and industrial zones, as well as the capabilities provided for setting up pharmaceutical projects and associated industries, technologies, and services.

He pointed out that the trend toward establishing specialised industrial clusters contributes to building an integrated ecosystem for pharmaceutical industries, medical devices, and supplies, enhancing pharmaceutical security, and attracting specialised global investments.

Al Dheeb further added that the Authority is working, in cooperation with relevant entities, developers, and operators, to prepare an integrated investment environment for international companies, as the Sultanate of Oman enjoys a strategic location, advanced infrastructure and logistics, and easy access to regional and international markets.

He pointed out that Salalah City for Pharmaceutical and Medical Industries, alongside the pharmaceutical and medical cluster in Khazaen Economic City, represent promising oppor-

tunities for companies seeking to localise manufacturing, storage, distribution, and export operations from the Sultanate of Oman to target markets.

Lubna Mohammed Al Harthy, Director of the Export Development Department at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, confirmed that the Sultanate of Oman's participation in the Milan Pharmaceutical Industry Exhibition 2026 aims to enhance the presence of Omani pharmaceutical and medical products in global markets and open new export markets for national companies.

She explained that the participation comes amidst the rapid growth witnessed by the pharmaceutical and medical industries sector in the Sultanate of Oman and the progress achieved in productive and competitive capacities, noting that the Sultanate of Oman's exports of medicines and medical products reached approximately OMR26.5 million during 2025.

She added that the upcoming phase focuses on expanding the base of target markets and connecting Omani companies with international buyers and importers, alongside building commercial and industrial partnerships that contribute to sustaining export growth and enhancing in-

country value.

This participation focuses on attracting qualitative and specialised investments and strengthening value and supply chains in the pharmaceutical sector by communicating with manufacturers, suppliers, technology developers, and companies operating in various stages of the pharmaceutical industry. It also leverages the strategic location of special economic zones, free zones, and industrial cities, the system of ports, airports, and logistics services, and the supportive business and regulatory investment environment.

The participation program also includes holding direct sessions and meetings with international companies and investors to introduce available investment opportunities, explore prospects for establishing new partnerships and projects, and review the latest technologies and innovations in the pharmaceutical industries, thereby supporting the localization of advanced industries, knowledge and technology transfer, and the enhancement of in-country value.

It is worth noting that the proposal to establish specialised industrial clusters for pharmaceutical industries and medical devices in special economic zones, free zones, and industrial cities has, in its first phase, allocated an area of nearly 500 thousand square metres in Salalah Free Zone for medical and pharmaceutical investments, and an area of over 500 thousand square meters in Raysut Industrial City for the same sector, together forming Salalah City for Pharmaceutical and Medical Industries, in addition to an area of over 500 thousand square metres in Khazaen Economic City to establish a cluster for pharmaceutical and medical industries. — OMA

SULTAN QABOOS UNIVERSITY

Muscat to host major conference

MUSCAT: The Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) will host the 4th International Conference on Environmental Microbiology and Biotechnology Applications, which will kick off on 12 October.

The 5-day event serves as an international scientific platform that will bring together researchers, academics, graduate students, early-career researchers and specialists in the fields of microbial ecology, biotechnology and related applications.

Twelve speakers from international universities and scientific institutions will give lectures on topics like microbial ecology, the microbiome and biotechnology.

The conference sees the participation of researchers representing 28 countries across the Middle East, North Africa, Asia,



Europe, and other regions. The scientific programme of the conference features 159 contributions, consisting of 41 oral presentations and 118 scientific posters.

This year, the conference gains added momentum through the launch of the Middle-Eastern Society of Microbial Ecologists (MEsME), the participa-

tion of the Society for Applied Microbiology.

The conference aims to foster international and regional scientific cooperation among academic and research institutions specialised in microbiology and its biotechnological applications. It also seeks to review the latest research findings, developments and scientific innovations in environmental microbiology and its applications in biotechnology across the environmental, agricultural and industrial sectors.

The event also seeks to highlight the distinctive potential of the Middle East's unique environments—including desert and marine ecosystems as well as hot springs—and to encourage their utilisation in innovative research and applications. — OMA

SOHAR UNIVERSITY

First international conference on juvenile literature organised

SOHAR: The proceedings of the first international conference titled "Readings in Juvenile Literature" kicked off yesterday in the Wilayat of Sohar, North Al Batinah Governorate. The two-day conference is organised by Sohar University in partnership with the Oman Society for Writers and Literati.

Dr. Ali bin Salim Al Man'ee, Chairman of the Organising Committee of the Conference, said that the event aligns with efforts to spread public awareness about the importance of scholarly research and culture, preserve a national memory, revive heritage and enhance intergenerational integration, in addition to encouraging researchers and innovative talents to extend channels of communication with the community.

"The diverse scopes of the 35 specialised research papers being presented at the conference reflects the interdisciplinary nature of literature featuring the interests of children and young—which in itself constitutes a sphere lying at the intersection



of language, literature, education, culture, identity, memory, science and technology," Dr. Ali said. This provides a broad platform for scholarly dialogue and a spectrum for the exchange of insights and expertise among researchers and specialists, he added.

The conference was held under the auspices of Sheikh Saud bin Mohammed Al Hinai, Wali of Sohar. — OMA

وزارة النقل والاتصالات وتقنية المعلومات
Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology

إعلان مناقصة
Tender Notice

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC AUCTION
FOR THE SALE OF GOVERNMENT MOVABLE ASSETS**

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology announces an electronic auction for the sale of government movable assets through Safqa Auctions website (www.safqauctions.om), as detailed below:

Movable Assets for Sale	Inspection Location	Inspection Date and Time	Auction Date
Iron tanks + water pumps + iron pipes	Al Wadi Al Kabir (Muscat Governorate)	20–22 October 2026 8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.	Starts: Sunday, 25 October 2026 at 8:00 a.m. Closes: Monday, 26 October 2026 at 12:00 noon
Scrap iron barriers and posts + signboards	Al Ghalil Workshop, Wilayat of Al Suwaiq		
9 vehicles and heavy equipment	Sohar Industrial Port (North Al Batinah Governorate)		
Scrap iron posts and barriers + signboards	Roads Department, Ibbi (A'Dhahirah Governorate)		
Scrap iron posts and barriers + signboards	Suhul Al Dakhiliyah Company Site, Wilayat of Nizwa (A'Dakhiliyah Governorate)		
Scrap iron posts and barriers + signboards	Al Buraimi Governorate		

Those wishing to participate in the electronic auction must comply with the following terms and conditions:

- Register on the website (www.safqauctions.om).
- Pay a security deposit of OMR 5,000 electronically through the website. The deposit will be refunded in the event that no purchase is made.
- The buyer shall pay the value of the movable assets by electronic transfer through the website within 48 working hours after the auction is awarded to the buyer.
- 5% Value Added Tax (VAT) and a 3% auction commission fee shall be added to the purchase value of the movable assets.
- The buyer shall remove the movable assets within one week from the date the auction is awarded. If the assets are not removed within the specified period, a ground rent charge of 5% for each day of delay shall be imposed. The Ministry shall not be responsible for any loss of or damage to the assets.
- Sold movable assets are non-returnable and their value shall not be reduced. No requests or appeals in this regard will be accepted.
- The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and Safqa Auctions shall bear no liability in respect of the movable assets in the event that the image or description of any item offered for sale does not correspond with the actual item. Neither party guarantees the fitness of the items offered for sale or their technical or mechanical condition. The buyer shall personally verify their condition through visual inspection on the designated inspection day. The items are sold as is, in their current condition, and neither party shall bear any liability for any defects discovered after the sale.
- No warranties of any kind shall be provided for the movable assets, including the mechanical condition of vehicles, their roadworthiness, or whether they can be registered with the Royal Oman Police. The Ministry shall not be liable for any defects in the movable assets sold.
- The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and Safqa Auctions shall not be responsible if the competent authorities do not register the vehicles in the buyer's name due to their non-compliance with the required specifications.
- The buyer shall be responsible for paying any fees, where applicable, whether payable to government or private entities (within Sohar Industrial Port).
- The company shall not be obliged to award the auction to the highest bidder, without stating any reasons, if the highest bid does not reach an acceptable price.
- The security deposit shall be forfeited in either of the following cases:
 - If the buyer fails to pay the value of the movable assets within the specified payment period.
 - If the buyer fails to remove the purchased movable assets within the specified removal period.

Notes

- All movable assets are sold as is, in their current condition.
- The company reserves the right to cancel the auction without stating any reasons.

For further details, please visit Safqa Auctions website (www.safqauctions.om) or contact: 96916169 – 91798145 – 94443325
For inspection during official working hours, please contact: 91798145 – 94443325 – 99695246 QR Code Labels

Safqa Auctions Link	Iron Tanks + Water Pumps + Iron Pipes	Roads Department – Al Buraimi Governorate, Al Buraimi	Roads Department – A'Dhahirah Governorate, Ibbi	• Al Ghalil Workshop – Wilayat of Al Suwaiq	Suhul Al Dakhiliyah Company Site – Wilayat of Nizwa	• Vehicles and Equipment Site – Sohar Port
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Internal Tenders Committee

STRATEGIC CONSULTATION GROUP MEETING

Oman, India discuss boosting economic partnership, expanding joint cooperation

NEW DELHI: The 15th session of the Strategic Consultation Group meeting between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of India was held on Wednesday in New Delhi.

The Omani side at the meeting was headed by Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Political Affairs, while the Indian side was headed by Sripriya Ranganathan, Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs for Consular, Passport and Overseas Indian Affairs.

The meeting included discussions on ways to activate the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the two countries, contributing to enhancing commercial and investment exchange and



expanding horizons of joint economic cooperation.

The two sides reviewed aspects of cooperation in the fields of civil aviation, maritime transport,

logistics, and energy, alongside discussing several consular issues and bilateral agreements, and exchanging views on regional developments.

The meeting was attended by Issa Saleh Al Shaibani, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Republic of India, and a number of officials from both sides. — **ONA**

SPECIALISED EVENT

Forum explores employing artificial intelligence in scientific resources

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, represented by the Literary Forum and in cooperation with Muscat College, organised a specialised event titled “Employing Artificial Intelligence in Scientific Resources.”

The event was presented by Dr. Arabi Madbouli, aiming to focus on modern digital transformations witnessed by the global scientific research system and how to leverage them locally.

The event sought to provide a precise and deep introduction to the methods and mechanisms of employing modern artificial intelligence technologies effectively and with high responsibility when dealing with scientific repositories and resources, alongside a broad review of practical applications and solutions supporting researchers and workers in the academic field throughout vari-



ous stages and procedures of scientific research.

The detailed objectives of the event included empowering participants to understand the pivotal role that artificial intelligence has come to play in the quality and development of scientific production, developing advanced re-

search skills for fast and smart access to sources and references, as well as training on utilising smart tools to read, analyse, and critique studies and research with high accuracy and efficiency.

The event also aimed to assist researchers in constructing and developing literature reviews and

accurately tracking research gaps, while enhancing their capabilities in verifying the validity and reliability of information and sources, and consolidating an enlightened understanding of ethical aspects, publishing controls, and the responsible use of technology in academic circles.



