Hello Friends

We’re back again with another issue of The Dhow. The focus, this time, is on the numerous activities and events that take place at MEC and the units responsible for them. We have a total of sixteen clubs functioning at the college as of now. This issue of the magazine has for you reports on the activities of some of the clubs and also the spirit behind most activities organized at MEC: the Students’ Activities Unit, now known as the Events and Activities Unit. It also includes some articles giving an insight into the importance and value of extra-curricular activities in a student’s life.

Our “On the Campus” section carries an informative interview with the Registrar, Mr. Ashwin John K, and an inspiring talk with our dear student Rayyan Al Mujaini, who has won several medals in sports events for the physically challenged and done the institution proud. She is now training and all set to participate in the Paralympics to be held at Rio de Janeiro in 2016 and bring laurels to her institution and her country. We wish her all the best in her efforts.

We bring to our readers, interviews with MEC students in the VOICES section giving their opinion on the “Places to Hang out in MEC” plus reports on some of the events and activities that have taken place in the college during the last 6 months, e.g. KOM Community Cup, First Students’ Conference, Photography Summit, MEC career fair, Achiever’s Day etc. to name a few. We also have news of our students attending international programmes and events conducted by different departments in the “News Roundup” section.

Students’ contributions to this issue need a special mention as we have quite a few articles by the GFP students to help increase awareness about plagiarism and how to avoid it, as well as reports on the 8th Library week and the International Day celebrated at MEC. Credit is certainly due to our two budding student journalists, Ayman Azam Mohammed Azam and Sadia Ashraf, who have worked hard to put together articles and reports for this issue.

Last but not the least, on behalf of the Dhow team, I would like to thank all the contributors of this issue, for having made this issue possible. We wish you all happy reading, and look forward to your continued support.

Good-bye and good luck.

Deepali Bhatnagar
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As we are all aware, there are numerous activities carried out in our college. But let us go back stage and see the people who arrange them. There is an “Events & Activities Unit”, previously known as the Students’ Activities Unit, whose days and nights are always busy trying to come up with new ideas to organize various events in the college and to celebrate internationally celebrated days. Their main mission is to make our college life the best and most celebrative.

I’m sure now a question arises in one’s mind as to what is this unit all about and what does it do…….? Without much ado let me give you a very basic introduction about this unit”. This unit currently consists of 6 members and many volunteers. They ‘plan’ and organize events and directly interact with students and supervisors. They also interact with other colleges and universities with regard to cultural programs and sports.

Currently there are also 6 magical members in the staff of the “Events & Activities Unit”. In spite of their busy schedules and responsibilities, they always put this task first. According to Banan Suwaid “I have always loved being a part of it…. I like this routine and more than anything, I like to organize an event, which is the foremost task for all of us…….I am here because I wanted to be part of it”.

Following are the hardworking members of the SAU:
Abdulwahed Al Masaoudi, Majid Al Balushi, Yahya Al Marshoodi, Banan Suwaid, Sultan Al Farsi and Shane Kurian.
Now comes the mechanism of this unit, how it works, how they organize the events etc. There are 17 clubs which comprise students of the college and whenever they need to organize an event or even come up with the idea to have an event, they know where to go. They can always depend upon the “Students’ Activities Unit”. The members of this unit help to organize the event that the club wants and when the unit comes up with the idea of any event they talk to the particular club they want to involve. This is the team work of 100s of people who work together to make college life more enjoyable.

Following are the 16 clubs currently in the college: Photography Club, Design Club, Media Club, Drama Club, English Club, Electronics Club, Rovers Club, Literary Club, Health Club, Al Amal Charity Group, Environment Club, Computing Club, Business Society, Students Success Club, Entrepreneurship Club and Sports Club. The mentors for these respective clubs are members of staff who contribute their time and advise the students when they need/seek help.

There is also a “Students Council Committee” which has a Student President, Student Vice-President and other office bearers, who are always there to plan out, council and look after the tasks and events.

There is a long list of events organized in this college such as Mother’s Day, Orphans’ Day, Library Week, Rover’s Day, Dramas, Achiever’s Day, Inter-College Debates, Security Awareness Week, National Day, Clean up Oman, Blood Donation Week, Sports Day for Staff and Students, Photography Week, Teacher’s Day, Orientation Week……and the list is endless!
E
each and every student in the campus comes with a set of expectations to the college. Some of them are skewed towards achieving their academic goals while the others prefer to balance the academic and non-academic aspects of activities within the college campus.

Well, there can be a huge debate on whether extra-curricular activities play a positive or negative role in the life of students. I personally have a huge bias towards how positively the extra-curricular activities can influence the students’ personality. It helps develop the all-round personality of the students. It prepares the students for a daunting, demanding and challenging future and life. Even the experience gained through these activities outside the classroom enables the students to learn a new set of KSAs (knowledge, skills and abilities) that may not have been learnt within the classroom.

These extra-curricular events help to develop the spirit of working and achieving in teams, through team spirit and cooperation, leadership, punctuality and a competitive spirit along with abilities of decision making, self-discipline and self-confidence.

Largely it is seen that extra-curricular activities motivate students to take up responsibilities and hence become better individuals in future. They help them to mould themselves into emotionally intelligent and interpersonally skilled students. Such activities refresh the burdened minds of the students and provide them with physical energy and vigour. They give them the confidence to face chaotic and sudden situations in life. Further in some universities and colleges extra-curricular activities are given weightage by potential employers. In real life, there is little room for experimentation, and these extra-curricular activities provide the students an opportunity to train themselves for the outside world.

Extra-curricular activities are important for adding value to student experience on campus. Overall, extra-curricular activities are like extra feathers in the cap of a student’s life!
The English Club of Languages Centre, Middle East College (MEC) conducted ‘MECORATOR-2013’—an inter-collegiate public speaking competition for General Foundation Programme students on March 11th, 2013. 19 contestants from 10 colleges participated in the mega event which witnessed the budding orators of Oman in action.

The programme was convened by Ms. Amal Al Badi and the competition committee included Mr. Gladwin George, Mr. Suleiman Al Rawahi, Ms. Samiya Al Hinai and Mr. Jamel Alimi.

The colleges that participated in the competition were: Sultan Qaboos University, University of Nizwa, Caledonian College of Engineering, Waljat College of Applied Sciences, Oman Medical College, Al Zahra College for Women, College of Banking and Financial Studies, Bayan College, International College of Engineering and Management and Middle East College.

The speakers were given a range of topics to prepare for the competition. However, on the day of the competition, they had to choose one topic by means of a draw.

The topics for the speaking competition were:

• Oman in 2030: Your perspective
• Environmental Issues in Oman
• The need for community engagement in the society
• Problems faced by the General Foundation Programme learners in Oman
• Oman: A blend of modernity and tradition

All speakers performed well, presenting their viewpoint and projecting their opinion on the topics they had to speak on. However, the ones who excelled won prizes for being a shade better than the others. The first prize winner was Halima Rahmat Al Baloushi of Middle East College who became ‘MECORATOR’ 2013. The second and third prizes were won by Asma Khalifa Al Riyami of Sultan Qaboos University and Ruqaiya Issa Hashim Al Taei of Oman Medical College respectively.

