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Ronaldo censured

Cristiano Ronaldo has been provisionally suspended by the Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) after disciplinary proceedings were opened over the striker's departure from the national team camp, Portuguese media reported yesterday. The 41-year-old left the squad's base in Copenhagen before Portugal's Nations League match against Denmark last week, after a rift with head coach Jorge Jesus. **(Reuters)**

MoI delegation in UAE



As part of efforts to enhance co-operation and exchange expertise in passport services, a delegation from the Ministry of Interior (MoI) paid a visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The delegation was headed by Director of the Unified Services Department at the General Directorate of Passports Brigadier Mohammed Ali al-Mohannadi. The visit included the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security in Abu Dhabi and the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs in Dubai. The visit aimed to review best practices in developing passport and residency services. **(QNA)**

Trump says to decide 'very quickly' on military action against Houthis

US President Donald Trump said yesterday he would soon decide whether to join Saudi strikes against Iran-backed Houthis after an attack on Riyadh's international airport. "We may. We're going to look at it. We just found out about the recent attack, so we'll make a decision," Trump told reporters at the White House. "We move very quickly." **(AFP)**

9 dead in Pennsylvania mass shooting

Nine people were confirmed dead in Erie, Pennsylvania, authorities said, after what Governor Josh Shapiro called a "tragic mass shooting". The incident occurred late on Friday and investigators determined that all deaths occurred before officers arrived at the scene, a statement from the city of Erie said yesterday. "I've spoken with Mayor Devlin and offered my Administration's full support following the tragic mass shooting in Erie last night - killing nine of our fellow Pennsylvanians," Shapiro wrote in yesterday morning's post on X, referring to Mayor Daria Devlin. **(Reuters)**

At least 12 killed in Riyadh airport attack

309 injured in strike on airport; Foreign embassies called on citizens to avoid travel

AFP
Riyadh

At least 12 people were killed and 309 others wounded yesterday in a strike on Riyadh's international airport, Saudi Arabia's civil aviation officials said - an attack that a diplomatic source blamed on Yemen's Houthis. Four Saudi citizens were among the dead, as well as two Bangladeshis, one US citizen, one Egyptian, one Jordanian, one Syrian, one Palestinian and one Sudanese, the statement added. Some of the wounded were in serious condition.

Saudi authorities suspended operations at Riyadh's international airport after the attack that sent passengers fleeing. The Houthis have unleashed a wave of strikes against the kingdom on an unprecedented scale, targeting Saudi airports, oil facilities and tankers since a truce in their long-running war with Yemen's Riyadh-backed government unravelled in July. Yesterday's attack prompted

Qatar stands by Saudi Arabia

Qatar has condemned in the strongest terms the attacks by the Houthi group on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, which resulted in injuries, and considers them a serious violation of Saudi sovereignty and a direct threat to the security of the region, the safety of civilians, civil facilities, and air navigation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) renews Qatar's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia,

and stands by its side in all the legitimate measures the nation takes to preserve its sovereignty, security, safety of its territories and interests, and affirms that the security of Saudi Arabia is an integral part of Qatar's security and the collective security system of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries for the Arab States. The ministry also expressed Qatar's wishes for the injured to recover swiftly.

health officials to activate a rare mass call-up of doctors to deal with the "serious emergency", a medical source said, while foreign embassies warned their citizens to avoid the airport.

A senior Western diplomat told AFP that several embassies had said they were banning their staff from using the airport "over the next week". Near the airport, passengers carrying luggage could be seen standing on the pavement at a metro station. The latest attack comes on the eve of Saudi Arabia's high-profile convention and entertainment season, which begins this month. One passenger told AFP they

witnessed a strike in the airport's domestic terminal. "I was on gate 403," the witness said. "I saw 401 hit, I saw injured in front of my eyes. Everyone was running"

The Iran-backed Houthis have repeatedly targeted the airport, claiming a series of strikes on Thursday that killed three people and damaged a plane, though they did not announce any new attacks yesterday.

A medical source told AFP that the health ministry had ordered ER doctors to report to hospitals around the capital. "We were told we are dealing with a 'serious emergency situation'" the source said.

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QCS receives GCC recognition for 'Wayyakum' platform

The Qatar Cancer Society (QCS), represented by its "Wayyakum" digital platform, has received GCC recognition in the Leading Voluntary Projects in Social Work category for 2026.

The recognition was presented during a ceremony in Bahrain honouring outstanding individuals and projects across the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, on the sidelines of the GCC Committee of Ministers of Social Affairs and Development meeting.

Bahrain's Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Khalid bin Abdullah al-Khalifa presented the recognition to the QCS, represented by board chairman Sheikh Dr Khalid bin Jabor al-Thani, in acknowledgment of its pioneering initiatives and contributions to community development and humanitarian work.

Sheikh Dr Khalid expressed his pride in this GCC recognition, emphasising that it reflects Qatar's commitment to advancing social and hu-

manitarian work, promoting sustainable development, and supporting initiatives that make a lasting impact on society.

He noted that the recognition highlights the QCS's ongoing efforts to support cancer patients, ease their financial treatment burdens, and develop innovative services, particularly through the "Wayyakum" digital platform.

Sheikh Dr Khalid said that the QCS launched its initiative to cover the full treatment costs of non-Qatari cancer patients in Qatar more than 14 years ago.

The initiative has since evolved significantly, culminating in the development of "Wayyakum", which simplifies treatment assistance applications and improves access to patient support services.

In 2025, the QCS covered the treatment costs of approximately 1,750 adult and paediatric cancer patients, with an estimated expenditure of QR49mn.

Sheikh Dr Khalid highlighted that the "Wayyakum" platform reflects the QCS's commitment to digital transformation in humanitarian services.

Developed approximately 18 months ago, the electronic system enables patients and doctors to submit and track treatment assistance applications through the "Wayyakum" application, the platform, or the QCS's official website, reducing administrative procedures and saving time and effort.

Sheikh Dr Khalid added that applications are reviewed by QCS specialists and physicians overseeing patients' cases to ensure appropriate decisions and efficient co-ordination among the relevant parties.

The platform is also connected to supporting entities in Qatar and the Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities, helping streamline assistance procedures, strengthen co-ordination, prevent duplicate funding requests, and ensure that support reaches eligible beneficiaries efficiently.

As autumn sets in, doctors warn of higher risk of respiratory infections

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Doctors have warned of an increased risk of respiratory infections as summer gives way to autumn, urging the public to adopt preventative measures, particularly to protect children, older adults and people with asthma, allergies and chronic illnesses.

They told reporters that the return to school, increased social interaction and prolonged stays in enclosed spaces can facilitate the spread of respiratory viruses.

Although seasonal changes do not directly cause infections, fluctuating temperatures, poor ventilation and close contact can increase exposure to viruses and aggravate existing respiratory conditions.

Common illnesses during this period include colds, influenza, sore throats, coughing, runny noses and nasal congestion.

Doctors recommended regular handwashing, adequate ventilation, sufficient sleep, balanced

nutrition and proper hydration to reduce infection risks.

Dr Khalid al-Yafei, a paediatric emergency consultant, said that children require particular attention during autumn because interaction in classrooms, school buses and extracurricular activities increases their exposure to viral infections.

He emphasised the importance of teaching children healthy habits, including washing their hands regularly, covering their mouths and noses when coughing or sneezing, and avoiding sharing water bottles and personal belongings.

Parents should also keep children at home when they show clear signs of illness to prevent infections from spreading to classmates.

While most respiratory infections in children are mild, Dr al-Yafei advised seeking medical attention if a child experiences difficulty or rapid breathing, extreme lethargy, refusal to eat or drink, reduced urination, persistent high fever or a significant deterioration in general condition.

He also highlighted the impor-

tance of regular sleep schedules, balanced meals, adequate fluid intake and appropriate physical activity in maintaining children's health.

General practitioner Dr Omar Habib said the seasonal transition often coincides with conditions that encourage the transmission of respiratory infections, particularly in schools, workplaces and other enclosed environments.

He said that temperature changes themselves do not cause viral illnesses.

Rather, he said, spending more time indoors, inadequate ventilation and close contact increase the likelihood of transmission.

Symptoms may begin with sneezing, a runny nose, nasal congestion or a sore throat before developing into coughing, fever and fatigue.

Most mild cases can be managed with rest, adequate fluids and symptom monitoring, but medical advice should be sought if symptoms persist or worsen.

Dr Habib also recommended cleaning frequently touched surfaces, washing hands after return-

ing from public places and before eating, and avoiding sharing cups and other personal items.

He added that persistent fever, breathing difficulties, chest pain, severe dehydration or a marked deterioration in health warrant prompt medical assessment, particularly among older adults and people with chronic conditions.

Dr Ismail Mubarak, a consultant in respiratory medicine, said people with asthma, allergies and chronic respiratory diseases may be particularly vulnerable during the transition from summer to autumn.

Temperature fluctuations, dust and other irritants, as well as frequent movement between hot outdoor environments and heavily air-conditioned spaces, can aggravate respiratory symptoms.

He advised maintaining moderate air-conditioning temperatures, avoiding direct exposure to cold air, particularly during sleep, and cleaning air-conditioner filters regularly.

Dr Mubarak also cautioned against confusing allergies with viral infections.

Frequent sneezing, itchy eyes or nose, and a runny nose may indicate allergies, while fever, sore throat, fatigue and body aches are more commonly associated with viral infections.

He warned against the indiscriminate use of antibiotics for colds and influenza, stressing that antibiotics do not treat viruses and should only be used when prescribed following medical assessment.

Family physician Dr Mahmoud al-Darini urged the public to maintain healthy daily habits, including thorough handwashing, avoiding touching the face with unwashed hands, practising respiratory hygiene and ensuring proper ventilation in homes, offices and classrooms.

He also stressed the importance of adequate sleep, a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables and protein, and regular water intake.

Dr al-Darini urged older adults and people with chronic illnesses to adhere to prescribed treatments and seek medical advice if they develop unusual or persistent symptoms.



Dr Khalid al-Yafei



Dr Omar Habib



Dr Mahmoud al-Darini

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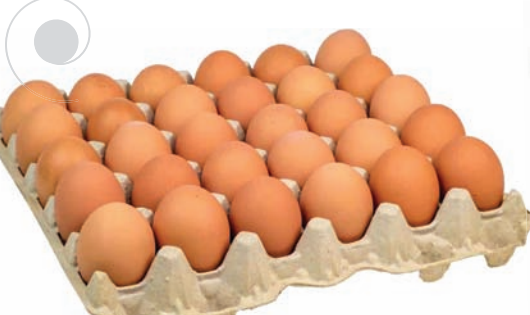
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Qatar firmly opposed to nuclear arsenals, testing: envoy to UN

Qatar underscores importance of complying with disarmament obligations, halting nuclear tests

Qatar has underscored the importance of full compliance with obligations under disarmament conventions and agreements, as well as support for international efforts to refrain from conducting nuclear tests and halt the development and modernisation of nuclear arsenals and other lethal weapons, in pursuit of global peace and security and to protect future generations and ecosystems from the threat posed by the proliferation of such weapons.

It expressed regret that the 11th Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held from April 27 to May 22, concluded without consensus on a substantive outcome document.

This came in a statement delivered by First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the UN Talal Abdulaziz al-Naama, during the general debate of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly at its 81st session, held at United Nations headquarters in New York.

Al-Naama said that Qatar prioritises the United Nations Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, convened pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546.

He said that Qatar supports Oman's presiding over the 7th session of the Conference, whose chairmanship will conclude in November.

Al-Naama added that Qatar looks forward to the co-operation of all countries of the region to ensure the success of the Conference and achieve its intended goals of strengthening peace and security on both the regional and global stages, as well as to Qatar assuming the presidency of the 8th session of the Conference.

He also reiterated Qatar's commitment to the inalienable right of all States Parties to the NPT to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

As part of Qatar's constant efforts to contribute to the elimination of chemical weapons, al-Naama referred to the adoption by the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), during its 112th session, convened in The Hague on July 9, of the draft decision submitted by Qatar on the reinstatement of the rights and privileges of Syrian within the organisation.

He elaborated that the draft decision, which was co-sponsored by 66 States Parties, was an outgrowth of the diplomatic efforts undertaken by Qatar through a series of consultations and initiatives that helped



build broad consensus among the States Parties, ultimately paving the way for its adoption.

Al-Naama also said that since February 28, Qatar has condemned Iran's attacks using ballistic missiles and one-way attack drones against its sovereignty, territorial integrity and territorial waters, as well as against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of brotherly nations, stressing that these assaults constitute flagrant violations of international law, international humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations.

He reiterated Qatar's position that it is important to comply with the provisions of Security Council resolution 2817 (2026), including those pertaining to navigational rights and freedoms in conformity with international law, particularly those related to critical maritime lanes.

The diplomat underlined that Qatar's priority is to contain escalation and unlock prospects for diplomatic efforts, indicating that Qatar will continue its engagement with partners to bridge viewpoints and build common ground among the parties, ultimately reaching a peaceful resolution that safeguards lasting security, peace and stability in the region.

In addition, al-Naama recalled that Qatar condemned the Houthi attack on Abha International and King Khalid International airports in Saudi Arabia on October 7, which led to casualties and material damage.

He further stressed that Qatar considers this assault a grave violation of Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and a direct threat to regional security, as well as to the safety of civilians, civilian assets and air traffic, reaffirming Qatar's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia. - QNA

Max Fashion unveils largest flagship store in Doha



Max Fashion, one of the region's leading value fashion brands and part of Landmark Group, has opened its new flagship store at City Center Doha. Spanning more than 38,000 sq. ft., the store is the brand's largest store and combines fashion, convenience and digital technology to offer customers an enhanced shopping experience.

The store was inaugurated by Rashid Bin Ali Al Mansoori, Chief Executive Officer of Aamal Company, in the presence of Hani Weiss, Chief Executive Officer of Max Fashion MENA & SEA, and Shumalan Naicker, Senior Vice President and Country Head of Landmark Group, Qatar, along with invited guests. The opening ceremony included a ribbon-cutting followed by a tour of the new store.

The flagship represents the latest evolution of Max Fashion's retail concept, featuring open layouts, contemporary interiors and dedicated spaces for women's, men's and children's collections. The design aims to make it easier for shoppers to browse the brand's offerings.

