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# the week

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**2010**

**the week**  
**INTER-SCHOOL NEWSDESK CHALLENGE**  
AHMAD BIN MAJID PRIVATE SCHOOL  
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The fashion event will showcase designs of 13 students on a catwalk before the pieces are auctioned off to raise money for the Association of Early Intervention

Fajer al Lawati, 16, said she and her friends have reached an age when they should be giving back to their community; the event at The Sultan's School will be held on May 6

# GIVING BACK



A group of students from The Sultan's School has got together to organise a fashion show to benefit a worthy cause

**BIG PREMIERE**  
Page 13

Bollywood political thriller, 'Rajneeti', to premiere on June 10 at Shatti Cinema

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**REACHING HEIGHTS**

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Cathy O'Dowd motivates people with her account of climbing Mt Everest

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**INSIDE 10** Accident figures: ROP recorded 123 accidents from April 17 to 23 that killed 10 people

**14** New furniture: IDdesign launches new 2010 product catalogue

**46** Football's amazing tales: When a player had to be dragged out of the field

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# SOCIAL NETWORKING ON THE AGENDA

The second day of the Women in Business Conference 2010 included discussions on social networking, working in post-conflict territories and marketing on a budget

Emma Williams  
[theweek@apexstuff.com](mailto:theweek@apexstuff.com)

Day 2 of the Women in Business Conference 2010, an event organised by Envent, got underway at the InterContinental Hotel, Muscat on April 26 with an excited audience. The problems women face in post-conflict territories, marketing on a small budget and how ICT can empower women were some of the topics covered. First up on the stage was Ashley Hunter, president of HM Risk Group, who spoke about the lessons she had learnt from her father on entrepreneurship.

Ashley spoke about the importance of events such as the conference and said, "I think it is extremely important not only for women who are looking to start businesses but for those of us who are currently in business. It is a way for us to network and expand our businesses among other women globally." During her speech, Ashley



► Dr Asyah al Bualy, adviser for culture and humanities at the research council

stressed the importance of women supporting other women – 13.8 per cent of women in the world live below the poverty line, so if they see another woman struggling, they should help her.

Following her presentation, Ashley was pleased with the feedback she received as members of the audience said how inspirational it was to see an African-American woman from the United States start a business in an area often dominated by men. The inspirational talks continued when Dr Asyah al Bualy, adviser for culture and humanities at the Research Council since June 2006, spoke to the audience on the different elements that have shaped women economically in Oman.

Speaking about how women in Oman have helped create the culture that we live in today and referring to a speech by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said in which he said Omani women should help contribute to the economic stability in Oman, Dr Asyah helped to focus the audience on the local side of their future ventures. Hanan Saab, a

third-generation pharmacist, managing director of Pharmamed and president of the Lebanese League for Women in Business, amazed and intrigued the audience with her story of building her business from scratch while raising a family during the turmoil that struck Lebanon.

"Yes, I had kids and wanted to look after them but I had a duty. I would put my kids and mother-in-law in a shelter and go to work not knowing if I would come back." Hanan spoke on her decision to stay in Lebanon and continue working when so many were fleeing the

business you get out of it. I approached a billion-dollar company at a function and said I wanted to do business with them. I gave them my card and I received emails from them organising meetings with individuals that we had been trying to meet for two years."

The final speaker of the day was Asli Bilgin, lead for web strategy for Middle East and Africa at Microsoft. Asli spoke to the group about how they can amplify their career using a ten-step checklist. Like Ashley, Asli spoke about the importance of such events and said, "The networking and face-to-face interaction at conferences cannot be matched with any virtual experience," while mentioning that she was thrilled with the level of enthusiasm among Omani women.

She hoped that her talk would trigger a sense of optimism and persistence among the women while showing how "the software industry comprises creative and dynamic opportunities versus the dry, science-only perception that people

## TROUBLED TIMES

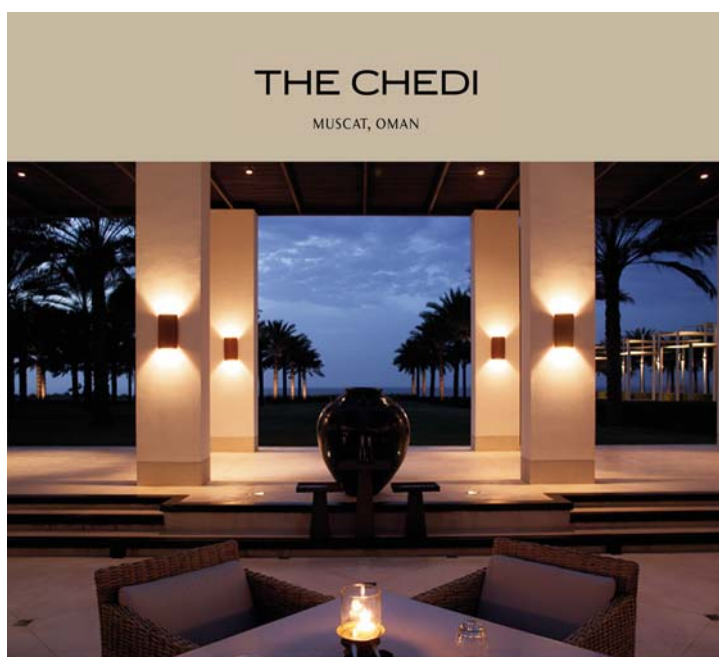
After deciding to stay in Lebanon, Hanan Saab, a third generation pharmacist would leave her children and mother-in-law in a shelter before going off to work in a hospital. She later started up her own company and now owns 90 per cent of her business. Her husband owns the remaining ten per cent

bombings. She also spoke of how until 1994, women in Lebanon had to get permission from their husband and/or father to start a business, but this has now changed and she owns 90 per cent of her pharmaceutical and medical equipment company while her husband owns the other ten.

Archana Garodia Gupta, director and founder of Touchstone Gems and Jewellery (India), gave some of the most functional advice during her talk on marketing your business on a small budget and spoke about the importance of advertising and treating your customers well. Archana said, "Networking is an essential skill for entrepreneurs; you would be surprised how much

have of the industry. Aside from that, the goal is to drive awareness about the free programmes that Microsoft has for students – DreamSpark and Students2Business – for entrepreneurs – BizSpark – and for web designers – WebSiteSpark".

Following the talks, a panel discussion took place on ICT and included information on the different social networking sites, websites and forums that can help empower and enable women to grow their business. During the discussion, Asli spoke about using these resources carefully as there is a lot of noise online and businesses need to make sure they are putting useful information out there for consumers.



THE CHEDI

MUSCAT, OMAN

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### OFM signs MoU with Prosper Management

Oman Flour Mills (OFM) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Prosper Management Consultancy announcing a new chapter in the growth of the company. This year-long programme will encompass a host of training/coaching sessions that will assist OFM employees in not only honing their skills but also tapping into their abilities, a press release said. The MoU was signed in the presence of Ahmed al Murrazza, senior HR and administration manager, OFM, and Sheikh Khalfan al Esry, executive coach/managing director of Prosper Management.



### Lulu flags off Buraimi project

The foundation stone of Lulu Hypermarkets Groups' Buraimi project, to be built at a cost of R014mn, was laid recently by H E Yahya bin Hamad al Ma'amari, Governor of Buraimi