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Qatar condemns Houthi missile attack on Madinah

Qatar has strongly condemned an attempt by Yemen's Houthi group to target Madinah in Saudi Arabia with a ballistic missile, describing it as a blatant provocation of Muslims, reckless disregard for civilian lives, a violation of Saudi sovereignty and a breach of international law.

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed Qatar's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and its support for all legitimate measures taken by the kingdom to safeguard its sovereignty, security, territorial integrity and interests.

The ministry stressed that Saudi Arabia's security is integral to Qatar's security and the collective security of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states. (**QNA**)

New wave of bomb hoaxes hit 27 flights across Europe

Hoax bomb threats hit at least 27 affected flights around Europe yesterday from Ireland to Bulgaria, the second wave this week, forcing some to make unplanned landings and prompting fighter jets to escort or intercept others.

While no country has attributed blame for the threats, they come as many European officials are accusing Russia of masterminding sabotage and "hybrid attacks" — often cheap, easily deniable and not expected to trigger an armed response. Denmark, Poland and Romania, all affected by yesterday's disruptions, have previously accused Moscow directly, while Germany blamed Russia for an attack on Leipzig airport in August. Britain has blamed Russia in the past but linked Iran to a suspected plot to attack a US air base. Both Russia and Iran deny any involvement.

Eric Schouten, head of the aviation security group Dyami, said most of the countries affected supported Ukraine in its war against Russia's invasion. "From a geopolitical view, I'm thinking, you always have to think about the scenario of hybrid warfare, where a country in this way — today we are looking at Russia, right? — is attacking us on multiple fronts, from railways to supermarkets to blood banks, most recently. The energy sector, the internet sector, and the aviation sector are among those," he said. (**Reuters**) Page 11

COMMUNITY
See Page 6

Amir reconstitutes QatarEnergy Board

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani issued yesterday Amiri Decision No. 42 of 2026, reconstituting the Board of Directors of QatarEnergy.

The decision stipulates that the QatarEnergy Board of Directors shall be reconstituted with His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani as Chairman and HE Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi as Vice-Chairman and Managing Director.

The Board shall also comprise HE Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari, HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad bin Qassim al-Thani, HE Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani, Nasser Khalil al-Jaidah, Ahmed Saif al-Sulaiti, Abdulaziz Jassim al-Muftah, and Abdulrahman Ahmed al-Shaibi as members.

The decision stipulates that the Board's term of membership shall be four years, renewable for one or more similar terms. The decision shall take effect from the date of its issuance and shall be published in the Official Gazette. (**QNA**)

PM pushes diplomacy in calls with Iran, UAE FMs

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani discussed bilateral relations and regional developments in a telephone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi yesterday.

The two officials reviewed co-operation between Qatar and Iran and ways to further strengthen ties, while exchanging views on diplomatic efforts and joint co-ordination aimed at reducing tensions and restoring security and stability in the region.

The PM reaffirmed Qatar's support for all diplomatic initiatives aimed at ensuring freedom of maritime navigation and paving the way for a comprehensive agreement to achieve lasting peace in the region.

Qatar has consistently advocated dialogue and diplomatic solutions to regional disputes, emphasising the importance of co-ordinated international efforts to prevent further escalation. The PM also held a telephone conversation with UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan.

The two leaders discussed bilateral co-operation and ways to strengthen it, as well as the latest regional developments, particularly diplomatic efforts and joint co-ordination aimed at de-escalating tensions and enhancing security and stability in the region. (**QNA**)

Amir performs Istisqa prayer



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani performed the Istisqa prayer along with crowds of worshippers at the Lusail prayer ground yesterday morning, reviving the Prophetic Sunnah of seeking rainfall from Allah the Almighty.

His Highness Personal Representative of HH the Amir Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa al-Thani, and HE Sheikh Jassim bin Khalifa al-Thani joined the Istisqa prayer.

HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, along with a number of Their Excellencies Sheikhs and Ministers, members of the Shura Council, dignitaries and senior officials, also performed the prayer.

In a sermon following the prayer, Sheikh Dr. Yahya Batti al-Nuaimi urged worshippers to turn to Allah with humility and repentance, noting that the delay in rainfall should remind people of their dependence on Allah and encourage them to seek forgiveness, increase charitable giving and engage in righteous deeds.

He also called on worshippers to be grateful for the blessing of water, conserve it and avoid waste. (**QNA**)

Qatar, Turkiye discuss defence ties



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani met Turkish Minister of National Defence Yasar Guler yesterday during an official visit to Turkiye. They discussed matters of mutual interest and ways to strengthen and develop bilateral co-operation. (**QNA**) Page 3

Qatar's water tech innovation efforts 'gaining momentum'

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Qatar's efforts to advance water technology innovation are gaining momentum as global startups engage with local industry leaders to develop solutions tailored to the country's challenging environmental conditions and operational requirements, a senior official at TotalEnergies Qatar said yesterday.

Yousef al-Jaber, vice-president, Innovation and Change Management at TotalEnergies E&P Qatar and director of Total Research Centre Qatar, highlighted the importance of connecting emerging technologies with real-world industry needs during a fireside chat as part of the Water Technology Accelerator programme Showcase at Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP).

In conversation with Moza al-Naemi, head of Climate Programme at QSTP, at the event, al-Jaber said: "Successful innovation requires more than technical capability. It also depends on understanding local conditions, regulatory frameworks and the operational challenges facing the energy sector.

"Qatar's geographical and environmental characteristics make it an important testing ground for water technologies, particularly given its arid climate, high temperatures, elevated salinity and humidity." To Page 5



Yousef al-Jaber in conversation with Moza al-Naemi. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen

Related story on Page 4

QR78,000 voucher widens the door to private schooling

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Qatar has put up to QR78,000 behind students with disabilities, unveiling a school voucher policy that widens access to private education, eases the pressure on family finances and binds every riyal to stricter standards of eligibility and accountability.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has launched the first edition of the policy for private schools and kindergartens, a regulatory framework that ties financial assistance to each student's individual educational needs.

Speaking at the launch, Assistant Undersecretary for Private Education Affairs Omar Abdulaziz al-Naama said the policy, rooted in Law No 7 of 2012 and its amendments and Cabinet Decision No 25 of 2023, would promote educational equity and make the most of support for Qatari students, particularly those with disabilities.

He said the framework would help families choose the right learning environment, setting out clear eligibility criteria, application procedures and the responsibilities of the ministry, schools and parents.

Al-Naama stressed that money alone is not enough: financial support must be matched by quality assurance, continuous monitoring and feedback from families and schools, so that transparency and accountability follow the riyal.

Director of the Private Schools and Kindergartens Department and Acting Director of the School Licensing Department Dr Rania Yousri Mohamed said the policy stands on three pillars: educational equity, financial empowerment of families and better quality through school performance monitoring.

It applies to Qatari students at every educational stage in participating private schools, with extra help for students with disabilities according to their assessed needs. Dr Rania said it would also open access to specialised academic, behavioural and psychological services, while protecting students' personal data. To Page 5

Ronaldo calls it a day

Cristiano Ronaldo has announced his retirement from international football, ending a 23-year association with Portugal's national team after a falling-out with coach Jorge Jesus.

Ronaldo, 41, leaves as the men's national team's all-time leader in goals (146) and appearances (234).

In a video posted on Instagram, he said the time had come to return the No. 7 shirt to the Portuguese people, adding that he had never felt it belonged to him alone.

He said he had been privileged to wear it for 23 years, defending it and carrying it to stadiums around the world, and that the time had come to pass it on to the future.

He described the decision as one made not only with the head but also with the heart.



The announcement comes a day before Jesus names his squad for Nations League matches against Denmark and Wales, and follows a 30-day suspension Ronaldo is serving for walking out on the national team. Sport Page 1

QATAR

Municipality minister meets Benin envoy



HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah met yesterday with the ambassador of the Republic of Benin to the State of Qatar, Nouhom Youssoufou Abdulrahmani. The meeting addressed Qatar-Benin co-operation in spheres of mutual interest. (**QNA**)

Al-Khulaifi holds phone call with Indonesian FM

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Khulaifi held a phone call yesterday with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Arrmanatha Nasir.

At the beginning of the call, HE Dr al-Khulaifi congratulated the Indonesian foreign minister on assuming his new position, wishing him success in his duties.

During the call, the two sides reviewed the bilateral cooperative relations and ways to support and strengthen them. They also discussed the latest regional and international developments, most notably the situation in the Gaza Strip, the occupied Palestinian territories, and Afghanistan, along with a number of other issues of common interest.

Dr al-Khulaifi affirmed the State of Qatar's support for all diplomatic efforts and initiatives aimed at reaching a solution that ensures freedom of maritime navigation and paves the way for a comprehensive agreement to achieve sustainable peace in the region. (**QNA**)

Amir congratulates president of Bulgaria

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Than sent cables of congratulations to Iliana Iotova on the occasion of her victory in the presidential election in the Republic of Bulgaria, wishing her success in carrying out her duties and the relations between the two countries further progress and prosperity. (**QNA**)

Qatar participates in Gulf meeting on establishing strategic reserve zones



The State of Qatar participated in the joint extraordinary meeting of the ministerial committees tasked with studying the establishment of Gulf strategic reserve zones for food, medicine, and other essential commodities. The meeting was held today via video conference, with the participation of the ministers and representatives from the member states of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC).

HE the Minister of Municipality, Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah, headed Qatari delegation in the meeting.

The meeting examined the items on its agenda.

HE al-Attiyah presented several insights and proposals that contributed to shaping the final recommendations, which aim to enhance Gulf integration and co-ordination in the areas of food security and strategic reserves, while strengthening the readiness of GCC states and the sustainability of supply chains to address future challenges.

The recommendations will be submitted to the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council for consideration and potential adoption. (**QNA**)



Justice minister launches legal journal's new website

HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Ibrahim bin Ali bin Issa al-Hassan al-Mohannadi, yesterday launched the new website for 'The Legal and Judicial Journal'. The launch took place during a graduation ceremony for participants in the qualifying and mandatory training programmes organised by the ministry's Center for Legal and Judicial Studies. This initiative establishes a digital platform for the journal, facilitating access to its scholarly content and broadening its utility for researchers and legal practitioners.

The website is the first of its kind for the journal, which is dedicated to publishing peer-reviewed legal research and studies, supporting legal scientific inquiry among academics and specialists, and disseminating legal knowledge across various segments of society. The journal is published by the Center for Legal and Judicial Studies. It is a specialised, peer-reviewed academic journal issued semi-annually, with its first edition dating back to 2007.

The journal features sections dedicated to research, studies, and legal commentaries, with contributions from law professors, members of the judiciary and the Public Prosecution, lawyers, and other researchers in the legal field. It serves as a platform for presenting specialised studies on legal and judicial issues, encompassing analytical and comparative legal research, as well as expert commentaries on legislation, judicial rulings, and international agreements.

Furthermore, the journal includes a section titled "From the Rulings of the Court of Cassation," which publishes significant judgments from the Qatari Court of Cassation along with the legal principles derived from them. It also features a section for legal opinions (fatwas), presenting key legal interpretations issued by the Department of Legal Opinions and Studies at the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, accompanied by analyses and the legal principles established therein.