Technology has been integrated across the customer journey. RFID-enabled systems are used to improve product availability and help shoppers locate items, while self-checkout facilities provide greater convenience at the point of purchase. The store also features Smart Fitting Rooms as part of the brand's technology-led retail experience.

Max Fashion is also introducing an AI-powered Virtual Try-On experience in Qatar. Developed with Google Cloud and powered by generative AI,

the feature allows customers shopping online to visualise how selected garments may look, fit and drape across different body types before making a purchase.

The brand has connected its physical and digital platforms through services such as Click & Collect and same-day delivery, allowing customers to place orders online and either collect them from the store or have them delivered.

Hani Weiss said the flagship reflected the brand's continued growth in Qatar since entering the market in 2007. "We are bringing together a larger and more inspiring store environment with technology that makes shopping simpler and more convenient, from Smart Fitting Rooms, RFID and self-checkout in-store to Virtual Try-On online," he said.

Shumalan Naicker said the move into a larger format reflected Landmark Group's confidence in the Qatar market. He noted that the group's stores in Qatar receive more than six million visits annually, with families accounting for more than 60% of its customer base and more than 500,000 Shukran members shopping with the group each year.

He said Qatar remained a priority growth market for Max Fashion, with the company continuing to invest in its stores and digital platforms.

The flagship also supports the brand's broader sustainability efforts, including a growing focus on eco-friendly fabrics, packaging and community initiatives.

DOC Medical Center Izghawa branch marks first anniversary



DOC Medical Center's Izghawa branch, in partnership with Nabina Medical Group, celebrated its first anniversary, marking a year of achievements and growing trust among patients. The event was attended by a number of distinguished guests and highlighted the centre's milestones since its opening.

5,000 treatment sessions completed

The centre announced a significant milestone, having completed more than 5,000 treatment sessions using MBST technology.

Mansoor Nabina, CEO of Nabina Medical Group, said: "We are incredibly proud of this outstanding achievement by DOC Medical Center. It represents a key objective of our partnership, and we are committed to advancing MBST technology in Qatar and the Arab world."

Mahmoud Qaddih, General Manager of DOC Medical Center's Izghawa branch, said the figures demonstrate the effectiveness of the centre's mission and its success in introducing the community to MBST therapy as a treatment option.

He added that the centre serves patients from across the GCC who travel to Doha for treatment. The group uses internationally

certified MBST technology and relies on highly skilled orthopaedic specialists.

Honouring the centre's pioneers

Among the attendees was Ibrahim bin Musa Saleh Al Hitmi, one of the centre's pioneering patients. Having undergone successful treatment for knee osteoarthritis using MBST technology, he expressed his appreciation for the high standard of medical services and the care he received.

He also praised Dr Fooladi, describing him as "a member of the family" for his meticulous attention to detail and medical preparedness.

Also present was Mohammed Nasser Wairan from Saudi Arabia, who accompanied his mother during her treatment journey. He commended the centre's services, accurate diagnosis and MBST treatment protocol, as well as the care provided by its medical team, particularly Orthopaedic Consultant Dr Fooladi.

"Upon arriving at the DOC Center, we felt a great sense of comfort, and we hope to see this technology become widely available across the Arab world," he said.

Working as one team

Dr Fooladi, Specialist Orthopaedic Surgeon at the Izghawa branch, said the milestone reflected the efforts of the entire team.



"I am delighted to mark the completion of 5,000 MBST sessions at DOC Medical Center. This achievement did not happen by chance; it is the result of our teamwork in delivering high-quality care," he said.

"We utilise state-of-the-art MBST technology, rely on a skilled and trained team, and follow a distinctive treatment protocol, all with the goal of achieving maximum patient satisfaction. We serve patients from both within and outside Qatar, and we also manage post-surgical cases to ensure a comprehensive recovery journey. We aspire to bring world-class medical standards to the Arab world," he added.

A success story

Rabie Abu Halaka, Marketing Manager at DOC Medical Center, said: "We are delighted to celebrate reaching the milestone of 5,000 MBST therapy sessions at DOC Medical Center and the first anniversary of our Izghawa branch. As a marketing team, we are proud to have played a part in this journey and to have contributed to a success story defined by a strong relationship with the public regarding this innovative medical technology. We look forward to achieving even greater success in the future."

Internal medicine services

The centre also houses an internal medicine clinic supervised by Dr Myadah Afadar, an Internal Medicine Consultant with 13 years of experience in Qatar.

She said the clinic provides comprehensive medical services through an integrated team approach, covering a range of chronic conditions and health concerns, including colon disorders, joint problems, spinal pain, digestive system disorders, diabetes, endocrine disorders and obesity.

An achievement to be proud of

Dr Emmanuel Tolessa said: "Today, we proudly celebrate the first anniversary of the DOC Izghawa branch. We take great pride in the milestones achieved over the past year and the trust our patients and community have placed in us."

"Another achievement we celebrate is reaching the milestone of 5,000 MBST therapy sessions. This figure reflects both our success and the confidence placed in this technology, and we remain committed to providing advanced treatment options."

What is MBST technology?

MBST is a German medical technology used in the treatment of conditions associated with joint degeneration and chronic pain. According to the centre, the technology is aimed at helping patients manage age-related discomfort and improve their quality of life, potentially reducing reliance on extensive medication.



almeera wins GCC award for workforce nationalisation

Al Meera Consumer Goods Company (almeera) has received a GCC-level award in the category of “Outstanding Companies in Workforce Nationalisation”, recognising its efforts in developing Qatari talent and creating meaningful career opportunities. The chief executive of almeera, Jassim Mohammed al-Ansari, received the award during a ceremony held on the sidelines of the 12th Meeting of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) Committee of Ministers of Labour in Manama. The regional recognition highlights almeera’s continued commitment to investing in national talent, developing future leaders, and supporting Qatar’s human development objectives in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.



HMC, PHCC highlight integrated community mental health services

The Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), in collaboration with the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), is highlighting the continued development of specialist and community-based mental health services across Qatar as the country joins the global community in marking World Mental Health Day 2026. Held annually on October 10, World Mental Health Day provides an opportunity to highlight the importance of ensuring people can access high-quality mental healthcare that responds to their individual needs.

As Qatar’s main provider of specialist mental healthcare, the HMC provides a comprehensive range of services for children, young people and adults across inpatient, outpatient, community and virtual settings.

These include child and adolescent mental health services, perinatal mental health, older adult psychiatry, forensic psychiatry, intellectual disability services, adult psychiatry, psychology services and community mental health care.

The continued development of these specialist services reflects a wider shift towards providing high-quality mental health care within community settings wherever clinically appropriate, while maintaining access to specialised hospital-based services for patients with more complex needs.

People with lived experience have an important role within this approach.

Their perspectives can help healthcare professionals better understand barriers to accessing care, identify opportunities to strengthen services and ensure that care pathways respond to the needs and circumstances of the people who use them.

Dr Majid Alabdulla, chairman of Mental Health at the HMC, said: “Over recent years, the HMC has continued to



Dr Majid al-Abdulla.

expand and develop the range of specialist mental health services available to the people of Qatar.”

“Our focus is on ensuring that patients receive evidence-based, patient-centred care from expert multidisciplinary teams, whether that care is provided in the community, through outpatient or virtual services, or within one of our specialist inpatient facilities,” he said.

A key part of Qatar’s evolving model of mental healthcare has been the close collaboration between the HMC and PHCC to integrate mental health services within primary care.

The partnership has supported the development of 28 integrated mental health clinics and services across health centres in Qatar, supporting access to community-based mental healthcare for a diverse range of patient groups, including adults, older adults, perinatal patients and autistic adults.

For patients, this integrated approach can provide greater continuity between primary and specialist care.

Patients who can be appropriately supported within the community are



Dr Samya al-Abdulla.

able to receive care within familiar healthcare settings, while clear referral pathways remain in place for those requiring more complex or intensive specialist treatment through the HMC.

Senior consultant family physician Dr Samya al-Abdulla, who is also assistant managing director (Operations and Clinical Affairs) and executive director of operations at the PHCC, said: “Primary care plays an important role in supporting people with mental health needs.”

“Through PHCC health centres, patients can discuss mental health concerns with their family physician, receive assessment and appropriate care, and be referred to integrated or specialist mental health services when required,” she said.

Alongside integrated mental health services, PHCC family physicians play an important role in identifying, assessing and managing mental health needs within primary care, with access to psychology and other supportive services where appropriate.

This enables patients to receive care at the most appropriate level, with referral to specialist services.

HBKU Press participates in Frankfurt Book Fair

Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKU Press) has affirmed that its participa-

tion in the Frankfurt Book Fair in Germany helps Qatari publications reach a global audience and en-

ter new markets through the sale of publishing and translation rights in multiple languages.

HBKU Press executive director Bachar Chebaro told the Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the fair serves as an international platform for negotiating the purchase and sale of publishing and translation rights, noting that this is the HBKU Press’s fifth participation in the event.

He said that unlike traditional book fairs that focus on direct sales to the public, the Frankfurt Book Fair enables publishers to hold professional meetings and conclude agreements that facilitate the exchange of books across markets and cultures.

Chebaro further said that the participation of the HBKU Press follows two parallel tracks: seeking new titles from Western publishers and negotiating rights to Qatari and Arab readers; and showcasing works by Qatari authors and illustrators while marketing their rights to foreign publishing houses to reach readers in multiple languages.

He highlighted the HBKU Press’s success in selling publishing rights for works by Qatari authors to entities in several countries, including Germany and Türkiye, enabling their publication in those languages and expanding their reach beyond Arab markets.

The 78th Frankfurt Book Fair is taking place on October 7-11, with approximately 4,000 exhibitors.

Its programme includes more than 3,800 activities at the fairgrounds and across Frankfurt, alongside extensive space dedicated to the trade in publishing and translation rights.

The Literary Agents Centre hosts 319 agencies from 32 countries. – QNA



Qatar takes part in Istanbul Justice Summit

Qatar participated in the Istanbul Justice Summit 2026, hosted by Türkiye, which took place on October 8-9.

Qatar was represented at the summit by Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice for Real Estate Registration and Documentation Affairs Amer Saeed al-Ghafri, in the presence of Qatar’s Consul General in Istanbul Dr Nayef bin Jassim al-Abduljabbar.

The summit provided an international platform for decision-makers, experts, and specialists to exchange expertise

and insights as well as to discuss shared challenges and explore the future of justice and legal systems amid rapid global change.

The international event’s sessions addressed key themes and priority issues, including international humanitarian law, human rights, international arbitration, and the future of the legal profession, in addition to examining rapid technological advances, artificial intelligence (AI) applications, cybercrime, and mechanisms for delivering justice in the digital age.

Qatar’s participation in the summit reflects the Ministry of Justice’s commitment to exchanging successful international experiences and expertise, contributing actively to specialised discussions on the future of justice and modern legislation, and drawing on leading practices to advance the justice sector in line with the State’s strategic direction to build an advanced legal system that supports sustainable development and keeps pace with global developments. – QNA

Qatar Charity inaugurates projects to support Kyrgyz communities

Qatar Charity (QC) has opened two new development projects in Kegeti village in Chuy District, Chuy Region, Kyrgyzstan, in the presence of government officials and representatives of local authorities.

The projects include a health centre covering a total area of 175 square metres and an 80-square-metre mosque.

They form part of the QC’s ongoing efforts to support vital sectors and improve access to essential services for communities in need.

The new health centre is expected to strengthen local healthcare services and benefit approximately 10,000 people living in Kegeti and nearby communities.

It will provide primary healthcare, medical consultations, and other essential health services, helping residents access treatment and basic medical care closer to home.

The mosque will provide the residents with a suitable place for worship while promoting Islamic values, community solidarity, and stronger social ties.

Together, the health centre and mosque provide an integrated model that addresses both the practical and spiritual needs of the local community.





QAPCO Invites qualified bidders to participate in the following tender:

Sel No.	Tender Reference and Description	(i) Deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding	ii Tender fee (nonrefundable)	iii Tender publication on ARIBA	iv Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1	RFP- P10-01-386 Provision, Implementation, and Support of an Asset Integrity Management (AIM) Solution, including One year Software Support Services	14 th Oct. 2026	QAR 750.00 Payment by: 14 th Oct. 2026	15 th Oct 2026	QAR 100,000.00	08 th Nov. 2026. 12:00 Noon

i Interested bidders to communicate their willingness to bid and contact details to QAPCO Procurement (procurement@qapco.com.qa) indicating company name, address, telephone, official E-mail,.etc. latest by the deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding indicated above. Reference Number and Description of the tender must be mentioned in the email.

ii Non-refundable tender fee as indicated above is payable to QAPCO through QNB account # 0013-001688-060 only at any QNB branch latest by the date mentioned above (Tender Number, Subject and bidder name are to be stated in the payment receipt)

iii Tender link will be sent via email notification from ARIBA system to the confirmed bidders. Tender Document will be accessible only after attaching the evidence of the tender fee payment in ARIBA by the bidder followed by Qapco approval.

QAPCO shall reply with the access to “ARIBA eSourcing RFP event” along with necessary instructions and guidelines for the bid submission. ARIBA Registration: Bidders who are not registered in QAPCO are requested to complete the registration process during the tendering period (Details on ARIBA registration can be accessed via QAPCO [website www.qapco.com](http://www.qapco.com))

iv. **Tender Bond (Bank Guarantee):**
Original tender bond must be delivered to the following address, at the latest by Bid closing date & time:
Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO) Q.P.J.S.C.
QAPCO HEADQUARTERS, P.O. Box 756,
Building: 12, Zone No. 92, Street No. 556, Mualthei Leafawiyat Street
Mesaieed, Qatar
Tel. 4033 8109
Attention: Procurement Department

Bidder to attach copy of tender bond to the offer in ARIBA. Offer without Tender Bond will not be considered.