Printed and published by:
Muscat Media Group
Post Box: 770,
Postal Code: 112

Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zedjali
Deputy Editor-in-Chief: Anees bin Essa Al Zedjali
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CIRCULATION: Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



Oman, Italy sign MoU to enhance cooperation in cultural heritage field

MILAN: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism of the Sultanate of Oman and the Italian Ministry of Culture on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the fields of heritage and museums. The signing ceremony took place during the visit of Oman's Heritage and Tourism Minister, Sayyid Ibrahim bin Said Al Busaidi, to the Italian Republic. The MoU was signed by Oman's Minister of Heritage and Tourism, Sayyid Ibrahim bin Said Al Busaidi, and Italy's Minister of Culture, Alessandro Giuli.

The MoU aims to foster the exchange of knowledge and expertise in the management, preservation and restoration of cultural heritage, the development of museums and the organisation of exhibitions. The MoU also seeks

to build national capacities in the fields of archaeology, heritage conservation and the establishment and restoration of museums, in addition to facilitating the exchange of expertise.

The two ministers discussed the implementation of an executive programme on outlining cooperation initiatives and explored opportunities to leverage the Italian expertise, notably for developing Oman Maritime Museum.

The discussions covered ways to improve the management of heritage sites and the implementation of training and residency programmes for Omani personnel operating in the field of joint archaeological research in managing terrestrial and underwater sites. — **ONA**



Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma



Social Impact Awards 2026



**جوائز بسمه
Jaw'iz Basma**

OQ8 Wins Community Education Initiative Award at Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma 2026



OQ8 was felicitated with the 'Community Education Initiative Award' at Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma Social Impact Awards 2026. Organised by Muscat Media Group, publisher of Times of Oman and Al Shabib, and managed by TEEvents, the awards recognised organisations, initiatives and individuals creating meaningful social, environmental and economic impact across Oman. The evening culminated in the presentation of 22 awards across diverse areas of community and social impact.

OQ8 was recognised for its

long-running 'Science of a Refinery Programme', which has been inspiring and educating the next generation of engineers in Al Wusta Governorate since 2016. The programme introduces students to science, engineering and refinery operations through interactive learning, practical experiments and direct engagement with engineers and industry professionals.

By connecting classroom learning with real-world industrial experiences, the initiative helps young people develop a deeper understanding of STEM subjects while

encouraging them to explore future careers in engineering and the energy sector. The programme's long-term impact is reflected in former participants who have gone on to study engineering and later returned to Duqm as engineers at the refinery.

Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma Social Impact Awards 2026 celebrates organisations and individuals whose initiatives contribute to community development, healthcare, education, youth empowerment, sustainability, inclusion and social progress across the Sultanate.

Ahlibank Wins Leadership in CSR in Banking Award at Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma 2026



Ahlibank was felicitated with the 'Leadership in CSR in Banking Award' at Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma Social Impact Awards 2026. Organised by Muscat Media Group, publisher of Times of Oman and Al Shabiba, and managed by TEEvents, the awards recognised organisations, initiatives and individuals creating meaningful social, environmental and economic impact across Oman. The evening culminated in the presentation of 22 awards across diverse areas of community and social impact.

Ahlibank was recognised for its purposeful approach to corporate social responsibility, with initiatives focused on community wellbeing, education,

financial literacy and social inclusion. Its efforts are designed to address immediate community needs while creating opportunities that contribute to longer-term personal and social development.

Among its key initiatives are 'Back to School' support for underprivileged students, assistance for children undergoing cancer treatment, provision of medical equipment and support for senior citizens, and Ramadan and Eid programmes for families and individuals in need. The Bank has also promoted financial literacy among youth from the Child Welfare Center, helping strengthen financial awareness and encourage more informed financial decisions.

Ahlibank's CSR efforts also extend to SME and entrepreneurship development, supporting Omani entrepreneurs in strengthening their capabilities, financial knowledge and business sustainability. Together, these initiatives demonstrate a sustained commitment to building stronger, more inclusive and financially empowered communities across Oman.

Shabiba Jawa'iz Basma Social Impact Awards 2026 celebrates organisations and individuals whose initiatives contribute to community development, healthcare, education, youth empowerment, sustainability, inclusion and social progress across the Sultanate.

Six agreements signed by Omani, Bahraini firms to expand exports

The agreements signed on the sidelines of the Sultanate of Oman’s participation in the “Made in the GCC 2026” forum and exhibition

MANAMA: Omani companies signed six commercial agreements and memoranda of understanding with companies from the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The agreements signed on the sidelines of the Sultanate of Oman’s participation in the “Made in the GCC 2026” forum and exhibition, a step reflecting the growing opportunities for trade cooperation between the two countries and supporting the access of national products to Gulf markets.

The move comes within the efforts of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, represented by “Oman Exports,” to open new markets for Omani companies and transform their external participations into export opportunities and sustainable trade partnerships.

These agreements and the Omani participation in the dialogue sessions come within the Ministry’s endeavours to maximise the economic and knowledge returns from the Sultanate of Oman’s presence at exhibitions, forums and regional and international economic gatherings, by promoting national industries and products, enabling Omani companies to reach importers, distributors and trade partners, alongside highlighting



national expertise and competencies and exchanging experiences in the fields of industry, innovation, finance, logistics services and supply chains.

The forum witnessed the participation of a number of Omani talents and experts in the accompanying dialogue sessions, which discussed the future of GCC industry, human resource development, the transition towards smart factories, the development of supply chains and financing and industrial partnerships.

In the session “Gulf Talent between Qualification and Employment,” Eng. Ali bin Abdullah Al Aysari, Executive Director of the Joint Labour Office at the Ministry of Labour, participated. The ses-

sion addressed the development and qualification of Gulf talent in line with the needs of the industrial sector and the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the enhancement of quality employment opportunities.

Dr. Ayman bin Abdullah Al Fadli, Chief Executive Officer of the Industrial Innovation Academy, also participated in the session “Smart Factories and Open Industrial Innovation”. The session focused on the role of advanced industrial technologies and smart factories in raising productivity, efficiency and competitiveness, and enhancing innovation and cooperation between the industrial sector and research entities.

In the session “Infrastructure

and Gulf Supply Chains,” Dr. Mahmoud bin Sakhi Al Balushi, Chief Executive Officer of Al Madina Logistics Services, participated. The session discussed ways to enhance connectivity between industrial cities, economic zones, ports and border crossings, and to facilitate customs clearance procedures and the movement of products between the GCC states.

Hamad bin Salim Al Harthy, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Development Bank, participated in the session themed “Financing Mechanisms and Industrial Partnerships,” which shed light on the role of financing institutions, development funds and partnerships in supporting the growth of the industrial sector, developing appropriate financing solutions, and enhancing the capacity of industrial projects to grow and attract investments.

Eng. Khalid bin Saleem Al Qassabi, Director-General of Industry at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, said that the agreements signed on the sidelines of the “Made in the GCC 2026” forum and exhibition reflect the growing ability of Omani industrial products to compete and reach Gulf markets. He noted that the diversity of the agreements across a number of industrial sectors confirms the evolution



of national industry’s capabilities in terms of quality, production and meeting the requirements of target markets.

He added that the Ministry is working to strengthen the industrial sector’s connection to external markets and to encourage Omani factories to expand into exports and build sustainable trade partnerships, in a manner that contributes to raising the added value of national products and diversifying the base of non-oil exports. He explained that the Gulf market represents an important extension of Omani industry and an opportunity to enhance industrial and trade integration among the GCC states.

For his part, Mahmoud bin Sulaiman Al Yazidi, General Supervisor of the Omani pavilion participating in the exhibition — Oman Exports at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, explained that the agreements represent direct commercial outputs of the efforts exerted by “Oman Exports” in connecting Omani companies with importers, distributors and trade partners in target markets, and in transforming participation in exhibitions and economic forums into export opportunities and actual contracts that contribute to enhancing the spread

of national products.

He noted that export promotion efforts are not confined to participation in exhibitions, but also encompass preparing Omani companies for market access, building direct communication channels with buyers and distributors, holding bilateral trade meetings and following up on the opportunities arising from them, helping companies build long-term trade relationships and open new sales and distribution channels. He affirmed that the agreements signed with Bahraini companies reflect the promising opportunities for increasing the presence of Omani products in the Bahraini market and launching from there towards broader Gulf and regional markets.

The Ministry continues to work on transforming external participations into tangible economic results by organising bilateral trade meetings, exploring promising markets and opportunities, and supporting companies in building distribution networks and sustainable partnerships and opening new export channels, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the Omani product and contributing to the growth and diversification of non-oil exports and the entrenchment of the presence of Omani industry in Gulf, regional and international markets. — ONA

SAFETY OF THE MARITIME ENVIRONMENT



UK parliamentary delegation visits Maritime Security Centre

MUSCAT: A parliamentary delegation from the United Kingdom (UK), headed by Emily Thornberry, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the British House of Commons and Labour Member of Parliament, visited on Wednesday the Maritime Security Centre (MSC).

Upon arrival at the centre’s headquarters, the delegation was received by Commodore Abdullah Ali Al Hajri, Head of the Maritime Security Centre.

The visiting delegation listened to a briefing reviewing the roles, tasks, and responsibilities of the centre, as well as the efforts exerted in preserving the safety of the maritime environment and protecting it within territorial wa-



ters, thereby enhancing the maritime security and safety system.

The delegation also toured the Maritime Security Centre and viewed its facilities, equip-

ment, and modern technologies and systems, reflecting the level of readiness and efficiency in executing its assigned tasks and responsibilities. — ONA

SOUTH AL BATINAH GOVERNORATE

Programme to boost trade reviewed



A’Rustaq: The Office of the Governor of South Al Batinah yesterday held a meeting during which it reviewed measures to implement a programme aimed at consolidating the environment of trade and investment across the governorates of Oman.

The meeting, held in the Wilayat of A’Rustaq, dealt with key aspects of developing a commercial and investment climate that contributes to boosting economic activity and establishing

an environment that better supports the private sector and investors at large.

The programme focuses on generating investment opportunities in South Al Batinah and leveraging available assets in a manner that attracts investments and develops economic activities. It also seeks to foster integration among government departments and establishments associated with the commercial and investment sectors. — ONA

ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY IN MUSCAT

Workshop explores means of using blockchain technology to authenticate certificates

MUSCAT: The activities of a regional workshop on utilising blockchain technology to verify the authenticity of academic certificates and protect them from forgery commenced on Wednesday at the Arab Open University in Muscat.

The two-day workshop is organised by the Ministry of Education, represented by Oman National Commission for Education, Culture and Sciences, in cooperation with the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (ALECSO) and the Arab Open University.

The opening of the workshop was held under the auspices of Eng. Omar Hamdan Al Ismaili, CEO of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA).

The workshop aims to introduce blockchain technology and its application domains in the education sector, review the project of the Unified Arab System for Certificate Verification based on this technology, explore ways for the Sultanate of Oman to join it, and build the technical capacities of work teams in universities and educational institutions in the field of digital certificate verification.

The opening ceremony included a speech by the Arab Open University delivered by Prof. Mohamed Hamdan Al Badi, Rector of the University, in which he pointed out the importance of blockchain technology in supporting digital transformation in the education sector, as well as



its utilisation in authenticating certificates and qualifications, verifying their validity, and protecting them from forgery.

In his speech, he emphasised the importance of scientific research, innovation, and translating knowledge into impactful applications and projects, highlighting the university’s efforts through the Innovation and Technology Transfer Centre and the Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence, alongside building national capacities to understand emerging technologies and harness them to serve society’s needs.

