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IN FOCUS



FLOODS WORSEN SITUATION IN GAZA

Heavy rains have flooded at least 70,000 tents, leaving 350,000 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip without shelter | P8-9

AFP

Mohammed outlines UAE's future vision

COUNTRY A MODEL OF GROWTH, STRENGTH AND RESILIENCE

DUBAI
Gulf News Report

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has reaffirmed the UAE's commitment to progress and development, stressing that the country under the leadership of President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan will remain a model of growth, strength and resilience.

In a post on X yesterday, Sheikh Mohammed highlighted the importance of the UAE Government Annual Meetings 2026, which bring together 500 of the country's most senior government officials to review national priorities, assess performance and discuss challenges and achievements.

Working as a team

"The UAE Government Annual Meetings are an annual national gathering that brings together the country's 500 most senior government officials. We review our priorities, evaluate our work and discuss our challenges and achievements, with the aim of working together as one team to fulfil the aspirations of our people," Sheikh Mohammed said.

He stressed that the UAE continued to demonstrate its strength and ability to adapt across multiple sectors under the leadership of the President.

"Today, under the leadership of my brother Mohamed Bin Zayed, the UAE is a model of development and growth, a model of strength and resilience, and a model of economic, governmental, military and political flexibility," he added.

Bright future

Sheikh Mohammed concluded his message by expressing confidence in the country's future. "Our coming days will be even better, our future greater and our flag will fly higher, God willing."

Meanwhile, Mohammad Bin Abdullah Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs, stressed that the UAE is moving forward in its global development journey under one national flag and exceptional leadership characterised by wisdom, swift decision-making and a constant presence among the people. Speaking at the opening of the UAE Government Annual Meetings 2026, chaired by Sheikh Mohammed, Al Gergawi highlighted the country's ambition to become the best nation, government and society in the world.

Building a stronger society

Al Gergawi stressed that the 500 senior officials participating in the meetings shared one mission, outlined by Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed: to build a stronger society, a more resilient economy, faster decision-making processes and better government services.

"In the UAE, we do not stop at what we have achieved. We redouble our efforts and accelerate delivery. If anyone seeks to delay us by one year, we intensify our work to move 20 years ahead," he said.

He pointed to the scale of ongoing development projects, with more than Dh4 trillion worth of projects currently under implementation across the country. "Our message to the world is clear: Our nation does not stop," Al Gergawi added.

NATION

Khor Fakkan beach closed after oil spill detected along coast | P4



ABU DHABI

Family key in Zamzam Al Hammadi's Jiu-Jitsu success | P1

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Royal Caribbean pianist rescued at sea

DUBAI
BY CHRISTIAN BORBON
Senior Web Editor

Two fishermen rescued a Royal Caribbean cruise ship pianist from the Pacific Ocean after finding him struggling to stay afloat nearly 20 miles off the California coast.

The crew member, whose identity hasn't been released, was taken to hospital. The US Coast Guard is investigating how he fell overboard.

Sean Norton and Grant Garrett were returning from a morning fishing trip near Catalina Island on November 6, when their boat captain spotted someone in the water.

The two men grabbed one of the man's arms and pulled him aboard. Norton said the crew member was in shock. "The only thing he said to me was, 'Thank you. I thought I was gonna die,'" Norton told CBS LA. After the rescue, the man told the fishermen he worked as a pianist aboard Royal Caribbean's *Ovation of the Seas*.

Authorities believe the pianist may have spent approximately nine hours in the water. Norton suggested that unusually warm ocean temperatures of 76˚F (24˚C) owing to El Niño may have helped. "A different year, no way he makes it," Norton told CBS.

Gargash: Dialogue with Iran not a concession

UAE rejects Iran's Hormuz control, demands respect for sovereignty

DUBAI
BY KHITAM AL AMIR
Chief News Editor

Dr Anwar Gargash, Diplomatic Adviser to the UAE President, has said dialogue with Iran is a strategic necessity rather than a concession, warning that Tehran must rebuild shattered trust through concrete actions, respect for sovereignty and verifiable changes in its behaviour, while firmly rejecting any attempt to impose Iranian control over the Strait of Hormuz.

Speaking at the opening of the 13th Abu Dhabi Strategic Debate, organised by the Emirates Policy Centre, Gargash said Iran would remain a neighbour of the Gulf states and that geography could not be changed, making diplomatic engagement essential despite the deep mistrust created by the conflict.

He stressed, however, that any post-war dialogue must be fundamentally different from past approaches, based on non-interference, respect for sovereignty and genuine recognition of neighbouring countries' legitimate security interests.

Grave violation

Gargash described Iran's decision to attack its GCC neighbours as a grave violation of sovereignty and a profound strategic miscalculation that had deepened mistrust and undermined prospects for stable regional relations. Gargash warned that Iran was facing one of the gravest challenges in its history, with pressure on its leadership, economic constraints, international sanctions and unresolved disputes over its nuclear programme complicating prospects for a comprehensive political settlement.

Turning to the Strait of Hormuz, Gargash firmly rejected any attempt by Iran to impose unilateral arrangements that would give Tehran control over international shipping through the strategic waterway.

He said President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan has steered the country through an unprecedented crisis with wisdom, clarity and determination.

Gargash stressed that credible deterrence and diplomacy were not competing approaches but mutually reinforcing pillars of regional security.

TO READ THE FULL STORY, LOG ONTO GULFNEWS.COM

WAR 'UNLIKELY'

US president Donald Trump told CNN in an interview on Sunday that renewed fighting was "highly unlikely," but warned that his decision "depends on whether or not they sign a very strong agreement."

Separately in a CBS's 60 Minutes interview, Trump suggested he was not seeking further escalation, saying: "I'm not looking to. I don't think there's any reason to."

—AFP



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PRAYER TIMINGS | FAJR 5:13 | DHUHUR 12:06 | ASR 15:12 | MAGHRIB 17:37 | ISHA 18:52

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Abu Dhabi: +4 mins, Ras Al Khaimah: -4 mins, Fujairah: -6 mins

AI to control Dubai traffic lights, cut congestion by 10%

NEW SYSTEM TO PREDICT BOTTLENECKS, ADJUST SIGNAL TIMINGS DYNAMICALLY

DUBAI

Gulf News Report

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has unveiled a major project to connect all traffic signals across the emirate to its traffic control centre in Al Barsha, paving the way for artificial intelligence to manage them dynamically, predict traffic congestion and bottlenecks, and respond proactively to ease traffic flow.

The authority expects the system to reduce congestion at traffic signals by at least 10 per cent. The RTA said it expects to complete the connection of all traffic signals to the centre by early 2027.

The new system will use existing cameras and traffic management systems alongside AI technologies to analyse vehicle movements, predict potential congestion hotspots and dynamically adjust signal timings according to traffic conditions, improving the efficiency of Dubai's road network.

Ahmed Hashem Bahrozyan, Chief Executive Officer of the RTA's Corporate Technology Support Services Sector, said the authority is working on a major project to link every traffic signal in Dubai to the Al Barsha traffic control centre, which oversees traffic management across the emirate in continuous coordination with Dubai Police.

He explained that the connections were being installed and were scheduled for completion in early 2027, alongside the introduction of AI technologies to manage traffic signals.



AI will use existing cameras and systems to analyse vehicle movements and predict congestion at specific locations.

The authority is working on a major project to link every traffic signal in Dubai to the Al Barsha traffic control centre.

Speaking on the Live Broadcast programme on Noor Dubai Radio, Bahrozyan explained that the new system would allow traffic signal timings to be adjusted more dynamically than at present, responding to vehicle movements and prevailing traffic conditions.

AI strategy covers 41 areas

He expects the technology to reduce congestion by at least 10 per cent, alongside other projects that will also help improve traffic flow across the emirate.

Bahrozyan stressed that traffic signal management is a key area of the RTA's updated AI strategy, which covers 41 areas across its sectors and departments.

These include public-facing services, internal operations and support functions such as contracts, procurement, finance and human resources.

The authority aims to fundamentally integrate AI into all 41 areas of its operations within two and a half years.

Implementation is divided into six phases, with the first two already under way and the remaining four scheduled for completion over the next two years. The goal is to use AI technologies in planning and across the RTA's various operations.

AI assistants to handle everyday services

One of the strategy's main priorities is transforming service delivery through AI assistants, moving away from conventional digital channels towards a simpler, more interactive system.

Customers will be able to complete essential transactions through AI-powered agents, including paying traffic fines, renewing vehicle registrations, renewing driving licences and accessing other frequently used services.

Managing assets worth more than Dh150 billion

Bahrozyan highlighted asset management as another major focus of the strategy, with the RTA overseeing assets worth more than Dh150 billion.

The portfolio continues to grow with the addition of major projects, including the Dubai Metro Blue Line and new road and infrastructure developments.

New Dubai food rating to help shoppers make healthier choices

Laboratory testing to verify the accuracy of nutritional information

DUBAI

Gulf News Report

Dubai Municipality has launched a new service that will assess the nutritional value of food products and assign them ratings from A to E, helping shoppers make more informed decisions about what they buy.

Introduced through Dubai Central Laboratory, the service uses laboratory testing to verify the accuracy of nutritional information displayed on food packaging before translating the results into a simple, traffic-light-style grading system.

The five-grade system, ranging from A to E, will classify products according to their nutritional value and approved assessment standards, providing consumers with a clearer indication of the nutritional quality of different foods.

Accuracy of information

The service is designed to address the accuracy of information provided on food packaging, giving shoppers access to more reliable nutritional data when choosing products.

It will also help food manufacturers, suppliers and companies verify the nutritional information associated with their products through laboratory testing, providing evidence that the information they supply is accurate.



The five-grade system, ranging from A to E, will classify products according to their nutritional value and approved assessment standards.

By combining scientific testing with a simplified grading label, the municipality aims to make nutritional information easier for consumers to understand and support more informed purchasing decisions.

Dubai Central Laboratory already conducts food sample testing through its microbiological and chemical analysis facilities, which form part of the municipality's existing laboratory services.

The new service builds on these capabilities by linking laboratory verification of nutritional information to a graded label that communicates the results to consumers.

Today's Activities
November 10

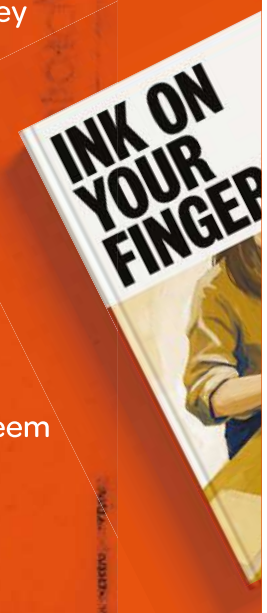
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SHARJAH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

Kids Program
Shows and Plays:
The music box
11:00-11:30
18:00-18:30
Halls and lobbies

Cookery Corner
Live Cooking:
Discover Punjabi cooking with chef, author and instructor Dipna Anand
17:45- 18:30
Hall 6

Creative Culinary District
Mini Edible Dream House
Discover a fun and creative way to build and decorate your very own edible dream house in this playful making workshop
11:30 – 12:00
Hall 7

Fitness and Wellness district
Shape Your Calm: My Mindful Reminder:
A hands-on mindfulness and clay session where children slow down, engage their senses and create a small object they can hold as a personal reminder to pause
10:45 – 11:15
Hall 7



Cultural Program
Whose Name Is in the Story?
Naaz Khan, Salamina Mosese, Nadia Al Najjar , Ibtehaj bint Mohammed Al Harthi.
Moderator: Dr Lamya Tawfik
18:00 - 19:00
Forum 3

Cultural Program
Why We Keep Going Back?
Rehan Khan, Reem AlKamali, Ashraf Al Ashmawi.
Moderator: Aisha Al Maazmi
19:15 - 20:15
Forum 2

Cultural Program
Who Gets to Solve the Crime? The Detective Beyond the Old Template?
Vaseem Khan, David Fennell
19:15 - 20:15
Forum 4

Cultural Program
When a Poem Becomes a Song Everyone Sings
Kristian S. Cordero, Kareem Matooq
20:30 - 21:30
Forum 1

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No more paperwork for 13 types of work permits

CHANGES PART OF ZERO BUREAUCRACY INITIATIVE

ABU DHABI

BY ABDULLA RASHEED
Abu Dhabi Editor

The changes aim to speed up applications, improve customer experience and strengthen the UAE labour market.

The UAE's Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE) has announced major improvements to the issuance of 13 types of work permits as part of the government's Zero Bureaucracy initiative.

The changes include eliminating all supporting document submission requirements, reducing the number of data fields required for certain permits by between 75 per cent and 97 per cent, and shortening processing times.

The ministry has also launched a new phase of improvements to its work permit services, focusing on simplifying requirements, redesigning procedures and expanding digital services. The changes aim to speed up applications, improve customer experience and strengthen the UAE labour market.

Role of public, customers

MoHRE is inviting members of the public and customers to submit suggestions and feedback online until July 30. The consultation seeks views on existing work permit services and ways to make them simpler and more efficient.

Particular attention is being given to redesigning work permit procedures, reducing administrative requirements, speeding up transactions and ensuring compliance with employment laws.

The ministry said the feedback gathered through the public consultation would help determine the next steps in developing work permit services.

The 13 types of work permits, allowing establishments registered with the ministry to employ workers according to the nature and requirements of their jobs are:

1. Private tutoring work permit: Allows individuals to provide private tutoring services.

2. Work permit for recruiting a worker from outside the UAE: Allows establishments to recruit workers from abroad, subject to the required conditions.

3. Transfer work permit: Allows establishments to employ workers already residing in the UAE after their previous employment relationship has ended

4. Work permit for residents sponsored by their families: Allows establishments to employ male or female workers who live in the UAE under the sponsorship of their family members.

5. Temporary work permit: Allows an establishment to employ a worker for a temporary assignment at another establishment.

6. Mission work permit: Allows establishments to recruit workers from outside the UAE for temporary assignments.

7. Part-time work permit: Allows establishments to employ workers from inside or outside the UAE under part-time contracts.

8. Juvenile work permit: Allows establishments to employ workers aged 15 to under 18 who are residing in the UAE.

9. Student training or employment permit: Allows establishments to train or employ students aged 15 and above.

10. UAE nationals and GCC citizens: Allows establishments to employ UAE nationals and citizens of other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

11. Golden Residency work permit: Issued at the request of an establishment seeking to employ a worker who holds a UAE Golden Residency visa.

12. National trainee work permit: Allows establishments to provide training to UAE nationals in line with their accredited academic qualifications.

13. Freelance work permit: Allows individuals to work independently without being sponsored by an employer or establishment. Foreign nationals can use this permit to carry out freelance work under their own residency sponsorship.



DUBAI FLAG GARDEN UNVEILS GIANT PORTRAIT OF MOHAMMED

- Brand Dubai, the creative arm of the Government of Dubai Media Office, has launched the 13th edition of Flag Garden as part of the UAE's National Month celebrations. The installation features 10,000 UAE flags arranged to create a large portrait of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Registration opens for Dubai Run 2026

The event attracted a record 307,000 participants in 2025

DUBAI

BY ZAINAB HUSAIN
Features Writer

Ever wanted to run down Sheikh Zayed Road without a car in sight? Dubai residents and visitors will get that rare opportunity this month as Dubai Run returns, transforming one of the city's busiest highways into a massive running track.

Registration is now open for the free event on November 22, with participants able to choose between a 5km route through Downtown Dubai and a longer 10km course along Sheikh Zayed Road.

Now in its eighth edition, Dubai Run is one of the flagship events of the Dubai Fitness Challenge (DFC), which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. The event attracted a record 307,000 participants in 2025, with hundreds of thousands expected to take to the streets again this year.

The event is open to people of all ages and fitness levels, including families, first-time runners and experienced athletes.

Participation is completely free, but you must register in advance.

To secure your place:

- Visit the official website – www.dubaifitnesschallenge.com/en/dubai-run
- Register for Dubai Run 2026.
- Choose your preferred route: 5km or 10km.
- Complete your registration to secure your spot.

RAK NYE promises 11-hour festival

DUBAI

BY CHRISTIAN BORBON
Senior Web Editor

Ras Al Khaimah will welcome 2027 with a free New Year's Eve celebration featuring fireworks, drone displays and live entertainment on December 31, with visitors required to register online before attending.

According to the official RAK NYE website, the festival will take place at Jais Festival Ground, with gates opening at 4pm and activities continuing until 3am on January 1.

The highlight will be the RAK NYE Sky Show, combining fireworks and synchronised drone displays to welcome the New Year. The show is scheduled to run from 11.50pm to 12.05am, although timings remain provisional.

Free, but registration mandatory

Entry to the Ras Al Khaimah New Year's Eve festival is free, but registration is compulsory for everyone, including children.

Registration opens on November 15 through the official RAK NYE website. Each visitor must have a registration QR code to enter.

Children must be registered under an accompanying adult and remain with them throughout the event.

Woman gets jail, deportation over child's viral video

She filmed baby at family party, posted it on Snapchat without parents' consent

DUBAI

BY AGHADDIR ALI
Senior Reporter

A woman has been sentenced to one month in prison, followed by deportation, after filming her five-year-old female relative at a family gathering and posting the video on a public Snapchat account without the child's parents' consent. The footage, which attracted more than 11,000 views, turned what may have been intended as an innocent family joke into a criminal case, raising serious concerns over the child's privacy and psychological well-being.

The footage showed the five-year-old girl joking about a type of food and mispronouncing its name, drawing laughter from those around her. A relative filmed the moment and later shared the video on Snapchat. It subsequently spread across social media platforms, bringing the child into the public spotlight.

The girl's father discovered the footage and objected to his daughter's image being shared publicly without his consent. Concerned about the potential impact on her privacy and psychological well-being, he reported the incident to the authorities.

Following an investigation, prosecutors charged the woman with publishing images or videos of a child through an information network without authorisation and exposing the minor to bullying or conduct that could affect her psychological safety.

The prosecution classified the offences as misdemeanours, covering both the unauthorised online publication of the child's footage and the potential harm to her emotional and psychological well-being.

The woman admitted to filming and publishing the video but denied deliberately bullying the child during court proceedings.

She argued that her Snapchat account was public and claimed the footage had spread beyond her control after she uploaded it.

The court ruled that sharing a child's image without the required authorisation could amount to a criminal offence, even in the absence of harmful intent.

The court ruled that sharing a child's image without the required authorisation could amount to a criminal offence, even in the absence of harmful intent.

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Writers shed light on crime fiction at Sharjah Book Fair

AUTHORS DISCUSS HOW REAL EVENTS, SOCIAL INJUSTICE SHAPE THEIR NOVELS

SHARJAH

BY BALARAM MENON
Senior Web Editor



The session titled 'Where Truth Ends and the Novel Begins' during the 45th edition of the Sharjah International Book Fair.

Crime fiction can do more than entertain readers. It can shed light on historical injustice, social inequality and difficult moral questions, three novelists told audiences at the 45th Sharjah International Book Fair (SIBF 2026).

During a session titled 'Where Truth Ends and the Novel Begins', British-Indian author Abir Mukherjee, Syrian novelist Islam Abu Shakir and Emirati writer Adil Al Sumaiti discussed how writers draw inspiration from real events while using imagination to build compelling stories. The session was moderated by Abdul Karim Hanif.

Mukherjee, who grew up in Scotland as the son of Indian immigrant parents, said he enjoys exploring the lesser-known parts of history.

"We know the big details but we don't know what happened in the margins," he said.

His *Wyndham and Banerjee* detective series, set in colonial India, follows a British police officer and his Indian sergeant. Through their investigations, Mukherjee offers readers a different perspective on British rule and the social divisions of the time.

Describing crime fiction as "a great vehicle for social commentary", he said detective stories allow writers to explore different sections of society while keeping readers engaged with a mystery.

Syrian novelist and creative writing instructor Islam Abu Shakir said stories need a connection to real life, but should not simply reproduce it.

"The power of fiction is that you can teach your readers while taking them on a journey of crime and its solution," he said. Mukherjee, who left a career in finance to become a writer, also highlighted the similarities between inequalities during colonial rule and economic divisions in modern India.

His latest thriller, *The Pinnacle*, is set in Mumbai's film industry and explores the gap between wealth and poverty, as well as the influence of power.

Syrian novelist and creative writing instructor Islam Abu Shakir said stories need a connection to real life, but should not simply reproduce it.

Seed of reality

"Every story requires a seed of reality. However, real life is full of random coincidences and illogical events, whereas a novel must follow its own artistic logic and internal rules," he said.

He added that story ideas often grow from a writer's experiences, reading and reflections over time rather than a single incident.

Abu Shakir also spoke about his work with Dubai Police, where he trained officers interested in creative writing. The initiative led to the publication of at least four short-story collections.

Emirati crime writer Adil Al Sumaiti said real-life incidents and modern forensic techniques also influence his novels. He stressed that strong characters should reflect positive values and ethical behaviour.

He also credited Egyptian writer Nabil Farouk for influencing his storytelling, particularly his use of cliffhangers to keep readers eager to turn the next page.

GRAND GESTURE

Sharjah Ruler allocates Dh4.5 million to buy new books from annual fair

SHARJAH

BY BALARAM MENON
Senior Web Editor

His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, has allocated Dh4.5 million to buy new books from publishers taking part in the 45th Sharjah International Book Fair (SIBF).

The funds will be used to add the latest publications to public and government libraries across the emirate, giving readers, students and researchers access to a wider range of books.