Tender Clarifications: Please send your queries with tender reference and description to email procurement@qapco.com.qa

For more information about QAPCO please visit our website: www.qapco.com



The Transport Company MOWASALAT (KARWA)

Mowasalat (Karwa) announces the following tender:

Tender Ref. No.	Tender Title	Tender Fee	Electronic Tender Fee Payment Dates	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
TC/034/EGS/2026	Construction of 4 x 4 Off Road Training Area in Sealine - Mawater	QAR 500	11 to 18 October 2026	QAR 20,000	10 November 2026

CONDITIONS:

- Interested bidder shall pay the tender fee to Mowasalat Bank Account details as shown:
- Bidder must submit proof of tender fee payment (Bank Deposit Slip + A Signed & Stamped Expression of Interest (indicating Tender Ref. No. and Title / Company Name and details of nominated contact person i.e., Tel. No., Fax No., and Email address) + Copy of valid Commercial Registration to Mowasalat Secretary - Tender Committee at email: tenders@mowasalat.com
- Tender documents will be released via email on the next working day after the tender fee payment date to all bidders who have submitted the bank deposit slip and other documents requested.
- Bonds: Tender Bond & Performance Bond:** Bids must be accompanied by Bonds issued by a local bank operating in the State of Qatar as per the Qatar Central Bank template. Further details of bonds can be found in the tender documents. *Bids without Tender Bond shall not be considered.*
- Tender validity:** Bid validity period shall be 180 days from the bid closing date.
- Tender documents submission:** Bids must be submitted in 3 separately sealed (**IN RED WAX**) envelopes addressed to **Secretary - Tender Committee** clearly highlighting the Tender Ref. No. & Tender Title:
 - Envelope 1#** must include the Technical Bid submission (1 Original + 1 non-Editable copy in a USB)
 - Envelope 2#** must include Commercial Bid submission (1 Original + 1 Editable MS Excel spreadsheet copied in a USB)
 - Envelope 3#** must include the Tender Bond (1 Original) + 3 years Audited Financial Statements.
- Bid Closing Date:** Bid submission deadline is **12.00 noon Doha Local Time** as on the Bid closing date shown above. The 3 envelopes must be handed over to the Office of The Secretary - Tender Committee, located at Mowasalat Head Office, Industrial Area. Any tender submitted after the deadline will not be considered.



Supplier Registration**Mowasalat Location**



تلفون: 4458 8724**فاكس: 4458 8850**

Commercial Bank places early detection at forefront of 'Breast Cancer Awareness Month'



Commercial Bank's Breast Cancer Awareness Month campaign will continue throughout October across its branches, community spaces, and digital platforms.

Commercial Bank is marking Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October with a campaign centred on a clear and empowering message: "Early Action Rewrites Your Story".

As part of this year's programme, Commercial Bank hosted a dedicated Breast Cancer Awareness event at Commercial Bank Plaza for the employees, in collaboration with the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) and the National Centre for Cancer Care and Research (NCCCR), to deliver informative sessions and interactive activities designed to enhance understanding of breast cancer, while reinforcing the importance of awareness, regular screening, and early detection.

The campaign forms part of Commercial Bank's Corporate Social Responsibility strategy, reflecting its commitment to supporting community health and contributing to the human and social development objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030.

The campaign will continue throughout October across Commercial Bank's branches, community spaces, and digital platforms. Through activations and educational content, the bank will bring the campaign message to different audiences and provide practical information, supporting greater awareness and encouraging regular screening.

Eiman Mohamed al-Naemi, EGM, Chief Communications and Marketing officer at Commercial

Bank, said: "Creating a positive and lasting impact in the communities we serve is a central pillar of Commercial Bank's Corporate Social Responsibility strategy. Supporting health is an important part of this commitment, particularly in relation to conditions that affect so many individuals and families.

"Through this campaign, we aim to reinforce the importance of recognising warning signs, following appropriate screening guidance and seeking professional medical advice. By working with Primary Health Care Corporation and the National Centre for Cancer Care and Research, we hope to contribute to a healthier, better-informed and more resilient community."

Executive director of Corporate Communications Department at PHCC, Huda Mohsen al-Wahedi, said: "At Primary Health Care Corporation, we are always open to collaborating with institutions and ministries across the state to promote health awareness and strengthen the role of community health in enhancing the well-being of individuals and society. We take pride in our diverse community partnerships, which support our mission of delivering comprehensive primary healthcare services centred on individuals and families."

The initiative reaffirms Commercial Bank's continued commitment to supporting health, awareness-raising, and community development.

MoECC marks World Migratory Bird Day

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) marked World Migratory Bird Day yesterday, reaffirming its commitment to protecting migratory birds, preserving their natural habitats and migration routes, and raising public awareness of biodiversity conservation.

The ministry called on the public and birdwatching enthusiasts to help monitor migratory species and document their sightings, stressing that such observations contribute to the national biodiversity database, support scientific research, and improve understanding of migration routes, population changes, distribution patterns and the habitats on which birds depend. The annual observance coincides with Qatar's autumn migration season, when various bird species travel through the country from Europe, northern Asia, Siberia and Central Asia en route to their wintering grounds in Africa and South Asia. Some species remain in Qatar throughout the winter. Qatar's geographical position along the Afro-Eurasian and Central Asian migratory routes makes the country an important stopover for birds seeking food and rest during their seasonal journeys between Europe, Asia and Africa, the ministry said.

Autumn migration begins gradually towards the end of summer and intensifies during September and October. Dur-



ing this period, Qatar's skies and coastal areas witness the passage of numerous species, including warblers, flycatchers, wagtails, swallows, waders, birds of prey, seabirds, ducks and various desert and land birds.

Early in the autumn season, species such as the blue-cheeked bee-eater, known locally as Al Saqraqa, the golden oriole, known as Al Saffara, and the European roller, locally called Al Khudairi, begin to appear. Other species stop in Qatar to rest and replenish their energy before continuing their journeys, while some settle in the country for the winter.

The ministry highlighted the importance of Qatar's diverse natural environments in supporting migratory birds, particularly Al Thakhira Nature Reserve, whose mangrove forests, mudflats and salt flats provide suitable habitats for numerous species, including the osprey.

Bin Ghanam Island and its surrounding coastal areas are also im-

portant sites for flamingos and other shorebirds, while Qatar's northern coast provides valuable resting areas for birds after they cross the waters of the Arabian Gulf.

Coastal salt flats and tidal mudflats offer essential feeding grounds for waders, including sandpipers and plovers. These habitats provide access to worms, molluscs and crustaceans exposed by tidal movements, helping birds replenish their energy reserves before continuing their migrations.

Accordingly, the ministry emphasised the importance of complying with regulations governing migratory bird hunting. The 2026 hunting season began on September 1 and will continue until February 15, 2027, under Ministerial Decision No 7 of 2026, which specifies the hunting season for permitted bird species and the authorised methods and equipment. The decision identifies 10 species that may legally be hunted: houbara bustards, coursers, ducks, blue rock thrushes, song thrushes, golden orioles, crested larks, desert wheatears, mourning wheatears and northern wheatears.

Hunting any other wild animals, birds or reptiles not listed in the decision is prohibited, the ministry said. It also urged hunters to observe the authorised species, dates and hunting methods, refrain from using electronic devices that imitate bird calls or other unauthorised equipment, and avoid disturbing bird gathering and resting sites or damaging their natural habitats.

Youth centres, clubs expand programmes to engage students during school year

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Youth centres, girls' centres and youth committees at sports clubs across Qatar are expanding their programmes for the 2026-2027 academic year, offering students a diverse mix of sports, cultural, technological, creative and volunteer activities to develop skills, discover talents and encourage constructive use of leisure time.

Some officials there noted that the programmes are being tailored to students' academic schedules, with activities concentrated in the evenings and at weekends. Organisers are also adjusting schedules during examination and revision periods to ensure extracurricular participation does not interfere with academic performance. The programmes range from sports competitions, camps and recreational trips to workshops in leadership, teamwork, artificial intelligence, digital technology and content creation, combining entertainment with practical learning and awareness activities to attracting young participants and sustain their engagement.

Saleh Mohamed al-Obaidli, volunteer work activist and head of the Madar Youth Team, said successful programmes depended



on selecting appropriate timings that accommodated school hours, prayers, study schedules and examinations. He noted that short activities were more suitable for weekdays, while weekends offered opportunities for tournaments, trips and extended events.

Ali Mohamed, director of activities and events at Al Arabi Club's Youth Committee, said the committee coordinated with schools to deliver awareness programmes and lectures during the school day, while camps were generally organised at weekends.

He said camps, competitions and interactive challenges attracted considerable interest, while longer-term awareness initiatives could deliver deeper benefits, with some programmes extend over three months, allowing organisers to reinforce key messages and assess their impact.

He added that social media and the Shabab Lad3m applica-

tion were important channels for promoting activities. He stressed that success should be measured not only by participation numbers but also by the benefits participants gain, with feedback and post-event evaluations informing future programmes. For girls, personal development, creativity, innovation, technology, photography, design and digital content production are among the growing areas of interest.

Sheikha Hussein Babsail, head of the Doha Girls Centre, said the centre schedules activities mainly during evenings and weekends, offering shorter, flexible and interactive sessions that accommodate students' commitments. She noted that practical workshops allowing participants to apply what they learn are increasingly popular.

Najla al-Hajri, director of Al-Reyada Girls Center, said direct engagement with students and

feedback from an advisory committee helped shape activities around their needs. Cooperation with schools has also enabled the centre to introduce specialised workshops, including early financial planning for the future.

Jana Jassim Khamis al-Muraikhi, Director of Al Khor Girls Center, said annual plans were developed through consultations with staff and members and aligned with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's academic calendar. Further, the centre works with schools to deliver morning workshops and organises evening activities, generally ending by 8pm. She highlighted the development of a digital fabrication laboratory in cooperation with the Qatar Scientific Club, offering opportunities to explore laser technology and 3D printing.

Meanwhile, Al Jumailiya Youth Center Director Khalifa Mohsen al-Shahwani, said students showed strong interest in football, table tennis, billiards, electronic games, horse riding and swimming, alongside training, community service and scouting camps.

Dr Hussein Buhaliqah, Director of Youth Activities at Al Ahli Sports Club, said programmes were designed around students' ages and academic commitments, with specialised workshops promoting leadership and teamwork.



Al Gannas delegation visits Saudi Falcons and Hunting Exhibition

A delegation of the Qatari Al Gannas Society visited the International Saudi Falcons and Hunting Exhibition. The 10-day event was organised by the National Falcon Center at the Riyadh Exhibition and Convention Center and concluded yesterday.

Led by Chairman of the Al Gannas Board of Directors, Ali bin Khatam al-Mahshadi, the delegation toured the exhibition's sections and events, which showcased falcon auctions and the Melwah lure racing competition, featuring 12 rounds and total prize money of SAR 723,000.

Al-Mahshadi stressed the event's significance in preserving falconry heritage, which represents a shared legacy between Qatar and Saudi Arabia. He also highlighted the importance of cooperation and the exchange of expertise in falconry and the organisation of international exhibitions. (QNA)

QSCCB organises awareness campaign marking World Sight Day and White Cane Safety Day

The Qatar Social and Cultural Center for the Blind (QSCCB) is staging an awareness campaign from Oct 8-18, 2026, promoting the message that differences enrich society and awareness brings people together. Organised in collaboration with a variety of educational, youth, and cultural institutions, the campaign marks World Sight Day and International White Cane Safety Day, featuring online contests, meetings, awareness exhibitions, and workshops targeting school students, government employees, and members of youth organisations. The activities aim to raise awareness of visual impairment and the role of the white cane in promoting independence and freedom of movement for people who are blind, promote awareness of appropriate ways to communicate and interact

with them, and correct common misconceptions about visual impairment. The campaign's agenda includes awareness workshops at Rabaa Al Adawiya Secondary School for Girls and Nasser bin Abdullah Al Attiyah Secondary School for Boys, in collaboration with Barzan Youth Center, as well as a workshop for employees of Al Daayen Municipality and a meeting for members of Doha Youth Center at the QSCCB headquarters. In addition, QSCCB is participating in activities marking these observances at the National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ), showcasing the centre's programmes and its cultural and awareness-raising role in promoting awareness of the rights of people with visual impairments and supporting their inclusion and active participation in society. (QNA)

PHCC organises activities during International Infection Prevention Week

Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) is organising activities to mark International Infection Prevention Week (IIPW) from October 18-24, 2026, under the theme "Generations of Infection Prevention | Past. Present. Protected".

The theme reflects the journey of infection prevention through time, from practices passed down through generations and lessons learned from the past, through contemporary scientific applications, to protecting patients, healthcare workers, communities and future generations.

The campaign's organising committee has identified a number

of key objectives for IIPW, most notably raising awareness among healthcare workers and visitors about the importance of basic infection prevention and control practices; promoting a culture of adherence to hand hygiene, cough etiquette, environmental disinfection and other daily practices; highlighting the Islamic civilisational and medical heritage in the field of infection prevention and linking it to modern practices; encouraging healthcare workers to adopt a culture of disease surveillance and early reporting of infection cases; and providing engaging and accessible awareness content

that reaches all groups at health centres and through social media platforms.

Manager of Health Protection at PHCC Dr Khalid Elawad emphasised that infection prevention and control is a key pillar in ensuring patient safety and the quality of healthcare services. He noted that PHCC's participation in this global observance contributes to disseminating awareness messages across health centres and among employees, patients and visitors, while promoting the adoption of preventive practices in daily life.

Dr Elawad added that infection prevention is not a modern con-



cept, but rather a journey that extends throughout history. During this journey, practices have evolved from a focus on hygiene, isolation and avoiding sources of infection into a comprehensive, evidence-based system for protecting individuals and communities.

Regarding the services provided by PHCC in the area of infection prevention and control, he said that PHCC implements a compre-

hensive infection prevention and control programme across its facilities. The programme includes adherence to standard precautions, hand hygiene, appropriate use of personal protective equipment, safe injection practices, environmental cleaning and disinfection, and safe waste management, in addition to continuous education for employees, patients and visitors.

