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GULF TIMES





0 668039 136499

FRIDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13888

October 9, 2026
Rabia II 28, 1448 AH

www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals

published in **QATAR** since 1978



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Qatar condemns Houthi attacks on Saudi airports

Qatar condemned the attacks by the Houthi group against Abha International Airport and King Khalid International Airport in Saudi Arabia, which resulted in several deaths and injuries, as well as damage to properties. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) expressed in a statement that the attacks represent a grave violation of the kingdom's sovereignty and a direct threat to the security of the region and the safety of civilians, civil objects, and air navigation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs furthermore reiterated Qatar's complete solidarity with the Saudi Arabia and its support for all legitimate measures taken to maintain its sovereignty, security, and the safety of its lands and assets, emphasising that the security of the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) is one. The ministry expressed Qatar's condolences to the victims, wishing a swift recovery to the injured. **(QNA)**

Top US science medal for Musk

US President Donald Trump presented Elon Musk with the top US science medal yesterday, as the rocket tycoon fully returned to the president's orbit after an explosive bust-up. Six US tech titans received prestigious awards from the president at a Washington peace institute that was itself recently renamed after Trump. But all eyes were on billionaire SpaceX and Tesla boss Musk following his acrimonious departure from Trump's cost-cutting Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) last year. Trump called Musk a "national treasure" and said that "Elon is our modern-day Thomas Edison," referring to the American inventor of the lightbulb. "Elon, I want to congratulate you. You're my friend, and all of that, but you are a very, very special guy," Trump added at the summit, dubbed "Science: A New Golden Age". Along with Musk, Google co-founder Sergei Brin, Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang and AMD chief Lisa Su all received the National Medal of Science from Trump during the ceremony. **(AFP)**

COMMUNITY

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Saudia plane hit, airlines cancel flights to Riyadh

Lufthansa Group and three Indian airlines will suspend flights to Riyadh, they said yesterday, as Yemen's Houthis renewed threats against airlines after claiming an attack on the Saudi capital's airport. A Lufthansa spokesperson told Reuters the German group's airlines would suspend flights to Riyadh through October 16 due to "current developments in the Middle East".

India's largest airline IndiGo said it had cancelled all flights to and from Riyadh until October 9.

Air India and Akasa Air also told Reuters they had cancelled all flights to and from the Saudi capital until October 10. Air India added that a flight from Delhi to Riyadh returned to the Indian capital yesterday, while Akasa Air cancelled two scheduled services.

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis said they had struck King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh with a ballistic missile, although there was no immediate confirmation from Saudi authorities.

Saudi authorities said on Wednesday that three people had

been killed this week in strikes on Riyadh airport and Abha airport in the southwest. Several dozen international flights bound for Riyadh yesterday evening have been cancelled, data from global flight tracker FlightRadar24 showed.

Data compiled by aviation analytics firm Cirium showed 49.7% of departures from Riyadh airport had been cancelled by 1500 GMT, with a further 31 cancellations expected across Saudi airports today.

Earlier, a commercial plane belonging to state-owned Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia) was heavily damaged by fire while parked at a terminal in Riyadh airport yesterday, three people briefed on the matter said, attributing the damage to either shrapnel or a direct hit by a projectile. The sources said that the plane was believed to be empty of passengers at the time, but could not rule out any injuries as a result of the incident. Saudi Arabia's government media office, its civil aviation authority and Saudia Airlines did not respond to e-mailed requests for comment. **(Reuters)**

Qatar, Italy to deepen ties in tech, digital, AI

HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai has met with Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy of the Italian Republic Adolfo Urso. The meeting discussed ways to strengthen co-operation between Qatar and Italy in communications and information technology.

The two sides also explored opportunities for joint co-operation in artificial intelligence (AI) ethics and governance, the digital industry and digital economy, as well as ways to promote the exchange of expertise and foster partnerships between digital-sector entities and companies in the two countries.

HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology underscored the importance of expanding Qatar-Italy co-operation and broadening the partnership between the two sides in priority digital and technological fields. He said the partnership provides scope for deeper digital collaboration through joint initiatives in AI



ethics and governance, the digital industry and digital economy, while strengthening ties between companies and institutions in both countries.

HE the Minister also expressed his aspiration to translate available opportunities into tangible partnerships and projects, strengthen the presence of startups on international platforms, and expand economic and technological co-

operation between Qatar and Italy.

The meeting also discussed opportunities to strengthen links between technology companies and entrepreneurs in the two countries, foster partnerships to expand trade and technological co-operation, and capitalise on opportunities offered by the Qatari market and international platforms hosted by Qatar to connect companies, investors and innovators. **(QNA)**

Visit Qatar bags prestigious GCC award

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Visit Qatar has received a GCC-level award recognising Outstanding Companies in Workforce Nationalisation, with Engineer Abdulaziz Ali al-Mawlawi, CEO of Visit Qatar, receiving the award from Sheikh Khalid bin Abdulla al-Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister of Bahrain, during a ceremony held on the sidelines of the 12th meeting of the GCC Committee of Ministers of Labour in Manama.

The regional recognition reflects Visit Qatar's strategic commitment to empowering national talent within the tourism sector. Qatar Tourism and Visit Qatar continue to invest in attracting, developing and retaining Qatari professionals, creating opportunities for them to contribute to the visitor experience and the sec-



tor's continued growth.

The recognition honours Visit Qatar's efforts to attract and develop national talent and follows Qatar Tourism's receipt of the Qatar Government Excellence Award for its outstanding performance, institutional excellence, and commitment to advancing public

sector governance in line with national priorities.

The GCC awards are held annually to highlight success stories and honour entities and individuals that have contributed to nationalisation efforts, fostering the exchange of expertise and experience among GCC countries.

'Productive discussions' ongoing with Iran: Trump

US President Donald Trump said yesterday that the US will not launch an attack on Iran before November's US midterm congressional elections, asserting that the two countries are having "productive" talks about ending the six-month-old war. "We are having productive discussions with the Islamic Republic of Iran," Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social. "We will not be attacking Iran at any time prior to the midterm elections to be held in the United States on November 3rd."

The war, which began in February when the US and Israel launched strikes on Iran, has helped drive Trump's domestic approval ratings downward and is weighing heavily on his fellow Republicans as they seek to preserve their narrow legislative majorities in November's election.

Some 60% of Americans — including one in four Republicans — disapprove of how Trump is handling the situation in Iran, ac-

cording to a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll. The conflict has pushed gasoline prices sharply higher at a time when voters say their top concern is the cost of living.

Trump has repeatedly said he expects oil prices to drop after the elections, but he has not offered a detailed plan for exiting the war.

Iran and the US have exchanged proposals in recent weeks aimed at ending the war and reopening the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global energy shipping route. Trump rejected Tehran's latest offer. Iran's state media reported yesterday that Tehran would not abandon uranium enrichment or hand over its uranium stockpile, citing the head of the country's Atomic Energy Organisation, days after US Vice-President JD Vance told Reuters that Iran must make "meaningful" reductions in its enrichment capacity.

The US, Israel and Western allies have long accused Iran of seeking nuclear weapons, an accusation Iran has denied. **(Reuters)**

QM set to host exhibition by iconic designer Erdem Moralioglu

QNA
Doha

Qatar Museums (QM) will present ERDEM: About Time, About Her, a major retrospective dedicated to the work of internationally acclaimed British-Turkish designer Erdem Moralioglu in the last week of October.

The exhibition is presented at M7, Qatar's epicentre for innovation and entrepreneurship in fashion, design, and technology, located in Msheireb Downtown Doha. It explores the designer's creative evolution and the refined visual language that defines Erdem's work today.

On view from Oct 27 through Dec 26, ERDEM: About Time, About Her is curated by Olivier Gabet, with exhibition design by P Joseph and immersive installation design by Robin Brown. It will bring together over 150 pieces from Erdem, including garments, sketches, personal ephemera and atelier materials.

Alongside Erdem's designs, the exhibition features works from the Museum of Is-



lamic Art, including paintings, sculptures, and decorative arts. By presenting garments alongside selected objects from the Museum of Islamic Art's collections, the exhibition explores the shared visual languages and cultural narratives that connect fashion and decorative arts and uncovers the dialogue between Erdem's designs and the wider cultural and artistic world.

Erdem Moralioglu, Creative Director and Founder of Erdem, said: "I have always been fascinated by the capacity of clothing to hold the trace of a person, a place or a moment in time. It is a privilege to share this reflection on the past two decades with a wider audience"

Maha al-Sulaiti, Director of M7, said:

"Our mission at M7 is to strengthen creative exploration and deepen the public's appreciation for design. ERDEM: About Time, About Her offers audiences a rare opportunity to engage closely with the thinking behind a globally recognised fashion house, while inspiring emerging designers to understand how a distinctive creative identity can be developed over time."

Olivier Gabet, Curator, Director of Objets d'Art Department at Musée du Louvre, said: "Over the past 20 years, Erdem Moralioglu has created far more than a distinctive language of dress: he has constructed an imaginative world in which history is never fixed, beauty is never innocent, and the past is continually transformed by the present."

As part of the Qatar, Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture, ERDEM: About Time, About Her celebrates the connections between different countries internationally. Through new scholarship on Qatar Museums' collections, the exhibition speaks to the lasting value of Years of Culture and how creative practice can build lasting cultural understanding across borders.





Qatar participates in meeting of GCC labour ministers in Bahrain

Qatar participated in the proceedings of the 12th Meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Labour of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), held yesterday in Bahrain. Qatar's delegation was headed by HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Samikh al-Marri. The ministers discussed ways to strengthen GCC co-operation in the labour market, exchange expertise and benefit from the successful experiences of GCC Member States. They also addressed issues of common interest in the field of the workforce, contributing to the development of Gulf labour markets and human resources. - QNA



Amir congratulates Kosovo's president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani has sent a cable of congratulations to Kosovo's President Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu on the occasion of her taking the constitutional oath, wishing her success in her duties and looking forward to further development and growth of relations between the two countries. HH the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent a similar cable of congratulations to Osmani-Sadriu. - QNA

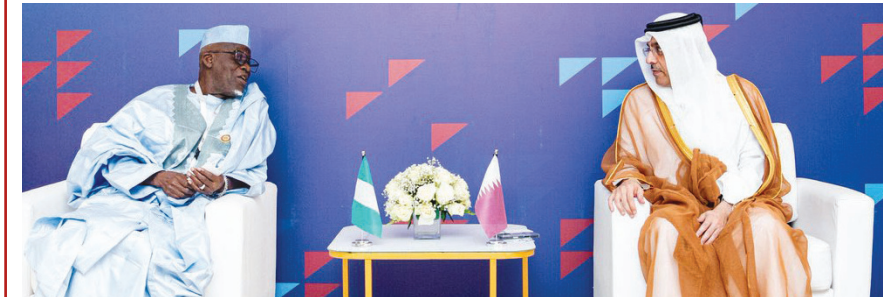
QMC takes part in meeting of ASBU Radio Committee

The Qatar Media Corporation (QMC)'s Qatar Radio has participated in the 37th meeting of the Permanent Radio Committee of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), held at the union's headquarters in Tunis. Qatar Radio holds the position of second deputy chairman of the committee. Qatar Radio director-general Jaber Mohammed al-Sorour led Qatar's delegation. The meeting reviewed preparations for the 27th Arab Radio and Television Festival, scheduled for 2027, including the main and parallel radio competition categories ahead of their circulation among member states. Participants also discussed arrangements for an open media day in support of the Palestinian cause and the resilience of Jerusalem, scheduled for November 29. Qatar Radio was selected as the central broadcaster for the event in co-ordination with Palestinian Radio. The meeting also reviewed preparations for World Radio Day 2027, with Qatar Radio again selected as the central broadcaster for the event, which is scheduled for February 13. - QNA



Al-Marri meets top officials attending 2nd Doha Dialogue on Labour Mobility

HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Samikh al-Marri held separate meetings with labour ministers participating in the Second Doha Dialogue on Labour Mobility, which was hosted by Tanzania on October 5-6 under the theme *From Commitment to Action: Advancing Fair and Sustainable Labour Mobility between Africa and GCC+*, with the participation of more than 33 Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), African and Arab countries. HE Dr al-Marri held meetings with Tanzania's Deus Clement Sangu, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo)'s Ferdinand Massamba Wa Massamba, Sierra Leone's Umaru Napoleon Koroma, and Djibouti's Yonis Ali Guedi. HE Dr al-Marri also held meetings with Somalia's Prof Salim Alio Ibro, Lebanon's Dr Mohammad Haidar, Nigeria's Dr Muhammadu Maigari Dingyadi, Chad's Abdoulaye Mbodou Mbami, Lesotho's Tseliso Mokhosi, Senegal's Mamadou Lamine Diante, Mozambique's Ivete Angela dos Anjos Ferrao Alane, and Botswana's Major-General Pius Mokgware. The meetings focused on bilateral co-operation in labour-sector matters, ways to further strengthen and advance these relations, and key issues addressed during the second edition of the Doha Dialogue on Labour Mobility. - QNA



Qatar, GCC ministers discuss social development action

Qatar participated in a meeting of the Committee of Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) Ministers of Social Affairs and Social Development, held in Bahrain, as part of efforts to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination on social development issues across the Gulf. Qatar was represented at the meeting by HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi. Officials said Qatar's participation underscores the importance of developing joint Gulf social action, enhancing the exchange of expertise and experiences among GCC countries, and supporting programmes and initiatives that address social priorities and challenges across the region. The meeting discussed a number of priority issues in the field of social development, including following up on the implementation of joint Gulf decisions and plans,



as well as the work plan of the Committee of Ministers of Social Affairs and Social Development 2026-30. It also explored ways to enhance the effectiveness of joint social initiatives and programmes in line with priorities and emerging developments.

The meeting further addressed issues concerning persons with disabilities, including monitoring and following up on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as a proposal to organise a regular Gulf forum on issues concerning persons with disabilities.

In the area of childhood, the meeting discussed the challenges and opportunities presented by artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on children's rights, the preparation of a regional report on children's rights and their future in the GCC countries, and further Gulf co-ordination on children's issues and rights. It also addressed matters concerning Gulf women and enhancing co-ordination among GCC countries in relevant areas. The meeting touched upon a number of new proposals and initiatives aimed at developing joint Gulf social action and strengthening co-operation among the GCC countries. On the sidelines of the meeting, HE al-Nuaimi participated in the 2026 ceremony honouring leading figures and projects in the field of civil social work, where a number of distinguished Qatari figures and projects were honoured. - QNA



Minister meets Turkiye, Netherlands ambassadors

HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah met separately yesterday with ambassadors Ferdinand Lahnstein (the Netherlands) and Yakup Caymazoglu (Turkiye). During the meetings, they discussed co-operation and relations in fields of common interest. - QNA



Al-Khulaifi meets French president's envoy to Lebanon



HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met yesterday with the French President's Personal Envoy to Lebanon Jean-Yves Le Drian, who is visiting Qatar. They discussed bilateral co-operation and ways to support and strengthen it, as well as the latest developments in Lebanon and issues of mutual interest. - QNA

UAE team explores Qatar's municipal planning, digital transformation

The Ministry of Municipality received a delegation from the Emirate of Ajman in the United Arab Emirates, as part of a visit aimed at exploring leading experiences and practices in municipal work, urban planning and digital transformation projects. During the visit, the delegation was briefed on key achievements and strategic initiatives implemented by the ministry through Doha Municipality, as well as the specialised services it provides to beneficiaries. The delegation also learned about the latest practices in the buildings sector and the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in developing field and service operations and enhancing urban planning efficiency. The visit included a detailed briefing on the latest technologies used to manage reports and facilitate direct communication with the public. - QNA



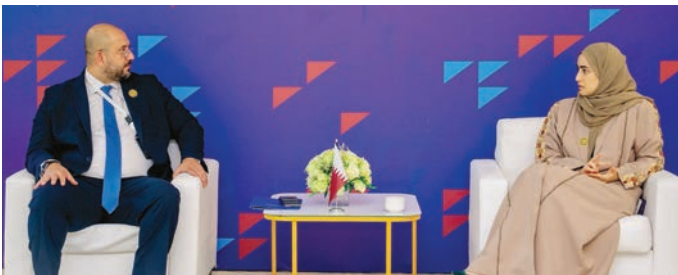
Qatar participates in meeting of ministers, heads of civil service

Qatar, represented by the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau (CGB), participated in the 22nd meeting of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) Ministers and Heads of Civil Service Committee, held in Bahrain. Qatar's delegation was headed by HE the President of the CGB and Secretary-General of the National Planning Council Dr Abdulaziz bin Nasser bin Mubarak al-Khalifa. The meeting discussed topics of mutual interest, within goals to strengthen co-operation and integration between the GCC countries in civil service and human resources development. - QNA





MoL undersecretary meets ILO, IOM officials in Tanzania



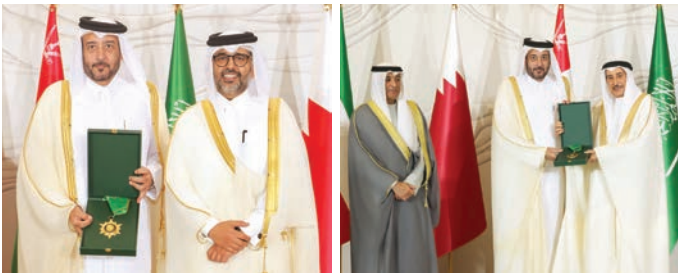
HE the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour (MoL) Sheikhha Najwa bint Abdulrahman al-Thani met separately yesterday with Regional Director for Arab States at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Dr Ruba Jaradat and Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa at the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Othman Fouad Belbeisi.