The competition, which turned out be a great success, was judged by a panel of three judges: Dr. Rajan Philips, Senior Lecturer, International College of Engineering and Management, Mr. Abdullah Al Shamsi, Faculty, Air Force Technical College and Dr. Tareq Damen, HOD, Languages Centre.
MEC Enterpreneurs Club holds workshop with Injaz Oman

Middle East College (MEC) is an organisation that aims to develop the skills and abilities of students through a judicious mix of teaching and extra-curricular activities. One of the student clubs is the Entrepreneurs Club, that builds entrepreneurial skills amongst other skills. This club involves the students at a level so as to inculcate and help sustain creativity amongst students who could then opt to establish their own businesses in the near future.

With this enlightened objective, the Entrepreneurs Club had invited Injaz Oman to render a day long workshop on “Building Entrepreneurship Skills”. The workshop was scheduled for 14th May 2013. The day passed with interesting activities conducted by the team from Injaz Oman, which kept all participants attentive throughout the session. The presenters took the students through phases of innovation and creativity, creating business ideas, marketing and selling and finally ended with a business plan. The students were excited and felt that this workshop proved to be an instant success. One of the students stated “This workshop should be taken by each and every student of MEC”!

MEC and Injaz Oman hope to tie up for future workshops in this direction, to provide an interesting learning experience to students at MEC.

Environment Club Activities

Eight students from the Environment Club at the Middle East College participated in the environment meeting entitled “Beiati Amanah” in Wilayat Wadi Al- Maawil. This meeting was organized by Aafi Sports Team from 26 Feb 2013 to 28 Feb 2013. The Environment Club discussed about the environment in general and about the Omani environment in specific.

Moreover, the club members showed concern about the irresponsible behavior of citizens which affects the environment badly. Also, a competition relating to the environment was organized for children and it had good participation. A questionnaire was distributed as well, to the visitors and participants, to learn about their opinion and views on the topic, as this would give a feedback that could be included in the club’s report.
ON THE CAMPUS

An Interview with Mr. Ashwin John K, Registrar
Interviewer- Ayman Azam Mohammed Azam, MEC Student

In order to know more about the courses and academic life in the college, we at The Dhow thought of having an interview with Mr. Ashwin, Registrar, Middle East College. I would like to thank him for the consideration and co-operation he extended to us and the time he spared for us from his busy schedule. We really honor your help, Sir. Some of the questions that we put to him, during the interview are as follows.

1. Currently, what are the courses being taught in the college?

This is the list of programs currently offered:
BEng (Hons) – Computer Hardware and Networking
BEng (Hons) – Data Communication and Systems Administration
BEng (Hons) – Wireless Networks
BSc (Hons) – Software Technology
BSc (Hons) – Internet Technology
BSc (Hons) – Database Management Systems
BSc (Hons) – Computing and Information Systems
BSc (Hons) – Computer Science
BSc (Hons) – Multimedia Technology
BSc (Hons) – Business Information Technology
BSc (Hons) – Archives and Records
Management
BEng (Hons) – Electronics and Telecommunication
Master of Business Administration
Master of Science in Information Technology
BEng (Hons) – Civil Engineering
BSc (Hons) – Business and Information Systems
Pathways in
a. Supply Chain and Logistics Management
b. Human Resources Management
c. Accounting and Finance

2. What are the new courses introduced in this semester?

We don’t add new courses semester wise. We add them in Fall on an yearly basis. Therefore the list of Programs added in Fall 2012 is:
BEng (Hons) – Civil Engineering
BSc (Hons) - Business and Information Systems
Pathways in
Supply Chain and Logistics Management
Human Resources Management
Accounting and Finance

3. What is the most popular course among students?

The most popular programs amongst the students are Engineering programs and Business Information Systems.
4. Is this college affiliated only to Coventry University or any other college too?

Yes, apart from Coventry, we are affiliated to another institute. It is “Dublin Institute of Technology” from Ireland.

5. How many total courses or programs are offered in the Middle East College?

There are 18 courses or programs being offered in MEC now.

6. Do you think the courses offered here are beneficial for Omani market?

Yes, actually before adding any program we do a survey to study the demand and we mainly focus on manpower. We also do a market study. After all this we add new programs.

7. What are the future programs which are going to be offered in MEC?

We are hoping to add Environmental Engineering in the future.

8. Which field is in demand nowadays?

Different students have different demands. Education and knowledge in every field is beneficial. But if you are focusing on the market point of view then it is “Engineering”.

9. In five words please describe your time or experience with MEC?

Visions and missions of founders, creativity, staff, students’ experience (they are my biggest priority) and the campus.

Inspiration : An interview with our student, Rayyan Al Mujaini

Rayyan Al Mujaini, a student of Middle East College has been, representing Oman in Discus throw, Javelin throw and Shot put. In spite of being physically challenged, she has the will and determination to develop her skill in these areas of sport so that she can excel in them and participate in the Paralympics to be held in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil in 2016. Rayyan Al Mujaini won three Gold Medals in the 3rd GCC Women’s Sports Games held in Bahrain during the period 3-13th of March 2013. Verghese Kurian talks to her about her passion for sport and her efforts to train for the Paralympics.

How long have you been training and what are the key events you participate in?

Rayyan: I started training in 2010 with the Paralympics team. Now it has been 3 years. I represented Oman in three types of athletic events: throwing Discus, Javelin and Shot Put.

How much training do you do on a weekly basis and does this increase before an event?

Rayyan: Usually, I train three times a week and before a competition, I train two times a day for at least three weeks.

What is your typical training regimen? How long do you train and what duration?

Rayyan: I train in the gym - weight training, and practice in the field. I train in the gym for about three weeks, only before the competition, otherwise just two times a week.

Do you follow a specific diet? Please share your healthy habits with our students and be an inspiration to them.

Rayyan: I do not follow any specific diet but I do not drink any type of soft drinks.

What would be the one thing you would like to talk about regarding your efforts to inspire all of us?

Rayyan: If you’re trying to achieve something, there will be obstacles. But these don’t have to stop you from your goal. If you run into a wall, don’t turn around and give up. Just figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it.

Who according to you is a great sports person? Do you take inspiration from this person?

Rayyan: “Knowing is not enough: we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.” My father, has
been my inspiration and my family has supported me all the time.

What is your next aim / goal? Please share it with us?

Rayyan: “When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us. ”I aim to represent Oman in the next Paralympics to be held in 2016.

Where do you see yourself in 3 years’ time?

Rayyan: At the beginning I faced many obstacles. But now things are very different from those in the past. My confidence is going up and makes me feel more comfortable all the time. I hope to have a good future. Confidence gives us the ability to do everything in our life. Also, it improves us when we present anything.

Student Grievance Procedure at MEC

If you have a problem, please don’t hesitate to tell us about it

“Student Grievance”

Middle East College strives tirelessly to enhance student experience and provide all facilities and services required for best teaching and learning. In this process, MEC also seeks to resolve student complaints and grievances in a fair and expeditious manner. In this regard, we have outlined a grievance procedure which students should follow for making a complaint/grievance. If a complaint cannot be resolved internally, a student may file a complaint with the appropriate authority in the concerned department. If he/she is not satisfied, they can submit an official complaint to the Dean’s office.