On the activities and events that PHCC will organise for visitors and the community, he said PHCC health centres will participate in IIPW through a diverse program of educational and interactive activities targeting employees, pa-

tients, visitors, school students and recipients of Home Health Care Services. The activities will include lectures, short workshops, educational competitions, daily presentations in waiting areas, dedicated educational and information corners, and interactive activities that encourage participants to adopt preventive behaviours. Activities will also be implemented in collaboration with the School Health Department to reach school students, and in coordination with Home Health Care Services to raise awareness among patients and their families in their homes. (QNA)

Caravan and cabin makers ramp up production ahead of winter

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Many caravan and cabin manufacturers across the country have stepped up production to meet growing demand ahead of the 2026/2027 winter camping season, with some factories reporting waiting lists and orders dating back to April as demand outstrips available production capacity.

Prices vary widely depending on size, design and specifications, ranging from around QR60,000 for smaller cabins to around QR1.5mn for luxury caravans equipped with premium fittings and accessories. Some manufacturers noted that rising raw material costs, which have increased by almost 35%, and a sharp surge in shipping expenses have placed additional pressure on the sec-

tor. Shipping costs for a container have climbed from around \$1,700 to \$13,000, increasing the cost of imported materials and components. In spite of such challenges, manufacturers said they had sought to absorb part of the additional expenses, limiting price increases to maintain competitiveness and retain customers.

Accordingly, factories are currently operating at high capacity to complete confirmed orders on schedule while continuing to accept new requests for manufacturing, maintenance, repairs and refurbishment. Much of the production is customised, allowing customers to select layouts, finishes, materials and additional facilities according to their needs and budgets.

Ali Ghanem al-Kubaisi, a caravan factory owner, said his facility has been operating at full capacity in preparation for the winter



camping season, although current demand was below last year's level.

"We have orders and work continuously from 5am until 9pm," he said, adding that orders had started coming in towards the end of the previous camping season, with customers paying in three instalments.

Al-Kubaisi said higher steel

and other material costs had pushed up production expenses, as the cost of steel required for a truckload of materials sufficient to manufacture five caravans had increased by around QR21,000. An eight-metre-long, four-metre-wide cabin typically costs between QR60,000 and QR90,000, depending on its specifications. Additional features, including



beds, wardrobes, seating arrangements and parquet flooring, can increase the final price. He added that manufacturing a caravan generally takes two to three weeks when materials are available and production schedules permit.

Meanwhile, Abdullah Khalifa al-Kubaisi, another caravan factory owner, said preparations had been strengthened to accommodate new orders while maintaining quality standards and agreed delivery schedules. He noted that demand was encouraging and expected market activity to increase as the camping season registration period approaches. In addition to manufacturing mobile and fixed

cabins, his factory provides repair, maintenance, renovation and modification services.

Ahmed Abdelhady, a caravan factory manager, said his facility had been working continuously since April, completing the manufacture, maintenance and refurbishment of approximately 170 caravans. Prices at his factory start at around QR65,000 and reach approximately QR1.48mn for the most expensive models. Luxury caravans start at about QR126,000, while the highest-priced units can measure 24 metres long and 4.5 metres wide and feature extensive fittings and accessories.

Msheireb Properties embraces agentic AI with Gemini Enterprise



At the Google Cloud Summit Doha, held at the Qatar National Convention Centre recently, Msheireb Properties announced a strategic collaboration with Google Cloud and Mannai InfoTech, an ICT division at Mannai Technologies WLL, to deploy Gemini Enterprise.

This strategic initiative marks an important step in Msheireb Properties' digital transformation journey, bringing advanced agentic AI capabilities into its operations to enhance efficiency, enable smarter decision-making and support its vision of a smart and sustainable city rooted in Qatari heritage.

As the developer of Msheireb Downtown Doha, the world's first sustainably regenerated downtown, Msheireb Properties continues to advance innovation in smart city development. The adoption of Gemini Enterprise will enable the organisation to transform how it manages and accesses information across its extensive asset portfolio, using advanced AI-powered search, retrieval and agentic capabilities.

Through this partnership, Msheireb Properties, and Mannai InfoTech will work with Google Cloud to explore and implement AI-driven use cases that can improve operational efficiency, enhance the experience of employees and stakeholders, and create

new opportunities for intelligent and sustainable city management.

At the heart of this partnership is the use of Gemini Enterprise to transform how Msheireb Properties accesses, understands and interacts with its internal data. Through the adoption of Gemini Enterprise, the organisation will empower its teams to quickly locate, understand and synthesise information across thousands of architectural blueprints, maintenance records and operational documents, making critical information easier to access and act upon. It will also enable teams to leverage AI-powered insights to support smarter and faster decision-making across facility management, asset operations and tenant services at Msheireb Downtown Doha.

"Msheireb Downtown Doha was built on the belief that heritage and innovation can shape a better way of urban living. Our collaboration with Google Cloud and Mannai InfoTech builds on that foundation. With Gemini Enterprise, our teams can draw on the knowledge behind every building and service in the city, making faster and better-informed decisions for the people who live, work and visit here," said Ahmad al-Korbi, senior ICT Manager, Msheireb Properties.

Msheireb shows modern design can grow from heritage: architect

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Msheireb Downtown Doha has become a catalyst for an architectural approach that blends contemporary design with local heritage, according to Fanos Panayides, managing partner of London-based John McAslan & Partners.

Speaking to Gulf Times on the sidelines of Doha Design District's Regenerate Cities: Design for What Comes Next forum, Panayides said Msheireb demonstrated how contemporary development could evolve while remaining connected to the culture and heritage of its surroundings.

"Msheireb is an example of how one can develop a contemporary part of the city, but at the same time do it in a way that is cognisant of heritage and respects heritage and culture," he said.

For Panayides, preserving that connection does not mean preventing cities from changing. Rather than replacing existing built heritage with something entirely new, he said architecture could be approached as part of a continuing story.



Fanos Panayides

"We see it as a continuum or an evolution," he said. "It can be contemporary, but it's informed by the existing place and heritage."

John McAslan & Partners worked extensively in Doha for around a decade, with a team based in the city during its involvement in the Msheireb development.

Panayides said the practice completed around 16 buildings within the project, spanning hotels, M7, museums, a mosque, a school and residential developments, alongside significant work on public spaces.

"What really appealed to us here about Msheireb was the wide

mix of uses in the master plan," he said.

He stressed that the public realm was also an important part of the development, helping connect the different buildings and uses across the district.

Looking at how architecture in Qatar has developed since the project began, Panayides described Msheireb as an important starting point for ideas that have since moved beyond the district.

"Msheireb was really the catalyst for much of that," he said, referring to the architectural language and guidelines developed through the project.

"You can actually begin to see these ideas expanding beyond Msheireb in a lot of the built environment projects that one sees here."

John McAslan & Partners is headquartered in London, with offices in Edinburgh and Sydney, and more recently in Riyadh and Dubai.

For Panayides, the experience of Msheireb shows that contemporary architecture and heritage need not compete, new development can instead evolve from the identity and character of the place in which it is built.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MUBEENA PARVIN ABDUL KHADER

holder of

INDIA Passport No. P3711206
QID No. 29435635906

hereby change my name

from

MUBEENA PARVIN ABDUL KHADER

to

MUBEENA PARVIN THANDALAM VALAPPIL

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

MSDF wraps up awareness campaign on older persons' role in family, society

The Ministry of Social Development and Family (MSDF), through the Community Care Department, has wrapped up an awareness campaign bserved both the the International and Arab Days of Older Persons from October 1-10, with the participation of a host of state entities, institutions, and centres.

The campaign grew out of a vision intended to substantially strengthen community awareness of the critical role older persons play, along with their key position in the family and society.

At its core, it highlighted their phenomenal expertise and experiences, which form a crucial part of the collective memory of society and are instrumental in shaping its present and future.

In addition, the campaign didn't overlook the need to provide spaces that help older persons express their experiences and share knowledge so as to promote their presence and positive interaction with various segments of the community.

The ministry observed both the International and Arab Days of Older Persons from October 1-10

The events of this campaign varied across the gamut, from interactive initiatives and panel discussions to familiarisation visits, offering plenty of direct opportunities for engagement and the sharing of expertise between older persons and community members, particularly young people, in addition to reinforcing values of appreciation and respect.

They highlighted the importance of capitalising on the accumulated experiences of older persons to enrich knowledge and strengthen intergenerational bonds.

The campaign showcased an awareness video that highlighted the roots of their stories and their continuation, creatively embodying the enduring relationship between generations and portraying older persons as those who literally constitute the fulcrum of society in the process of construction and development, a role that is nothing short of essential.

By and large, the drive touted older persons as a source of values and expertise that helped chart the nation's present and chart its future, emphasising that their contributions and legacies aren't confined to the past but rather continue to thrive as an enduring part of the present and future.

Their contributions have been by far an important part of societ y's development.

In addition, the ministry organised an awareness lecture on the blessings of a lifetime for older persons, addressing an array of matters related to their lives, as well as the significance of pursuing healthy lifestyles that contribute to strengthening physical, mental, and social health in the later stages of life.

Alongside this lecture, a mini-exhibition was held featuring several productive families of older persons, who showcased their products, creative work, and handicraft skills, there-

by highlighting successful examples of their contributions, substantially enhancing their community engagement, and supporting the sustainability of their production.

The campaign also featured an interactive mural on Gewan Island and in Msheireb, allowing community members to express their gratitude to older persons by writing messages conveying loyalty and appreciation and reflecting their status and role in the family and society.

Participating in the event were the MSDF, the Qatar Social Work Foundation, the Center for Empowerment and Care of the Elderly (Ehsan), the Family Consulting Center (Wifaq), and the Social Development Center (Nama), alongside visitors from different segments of the community.

Meanwhile, the MSDF collaborated with the Ministry of Sports and Youth (MSY) in organising a two-day panel discussion on impact and memory, hosted by the Friends of the Environment Center, a youth centre operating under the MSY. (QNA)

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, FAZLUL HOQUE ABDUL HASIM

holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. EJ0470964
QID No. 28105010861

hereby change my name

from

FAZLUL HOQUE ABDUL HASIM

to

FAZLUL HAQUE ABDUL HASIM

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, HARENDRA BOLORAM NATH

holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. EJ0262278
QID No. 27105007014

hereby change my name

from

HARENDRA BOLORAM NATH

to

SOPON CHANDRAW NATH

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, FAHEEM AHMED

holder of

INDIA Passport No. V4011639
QID No. 31535607345

hereby change my name

from

FAHEEM AHMED

to

FAHEEM AHMED ABINZ

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, DELOWAR HOSSAIN ALI AHAMMED

holder of

Bangladesh Passport No. EJ0769831
QID No. 28505023886

hereby change my name

from

DELOWAR HOSSAIN ALI AHAMMED

to

MD DELWAR HOSSAIN ALI AHAMMED

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

Hunger and malnutrition stalk Gazans

AFP
Khan Yunis, Palestinian Territories

Every day, Gazan mother Niyaha al-Masri spends six exhausting hours or more queuing at a community kitchen in the hope of getting some food for her family.

It has been a year since a cease-fire between Hamas and Israel was supposed to allow food to flood into the ruined territory, yet widespread hunger persists there.

Al-Masri has little choice. Without the kitchen run by humanitarian groups, she and her eight children would have “nothing at all”, the 35-year-old said.

Each day she sets out early in the morning and returns in the afternoon, this time bringing four containers of rice, lentils and a little chicken, which the family throws itself at. Among them is her husband, wounded in both legs by an airstrike, meaning he “cannot go

and fight with the others” to get food. This will be the only meal of the day for the family of 10, living in a tent in Khan Yunis. There was no breakfast and they will have no dinner.

What little flour they have, al-Masri explained, has to be rationed.

In August 2025, a United Nations-backed body, the IPC, declared a state of famine in Gaza, though Israel quickly denounced it as a lie. By December, the UN had lifted that declaration, saying that the ceasefire had allowed in enough supplies over the course of two months to ease conditions.

COGAT, the Israeli defence ministry organisation responsible for civilian affairs in the Palestinian territories, told AFP that the humanitarian situation in Gaza was stable. But Shaun Hughes, of the UN’s World Food Programme, was less sanguine.

The food security situation, he said, “is still extremely serious”

The most recent figures, from July, show that “1.4mn out of the population of about 2.1mn people are acutely food insecure”, he said, with 200,000 of them “just one step below famine”.

While some food is getting in, a lack of sufficient nutritional variety continues to pose a health threat. “Dietary diversity is a major food security issue in Gaza,” said Hughes.

“You cannot survive on dry goods and wheat flour and bread alone. Particularly children, particularly pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, they need the micronutrients that come with high protein foods, fresh vegetables, fresh fruits,” he explained.

Al-Masri said that her children, aged between three and 14, “dream of eating fruit” but the family doesn’t have the means to buy any.

She said one of her sons suffered from malnutrition during the 2025 famine, although “little by little, his condition is improving”.

Malnutrition isn’t only caused by a lack of food, but also essential nutrients. It weakens the immune system of children, making them vulnerable to illnesses and stunting their growth.

“Repeated bouts of acute malnutrition amongst children is something that human beings just don’t recover from,” said Hughes.

Cognitive and physical impairments “continue into later life”, he added.

At Khan Yunis’s Nasser hospital, the head of the malnutrition unit, Israa al-Najjar, told AFP she had “observed an increase in syndromes and conditions” linked to malnutrition that affect the immune system.

Medecins du Monde published a study that found 93% of pregnant or breastfeeding women had symptoms of anaemia, which is closely linked to malnutrition.

Just 17% had a sufficiently varied diet to meet their nutritional needs, the group found.



Niyaha al-Masri walks with two of her children to get a meal provided by a charity kitchen in Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip. (AFP)

All the while, al-Masri has kept visiting the community kitchen, despite asthma leaving her exhausted. Her children spend their days collecting “pieces of nylon, bits of cardboard and chunks of foam” to try and reinforce their tent, which is in a poor state.

She said it was “shameful” that her children had to do so.

“I swear to God, this isn’t normal.”

Yemeni forces advance against Houthis in areas around Bab al-Mandab

Yemeni military sources told AFP yesterday their forces were advancing against the Houthis in areas around the Bab al-Mandab strait but have not yet secured control of the waterway, after the government launched an operation to capture lost territory.

The Saudi-backed government last week announced a counter-offensive aimed at retaking all areas held by the Houthis, after the pro-Iran group seized Yemen’s entire western coastline in a lightning offensive.

