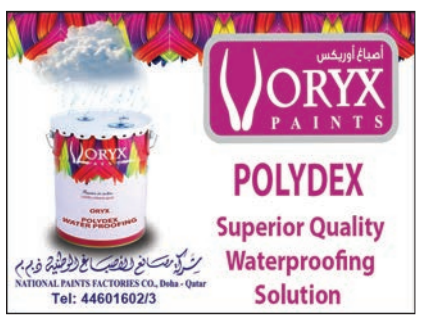
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Qatar LNG armada grows by nine in major boost

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Qatar's seaborne energy lifeline has grown nine hulls stronger. Nakilat has named seven liquefied natural gas carriers and two LPG/ammonia vessels at three Korean shipyards, adding to the fleet that will carry gas from the North Field expansion to markets around the world.

The naming at HD Hyundai Heavy Industries, Hanwha Ocean and HD Hyundai Samho mark a significant step in the long-term strategy of Qatar Gas Transport Company (Nakilat). That strategy aims to enlarge and diversify its fleet, sharpen its operational edge and underpin sustainable growth.

The new LNG carriers are named Al Ghuwair, Al Jazi, Al Mirzam, Maqdeem, Al Nasraniya, Energy Vigour and Energy Voyager. The LPG/ammonia pair have been christened Energy South and Energy East.

Five of the LNG carriers belong to Nakilat's programme of 25 conventional-size LNG carriers under construction at HD Hyundai Heavy Industries and Hanwha Ocean. All 25 will be wholly owned and operated by Nakilat and chartered to QatarEnergy affiliates under long-term agreements.

The other two LNG carriers and both LPG/ammonia vessels are part of a separate six-ship newbuild programme at HD Hyundai Samho.

Nakilat chief executive Engineer Abdullah al-Sulaiti said the naming was concrete proof of the company's long-term commitment to fleet expansion.

"We are proud of our partnership with QatarEnergy, through which we aim to deliver added value to the LNG transportation market as an active partner in meeting the requirements of the North Field expansion projects," he said. "The naming of these nine vessels represents tangible progress in Nakilat's long-term investment in expanding its fleet."

"By strengthening our LNG transportation capabilities and further diversifying our fleet with LPG/ammonia carriers, we are enhancing our ability to respond to our customers' evolving needs while continuing to support Qatar's position as one of the world's leading producers and exporters of LNG."

Paying tribute to the three Korean yards, al-Sulaiti described the partnerships as "central to the progress of these programmes". He thanked the shipyards and Nakilat's project teams for delivering the newbuilds "while maintaining the highest standards of safety, quality and operational excellence".

The LNG carriers are designed to move Qatari gas to global markets efficiently and reliably, under the most stringent safety standards. The LPG/ammonia carriers broaden Nakilat's service offering and give it a foothold in a cargo drawing growing interest as the energy transition gathers pace.

PM steps up diplomacy to secure freedom of maritime navigation



Qatar has intensified diplomatic efforts to defuse regional tensions and safeguard freedom of maritime navigation, with HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani holding a series of telephone consultations with counterparts from Lebanon, Jordan, Turkiye and Egypt.

The discussions focused on coordinating diplomatic initiatives to promote regional security and stability, with Qatar reaffirming its support for efforts to reach a comprehensive agreement that guarantees freedom of navigation and lays the groundwork for sustainable peace.

HE the Prime Minister held separate telephone conversations with Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Youssef Raji, Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman Safadi, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Co-operation and Egyptian Expatriates Badr Abdelatty.

The talks reviewed the latest regional developments and explored ways to strengthen joint diplomatic co-ordination to reduce tensions and prevent further escalation.

HE the Prime Minister emphasised Qatar's consistent position that diplomatic engagement remains essential to securing freedom of maritime navigation and reaching a comprehensive settlement capable of delivering lasting peace and stability across the region.

During his conversation with Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, HE the Prime Minister also reiterated Qatar's unwavering support for Lebanon's stability and territorial integrity, reaffirming its continued solidarity with the Lebanese people.

The discussions additionally covered bilateral relations with the respective countries and opportunities to strengthen co-operation across various fields. (**QNA**)

Shura slams LNG carrier attack

The Shura Council yesterday strongly condemned the attack on a Qatari liquefied natural gas (LNG) carrier in the Arabian Gulf, describing it as a serious threat to maritime navigation and global energy security.

At its weekly session, chaired by HE Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, the Council reaffirmed its support for Qatar's measures to protect its national interests, vessels and crews in accordance with international law.

The Council hailed His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's participation in the 8th Gas Exporting Countries Forum Summit in Moscow and his meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. It also welcomed the Amir's visit to Uzbekistan and talks with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

During the session, the Council referred a draft law on cloud computing to the Health, General Services and Environment Committee for review. The Speaker announced that the draft 2027 state budget had been referred to the Economic and Financial Affairs Committee. (**QNA**) **Page 3**

Iran in 'intensive' negotiations with US to avert war

AFP
Tehran

Iran yesterday said "intensive" exchanges were underway with Washington and offered to reopen the Strait of Hormuz under strict conditions, as efforts escalated to avert a return to war.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said indirect talks were taking place via mediators. China also urged a return to negotiations, while Iran's security chief discussed the conflict with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Oil prices, sent rocketing by Iran's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz energy corridor, dropped more than 6% yesterday on optimism over the eight-month-old conflict.

"Given the sensitivity and gravity of the current situation, consultations and deliberations are very intensive," Araghchi said in a video interview with the official IRNA news agency.

"Qatar and Pakistan are playing a very active mediating role in these negotiations."

The Axios news outlet reported that US Vice-President JD Vance had sent a letter to Iranian national security chief Mohsen Rezaei about possible new talks, marking the highest-level move in months.

The redoubled diplomatic push comes ahead of today's US midterm elections, where dissatisfaction over the war and higher fuel prices are weighing on US President Donald Trump's Republicans.

HIA conducts emergency drills

Field exercises simulating emergency-response procedures were conducted at Hamad International Airport (HIA) yesterday as part of the nationwide WATAN 2026 exercise, Qatar Airways announced.

In a notice posted on its official X account, the national carrier said passengers and airport visitors may notice increased ground activity at designated locations across the airport, as well as related activities in the surrounding airspace.

The airline assured passengers that flight operations and airport services would continue as normal, with no disruption expected. (**QNA**)

Web Summit '26 delivered QR1bn economic boost

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Web Summit Qatar 2026 has delivered a billion-riyal boost to the national economy, with its growing international appeal translating into higher visitor spending, increased business activity and fresh investment opportunities, reinforcing Doha's emergence as a global technology and entrepreneurship hub.

The four-day summit, held from February 1-4, generated approximately QR1.02bn in direct and indirect economic returns, a 26% increase over the previous edition, according to a report by global advisory firm Silverlode.

Its contribution to Qatar's gross domestic product (GDP) reached QR661mn, representing a 25% rise.

The economic benefits extended well beyond the conference venue, with visitors spending QR341.1mn during the event, averaging QR2,525 per person daily over a six-day stay. The summit generated 86,000 hotel room nights and approximately 26,000 airline bookings, providing a substantial boost to the hospitality, aviation, transport and services sectors. **To Page 9**



Qatar urges Arab universities to put Arabic at the heart of AI

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter



HE Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed AlKhater speaking at the event.

Qatar has urged Arab universities to help build Arabic-language artificial intelligence, as a Unesco conference in Doha heard that 95% of university campuses in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged.

Minister of Education and Higher Education HE Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed AlKhater made the call at the inaugural session of the 5th United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) Conference on Higher Education in the Arab Countries, which opened yesterday in Doha.

The two-day conference, themed "The New Learning Landscape in Higher Education in the Arab Region," brings together experts in education and policymaking.

"Higher education is changing rapidly, particularly with the rise of artificial intelligence and digital technologies. Over the past two decades, our universities have made significant strides in expanding access, developing their academic and research institutions and achieving gender parity in higher education enrolment," said the minister.

The opening ceremony was attended by Dr Nasser bin Hamad al-Hinzab, chairperson of Unesco's Executive Board and Permanent Representative of Qatar to Unesco, and Salah Khaled, director of the Unesco Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen in Doha. **To Page 9**
● **Related stories on Page 4**

Unesco hails Qatar's role

Unesco Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen Director Salah Khaled yesterday praised Qatar's pioneering role in advancing education, innovation and international co-operation, highlighting its constructive partnership with the organisation.

Addressing the opening of the Fifth Unesco Conference on Higher Education in the Arab Region in Doha, Khaled commended the vision of HH the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, whose contributions had transformed Qatar's higher education landscape and positively influenced the wider Arab region.

Khaled noted that higher education enrolment across the Arab region had reached approximately 15mn students in 2024, with a gross enrolment rate of 37%.

He welcomed the entry into force of the revised regional convention on recognition of higher education qualifications, ratified by Qatar and four other Arab countries, alongside the launch of Unesco's global higher education transformation roadmap in Arabic. (**QNA**)

QATAR

Deputy PM meets Hungary's Chief of Staff



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani met with the Chief of the General Staff of the Hungarian Defence Forces Lieutenant General Zsolt Sándor, and his accompanying delegation, during their visit to the Qatar. The meeting discussed topics of mutual interest between the two sides as well as ways to strengthen and further develop them. It was attended by HE Chief of Staff of the Qatar Armed Forces Lieutenant General (Pilot) Jassim bin Mohammed al-Mannai, along with several senior officers and officials from both sides. (**QNA**)



Chief of Staff meets Hungarian counterpart



HE the Chief of Staff of the Qatar Armed Forces Lieutenant General (Pilot) Jassim bin Mohammed al-Mannai met with Chief of the General Staff of the Hungarian Defence Forces Lieutenant General Zsolt Sándor, and his accompanying delegation, during their visit to the State of Qatar. The meeting discussed a number of topics of common interest as well as ways to enhance co-operation and co-ordination in military and defence spheres to further develop bilateral relations between the two sides. It was attended by a number of senior officers and officials from both sides. (**QNA**)

QMC partakes in ABU meetings in Lanka

The Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) is participating in the 63rd General Assembly of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) and its associated meetings, currently being held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The proceedings are set to conclude today.

Director of Qatar Radio, Jaber al-Surour represented QMC at the meetings.

This participation reflects QMC's commitment to strengthening its presence in international media forums and expanding cooperation with broadcasting and television organisations across Asia and the rest of the world. It also serves as an opportunity to contribute to discussions on strategic issues that will shape the future of public media, while keeping pace with the rapid technical and professional transformations within the broadcasting and media production sector.



In a statement issued yesterday, Qatar Media Corporation noted that its involvement in this international forum underscores its dedication to elevating the status of Qatari media and solidifying its presence within regional and international media organisations and unions. Furthermore, it aims to leverage global expertise to enhance content development and improve professional and technical performance, all in line with the State of Qatar's vision to build an advanced, responsible media sector capable of adapting to change and fostering dialogue and understanding among nations. The General Assembly meetings, held under the theme "Media for Peace and Humanity: Truth, Trust, and Transformation," address a range of pivotal topics. These include the role of public media in fostering trust, credibility, and institutional resilience; the responsible and professional integration of artificial intelligence into media; and the promotion of sustainability and sovereignty for media organisations in the region. Furthermore, the meetings explore ways to develop mechanisms for joint action and the exchange of expertise among member organisations.

The proceedings also encompass review of administrative reports and recommendations, discussions regarding membership, and nomination and election processes for the Union's leadership positions and administrative bodies. This underscores the significance of these meetings in shaping the Union's future direction and enhancing the efficiency of collective media framework. (**QNA**)

FGREALTY Receives Platinum Award from Qatari Diar for Lusail Performance

Recognition highlights FGREALTY's real estate performance and continued work with buyers and investors across Lusail



FGREALTY has received the Platinum Award from Qatari Diar in recognition of its real estate performance in Lusail, one of Qatar's largest master planned developments.

The recognition reflects FGREALTY's work connecting buyers and investors with residential and investment opportunities across Lusail, while supporting clients through property selection, investment decisions, and transactions.

Lusail is Qatari Diar's flagship development and spans approximately 38 square kilometers across 19 integrated districts. The city is planned to accommodate more than 200,000 residents and around 170,000 workers, alongside commercial, retail, entertainment, hospitality, and community facilities.

"Receiving the Platinum Award from Qatari Diar is a meaningful recognition of our team's work in Lusail and our commitment to serving buyers and investors across Qatar," said Serban Gabriel Spirea, CEO of FGREALTY.

"Lusail continues to develop as a diverse residential and investment destination, and our focus remains on helping clients evaluate opportunities based on their individual objectives, property requirements, and long-term plans."

FGREALTY's Lusail portfolio includes apartments, villas, townhouses, duplexes, penthouses, land plots, retail shops, offices, whole residential buildings, and other specialized property types. The brokerage works across areas including Marina District, Waterfront District, Fox Hills, Entertainment City, and Qetaifan Island North.

The recognition adds to FGREALTY's existing record of industry awards, including the Property Finder Best Quality Brokerage award and International Property Awards recognition for its Qatar agency and website.

Lusail is also among Qatar's designated freehold areas where eligible non-Qatari buyers can own property, according to the Ministry of Justice. FGREALTY supports local and international clients with property selection, ownership considerations, transaction coordination, relocation requirements, and investment guidance.

About FGREALTY

FGREALTY is a Qatar-based real estate brokerage helping local and international buyers, investors, tenants, and businesses identify property opportunities across Qatar. The company provides verified listings, market guidance, property selection support, and transaction assistance across residential and commercial real estate.

Explore FGREALTY

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Aamal Medical signs agreement with Leo Cancer Care



Gokhan Ozkan, general manager of Aamal Medical, and Miha Ulcar, director of Sales EMEA at Leo Cancer Care.

Aamal Company has announced that its subsidiary, Aamal Medical, has signed a representation agreement with Leo Cancer Care, a pioneer in upright radiotherapy solutions, appointing Aamal Medical as the exclusive distributor of its technologies in the Middle East and North Africa (Mena).
With more than 50 years of experience supplying medical equipment to Qatar's healthcare sector, Aamal Medical will represent Leo Cancer Care's innovative upright radiotherapy systems.
The agreement expands Aamal Medical's portfolio of specialised healthcare technologies and supports Aamal's strategy to develop its healthcare business through partnerships with international innovators.
Leo Cancer Care's technology offers an alternative approach to radiotherapy by positioning patients upright while keeping the treatment beam fixed. Its Marie solution for particle therapy has received US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) 510(k) clearance and CE marking and has been used to deliver its first patient treatments. The company is also developing Grace, its next-generation upright photon therapy solution, with the aim of extending this approach to conventional radiotherapy.
Gokhan Ozkan, general manager of Aamal Medical, said: "Aamal Medical has long supported national institutions in Qatar in their efforts to reduce the burden of cancer. Upright treatment options have the potential to improve access to radiotherapy while making the treatment experience more patient-centred and humane.
"This partnership reflects our commitment to equipping healthcare institutions with advanced solutions. By combining our longstanding market experience and relationships with Leo Cancer Care's technological expertise, we will strengthen our oncology offering and create new opportunities for sustainable growth."
Miha Ulcar, director of Sales EMEA at Leo Cancer Care, said: "We are excited to partner with Aamal Medical, whose longstanding reputation and reach within Qatar's healthcare sector will be invaluable as we introduce our upright radiotherapy solutions to the region."
Through this partnership, Aamal Medical aims to build relationships with healthcare providers exploring the adoption of upright radiotherapy and develop its presence in specialised cancer treatment technologies. The agreement also provides a platform to pursue regional opportunities, supporting the continued expansion of Aamal's healthcare operations.