Dr. Mahmoud Abdullah Al Abri, Secretary of Oman National Commission for Education, Culture and Sciences, delivered the Commission’s speech, in which he affirmed that this initiative is an extension of the Sultanate of Oman’s efforts in digital transformation, developing educational systems and services, and building national capacities. He noted that building a reliable system for certificate verification requires the integra-

tion of educational institutions, regulatory and technical entities, experts, and decision-makers.

Prof. Mohamed Al Jemni presented a keynote paper addressing ALECSO’s initiatives in developing and implementing artificial intelligence policies in learning, organising workshops and training programmes on AI and its ethics, supporting research and studies in this field, and collaborating with international institutions to strengthen ethical frameworks in the use of artificial intelligence.

The workshop’s proceedings include sessions discussing the use of blockchain technology in education, educational data governance and cybersecurity, authenticating certificates and protecting them from forgery, alongside reviewing digital transformation and education quality projects, and introducing the Unified Arab System for Certificate Verification, its services, and mechanisms for its implementation in educational institutions.

— ONA



SPORTS

Saudi national team wins Gulf Cup 27 title after defeating UAE

Saudi Arabia beat the United Arab Emirates 2-0 in the final at King Abdullah Sports City Stadium in Jeddah, winning the Kingdom's fourth Gulf Cup title

JEDDAH: On behalf of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, under whose patronage the tournament was held, Deputy Governor of Makkah Region Prince Saud bin Mishal bin Abdulaziz presented the 27th Arabian Gulf Cup (Khaleeji 27) trophy to the Saudi national team on Tuesday. Saudi Arabia beat the United Arab Emirates 2-0 in the final at King Abdullah Sports City Stadium in Jeddah, winning the Kingdom's fourth Gulf Cup title.

Also at the final were Minister of Sport and President of the Saudi Olympic and Paralympic Committee Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki



bin Faisal, FIFA President Gianni Infantino, and several princes and officials.

The minister of sport thanked the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for his patronage of the tournament.

"We take pride in the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for this tournament," he said in a press statement. "This gracious attention from the wise leadership reflects the esteemed status of the Arabian Gulf Cup and

its deep-rooted sporting and historical value for our brothers in the Gulf countries, who are united by bonds of brotherhood."

He added: "I extend my sincere congratulations to our wise leadership on our national team's victory in this cherished championship, which holds great significance for us as Gulf citizens."

He commended the Saudi fans for their unwavering support throughout the campaign and praised all participating teams for

their exemplary sportsmanship and competitive spirit.

He concluded: "I express my deep gratitude to all the organizing bodies and committees, staff, and volunteers for their tremendous efforts from the preparatory stages to the tournament's conclusion. Their coordination, cooperation, and dedication contributed to the success of this edition and ensured the tournament was presented in a manner befitting the stature of the Gulf Cup and the value it holds for

the people of the region."

Jeddah hosted the tournament for the first time, from September 23 to October 6. The eight national teams played 15 matches at King Abdullah Sports City and Prince Abdullah Al-Faisal Sports City.

Gulf Football Federation president praises Gulf Cup 27 success

President of the Gulf Football Federation (GFF) Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Thani affirmed that the success of the 27th Gulf Cup reflects the tournament's standing and continued evolution while preserving its identity and longstanding legacy.

He said, "We congratulate the Saudi national team on winning the Gulf Cup 27 title, and congratulate the UAE national team on reaching the final and on its performance throughout the tournament. We also extend our congratulations and appreciation to all the participating teams that contributed to the success of this edition."

He added, "What we witnessed in Jeddah throughout the tournament once again confirms the standing of the Gulf Cup among the people of the region. The large attendance, strong competition on the field, and extensive media coverage of the tournament all reflect the value of this competition and what it represents for Gulf football."

He expressed his appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting the tournament, as well as to the Saudi Arabian Football Federation, the local organizing committee, and all entities and teams involved in organizing it. He also commended the role of fans, media outlets, and partners in the success of the 27th edition.

Asian Football Confederation (AFC) President and FIFA Senior Vice President Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa congratulated the Saudi national football team on winning the Arabian Gulf Cup 27, affirming that the achievement reflects the distinguished standing of Saudi football at the regional and continental levels.

He praised the Saudi team's strong performances throughout the Gulf Cup, highlighting the determination and resilience the players showed in their matches.

The AFC president said the Gulf Cup 27 featured strong competition among the participating teams and provided valuable preparation ahead of their participation in the AFC Asian Cup 2027.

Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa also praised the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's successful hosting of the Gulf Cup 27, noting that the event was organized in an outstanding manner that reflected the Kingdom's strong reputation for hosting sporting events at various levels. -SPA

2027 ICC MEN'S ODI

Always electrifying: Sohail Tanvir on India-Pakistan clash

DUBAI: Former Pakistan pacer Sohail Tanvir believes the upcoming India-Pakistan clash in the 2027 ICC Men's ODI World Cup will once again generate immense excitement among cricket fans worldwide, while stressing that the quality of cricket should remain the biggest takeaway from the high-voltage encounter.

India and Pakistan have been drawn in the same group for the upcoming World Cup, setting up another highly anticipated chapter in one of cricket's biggest rivalries. With bilateral cricket between the two nations no longer taking place due to geopolitical tensions, their meetings are largely restricted to ICC events and the Asia Cup.

"It is always electrifying! The entire world eagerly anticipates these fixtures. Unfortunately, bilateral series between our nations no longer take place, so it is strictly in ICC tournaments or the Asia Cup that we get to see them battle," Tanvir told ANI.

India enjoy a commanding 16-1 head-to-head record against Pakistan across the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup and T20 World Cup. The latest encounter between the arch-rivals saw India secure a 19-run victory over



Pakistan in the Asian Games 2026 final in Japan, successfully defending their gold medal.

"Just like every cricket lover, I am eagerly awaiting that match. Above all, it should be an engrossing, tightly contested battle. As a cricket fan, what matters most is quality cricket— whoever triumphs at the end, it's okay as long as it's a great contest," he added.

Tanvir, who featured in several India-Pakistan encounters during his career, also opened up about the pressure surrounding these matches, saying the expectations from fans on both sides can often outweigh everything else.

"Look, the immense pressure

of public expectation from both sides outweighs everything else. It exists equally for both teams. Speaking specifically about my era, our matches were fierce, neck-to-neck nail-biters," the former Pakistan cricketer said.

However, Tanvir revealed that he personally enjoyed the intensity and pressure associated with playing against India, saying he thrived when faced with challenging situations.

"Yet, I personally always relished that intensity. I played a great deal of cricket in India—I played in the IPL, travelled to India for two bilateral tours, and in fact made my Test debut there in India," he said. -ANI

TICKET BALLOT

India vs Pakistan match in high demand as Cricket World Cup 2027 ticket applications top one million

JOHANNESBURG: The ticket demand for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027 has surged past the one-million mark, with more than one million applications submitted in less than three days since the ticket ballot opened on October 1.

Over 320,000 fans have already registered for the ballot, submitting applications for matches across South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia as anticipation continues to build for the 14th edition of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup, as per the ICC.

The India vs Pakistan fixture on October 10 is currently attracting the highest demand, with more than 100,000 ticket applications received. South Africa vs India follows with more than 86,000 applications, while India vs Australia has attracted more than 80,000.

The pre-seeded Super 7 fixture between India (A1) and Pakistan (A3) on November 7 has received almost 75,000 applications, making it the fourth most in-demand match. The November 21 final has also proved popular, with almost



65,000 applications already submitted. The tournament will feature 14 of the world's best teams, with the first ball set to be bowled on 2 October and the Final scheduled for 21 November.

With excitement building across the three host nations, the ICC has opened the ticket ballot to give fans around the world the opportunity to register for a chance to attend the tournament.

Ticket prices range from USD 9.62 USD (R158) for entry-level tickets to USD 31.31 (R514) for the highest-tier matches. Special consideration has also been given to family bundles, student and

pensioner pricing, early-bird local allocations, and community club and school group pricing.

ICC CEO, Sanjog Gupta said: "One million ticket applications in just over 48 hours of opening the ticket ballot is a demonstration of the attention, stature and affiliation for ICC Cricket World Cup 2027. ICC events are now spectacles which transcend cultural and geographic boundaries and serve as platforms to widen and deepen fandom for the sport."

"This is also Africa's moment to shine as an ICC marquee men's event is returning to the continent after two decades and brings with

it the attention of 2.5 billion cricket fans across 120+ countries. We aim to 'make the circle bigger', for fans, for the athletes, for the game, and for communities who will gather to celebrate the competition and the culture. The ballot is open, and we can't wait to host the world so get in if you haven't already."

Fans have until 23h59 (CAT) on November 21 to register for the ballot and select their desired matches at tickets.cricketworld-cup.com. The 12 teams already confirmed for the Group Stage have been divided into two groups of six. India, Australia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe and Qualifier A form Group A, while New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka, England, Bangladesh and Qualifier B make up Group B. The Group Stage will begin on October 7, with India taking on Australia in a repeat of the 2023 World Cup final in Cape Town. South Africa will begin their campaign against New Zealand in Cape Town on October 9, while co-host Zimbabwe will face Qualifier A in Bulawayo on the same day. -ANI

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

Merino double sends Spain past Croatia

MADRID: Mikel Merino scored twice in the second half as world champion Spain fought back from a goal down to beat Croatia 2-1 in Split on Tuesday.

The win extended Spain's unbeaten run to 42 matches and secured its place in the UEFA Nations League quarterfinals with four wins from four group games.

Merino provided the goals, while goalkeeper Unai Simon made several crucial saves to keep Spain in the contest.

Croatia coach Slaven Bilic, responding to his team's humiliating 7-0 defeat to England on Saturday, said he wanted a "game for men" and got the physical response he sought in a robust first half.

Although Spain, with Lamine Yamal, Pedri and Rodri in the starting lineup, enjoyed more possession in the opening period, the team was frequently uncomfortable.

Simon made an acrobatic stop to deny Josip Stanisic and later blocked Igor Matanovic after a counterattack, only for Ivan Perisic to follow up and score from the rebound in the 20th minute.

Simon made another point-



blank save to deny Matanovic shortly afterward before getting down quickly to smother an effort from Josko Gvardiol.

Mikel Oyarzabal wasted Spain's best first-half opportunity with a tame header from Aymeric Laporte's cross, while Yamal dragged a shot into the side netting.

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente replaced Alex Baena with Merino at halftime, and the substitution paid off. Merino equalized in the 60th minute after a clever pass from Dani Olmo, with Dominik

Livakovic having earlier denied Yamal.

Simon produced another fine stop in the 78th minute after an error by Martin Zubimendi, who had replaced Rodri, presented Perisic with a chance. Perisic was sent off a minute later after receiving a second yellow card for a reckless challenge from behind on Marc Cucurella. Merino sealed the win in the 88th minute, collecting a pass from Zubimendi before turning and firing into the top corner to confirm Spain's place in the quarterfinals. -Xinhua

SUDDEN DEPARTURE

Ronaldo breaks silence over Portugal camp exit

DUBAI: Cristiano Ronaldo has broken his silence over his sudden departure from the Portuguese national camp, which has created major controversy in the footballing world, insisting that he remains available for the national team while detailing his disagreement with head coach Jorge Jesus.

The Al Nassr star left the national team camp early after a breakdown in communication with Jesus over his role in the current squad came under question during the UEFA Nations League.

The 41-year-old Portuguese legend was part of Al Nassr's trophy-winning set-up when Jesus was the manager of the Saudi club.

Tensions between Ronaldo and the coaching staff reached their peak when Portugal played Norway.