The funds will be used to add the latest publications to public and government libraries across the emirate, giving readers, students and researchers access to a wider range of books.

The fair is being held at Expo Centre Sharjah from November 4 to 15. It has brought together 3,212 publishers and exhibitors from 126 countries, showcasing more than 1.7 million titles covering subjects such as science, literature and the arts.

Support for the publishing industry

The initiative reflects Sheikh Dr Sultan's continued support for the publishing industry and his commitment to making books and knowledge more accessible.

By purchasing books directly from participating publishers, the grant will also provide support to the industry while helping libraries keep their collections up to date.

The move is part of Sharjah's wider efforts to promote reading, writing, translation and publishing, while encouraging people of all ages to explore different areas of knowledge.

Libraries at the heart of cultural growth

Sheikha Bodour Bint Sultan Al Qasimi, Chairperson of the Sharjah Book Authority, said the grant reflects Sharjah's belief that books should reach readers and remain available through libraries, schools and cultural institutions.

She added that the funding would allow libraries to acquire titles from different cultures, languages and fields, while giving publishers direct support.

The initiative will further strengthen libraries as community learning spaces and support Sharjah's efforts to build a knowledge-based society.



$3m fund earmarked for rain enhancement research projects

New funding cycle to aid programmes that will bolster UAE's water security

ABU DHABI

BY HAMNA IQBAL
Reporter

The UAE has announced $3 million in funding for up to five research projects aimed at advancing rain enhancement technologies, as the country steps up efforts to strengthen water security and develop new ways to boost rainfall, particularly in arid regions.

The UAE Research Programme for Rain Enhancement Science (UAEREP), managed by the National Centre of Meteorology (NCM), announced its Seventh Cycle on November 5, inviting researchers from around the world to submit proposals addressing key challenges in rain enhancement science.

"The UAE continues to invest in scientific research, innovation and international cooperation as part of its efforts to strengthen water security," said Dr Abdulla Al Mandous, President of the World Meteorological Organization and Chairman of the NCM.

"Through NCM and the UAE Research Programme for Rain Enhancement Science, we are supporting new research and technologies that advance rain enhancement science and contribute to addressing water scarcity," he added.

The research will explore ways to improve the effectiveness of cloud seeding, develop alternatives to conventional techniques.

The new funding cycle will support up to five projects, with grants of up to $500,000 for one-year projects, $1 million for two-year projects and up to $1.5 million for three-year projects. Individual projects will run for between one and three years.

Five key research areas targeted

The programme has identified five priority research areas: optimising cloud-seeding materials; developing new cloud formation and rain enhancement systems; using autonomous unmanned aircraft systems; exploring limited-area climate interventions; and improving models, software and data.

The research will explore ways to improve the effectiveness of cloud seeding, develop alternatives to conventional techniques and investigate how emerging technologies, including autonomous aircraft, can support rain enhancement operations.

Khor Fakkan beach closed over oil spill

KHOR FAKKAN

BY AGHADDIR ALI
Senior Reporter

Al Luluyah Beach in Khor Fakkan has been temporarily closed to the public after oil spills were detected along its coastline, with municipal authorities launching cleanup operations to address the environmental hazard.

Khor Fakkan City Municipality announced the precautionary closure, saying the decision was taken immediately to protect beachgoers, residents and visitors.

Authorities are closely monitoring the situation as cleanup teams work to remove the oil spills and ensure the affected stretch of coastline is safe for public use.

In a public notice, the municipality thanked residents and visitors for their understanding and urged the public to follow safety instructions and stay away from the beach until further notice.

The municipality said updates on the beach's reopening would be announced through its official communication channels once cleanup work is completed and the site is declared safe.

The decision was taken immediately to protect beachgoers, residents and visitors.

Is Syria sending troops to help Saudi Arabia fight Houthis?

DAMASCUS REJECTS CLAIMS OF DEPLOYING 600 SPECIAL FORCES FIGHTERS

DUBAI

BY STEPHEN N. R.
Senior Associate Editor

Syria yesterday denied sending troops to Yemen or planning any deployment there, even as an Associated Press report said Damascus was preparing to send about 600 special forces fighters to Saudi Arabia to help secure its border with Yemen, amid escalating attacks by Iran-backed Houthis.

The conflicting accounts emerged as Saudi authorities issued a fresh aerial threat warning in Riyadh and Houthi militants reported that Saudi strikes in Yemen had killed 44 people, including 21 children.



AP

■ A man stands on the remains of his home after an airstrike in Al Shariya village, Yemen, yesterday.

No plans: Syrian minister

Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad Al Shaibani insisted that Damascus had no plans to send soldiers into Yemen.

"There is no deployment of troops to Yemen nor is there a plan for such deployment in the near future," he told a joint press conference with Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi in Damascus.

His statement followed reports from multiple Yemeni officials who told AFP that Syrian soldiers were already in Yemen, with thousands more expected to be deployed.

A Syrian official told AP that an initial contingent of approximately 600 special forces personnel could arrive in Saudi Arabia within a week. The official said Riyadh had insisted that the fighters be Syrian nationals rather than foreign militants who had joined armed factions during Syria's civil war.

AP reported Syria was discussing joining the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, signed by Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan in August.

Two Syrian officials and a regional official told AP that Syrian military advisers had already deployed to Saudi Arabia, although no Syrian fighters had been sent into Yemen.

One official said a Syrian military delegation led by Khaled Khattab, commander of the 82nd Division, had completed a two-week visit to Saudi Arabia.

Another said 36 Syrian military officials had visited a joint command and operations centre in Jeddah, where Saudi and Yemeni officers briefed them on the conflict's front lines.

A regional official said that a small number of Syrian advisers were helping to train Yemeni forces inside Saudi Arabia.

Al Shaibani acknowledged that Syria and Saudi Arabia had signed a defence cooperation agreement this month but said it was intended to rebuild Syria's military capabilities.

"Any military plan abroad would be announced ... and not done in secret," he said.

AP also reported that Syria was discussing joining the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, signed by Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan in August.

The agreement commits its members to regard an attack on one as an attack on all, while expanding military cooperation.

Eisenkot's strange bedfellow options to lead govt in Israel

He has called for a 'national emergency' govt that would oust Netanyahu

JERUSALEM



AFP

■ Gadi Eisenkot

Israel's former army chief Gadi Eisenkot has a matter of weeks to form a government, despite not having won a clear majority in the new parliament.

Eisenkot has a number of options, although none look ideal for him, to reach the magic number of 61 in the 120-member parliament.

President Isaac Herzog on Sunday gave Eisenkot the mandate to try to form a government, setting the clock at 28 days for him to come up with the 61 votes, although Herzog could give him a 14-day extension.

Arab-majority parties

Eisenkot has suggested it be a minority government at first — with other parties not joining immediately but still voting to install him.

One option would be to rely on Arab-majority parties which won a record 19 seats, easily enough to give a majority to Eisenkot, whose core opposition bloc won 48 seats. Netanyahu's bloc won 53 seats.

But any minority government would be fragile and Arab Israelis could bring down Eisenkot over likely policy disagreements including military pressure in Gaza.

Avigdor Liberman, a right-wing opposition leader, has vowed that his party's seven lawmakers will not join any government that relies on Arab Israelis, questioning their ideology and warning of the political cost.

Ultra-Orthodox alliance

Few campaign promises were as explicit for the opposition as ending an exemption from Israel's mandatory military service for ultra-Orthodox Jews who, under a long-standing arrangement backed by Netanyahu, are allowed to let their children study the Torah instead of joining the army.

The exemption has fuelled major resentment among other Israelis. But Liberman, who had gone so far as to call the ultra-Orthodox "anti-Jewish", has opened the door to allying with the community as a way to oust Netanyahu while avoiding ties with Arab Israelis.

National unity govt

Eisenkot and Netanyahu have both offered a national-unity government — but with each one insisting he would be in charge. — *AFP*

Iran hands jail terms to Bahai cousins

PARIS

Iranian authorities have sentenced two cousins from the Bahai religious minority to heavy jail terms over this year's mass anti-government protests, community representatives said yesterday.

Peyvand Naimi, 30, was jailed for 12-and-a-half years and Borna Naimi, 29, for eight years at a Revolutionary Court in Kerman, the Bahai International Community (BIC) said in a statement.

The cousins, arrested in January and March respectively, were charged with acting against national security. They were also accused of involvement in the killing of three members of the Basij militia in Kerman, a city in the southeast.

Hollywood backing

US actors Mark Ruffalo, Penn Badgley and Rainn Wilson had called for Peyvand's release, saying he was accused of crimes that took place when he was already under arrest.

"It is egregious that these two completely innocent individuals have been sentenced to such lengthy prison terms, effectively robbing them of their youth," said Simin Fahandej, representative of the BIC to the United Nations in Geneva.

She said not a "shred of evidence has been presented for the baseless allegations against them". — *AFP*

6 dead and 8 missing in Turkey steel plant blast

Overhead crane fell into a furnace during casting of liquid steel

ISTANBUL

A huge explosion and fire at an iron and steelworks in western Turkey left six people dead yesterday as rescuers searched for eight missing workers, officials said.

The fire at the Habas plant in Aliaga, Izmir province, also injured 13 people, two of them critically, the provincial governor's office said in a statement that updated an earlier announcement to reflect the deaths of one person in a hospital and two other people found under the debris.

Search and rescue efforts were underway to reach the eight people trapped under the rubble, it said.

Izmir Mayor Cemil Tugay said that the exact number of casualties would only be known once the debris was cleared.

Broadcaster NTV showed images of a large fire inside the facility and a tall column of smoke rising.

Witness Deniz Ulker told state-run Anadolu news agency that the explosion "felt like the earth's crust was shifting beneath us. I thought it was an earthquake."

The governor's office said that the blast happened around noon when an overhead crane toppled into a furnace during the casting of liquid steel. — *AFP*

A LARGE-SCALE DISTRICT COOLING SOLUTIONS COMPANY IN DUBAI SEEKS TO RECRUIT THE FOLLOWING PERSONNEL.

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EUROPE, CHINA PULL BACK FROM TRADE WAR FOR NOW

A temporary agreement masks deeper economic tensions that could reshape global trade

BY NOOR ALMUTAWWA | *Special to Gulf News*



In late September, China's Ministry of Commerce warned that Beijing would respond firmly if the European Union introduced new trade restrictions against Chinese companies or products. Less than two weeks later, the two sides moved to ease tension. On October 9, following two days of talks in Beijing, the EU trade commissioner Maros Sefcovic announced an interim trade deal with China. The agreement reduces immediate tensions, but it does not resolve the dispute. The deal still requires the approval of EU leaders, who are weighing whether it goes far enough.

The dispute centres on a persistent trade imbalance. The EU's goods trade deficit with China reached about €360 billion last year, equivalent to roughly €1 billion a day. All 27 EU member states now record a deficit with China. Brussels argues that this imbalance results from uneven competition. It points to Chinese state subsidies that have expanded production capacity well beyond domestic demand. Particularly in electric vehicles, batteries and steel. China exports the surplus at low prices, putting significant pressure on European manufacturers.

European companies also report barriers in the Chinese market, including restricted access to public contracts and limits on food and agricultural exports. In addition, Beijing tightened export controls on rare earth minerals in 2025.

Trade disputes

Moreover, the EU has addressed trade disputes with China on a case-by-case basis. It investigates a specific industry, establishes harm, and then imposes duties. Through this process, it introduced tariffs up to 35.3 per cent on Chinese electric vehicles in 2024. German carmakers, facing growing competition from China, have described the process as too slow.

And in early October, France and Germany backed a new instrument similar to Section 301 of US trade law, which Washington used to launch its trade war against China in 2018. The instrument would allow the European Commission to respond to trade pressure within days and across multiple sectors.

China's Ministry of Commerce had already described the proposal as protectionist and unilateral. It warned that applying pressure during negotiations would seriously undermine mutual trust. Tensions rose further in the days before the talks. On October 3, China launched an anti-dumping investigation into a European chemical used in dyes and medicine. Shortly afterward, Germany blocked the sale of a Hamburg port logistics company to Cosco, the Chinese state-owned shipping group and citing security concerns.

According to EU Trade Commissioner, the deal could reduce Chinese imports of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles to the EU by up to half of projected levels.

China also agreed to work towards lower tariffs on several European products, including car parts, olive oil and footwear. These account for almost €4 billion in current exports. In addition, Beijing said it would continue fast-tracking export licences for rare earths and permanent magnets.

However, the outcome remains limited relative to the scale of the problem: tariff reductions covering €4 billion of exports have little effect on a €360 billion deficit.

Europe faces pressure from two directions: a United States that has raised tariffs on its allies, and rising volumes of Chinese imports. EU member states have often been divided on China policy, but these divisions are narrowing. Germany now supports tougher trade tools alongside France.

On the other hand, China depends on the European market. With US tariffs still high, the EU remains one of its most important export destinations. The two sides traded about €880 billion in goods and services last year.

Direct implications for Gulf states

The dispute carries direct implications for the Gulf states. China is the GCC's largest trading partner. While the EU remains a key partner in trade, investment and technology. The UAE has been negotiating a free trade agreement with the EU while expanding its economic ties with Beijing. A trade war between Europe and China would present both risks and opportunities. If Europe restricts Chinese goods, they could be redirected to the Gulf market, increasing competition for local industries.

The Beijing deal buys time, but it leaves the central issues of subsidies, overcapacity, and market access unresolved. If Chinese exports continue to rise, pressure for Europe's new trade instrument will return, and China has already pledged to respond. For Gulf states, the most effective approach is balance. Maintain strong relations with both sides, closely monitor shifts and trade flows, and position themselves as stable partners in an increasingly divided global economy.

■ *Noor Almutawwa is a Researcher at Trends Research and Advisory.*

Letters to the Editor

A fresh start on the streets

I was pleased to read that Dubai has introduced its first electric waste collection truck. It may seem like a small change, but rubbish trucks visit every neighbourhood, often early in the morning, and they spend much of the day stopping and starting. That makes them one of the best candidates for electric power. Residents will notice the difference straight away. Diesel trucks are noisy and leave a cloud of fumes behind them, especially in narrow residential streets. An electric truck means less noise outside bedroom windows at dawn and cleaner air for children walking to school. Well done to everyone involved.

■ **FROM AKHIL S**
UAE

Food for thought

Dubai's new A-to-E food grading system for shoppers is a welcome idea. Like many families, we often shop in a hurry after work, and reading the small print on every packet is simply not practical. A clear letter grade on the front of a product would make healthier choices much easier. When shoppers can compare two breakfast cereals at a glance, they tend to pick the better one. Over time, this can also encourage manufacturers to improve their recipes, with less sugar and salt, so their products earn a better grade.

■ **FROM SAMANTHA RUTH**
UAE

Cities to raise families

It was heartening to see Abu Dhabi and Dubai named among the world's top spots for families. As a parent living here, I can say the recognition feels well deserved. What stands out most is the sense of safety. Children can play in parks and community spaces in the evening, and parents feel at ease. Add to that the clean streets, modern hospitals and a wide choice of schools, and it is easy to see why so many families choose to stay for years. More shaded play areas, affordable after-school activities and family-friendly public transport would make life even better.

■ **FROM DANNY THOMAS**
UAE

Goodbye heat, hello outdoors

After a long and hot summer that stretched well into autumn, news of rain and temperatures dropping below 30˚C this week is very welcome. Many of us are already planning evenings outdoors, from beach walks to family picnics. Cooler days also bring the country's parks, beaches and desert camps back to life.

■ **FROM ERIN FRANCIS**
UAE

■ *Editor's note: Is there a news report that you feel strongly about? Something that has to be addressed in the community and requires resolution? Email us on readers@gulfnews.com. You can also post a comment on our Facebook page or tweet to us @GNReaders.*

Reader Picture

DROP IT MUSTN'T



■ In a delicate display of nature's beauty, Vihaan Achar, a student at GEMS Modern Academy, captured a water droplet resting on a newly sprouted seedling. Reflected in the droplet is a flower bud, highlighting the intricate details of plant life and nature's quiet wonders.

■ *Want your pictures featured in Gulf News? Send them to us at readers@gulfnews.com.*

ON GULFNEWS.COM



UAE, Canada build tie-up for uncertain decade

When Prime Minister Mark Carney visited Abu Dhabi last November, he said Canada and the UAE might look as different as snow and sand, yet are deeply aligned. Eleven months later, that line reads less like diplomatic courtesy and more like a forecast.

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Russia-Ukraine talks in UAE to focus on security guarantees

BOTH SIDES REMAIN DIVIDED OVER TERRITORY AND EUROPE'S INVOLVEMENT

MOSCOW

For the first time since February, Russian, Ukrainian and US negotiators are scheduled to hold talks on ending the full-scale war that is nearing the five-year mark, with security guarantees topping the agenda.

The two-day session starting in Abu Dhabi today follows talks early this year that failed to produce any progress toward ending Europe's most devastating conflict since World War II.

The talks follow last month's localised truce around the Russian-occupied city of Oleshky in southern Ukraine that was brokered with the help of US first lady Melania Trump.

A look at the talks and what's on the agenda:

Sharply divergent demands

Russia and Ukraine remain far apart on key elements of any prospective peace deal.

Russian President Vladimir Putin wants Ukraine to pull its troops back from the four regions that Moscow annexed in September 2022, but never fully captured.

He also demands that Ukraine abandon its bid to join Nato, accept strict limits on its military and drop restrictions on the Russian language and the Moscow-affiliated Orthodox Church in Ukraine.

Putin wants a comprehensive peace deal on those conditions and won't agree to a general halt in hostilities, arguing such a pause would only allow Ukrainian troops to rest and replenish their weapons stockpiles.



AP

■ Recruits take an oath on the front line in the Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine, Sunday.

> **No one is going to invite them (European allies) to the negotiating table ... If they fly there, they won't be allowed into the room."**
>
> **Yuri Ushakov |** Kremlin foreign affairs adviser

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky rejects Putin's demands and argues that an immediate ceasefire is the first step toward a wider settlement.

Zelensky noted that Ukraine and its allies have discussed security guarantees similar to Nato's Article 5, which states the alliance sees an attack on one member as an attack against all.

In a November 5 interview, he said Ukraine's security guarantees boil down to what Western allies would do if Russia launches a new invasion. "If Russia starts again, what will happen?" Zelensky asked. "Who will do what, with what, and when?" Some European nations have mulled a possible deployment of their troops to Ukraine after a prospective peace deal. Russia rejects that as a non-starter.

Europe at the table

Ukraine insists its European allies must have a seat at the negotiating table, while Russia opposes any such involvement.

"No one is going to invite them to the negotiating table," Kremlin foreign affairs adviser Yuri Ushakov snapped when asked if European envoys could join the Abu Dhabi talks. He added that if they fly there, they won't be allowed into the room. — *AP*

Russell Brand jailed for 10½ years for rape, assault

Judge says actor showed casual and arrogant disregard for women

LONDON

British comedian Russell Brand was sentenced yesterday to 10½ years in prison for raping one woman and sexually assaulting three others during the rise of his entertainment career.

Judge Joel Bennathan told the 51-year-old actor and comedian that he had shown a "casual and arrogant disregard" for women. "You were clever — and in many people's eyes, funny and charismatic. You had also become a sexual predator," the judge said.

Brand showed little emotion as the sentence was delivered, turning to mouth "we'll be OK" to his wife before being led away by court officers.

A jury of eight men and four women convicted Brand of offences against four women dating back to 2004. He was acquitted of two rape charges and one attempted indecent assault charge.

Exploited fame

Brand, who maintained that all his sexual encounters were consensual, had denied wrongdoing.

Prosecutor Riel Karmy-Jones said Brand exploited his fame and influence to gain access to women, believing he could act with impunity.



AFP

■ Russell Brand

One victim, sexually assaulted at a London birthday party in 2004, said seeing Brand celebrated publicly for years made her feel physically sick.

Another woman, raped at his home after meeting him backstage at a comedy show in 2009, said his wealth and celebrity status left her feeling powerless. "I felt that if I reported him, I would not be believed," she said.

Complaint brushed aside

A third victim said her complaint about an assault during an advertisement recording was brushed aside by senior management.

Defence lawyer Ian Winter cited Brand's charitable work and efforts to help people overcome addiction, urging the judge to consider his good character.

Brand's wife Laura and father Ron attended the hearing at Southwark Crown Court.

The comedian, formerly married to singer Katy Perry, rose to fame through television, radio and Hollywood films. — *AP*

Climate meet opens in Turkey after year of deadly heatwaves

Delegates push for climate action amid Iran war and US absence

ANTALYA

World leaders, delegates and climate activists kicked off talks in Turkey yesterday on curbing climate change which, in the last year, has led to rising temperatures and deadly heatwaves in Europe and beyond, and played a role in disasters such as the devastating floods in Nepal.

This UN climate summit — the Conference of the Parties, or COP31 — comes as the war in Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz, hiking global prices of gasoline, oil and products made with them, such as fertilisers and pesticides. The disruption has pushed governments to rethink energy policies and increased investment in renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

'Supercharge solutions'

"COP31 must supercharge solutions," UN climate chief Simon Stiell said at the opening session. An estimated 68,500 people are to attend the two-week event and nearly 25,000 people will help ensure the conference goes smoothly.

