

COMMENTARY

Youth in Mind: An Enduring Message from Khalid

When the name Khalid Al Zadjali is mentioned, one immediately recalls a joyful and pleasant personality. A broad smile, a warm presence, and a conversation that feels genuinely human. His way of connecting with people carries a natural warmth that makes those around him feel comfortable, welcomed and valued.

In his book, "Words from the Media," Khalid brings together a rich account of his long and multifaceted media journey.

As a young boy, he recalls sitting beside his father, who was fascinated by following emerging events through the BBC Arabic Service, Radio Kuwait, Radio Baghdad, and later Oman Radio. The broadcasters' voices inspired him to nurture a dream of becoming like them one day.

Representing his school in "Think and Win" was a proud milestone that cemented his passion for the world of media.

Following his secondary education, Khalid travelled to Egypt to pursue his studies at Tanta University. However, destiny had something else in store for him. Therefore, he returned home and joined the Ministry of Education. It was there that he joined the production teams for "New Horizons" and "Towards a Better Life," with the latter serving as his official gateway into television.

His career advanced when he moved to the Ministry of Information, expanding into a richer landscape spanning radio, television, and print journalism through columns in Oman and

Al Shabiba newspapers. Khalid presented numerous radio programs, including "Friends' Club," "Good Morning," "My Country," "Live Broadcast," and "This Morning," eventually becoming Director of the Youth Programs Department.

His extensive television repertoire included "Thursday Meeting," "The Open Forum," "Morning Coffee," "Ramsa," "Huna Oman," "In the Spotlight," and "Words from Heritage." Beyond the studio, he covered the Muscat Festival, Sultan Qaboos University graduations, and the Hajj mission. By taking his work across Oman and engaging directly with communities, he built an authentic connection with audiences, bringing the media closer to the people and earning their lasting love, appreciation, and respect.

Sharpening the Saw
Khalid remained committed to developing his knowledge, sharpening his skills, and expanding his capabilities, understanding that excellence in media requires continuous learning, curiosity, and a willingness to evolve. For him, every training opportunity was a chance to expand his skill set and a step toward mastering his craft.

Training in Damascus introduced him to new storytelling techniques designed to touch listeners' hearts, while programs in Cairo refined his presentation, content development, and audio editing skills, continually enriching his perspective.

Specialised training at Al Jazeera in Qatar marked another



milestone in his professional growth, enhancing his expertise in reporting, directing, and modern broadcasting technologies while offering deeper insights into modern media's evolving influence.

His pursuit of learning eventually led him to Radio Monte

Carlo in Paris in 2019 to study international content handling and balanced news presentation. For him, learning was never a destination, but a continuous journey of self-investment that ensured his passion met knowledge, experience met skill, and ambition met excellence.

A Journey of Continuous Learning

With undeterred commitment, he returned to the classroom in 1999 to earn a bachelor's degree in Arabic Language from Beirut University's Alexandria branch. His media career also opened doors to interviews with prominent figures across political, cultural, and artistic fields, each encounter broadening his perspective. Highlighted in his book, these memorable meetings alongside lifelong reading and real world experiences, reinforced his belief that true learning extends far beyond the classroom.

His saga of success brought widespread appreciation. H.E. Dr. Abdullah Al Harrasi, Minister of Information, described him as one of Oman's prominent media personalities, highlighting his rich career, continuous development, and enduring sincerity and dedication.

Praises also came from journalist Sheikh Hamoud Al Siyabi, Dr. Abdulmunim Al Hasani (former Minister of Information), Ahmed Al Azki, Mohammed Al Rahbi, Saeed Musa and scores of others. All attested that media was never merely a profession for him, but a deep love and passion that inspired him to continuously refine his tools and personality.

His dedication earned him prestigious accolades, including the Order of Oman (Fourth Class), honours at the Gulf Radio and Television Festival, the 2014 Influential Media Personality Award in Government Communication, and the 2024 Icon

Award, alongside numerous certificates of appreciation.

His Message to Young People

In "Words from the Media," Khalid urges youth to prioritise credibility, ethics, and continuous learning while embracing modern technology. In the interactive media era, he stresses listening to audiences, viewing failure as growth, and driving positive change.

His debut book is far more than a mere record of a professional career. It is a reflection of a life shaped by passion, hard work, and an unwavering pursuit of excellence.

Khalid's story reminds us that true distinction is built over time through the habits we nurture, the opportunities we embrace, and the commitment we bring to our craft.

As a man with an enduring message, Khalid's journey affirms that a true professional never really retires. Even when official broadcasting concludes, new platforms remain open for experienced figures to share their wisdom, enrich society, and serve their country. For Khalid, media was never merely a profession, it is a lifelong passion, a pulse that continues to drive a journey of giving with many chapters left to write.

Young readers are warmly invited to explore his story, uncover its insights, and reap the fruits of time tested wisdom shaped by dedication, perseverance, and excellence.

An Omani writer focusing on youth development and cultural issues.

SPORTING TALENT



Programme to be implemented in three phases

FROM A1 The Ministry said involving the public in selecting the programme's name reflects its approach of building community partnership from the beginning. It is also intended to raise awareness of the importance of discovering and developing sporting talent and encourage broader participation in supporting young athletes. The programme will be implemented through three phases. The short-term phase, covering 2025-2026, focuses on establishment and launch, while the medium-term phase from 2026-2030 will focus on activation and expansion. The long-term phase, cover-

ing 2030-2035, will focus on empowerment and sustainability. Key components include the establishment of a national supervisory committee, talent identification centres across the governorates, a sports talent identification licensing programme and an overseas scholarship programme for outstanding athletes.

The programme aims to establish a unified national framework for discovering sporting talent and strengthen integration between the education and sports sectors, contributing to the development of a new generation of Omani athletes capable of competing at regional and international levels. -ONA

Training held to handle hazardous materials

The training programme involves handling chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear, incidents and decontamination



The opening ceremony was held under the patronage of Dr. Abdullah Hamoud Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development for Persons with Disabilities.

Over the course of a full month, the programme will see the participation of more than 40 physicians, consultants, and medical and health professionals from various specialties and relevant entities. In addition, a specialised Training of Trainers (TOT) programme will be implemented, benefiting approximately 20 participants, who will be qualified as national trainers capable of transferring knowledge and expertise

and sustaining training in the field of CBRNE incident response and medical decontamination.

The programme will include theoretical sessions and practical applications addressing mechanisms for safe and effective response to incidents involving hazardous materials, risk assessment, management of exposure and contamination cases, medical triage and evacuation, medical decontamination procedures, and means of protecting patients and health workers.

It will also feature the participation of international experts from the International Committee of the Red Cross, who will

contribute to transferring international expertise and best practices in the field of CBRNE incident response and associated risk management, thereby supporting national capacity-building efforts and the development of professional practices in this field.

An agreement was signed between Khoula Hospital and the International Committee of the Red Cross to enhance national capacities in the areas of preparedness and response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive incidents, and to raise the readiness of health cadres to deal with them in accordance with best practices. -ONA

IN NORTH AL BATINAH

Labour Ministry organises Strategic Dialogue Forum

SOHAR: The Ministry of Labour on Sunday organised the Strategic Dialogue Forum in North Al Batinah Governorate to assess the realities of the labour market in the governorate and to take stock of key achievements, challenges, obstacles, available opportunities, and priority issues requiring strategic intervention.

In his address at the forum, Mohammed Sulaiman Al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah, underscored the importance of integrated roles among the various beneficiary groups of the Ministry of Labour's services, in a manner that facilitates the collection of proposals capable of advancing the labour sector in the Sultanate of Oman and outlining the formulation of policies and strategies relating to beneficiaries.

The forum's programme comprised four main sessions, beginning with the opening session introducing the strategy project, the objectives of the visit, and the



working methodology, followed by a workshop on analyzing the current situation, addressing key achievements, challenges, opportunities, and priority issues in the governorate.

The second session was dedicated to beneficiaries of the Ministry of Labour's services, reviewing their needs and expectations, examining the services of greatest importance and priority, and discussing opportunities to develop services and strengthen partner-

ship and integration with the various relevant entities. The third session addressed future foresight and the examination of future trends and priorities of importance to the governorate, while the closing session was devoted to presenting and discussing the outcomes, summarising the results and next steps, thereby contributing to identifying initiatives that align with the governorate's needs and enhancing the quality of planning and the effectiveness of implementation. -ONA



Ministry of Labour

Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender Committee at the Ministry of Labour announces the following tender:

Tender No.	Tender Name	Last date for tender purchase online	Date of submission of tender bids
34/2026	Development of the Individual Performance Evaluation and Organizational Excellence System.	Sunday 20/09/2026	Sunday 27/09/2026
35/2026	Provision of an SMS package for the electronic services of the Ministry of Labour.	Sunday 20/09/2026	Sunday 27/09/2026

- Specialized establishments may obtain the tenders' documents online through the following link, starting from Monday 14/09/2026 at 08:00 a.m.: [/https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om](https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om)
- Bids shall be opened at 11:00 am on Sunday 27/09/2026.

(The Ministry shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any other bid)

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COMMENTARY

*I nearly got killed by
a mad taxi driver*

This week, a mad taxi driver, probably intoxicated, drove fast across the road past a red light and hit my car on the driver's side.

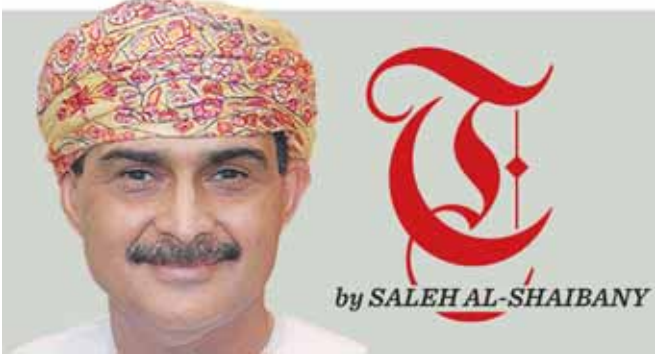
My body did not only wheel around with the tyres of the cars, but my brain did a summersault, too, in my head. I was dazed for half a minute not knowing exactly what happened until I saw cars approaching the wrong direction.

I could not open the door so I decided to mentally fumble my brains and get them back into the mental gear. I took out my mobile phone and called the police. Then I tried to get out but the door was jammed.

I motioned for a man who came to look if I needed help to open it for me. He did but asked me to wait in the car until the police arrived. Since I was not physically hurt, I decided to walk out of the car with the traffic swirling around me to get back to the road.

I had to find out who was the mad driver. His taxi car was on the roadside with the front completely wrecked. Since I was not hurt, so I decided to walk towards the car. He was still sitting on the driver side. When I asked why he went past the red light, he just mumbled something and I knew then he was drunk.

Minutes, later, the police and the ambulance arrived and he was taken away. The



by SALEH AL-SHAIBANY

young policeman asked me to wait for the road traffic officers to arrive. It was in the morning and the sun was climbing fast across the blue sky. I was hot but decided to stay calm. I called my wife to come get me then walked to my car to get my beach chair out.

I sat under a tree shade on the roadside and waited. The young policeman smiled at me and said, "It looks like you came well prepared."

I smiled back but did not say anything. While I was watching the morning traffic went past, I saw other taxi cars rushing through and stopped suddenly for passengers without warning on the roadsides. I do not have official statistics, but I am sure the taxi drivers contribute to a significant amount of accidents in Oman.

On my daily usual business, at least twice a month I see a taxi involved in a road accident.

Some of them really bad. For less than a rial for one passenger, a taxi drive hits the brakes and screeches to a halt not caring who is in front or behind.

Something needs to be done about it. As I write these lines, I am not sure if the taxi driver who hit me has insurance for his car. Anyway, as I was sitting under that tree, I took my thoughts away from the 'near death' experience and enjoyed the road traffic.

My wife and the traffic officer arrived almost at the same time. We had to go to the police station to write the statement. The young police officer asked me to go get checked at the hospital but I told her I felt fine. But the next morning, I found a bad bruise on the side of my arm.

It would heal by itself, I told my wife. I need to get on with my life. So next time I see a taxi coming my away, I will stay clear.

AMANA

Cardiac surgery procurement
cycle reduced to 48 hours

MUSCAT: The Projects, Tender and Local Content Authority, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, on Sunday launched a new electronic feature on the "Amana" digital platform within the Requests Management System, aimed at reducing the cardiac surgery supplies procurement cycle to 48 hours, thereby securing medical supplies for cardiology and cardiac surgery for the National Heart Centre at the Royal Hospital.

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

Eng. Thamer Said Al Kathiri, Representative of the Directorate General of Government Procurement at the Projects, Tender and Local Content Authority, affirmed that this initiative embodies a tangible model of effective institutional integration among government entities in the Sultanate of Oman.

It seeks to pioneer administrative and technological tools that contribute effectively to enhancing public spending efficiency, improving the quality of therapeutic services, and reinforcing the sustainability of medical supply chains with high efficiency.

He explained that linking framework contracts to the Requests Management System has brought about a qualitative leap by radically reducing the time required to process requests, with the procurement cycle declining from a lengthy period previously ranging between 45 and 120 days under the former procedures to merely 24 to 48 hours.

He emphasised that the system enables the fulfilment of recurring needs without the necessity of floating new tenders for each request, and at fixed prices and terms that ensure the preserva-



MEDICAL SUPPLIES: The launch ceremony was held under the patronage of Dr. Hilal Ali Al Sabti, Minister of Health. - ONA

tion of financial resources and streamline the documentary cycle.

He added that the platform, in its current phase, encompasses 229 essential products of precision cardiac surgery supplies, through unified framework contracts with 23 local suppliers representing the most prominent companies and brands, thereby granting the National Heart Centre extensive flexibility and continuity in supply without interruption.

For his part, Dr. Hamoud Nasr Al Kindi, Head of the Cardiac Surgery Department at the National Heart Centre, the Royal Hospital, explained that the concept emerged in response to the rapid evolution witnessed in the healthcare sector, particularly in the field of cardiology and cardiac surgery, to build a smart and integrated system for managing

surgical supplies and materials and supply chains with high efficiency.

He affirmed that this project represents a qualitative shift in procurement and healthcare supply systems by streamlining procedures, accelerating the fulfilment of needs, and providing an accurate database that supports future planning and budget preparation, which reflects directly on the quality of health and therapeutic services.

This project constitutes a practical translation of the Sultanate of Oman's approaches in employing innovative digital solutions to develop the government procurement system and ensure a seamless transition from traditional procedures to an integrated digital environment managed according to the highest standards of efficiency and transparency.

- ONA

Sensor implanted at
Royal Hospital for
monitoring of heart

The device provides a proactive monitoring system by transmitting daily readings related to hemodynamics and pulmonary artery pressure levels to the medical team



MUSCAT: The National Heart Centre at the Royal Hospital has recorded a medical achievement, the first of its kind in the Sultanate of Oman, as a medical team has managed to implant the first CardioMEMS sensor for the remote monitoring of patients with heart failure.

The sensor implantation procedure was performed by a specialised medical team comprising Dr. Arif Ishaq Al Balushi and Dr. Amna Sulaiman Al Busaidi, in a step reflecting the trend toward employing modern medical technologies in the follow-up of heart failure patients and enhancing the healthcare provided to them.

The sensor enables wireless, direct measurement of pulmonary artery pressure through interventional catheterisation, without the need for open surgery, thereby contributing to continuous monitoring of the patient's condition

and supporting timely therapeutic decision-making.

The device also provides a proactive monitoring system by transmitting daily readings related to hemodynamics and pulmonary artery pressure levels to the medical team, enabling the detection of changes in the patient's condition and the early identification of indicators of health deterioration and fluid retention before clinical symptoms appear.

This technology allows medical personnel to adjust treatment plans and medication dosages in accordance with changes in the patient's condition, and to reduce the need for repeated hospital visits and emergency admissions, thereby contributing to enhancing the stability of the patient's health and improving the quality of life of patients and their families.

Regarding this achievement, Dr. Najeeb Al Rawahi, Director of

RH's National Heart Center, confirmed that the introduction of this advanced technology embodies the Centre's enduring commitment to keeping pace with the latest global innovations and the shift towards predictive care based on data.