Ahead of the match, Cristiano was instructed to warm up with expectations of featuring in the later half of the contest. However, Jorge eventually decided against bringing Cristiano to the pitch, leaving the legendary striker frustrated on the bench.

While Jorge claimed that Cristiano was benched due to tactical reasons, it only added to the growing rift between the once-close coach-player pair.

"If I am physically well, playing for my club, with goals, I hope, after serving the suspension that may be applied to me, I will be available, as I have always been until today, to compete and win for our national team," Ronaldo wrote in a detailed Instagram post, following the incident.

Explaining his decision to leave the squad, Ronaldo said he was unhappy after being left on the bench despite warming up during the match.

"Everyone knows the rest. I warmed up from half-time onwards, watched the minutes tick by and wasn't called on," Ronaldo said. "The manager had broken his word to me."

Ronaldo and Jesus, who previously worked together at Al Nassr, subsequently held a meeting that was also attended by Saudi Pro League club sporting director Simao Coutinho. -ANI

15TH GCC MEETING

The 15th consultative meeting between the GCC Ministers of Commerce and Industry and the Presidents of the GCC Chambers of Commerce and Industry was held in Manama.

MARKET BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER

The MSX index closed at 7,828.06 points, up by 0.51% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.48% at 638.28 points. Oman Oil Marketing, up 9.85%, was the top gainer while, Muscat Gases, down 6.48%, was the top loser.

MSX gains global visibility with FTSE Russell watchlist entry

Being placed on the watchlist means that the market has become subject to monitoring and evaluation by the institution to consider the possibility of reclassifying it in the future according to its approved market classification methodology and criteria

MUSCAT: The entry of the Omani capital market (Muscat Stock Exchange) into the FTSE Russell watchlist represents an important phase in the course of the market's development and the enhancement of its presence on the global investment map.

Being placed on the watchlist means that the market has become subject to monitoring and evaluation by the institution to consider the possibility of reclassifying it in the future according to its approved market classification methodology and criteria.

Building on this positive step, FTSE Russell will continue during the upcoming phase to monitor MSX's performance and its sustained fulfilment of quantitative and qualitative requirements, alongside consulting with international investment institutions regarding their actual experience in entering and investing in the



market. This phase derives its importance from the prestige that FTSE Russell indices hold within the global investment community, where asset managers, institutions, and international investors use them as a benchmark for constructing and tracking investment portfolios and measuring market performance.

In classifying markets, FTSE Russell relies on a comprehensive evaluation that is not limited to index performance or trading levels, but also encompasses the regulatory environment, the efficiency of market infrastructure, trading, settlement, and custody mecha-

nisms, the ease of entry and exit for international investors, the availability of information and market transparency, as well as the size of the investable market and the number of securities eligible for its indices.

Entering the watchlist is set to place the Omani market to a greater extent within the monitoring scope of the international investment community, as asset managers and investment institutions begin closely following market developments and market access requirements in light of a potential future change in its classification.

Mohammed Mahfoudh Al Ar-

dhi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX), said that the inclusion of the Muscat Stock Exchange on the FTSE Russell watchlist represents an important milestone in the development journey of the Omani capital market. He noted that it reflects the institutional and regulatory progress achieved in recent years, which has contributed to enhancing market efficiency, elevating its readiness, and expanding its presence before the international investment community.

He also emphasised that the development path that began with the restructuring of the exchange and its transformation into a company owned by Oman Investment Authority is moving toward building a deeper and more competitive capital market, capable of keeping pace with rapid transformations in global markets.

He added that this step is viewed as the beginning of a new phase requiring continued building upon achieved progress and deepening integration among various stakeholders in the capital market ecosystem. This will enhance the exchange's role in supporting

economic diversification targets, directing capital toward promising opportunities, and connecting the Omani economy to a broader base of investors and investment institutions around the world. He stated that the ambition extends beyond attaining the "Secondary Emerging Markets" classification to establishing an efficient, resilient, and sustainable capital market that matches the aspirations of the Sultanate of Oman and its economic standing.

Haitham Salim Al Salmi, CEO of the Muscat Stock Exchange, said that entering the FTSE Russell watchlist places the exchange at a more advanced stage in the market's trajectory, as focus shifts from building the foundations of readiness to consolidating and sustaining them, and working to fulfill the requirements that enhance opportunities for reclassification and upgrade to the Secondary Emerging Markets category.

He added that the importance of this step lies in providing broader visibility for the Omani capital market sector before global investment institutions and asset managers, while simultaneously requiring continued elevation of market efficiency, depth, and capacity to accommodate broader investment participation.

He pointed out that attaining a new classification would expand the international investment base in the market, enhance its ability to attract capital, and solidify its role as a platform connecting investment opportunities in the Sultanate of Oman, upcoming initial public offerings (IPOs), and new listings to a broader base of investors around the world.

Furthermore, the entry of the Muscat Stock Exchange into the watchlist opens broader horizons to enhance the presence of the Omani market on the global institutional investment map, given the massive assets managed by investment funds tracking FTSE Emerging Markets indices. Data from several of the most prominent funds indicate asset sizes in the

billions of dollars, while the markets of GCC countries combined account for a weight of approximately 6.07 percent in the FTSE Emerging Index as of 31 August 2026 data, excluding the Omani and Bahraini markets, which remain classified as Frontier Markets. Any future reclassification of the Omani market and assignment of an index weight to it would allow a portion of the capital tracking the index to be allocated to Omani equities, thereby boosting opportunities to attract new institutional investment inflows and supporting market depth, liquidity, and presence on the global markets map.

Under the umbrella of Oman Investment Authority, and supervised by the National Programme for Financial Sustainability and Financial Sector Development (Estidamah), in cooperation with the Financial Services Authority, Muscat Clearing and Depository Company, the Social Protection Fund, and brokerage firms operating in the Omani market, the Muscat Stock Exchange continues working to develop the capital market system and enhance its efficiency and competitiveness. This is pursued through improving the investor experience, boosting liquidity and market depth, developing infrastructure and investment products, and facilitating access for local and international investment institutions. Reaching the watchlist represents a stage within an integrated market development path, while any decision regarding reclassification remains subject to FTSE Russell's evaluation and the extent and sustainability of meeting its approved requirements.

These efforts align with the objectives of Muscat Stock Exchange aimed at enhancing the standing of the Omani capital market regionally and internationally, expanding the investor base, and increasing the attractiveness of listed companies to institutional capital, thereby strengthening the role of the capital market in supporting economic growth and diversification in the Sultanate of Oman. -ONA

DIGITAL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

BankDhofar's EasyBiz receives excellent response from businesses from across Oman

MUSCAT: BankDhofar continues to strengthen its digital banking proposition for businesses with EasyBiz, its digital collection management platform designed to simplify and automate collections, reconciliation and receivables management for businesses.

Earlier this year, BankDhofar launched EasyBiz, and since its launch, the platform has received strong interest across sectors including insurance, exchange houses, education, oil and gas, and logistics. The solution is designed to support businesses of different sizes in managing their collection processes more efficiently, while providing greater visibility and control over their receivables.

EasyBiz brings together key collection and receivables activities on a single digital platform. Businesses can generate invoices, manage collections, automate reconciliation and access real-time management information, helping reduce manual processes and improve operational efficiency.

A key capability of EasyBiz is its ability to connect with existing ERP and billing systems, enabling businesses to integrate their existing workflows with the bank's digital collection infrastructure. At the same time, businesses can also use the platform directly, providing flexibility for organisations at different stages of their digital transformation journey.

The platform supports a powerful automated payment reminder, helping businesses follow up on outstanding receivables and improve collection efficiency. Virtual accounts and automated reconciliation further simplify



the process by enabling incoming payments to be identified and matched against the relevant customer or invoice, reducing manual reconciliation efforts.

Through a real-time dashboard, businesses can gain visibility into their collection performance, upcoming and overdue receivables, top outstanding amounts, ageing and average credit cycles. This provides management with actionable insights to better monitor cash flows and make informed business decisions.

EasyBiz also supports multiple collection channels, including online bank transfers, cash, cheques and digital payment links, giving businesses greater flexibility in how they collect from their customers while maintaining a consolidated view of their collections.

The introduction of EasyBiz reflects BankDhofar's broader strategy of using digital technol-

ogy to create more connected and convenient experiences for its business customers.

By bringing banking and business processes closer together, the platform supports businesses in managing their financial operations through a more integrated digital experience.

Building on the success of EasyBiz, BankDhofar is well positioned to progressively expand the platform into a broader digital business ecosystem, enabling SMEs and corporates to manage more of their day-to-day business needs through a single, connected platform.

EasyBiz is part of BankDhofar's continued commitment to supporting the digital transformation of businesses in Oman and enabling customers with innovative solutions that enhance efficiency, connectivity and financial visibility.






Announcement

The Tax Authority would like to draw the attention of taxpayers to file their VAT and Excise tax returns for the third quarter of the year 2026 in accordance with the tax return form which is available on e-service portal

www.taxoman.gov.om

And attach all required documents to it no later than: **30 October 2026.**

We hope all taxpayers comply with the deadline.






taxoman

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MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Oman Oil Marketing, up 9.85%, was the top gainer while, Muscat Gases, down 6.48%, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 7,828.06 points, up by 0.51% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.48% at 638.28 points. Oman Oil Marketing, up 9.85%, was the top gainer while, Muscat Gases, down 6.48%, was the top loser. Shares of Sohar International Bank were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 14,317 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 90.45 million, with more than 322.01 million shares changing hands. Out of 72 traded securities, 34 advanced, 19 declined, and 19 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net sellers for RO 2421K while GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 1857K, followed by foreign investors for RO 564K worth of shares. Financial Index closed at 13,998.08 points, up 0.70%. Prices of Global Financial Investments, Takaful Oman, Financial Corporation, Al Sharqia Investment, and Bank Muscat were up by 3.42%, 3.39%, 3.16%, 1.98%, and 1.60% respectively. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Muscat Finance, Oman United Insurance, Oman Qatar Insurance, and Bank Nizwa were down by 4.15%, 2.94%, 2.37%, 1.11%, and 0.64% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 10,173.78 points, up 0.11%. Prices of Oman Fisheries, Raysut Cement, Gulf Mushroom Products,



Al Anwar Ceramics, and Galfar Engineering were up by 4.76%, 2.14%, 1.43%, 0.61%, and 0.61% respectively. Prices of Oman Flour Mills, and A'Saffa Foods were down by 1.36%, and 0.71% respectively. Services Index was up by 0.32% before closing at 3,135.98 points. Prices of Oman Oil Marketing, Abraj Energy, OQ Gas Networks, OQ Gas Networks, and National Bank Muscat were up by 3.42%, 3.39%, 3.16%, 1.98%, and 1.60% respectively. Prices of Oman Arab Bank, Muscat Finance, Oman United Insurance, Oman Qatar Insurance, and Bank Nizwa were down by 4.15%, 2.94%, 2.37%, 1.11%, and 0.64% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 10,173.78 points, up 0.11%. Prices of Oman Fisheries, Raysut Cement, Gulf Mushroom Products,