The meetings were held on the sidelines of the Second Doha Dialogue on Labour Mobility, hosted by the United Republic of Tan-

zania in Dar es Salaam on Oct 5-6 under the theme "From Commitment to Action: Advancing Fair and Sustainable Labour Mobility between Africa and GCC+."

The meetings discussed Qatar's co-operation with the ILO and IOM in labour-sector matters, ways to further strengthen these partnerships, and key issues addressed by the Second Doha Dialogue, particularly its role in advancing institutional co-operation and fair and sustainable labour mobility between Africa and GCC+. (QNA)

GCC honours Qatar's NCSA chief for government service



HE Engineer Abdulrahman bin Ali al-Farahid al-Malki, president of the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA), received the GCC Medal for Civil Service and Administrative Development yesterday. The recognition came in appreciation of al-Malki's contributions and active role in the government sector, during a ceremony honouring distinguished professionals held on the sidelines of the 22nd Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Civil Service Authorities of the GCC States, in Bahrain.

Al-Attiyah chairs 2nd meeting of NAQ Board of Trustees

HE Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Archives of Qatar (NAQ), chaired the second meeting of 2026 yesterday morning at the institution's headquarters. During the meeting, the Board reviewed the items on its agenda. Dr Ahmed Abdullah al-Buainain, secretary-general, presented an overview of key achievements in 2026 and outlined the latest developments and planned activities for the upcoming period, enabling the Board to make appropriate decisions regarding them.



Arab Centre for Legal and Judicial Research adopts MoJ's guide for documenting research

The Arab Centre for Legal and Judicial Research, affiliated with the Council of Arab Justice Ministers, adopted the Guide to Documenting Arab Legal Research, prepared by the Center for Legal and Judicial Studies at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), as a unified Arab reference guide for documenting Arab legal research and studies.

The guide was adopted during the 34th meeting of deans and directors of Arab judicial institutes, held at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo. This move embodies the leading role of the Ministry of Justice's Center for Legal and Judicial Studies and reflects the State of Qatar's successful experience in the field of legal studies and research.

During the meeting, Director of the Center for Legal and Judicial Studies at MoJ, Dr Abdullah Hamad al-Khalidi reviewed the current state of citation in Arab legal research and journals, as well as



comparative experiences, outlining the guide's objectives, the rationale for its preparation, and its methodology, based on the latest international standards.

He pointed out that the guide was prepared in response to the disparities in citation styles observed across the Arab legal landscape, among law faculties, judicial institutes, and specialised journals, and the resulting challenges regarding the quality of legal research and its suitability for peer review and scholarly indexing.

The presentation highlighted

seven instances of inconsistency in citation practices within Arab research, most notably the absence of specific formats for certain sources, incomplete details regarding judicial rulings, and the failure to indicate the enforceability status of legislation. The presentation pointed out that the Arab guide draws upon leading international models, foremost among them the Oxford Standard for Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA) and the American Bluebook, while taking into account the unique characteristics

of Arab legislative, judicial, and Sharia sources.

The guide focuses on standardising documentation methods and enhancing the accuracy of legislative citations, by specifying official wording, the latest amendments, and enforceability status, thereby upholding academic integrity and supporting the quality of legal publishing in the Arab world.

The guide comprises 11 key areas, including Sharia sources, national legislation, judicial rulings, international sources, and emerging sources, foremost among them being artificial intelligence outputs, and stipulates that it will be reviewed periodically every two years.

The Guide to Documenting Arab Legal Research received its first academic accreditation from Qatar University (QU), and is expected to secure similar accreditations from other Arab universities, thereby bolstering its adoption within Arab academic and legal circles. (QNA)

QC signs agreement to perform cataract surgeries for 100 beneficiaries in Tunisia

Qatar Charity's office in Tunisia signed a co-operation agreement with the Hedi Raies Institute of Ophthalmology in Tunis to implement a health project providing cataract surgery for 100 beneficiaries, as part of efforts to support the health sector and facilitate access to specialised medical services.

The agreement was signed at the institute in the presence of Qatar's ambassador to Tunisia, Zayed bin Saeed al-Khayareen, and Director of Development Op-



erations at Qatar Charity, Ibrahim Abdulrahman al-Janahi.

Qatar's ambassador to Tunisia, Zayed bin Saeed al-Khayareen, said the agreement reflected Qatar's firm commitment to sup-

porting Tunisia and strengthening health services for its citizens.

Director of Development Operations at Qatar Charity, Ibrahim Abdulrahman al-Janahi, said the agreement was part of Qatar

Quality of education influences students, institutions: minister



HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhater affirmed that the concept of quality in education was no longer limited to meeting requirements, but has become linked to the extent of the educational process's impact on students, institutions and society.

Speaking at the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education Forum, held in Doha, HE AlKhater said that since its establishment in 2022, the National Committee for Qualifications and Academic Accreditation has been keen to benefit from regional and international expertise and experiences. She noted that more than 50% of higher education institutions in Qatar are now engaged in the committee's processes, whether as accredited institutions, candidates for accreditation or institutions preparing their self-study reports.

She pointed out that higher education systems in the Arab region comprise more than 13mn students across approximately 1,200 higher education institutions, noting that the scale of these systems and the diversity of their institutions and programmes make quality assurance an increasingly urgent and important issue.

AlKhater added that the forum is discussing more than 50 research papers, with active participation from higher education institutions in Qatar, reflecting a shared academic commitment to exchanging expertise and keeping pace with transformations in the sector.

She added that several research papers and accompanying workshops were re-examining quality assurance concepts and tools. Among the key areas under discussion were authentic assessment and safeguarding academic integrity amid the growing use of artificial intelligence tools ca-

pable of generating texts and answering questions. This, AlKhater noted, requires a greater focus on measuring what students have actually learned and their ability to apply knowledge.

She also said that the forum was also examining the use of data and analytics to support quality assurance and academic accreditation processes, including tools for tracking enrolment, retention and graduation, as well as analysing institutional evidence. She stressed that these tools support decision-making without replacing human expertise.

AlKhater noted that the shift from compliance with standards to measuring the actual impact of education is one of the forum's main themes. She added that integrating these approaches contributes to shaping a new concept of academic accreditation that goes beyond periodic document reviews to continuously measuring educational impact through

the use of modern technologies.

HE AlKhater expressed hope that the forum's recommendations would help translate scientific research findings into practical applications that support higher education institutions in anticipating the future, harnessing artificial intelligence to serve science and humanity, and achieving a sustainable impact on communities.

For her part, Dr Jokha Abdullah Hamoud al-Shukaili, President of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, affirmed that artificial intelligence (AI) applications and digital transformation have become an integral part of learning, scientific research and knowledge production.

Al-Shukaili noted that the real challenge lies not in accepting or rejecting artificial intelligence, but in how to use it responsibly and ethically to enhance learning, develop capabilities and,

at the same time, preserve the originality of academic work and the credibility of its outcomes. She stressed the need to develop assessment methods capable of measuring analytical, critical thinking, creative and problem-solving skills.

For his part, Chairman of the National Committee for Qualifications and Academic Accreditation Professor Dr Mazen Omar Hasna affirmed that Qatar's hosting of the forum reflected the committee's commitment to strengthening cooperation and engagement with regional and international networks specialising in quality assurance and the exchange of expertise.

He noted that the forum attracted broad participation, with 86 research papers submitted, of which 56 were accepted, alongside four specialised workshops and more than 500 registered participants. He stressed that the forum's real value lies in exchanging expertise and experiences that contribute to developing higher education institutions and serving students and communities.

The Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education Forum, organised by the National Committee for Qualifications and Academic Accreditation in cooperation with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation in the US, brings together leading experts, academics and representatives of quality assurance and academic accreditation bodies from Arab countries and around the world.

The forum discussed the future of academic accreditation and quality assurance in higher education institutions amid rapid developments in artificial intelligence and digital transformation, while exploring the opportunities and challenges these changes present for higher education systems across the region. (QNA)

SC receives AI Transformation Leadership Award

The Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC) has received the AI Transformation Leadership Award, presented by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) in collaboration with Microsoft, in recognition of its efforts to adopt and integrate AI technologies across the organisation. The award was presented by Sami Mohammed al-Shammari, MCIT Assistant Undersecretary for Infrastructure and Operations Affairs, and received on behalf of the SC by Aisha al-Kuwari, executive director of Information Technology. This award reflects the SC's commitment to using AI to support its employees, improve productivity and simplify daily operations, as well as to explore new applications for the technology in the planning and delivery of sporting and international events



Qatar attends GCC environment affairs undersecretaries' meeting

The State of Qatar participated in the 46th meeting of the Committee of Undersecretaries Responsible for Environmental Affairs in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, held via videoconference.

Qatar was represented at the meeting by HE the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Engineer Abdulaziz bin Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud. The meeting discussed follow-up on the implementation of the Supreme Council's decision concerning the GCC countries' environmental priorities, as well as developments related to support for the Green Middle East Initiative. It also addressed the work plan of the Committee of Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs through 2030, along with a number of issues related to strengthening joint Gulf environmental action. (QNA)

QU launches first edition of 'My Experience: From Reality to Impact' event

Qatar University (QU) launched the first edition of an event under the title of 'My Experience: From Reality to Impact', as part of the university's efforts to foster experiential learning and link academic life with professional and human experiences.

The first session of the event featured media expert, Saad bin Mohammed al-Rumaihi, offering students the opportunity to directly engage with key milestones of his media and professional career. The session also included a discussion on the challenges that al-Rumaihi had faced and the decisions that he had made, as well as their impact, moving beyond the traditional approach to shar-

ing professional experience.

On this occasion, al-Rumaihi affirmed that the value of the experience lies in the journey itself and the lessons learned from it, commending the students' level of interest and the questions they asked during the session.

In turn, Director of Student Activities Department at QU, Abdullah al-Mulla, said that the event reflects the university's commitment to offering high-quality programs that make students active partners in the learning process, noting that it aims to transform real-world experiences into practical knowledge that students can utilise to shape their future career paths. (QNA)





Teachers must be at heart of education, says al-Azzawi

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Teachers must be at the heart of efforts to advance education and build future generations, with their preparation, professional development, and working conditions receiving the same priority as curricula and educational systems, according to Prof Dr Mohammed Abdulwahab al-Azzawi, an international Total Quality Management expert.

Speaking to Gulf Times on the occasion of Teacher's Day, Prof Dr al-Azzawi, a former adviser to Qatar's Ministry of Administrative Development and the Institute of Public Administration, said teachers are the cornerstone upon which minds, societies and civilisations are built.

Prof Dr al-Azzawi, who is also a professor at the College of Administration and Economics at the University of Baghdad and former dean of the Institute of Accounting and Financial Studies, said improving teaching and learning remains a priority for both developing and developed countries, which recognise education as a key driver of their aspirations and future goals.

He said preparing teachers is among the most important factors in achieving educational advancement, which in turn drives progress across society.

A competent teacher, he added, can translate a society's educational and scientific objectives into reality while nurturing a

generation equipped to shoulder responsibility and committed to high ethical standards.

He noted that almost everyone who has attended school in the Arab world knows the famous verse by renowned Egyptian poet Ahmed Shawqi: "Stand up for the teacher and show him due reverence; the teacher almost ranks as a messenger."

He said the verse has become a familiar expression of gratitude and appreciation for teachers who devote themselves to their profession and guide students from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. However, he pointed out that many people who quote the famous line have never read the complete poem.

He said teachers come second only to parents in respect and reverence. They are among the first to instil in children a love of knowledge and serve as a bridge from their first encounter with the alphabet through the various stages of education.

"Knowledge is like a vast universe with no end, and the secrets of the cosmos are revealed only to those firmly grounded in learning," he said.

Prof Dr al-Azzawi stressed that a teacher is neither a machine nor an inanimate tool, but a vital intermediary between learners and knowledge. Teachers must therefore possess the intellectual, academic and psychological qualities needed to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

Citing the Prophet Muham-



Professor Dr Mohammed Abdulwahab al-Azzawi

mad (peace be upon him) as saying, "Allah loves that when one of you does a job, he perfects it," Prof Dr al-Azzawi stressed that excellence has requirements and standards. If quality specifications are essential for machines, he said, they are even more important for people.

He said teachers' academic and behavioural qualifications are essential at every stage of education, but become particularly critical during the early years of schooling, when children are highly impressionable and shaped by several influences, foremost among them the home and school.

"From my perspective, when the teacher is competent, many other shortcomings, whether in curricula or administration, can be addressed," Prof Dr al-Azzawi said. "The teacher is the leader inside the classroom, the person

who manages its dynamics and lays the foundations for a child's sound behavioural and moral development."

He stressed that teachers must be developed through modern scientific approaches, given their fundamental role, alongside parents, in raising children and advancing society and civilisation.

To strengthen teacher preparation, Prof Dr al-Azzawi proposed establishing a specialised academy where selected candidates would undergo a three-year bachelor's programme in education. He said the programme should combine pedagogy and Arabic with digital skills and artificial intelligence (AI), along with comprehensive ethical and behavioural preparation.

He suggested selecting teaching candidates from among high-achieving students before they enter the profession and assessing them through a structured programme designed to prepare them to work effectively with students.

He also called for attractive salaries and clearly defined career pathways to encourage talented graduates to enter and remain in the teaching profession, describing teaching as one of society's most fundamental vocations.

He also proposed mandatory, periodic professional development programmes tied to career progression and promotion, helping teachers keep pace with scientific and technological advances while maintaining professional balance throughout their careers.



Students at an exam session.

Students to be dismissed after fourth period during mid-term exams

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Students at government schools will be dismissed immediately after the fourth period during mid-term examinations in the first and second semesters of the 2026-2027 academic year, under new guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE).

The ministry has issued Circular No 3, from the Office of the Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs, outlining arrangements for the school day during mid-term examinations, including the distribution of periods, examination procedures, grading and score-recording timelines, and the working hours of students and staff.

Under the circular, the school day during the mid-term examination period will comprise four periods. The second and third periods will be allocated for examinations, while classes not scheduled for exams will continue according to the approved regular timetable.

The ministry said the arrangement aims to keep the school day running smoothly while setting aside designated periods for examinations without disrupting other scheduled lessons.

School administrations have also been instructed to strictly adhere to the approved timelines for grading and recording students' marks, including the relevant electronic system's opening

and closing times. This is intended to ensure that assessment procedures are completed accurately and on time, allowing results to be announced in accordance with approved procedures.