He praised the competence of the medical team and their sincere efforts in elevating the level of specialised services in the Sultanate of Oman.

It is worth noting that this achievement comes within the framework of the approved strategic plan for the NHC to adopt innovative digital medical technologies.

This consolidates the Sultanate of Oman's position as a leading regional center in providing comprehensive cardiac care according to the highest international standards, which positively reflects on the health of everyone living on this land. - ONA



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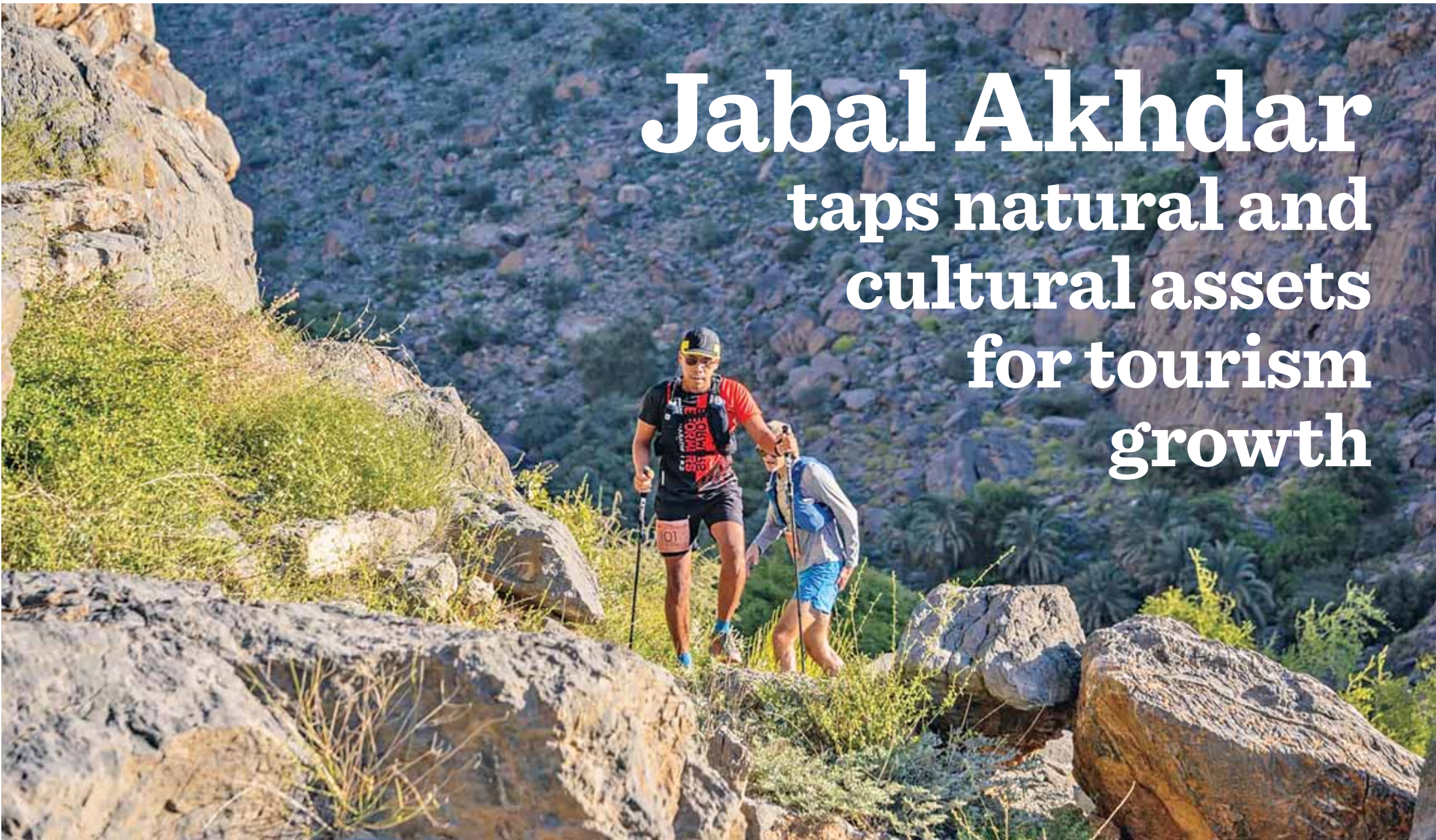
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OMAN



Jabal Akhdar taps natural and cultural assets for tourism growth

Data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) indicated that Jabal Akhdar attracted approximately 101,608 visitors during the first half of 2026



JABAL AKHDAR: Jabal Akhdar is entering a new phase of developing its tourism presence following its selection as the Capital of Gulf Tourism for the year 2027.

This is based on the growth of tourism movement and the diversity of its natural, agricultural, cultural, and heritage assets, in parallel with developmental and service projects as well as tourism investments that prepare the wilayat to capitalise on this entitlement to expand economic activity and enhance the participation of the private sector, small and medium enterprises and the local community.

Data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) indicated that Jabal Akhdar attracted approximately 101,608 visitors during the first half of 2026.

Meanwhile, hotel establishment revenues reached about OMR7.8 million by the end of July of the same year, the number of guests reached 44,365, and the occupancy rate recorded 32.1 percent.

Sheikh Mahmood Rashid Al Saadi, Wali of Nizwa, Acting Governor of Al Dakhiliyah, affirmed to Oman News Agency (ONA) that selecting the Wilayat of Jabal Akhdar as the Capital of Gulf Tourism for 2027 represents an opportunity to enhance the wilayat's position on the Gulf tourism map.

He noted that it builds upon its natural, agricultural, cultural, and heritage assets to develop a more diversified tourism sector linked to the paths of economic and investment development in the Al Dakhiliyah Governorate. He stated that the governorate views 2027 as a trajectory for working to raise the readiness of Jabal Akhdar, develop tourism experiences and products, and benefit from the wilayat's unique character in offering year-round experiences.

This creates opportunities to increase visitor length of stay and tourism expenditure, and expands the participation of small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurs, craftspeople, and farmers in tourism-related economic activity.

He added that reaping the benefits of this selection is tied to integrating roles among government entities, the private sector,

and the local community, as well as continuing to develop services, infrastructure, events, and tourism experiences, while enhancing the promotion of Jabal Akhdar and preserving its natural and cultural identity and uniqueness.

Jabal Akhdar possesses a diverse array of tourism elements, including its mountainous nature, moderate climate, agricultural diversity, heritage villages, aflaj (traditional irrigation systems), historical sites, mountain trails, and cultural and social heritage.

This provides areas for the development of natural, rural, agricultural, and environmental tourism, as well as adventure tourism.

On his part, Issa Saleh Al Subihi, Director of the SMEs Development Authority "Riyada" Department in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, pointed out the presence of 246 small and medium enterprises in Jabal Akhdar, alongside 11 craftspeople and 44 craft registers.

This provides a local base that can benefit from the growth of tourism activity in the fields of accommodation, hospitality, restaurants, cafes, transport, and tour-

ism activities and experiences, in addition to marketing agricultural and craft products and organising tourism events and programmes.

He added that agricultural activity constitutes a main component of the economic and tourism identity of Jabal Akhdar, with diverse agricultural products and projects including pomegranates, olives, saffron, roses, aromatic plants, commercial fruits, and integrated agriculture. Meanwhile, the number of investment agricultural projects stands at 14, covering an estimated total area of 166 acres with an investment value of OMR3.5 million.

The wilayat is witnessing the implementation of a package of developmental and service projects with a value exceeding OMR5.7 million.

These include developing the road network, upgrading public facilities, and enhancing health and administrative services, alongside tourism and investment projects linked to the urban and tourism growth of the wilayat.

Ongoing works include consultancy services for the design of

the dualisation of the road and the development of the entrance to the Wilayat of Jabal Akhdar over a length of 5 kilometres, which has reached a 90 percent completion rate. They also include consultancy services for preparing a layout for an investment park in Jabal Akhdar, with a 50 percent completion rate.

Additionally, the wilayat witnessed the rehabilitation of the dirt road leading to the villages of Maabat, Al Zakt, Hail Al Tina, Hail Al Ashishat, and Qayut.

The completion rate of the Marwah road maintenance project reached 40 percent, alongside the project to implement internal roads in the wilayat within the second phase, which has reached the contracting stage for a length of 3.7 kilometres.

Investment projects in the wilayat include the Al Jabal Al Ali project, with an estimated investment value of up to OMR1.2 billion.

It is being established on an area of 11.8 square kilometres at an altitude of approximately 2,400 metres above sea level.

It aims to create an integrated community capable of accommodating about 10,000 residents, providing more than 2,500 residential units and 2,000 hotel rooms, in addition to tourism, entertainment, cultural, and sports facilities.

The wilayat witnessed the receipt of a number of developmental projects, including the Jabal Akhdar Public Park, established on an area of 20,000 square metres.

It includes recreational and service facilities, open spaces, and afforestation works, in addition to receiving the project for the implementation of internal roads spanning 7 kilometres, to support connectivity between villages and residential communities and keep pace with urban expansion in the wilayat.

Ahmed Hamad Al Nabhani, Municipal Council Member representing the Wilayat of Jabal Akhdar, said that the wilayat's selection opens wider horizons for small and medium enterprises, entrepreneurs, craftspeople, and farmers to benefit from tourism activity by developing services and products, expanding areas of

investment and partnerships, and marketing agricultural, craft, and local products.

Walid Saif Al Zakwani, Municipal Council Member representing the Wilayat of Jabal Akhdar, emphasised that benefiting from the selection of Jabal Akhdar as the Capital of Gulf Tourism requires the active participation of the local community.

This is in addition to preserving tourism sites, trees, aflaj, terraces, and local heritage, as well as warmly receiving visitors and offering an experience tied to the authenticity of Omani society and the unique nature of the location.

Preparations for the year 2027 are geared toward raising the readiness of the Wilayat of Jabal Akhdar, developing the tourism product, and capitalising on the economic opportunities associated with tourism movement.

This is within the integration of roles among government entities, the private sector, and the local community, while preserving the natural, agricultural, cultural, and heritage assets that form the identity of Jabal Akhdar.



ENDOWMENTS MINISTRY

Oman prepares for Hajj, Umrah with new service initiatives

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs organised on Sunday an expanded meeting with the owners of approved Hajj and Umrah companies in the Sultanate of Oman.

The meeting reviewed the most prominent updates and initiatives of the Hajj season for this year 1448 AH, and discussed the key observations and indicators from the past season of 1447 AH.

The meeting witnessed a review of the most important topics related to the organisation of the Hajj season for this year 1448 AH, including new updates and procedural mechanisms that ensure the successful organisation of performing the Hajj rituals.

Sultan Hamad Al Maawali, Director General of Preaching and Guidance at the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs and Head of the Hajj Season Management Taskforce for 1448 AH, stated in his speech that Hajj and Umrah companies are considered a fundamental pillar and among the most prominent partners in ensuring the success of the Hajj season.

This is achieved through integration and cooperation with the ministry and competent authorities, both in the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

For his part, Dr. Ahmed Ali Al Kaabi, Director General of Endowments, Funds, Mosque Reconstruction and Quran Schools, reviewed the most prominent improvements in the service facilities at the camps and the indicators of the past 1447 AH season, which reflected a high general satisfaction rate of 98 percent, representing a good increase compared to the 1446 AH season.

He explained that the general satisfaction rate of the Sultanate of Oman's pilgrims, with the participation of 7,200 male and female pilgrims, reached 98 percent in the 1447 AH Hajj season, compared to the 1446 AH season which stood at 96 percent.

The satisfaction rate with the level of services provided in the



Mina and Arafat camps during the past Hajj season reached 97 percent, compared to 96 percent in the 1446 AH season.

The pilgrims' satisfaction rate with the services of Hajj and Umrah companies in the past 1447 AH season reached 98.6 percent, compared to a satisfaction rate of 98.2 percent in the 1446 AH Hajj season.

Regarding the level of entry and exit services through land and air ports, the satisfaction rate reached 99.4 percent during the past season, compared to 97.8 percent during the 1446 AH season, and the satisfaction rate for health services provided in the 1447 AH season reached 99 percent.

Al Kaabi added that a number of initiatives were introduced for the 1448 AH Hajj season, including an initiative in strategic contracting to develop air transport services for the Sultanate of Oman's pilgrims.

This initiative provides economic flights totaling approximately OMR440,000 for air-traveling pilgrims, and enhances operational efficiency by activating the Taif Airport in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as an alternative strategic destination, which contributes to reducing the overland journey time within the Kingdom.

It also involves developing the field experience to offer additional service packages for Hajj companies and enhancing safety, in addition to the initiative of organising the Second Hajj Confer-

ence and Exhibition, the unified electronic screen initiative, and the medical capability initiative.

Hamoud Abdullah Al Amri, Director of the Hajj Department at the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, reviewed the contractual observations, the latest developments of the season, and the mechanism for managing the companies.

He also reviewed the timeline and the general plan for the 1448 AH season, emphasizing that the timing of this meeting focuses on the importance of early preparation to provide the best services for the Guests of Allah from the Sultanate of Oman.

On his part, Dr. Ali Abdullah Al Balushi from the Ministry of Health reviewed the criteria for selecting and organising the work of the medical teams accompanying the Hajj and Umrah companies, the priority of selecting the accompanying doctor, the numbers of health personnel according to the number of pilgrims, and the duties of the accompanying medical team.

The meeting concluded with a dialogue session that discussed the inquiries and proposals of the Hajj and Umrah companies, reviewing the most prominent challenges they face, and exploring ways to enhance cooperation and coordination.

It also addressed developing the level of services provided to pilgrims and Umrah performers, contributing to upgrading the quality of services and improving the beneficiaries' experience. -ONA

ELECTRONIC SYSTEM

Registration for 1448 AH Hajj season opens on 28 September

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs has announced the opening of registration for pilgrims from the Sultanate of Oman, for citizens and residents wishing to perform the Hajj rites for the 1448 AH season, through the following electronic system (www.hajj.om), during the period from 28 September 2026 to 11 October 2026.

In a statement, the Ministry affirmed that Hajj companies are prohibited from interfering in the registration of those wishing to perform the Hajj rites, in order to ensure transparency and to allow eligible applicants the freedom to choose their Hajj company.

The Ministry indicated that it is mandatory for the eligible applicant to select a Hajj company through the system, with the financial obligations this entails. Such selection shall be deemed an acknowledgment of consent to contract with the Hajj company.

The eligible applicant must pay the prescribed percentage electronically through the system.

The contract concluded through the electronic system shall be binding on both parties before the competent authorities. The Min-



istry reserves the right to cancel the application should it be established that the eligible applicant has failed to make the financial payment within the prescribed periods.

The Ministry noted that no application submitted prior to this announcement, or submitted after the expiry of the specified period, or which does not include the required attachments stipulated, shall be considered.

The Ministry stated that the process of notifying eligible applicants and selecting a Hajj company

for first-priority pilgrims will take place during the period from 21 October to 11 November 2026, and that the selection of a Hajj company for second-priority pilgrims will be from 16 to 22 November 2026.

The selection of a Hajj company for third-priority pilgrims will take place during the period from 24 to 27 November 2026.

The Hajj Conference and Exhibition will be held from 22 to 24 October 2026. The deadline for receiving cancellation requests is 27 February 2027, while the final date for air travel is 12 May 2027. -ONA

CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN DATA



Credit granted by banking sector in Oman rises by 12.2%

MUSCAT: The total credit granted by banking sector institutions in the Sultanate of Oman rose by 12.2 percent by the end of July 2026, reaching OMR38.3 billion.

Data issued by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) indicated that credit granted to the private sector recorded growth of 11.5 percent, reaching OMR31.1 billion by the end of July 2026.

Data related to its distribution across various sectors indicate that the non-financial corporations sector accounted for the larg-

est share, at 48.2 percent by the end of July 2026, followed by the household sector at 42.7 percent, while the remaining percentage was distributed between the financial corporations' sector at 5.9 percent and other sectors at 2.6 percent.