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	7,849.26	7,788.14	7,828.06	7,778.14	39.92	0.51%
FINANCIAL INDEX	14,021.69	13,901.01	13,998.08	13,901.01	97.07	0.70%
Industry Index	10,233.87	10,162.79	10,173.78	10,162.79	10.99	0.11%
Services Index	3,140.92	3,125.30	3,135.98	3,125.87	10.12	0.32%
MSX Shariah Index	639.91	635.23	638.28	635.23	3.04	0.48%
MSX TR INDEX	12,169.39	12,074.64	12,136.53	12,074.64	61.90	0.51%
FINANCIAL TR IDX	17,238.94	17,090.56	17,209.91	17,090.56	119.34	0.70%
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	13,106.98	13,015.95	13,030.03	13,015.95	14.08	0.11%
SERVICES TR IDX	4,217.30	4,196.32	4,210.67	4,197.09	13.58	0.32%
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,291.27	1,291.27	1,291.27	1,291.27	0.00	0.00%

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
322,018,042	90,451,135	14,317	39,976,045,859	34	19	19	72

MSX DAILY BULLETIN AS ON 07/10/2026

	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST RD	LAST OFFER	PUR VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	104	151	1	1.450	1.450	1.450	1.450	1.320	0.130	9.848	1.450	1.350	1.452	0.100	88,648,750
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO	2,826,907	1,093,611	93	0.380	0.393	0.380	0.393	0.380	0.013	3.421	0.393	0.386	0.393	0.100	78,600,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	3,219,097	1,366,696	530	0.422	0.429	0.421	0.428	0.419	0.009	2.148	0.428	0.430	0.428	0.100	329,645,600
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO	224,700	23,154	21	0.103	0.104	0.103	0.103	0.101	0.002	1.980	0.103	0.101	0.103	0.100	3,270,000
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	33,138,804	15,530,976	1,731	0.439	0.448	0.438	0.445	0.438	0.007	1.598	0.445	0.398	0.445	0.100	3,340,346,693
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	4,862	2,405	5	0.480	0.485	0.480	0.485	0.488	0.007	1.434	0.485	0.485	0.536	0.100	24,919,477
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	34,675	8,828	7	0.252	0.255	0.252	0.255	0.252	0.003	1.190	0.255	0.252	0.255	0.100	10,924,963
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	2,725,942	240,163	14	0.088	0.089	0.088	0.089	0.088	0.001	1.136	0.089	0.089	0.089	0.100	31,695,330
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	297,445	117,585	12	0.465	0.500	0.465	0.500	0.465	0.005	1.010	0.500	0.487	0.500	0.100	812,873,178
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	66,345	13,944	11	0.210	0.212	0.210	0.212	0.210	0.002	0.952	0.212	0.205	0.212	0.100	65,192,018
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	1,509,023	329,529	393	0.218	0.220	0.217	0.220	0.218	0.002	0.917	0.220	0.222	0.220	0.100	668,753,677
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	127,858	14,378	32	0.112	0.113	0.112	0.113	0.112	0.001	0.893	0.112	0.111	0.113	0.100	19,775,000
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	54,635,554	12,467,738	2,440	0.227	0.230	0.227	0.228	0.226	0.002	0.885	0.228	0.227	0.228	0.100	987,382,254
OM0000009759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	31,458,889	15,775,287	1,964	0.498	0.504	0.498	0.499	0.495	0.004	0.808	0.499	0.499	0.446	0.010	3,992,000,000
OM0000003000	AI MAHA PETROLEUM PRODS MKRTNG	200	252	1	1.260	1.260	1.260	1.260	1.250	0.010	0.800	1.260	1.226	1.255	0.100	86,940,000
OM0000009908	OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SF2)	41,035,305	10,864,781	2,071	0.265	0.267	0.264	0.266	0.264	0.002	0.738	0.266	0.264	0.266	0.040	420,514,566
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	133,311	55,031	21	0.410	0.430	0.410	0.412	0.409	0.003	0.733	0.412	0.412	0.420	0.100	462,615,813
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	4,741,888	1,362,894	349	0.289	0.291	0.283	0.291	0.290	0.001	0.345	0.291	0.291	0.291	0.100	425,617,025
OM0000001509	DHOFAR INTL DEVELOPMENT & INVEST	72,335	21,276	30	0.291	0.295	0.291	0.294	0.293	0.001	0.341	0.294	0.292	0.294	0.100	145,840,505
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	14,716	50,601	11	3.435	3.440	3.435	3.440	3.430	0.010	0.282	3.440	3.433	3.440	0.100	308,565,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	100	65	1	0.645	0.645	0.645	0.644	0.644	0.001	0.155	0.645	0.615	0.645	0.100	213,412,898
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO	139,450	16,734	14	0.122	0.122	0.120	0.120	0.120	0.000	0.000	0.120	0.118	0.120	0.100	15,356,250
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	3,200	2,992	2	0.935	0.935	0.935	0.935	0.935	0.000	0.000	0.935	0.842	0.940	0.100	116,779,593
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	108,994,006	21,102,075	2,331	0.194	0.195	0.192	0.193	0.193	0.000	0.000	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.100	1,481,469,085
OM0000003661	VOLTAM ENERGY	320,852	60,560	46	0.189	0.190	0.188	0.188	0.188	0.000	0.000	0.188	0.186	0.188	0.000	188,000,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	356,319	113,931	52	0.320	0.320	0.319	0.320	0.320	0.000	0.000	0.320	0.319	0.320	0.100	208,302,154
OM0000004735	SEMBOCORP SALALAH	105,500	30,068	13	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.000	0.000	0.285	0.260	0.286	0.100	272,053,000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	252,571	50,427	32	0.200	0.200	0.199	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.199	0.200	0.100	134,977,486
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	332,725	66,405	40	0.200	0.200	0.199	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.200	0.200	0.220	0.100	145,861,283
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	7,500	2,550	2	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.000	0.000	0.340	0.332	0.340	0.100	23,932,600
OM0000003234	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	46,939	12,886	13	0.275	0.275	0.274	0.274	0.275	-0.001	-0.364	0.274	0.274	0.275	0.100	64,778,340
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	1,817,356	2,484,348	195	1.371	1.374	1.366	1.366	1.371	-0.005	-0.365	1.366	1.366	1.366	0.100	1,024,500,000
OM0000001020	ASTAD SHIPPING	2,672,481	623,076	705	0.234	0.235	0.232	0.233	0.234	0.001	-0.427	0.233	0.237	0.233	0.000	1,213,637,417
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	14,845	4,577	11	0.185	0.185	0.184	0.184	0.185	-0.001	-0.541	0.184	0.184	0.185	0.100	36,732,950
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	476,451	73,890	45	0.157	0.157	0.155	0.155	0.156	-0.001	-0.641	0.155	0.154	0.155	0.100	346,727,720
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	35,813	25,078	16	0.705	0.705	0.700	0.700	0.705	-0.005	-0.709	0.700	0.700	0.700	0.100	84,000,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	28,785	9,569	6	0.337	0.337	0.330	0.330	0.338	-0.008	-2.867	0.330	0.330	0.330	0.100	34,650,000
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	2,000	326	2	0.163	0.163	0.161	0.161	0.168	-0.007	-4.167	0.161	0.161	0.175	0.100	12,159,402
OM0000003141	BARKA WATER AND POWER	50,311	7,579	16	0.150	0.153	0.150	0.150	0.160	-0.010	-6.250	0.150	0.151	0.160	0.100	24,000,000
Total		39	293,873,104	84,046,415	13,303											
Parallel Market																
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	201,340	12,057	19	0.060	0.061	0.059	0.061	0.059	0.002	3.390	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.100	15,250,000
OM0000002911	FINANCIAL CORPORATION	7,500	735	1	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.095	0.003	3.158	0.098	0.098	0.098	0.100	6,862,936
OM0000001384	FINANCIAL SERVICES	1,538	368	2	0.239	0.239	0.239	0.239	0.236	0.003	1.271	0.239	0.239	0.239	0.100	4,780,000
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	18,454	3,304	3	0.179	0.180	0.179	0.180	0.178	0.002	1.124	0.180	0.178	0.180	0.100	106,458,638
OM0000009569	JABAL REIF	31,648	3,386	4	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.106	0.001	0.943	0.107	0.106	0.107	0.100	18,618,000
OM0000001151	OMIFCO	22,939,441	5,456,850	575	0.237	0.240	0.236	0.238	0.236	0.002	0.847	0.238	0.238	0.238	0.000	1,592,071,250
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	345,504	42,648	42	0.121	0.125	0.121	0.122	0.121	0.001	0.826	0.122	0.122	0.121	0.100	10,370,000
OM0000002623	OMAN GATEWAY FUND	7,343	7,873	4	1.077	1.077	1.072	1.072	1.065	0.007	0.657	1.072	1.072	1.075	0.000	29,398,481
OM0000002188	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	1,464,178	241,056	88	0.164	0.167	0.163	0.165	0.164	0.001	0.610	0.165	0.163	0.165	0.100	36,300,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	874,139	146,795	58	0.169	0.169	0.165	0.165	0.164	0.001	0.610	0.165	0.165	0.173	0.100	33,492,764
OM0000001095	DHOFAR INSURANCE	900	337	1	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.000	0.000	0.340	0.340	0.340	0.100	38,559,336
OM0000003168	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	25,900	1,943	2	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.081	0.100	4,687,500
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	53,584	4,533	4	0.087	0.087	0.084	0.085	0.085	0.000	0.000	0.085	0.084	0.085	0.100	3,663,500
OM0000002238	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	70,200	4,973	14	0.072	0.072	0.070	0.071	0.071	0.000	0.000	0.071	0.070	0.073	0.100	1,491,000
OM0000002041	OMAN CHLORINE	65,000	11,011	6	0.169	0.170	0.169	0.169	0.169	0.000	0.000	0.169	0.162	0.169	0.100	12,084,994
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	14,665	3,168	2	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.000	0.000	0.216	0.215	0.216	0.100	140,550,206
OM0000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	58,023	4,604	7	0.080	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.100	17,779,200
OM0000006847	OMAN REIF FUND	158,307	16,760	20	0.106	0.106	0.105	0.106	0.107	-0.001	-0.635	0.106	0.106	0.106	0.100	89,222,313
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	45,763	4,223	7	0.091	0.090	0.091	0.090	0.094	-0.001	-1.064	0.090	0.091	0.103	0.100	14,466,187
OM0000006979	OMAN QATAR INSURANCE	1,000	178	1	0.178	0.178	0.178	0.178	0.180	0.002	-1.111	0.178	0.178	0.198	0.100	28,696,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	6,586	4,001	3	0.581	0.581	0.581	0.581	0.589	-0.008	-1.358	0.581	0.571	0.581	0.100	100,887,019
OM0000007910	OMAN REAL ESTATE	2,000	134	1	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.068	-0.001	-1.471	0.067	0.067	0.074	0.100	13,400,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	100,550	6,737	7	0.067	0.068	0.066	0.066	0.068	-0.002	-2.941	0.066	0.066	0.068	0.100	20,271,657
OM0000005260	OMAN ARAB BANK	123,795	413,149	106	0.337	0.337	0.322	0.323	0.337	-0.014	-4.154	0.322	0.323	0.322	0.100	646,886,097
OM0000003711	SOHAR POWER	19	4	1	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.209	-0.009	-4.306	0.200	0.200	0.229	0.100	4,000,000
OM0000001078	MUSCAT GASES	5,000	650	2	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.139	-0.009	-6.475	0.130	0.130	0.138	0.100	3,900,000
Total		26	277,36,877	6,391,493	960								</			


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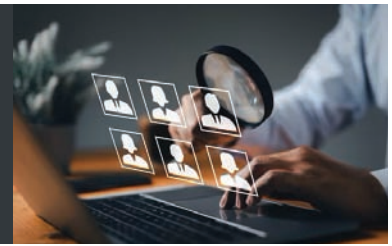
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WTTC summit opens in Malta, Europe tourism may grow 3.1%

The findings come as over 1,000 delegates, including over 200 of the world's leading Travel & Tourism CEOs and government leaders, gather in Valletta for WTTC's annual event



VALLETT : Tourism is forecast to grow 3.1% across Europe in 2026, continuing to outperform the wider economy and exceeding the sector's 2.6% growth recorded last year, according to the latest research from the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), released today at the opening press conference of WTTC's 26th Global Summit in Malta.