Shura slams LNG carrier attack



The Shura Council held its weekly session yesterday at the Tamim bin Hamad Hall at the Council's headquarters, chaired by HE the Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem.

At the beginning of the session, the Shura Council hailed the participation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani in the 8th Summit of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF), held in Moscow, Russia, emphasising its importance in strengthening global energy security.

The Council commended His Highness the Amir's meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, during which they addressed various regional and international issues, foremost among them energy security and regional stability.

The Council also commended His Highness's working visit to Uzbekistan and his meeting with the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, underscoring the importance of such meetings in strengthening bilateral relations and fostering joint cooperation.

On the other hand, the Shura Council expressed its strong condemnation and denunciation of the attack targeting a Qatari liquefied natural gas (LNG) carrier while it was sailing in the Arabian Gulf, stressing that this assault poses a serious threat to the safety of maritime navigation and the security of global energy supplies.

The Council reiterated its full support for all measures taken by the Qatar — in accordance with the provisions of international law and the UN Charter, to protect its property, safeguard its national interests, and ensure the safety of its vessels and their crews, thereby contributing to maintaining the security and stability in the region.

Then, HE the Secretary-General of the Shura Council, Nayef bin Mohammed al-Mahmoud, read out the meeting's agenda, after which the Council approved the minutes of its previous meeting.

During the meeting, the Council reviewed a draft law on cloud computing, which was referred by the esteemed government, and decided to forward it to the Health, General Services and the Environment Committee, for study and the submission of its findings thereon to the Council.

HE al-Ghanem, informed the Council that the draft state general budget for the 2027 fiscal year, along with the draft law for the approval of the state general budget, had been referred to the Economic and the Financial Affairs Committee, in accordance with Article no. 135 of the Council's Internal Regulations. The said regulation stipulates that the Council's Speaker shall refer the draft general budget to the committee for review immediately upon receiving it, and shall notify the Council accordingly during the next session.

The Shura Council reviewed the statement from the esteemed government regarding a proposal, submitted by the Council, on curbing childhood obesity, and decided to refer the matter to the Health, General Services and the Environment Committee, for study and the submission of its findings thereon to the Council.

During the meeting, the Shura Council also reviewed the participation of HE the Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council, Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti, in the 300th Session of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), held in Geneva in June, Switzerland, in addition to a report on the participation of Amina bint Youssef al-Jaidah, member of the Shura Council, in the meeting of the Palestine Committee of the IPU, which was held virtually in June. (**QNA**)

Mulhamoon Exhibition leads QNL's November lineup



Qatar National Library (QNL) will host a diverse array of cultural and educational events this November, featuring the interactive "Mulhamoon Exhibition 2026: Ideas, Art, and AI" and the third edition of the annual "Our Children Matter" forum.

The month-long programme is designed to empower future generations while promoting regional heritage through literature and art events.

The month begins on November 2 with the launch of a three-part weekly Book Chat series, "Voices of Arab Women Writers." Led by Dr Amal al-Malki, associate professor and founding dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), the interactive workshops will explore Arab women's literature through guided discussions. The sessions will focus on Palestinian literature through Sahar Khalifeh's Wild Thorns on November 2, Iraqi literature through Inaam Kachachi's The American Granddaughter on November 9, and Qatari literature through Shamma al-Kuwari's In My Memory Is a Place: Roots on November 16.

QNL then turns to preserving intellectual history on November 4 with the symposium "Historic Libraries in the Islamic World: Beacons of Knowledge and Pathways of Transmission." The event will examine how medieval library collections formed, their role in shaping regional identities, and the mechanisms of knowledge transmission.

Shifting to contemporary regional dynamics, the "Cultural Mosaic" discussion will take place on November 12. Featuring Sheikh Nawaf bin Mubarak al-Thani, founder and chairman of the International Mediation Council, the session will provide an analytical overview of the region's political landscape and security, highlighting Qatar's ongoing diplomatic efforts to promote dialogue and regional stability.

Continuing its commitment to heritage preservation, QNL's Himaya Project will co-host an international online symposium with the Unesco Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen on November 15, in observance of the International Day against Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property (November 14). "From Auction to Restitution: Protecting Cultural Property and Combating Illicit Trafficking" will bring together global legal experts, researchers, and cultural heritage professionals to discuss the tracing, protection, and restitution of looted cultural artefacts.

On November 16, the library, in collaboration with HBKU, will launch the "Mulhamoon Exhibition 2026: Ideas, Art, and AI." This inclusive, interactive showcase highlights stories and artworks created by students using artificial intelligence. Visitors can explore how students used AI to develop new visual interpretations of their ideas, encouraging reflection on the evolving relationship between human creativity and technology.

Educational empowerment takes centre stage on November 19 with the third edition of the "Our Children Matter" forum. Under the theme "The Inspiring Educator: Shaping Future Generations and Empowering Libraries," the forum will bring together specialists in parenting, early childhood, and library services to provide practical strategies for supporting children's developmental journeys.

On the evening of the same day, the Doha String Quartet will present Brahms' String Sextet No. 2 at the "Philharmonic at the Library" concert, offering visitors an evening of classical music.

The library rounds off its November highlights on November 25 with the fourth edition of the seminar series "From the Memory of Private Collections in Qatar." Focusing on "The Library of Sheikh Abdullah bin Zaid Al-Mahmoud", the event will celebrate the vital role individuals play in preserving family libraries, which represent pillars of Qatar's cultural heritage. The seminar will feature Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Abdullah bin Zaid al-Mahmoud, former president of Qatar's Shariah Courts and son of the late Sheikh Abdullah bin Zaid al-Mahmoud, alongside Dr Yousef al-Obaidan, former professor of Political Science at Qatar University.

The library encourages all community members to participate in these upcoming activities.

MoECC completes over 27,000 environmental procedures in Q3-2026

The Environmental Affairs Sector of the Ministry of Environment of Climate Change (MoECC) completed over 27,000 environmental procedures during the third quarter (Q3) of 2026. These included field inspections, monitoring, laboratory analysis, and the issuance of permits and licenses, as part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to protect the environment and ensure the sustainability of natural resources in the country.

MoECC said in a statement yesterday, that these measures included conducting 4,088 inspection and field visits, performing 9,316 laboratory analyses, and issuing 5,525 environmental permits and licenses. Furthermore, 2,867 customs inspections were carried out, and 2,780 customs declarations were cleared, all of which serve to strengthen environmental oversight and support development projects in accordance with established standards.

Providing further details on the efforts of the various departments, the Hazardous Chemicals and Waste Department conducted 2,426 inspection and field visits, issued 3,737 permits and licenses, carried out 2,112 customs inspections, cleared 2,025 customs declarations, and held an additional 340 technical meetings.

For its part, the Monitoring and Inspection Department conducted 1,164 field visits, addressed 75 environmental reports, recorded 16 violations, and completed 8,597 laboratory analyses covering seawater quality, coastal and beach environments, soil, and water outfalls. These efforts also included specialised studies, such as the Gewan Island study, as well as analyses of winter camping samples and emergency samples.

The Department also prepared 457 studies and technical reports, organised 91 workshops and training courses, and participated in 15 awareness-raising events.

In a related context, the Radiation Control Department conducted 191 inspection and field visits, in addition to 104 visits to update the database of radiation equipment. It also issued 1,049 permits and licenses, carried out 755 customs inspections, cleared 755 customs declarations, and conducted 550 laboratory analyses of radiation dose and concentration reference materials, ensuring the safe and peaceful use of radioactive materials and sources.

The MoECC affirmed that these achievements form part of its efforts to strengthen oversight of activities that impact the environment, provide scientific data to monitor its status, and support facilities in complying with the required regulations. (**QNA**)

Kia launches the new Sportage L with next-gen connectivity, performance upgrades





Al-Attiya Motors and Trading Co (AMTC) has announced the arrival of the new Kia Sportage L model in the Qatari market.

As one of Kia's global best-selling models, the new Sportage L arrives with a bold new design, pioneering cabin technology, and a versatile suite of powertrains engineered to meet the region's diverse lifestyle demands. The launch reinforces Kia's broader vision as a leading sustainable mobility solutions provider, advancing customer-centric innovation through smarter, safer, and more connected mobility experiences.

The Kia Sportage L has maintained a formidable reputation in the region, competing in one of the fastest-growing and most competitive SUV segments. This latest iteration represents a significant leap forward, demonstrating Kia's commitment to continuously evolving its products to exceed changing customer expectations through innovative design, enhanced technology, and convenience.

"The Sportage has long been one of Kia's defining global models, and its continued success in the Middle East reflects the region's growing demand for SUVs that combine bold design, advanced technology and everyday versatility. This latest evolution underscores our commitment as a leading sustainable mobility solutions provider to delivering innovations that enhance the ownership experience while meeting the diverse needs of customers across the GCC and Iraq through improved connectivity, enhanced performance, and elevated safety," remarked a Kia Qatar official.

To cater to a wide range of driving preferences, the new Sportage L offers an expanded powertrain lineup that delivers an optimal balance of performance, efficiency and everyday versatility.

Customers can choose the highly efficient 2.0 MPI engine paired with a 6-speed automatic transmission (2WD), or the responsive 1.5T GDI turbocharged engine matched to an 8-speed automatic transmission, available in both 2WD and a newly introduced All-Wheel Drive (AWD) configuration for greater confidence and traction across urban roads and more challenging regional terrains.

This robust performance is matched by a dramatic exterior redesign. Adopting Kia's striking "Star-map" signature lighting, the SUV features vertically shaped LED headlamps with an optional 4-cube projection LED system, matching rear LED star-map signature lighting, a Dynamic Welcome Light system, and newly styled aerodynamic Alloy Wheels. For customers seeking a more distinctive appearance, the X-Line grade introduces exclusive design elements including a dedicated radiator grille, black exterior badging, unique front bumper styling, exclusive 19-inch black alloy wheels and bridge-type roof rails, creating a bolder and more rugged character.

The cabin has undergone a complete digital transformation, centred around a panoramic curved 12.3-inch display housing Kia's next-generation ccNC (connected car Navigation Cockpit) infotainment system. For the first time, the Sportage introduces Kia Connect, bringing a suite of remote-control services directly to the driver's smartphone. Complementing these connected services is Digital Key capability, allowing drivers to securely access and start the vehicle using their smartphone for greater everyday convenience. Over-the-Air (OTA) updates ensure the vehicle's navigation and onboard software remain continuously up to date. Reflecting Kia's vision for software-defined mobility, these connected technologies enable the vehicle to continuously evolve through seamless digital updates and enhanced connected services throughout the ownership experience. A newly available 10-inch Head-Up Display (HUD) projects essential driving information onto the windshield, helping drivers stay informed while keeping their attention on the road.

The interior environment's Perceived Quality (PQ) is exceptional, utilising refined materials engineered to resist fingerprints on high-touch surfaces. New, premium interior colour options have been introduced, including the warm "Iced Coffee" theme for Base and Mid trims, and a sophisticated "Terracotta Brown" reserved exclusively for the rugged X-Line trim. Every journey is made more enjoyable with a high-fidelity Harman/Kardon audio system, integrated Ambient Lighting, a Surround View Monitor (SVM), and a fast Wireless Charger.

Designed to inspire greater confidence and peace of mind on every journey, the new Sportage L is equipped with a comprehensive suite of advanced active safety technologies. The upgraded Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) now feature Forward Collision-Avoidance Assist 2 (FCA 2) to protect against intersection hazards, Lane Following Assist 2 (LFA 2), Blind-Spot Collision-Avoidance Assist (BCA), and the intuitive Smart Cruise Control 2 (SCC 2). Additional safety and accessibility systems include Parking Collision-Avoidance Assist (PCA), a full suite of Parking Distance Warning sensors covering the Front, Side, and Rear.

The newly refreshed Kia Sportage L is now officially available across regional Kia showrooms. Customers are invited to visit the Kia Qatar showrooms to discover the refreshed model and to arrange an exclusive test drive experience.

QATAR

Unesco chairperson highlights aspects of higher education in Arab countries

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter


Dr Nasser bin Hamad al-Hinzab addressing the gathering.
PICTURE: Shaji Kayamkulam

Universities and other educational institutions should foster the youth with knowledge and skills not just for the labour market but for empowering them for the future, noted the chairperson of the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) and the Permanent Representative of Qatar to Unesco, Dr Nasser bin Hamad al-Hinzab.

Speaking at the opening session of the Fifth Unesco Conference on Higher Education in the Arab Countries being held in Doha, Dr al-Hinzab highlighted the preventive action plan to protect education from attacks, an initiative spearheaded by Qatar. Stating that higher education is a long-term investment, he also pointed to the threats faced by educational institutions in crisis zones.

During his address, Dr al-Hinzab highlighted three pillars for sustainable education in the Arab countries. He said: "First, enhancing co-operation between Arab countries on two levels: academic and governmental, and expanding partnerships that support the development of higher education and scientific research among Arab countries. Secondly, adopting decisions that elevate public education and position it among top priorities."

"And the third is a renewed commitment to the broader message of higher education, providing the fundamental basis for building communities — knowledgeable societies that support sustainable development — and opening avenues for dialogue and coexistence in the Arab region," he continued.

He explained: "Preparing our youth for the labour market is not enough; we must also empower them, equip them for the future, and ensure they bear the responsibility and make a positive contribution to their societies and the building of a sustainable future."

He underlined that, as chairperson of the council, he focuses on supporting the organisation's role as a platform for dialogue, cooperation, and collective action, aiming to turn shared commitments into tangible outcomes.

Dr al-Hinzab pointed to the significant global expansion of higher education, noting that, according to Unesco's first global report for 2024, the number of students enrolled in higher education has reached over 269mn. He called for sustainable investment and shared responsibility among member states, development partners, and the private sector to address challenges related to quality and equal opportunity and support progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 4.

The official highlighted the rapid technological advances and the role of artificial intelligence in reshaping learning, scientific research, and work. He stressed the need to uphold the quality of education and ensure that technology serves humanity and develops human skills, rather than replacing human thought.

He also said the Unesco Executive Board will convene an extraordinary session of the General Conference in January 2027 to consider developing a new international standard-setting instrument on youth and digital environments in the age of artificial intelligence.

Regarding the disruption of education in various crisis-hit regions, Dr al-Hinzab noted that the entire learning community lives under constant threat in such places.

"Let me touch upon an issue of special significance in the Arab world: the threats faced by education in crisis zones. Students, educators, and researchers in conflict zones live in constant uncertainty, and educational institutions face severe threats to their physical infrastructure. Numerous educational institutions have been targeted, destroyed, or subjected to military use, robbing generations of students of their right to education for prolonged periods, especially in Gaza," he highlighted.

He stressed that education is a fundamental human right that must not be compromised under any circumstances. "In this context, we commend the pivotal role of Qatar in strengthening Arab solidarity within The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation's framework, reflecting an unwavering commitment to humanitarian principles and relentless efforts by leadership to champion this cause and protect educational institutions," he underscored.

QU highlights research, global partnerships at Unesco forum

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter


Salma Mohamed

Qatar University (QU) highlighted its research achievements, international partnerships and contributions to Qatar's knowledge-based economy and innovation at the fifth Unesco Conference on Higher Education in the Arab States.

Speaking to *Gulf Times* at the QU booth, Salma Mohamed from the university's Communications and Public Relations Department said the institution's participation reflected its long-standing place in Qatar's higher education landscape.