Stiell said that agreeing on practical solutions, such as reducing methane emissions, can be "planetary icepacks" that can help reduce global heating. Methane stays in the atmosphere for a shorter time but warms the planet much faster than other planet-heating gases. Using renewable-powered electricity instead of oil, gas and coal can also help reduce global warming.



AP

■ A delegate poses for a picture at the COP31 UN Climate Summit as others wait to get in yesterday, in Antalya, Turkey.

68,500
people are to attend the two-week event

Delegates, meeting in the Mediterranean resort city of Antalya, will come under pressure to develop new pledges for climate action while implementing previous promises. The stakes are high: Climate scientists say global warming is likely to exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius above the preindustrial levels of the early 1800s.

Limiting temperature rise to that threshold was a goal established during the 2015 Paris Agreement.

The fact that the goal is no longer realistic underscores how difficult it's been for the world to cut greenhouse gas emissions caused by fossil fuels like oil, gas and coal are burned, leading to climate change. "This is the first COP where it is clear beyond a reasonable doubt that the world will overshoot the 1.5-degree target," said Turkish Environment Minister Murat Kurum.

Shared responsibility

Kurum, the COP31 president, has said that rather than establishing new targets, he wants the summit to focus on turning previous climate commitments into action.

He announced an "Action Agenda" that includes reducing methane emissions and building climate-resilient cities. There is also the aim of increasing the use of electricity — preferably from renewable energy — from 21 per cent to 35 per cent by 2035, to reduce greenhouse emissions.

"Success begins when our decisions reach that last mile," said Kurum. "If we are to share a future, we must share the responsibility for it."

The United States — the world's second-largest polluter after China — is again absent from the summit. — *AP*



GAZA FLOODS LEAVE 350,000 PALESTINIANS WITHOUT SHELTER

'Is the world waiting for our children to freeze,' asks resident as displaced families face crisis

DUBAI

BY STEPHEN N. R.
Senior Associate Editor

Heavy rains have flooded at least 70,000 tents sheltering displaced Palestinians across the Gaza Strip, leaving an estimated 350,000 people exposed to the elements and deepening fears of a humanitarian catastrophe as winter approaches.

The flooding has swept through overcrowded displacement camps, soaking mattresses, blankets and clothing, while families already struggling to survive amid the destruction caused by two years of war face another emergency.

Gaza Health Ministry Director-General Munir Al Bursh warned on Sunday that the flooding had left 350,000 displaced Palestinians sleeping in the open and appealed for urgent supplies of tents and other shelter materials.

The crisis turned deadly when a woman and four children were killed after a landslide struck tents housing displaced families in Deir Al Balah in central Gaza on Sunday, according to the territory's Civil Defence service. Rescue teams continued searching for people reported missing following the incident.

THOUSANDS OF TENTS FLOODED IN HOURS

Reuters reported that at least 70,000 tents were flooded within 12 hours of the storm, citing Gaza's government media office. Heavy rains and strong winds began battering the territory on Friday evening, turning makeshift displacement camps into muddy pools and forcing families to abandon waterlogged shelters.

Gaza's Civil Defence service said it had received around 1,500 distress calls from displaced residents.

In some areas, floodwaters reached depths of 1.5 metres, while several buildings already weakened by the war collapsed during the storm.

Three abandoned houses collapsed without causing injuries, according to Civil Defence officials. Families were seen desperately trying to reinforce their tents with sand, sweep away rainwater and move children to safer locations.

'WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF IT RAINS AGAIN?'

At a displacement camp in Gaza City, residents struggled to salvage their belongings after floodwaters entered their tents.

Olfat Magdoub, a displaced Palestinian woman, described how the first day of heavy rain had already overwhelmed families. "This is the first day of rain, and of course we are already flooded. What will happen if it rains again the next day?" she told Reuters.

Magdoub said earlier rainfall had also flooded her family's bedding, forcing them to sleep on blankets spread across the ground for several days.



A displaced Palestinian boy carries water from a collection point, amid heavy rainfall in Gaza City on Saturday. AFP











Clockwise from left: A youngster wades through the water following heavy rainfall in Deir Al Balah, central Gaza Strip.

A Palestinian child sits beside a pool of rainwater at a camp for displaced people in Deir Al Balah.

Tents are soaked at a camp for the displaced.

Palestinians repair tents damaged by heavy rain.

Palestinians attempt to clear water outside their flooded tents. Gaza's Civil Defence service said it had received around 1,500 distress calls from displaced residents. AFP





Above: Palestinian amputee Magdi Al Omari, 28, walks through a rain-soaked camp.

Left and below: Displaced Palestinian people wade through water puddles between the tents amid heavy rainfall. The flooding has swept through overcrowded displacement camps, soaking mattresses, blankets and clothing. AFP, AP



Now, with mattresses soaked again, families face the prospect of sleeping on wet floors as temperatures fall.

The latest storm has exposed the extreme vulnerability of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living in temporary shelters that offer little protection from rain, cold and strong winds.

EMERGENCY SERVICES OVERWHELMED

Municipal and Civil Defence officials said they were struggling to respond because of severe fuel shortages and extensive damage to equipment.

Reuters reported that authorities lacked functioning machinery needed to drain floodwaters and clear debris from damaged neighbourhoods.

Palestinian officials said Israeli military operations had destroyed hundreds of vehicles, including bulldozers and equipment used for pumping water.

The destruction has left local authorities with limited capacity to manage flooding or repair damaged infrastructure.

"We have no resources, no tarpaulins, no tents and no one is checking on us," displaced resident Rafiq Ghattas told Reuters while standing barefoot in floodwater.

"Is the world waiting for our children to freeze?" he asked.

SHELTER SUPPLIES REMAIN A MAJOR CONCERN

Al Bursh called for Gaza's crossings to be opened to allow urgently needed tents, temporary shelters and reconstruction materials into the territory.

Heavy rains and strong winds began battering the territory on Friday evening, turning makeshift displacement camps into muddy pools and forcing families to abandon waterlogged shelters.

70,000
tents were flooded within 12 hours of the storm, according to Reuters

He said thousands of tents were waiting at border crossings but accused Israeli authorities of preventing their entry.

Hamas has similarly blamed Israel for restricting shelter and construction supplies.

Israel's military aid coordination agency, COGAT, did not immediately respond to the accusations when contacted by Reuters.

However, COGAT said on Friday that it had increased efforts to improve sanitary conditions across Gaza ahead of the forecast heavy rainfall.

The agency said four additional vacuum trucks had entered Gaza through the International Committee of the Red Cross during the week, joining eight others delivered over the previous month.

The vehicles are intended to support sewage pumping, waste removal and repairs to water and sanitation infrastructure.

RECONSTRUCTION REMAINS STALLED

The latest flooding comes more than a year after a US-brokered ceasefire took effect in October 2025, raising hopes that Gaza's devastated neighbourhoods could begin rebuilding.

However, reconstruction has made little progress.

Negotiators remain divided over Hamas disarmament and the withdrawal of Israeli troops, which continue to control approximately two-thirds of the territory, according to Reuters.

Much of Gaza's population of more than two million has been displaced, with large numbers living in tents or damaged buildings.

Palestinian authorities say more than 74,000 people have been killed since Israel launched its military offensive following the Hamas-led attacks of October 7, 2023, which killed around 1,200 people in Israel.

With winter weather intensifying, aid agencies and local officials face growing pressure to secure adequate shelter, restore essential services and prevent further suffering among displaced families.

For thousands who have already lost their homes, the arrival of winter has brought another struggle for survival.



ANI

■ A tanker sprays water mist along Kartavya Path to suppress dense smog and maintain air quality after Diwali celebrations, in New Delhi yesterday. The Air Quality Index crossed 400 in several areas.

Delhi pollution: Why was AQI above 350 before Diwali, and are crackers to blame?

Traders question firecracker curbs as air was already toxic before Diwali

DUBAI

BY STEPHEN N. R.
Senior Associate Editor

Delhi woke up under a thick blanket of toxic smog yesterday, a day after Diwali, with air pollution reaching severe levels in several neighbourhoods. But a bigger question is emerging: Why was the national capital already choking before a single Diwali firecracker was burst?

AQI crosses 400

Air quality readings had reportedly remained between 350 and 400 on November 5, 6 and 7, days before the festival, according to the Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI), which has challenged the practice of blaming firecrackers for Delhi's recurring winter pollution.

The traders' body argues that while fireworks contribute to pollution, restrictions targeting a single festival cannot address the broader causes of the city's deteriorating air quality.

According to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data recorded at 10am yesterday, Delhi Technological University registered an AQI of 439, followed by Burari Crossing at 433 and Vivek Vihar at 421.

North Campus and Sonia Vihar recorded 419 each, while several other locations reported severe pollution. Separate monitoring figures cited by IANS showed even higher readings, with Sonia Vihar reaching 449 and Burari Crossing 445.

Delhi's overall AQI stood at 376, placing it in the 'very poor' category, although several individual monitoring stations recorded 'severe' air quality.

The CTI has questioned whether a complete firecracker ban could guarantee that Delhi's AQI would remain below 300 during the winter months.

Its chairman, Brijesh Goyal, pointed out that pollution levels were dangerously high before Diwali on November 8.

The traders' body argued that crop residue burning in neighbouring states and other recurring sources of pollution require greater attention.

AQI data 'manipulation'

AAP leader Saurabh Bhardwaj accused the government of manipulating AQI figures by allegedly shutting down monitoring stations and installing new ones in greener, less polluted locations.

DELHI'S TOXIC AIR: 6 KEY FACTS

- **Before Diwali:** Traders say AQI remained between 350 and 400 on November 5–7, even before the celebrations.
- **After Diwali:** Sonia Vihar recorded an AQI of up to 449, according to monitoring figures by IANS.
- **Citywide pollution:** Delhi's average AQI stood at 376 yesterday, in the 'very poor' category.
- **Firecracker debate:** Traders question whether banning fireworks can prevent the recurring pollution.
- **Data controversy:** AAP alleges manipulation of AQI readings.
- **Emergency curbs:** Stage III GRAP restrictions were introduced on November 6, before Diwali, amid forecasts of worsening pollution.



ANI

■ A man practises breathing exercises in New Delhi yesterday.

PUNJAB RECORDS 1,152 FARM FIRES ON DIWALI

Punjab recorded 1,152 farm fires on Diwali, November 8, the highest single-day tally this season, raising fresh concerns over air pollution in Delhi.

According to the Punjab Pollution Control Board and Commission for Air Quality Management, the state's cumulative farm fire count jumped to 4,459 from 3,307 a day earlier.

A total of 1,672 incidents were reported between November 6 and 8, despite intensified enforcement.

Tarn Taran recorded the highest number of incidents this season at 654, followed by Ferozepur (592) and Sangrur (488).

Authorities have registered 884 FIRs and imposed fines totalling Rs6.25 million across Punjab. More than 1,100 show-cause notices have also been issued to officials responsible for monitoring stubble burning.

The surge comes despite more than 91 per cent of Punjab's paddy area having already been harvested, highlighting the challenge of controlling agricultural fires.

— IANS

Pakistan mulls carving out 12 provinces

PROPOSAL COMES AMID INCREASING CALLS FOR DECENTRALISATION

DUBAI

BY ASHFAQ AHMED
Managing Editor

Could Pakistan's four provinces eventually become 12?

A growing debate over redrawing the country's administrative map has gained fresh momentum after Defence Minister Khawaja Asif backed the creation of smaller provinces, arguing that bringing government closer to the people could improve public services and development.



"If there is a proposal for 12 provinces, then make it 12, but they should not be created on the basis of language, ethnicity or political interests."

Khawaja Asif
| Defence Minister of Pakistan

More power for local govts

The proposal, which could fundamentally reshape Pakistan's political and administrative structure, comes amid increasing calls for decentralisation, more equitable distribution of resources and greater powers for local governments.

Speaking to Geo News on Sunday, Asif said Pakistan could consider creating as many as 12 provinces, provided the new units were established on administrative grounds rather than linguistic, ethnic or political considerations.

"If there is a proposal for 12 provinces, then make it 12, but they should not be created on the basis of language, ethnicity or political interests," he said.

His remarks follow similar calls by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and come amid media reports suggesting that a major constitutional restructuring could be considered in 2027.

According to media reports, one proposal under discussion envisages increasing the number of provinces from four to 12 by dividing Punjab into four provinces, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan into three each, and Sindh into two.

Nationwide referendum?

The reported plan could involve a nationwide referendum and a possible 28th Constitutional Amendment, although neither has been formally confirmed.

Reports suggest that preparatory work could begin in early 2027, with constitutional changes potentially considered during the first half of the year.

Such a restructuring would represent one of the most significant changes to Pakistan's federal system in decades.

Supporters of smaller provinces argue that Pakistan's growing population and expanding cities have made it increasingly difficult to administer large territories from a handful of provincial capitals.

Decision-making and financial authority remained concentrated in Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar and Quetta, leaving smaller cities and districts dependent on provincial governments. "Decentralisation would allow resources and administrative decisions to reach communities more directly," Asif noted.

Distribution of finances

Asif also questioned the existing financial distribution system, saying that funds transferred by the federal government largely remained under provincial control instead of reaching local institutions.

The debate also raises a broader question: whether creating more provinces would improve governance on its own, or whether stronger and financially independent local governments would be equally important.

Under Article 239 of Pakistan's Constitution, a constitutional amendment generally requires the support of at least two-thirds of the membership of both houses of parliament.

An amendment altering the boundaries of an existing province also requires approval by at least two-thirds of the total membership of the assembly of the province concerned.

4 girls, warden from govt shelter home in India drown

Girls went to a lake to bathe during Diwali holiday

CHENNAI

In a tragic incident that has sent shockwaves across Tamil Nadu's Tiruvannamalai district, five people, including four young girls residing in a government-run protection home and their hostel warden, drowned in Samuthiram Lake near Perumbakkam yesterday.

The incident occurred when the girls, accompanied by their warden, visited the lake for a bath during the Deepavali holidays.

What began as a holiday outing ended in tragedy after all five reportedly drowned one after another.

The deceased have been identified as shelter home warden Thenmozhi and Vijayalakshmi, Alli, Bhoomika, and Valliammal.

According to preliminary information, while they were in the water, one of the girls is believed to have encountered difficulties and started drowning. The others reportedly also got into trouble in the water, resulting in all five losing their lives.

However, the exact sequence of events and whether any of the victims attempted to rescue the others have not yet been officially established. *— IANS*

Bangladesh challenges Hasina over return pledge

Former PM has said several times she intends to return

DHAKA

Bangladesh has challenged ousted leader Sheikh Hasina to seek extradition from India if she was serious about returning, while reviewing an application to renew her passport.

Hasina, whose 15-year rule was ended by a mass uprising she tried to crush, has vowed to return in December to Bangladesh, where she was sentenced to death for crimes against humanity over the 2024 crackdown on protesters.

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed told reporters yesterday that authorities were looking into Hasina's request for a new passport, adding that she was a convicted offender who had taken refuge abroad.

Under review

"The legal basis of the application, whether it followed due process, and whether there is a right to apply for a passport — all those matters are being reviewed," he said.

"We had already sent a letter to that country (India) seeking her extradition through due process," he added.

Hasina has said several times she intends to return, telling AFP in an email that she was "fully aware" she faced being hanged.

Hasina's British lawyers have requested to renew her documents after the "reported revocation" of her passport.



AFP

■ Sheikh Hasina

A letter by law firm Matrix Chambers, addressed to Bangladesh's high commission in New Delhi and seen by AFP, requested her passport renewal - but made no mention of when, or where, she planned to travel.

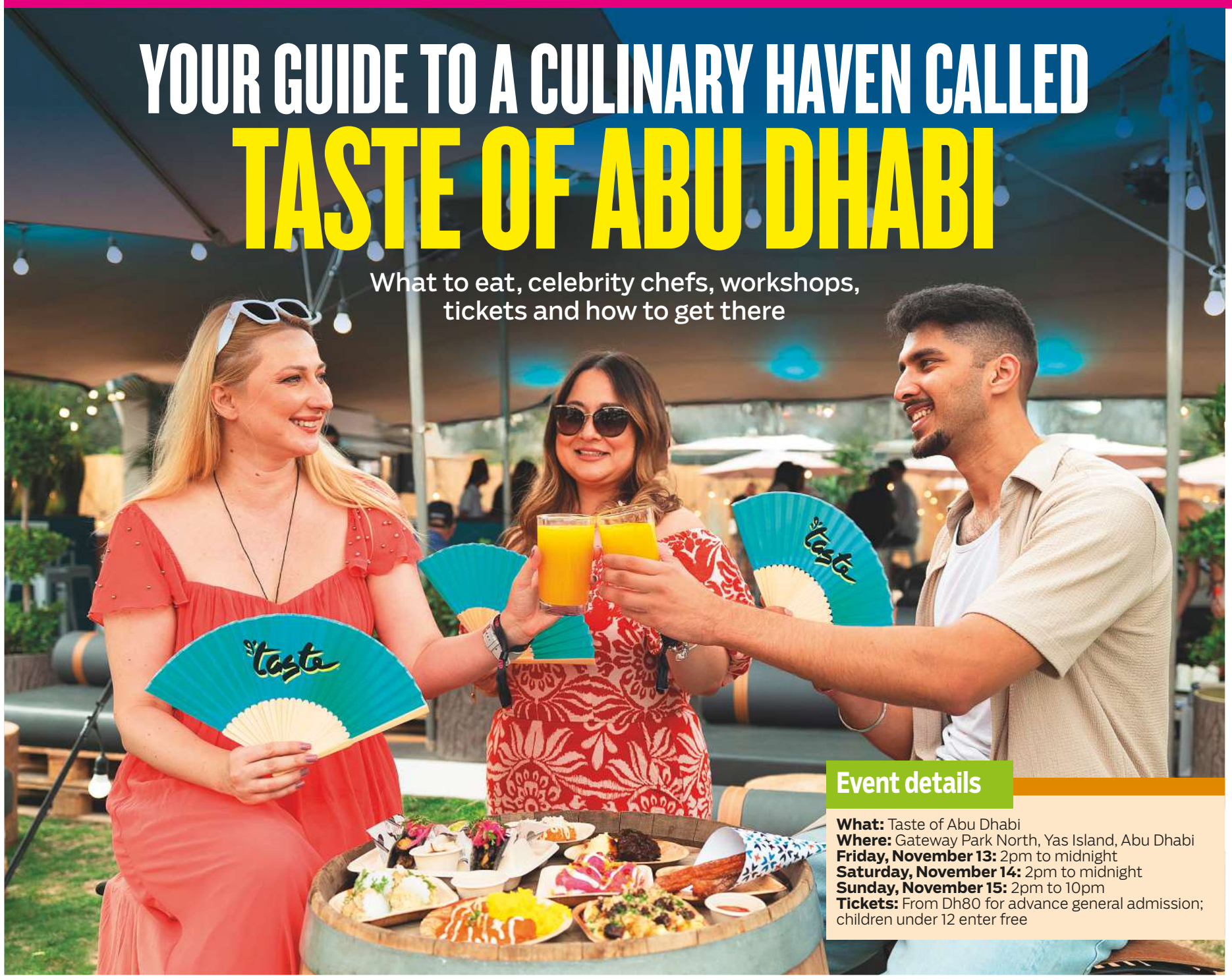
'Political stunt'

Mohammad Aminul Islam, chief prosecutor of the court that sentenced Hasina to death in November 2025, dismissed the application as "nothing but political stunt".

Humaiun Kobir, Bangladesh's junior foreign minister, said she should surrender herself to face justice. "Let her tell India: 'Yes, there is an extradition treaty. Please hand me over. I killed this many people, and I am ready to face the sentence. Please execute me there'," he told reporters. "She is a thief, a bandit and a terrorist who fled ... How could she, having fled, want to come back?" *— AFP*

YOUR GUIDE TO A CULINARY HAVEN CALLED TASTE OF ABU DHABI

What to eat, celebrity chefs, workshops, tickets and how to get there



Event details

What: Taste of Abu Dhabi
Where: Gateway Park North, Yas Island, Abu Dhabi
Friday, November 13: 2pm to midnight
Saturday, November 14: 2pm to midnight
Sunday, November 15: 2pm to 10pm
Tickets: From Dh80 for advance general admission; children under 12 enter free

By **Lakshana N. Palat**
Assistant Features Editor

Can't decide where to eat in Abu Dhabi? Imagine having 16 restaurants to choose from without having to drive across the city, book separate tables or commit to a full meal at just one place.

That's the idea behind Taste of Abu Dhabi, which returns from November 13 to 15 for three days of food, cooking workshops, live music and family entertainment.

Held at Gateway Park North on Yas Island, the festival is back for its fourth year in partnership with BMW Abu Dhabi Motors. Visitors can graze their way through restaurant pop-ups, watch celebrity chefs in action, learn a few kitchen tricks and let the kids loose in a revamped play zone.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Restaurant pop-ups, celebrity chefs, cooking workshops, live music, a kids' zone and food and beverage stalls.

That's a mix of dining styles to explore in one place, whether you're planning a full afternoon of grazing or just want to try a few dishes before settling in for the music.

Several licensed lounges will also be available for guests aged 21 and above.

Want to bring home more than food photos? The festival's culinary programme features three celebrity chefs, with workshops and demonstrations offering a chance to pick up ideas for your own kitchen.

The Keeta Fire Pit will add another flavour to the programme, with live-fire cooking and barbecue demonstrations throughout the weekend.