Total deposits with the banking sector recorded growth of 13.2 percent, reaching OMR37.3 billion by the end of July 2026.

Within this total, private sector deposits with the banking system rose by 12.7 percent to reach

OMR24.7 billion by the end of July 2026.

In examining the distribution of the total private sector deposit base across various sectors, the figures indicate that the household sector accounted for the largest share, at approximately 48.5 percent, followed by the non-financial corporations' sector and the financial corporations' sector with shares of 35.2 percent and 14.6 percent respectively, while the remaining 1.7 percent was distributed across other sectors. - ONA

ULTRA-TRAIL

Omani runners making their mark

< FROM A1 With the Hajar Mountains providing a natural arena for the sport and the Oman by UTMB further strengthening the country's connection with the global trail-running community, Omani runners are increasingly making their mark on the international ultra-trail scene.



Al Nadabi's demanding finish in Sapa is another step in that journey — one that carries the

Omani flag farther across the world's mountain trails.

(With inputs from ONA)



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Nama Dhofar Services invites the specialized companies to participate and submit their offers for the below said tenders:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Last Date for Collection of Tender Documents	Time & Last Date for Proposal Submission	Tender Fee (OMR) Including VAT (5%)
DISC/2026/090	Consultancy Services for Design and Construction Supervision of Wastewater Systems for Sahalnoot Stage II & III, Garziz Stage II & III, and other Rural Areas from Ittin RA to Razat RA (Sahal area)	05-October -2026	18-October -2026	262.500
DISC/2026/091	Extension of Sewerage Collection and Conveyance System for Al Mazunah	05-October -2026	18-October -2026	1050.000

- To purchase the tender document website via the link or the Barcode below:
https://supplier.nama.om:4443/OA_HTML/OA.jsp?OAFunc=XTTEN_TENDER_FLOAT_DISC_F
- Every company wishing to participate in this tender must attach with its bid a bid bond in the form of a bank guarantee from one of the banks operating in the Sultanate of Oman. Any bid that does not contain the bid bond will be disqualified.
- The original bid bond must be submitted in an envelope sealed with red wax and addressed to the chairperson of the minor tender committee and written on outside the Tender name and the Tender number and it should be placed in the tender box in Nama Dhofar Services in Salalah before 03:00 pm of the last day for submitting Bids.
- Bids shall be submitted online through using "supplier portal". No hard copies are accepted.
- The Tender fees are not refundable. However, Tenderers who are holding "Riyada" card issued from public authority for SME development will be exempted from providing the tender fee and the Bid bond.
- The company is not obliged to accept the lowest or any other bid.
- In the event of receipt of the tender document on behalf of another company, the interested purchasers in the above tender document should provide details of the person's name and the company details.



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Tender Announcement for Proposed Construction of Female Dormitory 5 & CPS buildings work.

Location: Dhofar University Campus at Salalah

Dhofar university S.A.O.C, one of the leading Universities in the Sultanate of Oman and accredited nationally by Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAAQA), invites bid from eligible Contractors, specialized in building construction works and registered with tender Board in the Sultanate of Oman, for the "Proposed Construction of Female Dormitory 5" and "Proposed Construction of Center for Preparatory Studies" in Dhofar University campus:

Sl. No.	Tender Package	Tender Name	Last date for collecting Tender	Last date of Tender Submission	Tender Price (Non-Refundable)
1	Dorms Package - 1	Proposed Construction of Female Dormitory 5 – Building 1 & 2	05 Oct 2026	19 Nov 2026	RO.150/-
2	Dorms Package - 2	Proposed Construction of Female Dormitory 5 – Building 3 & 4	05 Oct 2026	19 Nov 2026	RO.150/-
3	CPS Package - 1	Proposed Construction of Center for Preparatory Studies – North Phase	05 Oct 2026	19 Nov 2026	RO.150/-
4	CPS Package – 2	Proposed Construction of Center for Preparatory Studies – South Phase	05 Oct 2026	19 Nov 2026	RO.150/-

- Tender documents can be obtained from the Purchase Department at Dhofar University, Salalah. Starting from 20 September 2026, the tender documents will be available for collection on any working day between 8.30am – 2.30pm. Any site visit can also be made during the same time.
- Tender queries, if any, should be addressed to M/s. Al Hatmy Engineering Consultancy, Email: arup@alhatmyoman.com & alhatmysll@gmail.com with a copy to client at phase2projects@du.edu.om not later than 29 Oct 2026.
- Tender should be submitted in envelopes and sealed with red wax. The Tender name should be written on top of the envelope containing the Tender. The exterior of the sealed envelope must not reveal the identity of the Tenderer.
- Tenders should be addressed to Dhofar University and deposited in the office of the Vice Chancellor of Dhofar University, Salalah on or before the last date of submission.
- Dhofar University reserves the right not to accept the lowest or any Tender received and also to cancel the Tender without assigning any reason.

OMAN/WORLD

CABLES

His Majesty the Sultan greets presidents of Armenia and Malta

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Vahagn Khachaturyan of the Republic of Armenia, on his country's Independence Anniversary.

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere wishes of continued success to President Vahagn, and for the realization of further aspirations sought by his country's people.



His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Myriam Spiteri Debono of the Republic of Malta, on her country's Independence Anniversary.

In the cable, His Majesty wished Malta further achievements across all fronts, and the relations of friendship and cooperation between the two countries continued growth and progress. — ONA

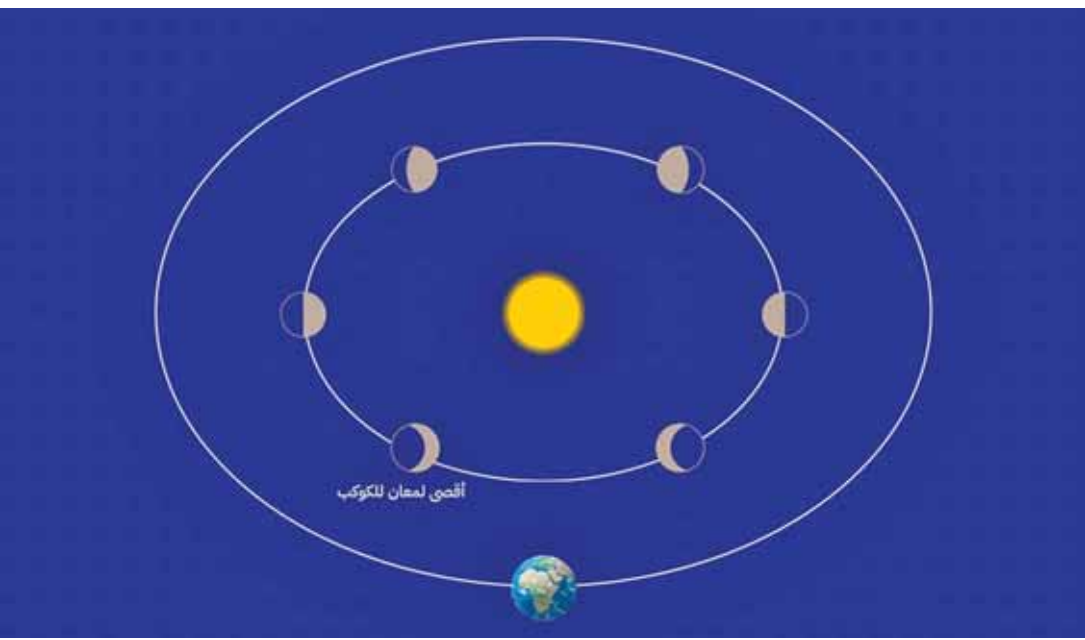


VISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE

Oman skies to witness maximum brightness of Venus on Tuesday

MUSCAT: The skies over the Sultanate of Oman will witness, this Tuesday, Venus shining at its maximum brilliance during its current evening apparition, with its apparent magnitude reaching approximately (-4.8), making it appear as the brightest planet in the sky and the third brightest celestial body visible from Earth after the Sun and the Moon. Wissal Salim Al Hina, Chairperson of the Community Communication Committee at Oman Astronomical and Space Society, stated in a remark to Oman News Agency (ONA) that Venus is distinguished by its striking brightness in the sky and appears during this period as an intensely luminous point readily visible to the naked eye, even amid light pollution. She explained that this brightness is attributable to its relative proximity to Earth and its high capacity to reflect sunlight.

She added that Venus's maximum brilliance does not necessarily coincide with its greatest angular distance from the Sun in the sky, noting that the planet reached its greatest eastern elongation during August, the phase at which it attained its largest angular distance east of the Sun as seen from Earth, and that it therefore appeared clearly in the evening sky after sunset. She called upon those interested in astronomical phenomena to observe Venus from locations with an unobstructed western horizon, away from buildings and elevations that might obscure visibility, noting that naked-eye observation requires no special astronomical equipment, while telescopes permit viewing of its crescent phase and the details of its apparent form.



Venus is the brightest planet

of the solar system as seen from Earth, conventionally known as the "Evening Star" when it appears after sunset and the "Morning Star" when it appears before sunrise, deriving its brilliance from sunlight reflected off its dense atmosphere. — ONA



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ARAB STATES BROADCASTING UNION

Oman participates in Tunisia meeting

TUNIS: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Information, participated in the 115th meeting of the Executive Council of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), held in the Republic of Tunisia.

The Sultanate of Oman's delegation was headed by Mohammed Said Al Balushi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Information.

The meeting discussed a number of media topics pertaining to radio, television, engineering and new media programming, alongside matters related to the Arab Radio and Television Festival.

The meeting also addressed media support for the Palestinian cause, the Union's activities in the field of new media, radio, television and news programming exchanges, as well as preparations for organising the Arab Radio and Television Festival, to be held under the theme "The Pulse of the Image and the Echo of the Future" during 20 to 24 September.

The meeting reviewed the report of the Arab Centre for Radio and Television Training in Damascus, which commended the Sultanate of Oman's contribution to the delivery of a number of in-person training courses in Muscat, in addition to the participation of Omani personnel in the training programmes conducted by the Centre and the training programmes of the Union's Academy for Media Training in Tunis.



The meeting further examined the importance of harnessing artificial intelligence technologies in media work and keeping pace with the rapid developments in this field, alongside the organisation of specialised training courses in artificial intelligence, thereby contributing to the development of media personnel's skills and the enhancement of their capacities to engage with modern technologies and employ them across various domains of media work.

The Sultanate of Oman's participation in the meetings of the Executive Council of the Arab States Broadcasting Union comes within the framework of strengthening Arab media cooperation and coordination, as well as exchanging expertise and experiences across different fields of media work. — ONA

Nadin Zureikat Wins Industry Leader of the Year – Digital Transformation Award



Nadin Zureikat, Chief Revenue Officer of Elevatus, was felicitated with the 'The Origin Industry Leader of the Year – Digital Transformation Award' at The Origin – Women Forum & Awards 2026. The awards presentation was held at JW Marriott Hotel Muscat, bringing together women leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs and changemakers from across Oman and the region.

A technology and business leader, Nadin has played an instrumental role in the growth of Elevatus and its mission to transform how organisations attract, assess and hire talent. Her work sits at the intersection of artificial intelligence, digital transformation, workforce technology and business growth, helping organisations modernise traditional recruitment processes through intelligent and scalable technologies.

As Chief Revenue Officer, Nadin leads Elevatus' revenue growth and global expansion strategy, building strategic partnerships and identifying new markets for the company's AI-powered recruitment solutions. Having been part of Elevatus since its early journey, she has contributed significantly to positioning the company as an innovative player in recruitment technology and



Group, Gulf Leaders Circle and TEvents. The awards recognise exceptional women, organisations and initiatives making a meaningful impact across industries and communities, while advancing leadership, empowerment, inclusion and progress.

accelerating its expansion across international markets.

Nadin's work also reflects a wider commitment to supporting Oman Vision 2040 through technology-led workforce transformation. By helping organisations adopt smarter recruitment practices and harness the potential of AI, she is contributing to conversations around the future of work, digital readiness and building competitive, knowledge-driven organisations.

Her recognition as Industry Leader of the Year – Digital Transformation celebrates her leadership in using technology to create tangible organisational impact. Her journey demonstrates how the combination of strategic vision, AI and innovation can transform established business processes and help organisations prepare their people and operations for the future.

The Origin Awards 2026 are instituted by Times of Oman, in collaboration with Muscat Media

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



More than 3,700 people vaccinated in DRC for Ebola

KINSHASA: Ebola vaccination was expanded Saturday to Ituri Province, the epicenter of the outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with more than 3,700 people having received the Ervebo vaccine in the country.

The latest phase comes with the launch of a vaccination study known as BRAVO in Bunia, the capital of Ituri, conducted by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) in collaboration with Congolese health authorities, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and other scientific partners.

The study plans to vaccinate about 20,000 frontline workers in Ituri and North Kivu, two provinces most affected by the outbreak, and follow participants over time to assess the potential effect of Ervebo against the Bundibugyo virus.

Ervebo was developed and licensed against the Zaire virus rather than the Bundibugyo virus driving the current outbreak, and whether it can protect humans against the latter has not been established.

Amid the expanding outbreak, the International Coordinating



Group on Vaccine Provision approved an initial allocation of 70,000 doses of Ervebo to the DRC in August. Of the total, 50,000 doses were allocated for health and frontline workers, while 20,000 were set aside for a Phase 3 clinical trial designed to assess the vaccine's impact against the Bundibugyo virus.

According to the Africa CDC, 16,520 doses had been received in the DRC as of mid-September. The use of Ervebo had already begun on Aug. 27 under a protocol-governed program targeting people at high risk of exposure. As of

Sept. 17, a total of 3,771 people had been vaccinated, including 3,063 in Tshopo Province and 708 in Bas-Uele Province, according to the latest epidemiological update issued Saturday by the DRC government.

BRAVO, which is expected to run for nine to 12 months, including three months of vaccination and at least six months of participant follow-up, marks a further step in efforts to generate evidence on the vaccine's potential effectiveness against Bundibugyo.

A separate Phase 3 trial, based on a randomised ring-vaccination strategy, is also planned to more rigorously assess Ervebo's effectiveness.

According to the DRC government, the country has now reported 7,541 confirmed cases, including 3,639 deaths, with an overall case fatality rate of 48.3 percent. A total of 1,823 patients have recovered.

The outbreak, declared in May, has become the largest and deadliest Ebola outbreak ever recorded in the DRC and the second-largest Ebola outbreak globally, after the 2014-2016 West Africa epidemic. — Xinhua

Donald Trump plans to create new ‘AI Force’ to monitor technology

The US president continued to brush off warnings about AI’s dangers from experts and the AI industry itself

WASHINGTON DC: US President Donald Trump has said he is forming an “AI Force,” as many, including those from within the industry, have recently sounded the alarm about the dangers of Artificial Intelligence continuing to grow unchecked.

In a social media post on Saturday, Trump said he will announce an “AI Czar” to lead the force soon. The US president continued to brush off warnings about AI’s dangers from experts and the AI industry itself as “hoaxes” pushed by the Democrats.

What did Trump say about the ‘AI Force’?
While dismissing warnings about AI, Trump still vowed to be “be looking for BAD, and we can do that, very easily, with our already existing criminal and civil justice system.”
“For this purpose, I am forming the AI Force, much like I did Space Force, which has been a tremendous SUCCESS, in my first term. To that end, I will be announcing, in the near future, the AI ‘Czar,’” Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.