"Qatar University is the first national university in Qatar," she said, noting that the institution was established in 1973.

Mohamed said the university's relationship with Unesco stretches back decades, adding that its presence at the conference offered an opportunity to highlight how the institution has developed over time.

She added that the university's work extends beyond teaching and degree programmes into scientific research, innovation and international collaboration.

"Qatar University is advancing higher education, scientific research and innovation," Mohamed said, noting that QU has more than 15 research centres and maintains partnerships with leading international universities and initiatives around the world.

Those partnerships, she said, form part of a broader effort to strengthen research, academic exchange and the university's contribution to Qatar's development priorities.

Mohamed also highlighted the scale of QU's academic community, pointing to its 12 colleges and the tens of thousands of graduates it has produced over the decades.

The institution, she added, continues to play an active role in preparing graduates for the labour market while contributing to the country's wider economic and knowledge ecosystem.

The fifth Unesco Conference on Higher Education in the Arab States, held under the theme "From Vision to Transformation: Towards the Future of Higher Education," is focused on exchanging expertise and strengthening regional co-operation and innovation.

For QU, the gathering provides another platform to present how its national role has evolved, from educating generations of students to expanding its footprint in research, partnerships and innovation.

QC distributes food baskets to flood-affected in Morocco

Qatar Charity (QC) has continued its humanitarian efforts to support families affected by floods and those most in need in Morocco. With support from generous donors, it carried out a food relief campaign in Tata Province, benefiting approximately 9,744 people.

The campaign distributed 1,392 food baskets to flood-affected families and those most in need, as part of Qatar Charity's efforts to ease the financial burden on affected households and strengthen their food security.

The project was implemented in co-ordination with local authorities, with organisational arrangements designed to ensure smooth distribution and the efficient delivery of assistance to eligible families.

The humanitarian initiative brought relief to beneficiaries, who extended their sincere thanks and appreciation to Qatar Charity for this assistance and said that this initiative has had a positive impact on them and helped ease their daily burdens.

Tata Province is among the areas at risk of flooding.



In September 2024, the province experienced severe floods and flash floods that caused loss of life and property damage. Homes, roads, bridges, water and electricity networks, agricultural land, oases and local livelihoods were affected, increasing the vulnerability of several families and local communities. (**QNA**)



Mini World Cup builds basketball momentum ahead of Qatar 2027

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Qatar's Mini Basketball World Cup returned for its second edition yesterday, using school competition and community engagement to build excitement ahead of the FIBA Basketball World Cup Qatar 2027.

The tournament opened at Qatar Sports Club Indoor Hall, forming part of the wider build-up to next year's global basketball showcase and efforts to introduce the sport to more young people across the country.

Speaking to *Gulf Times* on opening day, Competitions director Ahmad al-Darwish said the Mini World Cup was designed to help students and the wider community better understand the upcoming FIBA Basketball World Cup while creating greater interest in basketball.

"This is part of supporting and helping people understand more about the World Cup and the promotion for our upcoming World Cup next year in August."


Competitions director Ahmad al-Darwish

He said schools and students have an important role in the build-up, with the tournament giving children an opportunity to engage with basketball before Qatar welcomes the international competition.

Al-Darwish said the initiative supports a broader vision of introducing basketball more widely across communities in Qatar.

The aim, he added, is not simply to stage a youth competition, but to create lasting interest that carries through to the World Cup itself.

"We want to introduce basketball more in the community and in the country so we can have a big achievement next year," he said.

Organisers also hope early engagement with students will translate into strong support in the stands when the World Cup arrives.

"Hopefully we will have a full house in most of the games, and we love to see all the students attending the games," al-Darwish said.

The Mini Basketball World Cup is expected to be one of several activities leading into FIBA Basketball World Cup Qatar 2027, with more promotional and community events planned in the months ahead.

"Hopefully this will not be our first and last introduction for the World Cup," al-Darwish said. "We will have more events upcoming before the World Cup, Inshallah."

The Greener Route: How Keeta Is Making Every Journey Count

There is an interesting paradox to the modern appetite for convenience. We have grown accustomed to having almost anything arrive at our doorstep, often within minutes, yet seldom consider the intricate journey unfolding between a restaurant's kitchen and our front door. Somewhere within that seemingly ordinary transaction lies an elaborate network of streets, riders, restaurants and decisions, each carrying its own environmental consequence.

For Keeta, the question is not simply how quickly an order can arrive, but how intelligently that journey can be organised, and whether the distance travelled can be reduced without compromising the reliability customers have come to expect.

As **Qatar Sustainability Week 2026** brings renewed attention to the relationship between everyday consumption and environmental responsibility, Keeta's approach offers an interesting perspective on how technology can contribute to more sustainable urban mobility, often through decisions that remain entirely invisible to the customer.

Behind every order is an intelligent dispatching system that coordinates restaurants, riders and delivery routes, drawing on the technological expertise of Keeta's parent company, Meituan. Rather than treating each delivery as an isolated journey, the technology considers multiple variables, including rider proximity, restaurant preparation times, delivery destinations and route efficiency, to determine how orders can be assigned and completed with greater precision.

The principle is relatively straightforward, although the technology behind it is considerably more sophisticated: fewer unnecessary kilometres, less avoidable movement and a delivery network that makes more efficient use of the resources already available.

It is also central to Keeta's emphasis on reliability and its on-time delivery promise. By improving the coordination between restaurant readiness, rider allocation and the journey itself, intelligent dispatching can help reduce delays while limiting unnecessary travel. Speed, in this context, becomes less about moving faster and more about making better decisions before the journey even begins.



Across its first nine months of operations in Qatar, Keeta's internal operational analysis estimates that the allocation of right rider in the right routing and place have avoided more than 730,000 kilometres of road travel which is equivalent to approximately 110 journeys between Doha and London or 65 from Doha to New York. Achieved through everyday delivery operations in a country as geographically compact as Qatar, the estimate illustrates how smarter rider allocation and route optimisation can translate into substantial cumulative efficiency gains. While the number does not represent a directly measured reduction in carbon emissions, fewer kilometres travelled can mean lower fuel consumption, less unnecessary road movement and reduced transport-related emissions, depending on the vehicles and operating conditions involved.

For **Yohann Wang, General Manager of Keeta Qatar,** the significance lies in recognising that sustainability and operational excellence need not exist as separate ambitions.

"At Keeta, we believe that a more reliable delivery experience should also be a more intelligent one. Every order involves a series of decisions, from assigning the right rider to identifying the most efficient route, and technology allows us to improve those decisions continuously. By reducing unnecessary travel, we can create efficiencies that benefit our customers, riders and the wider environment. As we continue to grow in Qatar, our focus is on ensuring that growth is supported by smarter operations and a more responsible use of resources," says Wang.

There is also a broader conversation to be had about the role of technology in Qatar's sustainability ambitions. While environmental progress is often associated with large-scale infrastructure, alternative energy and visible conservation initiatives, there is an equally important opportunity within the systems that govern everyday urban life.

For a delivery platform, that responsibility begins with understanding how movement can be managed more efficiently, how unnecessary journeys can be avoided and how the cumulative effect of thousands of operational decisions can contribute to a more resource-conscious business.

Awqaf to convene seminar on identifying challenges facing Arabic language

The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, through its Department of Research and Islamic Studies, will hold the second seminar in its annual "In Clear Arabic" series on Nov. 10 at Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque.

The event convenes a distinguished array of researchers, academics and writers to explore ways to advance cultural incubators and promote the Arabic language, in pursuit of examining avenues for strengthening cultural incubators as instrumental platforms for advancing the Arabic language.

Director of Research and Islamic Studies Sheikh Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Thani said the seminar will discuss this consequential subject through three key themes, with the first one delving into the role of cultural incubators in preserving and advancing the Arabic language, since they are mostly cherished, especially in mosques, schools, media and cultural enterprises, alongside scholarly circles.

The seminar will broadly highlight the historical and civilisational role of those incubators in caring for the Arabic language, as well as the experiences of linguistic progression and the nexus between language, identity and the impact of these incubators in creating collective linguistic awareness, he said.

The second theme, the Director noted, is laser-focused on challenges facing the Arabic language in its contemporary cultural theatre and strives to find ample ways to address the foremost challenges that impair the effectiveness of those incubators, in terms of intellectual, social and educational causes, their impact on identity and belonging, and ways to withstand the cultural marginalisation of language.

He added that the third theme will discuss putting forward practical perspectives and strategies to advance the Arabic language through strengthening integration among educational and cultural institutions and operationalising the role of digital media and state-of-the-art platforms, in addition to encouraging scientific research in Arabic.

This seminar is a substantive contribution to a series of cultural events and projects the Department is undertaking, Sheikh Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed underlined, explaining that it is an annual event that aims to cherish the Arabic language for its high-profile standing and effectuate its role in society in terms of shaping identity and projecting its centrality in the sciences in general and Shariah sciences in particular, in addition to exploring its impact on achieving development and progress.

The event is based on the axiom that the Arabic language is the true civilisational and intellectual incubator for the nation through which the Holy Qur'an was revealed, and the noble Sunnah of the Prophet followed, laying the foundations for the flourishing of the sciences and the development of Islamic civilisation, Sheikh Dr Ahmed further stressed.

The inaugural seminar in the series was convened in November 2025 on the Arabic language: current and future prospects — toward cultural reconstruction and revitalising the foundations of identity.

The Department is also compiling and publishing the outcomes of each seminar in a documented volume to enrich Arab and Islamic libraries. (**QNA**)

Minister of Culture unveils QND slogan

HE the Minister of Culture and Chairman of the Organising Committee for Qatar National Day (QND), Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, unveiled the slogan for Qatar's 2026 National Day: "You Are the Nation's Treasure". The phrase was inspired by the historic address delivered by HH the late Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani upon handing over the reins of power to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani.

"You, our children, are the munitions of this homeland; builders of its present and bearer of its future torch. We have always thought well of you; pinning hopes on you; and you by virtue of your genuine eagerness and sincere achievements have proven to be deserving to lead and take our confidence."

HE Sheikh Abdulrahman explained that the slogan evokes the enduring national values of belonging and contribution upon which the state was and continues to be built. This path was laid by our forefathers, who faced life's challenges with patience and solidarity for the sake of the nation's development and the preservation of its resources.

He emphasised that the slogan carries profound significance this year, as it marks the first National Day following the passing of HH the late Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, serving as an occasion to honour his national legacy and vision that





placed the Qatari individual at the core of human development.

HE Sheikh Abdulrahman added that the slogan reaffirms that the nation's true treasure lies in its people, who shoulder responsibility toward their land and translate their sense of belonging into action, diligence, and sacrifice, becoming their country's greatest asset through their contributions to its growth and progress. The slogan draws deep inspiration from Qatar's history, where past generations recognised that nations are protected through unity, elevated through collective resolve, and sustained by dedicated work. Ancestors confronted scarce resources and harsh conditions with steadfast resilience, preserving the integrity of the land and social cohesion while paving the way for future generations through their sacrifices.

From this inspiring legacy, the journey of national development began, aimed at building a modern, firmly rooted state. At every stage, the nation's dreams expanded; potential has transformed into projects, and aspirations into institutions, reshaping all spheres of life and placing the individual at the heart of the development process, ensuring the foundations for progress and stability for future generations.

This developmental journey was built on unwavering confidence in human potential and the ability of citizens to bear responsibility and shape the future, driven by the conviction that Qataris are the ultimate treasure of the homeland. Guided by this principle, successive generations have been empowered to sustain national building in an unbroken continuum fuelled by loyalty, national pride, and solidarity.

Today, as Qatar's renaissance continues toward broader horizons, sustained by the resolve and dedication of its people, they remain committed to honouring the legacy of the nation's founders by upholding the pledge and safeguarding the country's achievements. (**QNA**)

Qatar Philatelic Center to participate in Sharjah exhibition

The Qatar Philatelic and Numismatic Center, affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, is participating in the Sharjah Stamp Exhibition 2026, which is being held in the UAE from Nov 4-8, with the participation of philatelic associations from the Gulf and Arab countries. The centre is participating with five stamp displays, which have previously won several international medals, including Iraq under British occupation with eight denominations, Lebanon's envelopes monitored during World War II with five denominations, the stamps of the Museum of Islamic Art with four denominations, the postal history of Jerusalem with three denominations, in addition to stamps suspended between the US and Switzerland during World War II with one denomination.
The exhibition is organised by the Emirates Philatelic Association, in co-operation with the Mega Mall in Sharjah. The Qatar Philatelic and Numismatic Center seeks to spread the culture of stamp and coin acquisition and develop this identity by providing a suitable environment for its practice and development, and by enhancing communication and the exchange of expertise between amateurs inside and outside the State of Qatar. (**QNA**)

Sanya showcases tourism and investment opportunities in Doha





The Sanya Tourism Board showcased the Chinese coastal destination's tourism offering in Doha today, bringing together representatives from Visit Qatar and the tourism industry to explore opportunities for tourism exchange and cooperation between China, Qatar and the wider Gulf region.

Held at the Suheil Meeting Room at JW Marriott Marquis, the Sanya Tourism Promotion Event highlighted the destination's tropical coastline, premium resorts, wellness experiences and cultural heritage. An investment presentation from the Sanya Investment Promotion Bureau complemented the tourism programme, outlining potential areas of collaboration under the Hainan Free Trade Port framework.