The circular also requires schools to observe the designated arrival and break times to ensure orderly student movement and smooth school-day operations throughout the examination period.

Regarding working hours, school staff may leave two hours before the end of the official working day, in accordance with the circular's provisions.

However, the ministry clarified that these early-departure hours may not be combined with nursing hours or reduced working hours to which female employees may be entitled.

It also stipulated that where staff members are granted permission to leave early for other reasons, the combined duration of such permission and the early-departure hours provided under the circular must not exceed three hours per day.

The ministry called on all school administrations to implement the circular in full compliance with human resources regulations and applicable procedures.

It stressed that the measures aim to maintain the stability and continuity of the educational process during the examination period, while ensuring effective school management and the highest standards of professional and educational practice.

Qatar takes part in Prince Naif Arab Security Award board meeting

The State of Qatar has participated in a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Prince Naif Arab Security Award, held virtually yesterday. HE Abdullah bin Khalaf bin Hattab al-Kaabi, Qatar's Undersecretary at the Ministry of Interior and a member of the award's Board of Trustees, represented the country at the meeting.

The meeting reviewed several items on the award's agenda and approved a number of decisions concerning its activities. Officials said that Qatar's participation reflects the Ministry of Interior's support for initiatives aimed at strengthening Arab security co-operation. The Prince Naif Arab Security Award is regarded as one of the prominent initiatives supporting security efforts across the Arab world. (QNA)



Qatar participates in Amman numismatic, philatelic exhibition

The eighth Amman International Numismatic & Philatelic Exhibition, organised by the Jordan Philatelic & Numismatic Society, opened yesterday with Qatar participating through the Qatar Philatelic and Numismatic Center.

The three-day exhibition features the Lebanese Association of Philately and Postal History and the Saudi Numismatic Society (Makkah Al-Mukarramah) as guests of honour.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Director of the Qatar Philatelic and Numismatic Center Hussein Rajab said Qatar's participation aims to explore the Jordanian exhibits, benefit from the experience and expertise of other participants, and exchange knowledge and perspectives.

He added that the event provides an opportunity to keep abreast of the latest developments and trends in banknote and coin valuation, thereby strengthening the expertise and knowledge of the Center's members in stamp and coin collecting. (QNA)



QM presents 'My Home is Your Home' exhibition

Qatar Museums (QM) presents Beyti Beytak (My Home is Your Home), a major exhibition organised by the future Art Mill Museum, at the Fahad bin Ali Palace in Doha.

On view from 26 October 2026 through 29 May 2027, the exhibition will feature works by more than 40 architects, designers, and practitioners from across the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia region (MENASA) and beyond, exploring architecture as a vital social and cultural practice grounded in ideas of home, hospitality, collective care, and shared responsibility.

Originally presented at the 19th International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia in 2025, the exhibition has been expanded for this iteration, featuring a new commission by Iraqi Architect Ola Znad, as well as archival research on the evolution of Doha's urbanisation. An extensive public programming for schools, universities and families will provide opportunities for unique engagement with the exhibition inviting the public to Fahad bin Ali Palace for the first time.

Organised in seven sections, the exhibition brings together architectural models, drawings, archival materials, films, and



site-specific installations of communal places ranging from desert oases to contemporary museums, and from residences to sacred spaces. Presented in the historically significant Fahad bin Ali Palace, the exhibition creates a compelling dialogue between contemporary architecture and Doha's vibrant architectural heritage.

Among the pioneering modern architects represented are Raj Rewal (India), Nayyar Ali Dada (Pakistan), Abeer Seikaly (Jordan) and Minnette de Silva (Sri Lanka). Their work is highlighted along with that of a range of contemporary designers and

architects. Beyti Beytak also reflects on the legacy of pioneering Egyptian architect and urbanist Hassan Fathy, whose work promoted social engagement while embracing vernacular forms, techniques, and materials.

Aurélien Lemonier, Senior Curator of Architecture, Design, and Gardens at the Art Mill Museum, said: "Beyti Beytak invites audiences to reflect on architecture as an act of generosity and responsibility. It foregrounds practices from across the MENASA region that respond to urgent social and environmental questions while remaining deeply connected to cultural heritage."

Sean Anderson, Co-Curator, said, "With a special focus on the architecture of Doha, this presentation of Beyti Beytak celebrates the remarkable design history that characterises Qatar and links its peerless heritage with thriving contemporary practices."

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Art Mill Museum will release a new publication, Beyti Beytak: Architectures of MENASA, that extends the exhibition's exploration of architecture across the region through critical essays, research, and project documentation. The publication offers a lasting record of the projects while contributing to wider discussions around contemporary architectural practices, regional histories, and the relationship between architecture and culture.

The exhibition's public programming will begin on 26 October 2026 with an opening conversation bringing together architects, practitioners, and contributors to the publication exploring the architectural narratives and ideas presented through Beyti Beytak.

Beyti Beytak is part of Qatar Museums' wide-ranging Fall 2026 programme of exhibitions, public art presentations, and initiatives designed to spark global cultural exchange and dialogue. (QNA)

LIC opens volunteer registration for Formula 1 and MotoGP 2026

Lusail International Circuit (LIC) has officially opened volunteer registration for two of Qatar's biggest motorsport weekends of the year: the MotoGP Qatar Airways Grand Prix of Qatar 2026, November 6-8, and the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix 2026, November 27-29. Registration is open from October 8-18, and applicants can volunteer at either event or both.

The opportunity is open to nationals and residents aged 18 or older who hold a valid Qatar ID (QID) through December 10 and are available on all race days of the selected event.

Now bringing both race week-

ends under one volunteer programme, LIC aims to empower participants, nurture local talent and strengthen community engagement within Qatar's expanding motorsport landscape, with inclusion and diversity at its heart.

That commitment was reflected in last year's results, when LIC welcomed 665 volunteers from 107 nationalities across key operational areas at the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix 2025. The group comprised 66% male and 34% female participants, showing how far the program has grown in both diversity and reach.

Those who join this year will

gain practical experience at major international motorsport events, working alongside experienced event professionals and learning how a world-class race weekend comes together. It is a chance to build skills that can strengthen a CV and open doors to future opportunities, while meeting new people and joining an energetic, diverse volunteer community. Interested candidates should submit their applications through the official portal at <https://events.lcsc.qa/volunteer/> prior to October 18. Selected volunteers will be contacted after the closing date for onboarding and training sessions.



Narratives increasingly being shaped by algorithms: experts

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Algorithms are increasingly shaping the content people consume, influencing how information is received and helping form public narratives, speakers at a Ministry of Culture seminar have said, stressing the need for greater digital awareness and critical thinking in an era of rapidly advancing artificial intelligence (AI).

The seminar, titled “The Power of Algorithms in Shaping Narratives and Programming Minds”, was held at the Ministry of Culture’s headquarters as part of the fifth edition of its “Seminar Season”, organised in partnership with the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies, Hamad Bin Khalifa University and Lusail University.

The event was attended by Assistant Undersecretary for Cultural Affairs Mubarak Abdullah al-Khalifa, along with several ambassadors and officials.

It examined the growing influence of algorithms amid the rapid adoption of digital technologies and AI, particularly their role in determining what content reaches users and shaping how audiences receive and interact with information.

Dr Abdulrahman al-Harmi, an educational and academic consultant, and Mohammed Salem, a media trainer and consultant, discussed how algorithms work and



The seminar is part of the 5th edition of the ‘Seminar Season’.

their growing impact on content creation, narrative formation, and how information and ideas reach the public.

Al-Harmi said algorithms have become an increasingly important subject of discussion as digital technologies permeate virtually every aspect of daily life.

They are no longer technical tools behind digital platforms, he said, but systems that directly shape the content users see and how people interact with information and ideas.

Al-Harmi stressed that understanding how algorithms work is essential to strengthening digital literacy, particularly amid the growing diversity of information sources and the vast volume of content circulating online.

Users, he added, should engage consciously with the content presented to them rather than automatically accepting what appears on their screens, emphasising the need for verification, critical

thinking and analysis.

Al-Harmi also highlighted education’s role in helping society navigate these changes, particularly by developing critical-thinking skills among younger generations and equipping them to understand the digital environments in which they live and learn.

He said that this would enable them to benefit from technological advances while staying aware of the challenges tied to the growing influence of digital platforms and algorithms.

Salem said that algorithms have become a major force in the media and digital landscape because they rank content and determine what users see.

This, he said, makes their influence on narrative formation an increasingly important topic of discussion, especially as people rely more on digital platforms for news and information.

He said the content-creation industry is rapidly transforming

due to technological advances, requiring media and cultural professionals to keep pace with emerging tools and understand how they are changing content production and distribution.

Salem stressed the importance of understanding how content is created, ranked, circulated, and disseminated, and the need to handle information shared across platforms responsibly.

The seminar also examined the relationship between algorithms and narrative formation, focusing on the growing role of digital platforms in producing and distributing content and the challenges this poses for users trying to distinguish factual information from targeted or algorithmically selected content.

Participants also discussed the importance of understanding how algorithmic systems operate and how they can influence individual choices, perceptions and interactions with different issues.

Through its “Seminar Season”, the Ministry of Culture continues to address a range of contemporary cultural, intellectual, and knowledge-based issues, providing a platform to discuss developments shaping society.

This version avoids repeating the same point about algorithms “shaping content” in several paragraphs.

It gave al-Harmi and Salem distinct angles: digital literacy and education for al-Harmi, and media/content production for Salem.



Haneen al-Saify takes over Serenity Pool at Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail this October

Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail welcomes renowned Qatari entrepreneur, beauty and fashion influencer Haneen al-Saify for a month-long takeover of Serenity Pool, the hotel’s exclusive adults-only pool.

The collaboration brings together Haneen’s distinctive approach to beauty, fashion and lifestyle with the refined poolside experience of Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail. Throughout October, Serenity Pool will feature specially curated touches and activations inspired by Pink October, creating an elevated experience that combines leisure and awareness.

Set within the serene surroundings of Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail, Serenity Pool offers an exclusive adult-only escape for guests looking to unwind, enjoy the sunshine and spend a leisurely day by the water.

Whether for a relaxed weekday escape or a vibrant weekend

by the pool, Serenity Pool offers an elevated setting to enjoy October with a touch of Haneen al-Saify’s signature style.

“For me, this collaboration is about creating a beautiful space where women can come together, enjoy a moment for themselves and feel confident. Pink October is a meaningful reminder of the importance of awareness and early detection, and I am excited to bring this message to life through a month of thoughtful experiences, connection and, of course, a little beauty and elegance by the pool,” said Haneen al-Saify, Founder of By Haneen al-Saify.

The Haneen Al Saify x Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail collaboration will run throughout October 2026 at Serenity Pool.

Serenity Pool Day Pass
Sunday – Wednesday | QR250
Thursday – Saturday | QR350
Location: Serenity Pool, Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail

Awqaf, QC sign partnership on endowments work collaboration

Qatar’s Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs and Qatar Charity have signed a co-operation agreement aimed at strengthening collaboration in endowments, zakat (giving to charity) and humanitarian and development work.

The five-year agreement, renewable by mutual consent, was signed by Awqaf’s Assistant Undersecretary for Islamic Affairs Khalid al-Ghanem and CEO of Qatar Charity Yousef al-Kuwari.

The partnership seeks to establish a national model for institutional co-operation, bringing together the organisations’ efforts to increase the sustainable social and development impact of their projects in Qatar and abroad.

Under the agreement, the two sides will co-ordinate humani-

tarian and development activities to avoid duplication, while working together on zakat collection and social and Shariah research. They will also study the establishment of a joint fund to support projects in Qatar and overseas that comply with Shariah requirements governing zakat funds.

The partnership will also expand co-operation on endowment projects abroad, including the construction of mosques, well drilling, educational endowments, sponsorship of orphans and families in need, and emergency relief efforts.

The agreement includes governance mechanisms and the appointment of co-ordinators from both sides to oversee implementation, with regular reports to measure results and assess performance. (QNA)

Qatar’s commitment to social development, women highlighted at UN committee

Qatar highlighted its efforts to advance social development, strengthen women’s empowerment and protect children’s rights at the United Nations on Wednesday, reaffirming its commitment to translating these priorities into national policies and international initiatives.

The remarks were delivered by Third Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations Amina Abdullah Salat during meetings of the Third Committee of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly in New York, where she addressed agenda items on social development, the advancement of women, and the promotion and protection of the rights of children.

On social development, she underscored Qatar’s longstanding commitment to advancing the global social development agenda, highlighting the country’s record of hosting major UN conferences, including the Second World Summit for Social Development, held in Doha in November 2025.

The Doha summit brought together world leaders three decades after the first World Summit for Social Development was convened in Copenhagen.

The diplomat noted that Qatar has made significant progress across the pillars of Qatar National Vision 2030, adding that the Third National Development Strategy 2024-30 sets the framework for the next phase of the country’s development and its efforts to advance the objectives and aspirations of the National Vision.



She also highlighted the National Strategy of the Ministry of Social Development and Family 2025-30, under the theme From Care to Empowerment, as an integrated framework for advancing social policies and programmes.

The strategy seeks to strengthen family support, empower women, enhance the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities, and support older persons.

On the advancement of women, Salat said women’s empowerment remains a key national priority for Qatar, reflecting its firm commitment to promoting and protecting women’s human rights and recognising their pivotal role as both contributors to and beneficiaries of the country’s development process.

She underscored that enhancing women’s participation across all spheres of life is a cornerstone of Qatar National Vision 2030, which places strong emphasis on women’s empowerment and capacity-building.

The diplomat added that Qatar’s Third National Development Strategy 2024-30 places particular emphasis on raising awareness of and recognising women’s contributions across society. (QNA)

Doha Bank named title sponsor of Qatar Ladies Open

QNA
Doha

The Qatar Tennis, Squash, Padel and Badminton Federation has announced a new partnership with Doha Bank Group, under which the Bank will become the title sponsor of the Qatar Ladies Open (WTA 1000) beginning in 2027.

The partnership aligns with the Federation’s commitment to expanding co-operation with leading national institutions, supporting efforts to develop the tournament and strengthen its status as one of the premier tennis events hosted by the State of Qatar.

Speaking at a press conference today, HE the President of the Qatar Tennis, Squash, Padel and Badminton Federation Nasser bin Ghanim al-Khelafi underscored the importance of the new partnership with Doha Bank, saying it represents a significant addition to the tournament and reflects confidence in its standing as a prestigious event on the global Women’s Tennis Association (WTA) calendar.

He added that the agreement reflects Doha Bank Group’s active community role through its support for sports and a range of events in Qatar.

Al-Khelafi expressed confidence that the collaboration would contribute to the tournament’s continued success and



showcase Qatar’s prominent position as a host and organiser of major sporting events.

For his part, Doha Bank Group CEO Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Fahad bin Faisal al-Thani expressed his pride in strengthening their partnership with the Qatar Tennis Federation through Doha Bank Group’s sponsorship of the Qatar Ladies Open tournament, one of the most prominent events on the global tennis calendar.

He added that the partnership reinforces the Bank’s com-

mitment to supporting Qatar’s sports sector and helping consolidate the country’s status as a global destination for major sporting championships and events, in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

The Doha Bank Group CEO added that the Bank is proud to have the prestigious tournament bear its name, reflecting its ambition to build high-quality, sustainable partnerships and support Qatar’s growing presence on the international sports stage.

The Qatar Ladies Open tennis tournament is the longest-running event of its kind in the region. Its inaugural edition was held in 2001, when Swiss star Martina Hingis claimed the first title. Czech player Karolina Muchova won the 2026 edition after defeating Canada’s Victoria Mboko in the final, securing the Golden Falcon trophy and her first WTA 1000-level title.

The 2027 edition of the Qatar Ladies Open tournament is scheduled to take place from February 8 to 14.

NMoQ, QU conclude future teachers workshop

QNA
Doha

The National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ), in collaboration with Qatar University’s College of Education, concluded a two-day workshop introducing future educators to practical approaches for integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) into classroom teaching through museum-based learning.