The Houthis confirmed that government forces had attacked in the Bab al-Mandab area but they claimed to have repelled the assault.

“Saudi-led forces attempted to advance from the Ras al-Ara area in Lahj governorate towards the area south of Bab al-Mandab,” Hizam al-Asad, a member of the Houthis’ political bureau, told AFP.

“However, our forces repelled them outside the Bab al-Mandab zone, inflicting heavy losses in personnel and equipment and forcing the survivors to retreat.

“Our forces maintain control over Bab al-Mandab, Mayun Island, and the remaining areas along the country’s western coast,” he said.

Sources from Yemen’s military also said Mayun Island — located in the heart of the strait — remained in Houthi hands. (AFP)

Abbas postpones legislative elections to September 2027

AFP
Ramallah, Palestinian Territories

Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas yesterday postponed legislative elections to September next year, official media said, confirming widespread speculation that the polls would not be held on time.

Legislative elections, which the international community has strongly advocated for, have not been held since 2006.

The new polls had originally been scheduled for November 28, with a presidential election expected in early 2027. But now the elections will be held alongside the presidential vote on September 11, 2027, Abbas said in a decree, blaming “obstacles” imposed by Israel, according to the Palestinian official news agency Wafa.

Abbas’s office, in a statement, attributed the delay to “obstacles imposed by Israeli measures that prevent elections from being held on their previously scheduled date, as well as the need to create appro-

priate political, security and on-the-ground conditions to ensure free, fair and inclusive elections”.

This week, the Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority said Israel refused to allow Palestinian election officials access to east Jerusalem or Gaza ahead of the legislative elections.

Palestinian factions including Abbas’s Fatah party and its longtime rival Hamas had agreed to recommend the elections be postponed at a meeting in Cairo on Wednesday, a source who was present told AFP.

Esmat Mansour, a journalist and former official of a leftist party, suggested that Israeli restrictions had been known at the time the elections were initially scheduled and were not the only explanation for the delay. “The only thing that could explain this delay is your fear of elections. You do not want people to have a say,” Mansour said in a Facebook video addressing other Palestinian factions.

But Palestinian analyst Ghassan al-Khatib disagreed, saying “I don’t think that the internal Palestinian politics are the reason for the postponement.”



President Mahmoud Abbas. (Reuters/File Photo)

How official access turned into a criminal charge

Acquittal of two employees at a major investment entity upheld on appeal and at the Court of Cassation

His working hours at the office were over, but the work was not. An employee e-mailed a document from his work account to his personal one so he could finish what he had started at the office.

He did not send it to a competitor, nor did he leak it to an outside party; he sent it to himself. What he did not know was that this e-mail would lead him, along with a colleague, to a criminal charge and 109 nights behind bars.

The case was not about breaking through security or infiltrating a system from the outside.

It turned on one decisive question: how can official access become a charge of unauthorised entry? That is where the defence began, tracing dates, system logs and information security policies, then confronting the entity’s witnesses with what its own documents said.

From an e-mail to a criminal complaint

The case began when the information security system flagged those e-mails.

One of the two employees behind them was a digital transformation specialist who in 2018 designed a dedicated application for senior management, work that contributed to his promotion.

The other was a systems and solutions architect who had spent eleven years with the entity.

No administrative investigation was held with either of them before the complaint was filed.

When the entity’s representative was asked in court why, he said it was “due to the surrounding risks”.

He meant the fear that the two might flee the country.

The file was referred to the criminal authorities, and the two employees were charged with unlawfully accessing the electronic system for investments and financial data, and obtaining confidential data, under Law No. 14 of 2014 on Combating Cybercrimes.

The charge was framed in complex technical language, but lawyer Abdullah bin Hamad al-Athbah did not answer it with a blanket denial.

Instead, he put the case file through three decisive tests:

Did the e-mails actually belong to the two employees? Was their access to the data within their authorisation? And were the legal elements of unauthorised access actually met?

With each test, part of the case against them began to crumble.

This is where al-Athbah’s background made the difference.

A lawyer with extensive experience in fintech, information systems and cybersecurity, he did not read the law alone.

He read the system’s architecture, its access logs and user permissions, its information security policies and the investment technology behind it.

Digital evidence can look conclusive when it is wrapped in technical language, but it can collapse under a single legal question once the defence understands how it was built.

In al-Athbah’s hands, fintech expertise was not an added skill; it was the defence tool that won his clients back their freedom and their future.

E-mails that were never his exposed the truth

One of the strangest elements of the file was that the Information Security Director and his team attributed to one of the employees e-mails dating back to 2011.

The first test began with a small detail the technical examination had overlooked: the date of the e-mails.

They dated back to 2011, when the employee was working in Singapore.

He had not yet signed his contract with the entity now accusing him, and he had not even come to Qatar.

Exposing the contradiction required no complex technical analysis. It required a lawyer who checks the dates before accepting the story.

An examination of the senders and recipients produced the same result.

The employee’s name did not appear in the e-mails, nor did any e-mail address belonging to him.

Yet they were attributed to him.

And so an employee was linked to e-mails that bore neither his name nor his e-mail address, and that predated his joining the entity. The outcome shows the danger of treating a technical examination as final truth before it has been tested in court.

A late policy puts the past on trial

Most of the correspondence attributed to one of the employees dated back to 2018 and was linked to an application he had developed for senior management.

The defence set the date of the correspondence against the date of the internal policy.

The e-mails dated back to 2018, but the policy they allegedly breached was not adopted until 2022 or 2023, as the Information Security Director acknowledged.

With a gap of four or five years, the flaw became clear: the accusation measured an old act against a rule created after it.

What kind of accountability digs years into the past, judges an old action by a pol-



Abdullah bin Hamad al-Athbah

icy that did not exist when it occurred, and turns it into a criminal charge?

A later policy may regulate the future. It cannot redefine the past or turn earlier conduct into a “crime” simply because someone wishes it so.

He had the access, yet was charged with unauthorised entry

The defence then turned to the access rights themselves. The entity’s representative told the court that one of the employees had access to the programme in question until September 2025.

The referral order, however, placed the alleged offence in April 2026. The gap between the two dates was not the decisive issue.

The real question was whether his access had actually been revoked.

The defence asked whether his access to the programme had been blocked after he moved to the finance department.

The witness replied that it was “supposed” to have been blocked, then said: “I don’t know!”

The prosecution witness: Doesn’t know, doesn’t remember, didn’t read the report

As the cross-examination went on, these answers kept recurring:

- Asked whether the documents were classified as “confidential”, the witness replied: “I don’t remember.”
- Yet the entity has an approved four-level classification system, and no evidence was presented that any document had been classified at any of those levels.
- Asked whether they included financial data, he replied: “I don’t know.”
- He was shown the technical report stating that an examination of one employee’s devices found no document belonging to the entity. He said he “had not seen the report.”
- Asked about the technical aspects, he said: “I am not an information systems expert.”

A charge without e-mails, and two witnesses who can’t agree on the number

The entity’s two witnesses could not even agree on how many e-mails were at the centre of the charge.

One said there were 25; the other said 23. More importantly, the court was not shown a single e-mail whose content, sender or recipient could be examined.

The dispute was not over a trivial number. It was over evidence that never itself appeared in the courtroom.

What did they send, and what did the circumstances reveal?

The circumstances surrounding the e-mails revealed four striking facts:

- In one of the two incidents, the document was sent to a personal e-mail account so work could be completed outside the office. Investigators did not find the e-mails in that account.
- In the other, the material sent was technical training material the employee had prepared himself. It was based on public sources and a development environment classified as “non-sensitive”, and he sent it so he could keep working on it before an approved business trip.
- The Information Security Director acknowledged that the password said to give access to the system had been deactivated for a year and no longer worked.
- On top of that, the entity waited 14 days before filing the complaint. Meanwhile, the employee who sent the e-mail kept coming to work with his access rights intact. So where was the risk that supposedly ruled out an administrative investigation?

The testimony that settled the question of access

The defence had exposed the contradictions over the e-mails, their classification and the technical report.

It then reached the question on which the whole case rested: was the employee authorised to access the data in question?

The answer from the entity’s representative was direct: “Yes, he was authorised to view that data.”

In that one brief sentence, the entity’s own witness undermined the core of its accusation.

The defence pressed further. If this information was confidential, as the charge claimed, why was it available to him?

He replied: “Because he is the programme’s developer.”

The Information Security Director’s testimony reached the same conclusion. He said he had checked with his team, who confirmed that the employee was “entitled to access that data” as a developer.

The testimony of the entity’s two witnesses thus established that the employees’ access to the data fell within the permissions granted to them.

In this way, the defence took apart the technical case. It connected the system’s architecture and user permissions to the legal elements of the offence.

The file’s complex language came down to a clear legal question that left no room for evasion, and the courts answered it at all three levels of litigation.

When the courts had their say

The Fourth Criminal Circuit examined and scrutinised the evidence in the case and brought the accusation back to its decisive legal question: was the employees’ access to the data authorised?

The issue was not whether sending a document to a personal e-mail account complied with internal procedures. It was whether doing so met the legal elements of the offence of unauthorised access.

The entity’s own witnesses had established that access fell within the permissions granted. On that basis, the Circuit concluded that the material element of the offence was not met.

Anything that might be attributed to the employees amounted at most to an administrative violation that did not rise to the level of a crime.

The Circuit acquitted them and described the case file as “devoid of proof and poor in evidence”.

After the first-instance acquittal, the two employees travelled abroad on leave.

According to documents submitted by the defence, they then returned to Doha of their own accord and appeared in court for the appeal proceedings.

Their voluntary return was a practical answer to the fear of flight that had been used to justify skipping an administrative investigation.

The Court of Appeal then upheld the Fourth Circuit’s ruling, and the acquittal stood. When the ruling was challenged before the Court of Cassation, the court declared the challenge inadmissible, making the acquittal final.

‘Before justice, no one is too big’

On one side of the courtroom stood two employees backed by nothing but their defence and the case papers. On the other stood a major investment institution with its name, weight and standing.

Yet the court looked at the evidence before it, not at the gap in status and resources. When it found nothing in that evidence to prove a crime, the entity’s name and standing had no bearing on the outcome.

Lawyer al-Athbah describes what these rulings meant for his clients:

“These rulings showed the two defendants, who are not Qatari, that the judiciary in Qatar does not favour any party, whatever its size or name. The standard is truth and justice, and the judiciary is the impregnable stronghold to which all litigants turn.”



Panama struck by powerful earthquake, at least 27 hurt

AFP
Penonomé, Panama

A powerful 7.7-magnitude earthquake rocked Panama on Friday, collapsing buildings and roads in the centre of the country and injuring at least 27 people, with no deaths reported.

The shallow tremor was felt across the Central American nation of around 4.5 mn people, according to the National Civil Protection System.

The head of emergency operations Rene Garcia told AFP that there were no reports of fatalities so far.

In Panama City, about 200 kilometers from the epicentre, there were scenes of panic and complete diarray as people rushed to evacuate from the city's emblematic skyscrapers.

"I was scared because the shaking was very strong and prolonged," Salomon Andion, 46, told AFP after evacuating his 15-story building for the second time following aftershocks.

"Heavy objects like dressers, the bed, and all the kitchen items were shaking."

A video widely shared on social media showed water falling from the rooftop pool of a building more than 20 stories tall.

Another showed a bridge over the Panama Canal shaking violently but remaining upright as vehicles traveled across it.

"We are facing a major disaster," President Jose Raul Mulino said, adding that some roads had "completely collapsed."

"It was horrible, like nothing we ever experienced. My daughter was trapped in school," Juana Alveo, a 38-year-old cashier at a store in the city of Penonomé in central Cocle province, told AFP.

There were 27 people with minor injuries across the country as a result of the quake, according to a statement from the National Civil Protection System.

The US Geological Survey (USGS) said the quake struck at 12.56pm local time with an epicentre 10km from the small town



A car sits crushed beneath debris from a collapsed building after an earthquake struck near the southern coast of Panama, in Penonomé. (Reuters)

of Pitaloza Arriba in central Herrera province.

The USGS initially estimated it to be a magnitude-8.0 quake before revising it down to 7.7.

A tsunami warning was issued for the eastern Pacific but later lifted.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on X on Friday that he was "closely monitoring" the situation, with his office "rapidly mobilising resources and personnel to assist," at the Panamanian government's request.

The Panama Canal Authority said shipping through the channel, which connects the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, was unaffected and operating "as normal."

Mulino traveled to Penonomé to co-ordinate the disaster response.

Health Minister Fernando Boyd said the most affected areas were the provinces of Herrera and Cocle as well as Los Santos.

He said the town of Tonosi in Los Santos was completely cut off.

"We are trying to figure out how

to get there by air, because it's impossible by land," Boyd said.

Panama City's international airport, a major hub for the region, was temporarily closed.

Several flights were diverted to other airports as a precaution, according to the Civil Aeronautics Authority.

The leaders of Colombia, Ecuador and Guatemala all sent messages of solidarity and offers of aid.

Benjamin Gonzalez, 52, said he was at a farm near the town of La Miel when the quake hit, and when he returned home he found "many houses devastated" and "everyone terrified" in the small town square, which was left without power.

His neighbour, David Castillo, told AFP that residents were choosing not to return home because they are "afraid it will happen again."

Earthquakes are rare in Panama and usually occur in western Chiriqui province, bordering Costa Rica.

Former president Ricardo Mar-

tinelli posted pictures on Instagram of his house in the town of Sona in Veraguas province that collapsed.

A church and a hotel in Penonomé also suffered extensive damage, images shared on local media showed.

More than 80 aftershocks, one above magnitude 6.0, were recorded by the local geosciences institute.

Mulino called for calm.

"What happened should not be used to generate alarm and disorder," he wrote on X, adding that he had called for a report on the damage.

The education ministry announced the suspension of classes in schools nationwide.

The Panamanian quake is at least the fourth quake this year in Latin America region which surpassed 7.0 in magnitude. The quake comes after devastating back-to-back earthquakes in Venezuela's Guaira in June and a powerful earthquake in western Colombia in August.