The launch of this website is part of the Ministry of Justice's efforts to advance digital transformation, in alignment with the objectives of its 2025-2030 strategic plan. By leveraging modern technology to enhance legal services and facilitate access to legal and judicial knowledge, the initiative supports the Ministry's commitment to fostering institutional excellence and embedding a culture of innovation and continuous development. (**QNA**)

QICCA discusses solidifying Qatar's position as hub for dispute resolution

The Qatar International Center for Conciliation and Arbitration (QICCA) examined the latest developments in the field of international arbitration and the promotion of the exchange of expertise among experts, practitioners, and academics to advance arbitration practices and reinforce the State of Qatar's position as a regional and international hub for dispute resolution.

Held as part of the activities accompanying the Sixth World Conference on International Arbitration, the seminar was attended by HE Vice-Chairman of QICCA Sheikh Dr Thani bin Ali al-Thani and Secretary-General Ibrahim Shahbek, alongside a distinguished group of legal experts, arbitration practitioners, and students from Qatar University and Lusail University. (**QNA**)

Ministry highlights vital role of youth in tackling climate change

Assistant Undersecretary for Climate Change Affairs in the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), Engineer Ahmad Mohammed al-Sada, emphasised the vital role of youth as key partners in formulating and executing climate change solutions. He underscored Qatar's commitment to supporting youth initiatives, advancing scientific research, fostering entrepreneurship, and developing green economy skills.

These remarks were made during the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's participation in the "Doha Climate Talks presents the Youth Climate Summit", organised by the Arab Youth Climate Movement in Qatar. The event brought together ambassadors, climate experts, entrepreneurs, and youth representatives to exchange innovative ideas for environmental sustainability.

In his address, al-Sada explained that the State of Qatar continues to address climate change in alignment with Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Third National Development Strategy, while adhering to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement, and principles of climate equity. These commitments are reflected in national policies and projects that enhance energy efficiency, renewable energy expansion, low-emission technologies, ecosystem protection, and climate adaptation.

He pointed out that dedicating this edition of the Doha Climate Talks to a youth summit reaffirms the central role that younger generations play in climate action. Qatar sustains its constructive engagement in international climate negotiations and the importance of strengthening the implementation of commitments arising from the Paris Agreement ahead of the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) in Antalya, Republic of Turkiye, balancing global climate targets with sustainable development and national interests.



He also praised the bilateral cooperation between Qatar and the Federal Republic of Germany, highlighting the value of international and community partnerships in addressing climate challenges, fostering the exchange of expertise, and supporting youth-led initiatives.

The event agenda featured three panel discussions covering climate diplomacy, the role of youth in climate action, as well as opportunities for green jobs and youth entrepreneurship. Discussions also addressed nature and sustainability within the Gulf, including sustainable land use, nature-based solutions, and enhancing resilience in the water sector.

Additionally, the event included interactive workshops on the causes and impacts of climate change, the principles of a circular economy, and zero-waste design in Qatar. These sessions explored the role of youth in developing innovative environmental solutions. The program also featured a field visit to showcase sustainable desert hospitality practices and the preservation of natural ecosystems.

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's participation in this event is part of its ongoing efforts to promote environmental awareness, empower youth to actively address environmental challenges, and support innovative youth-led and community initiatives that aim to achieve sustainable development goals and protect natural resources. (**QNA**)

Qatar launches 'National Product Week' to back local industries

Qatar's Ministry of Commerce and Industry has launched a national initiative aimed at supporting domestic industries and sustainability amid plans to localise supply chains and strengthen self-sufficiency.

The National Product Week campaign was held under the slogan "From Us, For Us - The Story Begins in Qatar", focusing on motivating consumers to purchase locally made goods and promoting economic diversification across various sectors.



Speaking at the opening ceremony, Assistant Undersecretary for Industry and Business Development Saleh al-Khulaifi said the initiative aligned with the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030, the Third National Development Strategy and the Qatar National Manufacturing Strategy 2024-2030.

Al-Khulaifi added that the importance of domestic industries had become particularly evident during the recent regional crisis and the supply chain disruptions.

Qatari factories, he added, had demonstrated their ability to maintain production and respond to increased demand for essential goods, helping stabilise local markets and ensure continuity of supplies.

For his part, Director of the National Product Competitiveness Support Department Dr Mohammed al-Bousham al-Sayed said the initiative formed part of broader efforts to strengthen the competitiveness of Qatari products and expand their presence in local and international markets.

He explained that the ministry was working on an integrated approach involving assessments of domestic industries, identifying challenges and developing initiatives and solutions to support industrial competitiveness and growth in co-ordination with relevant authorities.

He added that these efforts included protecting national industries against harmful trade practices and unfair competition through trade remedies, alongside raising awareness among industrial businesses about available protection mechanisms.

Al-Sayed also highlighted the positive impact of previous editions of National Product Week, revealing that some participating retail outlets recorded increases of up to 75 percent in sales of national products during 2025.

The opening ceremony, attended by representatives of government entities and the private sector, featured a presentation on Qatari products and workshops organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Finance and Qatar Development Bank.

The event also included exhibition stands showcasing a range of products manufactured by participating Qatari factories.

As part of the initiative, three dedicated retail outlets for Qatari products were inaugurated at Lulu Hypermarket in Al Gharrafa, Monoprix at Place Vendome and Al Meera in Ain Khaled.

Two additional outlets are scheduled to open on Friday at Carrefour in City Center Mall and Rawabi in Al Gharrafa.

The program will also include field visits for school students to national factories next week, in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. (**QNA**)

Qatar participates in 7th World Media Summit in Beijing

QNA
Beijing



The State of Qatar is taking part in the 7th World Media Summit, which opened in Beijing under the theme "Media in the Intelligent Age: From Consensus to Action", bringing together leading media organisations and industry figures to address the far-reaching transformation of the media landscape driven by artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.

Qatar is represented at the summit by HE the Director-General of Qatar News Agency (QNA) Ahmed bin Saeed al-Rumaihi.

Organised by Xinhua News Agency in co-operation with the People's Government of Beijing Municipality, the five-day summit is examining the future of the media industry amid the rapid evolution of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, with discussions centred on the transformation of global media, the application of AI in news production and communication, and efforts to strengthen international media cooperation and technological innovation.

In his opening remarks, Vice-President of Xinhua New Agency Huo Xiaoguang said artificial intelligence is reshaping patterns of production and daily life, as well as the ways knowledge is produced, presenting traditional media with both new opportunities and challenges.

He stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation among media organisations and expanding the production and distribution of high-quality news content to keep pace with the rapid transformation driven by AI and other emerging technologies.

He also called for safeguarding media credibility, strengthening the verification of news and information, and conducting joint interviews, while advancing innovation and broadening participation in harnessing technological progress to foster greater understanding among civilisations.

On the sidelines of the summit, Ahmed bin Saeed al-Rumaihi met with Xinhua Vice-President Huo Xiaoguang to explore avenues for strengthening co-operation between the two news agencies and advancing the exchange of expertise in media and technology. The meeting also addressed opportunities to harness emerging technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) in news operations.

The summit also saw the launch of the world's first bionic humanoid robot news anchors, alongside a research initiative focusing on mobile phone-based news photography and the verification of media content authenticity. The developments highlight the rapid integration of emerging technologies into news production amid growing challenges in verifying the authenticity of AI-generated images and videos. (**QNA**)

Deputy PM meets president of Turkish Defence Industries



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani met yesterday with President of the Turkish Defence Industries Professor Haluk Gorgun, during his official visit to the Republic of Turkiye. The meeting addressed topics of mutual interest to both sides as well as ways to strengthen and develop them. (**QNA**)

Deputy PM meets Turkish FM



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani met yesterday with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkiye Hakan Fidan, during his official visit to Turkiye. During the meeting, the two sides discussed topics of mutual interest and explored ways to bolster and further develop bilateral co-operation. (**QNA**)

Multaqa Al-Ruwwad championship concluded



The Military Sports Federation concluded the Armed Forces Officers' Multaqa Al-Ruwwad running and walking championship at Al Bidda Park.
The event brought together teams from various units of the Qatar Armed Forces and a team from the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya).
The closing ceremony was attended by President of the Federation Major General (Dr) Yousef Desmal al-Kuwari, along with several senior officers from the Qatar Armed Forces.
In the final standings, the Lekhwiya team took first place in the officers' category, followed by the Qatar Amiri Air Force team in second and the Office of the Chief of Staff team in third.
The championship is part of a series of sporting activities organised by the Military Sports Federation to promote physical activity and foster a spirit of competition among members of the Armed Forces. (**QNA**)



Qatar attends GCC health ministers meeting



The State of Qatar participated yesterday in an extraordinary meeting of Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) Health Ministers Committee, held via videoconference. HE the Minister of Public Health Mansoor bin Ebrahim al-Mahmoud led the State of Qatar's delegation to the meeting. The meeting focused on a proposal to establish GCC strategic reserves for food, medicines, and other essential supplies. (**QNA**)

Qatar, Greece announce plans to launch annual strategic dialogue

The State of Qatar and the Hellenic Republic held their first policy dialogue, at the conclusion of which they announced plans to launch an annual strategic dialogue as a framework for deepening bilateral co-operation and advancing shared priorities.

The Qatari side was co-chaired by the Director of the Policy Planning Department Dr Khalid bin Fahad al-Khater, and the Director of the European Affairs Department Fahad bin Mohammed Kafoud, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Greek side was headed by the Director of the A6 Directorate for Arab Countries and the Middle East at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic Ioannis Foivos Georgakakis.

Both sides affirmed that the strategic dialogue builds on the positive momentum generated by the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Athens in April 2026, reflecting the strength of relations between the two friendly countries and their shared aspiration to develop a future partnership that delivers mutual benefits to their peoples.

They also underscored their partnership in promoting peace, security and stability through diplomacy and dialogue, as well as their shared interest in strengthening their roles as trusted partners contributing to consolidating stability at the regional and international levels.

Qatar and Greece hold their first policy dialogue

They reaffirmed their commitment to international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and to safeguarding freedom of navigation and maritime security, particularly in vital international shipping lanes.

The two sides also expressed their determination to translate shared priorities into practical cooperation and tangible outcomes by strengthening collaboration in the fields of trade, investment, defence, security, technology and innovation, public health, culture, sports and education.

They noted that the annual strategic dialogue would open a new chapter in bilateral relations, providing a platform for constructive communication and mutually beneficial cooperation, while further developing the partnership between the two countries. (**QNA**)

GU-Q to explore Al Zubarah's archaeological significance

Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) will host a discussion exploring the archaeological significance of Al Zubarah and its history as a centre of trade and exchange connecting Qatar to the wider world.

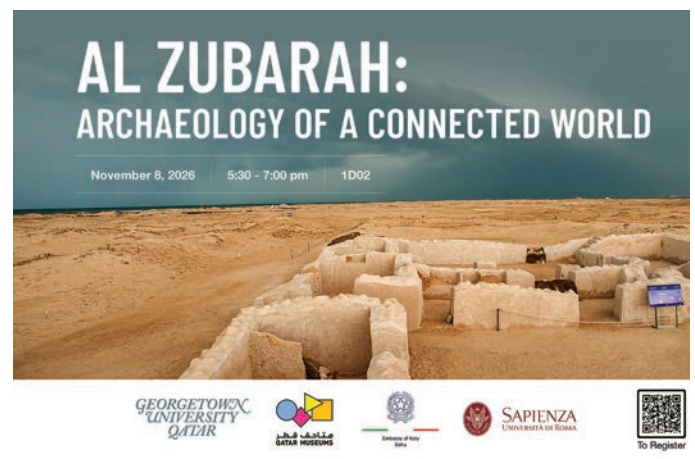
Titled "Al Zubarah: Archaeology of a Connected World", the event will explore the history of Al Zubarah, an 18th-century coastal town that became one of the Gulf's most important pearling and trading centres. Located northwest of Doha, the Unesco World Heritage site offers a rare, remarkably well-preserved record of life in Qatar before the oil era, including the homes, mosques, markets and fortifications of a community whose trade networks extended across the Indian Ocean, Arabia and Western Asia. Destroyed in 1811 and eventually abandoned, the town was largely preserved beneath desert sands. International scholars, heritage specialists and Georgetown faculty will discuss what archaeological research at the site reveals about the people who lived there, the networks that connected them and the history of the Gulf.