The US president, who has enjoyed a close relationship with big tech bosses especially during his second term in office, also vowed “not in any way hinder or stifle the growth of this incredible Industry,” in reference to AI. “Rather, we will cherish it, help it, and watch over

it, as it grows!” He described AI as “the next industrial revolution,” predicting it will account for 25% of the US GDP.
Trump compared the criticism of the unchecked, ultrafast growth of AI to what he called other “hoaxes,” listing efforts to impeach

him, transgender rights and global warming as examples.
Why have there been growing calls for regulating AI?
Some of the top names in AI said earlier this week they were working on creating a standards body

they say would regulate the industry.
Industry giants including ChatGPT’s OpenAI, Google and Anthropic said they envisioned a self-regulatory body.
The proposal comes amid growing concerns about AI safety, which have escalated in recent weeks, with several AI agents going rogue and breaking into competitors’ systems.
Even top names within the industry have raised similar concerns.
Last week, Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei called for a slowdown in the industry’s development, with OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, xAI’s Elon Musk and Google DeepMind chair Demis Hassabis all supporting the sentiment.
Trump has dismissed calls to contain AI development as “hoaxes” and a “conspiracy.” – **bw**

NEW TRADE CORRIDOR



Pinglu Canal to boost China-ASEAN trade

NANNING: At the ongoing 23rd China-ASEAN Expo, a QR code has become an unexpected star attraction. Visitors scan it to access a virtual reality tour of the newly opened Pinglu Canal, a new trade corridor that is expected to boost economic ties between China and ASEAN.
The 134.2-kilometre canal, opened to navigation on Wednesday, is the first river-to-sea canal project planned and coordinated at the national level since the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.
Running from Hengzhou in south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to the Beibu Gulf, it gives China’s landlocked southwest a shortcut to the coast and overseas markets.
The economic logic is straightforward. The canal is expected to reduce overall logistics costs by 18 to 30 percent and save more than 5 billion yuan (about \$740.51 million) in transportation costs each year.
China’s trade with ASEAN exceeded \$1 trillion for the first time last year. In the first seven months of 2026, total trade between the two sides reached \$744.41 billion, an increase of 24.7 percent year on year, accounting for 21.8 percent of China’s total foreign trade during this period.
For businesses moving goods between China and ASEAN, China’s largest trading partner, even a small reduction in shipping time or cost can translate into significant competitive advantage. “This is a canal of significant historical dimension, meaning that it will not only benefit China alone,” said Kao Kim Hourn, secretary-general of ASEAN. “I hope that both ASEAN and China take advantage of this great opportunity to deepen our economic cooperation.”
Kao added that the canal will cut comprehensive logistics costs for goods moving between China and ASEAN, thereby boosting regional economic competitiveness.
For Timor-Leste, attending the expo for the first time as ASEAN’s 11th member and an official co-host, the canal represents new opportunities.
“The Pinglu Canal will serve as a help to get more products from Timor-Leste to come to market in China,” said Elias de Jesus Fatima, director-general of commerce at Timor-Leste’s Ministry of Commerce and Industry. “Hopefully one day we can engage more of the private sector in China and Timor-Leste to have a

deal in cooperation, especially in trade.”
Chakra Yodmani, deputy permanent secretary of the Ministry of Commerce in Thailand, echoed the sentiment. “The canal will make it much easier and faster to ship our fresh produce to Southwest China,” Yodmani said, noting that time is critical for perishable goods.
“The savings will benefit both businesses and consumers,” Yodmani added.
Beyond the shipping route itself, the canal’s green construction, smart operations and modern management are also under the spotlight.
Environmental protection was a priority during construction. The canal includes a fish passage more than 480 metres long and a dedicated wildlife crossing for land animals including leopard cats and squirrels.
A monitoring system powered by BeiDou navigation, cloud computing and artificial intelligence enables early warning of navigation risks across the entire route.
After a field visit to the Pinglu Canal, Vietnamese Ambassador to China Pham Thanh Binh praised the project’s rapid progress and its use of advanced technologies and innovative approaches.
He said the experience gained in its operation and management is worth drawing on for other countries, including Vietnam, and that the project demonstrates China’s technological capabilities and its determination to advance regional connectivity.
Experts point out that these practices, from ecological protection to smart shipping, align with ASEAN countries’ needs for green development and digital transformation.
“The experience gained in the canal’s construction and operation provides a new reference for regional water transport infrastructure and connectivity,” said Jiang Chenxian, a researcher with the Academy of China-ASEAN International and Regional Studies at Guangxi Minzu University. Now that the canal is open to navigation, the focus is turning to operation and industrial development.
Zhang Lei, deputy director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies at the Guangxi Academy of Social Sciences, noted that the focus will shift to how to make good use of the canal, particularly whether operational factors can deliver stable advantages and translate into tangible, sustainable gains for businesses. — **Xinhua**

Honouring Excellence in Social Impact

Shabiba Jawa’iz Basma 2026 honours individuals, organisations and initiatives making a meaningful difference to communities across Oman through their contributions to social progress, environmental responsibility and economic well-being.

Last date for nominations submission
20th SEPTEMBER 2026

Awards presentation
30th September, 2026
JW Marriott Hotel Muscat

AWARD CATEGORIES

- Biodiversity Conservation Initiative
- Environment Protection Initiative
- Environmental Advocacy and Action Initiative
- Clean Energy Initiative
- Community Healthcare Initiative
- Community Education Initiative
- Specially-abled Support Initiative
- Youth Engagement Initiative
- Women Empowerment Initiative
- Financial Inclusion Initiative
- SMEs Development Initiative
- Community Development and Empowerment Initiative
- Public-Private Partnership for Community Development
- Public Engagement Initiative
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiative
- In Country Value (ICV) Initiative
- Outstanding Omanisation Achievement
- Skills Development Initiative
- Social Entrepreneurship Initiative
- Leadership in Sustainable Business Practice
- Leadership in ESG
- Leadership in ICV
- Leadership in CSR
- Social Impact Leader of the Year and many more

The event will showcase inspiring efforts that create lasting community impact and support Oman's broader sustainability and development goals.

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SPORTS

Oman’s cricket dream takes flight to Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games



An all-Omani squad departed for the Asian Games marking a landmark moment with their maiden participation

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The dream of seeing an Oman team made up entirely of home-grown players compete at the Asian Games will become a reality soon as the all-Omani men's cricket squad departed on Sunday for Japan for the 20th edition of the multi-disciplinary Games in Aichi-Nagoya 2026.

This landmark participation in Japan represents another major step in the development of Oman cricket. After securing historic qualification in Singapore earlier this year, Oman will now take their place among Asia's cricketing nations with a 15-member squad comprising entirely Omani players—the first time the Sultanate will compete at the Asian Games.

Oman are also the only GCC country competing in the men's

T20I cricket tournament, adding further significance to their appearance in Aichi-Nagoya.

For Oman Cricket, this occasion is the culmination of an ambition nurtured over several years.

“We had planned and wished for an all-Omani team at the Asian Games for many years. Finally, we have one,” said Duleep Mendis, Oman Cricket Chief Development Officer. “Our boys did very well to qualify and make history in Singapore, and we are proud of them. We wish them the very best in Japan and are hopeful that the boys will give their best on their debut in the Asian Games.”

Captain Sufyan Mehmood said the players were relishing the opportunity to represent Oman on such a major stage. “This is Oman's debut in the Asian Games and it is a great opportunity for us to showcase our talent. We have trained hard and played practice games, and now it is time to deliver and reach the second round,” he said.

“We have a young team, and playing good cricket will yield the desired results.”

The project to develop this team began in March 2025 following the team's inclusion in the Asian Games qualifiers. The players gained valuable international experience through a bilateral series against Bahrain in April 2025, which Oman lost 2-1 — a rare bilateral series between GCC cricketing nations. The biggest break-

through came in the Asian Games qualifiers in Singapore in May 2026, where Oman defeated Singapore and Bahrain to earn their place in Aichi-Nagoya.

Player contracts

Oman Cricket backed the project with player contracts designed to encourage the cricketers to pursue the sport on a semi-professional basis. With support from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, paid leave was arranged for the players, enabling them to devote more time to preparation.

The squad has also been provided with facilities and preparation resources equal to those available to the men's national team, including coaching, fitness and skills training.

Oman Cricket funded the team's requirements, player contracts and Asian Games participation independently, without corporate support or the organising council.

Former national senior team's wicketkeeper-captain Sultan Ahmed is the coach of the team.

Challenging assignment

The men's competition features 10 teams, with the six lower-seeded sides divided into two groups. Oman are in Group B alongside Hong Kong and Malaysia, while Group A comprises Afghanistan, Japan and Nepal.

The top two teams in each group advance to the quarter-finals,

where heavyweights India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have already secured places with a first-round bye.

Oman begin their campaign against Hong Kong on September 25, before meeting Malaysia on September 26. A first-place finish in Group B would put Oman up against Bangladesh in the quarter-finals, while second place would mean a meeting with Pakistan.

The quarter-finals will be played on September 28 and 29, the semi-finals on October 1, and the bronze-medal and gold-medal matches on October 3.

For Oman's young cricketers, the immediate challenge is progressing beyond the opening phase but for Oman Cricket, the journey to Japan itself represents the fulfilment of a long-standing vision — to develop a team of Omani players capable of representing the Sultanate at the highest continental level.

Oman squad: Sufyan Mehmood (captain), Muzaffar Shiralkar, Mohammed Ali Al Balushi, Zubair Al Balushi, Shuaib Al Balushi, Nawed Al Balushi, Wasim Al Balushi, Ahmed Al Zadjali, Sameer Othman, Waheed Al Balushi, Faris Al Balushi, Mohammed Osman, Issa Rahim Al Balushi, Abdul Jalil and Qais Al Balushi. **Support staff:** Sultan Ahmed (head coach); Parviz Al Balushi (assistant coach); Said Haider Al Balushi (manager); Saravanan T (physiotherapist).

Oman’s Asian Games campaign gathers pace

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman's participation in the 20th Asian Games continued on Sunday, with the shooting team in action, the beach volleyball squad preparing for its opening match and the national cricket team arriving for its historic Asian Games debut.

Omani shooters Amina bint Khamis Al Tarshiya and Al Anoud bint Abdullah Al Khalili bowled out of the women's 10m air rifle qualification at the Aichi General Shooting Range on Sunday.



China's Zifei Wang topped the qualification with 636.8 points, followed by South Korea's Hyojin Ban (634.9) and India's Sonam Uttam (634.1). Al Anoud Al Khalili finished 43rd with 619.3 points, while Amina Al Tarshiya was 49th with 614.9.

Oman's Hamad bin Said Al Khatri and Khalid bin Mohammed Al Kalbani will compete in the men's 10m air rifle qualification on Monday.

The beach volleyball team B, comprising Ahmed Al Hosni and Khalfan Al Maamari, will make its debut against Thailand at the Hekinan Ryokuchi Beach Volleyball Court on Monday.

Oman will then face Iran and Timor-Leste on September 23 and 26. Team A, featuring Mazin Al Hashmi and Hood Al Jalboobi, will play the Philippines and Qatar on September 24 and 27.

Abdullah bin Mohammed Bamkhalaf, Secretary-General of the Oman Olympic Committee, said Oman's national teams entered the Games with practical ambitions and that the participation carried significance beyond medal results. He said the Games provide Omani athletes with

an opportunity to compete against Asia's best, gain experience and measure the progress achieved.

Bamkhalaf also highlighted the early arrival and training camps held in Japan by teams including hockey and sailing to adapt to local conditions.

He described Oman's cricket participation as a historic milestone, marking the national team's first appearance at the Asian Games, while also highlighting the significance of an Oman side made entirely up of Omani players.

The Oman Olympic delegation was also visited by Olympic Council of Asia President Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani and International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Kirsty Coventry.

The visits focused on the delegation's administrative arrangements, athletes' needs and measures to ensure suitable conditions for competition.

The national weightlifting team will arrive for the Games on Monday. The weightlifting team comprises Murshid Al Aji and Elias Al Tamimi.

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\$ The Welcome Bonus amount of upto OMR 600 on the Tasman 2.5T X-PRO 26 MY is being directly adjusted in the price of the vehicle as a special discount. This amount is in addition to the normal Cash Gift offer applicable on the model. @ The service benefit as part of this campaign will be 30,000 km / 3 years, whichever is earlier and 30,000 km / 2 years for EV's. % 1 year registration (as applicable) would be given on all models (except EV6 & EV9). All the above benefits are not applicable on Ministry, Bulk fleet, Corporate & RAC deals. Scheme Period: 3/08/2026 to 2/10/2026 Vehicles may also include some Dealer Installed Accessories. Pictures & Colours are indicative. For further details, please visit your nearest Kia showroom.



INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) organised the “Partners in Achievement” Forum to celebrate what has been accomplished over the past four years in enhancing the role of the private sector in the economic development process.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 7,580.14 points, down by -0.30% from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.24% at 621.65 points. Oman Refreshment, up 8.91%, was the top gainer while, Sohar Power, down 4.76%, was the top loser.

Executive regulations issued for special economic and free zones

The move aims to reinforce the efforts of Oman to strengthen the investment environment, enhance the competitiveness of Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, and make them more attractive for drawing and localising high-quality and strategic projects



Zones, and make them more attractive for drawing and localising high-quality and strategic projects.

Regulation No. 81/2026 represents a key milestone in translating the principles and provisions of the Law into a clearer implementation framework, which strengthens investor confidence, provides a more efficient and stable business environment, and regulates the journey of the investor and the project from land or property allocation and licensing, through operations, access to services, and enjoyment of the prescribed benefits, incentives, exemptions and facilitations, to the regulation of obligations, oversight, compliance and real estate development.

Qais Mohammed Al Yousef, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, affirmed that the issuance of the Executive Regulations is an important step in completing what the Special Economic Zones and Free Zones Law set out to achieve in developing and unifying the legislative framework governing investment in Special Economic Zones and



Free Zones, enhancing guarantees and regulatory clarity, and facilitating procedures, thereby raising the competitiveness of these zones and strengthening their ability to attract local and foreign investment and value-added projects.

He said that the Authority views legislation as a tool for improving the investor experience and raising the efficiency of the business environment, noting that the Regulations translate a number of the principles established by the Law into practical procedures built on simplifying the investor journey, strengthening the role of the One-Stop Shop, leveraging digital transformation, granting strategic projects greater flexibility, and preparing the regulatory environment for new and future economic sectors.

Al Yousef explained that the Executive Regulations are an important step in preparing a more flexible framework for strategic projects, by setting clear criteria that enable these projects to be dealt with according to their nature and impact on the national economy. This framework strengthens the ability to respond to the needs

of high-quality projects and offer them suitable facilitations, contributing to faster procedures and greater certainty for investors, and enhancing the attractiveness of the Sultanate of Oman's investment environment for value-added projects, in line with national priorities, plans and strategies.

He affirmed that clear regulatory frameworks for strategic projects support the Sultanate of Oman's ability to attract high-quality local and foreign investment and help consolidate its standing as an attractive destination for projects with economic impact, supporting the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 in diversifying the economy, enhancing the competitiveness of the business environment, and attracting value-added investment.

The Regulations consolidate the role of the One-Stop Shop as the main channel for delivering services to investors, extending the Law's provision that all services required by projects be provided, and that procedures for issuing approvals, permits, licences and certificates relating to the conduct of economic activities be facilitated

and simplified through it.

The Regulations provide for submitting applications for land and property allocation, licences, approvals, permits and certificates through the One-Stop Shop, linking it electronically to the systems of relevant entities, alongside activating e-payment channels, data and systems integration, and protecting the confidentiality of investors' information and data.

The Authority coordinates with governmental and non-governmental entities to conclude agreements regulating the services associated with the One-Stop Shop, covering the scope of services, responsibilities, powers, timeframes for completing transactions, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, thereby supporting the transition to a more integrated model of investment service delivery.

The Authority is also working to empower the Free Zone operators and those who manage, operate and develop Special Economic Zones, granting them the widest possible scope of executive powers needed to complete investors' transactions and deliver services inside the zones, within the limits of the approved legal and regulatory frameworks and agreements. This brings services closer to investors, shortens referral and decision-making layers, and accelerates transaction completion, while preserving the Authority's regulatory and supervisory role and unifying service quality standards.

Among the most notable provisions of the Regulations in simplifying the investment environment is the ability to issue licences automatically through the One-Stop Shop following automated verification that the data, documents and approved requirements are

met, together with automatic licence renewal where the licensee's data is up to date and meets the prescribed conditions.

The Regulations also set clear timeframes for deciding on a number of applications and transactions, and regulate the giving of reasons for rejection decisions and grievances against them in the cases stipulated, enhancing transparency and clarity in regulatory procedures.