The findings come as more than 1,000 delegates, including over 200 of the world's leading Travel & Tourism CEOs and government leaders, gather in Valletta for WTTC's flagship annual event, with more than 100 speakers participating across the programme.

The Summit is attracting an exceptional concentration of global leadership, including the Right

Honourable Justin Trudeau, former Prime Minister of Canada; José María Aznar, former Prime Minister of Spain; Apostolos Tzitzikostas, European Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism; and Nick Adams, the first U.S. Presidential Envoy for Tourism.

WTTC's latest outlook shows that, despite geopolitical and economic uncertainty, global Travel & Tourism is expected to grow by 2.5% in 2026, outpacing the wider global economy. Europe is forecast to perform even more strongly, with international visitor spending projected to increase by 5.8%, while leisure and business travel spending are expected to grow by 3.1% and 4.2%, respectively.

Travel & Tourism remains one

of Europe's most important economic sectors, supporting around one in ten jobs across the region and creating opportunities for communities, businesses and destinations.

Manfredi Lefebvre, Chairman, WTTC, said: "The WTTC Global Summit brings together the leaders shaping the future of Travel & Tourism. Malta's Government has shown strong leadership and commitment to our sector, making it an ideal host for these important discussions. Over the coming days, we will strengthen partnerships, advance new initiatives and help ensure Travel & Tourism continues to drive growth, investment and opportunity around the world."

Gloria Guevara, President & CEO, WTTC, said: "Travel & Tour-

ism continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience. Globally, the sector contributed US\$11.6 trillion to the economy last year, representing 9.8% of global GDP, and supported 366 million jobs – nearly one in every nine jobs worldwide. Despite significant geopolitical challenges, we expect the sector to grow 2.5% this year, outpacing the global economy.

In Europe, the outlook is even stronger, with Travel & Tourism forecast to grow 3.1% in 2026. This is a sector that is ready to invest and innovate, but governments must create the right conditions – enabling seamless travel, strengthening connectivity, developing talent and supporting sustainable growth.

The choices made today will de-

termine how much of this opportunity Europe captures."

Carlo Micallef, CEO, Malta Tourism Authority, said: "Through our vision for the future we are not seeking to welcome more visitors only. We want to create greater value, not only economic, but also social and environmental. We want tourism that is sustainable and resilient. Tourism that embraces innovation while remaining rooted in our identity. Tourism that creates meaningful experiences for visitors while delivering tangible benefits for the communities that welcome them. And above all, tourism that remains a force for good. Hosting this Summit gives us an extraordinary opportunity to place that ambition within a global conversation."

Dr Charles Mangion, Chairman, Malta Tourism Authority, said: "For Malta, hosting a gathering of this significance is a moment of great pride. To welcome more than 200 of the world's leading voices in Travel and Tourism is a recognition not only of Malta's achievements as a tourism destination, but also of the role we aspire to play within the wider international tourism community. It is an opportunity to reflect on how we can continue to grow and strengthen our tourism sector while remaining mindful of our responsibilities to the people and communities that make Malta what it is. Above all, we must ensure that the well-being of our communities remains at the heart of this progress, so that the benefits of growth are shared and our development remains sus-

tainable for generations to come."

The findings set the scene for discussions at WTTC's FUTU[RE]SET Global Summit, where government and business leaders will examine the policies, partnerships and innovations needed to strengthen the competitiveness of Travel & Tourism in the years ahead.

Key themes include investment, connectivity, technology and artificial intelligence, workforce development, destination competitiveness and sustainable growth, all of which will play a critical role in determining how the sector responds to evolving traveller demand and global economic change.

The decision to bring the WTTC Global Summit to Malta reflects the country's strong commitment to Travel & Tourism and the support of the Maltese Government and tourism authorities in positioning the sector as a key driver of economic growth and international engagement.

WTTC's latest Economic Impact Research shows that Travel & Tourism is forecast to contribute US\$4.9 billion to Malta's economy in 2026, representing 16.9% of the country's GDP and supporting more than one in five jobs across the country.

The latest data also highlights Malta as one of Europe's strongest tourism performers. In 2025, the country recorded the highest annual increase in Travel & Tourism's GDP contribution among all European economies, growing by 16.8%, compared with the European average of 2.6%.

DISCOVERY OF NON-LINEAR EFFECTS

Nobel Prize in Chemistry goes to Henri B. Kagan, Kenso Soai

BERLIN: The Nobel Prize in Chemistry on Wednesday was awarded to Henri B. Kagan and Kenso Soai "for the discovery of non-linear effects and autocatalysis in asymmetric organic synthesis."

That means that the duo have been awarded for their breakthrough discoveries that pertain to questions of life.

They solved an age-old mystery, which was that some molecules, like amino acids, exist as two variants that are mirror images of one another.

But only one of the variants out of the two is found in the proteins in our cells and the other is rarely found in nature.

The scientists answered questions about why life chooses one variant over another and answered questions relating to that mystery.



Nobel chemistry prize goes to scientists who answered questions about homochirality

In chemistry, life's chemistry is what scientists call homochiral, after the Greek words for "same" and "hand."

The Nobel Committee said the chemistry prize recognizes discoveries that have enabled chemists to drive chemical reactions that lead to homochirality

"Henri Kagan and Kenso Soai have provided a solution to a chemical mystery that is over a century old: how homochirality can emerge spontaneously," said Heiner Linke, chair of the Nobel Committee for Chemistry.

"The chemical reactions they have developed are spectacular."

Last year, Susumu Kitagawa, Richard Robson and Omar Yaghi won the Nobel Prize in chemistry

for the development of new molecular structures that can trap vast quantities of gas inside. Their discoveries can help tackle some of the world's most pressing problems, like climate change.

What do laureates receive?

Laureates receive a tailored diploma, a medal and a document detailing the cash award that is set this year to 12 million Swedish kronor, which is equivalent to just over €1 million or \$1.2 million.

Who else has received a Nobel Prize so far?

The Nobel Prize in medicine was awarded Monday to Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann and Georg Nagel for their pioneering work on optogenetics, a method of controlling nerve cells with light, which makes it possible to study how the brain works. -DW

KEY MILESTONE

GE Aerospace ships 4 more F404 engines

NEW DELHI: US defence giant GE Aerospace has announced a key milestone in its supply commitments, confirming the latest dispatch of hardware for the F404-IN20 high-performance turbofan jet engine while underscoring its ongoing partnership with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and the Indian Air Force.

A GE Aerospace Spokesperson told ANI, "GE Aerospace shipped four F404-IN20 engines in September 2026. We remain focused on delivering the engines needed to power India's Tejas indigenous fighter jets. We are proud to partner with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and the Indian Air Force."

This recent dispatch follows an earlier consignment, as GE Aerospace had previously stated that it delivered three F404-IN20

engines to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in August for India's Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas programme, noting at the time: "GE Aerospace shipped three F404-IN20 engines to HAL in August 2026. We are proud to partner with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and the Indian Air Force to power India's indigenous fighter jets."

Faced previous delays

These recent deliveries come as HAL continues to receive F404 engines for the LCA Tejas Mk1A programme, which has faced previous delays due to supply constraints. Addressing the delivery schedule earlier, former HAL Chairman DK Sunil said that GE had assured the delivery of 20 F404 engines during the second half of 2026, between June and December. -ANI

GLOBAL SUPERSTARS

How winning a Nobel Prize can give you delusions of grandeur

BERLIN: Linus Pauling won not one, but two Nobel Prizes – the first, for chemistry, in 1954 for his research into the nature of the chemical bond, and the Peace Prize in 1962 for his work in the anti-nuclear weapons movement.

The American chemist not only won two Nobel Prizes, but won them on his own, a rare feat for any scientist. Such an honour often turns laureates into global superstars overnight, with millions hanging on their every word.

Nobel laureates can fall victim to Nobelitis

That instant fame can be dangerous, said Nils Hansson, a professor in the Department of History, Theory and Ethics of Medicine at Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf. Especially, he said, when these world-renowned experts "start spreading crazy, unproven scientific theories" – ideas that, when disseminated by Nobel laureates, risk being taken seriously.

That's what happened with Pauling. Beginning in the mid 1960s he began claiming that vitamin C was a universal remedy, a cure for everything from cancer to cardiovascular conditions and degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's disease, multiple sclerosis or osteoarthritis.

Pauling developed an alternative treatment he called orthomolecular medicine, based on specific doses of vitamins and minerals for each patient. To this day, some 60 years later, evidence for his methods remains inconclusive.



An informal term

Pauling's case is a classic example of "Nobelitis," or "Nobel disease" – not an official diagnosis, but an informal term used to describe how some laureates begin to suffer delusions of grandeur later in life. It was first coined by Paul Nurse, president of The Royal Society, the UK's national academy of sciences, and himself a winner of the Nobel

Prize.

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sciences, and himself a winner of the Nobel Prize.

'Be skeptical of everything'

"Be skeptical of everything, including yourself and your own ideas," Nurse said in a 2019 interview with KU Leuven University in Belgium, when asked what made someone a good scientist. In cases of Nobelitis, that self-skepticism is the first to go.

That was also the case with virologist Luc Montagnier, who was jointly honored in 2008 for his discovery of the human immunodeficiency virus, HIV, with colleague

Francoise Barre-Sinoussi in the early 1980s.

Montagnier would later go on to support homeopathic medicine, another alternative treatment of disease and claim that HIV transmission in Africa could be diminished through better hygiene and nutrition.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Montagnier said the SARS-CoV-2 virus had been created in a lab with parts of the HIV genetic code. "It's difficult for a practicing virologist to say that a Nobel laureate in virology is spreading nonsense," said German virologist Christian Drosten on NDR's Coronavirus Update podcast in May 2020. "But that is utter nonsense."

James Watson, who was never known for his modesty, also let fame go to his head. In 1962, he was awarded the Nobel Prize along with Maurice Wilkins and Francis Crick for their discovery of the structure of the DNA molecule. But in the early 2000s, Watson repeatedly spread racist theories that Black people were less intelligent than white people.

For medical historian Hansson, Watson is a prime example that the Nobel Prize is not automatically awarded to a person who should be considered as a role model.

"You may have made a fantastic discovery, but that doesn't make you a universal genius," he said.

Even Noble Prize winners need to be challenged

But the great expectations of an admiring public may also contribute to the development of Nobelitis. Paul Nurse, who won the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine in 2001, soon found himself getting daily requests for interviews on all sorts of topics.

"As if suddenly I was knowledgeable about all workings of the world and of human beings," he told DW.

Nurse had this advice for researchers: "Be careful quite what you say. Talk about things that you do know something about that would be fine. And if you don't know so much or you're not sure about something, be really clear that you're not sure."

Hansson has also noticed that the media eagerly report whatever Nobel laureates say – even when prize winners stray far from their area of expertise.