Student Grievance Redressal Procedure: In accordance with its mission, Middle East College promotes and maintains a supportive learning environment so that students can optimize their personal, academic, and professional development. All actions under these procedures are based on the values most consistent with the College’s mission and by the principles of mutual respect and procedural fairness. All students, faculty, staff, and administrators may be involved.

The purpose of the Student Grievance Cell is to establish and demonstrate fairness to students’ concerns in a consistent and fair manner. Students’ grievance redressal is in three steps. Students must complete lower step of the resolution process in its entirety before continuing to the next step. College policy is to address all grievances informally within departments (step 1) before embarking on a formal student complaint (steps 2 & 3).

A complaint should be made at the earliest after the incident or the most recent occurrence but within the time frame stipulated in students’ handbook. A complaint resolution process normally takes five working days on receipt of the complaint. The chart below shows the process of student grievance redressal.
First revelation from Allah Almighty to Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) was “Read with the name of your Lord who created (everything)…”. It is clearly stated that “read” was the first word by God to us human beings. The first message to be “to read” proves the importance of reading and seeking knowledge.

We humans are superior to all living beings, due to the ability of being able to read, think, explore progress etc. But some of us are not using these abilities to their full potential.

Nowadays, we are progressing but materialistically. For us the first revelation to the earth is the least priority. In this day and age people are leaving libraries behind. Libraries are becoming deserted and this emptiness is forcing the authorities to shut them down. This can be clearly seen in our surroundings and this is why there are not many libraries around us.

We cannot blame anyone else; it is we who are moving away from books. In the past everyone used to take books as their best friends. People used to value the information from books. Turning the pages of a book was like opening the doors to a new world. It was not just reading but it was reading for pleasure. However, now we are so busy in the turmoil of life that most of us are unaware of the pleasure we can get by reading books. We should get back to books, the all time best friends of humans and make use of the unlimited information they hold.

People blame technology but it's actually the people who are to blame. They don't even read e-books. They just read for reference. More than anything, it
is our laziness and non-seriousness towards books that is the reason for the sad demise of many of our libraries. It cannot be one individual’s effort; collectively, we all should make an effort to bring the charm of libraries and reading back into our lives. We should all retrieve the treasure of knowledge from books before it is too late.

For a student, reading books is very important and it should not just be a short-lived habit. Let the books cast their magic on you. Seriousness in approach to books and serious reading is the key to enter the world of knowledge, creativity, imagination and awareness. A student does not have to depend on rote learning like a parrot if he or she takes reading seriously. Information would be engraved in one’s mind as a result of serious reading. We are taking the precious source of knowledge for granted. Let us all together play our part to relive the magic of books.

Schools, universities, colleges, clubs etc should organize events to spread the word of awareness about benefits of libraries. Even if it is a small step, at least we all can play our part in it.

THE 8TH LIBRARY WEEK AT MEC

Our most loveable college has been making a great effort to promote the library system and reading culture. MEC’s main aims are to bring library and reading back to the top in a students’ list. Students should realize the value of reading books. Out of the long list of activities organized at MEC every year, the “library week”, organised by MEC Library is one of the main events.

This year the 8th library week was organized for students from 16th to 20th March 2013. The library week in charge was Ms. Rasha Al Hammadi who handled this event very well with Ms. Khalsa and other team members.

This time there were two workshops organized for the students, by the library. The first one was “How to read books efficiently” conducted by Dr. Nizar which was very good and beneficial for the students. As mentioned earlier, generally students like to run away from time consuming tasks, and want everything to happen instantly. Keeping this in mind the workshop was conducted for students so that they could take as much benefit from it as possible. Some techniques for efficient and useful reading were suggested.

The second workshop was on “Fire and Safety” which was conducted by Mr. Ahmad Al Hadrami, Ms. Rasha and Ms. Khalsa. This workshop was mainly organized to train students in tackling fire hazards. The steps and precautionary measures to tackle not only fire but other natural hazards also, were introduced. This workshop was for all college students. A drill was conducted to make students aware of the situation in case of a real fire. The fire-alarm rang and the whole college was evacuated. Students were made to leave their tasks and rush to the assembly point in the open area. Student volunteers were also deputed to assist others in this drill.

During the Library Week, there was an exhibition of books to inform students about career building and future life prospects. Around 47 batches and 1051 students visited the library during this week and learned how to use the library system and resources effectively through training sessions. This event was filled with many activities. Students were taken to the library by the teachers and were asked to find information on selected topics. They were also taught how to write a reference list in Harvard style, which is very useful for us for our assignments. One of the main activities was the ways to tackle plagiarism and how to avoid it. We learned a lot from it.

On the whole, because of the library week, we got to discover our taste in books, be it fiction or nonfiction. It is good to have such events in the college as they really influence and motivate one to feel attracted towards books and libraries. Many students were able to discover their hidden talent to write, when they did book reviews and nurture their love to read new books. Many students could find books written by their favorite authors. I feel there should be more competitions organized for the students, to attract them to reading e.g. to find the book of a particular title and author, read it and present it to the class or to find some information about a specific topic etc.

Overall we students thank the staff of MEC library for giving us the opportunity to get close to the magical world of books. Hopefully, we will have more such events for our own improvement because I personally liked it and learned a lot from it. Many students who were not aware of libraries and their benefits, came to the library for the first time just because of the Library Week.
Anti-Plagiarism Week - Our Experience

Nowadays people think that cheating or stealing is something normal and not a big problem. Plagiarism is the act of stealing another person’s ideas and using them as your own.

There are two types of plagiarism. Some students know the meaning of plagiarism but they still plagiarize. This type is called intentional plagiarism. Unintentional plagiarism means the student does not know the meaning or what plagiarism is and they plagiarize.

There are many reasons why some students plagiarize. First of all, some students think that if they steal another’s ideas they will get high marks, as their parents expect them to get high marks. The second reason is that some students don’t trust their own ability. They always depend on others to do their tasks and also they don’t work hard to improve their weaknesses.

There are many effects of plagiarism. The students who plagiarize might fail because they don’t learn anything. They only copy-paste from the internet and neglect their studies. Another effect is that teachers don’t trust students who steal others ideas and take it as their own. Students plagiarize because they don’t respect their teachers.

There are some ways to avoid plagiarism. First of all, ‘Citation’ is one of the ways to avoid plagiarism. ‘Citation’ is giving credit to the author after taking a part of a paragraph/ information from a book and writing the last name of the author, the year of publication and page number of the book from which the information has been taken. Another way is to summarize. It means, to make a summary using your own words, without changing the author’s ideas. Quoting is the third way, to avoid plagiarism. Quoting means; to put the information taken, from books, websites or any other source, within quotation marks.

In brief, the students should use their ideas and not plagiarize. If they always depend on others, they will not improve their skills and will face many other consequences and be penalized for their mistake.