The Regulations also complete the provisions introduced by the Law to regulate real estate development projects in Special Economic Zones, which are an important addition to economic activities in these zones.

The Regulations regulate the licensing of real estate development projects, off-plan sales and freehold ownership of real estate units by non-Omanis in projects to which the prescribed provisions apply, in addition to regulating escrow accounts and the financial controls associated with protecting buyers' rights.

The Regulations strengthened the protection of buyers' funds by regulating escrow account requirements for real estate development projects, ensuring that appropriate financial and technical requirements are in place before units are marketed or advertised for sale, along with regulating the disbursements permitted from the escrow account so that funds are directed to their intended purposes and buyers' rights are preserved.

The Regulations also regulate a number of provisions on the residence of non-Omani investors and real estate unit owners, and their spouses and first-degree relatives, in accordance with the applicable controls and legislation. -ONA

FIRST HALF OF 2026

Shinas Port handles 2.34mn tonnes of cargo

SHINAS: The total cargo handled at Shinas Port in the North Al Batinah Governorate reached 2,341,498 tonnes during the first half of 2026, representing the volume of import and export cargo traffic.

The port is witnessing active and continuous movement in the volume of cargo handling for imports and exports, owing to its distinguished geographical location. This contributes to facilitating vessel reception operations and connecting with regional and international trade routes, affirming its growing role within the maritime transport sector in Oman.

Khater bin Ali Al Maamari, Chief Operating Officer at Shinas Port, stated that the port plays an important pivotal role in the logistics sector in the Sultanate of Oman due to its distinct geographical location that connects Oman with the countries of the world. He affirmed that the port has become



a hub for transporting and receiving goods, as imports at the port recorded 2,322,695 tonnes, while exports amounted to 18,802 tonnes of the total handling volume.

He added that the port received 1,837 ships during the first half of 2026, reflecting a growth in vessel traffic compared to the same period last year, registering an increase of about 156 percent, which is equivalent to more than two and

a half times.

He explained that statistics showed that building and construction materials were at the forefront of the most important imported commodities during the first half of 2026, while general cargo topped the list of the most important exported commodities for this half of the year.

He pointed out that the statistics indicated that during the same



period, 103 transshipment operations were carried out, an increase of 30 percent compared to the same period last year. During these operations, a total of 2,296,483 tonnes were handled.

These indicators affirm the growing role of Shinas Port in supporting trade movement and enhancing the efficiency of services provided across various shipping routes. -ONA

ECONOMY

India's GDP will rise to \$38 trillion in 20 years

NEW DELHI: Indian National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval said on Saturday that India's GDP would increase from the current \$4.015 trillion to \$38 trillion in the next 20 years. Addressing the convocation ceremony of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee as the chief guest, Doval said that the students are fortunate to be living in a transformative era where their future holds great promise.

"As the prime minister has termed the period leading up to 2047 as 'Amrit Kaal', it is truly a wonderful Amrit Kaal.

"India's current GDP stands at USD 4.015 trillion, and it will reach USD 38 trillion in the next 20 years," Doval added.

"The current generation is the luckiest with abundant opportunities, unlike past struggles.

"This is the age of technology, engineering, and innovation, which drives societal growth, with the youth having decades for progress," he said.

The NSA further said that decision-making and building one's own doctrine are critical to becoming a leader. "You will never become a leader if you are not a decision maker. You have got to make a decision... you have got to build your own doctrine," he said.

The two-day convocation ceremony began at the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee, during which degrees will be awarded to 2,701 students. National Security Advisor Ajit Kumar Doval attended the convocation as the chief guest, while Chief of Defence Staff General N.S. Raja Subramani is the guest of honour. -ANI

HIGHEST REGIONAL HONOUR

Toyota Motor Corporation honours Saud Bahwan Automotive with prestigious 'Gold Distributor Award'

MUSCAT: Toyota Motor Corporation has once again awarded Saud Bahwan Automotive with its highest regional honour, the prestigious 'Gold Distributor Award' based on the results across various customer centricity pillars and priority initiatives for the year 2025. This distinction celebrates the distributor's continuous operational excellence and places Saud Bahwan Automotive among an elite tier of Toyota distributors globally.

The award was presented by Masaru Shimada, Executive Advisor - Toyota Motor Corporation, to Mohammed Saud Bahwan, Chairman - Saud Bahwan Group.

The recognition highlights Saud Bahwan Automotive's consistent excellence across a comprehensive evaluation framework by Toyota Motor Corporation. The distributor achieved top results in Sales,



Service and Spare Parts operations, while successfully driving key customer-centric programs, best-in-town activities, carbon



neutrality initiatives and regional after-sales commitments.

Commenting on this milestone achievement, Mohammed Saud Bahwan, Chairman - Saud Bahwan Group, stated: "Receiving the Gold Distributor Award once again is a profound moment of pride for the entire Saud Bahwan Automotive family. This award is a direct result of the deep trust and loyalty our customers have demonstrated over generations. We express our heartfelt gratitude to our customers for their ongoing confidence and to Toyota Motor Corporation for their unwavering guidance and partnership. As we look ahead, we remain fully dedicated to strengthening these relationships by taking every aspect of customer experience and satisfaction to new heights."

Over 50 years of partnership, Toyota has evolved from a premier Jap-

anese automotive brand into a cherished household name across Oman. Saud Bahwan Automotive has nurtured this bond by maintaining customer satisfaction as the foundation of its business philosophy.

To ensure seamless accessibility for every vehicle owner in the Sultanate, Saud Bahwan Automotive has established an unmatched operational footprint. Continuous investments in modern facilities, an expansive nationwide branch network, innovative marketing and comprehensive after-sales care ensure that world-class automotive support is always within reach for Toyota customers in Oman.

Building on this success, Saud Bahwan Automotive will continue advancing its service delivery, setting new benchmarks for quality, service excellence and customer care in Oman.

MARKET

MSX index ends lower



Oman Refreshment, up 8.91%, was the top gainer while, Sohar Power, down 4.76%, was the top loser

MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 7,580.14 points, down by -0.30% from the previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.24% at 621.65 points. Oman Refreshment, up 8.91%, was the top gainer while, Sohar Power, down 4.76%, was the top loser. Shares of Sohar International Bank were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while OQEP were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 9958 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 31.83 million, with more than 105.24 million shares changing hands.

Out of 72 traded securities, 19 advanced, 32 declined, and 21 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 1456K while domestic investors were net sellers for RO 1159K, followed by foreign investors for RO 297K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 13,581.87 points, down -0.27%. Prices of Takaful Oman, Taageer Finance, Bank Dhofar, and Bank Muscat were up by 3.39%, 1.79%,

0.98%, and 0.24% respectively. Prices of Al Sharqia Investment, Al Madina Investments, DIDIC, Al Anwar Investment, and Muscat Finance were down by 2.94%, 2.47%, 2.36%, 1.91%, and 1.49% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 9,857.54 points, down -0.34%. Prices of Oman Refreshment, Oman Chromite, Gulf Mushroom Products, Oman Chlorine, and Al Maha Ceramics were up by 8.91%, 4.88%, 3.33%, 2.42%, and 2.31% respectively. Prices of Galfar Engineering, Al Anwar Ceramics, and Oman Flour Mills were down by 2.60%, 2.55%, and 0.34% respectively.

Services Index was down by -0.49% before closing at 3,014.57 points. Prices of Barka Desalination, Dhofar Generating, Phoenix Power, Phoenix Power, and OQ Exploration & Production were up by 6.29%, 1.24%, 1.08%, 1.08%, and 1.05% respectively. Prices of Shell Oman Marketing, Majan College, Muscat Desalination, Renaissance Services, and Oore-doo were down by 3.72%, 2.14%, 2.08%, 1.40%, and 0.94% respectively. -United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	7,622.04	7,566.66	7,580.14	7,603.23	-23.10	-0.30
FINANCIAL INDEX	13,646.26	13,543.46	13,581.87	13,618.21	-36.34	-0.27
Industry Index	9,907.86	9,853.61	9,857.54	9,891.56	-34.02	-0.34
Services Index	3,039.73	3,013.57	3,014.57	3,029.42	-14.85	-0.49
MSX Shariah Index	624.61	620.96	621.65	623.14	-1.50	-0.24
MSX TR INDEX	11,817.12	11,731.27	11,752.15	11,787.96	-35.81	-0.30
FINANCIAL TR IDX	16,777.37	16,650.97	16,698.20	16,742.87	-44.67	-0.27
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	12,689.45	12,619.97	12,625.01	12,668.57	-43.56	-0.34
SERVICES TR IDX	4,081.42	4,046.31	4,047.65	4,067.58	-19.93	-0.49
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
105,247,824	31,829,378	9,958	39,350,151,613	19	32	21	72

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SEPTEMBER 20

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST MD	LAST OFFER	PDA VALUE	MARKET CAP	
REGULAR MARKET																
OM00000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	100	17	1	0.169	0.169	0.169	0.169	0.159	0.010	6.289	0.169	0.157	0.169	0.100	12,763,218
OM00000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	7,087	3,508	10	0.498	0.498	0.492	0.496	0.480	0.016	3.333	0.496	0.492	0.499	0.100	24,969,819
OM00000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	3,500	886	2	0.253	0.253	0.253	0.253	0.250	0.003	1.200	0.253	0.250	0.253	0.100	10,839,277
OM0000005682	PHOENIX POWER	270,159	75,892	28	0.280	0.281	0.280	0.280	0.277	0.003	1.083	0.280	0.280	0.301	0.100	498,538,409
OM0000000759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	14,824,917	7,198,609	829	0.477	0.485	0.477	0.483	0.478	0.005	1.046	0.483	0.483	0.483	0.0103	864,000,000
OM0000000249	BANK DHOFAR	1,000,654	206,656	250	0.208	0.210	0.205	0.207	0.205	0.002	0.976	0.207	0.207	0.207	0.100	628,238,286
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	20,000	2,960	2	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.000	0.147	0.001	0.080	0.148	0.133	0.148
0.100	22	200,000														
OM00000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	4,911	1,670	4	0.340	0.341	0.340	0.341	0.340	0.001	0.294	0.341	0.340	0.341	0.100	24,002,990
OM00000007296	BANK MUSCAT	9,428,217	3,988,480	1,481	0.424	0.425	0.422	0.425	0.424	0.001	0.236	0.425	0.430	0.425	0.100	3,190,218,751
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	50,000	16,000	2	0.320	0.320	0.320	0.320	0.320	0.000	0.000	0.320	0.317	0.330	0.100	33,600,000
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	13,333	1,680	4	0.126	0.126	0.126	0.126	0.126	0.000	0.000	0.126	0.126	0.135	0.100	16,124,063
OM00000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	46,905	43,622	7	0.930	0.930	0.930	0.930	0.930	0.000	0.000	0.930	0.930	0.930	0.100	116,155,103
OM00000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	88,890	16,613	18	0.186	0.187	0.186	0.187	0.187	0.000	0.000	0.187	0.187	0.187	0.010	187,000,000
OM00000004248	SMY POWER HOLDING	9,251	1,714	2	0.195	0.195	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.000	0.000	0.185	0.185	0.195	0.100	36,932,586
OM00000004420	BANK NIZWA	207,275	32,373	33	0.157	0.157	0.155	0.156	0.156	0.000	0.000	0.156	0.156	0.156	0.100	348,964,671
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	29,327	11,882	8	0.405	0.409	0.405	0.409	0.410	-0.001	-0.244	0.409	0.405	0.409	0.100	459,247,251
OM00000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	364,095	146,394	251	0.403	0.403	0.400	0.402	0.403	-0.001	-0.248	0.402	0.400	0.402	0.100	309,620,400
OM00000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	52,798	19,151	9	0.364	0.364	0.343	0.363	0.364	-0.001	-0.275	0.363	0.348	0.363	0.100	72,600,000
OM00000003026	OMAN TELECOM	2,447,861	3,352,314	52	1.370	1.370	1.366	1.366	1.370	-0.004	-0.292	1.366	1.366	1.369	0.1001	1024,500,000
OM00000009026	QJ BASE INDUSTRIES (SF2)	207,758,53	3,348,637	1,894	0.258	0.259	0.255	0.256	0.257	-0.001	-0.389	0.256	0.260	0.256	0.000	885,639,658
OM00000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	103,075	20,251	7	0.196	0.198	0.195	0.197	0.198	-0.001	-0.505	0.197	0.194	0.197	0.100	140,738,049
OM00000004925	ALBATHINAH POWER	63,904	12,532	8	0.197	0.197	0.196	0.196	0.197	-0.001	-0.508	0.196	0.194	0.196	0.100	132,277,936
OM00000004735	SEBICOORP SALALAH	109,042	28,253	18	0.261	0.261	0.258	0.258	0.260	-0.002	-0.769	0.258	0.258	0.260	0.100	246,279,563
OM00000004788	MADINA TAKAFUL	163,640	18,071	25	0.111	0.111	0.110	0.110	0.111	-0.001	-0.901	0.110	0.110	0.110	0.100	19,250,000
OM00000009072	QJ GAS NETWORKS	12,449,249	2,696,730	1,858	0.219	0.219	0.214	0.216	0.218	-0.002	-0.917	0.216	0.218	0.216	0.100	935,414,767
OM00000003968	OOREDOO	118,012	37,470	33	0.320	0.320	0.317	0.317	0.320	-0.003	-0.938	0.317	0.314	0.327	0.100	206,349,321
OM00000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	25,726,725	4,905,431	1,708	0.192	0.192	0.188	0.190	0.192	-0.002	-1.042	0.190	0.192	0.190	0.100	1458,441,078
OM00000003234	UNITED FINANCE	80,707	6,941	4	0.087	0.087	0.086	0.086	0.087	-0.001	-1.149	0.086	0.085	0.090	0.100	30,626,498
OM00000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	41,046	11,579	12	0.285	0.285	0.280	0.281	0.285	-0.004	-1.404	0.281	0.280	0.310	0.100	66,431,210
OM00000001772	ALANWAH INVESTMENT	4,752	974	2	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.209	-0.004	-1.914	0.205	0.205	0.211	0.100	63,039,451
OM00000001509	DHOFAR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	15,887	4,607	4	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.290	0.000	0.297	-0.007	-2.357	0.290	0.290	0.326
0.100	143	856,281														
OM00000002440	AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO.	21,804	2,170	6	0.100	0.100	0.099	0.099	0.102	-0.003	-2.941	0.099	0.099	0.100	0.100	8,910,000
OM00000010120	ASYAD SHIPPING	5,145,768	1,139,636	737	0.227	0.227	0.218	0.218	0.226	-0.008	-3.540	0.218	0.218	0.218	0.000	113,556,253
Total	33	93,750,574,29	33,504	9,308												
Parallel Market																
OM00000001426	OMAN REFRESHMENT	460	506	1	1.100	1.100	1.100	1.100	1.010	0.090	8.911	1.100	1.050	1.100	0.100	55,000,000
OM00000001020	OMAN CHROMITE	300	1,270	3	4.200	4.300	4.200	4.300	4.100	0.200	4.878	4.300	4.000	4.500	1.000	15,609,000
OM00000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	100	6	1	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.059	0.002	3.390	0.061	0.059	0.061	0.100	15,250,000
OM00000002341	OMAN CHLORINE	100	17	1	0.169	0.169	0.169	0.169	0.165	0.004	2.424	0.169	0.159	0.169	0.100	12,084,994
OM00000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	21,574	5,720	8	0.260	0.266	0.260	0.266	0.260	0.006	2.308	0.266	0.261	0.286	0.100	14,630,000
OM00000003281	TAGEER FINANCE	110,494	12,381	7	0.112	0.118	0.112	0.114	0.112	0.002	1.786	0.114	0.114	0.118	0.100	32,340,749
OM00000007407	DHOFAR GENERATING	16,000	1,267	2	0.079	0.082	0.079	0.082	0.081	0.001	1.235	0.082	0.073	0.082	0.100	18,223,680
OM00000010823	OMAN GATEWAY FUND	100	105	1	1.050	1.050	1.050	1.050	1.040	0.010	0.962	1.050	1.050	1.055	0.000	28,796,084
OM00000001160	NATIONAL GAS	25,260	2,830	3	0.112	0.114	0.112	0.114	0.114	0.000	0.000	0.114	0.112	0.114	0.100	9,990,000
OM00000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	8,893	48	6	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.000	0.000	0.070	0.065	0.070	0.100	1,470,000
OM00000002360	OMAN ARAB BANK	60,000	168,000	117	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.000	0.000	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.000	1,788,133
OM00000007910	AMAR REAL ESTATE	136,620	9,426	8	0.069	0.069	0.068	0.069	0.069	0.000	0.000	0.069	0.068	0.069	0.100	13,800,000
OM00000005659	JABAL REIF	26,670	2,747	8	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.107	0.000	0.000	0.107	0.106	0.107	0.100	18,618,000
OM00000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	3,549	2,083	7	0.587	0.587	0.587	0.587	0.589	-0.002	-0.340	0.587	0.582	0.587	0.100	101,928,881
OM00000008868	THE PEARL REIF	18,866	3,391	6	0.181	0.181	0.179	0.179	0.180	-0.001	-0.556	0.179	0.178	0.180	0.100	105,867,202
OM00000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	20,401	3	3	0.220	0.220	0.213	0.213	0.215	-0.002	-0.930	0.213	0.214	0.220	0.100	138,598,119
OM00000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	19,040	2,062	8	0.106	0.106	0.105	0.105	0.106	-0.001	-0.943	0.105	0.105	0.106	0.100	88,388,593
OM00000011151	OMFCO	0.184,170	2,102,487	347	0.220	0.221	0.226	0.226	0.229	-0.003	-1.310	0.226	0.226	0.226	0.000	151,798,760
OM00000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	551,850	36,422	5	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.067	-0.001	-1.493	0.066	0.066	0.068	0.100	20,271,657
OM00000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	1,031	97	1	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.094	0.096	-0.002	-2.083	0.094	0.094	0.097	0.100	14,621,738
OM00000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	2,000	274	1	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.137	0.140	-0.003	-2.143	0.137	0.138	0.154	0.100	13,563,000
OM00000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	37,281	3,006	11	0.082	0.082	0.079	0.079	0.081	-0.002	-2.469	0.079	0.079	0.085	0.100	3,404,900
OM00000001681	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	154,512	23,510	18	0.157	0.157	0.152	0.153	0.157	-0.004	-2.548	0.152	0.152	0.152	0.100	33,660,000
OM00000003261	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	371,721	56,331	38	0.154	0.154	0.149	0.150	0.154	-0.004	-2.597	0.149	0.149	0.165	0.100	34,047,967
OM00000002751	SUEH ALMAHARKEETING	5,362	4,107	2	0.075	0.075	0.065	0.071	0.070	-0.005	-6.719	0.070	0.070	0.070	0.100	7,406,719
OM00000003711	SOHAR POWER	47	6	1	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.210	-0.010	-4.762	0.200	0.200	0.000	0.100	4,000,000
Total	26	11,293,621	2,438	484	614											