President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, a candidate for reelection for the Workers' Party (PT), hugs a girl during a campaign rally. (Reuters)

Lula scraps gasoline tax ahead of runoff election

AFP
Sao Paulo

Brazil's government announced on Friday that gasoline taxes will be temporarily scrapped, two weeks ahead of the runoff election between incumbent President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and right-wing challenger Flavio Bolsonaro.

Lula, who is seeking his fourth term, is trying to contain rising fuel prices amid a global spike in oil prices driven by the war in the Middle East.

The gasoline tax, which was set at 0.89 reais (\$0.18) per liter, would be waived for 30 days, according to the government.

The measure announced on Friday also expands subsidies for importers of diesel, the predominant fuel used in Brazil's freight transport.

"The objective is to ensure that imports remain viable at a critical moment for supply," the presidency said in a statement.

The fiscal impact of the tax exemptions will be offset by Brazil's "extraordinary revenues" from oil exports, it said.

The runoff election on October 25 was set after Lula won 45% of the vote in the first round and Bolsonaro received 47%.

Bolsonaro called his opponent "irresponsible," warning that Lula was placing a "bomb" on consumers' laps and that diesel prices could rise after the election.

Bolsonaro, the eldest son of former far-right president Jair Bolsonaro, repeatedly criticised the government during his campaign for failing to control the cost of living.

Inflation in Brazil rose by 0.82% in September, the statistics authority said on Friday.

Ninth journalist killed in Mexico: NGO

A journalist was shot dead on Friday in Mexico, according to human rights NGO Article 19, the ninth to be killed in the country this year. Hamurabi Huesca Manzano, the owner of a news website with more than 52,000 followers, was gunned down in Oaxaca state in the south of Mexico, Article 19 said, adding to a tally of journalist homicides tracked by Reporters Without Borders. Huesca Manzano died from gunshot wounds when an armed group opened fire on him and two other men, according to the state prosecutor's report. His website, Pinotepa Comunica, published news about politics and local issues in Santiago Pinotepa Nacional, the city where he lived. He was also a taxi driver. (AFP)

Eritrea urges UN to act against Ethiopia

AFP
Addis Ababa

Eritrea yesterday asked the UN Security Council to take "deterrent measures" after what it called Ethiopia's "declaration of war" against it in the conflict over the Tigray region.

The neighbouring countries have accused each other of starting a war over Tigray, where Ethiopia says Eritrea is backing rebels. Rebels launched attacks against federal forces last month in the northern Ethiopian region. Eritrean forces have since invaded Ethiopian territory.

The Ethiopian army has pushed back the rebel Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and seized their capital, Mekelle. It has also launched drone strikes against the Eritrean troops in the

region. "Eritrea requests the UN Security Council to forcefully condemn Ethiopia's deplorable declaration of war against Eritrea... and take the requisite deterrent measures," Eritrean Foreign Minister Osman Saleh said in a letter.

He said the Ethiopian action would cause "huge devastation to the peoples of both countries and destabilise the whole region". Ethiopian Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos on Friday accused Eritrea of "a blatant act of aggression that engages Ethiopia's inherent right to self-defence". Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993 and they fought a deadly border war from 1998 to 2000.

Relations improved after Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed came to power in 2018, but have soured again in recent years.

Venezuela authorises Musk's Starlink satellite Internet

AFP
Caracas

Venezuela has authorised Elon Musk's Starlink satellite internet service to operate in the country, formally lifting a ban put in place under ousted president Nicolas Maduro, a fierce critic of the tech billionaire.

The National Telecommunications Commission (Conatel) announced on Friday that it had granted seven licenses to SpaceX's Venezuela subsidiary to operate the Starlink service throughout the country.

Before the formal authorisation, an estimated 3.6% of internet users in Venezuela were already accessing the web through Starlink, according to APNIC data.

Maduro, before his capture in a US military operation in January, railed against Musk with a publicity campaign that caricatured the South African-born entrepreneur and tycoon,



Elon Musk (Reuters)

whose X social media platform was also banned, as a demonic figure.

Authorities in Venezuela arrested individuals selling Starlink antennas following Maduro's con-

tested reelection in 2024.

Musk announced shortly after Maduro's capture in January 2026 that the Starlink service would be free for a month for Venezuelan users.

Authorities in Venezuela arrested individuals selling Starlink antennas following Maduro's contested reelection in 2024

Starlink resumed offering free services after the devastating twin earthquakes that struck northern Venezuela on June 24, to support recovery efforts in La Guaira, the hardest-hit area.

US sanctions on Venezuela before Maduro's capture had also prevented Starlink from operating in the country, according to Andres Azpurua, director of VE Sin Filtro, an NGO dedicated to promoting digital freedom.

After Maduro's fall, Starlink executives "felt they would no longer face problems on the US side and began to move more openly in Venezuela.

But the local regulatory problem still existed," Azpurua said.

Isaias drenches US southeast region as weakened post-tropical cyclone

AFP
Pensacola, US

The southeastern US faced a high risk of flooding yesterday as Isaias, weakened from a hurricane to a post-tropical cyclone, advanced northward from its landfall on Florida's Gulf Coast.

More than 800,000 US customers were without electricity yesterday morning along its path through Florida, Alabama and Georgia, according to the PowerOutage.com tracker.

Isaias roared ashore late Friday as a Category 2 hurricane near the resort community of Destin, Florida, packing sustained winds of 105 miles (165 kilometers) per hour, before weakening overnight, the National Hurricane Centre (NHC) said.

It was the first hurricane of an Atlantic season tamed by a historic El Nino weather phenomenon, and the first hurricane since 2024 to hit the US mainland.

Officials have reported two



A person walks through the wind and rain as Hurricane Isaias passes through the area in Pensacola, Florida. (AFP)

deaths related to the storm, both from trees falling on homes — one near Pensacola in Florida and another in Birmingham, Alabama.

AFP reporters travelling from Pensacola to nearby Destin saw relatively minor damage, with electricity workers repairing power lines along mostly clear roads. Streets were largely deserted in the

coastal communities after mandatory evacuations ahead of the storm. "Although the centre of the storm has moved out of Florida, the threat of flooding remains," Florida Governor Ron DeSantis told a press briefing yesterday morning.

He said that weather conditions fortunately had prevented the storm from making landfall as



A fallen tree blocks a street in Pensacola. (AFP)

a major Category 3. "We had assets in place that assumed the storm might strengthen rather than weaken, and I think that's the way you want to do it. You want to be overprepared," he said.

A major flood threat remained from the storm as it headed northward and inland. The NHC warned that some areas in the southeast

could see upwards of 10 inches of rain. "Considerable flash flooding and landslides are also possible across the Southern Appalachians," it warned in a briefing.

The threat was particularly worrying in the mountains of North Carolina, where communities are still recovering from Hurricane Helene of 2024.

That storm made landfall in the same Florida region as Isaias, but remained at tropical storm strength as it moved northward, dumping record amounts of rainfall into the mountains and leading to deadly flooding.

Isaias's late arrival this season is largely due to an El Nino of historic strength. El Nino, the warm phase of the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), creates strong vertical wind shear over the Atlantic that tends to tear storms apart.

"We have been seeing basically nearly record strong shear throughout the Atlantic Basin this year, and that is consistent with what we'd expect to see with a strong El Nino event," Michael Fischer, of the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science, told AFP.

In the Pacific, it has the opposite effect, weakening shear and allowing storms to grow. The Pacific has already produced several hurricanes this year, some of which hit maximum Category 5 strength.

India detains ‘cockroach’ online movement leaders

AFP
New Delhi

Indian police detained the head of the satirical “cockroach” online movement yesterday as hundreds of protesters demanding the election commissioner’s resignation gathered in New Delhi despite a heavy security crackdown.

The demonstration is the culmination of weeks of opposition mobilisation following allegations of misconduct during a nationwide voter-roll revision by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke and two other leaders were detained before disembarking from a flight in the capital, the group said.

It said in a statement they had been taken to “an undisclosed location”.

“They’re being denied access to their lawyers and cut off from all contact with others,” the statement said.

Opposition parties and other critics say the voter-roll revision could disenfranchise millions of voters and benefit Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party.

The ECI has rejected allegations of impropriety, saying the revision was intended to remove duplicate and ineligible voters.

Delhi has been under a strict

security clampdown since Friday, with tens of thousands of police and paramilitary personnel deployed to stop those seeking to reach the main protest site in the heart of the city.

Authorities have closed dozens of metro stations, cancelled several trains coming to Delhi and temporarily shut down mobile internet around the protest site.

Dozens of protesters were taken away in police vehicles after they tried to march to the Jantar Mantar protest site in central Delhi, shouting anti-government slogans, AFP reporters saw.

The Hindu newspaper said as many as 3,000 protesters had been detained, although it was not immediately possible to verify that number.

Journalists from some media outlets, including the Scroll and Newslaundry, were also detained briefly.

AFP was unable to reach police for comment on the reported detentions.

The protests are widely seen as a reprise of the “cockroach” movement’s mass mobilisation in July.

This time, they are demanding the resignation of ECI chief Gyanesh Kumar.

The allegations against the ECI are a fresh challenge for 76-year-old Modi during his third term in office.

Opposition parties have long alleged that legitimate voters are



Cockroach Janata Party leader Ajinkya Shinde addresses a press conference during the protest demanding the resignation of India’s Chief Election Commissioner in New Delhi yesterday. (AFP)

being struck off lists in India, the world’s largest democracy with 1.4 bn people.

The issue flared last month when the Indian Express reported that key decisions linked to the revision were likely taken without the approval of two of the three election commissioners.

The ECI, a constitutional body, says all its decisions were unanimous and legally valid.

Demonstrators told AFP they were angry because they were being denied their right to protest peacefully.

Saransh, a university graduate, walked several miles after navigating security barricades to get close to the Jantar Mantar site.

“I am here to protect the con-

stitution,” said the 24-year-old, who gave only one name.

“Why do I need permission to peacefully express my opinion?”

Amnesty International denounced the “lockdown-like restrictions”, while Shashi Tharoor of the opposition Congress party said the government must provide answers.

“A government confident in the fairness of its elections would welcome questions about them, whereas one that turns its capital into a fortress to avoid them only deepens the very suspicions it seeks to suppress,” he said.

The voter list overhaul, which began in 2025, has led to more than 135mn names being excluded from draft rolls, according to Indian media reports citing ECI data.

The commission said the revision identifies fraudulently registered voters and aims to prevent “foreign illegal immigrants” from voting.

Critics say the drive has disproportionately affected marginalised and minority communities.

Members of Modi’s party have long alleged that large numbers of undocumented Muslim migrants from neighbouring Bangladesh have fraudulently entered India’s electoral rolls.

BJP spokesman Sambit Patra said on Saturday the BJP had failed in its attempt to spread “anarchy”.

“What is happening at Jantar Mantar, what you can see on TV and a few social media handles, is



Police personnel detain supporters of the Cockroach Janata Party during the protest demanding the resignation of India’s Chief Election Commissioner in New Delhi, yesterday. (AFP)

UN urges release of people detained

The UN office for the high commissioner for human rights yesterday urged India to immediately release people “arbitrarily detained” in protests against alleged misconduct by electoral authorities. “We are concerned by reports of mass detentions in India of demonstrators, protest leaders, members of civil society organisations, lawyers and journalists, before and during today’s large-scale demonstrations in Delhi,” the office said in a statement. “All those arbitrarily detained must be immediately and unconditionally released.” (AFP)

Rahul Gandhi says election protest must continue despite crackdown

India’s main opposition leader Rahul Gandhi called on demonstrators yesterday to keep up protests against alleged misconduct by the election commission despite a heavy security crackdown. “Youth of India, I am proud of you. Keep protesting. We are standing with you,” Gandhi, a senior leader of the Congress party, said in a statement after police detained hundreds of protesters in New Delhi. (AFP)

not India’s story,” he told reporters.

“India is calm and going ahead under good governance.”

Political analyst Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay told AFP the pro-

test comes at a time when Modi appears to be “at his weakest politically and individually”. “And I see this becoming a bigger challenge in the coming months,” he said.

Thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators rally in London

AFP
London

Several thousand pro-Palestinian protesters marched through central London yesterday, calling for an end to Israeli strikes on Gaza, three years after Hamas’s October 7 storming.

Marchers carried placards reading “End the genocide” and “Free Palestine” as they made their way along the route near the British parliament.

“We are here today to mark three years of the ongoing genocide in Gaza,” Aimee Shalan, director of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, told AFP.

She said UK-led Western sanctions over settler violence did not go far enough, calling for “full sanctions on Israel”.

A ceasefire began a year ago and although Israel has reduced its level of attacks it has kept striking Gaza on a near-daily basis.

Strikes have killed some 1,450 Palestinians since the ceasefire, according to Gaza’s health ministry.

Police said they had made “several arrests” including a man and a woman with placards of support



People take part in a National March in support of Palestine, organised by Palestine Solidarity Campaign, in central London, yesterday. (AFP)

for the banned organisation Palestine Action.

Recent graduate Hibbo Hassan,

23, said she was there to show her solidarity.

“Although it is happening in

the Middle East, it affects us here now,” she said.

“It’s extremely dystopian and that is something we should be all scared about,” she added.

Another protester, a 32-year-old Kosovar immigrant who gave his name as Kobe, said his own experience of war made him want to “stand up today and not let history repeat” itself.

The “National March for Palestine” organised by the Palestine Coalition, according to police, came three days after the third anniversary of the October 7, 2023 storming.

In response, Israel launched a military offensive that has left most of Gaza in ruins and killed more than 74,200 people, according to Gaza’s health ministry.

A small counter-demonstration was organised by Stop The Hate UK, a Jewish-led, pro-Israel campaign group.

Ahead of the march, London’s Metropolitan police said it would be using powers under public order legislation to require anyone wearing a face covering to deliberately hide their identity to remove it.

“We will take a zero-tolerance approach to hate crime and other offending,” said senior Met officer Carl Galvin.

Seoul’s ambassador to Ukraine returns home after POW row

Republic of Korea’s ambassador to Ukraine returned home yesterday, Seoul’s foreign ministry said, as a diplomatic row deepens over the transfer of North Korean prisoners of war (POW) to Seoul.