Dr Marco Ramazzotti, Associate Professor of Archaeology and Art History of the Ancient Near East at Sapienza University of Rome, will present his team's archaeological research on Al Zubarah. Dr Robert Carter, Deputy Director of Heritage and Archaeological Research at Qatar Museums, will discuss the site's historical importance, while Dr Ferhan Sakal, Head of Excavation and Site Management at Qatar Museums, will share findings from earlier excavations.

The programme will also feature Paolo Toschi, Italy's ambassador to Qatar, alongside Georgetown faculty members Firat Oruç, associate teaching professor of Culture and Theory; Gerd Nonneman, professor of International Relations and Gulf Studies; Ian Almond, professor of World Literature; and Dr Maryam Alsada, adjunct lecturer.

Recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage site, Al Zubarah offers an important record of the Gulf's commercial and maritime history. Its archaeological remains provide insight into the communities and trade networks that connected the region to wider circuits of exchange.

The discussion will take place on November 8 from 5.30-7pm at Room 1D02, on the first floor of GU-Q.



Cabinet's General Secretariat obtains ISO certification for Information Security Management System

The General Secretariat of the Cabinet has obtained ISO/IEC 27001 certification for its Information Security Management System, reflecting its commitment to implementing international standards in information protection and strengthening corporate governance, thereby supporting operational efficiency and reinforcing confidence in its digital environment.

This achievement comes as part of the General Secretariat's efforts to develop its information security framework by strengthening organisational and technical measures, implementing the necessary controls to mitigate risks, and ensuring the confidentiality, integrity and availability of data, thereby supporting business continuity.

On this occasion, Director of the Information Systems Department at the General Secretariat of the Cabinet, Alshayma Ahmed al-Malki, affirmed that obtaining this certification marks an important milestone in the development of the General Secretariat's information security framework and reflects its commitment to enhancing the efficiency of its systems and approved policies in line with an institutional approach that keeps pace with evolving cybersecurity requirements.

Information Systems Department continues its efforts to enhance technical readiness, develop mechanisms for responding to cyber threats, and raise employee awareness of safe practices, recognising the human element as an essential partner in maintaining digital environment security and supporting digital transformation, she added.

ISO/IEC 27001 is an internationally recognised standard for information security management systems. It specifies the requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining and continually improving these systems, based on risk assessment and treatment in accordance with defined controls and procedures.

The Cabinet's General Secretariat continues its efforts to adopt modern technological solutions and enhance its institutional performance, thereby improving operational efficiency and supporting the transition towards a secure and reliable digital environment that keeps pace with technological advancements and the country's digital transformation objectives. (**QNA**)

HMC concludes Int'l congress on healthy ageing and geriatric rehabilitation 2026

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) has successfully concluded the International Congress on Healthy Ageing and Geriatric Rehabilitation 2026 (IC-HAGR 2026), organised by HMC's Rumailah Hospital under the theme "Transforming Global Care through Innovation and Function."

The Congress was held at the Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel from October 29-31, bringing together a wide range of experts, healthcare professionals and researchers from Qatar and around the world. It was preceded by a pre-event held on October 28 at the Itqan Clinical Simulation and Innovation Centre.

The Congress explored the latest scientific developments and medical practices in healthy ageing, brain health, dementia, and geriatric rehabilitation, with a particular focus on Functional Longevity across medical disciplines.

The inaugural ceremony welcomed leaders from HMC, the Ministry of Public Health, Primary Health Care Corporation, private healthcare organisations, and the wider social care sector. A senior Qatari community member served as Master of Ceremonies, reinforcing the importance of involving older adults and ensuring their voices are heard in discussions concerning their care.

Hamad Medical Corporation
HEALTH • EDUCATION • RESEARCH

Prof Hanadi al-Hamad, Congress Chair, HMC's Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Long-Term Care, Rehabilitation and Geriatrics, and Medical Director of Rumailah Hospital, said: "Our focus is not only on helping people live longer, but also on ensuring that they maintain their functional abilities, independence and quality of life. Through Functional Longevity, evidence-based practice and multidisciplinary collaboration, we aim to transform healthy ageing into meaningful outcomes for older adults and support a future where longer lives are healthier and more fulfilling."

The scientific sessions emphasised the importance of shifting the focus from merely extending life expectancy to improving quality of life throughout the ageing process. Discussions highlighted the need to preserve older adults' mobility, cognitive abilities and independence in performing daily activities, as well as the critical role of early intervention and preventive healthcare in maintaining health and functional capacity with advancing age.

The Congress also addressed several emerging areas, including precision geriatric medicine, frailty, neurorehabilitation, digital health and applications of artificial intelligence in healthcare. Other key topics included community-based care, integrated healthcare delivery and the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration in addressing the complex and diverse healthcare needs of older adults.

Participants further explored the importance of integrating healthcare, rehabilitation and long-term care services to ensure continuity of care across different stages of the healthcare journey. Such integration is essential to preserve functional abilities, promote independence, and improve overall health outcomes among older adults.

The Congress also featured oral scientific presentations and research posters covering topics aligned with its principal themes. The closing ceremony included the announcement of the winners of the scientific presentation and research poster awards.

QATAR

Minister of Interior attends closing of 'Watan 2026'



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani attended yesterday the closing of the 6th edition of the Watan exercise (Watan 2026). A Lineup of ministers, senior officials, and commanders from the state's military, security, and civilian sectors, attended the event along with officials and representatives from the French side. The exercise comprised preliminary tabletop phases, followed by field exercises that simulated realistic scenarios for addressing security challenges and emergencies. These activities were designed to test operational readiness, enhance the integration of roles, and improve the efficiency of the national response system. (**QNA**)



WaterTech startups present water security solutions

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Several startups from around the globe presented water security solutions at a special gathering at Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), a member of Qatar Foundation, yesterday.

Held in partnership with TotalEnergies, the Final Showcase of the QSTP x TotalEnergies WaterTech Accelerator saw several startups highlight their innovative solutions and how Qatar can adopt them. They also noted that these solutions are fine-tuned for Qatar's local conditions, including the country's and region's prevailing climatic and environmental conditions.

Representatives of each startup were given a set slot and time to present their ideas and how they can connect with Qatar's prevailing demands and needs. It also gave industry leaders, participants, and other guests a general idea of each startup and its special features. The event also included a networking session where startup representatives could connect with others and share more details about their projects.

The accelerator programme brought its cohort of 11 growth-stage WaterTech startups to Qatar for the Doha Immersion Week, connecting founders with the country's water, research and innovation ecosystem. The participating companies are developing solutions to address a range of water challenges, from generating drinking water from atmospheric moisture and recovering water and valuable resources from industrial brine, to reducing water losses and advancing water quality monitoring.

The Final Showcase brought the cohort together with industry leaders, investors and ecosystem stakeholders. Featuring a fireside chat with TotalEnergies and presentations from the participating founders, the event highlighted the technologies developed throughout the accelerator and their potential relevance to Qatar's water priorities. It also provided an opportunity to explore their practical applications and pathways for future pilots and partnerships.

The programme included visits to the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute Water Centre for a laboratory tour, TotalEnergies' offices and Msheireb Downtown Doha to explore its Smart City infrastructure. Founders also engaged with representatives from Earthna, Kahramaa and Ashghal through discussions and networking sessions, exploring Qatar's water priorities and potential opportunities for collaboration and piloting.



Moza al-Naemi.

Moza al-Naemi, head of Climate Programme at QSTP, said: "The accelerator reflects the importance of bringing technology innovators closer to industry and the markets they aim to serve. Through the Doha Immersion Week, we have created opportunities for meaningful engagement between the founders and Qatar's water ecosystem, helping connect promising technologies with local priorities and exploring pathways for their application. This is an important step towards advancing solutions that can contribute to the future of water sustainability in Qatar and across the region."

Following the Doha engagement, the accelerator will continue with an immersion week in Morocco from November 16 to 18, giving founders more opportunities to connect with regional stakeholders and explore collaboration across the region.



Some of the officials and guests during the event. **PICTURES**: Thajudheen



Qatar attends GCC culture ministers' meeting

Qatar has taken part in a Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) meeting aimed at promoting cultural co-operation among the bloc's member states. HE Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani attended the 30th meeting of GCC Ministers of Culture, which took place yesterday in the Bahraini capital, Manama.

The meeting was chaired by Chairman of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities Sheikh Khalifah bin Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Khalifah, who is also the current president of the GCC Committee of Ministers of Culture. GCC Secretary-General Jasem Mohamed Albudaiwi was in attendance. Discussions focused on enhancing co-ordination and integration, developing the cultural sector, supporting cultural and creative industries, and expanding the international presence of Gulf culture.

In his address, Albudaiwi said GCC countries shared a rich civilisational heritage and a well-established cultural identity that served as a source of strength and social cohesion.

He highlighted achievements in developing cultural institutions, preserving heritage, supporting creativity and launching specialised cultural initiatives across the region.

Citing statistical indicators, Albudaiwi said the member states collectively had nearly 300 museums and more than 170 public libraries. Cultural events across the Gulf attracted over 5.5mn visitors and featured the participation of more than 8,000 exhibitors and publishing houses.

He also highlighted the importance of the GCC Cultural and Creative Industries Action Plan for 2027-2030.

The plan also includes developing the GCC Cultural and Creative Industries Index and a cultural statistics platform to establish a shared information database that can support planning and decision-making, as well as assess the cultural sector's contribution to GCC economies. (**QNA**)

New Jeep models bring refreshed design, power and tech

Jeep is introducing the refreshed Grand Wagoneer and Grand Cherokee to the GCC. The updated models bring a new era of refinement, capability and power designed for families across the region.

Youssef Bouhaddioui, regional brand director, American & Italian Brands, Stellantis Middle East, said: "For 85 trailblazing years, Jeep's vehicles have been designed for adventure, capability and freedom. Families across the GCC have always been clear about what they expect from an SUV: space for everyone, comfort on long journeys, premium craftsmanship and the capability to go anywhere. In line with the customer centricity at the heart of our FaSTLAne 2030 strategy, at Jeep we listen closely to our customers' needs and anticipate what they will look for next, and the new Grand Wagoneer and Grand Cherokee reflect exactly that. As Jeep celebrates its 85th anniversary, these launches deliver what customers in our region want, while carrying forward the adventurous spirit that has defined the brand since 1941."

The Jeep brand is taking a bold step to simplify and strengthen its SUV lineup by fully integrating the Grand Wagoneer under a unified flagship name: Jeep Grand Wagoneer. Starting with this model, every Grand Wagoneer will proudly wear the Jeep badge, reinforcing its place among the brand's most iconic vehicles and creating a more cohesive experience for customers and dealers.