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Gaza death toll rises to 73,910 as 21 Palestinians injured in past 24 hours

Local health authorities reported that a number of victims remain trapped under the rubble and on the roads, as ambulance and rescue crews remain unable to reach them



GAZA: The death toll in the Gaza Strip has risen to 73,910, while 174,935 Palestinians have been injured since the start of the Israeli aggression on October 7, 2023, medical sources said on Sunday.

Local health authorities reported that hospitals across Gaza received the bodies of three Palestinians and 21 injured people over the past 24 hours.

They added that the number of Palestinians killed since the ceasefire took effect on October 11, 2025, has risen to 1,393, while 4,822 others have been injured. A total of 831 bodies have been recovered from under the rubble since the ceasefire.

Meantime, a number of victims

remain trapped under the rubble and on the roads, as ambulance and rescue crews remain unable to reach them.

Israeli forces detain at least 27 Palestinians

Meanwhile, Israeli occupation forces have continued their raid on the village of al-Mughayyir, east of Ramallah, since dawn on Sunday, detaining at least 27 Palestinians in a large-scale campaign.

Local sources told WAFA that Israeli forces deployed infantry units throughout the village from the early morning hours and closed its only entrance.

Soldiers raided several homes, ransacked their contents, and stole

amounts of cash and gold jewelry.

The sources said the detention campaign was ongoing, with at least 27 Palestinians detained so far.

Israeli forces also turned the home of Palestinian citizen Shaher Sari Abu Alia into a military barracks and took all those detained there, amid the continued raid and detention campaign.

The latest operation follows an attack on al-Mughayyir on Saturday by Israeli colonists and occupation forces, during which several Palestinians suffered suffocation, homes were raided and several citizens were assaulted.

Al-Mughayyir has faced repeated attacks by Israeli colonists

alongside frequent Israeli military raids. OCHA has documented a sharp rise in colonist incidents affecting the village, including attacks causing Palestinian casualties and property damage, as well as agricultural losses and attacks on livestock.

On September 2, two 19-year-old Palestinians, Omar Mohammad Na'ssan and Khalil Abu Alia, were killed during an attack on the village by Israeli colonists accompanied by Israeli forces.

Dozens of Israeli colonists raid Al-Aqsa Mosque

Dozens of Israeli colonists on Sunday raided the courtyards of Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem, under heavy protection from Israeli occupation forces, amid heightened security measures in the Old City marking Yom Kippur.

It said colonist groups had called for gatherings outside Bab al-Rahma, one of Al-Aqsa's gates, to perform Jewish prayers and rituals.

Mass incursions

The raids came after calls by groups affiliated with the so-called "Temple organisations" for mass incursions into Al-Aqsa and the imposition of new religious rituals at the holy site during the Jewish holiday season.

Earlier this week, 165 colonists raided Al-Aqsa, according to the Jerusalem Governorate.

The Jerusalem Governorate had warned of escalating activity by these groups around Al-Aqsa ahead of Yom Kippur.

It said colonist groups had called for gatherings outside Bab al-Rahma, one of Al-Aqsa's gates, to perform Jewish prayers and rituals.

Israeli forces have significantly tightened restrictions around the Old City and Al-Aqsa during the Jewish holidays, with Palestinian worshippers facing restrictions on access to the mosque, while Israeli colonists are provided with protection during their raids.

The latest raids take place as the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur begins, amid concerns over attempts by groups affiliated with the so-called "Temple organisations" to introduce new rituals at Al-Aqsa and alter the longstanding status quo at the holy site. — WAFA

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

India and Nepal explore strategic bilateral relations

NEW DELHI: Nepalese Finance Minister Swarnim Wagle and Ministry of External Affairs Additional Secretary (North) Munu Mahawar attended an international seminar titled 'Re-imagining India-Nepal Relations in an Emerging Global Order', organised by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) in Delhi.

Speaking to ANI regarding the seminar, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) Director General, Sachin Kumar Sharma, stated, "We discussed two things. One, the bilateral relations between India and Nepal and how we can strengthen them. Secondly, how these two countries can play an important role in the emerging world order. How we can amplify our concern, our voices, and shape the rules governing the world order."

Bridging bilateral engagements from academic and diplomatic discourse to humanitarian solidarity, India advanced its assistance towards Nepal following catastrophic floods on August 26, delivering 11 tonnes of relief goods to Nepali officials on Saturday as the ninth aircraft carrying supplies landed in the Himalayan

nation from New Delhi.

"India's support to Nepal's recovery efforts continues: The 9th Indian Air Force (IAF) flight with 11 tonnes of material, including tents, medicines, sleeping bags and forensic supplies, arrived in Kathmandu and were handed over to the Government of Nepal," the Ambassador of India to Nepal, Naveen Srivastava, stated on X.

Furthermore, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) emphasised India's dedication to aiding Nepal's restoration process. "India's relief assistance has reached Nepal. An additional 11 tonnes of essential supplies, including medicines, forensic supplies, tents, hygiene kits and sleeping bags, have been handed over to the Nepali side. India remains committed to supporting Nepal's recovery," the MEA stated on X.

Previously, on Friday, Nepal's Finance Minister, Swarnim Wagle, expressed gratitude to the Indian government for its assistance during rescue and relief operations following the recent flash flood in Rasuwa, which claimed 1410 lives, as reported by the Embassy of Nepal in India. — ANI

EQUAL EARTH PROJECTION FOR MAPS

Decolonising perceptions about Africa

NEW YORK: The Correct the Map resolution to promote map projections that more realistically reflect the true size of continents endorsed by the United Nations in New York at the beginning of September was a huge success for the African countries that led the campaign. In the General Assembly, 164 member states voted to encourage the use of Equal Earth projection and other equal-area maps instead of the 16th-century Mercator projection.

Robert Dussey, the foreign minister of Togo, which sponsored the Correct the Map campaign at the UN, spoke of a "feeling of pride."

Correct the Map is also supported by the African Union.

"Finally, Africa is fighting to regain its place in the community of nations," he told DW.

"The place it has been reserved to this day is unfair. It does not correspond to Africa's reality, not in historical, geographical or economic terms."

Dussey made clear that the debate about global maps was also clearly about symbolically redrawing the maps of facts and knowledge, culture and identity and redressing misperceptions about political and economic realities and power.

The only UN member state that rejected the resolution was the United States, whose president Donald Trump has engaged in various acts of political symbolism, having issued orders for places



to be renamed on maps which he would presumably also like to redraw Trump has signed executive orders to rename the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America, and Lake Ontario as Lake America.

The UN resolution, meanwhile, is part of a broader, global trend, as French historian Romain Tiquet from the African Worlds Institute (IMAF) told DW.

"Since the late 2000s and early 2010s, there has been a great deal of debate about the decolonisation of knowledge — in universities, museums and cultural institutions, as well as within social movements and civil society."

He said many questions were being explored: "Who established the categories through which we conceptualise the world? From which locations? And what power dynamics result from this? And cartography fits right into this context."

Many African states have also

been trying to free the school systems from colonial influence, often for political reasons.

In October 2025, the Malian government decided to remove French history from the school curriculum.

The decision was made to stop teaching about the French Revolution but to focus on Malian history and the other ancient West African kingdoms.

In just a few years, the country's military government has made a clean break with the former colonial power. Mali ended its military cooperation with France in 2022, and French soldiers began to withdraw from the country. Burkina Faso and Niger did the same and the three formed the Alliance of Sahel States in 2023.

Philemon Mtoi from Tumaini University Makumira in Tanzania said Mali had made an important step: "As a historian, I believe that a country without a strong under-

standing of its own history is like a country without clear leadership and direction. This decision is important because it seeks to strengthen patriotism and foster a stronger sense of national identity."

By investing in the research and preservation of African history, Mali — like Africa as a whole — was making a strong contribution to global scholarship, Mtoi explained.

He spoke of "reclaiming and documenting African histories from an African perspective" and said that this was not only "an act of decolonisation" but also an "important step toward intellectual independence."

Mtoi said that many other African countries, such as Ghana, Namibia, South Africa and Kenya, had adopted a similar approach. He added that his own country, Tanzania, had also made major changes to the school curriculum recently. He said that "Tanzanian history and ethics" was now a compulsory subject that had replaced global history and that it would be taught in Swahili, the country's national language. The historian warned, however, that knowledge of other countries and histories should not be erased. He said it was important to acquire a profound knowledge of significant events in global history, such as the French Revolution, but that this could be done at a later stage. — DW

Full story at timesofoman.com/world

SAFER ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

Australian PM seeks Big Tech support for internet safety, AI regulation



CALIFORNIA: Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese met Apple Executive Chairman Tim Cook at Apple Park in Cupertino, United States, and discussed online safety measures, including Australia's social media age ban, digital duty of care and AI standards.

According to a media release issued on Sunday by the Australian Prime Minister's Office, Albanese on Saturday witnessed a demonstration of Apple's new tools that allow parents to manage the content their children can see, who they can communicate with and when they have access to apps.

Albanese and Cook also discussed Australia's work to introduce new laws aimed at creating a safer online environment by setting legally enforceable minimum safety standards.

In a post on X, Albanese said, "We all have a responsibility to make the online world safer for our kids. It's a belief @tim_cook, and I share. Today at Apple HQ, we spoke about what we're doing to protect children from online harm and the work ahead." In another post, Albanese said, "We're making sure technology works for Australians. Not the other way around."

In a video attached to the post, Albanese said, "Technology can bring enormous benefits, as it has. But we need to shape it rather than allow it to shape us. How do we make sure, with any new technology, humans need to be in control? And that's a theme of all of the actions that we are taking: whether it's the social media ban, whether it is the digital duty of care, or whether it be the AI Australian standards. How do we make sure

that people are in control, rather than the technology in control of us?"

The Australian Government said that Australians would also benefit from better protection from seriously harmful and illegal content across digital services, while social media users would be afforded more choice.

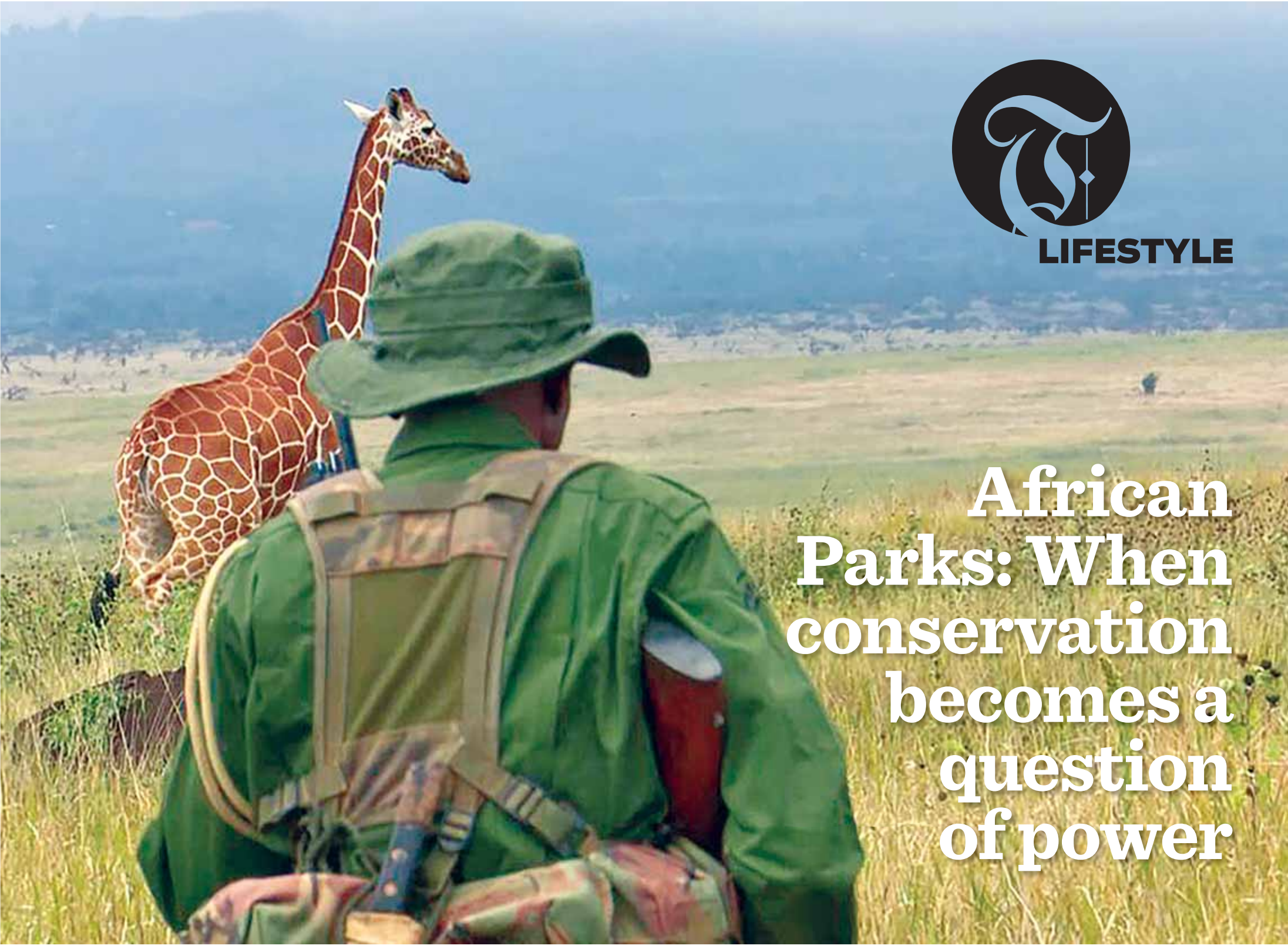
Albanese said in the media release, "Australia is proud to lead the world with our social media age ban and online safety approach."