The announcement came days after South Korea said it recalled him following Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky’s disclosure last

month of the prisoner transfer, which Seoul said put their families in North Korea at risk. “We inform you that Park Ki-chang, Ambassador to Ukraine, returned home this morning,” Seoul’s foreign ministry said. Korean President Lee Jae Myung has demanded an official apology over the prisoner revelation. Seoul also previously summoned Kyiv’s ambassador and

threatened unspecified “further measures”. Ukraine has insisted that “diplomacy must prevail over emotions”. Earlier this week, Seoul’s foreign minister Cho Hyun said Ukraine had sent a message that “included words of apology” over Zelensky’s disclosure, but it fell short of “the level” Seoul had in mind. (AFP)

Thailand to host IMF-World Bank meetings

Reuters
Bangkok

Thailand is preparing to host the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings in Bangkok from October 12-18, bringing together more than 15,000 participants from 191 countries, including central bank governors, economic policymakers and business leaders, for discussions on the world economy.

To ease traffic, Bangkok government offices will work from home on October 12, 14 and 15, while October 13 is an existing public holiday and October 16 has been declared a special government and bank holiday, with private companies and state enterprises asked to consider suitable arrangements.

Security has been tightened at the meeting venue in central Bangkok and 21 official hotels, according to the authorities.

About 500 Tourist Police officers will also help secure the venue, delegate hotels and tourist attractions through undercover deployments, patrols, drones and motorcade escorts coordinated with around 39 embassies, Tourist Police Bureau Commissioner



Police officers push an X-ray machine for installation, ahead of the 2026 IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings at Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre in Bangkok. (Reuters)

Phongsiam Meekhanthong said.

Visiting leaders include Swiss President Guy Parmelin, making the first official visit to Thailand by a Swiss president in 22 years, and Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam, the Thai Foreign Ministry said.

Participants’ spending could generate 1.05-2.25 billion baht for the Thai economy, according to the Thai Finance Ministry.

More than 320 electric vehicles

will serve participants to cut carbon emissions, the Thai Finance Ministry said.

Heavy to very heavy rain is forecast for Bangkok and surrounding provinces on October 10-11, potentially causing localised flooding, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration warned. This comes after parts of the city flooded two weeks ago following 320mm (12.6 inches) of rain over three days.

Nearly 300,000 Nepalis at flood risk: study

More than 1,400 people were killed and 5,000 remain missing after catastrophic floods hit Nepal in August – and a new study Thursday warned nearly 300,000 people face similar risks. A tsunami-like wall of water and debris triggered by a glacial and rock collapse on the Nepal-China border on August 26 cut a swathe of destruction across the nation. The disaster raised fears that similar floods could strike elsewhere as glaciers retreat and development expands across fragile mountain terrain. The study, published in *Scientific Reports*, examined areas up to 50km (31 miles) downstream of 1,361 Himalayan lakes in Nepal and neighbouring parts of China and India. “Our results demonstrate rapidly increasing exposure in Himalayan catchments,” key study scientist C Scott Watson, from Britain’s University of Leeds, told AFP. Scientists say climate change played a key role in the August floods. (AFP)

China sentences former Wuhan mayor to 14 years in jail for taking bribes

AFP
Beijing

A Chinese court sentenced the former mayor of the central city of Wuhan to 14 years’ imprisonment yesterday after he was found guilty of accepting bribes in business deals.

Zhou Xianwang, whose tenure as mayor of Hubei’s provincial capital coincided with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in the city, was placed under investigation in July last year.

He was found to have leveraged official roles, including as mayor of Wuhan, for personal gain from 2003 to May 2025, the court in Shangqiu in central Henan Province said in a statement.

“Zhou Xianwang took advantage of his various positions... to assist relevant entities and individuals with matters such as

securing engineering contracts, business operations and administrative approvals,” the court said.

He accepted bribes in the form of money and property totalling more than 60.5mn yuan (\$9mn), it added.

The court imposed a fine of 5mn yuan in addition to 14 years of imprisonment for the bribery offence, it said.

Zhou has served in a range of high-level roles, including as vice chairman of a provincial committee under China’s top political advisory body from 2021-2023.

Since coming to power over a decade ago, Chinese President Xi Jinping has engaged in a strident crackdown on official corruption within the ruling Communist Party.

Supporters say the campaign promotes clean governance, though critics say it serves as a tool for Xi to oust political opponents.

Spain’s housing crisis bursts into the spotlight at snap election

Spain's snap election will revolve around an issue which has topped voters' list of concerns for three years straight but, until a fortnight ago, failed to dominate the political debate: housing. It was the attempted eviction of 87-year-old Maricarmen Abascal in central Madrid last month after her building was bought by a real estate firm that upended the country's politics. Her case triggered nationwide protests and catapulted the issue to the top of the agenda, even overshadowing immigration which had dominated headlines for weeks following a mass migrant crossing in Ceuta. Spain's housing shortage shares patterns with others across Europe: complex bureaucracy and labour shortages stalling supply, proliferating short-term rentals and high demand in urban centres pushing up prices, and rural areas hollowing out. From Ireland's 2024 election to Berlin's recent mayoral race, the topic has particularly galvanised

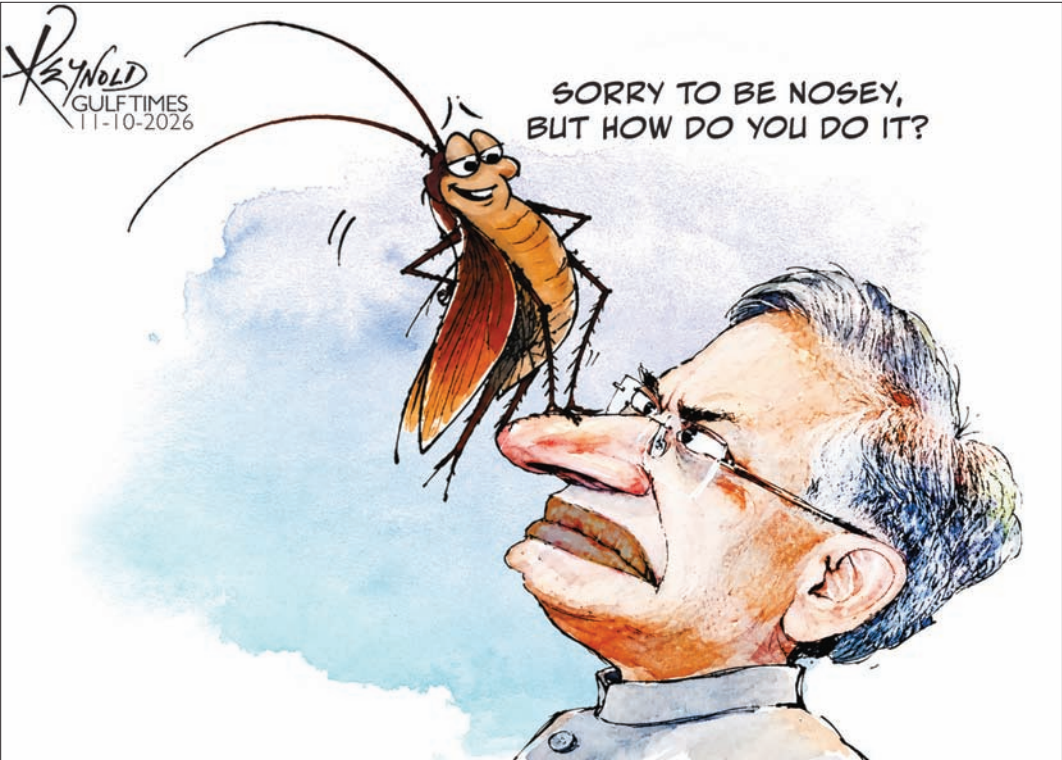
young voters across the region tired of spending a rising proportion of their incomes on rent. Yet how to resolve the crisis in Spain is a matter of bitter debate. Housing plans proposed by Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's Socialist government in Parliament last Friday were struck down by rightwing MPs who argued the measures — ranging from rent caps to limits on purchasing real estate for corporate entities — would worsen the problem by choking supply. Alberto Nunez Feijoo, the leader of the centre-right opposition People's Party, is pledging instead to build 250,000 new homes a year in projects creating 600,000 more jobs. "If Spaniards give me their trust, my priority, my success, will be housing policy," said Feijoo, whose party leads voting intention in September polls with around 33% support to the Socialist PSOE's 26%. Feijoo also wants to speed up urban planning to free up land for development and provide stronger

mortgage and rental guarantees for young people. But some are sceptical about his promises. Marta, a 28-year-old Madrid resident and one of tens of thousands of protesters who took to the streets to voice discontent at the decree being struck down, hopes a successful election will strengthen the left's mandate to fix the issue. "If we leave this issue in the hands of the right, it's going to get much worse," she said. Spain's regionalised structure often stands in the way. Central governments can set housing legislation and devise nationwide plans for incentives and subsidies, but their implementation, and wider urban planning, is largely devolved to regional governments and municipalities. All types of instruments — from rent controls proposed by the Socialists to eased planning permissions proposed by conservatives — have been struck down, blocked, or simply not implemented

since the Socialists took power in 2018. Two decades on from a housing bubble and subsequent market collapse that scarred its economy, Spain's has flipped from a housing glut to a major deficit, estimated by its central bank at 750,000 homes and likely to reach a million by 2028. A steady recovery in demand, boosted by ultra-low interest rates and rising immigration, was not matched by new supply in the areas needing it most, as developers and lenders scarred by the crisis and lacking workers were loath to resume building. Though 73% of Spaniards own their homes, over half of 18-34 year olds now live with their parents or depend on them for living costs. House prices rose at three times the rate of wages last year, official statistics show, pushing more people to rent. At just 1.7% by European Commission calculations, its social housing stock is among the lowest in the EU. — Reuters



People wearing masks with the colours of the Palestinian flag take part in a pro-Palestinian rally amid events marking the third anniversary of the October 7, 2023, in Istanbul, Turkey, yesterday. (Reuters)



Ukraine scrambles for money as Russian strikes batter economy

- Government faces biggest budget crisis since invasion
- Intensified Russian airstrikes hit Ukraine's economy
- Ukraine forced to freeze non-essential spending
- Reform delays put foreign financing at risk, PM says

By Olena Harmash
Reuters

Kyryvy Rih, the hometown of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, is struggling to survive. Russian airstrikes have brought the city's huge steel plant and mines to a standstill, dragging the local economy to its knees. Mayor Oleksandr Vilkul said the sprawling industrial city — which stretches along the banks of the Inhulets River — was doing everything possible to ensure its hospitals remain open, the lights remain on in kindergartens and schools, and buses keep running. "In Kryvyi Rih, the situation is actually worse than anywhere else, apart from the front line itself," Vilkul, 52, a former mining executive, said in a video address. The financial squeeze on the city of about 600,000 people underlines the challenges facing Ukraine as the government navigates its biggest budget crisis since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. Last month, the city's largest employer - ArcelorMittal's hulking mining and steelmaking complex - suspended its operations following a series of Russian ballistic missile strikes that darkened its furnaces. The prospects for next year, Vilkul said, are bleak. "It's about survival. Right now, we need to survive," he said. It's a scene played out across Ukraine's once-mighty steel industry, which accounted for a tenth of economic output before the war. Giant mills in Zaporizhzhia in the southeast and other industrial cities stand silent and exports have stopped. An escalation in Russia's drone and missile strikes this summer destroyed factories and warehouses across Ukraine, damaged ports and railways, and forced shops and businesses to close, slowing the growth of the economy and tax revenue.



Firefighters work at the site of an apartment building and a supermarket hit by a Russian jet drone strike in Kyiv in this file picture. (Reuters)

Meanwhile, the technology-driven war is becoming ever more expensive for Ukraine to fight. Billions of euros in foreign loans have been delayed by failure to pass bills including unpopular tax reforms and anti-corruption legislation demanded by Ukraine's Western allies, leaving a gaping hole in state coffers. Ukraine needs \$56bn to fund that gap this year - equivalent to about a quarter of its economic output. Of that, \$27bn is military spending. To bridge the shortfall, Ukrainian officials met European partners in Brussels last week to discuss bringing forward disbursements due next year under a €90-bn (\$101-bn) EU loan. The European Commission

and Ukraine said they had identified funds to close the gap this year. But three sources familiar with the talks said accelerating these payments risked increasing budget pressure next year - at a time when looming election campaigns in European allies including France and Poland could erode support for Kyiv. Prime Minister Sergii Korotshuk acknowledges the situation is "challenging". The government has been forced to freeze non-essential spending — including reconstruction of damaged buildings and infrastructure — to prioritise military spending, public sector wages and pensions. "All resources should

be channelled into critically important areas," Korotshuk told reporters. **WAR COSTS SOAR** Two years ago, a single day of fighting cost Ukraine \$140mn, but that figure has jumped to \$190mn, according to Roksolana Pidlasa, the head of parliament's budget committee. And that does not include direct military support to Kyiv from its Western allies. Rising costs are driven partly by the need for expensive medium- and long-range weapons capable of striking Russia's oil refineries and military factories to reduce Moscow's ability to continue its war.