THINGS TO KNOW

Culinary sessions are free with festival entry, but registration is required before each session. Places are subject to availability, so arrive early if there's a particular workshop you want to attend.



Participants at a workshop during an earlier edition of Taste of Abu Dhabi.

Restaurant pop-ups

Think of this as a restaurant crawl without the citywide driving.

Taste of Abu Dhabi brings together restaurant pop-ups serving smaller portions, so you can sample different dishes, revisit a favourite or discover somewhere new. Each restaurant is expected to offer three to five tasting dishes. Full menus have not yet been announced, but participating restaurants include:

- Soraya
- Marcella
- Beetza by ERTH
- Ergon by ERTH
- Tanjun by 99
- Almayass
- Oak Room
- Desert Lotus
- The Directors Club
- Lento
- Paradiso
- Ting Irie
- Pincode
- Villa Toscana at St. Regis
- The Ramen Bar

WHAT'S FOR THE KIDS?

The festival's family offering gets a revamp this year with a new Candy Land Kids' Zone.

Children can enjoy rides, arts and crafts, and activities designed to give younger visitors their own festival experience while grown-ups explore the food stalls.

And there's a welcome bonus for families: Children under 12 enter free.

ENTERTAINMENT MENU

There's more to the festival than what's on the plate. A new entertainment line-up will bring musicians, live performances and DJs to the event across all three days. Emirati soul singer Hamdan Al Abri is among the performers, bringing his distinctive sound to the festival. Dubai rock band Tone Deaf will add a louder edge to the entertainment.



Snger Hamdan Al Abri will provide food for the soul.

You could arrive in the afternoon for a late lunch, explore the food stalls and workshops, then stick around for the evening's music.

HOW TO GET THERE

- **By car:** Drive to Gateway Park North, Yas Island, and follow event parking signs. Free parking is available around the venue, but car parks closest to the festival may fill up during busy periods.
- **By taxi or ride-hailing:** You can take an Abu Dhabi taxi or book through an app such as Careem or Uber. Set your destination to Gateway Park North, Yas Island.
- **By public bus:** Yas Island's transport guidance lists bus route 102 from Abu Dhabi Central Bus Station. Check the Darbi app for current schedules and your onward journey to the venue before setting off.

If you're driving, allow extra time for parking and walking to the entrance.

If you're planning to enjoy the licensed lounges, consider taking a taxi or arranging another way home.

Tickets and packages

There are three main ticket options, depending on whether you want entry alone, food and drink vouchers, or the VIP experience.

General admission @ Dh80 in advance: Best if you want to explore the festival and buy food as you go. Includes one-day festival entry, access to culinary workshops, subject to availability.

Taster package @ Dh185 in advance: A useful option if you want to arrive with a few food and beverage vouchers ready to use. Includes one-day festival entry, two food vouchers, two beverage vouchers, access to culinary workshops, subject to availability.

VIP Package @Dh350 in advance: For visitors who want a few extras alongside their festival entry. Includes one-day festival entry, fast-track entry, three food vouchers, four beverage vouchers, access to the VIP Lounge. access to culinary workshops, subject to availability.

Friday Work Social packages: Available for groups of 10 or more, with prices starting at Dh160 per person. Packages include food and beverage vouchers and VIP Lounge access.

Advance ticket prices are available until November 12 or until tickets sell out. Check the booking page for availability and the latest prices before purchasing.

Top Tips

- **Book ahead:** Advance tickets are available until November 12, subject to availability.
- **Register for workshops early:** Sessions have limited places, so don't leave your favourite chef's workshop until the last minute.
- **Go with an appetite for variety:** Tasting portions make it easier to sample dishes from several restaurants.
- **Make a family plan:** Check out Candy Land and the children's activities when you arrive.
- **Leave time for the music:** If you're not in a hurry, plan to stay beyond your meal and explore the entertainment programme.



MEET THE CELEBRITY CHEFS



GINO D'ACAMPO

The Italian chef and television personality is known for his Italian cooking. Expect food inspiration and practical ideas from a familiar face on screen.



RACHEL ALLEN

The Irish chef and food writer brings her approachable style of cooking to the programme, with tips for home cooks looking to sharpen their skills.



THOMAS STRAKER

Known for his social media series, All Things Butter, the chef and restaurateur has made flavoured butters a talking point. His appearance is a chance to explore how one ingredient can transform a dish.



Band members of U2 and (inset) Macklemore.

Photos: AP

U2 DEFEND MACKLEMORE'S COMMENTS ON PALESTINE



However, they urge fans not to 'vilify' Ed Sheeran

By **Lakshana N. Palat**
Assistant Features Editor

U2 have spoken out about Macklemore's exit from Ed Sheeran's US tour, defending the rapper's freedom to express his views on stage while asking that Sheeran not be singled out for criticism.

In an interview with BBC News, guitarist the Edge said the band fully supports Macklemore's right as an artist to say what he chose to say. He also said he didn't think Sheeran deserved to be "vilified," noting that the singer had been put in a hard spot. The Edge praised the musicians who stepped away from the tour in solidarity, describing the episode as a question of free expression.

NO RIGHT TO CENSOR

Drummer Larry Mullen Jr. said that to be politically engaged is each artist's decision. He added that the band would stand up for people's right to share their opinions, provided they don't encourage violence, even when U2 don't agree with what's being said. "But we as a band will fight for the right to speak your mind as long as it doesn't incite violence. And even if we disagree with it or don't like it, nobody has a right — no billionaire, no promoter, no owner has the right to censor anybody. They will definitely not be censoring us ever," he said.

THE BACKGROUND

Macklemore was removed from the North American leg of Sheeran's Loop Tour in September, after two opening sets at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey in which he voiced support for Palestine, spoke about Gaza and the West Bank, and performed his song *Hind's Hall*.

Promoter Messina Touring Group said the venues hosting the remaining dates would not proceed with him on the lineup.

New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft confirmed he had barred Macklemore from Gillette Stadium, pointing to the rapper's remarks and what Kraft described as a wider pattern of antisemitic rhetoric and imagery.

Sheeran said the call was the promoter's to make. Several acts subsequently left the tour, among them Finneas, Lukas Graham and Irish folk group Beoga, who had been playing alongside Sheeran nightly. At a later show in Philadelphia, Sheeran opened by apologising for the missteps he had made in handling the entire matter.

> Drummer Larry Mullen Jr. said the band would stand up for people's right to share their opinions, provided they don't encourage violence.

SOLD-OUT SHOWS

Macklemore has since headlined three sold-out Free Palestine benefit concerts in Dublin, Paris and London, joined by guests including Hozier, Kneecap and Beoga.

The proceeds of the concerts will go to organisations that support and work for Palestinians.

GULF NEWS

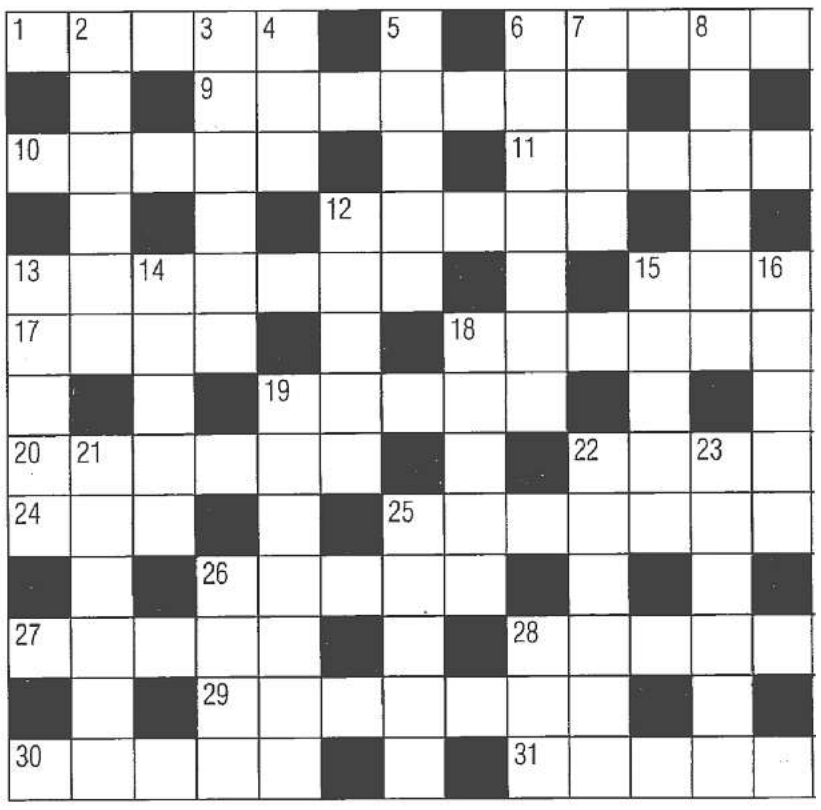
Weekend Unwind

We go where the vibe is, chase the stars that matter, and bring you the fun and fabulous. Weekend Unwind is your ultimate newsletter, wrapped in style.



Scan the QR code to sign up for our weekly round-up.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 Mother's interrupted by a bighead — the snake! (5)
6 Try a test another way (5)
9 Under water, it takes a month to work! (7)
10 Eject that drunkard out of the house! (5)
11 Make a splash with her in the river (5)
12 Like an owlish lion? (5)
13 America's road to liberation? (7)
15 A drink in the local, especially (3)
17 Being metal, it conducts electricity (4)
18 It's useful for pouring fuel out, apparently (6)
19 Watchful for a later change (5)
20 As a dairy product, you can pack it up (6)
22 Tasteful little figures (4)
24 The Dawkins family? (3)
25 An expression of congratulation to a smart individual (4,3)
26 It's often replaced on sporting grounds (5)
27 By Robin, is it modern music? (5)
28 Projected productions (5)
29 Regular pay for a place to stay (7)
30 Alloy used for farthings, one imagines (5)
31 The silly fellows may go to Canada! (5)

DOWN

2 A support sailors may like to get (6)
3 Kicked Edward with a loud cry (6)
4 Current West End performance (3)
5 To time without delay (5)
6 It will eventually happen that an act gets banned (4,3)
7 Grey, but still able to have a fling? (4)
8 In a story, it's no good to confuse things (6)
12 Having four legs, may be apt to give a bleat (5)
13 The sheep a fathead has to make secure? (5)
14 Consumed in great enthusiasm (5)
15 A New Zealand figure in an Italian resort (5)
16 She makes a change from Elsie (5)
18 Natural product; you can make "fur" with it (5)
19 Hopes to take a donkey round the pier, perhaps (7)
21 In letting the herd stray around, cause obstruction (6)
22 In feel, perhaps, suggestive of a cat (6)
23 They guard treasures, yet possess no gems (6)
25 It's somewhat circular, like a ring in the nose (5)
26 Goes down with many a subscription (4)
28 In bad visibility, note the footballer's error (3)

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS: 3, Whips 8, Manor 10, Lemon 11, Rap 12, Bread 13, Vi-negar 15, Ca-p-es 18, Fat 19, Ten-an-t 21, Cutters 22, Re-a-L 23, Star 24, Armen-ia 26, Ch.-ancy 29, Mum 31, Teno-r 32, Rab-idly 34, Robin 35, L-i.e. 36, Glass 37, Lag-er 38, Essay.

DOWN: 1, Paris (pairs) 2, Hop-eful 4, He-RR 5, P-L-aces 6, Sedan 7, (The Dirty) Dozen 9, Nan 12, Battery 14, Gat 16, Past-a 17, Star-k 19, True-man 20, BR-act 21, C-Av.-an 23, Similar 24, A-cross 25, Nub 27, Heels 28, Norse 30, Bleed 32, Riga 33, Dig.

SUDOKU

	3		8	2				
			7	6	4	3	9	8
6				3	5	7	2	
	7				3	1	5	9
1				7				3
9	4	3	5				7	
	2	6	3	9				5
3	9	1	4	5	6			
				8	2		3	

THE CHALLENGE

An unsolved Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3x3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers one to nine. Good luck!

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

2	1	5	8	3	6	7	9	4
7	3	6	5	9	4	2	8	1
8	4	9	2	7	1	3	6	5
9	5	7	1	6	8	4	3	2
6	8	1	3	4	2	5	7	9
4	2	3	7	5	9	6	1	8
1	6	8	4	2	7	9	5	3
3	7	2	9	1	5	8	4	6
5	9	4	6	8	3	1	2	7

NOTEPAD

EASY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Exchanges (5)
6 Foolish (5)
9 Sharp reply (7)
10 Once more (5)
11 Admission (5)
12 Spools (5)
13 Sideways (7)
15 Plunge (3)
17 Among (4)
18 Facade (6)
19 Sea duck (5)
20 Under control (2,4)
22 Assistant (4)
24 Pistachio (3)
25 Railway coach (7)
26 Sacks (5)
27 Concerning (5)
28 Makes watertight (5)
29 Defamation (7)
30 Delete (5)
31 Book of maps (5)

DOWN

2 Native American dwelling (6)
3 Valued highly (6)
4 Transgression (3)
5 Wooden peg (5)
6 Studio (7)
7 Enclosures (4)
8 A sally (6)
12 Quick (5)
13 Ancient language (5)
14 Taut (5)
15 Jeans fabric (5)
16 Clean feathers (5)
18 Planet (5)
19 Allow (7)
21 Numeral (6)
22 Watch chain (6)
23 Perennial plant (6)
25 Coin (5)
26 Ado (4)
28 Ocean (3)

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS: 3, Galas 8, Widow 10, Strip 11, Gin 12, Aorta 13, Finally 15, Riles 18, Gig 19, Banana 21, Hopeful 22, Oven 23, Bear 24, Trigger 26, Angora 29, Lag 31, Hyena 32, Lay open 34, Idler 35, Nib 36, Voice 37, Rip up 38, Erupt.

DOWN: 1, Vigil 2, Nonagon 4, Ahoy 5, Astral 6, Stain 7, Vixen 9, Din 12, Algebra 14, Lip 16, Laser 17, Sabre 19, Burglar 20, Jonah 21, Hedge 23, Begonia 24, Trader 25, Gay 27, Nylon 28, On ice 30, Debut 32, Leap 33, Pip.

Pakistan ride on 4 fifties to punish Sri Lanka in 1st Test

Azam, Shakeel and two debutants shine on Day 1 as hosts reach 281-5

RAWALPINDI

Captain Babar Azam and two debutants were among four batters to hit half-centuries as Pakistan reached 281-5 on day one of the first Test against Sri Lanka yesterday.

Opener Tayyab Arif scored an impressive 57 and Mohammad Taha a patient 51 — both playing their first Test — while Azam hit 50, with Sri Lanka's decision to bowl on what appeared to be a green pitch in Rawalpindi seemed to backfire.

Saud Shakeel was unbeaten on 57 when bad light stopped play 15 minutes before schedule, with Ghazi Ghori seven not out.

Sri Lanka's decision to go with a pace quartet and without a frontline spinner could also prove costly, with the pitch not offering much to the fast bowlers.

Asitha Fernando was the pick of bowlers with 2-64.

In good touch

Azam looked in good touch but still failed to score an elusive century, and was dismissed by Dilshan Madushanka after the lunch break.

He hit seven fours in his 58-ball innings.

Azam has now gone 41 innings without a Test century, his last coming against New Zealand in Karachi in December 2022.

Salman Agha made 16 before giving Sri Lankan wicketkeeper Kusal Mendis his fourth catch of the innings.

Arif put on a confident 86-run opening stand with Azan Awais (30) as Sri Lanka's pace bowlers struggled to break through.

The 20-year-old, playing his maiden first-class season, cracked nine boundaries and a six in his impressive 51-ball knock.

Sri Lanka had to wait until the 16th over for a breakthrough, when Milan Rathnayaka had Awais caught behind by Mendis.

Fernando found an edge off Arif's bat to Mendis, making it 90-2.

Allrounder Arafat Minhas and pace bowler Saqib Khan are also making Test debuts for Pakistan.

The second and final Test is in Lahore from November 17.

— *AFP*



AFP

■ Pakistan captain Babar Azam celebrates after scoring a half-century during the first day of the first Test against Sri Lanka.



AFP

■ Pakistan's Mohammad Taha plays a sweep shot against Sri Lanka during the first day of the first Test in Rawalpindi.

CARRICK COUNTING HIS DAYS AFTER VILLA DRAW

MANCHESTER UNITED'S 4-4 COMEBACK HIDES A BIGGER PROBLEM AS POCHETTINO RUMOURS INTENSIFY



AP

DUBAI

BY SHAMSEER MOHAMMED
Staff Writer

Manchester United showed tremendous fighting spirit against Aston Villa on Sunday. But was it really something to celebrate?

I don't think so.

After all, this is Manchester United we are talking about. A club sitting in the Premier League relegation zone with just eight points from 10 matches.

Following their memorable comeback victory over Roma in the Champions League, you would have expected Michael Carrick's men to start strongly against Aston Villa.

Instead, they conceded two goals inside the opening four minutes.

Yes, you read that right. Two goals in less than four minutes!

It was a shocking start, exposing once again just how fragile United have become at the back.

But credit where it is due.

United showed remarkable determination to fight back from two goals down, not once but twice, to earn a dramatic 4-4 draw at Old Trafford.

Bruno Fernandes and Youri Tielemans brought them level before half time. But all that hard work was undone when Villa scored twice again early in the second half.

Stirring fightback

And just when another defeat looked inevitable, Joshua Zirkzee and Patrick Dorgu struck in stoppage time to rescue a point.

You have to admire the players for refusing to give up, especially when everything seemed to be going against them.

This is where Manchester United's biggest problem lies.

They are so poor at the fundamentals of football. Their defensive organisation is all over the place. They struggle to deal with basic situations, make too many individual mistakes and look vulnerable whenever the opposition attacks. Some of the players are not worthy enough to be starters at this football club.

Two goals in less than four minutes! It was a shocking start, exposing once again just how fragile United have become at the back.

19 goals
Manchester United have conceded in 10 league matches

You simply cannot keep conceding goals like this and expect extraordinary comebacks to rescue you. United have now conceded 19 goals in just 10 Premier League matches. Only Crystal Palace and Ipswich have conceded more, while Coventry have conceded the same number.

That is an alarming statistic for a club of Manchester United's stature.

And despite scoring four goals on Sunday, United remain 18th in the table, having won just once in the league this season.

That tells you everything about their current situation.

The frustration among supporters is understandable.

There were fresh protests against the club's ownership before Sunday's match, with fans displaying green and gold balloons and a banner demanding the owners' departure.

But will these protests bring any meaningful change?

And what about Michael Carrick? The victory over Roma and the draw against Villa may have bought him some time, but neither performance offered much evidence that United's fundamental problems are being addressed.

Change in the air

With the international break now upon us, speculation over his future is growing.

According to the *Evening Standard*, former Tottenham and Chelsea manager Mauricio Pochettino has emerged as the betting favourite to replace Carrick, with Eddie Howe and Julian Nagelsmann also among the leading contenders.

But would changing the manager really solve everything?

There are clearly deeper problems at Manchester United. In my view, the owners have not done enough to address the weaknesses in the squad, and questions over recruitment and decision making cannot be ignored.

At the same time, it is becoming increasingly difficult to see how Carrick can continue if performances remain this poor.

And with another managerial change potentially on the horizon, haven't we seen this story before?

A manager struggles, the pressure builds, someone new arrives, there is renewed hope, and eventually the same problems return.

Manchester United seem to be heading towards yet another cycle. The players have shown they can fight. But fighting spirit alone is not enough.

Something has to change at this football club. And it has to be more than just the manager.

UAE sprinter storms to 100m silver

DAKAR

UAE sprinter Arwa Ali won the silver medal in the women's 100 metres at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games on Sunday, clocking 11.41 seconds to take the country's official medal tally to two, comprising one gold and one silver.

Ali finished second behind Nigeria's Rosemary Nwankwo, who claimed gold in 11.16 seconds, while Qatar's Dana Salem secured bronze in 11.48 seconds.

The result extends Ali's strong continental form after she won the 100m gold medal at the Bahrain 2025 Asian Youth Games in 11.45 seconds, breaking the Games record three times during the competition.

In other athletics events, UAE sprinters Saeed Omar and Aisha Mohammed qualified for the men's and women's 400m finals, respectively. Omar recorded 48.33 seconds, while Mohammed clocked 54.89 seconds, with both finishing third overall in their respective qualifying rounds.

Malhan's feat

Riyan Malhan had earlier secured the UAE's first gold medal in the history of its participation at the Youth Olympic Games by winning the boys' singles badminton title after defeating France's Mady Sow in straight games in the final.

UAE equestrian Alya Almheiri also won gold as part of Team Asia in the continental team competition organised by the International Equestrian Federation (FEI) during the Games.

— *WAM*



■ Arwa Ali

Warner: Khawaja is '100% accurate'

Former opener backs 'my brother' on Sandpapergate revelations

SYDNEY

David Warner yesterday backed former teammate Usman Khawaja's claims that the entire Australian team was in on the 2018 "Sandpapergate" scandal as "100 per cent accurate".

Warner, one of three players banned over the ball-tampering controversy in Cape Town along with Steve Smith and Cameron Bancroft, said he stood "with my brother" Khawaja.

"It's been eight years since I spoke on this topic," the former opener said on Instagram.

"Uzzie, I throw my full support behind you. I thank you for what you've done.

"It's 100 per cent accurate what you've said. Now everyone knows the truth. It's out there. People wanted to know it. You've come out and said it."