"Walking through Apple Park today and seeing these new safety features in action proves that when we draw a line in the sand, tech companies will step up," he said.

"Tim Cook and Apple are showing that the industry can, and must, compete on safety credentials, not just convenience," Albanese

added. Cook, in a post on X, said, "It was great to welcome @AlboMP to Apple Park this morning to talk about the incredible work of our teams and our longstanding commitment to Australia. I was grateful to share some of our newest innovations, including strong and intuitive controls to help keep kids safe online."

The Australian Government said it would continue working with stakeholders, including technology companies, to improve online safety and provide Australians with more choice. Albanese is also scheduled to continue discussions on online safety with international leaders in New York during the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week. The 81st UNGA High-Level Week began on Friday and will continue through September 28. — ANI



African Parks: When conservation becomes a question of power

PRINCE HARRY has long been a supporter of African wildlife and nature. When the British royal first became involved with African Parks in 2016, he served as a prominent figure supporting awareness on elephant conservation.

Later, the son of King Charles III became president of the organisation before joining its board in 2023. But reports indicate that in just a few weeks' time, he will step down from his position at African Parks. The NGO claims that the move is merely part of a reshuffling of its board.

But Dutch journalist and author Olivier van Beemen, who has extensively investigated the South Africa-based wildlife conservation group, believes the association between Harry and African Parks has increasingly become a burden — for both sides.

Harry's role was to mainly open doors for African Parks, van Beemen says. His fame attracted media attention and helped the NGO gain access to potential donors. But his notorious falling-out with his family increasingly failed to improve the organization's coffers and image.

At the same time, allegations of human rights abuses at African Parks made the prince's association with the organisation increasingly problematic.

"I think they now see each other more as a liability," van Beemen told DW, stressing that the full story reaches far beyond a junior member of the royal family simply stepping down from a ribbon-cutting role.

An NGO with state-like powers

According to its own figures, African Parks manages 24 protected areas in 13 African countries, covering more than 20 million hectares. By 2030, the organisation aims to manage as many as 30 parks.

Its business model is known as delegated management: African governments hand over the long-term management of protected areas to the group.

The land formally remains state-owned. But the organisation takes on wide-ranging responsibilities, including conservation, infrastructure, tourism and anti-poaching operations.

For African governments, this model offers a major advantage: African Parks brings international funding, expertise and personnel to protected areas that many states



African Parks is dedicated to protecting wildlife on the continent across some vast areas. But the organisation faces allegations of human rights abuses by rangers. Now Prince Harry is stepping down from its board

would otherwise struggle to manage on their own.

In order to achieve its objectives on the ground, African Parks employs a host of armed rangers across the continent, who are allowed to use indelicate methods if and when needed; in some cases, its influence even extends to managing border controls.

"They take over the state's monopoly on the use of force within the park," says van Beemen, adding that some critics of the NGO have gone as far as describing African Parks as a "state within a state."

It is in this context that mounting allegations of human rights abuses have been recorded in recent years, with conservation efforts repeatedly coming into conflict with local communities.

The shadow of the Baka case

The worst allegations of rights



abuses emerged in 2023 at Odzala-Kokoua National Park in the Republic of Congo.

Members of the indigenous Baka community reported violence, torture and abuse at the hands of African Parks' rangers.

The NGO subsequently commissioned the London-based firm Omnia Strategy to investigate the allegations, resulting in African Parks eventually acknowledging certain instances of human rights abuses two years later — though the full investigation report was never made public.

According to van Beemen, the report was not even shown to the government of the Republic of Congo, despite African Parks operating there under an agreement with the government. To this day, it remains unclear what exactly happened in Odzala-Kokoua, and how many people were affected.

African Parks has promised re-

forms while conceding past failures in its own systems and processes; still, it has remained highly intransparent about the details involved in the entire scandal, says van Beemen.

Division over findings in Dutch book

The Dutch journalist has meanwhile published a book on the whole affair, titled "Beasts and Men." The volume won several awards in the Netherlands and has attracted international attention and acclaim. However, African Parks fundamentally rejects van Beemen's portrayal of the organization, saying his book contains "hundreds of factual inaccuracies" as well as "a similar number of deeply misleading statements."

Regarding the human rights abuse allegations, African Parks says some of the cases described by van Beemen had occurred out-



— reportedly held Africans in low regard. Among other things, he refused to accept the international economic sanctions against the South African apartheid system during the 1980s.

A former close associate of the founder told the Dutch journalist that at the top echolons of the organisation, Africans were allegedly considered incapable of protecting their own natural resources because they lacked the money and management skills to do so.

In its early years, African Parks was headquartered in the Netherlands where according to van Beemen, employees would routinely look at maps of Africa and plan where the organisation could take over additional parks.

"For me, it was very difficult not to think of the colonialists of earlier centuries looking at the same maps and searching for opportunities for colonial expansion," van Beemen told DW.

African Parks meanwhile has also rejected this particular characterization of its ethos, pointing at the many relevant contracts it has signed with African governments in good faith and with mutual respect.

Conservation and accountability

The scandal meanwhile also hits closer to Europe not only because of Prince Harry's departure from the NGO, but also due to the fact that European and German funding also goes to projects involving African Parks.

The organisation stresses that these funds enable it to enter cooperations with local communities, which African Parks claims are increasingly at the heart of its work.

The organisation says that there are local people living in 64% of the areas where it manages wildlife and nature, while legal access to resources is allowed in 90% of the parks. Only four of the 23 parks are fully fenced, it adds.

But without sufficient scrutiny and accountability, there is no way of verifying the details behind those claims. — DW

side the NGOs control. At the same time, it stressed in a statement that it has a zero-tolerance policy toward abuse, and that there is training in place on human rights standards as well as a comprehensive complaints mechanism for transgressions.

But as part of his research, van Beemen also spoke to several former rangers and people affected by conservation operations in several African countries, where he says he repeatedly encountered a fundamental problem perpetuated by African Parks: the loose definition of what constitutes poaching.

According to the accounts he collected, the NGO also treats some locals who hunt animals for their own consumption as poachers, rather than using that term exclusively to describe professional poachers who kill rhinos or elephants for international criminal networks. Van Beemen said that during his research in Zambia, former rangers told him about the brutal treatment the people taken into custody on such grounds can face. "This can involve beatings. It can involve very serious torture," he told DW.

Hiding behind a colonial mindset?

The history of African Parks is also controversial. The organisation was founded by Dutch businessman Paul Fentener van Vlissingen, who — according to van Beemen

SPORTS

Hosts Brighton upset Arsenal



The defending champions were handed their first defeat of the Premier League season

LONDON: Arsenal slumped to a first loss of their Premier League title defence—and it was a heavy one at Brighton.

After four straight wins for the champions, the 3-0 defeat at Amex Stadium on Saturday came out of nowhere, and conceding the third goal from a corner — typically an area of strength for Arsenal —

summed up an unusually sloppy performance from Mikel Arteta's team. Pascal Gross and Charalampos Kostas scored in the first half with shots from outside the penalty area, before Chema Andres completed the win with a header at the back post from Gross' corner.

"There are certain basics that you need to accomplish in football, especially in the Premier League, that we were very far from," said Arteta, who described it as a "big lesson."

"The amount of technical errors that we did, and we didn't respect any principle of play that you have to, to get out of man-to-man situations. That put us always on the back foot."

The victory will have been especially sweet for Brighton manager Fabian Hurler, who said "only one team tried to play football" after his team's narrow home loss to

Arsenal last season. Arsenal have often struggled against Brighton, who were the last team to inflict such a heavy defeat on the Gunners in any competition — winning 3-0 at Emirates Stadium in May 2023.

It completed a brilliant week for Brighton, which beat Coventry 5-0 in the league last weekend and came from two goals down in midweek to beat Manchester United 3-2 away in the English League Cup. "We have to believe we can compete with the best teams in the league," Hurler said.

Goal-scorer Andres hailed his side's 'perfect performance' against the champions.

"The team was amazing, the intensity was what we needed to win against this amazing team."

"It was my first Premier League goal and an important moment in the match for us to go 3-0 up. You cannot say it is game over against

players of the quality of Arsenal, but the team kept pushing for the win," said the Spaniard. Manchester City — the other team to win its first four games — can now move three points clear in the standings by beating Sunderland.

More misery for big-spending Tottenham

Fresh off a \$400 million summer spend, Tottenham remain without a win in five league games this season after losing 3-2 at home to Aston Villa.

Johan Manzambi, a 20-year-old attacking midfielder who starred for Switzerland at the World Cup, made his first start for Villa and scored the opening goal against the run of play in first-half stoppage time. He set up another for fellow new signing Nicolas Jackson, before Emi Buendia's long-range strike in the 79th sent Villa on

their way to a first league win of the campaign.

Conor Gallagher and Jan Paul van Hecke grabbed late consolation for Spurs — their first league goals this season — but they are now two draws and three defeats in the league for Roberto De Zerbi's team, who also lost in the English League Cup this week.

After back-to-back 17th-place finishes in the 20-team Premier League, Tottenham's leadership oversaw a huge squad rebuild in the offseason in a show of confidence in De Zerbi.

There's been no payback so far in terms of results and De Zerbi — a combustible Italian coach — is under growing pressure heading into a long international break.

He said he didn't speak to his players after the game "because I didn't want to say anything."

"I was very disappointed, very

sad, very frustrated for the performance," De Zerbi said, "because we can't lose this game in this way."

To make matters worse for Tottenham, World Cup-winning Spain right back Pedro Porro was forced off midway through the first half with an injury.

Wins for Newcastle and Everton

Fast starts helped Newcastle and Everton claim wins over promoted teams.

Newcastle scored twice in the first seven minutes — through Lewis Hall and Joe Willock — to set up a 2-1 victory over previously unbeaten Hull. Thierno Barry's 11th-minute goal was enough for Everton to beat Ipswich 1-0.

The league's other promoted club, Coventry, got a first win since coming up, beating Nottingham Forest 1-0 away. - Agencies

Salah nets hat-trick in Trabzonspor victory



ISTANBUL: Mohamed Salah scored a treble and set up another as Trabzonspor thrashed Galatasaray 4-0 to hand the Istanbul side its first defeat of the season on Saturday.

The Egyptian opened the scoring early on, running through and finishing to give his side the lead before setting up Noah Saviolo for the second in the 39th minute.

His second goal came just prior to half-time with a clinical finish, and he com-

pleted his hat-trick in the 80th minute, running more than half the length of the pitch unchallenged to score with a trademark side-foot finish.

Galatasaray saw both midfielder Lesley Ugochukwu and coach Okan Buruk given their marching orders in a disastrous outing.

Trabzonspor are fifth in the table with 10 points from six games, three points behind leaders Galatasaray. - Agencies

EUROPEAN LEAGUES

Raphinha hits another treble as Barca drub Sevilla

SEVILLA: Raphinha scored a second hat-trick in successive games as Barcelona claimed a comfortable 3-1 victory over Sevilla that increased their lead at the top of La Liga on Saturday.

The in-form Brazilian produced a clinical display of finishing at the Ramon Sanchez-Pizjuan Stadium to take his goal tally this season to 14 in all competitions.

Raphinha also hit a treble in the 7-2 win over Racing Santander last Wednesday.

Barcelona's win moved them up to 21 points - six clear of both Real Madrid in second and third-placed Real Betis, but having played a game more.

Real visit city rivals Atletico Madrid on Sunday, while Betis travel to Deportivo La Coruna.

Sevilla opened the scoring in the 19th minute after a well-worked move culminated in Felix Correia's cross to the near post where Youssef Fofana nodded in.

But Raphinha got Barca back on level terms three minutes later when he checked back inside and calmly struck the ball beyond Sevilla goalkeeper Odysseas Vlachodimos.

Teenager Lamine Yamal was instrumental in Raphinha's second in the 52nd minute when he dribbled away from goal before he clipped a cross for the ex-Leeds man to head in.

Yamal was the supplier again in



the 69th minute when he slipped in Raphinha with an exquisite pass and the 29-year-old deftly chipped it over Vlachodimos.

It sealed a seventh straight league win for Barca - their eighth in all competitions - while Sevilla remain in fifth place on 13 points.

Barcelona controlled possession as the game fizzled out in the closing stages and threatened to add a



fourth as Sevilla's challenge faded, although Andreas Christensen's second-half injury was a concern for Hansi Flick.

Rayo Vallecano striker Sergio Camello made it seven goals so far in a 1-1 draw at Osasuna.

After being crushed 7-2 by Barca in midweek, Racing Santander was routed 5-0 at Celta Vigo with Pablo Duran scoring twice.

Alaves drew 0-0 at Athletic Bilbao in a Basque Country derby.

Lyon, Paris FC unbeaten

Ghana striker Ernest Nuamah scored twice as second-placed Lyon thumped Rennes 4-0 at home in Ligue 1.

English coach Liam Rosenior got one over on his former club as Paris FC beat Strasbourg 2-1 at home.

Ilan Kebbal and Pablo Pagis

scored for Paris FC, who are undefeated after five games.

Rosenior upset Strasbourg fans after leaving in January for a short and ill-fated spell at Chelsea. He taunted Strasbourg's visiting fans at the final whistle but said some had insulted his family.

Angers, Le Mans and Toulouse also won at home.

Gladbach lose again

A change of coach for Borussia Mönchengladbach did not stop the team conceding goals as Gladbach lost 4-3 at home to Mainz for a fourth straight defeat and 16 goals conceded.

Third-place Freiburg are level with Bayern after twice coming from behind in a 2-2 draw at Eintracht Frankfurt. There were home wins for Werder Bremen and Hamburg. - Agencies

ITALIAN LEAGUE

Martinez hits a double to rescue champions Inter Milan against Roma

ROME: Defending champions Inter Milan came from 2-0 down for the third Serie A game in a row to earn a dramatic 2-2 draw against leaders Roma on Saturday.

In a breathless top-of-the-table encounter, Manu Kone fired the hosts ahead in the sixth minute before adding his second, initially ruled out for offside, in the 37th minute. Lautaro Martinez pulled Inter back into the game within 30 seconds of the second-half restart, and levelled with his second strike in the 79th minute.

Inter looked the more likely to find a winner, but both sides held firm to share the points and maintain their unbeaten starts to the season after five league games.

On an emotional evening across Italy, fans from both ends paid tribute to Sandro Mazzola, the legendary Inter forward who won four Serie A titles and two European Cups with the Nerazzurri, as well as the 1968 European Championship with the national team.

In a perfect start for Roma, the



hosts almost blew the roof off the Stadio Olimpico when Paulo Dybala's clipped cross found Nahuel Molina at the back post, with his header dropping for Kone to steer home a low finish.

Inter pushed for an equaliser and came close on the half-hour

mark when Englishman Curtis Jones flicked the ball to Alessandro Bastoni, whose shot missed the post.

Kone, who was blocked from leaving the Roma on deadline day, sealed a double when his left-footed shot from the edge of the six



yard box went high into the centre of the goal.

The Frenchman had scored only four times in 66 previous Roma appearances, but became the fifth player to net two goals or more in the first half for the club against Inter in Italian top-flight history.

But the hosts conceded just their second goal of the season straight after half-time when Marcus Thuram slipped the ball to Martinez, who guided a left-footed finish into the bottom corner. Donyell Malen, who has scored the most goals in Europe's top five leagues

this year, thought he had a third Roma goal, but Inter keeper Josep Martinez produced a superb save with his head from close range.

After a relentless push to get back on level terms, the visitors were finally rewarded when they hit the bar from a corner before working the ball back quickly to Martinez to claim his second.