The Grand Wagoneer is powered by an award-winning 3.0-litre Hurricane twin-turbo inline six-cylinder engine in Standard Output (SO) configuration, delivering 420 horsepower and 635 Nm of torque, plus best-in-class available towing capacity up to 4,536 kg. Engineered for optimised fuel economy through technologies such as cooled exhaust gas recirculation (EGR).

The new model ushers in a new era of elevated SUV design, redefining its presence with a commanding, upright stance and a sophisticated, high-tech, confident aesthetic.

One of the most significant design shifts is the introduction of a chrome-free exterior, a first for Grand Wagoneer. As the design team embraced more sustainable materials and processes, the shift to "no chrome" marks a bold move toward a cleaner, more responsible and modern expression of luxury.





The GCC launch offering includes two Grand Wagoneer trims: Limited Reserve and Summit Reserve, with distinct interior finishes: black with Sea Salt and all black.

The Summit Reserve continues the theme of refinement with a premium interior and Dark Waxed Walnut, open-pore real wood as the primary decorative trim. It introduces a bold new interior palette of black, Tupelo and Dark Ruby Red (late availability). The model enhances the driving experience with standard premium features, including a state-of-the-art 23-speaker McIntosh audio system, ventilated rear seating, an integrated front console cooler, a front passenger display, and a sophisticated black appearance.

The Limited Reserve combines premium appointments with a distinctive black appearance package. Features include a 19-speaker McIntosh audio system, a tri-pane sunroof, power-deployable running boards, and a head-up display (HUD).

The new Grand Wagoneer also introduces a new, larger HUD that enhances the driving experience with a significantly larger field of view and a virtual image distance twice that of previous versions. Standard on Limited Reserve and Summit Reserve, this advanced HUD reflects the brand's commitment to cutting-edge technology and driver-centric design, offering improved visibility and a more immersive interface.

The refreshed Jeep Grand Cherokee returns with an updated design, new cabin technology, and a simplified trim lineup. Its new 2.0-litre Hurricane 4 Turbo engine delivers 324 horsepower and 450 Nm of torque.

The Grand Cherokee's signature seven-slot grille remains at the heart of its design, joined by redesigned headlamps, updated fascias and new exterior trim finishes.

Inside, a new 12.3-inch infotainment touchscreen and a reworked cabin elevate its technology offering. Available features include a 10.25-inch passenger display, Active Driving Assist technology and a premium McIntosh 19-speaker sound system.

The GCC launch lineup includes Limited, Limited Reserve and Summit. New exterior paint finishes include Steel Blue, Copper Shino and Fathom Blue.

The Limited pairs 20-inch alloy wheels with a dual-pane panoramic sunroof, ventilated front seats and ambient LED lighting. A digital rearview mirror, 360-degree surround-view camera system and integrated off-road camera support visibility, while Selec-Terrain™ and a nine-speaker audio system with a subwoofer and 506-watt amplifier add to the drive.

New to the lineup, the Limited Reserve sits between Limited and Summit, adding a more refined mix of comfort and technology. It builds on Limited with 20-inch black wheels and Global Black Nappa leather seats, while retaining active noise control and a head-up display, along with power massaging front seats and Night Vision with pedestrian and animal detection.

The Summit tops the range with Palermo leather, a deluxe headliner, ventilated rear seats and 21-inch alloy wheels. Quadra-Lift air suspension, a front passenger interactive display, drowsy driver detection, and four-zone automatic temperature control add comfort and technology. A 19-speaker McIntosh audio system with a 950-watt amplifier completes the package.

The three-row new Grand Cherokee L is offered in Limited and Summit trims in the regional lineup. These models feature third-row USB charging ports and a 60/40 split second-row bench seat, alongside the latest technology and convenience updates.

Grand Cherokee L builds on the Jeep brand's legacy of cargo-friendly family haulers, combining best-in-class second-row legroom, more passenger volume and more cargo room behind the third row than competitor SUVs.

Availability

For local availability, trim specifications, and pricing for the new Jeep Grand Wagoneer and Grand Cherokee, customers can contact authorised Jeep dealers in their GCC market.

Weekend vibes at Lusail Promenade





The vibrant Lusail Marina Promenade comes alive as the sun dips below the horizon. Spanning 4-km of scenic coastline, this bustling waterfront escape seamlessly blends fitness tracks, striking architecture, and lively food trucks, making it the perfect destination to unwind, stay active, and soak in the evening coastal views. **PICTURES**: Thajudheen

Tankers hit in Hormuz as Iran keeps up pressure after US vote

Reuters
Dubai

Iran reported three more tankers had been damaged in the Strait of Hormuz yesterday, making clear that shipping would remain in peril as long as the war in the Gulf is unresolved, now that US voters have punished President Donald Trump for waging it.

The electoral rout that cost Trump's Republicans control of Congress has prompted a stark reassessment of the conflict's political cost in Washington, led by Vice-President JD Vance, who said in a long social media post on Wednesday that the war was to blame for his party's defeat.

In a mocking reply yesterday, Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Vance's opposite number at previous peace talks, accused Vance of letting Trump double down like a "losing gambler" by planning more US strikes.

If Vance believed the war was a mistake he should persuade Trump to call it off, Ghalibaf said: "Skip the TED talk. Why not say this to your boss?"

Meanwhile, attacks on tankers in the Gulf are still running close to a record pace. At least five vessels have reported incidents since Sunday, according to UK maritime security agency UKMTO, around the same rate as in October when the agency said 35 vessels were hit, the most of any month of the war.

The UKMTO reported that a vessel had been struck by two unidentified projectiles late on Wednesday.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards, who do not typically acknowledge firing on merchant ships but say the transit route is unsafe without Tehran's consent, said two tankers had struck naval mines and another had caught fire yesterday.

On Wednesday Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei said there should not be "even the slightest inclination towards submission" to the United States, which he said would remain hostile towards Iran no matter which party was in power.

When asked about Vance's comments on the war on Wednesday, Trump defended the decision to launch it, saying it was important to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, a justification he has repeatedly cited.

A White House adviser told Reuters that some officials and staff inside the White House viewed Vance's post as a foreign policy break from the president and a public recognition of the war's economic consequences.

But two sources told Reuters they believed Trump was still likely to order resumed hostilities.

"He is planning to bomb Iran. Don't listen to what he's saying. He held off because of the midterms. We asked him to hold off until the midterms," said one of the sources. The other said Trump did not have anything to lose politically now that the midterms were over.

Peacemaking efforts have revolved around the future status of the strait, a US blockade on Iranian ports, sanctions on the Islamic Republic and a resumption of negotiations over Tehran's nuclear programme.

A senior Iranian official said this week that the two sides remain far apart.

Saudi coalition intercepts missile fired at Madinah

AFP
Riyadh

The Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Houthis yesterday said it intercepted a ballistic missile fired by the group at the Madinah region, home to one of Islam's holiest cities.

The announcement came just minutes after the kingdom's civil defence agency warned of potential danger in the area near the strategic port of Yanbu.

It was unclear if the two events were connected.

"Air defence intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by the terrorist Houthi militia toward the Madniah region," coalition spokesman Turki al-Malki said in a post on X.

The Houthis rejected any suggestion they were targeting the city, saying such accusations were a "blatant and grave falsehood".

"Our operations target only its oil facilities and military bases," the group said in a statement.

Later, the coalition said it had shot down a drone in Eastern Province, a focal point of Saudi Arabia's oil industry. The province's Dammam airport has been a frequent target of attacks.

The Houthis have repeatedly said their forces would not target the holy cities of Makkah or Madinah in their ongoing campaign against the kingdom.

Among their attacks on airports, energy infrastructure and military sites, they have targeted the port of Yanbu on several occasions in recent months.

"A warning has been issued by the National Early Warning Platform in Yanbu Governorate to alert of a potential danger," read a statement published by the agency online.

Yanbu, on the Red Sea, is the terminus of the East-West Pipeline that allows Saudi oil to bypass the blockaded Strait of Hormuz.

Qatar's water tech innovation efforts 'gaining momentum'

From Page 1

He noted that international startups often arrive with technologies developed for different environmental conditions, creating a gap between their existing solutions and the specific requirements of Qatar's water sector.

"Bridging this gap requires startups to engage directly with local professionals, understand operational challenges and adapt their technologies to the country's needs," he said.

According to the official, one of the biggest challenges is treating and managing produced water generated during oil and gas operations.

"More than 90% of the fluid produced from some wells can consist of water, with oil accounting for a much smaller proportion," he described. "This water has high salinity and must undergo treatment to meet strict quality requirements before it can be reinjected into underground reservoirs."

"This process is a major operational challenge, requiring multiple treatment stages and the transportation of water between offshore platforms and facilities. The process involves substantial pumping costs and presents technical difficulties because of the water's corrosive properties and high salinity," he continued.

Al-Jaber also noted that innovators must understand the broader regulatory and operational ecosystem in which their technologies will be deployed. He stated that the country's extreme environmental conditions provide an opportunity for international innovators to test solutions that may become increasingly necessary in other parts of the world over the coming decades.

The conversation also explored the relationship between water management, biodiversity and Qatar's marine environment.

Highlighting the country's historical connection with the sea, al-Jaber said that Qatar's coastal waters have long supported traditional livelihoods, including fishing and pearl diving, and continue to play an important role in shipping, tourism and economic activity.

"Protecting marine biodiversity is essential, particularly as human activities in coastal and offshore environments continue to expand. Water management also contributes to biodiversity on land, where the availability of water supports vegetation and green spaces," he underlined.

He also pointed out TotalEnergies' involvement in marine environmental remediation and the importance of developing technologies that can help monitor and protect underwater ecosystems.

Concluding the discussion, al-Jaber encouraged everyone to view the accelerator programme as the beginning of a longer-term relationship rather than the conclusion of their journey.

"Developing a successful technology requires continuous improvement, ongoing engagement with industry partners, stronger professional networks and an ability to adapt to changing market demands. It is also time to embrace artificial intelligence and emerging digital tools, with due diligence and care, as they are valuable resources for improving efficiency, strengthening capabilities and maintaining competitiveness," he added.

Israeli fire kills five in Gaza, including child: civil defence

Israeli strikes and gunfire yesterday killed five people across Gaza, including a woman and a 12-year-old boy, rescue services in the war-ravaged Palestinian territory told AFP.
Mahmoud Bassal, spokesman for Gaza's civil defence agency, told AFP that a 12-year-old boy was killed by Israeli gunfire east of the Al-Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza.
A few kilometres away, near the town of Al-Zawayda, two people were killed in separate Israeli strikes, he added.
The nearby Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital confirmed to AFP that all three were dead on arrival.
In southern Gaza, a woman was killed by Israeli gunfire near the city of Khan Yunis, Bassal said.
Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis confirmed her death to AFP.
Later in the day, "one person was killed and several others injured in an Israeli drone strike... west of Gaza City," Bassal said. (**AFP**)



QR78,000 voucher widens the door to private schooling

From Page 1

For the first time, specific eligibility criteria have been set for newly established schools and private kindergartens operating in standalone buildings. These span school evaluations, modern facilities, national investment partnerships, recruitment and development of Qatari talent, tuition fees, student capacity, community contributions and support for low-income families.

Schools relocating to new premises will keep their voucher eligibility, provided their legal status, licensing, activities and educational stages remain substantially unchanged.

Students with disabilities must hold ministry-approved individual education plans, have completed assessments and carry approved tuition fees to qualify, Dr Rania said.