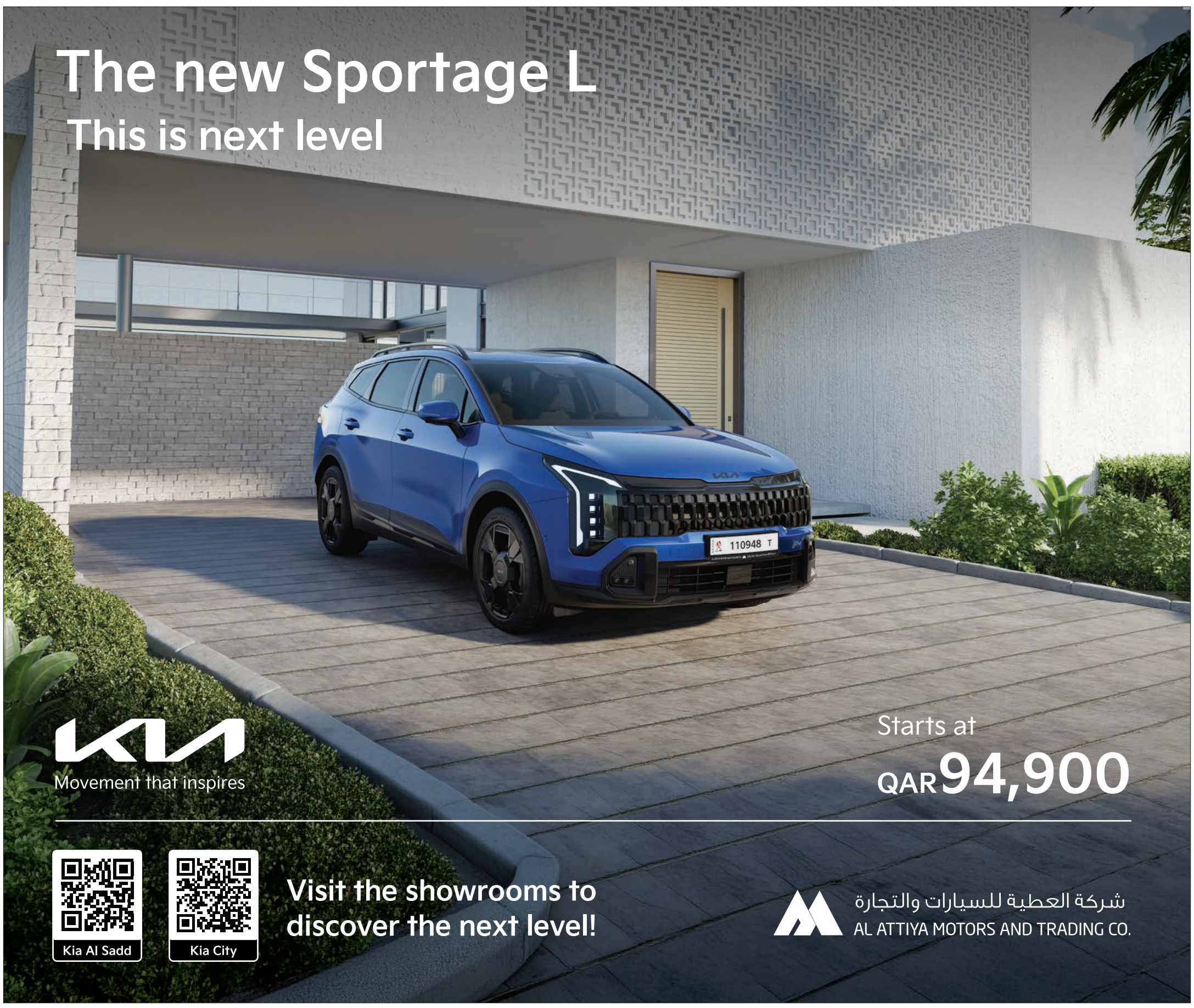
Distinguished guests included Mr. Zhang Hao, Vice Director General of the Sanya Tourism Board; Ms. Shi Lei, Director of the Sanya Tourism Board; Mr. Qiu Chao Kui and Ms. Luo Xin Jing of the Sanya Tourism Board; Ms. Yang Yi Ping of the Sanya Investment Promotion Bureau; and Ms. Shi Ruiyi of Hainan Hejia Culture & Media Co. Ltd. Visit Qatar was represented by Mr. Saud Alhamdan, Regional PR Lead, and Ms. Sabrina Ding, Senior Manager of International Markets – Asia Pacific.

The tourism programme featured the Shanhai Wellness initiative, introducing experiences that combine Sanya's coastal environment with health and wellness, traditional Chinese medicine and Hainan's intangible cultural heritage. The presentation positioned Sanya as a destination for international travellers seeking resort holidays, cultural discovery and wellness-focused stays.

Alongside the destination showcase, the investment presentation identified resort and wellness development, duty-free retail, cross-border finance, deep-sea technology and blue carbon as areas for potential cooperation. It also introduced Sanya's industrial districts, including the Central Business District, Yazhou Bay Sci-Tec City, Jingu Industrial Park and Haitang Bay National Coast Leisure Park.

The Sanya Investment Promotion Bureau outlined support for prospective investors, including dedicated points of contact, district matching, business registration assistance and guidance on relevant policies. Proposed follow-up activities included sector-specific discussions, visits to Sanya and exploration of framework agreements and pilot projects.

The Doha event forms part of Sanya's international promotional efforts to build its profile in the Middle East and develop connections with travel companies, destination partners and potential investors. Through continued dialogue, the initiative aims to support long-term tourism and investment cooperation with Qatar and the wider Gulf region.



QATAR

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From Padel Court to Operating Theatre: Understanding Sports Injuries in Qatar

Qatar's football pitches, padel courts and gyms reflect a growing enthusiasm for sport. Yet many recreational athletes move from long hours at a desk to intense activity without adequate conditioning. This mismatch can contribute to knee, shoulder and ankle injuries.

A Surgeon Who Plays Padel: The Changing Face of Sports Injuries

Sports injuries are not confined to professionals. Recreational players balancing demanding careers with football, padel and gym training frequently experience meniscal tears, anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries, cartilage problems, rotator cuff disorders and shoulder instability.

At Aster, we understand the rapid changes of direction, twisting movements and repeated stresses on the knees, ankles, shoulders and elbows during padel. Experiencing these demands firsthand complements, the clinical work and reinforces the importance of preparation and safe return to play.

Treat the Patient, Not Just the MRI

Imaging is valuable, but an MRI finding alone should not determine whether surgery is necessary. The mechanism of injury, examination findings, joint stability, functional limitations and sporting goals must guide decisions.

Many degenerative meniscal tears respond to physiotherapy and strengthening. Conversely, a displaced, repairable tear may warrant arthroscopic intervention. An athlete with persistent ACL instability may benefit from reconstruction, while selected patients can manage successfully with rehabilitation.

Preserve Before You Replace: Advances in Sports Surgery

Modern arthroscopy allows precise assessment and treatment through small incisions, with an emphasis on preserving natural joint structures. Techniques include anatomical ACL reconstruction with internal brace augmentation, lateral extra-articular tenodesis for selected patients at higher risk of rotational instability, meniscal repair, shoulder labral repair, rotator cuff repair and ankle ligament reconstruction. Biological augmentation may be considered in selected rotator cuff cases.

Meniscal preservation is particularly important: retaining functional tissue helps protect knee cartilage and may reduce long-term degeneration.

Since joining Aster Hospital, Dr Mahesh Reddy has performed more than 150 orthopaedic surgeries, including advanced knee and shoulder arthroscopy, ligament reconstructions, meniscal repairs and complex trauma procedures. The objective is to restore stability, preserve healthy tissue and support lasting function.

Injury Prevention: Preparation Matters

A structured 10–15-minute warm-up incorporating dynamic mobility, muscle activation, balance and sport-specific movements can reduce certain injury risks. Padel and football players should build lower-limb strength, practise controlled changes of direction and increase playing intensity gradually.

Adequate recovery, appropriate footwear and consistent strengthening are equally important. Persistent pain, swelling or instability should never be dismissed as a normal part of sport. Rapid knee swelling, locking or giving way, and sudden shoulder weakness after injury, warrant timely assessment.



Dr. Mahesh Reddy
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
Aster Hospital, Qatar

Rehabilitation Completes the Result

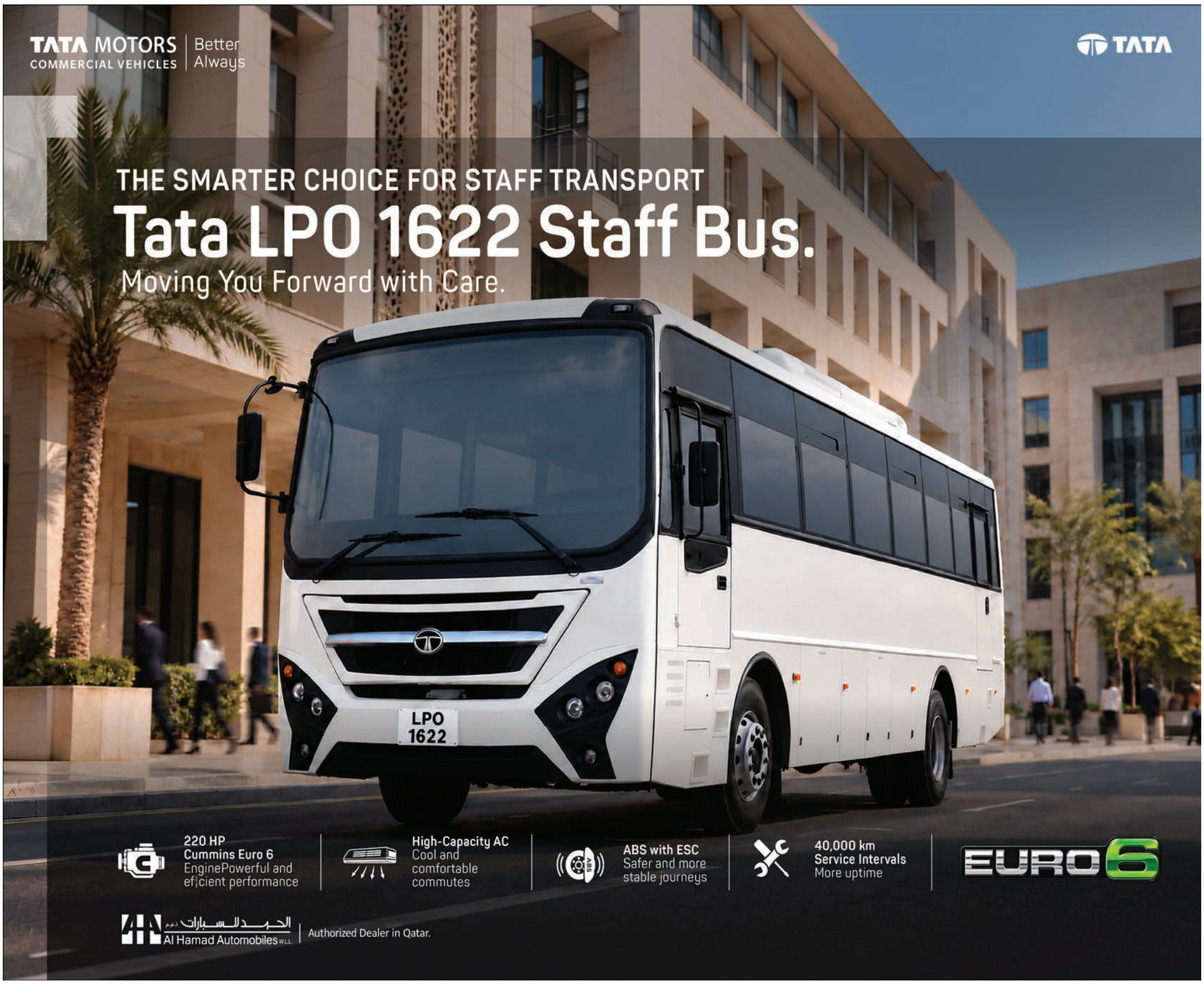
Surgery, when indicated, is only one stage of recovery. Rehabilitation restores mobility, strength, balance and sport-specific control. Return to play should depend on functional milestones and readiness, not simply the number of weeks since surgery. Close collaboration between surgeon and physiotherapist helps individualise rehabilitation and reduce reinjury risk.

Looking Ahead: Building a Healthier Sporting Community

As participation grows across Qatar, sports medicine must prioritise prevention, joint preservation and safe return to activity. The future is not simply about more advanced operations; it is about helping people remain active throughout their lives. Whether a professional athlete or weekend padel player, the goal is restoring movement, confidence and quality of life.







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QATAR

Qatar gives legal profession overriding priority: Minister





HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Ibrahim bin Ali bin Issa al-Hassan al-Mohannadi, affirmed that the State of Qatar gives the legal profession an overriding priority, as demonstrated in the nation's move to make amendments to the Law Regulating the Legal Profession, along with the ensuing statutory decisions.

HE the Minister noted that a review of the legislative framework of this profession is underway in accord with Qatar National Vision 2030 and the ministry's strategy.

Speaking yesterday at the opening session of the Gulf Lawyers Forum, organised by the Qatari Lawyers Association (QLA) to mark its 20th anniversary, al-Mohannadi said the independence of this profession isn't a privilege granted to lawyers, but rather a safeguard for litigants before it is a right of lawyers. He stressed that protecting the profession and preserving its integrity and independence require its members to be the first to reject wrongdoing and hold those responsible to account.

The quality of justice in any country is literally gauged by what is happening inside lawyers' offices even before measuring what is happening inside courtrooms, as lawyers are the primary people to whom right holders resort, al-Mohannadi explained.

He recalled that lawyers are the first ones to listen to the stories of those right holders and ultimately decide whether a dispute deserves to be escalated to the court, emphasising that lawyers are vested with the responsibility of clarifying the mistake when clients are wrong.

Al-Mohannadi underscored the importance of technological readiness, financial integrity and proper training in the legal profession.

He extended his profound gratitude to QLA for organising the forum and for its efforts to strengthen professional communication among lawyers from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. He also congratulated the association on the 20th anniversary of its establishment, noting that over the years it has served as a voice for the profession and a partner in the pursuit of justice.

He pointed out that the legal profession faces three major tests that cannot be put off. The first is technology, particularly as artificial intelligence makes its way into law firms. He stressed that the question is no longer whether lawyers will use these technologies, but rather who will bear responsibility when a machine makes a mistake.

The minister emphasised that responsibility remains entirely with the lawyer. A technological tool does not sign a legal brief, appear before a judge or shoulder the duty of trust owed to a client. He noted that professional competence today invariably includes a lawyer's understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the tools at their disposal, as well as the need to be candid with clients and the court about how those tools are used.

The second test, he explained, concerns financial integrity. A lawyer is entrusted with public confidence, and a law office must never become a conduit for funds of unknown origin.

The third test is the human element, al-Mohannadi explained that legislation and procedures alone cannot produce a competent lawyer. Rather, the future of the profession rests on trainees who are learning the fundamentals and principles of legal practice today.

He questioned whether they would receive training based on sound professional standards or simply be left to learn on their own.

Al-Mohannadi stressed that meaningful training is a responsibility that law firms and professional associations are expected to uphold, rather than merely a requirement for admission to the roll of lawyers. This makes it essential to strengthen the role of these institutions in preparing and qualifying legal professionals.

On GCC co-operation, al-Mohannadi said member states have made considerable strides in enabling GCC lawyers to practice the profession across the region. However, genuine integration cannot be achieved simply by opening the doors to co-operation; it requires convergence in qualification standards, codes of conduct and safeguards for litigants, he underlined.

He explained that such convergence strengthens litigants' confidence in any GCC legal institution when the lawyer handling their case is subject to professional standards as consistent as those applied elsewhere across the region. This, in turn, can help build a successful GCC-wide legal market.

He called on lawyers' associations and bodies across the GCC, in close co-ordination with the authorities regulating the profession, to pursue two specific initiatives: first, the preparation of a unified GCC-wide guiding framework; and second, the establishment of appropriate foundations for mutual recognition of continuing professional development programs among member states.

He emphasised that practical steps of this kind could transform the forum from an occasion for celebration and professional networking into a sustainable path toward professional development and greater legal integration across the GCC.

The State of Qatar has held that relations among the authorities regulating the profession, lawyers and their associations should be based on co-operation and integration, while respecting each entity's respective mandate, in a way that serves the cause of justice, al-Mohannadi pointed out.



QOC, QU sign MoU

The Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) and Qatar University (QU) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance joint co-operation and expand partnership in the fields of education, sports training, scientific research and development.

The partnership is forged to give impetus to the development of national capabilities and competencies within the sports sector on agenda.

The MoU was signed by QOC Secretary-General Jassim bin Rashid al-Buenain and QU President Dr Omar Mohamed al-Ansari.

The MoU establishes an integrated framework for co-operation in talent development and leadership skills, while also providing avenues of academic support for Qatari athletes.

These efforts will help athletes balance the demands of their sporting careers with their academic pursuits, while opening broader pathways for personal development and excellence.

QOC Secretary-General Jassim bin Rashid al-Buenain said the MoU represents a significant step forward in the partnership between the QOC and QU, reflecting the two institutions' commitment to fostering a more informed society that recognises the importance of sport and physical activity, promoting healthy lifestyles in everyday life.