Khawaja, Warner's close friend and long-time opening partner, re-ignited the infamous incident on Saturday ahead of the release of his autobiography this week, where a chapter is dedicated to the issue. "It was all of us. Not the batters, not the bowlers, not the staff. All of us," Khawaja claimed about who was in on the plot to doctor the ball with sandpaper.

Cricket Australia's original investigation found only Smith, Warner and Bancroft were in the know, with the governing body at the weekend saying it remained "comfortable" with its findings.

Denying knowledge

Bowlers Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Nathan Lyon all denied publicly in 2021 that they knew about it, while Darren Lehmann, who was head coach at the time, denied on Saturday there was widespread knowledge.

"This isn't about reopening old wounds," said Warner, who retired from Test cricket in 2024.

"It's about acknowledging that some wounds never properly healed. I stand with my brother Usman Khawaja.

"Speaking your truth takes courage, especially when people would rather you stay silent.

"Time passing doesn't replace accountability, and asking questions shouldn't be mistaken for holding grudges. Respect, honesty and accountability. That's all anyone can ask for." — *AFP*

LABUSCHAGNE AXED FOR NEW ZEALAND TESTS

Marnus Labuschagne was yesterday axed from Australia's squad for their upcoming four-Test series against New Zealand, paying the price for a long run of poor form. The number three, who has played 68 Tests, was under-pressure going into their recent tour of South Africa and failed to fire across the three Tests.

"At this stage we won't be considering Marn for selection for certainly that first Test, but for the New Zealand series," chairman of selectors George Bailey told cricket.com.au. "There's been a lot of speculation around his place in the team. "So I think this gives him a little bit of space and clears up a bit of conjecture as we work through the next round of (Sheffield) Shield cricket."

Labuschagne, who was once the world's top-ranked batter, had a tortured tour of South Africa, where his highest score was 39. — *AFP*

Bangladesh force draw, West Indies win series

Hridoy 1st Bangladesh batter to score 300+ runs in a Test match

SYLHET

Towhid Hridoy became the first Bangladesh batter to score 324 runs in a Test match, as the second Test against West Indies ended in a draw in Sylhet yesterday.



Chasing 369 to win, Bangladesh were 184-4 when fading light ended the final day's play, with Litton Das unbeaten on seven and Mehidy Hasan Miraz on one.

West Indies, who won the opening Test in Mirpur by eight wickets, took the two-match series 1-0.

Hridoy starred with an unbeaten 242 in Bangladesh's first innings, rescuing the hosts from 88-3 as they posted 386 for a 30-run lead over West Indies' 356.

Marathon knock

His marathon knock surpassed Mushfiqur Rahim's previous Bangladesh record of 219 not out, and included a 117-run partnership with Taijul Islam.

Hridoy added 82 in the second innings, taking his match aggregate to 324 and surpassing Mominul Haque's previous record of 281 against Sri Lanka in 2018.

West Indies resumed on 345-3, with Kavem Hodge unbeaten on 140. Bangladesh took three early wickets, including Hodge for a career-best 142 off 194 balls.

During Bangladesh's chase, Mushfiqur reached 7,000 Test runs, becoming the first Bangladeshi batter to achieve the milestone. — *AFP*

GUJRANWALA ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY LIMITED

INVITATION FOR E-BIDS

Electronic Bid(s) for the following tender are invited through International Competitive bidding at Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO) for the supply of 200,000 Smart **AMI** Single Phase Energy Meters with GSM/GPRS modem (PTA verified) in four (04) equal lots as per WAPDA/PEPCO/NTDC specification (amended upto date) (detail given in bidding documents) without any element of foreign exchange and free of delivery (FCS) at GEPCO 132-KV Grid Station GT Road Shaheenabad, Gujranwala, through "Single Stage Single Envelope Procedure" on International Competitive Bidding (ICB). Basis of eligible bidders complying with qualification & experience criteria laid down in tender documents available at **EPADS v2.0**.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Item(s) Description	Lot No.	Qty.	Bid Guarantee Required (Rs.)	Bid Opening Date and Time
1	52/MM/2026-27	Smart Single Phase **AMR** Meter	I	50,000	11,500,000	03 December, 2026 11:30 AM
			II	50,000	11,500,000	
			III	50,000	11,500,000	
			IV	50,000	11,500,000	

Terms and Conditions

1. The **Material Management Directorate (Gujranwala Electric Power Company Limited (GEPCO))** invites E-bids through International Competitive bidding described in the bidding documents on **EPADS v2.0**.
2. **Single Stage Single Envelope** will be used by adopting **Least Cost Based Selection (LCBS)** Technique for the subject procurement, in line with the Public Procurement Rules, 2026 and any Regulations, Regulatory Guides, Procurement Guidelines or Instructions issued by the Authority from time to time.
3. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security amounting described in Bid Security Section in Bidding Document in the form of Pay Order, Banker's Cheque, Call at Deposit and Bank Guarantee in the name of Chief Executive officer GEPCO. Bid Guarantee(s) in original shall be submitted in an envelope clearly marked with the tender No. & Title before E-bid submission deadline in the undersigned's office, failing which the bid shall be declared non-responsive; copy of the same shall be attached with Technical Proposal of the E-Bid. All files uploaded to the **EPADS v2.0** website during bid submission should include the firm's name and a brief file description.
4. E-Bidding documents, containing detailed terms & conditions, specifications and requirements etc. are available on **E-Pak Acquisition and Disposal System (EPADS)** at **vendors.epads.gov.pk/login.**
5. Bidder(s) are required to get themselves registered on **EPADS v2.0** on or before **Thursday, December 3, 2026 at 11:00 AM**. E-bids will be opened by using **EPADS v2.0** on the same day i.e. **Thursday, December 03, 2026 at 11:30 AM**. Manual submission of Bids shall not be entertained.
6. Bid(s) must stay valid for **120 days**, and Bid Guarantee of amount mentioned above must remain valid for **28 days** beyond the bid validity date.
7. Bidders are required to regularly check the **EPADS v2.0** website for this tender in order to remain informed of any clarifications issued by the Procuring Agency regarding unintended omissions, errors, or oversights. Bidders may also submit their queries for clarification through the same website no later than seven (07) days prior to the tender opening date.
8. Conditional bids, late submissions, or bids without the required Bid Guarantee will be rejected. All tender conditions outlined in the bidding document must be fulfilled. Required information must be provided on the specified forms included in the bidding document.
9. Domestic preference shall be applicable in accordance to SRO.827(I)/2001 dated 03 December, 2001 issued by Ministry of Commerce Govt. of Pakistan.
10. Pre-Bid meeting will be held on **17 November, 2026 (Tuesday) at 11:00 AM** in committee room or the office of Manager (MM) 565-A Model Town GEPCO HQ Gujranwala.
11. GEPCO reserves the right to reject any/all bids as per PPRA Rules.
12. For further information contact the office of Manager (MM) on any working day during office hours.

Manager (MM)
GEPCO Ltd., Gujranwala. 565-A Model Town, Gujranwala, Pakistan Ph. +92 -55-9200527 Fax. +92-55-9200528

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ABU DHABI

PERSONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notice of Name Change
I, THASMINA NIFAYA RIYAZ AHAMED, daughter of HAJ MOHAMED,
holder of Indian Passport No. AR389730, issued in Abu Dhabi on 10.06.2026 permanent resident of 425/6, Millath Nagar, Jappan Street, Avaniyapuram Post, Thiruvidaimarudur Taluk, Thanjavur, PIN CODE 612107, TAMIL NADU, INDIA, and presently residing at Serdyan St, Al Mu'tarid, Harat Mohd Ibn Khalifa, Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, UAE,
do hereby declare that I have changed my name from THASMINA NIFAYA RIYAZ AHAMED to THASMINA NIFAYA HAJ MOHAMED, with immediate effect.

3599687_1_1

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ACCOUNTANT
Required for a real estate company in Abu Dhabi
Candidate must have 10+ years of experience.
Mobile: 050-3522726
Email CV to: info@alsharq1-byg.ae

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Miscellaneous

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1. **BODYSHOP SERVICE ADVISOR**
2. **MECHANICAL FOREMAN**
3. **BODYSHOP FOREMAN:** With minimum 5 years UAE experience in Auto Service field & having good communication skills.
4. **ACCOUNTANT:** Should be well-versed in Tally and having minimum 5 years UAE experience

Having a valid UAE driving license is a benefit.

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PERSONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Government of Dubai - Dubai Courts
Notice of Publication
Emirate of Dubai
Dubai Courts Department
Personal Status Court
Name Change Notice
Special Certification Application to the Ministry of Health, Births and Deaths Committee No. (2026/175724)
Mr. Tajuddin Bakshi Shaik Karimulla, an Indian national, has submitted a request to the Personal Status Court to change his daughter's name on her birth certificate from Samiya Shaik to Maisha Shaik. Anyone with an objection should submit it to the aforementioned court within one month from the date of publication of this notice.
Personal Status Services Department
Dubai Courts
//stamp and signature – Dubai courts personal status department//
Publication date: 10th November 2026

3599680_1_1

NOTICE OF NAME CHANGE
I, Ahmed Noorul Rabani son of Kuthbudeen, holder of Indian Passport No U2027585 issued at India on 22/01/2020 permanent resident of 387, Mohamed Ali Street, Aaikudi, Podakkudi, Thiruvarur, Pin: 614103, Tamil Nadu, India and presently residing at Flat - 103, Ali Hassan Redha Bldg, M38 Street, Hor Al Anz, Deira, Dubai, do hereby change my name **from Ahmed Noorul Rabani (given name) Pulavar Abdulhamid Kuthbudeen (surname) to Ahmed Noorul Rabani (given name) Kuthbudeen (surname)** with immediate effect.

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* Responsible and punctual
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Salary: Negotiable
Employment: Full-time

What we offer:
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Interested candidates may please send their CVs to: info@skyhighhr.com

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Contact / WhatsApp: +97156-5345214
laurel.suvai@gmail.com

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SALES EXECUTIVE / ENGINEER
MALE (2 Nos.)

- 3+ years sales experience of engineering and welding products
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- Qualification: Graduate or equivalent

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WALK-IN INTERVIEW | CAREGIVER

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We are looking for compassionate and dedicated Caregivers with a strong background in supporting children with behavioural challenges.
Position: Female Caregiver | Salary: Starting from AED 3,000 (Based on experience) + Benefits as per UAE Labour Law

Preferred Requirements
- Proven experience handling children with behavioural, developmental, or learning challenges
- Tagalog speakers preferred
- Knowledge or experience in Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)
- Experience supporting children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- IBT Certification is an added advantage
- Patient, caring, and committed to child development and well-being

Responsibilities
- Provide daily care and support to children, including feeding, bathing, personal hygiene, and general well-being, while ensuring their safety, protection, and safeguarding remain the highest priority.
- Demonstrate the ability to manage behavioral challenges, including emotional distress and behavioral breakdowns, using appropriate, calm, and supportive approaches. Recognize early signs of behavioral or emotional changes and identify situations that may require immediate attention or intervention.
- Able to communicate effectively and provide accurate, timely, and real-time updates and feedback to therapists and other healthcare professionals regarding the client's progress, behavior, and overall well-being.
- Support children in achieving social, communication, and life skills goals.
- Maintain a safe, positive, calm, and peaceful environment for clients, ensuring their comfort, well-being, and emotional security.

Walk-In Interview Location: PACT Employment Services, Derby Office, Office 5, Reem Building, Al Karama, Dubai
Date: 10 & 11 November 2026 (Tuesday & Wednesday) | **Time:** 10 A.M – 3 P.M. | Please bring your updated CV and relevant certifications.
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Norris win, Max magic, Mercedes title mark race

MCLAREN DRIVER KEEPS IT COOL TO THWART RAMPAGING RED BULL

DUBAI

BY JAYDIP SENGUPTA
Pages Editor

Mercedes expectedly won the F1 Constructors' Championship at the Sao Paulo GP on Sunday, despite both their drivers having the noses of their cars pointing in the opposite direction during a chaotic and wet race in Brazil.

While George Russell finished fourth, after starting fifth and spinning in the pitlane, teammate Kimi Antonelli finished fifth, seven days after becoming the youngest champion.

The 20-year-old had started from the front row alongside pole-sitter McLaren's Lando Norris, the eventual winner, and endured a difficult race, spinning on a couple of occasions, but it was enough to ensure that Mercedes outscored Ferrari to take a ninth teams' title.

Driver of the Day

However, the Driver of the Day was Red Bull's Max Verstappen, who produced another spectacular drive in the rain to finish second after starting from 21st. This was the Dutchman's 58th DOTD award — former Red Bull driver Sebastian Vettel sits a distant second at 23 — and his 10th this season, showing exactly why he is considered one of the greats of the sport.



> **It was one of my best races in terms of execution. It was a race where things could easily change. The main thing today was to keep it cool."**
>
> **Lando Norris** » McLaren driver

10 races
Verstappen has been voted Driver of the Day of 20 races this year

But it was Norris who had his second consecutive victory in Brazil after a race he led for 47 of 71 laps, with Brazil football great Neymar waving the chequered flag. "It was one of my best races in terms of execution," Norris said. "It was a race where things could easily change.

"The main thing today was to keep it cool."

Verstappen, who wasn't too pleased with the state of the car despite his stirring recovery drive, said: "It was a challenging race! The first laps were so important. We were strong on the inters, but then it was not so good but starting P21 and finishing on the podium is a good result."

Red Bull's Isack Hadjar, having taken his third podium of the year and having led a Grand Prix for the first time, added: "That was so difficult. The switching from inters to softs and then back again! Very tricky to drive and then more rain."

Hamilton's woes

Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton, though, made a subdued exit from Interlagos after a weekend to forget, the third race in a disappointing 'triple-header' for Ferrari.

The seven-time champion finished ninth after starting 20th on the grid, two places behind teammate Charles Leclerc.

The result saw Hamilton slip from third to fourth in the drivers' title race behind new champion Antonelli, Verstappen and Russell. Leclerc is fifth.

The next race will take place in Las Vegas on November 21, with the two final races of the season in Qatar and Abu Dhabi.

I'm really proud of myself, Gauff says

Two-time major winner edges Pegula in the WTA Finals openers

LOS ANGELES

Coco Gauff outlasted fellow American Jessica Pegula to win a tension-packed group stage opener 6-4, 6-7 (5/7), 6-2 on Sunday in the WTA Finals at Indian Wells.

Two-time major winner Gauff fell behind 5-1 in the second set but saved three set points in the 10th game and captured five games in a row to seize a 6-5 edge.

Pegula denied a Gauff match point and held in the 12th game to force a tie-breaker, then jumped to a 5-2 lead and forced a third set with a forehand return winner.

Gauff seized a 3-0 lead in the third set and dominated from there, holding in the final game to take the match after two hours and 39 minutes when Pegula swatted a backhand beyond the baseline.

'Having a lot of fun'

"I was having a lot of fun," Gauff said. "I took a little break. First match in like a month. To play a tournament like this with no preparation is something I've never done in my career.

"I'm just really happy to get through today. It was a tough match. It was 2 1/2 hours and I feel like every point was — I don't know if you guys were holding my breath but me too, so just happy to be through.

"I'm really proud of myself for this one."

Gauff, the 2023 US Open and 2025 French Open champion, and Pegula had split 10 prior career matches, Gauff winning the Cincinnati final and a Wimbledon quarter-final this year in their most recent prior meetings.

In the other Group One opener, reigning Wimbledon champion Linda Noskova defeated Marta Kostyuk 6-2, 6-4. — *AFP*

ALCARAZ CRUISES

Carlos Alcaraz feels proud of taking "one step forward mentally" after following up his Vienna title last week with a 7-6 (5), 7-5 victory over Ben Shelton in the Paris Masters final on Sunday.

The Spanish showman, who missed more than four months of the season because of an injured right wrist, continued his late-season surge in style. He has won all three finals he has reached since the US Open two months ago.

Alcaraz took his total to five titles for the year and 29 overall, including the Japan Open last month.

—AFP

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Email: mohnrav92@gmail.com
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Accountancy

Chief Accountant, BCom, CA Inter, AAT, with 15 years UAE experience, seeks job. Contact: 052-8679080.
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NOTICE OF CHANGE OF NAME OF A FREE ZONE LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY

To Whom It May Concern:

We, **AGERE SCIENCES FZ-LLC**, a Free Zone Limited Liability Company, License No. 107399, incorporated under the Dubai Development Authority Private Companies Regulations 2016, and its amendments (the "**Private Companies Regulations**") hereby give notice that under the terms of Article 17 of the Private Companies Regulations, we intend to change our name to:

PURE PEPTIDE PHARMACEUTICALS RX FZ-LLC

Any person objecting to this change of name should make such objection in writing, no more than fourteen (14) days from the date of publication of this notice to the following:

Manager
Registration and Licensing Department
Dubai Development Authority
P. O. Box 478844, Dubai, UAE
Email: info@dda.gov.ae

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Ministry of Commerce
Government of Pakistan

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No. TCP/T&R/Sugar Export-02/2026

TENDER FOR EXPORT OF 108,000 METRIC TONS WHITE REFINED SUGAR AVAILABLE WITH TCP AT TCP'S PIPRI GODOWN, KARACHI

The Federal Government has allowed Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) to export 108,000 MT White Refined Sugar, imported in 2025, available at Pipri Godown, Karachi.

In this regard, TCP invites sealed bids through international competitive bidding (single-stage-one-envelope) from international buyers, authorized representatives of foreign buyers, and exporters for purchase of full or partial quantities. Details given below:

Commodity	Imported bagged white refined sugar – medium and fine grain – Year of Manufacture 2025
Quantity	108,000 MT in total (96,000 MT Fine Grain size and 11,086 MT Medium Grain size).
Minimum Lot size	Bids for any quantity will be accepted, subject to minimum lot size of 10,000 MT for Fine Grain and 11,086 MT for Medium Grain.
Basis of Sale	"As is, where is basis", EX-Works TCP Pipri Godown, Karachi
Price	To be quoted in US$ per MT only, EX-Works.
Payment	Full advance payment in foreign currency in TCP's designated bank account or an irrevocable at-sight Letter of Credit, before issuance of the Delivery Order .
Bid validity	Seventy-Two (72) working hours from bid submission deadline.
Stock inspection	Any working day, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at Pipri Godown, until the bid submission deadline .
Tender documents	Available free of cost on the PPRA and TCP websites.
Last date for queries	Three (3) days before the bid submission deadline.
Bid submission	**13th November, 2026 at 1100 hours at TCP Principal Office**
Bid opening	**13th November, 2026 at 1130 hours at the same venue**, in the presence of bidders or their representatives who wish to attend.

3. Bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope dropped in the Tender Box available at TCP Principal Office, 4th Floor, Block-B, Finance & Trade Center, Shahrah-e-Faisal, Karachi. Bids sent through courier should reach by the bid submission deadline given above. Late submission will not be accepted, opened or considered for the tender purpose.
4. The interested parties who have previously not fulfilled their contractual obligations with TCP shall not be eligible to participate in the Bids, unless they clear their dues along with penalties or fulfill their contractual obligations in services and commodities with TCP, as the case may be, before tender opening date. Furthermore, those firms against which black listing procedures have been initiated by TCP shall not be eligible to participate in the tender.
5. A pre-bid meeting shall be held on **11th November, 2026 at 1100 hours** in the Board Room of TCP's Principal Office, 4th Floor, Block B, Finance & Trade Center, Shahrah-e-Faisal, Karachi, which may be attended by the prospective bidders, who may wish to attend.
6. TCP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids.

SYED DANISH HAIDER ZAIDI
Manager (International Trade)
31348817_1_1

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GULF NEWS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2026
BUSINESS

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UAE	Dh497.25 /g (24 ct)	▲	Brent	93.46	▼	PKR	75.31	—	LKR	90.53	▲	DFM	6,087.47 (close)	▲	FTSE 100	10,732.28 (15:30 GMT)	▲	Nikkei 225	58,775.50 (close)	▲
UAE	Dh460.50/g (22 ct)	▲	WTI	86.82	▼	PHP	17.19	—	NPR	40.89	▲	Sensex	81,106.65 (close)	▲	STOXX 600	655.21 (15:30 GMT)	▲	KSE 100	173,886.70 (close)	▼
			Murban	99.17	▲															

✕(Closed); —(Unchanged)

Abu Dhabi finds new way to cut peak power use

EMIRATE TO LICENSE AGGREGATOR FIRMS TO MANAGE POWER DEMAND

ABU DHABI

BY ABDULLA RASHEED
Abu Dhabi Editor

401MW
Maximum reduction in electricity demand achieved during the 2025 pilot

251MW
Average reduction in electricity demand during the 2025 pilot

Abu Dhabi has issued new rules for licensing energy aggregator companies to help manage electricity use during peak periods, following a trial that reduced power demand by up to 401 megawatts (MW). The move supports efforts to meet electricity needs by enabling consumers to adjust their consumption when demand is high.

The Abu Dhabi Department of Energy (DoE) said its 2025 Demand Response Pilot Project achieved an average load reduction of 251MW, compared with 106MW in 2024. More than 30 entities across the emirate's economic sectors participated.

The average reduction was more than double the level recorded in 2024, increasing by 145MW. The maximum reduction of 401MW represents the largest drop achieved during the 2025 pilot, rather than the average response.

Energy saved, emissions cut

DoE said adjusting electricity use during peak periods reduces the need to operate additional generation capacity that costs more and produces higher emissions. It also allows the emirate to make better use of existing power infrastructure.