Eligibility also extends to students lifting their academic averages in Grades 11 and 12, those switching curricula, and students repeating a year until they pass, subject to regulations. Children of parents or guardians who retire will receive vouchers through the ministry upon retirement.

The standard voucher caps at QR28,000, while students with disabilities qualify for QR43,000, QR53,000 or QR78,000, depending on their approved level of support. The sums cover tuition and approved educational and rehabilitation services.

Invoices will be issued in Arabic through the National Student Information System, with 50% billed in October and the remainder in February. Applications from standalone private kindergartens open on April 1, 2027, with results due by the end of June for the 2027-2028 academic year, and the policy has been circulated to all private schools and kindergartens.

Director of the Special Education and Inclusive Education Department Amna Ali al-Mulla said the three-tier disability support system rests on approved diagnostic criteria developed in co-ordination with the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Social Development and Family.

Implementation will proceed in two phases. The first covers autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disabilities and associated syndromes, hearing, visual and physical disabilities, and dual or multiple disabilities. The second will take in specific learning difficulties, borderline intellectual functioning, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and speech and language disorders.

The ministry's Information Systems Department also demonstrated electronic application procedures designed to simplify submissions for schools.

The initiative supports Qatar National Vision 2030 by promoting inclusive, equitable education and strengthening opportunities for students with disabilities.

Jordan says security officer killed in Amman stabbing attack

AFP
Amman

Jordanian authorities said a security officer was stabbed to death in the country's capital Amman yesterday, calling it a "terrorist attack".

"The Public Security Directorate mourned the martyrdom of Corporal Jawad Ali Khalaf al-Salaytah, who was killed in a cowardly terrorist attack," the directorate said in a statement.

Another officer was injured in the incident, it added.

Authorities said the attack took place in front of the Sri Lankan embassy, where the victim was stabbed with a "sharp object".

The officer was rushed to hospital but later died from his injuries, the directorate said.



Prince Faisal bin al-Hussein of Jordan visiting a security officer, lying in a hospital bed in Amman, after he was wounded as he tried to stop an assailant who stabbed another security officer to death. (**AFP**)

A nearby police patrol responded immediately and arrested the attacker, it added.

King Abdullah II, during a visit to Kazakhstan, "emphasised that Jordan will not falter in its fight against terrorism and extremism, nor will it allow anyone to threaten its security or harm its citizens", the royal court said in a statement.

The second officer wounded in the incident sustained injuries to their face as he tried to intervene and was in a stable condition.

Security agencies were investigating, the directorate said.

The attack comes two weeks after gunmen killed nine people and wounded 25 others when they stormed a Greek Orthodox church in Karak governorate.

On Tuesday, three men were charged with terrorism-related offences over that attack.

The violence shocked Jordan, where Christians make up around three percent of its Muslim-majority population.

Under Jordan's anti-terrorism law, a conviction on the most serious charge – carrying out terrorist acts resulting in death – is punishable by death.

COMMUNITY

TFOE-PE Qatar Region elects new leaders for Eagle Year '27





The Third Qatar Region Election of "The Fraternal Order of Eagles - Philippine Eagles (TFOE-PE) Qatar Region" was successfully conducted on October 30, under the administration of the Qatar Region Election Committee headed by Election Committee Chairman Eagle Michael Galigao.

Representatives and qualified voters from the region's six constituent clubs actively participated in the democratic exercise, reaffirming the organisation's commitment to transparency, unity, and responsible leadership. Following the election, the membership overwhelmingly elected Eagle Charlie Dango as Governor, with Eagle Francis Reyes, Eagle Junbe Caya, and Eagle Rommel Salvador elected as Vice-Governor and Assemblymen for EY 2027. The newly elected officials are entrusted with leading the region and advancing its programs and initiatives for the coming Eagle year.

In his message to the membership, incumbent Governor Eagle Rene M Lloren emphasised that the Qatar Region's continued strength and success depend on mutual respect, co-operation, and unity among its members. He encouraged all Eagles to support the newly elected leaders and remain committed to the organisation's core values and shared mission.

The successful election reflects the maturity, solidarity, and collective commitment of the TFOE-PE Qatar Region to fostering servant leadership and organisational excellence. Members expressed optimism that the newly elected officers will further strengthen regional programs and continue building a legacy of service, brotherhood, and community engagement throughout Eagle Year 2027.

Learning made easy at MESIS Bloom Fest





MES Indian School, Abu Hamour Branch (MESIS) celebrated its Fifth Annual Bloom Fest – Activity Day for Grades 1 and 2 with great enthusiasm and vibrant participation. The first day of Bloom Fest was inaugurated by Usman A T, treasurer of the MES Governing Board, in the presence of Dr Hameeda Kadar, principal of MES Indian School, and the principal and vice- principal of MES Indian School, Abu Hamour Branch and the parents. Their presence added prestige to the occasion and encouraged the young learners.

Pramila Kannan, principal of MESIS, addressed the gathering, appreciating the enthusiasm and active participation of the students, the dedication and commitment of the teachers, and the valuable support of parents in fostering experiential learning. The second day of Bloom Fest was inaugurated by Faisal Mayan, director of the MES Governing Board, in the presence of Ansar T K and Shaheed Ali, directors of the MES Governing Board. Their presence added significance to the celebration and served as an encouragement to the young learners as they enthusiastically engaged in the activities.

The two-day festival showcased MESIS' commitment to activity-based learning and holistic education. Through hands-on, interactive activities based on previously taught concepts, students explored, experimented, expressed their creativity, and strengthened essential skills, making learning meaningful and enjoyable.

Parents appreciated the opportunity to witness their children's progress and commended the school's innovative teaching approaches that foster curiosity, confidence, and independent thinking. Bloom Fest 2026–2027 concluded on a joyful note, celebrating curiosity, creativity, and collaboration while reaffirming MESIS' commitment to nurturing young minds and fostering a lifelong love of learning.





MES Junior Section celebrates creativity, experiential learning







The Junior Section of MES Indian School, Doha celebrated 'The Magic of Mosaic' – Project Day on October 14 with enthusiastic participation from students of Grades I to IV. Principal Dr Hameeda Kadar inaugurated the event.

The exhibition showcased interdisciplinary learning across English, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Art and multiple Indian and foreign languages. Through interactive demonstrations, creative displays, role-plays and presentations, students confidently explored diverse themes, including photosynthesis, geometry, communication, modern Qatar, seasons and plant life. English grammar presentations, literary enactments and portrayals of eminent personalities further enriched the experience.

A vibrant music and dance performance, complemented by engaging games organised by the Physical Education teachers, added to the festive atmosphere. The school management, principal and senior vice-principal visited the classrooms, interacted with students and appreciated the efforts of both learners and teachers. Parents also witnessed the children's creativity, confidence and practical application of knowledge.

Co-ordinated by Nisha Menon, Rajani Prem, Safeeya Rajoob and Rahila Banu, with Fency Pathrose, extra-curricular incharge, overseeing the proceedings, the event celebrated experiential learning, critical thinking, collaboration and multilingual awareness.











Noble International School hosts Grand Science Expo



Eureka 2026: A celebration of scientific excellence and compassion

Noble International School (NIS) organised Eureka 2026, a grand Science Expo, on November 1, under the aegis of the Science and Art Departments. The principal, Dr Shibu Abdul Rasheed, formally inaugurated the event at 9am in the presence of the vice-principal, Jayamon Joy, and the heads of sections. The expo exemplified the institution's commitment to fostering scientific curiosity, creativity and social responsibility among students. The exhibition featured an impressive array of scientific experiments, innovative models and interactive demonstrations. The Science Room showcased fascinating projects on physics, biology and environmental science, while the Planetarium offered visitors an enthralling glimpse into the mysteries of the universe.

The Art Room displayed students' artistic talents through creative exhibits and interactive activities. The Gaming Room and Games and Challenges provided engaging recreational experiences, while Aiding Hearts offered delightful activities such as henna, face painting and a photo booth.

The expo served as a vibrant platform for experiential learning, encouraging students to explore ideas, collaborate and demonstrate their ingenuity. Students' enthusiastic participation and the school community's wholehearted support contributed significantly to its success.

Eureka 2026 concluded as a memorable celebration of knowledge, innovation and compassion, reaffirming the school's belief that education finds its true purpose in serving humanity.



Indonesian police say wiretapping probe matter for law enforcement

Reuters
Jakarta

An Indonesian police probe into the wiretapping of President Prabowo Subianto's phone was a matter for law enforcement, the country's police chief said yesterday, as the scandal exposed the deepening cracks between Prabowo and his former backer and predecessor, Joko Widodo.

"We assure you that this is purely law enforcement and has nothing to do with rivalries or anything else," police chief Suyudi Ario Seto told reporters without elaborating, adding that the arrests must serve as a lesson for the police.

Prabowo took office in 2024 after winning the election in a landslide as the continuity candidate for Widodo, known also as Jokowi, whose son Gibran Rakabuming Raka was also elected as Prabowo's vice-president.

After details of the wiretapping scandal emerged, several lawmakers said yesterday they were considering launching a parliamentary inquiry into Gibran's eligibility to serve after questions were raised about his election credentials, a move analysts saw as the first step to potentially remove him from office.

The wiretapping involved a Jokowi loyalist, and a spokesperson for Prabowo said intercepting the president's communications could amount to treason.

Three senior police officers were arrested on Tuesday, including former national police chief and Prabowo's chief of staff, Listyo Sigit Prabowo, for allegedly tapping the phones of Prabowo as well as other politicians, journalists, civil society organisations, government officials, and business people since 2025.

Prabowo sacked Listyo, widely known as a Widodo loyalist, the next day.



Indonesia's Co-ordinating Minister for Law, Human Rights, Immigration, and Correctional Affairs, Yusril Ihza Mahendra, speaks during a press conference regarding the alleged illegal wiretapping of Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto's phone in Jakarta, on Tuesday. (**Reuters**)

The scandal has piled more pressure on the president, with public discontent growing over his costly populist policies and weakening investor confidence in Indonesia's $1.5tn economy.

Neither the government nor police investigators have yet disclosed the motives behind the wiretapping.

Jokowi told reporters yesterday that he respected the legal process.

Political parties have started discussions to invoke parliament's right to hold an inquiry into the vice president following the wiretapping case, said Hasto Kristiyanto, a senior official with the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, the biggest party in parliament and the only one outside of Prabowo's coalition.

They are following up on rulings by the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court that Gibran's foreign senior high school credentials did not meet domestic legal requirements for vice-presidential candidates, and had been improperly accepted by election officials in 2024.

"There's increasingly intensive dialogue in the parliament to invoke their constitutional rights especially after the wiretapping," Hasto said.

Three other parties in parliament — all within Prabowo's coalition — were also considering an inquiry into the matter, party officials said.

Under the constitution, lawmakers can launch an investigation into allegations of legal or constitutional violations by the government.

"We are currently reviewing these options and also communicating with other political parties," said Muhammad Kholid, a senior official of the Prosperous Justice Party.

The vice president's office did not respond to a request for comment.

Prabowo's coalition controls 81% of parliament. Neither Jokowi nor Gibran belongs to a party represented in parliament.

Burhanuddin Muhtadi, a senior visiting fellow at Singapore's Yusof Ishak Institute, said the inquiry process would likely lead to Gibran's impeachment.

"It's ultimately leading to Gibran's impeachment and some think they no longer need to do an investigation because there are already rulings from two courts," he said, adding it looks increasingly unlikely that Jokowi and Prabowo would mend their relationship.