For his part, QU President Dr Omar al-Ansari said this memorandum underscores QU's commitment to deepening its partnerships with national institutions and promoting the integration of expertise and complementary roles in support of the development of the sports sector. (**QNA**)

DFF 2026 celebrates power of music to transcend borders

Doha Film Festival 2026 unveiled yesterday its music programme for this year's edition, scheduled to run from November 19-27, featuring a lineup of regional music pioneers, international artists, and emerging talents that reflect the diversity and creative energy of today's global music landscape.

The festival's programme celebrates the power of music to transcend borders, amplify underrepresented voices, and foster shared cultural experiences.

The schedule features a wide array of performances, ranging from Palestinian youth-music trailblazers and fresh Sudanese voices to international artists, alongside a special collaboration with Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra.

Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute and Director of the Doha Film Festival Fatma Hassan Alremaihi stated yesterday that music remains one of the most potent art forms for bringing people together across borders, languages, and cultures, creating shared experiences that resonate deeply.

Alremaihi added that across the Arab world, a new generation of artists is using music to innovate and redefine contemporary sounds to express their identities, life experiences, and social and cultural concerns.

He said the organisers of the festival are proud to host these artists and to offer audiences and music enthusiasts the opportunity to experience music's incredible capacity to bridge gaps between individuals and communities. (**QNA**)

QALA set to host literary event on Arabic novel

QNA
Doha

Qatar Arabic Language Association (QALA) announced on Sunday that it will host a cultural seminar on the environment in the Arabic novel. Organised in collaboration with the Katara Library for Arabic Novels, the event will take place on Thursday at the library, located within the Katara Cultural Village Foundation. This initiative is part of the QALA's participation in Qatar Sustainability Week 2026. The seminar will explore how the Arabic novel depicts the relationship between humanity and nature, and examine the role literature can play in fostering environmental awareness.

The discussion will feature Qatari writer and author Rawda al-Amri, poet and man of letters Dr Al-Siddiq Omar al-Siddiq, and academic lecturer and trainer Dr Alhan Farhat.

Chairperson of the QALA Dr Maryam Abdulrahman al-Nuaimi said that the association believes the Arabic language and its literature play a role in fostering awareness of issues that affect our society and our future.

She added that through this seminar, the association aims to highlight the novel's capacity to deepen the reader's sense of connection to nature, and to open up space for cultural engagement that contributes to embedding values of sustainability and environmental responsibility.

The seminar also highlights the presence of the environment in the Arabic novel as an influential factor in shaping setting, characters, and events.

The event will explore the capacity of narrative to express the relationship between human beings, the land, and natural resources, a relationship that gives rise to questions concerning belonging, responsibility, and the future.

Furthermore, the seminar will explore the role of literature in bringing environmental issues closer to the reader through the lens of human experience.

It highlights the impact of individual and collective behaviour on the natural world, thereby contributing to the development of environmental awareness and the entrenchment of values such as sustainability and social responsibility.

The participation of QALA comes as part of its commitment to linking the Arabic language with contemporary issues, expanding the presence of culture within environmental initiatives, and highlighting the role of the written word and creativity in fostering greater public interest in environmental protection and the sustainability of its resources.

Stamp exhibition opens its doors at Katara

Katara Cultural Village Foundation, in co-operation with the Qatar Philatelic and Numismatic Centre, opened yesterday the "Mark and Memory" stamp exhibition at Building 22. The exhibition runs until December 3.

The exhibition reflects Katara's continuous and unrelenting efforts to preserve cultural heritage and highlight the importance of postage stamps as historical documents and visual records capturing peoples' social and cultural lives and preserving their collective memory.

Its title brings together two concepts: "Mark," representing the lasting imprint of previous generations, and "Memory," referring to the cultural and human heritage passed down through customs, traditions, values and stories.

The exhibition features stamps showcasing various aspects of heritage, including customs and traditions, traditional clothing, and the popular professions and crafts practised by previous generations as essential parts of their daily lives and livelihoods.

It also highlights traditional jewellery and ornaments, folk music and arts, as well as pearl diving and its associated tools, underscoring the craft's economic and social importance in Gulf history before the discovery of oil.



Al-Mujadilah, GU-Q bring women diplomats to discuss leadership



Al-Mujadilah: Centre & Mosque for Women, in collaboration with Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q), hosted "Women in Diplomacy: Challenges and the Way Forward", a panel discussion and networking luncheon bringing together distinguished diplomats, students, and aspiring professionals to exchange experiences, examine challenges facing women in diplomacy, and explore pathways for their advancement in foreign affairs.

The gathering provided a platform for candid, cross-generational, and global dialogue, bringing together women diplomats and aspiring professionals to exchange experiences and perspectives on leadership, career development, and the evolving role of women in foreign affairs. Discussions explored the structural, cultural, and institutional barriers women face in diplomacy, alongside practical approaches to addressing these complexities and opportunities for mentorship and professional growth.

The panel was moderated by former ambassador of the Republic of Colombia to the State of Qatar, Odette Yidi David and featured ambassador of Malta to Qatar, Maria Camilleri Calleja; ambassador of South Sudan to Qatar, Lily Adhieu Martin Manyiel; and Partnerships Development Manager at Inter-American Development Bank, Maryam al-Nasr.

Reflecting Al-Mujadilah's commitment to fostering meaningful dialogue and knowledge exchange, the initiative further strengthened its collaboration with GU-Q, connecting academic learning with professional experiences in diplomacy and creating opportunities for continued engagement between students, alumni, and diplomatic leaders. (**QNA**)

Doha Historical Dictionary of Arabic Language launches official app on stores

The Doha Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language yesterday launched its new official smartphone application on Apple's App Store and Google Play, in a move to broaden access to its vast linguistic resources for researchers, writers and other users across the Arab world and beyond.

The application, in its newly redesigned form, reflects the latest updates to the dictionary's online portal, which were introduced alongside a ceremony marking the project's completion last year. The upgrades make the portal's resources more readily accessible to smartphone users across different operating systems.

It enables users to search approximately 300,000 dictionary entries, 10,000 roots and 10,000 bibliographical sources, as well as explore the linguistic contexts of a corpus containing nearly one billion words. Users can also benefit from the full range of enhancements and services added to the portal over the past year, chiefly its automated pronunciation service, introduced in June.

In addition, the application allows users to create personal accounts and sign in, as they can on the online portal, unlocking specialised services such as saving searches and their results, submitting comments and corrections on dictionary entries to the scientific team, and contributing to the project by proposing words, meanings or textual citations that may not yet appear in its entries. Users can also browse the "Word of the Day" feature and access the dictionary's social media accounts.

Executive Director of the Doha Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language Dr Mohammed al-Obaidi said the new application builds on an epochal vision for the dictionary that took shape during its early founding stages, clarifying that the decision to go online stemmed from an ambition to navigate the constraints of time and place, making it accessible to anyone seeking to benefit from it, wherever they may be.

Dr al-Obaidi emphasised that the dictionary's value lies not merely in its unprecedented breadth, precision and reliability, but equally in making its content accessible to Arabic speakers through modern, user-friendly means.

He said efforts to expand its user base through various search engines and the application are instrumental to fulfilling its overarching objective: serving as a transformative intellectual project for the Arab world as a whole.

The dictionary's team is now laying the groundwork for a new phase focused on capitalising on the unparalleled linguistic wealth of what is the largest historical dictionary of the Arabic language. Its completion was announced on Dec 22, 2025, following its official launch in May 2013 under the supervision of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies.

The project took more than 12 years to complete and involved over 500 researchers from across the Arab world.

The dictionary's influence has extended well beyond the Arab world, with a growing number of Western universities recommending it as a research resource for students and adding it to their electronic library collections.

Cornell University in the United States and the University of British Columbia in Canada have both incorporated it into their digital libraries under the hierarchical classification headings of Near Eastern Studies, Arabic Literature, and Dictionaries, Thesauruses and Abbreviations. (**QNA**)

Qatar participates in 42nd COMCEC session in Istanbul



Qatar participated in the 42nd Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Co-operation of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (COMCEC), held in Istanbul, Türkiye, from October 31 until today.

Cevdet Yılmaz, Vice-President of the Republic of Türkiye, chairs the event on behalf of the President of the Republic. The session brought together ministers, senior officials, and representatives of member states and institutions affiliated with the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC).

HE Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal al-Thani, Minister of Commerce and Industry, headed the State of Qatar's delegation participating in the ministerial meetings, which discussed ways to strengthen economic and trade co-operation among OIC member states, develop mechanisms for joint action, and expand intra-OIC trade and investment, to address economic challenges and promote opportunities for growth and sustainable development.

Qatar's participation is part of its efforts to strengthen joint economic co-operation among OIC member states, promote trade and investment integration, and develop economic partnerships, contributing to new opportunities for the private sector, facilitating trade flows, and enhancing the competitiveness of member states' economies.

The ministerial discussions focused on the theme "Developing Effective Trade Financing Tools for Increasing Export in the OIC Member Countries", including improving access to trade finance, developing export guarantee instruments, and strengthening the ability of businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to access international markets.

The session was held amid expectations of continued economic growth across OIC member states. According to the OIC Economic Outlook 2026 report, issued by the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), the combined gross domestic product (GDP) of OIC member states is projected to increase from approximately $10.79tn in 2026 to $11.27tn in 2027.

The meetings also reviewed efforts to implement the COMCEC Strategy, strengthen economic and trade co-operation, and operationalise the Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the OIC (TPS-OIC), along with initiatives to support the private sector and develop economic and trade relations among OIC member states.

On the sidelines of the session, Sheikh Faisal with Dr Thani bin Ahmed al-Zeyoudi, Minister of Foreign Trade of UAE.

During the meeting, the two sides reviewed co-operation between their countries in the economic, trade, and investment fields, explored ways to strengthen and develop these relations, and discussed a number of topics of mutual interest.



Sanya Tourism Board, Visit Qatar reinforce ties

The Sanya Tourism Board showcased the Chinese coastal destination's tourism offering in Doha, bringing together representatives from Visit Qatar and the tourism industry to explore opportunities for tourism exchange and cooperation between China, Qatar and the wider Gulf region.

Held at the Suheil Meeting Room at JW Marriott Marquis, the Sanya Tourism Promotion Event highlighted the destination's tropical coastline, premium resorts, wellness experiences and cultural heritage.

An investment presentation from the Sanya Investment Promotion Bureau complemented the tourism programme, outlining potential areas of collaboration under the Hainan Free Trade Port framework.

Distinguished guests included Zhang Hao, vice director general of the Sanya Tourism Board; Shi Lei, director of the Sanya Tourism Board; Qiu Chao Kui and Luo Xin Jing of the Sanya Tourism Board; Yang Yi Ping of the Sanya Investment Promotion Bureau; and Shi Ruiyi of Hainan Hejia Culture & Media Co Ltd.

Visit Qatar was represented by Saud Alhamdan, regional PR Lead, and Sabrina Ding, senior manager of International Markets – Asia Pacific.

The tourism programme featured the Shanhai Wellness initiative, introducing experiences that combine Sanya's coastal environment with health and wellness, traditional Chinese medicine and Hainan's intangible cultural heritage.

The presentation positioned Sanya as a destination for international travellers seeking resort holidays, cultural discovery and wellness-focused stays. Alongside the destination showcase, the investment presentation identified resort and wellness development, duty-free retail, cross-border finance, deep-sea technology and blue carbon as areas for potential cooperation. It also introduced Sanya's industrial districts, including the Central Business District, Yazhou Bay Sci-Tec City, Jingu Industrial Park and Haitang Bay National Coast Leisure Park.

The Sanya Investment Promotion Bureau outlined support for prospective investors, including dedicated points of contact, district matching, business registration assistance and guidance on relevant policies. Proposed follow-up activities included sector-specific discussions, visits to Sanya and exploration of framework agreements and pilot projects.

The Doha event forms part of Sanya's international promotional efforts to build its profile in the Middle East and develop connections with travel companies, destination partners and potential investors. Through continued dialogue, the initiative aims to support long-term tourism and investment cooperation with Qatar and the wider Gulf region.

PSG QNB We Run Doha concludes its inaugural edition urging people to adopt active lifestyles



QNB Group, a leading financial institution in the Middle East and Africa, successfully concluded the inaugural PSG QNB We Run Doha, bringing together 2,300 runners at Lusail International Circuit in a celebration of community spirit, inclusion and the unifying power of sport.

More than a running event, the initiative created a shared sporting experience for people of different ages, backgrounds and abilities, including children, families, amateur and professional runners, and participants with special needs. Organised in collaboration with Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) as part of the global PSG Running series, the event reflected a shared commitment to making sport more accessible and inclusive.

As Title Partner, QNB Group reinforced its longstanding strategic partnership with PSG, extending the collaboration beyond professional football to support grassroots participation and promote active lifestyles.

The event featured a variety of race categories designed to encourage broad participation, including 10 km and 5 km races for adults and a 1-km race for children. Beyond the races, dedicated children's activities and family-friendly experiences provided opportunities for non-runners to join the celebrations.

The event was attended by Saad bin Ali al-Kharji, chairman of Qatar Tourism; and Nasser bin Ghanem al-Khelaifi, president of PSG, alongside senior executives from QNB Group. The closing ceremony recognised the winners of the men's and women's 5km and 10km race categories, celebrating their achievements and sporting excellence.

PSG QNB We Run Doha forms part of QNB Group's Corporate Social Responsibility strategy, which prioritises community development, inclusion and wellbeing. The initiative also supports the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030, particularly its focus on human and social development, by encouraging healthy lifestyles and strengthening community participation.

Through its longstanding partnership with PSG and continued investment in community-focused initiatives, QNB demonstrates its commitment to being a bank for everyone, creating shared experiences that bring people together and generate positive impact beyond traditional banking services.

Liwan, Uzbek art foundation partner on ceramics residency

Liwan Design Studios and Labs has announced a new ceramics residency with the Uzbekistan Art and Culture Development Foundation (ACDF), in collaboration with the Qatar Fashion and Crafts Council (QFCC).

Bringing renowned Uzbek clay masters from the Rahimov family to Doha, the programme will connect creatives in Qatar with Uzbekistan's ceramic traditions through workshops, practical learning and cultural exchange.

Through hands-on workshops and collaborative production, participants will work alongside the Uzbek masters at the wheel and the glazing bench, developing ceramic pieces that combine Qatari and Uzbek forms, glazes and surface decoration. The process will give participants opportunities to build their technical skills and explore new approaches to contemporary ceramics through the exchange of knowledge and techniques.

Liwan's Clay Lab will serve as the centre for design and production throughout the residency, with support from clay resident Noora al-Melhim. Working with locally sourced clays, participants will explore Qatar's natural landscapes as a source of material, testing what they find against the techniques shared by the visiting masters.

Director of Liwan Design Studios and Labs Aisha Nasser al-Sowaidi said: "Ceramics is learned through the hands, and there is no substitute for working beside a master. This residency gives practitioners in Qatar that chance and lets them test what they learn against our own clay and landscapes. What comes out of the Clay Lab will be shaped by two tradition's and made to be used, every day, at the table."

Chairperson of the Uzbekistan Art and Culture Development Foundation Gayane Umerova said: "Uzbekistan's craft traditions are living forms of knowledge, passed through generations and continually renewed. The Rakhimov family, representing the sixth and seventh generations of ceramicists, embody this continuity: preserving inherited knowledge while creating, experimenting and developing new approaches."

Alisher has participated in Unesco projects dedicated to reviving historic ceramic technologies and received the title of Honoured Art Worker of Uzbekistan in 2012.