Nobelitis sufferers are leaders in their fields, and rightly honored for their work with the Nobel. But they're also regular individuals, not immune to megalomania and other behavioral problems – meaning that homeopathy, orthomolecular medicine and other pseudosciences don't automatically become credible just because they're backed by a Nobel Prize winner. -DW



LIFESTYLE

HOW CLIMATE CHANGE

WORSENE NEPAL'S DEADLY MOUNTAIN

A glacier and rock collapse in Nepal killed nearly 1,400 people and left thousands missing. Scientists say decades of warming helped set the disaster in motion

Nearly 1,400 people have died after a mountain slope collapsed and flash floods swept through the valleys of Nepal and Tibet. More than 5,000 people remain missing.

The collapse was initially thought to have been caused by an earthquake. Now, glaciologists and climate scientists have determined that a complex series of factors led to the disaster, with climate change laying the groundwork several times over: Warming temperatures receded the glacier, thawed permafrost and increased meltwater, destabilising the slope until it gave way on August 26.

"This was not a single trigger event," Walter Immerzeel, a mountain hydrologist at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, told journalists on a press call. "The failure occurred at an elevation of about 5150 metres (about 16,896 feet) and there were several processes acting together over time scales of years to decades, rather than one factor acting alone."

How the disaster unfolded

The floods began upstream with a large rock avalanche on the north face of Langtang Lirung. That caused a section of the glacier to collapse at the same time, sending roughly 110 million cubic metres of rock and glacier ice, the size of 44,000 Olympic swimming pools, hurtling downward. That type of rock avalanche is rare, occurring at this size only once every 1,000-10,000 years.

The material fell about 1,400 metres (4,593 feet) from the mountain to the valley floor, picking up debris, water, ice, rock and sediment as it descended. The impact released as much energy as a magnitude 5.2 earthquake. As it crashed into the valley, it also tore up buried glacier ice, adding up to 30 million more cubic metres of debris and water to the flow.

Within about seven minutes, the flood reached Nepal and China's Rasuwagadhi border, 20 kilometres (about 12 miles) downstream, moving at an average speed of 170 kilometres per hour (about 106 miles per hour). The flood continued downstream, travelling 200 kilometres in under seven hours.



How did this happen?

It was a complex combination of conditions, exacerbated by climate change, that allowed the slope to collapse in the first place. That's according to researchers with World Weather Attribution, an international collaboration of scientists that looks at the role of climate change in extreme weather and disaster events.

Rising temperatures, due to the burning of fossil fuels, have reshaped this stretch of the Himalayas for decades.

Near the failure site, the gla-

cier's edge had retreated just 75 metres between 1964 and 2000. But between 2010 and 2026, it dramatically accelerated, retreating another 373 metres. That stripped away the ice supporting the rock wall above it.

Permafrost — or permanently frozen ground within the rock — had also started to thaw. That took place between 4,500 and 5,500 metres of elevation, a critical band that's most sensitive to warming. As it thawed, the mountain walls became more and more unstable.

In the immediate run-up to the

collapse, conditions were extreme. July and August overall were the warmest on record in the area, with climate change adding about 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) to the region. On August 24 and 25, temperatures ran roughly 2.5 to 2.7 degrees Celsius above the 10-year average. A day before the catastrophe unfolded, the maximum temperature was approximately 7 degrees Celsius above the reference mean.

An unusually snowy October in 2025 likely also played a role, generating more meltwater.

Researchers also believe a 2015 earthquake played a role. That magnitude-7.8 quake triggered an earlier avalanche at Langtang Lirung, which may have weakened the rock mass in the years since, priming the slope for failure.

A disaster beyond adaptation

Researchers also tried to find out whether this was a disaster the region could have prepared for and adapted to. They determined it was uniquely hard to detect, as Nepal's early warning systems are designed for forecastable rainfall-driven floods, not quickly developing, cascading events like this one.

Essentially, this kind of complex threat exceeds the limits of adaptation. The flood outran Nepal's early warning systems and destroyed several monitoring gauges in its wake. The first mass SMS warning was sent about 38 minutes after the initial collapse, but the flood had already reached the border 7 minutes in.

"When warming destabilizes the roof of the world, no amount of local adaptation can fully shield vulnerable people downstream from this scale of destruction," Friederike Otto, professor of climate science at Imperial College London, said.

"Without much faster action to transition to zero fossil fuel emissions we will inevitably see more disasters of this scale occurring in the years to come." - **ow**

The material fell about
1,400 metres
(4,593 feet) from
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up debris, water, ice,
rock and sediment as it
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released as much energy
as a magnitude 5.2
earthquake.

SPORTS

Playing for Argentina the most beautiful thing: Messi bids emotional farewell

Messi signed off from international football in fairytale fashion, delivering two assists and scoring a goal as Argentina secured a commanding 3-0 victory over Benin in Buenos Aires

BUENOS AIRES: Lionel Messi expressed deep gratitude and emotion after his farewell match for Argentina, saying that representing the national team was the most beautiful experience of his career.

He reflected on two decades of dedication, acknowledging that stepping away from the team would be painful and admitting he wished he could continue playing for Argentina for the rest of his life.

Messi signed off from international football in fairytale fashion, delivering two assists and scoring a goal as Argentina secured a commanding 3-0 victory over Benin in Buenos Aires on Tuesday night.

“I have nothing left to do but thank this shirt. For 20 years, even through the worst moments, I never stopped fighting, pushing forward, giving everything I had and wanting to be here. Not coming here anymore and no longer being with the Argentina National Team is going to hurt a lot. If it were up to me, I would love to be here for

my entire life, because playing for Argentina is the most beautiful thing there is. I think I’m talking more than ever today because I simply don’t want this moment to end,” Messi said after his farewell match, as per 433.

In what was billed as his final appearance for the national team, the Argentine maestro delivered a performance befitting his extraordinary international career, orchestrating Argentina’s second-half dominance and giving the home crowd a memorable farewell.

After a goalless first half, Argentina broke the deadlock shortly after the restart, with Messi setting up Nicolas Otamendi in the 48th minute to put the hosts ahead.

Messi was again at the heart of Argentina’s attack for the second goal, teeing up Nico Paz, who produced a superb curling finish to double the advantage.

The 39-year-old then completed the scoring from the penalty spot, calmly converting to make it 3-0



in 2008 to an unforgettable career, making history every step of the way with La Albiceleste. Congratulations, Leo, for continuing to make Argentina’s jersey even more iconic!” FC Barcelona wrote an X post.

Ronaldinho’s emotional farewell message to Messi

Brazilian legend Ronaldinho paid heartfelt tribute to the star footballer. Ronaldinho praised Messi’s extraordinary career and said he was proud to have been part of his journey from the beginning.

He highlighted Messi’s contribution to Argentina’s World Cup triumph, his dedication to the national team and his lasting legacy in football.

Ronaldinho also expressed understanding of Messi’s focus on family and wished his former teammate happiness and success in life.

“A pleasure and what joy to have been part of your story from the very first day, brother! You made us smile and enjoy football so much!!! Your name is etched in the history of your country, of the whole world... Only we know the joy we felt when we fulfilled our childhood dream, representing our entire nation and becoming world champions!!!! You gave everything for your national team and for your country... I understand you perfectly, and I know that everything related to family makes us rethink things... Enjoy life, brother. I wish you the very best, today and always,” Ronaldinho wrote in an X post. **-ANI**

and putting the finishing touch on a memorable final appearance.

As the final whistle sounded, Messi embraced his Argentina teammates on the pitch while supporters filled the stadium with chants and applause.

The emotional scenes provided a fitting conclusion to an era in which the forward helped transform Argentina’s fortunes on the international stage.

River Plate names Lionel Messi Honorary Member

River Plate honoured football icon Lionel Messi by naming him an Honorary Member of the club, as

carlo, the greatest player of all time received the membership card that distinguishes him as an Honorary Member of the Club, a commemorative plaque, and the Sacred Jersey with his name. Thank you for the football, Captain!” River Plate football club wrote in an X post.

FC Barcelona celebrated Messi’s remarkable international career, recalling his gold medal at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and his historic achievements with Argentina. The club congratulated Messi for his lasting impact and for making the iconic Argentina jersey even more legendary.

“From that gold medal in Beijing

T20I SERIES



Shreyas Iyer’s majestic ton powers India to 8-wicket victory over West Indies in 1st T20I

LUCKNOW: India began their five-match T20I series against West Indies in emphatic fashion, registering an eight-wicket victory in the first T20I at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium on Tuesday.

Chasing 172, India rode on a sensational unbeaten century from skipper Shreyas Iyer to complete the chase in just 14.4 overs, taking a 1-0 lead in the series.

Iyer smashed 102 not out off 43 balls, striking 10 fours and six sixes at a staggering strike rate of 237.21.

Iyer walked in and took control of the chase from the outset, taking the attack apart with an array of powerful strokes. The right-hander displayed remarkable composure and aggression, finding the boundary with ease as he smashed 10 fours and six sixes in a breathtaking innings that kept the West Indies bowlers under constant pressure.

Iyer was well supported by Ishan Kishan, who scored 37 off 27 balls, including five fours, as the pair put together a match-winning partnership. Kishan was the more sedate of the two, but he played his role to perfection, smartly hanging around till the end. Sanju Samson contributed 11 off nine balls before being dismissed by Akeal Hosein, while India lost Abhishek Sharma early in the chase.

Earlier, India won the toss and opted to field, restricting West Indies to 171 in 19.1 overs. The visitors made a brisk start through captain Shai Hope, who led from the front with a fluent 52 off 37 balls, including six fours and two sixes. Sher-

fane Rutherford provided the late impetus with a well-made 56 off 34 deliveries, hitting six fours and three sixes. West Indies, however, struggled to maintain momentum after losing wickets at regular intervals. Kamil Pooran made 12 off 11 balls before being dismissed by Arshdeep Singh, while Shimron Hetmyer scored five off two balls before being run out. Rovman Powell was dismissed for a duck, further denting the visitors’ progress.

For India, debutant Naman Dhir delivered an impressive performance with the ball. The all-rounder returned figures of 3/31 from his four overs, picking up crucial wickets, including those of Hope, Romario Shepherd and Shamar Springer. Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav claimed two wickets apiece, while Arshdeep Singh and Mayank Yadav picked up one each.

Hope and Rutherford’s efforts had given West Indies a competitive platform, but India’s bowlers struck at crucial moments to bowl the visitors out with five balls of their innings remaining. Rutherford’s 56 was the highest score for West Indies, while Hope’s 52 ensured the visitors had a strong contribution at the top of the order.

India’s chase, was dominated by Iyer from the outset. After Sanju Samson’s dismissal left India at 35/2, Iyer took control of the innings and attacked the West Indies bowling with remarkable authority. His unbeaten 102 came off just 43 balls and included 16 boundaries, helping India race to the target with 32 balls remaining. **-ANI**

LANDMARK EDITION

Oman Sail prepares to welcome over 100 sailors to 15th Mussanah Race Week

MUSCAT: Final arrangements are underway as Oman Sail prepares to welcome more than 100 sailors from across the region for a landmark edition of Mussanah Race Week, presented by Renaissance Services, held at the Barceló Mussanah Resort from 15–21 October 2026.

Since its inception, Mussanah Race Week has established itself as an essential fixture on the regional and international sailing calendars, unique in its combination of high-performance coaching workshops, its focus on international youth development, and high-level regatta racing.