Held recently as part of the ExxonMobil STEAM Festival, Discovering STEAM Learning at NMoQ welcomed 36 undergraduate education students, including student teachers preparing for or undertaking school-based teaching practice.

The programme introduced participants to NMoQ’s approach to connecting Qatar’s heritage, museum collections and cultural knowledge with STEAM education. Through first-hand activities, workshops and discussions, students learned how museum-based knowledge can complement classroom teaching, support curriculum delivery and provide



new ways for pupils to understand STEAM concepts through objects, stories and place.

Nadya al-Saleh, Director of the ExxonMobil STEAM Festival and Acting Deputy Director of Learning and Outreach at NMoQ, said, “Museums can extend learning beyond the classroom, giving teachers and students opportunities to connect curriculum subjects with objects, heritage and real-world experiences. Through this programme, we wanted future educators to experience our learning activities for themselves, understand the thinking behind their

development and consider how these approaches can be adapted for their own classrooms.”

Alshaima Alyafei, Section Head of Learning Support at Qatar University’s College of Education, said, “Through its partnership with the National Museum of Qatar, the College of Education at Qatar University provided students with an authentic learning experience that supports the University’s commitment to experiential learning, innovation, and community engagement. The programme enabled students to bridge theory and practice, de-

velop a deeper understanding of interdisciplinary STEAM education, and explore how classroom concepts can be transformed into meaningful, hands-on learning experiences. It also highlighted the National Museum of Qatar as an important educational resource that enriches teaching and learning beyond the classroom.”

The workshop also highlighted collaboration across Qatar’s education ecosystem, connecting academics and future teachers with museum learning specialists and industry expertise.

The ExxonMobil STEAM Festival is supported by ExxonMobil Qatar through its research arm, ExxonMobil Research Qatar (EMRQ).

The ExxonMobil STEAM Festival will continue at the National Museum of Qatar until 28 November, with activities taking place across the museum’s Digital and AI Centre, Library and other learning spaces. Programmes include hands-on navigation workshops, a Silk Road board game and storytelling sessions connecting STEAM concepts with navigation, traditional boats and Qatar’s heritage.



Indian embassy celebrates Hindi Diwas 2026

The Indian embassy in Doha, in association with Amrit Uttar Pradesh Navrang Sanskritik Mandal (AUPNSM), Qatar, celebrated Hindi Diwas 2026 with a cultural and literary programme attended by more than 450 members of the Indian community.

The event brought together distinguished guests, community leaders, educators, students and Hindi enthusiasts to celebrate the language's heritage, literary legacy and contemporary relevance.

India's ambassador to Qatar Dr K Sri-



kar Reddy was the chief guest.

Welcoming the ambassador, AUPNSM president Nita Mishra expressed appreciation for his presence and continued support for initiatives promoting Indian languages, culture and heritage.

In his keynote address, Reddy spoke about the historical evolution of Hindi and its growing significance in today's multicultural world.

He highlighted the language's enduring role in connecting people, preserving cultural heritage and fostering a shared sense of identity, while reaffirming the embassy's support for strengthening Hindi as a cultural bridge and language of identity for Indians abroad.

The event was also attended by the embassy's first secretary (Education & Culture) Harish Pandey; Fahad Mohammed Hassan al-Salhi, a Hindi enthusiast from Oman; Indian Cultural Centre president AP Manikantan; and presidents and office-bearers of prominent Indian community organisations, along with educators and community leaders.

The programme featured cultural performances and literary presentations cen-



tered on the spirit of Hindi Diwas.

Dance performances showcased India's diverse traditions, while group Hindi songs, skits and motivational performances highlighted the importance of preserv-

ing and promoting the language.

The programme also provided children, young participants and community artists with a platform to showcase their creativity and strengthen their connection with Hindi and India's linguistic heritage.

A highlight was the release of the Hindi poetry collection *Shrestha Abhivyakti*, authored by Dr Vivek Kumar Tiwari.

The book was formally released by Reddy in the presence of guests and community members, recognising the continuing tradition of Hindi literary expression among the Indian diaspora.

The celebration also featured a felicitation ceremony honouring 12 Best Hindi Teachers

from various Indian schools in Qatar.

The recognition acknowledged their contribution to nurturing Hindi among young learners and helping preserve India's linguistic and literary heritage for future generations.

The presence of school principals, teachers and students added an educational dimension to the event, underscoring the importance of encouraging Hindi among younger members of the community.

The celebration concluded with a renewed commitment to preserve, promote and celebrate Hindi as an enduring expression of India's cultural identity and heritage worldwide.

Gandhi Jayanti marked with voices, values and creative expressions

MES Indian School, Evening Shift, commemorated Gandhi Jayanti on October 1 with a series of programmes and competitions to inspire students to reflect on Mahatma Gandhi's life, values, and principles.

The Kindergarten Section presented a special celebration featuring patriotic songs and presentations titled "Little Voices, Big Values", "Walk with the Little Leaders", and "Dress Up & Salute".

The programme was graced by principal Dr Hameeda Kadar, senior vice-principal Shihabudeen Pulath, head of section (Evening) Shalini Sharma, head of section (Junior) Sameena Ashfaq, and head of section (KG) Suja Mathew.

Students of Classes I to IX participated in "Dress Up as Gandhiji", "Poster Making", "Collage Making", "Debate" and "Article Writing" activities, based on themes highlighting Gandhian ideals and their relevance today.

The Scouts and Guides Unit organised a speech competition, giving students a platform to share their thoughts on Gandhiji's life, values, principles, and contributions to the nation.

The celebrations fostered creativity, reflection and value-based learning among students. MES Indian School remains committed to nurturing responsible, compassionate and value-driven citizens through meaningful educational experiences.



Young minds at MES embrace Gandhian values commemorating Gandhi Jayanti

MES Indian School observed Gandhi Jayanti with a series of engaging activities for students from Classes I to XII, highlighting Mahatma Gandhi's life, values, and enduring teachings and marking his 157th birth anniversary.

The school's Kindergarten Section celebrated Gandhi Jayanti with patriotic fervour through a special assembly.

The programme featured a delightful presentation by a KG II student dressed as Mahatma Gandhi, who briefly spoke about the values of truth and non-violence.

A special costume parade followed, with children portraying and introducing eminent national leaders and freedom fighters.

The celebrations featured a diverse range of creative activities.

Classes I and II participated in a Dress Up as Gandhiji activity, portraying Mahatma Gandhi and personalities associated with his life, and shared brief reflections on his life.

At the same time, Classes III and IV explored his childhood and values through a storytelling competition narrating incidents from Gandhiji's childhood and highlighting his ideals of truth, honesty, kindness and courage.

Classes V to VII expressed the theme of non-violence through poster designing, while Class-



es VIII and IX commemorated Gandhi's 157th birth anniversary through innovative stamp designs without using portraits.

Students of Classes X to XII created bookmarks inspired by Gandhian values and memorable quotes.

Through meaningful participation and creative expression, the observance enabled stu-

dents to reflect on Gandhi's ideals of truth, non-violence, simplicity, and service, making the occasion a purposeful and enriching learning experience.

As part of the Gandhi Jayanti observance, the Campus Care Force (CCF) of MES conducted a cleanliness campaign on the school campus.



DPS Modern Indian School organises 4th Jamboree

DPS Modern Indian School hosted the 4th edition of Jamboree 2026 on the theme *Where Eras Collide - Rewind and Reload*, celebrating student creativity, innovation, teamwork, leadership and entrepreneurship on October 3.

The event featured more than 55 student-created stalls showcasing food, games, karaoke, and art & crafts, turning the campus into a vibrant hub of ideas and enterprise.

Addressing the gathering, principal Soma Bhattacharjee highlighted the importance of nurturing entrepreneurial thinking through hands-on experiences.

She announced this year's unique Jamboree charity initiative in collaboration with Nexus Innovation Association.

As part of the initiative, students will contribute books, clothes and bags through Nexus Innovation Association, which will facilitate their distribution to Maktaba Children's Library and Qatar Charity.

Chief guest Kamakshi Gopi, the vice-president of the Indian Women Welfare Organisation, encouraged students to identify opportunities, think creatively, and turn ideas into action.

Group Academic adviser Asna Nafees described Jamboree as a student-driven platform for experiential learning, reinforcing the spirit of "Service Before Self".

Jamboree 2026 gave students an opportunity to experience entrepreneurship through creativity, collaboration, responsibility, and initiative.

Qatar Tamizhar Sangam hosts family badminton tourney

Qatar Tamizhar Sangam (QTS), an Indian socio-cultural organisation and an associate organisation of the Indian Cultural Centre under the aegis of the embassy of India, organised a "Family Badminton Tournament" for its members at Beta Cambridge School, Al Wukair, on September 25.

The tournament witnessed enthusiastic turnout, with more than 200 participants competing across a wide range of family-oriented categories.

The matches were conducted in the following categories: Men's Singles & Doubles, Women's Singles & Doubles, Father & Daughter Doubles, Father & Son Doubles, Mother & Daughter Doubles, Mother & Son Doubles, Brothers Doubles, Sisters Doubles, Brother & Sister Doubles, and Husband & Wife Doubles.

The event was filled with excitement, sportsmanship, and community spirit, creating an enjoyable sporting experience for participants and their families.

The tournament also gave members a chance to strengthen family bonds while coming together as a community.

The QTS management committee awarded winners and runners-up in each category trophies during the prize distribution ceremony.

Qatar Tamizhar Sangam extends its heartfelt appreciation to all participants, volunteers, supporters, and well-wishers whose valuable contributions helped ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the tournament.



Plane billows smoke at Riyadh airport as Houthis escalate attacks

Reuters

Riyadh/Dubai

Yemen's Houthis escalated their campaign of strikes against Saudi Arabia yesterday, trying to shut down the kingdom's airspace and oil facilities with missile fire that has killed three people this week.

The group said it had struck Riyadh airport, where witnesses saw smoke billowing from a plane, and it warned workers to stay away from energy plants. Saudi officials said debris from an intercepted missile had hit a kindergarten and medical complex.

Lufthansa and Air India said they were suspending flights to Riyadh after Houthi attacks.

The Houthis say they are targeting the kingdom over its support for government forces in Yemen's reignited civil war. Saudi Arabia says it is backing an offensive by Yemen's UN-recognised government to take back territory from the Houthis.

The conflict, now an overspill of the US-Iran war, has added new chaos to a region already aflame, and threatens to draw other states into gruelling mountain fighting – with Syria now considering deploying troops to assist Saudi Arabia.

The kingdom has pushed for support from allied nations, including Türkiye and Pakistan, even if only in a logistical or defensive capacity, as it tries to reverse Houthi gains in southwest Yemen, by the southern entrance to the Red Sea.



Smoke and flames rise from King Khalid Airport, after Yemen's Houthis said they attacked the airport, in Riyadh, yesterday. (Reuters)

Those requests have taken on more urgency since Saudi authorities said on Wednesday that three people had been killed this week in strikes on Riyadh airport and Abha airport in the southwest.

The Houthis have made Saudi airports a focus of their strikes, and the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen said it had destroyed two ballistic missiles launched by the group towards Riyadh and another towards Khamis Mushayt, home to a major airbase.

A thick black column of smoke and flames were shown rising from Riyadh airport in video verified by Reuters. A witness and three people briefed on the matter said a

commercial plane had caught fire and was the cause of the smoke.

According to data compiled by aviation analytics company Cirium, almost 50% of departures from Riyadh airport had been cancelled by 1500 GMT, with 31 more cancellations expected for Friday in all Saudi airports.

There was no immediate confirmation from Saudi authorities on the Houthi claims of ballistic missile attacks on Riyadh airport and the cause of the smoke billowing from the plane was not immediately clear, though people briefed on the matter said the fire had been put out.

However, the flight tracker FlightRadar24 indicated numerous delayed arrivals and departures at Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport yesterday. The airport advised travellers to contact airlines to check the status of flights before trying to travel.

Riyadh is due to host a major meeting of energy policy makers, the WPC Energy Congress, this week.

The Houthis also warned workers to stay away from oil facilities in Saudi Arabia, saying they would be targeted.

Yemen's long-running civil war, which paused with a ceasefire in 2022, has erupted again in recent weeks with the Houthi seizing stretches of the Red Sea coast last month, including along the vital Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

The Houthis have said they were responding to attacks from the Saudi-backed government, which the government denies.

Their threats to shipping and attacks on Saudi cities and infrastructure have drawn the kingdom back in. This week, Saudi-backed forces launched a counterattack, taking back areas around the strait.

However, in a war with several front lines, the Houthis have made gains of their own, surrounding Yemen's third-largest city, Taiz, by taking territory along its main mountain road to Aden.

The fighting, which pits the Houthis against a coalition of Saudi-backed forces under the internationally recognised government, has led to a humanitarian crisis in the poorest Arab state, displacing 200,000 people since the conflict resumed.

One US and one Syrian defence official said Syria was carefully considering options for military support, including defensive aid to protect Saudi Arabia from attacks, or an offensive deployment to help take the fight to the Houthis.

In response to a request for comment to the Syrian foreign ministry, a diplomat said Syria stood firmly with Saudi Arabia but that its focus was on domestic priorities such as recovery from its own civil war.

Nato-member Türkiye said on Wednesday it was sending mainly defensive and technical support to the kingdom to help in the fight against the Houthis. A Turkish official said this was expected to take the form of military equipment, intelligence sharing and weapons systems.

Riyadh kindergarten hit by interception debris

AFP

Riyadh

The Saudi civil defence agency said a kindergarten and a medical complex in Riyadh were damaged by debris from a missile interception yesterday, as Yemen's Houthis announced a series of attacks targeting the capital's airport.

One source briefed on the matter said at least one plane had suffered catastrophic damage at the transit hub, while a second said three aircraft were hit.

Saudi Arabia leads a pro-government coalition fighting against the Houthis in Yemen's civil war, and the group has repeatedly targeted Riyadh since the conflict roared back to life in July, vowing to hit critical infrastructure and disrupt Saudi airspace.

The scale and frequency of the attacks on the Saudi capital have been unprecedented in the eight months of wider war in the Middle East.

The Houthis announced three separate attacks yesterday against Riyadh's airport, which has been increasingly targeted of late. Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree said the group had also launched missiles at an airport in Najran and an airbase in Khamis Mushait.

Recent attacks have also targeted oil infrastructure in the world's largest crude exporter.

Yesterday the Houthis warned workers to evacuate Saudi Arabia's oil facilities, having days before hit a major refinery south of the capital.

Earlier in the day, the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis said it had intercepted two missiles fired towards Riyadh.

Shortly after, the kingdom's civil defence agency said "interception debris" had damaged a kindergarten and a medical complex in the city. It did not say if there were any casualties or provide details of the damage.

Admissions by Saudi authorities of civilian targets being hit are relatively rare, with officials issuing few statements on Houthi attacks in recent weeks.

In Riyadh diplomats were instructed to shelter in place in their respective embassies, some of them told AFP, after explosions echoed around the city yesterday morning.

There were no text alerts warning residents, as there had been in the past.

A campaign by the interior ministry has repeatedly warned residents against sharing unauthorised information, images or footage of missiles, drones and their impacts, warning that violators could face legal consequences.

Several residents told AFP that international schools were also taking precautions, with at least one facility sending children into a basement for safety.

"My daughter called me," one parent told AFP on condition of anonymity, saying she was "completely distraught".

Two people working in Riyadh's business hub, the King Abdullah Financial District, told AFP that some companies were evacuating staff from the area.

US freezes Microsoft, Adobe, green-card applications over alleged fraud

Reuters

Washington

The Trump administration froze yesterday some green-card filings by Microsoft, Adobe and major IT out-sourcers and opened probes into nine elite universities, widening a visa crackdown it says targets fraud and American job losses.

The twin actions mark the broadest strike yet against skilled-worker immigration programmes, potentially blocking a common path to permanent residency for thousands of foreign tech workers while putting some of the country's most prominent research universities on notice. The moves come even as the administration cultivates closer ties with the same tech leaders whose companies are now in its crosshairs.