Lujaina Hamed Al Hashmi(12f9178)

Plagiarism is the most important problem that students face in society nowadays. In this essay I will discuss the meaning of plagiarism, the reason why people plagiarize, its effects and how to avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism means the act of presenting the ideas of others as your own. It also means stealing and cheating information from others. There are two types of plagiarism: intentional and unintentional. Intentional means that you know it’s wrong and you do it on purpose and unintentional means you don’t know what plagiarism means. Also unintentional plagiarism means that students do not quote or cite the ideas they take, properly, because they do not know how to.

There are many reasons and excuses given by most students as to why they plagiarize. They argue that they do it because they are weak in English, they want to get high marks, they are not aware of plagiarism and also because their parents expect high marks.

There are many effects of plagiarism on students. They might fail, their teacher won’t trust them, they won’t develop their language skills and they will never succeed in their job.

How to avoid plagiarism?? By referencing, paraphrasing and using direct quotation. Give credit to other writers by citation and referencing. Make sure to paraphrase what the original writer said and if you cannot paraphrase, you can use a direct quotation or inverted commas.

In conclusion, when you take ideas from others, you need to cite them. Don’t use other people’s ideas. Don’t change the writer’s original ideas.
Students plagiarize to complete their assignments and other work. It is a bad way as they don’t use their own ideas and thinking skills when they do it, but just copy and paste without reading the information. In addition, when they steal others thoughts, they can’t create successful things in the future.

In my opinion, plagiarism is a very bad way of doing things, for many reasons: one of these is that it prevents the emergence of new ideas. For example, if the teacher asks the students to write an essay on any topic and asks them to use their own ideas in that essay, the students don’t write that essay by themselves but, instead some of them use the internet, and others make someone write the essay for them. When the teacher corrects the essay he/she doesn’t find new ideas and opinions because most of the students have plagiarised to do their assignment and this is bad behaviour. Also the people who plagiarise find it difficult to learn a new thing because they don’t use their own ideas, opinions, and thoughts to learn from their errors. Also plagiarism makes people dependent on others for thoughts and ideas.

At the end, I think all people should be against plagiarism and use their own ideas and creativity. Also the other people should help to stop this problem and advise people who resort to it. In addition, the educational institutions can help to stop this practice by spreading awareness among students in schools, colleges, and universities.

Plagiarism means stealing other people’s work, or taking other people’s work without asking them. In this essay I will talk about why we think it’s bad, and what we have done to reduce plagiarism.

Plagiarism is taking other people’s work and it is bad because they work hard and make something good but then others come and take their work. Even in exams, some students study hard for the exam whereas the others don’t revise and come and copy the answers very easily.

Some types of plagiarism is stealing poetry, homework, and projects; some of them pay others to do their job or work. We have worked as a group, and made posters about anti-plagiarism. We drew a lot of pictures and wrote notes about plagiarism.

In conclusion, I think we have to educate people about plagiarism, how dangerous this thing is and how people lose their credit because they plagiarize.

Being a GFP student, I had the privilege of being an active participant of the anti-plagiarism week held in our college. Our teachers continuously work hard to prevent plagiarism and as they care to raise our awareness about it, they organized the anti-plagiarism week. This week was my favorite week in the college. We learned about anti-plagiarism policy of our college.

The students had a poster session and a competition on commercials made by students about plagiarism. As an additional activity, some students visited other classes to talk about plagiarism and its dangerous effects. I was one of the students who went to different classes for the presentations. This experience has made me bold and confident.

Previously, I also used internet for my assignments but I didn’t know that copying ideas, diagrams, pictures, sounds etc. is also a form of plagiarism. In short, this program made me aware about my unethical behavior and I vowed never to repeat it. In my opinion plagiarism is not only a crime but it also deprives us of learning. Anti-plagiarism week boosted us to choose the right way and aspire for higher aims!
MEC welcomes every nationality to have a beautiful experience of student life. We the students here have friends beyond borders. We all blend together so finely creating one family.

To share this experience, feelings, culture, heritage and identity of different nationalities studying here, International Day was organized in the Sports Hall on 12th of May 2013. Students from ten different countries participated in this event. The list includes Oman, India, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iraq, Philippines, Libya, Sudan, Egypt, and Palestine.

Each of them put in their best to showcase their culture and heritage. Traditional dresses of their respective cultures were also on display. Students from each country gave a talk about their country. Performances were given by the members of each group representing different nationalities.

Being a part of it myself, I can proudly say that we worked, practised, decorated and shared feelings of love and brotherhood amongst us. We became aware of the culture and traditions of different nations. The most important thing which was clearly stated was that we all are friends beyond borders; we respect and love each other’s culture and heritage. And borders are never in between the relationship, signifying respect, love, sharing, caring, and “friendship”.

I felt privileged and proud to be a part of this event and I made a whole lot of new and good friends from every nation. Now, wherever we meet, there are smiles and greetings shared….. I would love to be part of such an event again because more than anything else it leads to “Global Friendship”……
The Confident Ladies
Marwa Nasser Al-Ghaithi (12F9655)

We - the girls of today!
We - the confident Ladies
Like the sunrise in the dawn
We are the proud Omanis...

Like the stars decorate the night
We work together as one
We are gorgeous and friendly
Like the warmth of the sun...

Meet us and you will be energized
We are baking in kitchen and flying in space
We are traditional and modern
Champion in studies and also in games....
MEC student selected for NESA

Mr Anas Muneer Al-Rawahi, an Electronics and Telecommunication student at Middle East College, has been selected to participate in the Near East and South Asia (NESA) Undergraduate Exchange Program, for the academic year 2013-2014.

The program provides full scholarships to outstanding students in the Near East for one academic year of non-Degree undergraduate study at accredited two and four-year colleges and universities across the United States. The scholarship participant will be enrolled full-time in undergraduate course work chosen from a host institution’s existing curriculum, which allows foreign students ample opportunity for exposure to U.S. academic and classroom culture.

Scholarships are granted primarily to students who are currently enrolled in an undergraduate degree program in their home country. Students should not have graduated/completed their final year of undergraduate study before they arrive in the U.S. Mr. Anas is one of the four students who has been shortlisted from applicants from all the universities and colleges across Oman. He, along with three other students from the Sultanate, will be representing Oman in the USA.

BIT student selected for MEPI Student Leadership Programme

We at Middle East College, are proud to announce that Ms Hajar Khamis Marhoun Al Mezeini, a Business Information Technology student, has been selected to participate in the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Student Leadership Program that will take place in Summer 2013.

The student leadership program is an intensive five to six week exchange program to the US, for 70 to 90 students from the MENA region. Students will be divided among six US academic institutions where they will develop their leadership skills and expand their understanding of civil society. This program is designed for undergraduate student leaders and will comprise an integrated series of lectures, readings, discussions, leadership and skills development sessions and site visits. Workshops will also be organized for the program participants approximately six to eight months after the conclusion of the U.S based program.
SAU Awards (2012-2013)

The English Club of Languages Centre stole the show in the Annual Student Activities (SAU) Awards of Middle East College, for the academic year 2012-2013. The English Club of Languages Centre won the award for the ‘Best Club’ in the academic year 2012-2013 in Middle East College.

