

19th Annual GPCA Forum to take place in Bahrain for the first time this December

The forum will be held from 8-11 December 2025 at Exhibition World Bahrain

Manama

The Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA), the voice of the chemical industry in the Arabian Gulf, is delighted to announce that the 19th Annual GPCA Forum will be held for the first time at Exhibition World Bahrain from 8-11 December 2025, under the patronage of the Ministry of Oil and Environment, Bahrain. Hosted by the Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC), under the theme “Catalyzing Competitiveness through Strategic Partnerships”, this year’s forum underscores the industry’s imperative to embrace collaboration, innovation, and sustainability in the

face of global challenges. As the global chemical sector navigates an increasingly complex landscape shaped by the energy transition, digital disruption, and geopolitical uncertainty, strategic partnerships and technological innovation will be key to defining competitive advantage in the decade ahead. AI-driven innovation and circularity strategies will play a central role in improving operational efficiency and sustainability, while high-impact collaborations will help unlock scale and accelerate transformation. The Annual GPCA Forum will convene global

chemical CEOs, policymakers, technology providers, and young professionals from the region for a rich program of ministerial sessions, keynote presentations, fireside chats, and leadership dialogues. Abdulrahman Al-Fageeh, CEO, SABIC and Chairman, GPCA, will deliver the Welcome remarks and open the forum on 8 December, while H.E. Dr. Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, Minister of Oil and Environment, Bahrain, will present a Ministerial address as the host of this year’s event. Prof. Jim Al-Khalili CBE FRS, Distinguished Professor Emeritus in Physics, University of Surrey, UK, will deliver a Keynote address on 8 December entitled “Pathfinders of Innovation”. On 9 December, Shaikh Nawaf S. Al-Sabah, Deputy Chairman and CEO, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), will participate in a Fireside chat about the future of energy and petrochemicals. He will be followed on stage by Simon Williams, Chief Economist, HSBC, who will address the state of the global economy and the tariffs conundrum. Peter R. Huntsman, President and CEO, Huntsman Corporation, will discuss the power of partnerships in a Fireside chat, followed by a CEOs Plenary on the role of high impact partnerships featuring Dr. Markus Kamieth, CEO, BASF, and Peter Vanacker, CEO, Ly-

ondellBasell. Other esteemed speakers at the forum this year include:

- Steve Prusak, President and CEO, Chevron Phillips Chemical Company
- Dr. Hans Bohnen, CEO, Röhm GmbH
- Dr. Stefan Doboczky, CEO, Borealis AG
- Jean - Marc Natal, Head of the Commodities Unit, International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- Eduardo Meneses, CEO, Air Products
- Aloke Lohia, Founder and Group CEO, Indorama Ventures
- Ignacio ‘Nacho’ Torras, President and CEO, Tricon Energy
- Stephan Schnabel, Chairman of the Executive Board, HELM AG
- Dr. Udo Lange, CEO, Stolt-Nielsen

The forum will also feature the 2nd GPCA Startup Nexus, a platform dedicated to advancing the regional start-up ecosystem, alongside the 3rd GPCA Solutions Xchange and the GPCA Sustainability Pavilion, which will showcase the region’s sustainability initiatives and circular solutions. Building on the success of previous editions, the 4th GPCA Youth Forum will unite young pro-

fessionals and students with industry leaders to exchange insights and shape the future of the chemical and petrochemical sector. As in previous years, one of the most anticipated moments of the forum will be the presentation of the 7th GPCA Legacy Award “Al Rowad”, taking place on 8 December. The award will honor an exceptional pioneer whose vision and leadership laid the foundations for the chemical industry in the Arabian Gulf, celebrating their enduring impact and contribution to the sector’s growth

and global reputation. Dr. Abdulwahab Al-

Sadoun, Secretary General, GPCA, commented: “In this new era of global rebalancing, emerging trade flows and strategic partnerships present new opportunities to reinvent the GCC chemical industry’s competitiveness and pursue new avenues for growth. The Annual GPCA Forum is the ideal platform to ignite collaboration, while driving innovation, advancing sustainability, and building industry resilience. We invite the global and regional chemical industry community to join us this December in Bahrain for four days

full of networking, knowledge sharing, and collaboration to shape the future ‘ether.’”