The project reduced electricity consumption during peak periods by approximately 27 gigawatt-hours (GWh) and avoided an estimated 4,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, according to the department. Participants received financial incentives through credits applied to electricity bills issued by Taqa Distribution.

These figures measure different aspects of the project: megawatts describe the reduction in power demand, while gigawatt-hours measure the amount of electricity consumption reduced over time. The reported 27GWh reduction applies specifically to peak periods.

New licensing rules

The new framework enables the licensing and operation of energy aggregator companies. DoE said it also provides for consumer protection and commercial returns as the emirate develops its demand response market.

Ahmed Al Falasi, Executive Director of the Energy Efficiency Sector at DoE, said the initiative supports Abu Dhabi's efforts to meet rising electricity demand. He described the licensing programme as the first comprehensive, regulated programme of its kind in the region.

"Abu Dhabi is developing an integrated energy system capable of supporting economic growth and rising electricity demand while maintaining reliability of supply and resource efficiency," he said.

"For the first time in the region, a comprehensive, regulated energy aggregator licensing programme is being launched, opening new markets that attract investment and strengthen demand flexibility and security of supply."

Al Falasi said cooperation between public and private sector partners had helped turn ideas into practical solutions. He said this work supports more efficient investment in infrastructure and the long-term sustainability of Abu Dhabi's energy sector.



ETIHAD UNVEILS MCLAREN-BRANDED DREAMLINER

Etihad Airways yesterday unveiled a Boeing 787 Dreamliner featuring McLaren Racing's distinctive papaya livery, marking the first time a Formula 1 team's branding has appeared on a wide-body commercial aircraft. The aircraft, unveiled at Etihad Engineering's facility in Abu Dhabi, features McLaren's distinctive branding and papaya colours. It will operate across Etihad's international network, connecting Abu Dhabi with destinations including Dublin, Milan, Vienna, Bali, Bangkok and Delhi. The maiden flight will depart for Madrid today.

DIFC Courts plan new way to settle digital asset disputes

If a disagreement arose, only the disputed asset would be frozen

ABU DHABI

Gulf News Report

The DIFC Courts has proposed a system that would allow legal decisions over digital assets to be enforced directly on the blockchain. Parties would agree in advance on who would handle a dispute and how the outcome would be carried out.

The proposal addresses a gap: courts can decide who owns a digital asset or is entitled to funds, but lack a dependable way to enforce those decisions on the blockchain. A new white paper proposes a link called the Dispute Resolution Oracle (DRO).

How it would work

Participation would be voluntary. Before a transaction, parties would choose a court or another qualified body to resolve any dispute.

If a disagreement arose, only the disputed asset would be frozen, subject to safeguards. The chosen body would hear the case, and the Dispute Resolution Oracle would turn its decision into a digital instruction that the system holding the asset could carry out.

People would remain responsible for resolving disputes. Technology would record the parties' agreement, preserve the asset and enforce the outcome.

People would remain responsible for resolving disputes. Technology would record the parties' agreement, preserve the asset and enforce the outcome.

Safeguards would include early review of asset freezes, decisions explaining their reasoning, and review and appeal options. Under the DIFC Courts' model, more than one court officer, each with a separate digital signing key, would have to authorise enforcement.

Where it could apply

Potential uses include funds held for tokenised property deals, digital shares pledged as security, and disputes involving digital asset custody or platforms. The proposal focuses on arrangements where control over the asset is built into the system from the outset.

Justice Omar Al Mheiri, Director of the DIFC Courts, said the aim is to give parties certainty about where disputes would be heard and how decisions could be enforced. The ambition is an open standard that qualified bodies and jurisdictions worldwide could adopt.

DIFC would serve as the initial working model. Its laws recognise digital assets as property, while its Digital Economy Court handles complex technology disputes.

The proposed system would work across providers, with a public register of qualified courts, arbitration tribunals, mediators and experts. Parties could select a body whose decisions could then be enforced through the system.

Testing first

Implementation would begin with international discussions and controlled trials before a wider launch. No assets with real financial value would be involved until the full process, from recording a dispute to enforcing a decision, had been tested.

The DIFC Courts developed the white paper with technology advisory support from DECA4 Advisory. Legal, regulatory, blockchain and professional services organisations also contributed.

'Passports could become redundant within five years'

Dubai Airports CEO says the technology exists; the challenge is getting countries to accept the same digital ID

DUBAI

BY JUSTIN VARGHESE
Your Money Editor

At parts of Dubai International Airport, a traveller's face can already do the work of a boarding pass. Paul Griffiths, Chief Executive Officer of Dubai Airports, believes the next step could be leaving the passport at home altogether.

That could become possible within five years, he suggested in a LinkedIn post. The technology is available, he said; getting governments, airlines and airports to recognise the same digital identity across borders is the task ahead.

'It's outdated'

"Passports could be redundant within five years," Griffiths wrote on Monday. "I know many travellers cherish collecting travel stamps, but from a technological perspective, the idea of carrying a physical book in order to fly is outdated."

His prediction comes as Dubai expands services that let registered passengers move through airport procedures with fewer document checks. It remains a forecast dependent on global cooperation, rather than an announced date for passport-free travel.

More than 200 biometric cameras have been installed across Terminal 3 at Dubai International. The initiative, developed with Dubai's immigration authority, allows registered passengers to use facial recognition at participating check-in, immigration, lounge and boarding points.

Registration involves verifying passport, taking a photograph and giving consent to use biometric information. Passengers can register at check-in desks in Dubai, while biometric boarding operates at selected departure gates.



SHORT TAKES

Adnoc unit's net profit surges 37%

Adnoc Distribution's net profit rose 37 per cent year on year to $791 million or Dh2.90 billion in the first nine months of 2026, the Abu Dhabi-listed fuel retailer reported.

Fuel volumes reached a record 11.86 billion litres, including 8.26 billion litres through retail. Non-fuel retail (NFR) gross profit rose 13 per cent to $217 million or Dh797 million.

Adnoc Distribution's board also approved a third-quarter dividend of 5.14 fils per share, worth $175 million or worth Dh643 million. Full-year 2026 dividends are expected to exceed $700 million.

Emirates secures funding for A350s

Emirates, Dubai Islamic Bank (DIB) and Natixis Corporate & Investment Banking (Natixis CIB) announced the successful completion of a 12-year Sharia compliant French Lease transaction supporting Emirates' acquisition of two new Airbus A350-900 aircraft in 2026.

The innovative funding approach combines two financing frameworks that are typically structured separately, aligning the features of the French lease with Sharia principles within a single financing structure.

The financing directly supports Emirates' ongoing fleet expansion strategy.

FAB buys out Bahrain fund administrator

First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB) has acquired 100 per cent of Yasira Financial Services, a Bahrain-based fund administration and trust services platform, the lender announced yesterday.

The companies have not yet disclosed the value of the deal, but FAB will rebrand Yasira and fold it into its Securities Services franchise.

The deal will bring together Yasira's fund administration along with FAB's custody, cash management and foreign-exchange services across the Middle East, North Africa, South and Southeast Asia (MENASSA).

ADIB's Dh1.7b rights issue opens today

Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank (ADIB) opens subscriptions for its Dh1.75 billion or roughly $476 million rights issue today. The window for subscription will close on November 24, inclusive of both days.

Shareholders who registered on November 2 received one right for every 34.14 shares held. Each right lets the holder buy one new share at Dh16.45 each. A shareholder with 3,414 shares holds 100 rights and will need Dh1,645 to take them up in full. Rights trade on the ADX will trade under the symbol "ADIBRI26" until November 16.

— Gulf News Reports

UAE'S NEAR-DH3 TRILLION TRADE PUTS FOCUS ON INDUSTRY, SMALLER EXPORTERS

PORTS, RAIL LINKS FEATURE IN PLANS TO WIDEN OVERSEAS MARKET ACCESS



DUBAI

BY JUSTIN VARGHESE
Your Money Editor

The UAE's non-oil foreign trade approached Dh3 trillion in the first nine months of 2026, with exports growing more than twice as fast as overall trade. The record figures come as the country pursues additional cargo routes, wider economic partnerships and closer links between trade and finance.

Non-oil trade reached Dh2.945 trillion, up 10.1 per cent from a year earlier, according to the UAE's foreign trade report. Non-oil exports increased 21.6 per cent to Dh705.8 billion, while imports rose 11.5 per cent to Dh1.661 trillion and re-exports totalled Dh578 billion.

Exports accounted for 24 per cent of total non-oil trade, compared with 21.7 per cent a year earlier. Monthly exports exceeded Dh100 billion for the first time in September, while exports to the country's 10 largest trading partners increased 31.6 per cent over the nine months.

Dr Raymond Khoury, Senior Partner and Innovation Practice Lead at Arthur D. Little Middle East, said the performance reflected the UAE's ability to turn its geographical position and advanced logistics infrastructure into a competitive advantage amid global trade disruptions. He viewed the growth in exports to its largest partners as evidence of broader markets and more diversified relationships.

Exports accounted for 24 per cent of total non-oil trade, compared with 21.7 per cent a year earlier. Monthly exports exceeded Dh100 billion for the first time in September.

More value at home

"The next challenge lies in translating this momentum into greater domestic value added by supporting industry, technology and smart logistics services, and by facilitating small and medium-sized enterprises' access to foreign markets," Khoury said.

His assessment puts the focus on how expanding trade can generate more value through businesses and activities within the UAE.

The export expansion has continued across several quarters. Quarterly non-oil exports exceeded Dh200 billion for five consecutive quarters through the third quarter of 2026, when they reached Dh256.1 billion, up 19 per cent from a year earlier.

Switzerland, Hong Kong and India were the leading destinations for non-oil exports. Shipments to Switzerland increased 75.8 per cent and those to Hong Kong rose 59.1 per cent, while gold, jewellery and tobacco products topped the list of exported goods.

The wider trade figures also showed faster growth beyond the UAE's largest partners. Total non-oil trade with countries outside the top 10 increased 11.9 per cent, compared with 8.3 per cent growth with the top 10.

More routes for goods

Speaking last week at the Dubai FinTech Summit, held as part of Dubai Future Finance Week, Fahad Al Gergawi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, outlined plans to expand port capacity along the UAE's eastern coast. He highlighted Fujairah and Khorfakkan, alongside greater use of the Etihad Rail network to transport cargo. Al Gergawi said the country's trade strategy is designed to withstand changing global conditions. Expanding transport options is intended to help goods keep moving when established shipping routes face disruptions.

He also highlighted the international reach of UAE logistics companies, which he said manage or operate more than 140 ports and over 30 airports worldwide. The UAE ranks among the world's five largest re-export hubs, he said.

Saudi Arabia was the leading destination for UAE re-exports during the first nine months, followed by Iraq and Oman, according to the trade report. Telephone sets, diamonds and cars led re-exported goods, while re-exports to Oman increased 71.5 per cent year on year.

Agreements widen access

Dr Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Foreign Trade, attributed the trade expansion to diversifying partners and markets, developing routes and strengthening supply chains. He said Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements, or CEPAs, open markets, lower trade barriers and give UAE companies wider access to overseas consumers and business partners.

Non-oil trade with the 23 countries covered by the 19 CEPAs in force as of October 20, 2026, reached approximately Dh510.8 billion. This comprised Dh317.6 billion in imports, Dh104.6 billion in re-exports and Dh88.5 billion in non-oil exports.

Al Gergawi said last week that the UAE's broader network of economic agreements and understandings extends to approximately 40 countries. He said these partnerships also support industrial development, attract investment and strengthen business competitiveness.

Khoury linked sustained trade growth to further opportunities for infrastructure and investment. "Continued performance of this kind also gives the country greater scope to strengthen its Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements, develop its ports and free zones, and attract high-value investments that benefit from growing goods flows," he said.

Financing smaller exporters

Access to finance is another priority as businesses expand their overseas relationships. During a summit session on the UAE's role as a financing hub for its trade partners, Al Gergawi called for closer cooperation between financial institutions and commercial businesses, alongside financial products suited to growing international trade.

Trade finance helps companies purchase goods, pay suppliers and manage the period between shipping products and receiving payment. Facilities such as letters of credit help buyers and sellers manage payment risks, while other financing allows businesses to meet expenses as they await customer payments.

For smaller companies, access to these services can influence the volume of orders they can fulfil and the markets they can serve. Al Gergawi's remarks placed financing alongside transport infrastructure and trade agreements in supporting the country's international commerce.

He also said the Ministry of Foreign Trade is expanding its use of artificial intelligence to accelerate procedures and improve services. He highlighted cooperation with DHL to train exporters.

Khoury identified weaker global demand and rising shipping costs as risks requiring continued monitoring. He also stressed the need to ensure businesses across sectors benefit from expanding trade, with support for domestic capabilities and smaller exporters helping strengthen resilience to recurring external shocks.

Demand for GCC oil grows 3% annually

MUSCAT

The 2025 energy sector indicators for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, released by the Statistical Centre for the Cooperation Council for the Arab Countries of the Gulf (GCC-STAT), show that global demand for GCC crude oil grew at an average annual rate of 3.1 per cent over the period 2021-2025.

GCC oil exports

Crude oil production in GCC countries increased by 5 pe rcent in 2025 compared with 2024, reaching 16.9 million barrels per day and accounting for 22.5 per cent of global crude oil production. These figures underscore the GCC's continued significance in the global energy supply system.

On the exports front, the statistics indicate that GCC crude oil exports reached 12.2 million barrels per day in 2025, representing 27.3 per cent of global crude oil exports. This reinforces the region's role in meeting international market needs and highlights the importance of stable GCC supplies amid ongoing changes in global energy markets.

Natural gas output

In the natural gas sector, production in GCC countries stood at approximately 460.9 billion cubic metres, accounting for 10.6 per cent of global natural gas production. This reflects the importance of the region's natural gas resources in meeting global energy demand.

The data show fluctuations in GCC crude oil production over the period 2021-2025. According to the bulletin, production stood at 16.0 million barrels per day in 2021, rose to 18.2 million barrels per day in 2022, then declined to 17.0 million barrels per day in 2023 and 16.1 million barrels per day in 2024, before increasing to 16.9 million barrels per day in 2025. — *WAM*

VAT rules: Six employee expenses businesses can now claim tax back on

Companies can recover VAT paid on qualifying expenses, not the full cost

ABU DHABI

Gulf News Report

The UAE's Federal Tax Authority (FTA) has identified six categories of employee expenses on which businesses subject to value-added tax (VAT) may recover or deduct input tax.

The provisions, outlined in FTA Decision No. 17 of 2026, which took effect last month, establish detailed conditions to ensure that the goods and services are provided for business purposes rather than as personal benefits to employees. Companies can recover VAT paid on qualifying expenses, not the full cost. Here are the six categories:

1 Transport expenses

The decision allows businesses to recover input VAT paid on employee transport services, provided they are used exclusively for journeys between an employee's home and workplace, travel to client premises or other journeys directly related to their duties.

The transport service must not be used for personal benefit, and employees must not have the option of receiving a cash allowance or financial compensation instead of the transport provided by their employer.

2 Food and beverages

Companies may also recover VAT paid on food and beverages provided to employees in specific circumstances.

These include cases where employees live in remote, distant or isolated areas without suitable facilities for preparing food at their accommodation or workplace, and where there are no nearby restaurants or facilities from which they can easily obtain meals and drinks.

The provision of food must be directly linked to the period of work or residence required by the nature of the job.

Employees must also have no option to receive a cash allowance instead of the meals provided.



■ Businesses in the UAE can now get back VAT they pay on certain expenses as long as they are strictly related to work.

3 Work-related accommodation

Housing must be provided because of operational work requirements and must not form part of an employee's regular remuneration or employment benefits.

The nature of the job must require the employee to live near the workplace, project site or client premises, with no option to receive a cash housing allowance.

Accommodation must be designated for the employee concerned and must not include family members or other personal uses. An exception applies where the nature of the work requires an employee to live permanently near the workplace, making the accommodation their usual residence.

The accommodation and its facilities must also be proportionate to the requirements of the job and the employee's basic living needs.

4 Temporary housing for new employees

Companies may recover input VAT on temporary accommodation provided to newly recruited employees for a period not exceeding 30 days.

5 Mobile phones and internet services

Eligible expenses also include mobile phones, calls, data packages and internet services provided at an employee's residence through a router, where these are necessary for carrying out work duties. This includes remote working and job-related communications outside normal working hours.

The services must be used primarily for business purposes, although limited and incidental personal use is permitted. Employers must establish a documented internal policy specifying permitted usage and the consequences of unauthorised use. They must also implement reasonable monitoring mechanisms and retain the necessary records and justifications.

6 Parking fees

The decision also permits input VAT recovery on parking fees incurred for employees where the company bears the cost exclusively for business purposes. The parking must be directly related to the performance of work duties, including external visits and meetings.

Conditions for VAT recovery

In general, the decision links eligibility for input VAT recovery to a contractual obligation or documented internal policy requiring employers to provide goods or services to employees free of charge.

Companies must also demonstrate that the expenses are directly connected to their business activities and operational requirements.

The provisions do not automatically cover ordinary daily meals, cash housing or transport allowances, or services primarily intended for personal use, even if the employer pays for them.

Why more Dubai tenants are purchasing their own homes

MARKET'S SHIFT TO A 'SELECTIVE PHASE' IS GIVING RISE TO NEW BUYERS

DUBAI

BY ASHFAQ AHMED
Managing Editor



More expats are choosing to buy homes in Dubai, while a growing supply of properties gives buyers more choice.



From left: Shahzaib Elahi, Kareem Emam, Khalid Al-Atiya and Iryna Kedysh.

More expatriates who have spent years renting homes in Dubai are now considering buying their own properties, marking a significant shift in the emirate's real estate market as rents ease, more homes become available and buyers focus on long-term value.

Property experts say families who have lived in Dubai for several years, enrolled their children in local schools and secured long-term residency visas are increasingly choosing home ownership over renewing rental contracts.

The changing trend comes as Dubai's property market enters a more selective phase following two years of exceptional growth.

According to property consultancy Cavendish Maxwell, Dubai recorded residential sales worth Dh72.6 billion across approximately 34,000 transactions in the third quarter of 2026, representing a 47 per cent decline in value and a 38 per cent drop in transaction volume compared with the same period last year.

However, industry analysts say the figures do not necessarily indicate a sharp downturn. Part of the decline reflects delays between property purchases being agreed and officially registered.

Long-termers lead shift

Shahzaib Elahi, Co-founder of Hayaat Developments, said the biggest change is the growing number of long-term Dubai residents deciding to become homeowners.

Many of these buyers have been renting for three, five or even eight years and now consider Dubai their permanent or long-term home.

"When they sit down with the numbers, the gap between their annual rent and a monthly mortgage payment on a comparable home is often smaller than they expected," he said.

Cavendish Maxwell recorded approximately 22,500 home-loan transactions during the first half of 2026, an increase of more than 7 per cent compared with the previous year.

"The most active buyer I deal with right now is a tenant whose lease is coming up for renewal," Kareem Emam, Senior Property Consultant at Driven Properties, said.

"They arrive with two options on the table, a new lease or a purchase, and they compare them line by line: rent against mortgage payments, service charges and the cost of moving."

He said ready-to-move-in homes are particularly attractive because buyers can inspect the property before purchasing and move in within weeks.

Foreign buyers

International investors remain an important part of Dubai's property market, but their buying behaviour is changing.

Industry experts say investors are becoming more cautious about potential returns, particularly as thousands of new homes are expected to enter the market. Others are linking property purchases to long-term residency plans, allowing them to use their investments as future family homes. The expected increase in housing supply is another factor influencing purchasing decisions.

Supply set to surge

Dubai added approximately 24,800 residential units during the first half of 2026, nearly 38 per cent more than during the corresponding period last year, according to Cavendish Maxwell.

Savills estimates that more than 525,000 residential units are scheduled for delivery between 2027 and 2030.

Industry experts expect increased supply to create stronger competition among developers and landlords, particularly in areas dominated by high-rise apartment buildings.

Khalid Al-Atiya, Director of Sales at HOLM Developments, said buyers are increasingly prioritising location, construction quality and long-term value.

"End users, including many UAE-resident expats, remain the core of demand, with international investors adding a steady layer."

Iryna Kedysh, Senior Property Consultant at Dacha Real Estate, said the growing interest in home ownership among long-term residents reflects Dubai's appeal as a place to settle rather than simply invest.

Look beyond asking price

Property experts expect 2027 to be a year when careful financial planning becomes increasingly important for both homeowners and investors.

Emam advised prospective buyers to examine service charges, building conditions and actual transaction prices recorded by the Dubai Land Department rather than relying solely on advertised property prices.

For residents considering whether to continue renting or purchase a home, the decision will depend on mortgage affordability, upfront buying costs, expected length of stay and the quality of available properties.

UAE holiday travellers face higher airfares as airlines warn of hikes

Ryanair warns of fare jumps of up to 20% in Europe as fuel hedging deal expires

DUBAI

JUSTIN VARGHESE
Your Money Editor

UAE residents planning overseas trips for the December holidays face growing pressure on travel budgets as airlines worldwide warn of higher ticket prices, with soaring jet fuel costs forcing carriers to reconsider fares, flight schedules and operating expenses.