Shokhrukh carries this inheritance into contemporary ceramics, with international experience including a Homo Faber Fellowship from the Michelangelo Foundation.

The eight participating practitioners are Neslihan Kiraz Tepe, Fatima Javed Shiekh, Soraya Sus, Ewa Merchel, Hatice Cosar, Hifa AlKhuzai, Hameed al-Qahtani and Faisal Haman Adama. (**QNA**)

Qatar urges Arab universities to put Arabic at the heart of AI

From Page 1

Also present were a large number of academics, experts, decision-makers and representatives of universities, as well as regional and international organisations.

The minister highlighted that regional co-operation is essential to building stronger, more inclusive higher education systems.

However, she noted that progress has not erased persistent disparities among Arab universities, which continue to grapple with funding constraints, talent retention and disruption to education in several Arab countries, foremost among them Palestine, Sudan, Yemen and Syria.

AlKhater pointed out: "Unesco estimates indicate that 95% of university campuses in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged, with 22 completely destroyed. In Sudan, 124 universities and colleges have been destroyed or looted, in addition to the difficulties facing Yemen."

"This means the loss of scientific and intellectual wealth built by academics and researchers over decades. It is part of our shared Arab scientific memory. We have a duty to contribute to its preservation by providing opportunities to continue studies, hosting affected researchers, and establishing partnerships that safeguard the continuity of education and research," continued the minister.

The minister said one of the most prominent developments confronting Arab universities today is artificial intelligence, whose impact has reached the core of their mission, from the production and evaluation of knowledge to what it means to be a qualified graduate equipped with the necessary skills.

"This means that the rules governing the use of these technologies are still being formulated, and the door remains open for our Arab universities to become partners in this process. It is not enough for modern technologies to communicate with us in Arabic; our language must be present in their foundations and development," underlined the minister.

AlKhater noted that Qatar's Fanar initiative is one model that has promoted the Arabic language. "One initiative in this direction is Fanar, a model developed by the Qatar Computing Research Institute at Hamad bin Khalifa University in collaboration with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. A number of universities and higher education institutions in Qatar and across the Arab world have begun using this model," she explained.

"We therefore call on our Arab universities and higher education institutions to embrace Arabic-based models and contribute to their development, so that they may become a shared Arab project that strengthens the presence of our language in the future of education and knowledge production," urged the minister.

"This conference also marks the launch of the Arabic version of Unesco 's Roadmap for Transforming Higher Education. We hope the discussions will help shape shared Arab priorities beyond 2030, based on protecting knowledge, producing it and ensuring equitable access to opportunities," concluded the minister.

Web Summit Qatar 2026 delivered QR1bn economic boost, says report

From Page 1

The findings illustrate how Qatar's investment in hosting major international events is increasingly paying dividends, not only through immediate economic activity but also by attracting businesses, investors and entrepreneurs seeking a foothold in the region.

HE Sheikh Jassim bin Mansour bin Jabor al-Thani, Director of the Government Communications Office and Chairman of the Permanent Web Summit Organising Committee, described the summit as a strategic driver of economic diversification.

He said the event had strengthened Qatar's competitiveness by attracting international investment, companies and entrepreneurs, demonstrating how major global gatherings could serve as instruments of sustainable economic development.

The results, he added, reflected growing international confidence in Qatar's business environment, advanced digital infrastructure and integrated innovation ecosystem.

Hamad Madi al-Hajri, a member of the Permanent Web Summit Organising Committee representing the Ministry of Finance, said the summit's billion-riyal economic impact demonstrated its increasing value to the national economy.

He highlighted the benefits flowing into hospitality, aviation and transport, noting that the event supported the objectives of Qatar's Third National Development Strategy by stimulating economic activity and encouraging diversification.

Beyond the immediate financial gains, the summit also generated significant momentum for Qatar's business and innovation landscape.

More than 300 companies registered with the Qatar Financial Centre during the event, while nearly 2,300 business licence applications were submitted across sectors including financial technology, digital transformation, consulting, project management and innovation.

The figures point to the summit's expanding role as a gateway for international businesses looking to establish operations in Qatar and use the country as a base for regional expansion.

The third edition, the largest since the event made its Doha debut in 2024, attracted more than 30,000 participants from 127 countries.

Investor participation rose particularly sharply, with more than 930 investors attending, a 55% increase over the previous year. The gathering also drew over 840 media professionals, up 40%, further expanding its international visibility.

Startups were another major success story, with 1,637 participating companies, including 247 from Qatar. Their overall participation represented growth of approximately 30% compared with the previous edition, reflecting the expanding reach of the country's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Spread across 86,200sq m, the summit also demonstrated Qatar's capacity to stage large-scale international technology events supported by modern infrastructure and integrated services.

The Silverlode report positions Web Summit Qatar as more than a high-profile gathering of technology leaders. Its expanding economic footprint, growing investor participation and ability to attract new businesses underscore its importance in Qatar's broader drive towards an innovation-led, diversified and sustainable economy under Qatar National Vision 2030.

OPINION

How could the oil spill off the UAE coast affect desalination plants?

An oil spill off the United Arab Emirates that has prompted temporary restrictions on fishing and on access to several beaches has raised concerns over the risk of environmental contamination and the potential impact on desalination plants.

The spill is from a vessel that shipping sources have identified as crude oil tanker Gem No. 2.

The incident off the UAE has also raised questions about what impact oil spills can have on desalination plants, which crowd the Emirati coastline and, just as in other Gulf countries, are a supplier of water.

In the UAE, desalinated water accounts for more than 80% of potable water. Major plants include those at Dubai's Jebel Ali industrial port, and at Taweelah between Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Gulf desalination plants had already come under threat from direct hits in the conflict earlier this year.

Maritime intelligence firm Windward said on Sunday that the leak threatened the seawater intake of the Naqa'a desalination plant at the border between Umm Al Quwain and Ras Al Khaimah.

Footage verified by Reuters showed that the oil slick had reached a location in Ras Al Khaimah about 2km (1.24 miles) from the plant.

Water analysts told Reuters that it was hard to assess the potential impact on desalination plants without more information on the extent of the spill. So far, the UAE has not announced any shutdowns of plants.

The UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, Ras Al Khaimah Media Office and the Naqa'a plant did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Any oil spill has the potential to impact the environment, but the extent of the damage depends on the type of oil and the volume, said Simon Boxall, a senior lecturer at the University of Southampton.

"Crude oil in particular is a natural product. And so crude oil will break down in the marine environment, particularly in the warm waters such as the Gulf, within a matter of a few weeks," he said.

"A thicker spill obviously carries more oil, and when it hits the beaches, when it hits the marine environment, both at sea, on the seabed, and on the coast, then it has a potential to cause more damage. It will eventually break down, but that does take time."

For wildlife, it can be fatal.

Plants need to be shut down as soon as oil gets anywhere near them to avoid contamination, said Boxall.

Nidal Hilal, director of New York University Abu Dhabi's Water Research Center, said oil spills can threaten desalination plants even when the oil does not physically reach the plant, with the principal vulnerability being the seawater intake, which draws raw seawater into the facility for treatment.

"For the UAE, where desalination is a cornerstone of drinking-water security, a key concern is whether the oil could reach seawater intakes and compromise the treatment process," he told Reuters.

It is important to make a distinction between a threat to water quality, a temporary shutdown of a plant, and actual physical damage to the facility, he said.

The most effective strategy is to establish several layers of protection rather than rely on a single intervention.

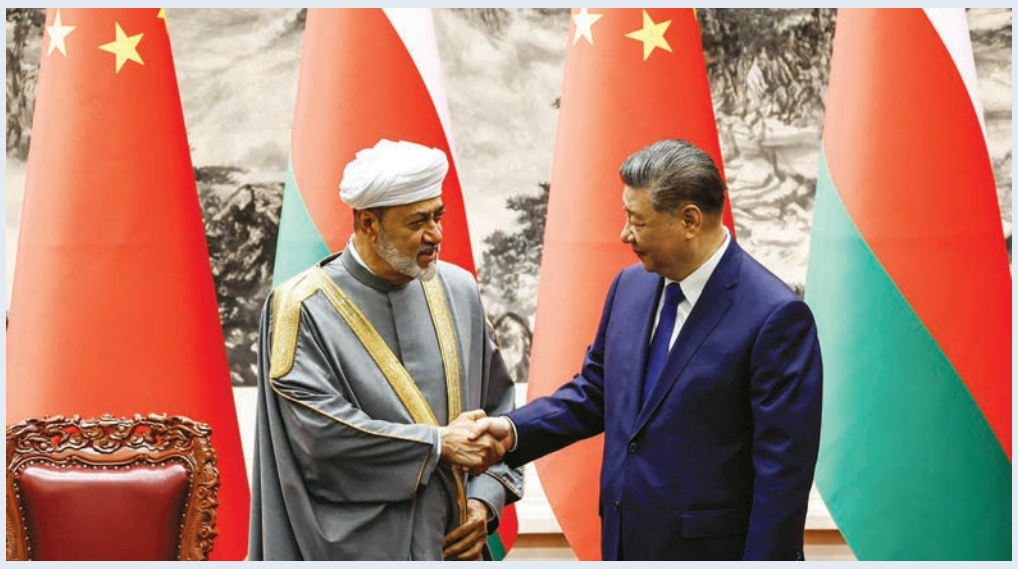
"For the current incident, the priorities should be to prevent oil from reaching desalination intakes, protect treatment equipment, and maintain a safe and reliable drinking-water supply," said Hilal.

Generally, recovery time depends on whether contaminated seawater entered the plant and if the incident causes persistent fouling and equipment damage, he said, listing plant design and the type and quantity of oil among factors that can also play a role.

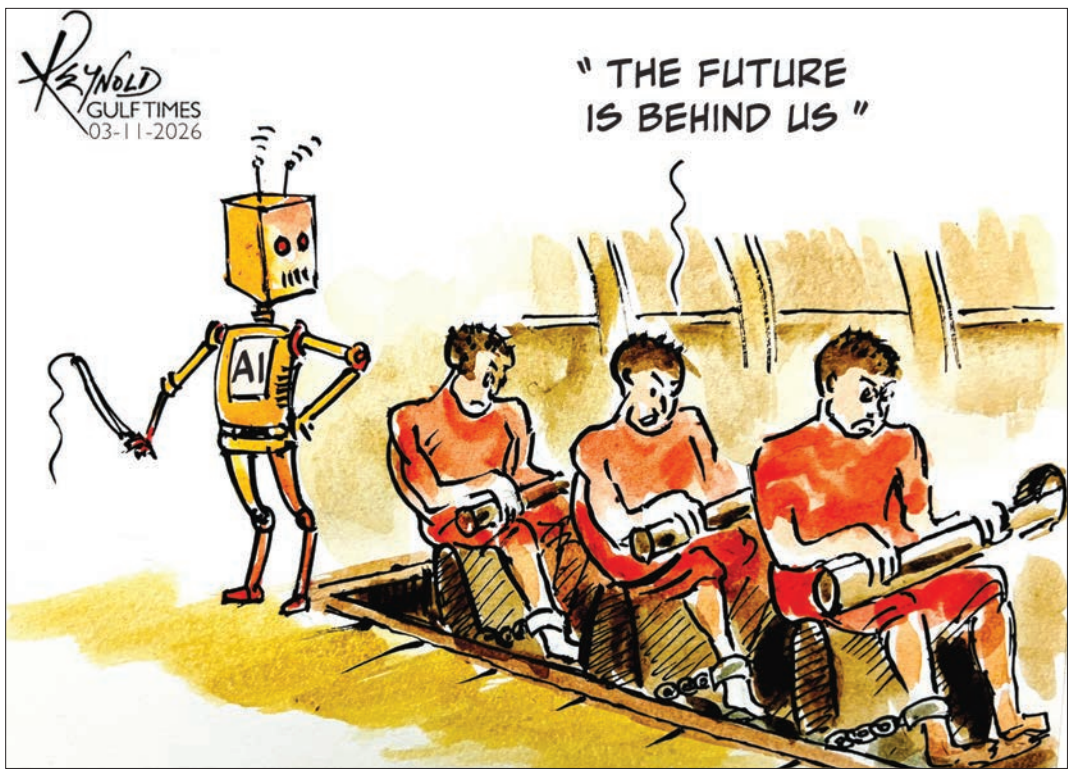
Technical studies and previous incidents have shown that oil contamination can disrupt desalination operations and even damage treatment equipment, said Hilal.

A major spill in 1991 during the Gulf War was one of the largest in history, leading to several desalination plant shutdowns in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and extensive shoreline contamination. — Reuters

China-Oman diplomacy



Chinese President Xi Jinping and Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq shake hands following a signing ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday. Haitham arrived in Beijing on Sunday for a two-day visit, the first by an Omani head of state since the countries established ties in 1978. Xi told Haitham bin Tariq that China was ready to "contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the region". (**AFP**)



Journalists still face danger as justice falters worldwide

QNA
Doha

Every year on Nov 2, the world marks the Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (IDEI) as one of the most consequential dates in the history of freedom of expression.

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/68/163 at its 68th session in 2013, recognising the far-reaching consequences of impunity, particularly for crimes committed against journalists.

The landmark resolution condemned all attacks and acts of violence against journalists and media workers, urging member states to do their utmost to prevent violence against witnesses to the truth, ensure accountability, bring perpetrators to justice and guarantee that victims have access to appropriate remedies.

It also called on countries around the world to work toward creating a safe and enabling environment in which journalists can carry out their work independently.

Despite all the calls and resolutions, the targeting of journalists and media workers has remained a systematic tool used by certain actors and groups to reshape narratives, erase crimes and withhold facts from global public opinion.

Marking IDEI is an annual reminder of the dangers facing the guardians of truth. It has become a pointed reckoning for the global conscience and the international legal system, as perpetrators-whether individuals or authorities — continue to evade accountability and punishment.

Over the years, what began as a procedural loophole and a failure of law enforcement has morphed into a shield and tacit immunity, effectively giving perpetrators the green light to repeat these crimes and violations.

This year's observance highlights how emerging technologies and weapons are changing the nature of the threats journalists face, particularly in conflict zones.

While the methods used to target journalists continue to evolve, those responsible for killing them still evade accountability. To mark the occasion, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) is set to launch a global advocacy campaign under the slogan: "THREATS EVOLVE. IMPUNITY ENDURES".

Since 1993, more than 1,700 journalists have been killed for reporting the news and providing information to the public. In nine out of every 10 cases, the killers go unpunished, according to the Unesco Observatory of Killed Journalists.

Impunity leads to further killings, while also serving as a symptom of escalating conflict and the breakdown of the rule of law and judicial systems.

According to Unesco data, 189 journalists were killed in the line of duty in 2024 and 2025, a 20% increase compared with the preceding period. Meanwhile, 86% of recorded cases of journalist killings since 2006 remain unresolved or have been abandoned.

Two-thirds of the journalists killed in 2024 and 2025 lost their lives in armed conflicts, with drones responsible for 40% of those killings.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said journalists around the world continue to pay a heavy price for telling the truth. In a message marking the occasion, he added that media workers play an essential role in keeping the public in the loop about unfolding events and holding those in power to account.

Yet they are often subjected to harassment and surveillance, prosecuted, physically assaulted or thrown behind bars. In some cases, they are even tortured and killed for no reason other than doing their jobs, the UN Chief noted.