Mr. Gladwin George, mentor of English Club won the award for the ‘Best Mentor’. Zaher Al Siyabi won the ‘Best President’ award. The English Club conducted a series of sterling activities like the Lingua Quiz Competition for Level 1 students of Foundation Programme and MEC’s Got Talent, the first of its kind, reality show in MEC.

Languages Centre Event: English Souq

An English Souq was organized by Languages Centre, to encourage students to use the second language, English, in their day to day dealings. Students from all three levels of the General Foundation Programme participated in this event.

The main objectives of the event were:
• to encourage the use of English in authentic contexts.
• to implement the concept of learning through fun.
• to target and familiarize students with various kinds of learning styles.
• to enhance English communication between various levels of students.

The event comprised the following:
Students from all sessions of all the levels of the GFP, displayed goods in their shops, which were based on a specific chosen theme which encouraged real transactions. Themes chosen were like – handicrafts, local items, grocery, food items, exhibition of traditional clothes or other items, music etc. A panel of judges chose sessions which were the best according to their communicative abilities in their transactions in English. An English Police Force comprising students, was formed to check that all the communication was carried out in English. Special entertainment corners within the souk encouraged students to exhibit their talents. Games corners had special games focusing on correct use of vocabulary and grammar. Students were encouraged to advertise for the products in their shops through posters prepared by them. Some activities like a Lucky Draw etc. were carried out with the objective of collecting money for charity purposes on behalf of the college.

The event was a successful initiative and was thoroughly enjoyed by the students. Prizes and certificates were given away to the winners of the best three stalls.

Languages Centre News

A paper titled, ‘Storytelling in the ESL/EFL Classroom’, written by Ms. Samia Naqvi, Sr. Lecturer Languages Centre and Ms. Asfiya Khan, Head of Student Success Centre, has been published as a chapter in the book titled Literature Teaching in the EFL Context-New Perspectives, ISBN 978-9948-16-767-9.

The MEC community congratulates both Ms. Samia and Ms. Asfiya on this wonderful achievement.
Earth Hour Observed At MEC

The Environment Club at MEC, observed Earth Hour on 23rd March 2013 in collaboration with Knowledge Oasis Muscat. To mark this event, all electrical devices were switched off between 8.30 pm and 9.30 pm on the MEC campus as an initiative to save energy. Many members of the MEC community also supported the cause by observing Earth Hour at their homes. A circular was earlier sent out by the Environment Club requesting all to observe the Earth Hour.

Students showcase cultures at MEC’s International Day

Middle East College held the first International Day, on its campus at the Knowledge Oasis Muscat, with a big turnout. The event that came in line with MEC’s core values of quality, diversity, transparency, respect and commitment, was driven by the great importance attached by MEC to enhance and support cultural diversity among students.

The participants had the opportunity to discover cultures, traditions and customs of different countries. Students from Oman, Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan, Pakistan, India, Egypt, Libya, Palestine and the Philippines showcased many multiple and wonderful performances that reflected the rich cultural heritage of their countries. The event was filled with a variety of activities each providing a unique opportunity for students of the college to have a taste of the diverse cultures of their fellow students.

“It was an exciting event which we are proud to have been part of. Diversity is one of the core values of our college and we were able to successfully uphold our respect for it by organizing this day”, said Muhammed Najeeb, B.Eng. student at MEC, and one of the chief organizers of the event.
Our college infrastructure can be compared to the best institutes locally and internationally. We have everything what a student can ever dream of. Now let us have a tour of the places to ‘hang out’ in MEC. Students can tell you in a better way about the places where they ‘hangout’. Therefore, the description of every place is followed by an interview with students…….

The first in the places to, ‘hang out’ list is the “Canteen” or Cafetaria. This place is in the Recreational block. It is the perfect place to have food and to hang around with friends. With the color combination of yellow and white, this canteen is huge and spacious. When it comes to food, it is like walking through a pathway with a variety of foods to select from and choosing what you like.

Let us see what the students have to say:

**Maali Jamil Ali Al-Shabibi (11F7584):**  
1) Why do you prefer this place?  
   “Because it is the best place to eat and hang out”

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like it because here I can eat with my friends” Dislikes: “I don’t dislike anything here”.

3) Any suggestions?  
   “Although I like everything about this place I want to suggest a separate big canteen for girls only”.

**Wafa Sulaiman (11F7749):**  
1) Why do you prefer this place?  
   “I prefer this place because for me it is the best place to relax.”

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like that here we can have a mini get together.” Dislikes: “One thing I dislike about it is that sometimes it gets overcrowded”.

3) Any suggestions?  
   “I suggest lowering the prices of food, because it is expensive for a student”.

**Places frequented by MEC Students**

- Ayman Azam Mohammed Azam
Khalsa M. Al Ladwani (11F8262):
1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I prefer this place because of its uniqueness”

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like that there is a separate place to sit for boys and girls”
Dislikes: “Not enough space for 4000 students”

3) Any suggestions?
“I would like to suggest that the attendant or cashier, at least for girl’s lounge should be a lady, so that we can be more comfortable here”.

Saali Ali Suleimani (08F4438)
1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I prefer this place as I think it is the best place for a hangout. This is because no matter how many friends are there with you, everyone gets a place as this place can accommodate them all easily”.

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like the concept of Girl’s lounge. Apart from the interior, the idea itself is very unique and different.” Dislikes: “I only dislike the food here. Honestly, the prices are too high and there is no variety in the food”.

3) Any suggestions?
“I would like to suggest that the attendant or cashier, at least for girl’s lounge should be a lady, so that we can be more comfortable here”.

Laila Al Alawi (12F8933)
1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I prefer this place because of its infrastructure and decoration. It is unique”

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “A ‘Girls only’ place is the best. Girls like to have a place where they can be comfortable”.
Dislikes: “I seriously don’t have any dislikes about this place. It is perfect”

3) Any suggestions?
“I believe there should be provision for some indoor games.

The second place in our list is “Girl’s Lounge”. This place is in the Learning and Teaching Block. It is a classy place only for girls.
It is the place with fantastic interiors and a range of food to select from. If you girls are planning to hang out then this is the perfect place for you ladies. Let us see what the students say:

Safiya Nasser Salem (11F7626):
1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I prefer this place to relax and eat between breaks and it is actually the best place to give and take treats”.

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like that there is a separate place to sit for boys and girls”
Dislikes: “Not enough space for 4000 students”

3) Any suggestions?
“I believe the menu is same everyday and it should be a bit different on different days and sorry to say but prices should be a bit low”. 
The other place in our list is “Common Lounge”. This place is in the Learning and Teaching Block. It is the twin sister of Girl’s Lounge but the main difference is that it is used commonly by both boys and girls. This place is now becoming like a hub for the COD (call of duty) players. So if you are COD lover then come and hang out with other COD lovers. This place is the best for treats and get togethers. So if you are planning to hang out with friends in a “FUNtastic” way, then this is the place for you. Let’s see what others have to say.

Ghadir Mohammad Ameen Ahmed Ibrahim (12F9328)

1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I prefer this place with no major reason I just like it and for me this place is built for a perfect hangout”

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like the ambience and the atmosphere of friendship and the infrastructure”. Dislikes: “The prices are very high. It is too expensive”.