"Our message to Microsoft is: You're a great American company, but you've got to hire great American workers," Vice-President JD Vance said.

Labor Secretary Keith Sonderling said the suspension would also cover Cognizant, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, HCL Technologies and Capgemini.

"We will not accept any new or process any pending permanent labour certification applications involving these companies," Sonderling said.

Vance also said nine universities, including Harvard, Yale and Stanford, would be investigated for what the administration called the misuse of exchange-visitor visas to undercut American wages.

Microsoft, Adobe, Cognizant, Infosys, HCL Technologies, Wipro and Capgemini did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Tata Consultancy Services declined to comment.

Under the Labor Department's permanent labour certification process, known as PERM, which is required for most employment-based green cards, employers must show that hiring a foreign worker will not harm the wages, working conditions or job opportunities of US workers. Approved applications then go to US Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The freeze does not appear to directly affect current holders of H-1B visas, which allow companies to employ foreign workers temporarily. But it could block a common route by which employers sponsor those workers for permanent residency.

AFP

New York

The US yesterday filed new torture charges against ousted Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores, bolstering a mounting criminal case against the pair held in US custody.

Maduro and Flores already face drug trafficking and firearms charges in the US after they were snatched from their Caracas compound in an extraordinary US military raid in January.

A new court filing shows both are now additionally charged with conspiracy to commit torture, stating that they "inflicted severe physical and mental pain and suffering."

The alleged goal was to "repress and punish political opposition, silence dissent and perceived dissent, preserve and protect the power and authority of the members of the conspiracy, and intimidate, harass, and neutralise their opponents, including through kidnappings."

Prosecutors detailed apparent instances of unidentified victims, including US citizens, being shocked with electric wires, waterboarded and abuse while in Venezuelan detention.



Cilia Flores, the imprisoned wife of ousted Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro, stands as Judge Alvin Hellerstein presides during an appearance in Manhattan federal court in New York, yesterday, in this courtroom sketch. (Reuters)

In a 2022 instance, Venezuelan authorities allegedly tortured an American who they accused of plotting to assassinate Maduro.

"That torture included electric shock to (the victim's) arms, legs; asphyxiation; beatings; deprivation of food and water; and forced injections of a substance that caused (the victim) to experience seizures," the filing states.

During his 2013-2026 presidency, rights groups widely accused

Maduro of using political repression to cling to power.

Maduro and Flores are slated for a trial in New York next June and are currently being held in a Brooklyn jail.

US prosecutors claim that Maduro used state power to protect and promote illegal drug smuggling, and that he allied himself with cartels to ship tons of cocaine into the US.

Maduro has denied the charges

Peru creates joint command to tackle crime

Peru's right-wing President Keiko Fujimori announced on Wednesday the creation of a joint military-police authority that will take charge of fighting the crime wave sweeping the country. The Andean nation is going through its worst security crisis in decades, fuelled by the spread of local and foreign criminal gangs that oversee contract killings and extortion. Homicides in the country rose from 1,000 in 2018 to 2,600 last year, while reports of extortion increased from 3,200 to 26,500 in that period. At a ceremony at the army headquarters, Fujimori announced the establishment of a "unified command to confront and defeat criminality and crime."

"We are going to set up a major operations centre to direct all actions," she said. Fujimori did not specify who will lead the Unified Command, made up of 1,350 elite military and police personnel, or whether civilian authorities will play a role. "We are going to put these miserable criminals at the disposal of (the justice system)... so that they are prosecuted in accordance with the law," the conservative president said. (AFP)

Protests, clashes as South African anti-migrant tensions reignite

AFP

Johannesburg

South African protesters clashed with foreign nationals yesterday, police and an AFP reporter said, as tensions over migration were reignited by a court order that government must restart processing asylum applications.

Violence erupted in Soweto, in Johannesburg, and the east coast port city of Durban, with several cars torched and foreign-run businesses forced to close.

It followed protests called by movements targeting undocumented migrants that were behind waves of demonstrations earlier this year.

Tens of thousands of people from other African countries were forced to flee the country.

In Durban, allegations that a foreign national assaulted a South African demonstrator sparked violence that led to the burning of at least 14 vehicles, police said.

Three foreign nationals were arrested, they said.

South Africans reportedly burned down a business run by a



A resident walks past burning vehicles during unrest following anti-migrant protests, in Soweto, yesterday. (Reuters)

foreigner and looted other properties, while other migrants sought protection from security reinforcements, an AFP reporter said.

In Soweto, at least nine vehicles were torched, Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department spokesman Superintendent Xolani Fihla told SABC television.

"It's reported that there were clashes between foreign nationals in the area and South African nationals," he said.

"At the present moment, I can confirm that no injuries have been reported."

The court ruling behind the flare-up of xenophobic tensions

said certain provisions of a government act on refugees were unconstitutional.

This, the court said, was because the provisions prevented some individuals from accessing the asylum system on procedural grounds, including if they entered the country irregularly.

The ruling led hundreds of people to flock to government refugee centres in recent days, reportedly including people who do not qualify for asylum.

The government stressed on Wednesday the judgement "does not grant refugee status or permanent residence automatically to anyone who enters South Africa".

US busts major Internet scam compound in Ghana: FBI

AFP

Accra

US and Ghanaian authorities have arrested scores of Internet fraudsters accused of netting more than \$10mn in scams, the FBI said yesterday, the latest in an operation targeting "scam compounds".

Fraudsters operating in huge teams out of houses or apartment complexes target people around the world – often older people in wealthy countries – with high-profile cases emerging from southeast Asia as well as Nigeria in recent years.

"Another takedown this week out of Ghana," FBI director Kash Patel announced on social media, posting a photo of US agents alongside Ghanaian authorities.

Patel said that 130 people were arrested, including people who had been trafficked and forced to work in the compound, over scams targeting 89 people.

Neither the victims' nor the alleged perpetrator's nationalities were specified.

The raid was the latest in the FBI's "Operation Blackout", which focuses on Internet scam rings.

"These scam compounds target American citizens and destroy lives," Patel said.

Aided by the spread of the Internet, artificial intelligence, such fraudsters are notorious for targeting older, less tech-savvy people in richer, western countries.

Patel said the Operation Blackout had so far seized \$17bn worldwide and warned more than 10,000 Americans at risk of being scammed.

In Nigeria, scammers are nicknamed "Yahoo boys", for their use of Yahoo e-mail addresses in the early 2000s, though their frauds have grown more complex since those early days.

Victims know no nationality: In Ghana, AFP reported last year on a rise in teens turning toward Internet and mobile money fraud targeting fellow Ghanaians, amid a weak economy.

In February, Interpol announced that police in 16 African countries had arrested 651 people in an eight week operation that targeted investment scams, mobile money fraud and fraudulent mobile loan applications.

Most of the victims were African.



China announces candidate for WHO chief

AFP
Beijing

China announced yesterday it had put forward a candidate to lead the World Health Organisation (WHO) – a move that could signal intent to expand its influence at the WHO after the US quit, even though questions persist about Beijing's transparency over the Covid-19 pandemic.

China has nominated maternity health expert Song Li for the top position at the UN agency, foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a news briefing.

Tedros reaches the end of his second five-year term – the maximum – in August 2027.

The vacancy presents Beijing with an opportunity to step up, after the US withdrawal left China as the biggest contributor of

WHO membership fees, ahead of Japan and Germany.

However, voluntary contributions still make up the organisation's main source of funding, and China was far from the biggest overall contributor in the 2024-2025 biennium.

Weakened by the US withdrawal and other countries cutting foreign aid spending, the WHO was forced to undergo sweeping reforms last year.

Its budget was slashed by over 20%, with hundreds of jobs cut and programmes scaled back.

Tedros says the organisation has now completed its re-prioritisation and is on a stable footing.

The WHO website presents Song as the head of the Department of Women and Child Health at China's National Health Commission, with a career spanning 21 years.

However, Chinese media say



she since took up a role at the All-China Women's Federation, a Chinese Communist Party organisation, which lists her as its secretary.

Beijing's nomination "demonstrates China's firm support for multilateralism" and "will help the organisation play a more active role in enhancing the health and well-being of all humanity", said Mao Ning.

China's public announcement comes after the September 24 deadline for candidates.

The full list will be published by the WHO in early November. However, if the nominating country wishes, candidates may be announced before then on the WHO website.

In January, the WHO's 34-member Executive Board will nominate up to three candidates to be submitted to the World Health Assembly of member states, which will choose a winner in May 2027.

Song is running against candidates proposed by Belgium, Botswana, Indonesia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Spain.

They include the WHO's Europe director Hans Kluge and Eastern Mediterranean chief Hanan Balkhy.

If elected, Song would be the second Chinese national to lead the WHO after Margaret Chan, who headed the Geneva-based organisation between 2007 and 2017.

Thailand begins extradition process against China journalist

Thai authorities began extradition proceedings yesterday against a Chinese investigative reporter wanted by Beijing and detained for months in Thailand, his lawyer and an official told AFP.

Bai Zhaodong, 56, exposed government corruption in China over two decades before leaving in 2023 to escape "mounting persecution from the state", according to Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

He arrived in Thailand in 2024 and has been in detention in the Southeast Asian country since January 2026, the media rights group says.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian said in July that Bai was suspected of extortion and bribery, and said an extradition request had been submitted to Thailand.

"The prosecutor is bringing a case against him at court now. It is the beginning of the extradition

hearing process," Prayuth Pecharakun, spokesman for Thailand's attorney general, told AFP yesterday.

Bai's lawyer Nadthasiri Bergman also confirmed to AFP that he had been taken to court to face extradition proceedings.

The journalist has been held at Bangkok's Suan Phlu immigration detention centre since January 21, according to the Southeast Asia Legal Defence Initiative, which represents him.

RSF says a third country has offered him asylum, without specifying which, but Thai authorities had twice cancelled his flight and extended his detention.

Bergman has called on Thailand to grant the journalist permission to leave the country.

Yesterday's development came on the eve of an expected decision on a legal challenge brought by Bai's lawyers against Thai authorities over his continued detention. **(AFP)**



Korean President Lee Jae Myung reacting as he observes the first test launch of a hypersonic glide vehicle at Anheung Test Centre of the Agency for Defence Development in Taejeon. **(AFP)**

Korea test-fires its first hypersonic glide vehicle

AFP
Seoul

Republic of Korea test-fired its first homegrown hypersonic weapon yesterday, the presidential office said, days after Pyongyang announced the AI-assisted launch of an intermediate-range hypersonic missile.

Korean President Lee Jae Myung "observed the first test launch of a hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV) – currently under research and development using domestic technology," the presidential Blue House said in a statement.

Hypersonic glide vehicles are sent into the upper atmosphere via rocket boosters or on ballistic missiles, then glide towards their target at five times the speed of sound or greater.

Hailing a "key strategic asset capable of changing the course of the battlefield", the Korean statement said that the missiles' "unpredictable flight trajectories and overwhelming speed enable them to strike key strategic targets".

The test was aimed at verifying "the performance of ultra-high-temperature heat-resistant materials – a core technology for glide vehicles – as well as guidance and control capabilities and the ability to fly irregularly at low altitudes under hypersonic flight conditions," it added.

Analysts say North Korea, which is technically at war with the Seoul, has stepped up testing of its own hypersonic weapons with technological support from Russia.

Both Seoul and Washington have said the missile could be "sufficiently detected and intercepted using the defensive assets possessed by the two allies".

Korea said that the hypersonic glide vehicle tested Thursday "descended to a low altitude after separation, freely altered its trajectory both vertically and horizontally, and... accurately struck its designated target".

The weapon offered "a new deterrence capability capable of striking key targets within the Korean Peninsula's operational environment", the Blue House said.

Myanmar agrees to take back more migrants from Malaysia

Min Aung Hlaing says will accept more Myanmar migrants held in Malaysia as soon as possible

AFP
Putrajaya, Malaysia

Myanmar will accept more Myanmar migrants held in Malaysia "as soon as possible", the war-torn nation's leader said yesterday despite human rights concerns over the opaque repatriation scheme.

Min Aung Hlaing made the pledge on a visit to his counterpart in Malaysia, as he works to bring his country back into the international fold after staging a 2021 coup.

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim invited Min Aung Hlaing, now installed as civilian president, for a two-day visit to discuss the return of thousands of migrants to his country.

Malaysia has historically offered safe haven to those exiled from Myanmar, hosting 190,000 refugees or asylum seekers from the nation – mostly Rohingya – according to the UN.

But Anwar is making a repatriation push amidst an uptick of anti-migrant sentiment in Malaysia, defying concerns from the UN that his scheme cannot guar-



Myanmar's President Min Aung Hlaing (left) meeting with Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in Putrajaya. **(AFP)**

antee their safe homecomings to Myanmar.

The country has been wracked by war since Min Aung Hlaing's putsch, and there are fears the persecuted Rohingya may return to a country where they suffer violent persecution many deem genocidal.

"We will take those verified nationals back as soon as possible," Min Aung Hlaing said at a joint news conference with Anwar, in Putrajaya, the administrative capital.

Min Aung Hlaing has been a pariah in many capitals abroad since his putsch unleashed a civil war, but Anwar invited him for talks about returning Myanmar migrants.

Nearly 1,500 migrants arrived

in back in Myanmar on Sunday after a five-day navy vessel voyage from Malaysia, where they were being held in detention centres before being shipped out.

Anwar in July announced that Myanmar agreed to take back 5,000 Rohingya members, but the Malaysian government later said those sent back would be of "various ethnicities," not only Rohingya.

Myanmar last month pledged "safe and dignified" returns for its citizens displaced abroad, after criticism from the UN and rights groups.

Min Aung Hlaing's two-day trip also comes as he makes a push for diplomatic recognition after being installed in April as civilian president, following elections

branded a charade by democracy watchdogs.

Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) said in July they were seeking "gradual" engagement with Myanmar.

The 11-nation organisation has frozen Myanmar out of high-level summits since the coup, presenting a united front to pressure its leaders into engaging in its conflict resolution plan.

But analysts say the consensus is now fraying.

Malaysia marks the fifth Asean nation to host Min Aung Hlaing since he transitioned to ruling the country as nominally civilian president.

A five-point peace plan adopted by Asean's leaders in April 2021, which among other things call for an immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar, has shown very little signs of progress.

This was highlighted by a Myanmar military air strike late last month on a market in western Myanmar killing some 50 people – one of the deadliest recent bombings of the civil war.

Said Anwar yesterday: "We and (for) our part in Malaysia will do whatever is possible to make sure that we enhance this collaboration."

The aim ultimately was to "take Myanmar as part of our community of nations without prejudice, and particularly in the context of Asean."

Korea says will recall Ukraine ambassador

Republic of Korea said yesterday it will recall its ambassador to Ukraine in response to a deepening diplomatic row over the transfer of North Korean prisoners of war to Seoul.

The two countries have been at loggerheads since Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky last month disclosed the prisoner transfer, sparking anger in Seoul, which said it had placed their families in North Korea at risk.

The recall also comes days after a media report alleged more than 176,000 tonnes of fuel, mostly diesel, had been shipped from Korea to Russia in July and August, sparking accusations Seoul was helping alleviate Russian fuel shortages.

"The government has decided to recall its ambassador to Ukraine," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

"The government hopes that all outstanding issues between the two countries will be resolved amicably and will continue consultations

with the Ukrainian side to that end," The Ukrainian embassy in Seoul did not respond immediately to a request for comment.

Ukraine's hopes of armament supplies from Seoul have been complicated by the row over Zelensky's disclosure.

Korea has so far not provided lethal weapons to Ukraine, citing a domestic ban on militarily aiding countries at war.

Seoul had already summoned Kyiv's ambassador and threatened unspecified "further measures" and President Lee Jae Myung has demanded an official apology over the prisoner revelation.

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga has referred to the incident as a "diplomatic misunderstanding".

A report in Britain's *Guardian* newspaper this week has threatened to deepen tensions, with allegations of fuel shipments to Russia coming as Ukraine has struck refineries deep in Russian territory while Moscow has been

launching an all-time high of missile attacks.