Korea to expand military mission closer to Hormuz

AFP, Reuters
Seoul

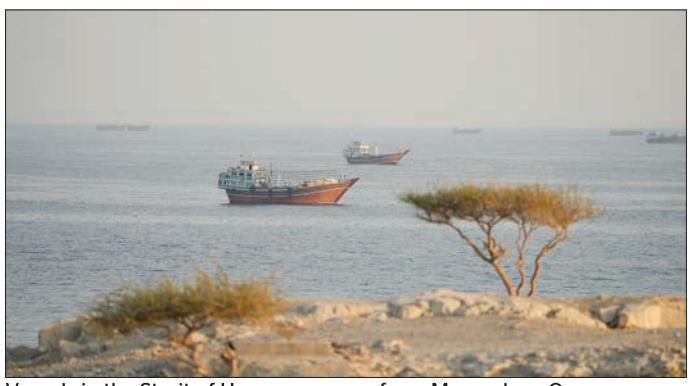
Republic of Korea's defence ministry said yesterday it would deploy maritime patrol aircraft and an explosive ordnance disposal team to waters near the Strait of Hormuz as part of a mission to help keep the waterway open.

The announcement comes as Seoul maintains it will not deploy troops to intervene militarily in the Iran war, while seeking to protect commercial shipping and energy supplies through one of the world's most important maritime chokepoints.

The US-Iran war that began on February 28 has disrupted shipping through the Hormuz strait, a vital conduit for global energy supplies that normally carries about a fifth of the world's oil.

The defence ministry confirmed reports that the government plans to expand the operational area of its Cheonghae anti-piracy naval unit, which protects commercial vessels in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia, to waters near the Strait of Hormuz, a defence ministry spokesperson said yesterday.

The government will submit a motion to parliament to extend the unit's deployment to the Middle East, which is set to expire at the end of 2026, a ministry spokesperson said, confirming a report by Yonhap News Agency.


Vessels in the Strait of Hormuz as seen from Musandam, Oman. (**Reuters/File photo**)

The Cheonghae unit has been stationed in the Gulf of Aden since 2009 to ensure safe navigation of commercial vessels.

It currently includes a 4,400-ton-class destroyer, a maritime operations helicopter, up to three rigid-hull inflatable boats and around 300 service members, according to broadcaster YTN.

The motion to be submitted to parliament, which needs to be approved by President Lee Jae Myung and the cabinet, would expand the unit's area of operation to waters near the port of Duqm in Oman, which is about 650 km (403 miles) away from the strait.

The deployment will include a destroyer, a P-8 maritime patrol aircraft, an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team, unmanned surface vessels, unmanned underwater vehicles and remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) for underwater exploration, Yonhap News Agency reported.

Extending the deployment of the Cheonghae unit — currently authorised until the end of this year — will require parliamentary approval, Yonhap said.

"The enhancement of the Cheonghae unit's mission is to protect our citizens and safeguard our economic interests," a defence ministry official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

The official said the reinforcement is strictly for non-combat purposes and the unit will operate independently of allied forces.

"Operations will remain restricted to the open waters south of Oman, and the maritime patrol aircraft will be prohibited from targeting or monitoring Iranian territory, territorial waters or the interior of the Strait of Hormuz during their missions," he said.

In September, Korea's President Lee Jae Myung reiterated that Korea would not deploy troops in a way that could lead to military intervention.

"We have upheld the principle of non-involvement and non-intervention in the war until now," he said. "And we will continue to uphold it going forward."

Tehran has warned Korea against any such deployment after Seoul said it was weighing a contribution to the security of the waterway.

N Korea tests new air-defence missile system: state media

AFP
Seoul

North Korea test-fired a newly designed air-defence missile system and held a strategic cruise-missile strike drill, state media reported yesterday, in the latest showcase of its weapons abilities.

Wednesday's test came during a flurry of weapons demonstrations in recent weeks that include cluster munitions, attack drones, a precision-guided torpedo system and an intermediate-range hypersonic missile.

Republic of Korea's military said on Wednesday it detected several missiles launched from the North Korea's Sondok area into the Sea of Japan.

Pyongyang has also hardened its stance towards Seoul and Washington, with a landmine dispute plummetting inter-Korean relations and Kim Jong-un's powerful sister this week signalling little appetite for renewed talks with the United States.

The newly designed system was test-fired to confirm its technical specifications, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said yesterday.

"The test-fire proved the technical specifications and reliability of the new material and intelligent multiple guided mode of the projectile," KCNA said, without elaborating on the new material.

It also demonstrated the missile system's ability to identify and track targets, as well as the reliability of its detection data processing device, it added.

KCNA also said a firepower sub-unit of a long-range strategic cruise-missile unit in eastern North Korea also staged a strike drill on Wednesday.

The unit "perfectly performed its mission to strike a virtual airport target with a long-range strategic cruise missile", state media said.

The two exercises were aimed and maintaining weapons systems "on a technically high level and improve the combat reliability of the strategic weapon", KCNA added.

Unlike ballistic missile launches, North Korean cruise missile tests are not prohibited by UN Security Council sanctions.

North Korea has a history of launching missiles around US elections, widely seen as a show of force, including during the midterms four years ago and the presidential election two years ago.


Test-launch of the new surface-to-air missile conducted by North Korea's missile administration at an undisclosed location in North Korea, on Wednesday. (**AFP**)

China denies accusations of 'squeezing out' other economies

AFP
Shanghai

China's vice-premier brushed off "completely unfounded" concerns that his country was "squeezing out" other economies as he opened a major business fair yesterday aimed at enticing importers.

The United States and European Union regularly accuse Beijing of heavily subsidising its industry and flooding foreign markets with its products, particularly in vehicle and green technology sectors, to the detriment of their own companies.

"Some institutions and media outlets have been hyping up the so-called 'China squeeze' theory," said Ding Xuexiang as he opened the China International Import Expo in Shanghai.

"Such claims... are completely unfounded," he added.

More than 4,000 foreign companies gathered this year at the expo, which has been held annually since 2018.

International firms at the event are seeking to expand into the Chinese market, while Beijing promotes its message that China is not just the world's factory but a vast market open to foreign products.

However, the Asian giant runs significant trade surpluses with the United States and the European Union, fuelling tensions.

"It is only natural that people are paying attention to trade imbalances. The key issue is how to achieve a trade balance," Ding told business representatives.

He added that Beijing has "never deliberately sought a trade surplus".

Ding maintained that "the competitiveness of Chinese products does not come from government subsidies."

Rather, it stems from their "technological advantages, sustained high levels of investment in research and development".

"There are many products we would like to import but cannot obtain because we are not allowed to buy them," he added.

For several years, the United States has been imposing restrictions on the export of cutting-edge technologies to China, citing national security concerns.

"We will continue to create favourable conditions for companies from around the world to develop their businesses in China," Ding said, reiterating messaging from Beijing.

Foreign companies have raised concerns about difficulties in accessing the Chinese market, including competition from local firms and regulatory issues.

Japan denies seeking Myanmar's removal from FATF blacklist

Reuters
Tokyo

Japan's Ministry of Finance has denied pushing for Myanmar to be removed from a global financial watchdog's blacklist after Reuters reported last week that it was among countries supporting the removal.

Myanmar was added to the Financial Action Task Force's blacklist in 2022 as the country was plunged into turmoil and widespread civil war following a military coup. The blacklist requires countries to apply enhanced screening to financial transactions with Myanmar to avoid money laundering and terrorist financing.

"There is no fact that the Japanese government sought to have Myanmar removed from the FATF blacklist. Japan hopes that Myanmar will make the necessary improvements to strengthen its measures against money laundering and related illicit activities," the ministry said in a statement to Reuters.

Myanmar remained on the blacklist following a closed-door meeting of the 40-member global body in Paris on October 30. Japan did not state at the Paris meeting that it wanted Myanmar removed, the ministry said in its statement.

Reuters reported on Oct 30 that Japan was pushing for Myanmar's removal, according to a senior Japanese government official and another person familiar with the matter. One of the people, reached by Reuters on Thursday, said they stood by their comments, while the other could not be immediately reached for comment.

A spokesperson for Myanmar's military-backed government said in a message to Reuters on Saturday that various "friendly countries" were supporting its efforts to be removed from the list.

"The United States, China, Japan, India, South Korea, and Indonesia recognise Myanmar's efforts. We are grateful to all of them for acknowledging Myanmar's current progress," the spokesperson added, without elaborating.

Korea's foreign ministry said it was "encouraging Myanmar to abide by FATF duties, and closely co-ordinating with FATF member countries on the issue".

US Marine dies after training in Japan

A Marine died after a training exercise in Japan's Okinawa, the US military said yesterday.

Lance Cpl Devin J Hernandez, 25, of Maryland, was "participating in fast-rope training at Camp Schwab when he sustained injuries," the 3rd Marine Division said in a statement.

Sebastian RiveraAponte, a spokesman for the division, confirmed earlier to AFP that a Marine died on Tuesday following training at the camp.

The cause of death "is still under investigation", he said, declining to disclose further details.

"Our focus remains on supporting (Hernandez's family) while we fully investigate the circumstances of this tragic incident," Maj. Gen. Kyle Ellison, commanding general of 3rd Marine Division, said in the statement.

The United States has around 54,000 military personnel stationed in Japan, mostly in Okinawa.

While the US military presence is key in Japan's defence policy, it has also long been a thorn in relations between the close security allies. (**AFP**)

Petrol prices drive highest Philippine inflation in years

AFP
Manila

Soaring petrol prices driven by the Middle East conflict pushed inflation in the Philippines to a 44-month high of 7.8% in October, the government said yesterday, as the country continues to struggle with a devalued peso.

The latest inflation number was the highest since the 8.6 % recorded in February 2023, chief Philippine statistician Dennis Mapa said, topping analysts' forecast of 7.6%.

"The main reason for the rise in inflation in October compared to September is the 20% rise in transport costs," he told a news conference.

The Middle East conflict has had a harsh impact on the oil import-dependent Philippines, with the peso also diving to record lows, driving up transportation costs for commuters while also affecting other costs from power generation to food transport.

The latest figures bring the inflation rate for the year to 5.6%, well above the government target of 2-4%.

"There are risks that we face ahead," Mapa said, citing the El Nino dry spell now starting to affect the country's food supply as well as rising energy commodity prices.

The latest figures bring the inflation rate for the year to 5.6%, well above the government target of 2-4%

The inflation data was released two weeks after the central bank raised its key lending rate by a substantial 50 basis points to 5.50%.

The bank said it needed a "strong monetary policy response to broadening price pressures and further upside risks to inflation".

As the peso fell to 64 to the dollar last week, President Ferdinand Marcos told Filipinos "don't panic", and blamed the exchange rate woes on the rising prices of oil.

While Manila could "do nothing" about global oil prices, Marcos said Philippine foreign exchange reserves were at a healthy level and the government had "all the tools to defend the peso".

Rising inflation has impacted the growth of the Philippine economy, which expanded by a paltry 2.3% in the three months to June, the lowest since the fourth quarter of 2009, excluding the pandemic years.

Third-quarter gross domestic product growth data is scheduled to be released on Monday.

WORLD

Putin will not attend Britain's G20 summit, Burnham says

Reuters
London

Prime Minister Andy Burnham has said Russian President Vladimir Putin will not travel to a G20 summit in Britain because of UK sanctions against him, The Economist newspaper reported yesterday.