3) Any suggestions?
“I would seriously like to suggest variety in the food.”

Muhammad Imran (11F8449)

1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I really like the level of comfortability here. It has everything to make a person comfortable”.

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like its infrastructure”. Dislikes: “It is too expensive”.

3) Any suggestions?
“I would like to suggest that there should be more variety in food”.

Saffa Al Saafi (11S6268)

1) Why do you prefer this place? “I just like this place”.

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I just like it without any special reason”. Dislikes: “I have no dislikes about this place”

3) Any suggestions?
“I suggest that we have more variety in the food”
There is a place in the Recreational Block on its first floor named “Common Room”. This place is for indoor sports lovers. It provides you a foosball, snooker, table football etc. Here you can meet many new friends who have the same tastes as yours. If you are looking out to be part of a healthy tournament in any of these indoor games then this is the place for you. Let us see what these sports lovers want to say.

**Tayyeb Rizvi (11F2397)**
1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I prefer this place because here my friends and I can easily have a great time together by playing indoor games and enjoying”

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I love to play foosball here”. Dislikes: “There are not many choices in games to play”.

3) Any suggestions?
“We want other options and different types of games to play here”.

**Adil Aslam (12S857):**
1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I prefer this place because it is a very good place to socialize”

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like the idea of this place, its main concept”. Dislikes: “I don’t have any dislike regarding this place”.

3) Any suggestions?
“I would like to suggest having more options and variety of indoor games”.

**Mohammad Ahmed Iqbal (10F6538)**
1) Why do you prefer this place?
“I prefer this place because it is a good blend of sports activities and and a place for friends to hang out. One can have a healthy tournament between friends”.

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place? Likes: “I like the time my friends and I spend here” Dislikes: “We all want more options in games”.

3) Any suggestions?
“I would like to suggest that although this place has everything for it to be the best place for a hangout, it is lacking in more games”.

The lush green place in front of the main block is called “The Garden”. This place is like a green lounge with healthy, well-maintained bushes, grass and trees. Here you can mostly find girls/ladies because this is a place for them to feel fresh and relaxed. They all have answers for the questions put to them on the suitability of this place. For example when I asked them about the weather, they said, “When it is breezy then this place is for sure naturally air-conditioned and when it is sunny, then we love to sit under the cool shadows of bushes and trees with ice creams”. If you want a place in the open air and want to escape from air-conditioners then this place is for you. Let’s see what these greenery lovers have to say.

**Abeer Ghulam Hussain Al Balushi (12F9198)**

1) Why do you prefer this place?  
“I prefer this place because it is natural, comfortable, fresh and clean”.

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place?  
Likes: “I like the freshness here”.  
Dislikes: “I don’t have any dislikes about this place”.

3) Any suggestions?  
“I would like to suggest having benches here; at least two benches”.

**Mashail Al Yahmadi (12F9176)**

1) Why do you prefer this place?  
“I prefer this place because it is natural. People are getting more and more diseases mainly because of air conditioners, artificial air, so whenever anybody gets a chance, they should try to spend it with nature.”

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place?  
Likes: “I like this place because it is so fresh and green”.  
Dislikes: “Honestly speaking I don’t have any dislikes.”

3) Any suggestions?  
“Now more and more students are spending time here so I am really concerned about the insects here. Therefore there should be a spray of insecticide at least once in a day or a week.”

**Zeenat Zehra Syed Asghar Mehdi (13S10148)**

1) Why do you prefer this place?  
“I prefer this place because of its freshness and its a perfect place to enjoy good weather”.

2) What are your likes and dislikes about this place?  
Likes: “It is naturally beautiful but regular cutting of grass and hedges and cleaning makes it more beautiful”.  
Dislikes: “I believe that one thing which it lacks is flowers”.

3) Any suggestions?  
“I would like to suggest having more flowers planted around to make it more beautiful”.

These are the responses of students and what they wanted to say about the selected places to hangout in MEC. This is not about places. The best place to hangout is where you and your friends share beautiful memories and spend time together. It can be any place where you have your friends with you. The above mentioned places are just a few selected places. The best place to hangout is the one where you and all your friends get along and this place is there in your heart.
The Middle East College’s Students’ Conference took place on Tuesday, the 21st May 2013, on its campus at Knowledge Oasis Muscat. Among the most important sub-themes of the conference were Applied Research in Electronics and Telecommunications and Applied Research in Information Technology.

The student conference was organized with the objective of stimulating and promoting research among young researchers, as it is considered the driving force behind teaching, learning and curriculum innovation and is helpful in creating a strong foundation for building the capacity to do research, in the Sultanate of Oman. It included many sessions at which many research papers and presentations that had been prepared by the students and professors of MEC, were delivered.

According to Dr. Nagesh Poojary (Program Chair), “The conference was meant to ensure and reassure research-led practice with a pragmatic collaboration among student and staff”. He further added that the outcomes of the conference such as research papers and educational experience will become case studies for new learners. Learning from best practice examples of students will facilitate creation and translation of knowledge and thereby dynamically improve research pedigree and the teaching and learning process.

In the words of Jaifar Al Abri, a UG student, “It was a great opportunity for students to share and learn from others’ experiences. I look forward to take advantage of every opportunity to learn from this conference”.

Through such conferences, MEC aims to activate an annual gathering of students, academics and researchers from different specializations and study programmes, in order to enhance the distinctive teaching and learning environment that MEC has; and to provide local communities and industries with high level scientific studies and researches that will contribute to the development of these industries and local communities.

The conference, witnessed a big turnout of students, researchers and academics from a variety of educational institutions in the Sultanate and industrialists from industries. It showcased support and cooperation within the student groups, on the one hand, and between the students and their professors on the other. Middle East College is committed to building quality graduate and post graduate programs with a distinctive interdisciplinary learning and research culture.
MEC’s Fifth Career Fair

MEC’s fifth Career Fair was held in the campus of Middle East College (MEC) at the Knowledge Oasis Muscat, from April 6-7, 2013. Eng. Mohamed Bin Hamad Al Maskary, the Director General of the Knowledge Oasis Muscat, honoured the opening ceremony of the fair that witnessed a big turnout from students, graduates and job seekers.

Building on the great success of the previous job fairs held by MEC, the Fifth Career Fair had an intensive participation from a variety of governmental offices and agencies, private sector establishments and corporates. The Ministry of Manpower, the Public Authority for Radio and TV, the Royal Air Force of Oman, Nawras, Bank Sohar, Schlumberger, Huawei, ITA, Bahwan Cyber Tech, Aijal Human Resources Solutions and Services, United Facilities Management, Arabia Insurance Company, Step4Ward, Suhail Bahwan Automobiles, Qater Airways, Zubair Corporation, Sanad and INCUBIX, were some of the participating organizations.

To mark the opening ceremony of the two-day career fair, there was a brief presentation on the job and training opportunities offered by the employers participating in the career fair, which was graced by Eng. Mohamed Bin Hamad Al Maskary. Commenting on the efforts made by MEC in this field, he said, “This fair is a great opportunity to make a strong connection between students, graduates and employers. MEC has never spared any effort to support the labour market, as well as tried to make it easier for students and graduates to take their first steps in the path of their future career.”