An adviser to Zelensky said this week that the alleged diesel shipments stood in "sharp contrast" to Korea's sanctions policies, remarks Seoul slammed as "factually incorrect" and "inappropriate".

Seoul has been part of a coalition of countries with enhanced export controls on Russia and its ally Belarus since Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

But Korea's foreign ministry yesterday issued a statement saying that even if the fuel had originated in Korea – something it argued had not been established – they would not fall foul of the country's export ban.

"Refined petroleum products, including commercial diesel and aviation fuel, mentioned in The *Guardian*'s report, are not subject to South Korea's export controls against Russia," it said, noting that overall exports to Moscow had more than halved since the war's start. **(AFP)**

N Korea's Kim Yo Jong rejects Seoul's medical aid, calls it a provocation

Reuters
Seoul

North Korea's Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of leader Kim Jong-un, denounced yesterday Republic of Korea's plans to provide medical equipment aid to Pyongyang, calling it a "political provocation" and violation of its sovereignty.

In a statement carried by state media KCNA, Kim criticised Seoul for publicising its efforts to obtain UN sanctions exemptions for a medical aid package, saying Seoul had "insulted" North Korea by referring to shortages of medicines and medical equipment and deteriorating health conditions.

"The hostile nature of inter-Korean relations and Korea's identity can never change," Kim said, adding that North Korea's position is that there is "nothing to give or receive" from Korea.

Kim Yo Jong, a senior official in the North's ruling Workers' Party, said Seoul's aid proposal was intended to showcase Korea's "goodwill" in contrast to North Korea's rejection of the assistance, calling the effort a politically motivated scheme.

Seoul secured a UN sanctions exemption in May to ship medical equipment worth about \$6.8mn to a hospital in Pyongyang, according to Korean media reports.

The plan involves sending more than 1,400 medical items, including diagnostic and surgical equipment, by late November, although Seoul's Unification Ministry said the proposal remained subject to consultations with North Korea, the reports said.

Korean President Lee Jae Myung has sought to reopen dialogue with North Korea and expand humanitarian co-operation despite repeated rebuffs from Pyongyang.

Kim Yo Jong also linked the aid issue to a recent mine-blast dispute, accusing Seoul of simultaneously pursuing humanitarian outreach while escalating tensions over the mine incident that wounded Korean soldiers near the Demilitarised Zone last month.

"If there is truly a desire to restore inter-Korean relations, Korea should first show respect, consideration and sincerity in each of its words and actions," Kim said.

Seoul says the incident was caused by North Korean mines and has warned of diplomatic and military responses, while Pyongyang has denied planting the mines and described the incident as a fabrication.

Korea's Unification Ministry said Seoul would not be "swayed by each development" in North Korea's response and would continue efforts to ease distrust between the two Koreas.

Dozens protest in Tokyo over Marine accused of murder

Reuters
Tokyo

Dozens of protesters lined up in front of Japan's Foreign Ministry yesterday after a US Marine was accused of killing a woman in the southernmost prefecture of Okinawa, many holding signs decrying crimes by US service members.

The case is the latest in a string of incidents stretching back years that have fuelled unease over the large US

troop presence on the island chain near Taiwan and China, with US officials warning it could undermine ties vital to security in East Asia.

Public reaction to Anna Yagi's killing, however, has been muted compared with the mass demonstrations that followed the rape of a 12-year-old Okinawan girl by three US servicemen in 1995.

Lance Corporal Devin Jacob Ballard, 20, is suspected of killing Yagi, 39, in a hotel in the Okinawan capital of Naha last weekend and taking her wallet and backpack. Ballard

denied the allegations, police said.

Leaders of Thursday's protest spoke over loudspeakers about abuses by US service members and called on the government to respond, with others in the crowd rattling noisemakers in assent.

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi has called the killing "extremely brutal and heinous", and Tokyo said it had strongly protested to the US and demanded measures to prevent a repeat of such incidents.

Japan hosts the largest overseas contingent of US forces globally.

Most of the 18,000 Japan-based Marines are stationed in Okinawa, which the US held from the end of World War Two until 1972.

That presence has repeatedly stirred resentment among residents over issues such as noise, aircraft crashes and the conduct of personnel. The US on Wednesday began a 48-hour pause of military operations while troops undergo training on standards and discipline. Service members have also been given a month-long curfew for a "period of reflection".



Demonstrators hold placards during a protest yesterday outside the foreign ministry building in Tokyo following the killing of a Japanese woman in Okinawa. **(Reuters)**

Tools to attain excellence in faith

In one of the great prophetic narrations which included few, yet very comprehensive words, the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), clarified one of the means for salvation, and a sign of the excellence of Islam. This narration gives the believing slave a tool by which to measure himself and realise how close or far he is from the straight path.

Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, said: “It is from the excellence of (a believer’s) Islam that he should shun that which is of no concern to him”. [At-Tirmithi].

This narration contains many great meanings which a believer should understand and apply. It is one of the principles and foundations of good manners, and thus some scholars considered it to constitute one-third or one-fourth of the religion of Islam.

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: “The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, summed all the aspects of piety and devoutness in this narration. He, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, outlined for the slave what to do and what to shun, and it is an indication to the first pillar of soul purification, namely, shunning what does not concern the person, which leads to the second pillar, and that is busying oneself essentially with what concerns him”

He, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, clarified that shunning that which does not concern the person is a means to attain excellence in religion. This means, that people, in reality, are of two categories, those who are excellent in Islam and those who are not. The one who applies Islam inwardly and outwardly is the one who has reached the level of excellence, as Allah says (what means): “And who is better in religion than one who submits himself to Allah while being a doer of good and follows the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth? And Allah took Abraham as an intimate friend.” [Qur’an: 4:125].

On the other hand, the one who does



not apply Islam inwardly and outwardly is the one whose degree of commitment to Islam is low, and one of the signs of this in him is that he busies himself in that which does not concern him.

The following verse is proof substantiating the meaning of the narration, in which Allah Says (what means): “And they who turn away from ill speech” [Qur’an: 23:3]. “... ill speech” is anything from falsehood, and that includes association, other minor sins and all useless speech, actions and concerns. Furthermore, busying oneself with that which does not concern him is included

in the definition of “ill speech”.

There are other prophetic narrations which highlight the virtue of excellence in religion, such as the narration of Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, in which he reported that the Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, said: “When one of you reaches the level of excellence in faith, then every good deed is multiplied for him ten times up to seven hundred times; and each sin is recorded as only one, until he meets Allah” [Muslim].

The saying of the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam: “... that which is of no

concern to him” means, that which does not benefit him in his worldly life or the Hereafter, and this includes things that are prohibited, disliked, doubtful, and excess permissible matters which one does not really need.

The measure by which one knows whether something is of his concern or not, is Islamic teachings and not one’s desires.

Many people decide to abandon enjoining good and forbidding evil under the pretext that this is interfering with people’s privacy and personal life. They would do so claiming that it is not a person’s

concern to intervene in other people’s affairs, basing their argument on an incorrect understanding of this very narration.

Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq, may Allah be pleased with him, said: “O you people! You recite and misinterpret the following verse (which means): ‘O you who believe! Take care of your own selves. If you follow the (right) guidance [and enjoin what is right (Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbid what is wrong (polytheism, disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden)] no hurt can come to you from those who are in error!’ [Qur’an 5:105] But I have heard Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, saying: ‘When people see an oppressor but do not prevent him from (doing evil), it is likely that Allah will punish them all!’” [Abu Dawood & At-Tirmithi]

In another narration he, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, said: “Never that evil is committed and people do not prevent it, though able to do so, but Allah will overwhelm them with punishment”

One other thing that one must concern himself with is the affairs of other believers and their issues, because he who does not worry about the affairs of his fellow Muslims is not one of them.

The need to understand this narration, its implications and applications intensifies in times like ours, when people’s commitments and personal obligations have increased and priorities are mixed up.

The implementation of this narration is the first practical step toward reforming oneself and those under his guardianship and care which leads to achieving excellence in religion. This happens by concentrating on that which is beneficial and staying away from all that is not ones concern.

Article source: <http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/>



How to respect your parents

There are many days set aside in non-Islamic societies to honour and appreciate special people; for example, Father’s Day, Mother’s Day, Memorial Day and Labour Day. In Islam, however, respecting, honouring and appreciating parents is not just for a single day of the year, but rather for each and every day.

A Muslim child should respect and appreciate his or her parents on a daily basis. Allah mentions that human beings must recognise their parents and that this is second only to the recognition of Allah Himself. Throughout the Qur’an, we notice that parents are mentioned with appreciation and respect, even if they are senile. In the Qur’an, there is a very beautiful description of how parents are to be treated; Allah Says (what means): “And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as] ‘uff’ [i.e., an expression of irritation or disapproval] and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say: ‘My Lord! Have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small.’” [Qur’an 17:23-24]

The recognition and respect of parents is mentioned in the Qur’an 11 times; in every instance, Allah reminds children to recognise and to appreciate the love and care that they have received from their parents. One such example is when Allah says what means: “And We have enjoined upon man goodness to parents...” [Qur’an 29:8 & 46:15]

1. The demand for recognising parents is made more emphatic when Allah Says (what means): “And [recall] when We took the covenant from the Children of Israel, [enjoining upon them]: ‘Do not worship except Allah; and to parents, do good...’” [Qur’an 2:83]

2. Allah again emphasises in chapter An-Nisaa’ that children should be kind to their parents. He says what means: “Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good...” [Qur’an 4:36]

3. In Chapter Al-An’aam, Allah re-emphasises that people should be kind to their parents; He says what means: “Say: ‘Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited to you. [He commands] that you not associate anything with Him, and to parents, good treatment...’” [Qur’an 6:151]

Although Islam recognises both parents, mothers are given particular http://172.17.99.108/newspress/app/article_publishing/display_art_sec.php?server=np&fetch_type=article&a_id=250128%3Csep%3E501385&a_sec=image&a_lan=en&img_id=501385&image_resize_type=phpthumb&dynamic_creation=1&activate_yellow_flag=&a7x=1&user_id=4137&sf_id=501385 gratitude and respect.



This can be appreciated if we reflect upon the hardships and suffering that mothers experience in their lives. In this regard, there is a Hadith of the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam: It was narrated by Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, that a man came to the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, and asked him: ‘Who is most deserving of my close companionship?’ He replied: “Your mother; your mother; your mother; then your father; then the next closest to you in kinship; then the one next closest.”

Islam has endorsed respect for parents by their children, even if the parents are non-Muslims. If parents strive to convert their children to non-Islamic beliefs, the children should not obey them, but must still maintain goodness towards them. In this regard, Allah says what means: “And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is two years. Be grateful to Me and your parents; to Me is the [final] destination. But if they endeavour to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, and do not obey them but accompany them in [this] world with appropriate kindness and follow the way of those who turn back to Me [in repentance]. Then to Me will be your return, and I will inform you about what you used to do.” [Qur’an 31:14-15]

Islam teaches us that of the most beloved deeds to Allah, having respect for one’s parents is second only to that of prayer and is greater than that of Jihad (fighting in His cause). In this respect, Abu ‘Abdur-Rahmaan ‘Abdullah Ibn Mas’ood, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated the following: “I asked the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam: ‘Which deed is the most beloved to Allah?’

He replied: ‘Prayers performed on time.’ I then asked: ‘Which one is next?’ He replied: “Goodness to parents.” I then asked: ‘Which is next?’ He replied: ‘Jihad in the path of Allah.’”

In Islam, respect for parents is so great that the child and his wealth are considered to be the property of the parents: ‘Aa’ishah, may Allah be pleased with her,

narrated that a man came to the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, in order to resolve a dispute that he had with his father regarding a loan he had given him. The Prophet said to the man: “You and your wealth are to (i.e., the property of) your father.”

We hope and pray that all of us will respect our parents while they are alive and after their death. One can honour his parents after their death through the following methods:

1. Performing daily Du’aa’ (supplication) for them.
2. Giving charity on their behalf.
3. Instituting a perpetual charity on their behalf, such as a mosque, an Islamic Centre, an Islamic library, an Islamic hospital, an orphanage, etc.
4. Performing Haj on their behalf, or asking someone to do so.
5. Distributing Islamic literature on their behalf.

Let us pray to Allah that we do our best to respect our parents, honour them, be kind to them, assist them, and please them so that we may attain the love of Allah.

O Allah! Accept our humble prayers and make us obedient slaves to You.

O Allah! Help us to be respectful children to our parents. Aameen.

Article source: <http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/>

Ingratitude towards parents

“Say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour.” [Qur’an 17:23]

In Islam, it is obligatory for us to show kindness, respect, and obedience to our parents.

The position of parents, and the mutual obligations and responsibilities, have been addressed in Islam in great detail.

In fact, kindness and obedience is so strongly emphasised that Allah has linked showing gratitude to one’s parents with showing gratitude to Allah.

In the Noble Qur’an, Almighty Allah Says (which means): “And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), “Show gratitude to Me and to your parents: to Me is (your final) return.” [Qur’an 31:14]

Sadly, we are living in a time where children speaking disrespectfully to their parents and about their parents, is the norm rather than the exception.

However, Islam places great emphasis on respectful and considerate behaviour to even our enemies, so to not uphold the obligations laid down by Allah to our parents is actually one of the major sins.

Let’s see what the Qur’an says about parents.

“This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah.” [Qur’an 2:02]

Treat parents with honour and speak to them graciously and with humility.

Allah Says (which means): “Your Lord hath decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.” [Qur’an 17:23]

Be grateful to parents but do not obey them if they strive to make you associate anything with Allah.

Allah also Says (which means): “...Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual coming. But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which you have no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to Me (in love): in the end the return of you all is to Me, then will I inform you of what you did.” [Qur’an 31:15]

These verses make it clear that we must honour our parents, appreciate their sacrifices and efforts for us, and do our best for them. This is required regardless of whether they are Muslims or not.

Be good to parents and everyone whom you meet.

The Qur’an states (which means): “Worship Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet), and what your right hands possess: For Allah loves not the arrogant, the vainglorious.” [Qur’an 4:36]

If the Qur’an tells us to be good to a stranger, then how can we even think of disrespecting our parents?

Let’s now see what Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, said about parents in the authentic Ahadith (narrations).



Almighty Allah Says (which means): “Whatsoever the Prophet gives you, take it and whatsoever he forbids you, refrain from it.” [Qur’an 59:7]

Undutifulness to parents is a major sin.

Anas narrated from Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, about the major sins.

He (the Prophet) observed: ‘Associating anyone (or anything) with Allah, undutifulness to parents, killing a person and false utterance!’ [Muslim]

One of the dearest deeds to Allah is being good and dutiful to parents.

‘Abdullah Ibn Mas’ood, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated: I asked the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, “Which deed is the dearest to Allah?” He replied, “To offer the prayers at their early stated fixed times.” I asked, “What is the next (in goodness)?” He replied, “To be good and dutiful to your parents” [Al-Bukhari]

Being dutiful to parents is one of the keys to enter Paradise.

Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, as saying: Let him be humbled into dust; let him be humbled into dust; let him be humbled into dust. It was said: O Allah’s Messenger, who is he? He said: He who accompanies either of his parents during their old age or one of them, but he does not enter Paradise (by being undutiful to them). [Muslim]

What acts of kindness can we do for our parents after their death?

A man of the tribe of Salamah came to Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, and said: ‘O Apostle of Allah! Is there any kindness left that I can do to my parents after their death?’ He replied: ‘Yes, you can invoke blessings on them, forgiveness for them, fulfil their promises and pledges (to do righteous deeds), maintain ties with kinfolk for the mere reason of being dutiful to them (i.e. parents), and honour their friends!’ [Abu Daawood]

High status is given to mothers.

A man came to the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam, and asked him for permission to fight Jihad. The Prophet asked him if he had a mother, and when he replied affirmatively, he said, “Stay with her, for Paradise is at her feet (i.e. she is the way leading to it).” [Ahmad]

Sometimes we may take our parents for granted and overlook their importance.

As Muslims, we should constantly be alert to guard ourselves from sins; however, are we guarding ourselves from one of the biggest major sins?