Guterres underscored the importance of justice in this regard and the urgent need to put an end to this shameful state of affairs, stressing that nothing should stand in the way of journalists seeking to carry out their work, emphasising that this is an indispensable





Agence France-Presse's photographer Jaafar Ashtiyeh is carried by Palestinian first responders to seek medical assistance after being beaten by several Israelis in Aqraba in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. (**AFP/File photo**)

requirement for upholding human rights, advancing democracy and strengthening the rule of law.

Guterres also noted that experience has shown that progress is possible. He pointed to a decline in the impunity rate for these crimes in countries not experiencing armed conflict, from 94% to 77% since the launch of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity in 2012, while stressing that much more needs to be done.

On the impact of the absence of justice on journalists and the public's right to know the truth, Nayef al-Nabet, a nonresident fellow at the Middle East Council on Global Affairs, told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that one aspect does not receive much attention: parties to conflicts compete not only on the ground but also over the narrative, with each side seeking to convince the world that its actions are justified and that its adversary is responsible for the violations.

Al-Nabet underscored that this is where the importance of independent journalists lies, as they can offer an account that is not necessarily shaped by the calculations of the warring parties.

He noted that killing journalists and getting away with murder makes it easier to control information, making the issue far broader than media freedom. What is at stake, he emphasised, is societies' ability to know what actually happened and the evidence that may later be used to hold those responsible to account.

Asked why impunity persists despite international conventions and resolutions aimed at protecting journalists, al-Nabet said the reason is simple: international law doesn't enforce itself.

He explained that the world operates under an international system in which there is no central authority capable of enforcing the law on all countries in the same way governments enforce their laws domestically.

In this regard, he cited UN Security Council Resolution 2222 on the protection of journalists. Despite its significance, he said, the resolution does not guarantee accountability simply by virtue of its adoption.

Al-Nabet further remarked that when an accused state refuses to co-operate or enjoys political protection from a major power, enforcing the law becomes substantially more difficult. This is not an issue confined to journalists; it is evident in numerous international cases, he said.

Having a legal rule in place is one thing, while having the political and institutional capacity to enforce it is quite another, al-Nabet continued.

He further stressed that double standards in international affairs and diverging political interests among major powers play a significant role in sidelining this issue. He pointed, for instance, to the way major powers deal with violations in Ukraine and Gaza.

He said there is a clear difference in the nature of political pressure and the tools countries are prepared to use, while acknowledging that the legal and political circumstances of the two cases are different.

Al-Nabet emphasised that this is because countries do not make decisions on the basis of law alone; alliances, security interests and strategic calculations invariably come into play.

He added that this does not mean international law is without value. Rather, its enforcement is shaped by power relations. Countries are generally more willing to demand accountability when doing so does not run counter to their interests, he pointed out. The problem, he remarked, is that such selectivity harms not only victims but also undermines the confidence of countries and societies in the international system itself.

Asked whether the UN has effective mechanisms for holding those responsible for crimes against journalists to account, Al Nabet said the UN is sometimes expected to shoulder responsibilities that go beyond the authority originally granted to it by member states.

Al-Nabet continued that the UN can investigate, document violations and issue reports, but it is not a world government and does not have a general criminal court capable of prosecuting everyone who commits a crime.

In addition, al-Nabet elucidated that the International Criminal Court (ICC), which is independent of the UN, faces constraints involving jurisdiction, co-operation from states and the enforcement of arrest warrants.

The issue therefore needs to be approached realistically: the problem does not always lie in the performance of international institutions, but in the fact that states have not granted them the authority necessary to enforce accountability independently, he underlined.

On the urgent steps and measures required to end impunity and ensure journalists' protection, Al Nabet called for thinking in terms of incentives and costs, rather than resolutions alone.

He said that if perpetrators expect to face no consequences, what would deter them from repeating their crimes What is needed, he explained, is independent investigations, international judicial co-operation and the prosecution of those who issue orders, not merely those who carry them out.

Targeted sanctions can also be imposed on individuals involved when sufficient evidence and legal grounds are available, al-Nabet continued.

He stressed that, above all, cases must continue to be pursued even after media attention to them wanes. Justice, he said, requires evidence, institutions and political will. Ultimately, impunity won't end as long as committing a crime carries a lower cost than refraining from it.

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China calls for dialogue in talks with Iran, Saudi, Oman

AFP
Beijing

China stepped up diplomatic efforts yesterday to resolve the Middle East crisis, urging a return to the negotiating table in back-to-back meetings with Iranian, Omani and Saudi officials in Beijing.

The meetings come days after US President Donald Trump issued a fresh war threat more than eight months into the conflict, which was triggered by US-Israeli strikes on Iran and has at times spilled over into neighbouring countries.

Beijing supports Tehran in "safeguarding its own sovereignty and security", Foreign Minister Wang Yi told Ali Bagheri Kani, the deputy secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, according to a Chinese statement.

Wang later called for dialogue to end the conflict "while safeguarding regional energy security and the safety of shipping lanes", as he met with Saudi National Security Adviser Musaad bin Mohammad al-Aiban.

China, a top economic partner of Iran, has long sought a detente in the months-long conflict that has disrupted global shipping.

Trump said on Saturday that the US had knocked out much of Iran's military but still has to "take care of" one or two targets, with Tehran warning of reprisals if attacked.

"All parties should... in a spirit of reason and pragmatism, focus on a political solution rather than once again resorting to armed conflict," Wang told Bagheri Kani, according to the statement.

China's foreign ministry had not previously announced the visit by Bagheri Kani to Beijing. President Xi Jinping also met Oman's sultan for talks in Beijing yesterday — the first visit to China by the Gulf nation's head of state since diplomatic ties were established.

Xi told Haitham bin Tariq that China was ready to "contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the region".

The Chinese leader said that the Middle East should not become a "wrestling ground for major-country rivalry and geopolitical conflicts", state news agency Xinhua reported.

Later this month, Beijing will send its Middle East envoy to Iran, Oman and Saudi Arabia as a part of "shuttle diplomacy visits... aimed at promoting peace talks (and) easing tensions", a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said.

Houthis target Dammam airport

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis yesterday said they targeted Dammam airport in eastern Saudi Arabia, following weeks of attacks against the oil-rich kingdom.

Military spokesman Yahya Saree also claimed strikes on a Saudi early-warning radar and a military transport plane, both in the kingdom's southwest.

The Houthis are fighting a Saudi-led coalition supporting Yemen's internationally recognised government, a civil war that reignited in July following a years-long truce. "Our armed forces have, over the past 48 hours, succeeded in targeting Dammam Airport in two phases with two drones," Saree said.

"The operation achieved its objective successfully and led to a disruption of air traffic at the airport."

Meanwhile, the coalition yesterday said its forces had intercepted two drones in the area of the capital Riyadh.

"Interception and destruction of two drones in the Riyadh area," coalition spokesman Turki al-Malki said in a post on X, without naming a perpetrator. The United Nations says more than 1,600 people have been killed and more than 300,000 displaced since fighting resumed. (**AFP**)

In last lap of Senate race Democrats caught in rift

Reuters
Detroit/Washington

Democrats sought yesterday to contain a rift in Michigan's US Senate race after one of their own crossed party lines to endorse the Republican, as both parties made their final push before midterm elections that will determine control of Congress for the next two years.

US Representative Haley Stevens, who lost the Michigan Democratic Senate primary to Abdul El-Sayed in a bitter contest, publicly backed Republican Mike Rogers and appeared with him at a Detroit church. The race is critical to Democrats' hopes of ending the 53-47 Senate majority hold of President Donald Trump's Republicans in today's vote.

Stevens' Sunday surprise came the same day a federal judge dismissed a US Justice Department lawsuit seeking to block certification of election results in Alaska if Republican incumbent Senator Dan S Sullivan narrowly loses in the battleground state.

Trump, who has been holding daily rallies around the country for Republican candidates, was due to deliver remarks at 2pm at the belated reopening of Washington's Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool. An earlier renovation as part of his beautification efforts for the US capital was botched by contractors, leading to the "American flag blue" liner peeling away, which Trump had wrongly blamed on vandals.

In Michigan, Stevens' decision to endorse Republican Rogers surprised party leaders, with some members, such as Representative Debbie Dingell, saying that it created a "distraction" for Democrats.


US President Donald Trump arrives to speak at a rally. (**AFP**)

Stevens said in a video posted to social media: "I don't belong in Abdul's campaign."

A spokesperson for El-Sayed's campaign said it raised $2.4mn on Sunday, its largest single-day fundraising haul, fuelled by small-dollar donations averaging $36.74 from more than 65,000 donors.

Nonpartisan analysts generally favour Democrats' chances of winning a majority in the House of Representatives. Winning control of the Senate will be trickier,.

Control of either chamber would constrain Trump's ability to pass legislation and empower Democrats to investigate his administration, while a Senate majority would also allow them to block his appointees to federal courts including the Supreme Court.

Opposition bloc in Israel to meet for PM pick push

AFP
Jerusalem

Party heads in the Israeli opposition camp, led by Gadi Eisenkot, will meet today after they all endorsed the former military chief to become the next prime minister. It will be the first meeting since last week's close-fought election delivered no majority for any party.

Eisenkot's Yashar party said the leaders of the so-called change bloc would meet "to discuss coordinating the bloc's next steps" in Herzliya. Eisenkot's bloc won 48 seats while Netanyahu's camp secured 53. Arab-majority lists won a record 19 seats in the 120-member parliament, making them potential king-makers.

So far, few details have leaked about behind-the-scenes negotiations. Despite their diverging views on various issues, all the party leaders in Eisenkot's bloc have as of yesterday said they will back him to form the next government.

For their part, the Arab lists have hinted that they may endorse Eisenkot.

In Netanyahu's camp, his far-right allies are expected to put the veteran premier's name forward, as is the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, according to media reports.

The position of the other ultra-Orthodox party is unclear. President Isaac Herzog will hold consultations with party representatives starting Wednesday.

He has seven days to make his choice, or until November 11. The chosen candidate then has 28 days, extendable by 14 days, to form a coalition.

Tusk asks president to confirm judges

AFP
Warsaw


Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk. (**Reuters/File Photo**)

Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk yesterday called upon conservative-nationalist president Karol Nawrocki to confirm judges to the country's highest court elected by Parliament, amid a constitutional crisis. It is necessary that "the President recognises the judges legally elected by the Sejm, because that is what the Constitution stipulates," Tusk wrote on X, adding Nawrocki should allow them to fulfil their duties at the Tribunal.

The head of government added the president was choosing "forceful confrontation" in choosing not to do so, "which could cost Poland very dearly".

Tusk, a former European Council president, has promised to resolve the constitutional crisis since his return to power in 2023. While parliament has elected new judges, not all have been allowed to swear an oath before the president, and the court remains controlled by the nationalist opposition.

The crisis surrounding the country's highest court has been dragging on since 2015. Appointments to the court have become highly politicised, leading domestic and international institutions to question its independence.

The court was at the heart of a standoff between Brussels and the nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) party during its time in office from 2015-2023.

In 2015, the PiS government appointed politically committed judges to the court, who are recognised neither by the EU nor by the current prime minister, centre-right Donald Tusk.

Issues surrounding the court rapidly escalated late last week when police were deployed around Poland's highest court and judicial and political authorities took steps affecting its leadership.

Conservative demonstrators who had been present on-site for weeks and members of Poland's right-wing and far-right opposition condemned the governments actions as a "*coup d'etat*" while the pro-European ruling coalition insisted these were necessary actions to preserving the rule of law.

Poland's justice minister and prosecutor general Waldemar Zurek called for the court's PiS-aligned president's immunity to be lifted, and a judge recently appointed by the ruling majority announced that she would serve as acting president and suspended president Bogdan Swieczkowski.

The deployment of law enforcement around the court took place while Nawrocki was on a plane bound for Senegal.

He immediately turned back and went to the court in the evening, forcing his way in despite opposition from some judges, and was greeted by enthusiastic applause from nationalist demonstrators gathered outside.

On Saturday the president convened consultations with political leaders, which produced no tangible results.

That same day, the European Commission sided with Tusk, calling on Nawrocki to validate the appointment of judges in order to break the deadlock.

Acting court president Anna Korwin-Piotrowska — who is not recognised by its former head Swieczkowski, nor by the nationalist opposition nor by the head of state — has called a general assembly of the Court today.

UN reports warn of large-scale damage to Earth's ice from climate change

Exceeding 1.5C of global warming will have "irreversible" consequences for glaciers, sea ice and the Earth's frozen regions, two UN reports warned yesterday, calling for urgent action. The landmark 2015 Paris Agreement commits the world to limiting warming to well below 2C and pursuing efforts to hold it at 1.5C to try to avoid the worst effects of climate change. One of the reports said overshooting the 1.5C target "will bring large-scale and in many cases irreversible impacts" for the cryosphere — Earth's ice in all its forms. Melting of glaciers and sea ice, the thawing of permafrost and the accelerating rise in sea levels, will have widespread repercussions, from flooding to water shortages.

Some of the effects of the rise in temperature are already visible, such as the 20-percent loss in glacial mass in Switzerland. But even if the 1.5C target remains relevant, it is already too high for the cryosphere, as current levels of warming were "already unsafe" for the Arctic, Antarctic, mountain glaciers and polar oceans, the UN warned. "Although returning to 1.5 C will slow ice loss, a truly 'safe' temperature for Earth's ice is now thought to be closer to 1C or even below over the coming centuries," it added. Global warming has already reached 1.37C above pre-industrial levels and according to the European Copernicus network, the 1.5C threshold could be exceeded around 2030. "There are no good outcomes in exceeding 1.5C," said glaciologist James Kirkham, lead author of one of the reports, entitled "Overshoot and the Cryosphere", which was written with 80 scientists.

"To contain the global fallout and damage from ice loss in the world's polar and mountain regions, overshoot needs to be kept to the absolute minimum," he said. "Every extra fraction of a degree and every year spent in overshoot means more devastating impacts."

Scientists warn in particular about the risks of crossing certain tipping points and say that, even if temperatures were to return to below the 1.5C threshold, recovery would be very slow. Reducing warming to under 1.5C and even 1C could see some glaciers partially regenerate, while there could also be benefits for sea ice. But Matthew England, an oceanographer and climatologist at the University of New South Wales in Australia, said recovery could take "decades to centuries". The second report — "State of the Cryosphere 2026. The Cost of Overshoot" — shows that exceeding 2.8C into the next century would have significant consequences. Sea levels could rise by up to five centimetres a year by 2150, compared to the current 0.45 centimetres while the thawing of permafrost could release as much carbon dioxide each year as the US, the world's second-largest polluter.

A worst-case but not-so-improbable scenario is that the world is heading towards warming of 2.6C by 2100 even if countries meet their climate commitments. "Temporarily exceeding 1.5C does not mean that the goals of the Paris Agreement are irrelevant but instead makes them more urgent," argued Kirkham. "Returning to 1.5C or below by 2100 remains possible with sufficient political ambition and urgency. (**AFP**)

Fridge cyberattack hits supermarkets in Europe

AFP
Stockholm

Grocery stores in at least seven European countries saw temperatures in their cold cases soar yesterday, with several confirming they had been hit by a cyberattack similar to one three weeks ago in France.

Supermarkets in Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Sweden were among those affected in the latest hacker attack.

Stores were forced to throw out food that had spoiled or risked being spoiled and restock their refrigeration units with fresh items.

Major French retailers said on October 12 that hundreds of store refrigeration systems were hit by a cyberattack, which also forced them to toss food and raised concerns about food security. No one has claimed responsibility for either attack.