When asked if Putin would be invited, Burnham said: "No."

The Economist reported that Burnham had said Putin could not and would not be "disinvited" because Russia was a member of the G20, but that the Russian leader "will not be coming because of an outstanding sanction".

Burnham's office did not comment further on the sanctions against Putin which Britain started imposing from 2022.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in September that Washington had invited Putin to a G20 meeting in Miami in December, saying it would provide an opportunity for him to engage with President Donald Trump and other world leaders.

Russia remains a member of the G20 despite Western efforts to isolate it following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Leaders of host nations traditionally invite all members of the bloc to attend its annual summit.

Next year's annual G20 summit will be held in November in the city of Manchester, the centre of a region in northwestern England where Burnham was mayor.

UK court reviews jail term for Sikh who killed student

AFP
London

England's Court of Appeal was set to rule yesterday on calls to revise the prison sentence imposed on a British Sikh for murdering a teenager in a racially-tinged case that sparked protests.

The three-judge panel will decide whether to increase, cut or maintain the minimum 21-year life term handed down to Vickrum Digwa for killing student Henry Nowak last year.

Nowak was handcuffed by police as he lay dying having been stabbed multiple times by Digwa, who falsely told officers he had been racially abused by the 18-year-old.

The high-profile case sparked protests, stoked by anti-immigration figureheads such as Reform UK leader Nigel Farage and US tech billionaire Elon Musk, who seized on it as evidence of supposed discrimination against white Britons.

The government's legal team has argued in court that the sentence for the December attack in the southern English city of Southampton should be boosted as it was "unduly lenient".

"The finishing point of 21 years... is simply too low," lawyer Jonathan Polnay, representing the attorney general, told the judges.

Digwa has appealed separately for his minimum prison term to be cut from 21 years, saying it was "too much".

His mother, Kiran Kaur, was also jailed for three years for trying to hide the ceremonial knife, of a type worn by Sikhs, that was used by her son on Nowak.

The court was expected to announce its decisions at 3:30pm (1530 GMT).

The UK government last week announced an independent review into the circumstances of the killing.

Polnay cited various "aggravating factors" for increasing the sentence, including the use of the Sikh ceremonial dagger, or kirpan, which can be legally carried as an article of faith.

Digwa's "conduct in misleading first responders" and the "false allegation of racism" should also justify raising his jail term.

Nowak's family members were in court to hear the legal arguments, while Digwa watched proceedings via video-link from prison in northern England.

His lawyer Imran Khan argued there must have been a "gross error" by the sentencing judge.

Arguing in favour of Digwa's bid for a "materially lower minimum term", Khan said the judge had already weighed the "aggravating factors" but incorrectly applied them.

"The attorney general says 21 years was too little. We say it was too much," he said.

India in final-stage talks to expand missile sale to Philippines: sources

Reuters
New Delhi/Manila


The India Army's BrahMos missile launcher is displayed during the Republic Day parade in New Delhi. (**Reuters/File Photo**)

India is in final-stage talks to expand its sale of supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines, three sources with direct knowledge of the matter told Reuters, as New Delhi nears completion of deliveries under a 2022 deal.

The Philippines is expected to buy about five BrahMos systems, nearly 60 missiles in total, in a deal potentially worth $700mn to $800mn, two of the Indian sources said.

"Manila has shown interest again to procure about 5 systems of the BrahMos and they now view India as a very reliable partner," one Indian source said.

New Delhi's latest likely deal with the Philippines, which is modernising its military and strengthening coastal defences as tensions rise in the disputed South China Sea, is much higher than the last $375mn order of BrahMos for naval use.

BrahMos, developed jointly by India and Russia, is among the world's fastest cruise missiles and can be launched from land, sea and air platforms.

Arsenio Andolong, Philippines defence ministry spokesperson, told Reuters that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr had expressed his desire to acquire additional BrahMos missiles. Andolong did not offer more details.

Speaking virtually at the Delhi Defence Dialogue on Wednesday, Philippine Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro said the Philippines hoped to secure more BrahMos units and had shared a wish list with Indian authorities to make the system more tailored to the Philippine environment.

Reuters is the first to report the size and value of the deal.

The additional purchase comes at a time when Manila is building its military strength as tension escalates with Beijing on overlapping claims in the South China Sea, where the two countries have clashed in recent years.

India's defence and foreign ministries, as well as missile maker BrahMos Aerospace, did not respond to requests for comment.

Interest in the BrahMos system has increased since last year's four-day conflict between India and Pakistan, when India used the weapons system for the first time in battle.

In July, Delhi announced the supply of BrahMos missiles to Indonesia and has also signed a deal with Vietnam. It is in talks on the system with a number of other countries including UAE, Thailand, South Africa and Brazil.

India's defence exports for the fiscal year to March reached 384.24bn rupees ($4.11bn), a jump of more than 62% from the same period the year before, government data showed.

UK to hold talks on harms of slave trade

AFP
London


Britain's Prime Minister Andy Burnham speaks to the media in St John's, Antigua and Barbuda. (**AFP**)

Commonwealth leaders have welcomed Britain's agreement to engage in "time-bound inclusive and good-faith dialogue" over the "historical harms" of the transatlantic slave trade.

In a final communique issued late on Wednesday, the group of nations said the time had come for "meaningful, truthful and respectful conversation towards forging a common future based on equity".

But it did not set out a timetable for the talks.

It comes after British Prime Minister Andy Burnham said he was open to saying sorry but ruled out paying financial reparations demanded by some Caribbean countries.

Burnham used his appearance at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Antigua and Barbuda to hold discussions about issuing a formal apology for Britain's role in slavery, which saw about 10-15mn slaves brought from Africa to the Americas over four centuries.

In a speech to opening the biannual Commonwealth leaders meeting on Tuesday, King Charles III, who is politically neutral, called the slave trade "a monstrous injustice" that filled him with "profound personal sorrow", stopping short of a formal apology.

Britain's pivotal part in slavery has long strained relations between the UK and its former colonies, including an awkward previous meeting of Commonwealth leaders in 2024.

"We welcome the agreement of the government of the United Kingdom to engage in a structured, time-bound, inclusive and good-faith dialogue with affected parties addressing the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans and its historical harms," the final communique said.

The Commonwealth is a 56-nation group of mostly former British colonies. Of those Charles remains head of state in 14.

Britain's Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband has said it is "not feasible" for the country to pay reparations for slavery, but that "there are things we can work on co-operatively".

Miliband also hinted that Britain could issue a formal apology next year when it hosts a G20 leaders' summit, in comments to the BBC aired on Wednesday as the meeting wrapped up.

India launches $1.5bn energy storage plan

India has launched a $1.5-billion scheme to develop 92 gigawatt-hours of energy storage capacity as it seeks to accelerate its shift towards renewable energy, the government said Wednesday.
India is the third-biggest emitter of greenhouse gases and remains deeply dependent on polluting coal to meet its soaring energy demand.
Energy demand in India, home to more than 1.4bn people, is expected to continue rising rapidly even as the government pursues its goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.
The scheme, which runs from 2026-27 to 2030-31, will support 60 gigawatt-hours of pumped hydro storage, 30GWh of battery storage, and two GWh using emerging technologies, the government said.
New Delhi's incentives would support an estimated $10bn of investment in the next five years, it added, with the planned additions equivalent to 170% of India's existing grid-scale energy storage capacity. (**AFP**)

Bangladesh garment protests defy wage move

Reuters
Dhaka

Garment workers staged fresh protests in Bangladesh yesterday, forcing factories to suspend operations despite a wage board move to introduce a revised pay structure from December.

The protests, which began on Saturday, have forced the closure of hundreds of factories, disrupting production and raising concerns about export shipment delays in Bangladesh, the world's second-largest garment exporter after China.

Workers initially reported to work early yesterday in Ashulia, a major garment manufacturing hub on the outskirts of the capital Dhaka. But they later walked out and blocked a major highway, demanding a clear announcement on the proposed wage increase.

"We had to use tear gas and sound grenades after protesters threw bricks at police and vandalised police vehicles," Ashulia Industrial Police Superintendent Mohammad Mominul Islam Bhuiyan said.

More than 100 factories suspended operations in the area yesterday, he said, adding that additional police and Border Guard Bangladesh personnel had been deployed across the industrial zone to prevent further unrest.

The situation was, meanwhile, relatively calm in other industrial hubs, including Savar and Gazipur where many workers returned to their jobs, though some factories remained temporarily closed.

Authorities have urged factory employees to come back to work as security forces remain on high alert across major industrial zones.

The wage board agreed on Wednesday to implement a revised wage structure from December, with workers set to receive their first pay under the new scale in January. But it has yet to determine the size of the increase.

Workers are demanding that the minimum monthly wage be more than doubled to 30,000 taka ($241.55) from 12,500 taka currently, saying rising food, housing and transport costs have eroded their purchasing power.

"The prices of everything have gone up, but wages have not. It is becoming harder and harder to make ends meet," said Shilpi Khatun, a garment worker who did not join yesterday's protest.

Low wages and duty-free access to key Western markets helped fuel the growth of Bangladesh's garment industry, which generates more than 80% of the South Asian nation's export earnings, but the unrest is testing its low-cost advantage.

The sector employs about 4mn workers and supplies major global brands including H&M, Zara owner Inditex and Walmart. Manufacturers warn the unrest could disrupt production schedules during the peak season for export orders.


A demonstrator hurls back a tear gas shell fired by police following a clash between the police and garment workers protesting for higher wages, in Narayanganj. (**Reuters**)


A school group assists Project Jonah staff to care for a stranded pilot whale after a large pod of whales were stranded over night in Cape Palliser yesterday. (**AFP**)

Dozens of pilot whales stranded on NZ coast

Reuters
Wellington

Dozens of pilot whales have been found stranded on a beach in New Zealand's North Island and rescuers are trying to refloat a handful of the survivors, the country's conservation department said yesterday.

At least 20 pilot whales were stranded along the Ngawi coast near Cape Palliser, the southern-most point of the North Island, the Department of Conservation said.

The department said it was working with local iwi — a Maori tribe — and Project Jonah, a group that specialises in rescuing stranded whales. Two whales have been successfully refloated so far.

Locals said up to 50 whales had been stranded on the coastline overnight, Radio New Zealand reported.

Most succumbed to their injuries and volunteers were trying to keep survivors alive and hydrated using buckets of water and towels.

"It's horrible. The ones that are alive are on their last breaths," Ngawi local Rob Bargh told Radio New Zealand.

In a post on Facebook yesterday, Project Jonah said four whales were alive and rescuers would try to refloat them during high tide.

Whale strandings are fairly common in New Zealand and neighbouring Australia owing to large populations of pilot whales living in the deep oceans surrounding both island nations. The cause of whale stranding is unknown.

Bangladesh investigates vaccine delays

Bangladesh has launched an investigation into allegations that delays in procuring and distributing measles vaccines under the previous interim administration worsened a deadly outbreak, the government has announced.
The South Asian nation of 170mn people is battling its worst measles outbreak in decades, which has killed 1,269 children as of Wednesday, according to authorities.
The government that took over from the interim administration in place between August 2024 and February this year said on Wednesday it was setting up a three-member commission to look into alleged failures in a nationwide vaccination campaign.
The probe will look into allegations of "administrative failures by the interim government that adversely affected public health", a government statement said.
"The commission is going to identify the causes of the delay in the procurement and distribution of vaccines, irregularities and administrative failures, and the people responsible," it added.
A measles immunisation campaign planned for 2024 was derailed by the mass uprising that toppled the government of Sheikh Hasina, while prolonged political instability disrupted a follow-up campaign in 2025.
Authorities have since launched a mass vaccination drive, but infections have continued to climb.
The commission announced on Wednesday was also tasked with recommending measures to prevent a repeat crisis and is expected to submit its findings within 60 working days. (**AFP**)

Practical steps to help lower your gaze



Here are some practical steps to control your gaze:

1- First, let us agree upon an issue that greatly affects the way you control your gaze, namely, the issue of the relativity of beauty.