Are we honouring and respecting our parents as per their right? Or are we neglecting one of the dearest deeds to Allah?

Right now the choice is ours!

We ask Allah the Most High, the All-Powerful, to teach us that which will benefit us, and to benefit us by that which we learn.

Article source: <http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/>

Making sense of the status of Iran’s uranium enrichment programme

US Vice President JD Vance told Reuters earlier this week that Iran must make a “meaningful” reduction in its uranium enrichment capacity to satisfy US demands and end the countries’ seven-month war. The Trump administration has sought to force Iran to denuclearise in slow-moving negotiations to end the conflict.

Israel launched airstrikes on Iran’s nuclear facilities on June 13 of last year, soon followed by the United States. In a 12-day campaign, they destroyed or badly damaged the three uranium-enrichment facilities that were known to be operating in Iran at the time. They argued that Iran was getting too close to being able to produce a nuclear weapon, but the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, said it had no credible indication of a coordinated weapons programme. Iran was, however, enriching uranium

to up to 60% purity, a short step from the roughly 90% of weapons grade.

The IAEA, which had access to all Iran’s declared nuclear sites, including its enrichment plants, until the US-Israeli bombing campaign, estimates Iran had 440.9kg of uranium enriched to up to 60% when the first bombs fell. That is enough, if enriched further, for 10 nuclear weapons, according to an IAEA yardstick. Iran also had stocks of uranium enriched to lower levels.

No other country has enriched uranium to such a high level without producing nuclear weapons. The US and its European allies say there is no civil justification. The IAEA said the enrichment level and quantity produced were of serious concern. Iran has long held that it does not want and is not seeking to develop nuclear weapons.

Iran has not told the IAEA how much of its enriched uranium survived the attacks or informed it

of its whereabouts. It has also not let IAEA inspectors return to the bombed sites since they were attacked. Of the three enrichment plants, the only above-ground one, at the sprawling Natanz nuclear facility, was destroyed, the IAEA has said. The other two, at Natanz and Fordow, were at least badly damaged and are widely believed to be out of action.

The day before Israel attacked, Iran informed the IAEA it was opening a new enrichment plant at Isfahan, which diplomats say is in a network of tunnels there that appears largely unscathed by US bombing. The IAEA says it does not know the status of that plant or whether it contains nuclear material.

While some of Iran’s enriched uranium will have been destroyed in the US-Israeli strikes, IAEA chief Rafael Grossi said in March his agency believes “a bit more than 200 kg” of Iran’s uranium enriched to up to 60% remains in the tunnel complex at Isfahan, with some also still at Natanz.

Vance questioned why Iran had 60% enriched uranium if it claims to not desire nuclear weapons. And he positioned meaningful reductions in “enrichment capacity” as a prerequisite to satisfying US demands and ending the war. “Sixty percent enriched uranium, you know, I’m hardly a nuclear scientist, but I’ve learned this: you don’t need that for any energy production. You don’t need it for anything except to have threshold weapons-grade uranium,” Vance said. “I think if they want to show a commitment to not building a nuclear weapon, they would do something meaningful on their enrichment capacity. So far, we haven’t seen a long-term commitment to do that.”

Given that Iran is not currently known to be enriching, any reduction is likely to be compared to its previous capacity, which was significant. A reduction could refer to purity, output or the number of enrichment sites. — Reuters



The vital link in Central Asia

By Shohboz Makhammadrizaev

Historically, Central Asia was the vibrant hub of the Great Silk Road, connecting East and West. Following centuries of administrative centralisation, this historical role contracted, but since gaining independence in 1991, Central Asian nations have worked to revive their global connectivity. Situated at the heart of the region, Uzbekistan is one of only two doubly landlocked countries globally. It is also the only nation in Central Asia sharing direct borders with all four neighbouring states and Afghanistan.

For nearly a quarter-century after 1991, this central location was a source of tension due to border disputes, water conflicts, and high tariffs. Furthermore, prior to 2016, Uzbekistan pursued a cautious, self-contained foreign policy, maintaining diplomatic ties with 134 nations and a visa-free regime limited to about 10 CIS states.

Under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, this approach changed dramatically through pragmatic regional diplomacy and rapid reforms. Tashkent transformed its geographical disadvantage into a logistics asset, expanding diplomatic relations to 168 countries and granting visa-free travel to citizens of over 90 nations. For the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries seeking economic diversification in Eurasia, Uzbekistan has become a logical gateway to the broader

Central Asian Economy Thawing Ice in the Region

Between 2017 and 2025, Tashkent fundamentally shifted its regional strategy, resolving long-standing structural bottlenecks across three core areas: border delimitation, transboundary water security, and trade-industrial co-operation. Decades of border friction and complex enclaves in the Fergana Valley were decisively resolved between 2022 and 2023 through intensive diplomacy, successfully finalising borders and reopening long-closed checkpoints.

Simultaneously, transboundary water disputes — such as those concerning Tajikistan’s Rogun Hydropower Plant and the Kampir-Abad reservoir — shifted from opposition to regional co-operation through landmark joint-management agreements that balanced downstream and upstream interests.

These diplomatic breakthroughs catalyzed comprehensive economic

opening. By introducing a 30-day visa-free framework, restoring long-severed rail, bus, and transit connections, and dismantling trade barriers, Tashkent accelerated transit connectivity across Central Asia. By 2025, all five Central Asian republics — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan — began taking synchronised steps toward deeper integration, effectively eliminating the primary layer of geopolitical risk for institutional partners in Riyadh, Doha, or Abu Dhabi.

Building Multi-Directional Trade Corridors

Prior to 2016, Uzbekistan pursued a cautious, self-contained model, but following a strategic shift toward openness, it initiated a comprehensive policy of building multi-directional trade corridors. The Chinese Direction and the Eastern Corridor: Before 2016, bilateral trade with China stood at roughly \$4.2bn, limited to raw materials. Through pragmatic diplomacy, China became Uzbekistan’s largest trading partner, with trade tripling to \$13–14bn. Total Chinese investment grew from \$2.2bn in 2015 to over \$15bn by 2025, driving manufacturing, renewable energy, automotive, and infrastructure sectors. By 2024, freight transport reached 6mn tonnes, transforming Uzbekistan into an active transit hub along China–Europe supply routes.

The European Direction (The Middle Corridor)

Previously, trade with the European Union hovered around \$2.0–2.3bn under basic 1996 frameworks, with minimal investment. Pragmatic diplomacy reshaped this: Uzbekistan secured EU GSP+ status, allowing over 6,200 product lines duty-free access. Trade grew 2.5-fold to \$6bn, with over 1,000 European-capitalised companies operating locally. Relations reached a milestone at the April 2025 EU–Central Asia Summit in Samarkand, elevating the partnership to a strategic level. Under Europe’s €12bn Global Gateway package, Uzbekistan emerged as a key regional hub for the Middle Corridor — bypassing traditional northern routes — and a vital link for Critical Raw Materials.

These shifts demonstrate that under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Uzbekistan actively redrew Eurasia’s logistical landscape. Transforming from a historically isolated country into an

indispensible strategic bridge connecting East, West, North, and South stands as a clear example of modern pragmatic diplomacy.

Gulf–Central Asia Relations

The historic 2023 Jeddah Summit under the C5+GCC format opened a vibrant new chapter in interregional co-operation, culminating in a landmark Joint Declaration and a comprehensive 5-year roadmap spanning politics, security, economics, investment, energy, transport, and cultural-humanitarian affairs. Subsequent high-level investment forums in Tashkent, Riyadh, Doha, and Abu Dhabi successfully translated these political agreements into multi-billion-dollar project portfolios, driving total trade turnover between the GCC and Central Asian nations well past the \$10bn threshold.

Beyond conventional trade, the expanding partnership between the Gulf nations and Central Asia spans much deeper economic integration, with Uzbekistan uniquely positioned as the core platform for driving GCC engagement across the region. A primary engine of this collaboration lies in Uzbekistan’s abundant reserves of strategic raw materials. The country holds major global rankings in critical minerals, including substantial reserves of uranium, copper, tungsten, molybdenum, lithium, and rare earth elements (REEs).

Historically, much of this immense resource wealth was exported exclusively



The aerial view of Tashkent city. PICTURE: Muso1996/Wikipedia

From landlocked to land-linked: Why Uzbekistan could become the Gulf’s gateway to Central Asia?

as raw materials or basic semi-finished goods. This exact gap creates an exceptional strategic opportunity for Gulf investors. Rather than limiting their involvement to raw extraction, investors can channel capital into local deep-processing capabilities and high-value-added production chains directly inside Uzbekistan:

Advanced Mineral Processing: Transitioning from raw exports to establishing advanced industrial complexes and gigafactories that manufacture critical components for electric vehicles (EVs), renewable energy systems, and advanced battery storage. Similarly, raw uranium can feed into domestic nuclear medicine manufacturing and advanced isotope production, while tungsten and other rare metals can be utilized to produce ultra-light, durable alloys for aviation and heavy industries.

Green Energy Hub: Renewable energy co-operation represents another powerful pillar. Industry giants from the Gulf — such as Saudi Arabia’s ACWA Power, the UAE’s Masdar, and Qatar’s Nebras Power — have become leading foreign investors in Uzbekistan’s energy transformation. With Uzbekistan rapidly expanding its renewable capacity toward ambitious 2030 targets (accounting for a substantial share of total generation), collaboration is extending into large-scale battery energy storage systems,

green hydrogen export initiatives, and the localised manufacturing of solar panels, inverters, and turbine parts.

This integration establishes a regional “green energy loop” that cuts production costs by 30% to 50%, ensures full compliance with international standards such as the European Union’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), and directly supports national development blueprints like Saudi Vision 2030, Qatar National Vision 2030, and the UAE Centennial 2071.

Agro-Logistics Hub: Amid growing water scarcity and limited arable land, food security is a top national priority for Gulf states. Uzbekistan’s favourable climate and rich agricultural output position it as an ideal food-security partner. By constructing modern cold-storage facilities, advanced sorting and packaging hubs, enforcing GSO Halal certifications, and securing direct transit corridors, Uzbekistan functions as a regional agro-logistics center that consolidates agricultural output across Central Asia for rapid delivery to Gulf markets.

These multi-dimensional footprints empower Gulf corporations to view Uzbekistan not merely as a standalone domestic market of 38mn people, but as an integrated manufacturing, industrial, and logistics gateway providing seamless access to the wider Central Asian market of over 80 million residents and broader Eurasian economic spaces.

Conclusion

Taken together, these developments reflect Uzbekistan’s foreign policy shift since 2016 from a cautious stance to an open, pragmatic, and diversified approach. Robust economic partnerships with China, the EU, and the Gulf have significantly expanded Tashkent’s diplomatic and economic horizons. Furthermore, Uzbekistan’s geographical position along the Eastern and Middle corridors has turned a historic vulnerability into a strategic advantage. By connecting transport networks across Eurasia, Uzbekistan serves as an indispensable commercial bridge between East, West, North, and South — stimulating cross-border investment, energy collaboration, and infrastructural growth throughout Central Asia.

• The writer, Shohboz Makhammadrizaev, is an independent researcher



Supporters of former Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan's party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), take part in a protest march demanding Khan's release and calling for the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law across the country, in Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, yesterday. **(Reuters)**

Pro-Imran Khan march intensifies

AFP
Khyber Line

Punching the air and roaring in unison, ecstatic crowds joined a growing demonstration on Wednesday in support of Pakistan's jailed ex-prime minister Imran Khan, an opposition show of force that authorities had sought to avert.

Supporters of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party began their so-called "long march" on Sunday, demanding the former prime minister's release and airing anti-government sentiment fuelled by harsh economic conditions.

"I joined this procession for one reason: Imran Khan's release. I will not return under any circumstances until he is released,"

58-year-old Qalandar Khan told AFP in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, ruled by the PTI.

"If the government and the establishment think they can remove Imran Khan ... they should know that he has a place in our hearts," said the protester from the mountainous North Waziristan area.

A hugely popular former cricket star, Imran Khan has been behind bars since August 2023 and faces scores of charges ranging from corruption to treason following anti-establishment riots also in 2023.

He and his legal team reject the allegations, branding them as politically motivated cases aimed at neutralising his popularity.

"We have become deeply frustrated with inflation, lawlessness,

poor governance and terrorism in the country," he added.

"We are Khan's soldiers," Sohail Afridi, PTI chief minister for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, shouted down a microphone as he addressed crowds south of Peshawar city, ahead of the fourth day of the march.

From atop a truck with a 5-metre-high (16-foot) platform festooned with smiling pictures of the jailed former prime minister, Afridi reiterated PTI demands including access in prison to Khan for doctors, party officials and relatives.

Raising his fist in the air, Afridi asked the crowd: "Are you ready to march to Islamabad?"

The packed crowd of protesters, some holding red-and-green party flags or clutching pictures of Khan, cheered back: "We are ready."

Russian strike on buses kills 30 in frontline Ukrainian city

AFP
Kyiv

Ukraine yesterday accused Russia of deliberately targeting civilians after 30 people were killed when two buses were blown up in the frontline city of Kramatorsk, in one of the deadliest attacks in weeks.

President Volodymyr Zelensky vowed that it "will not go unanswered" after photos posted by local authorities showed the burnt-out metal shell of the vehicles, with bodies and debris strewn across the road.

"Russia is trying to destroy all life in (the) Donbas (region) and the world must respond to this," he wrote on Telegram, warning the death toll could rise.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio meanwhile warned that the current stalemate after nearly five years of fighting was "very dangerous" and could lead to escalation.

But Zelensky said he hoped Ukrainian negotiators, who were heading to the US, could persuade Washington to put more pressure on Russia.

Last weekend he disclosed that Washington wanted technical-level talks between the two sides by the end of October.

The Kramatorsk strikes came just a day after five young children were among 22 killed when a Rus-



A bus burns following a Russian air strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in the city of Kramatorsk, in Donetsk region, yesterday. **(Reuters)**

sian missile struck a five-storey apartment block in Pryluky, in the northern Chernigiv region.

"The Russians are deliberately targeting civilians," Donetsk governor Vadym Filashkin said, accusing Moscow of flouting "every conceivable rule of warfare and norm of international humanitarian law".

Kramatorsk City Council called it "yet another horrific crime committed by the Russian army against the civilian population," adding there were "absolutely no military targets" in the area.

Three more people were killed in shelling at a nearby village, the emergency services said.

There has been mounting concern about the increase in civilian deaths and injuries as both sides step up long-range attacks.

The UN has verified more than 17,000 civilian deaths but says the real number is considerably higher.

At least 534 people have died in Kyiv since the 2022 invasion, according to the city state administration's data seen by AFP yesterday.

Last week, Zelensky said his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin had sanctioned massive attacks on civilian areas, a claim the Kremlin denies.

But touring the site of the Pryluky attack yesterday, visiting UK foreign minister Ed Miliband said there was "no clearer sign of Putin's evil, evil intent and strategy in this conflict".

"Putin once said that he was going to win on the battlefield," he told reporters, as London an-

Indian opposition protest police action against lawmakers, push for poll chief's resignation

Reuters
Bengaluru

Indian opposition groups demonstrated for a third day yesterday, protesting police action against Congress party leaders and demanding the resignation of the chief election commissioner over a controversial revision of voter lists.

Opposition parties, their student units, and the "Cockroach" youth movement have been holding almost daily demonstrations seeking Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's resignation. They have accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of using a revision of voter lists to fix them in its favour, in collusion with its appointees, including Kumar.

Kumar has not commented but the Election Commission and the BJP have denied the allegations.

The protests present a new political challenge to Modi midway into his third term, just months after similar demonstrations led by the self-named Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) forced the resignation of his education minister over exam paper leaks.

Visuals from news agency ANI showed dozens of Congress supporters staging a protest march yesterday in the southern state of Telangana, while the opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal organised a similar demonstration in



Congress party supporters gather as leaders of India's opposition alliance, the INDIA bloc (Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance), leave in a bus to participate in a protest in New Delhi. **(AFP)**

the eastern state of Bihar.