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. R.C. Bhattacharjee, MEC’s Dean, said, “The career fair is basically for showcasing the opportunities available to our graduating students. This is our fifth career fair, and this year it has witnessed a big turnout. We have received a very good response from reputed companies. The prospective employers collect the CVs from our students and invite them for further training if necessary. Every year, about 60% of our graduates are picked up by various companies from our campus. Moreover, our faculty members get the idea about the target areas available in the market, and re-orient themselves to equip our students to face the fresh challenges of the labour market. I wish the organizers of our fifth career fair all the success.”

Middle East College has grown significantly in the last few years. With a strong focus on applied studies and research, Middle East College currently offers a wide range of Diploma, Bachelor and Master degree programmes in Engineering, Science & Technology, and Business information systems. The college currently offers 14 programs at the Bachelor level in Engineering, Science and Technology, Business Information Systems and Design. All programmes are Honors programmes which are well acclaimed internationally and locally. The college also offers two Postgraduate programmes; namely MBA (IT) (Master of Business Administration in Information Technology) for managers intending to understand the role of Information Technology in strategic management and to help them leverage the right IT and management tools and an MSc (IT) program for individuals intending to pursue their careers in technology at the Masters level.
The National Day of Oman is celebrated every year on 18th November, His Majesty, Sultan Qaboos bin Said’s birthday. Building Oman, to where it stands now, has been an arduous task, achieved by well-studied steps taken under the wise leadership of His Majesty, and the strong will and sincere determination of the Omani people. This has contributed in the developmental process, to build a bright present and a great future for Oman. Under the able leadership and farsightedness of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the country and its people have marched ahead, using their skills and abilities. In tune with this devotion, Middle East College celebrated the National Day at the college campus, where both Omani and non-Omani students worked as a team and organized the whole event.

The preparations for the event took place just one day before the event. Students decorated the whole college. Some students designed banners and charts reflecting their patriotism while others decorated the buildings. Students belonging to the Drama Club prepared plays to perform on this day. Different student clubs joined together and worked as a team to make arrangements for the event in the Sports hall where the actual function took place.

18th November, the day of the event, began with a parade carried out by scouts. Then our Chief Guest, Dr. RC Bhattacharjee, Dean, MEC and Dr. Anupam Srivastava, Associate Dean, visited the Sports Hall. They visited all the stalls organized by club members and commended them for their efforts. There were total seven stalls, some put up by our college students while some others were put up by ex-students of MEC.

Stalls organized by students:
- Environment club
- Photography club
- Drama club
- Face painting (organized by MEC students)
- English club

Stalls organized by others (ex-students):
- Two graduated students of MEC Ruqaiya Al Busaidi and Wada Al Balushi came to display their outfits and fashion accessories. They had completed their bachelors’ degree in fashion designing at MEC.
- Maryam Al Mamari displayed her cultural outfits and accessories. She had also contributed her design collection for the function.

The programme provided a wonderful platform for all Omanis to showcase their feelings of patriotism towards their motherland.
Events & Activities Unit and faculty of Middle East College organized Achievers’ Day which was conducted on 29th May, 2013 under the auspices of Dr. R.C. Bhattacharjee, Dean of the college. This event was celebrated to felicitate and honour those outstanding students who had shown exemplary performance throughout the academic year 2012 to 2013. There were more than six hundred students who participated in different events that took place inside and outside the college.

Some students were presented gifts as a token of appreciation for their efforts while others were awarded certificates. Along with students, mentors of different clubs, teachers and supervisors were also awarded trophies and prize money.

MEC Students Rayyan Al Mujaini and Sheikha Abdullah Al Hamadi, who have made us proud by showcasing their outstanding performance across the borders, were also presented trophies and prize money. Similarly, students who had performed outside the college, were also felicitated through awards of prize money and gifts. Students who participated in different events that took place in college were awarded certificates.

The celebration aimed to strengthen students’ entrepreneurial spirit, and instill self-confidence in them, and help them to become pioneers and future leaders. This was an encouragement for them to organize several other events in the future also. In addition, college administrators, Club mentors and the best supervisors who contributed in organizing special events throughout the academic year were honoured.

The ceremony began with verses from the Holy Quran, which were recited by Majid Al Balushi. The ceremony was conducted by two talented students Benan Swid and Yahya Al Marshoudi. On behalf of the Students’ Activities Unit, Mohammad Sultan came on the stage and spoke a few words of appreciation and greeted the audience. A short film was also presented which was created by Zahraa Al-Mahdi and Benan Swid.

Studying is an important aspect in our life but without entertainment studying can be very boring. Entertainment alternated with studies can help to refresh and encourage students. That’s why colleges schedule some events and activities for it. One such event organized by the students of our college was the OPEN DAY, which was held a few months back at the Middle East College campus.

Most of the programmes were held in the Sports Hall and the Auditorium. I was one of the organizers looking after the event in the Sports Hall. We were allocated duties by the seniors from the Students’ Activities Center and asked to work together as a team. First of all we did all the decorations in the Sports Hall with colorful balloons and streamers. Second, we distributed duties for each team member and made sure that we had at least two students posted at each entrance as guards, as there were three different doors for entry: one for boys, another for girls, and the third one for staff. Third, we had to bring and arrange chairs to organize the seating arrangements properly. Fourth, we decorated the stage for the forthcoming events to take place.

The students showcased their talent in dramas through silent plays and other items showing their superior performance skills. On the whole the event was a success and was well appreciated by staff and students alike.
First TV Commercial Festival Headlines Anti-Plagiarism Week - Zahir Abdullah Al Shaikh

18 TV commercials, conceptualized and made by the Foundation students on Anti-Plagiarism were shown in the auditorium on 2nd April 2013, as a culmination activity of the Anti-Plagiarism week. The auditorium was filled with cheers and appreciation for each commercial. Six special awards were given in the first ever TV commercial festival in MEC: Prizes were awarded for the following categories: Best Commercial, Best Technical Design, Best Concept, Most Creative, Most Original and Most Informative. Dr. R.C. Bhattacharjee, Dean, MEC and Dr. Anupam Srivastava, Associate Dean, congratulated the winners and gave away the prizes.

The Anti-Plagiarism week, held during March 23 to 26, 2013 was organized by the Languages Centre in collaboration with the English Club. The event had activities stretching over a week, in order to make the students aware of academic integrity and honesty. Another objective was to encourage students to express their ideas, find ways of spreading awareness about plagiarism and to foster creativity, originality and teamwork among students.

There were three classroom-based activities. In the Listening/Speaking classes, selected Foundation students gave a 30-minute talk on ‘Academic Honesty’. These students were trained by the LC faculty comprising an Anti-Plagiarism Team. Reading teachers conducted a game on plagiarism in their Reading classes. Prizes were given to the winners in each session. The students also wrote essays on anti-plagiarism in their Writing classes. On 2nd April 2013, each session showcased different posters on the different kinds of plagiarism. Then everyone gathered at the auditorium for the closing ceremony. Dr. Tareq Al Damen, Head of the Department, Languages Centre gave an inspiring talk on Plagiarism. The event was closed with a heartwarming vote of thanks given by Mr.Van Louis Lo, the convener of the Anti-Plagiarism week.