Plus, the wage bill for an expanded army is higher than ever before, and the state must support a growing number of military families of disabled or deceased soldiers. "Expenditure will continue to rise," Pidlasa told a conference in Kyiv. "This is one more pragmatic reason why the US and Europe need to act faster to force (Russia) to end this war." In the first nine months of this year, Ukraine spent more than \$44bn on defence alone, data showed. That does not include in-kind military support from allies. In the same period, the government was able to raise only about \$42bn in tax revenue as the economy slowed. Pidlasa said that in the first nine months of this year Ukraine's budget lost over 49.5bn hryvnias (\$1.1bn) in tax revenue because of Russian attacks that not only damaged property and goods, but disrupted logistics and shut shops and businesses for hours at a time. By the end of the year, the cumulative losses could rise to 70bn hryvnias, the government estimates. "We have not a temporary but a structural problem with the revenues at the very time when spending really requires resources," said Oleksandra Myronenko, an economist at the Centre for Economic Strategies, a Kyiv-based think tank. Some Ukrainian businesses have started to scale back operations. Others have put capital expenditure on hold as the country braces for a difficult winter. Business sentiment and economic expectations are darkening. Vasyl Khmelnytskyi, founder of an industrial park in the city of Bila Tserkva near Kyiv, said he had scrapped plans to build three new factories. "The risks are simply too great right now - both for the business and for the people," he said in a Facebook post. Ukraine's agricultural sector — its largest source of export revenues — has been particularly

hard hit. Russian attacks on Ukraine's Black Sea ports led to a 36.6% fall in grain exports year-on-year in September. About \$40bn in export revenue is at risk this year as a result of the blockade, Economy Minister Oleksandr Kravchenko said. Even with tens of billions of euros in foreign support, Ukraine's economy is expected to grow only between 0.5% and 1.5% this year, economists say — down from 1.8% in 2025. **FOREIGN AID IS DELAYED** During more than four years of intense fighting, Ukraine has been able to maintain macroeconomic and financial stability thanks to fiscal support from its Western partners, receiving nearly \$200bn since Russia's invasion. But \$29.5bn in foreign aid is now at risk this year because of delays in passing reforms, Korotshuk said. The government has postponed about \$900mn of capital spending until December, in the hope the legislation will be passed. The aim is to pass all the required legislation in parliament by October 15, Korotshuk said. "Only then we will get all the money," Korotshuk said. "This is absolutely vital. It needs to be done as soon as possible." Legislators are now discussing the budget for next year. The government has proposed record defence budget spending of \$110bn. This figure does not include direct military aid. Finance Minister Sergii Marchenko has estimated that the unfunded budget gap for the next year is already more than \$32bn. Part of the solution, Marchenko said, is to use frozen Russian assets in Europe to fund Ukraine's budget. EU countries immobilised some €210bn of Russian central bank assets after Moscow invaded Ukraine. "Ukraine continues to mobilise domestic resources, but the scale of Russia's war puts clear limits on our capacity," Marchenko said on X.



Russia's President Vladimir Putin. (Reuters)

Putin told Trump about Iran's position on deal

AFP
Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin has told Donald Trump about Iran's position on a possible Mideast peace deal, the Kremlin said yesterday.

The Kremlin said Tehran's stance was relayed in a phone call held between the two leaders on Friday. It did not say how Trump responded, nor elaborate on Iran's position.

Diplomatic efforts to end the more-than-seven-month-long Iran conflict, which began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran in February, have been at an impasse since the summer. Putin met Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of a summit in Turk-

menistan earlier this week, where the Russian leader expressed an interest in helping broker peace.

"In co-ordination with the Iranian president, Putin conveyed the Iranian side's views on a possible resolution to the conflict to Trump," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said yesterday, according to Russia's state RIA news agency.

The US and Iran agreed a memorandum of understanding in June that spelled out a framework for ending their conflict, but Iranian attacks on ships in the Strait of Hormuz prompted a resumption of US military operations.

Recent indirect talks between Washington and Tehran on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly failed to produce a breakthrough.

Trump conveyed ideas for Ukraine de-escalation to Putin: Kremlin

US President Donald Trump conveyed his ideas about how to de-escalate the war in Ukraine to Vladimir Putin during a phone call on Friday, the Kremlin said. Putin received the proposals "with understanding", the Kremlin said, without elaborating on what the proposals were or the Russian president's response. Trump, who took office last January, has long sought to broker an end to the more than four-and-a-half year conflict.

Talks between Russia and Ukraine remain largely deadlocked, with both sides intensifying long-range strikes on each other in recent months. "The Russian president received with understanding certain proposals from the US side for measures aiming at de-escalation," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said yesterday. US, Ukrainian and European officials met in Miami on Friday in a renewed diplomatic push to end the fighting, as Washington seeks to find a way out of the stalemate. (AFP)

Zelensky blasts diesel deal after Russian strikes kill 15

AFP
Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said yesterday that Russia was expressing its "thanks" for a diesel deal agreed with the US by attacking Ukraine, after fresh Russian attacks killed 15 people, according to authorities.

The deal, which US President Donald Trump announced on Friday after a call with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, would see Moscow release large amounts of diesel onto global markets in exchange for sanctions relief.

Zelensky told reporters on Friday that the deal was "unworthy of our partners" and described it as a "weak decision".

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said yesterday that lifting sanctions on Russian diesel would help fuel the Kremlin's war on Ukraine.

"This is not the time to ease pressure on Russia, and Europe won't," she wrote online.

Germany also said it would continue to push for new EU sanctions on Russia, despite the agreement.

Moscow has intensified its deadly bombardment of Ukraine in recent months, sending civilian casualties soaring, while US-led efforts to broker an end to the more than four-and-a-half year conflict remain deadlocked.

Early yesterday, Russia targeted residential neighbourhoods in the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia with "five guided aerial bombs", according to Ukraine's national police service.

At least 15 people were killed, among them three children, Ukraine's state rescue service said.

"Today, Russia expressed its thanks for the lifting of sanctions on diesel exports by dropping five glide bombs on residential buildings in Zaporizhzhia," Zelensky said in a post on X.

An AFP correspondent at the scene saw people being pulled from the rubble by Ukrainian emergency services.



Rescuers evacuate a woman on a stretcher from the rubble of a five-storey residential building damaged during a Russian attack which killed 16 people in Zaporizhzhia. (AFP)

"We saw people under the rubble — a woman, her husband and a child," one rescuer, Daniil Pishkin, told AFP.

He added that he saw two people rescued from the wreckage but "unfortunately there was a little girl who died".

A resident of one of the buildings that was hit, who identified herself as Iryna, 69, said she just had time to seek refuge in the toilets after receiving an air raid warning.

She said her two neighbours were killed.

"They were 75 years old. They were simply thrown out there, onto the street. They didn't make it to the hospital," the resident told AFP.

Ukraine's capital Kyiv meanwhile suffered "large-scale power outages" yesterday due to Russian strikes, the country's largest private energy provider, DTEK, said.

AFP reporters heard booms over the capital earlier yesterday,

as the city's mayor reported that a restaurant had been hit.

The strikes came as Ukraine expressed mounting frustration at Washington's diesel agreement with Russia.

Prices at US gasoline and diesel pumps have surged since late February, when the US and Israel launched joint military strikes on Iran.

Announcing the deal on Friday, Trump said in a post on his Truth Social platform that diesel prices would be "coming down, in record numbers, and fast", in all caps.

"I want to thank President Putin, to be honest with you," he later told reporters.

In a post on Facebook yesterday, Zelensky said the deal needed to be reversed.

"Russia's choice is war. And they will be ready to end it only when they feel that their ability to drag the war out is diminishing," Zelensky said.

"Unfortunately, the signals

Russia received yesterday were entirely different — signals suggesting that it could simply keep attacking. This needs to be corrected," he added.

US, Ukrainian and European officials meanwhile met in Miami on Friday in a renewed diplomatic push to end the war.

Trump, who has repeatedly touted his credentials as a peacemaker, has long sought to broker a deal since taking office last January.

US envoy Steve Witkoff posted to X after the meeting that the "constructive discussions" tackled "potential avenues to de-escalate and conclude the war with Russia ahead of winter and advance efforts towards a durable and lasting peace".

Witkoff said the meeting included "the E3, the European Commission, Ukraine and Nato".

Russia, which launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022, now occupies roughly one-fifth of Ukrainian territory.

French policing under lens as student injuries mount

Reuters
Paris/Argenteuil, France

Fourteen-year-old Eden suffered a broken jaw and multiple smashed teeth when he was struck by a tear gas canister directed towards him at close range by a police officer last week during student protests in France, his parents and family lawyer said.

The teenager had been sitting on a wall looking at his phone metres away from the protest in Saint-Ouen-l'Aumone, the lawyer said.

An officer approached him and struck him with a baton, prompting Eden to respond with a kick, according to the local prosecutor. A second officer then fired a tear gas grenade with a Cougar launcher, hitting him in the face.

"(The officer) shot him in the mouth and left him lying on the ground, without even calling the emergency services," said lawyer



Anti-riot police officers face protesting students outside the secondary school Le Corbusier, in Aubervilliers, northern Paris. (AFP)

yer Elsa Marcel. The family, who asked for Eden's second name to be withheld to protect their privacy, has filed a complaint for attempted murder, she said.

A police spokesperson said they do not comment on ongoing investigations. The prosecutor's office

said in a statement that the student had confronted the police and the officers tried to push him back.

The officer was placed under formal investigation on charges of assault by a public official resulting in permanent disability or disfigurement on Tuesday, eight

days after the incident.

The case is one of 24 under investigation by the IGP internal police watchdog linked to the policing of a more-than-two-week-long wave of student unrest over conditions in schools. Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu has described the demonstrations as the most violent in decades.

The police response has renewed calls for the withdrawal of the use of rubber bullets and grenade launchers, which are not used by police in many other European countries and have been repeatedly criticised in recent years by rights groups, including Amnesty International and UN human rights experts, as dangerous and disproportionate.

It has also sparked anger among the public and fanned support for a protest movement that is the latest manifestation of deep-seated discontent with President Emmanuel Macron's government ahead of a 2027 election.

Turkiye social media ban takes effect next month

AFP
Istanbul

Turkiye yesterday formally declared a ban on the use of social media for under-15s, scheduled to come into effect on November 1.

It has joined a growing number of countries legislating to protect children and teenagers from the harmful effects of online platforms.

The official state journal published the decision following the adoption of a law by parliament in April. It stipulates that social media providers must "take the necessary technical and administrative measures, including age verification, to implement" protections for young people.

"No service likely to produce

'No service likely to produce an addictive effect in children may be offered,' — a report published in the official state journal said.

an addictive effect in children may be offered."

Countries including Australia have introduced restrictions on social media for children and others such as Britain and France are pushing to do the same.

They aim to protect children from digital risks such as screen addiction, lack of sleep, bullying and eating disorders.

Rights groups have complained of restrictions on freedom of expression in Türkiye, the media and the political opposition. Numerous social media accounts have been blocked in recent weeks.

Spanish PM begins vote campaign overshadowed by housing protests

AFP
Dos Hermanas, Spain

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez aimed to pull off another unlikely comeback as he began campaigning yesterday for a snap vote dominated by housing protests that have shaken the country.

When 87-year-old Madrid pensioner Maricarmen Abascal was evicted from her home two weeks ago, no one could have expected Spain was headed for upheaval that would bring forward a general election scheduled for 2027.

The eviction of Abascal, who became the face of the country's chronic housing crisis, catalysed nationwide protests that piled pressure on Sanchez's left-wing coalition to present urgent decrees.

But after the minority government failed to pass its measures in parliament, Sanchez rolled the dice and called an election for November 29.

Sanchez, in power since 2018,

has acquired international prominence in recent years as his clashes with US President Donald Trump and Israel endeared him to disillusioned global progressives.

He is a divisive figure at home and trails in most polls to the main conservative Popular Party (PP).

At his rally Saturday, Sanchez vowed to strengthen legislation protecting tenants against "real estate speculation" if his party wins an absolute majority.

"Maricarmen and all those who campaign for her, as well as all those who take action for the just cause of housing, have opened the way," he said, voicing his "affection" for Abascal, who died on Wednesday in hospital.

Sanchez chose the symbolic location of Dos Hermanas, a commuter town outside the southern city of Seville and a historic Socialist stronghold, to kick off his electioneering.

He launched his 2023 election campaign from Dos Hermanas and went on to thwart the predictions by retaining office, even though



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez presents the citizenship and integration plan in Madrid. (Reuters/FilePhoto)

the PP won more seats.

Dos Hermanas was also the scene of Sanchez's political resurrection after he resigned as Social-

ist party leader in 2016, following two bruising general election defeats.

As Sanchez began his rally, Isa-

bel Morales, a 67-year-old pensioner in the crowd, told AFP she viewed his term in office as "very positive".

"He's done a lot of things for the working class. He raised wages, raised pensions, enacted a housing law, a lot of things that are extremely positive. Let's hope he continues," she said.

PP leader Alberto Nunez Feijoo was also rallying his followers yesterday, in Madrid. He has his sights set on becoming prime minister after failing to form a government in 2023. "Spain needs a future and he (Sanchez) needs to be in the past," Feijoo told a rally in Madrid on Sunday. "We are proposing a total change."

The PP leader, who tops most polls, has focused his criticism on the government's handling of a migration crisis in Ceuta, where he held an event on Wednesday promising to restore normality.

More than 70,000 migrants streamed into the Spanish north African enclave from neighbouring Morocco in late July. Thou-

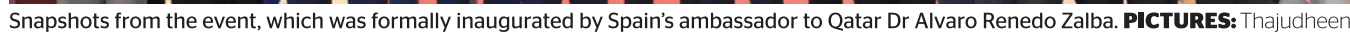
sands have remained for months in largely chaotic conditions, sparking anger among locals.

Yet the polls suggest Feijoo is unlikely to achieve a majority, which could make far-right party Vox, parliament's third-largest force, a kingmaker in hypothetical coalition talks.

Feijoo deserves "a chance", argued Ruben Moscoso, a 31-year-old public-sector worker at the rally. "We want to pull our country out of the ruin, the corruption, the shady practices that we've been seeing recently," he said.

Housing, long a top public concern, was a topic hanging large over both of yesterday's rallies as hundreds of protesters camped in Madrid's emblematic Puerta del Sol square and in other cities demanding more protection for tenants and affordable prices.

The main unions have called a general strike for November 11 — the first such stoppage in Spain since 2012 — to crank up the pressure over housing and wages before the vote.



The festival aims to showcase the rich flavours and culinary heritage of Spain to shoppers across Qatar, with the celebration running across all LuLu Hypermarket outlets in the country until October 14.

"There are also important connections between Spanish culinary traditions and Arab gastronomy, reflected in products such as saffron and olive oil, as well as tra-

"LuLu Group has consistently celebrated Spain's rich culinary heritage through our annual Spanish Festival," the spokesperson said. "This year, we have further

These initiatives reflect a shared commitment to promoting Spanish food culture, encouraging culinary discovery and deepening commercial and cultural connections between Spain and Qatar.



On the same stage, Moza al-Ahmad, a Grade 4 student at Qatar Academy Al Wakra, part of the QF's PUE, also took part for the first time.

Showtime! 2026: The Secret of the Garden, was held at Qatar Foundation's Pre-University Education Theatre, with more than 400 guests attending its opening day.