Hundreds of supporters of the CJP youth movement also protested in tech hub Bengaluru, many of them holding posters that said, "Every name counts, Every vote matters" and "Stop the Murder of Democracy".

"I think voting right is the most basic point of democracy ... People who actually want to vote, who actually care about the future of India, they are just being (denied) voting rights," Khushi Shrivastava, a 22-year-old architecture student who attended the Bengaluru protest, told Reuters.

On Wednesday, Congress accused police of using "brute force" to briefly detain party leader Rahul

Gandhi, his sister Priyanka Vadra, and other lawmakers as they tried to reach the Jantar Mantar protest site in New Delhi.

Delhi Police said the allegations were being used to "defame" the force.

"We are on the ground and, as officers, we also ensure that every kind of legal duty is followed and no illegal, unnecessary actions take place," senior police officer Shrishti Pandey told ANI.

BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia said the allegations were "being levelled by an irresponsible, anarchist opposition". The claims had "no base, not an iota of evidence", he told reporters at a media briefing yesterday.

Bollywood actor Nana Patekar dies at 75

Reuters
Mumbai

Nana Patekar, a veteran Indian actor known for his fiery performances in Bollywood films and theatre, died yesterday aged 75, local media reported.

Patekar was found unconscious at his home in the coastal state of Goa early yesterday morning and doctors were unable to revive him, news agency ANI and other media reported.

He died of cardiac arrest, but it was unclear what triggered it, Shekhar Salkar, chief of the oncology department at the Manipal Hospital, where Patekar was brought, told ANI.

Born Vishawanath Patekar, but popularly known as Nana, he started his career doing theatre in Marathi, the language spoken in his home state of Maharashtra, which is also home to Bollywood.

Patekar acted in several of India's arthouse movies in the 1970's and 80's, including Mira Nair's award-winning "Salaam Bombay" before moving to mainstream Bollywood.

He played a variety of roles, sharing screen space with actors such as Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan and excelling in both serious and comic roles.

His performances, marked by trademark aggression and forceful dialogue, won him several national and regional film awards.

"He was one of those rare actors who never needed to do too much to make you sit up and watch. That voice, that intensity, that honesty in every performance...he was completely his own," said actor Akshay Kumar, who acted with Patekar in several movies.

Patekar is survived by his wife, from whom he was separated, and a son.

Burnham backs Germany for jet project

British Prime Minister Andy Burnham said yesterday that he was open to having Germany join a next-generation fighter jet project, after the collapse of a Franco-German warplane programme. Britain, Italy and Japan are working on the "Global Combat Air Programme" (GCAP), which aims to replace the Eurofighter Typhoon and Mitsubishi F-2 jets currently used by those countries. Germany's competing next-generation fighter jet project with France and Spain — the "Future Combat Air System" (FCAS) — fell apart in June amid bickering between the companies involved. During a visit to Berlin, Burnham said he had told Chancellor Friedrich Merz about Britain's "openness to Germany joining GCAP" during discussions earlier in the day. Burnham said he hoped to work with Italy and Japan "in the coming period" on having them join as well. **(AFP)**

France high school students vow no let-up

AFP
Paris

Tens of thousands of people thronged a Paris square yesterday demanding better education and less police brutality, as students protested nationwide despite government attempts to ease a crisis that has rocked the country for more than a week.

Students have blocked entrances to hundreds of high schools across the country, with squads of riot police deployed to control the situation — occasionally resulting in violent clashes.

A few fireworks streamed up into the sky as tens of thousands of students from schools and universities rallied in the French capital's Bastille Square yesterday afternoon.

Crowds of students climbed the famous monument at its centre, some waving the French flag and singing the national anthem.

A student sat with his legs dangling on the top of a bus stop, clutching a sign reading: "Reason for absence: Too busy fighting for our future."



French police officers clash with protesters during a demonstration of high-school students at Place de la Bastille, in Paris, yesterday, as part of a nationwide protest movement over learning conditions. **(AFP)**

Student demonstrators — many attending high schools called lycées for children aged between 15 and 18 years old — have complained of absent teachers, overloaded timetables, dilapidated classrooms and buildings that cannot cope with rising temperatures.

Jeanne, a 15-year-old student from a top Paris high school, said she wanted to show solidarity with pupils in less privileged areas outside the capital.

"Everyone has the right to be educated at the same level. There shouldn't be people who are more educated than others when we're all in the public education system," she said.

Marianne, a 20-year-old university student who also did not want to give her second name, said she was also there to protest excessive police force in recent days of protest. "For me, that's just unacceptable," she said.

AFP
Rome

Italy's parliament yesterday approved a reform of the country's electoral law that opposition parties say Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's hard-right government has designed to boost its chances of re-election next year.

The reform introduces a fully proportional system that guarantees a parliamentary majority to any alliance winning more than 42% of the vote.

Meloni, who has presided over the longest-serving government in Italy's post-war history, has argued the reform will bring more political stability.

The vote passed with 227 votes in favour and 164 against after Meloni told her governing coalition she would resign if the reform fell through.

"Stable governments and greater participation mean more continuity, more accountability and a greater ability to provide concrete answers to Italians," Meloni wrote on X after the vote.

The changes also require parties and coalitions to spell out their governing programme and name their candidate for premier ahead of elections.

Giovanni Donzelli, a senior lawmaker with Meloni's Brothers of Italy party, told AFP the electoral law "is a revolution".

"Italians will finally have real weight with their vote, as they will choose the coalition, the platform, and the candidate for prime minister," he said.

But Giuseppe Conte, former prime minister and leader of the

opposition Five Stars Movement (M5S), told AFP the new law is "a mess, a convoluted scheme, devised solely to find a formula to gain an advantage in the upcoming elections".

Neither the right nor the left are expected to secure an outright parliamentary majority at the next election which has to be held by the end of next year.

Under the proposed system, an alliance winning more than 42% of the vote would automatically receive a parliamentary majority, gaining an additional 70 seats in the lower house and 35 in the Senate.

Reaching that threshold, however, may prove difficult for either side.

Meloni last month became the leader of the longest-running administration in Italy's post-war history, but her coalition has been losing support to former army general Roberto Vannacci and his new National Future (FN) party.

Although Meloni has so far ruled out an alliance with Vannacci, the far-right FN is polling ahead of both Meloni's allies, the anti-immigrant League and centre-right Forza Italia, and she may yet need him.

According to a recent survey by Ipsos Doxa, the centre-left coalition could surpass the 42-percent threshold, provided it overcomes internal divisions and persuades two small radical parties to join forces.

Meloni's term officially ends in October 2027, but she could opt to bring elections forward to April or May.

Opposition parties have already vowed to challenge the new electoral law in court before then.

Qatar-Spain ties ‘have never been stronger’

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Qatar-Spain relations have reached a new level of strength, with both countries expanding co-operation across security, energy, education, sports, infrastructure, and trade, Spain’s ambassador to Qatar Dr Alvaro Renedo Zalba has said.

Speaking to *Gulf Times* on the sidelines of the Festival of Spain at Lulu Hypermarket, the envoy highlighted close political ties between Doha and Madrid and said both countries share a strong commitment to resolving conflicts through diplomacy, international law, and respect for human rights.

“Our relationship has never been stronger,” Dr Renedo Zalba said, pointing to high-level contacts between the leadership of Qatar and Spain and growing co-operation across a range of sectors.

He noted that HE the Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa

al-Thani recently visited Madrid, where Spain and Qatar signed an important letter of intent on security co-operation in preparation for the 2030 FIFA World Cup, which Spain will co-host with Portugal and Morocco.

The envoy also highlighted ongoing high-level political contacts, including meetings between His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Spain’s King Felipe VI.

“Both the countries are also closely aligned on the need to address the growing geopolitical challenges facing the international community,” he said. “We have a shared resolve to contribute to conflict resolution through diplomacy.”

“International law and human rights are cornerstones of the respective foreign policies of Qatar and Spain,” the envoy noted.

Dr Renedo Zalba stressed that such common ground has become increasingly important amid conflicts and humanitarian crises, including the war in Ukraine and the situation in Gaza.



Dr Alvaro Renedo Zalba: I firmly believe in gastronomical diplomacy. I think it is a way of bringing people together.

“It’s very important to work together and contribute to the stabilisation of our world, and to guarantee human rights and international law,” he said.

On Qatar’s role in addressing the re-

gion’s current challenges, the envoy expressed strong confidence in positive outcomes.

“Qatar would continue to make a significant contribution to peace, security, stability and prosperity in the region. I personally am sure that Qatar would emerge from the crisis stronger,” he underlined.

On economic and commercial relations, Dr Renedo Zalba said Spain and Qatar are working to develop further co-operation in sectors important to Qatar’s future, including energy, services, education, sports, and infrastructure.

“The current geopolitical situation and the war have created bottlenecks, challenges and distortions affecting trade and commerce,” he said.

“However, both sides are working to overcome these obstacles,” the ambassador continued. “The impact of the war on trade volumes between both the countries is still being assessed.”

He said the Festival of Spain at Lulu Hypermarket aims to build a “gastronomical

bridge” between Spain and Qatar, using food and culinary traditions to bring people from the two countries closer.

“Qataris and residents in the country appreciate the quality and diversity of Spanish gastronomy, while there are also historic connections between Spanish and Arab culinary traditions,” Dr Renedo Zalba said.

“Products such as saffron and olive oil, as well as sweets such as turron, have links to Arab culinary heritage,” he highlighted.

Beyond promoting Spanish food products, the envoy said the initiative showed how cultural exchange could strengthen bilateral relations.

“I firmly believe in gastronomical diplomacy,” he said. “I think it is a way of bringing people together.”

“For Qatar and Spain, gastronomy is not simply about trade or cuisine, but another avenue through which the two countries could deepen their people-to-people connections and reinforce an already expanding bilateral partnership,” Dr Renedo Zalba added.

QF’s Ladies Sport Night returns to Oxygen Park for fall season



Qatar Foundation (QF)’s Ladies Sport Night, in partnership with Oryx GTL, returns to Oxygen Park in Education City this fall, with a diverse programme of sports, fitness, and community activities for women and girls aged 8 and above.

Running every Tuesday between October 13 and December 15, from 5pm to 9pm, the programme will bring together QF entities, Qatar Sports For All Federation (QSFA), and local gyms to offer a broad range of activities throughout the season.

Weekly offerings will include team sports, running sessions, fitness classes, tournaments, challenges, and community activities.

Participants can register through the Education City App.

The fall edition will also introduce a series

of monthly themes focused on key areas of women’s health, wellbeing, and participation in sport.

October will focus on Breast Cancer Awareness, followed by Women’s Wellness in November.

“Through our exciting Ladies Sport Night programme, we aim to create more opportunities for women and girls to get involved in fitness and sport, while bringing together sports organisations, community partners, and fitness providers to create a welcoming and inclusive environment,” said QF director (Community Engagement) Leena A al-Musalmani.

“With everything from competitive tournaments and running activities to fitness classes, challenges, and community sessions, Ladies Sport Night offers a range of ways for participants to stay active, discover new activities, and connect with others,” she said.

“We hope it will encourage more women and girls to make physical activity part of their regular routine, while strengthening their connection with the wider sporting community,” al-Musalmani added.

According to Qatar Sports For All Federation executive director Abdullah al-Dosari, the weekly Ladies Sport Night reflects the QSFA’s commitment to building on previous successes and encouraging greater women’s participation in sports and community activities.

He noted that the programme offers fitness classes, sports activities, competitions, and community events led by specialised female coaches, providing a safe, motivating environment that encourages regular physical activity and promotes a healthy lifestyle.

Those interested in joining Ladies Sport Night are encouraged to pre-register in advance through the Education City App, available on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.



Al Noor Centre marks World Sight, White Cane days

Al Noor Centre for the Blind, one of the centres affiliated with the Qatar Foundation for Social Work, marked World Sight Day and White Cane Day as part of its “Their light is among us” initiative.

Al Noor Centre executive director Mishaal al-Nuaimi said the two occasions highlight complementary priorities: protecting eye health through prevention and early detection, and affirming the rights of people with visual dis-

abilities to independence, mobility and full participation in society.

He noted that the white cane is not merely a mobility aid, but an important tool for independence, enabling people with visual disabilities to access facilities

and services with confidence and safety.

This, he added, requires accessible environments and institutional practices that support accessibility, participation and inclusion. – QNA

Ministry highlights meadow planting efforts to protect Qatar’s biodiversity

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has organised a public awareness event to plant a natural meadow in the north of the country, as part of efforts to rehabilitate terrestrial ecosystems and enhance natural vegetation.

The event was led by officers and personnel from the ministry’s Wildlife Development Department to plant the Umm Juwayfah meadow in Al Ghuwairiya town in the Al Khor and Thakira municipality.

The initiative forms part of the 2026 desert meadow planting season, which aims to restore natural habitat, protect biodiversity and strengthen sustainable environmental practices across Qatar’s wilderness areas.

The event brought together environmental specialists and stakeholders and featured field activities to plant the meadow, alongside awareness activities highlighting the importance of rehabilitating natural areas and preserving native wild plants in order to support ecological balance.

The ministry stressed that such initiatives contribute to restoring the natural characteristics of affected sites and improving vegetation cover to provide suitable habitats for wildlife.

It also reaffirmed its commitment to promoting the conservation of meadows and reducing harmful practices, supporting the environmental sustainability objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030. – QNA



Lusail initiative combines fitness, community and health awareness

By Shaima Sherif
Staff Reporter

Qatar’s growing appetite for running, cycling and recreational fitness is turning community sport into a platform for health awareness, with the Lusail International Circuit (LIC) opening its track to people of all ages and fitness levels.

The circuit was illuminated in pink on October 7 as community members gathered for a Pink October Mixed Training Day, running, walking and cycling along its 5.38km track.

The initiative, held to support breast cancer awareness, also highlighted the growing role of community-based sport in encouraging healthier and more active lifestyles in Qatar.

LIC public relations and communications manager Hamad al-Khalaqi said that the initiative was designed to let people experience health awareness collectively rather than just hearing about it.

“At Lusail International Circuit, we believe awareness works best when people experience it together rather than simply hear about it,” he told *Gulf Times*.

Alongside the track activities, participants took part in health- and awareness-focused activities as the circuit used its sporting platform to support Qatar’s national efforts to raise breast cancer awareness.

Al-Khalaqi said there was a “real appetite in the community for active living”, describing it as one of the most encouraging developments in Qatar’s sporting landscape.

He pointed to the growing participation of running clubs, cycling groups, families and first-time participants, saying more people were choosing to make fitness part of their weekly routines.

He said the Mixed Training Day helps remove barriers to participation because it is free and lets people set their own pace, whether they choose to run, walk or cycle.

Exercising on the same track used by Formula 1, the World Endurance Championship and MotoGP also gives community participants a distinctive sporting experience.

For al-Khalaqi, inclusivity is central to the circuit’s wider community role.

“Mixed Training Day is open to all ages and fitness levels, and families take part together,” he said, adding that “a first-time walker is just as welcome as an experienced club athlete”.

The official said bringing runners, walkers and cyclists together was particularly important for an awareness campaign that affects families and communities across society.

“When people of different generations and backgrounds move together on one track, it builds a sense of belonging and shared purpose,” al-Khalaqi said.

Beyond Pink October, he believes regular participation in physical activity can have lasting benefits for both physical and mental wellbeing.

“Awareness is the spark, but consistency is what changes lives,” he said, noting that running, walking and cycling can build strength, stamina and healthy habits while providing opportunities to spend time outdoors and connect with others.

He added that the Mixed Training Day is a regular fixture on the circuit’s community calendar rather than a one-off event.

Looking ahead, al-Khalaqi said everyday participation would be key to building a more active culture in Qatar.

“Major international events put Qatar on the global stage, but it is everyday participation that builds a healthy, connected nation,” he said.

The circuit’s Mixed Training Days are expected to return after the 2026 MotoGP and Formula 1 events, continuing its push to position the venue not only as a motorsport destination but also as a space for active living, family participation and community engagement.



Hamad al-Khalaqi