KOM Community Cup hosted by MEC

The KOM Community Cup hosted by MEC started on the 2nd of March 2013 and had eight teams participating in it. The objective of the tournament was mainly to unite people within the Knowledge Oasis Muscat Community, through sports.

The teams included; hosts Middle East College, Knowledge Oasis Muscat, Information Technology Authority, Ericsson, Qatar Airways, Huawei, Infoline and Waljat College of Applied Sciences.

The tournament was inaugurated by Engineer Mohamed Bin Hamed Al Maskari, Director General of Knowledge Oasis Muscat on the 26th of February 2013. Besides the spirit of the game, the highlight of the tournament was that it was organised completely by the students of Middle East College.

The finals of the tournament saw hosts Middle East College play Information Technology Authority. Information Technology Authority were the winners, winning the game 5-1. The Chief Guest at the Award Ceremony was Mr Hilal Bin Hamad Al Ahsani – CEO, Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (PEIE). The ceremony was also attended by Dr. Abdullah Saif Ahmed Al Sabahy, Chairman, Middle East College, Eng. Mohamed bin Hamed Al-Maskari, Director General, Knowledge Oasis Muscat, Prof. R. C. Bhattacharjee, Dean- Middle East College (MEC) and Dr. Salim Sultan Al Ruzaig, Chief Executive Officer of the Information Technology Authority (ITA).

The winning team and the runner’s up were awarded prizes. The best player’s award went to Mahmoud Al Busafi of Information Technology Authority (ITA) and the highest goal scorer’s prize was awarded to Emilio Lenarduzzi of Middle East College (MEC).
One usually associates education and educational institutions with books, studies and the usual routine-classes, semesters, examinations etc. ‘Academics’ happens to be the main focus in such a scenario and is certainly a significant element in the school or college life of an individual. However, that should not be the only focus where education is concerned. An all-round education or what can be called ‘holistic’ education in contemporary terms, is the key-word when we talk of education in the modern times. It encompasses academic as well as extra-curricular activities which are an important component of education today.

Though, earlier, extra-curricular activities were considered to be out of the scope of a normal curriculum in a school or college, with the present approach to ‘holistic education’ they have become an integral part of the curriculum in most educational institutions. Education cannot be complete without participation in other activities beyond the realm of the usual academic curriculum. Therefore, the inclusion of these activities in the curriculum necessitates renaming them as Co-curricular activities.

Now, the question may cross one’s mind: Why are extra-curricular/co-curricular activities so important for a student? They are important because they help a student broaden his/her horizons into non-academic aspects of daily life. Participation in such activities contributes largely to the learning process. They provide multi-sensory experiences and an opportunity to utilize multiple intelligences. They also have an important role to play in the all-round personality development of a person. As we all know, personality development plays a vital role in the progress of a person in his educational and professional life.

At this juncture, one is reminded of the age old English saying: “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy”. The kind of exposure students get through participation in extra-curricular/co-curricular activities, leads to their overall personality development which can hold him/her in good stead in later life. Thus, we can understand how important participation in extra-curricular activities is for young people while they are obtaining school and college education.

Co-curricular activities are usually performed by students under the guidance of their faculty or as independent student-led initiatives. They may exist at all levels of the educational life of a student. Every person has tremendous potential and talents that may not have been realized appropriately or may not have come to the fore in strictly academic/pedagogic situations. Extra-curricular or co-curricular activities such as sports, arts & crafts, field trips, community service, dramatics, debates, conducting workshops etc., help students to enhance their hidden talent on
the one hand and aid in developing their social skills, improving health and fitness and general well-being on the other hand, leaving with them a valuable experience they can always cherish in post-college life.

One can choose one’s area of interest; for example take part in any outdoor sport or be a part of other activities such as an indoor game like chess or choose some field connected with IT such as multi-media. One could even explore the areas connected to language like debating or public speaking or participate in theatre etc. The options are many.

Through participation in sports, students are encouraged to engage in teamwork, learn cooperation and develop the skill of managing their time. Participation in various cultural activities provides opportunities for students to enrich their cultural interests and to realize their hidden potential in this field. Participation in workshops, conferences and leadership development programmes helps to develop leadership qualities and build self-confidence in them apart from updating them on related subjects and advancement in technology. Outward-bound activities enhance their learning and help to increase their knowledge and understanding of the community and the outside world.

This kind of exposure makes a person not only gain values other than the ones given by his/her school or college through academics, but also helps in making a person more social, more communicative, more determined and dedicated, and focused on a goal. Every student can become an achiever in one way or another and this can initiate the growth of self-confidence and a positive self-concept.

Co-curricular activities can be classified under different groups. These are incorporated in the curricula by educational institutions as a means to enhance social interaction, leadership, healthy recreation, self-discipline and self-confidence. A typical classification would be:

- Performing Arts like dramatics, concerts, musical performances etc
- Sports and Games
- Uniformed Groups like Rovers Club, Scouts and Guides etc.
- Clubs and Societies
- Student Associations

Middle East College gives its students ample opportunity to gain this kind of experience, in abundance. MEC’s mission statement emphasizes excellence in developing human resources, creating knowledge, encouraging active community engagement not only for the immediate society but also for the world at large and enhancing student experience through all these.

The institution promotes an all-round development of its students and to achieve this objective, there are various clubs at MEC namely: Sports Club, Electronics Club, Design Club, Rover Club/Society, Literary Club, Health Club, Media Club, Photography Club, Drama Club, Al Amal Charity Group, Environment Club, Computing Club, English Club, Business Society, Students Success Club, Entrepreneurship Club and last but not the least, the Events and Activities Unit, which always provides help and support to the students at all times. These clubs and societies organize various events and recreational activities to encourage students of the college to participate in sports, cultural activities, workshops, conferences, quiz programmes, competitions etc., to name a few.
As a raindrop left the clouds, it started to think, “Why did I leave (the comfort of) home?”

O God! What is in my fate? Will I fall on a heap of dust (and become mud?)

Or will I fall on amber and get burned? Or will I land on a (beautiful) lotus flower?

A gust of air forced her towards the ocean

She fell into the open mouth of an oyster and became a pearl”

Similarly people often hesitate to leave home

But as it happened to the raindrop, leaving home often turns out to be good for them.

(Originally written in Hindi by Mr. Ayodhya Singh Upadhyay)

It happens with all of us at some point of time in our life, where we have to take decisions for ourselves and we hesitate to act by imagining some unforeseen situations.

Challenge should be a part of your life or else life becomes too lethargic. Nothing is permanent but change, time changes, people change and so do we. Sometimes the change is for a reason and sometimes we change without any reason as everyone else is changing. We should not be a part of the sheep walk, and follow others just because they are doing it. If we can face all the challenges boldly there is nothing impossible in life.
Student Reporters

Ayman Azam Mohammed

Abeer Ghulam Hussain Al Balushi

Sadia Ashraf