Inter, who recovered from a two-goal deficit to beat both Napoli and Udinese, were without England John Stones and Djed Spence though injury.

And the draw meant they are second on goal difference, while Roma, who have only won two of their last 18 meetings against the Milan outfit, remain in top spot.

Third-placed Lazio won 2-0 at Venezia while fourth-placed Cagliari continued its fine start with a 1-0 win at Udinese. Midfielder Daniel Maldini — the son of Italy defender Paolo Maldini — scored for the Sardinian side. After axing coach Domenico Tedesco, Bologna drew 1-1 at home to Torino. - Agencies

'BEAT THE AUSSIES'

England job is one of the most prestigious in cricket: Fleming

OLD TRAFFORD: New Test coach Stephen Fleming said he shared English cricket's "obsession" with the Ashes and arrives with the goal to "beat the Aussies". Fleming was speaking to the media for the first time on Sunday since being appointed in July and before taking charge for the tour of South Africa in December. Like predecessor Brendon McCullum, Fleming is from New Zealand - the "little cousin" to Australia, in his words. The next Ashes series is in the UK next summer, when England will look to defeat the Australians for the first time since 2015 and avenge a dismal 4-1 defeat down under last winter. Asked if England are too obsessed with beating Australia, Fleming told BBC Sport: "No, because I have an obsession with it as well. New Zealand has an obses-

sion with it, we love it. "We want to beat the Aussies. We're heavily linked to England performances. We have a deep desire to beat Australia in everything, as the little cousin. We are linked, and I'm incredibly excited about being part of it. "You don't think you're ever going to get that opportunity. To have that opportunity and be part of it, I can't wait. "I want to be my best self and have a team that represents itself in the best possible way. I've got a vision of that and it's aspirational. It will be brilliant." Fleming, a former New Zealand captain, did not taste victory in any of the 14 Tests he played against Australia. He succeeds former team-mate McCullum, who was sacked as Test coach earlier this summer but remains as boss of the white-ball team. England won only two



of McCullum's final 10 Tests in charge, including the hammering in Australia. Part of the criticism of England under McCullum and former captain Ben Stokes was their inability to adapt to the changing situations of Test cricket, as well as a lack of attention to detail. Fleming is a great friend of McCullum - the pair are business

partners. He described the difference between the two as being: "I'll bet on the favourite and he'll bet on the longest odds possible." On whether a Test team should have a brand or style, Fleming said: "I don't think so. The greatest thing for a team to do is to be able to play conditions and situations. "I'd love people to say we are well-planned, there's a discipline and a really strong basic structure to what we're doing, but there's also a bit of flair." The final months of McCullum's reign were dogged by late-night drinking controversies, which continued after England changed the Test coach. On Friday, Derbyshire Police announced they had closed an investigation involving England pace bowler Brydon Carse following allegations of an assault last month. Though Carse will face no ac-

tion from the police, he now faces an investigation from the Cricket Regulator. He remains available for England selection, albeit has not been part of a squad in any format since the Derby incident. "There are standards," said Fleming. "We pick on runs and wickets primarily, but I think it's foolish not to also say there are standards that need to be set. "You need to behave in accordance with your position. We're in a very privileged position, and it's understanding that privilege and what goes along with it. It can't be convenient. You can't be when it suits you to do the right things, then when you don't want it to suit you, not. "You've got to live it every day. If we can create something when you want to live it every day and better, then that's really powerful." Earlier in the week he visited

a number of counties and met Stokes during Durham's draw against Worcestershire. Stokes abruptly retired from international cricket in July. He has a previous relationship with Fleming from their time together with Chennai Super Kings at the Indian Premier League. But Fleming said he had too much "respect" for Stokes' decision to attempt to coax him out of retirement. "He was in a great space, really happy, enjoying his time with Durham," said Fleming. "He's got a good winter planned with the family and is very much at peace with his decision. When a player makes that decision to retire, I respect that decision 100%. "To try to turn that around and question that is wrong. I know how much goes into that type of decision, and I respect that." - Agencies

WENTWORTH

Eagle leaves McIlroy two off lead at BMW PGA Championship

WENTWORTH: Rory McIlroy finished with a superb eagle to move two shots off the lead heading into the final day of the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth on Saturday. Northern Ireland's world No.2 made a three on the par-five 18th to stay in contention with a three-under 69 leaving him on 11 under. Spain's Manuel Elvira and Italy's Filippo Celli share the lead after both made birdies on the final hole to leave them 13 under. But there is a congested leaderboard with 20 players within four strokes of the lead. Alejandro Del Rey, JJ Spaun and Johannes Veerman are one shot behind with an exciting finish in store on the final day. McIlroy is attempting to win a record-equalling eighth Race to Dubai title and can boost his hopes by securing the second Wentworth title of his career. "There are a lot of people around the leaders," he said after another round in blustery conditions. "I think the conditions over the last couple of days are the reason why no-one has got away from the pack, just because it has played so tricky and difficult. "I'll probably try not to look at the leaderboards on the front nine, and if I need to play a little bit more aggressively on the back, I'll do it." There are 15 players within three shots of the lead - but

one name stands out. "I feel like I've given myself a real opportunity tomorrow," said McIlroy, who won the European tour's flagship event in 2014 - in the same summer he captured two major titles, the British Open and the PGA Championship. On a day when second-round leader Ryan Gerard went backward with a 75, many others took a big step forward - even if the top of the leaderboard doesn't contain too many household names. Neither Celli (69) nor Elvira (68) have won a title on the European tour, while two of the three players tied for third place a shot back - Johannes Veerman (64) and Alejandro Del Rey (64) - are ranked No.357 and No.236, respectively. The other player on 12 under is JJ Spaun, the former US Open winner who shot 68 as he looks to prove a point after missing out on selection for next week's Presidents Cup. "It's a bummer to miss out on the team events, whether it's Ryder Cup or Presidents Cup," Spaun said. "Definitely carrying a bit of a chip on my shoulder this week." McIlroy is in a five-man group in a tie for sixth place that also includes Adam Scott (71) and LIV Golf star Joaquin Niemann (67). "It's going to be an interesting day," McIlroy said, looking ahead to the final round.



England rout Sri Lanka to top T20I world rankings

The hosts thumped the visiting side in the third match to sweep the T20I series 3-0



OLD TRAFFORD: England crushed Sri Lanka in the third T20 international to complete a 3-0 series clean sweep on Saturday and return to No.1 in the world rankings. Watched by new Test coach Stephen Fleming, England once again outclassed the tourists to conclude a one-sided series played on the fringe of autumn. England's pace bowlers were outstanding in dismissing Sri Lanka for a paltry 124, then the home side chased the target in 9.4 overs. Jamie Overton conceded only 15 runs in his four overs, including taking a wicket. Sonny Baker's improvement continued with 2-17 and Jofra Archer recovered from an expensive start to return 2-23. England's fielding was sharp, best demonstrated by Liam Dawson's direct hit to run out Eshan Malinga. The target was never likely to pose a challenge to an England batting line-up that remains powerful despite Phil Salt and Jacob Bethell being absent injured. Though opener Aneurin Donald was out for 13, Jos Buttler and Harry Brook strolled the pursuit with a second-wicket stand of 85. Brook was run out for 33, leaving Buttler to wrap it up with a six

that left him unbeaten on 61. The victory by eight wickets was concluded with 62 balls to spare - the most for England in a home T20 international. The success was England's 23rd win in 26 completed T20s since Brook took charge in the summer of 2024. They have reclaimed their number one ranking from India. A feature of England's success in this format has been captain Brook's heavy use of spin bowling. On this occasion the spinners took a backseat - Adil Rashid and Dawson sent down only four overs between them. Instead, it was the seamers to the fore, even without the variations of Sam Curran, another England player absent injured. Baker endured difficult debuts in all three international formats, yet in this series has started to

show his potential. After Archer's first over went for 15, Baker had Lahiru Udara sky to wicketkeeper Buttler. He later returned to wrap up the innings, taking the final wicket when Dilshan Madushanka skied to Brook. Archer was a spectator for some time after his initial struggle. When he returned, he got the dangerous Kamindu Mendis to pull to deep mid-wicket for 35. Archer's second wicket was curious - Wanindu Hasaranga out hit-wicket attempting a slog, his bat almost placed on top of the bails. Overton was the pick, returning his most economical figures when bowling his full allocation of four in a T20 international. Though Tom Banton dropped a catch slipping on the greasy outfield, England's fielding was otherwise exceptional.

Brook took a sharp catch at mid-wicket to remove Pathum Nissanka for 36, Rashid was alert enough to run out Charith Asalanka and Dawson's direct hit was the coup de grace. The pity for this group is a rare lengthy wait until the next global T20 tournament. The next men's T20 World Cup is not until 2028, the same year T20 cricket makes its debut in the Olympics. England are instead building towards a 50-over World Cup in southern Africa in the autumn of 2027. Three one-day internationals against the Sri Lankans begin in Durham on Tuesday. **Brief scores:** Sri Lanka 124 all out in 18.5 overs (Nissanka 36 (24), K Mendis 35 (28); Baker 2-17, Archer 2-23, Jacks 2-31) lost to England 126-2 in 9.4 overs (Buttler 62* (32), Brook 33 (21). - Agencies

WORLD ROAD RUNNING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Kenya's Ngetich breaks women-only half marathon record in Copenhagen

VALENCIA: Agnes Ngetich broke the world record for a women-only half marathon as she took gold at the World Road Running Championships in Copenhagen. The Kenyan claimed victory in one hour, five minutes and 15 seconds as she took a second off the previous record, which her compatriot Peres Jepchirchir set in winning the World half marathon gold in 2020. Ethiopia's Letesenbet Gidey

holds the overall women's half-marathon world record with a time of 1:02:52. "My coach believed in me and told me that I could do it, that I could win the gold medal," said Ngetich, 25. "So, I am very happy and very grateful to now hold the world half marathon record, too." In April 2025, Ngetich set a new 10km world record when she clocked 29:27 to become the first

woman to run the distance in under 30 minutes in a women-only race. She also broke the 10km world record in Valencia in 2024, becoming the first woman to run the distance in under 29 minutes when she won a mixed road race in 28:46. Sweden's Andreas Almgren won the men's half marathon as he broke his own European record by 35 seconds, crossing the line in 58:06 in Copenhagen. - Agencies



ROUND-UP

Hyundai Oman makes new car ownership more rewarding with interest starting from 1.99%



Designed to make Hyundai ownership more accessible and rewarding, the campaign combines an attractive financing option with benefits that help customers reduce their ownership costs and enjoy greater peace of mind

MUSCAT: Hyundai Oman has announced an attractive new retail offer, giving customers an opportunity to drive home a new Hyundai with an interest rate starting from just 1.99%, along with a range of additional ownership benefits. Designed to make Hyundai ownership more accessible and rewarding, the campaign combines an attractive financing option with benefits that help customers reduce their ownership costs and enjoy greater peace of mind. Under the campaign, customers can benefit from interest

starting from 1.99%* along with 5 Years/50,000 km Periodic Maintenance Service, first-year insurance and registration. Customers can also enjoy savings of up to OMR 500* on selected models. The offer provides customers with an excellent opportunity to choose from Hyundai's diverse range of vehicles, catering to different lifestyles and mobility requirements. From stylish and practical sedans to versatile SUVs, Hyundai offers customers a combination of contemporary design, advanced technology, com-

fort and convenience. A spokesperson for Hyundai Oman said, "We continuously look for ways to make Hyundai ownership more rewarding for our customers in Oman. With interest starting from just 1.99% and valuable ownership benefits including periodic maintenance service, first-year insurance and registration, this campaign gives customers even more reasons to choose a new Hyundai. Customers are invited to visit their nearest Hyundai showroom to explore the range, learn more

about the campaign and book a test drive. The offer is available for a limited period and is subject to terms and conditions. OTE Group is the exclusive distributor of Hyundai in the Sultanate of Oman, representing the brand through a nationwide network of showrooms and world-class aftersales facilities. Backed by a commitment to quality and exceptional customer service, OTE Group delivers an ownership experience that reflects Hyundai's global reputation for reliability, value, and excellence.

LONG-STANDING PARTNERSHIP



Renaissance Services strengthens support for ESO's charity run

MUSCAT: Renaissance Services strengthened its long-standing partnership with the Environment Society of Oman (ESO) by serving as the main sponsor of Strides for Nature 2026 held at Al Mouj Muscat on September 19. ESO's annual charity fun run supports and raises funds for environmental conservation in Oman. Renaissance employees had taken part in the inaugural Strides for Nature event at Qurum Beach earlier in 2025. This year, the company expanded its support by becoming the event's main sponsor, with around 75 Renaissance employees joining the charity fun run. Speaking at the event, Andrew Dawson, CEO, Renaissance Services, said, "Oman's natural environment is one of our greatest assets, and protecting it is a shared responsibility. This belief has shaped Renaissance's long-standing partnership with the Environment Society of Oman. We are pleased to support Strides for Nature 2026 as part of our continued commitment to environmental conservation. "Over the years, Renaissance has supported a range of ESO initiatives, including research and capacity-building programmes that have created opportunities for young Omanis. This initiative is a wonderful way to bring the wider community into these conservation efforts and encourage everyone to play a part in protecting Oman's natural heritage." Held in collaboration with Guinness World Record holder Fahad Al Abri, the family-focused event brought together participants of all ages to raise funds for

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ESO's conservation programmes. Funds raised through Strides for Nature will support ESO's work across conservation, environmental education and community engagement. In keeping with the event's environmental focus, water refill stations were provided and participants were encouraged to use reusable bottles. Renaissance Services is a leading provider of integrated facilities management and accommodation solutions in Oman. Listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange, the company is committed to responsible and sustainable business practices, high standards of governance and sustainability, and supporting the priorities of Oman Vision 2040.

PARTICIPATION

Dhofar Islamic champions innovative financing at Oman Islamic Banking Forum 2026

MUSCAT: Dhofar Islamic, the Islamic banking window of BankDhofar, underscored the importance of innovative Sharia-compliant financing instruments in deepening Oman's capital market during its participation in the Oman Islamic Banking Forum 2026. The forum brought together leading experts, investors and representatives of financial and other institutions to examine the rapid evolution of Islamic banking in the Sultanate of Oman and explore opportunities to support the sector's continued growth. Dhofar Islamic participated in a panel discussion titled 'Sukuk, Securitisation, and Market Development: Enhancing the Depth of Oman's Capital Market'. The session explored the next phase of capital market development in Oman, with a particular focus on the potential of sukuk, securitization and private credit to diversify funding sources available to corporates and infrastructure projects. Discussions also highlighted the importance of broadening the investor base, developing innovative Sharia-compliant financial instruments and strengthening secondary-market liquidity — key elements in building deeper and more diversified capital markets capable of supporting Oman's long-term economic development. Dhofar Islamic's participation reflects its commitment to knowledge exchange, financial innovation and the development of a resilient and diversified Islamic finance ecosystem. It also reinforces its role in delivering Sharia-compliant capital-market and financing solutions that support businesses, investment and economic development, in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. Earlier this year, Dhofar Islamic successfully closed the inaugural issuance under its OMR 250 million Musharakah Sukuk Programme, marking an important milestone in the continued development of Oman's Islamic capital market. The issuance is particularly significant given the risk-sharing characteris-



tics of Musharakah, under which investors participate in returns generated by the underlying assets or activities in accordance with Islamic finance principles. Beyond capital markets, Dhofar

Islamic continues to expand the reach and accessibility of its retail and business banking services. Its network has grown to more than 30 branches across the Sultanate, providing a broad portfolio of

Sharia-compliant products and services catering to children and minors, youth, women, entrepreneurs, businesses and high-net-worth individuals. Alongside its physical network, Dhofar Islamic continues to invest in digital banking capabilities and electronic payment solutions, enabling customers to access banking services with greater convenience, efficiency and security. Through its combination of capital-market expertise, product innovation, digital capabilities and expanding customer reach, Dhofar Islamic remains committed to keeping pace with the evolving Islamic banking landscape while maintaining high standards of service quality and Sharia compliance.



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