Iran likely seized oil tanker off UAE: security firms



Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Iran likely seized an oil tanker that suddenly changed course towards the country’s waters Friday, two security companies said, stoking concern that Tehran has resumed maritime captures after a lull. The ship, which had left Ajman in the United Arab Emirates destined for Singapore, was heading for Iranian waters. Ellie Shafik of Vanguard Tech told AFP the Talara had been intercepted by Iran’s Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) and detained. “It’s unclear why,” she said. “Iran will likely frame this as a judicially ordered, law-based action, masking what may just be a strategic seizure.” Iran has so far not commented on the incident. The US Navy said it was “actively monitoring the situation”. “Commercial vessels are entitled to largely unimpeded rights of navigation and commerce on the high seas,” said

the US 5th Fleet, which patrols the region. The Marshall Islands-flagged vessel was heading south through the Strait of Hormuz when it was approached by three small boats, maritime security company Ambrey said, adding it had made a “sudden course deviation”. Maritime Security company Neptune P2P Group said the vessel had been seized by “suspected Iranian forces”. “The incident appears to be the latest in a series of illegal ship seizures transiting the Strait of Hormuz and Gulf of Oman in recent years, but it is the first since the seizure of the commercial ship MSC ARIES in April 2024,” it said in a note. “The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy are usually responsible for such incidents and has been known to use such activity to apply political pressure in the region,” it added. The British Royal Navy-run UKMTO, meanwhile, said the incident was “believed to be state activity”.

Epstein’s emails reveal network of powerful contacts

AFP | Washington, United States

The latest batch from convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein’s emails illustrates the extraordinary scope of his contacts with powerful people, ranging from a top Trump adviser to Britain’s ex-prince Andrew. The US House of Representatives is expected to vote next week on trying to force release of evidence gathered on Epstein by law enforcement over the years -- including the identities of the men suspected of participating in his alleged sex trafficking ring. However, a slew of emails released this week has already opened new windows on the extent of Epstein’s network. These include multiple references to President Donald Trump, who is angrily calling the push for more transparency a “hoax” -- while simultaneously demanding a probe of Epstein’s links to others, including former president Bill Clinton. Documents already released by Democrats in Congress include email exchanges running from 2009 to 2019, when Epstein died in detention while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges.

His death was ruled a suicide. These are just three of the prominent men -- and one woman -- found in the email threads. Andrew, fallen prince One exchange in the typo-strewn emails confirms that contact between Epstein and Andrew, who was stripped of his royal title in October, did not definitively end in late 2010, as his brother King Charles has stated. As late as March 4, 2011, Epstein wrote to Andrew with several questions addressed to long-time associate Ghislaine Maxwell, who was convicted of sex trafficking after



Epstein’s death. “Please make sure that every statement or legal letter states clearly that I am NOT involved and that I knew and know NOTHING about any of these allegations. I can’t take any more of this my end,” Andrew wrote. Two days later Epstein wrote back: “you ok? these stories are complete and utter fantasy.” Bannon, former Trump adviser Epstein had a long email correspondence in 2018 with Steve Bannon, an adviser to Trump in his first term and a chief ideologue of the hard-right Make America Great Again movement. That July, Epstein suggested he help Bannon spread his far-right ideas in Europe. Epstein: “It’s doable, but time consuming, there are many leaders of countries we can organize for you to have one on ones.” “Agree 100% How do I do that???” Bannon asked. “We can talk about at your convenience,” Epstein said. Former treasury secretary Summers “How is life among the lucrative and louche?” asked Larry Summers, who served as treasury secretary under Barack Obama, in an

email to Epstein on October 27, 2017, during Trump’s first term. “When we meet I will endeavor to mesmerize you with stories of D.C. so wild !!!” Epstein replied. Epstein asked what people attending a conference with Summers think of Trump. “Hard to tell. General view Donald is a clown, increasingly dangerous on foreign policy,” Summers said. Epstein in December 2018: “trump - borderline insane.” Former Obama adviser Ruemmler Epstein also traded emails with Kathryn Ruemmler, a lawyer who served as an adviser to Obama until 2014. Their exchange began that year and ran until 2019. “I am about to go on stage. The first part of my presentation is about Trump,” Ruemmler wrote in May 2016. “Con man, says it all,” Epstein replied. In August 2018 he wrote to her: “I know how dirty donald is. my guess is that non lawyers ny biz people have no idea.” That December Epstein wrote: “you might want to tell your dem friends that treating trump like a mafia don, ignores the fact that he has great dangerous power.”