Europe's largest airline by passenger numbers, Ryanair, has become the latest to sound the alarm, warning that airfares across Europe could rise by as much as 20 per cent next year if elevated fuel prices persist. The warning comes as US holiday airfares have already climbed to their highest levels in a decade, according to travel booking platform Hopper.

For UAE residents planning to visit family or take holidays abroad, the developments make it increasingly important to compare fares, consider alternative travel dates and account for additional charges before booking.

The pressure is not limited to one region. Airlines in Europe and the US are grappling with higher fuel bills, while some carriers are reducing flight capacity or reviewing costs to protect profitability.

Higher fuel bills

Ryanair chief executive Michael O'Leary said yesterday that European airlines could impose double-digit percentage fare increases in 2027 as existing fuel hedging agreements expire and carriers become exposed to higher market prices.

In a separate *CNBC* interview, he said European ticket prices could climb as much as 20 per cent next year.

"Unless there is a swift resolution of the Middle East conflict, we expect jet-fuel prices to remain elevated well into 2027," O'Leary said in the company's earnings statement.

Profit declines

The carrier reported a 6 per cent decline in second-quarter net profit to €1.61 billion, despite a 4 per cent increase in revenue to €5.7 billion. Passenger traffic grew 5 per cent, but average fares fell 2 per cent amid weaker consumer confidence and later bookings.

The warning is particularly relevant for travellers planning European holidays because Ryanair operates an extensive network of short-haul flights across the continent, including services used for onward journeys between European destinations.

Jet fuel prices have risen sharply since the outbreak of the Middle East conflict, creating one of the biggest cost challenges for airlines.

Brace for sharp rise in fares

According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), global jet fuel averaged approximately $99 a barrel on February 27, before more than doubling to $209 in early April.

Dan Coatsworth, head of markets at AJ Bell, said airlines had been protected by fuel hedging agreements but could face significant cost increases as those contracts expire.

"Travellers should brace themselves for a sharp increase in the cost of flying unless oil prices fall substantially," Coatsworth said.

The impact is already evident in the United States, where domestic airfares for Thanksgiving and Christmas have climbed to their highest levels in 10 years, according to Hopper's September 2026 Holiday Travel Index.

Average return fares for Thanksgiving have reached $402, up 31 per cent from last year, while Christmas flights average $452, an increase of 23 per cent.

DXB RETAINS LEAD IN SEAT CAPACITY

Dubai International Airport has retained its position as the world's busiest airport for scheduled international seat capacity in November, with airlines offering 4.47 million departing seats, equivalent to approximately 8.94 million seats in both directions, according to aviation data provider OAG.

The airport maintained a lead of nearly 680,000 seats over London's Heathrow Airport, which ranked second with 3.79 million international seats, the latest figures showed.

Dubai International remained at the top of the global rankings for international flights despite a 16 per cent decline in scheduled seat capacity compared with November 2025, OAG reported.

Seoul's Incheon International Airport ranked third with 3.7 million seats, followed by Singapore's Changi Airport with 3.58 million and Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport with 3.25 million. Hong Kong International Airport placed sixth with 3.19 million seats

—Gulf News Report

Emaar is building profits on homes already sold

This explains how Emaar's profits keep rising without equivalent acceleration in new sales

DUBAI

Gulf News Report

Emaar Properties is drawing on years of earlier home sales to sustain earnings growth as regional uncertainty tempers new business and weighs on its hotels, putting construction progress at the centre of its next phase of growth.

The developer ended September with Dh158.8 billion of sold properties awaiting revenue recognition. That pipeline is helping support income as work advances across its projects, even as its residential subsidiary describes a more measured pace of sales amid evolving geopolitical conditions.

The combination explains how Emaar's profits can keep rising without an equivalent acceleration in new purchases. Revenue from homes booked in earlier periods enters the accounts as construction progresses, creating a gap between current sales activity and reported earnings.

Net profit after tax increased 17 per cent to Dh17.1 billion in the first nine months of 2026, while revenue rose 13 per cent to Dh37.5 billion. The results also exposed differences across the business: shopping malls and leasing grew, while hotel occupancy fell sharply.

At Emaar Development, the group's majority-owned UAE residential subsidiary, revenue increased 26 per cent to Dh22.2 billion and net profit after tax rose 24 per cent to Dh10.8 billion. The company attributed revenue growth to construction progress and recognition of previously booked sales.

Dh159b
Value of properties sold by Emaar but awaiting revenue recognition as of September 2026

The subsidiary secured Dh26.2 billion in property sales during the period and held a Dh119.8 billion revenue backlog at September 30. Those figures measure different stages of the development cycle: bookings add future business, while construction allows previously secured sales to become reported revenue.

That timing gives Emaar visibility beyond the latest selling period. It also makes delivery central to sustaining earnings, with the backlog representing revenue still to be recognised rather than profit already earned.

The group handed over more than 4,800 residential units in the UAE during the nine months. It said more than 80 per cent of its active UAE projects were ahead of schedule at the end of September.

"A home purchase is a significant commitment, and our responsibility continues long after the sale," Mohamed Alabbar, founder of Emaar, said in the results statement.

The scale of construction commitments shows the work still required across Emaar's communities. Emaar Development awarded 23 main construction contracts worth Dh13.5 billion and 43 infrastructure contracts valued at Dh4.3 billion during the period.



Rising global airfares put pressure on travel budgets of UAE residents planning to visit family or holiday abroad.

German carmakers are facing their 'Nokia moment' in China

'THE LEGACY AUTOMAKERS WERE BRINGING ANALOGUE TOYS TO A DIGITAL PARTY'

BEIJING

After decades of making bumper profits in China, Germany's carmakers have run out of road and sales have slumped dramatically, forcing painful job losses at home.

German carmakers have become increasingly irrelevant and painfully obsolete, especially in China.

Volkswagen's woes in China pushed Europe's largest carmaker to a 5.8 billion euro ($6.5 billion) loss for the three months to end-September.

The 10-brand group's declining fortunes in the world's largest car market are the main reason behind a historic restructuring drive that could see it shed up to 120,000 jobs by the end of the decade.

BMW and Mercedes-Benz are also cutting jobs, and all three have issued profit warnings this year.

"Nobody was prepared for the swiftness or the violence of the pivot," Tu Le of Sino Auto Insights told AFP. "The fall for the German automakers has been really abrupt."



AFP

■ In China, people associate brands with specific techs, says an analyst. If you think of Volkswagen, you think petrol, not electric, he adds, referring to VW's struggle to stay relevant in a key market.

$6.5b
Volkswagen Group's loss for 3 months ending Sept 2026

120k
Jobs Volkswagen could cut by the end of the decade

Rivals steal the lead

The big three German carmakers' annual vehicle deliveries in China fell about a third between 2019 and 2025 to 3.87 million, according to AFP calculations based on company disclosures.

Chinese carmakers' shares of their domestic market, meanwhile, rose to 65.3 from 37.8 per cent, according to the China Passenger Car Association (CPCA).

The rapid fall has come as a shock to Germany, a nation that has regarded itself as a key player ever since Carl Benz invented the motor car in 1886.

German carmakers' rich history meant they were long dismissive of Chinese competition and slow to react, said a former Mercedes-Benz strategy expert who later consulted for BMW.

"When I was doing analyses of the market in China there was not appreciation, more a sort of confusion," she told AFP.

"It was coming from a place of elitism, a thought of 'Oh we're better'. There was disbelief that others could do things differently."

EVs change the rules

The German brands, meanwhile, had to compete with the likes of China's BYD, which started out making batteries for mobile phones, and Xpeng, founded by software entrepreneur He Xiaopeng.

The Chinese government stepped up support for electric vehicles (EVs) with subsidies and charging infrastructure at the same time.

That made Germans' key strength — long experience in improving internal combustion engines — increasingly irrelevant and perhaps soon obsolete.

"What the market demanded was not a skillset they had", Le said. "The legacy automakers in China were bringing analogue toys to a digital party."

Petrol power loses appeal

Germany's carmakers have held up better in China's combustion-engine segment. Volkswagen is the country's number-one carmaker for petrol and diesel vehicles.

But that is a wasting asset in China, where so-called new energy vehicles made up a record 67.8 per cent of sales last month, according to the CPCA, leaving combustion-engine cars looking tired. "In China people associate brands with specific technologies now. If you think of Volkswagen, you think petrol, not electric," Ingo Speich of Deka Investment, which holds shares in the German carmakers, told AFP.

The Nokia moment

"It's like after 2007 when Apple invented the iPhone. Nokia started coming out with good smartphones by 2009, 2010, but it was too late, people just didn't think of them as smartphone-makers."

Germany's carmakers are now trying to shift engineering east, both to stay competitive in the Chinese market as well as to integrate technologies developed there into cars sold abroad.

Volkswagen said a year ago that it could now design cars from start to finish in China at its centre in Hefei.

Both BMW and VW have said they hope to export vehicles from China into other parts of the Asia-Pacific region. — *AFP*

Subaru and Toyota are winning the EV race in US by showing up late

As rivals scrapped electric models, the two Japanese brands nosed into the void

CALIFORNIA

As US auto executives cooled on electric cars this year, scrapping models and cutting production, Subaru Corp. and Toyota Motor Corp. haev nosed into the void. With five new models, the companies collectively sold almost 62,000 EVs in the US in the first three quarters of 2026, more than double their year-earlier tally.

Though the brands still represent only 9 per cent of the US EV market and trail General Motors Co. in the space, their sales are growing, while rivals have gone in reverse. In the year to date, Rivian Automotive Inc., which also added a new truck, is the only other carmaker to post a gain in battery-powered business.

62,000
EVs Subaru and Toyota sold in the US during the first nine months of 2026

9%
US electric vehicle market share of Subaru and Toyota

While EV demand cooled in the US when federal incentives expired in September, the market has stabilised and the ranks of electric-curious drivers are growing.

Rivals' retreat helps

Subaru and Toyota are relatively late to the electric-car race, but their timing is propitious. While EV demand cooled when federal incentives expired in September, the market has stabilised and the ranks of electric-curious drivers are growing. Analysts say the two brands are scooping up drivers addled by high gas prices and market share that might have otherwise gone to larger rivals who scrapped EV models.

"It's a reset for the EV market and it is resilience," said Stephanie Valdez Streaty, director of industry insights at Cox Automotive Inc. "And you start to see this divergence of who's winning the race and who's pulling back."

Toyota, which owns 20 per cent of Subaru, is now selling two EVs in the US to every one of Ford's. And while Subaru is still a small player, Valdez Streaty said it is capitalising on a renaissance in EV interest. The companies' new EVs are affordable SUVs, which is the sweet spot of the US car market, she added.

To some extent, the sales boom required as much luck as strategy. While it takes a long time to take a new car model from sketch to assembly line, scrapping one is relatively fast. When the US EV market plummeted late last year, a cluster of models were pulled from production within weeks.

'Our timing was good'

Meanwhile, the new EVs from Subaru and Toyota had been in the works for years and just happened to debut as gas prices spiked and the EV field had thinned considerably.

"There's been so much volatility with EVs out there in terms of regulations that it's been an interesting go," said Timothy Tagye, vice president of field operations for Subaru of America Inc. "But our timing was good." — *Bloomberg*

Crypto's Trump-fuelled US boom reaches its endgame

After two years of a friendly White House, industry now confronts a Democratic sweep

WASHINGTON

Crypto's extraordinary run of political good fortune in Washington has come to an abrupt halt. With Democrats set to control Congress following their midterm sweep, the industry faces the prospect of tougher rules and closer scrutiny of its ties to President Donald Trump.

For two years, the industry enjoyed something few businesses ever get in the nation's capital: a president who made digital assets a national priority while amassing his own crypto fortune, regulators clearing a path for wider adoption, and a Republican Congress sympathetic to its agenda.

Now crypto faces the harder test of becoming a lasting force in finance as its extraordinary political advantage evaporates. The Democratic sweep threatens to make comprehensive legislation harder to secure on the industry's preferred terms and raises the prospect of congressional investigations into Trump's crypto dealings.

"Many significant figures in crypto aligned themselves with the Trump family," said Austin Campbell, a crypto expert and former banker who is now an adjunct professor at the NYU Stern School of Business. "Those chickens are likely to come home to roost."

Clarity Act's Senate hurdle

Trump famously launched his own digital assets, welcomed crypto executives to the White House and made the industry's ambitions part of his political agenda. In turn, crypto's biggest victories became closely associated with his presidency, even as his personal financial interests complicated the industry's efforts to secure broader political support.

All that came to a head in September, when the Senate failed to advance the Clarity Act, which would have established clearer rules for exchanges and other digital-asset businesses. Trump's crypto dealings became a flashpoint,



Democrats have signalled plans to demand tougher ethics restrictions and stronger consumer protections for digital assets.

though disagreements over stablecoin rewards, investor protections and banking competition also contributed to the impasse.

The election is now set to change the terms of that debate. Democrats have signalled plans to demand tougher ethics restrictions, stronger consumer protections and a greater role for the Securities and Exchange Commission in overseeing digital assets. Those changes would depart from the framework many crypto companies sought under Republican control, but could also create a new path to legislation if the industry can build support across party lines. "There's going to be a defensive posture as the industry readjusts to new leadership, at least initially," said Adam Minehardt, chief policy officer at Hyperliquid Policy Center.

Political consequences

The industry's big political bets could also have consequences. Sherrod Brown, defeated in 2024 as crypto lobby groups poured millions of dollars into the campaign against him, unseated Ohio's Republican Senator, Jon Husted. Brown could take a top position on the Senate Agriculture Committee, which oversees the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, a key crypto regulator, according to researcher Capstone.

A flurry of investigations

Democratic control of Congress also brings greater power to investigate Trump's business interests. Lawmakers have already sought information about ventures involving the president and his family.

The market presents a different challenge. Bitcoin's history of sharp boom-and-bust cycles under administrations of both parties complicates any attempt to attribute its price prospects to Washington. Bitcoin remains well below its previous highs, despite the Trump-era regulatory relief.

The recent Binance hack underscored another challenge: security. The exchange suffered $6.3 billion in losses, but has since effectively replenished the stolen cryptocurrency, using a combination of money from its corporate treasury as well as two insurance funds. — *Bloomberg*

Binance's CFO leaves company

NEW YORK

Kaiser Ng, the chief financial officer at Binance Holdings Ltd., the world's largest crypto exchange, is leaving, the company announced just days after hackers stole more than $6 billion in cryptocurrency from the platform.

"Kaiser Ng has decided to pursue a new venture after more than five years at Binance, with a transition plan implemented over the last six months," Binance co-Chief Executive Officer Yi He said in a statement. "We wish him the best in his next chapter." Justin Yek will become the firm's new CFO, she said.

Hackers stole $6.3 billion from Binance last week in the biggest heist in cryptocurrency's history. It came as the industry leapfrogs into the mainstream at a time when the ascent of artificial intelligence presents ever-increasing cybersecurity challenges. — *Bloomberg*

GULF NEWS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2026
ABU DHABI
NEWS FROM YOUR CAPITAL

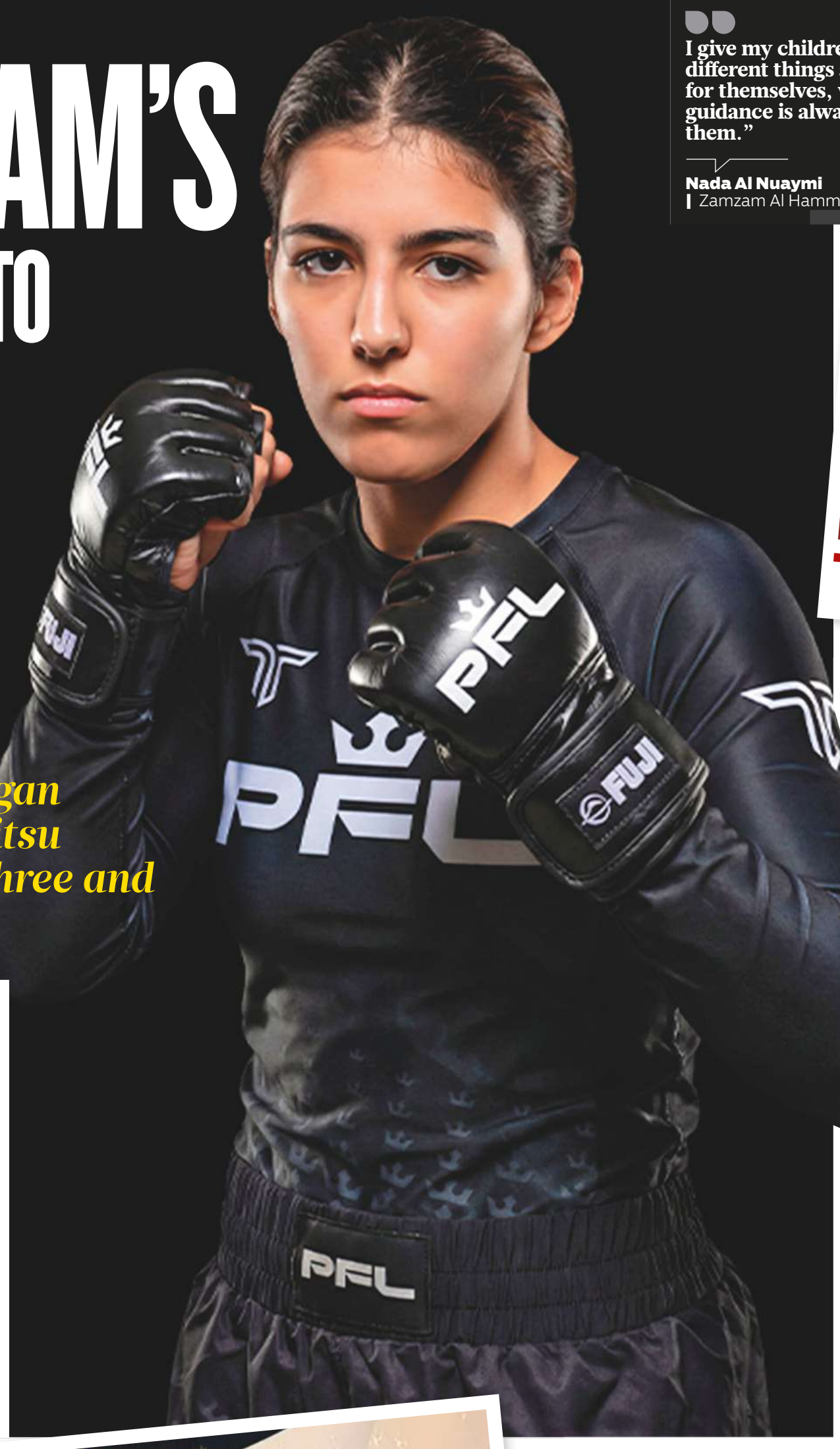


CATS AND CARS

At KoolKats, car repairs come with a bigger purpose. Meet the Abu Dhabi couple turning their love for cars into a lifeline for Musaffah's abandoned cats. – P III

ZAMZAM'S JOURNEY TO JIU-JITSU SUCCESS BEGINS AT HOME

18-year-old began practising jiu-jitsu when she was three and a half years old



> **I give my children room to explore, try different things and make some choices for themselves, while making sure that guidance is always there without restricting them."**
>
> **Nada Al Nuaymi**
> | Zamzam Al Hammadi's mother



Zamzam was always curious and liked to try new things.

ABU DHABI
BY RAHF YOUSSEF
Reporter

Long before Zamzam Al Hammadi stepped onto a mat, she watched someone else do it.

Her mother trained in judo and jiu-jitsu. And in the Al Hammadi home, that was not something that happened somewhere else. It happened in front of the children.

"Sport was simply part of our everyday life," Nada Al Nuaymi said.

Zamzam, 18, and her siblings, Ghala and Zayed, were curious children who liked to try new things. "They would watch closely, paying attention to the movements and techniques and then try to imitate and practise the techniques themselves." she said.

Zamzam began practising jiu-jitsu when she was three and a half years old.

Learning by watching

Nada did not sit her children down and explain what they should love. She noticed what they kept coming back to. "I began to notice that their interest in sport kept returning and that they genuinely wanted to learn more," she said.

She thinks the early years matter for exactly this reason. "Staying close to our children during their early years gives us the chance to notice what naturally draws their attention sometimes even before they are able to put those interests into words." she said.

Training together is the key

Nada is an athlete herself, and she did not leave her children to find sport alone. She exercised with them.

But she was careful about what those hours should be.

"I never wanted those moments to be only about training and instructions, I also wanted there to be encouragement, conversation and fun, and for them to feel that we genuinely enjoyed the time we spent together."

The result, she believes, is that sport meant more to her children than exercise. "From an early age they associated sport with enjoyment and closeness as a family," she said. It became part of their family memories, while gradually building the commitment and discipline that later shaped their sporting journeys.



Zamzam with her mother Nada Al Nuaymi.

Time and patience are important

The picture is not one of effortless confidence. Nada is open about that. "My children tended to be shy, and interacting with others was not always easy for them at first."

Her response was not to push. She stayed close, listened and tried to understand how they were feeling. Then she gently encouraged them to engage with other children, especially those who shared their interests.

"I did not want them to feel that they had to change quickly, I wanted them to know that I was there beside them and that they could take the time they needed to feel comfortable in their own way."

It worked slowly. "With time, patience and repeated experiences, they gradually became more comfortable and confident interacting with others."

Love, passion and initiative

Sport was only one thread in the family's life. "Reading and storytelling were always part of our home," Nada said. Her father loved reading to her children and telling them stories, and those moments became a beautiful part of their relationship with him.