Carrefour Belgium yesterday reported disruption in about 15 of its 700 stores. "It's a cyberattack, there is no other reason," said spokesman Mich Vergauwen. An Ikea Belgium spokeswoman likewise said a cyberattack hit its store in Mons, southwestern Belgium, causing the temperature of freezers to rise suddenly in the early hours of yesterday.

Chains Delhaize, Colruyt and Intermarche also experienced technical problems.

Ebola outbreak kills more than 5,300 people in Africa

AFP
Addis Ababa

Africa's latest Ebola outbreak has killed more than 5,300 people, the vast majority of them in the Democratic Republic of Congo, according to the continent's top health agency.

In mid-May, the DRC declared its 17th Ebola outbreak, a deadly disease transmitted through contact with bodily fluids that causes haemorrhagic fever and has killed more than 15,000 people in Africa over the past 50 years.

According to data shared with AFP by the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) yesterday, the outbreak, which has spread to other countries on the continent, has killed 5,376 people — 5,372 in the DRC and two each in Kenya and Uganda. A total of 10,444 cases have been confirmed, with a fatality rate of more than 50%.

Neighbouring Uganda recorded 20 cases, almost all involving people who had travelled from the DRC, before being declared Ebola-free in August.

In October, Kenya recorded nine infections, marking the first time the country had reported an Ebola case. That same month, Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, reported an Ebola case involving a 42-year-old Swiss woman whose husband works at the Swiss embassy in Abuja. The couple had travelled to Uganda before returning to Nigeria.

The outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, for which no approved vaccine or treatment is currently available.

In recent weeks, clinical trials have begun with the Ervebo vaccine, which has proved effective against Zaire strain of the virus.

UK adventurer ends 28-year trek to reunite with family

AFP
Kingston upon Hull, UK

British adventurer Karl Bushby enjoyed an emotional reunion with his mother and family yesterday as he arrived back home after a 28-year, 50,000-kilometre trek from South America, during which he crossed four continents on foot.

Cheers erupted as the 57-year-old former paratrooper was greeted in the street outside his mother's house in the northeastern UK port of Hull. Bushby, who set off on his odyssey from Chile in 1998, had two golden rules for his journey — to avoid all forms of transport to advance and not return until he completed his challenge.

He was met yesterday in the centre of Hull by a crowd of about 1,000 cheering people, and thanked everyone for all the support he had met along the way.


Karl Bushby embraces his mother, Angela outside her home. (**AFP**)

"I didn't do this alone," he said, adding it was a "global effort".

"You wouldn't believe just how many people have been involved in this, to get us around the kinds of obstacles that we face."

"We've faced down governments, we've faced down some of the hardest challenges."

The route back to his home city has seen him walk the length of the Americas, across the frozen Bering Strait from Alaska to Russia and then through parts of Central Asia and Europe, covering jungles, mountains and deserts.

He had already been applauded Sunday as he crossed the iconic Humber Bridge near Hull in thick mist, ahead of his final push into the city centre and then on to his mother's home.

He won praise from Hull Mayor Maria Coward, who spoke of the city's pride in his achievement.

"So many people have followed Karl on his epic journey. We have all felt inspired by his spirit, tenacity and dogged determination," Coward said.

Bushby was greeted by neighbours as he was reunited with his mother Angela at her home, as well as his 36-year-old son Adam and a 12-year-old granddaughter he had never met. "It's quite emotional. I'm proud of him and what he's done. What an achievement," neighbour Laura Chaplin 47, told AFP.

British leader Andy Burnham's spokesman said it was "an extraordinary achievement and the prime minister welcomes him back.

QATAR

Ashghal launches initiative to distribute Mashmoum plants

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) has launched an initiative to distribute Mashmoum plants to homes in areas where infrastructure projects are being implemented, as a gesture of appreciation for residents' co-operation and understanding throughout the construction period.

The initiative is part of Ashghal's corporate social responsibility efforts and aims to strengthen its engagement with local communities through a plant deeply rooted in Qatar's cultural heritage. It also aligns with the objectives of Qatar Sustainability Week, which runs from October 31 to November 7.

The initiative covers residential areas and neighbourhoods within the road and infrastructure development projects Ashghal is implementing across the country. Seedlings will be distributed gradually across these areas, with the Authority's engineers participating. This approach will create opportunities for direct interaction with residents, share the initiative's objectives, and encourage community participation.

Ameera al-Mushiri from Ashghal's Public Relations and Communication Department said: "This initiative expresses the Authority's appreciation for the co-operation and understanding shown by residents in project areas during construction works. It also reflects Ashghal's commitment to its social responsibility by strengthening its relationship



Engineer Fatema Salat

with the local community and implementing initiatives that positively impacts residents' lives."

The initiative also aims to revive the Mashmoum plant's presence in Qatari society, encourage families to grow it at home, and give younger generations the chance to learn about it and care for it. This helps strengthen their connection to the community's heritage, promotes sharing knowledge and experiences among family members, and passes down the tradition of planting and caring for Mashmoum from one generation to the next.

Ashghal encourages residents to document the stages of planting seedlings, their growth, and care, and to share memories and family experiences related to the Mashmoum plant, which helps spread interest in this plant and encourages more families to grow it. It also urges the public to follow Ashghal's official accounts to stay updated on the initiative's news, distribution coverage, and





community participation.

The initiative supports the objectives of Qatar Sustainability Week by encouraging community members to adopt everyday environmentally friendly practices, starting with planting and continuing with ongoing plant care. Residents' participation can turn this community gesture into a lasting impact at home while promoting home gardening across generations.

Engineer Fatema Salat, head of the Southern Areas Section at the Roads Projects Department, said the initiative comes alongside the continued implementation of road development and infrastructure projects across the country to meet residents' needs and accommodate urban expansion. These projects include developing internal roads and connecting them to main roads to facilitate travel and improve traffic flow. They also enhance road safety by providing street lighting, parking spaces, and pedestrian and cycling paths. In addition, the works include constructing and developing drainage networks, stormwater drainage systems, treated water networks, and other utility services.

The projects also include tree planting and beautification works, including planting trees, plants, and ground cover along roads and in surrounding areas. They also include providing irrigation networks using treated water, contributing to the expansion of green spaces and improving the overall appearance of the areas.

Ashghal has planted more than 51,400 trees and implemented approximately 6,793,000sq m of green spaces over the past five years across its projects. These efforts aim to provide a more sustainable and comfortable environment for residents and road users.



Mexican craft takes centre stage in Doha this Fall through Years of Culture

Mexican craft is taking centre stage across Doha this fall, with a programme of exhibitions, design collaborations, and culinary experiences exploring how skills passed down through generations continue to shape contemporary life. Presented as part of the Qatar, Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture, the programme introduces audiences to the people, materials, and ideas behind the work.

In both countries, makers are finding new applications for traditional techniques by connecting cultural heritage with the ways people live today.

At the heart of the programme is Expanded Tradition: Contemporary Craft Practices in Mexico, on view at M7 from 27 October to 26 December 2026. Curated by Ana Elena Mallet, the exhibition brings together 106 works by 26 makers and collectives from 12 Mexican states.

At MIHAD Gallery in Doha Design District, craft becomes part of the experience of sharing a meal. Panadería Rosetta, led by Mexican chef Elena Reygadas, brings the Mexico City bakery to Doha for its first residency in the city, from 05 to 15 November 2026. Its baking is presented alongside handmade ceramics and lighting by Mexican designer Perla Valtierra, connecting the food with the objects and surroundings in which it is enjoyed.

In Doha, visitors can experience The Sower, Laposse's installation at Fareej Al Asmakh. Curated by Mario Ballesteros, the installation unfolds in three parts. The past is represented by pearls and cochineal: two natural resources and two forms of ancestral knowledge that once connected Qatar and Mexico to world trade. The exhibition is on view during the Design Doha Biennale, from 5 November 2026 to 31 January 2027.

The Years of Culture partner-year model is built on exchange, and Mexico offers Qatar a mirror. Both countries have crafts shaped by harsh landscapes, family transmission and trade. (**QNA**)

Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail, Carolina Herrera unveil exclusive afternoon tea

Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail announces an exclusive collaboration with Carolina Herrera, bringing together the world of luxury fragrance and the art of afternoon tea in a distinctive experience at Peacock Alley.

Inspired by the best-sellers from the Herrera Confidential collection, Cedar Chic and Stallion Leather Suede, and the novelty Peccato Nobile, the limited-edition afternoon tea brings the character of each fragrance to life through an elegant collection of sweet and savoury creations.

Bringing together two renowned names in luxury, the collaboration celebrates craftsmanship, creativity and attention to detail. Developed in collaboration with Carolina Herrera, the experience has been thoughtfully designed as a complete afternoon tea journey, with the fragrances woven into each stage, from the moment guests arrive at Peacock Alley until the end of their visit.

Guests are welcomed into the world of Herrera Confidential with the opportunity to discover the three signature fragrances. The experience continues with an exclusive afternoon tea stand, where a collection of sweet and savoury creations showcases the culinary team's creativity and craftsmanship. Through distinctive flavours,



textures and presentation, each creation offers a different interpretation of the fragrances, bringing together the art of perfumery and the creativity of fine patisserie.

Set within the elegant surroundings of Peacock Alley, the collaboration reflects Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail's approach to hospitality, bringing together exceptional partners to create thoughtful, distinctive, and engaging experiences. The partnership with Carolina Herrera introduces a fresh expression of afternoon tea in Qatar, where fragrance and fine patisserie meet.

The exclusive Carolina Herrera Afternoon Tea is available at Peacock Alley at Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail for QR330 per stand, serving two guests. The experience includes a welcome drink and unlimited tea or two coffees.

QPO to organise concert at Katara today

The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) will perform alongside Colombian musicians at Katara's Drama Theatre today, showcasing Colombia's musical heritage while underscoring the role of international co-operation and intercultural dialogue in bringing communities closer together.

The concert, organised in collaboration with the embassy of the Republic of Colombia in Qatar, Qatar Music Academy and Katara Cultural Village, is part of an initiative to advance cultural and educational exchange through a series of musical and training activities.

The performance will conclude a joint programme featuring educational sessions, rehearsals and workshops at Qatar Music Academy, with the participation of QPO musicians. The activities give young Colombians an opportunity to develop their musical skills and exchange expertise with musicians and students in Qatar, while engaging directly with Academy students to strengthen artistic ties between the younger generations of both countries.

The programme features a selection of works rooted in Colombia's musical heritage, including "La Pollera Colorá", "Fiesta en Turbaco", "Mi Buenaventura", "La Lorenza", "Matildelina", "Atlántico" and "Colombia, Tierra Querida", alongside an array of internationally renowned musical works.



The initiative reflects QPO's commitment to supporting music education and opening up distinctive opportunities for young talent to learn, train and perform together. It also seeks to strengthen artistic connections among musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The event also underscores the instrumental role of cultural diplomacy in bringing societies closer through music, creating opportunities for interaction and an interchange of knowledge between young people and professional musicians, while familiarising audiences with different musical traditions. Its ambitions extend beyond artistic performances to building lasting cultural and human connections.

The initiative falls under the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Cultural and Sports Diplomacy Initiative, launched in 2011 to advance peace, social inclusion and artistic development through international cultural exchange.

Marking its 15th anniversary this year, the initiative provides children and young people in underserved communities across Colombia with opportunities to develop their artistic talents and take part in international cultural experiences.

Founded in 2007, QPO performs Western and Arab musical works at home and abroad. It seeks to inspire generations, encourage musical creativity and bring cultures closer together. (**QNA**)

Qatari chef takes traditional Regag to international art scene

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

From Qatar's kitchens to the international art scene, chef Noof al-Marri used Regag to introduce global audiences to the country's culinary traditions, blending familiar flavours with contemporary interpretations while preserving the dish's cultural identity.

A much-loved staple of Qatari cuisine, Regag offers an accessible entry point into the country's food heritage. At the recently held Art Basel Paris, al-Marri offered international visitors a new way to experience the traditional flatbread while discovering the stories and hospitality behind it.

"Regag is something familiar and much loved in Qatar, and I wanted to share that enjoyment with people who may never have tasted our food before. Its simplicity makes it the ideal introduction to the richness of Qatari cuisine," she told *Gulf Times*.

Al-Marri said she enjoys giving traditional dishes her own touch, and Regag offers plenty of room to experiment without losing its



Chef Noof al-Marri, whose menu was featured in the Qatar Lounge at Art Basel Paris 2026.
PICTURES: Qatar Museums

connection to the country's culinary roots.

For the Art Basel experience, she sought to make the dish both approachable and unexpected, presenting a fresh perspective on something deeply embedded in Qatari food culture.

"Guests do not need to know its history before enjoying it. For me, that first bite is an invitation to discover more," she said.

Adapting the experience for different Art Basel host cities also required understanding local food cultures and audience preferences.

Al-Marri said she explored ingredients and flavour combinations that reflected each city's culinary identity while keeping traditional Regag at the heart of every creation.

Her approach, she explained, is to introduce something new without compromising the original dish's character, particularly its delicate texture and the care involved in its preparation.

"My starting point is always the same: the food must retain its character," she said, adding that she wants people to feel comfortable trying something unfamiliar while discovering an important part of Qatari cuisine.

Regag, al-Marri noted, also embodies key aspects of Qatar's culinary culture, expressing an appreciation for simplicity, family traditions and the spirit of hospitality.

Although its ingredients may be modest, she pointed out that preparing the flatbread well requires skills and knowledge developed through practice and passed down across generations.

For al-Marri, the connection is deeply personal. Her passion for cooking began in her grandmother's kitchen, where she developed an appreciation for the people and memories behind traditional dishes.

She said food carries the stories of those who prepare and share it, making culinary heritage as much about family connections as ingredients and techniques.

"In Qatar, offering someone food is also a way of looking after them. Hospitality is in that personal gesture of preparing something and making sure a guest feels at home," she said.

Introducing Regag to international audiences, however, also comes with practical challenges, particularly during busy events where preparation and timing are essential.

Al-Marri said the flatbread must be prepared fresh and served immediately to preserve its signature thin and crisp texture.

Despite these demands, the response from first-time guests has been encouraging. Many are surprised by how light and crisp Regag is and become curious about how it's made and its place in Qatari cuisine.

For the chef, such conversations are as rewarding as seeing visitors enjoy the food, as they create opportunities to introduce them to



Chefs cooking regag at the Qatar Lounge at Art Basel Paris 2026.

other aspects of the country's culinary traditions.

She hopes the experience will encourage some guests to explore more Qatari dishes and eventually visit the country to experience its food and hospitality firsthand.

Al-Marri also sees contemporary interpretations of traditional dishes as an important way to preserve culinary heritage, provided they are rooted in an understanding of and respect for the original recipes.

She believes chefs must first recognise what gives a dish its identity, including its essential flavours and techniques, before introducing their own creative approaches.

With younger generations increasingly exposed to different food cultures, she said contemporary presentations could make traditional dishes more relevant to modern tastes and encourage people to rediscover familiar food.

"Heritage stays alive when people continue to cook and enjoy these dishes. Creativity can give them another reason to do so," she said.

Al-Marri believes Qatari chefs have an important role in communicating the country's cultural identity internationally.

Each dish, she said, offers an opportunity to share family traditions, generations of culinary knowledge and the generosity that underpins Qatari hospitality.

Cooking abroad also lets her honour those who taught her while sharing a personal connection to her country's traditions.

"I want guests to enjoy the food and leave with a sense of the people and culture behind it," she said.