This year marks the 15th edition of Mussanah Race Week, and adding to the impact of this year’s regatta, Oman Sail will simultaneously host the 3rd Arab Women’s Sailing Championship, organised in cooperation with the Oman Maritime Sports Committee and the Arab Sailing Federation. The standalone women’s championship is set to welcome around 30 female sailors competing across the Optimist, ILCA 4, and ILCA 6 classes, highlighting the continued growth and momentum of women’s sailing across the Arab world.

Held at the Mussanah Sailing School, a Category (A) High-Performance Centre, the event provides a proven pathway for young sailors to hone their skills alongside international peers while reinforcing Oman Sail’s wider mission to nurture local talent and showcase itself as a premier global sailing destination.

Hamad Al Yahmadi, Project Manager of Mussanah Race Week, said, “Reaching the 15th edition of Mussanah Race Week is a momentous milestone for Oman Sail and a true testament to the enduring success of this event. Over the past decade and a half, Mussanah Race Week has evolved into a well-established festival of sailing and a globally respected platform for youth development, bringing together cultures, fostering camaraderie, and preparing the next generation of sailors for competitive sailing. Our teams are focused on delivering a high-quality event and extending a warm Omani welcome to more than 100 sailors, coaches and delegation members.

Nawaf Al Ghadani, Deputy Head of Sailing Schools at Oman Sail, added, “Mussanah Race Week plays a vital role in our regional talent development strategy, bridging grassroots discovery with elite international competition.

To celebrate our 15th edition alongside the 3rd Arab Women’s Sailing Championship under-



scores the incredible progress of the sport in Oman and across the region. Providing an equal, world-class platform for youth and female athletes allows us to raise the standard of sailing in Oman, inspire the next generation, and continue positioning our nation as a world-class hub for maritime sports.”

The events will begin on 15 October 2026 with registration and measurement, followed by briefings and practice races. Racing will commence on 18 October, with competitors across the Optimist, Optimist Juniors, ILCA 4, ILCA 6, ILCA 7, and Para Inclusive Hansa 303 and RS Venture Connect classes will then take to

the water for up to four races per day. The event will culminate on 21 October with the prize-giving and closing ceremony, honouring the top overall sailors, junior competitors under 12, and leading female athletes.

Mussanah Race Week 2026 will also support Oman Sail’s environmental commitments as a certified Clean Regatta, including a ban on single-use plastics, event-wide recycling initiatives, and a community beach clean-up during the event week.

By ensuring sailing offers equal opportunities, the combined Mussanah Race Week presented by Renaissance and Arab Women’s Sailing Championship serves as

a high-impact catalyst for social change, contributing significantly to multiple pillars of Oman Vision 2040. Oman Sail Women’s Sailing programme launched in 2012 and stands as a powerful example of how a sports initiative can be strategically aligned with the national development goals.

Mussanah Race Week presented by Renaissance Services will be held with support from Strategic Partner the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, and Experience Oman, Bronze Partner the Barceló Mussanah Resort, and Official Supporter Partners the National Mineral Water Company SAOG (Tanuf) and the Oman Maritime Sports Committee.

IN PICTURES

Models present creations at Colonna Palace in Rome, Italy: A model presents a creation from Spring/Summer 2027 collections of Chinese brand Heaven Gaia at the Colonna Palace in Rome, Italy. — Xinhua



UEFA Nations League 2026/27 League C Iceland vs Estonia: Iceland's Andri Gudjohnsen (top L) and Estonia's Maksim Paskotsi head for the ball during the UEFA Nations League 2026/27 League C Group C4 match between Estonia and Iceland at A. Le Coq Arena in Tallinn, Estonia. — Xinhua

Valentino Spring/Summer 2027 collections at Paris Fashion Week: A model presents a creation from the Womenswear Spring/Summer 2027 collections by Valentino during the Paris Fashion Week in Paris, France. — Xinhua



Singer Marami Sarma's new song 'Bhalpowa Kahini' released: Singer Manisha Hazarika, Musician Raja Boruah, and others pose for a group photo during the song release event of 'Bhalpowa Kahini' by singer Marami Sarma at Guwahati Press Club, in Guwahati. — ANI Photo



Paramount Skydance completes takeover of Warner Bros Discovery to create Skydance: This photo shows a Paramount logo at Paramount Pictures Studios in Los Angeles, California, the United States. Paramount Skydance completed its takeover of Warner Bros. Discovery, creating a sprawling company called Skydance that brings two century-old Hollywood studios, two global streaming services and two major US news organisations under one corporate roof. — Xinhua



Selection of classic Wu Opera pieces staged in Berlin: Artists perform Wu Opera in Berlin, Germany. The Zhejiang Wu Opera Research Centre brought a selection of classic Wu Opera pieces to German audiences. — Xinhua



Highlight of World Judo Championships 2026: Koga Wakana of Japan (R) competes against Assunta Scutto of Italy during the women's -48kg gold medal match at the World Judo Championships 2026 in Baku, Azerbaijan. — Xinhua

ROUND-UP

O-GREEN, Samruk-Energy sign strategic cooperation pact targeting 2GW of renewable energy projects

The proposed programme aims to supply wholesale electricity markets, industrial consumers and data centres, including through round-the-clock renewable power solutions

ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN: O-GREEN, an integrated energy, technology and compute platform, bringing together renewable power, energy storage, green technologies, manufacturing and AI-ready data centres, and Samruk-Energy, Kazakhstan's national power holding and a portfolio company of the Samruk-Kazyna Sovereign Wealth Fund, have signed a strategic co-operation agreement targeting approximately 2 GW of installed solar and wind generation capacity, supported by battery storage, in Kazakhstan, Central Asia and other mutually agreed international markets.

The agreement was signed by Aidarov Ansar Aidaruly, Chief Investment Officer of Samruk-Energy JSC, and Mustafa Al Hinai, Chief Executive Officer of O-GREEN.

Signed within the framework of the state visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik – may God protect him – to Kazakhstan, the agreement establishes a framework for cooperation across Kazakhstan, Central Asia and other mutually agreed markets.

The proposed programme aims to supply wholesale electricity markets, industrial consumers and data centres, including through round-the-clock renewable power solutions.



O-GREEN will contribute project development and technical expertise, while Samruk-Energy will facilitate engagement with relevant subsidiaries, authorities, the grid operator and potential customers in Kazakhstan.

In other markets, the partners will jointly engage the relevant authorities, grid operators, offtakers and local partners, and will work together to enable project execution and financing.

The partnership will also create opportunities to export clean energy expertise and capabilities from Oman to international markets, while supporting Oman's wider ambitions for a net-zero future.

"Reliable clean power is essential to industrial competitiveness

and the growth of AI infrastructure. With Samruk-Energy, we aim to combine renewable generation and storage with the needs of electricity customers, creating opportunities for investment in Kazakhstan and the wider region," said Mustafa Al Hinai, the CEO of O-GREEN.

"Kazakhstan has significant potential for further renewable energy development, and we see growing opportunities in Central Asia and other international markets. The focus must be on projects that are technically sound, commercially viable and aligned with the needs of the power systems they serve," said Aidarov Ansar Aidaruly, Chief Investment Officer of Samruk-Energy JSC.



SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE

Sohar International signs agreement with Sohar University to establish Oman's first bank-endowed chair

MUSCAT: Recognising the importance of sector-specific knowledge in strengthening Oman's SME ecosystem and supporting the development of a more competitive and diversified economy, Sohar International has taken a pioneering step in advancing collaboration between the banking and higher education sector by signing a five-year sponsorship agreement with Sohar University to establish the Research Chair in SME Finance and Sector Intelligence.

The initiative represents a significant milestone in connecting financial-sector expertise with academic research to generate practical insights into the challenges, opportunities and financing needs of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), with a particular focus on fisheries, agriculture and trade.

To ensure accountability and measurable impact, the Research Chair will operate under a monitoring and evaluation framework overseen by a joint Steering Committee comprising three representatives each from Sohar International and Sohar University. The committee will meet at least twice annually to assess progress against agreed research, SME development, financial-sector engagement and policy objectives, guided by annual work plans and measurable outcomes.

The initiative reflects Sohar International's commitment to supporting SME development beyond traditional financing by investing in the knowledge and capabilities required to enable sustainable enterprise growth. As Oman advances its economic diversification agenda under Oman Vision 2040, strengthening the SME sector re-



quires a deeper understanding of the industries in which businesses operate, the challenges affecting their competitiveness and the opportunities available for expansion. Through this pioneering partnership, Sohar International and Sohar University aim to bridge the gap between financial-sector expertise, academic research and the practical realities of businesses, contributing to a more informed and responsive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Commenting on the partnership, Abdul Qadir Al Sumali, Chief Retail and Wealth Management Officer at Sohar International, said: "The next phase of Oman's economic growth will depend not

only on expanding access to capital, but also on strengthening the capabilities and competitiveness of the businesses that drive our economy. SMEs have an important role in this transformation, yet unlocking their full potential requires a deeper understanding of the sectors in which they operate, the challenges they face and the opportunities available to them. At Sohar International, we believe our responsibility extends beyond providing finance to helping create the conditions in which businesses can grow and succeed. Through this partnership with Sohar University, we are investing in knowledge that can inform better decisions, strengthen enter-

prise resilience and contribute to a more diversified and competitive economy. This reflects our commitment to Oman Vision 2040, bringing together financial capabilities, institutional expertise and national priorities to create lasting economic value."

Dr. Hamdan Al Fazari, Vice Chancellor of Sohar University, commented: "Universities have an important responsibility to ensure that research responds to the evolving needs of the economy and delivers value beyond academia. This Research Chair will create a dedicated platform for generating sector-specific knowledge, strengthening engagement with businesses and translating

academic expertise into practical insights. Our partnership with Sohar International brings together research capabilities and financial-sector experience, enabling us to address real challenges facing SMEs while contributing to a stronger culture of applied research, innovation and evidence-based decision-making in Oman."

The Research Chair will focus on developing a deeper understanding of the commercial and operational dynamics shaping SMEs across the identified sectors. Its research will examine conventional financial indicators and operational risks and revenue cycles, complementing knowledge exchange and policy dialogue among researchers, financial institutions, policymakers and businesses, encouraging greater alignment between financial solutions and the evolving needs of SMEs.

Importantly, the initiative is designed to translate research into practical value for the wider economy. Through sector studies, market intelligence, accessible research publications and practical toolkits, the Chair will seek to equip entrepreneurs with insights that can help them identify opportunities, address business challenges and strengthen their competitiveness. It will also support knowledge exchange and policy dialogue among researchers, financial institutions, policymakers and businesses, encouraging greater alignment between financial solutions and the evolving needs of SMEs.

The five-year collaboration fur-

ther reinforces the importance of partnerships between financial institutions and academia in advancing national development priorities. By combining Sohar University's research capabilities with Sohar International's understanding of the financial and business landscape, the initiative seeks to establish a sustained platform for applied research, industry engagement and capacity development, while strengthening the contribution of higher education institutions to Oman's economic progress.

Aligned with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040, particularly economic diversification, private sector development, competitiveness and the transition towards a knowledge-based economy, the partnership reflects a shared commitment to strengthening the foundations of sustainable enterprise growth. As SMEs continue to play a vital role in broadening economic participation, generating employment opportunities and creating in-country value, access to reliable sector intelligence can help enable more resilient businesses and a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Through this initiative, Sohar International continues to advance its role beyond traditional banking by connecting financial-sector expertise, academic knowledge and national development priorities. The partnership reinforces the Bank's long-term ambition to support a more competitive, innovative and globally connected Omani economy, where businesses are better equipped to grow, expand and create sustainable value.



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