She also wanted her children to grow up with the traditions and values she grew up with. Not by talking about them, but by living them.

"I wanted them to be part of what they saw and experienced in our everyday lives in how we treated our family and others, in our own commitment, and in the way we encouraged one another."

Love, passion, initiative and helping others, while staying connected to their family, their country and their values. That is what she hoped to pass on.

And she wanted her children to understand that their talents are not only about personal achievement. They can also benefit the people around them and their wider community.

Where confidence begins

How much freedom is too much? Nada's answer is a balance.

"I give my children room to explore, try different things and make some choices for themselves, while making sure that guidance is always there without restricting them."

When they make mistakes, she tries to explain what went wrong calmly and with love, and to help them see what they can learn from it, rather than focusing only on the mistake itself.

Asked what made the greatest difference, Nada does not point to a single moment. She points to many small things, repeated through childhood: the time together, the shared sport, her father's stories, the conversations and the encouragement whenever they tried something new.

"When children feel that they have people who believe in them, listen to them and stand beside them throughout the journey, not only when they succeed, they gradually begin to build confidence in themselves," she says. "I believe that confidence began at home, long before it became visible through sport or any other area of their lives."

What she would tell other parents

Her advice to parents who are noticing a spark in their child is to begin by being close, not by chasing results.

"Spend time with them. Notice what they naturally choose and what they keep returning to during their early years."

Ask what they enjoy. Give them room to explore, without turning every new interest into a goal or a competition.

Sometimes what matters most is that a child feels their parents enjoy sharing something they love, whether it becomes an achievement or simply stays a happy experience they shared together.

Global investors drive record $121b secondary market deals

ABU DHABI STRENGTHENS ITS POSITION AS GLOBAL 'CAPITAL OF CAPITAL'

ABU DHABI

BY ABDULLA RASHEED
Abu Dhabi Editor



Abu Dhabi continues to consolidate its position as the global "Capital of Capital". The emirate is no longer simply a major source of venture capital and private equity, but has also become a key destination for leading global asset managers and private equity firms seeking to capitalise on opportunities in the secondary market.

This growing economic trend comes amid an urgent need in global markets to accelerate liquidity generation and facilitate the reallocation of large investment portfolios, against a backdrop of fluctuating global interest rates.

According to a report by Bloomberg, Abu Dhabi has emerged as an attractive destination for major investment firms operating in the secondary market, with an expansion in offices and partnerships, market growth and an increasing focus on accelerating liquidity and portfolio rebalancing in recent months.

The emirate is further strengthening its position as a global centre for private market investment, as a new wave of international investment firms establishes a presence in Abu Dhabi. These firms are seeking to expand partnerships with sovereign wealth funds, participate in their investments and acquire stakes in companies held within their portfolios, according to Bloomberg.

The agency reported that this trend is particularly evident in the secondary market for private assets, which is experiencing rapid growth, with the sector expected to reach $250 billion in value this year.

Established a presence

Since mid-September, EQT, Pantheon and Eurazeo have opened offices in Abu Dhabi, joining Ardian and HarbourVest Partners, which had already established a presence in the market.

Ardian's deal-making activity provides one of the clearest examples of Abu Dhabi's growing influence in this sector. Last year, the company raised $30 billion for what was the largest-ever secondary investment platform.

Secondary transactions are becoming increasingly important as higher interest rates have made asset sales and liquidity realisation more challenging. They also offer Gulf sovereign wealth funds an opportunity to rebalance their investments and unlock capital for new opportunities as their private market portfolios continue to expand.

Yassine Zarrouk, Managing Director and Co-Head of Ardian Abu Dhabi, told Bloomberg in an interview that the scale of the firm's operations makes it a natural partner for large and complex transactions, particularly in providing liquidity solutions to local investors.

Ardian has strengthened its relationship with the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), which manages $1.1 trillion in assets, through a partnership to launch a secondary real estate investment platform during the early days of the war with Iran.

The firm also maintains partnerships with Mubadala Investment Company in the private assets sector and has continued to expand its Abu Dhabi investment team since opening its office in the emirate in 2023.

The momentum has extended to other investment firms. Just days after opening its Abu Dhabi office in late September, Pantheon announced that its latest flagship global private equity secondaries fund had exceeded its target, securing $6 billion in investment commitments, with substantial support from new investors in the Middle East.

Record deals

Edward Holdsworth, Managing Director on HarbourVest's secondary investment team, said these relationships could lead to asset-sale transactions aimed at rebalancing portfolios, or to partnerships involving co-investment in secondary market deals.

Secondary transactions involving private assets reached a record $121 billion in the first half of 2026, according to Evercore, prompting Abu Dhabi's sovereign wealth funds to strengthen their positions to capitalise on the market's expansion.

The emirate is further strengthening its position as a global centre for private market investment, as a new wave of international investment firms establishes a presence in Abu Dhabi.

DRIVERS OF CHANGE: WHY ABU DHABI, AND WHY NOW?

The growing momentum behind Abu Dhabi's secondary investment market can be attributed to a combination of structural and financial factors:

1. ACCELERATING LIQUIDITY

The global private equity sector is experiencing a slowdown in traditional exit routes, particularly through initial public offerings (IPOs), compared with previous years. This has prompted institutional investors to increasingly turn to secondary markets to sell stakes in their investments and unlock liquidity.

2. PORTFOLIO REBALANCING

Sovereign wealth funds and major financial institutions are seeking to adjust the strategic allocation of their investments across sectors such as technology, artificial intelligence, real estate and private equity. Buying and selling secondary stakes provides them with greater flexibility to rebalance their portfolios in line with changing investment priorities.

3. REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY AT ABU DHABI GLOBAL MARKET (ADGM)

ADGM's regulatory framework, based on English common law, provides legal certainty, investor protection and the flexibility needed to structure and execute complex transactions efficiently. This has helped create an attractive environment for sophisticated investment deals and further strengthened Abu Dhabi's appeal as a global financial and investment hub.

Rotterdam seeks UAE investment for energy transition

Europe's largest port eyes UAE partnership for sustainable energy advancements

ABU DHABI

BY RAHF YOUSSEF
Reporter

Rotterdam is positioning itself as a long-term partner for the UAE's energy transition, urging Gulf producers to start with blue hydrogen rather than wait for green, and inviting investors to tap CCS and hydrogen infrastructure that is already in place.

The city's mayor, Carola Schouten, was in Abu Dhabi for ADIPEC with a delegation of Dutch companies.

Speaking to *Gulf News*, the mayor said the visit was about strengthening long-standing ties. "First of all, it's to show that Rotterdam is a reliable partner, and that we are here and we stay here," she said. "We want to show that the UAE and the region stay very important for us."

A shared mindset

The mayor said she had already held talks at Abu Dhabi Port on the morning of her arrival and felt an immediate connection. "I really feel the same mentality as we have in Rotterdam. We have to move forward. That is also the spirit of Rotterdam," she said.

The Port of Rotterdam is also a shareholder in the Port of Sohar in Oman. More than 50 companies – most from the Rotterdam region, exhibited at ADIPEC, which she said shows strong business appetite for working with the UAE. "It's not only from the government side, but also from the business side. People want to continue doing business with the UAE."

Europe's energy gateway

Rotterdam is Europe's largest port, and around 13 per cent of the energy entering Europe passes through it. The municipality holds a 70 pe rcent share in the port, with the Dutch national government holding the remaining 30 per cent.

"We want to become the greenest and also the most successful port in the future, which means you have to invest and take decisions already to make it happen, and we need partners for that," the mayor said.

She said the two sides have much in common, particularly in carbon capture and storage (CCS). "We have a big project in Rotterdam, and they already do it here, so it's interesting to see what each other is doing and to use knowledge both ways."

On hydrogen, she pointed to Holland Hydrogen One, one of the largest infrastructure projects under way in Rotterdam. Once the infrastructure is operating, she said, Rotterdam could import green hydrogen from the UAE. "You can use the partnership you already have and think about opportunities from both sides."

She also encouraged Gulf producers to begin with blue hydrogen, produced with carbon capture. "Don't wait until it must be green. Work with us to make the transition in hydrogen."

Open for investment

Asked why Gulf companies should invest in Rotterdam, she pointed to the port's scale and integrated industry. "You can talk about scale, because we have it. We have almost all the industry we need, and they work very closely together."

She added that investors would find the groundwork already laid. "We invest a lot in hydrogen infrastructure, and the CCS infrastructure is already there. You don't have to start from zero."

VISION FOR 2050

Rotterdam aims to have Europe's strongest port by 2050.

"It's our duty for the next generations to work on a greener energy system," she said.

"We are responsible for our children and all the generations after us, and I see that many companies feel this responsibility too. It's not only a moral point of view, but also an economic one."



■ The city's mayor, Carola Schouten, was in Abu Dhabi for ADIPEC with a delegation of Dutch companies.

13%
of Europe's total energy supply flows through Rotterdam

50
companies, most of them from Rotterdam region, exhibited at ADIPEC

Paid parking coming to two Musaffah sectors

New system starts on Nov 16, covering 4,233 spaces in M10 and M17

ABU DHABI

BY BALARAM MENON
Senior Web Editor



■ Abu Dhabi's new parking phase aims to ease congestion and improve access to businesses.

Paid parking will be introduced in two more sectors of Musaffah from November 16, as Abu Dhabi expands its parking management system in the industrial and commercial district.

The fourth phase of the rollout, announced by Q Mobility under the supervision of Abu Dhabi Mobility, will cover sectors M10 and M17, adding 4,233 standard parking spaces to the paid system.

Of these, 1,645 spaces will be in M10 and 2,588 in M17. Designated parking spaces for People of Determination will also be provided.

The latest expansion is part of a gradual rollout that began in January 2026. It aims to make better use of public parking, reduce random parking and ease traffic congestion in one of the emirate's busiest business and industrial areas.

Easier for motorists

Musaffah attracts large numbers of workers, visitors and businesses throughout the day, putting pressure on available parking. The new system is intended to make it easier for motorists to find parking and move around the area, while improving access to commercial and service establishments.

The parking fee will be Dh2 per hour for standard spaces covered by the new phase. Motorists can pay through the Darb and TAMM apps, allowing them to manage payments digitally.



Salim Gouasmia and Natalia Sobko with their cat.

COUPLE'S CAR REPAIR BUSINESS HELPS RESCUE STRAY CATS

In Musaffah, the couple has rescued over 52 cats

ABU DHABI

BY LAKSHANA N. PALAT
Assistant Features Editor

Cat coasters, books on cats, and then actual cats prowling around the garage and peering through the windows.

The real bosses of KoolKats, the Musaffah garage run by husband-and-wife Salim Gouasmia and Natalia Sobko, could just be the cats, and you would believe it immediately. Even the name is a nod to Salim's Scandinavian roots.

As I walk into this little cat haven, the beaming couple begins to share their curious idea of cats, cars and repairs. If you didn't think those three could fit in one sentence, the couple is here to prove you wrong.

"Cats and cars are really the favourite," Salim says, and then explains the idea. He had long wanted a second business in cars, where he saw a gap in the market for honesty and fair prices. The couple had also spent years rescuing cats around Abu Dhabi with their own money. So, they asked themselves: Why not build a business that pays for both?

CAT-FRIENDLY PROJECT

The cat part of the business was not Salim's idea alone. When he first told Natalia he wanted to open a repair shop, she had a condition. "She said, well, you can't just open one, because it has to have some more meaningful thing," he recalls. "You have to promise me that part of that money has to go to our cat-friendly project."

Natalia would only approve the shop if it was dedicated to cats in every possible way, and not just by word. So, the couple set up a permanent CSR programme, funded by the garage, to support local rescuers and the cats in their area. Then they put the cause in the name, so no one could miss what the business was really for.

The passion and love for cats reverberates in Natalia's voice as she explains the situation of abandoned cats in Musaffah. "Every day, I get a call from nearby grocery stores reporting an injured or abandoned cat," she explains. The couple tend to the cats of the neighbourhood, taking them to the vet and, quite often, paying out of their own pocket. As Natalia says, she goes around trapping, neutering, and returning the cats to safer spots too.

I meet the boss. Hello, Koolie.

She waits for her food and nods at me rather approvingly. She's the first official resident and, by the count of the couple's vet bills, number 13.

She turned up while the building was still being renovated and never left. Once the work was done, the couple decided to make it official. Koolie now has her own house and litter tray, and when the garage closes for the night, she sleeps safely inside.

Her arrival was not without trouble. She went through the full TNR process (trap, neuter, return) along with vaccinations and deworming. Along the way, vets found a hernia that could have been life-threatening. "Luckily we caught her on time," Salim says.

Koolie has recently gained company. Another cat, who was also severely ill and recovered after the couple's rescue efforts, now lives in the garage too. Salim admits he was not always a cat person; he never had a pet growing up. What won him over was the way cats make you work for their affection. "You actually have to earn their trust," he says. "It's the same way as human relationships." Street cats take even longer, he has learned, but the bond is worth it.



"You actually have to earn their trust. It's the same way as human relationships."

Salim Gouasmia
Owner, KoolKats

POPULATION CONTROL

The couple's rescue work began long before the garage. On evening walks around Reem Island, they kept noticing stray cats. Like many volunteers across the UAE, Natalia went on to form a group there to trap and sterilise them.

The goal is population control, so colonies stay a manageable size. Salim says they have seen the results first-hand: sterilised cats settle into an area, have a feeding station, and keep to themselves. In Musaffah, the couple has rescued over 52 cats.

For all the whiskers, KoolKats is still very much a car repair business. Salim, who has years of experience in the industry, says he wanted to address a gap he had noticed in the market. Some garages charged premium prices. Cheaper alternatives did not always offer a comfortable experience, with mechanics often working outdoors in the heat and little provision for people waiting for their cars.

"If something happens to your car, that means you can't afford a vacation," he says.

He kept that in mind while working out the business model. The idea was to find a balance: charge enough to cover operating costs and look after staff, without making car repairs unnecessarily expensive for customers.

Yet, pricing was only part of the picture. Salim says one of his biggest frustrations over the years has been how little customers sometimes understand about what's happening with their own vehicles. He wants to change that by explaining repairs clearly, rather than leaving people in the dark about what needs fixing and why.

Salim's other love is technology. He is single-handedly coding and designing an automated system for diagnosing cars remotely.

If a customer breaks down, they plug a small dongle into the car. The garage can then read the car's data from a distance, gather photos and videos, and display it all on a dashboard. An AI analyses the data first, giving the team a head start before a mechanic even looks at the car.

The system draws on Salim's background in another business, where he develops autonomous surveillance platforms. "All the passions are literally coming together here," he says.

Salim has little patience for waiting on someone else to solve Abu Dhabi's stray cat problem. "At the end of the day, it starts with individuals," he says. His hope is that others will see the value and join in, and that the authorities will eventually follow.

Until then, the couple's job is to keep their corner of Musaffah safe, clean and welcoming – for customers, for staff, and for every cat who wanders in looking for a home. The family business, it seems, has plenty of hands.

And paws.

ABU DHABI

BY BY LAKSHANA N PALAT
Assistant Features Editor

AL RAHA GARDENS

Where community spirit comes naturally

RESIDENTS SHARE WHY THEY FEEL PARTICULARLY AT HOME IN THESE SPRAWLING GREEN SPACES

What really makes a home? It isn't only the world you build within four walls. It's the little world just outside them. It's the people you walk with, the ones you start clubs with, for swimming or for gardening. And sometimes it's the ones you spend your first Halloween with, in a new city and a new country.

In Al Raha Gardens, you can feel that world the moment you step onto its paths. They wind between the villas and open onto pocket after pocket of green. Follow one and it might lead you to a new friendship. Follow another and you'll find a shortcut to the cafés and grocery stores, all within walking distance. Nothing here feels too far away, and the homesickness that comes with any move starts, slowly, to ebb.

Jackie Wilson has lived in Dubai and Abu Dhabi for more than two decades, and for her 'there has never been anywhere quite like Al Raha Gardens'. So what gives this neighbourhood its old-fashioned sense of community?

With Wilson as our guide, we set off to meet the residents who know it best.







When the weather turns pleasant, the paths come alive. The women hold their gatherings, the children play outside, and you might even pass a young entrepreneur or two selling their wares.

'You feel as if you're looked after'

Our first stop is with Heba Attia, who moved here in 2020, just before Covid arrived. "We really wanted the vibe of a community. I've always wanted to know my neighbours, and at first I couldn't see too much happening," she says.

So she set about changing that. One of her first ideas, naturally, was Halloween. She started a WhatsApp group, went on to become Vice President of the residents' association, and today Wilson calls her "a pillar of the community". "I've created so many events and done so many activities, including planning a mini-library," Attia says.

Listen to her describe the neighbourhood and you start to see the invisible web strung between the villas: groups and subgroups, with something for everyone. Keen gardener? There's a group for you. Want to stay fit? There's another. Planning playdates? There's one for that too. Even the street cats have their champions, with a dedicated group setting up feeding stations and running trap-neuter-return programmes.

When the weather turns pleasant, the paths come alive. The women hold their gatherings, the children play outside, and you might even pass a young entrepreneur or two selling their wares.

The gardening society is thriving. "People exchange seeds, recommend places to buy what's missing, or give away their extras. Last year the giveaways were lights to grow seeds indoors, and pots for outdoors," Attia recalls. "We share simple suggestions and always guide each other to make it successful."

But the real measure of a neighbourhood is what happens when it matters, and here, someone is always looking out for you. "You feel as if you're looked after," Attia says.

She tells the story of the ice-cream truck. Her child missed it and was in tears, so the community rallied, security guards included, to make sure there was an ice cream after all. "We even got ice creams for the guards," she remembers.

The same willingness extends for different situations. When a dog goes missing, the groups light up with messages and everyone turns out to search. And when this year's conflict brought rising anxiety, the community answered. A new WhatsApp group was set up to keep residents informed and calm. "We explained when to go out, or when we had to stay home," Attia says. Residents also created 'safe spaces' where anyone in need of reassurance could find support and a kind word.







'Help is always given so lovingly'

A few paths along, we meet Suzana Oliver, fondly known as the "Google of the Gardens". For her, it all comes down to trust. "What really makes it special is that there is such love and trust in the community. If I post that I have a problem with my irrigation system, someone else will say, 'I have the same,' and then we find the solution together," she says.

That willingness to help extends to the neighbourhood's street cats, too. Some residents set up feeding stations, while others work with vets in the community to arrange trap-neuter-return (TNR) programmes.

The same spirit of looking out for one another shapes how newcomers are welcomed. Neighbours drop by to say hello, Oliver says, making it easier for new residents to find their feet and feel at home.

There's always a get-together or celebration on the calendar, especially at Eid, when a dedicated Eid group plans community meals. And every so often, everyone gathers for a potluck, each family bringing a dish from home.

- In Al Raha Gardens, shared passions, thoughtful neighbours and everyday acts of kindness turn unfamiliar streets into familiar paths, bringing families together and making every newcomer feel warmly welcomed.

The swimmers' club

Fitness, like friendship, comes in many forms here, and one of them is in the pool.

Jan Naylor arrived in Al Raha Gardens 20 years ago. Her children were already swimmers, which meant regular trips to Dubai to train. "So I thought I would form a swimming club," she says. And she did. The club has held together through Covid and through this year's conflict.

Naylor teaches swimming to women of all ages, and introduced an aquafit programme to give older women another way to stay active. Swimming, she says, also offers welcome relief from everyday stress. Over time, the sessions have become about more than fitness. The women have grown close, and their time in the water has become a chance to catch up and deepen friendships. Exercise is something to look forward to, not another item on the to-do list. "These ladies are a special group," Naylor says.

Oliver agrees, noting that the energy spills over into yoga and other workouts. "They just work at bettering themselves and becoming healthier," she says. The children have their own reasons to look forward to the pool. Along with water safety and fitness, they get to know the other kids in the neighbourhood.

A bewitching welcome

Our walk ends with Kirsty Montaut, who moved here from New Zealand last year with her husband and son. Moving countries is never easy. Where do you begin again, and how? But when they saw the open green spaces of Al Raha Gardens, they felt a little more at ease. "There are so many paths that we keep discovering new ones every day," she says. Each one seems to lead to another patch of green.

Everything is close by, too, from the shops to the school. Her son can even ride his bike to school. The moment she truly felt welcomed came at Halloween, which this community takes very seriously indeed. "The residents put so much effort into planning events here. They even planned which villas to visit for trick-or-treating," she says. In the photos she and other residents shared, the children are earnestly decked out in all the witchery and wizardry you'd expect, broomsticks in hand.

And, she too, echoes the familial feeling that echoes around the community. "There are the mum helping mum groups in fitness clubs; it's also so much, women supporting women. We all know that we're all juggling so much here, and to have that kind of support is a relief," she says.

It's a snowball effect, she adds. You know one person; they'll bring friends, and you will get involved, and soon you will be in different groups, and if you're a mum, a part of different playdates. So, if you're new in Al Raha Gardens, Kirsty says, come out of the house, and test the waters. Literally, get in the pool.

As she says, "This entire umbrella of community fitness clubs, really improved my mental health."

And so, this month, the broomsticks will come out again, the trick-or-treat routes will be mapped, and a new families will knock on unfamiliar doors for the first time. If Al Raha Gardens is anything to go by, those doors will open wide, and someone will be waiting with a welcome.