The criteria of beauty vary from person to person and from one sensibility to another. For example, you may like certain clothes and consider them the most attractive. On the other hand, other people may see these clothes as not beautiful enough, or even ugly.

Hence, what you see as beautiful may not be so in others' eyes; or rather, it may not be beautiful at all.

Let us give you an example to make this issue clearer; the majority of drug addicts believe that drugs are the best thing in this world. However, you know the reality of drugs and thus it is impossible for you to say that drugs may be good just because there are some people who believe that they are so.

Hence, the prohibited scenes that you see and believe to be beautiful, like many others, are not so in reality; what is the beauty in a woman who angers Allah The Exalted publicly and defies His Commandments openly?

Where is the beauty in a scene that many other people have enjoyed before you and many others will enjoy after you?

Where is the beauty in a woman who offers herself as a tradable commodity through showing her beauty to entice buyers?

What beauty is this when, in reality, it is the work of the devil?

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), described the woman who leaves her house while applying perfume and showing her adornment saying: "The woman is 'Awrah (part of the body that must be concealed). Whenever she leaves her home, the Devil beautifies her in men's eyes." [Sheikh Al-Albani has noted as Saheeh]

Is the woman who is beautified by Satan himself in your eyes and the eyes of many other men considered beautiful, no matter what the reality of her appearance may be?

You should know the reality of what you see in order to disdain it and dissuade yourself from looking at it.

2- Controlling the eye and its movement:

Some people – particularly those who are not habituated to lowering their gaze – let their eyes lead them instead of leading their eyes. Such people let their eyes wander all over without any form of control. However, you can solve this problem by training yourself to look at a certain place for a period of time and gradually lengthening the duration until you reach the level of controlling your eyes and preventing them from looking at anything without necessity.

3- If you lose control over your gaze once, then follow this look immediately with an act of worship such as asking Allah the Almighty for forgiveness one hundred times or making Tasbeeh (saying "Subhan-Allah") one hundred times or offering charity. This method is one of most successful therapies, because you defy the devil through it and make him regret making you commit that sin, as you follow it up with repentance and additional good deeds.

4- Penalise yourself by some beneficial action that has a positive outcome if you lose control over your gaze once. For example, give a certain sum in charity, preferably a substantial amount, to serve as sufficient deterrent.

5- Determine a target for yourself and pledge to achieve it. For example, try to lower your gaze for two days or one week. If you achieve this purpose, then reward yourself with something pleasant even if it is something small. You can eat one of your favorite meals for instance. After that, double this period and double the reward.

6- Always tell yourself that you have a dignified soul and it does not befit you to pay attention to these lowly matters, as honourable souls only accept the best things that lead to the best results. On the other hand, the lowly souls hover about lowly things and land over them like flies which gather around rubbish. Hence, the honourable soul does not accept injustice, immorality, theft or treachery, because it is too sublime to do this. [Ibn Al-Qayyim in Al-Fawa'id]

Furthermore, giving full rein to one's gaze is not among the characteristics of magnanimous men.

The pre-Islamic poet, 'Antarah Al-'Absi, said in one of his poems that he lowers his gaze if his female neighbor appears, until she enters her house. If this was the attitude of a poet in pre-Islamic times, then young Muslim men have even greater reason to do the same.

To conclude, let us go over the following anecdote that happened to one of my friends. We will see how his realisation of the triviality of this issue in addition to his self-respect, after the support of Allah the Almighty, caused him to control his gaze.

Shortly after becoming more committed to his religion, my friend went with his father to Britain.

We kept warning him strongly against the West, and we asked Allah the Almighty to support him in the face of the temptations there. In our opinion, this young man was about to go through a very difficult test, especially as he was an adolescent.

Indeed, my friend was accompanied on his travels by his brothers' sincere supplications and great concern about his religiousness. When he arrived in Britain, he was extremely scared, because he found himself face to face with sights he was not used to and he feared that his feet might slip and forsake chastity.

However, he conducted the following interesting dialogue with himself:

Do you want to look at some flesh? Ok then, let us go to the butcher and buy some meat to look at! The result is the same in both cases, and their fate is similar: both of them end in nothing. Indeed, my friend found that this inner-dialogue was very effective and whenever he thought about looking at the women who expose their adornment, he repeated the same dialogue. Thanks to Allah the Almighty, he returned home with his chastity and piety intact.

Hence, you should think about the petty nature of the sin and realise that it does not deserve the consequent suffering.

7- Seek the help of Allah the Almighty, supplicate as much as you can, and ask Allah the Almighty to provide you with adherence to chastity and to protect your eyes from looking at what is prohibited. Do not ever feel ashamed of asking Allah the Almighty to help you control your gaze. May Allah the Almighty protect all of us from all trials.

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

islamweb.net English

Practical steps towards sincere repentance

Most people are aware of the conditions people must fulfil before their repentance is accepted, namely giving up the sin, regretting the sin, and being determined never to commit it again.

However, in this article we will highlight some practical steps people should follow in order to help achieve sincere repentance.

Let us go through these practical steps together with the permission of Allah, The Almighty:

First: Counting all the sins that you have committed since adulthood until the present time in writing.

This is an introduction to repenting for all these sins, because when a person considers all its sins, it will be humble and tend to repent as soon as possible. Here is a list of the categories of sins to help you remember your past sins:

- Sins of the body such as the tongue (backbiting, tale-bearing, lying, and ridiculing others); the eyes (looking at what is prohibited), ears, hands, feet and private parts.
- Sins of the hearts, such as arrogance, envy, aggression, self-conceit, and so on.
- Negligence in performing your duties towards one's parents, relatives and negligence regarding the other duties such as enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, as well as Da'wah (calling to Islam).
- Negligence in the acts of worship like delaying the prayer after its due time.

Secondly: Try to count the blessings of Allah, The Almighty, upon you in writing.

You should keep counting these blessings until you realise how negligent you are towards the rights of Allah, The Almighty, and continue counting until you despair of counting. Allah, The Exalted, Says (what means): {And He gave you from all you asked of Him. And if you should count the favour of Allah, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, humankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful.} [Qur'an 14:34]

Then, you should make a comparison between the blessings that Allah, The Almighty, sends down to you, and your misdeeds that are being sent to Him in return. In this case, you will not be able to resist your tears, your heart will be soft and you will say: "I acknowledge the favours that You have bestowed upon me, and I confess my sins. Pardon me, for none but You has the power to pardon." [Al-Bukhari]

When you shed tears and feel remorse, you should then move to the third step.

Thirdly: Repentance Prayer

After deserting the sin, you should immediately implement the advice of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), who said: "Whenever one commits a sin, and then performs ablution perfectly, and prays two Rak'ahs (units of prayer) after which he seeks the forgiveness of Allah, He will forgive him." [Al-Albaani: Saheeh]

Then, you should determine that you would never return to sins. In this way, you will live the best day of your life since your birth.

Fourthly: Keep away from bad friends and evil companions.

Sever your relationship with them, because they will prevent you from returning to your Lord. If you succeed in getting rid of them, then this is a great sign that Allah, The Almighty, has accepted your repentance.

Fifthly: You should have a daily programme of acts of worship to perform.

This programme aims at helping you make up for what you missed and compensate your negligence towards the rights of Allah, The Almighty. This programme should include reading parts of the Qur'an, Thikr (words of remembrance) reported from the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, night prayer and fasting. However, the most important thing is that this programme should be gradual and realistic.

Sixthly: You should attend a religious lecture in a mosque once a week on a regular basis.

This step aims at strengthening your relationship with your Lord and the righteous people who are your companions on the road to faith. Accompany those righteous people and never keep away from them.

Finally remember that you are in need of the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and that without Him, you are impoverished in every way.

Remember that you have wronged yourself, so be humble in front of your Lord. Listen to the teacher, Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy upon him, who was an excellent example of humble servitude in front of Allah, The Almighty. While referring to some signs of sincere repentance, he said:

"The prerequisites of sound repentance include a special kind of humility in one's heart that does not resemble any other feeling, because it only occurs to the sinful slave. Such a feeling cannot be obtained through hunger, or mere love; rather, it is a feeling beyond all of this. It breaks the heart completely, grabs it and throws it humbly in front of the Lord. There is nothing dearer to Allah, The Almighty, than this feeling, humility and submission on the part of His slave."

How sweet the words of the slave in this state are when he says:

I ask You by Your Grandeur and my humility to have mercy upon me....

I entreat You by Your strength and my weakness, by Your richness and my poverty to pardon me....

Here I am, the wrongful and sinful slave, before You... You have many slaves other than me, but I have no Lord but You...

I have no shelter other than with You, as there is no escape from You, except to You....

I ask and entreat You, as I am humble, poor, frightened and blind...

I ask You while I am surrendering completely to You, and weeping out of fear of You.... to pardon me...

Such a feeling is a sign of accepted repentance, so, if you lack this feeling, accuse your sincerity and correct your repentance.

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

Why do our morals change across situations?

The morals of the believers are not supposed to come into play exclusively at times of ease and convenience. In fact, true morality self-manifests during the moments of hardship, adversity, and crisis. Some people may seem well-mannered with a polite attitude and bashful conduct as long as they are calm and the surrounding circumstances are convenient and favourable. However, when they are subjected to anger or experience hardship, unfortunate conditions, and the like of adverse circumstances, they turn into completely different people, far from the well-mannered people you knew!

Sadly, a person (who was once well-mannered) would turn into a bad-tempered, fierce, verbally abusive, harsh, intimidating, and vulgar transgressor! We see this saddening transformation quite often, and the extent to which someone's character can change is quite shocking. Is this how distant Islamic morality is from our hearts and souls, due to which it fails to change such qualities?

It was narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), said: "A believer is neither a slanderer nor a curser, nor is he obscene or vulgar." [Saheeh At-Tirmithi: 1977] Ibn Battaal, may Allah have mercy upon him, said that "obscene" means the one who is verbally abusive and commits obscene actions. "Vulgar" means foul-mouthed (An-Nihaayah). How could a person turn into one who fits such a bad description denounced by the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, in a single moment because of a situation or a word or a dispute!

We used to think that foolish people are those who are poorly-educated, ill-mannered, and have these sinful (evil) qualities. However, we were shocked to find many people whom we thought to be educated fitting the description as well!

Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "A vulgar, foul-mouthed person is described as foolish because vulgarity is only compatible with ignorance and small-mindedness."

Some people would argue that their obscenity and vulgarity are justified by the fact that they have been angered, that the situation called for it, that other people triggered them by their misbehaviour, or that calmness in such situations is harmful and passive! There is no doubt that this is an erroneous way of thinking that may incur evil consequences on people. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "...and if a man verbally abuses you or shames you for something in you that he knows about, do not shame him for something in him that you know about; let him bear the evil consequences of it (his abuse), and you receive the reward for it, so do not curse." [Saheeh At-Targheeb: 2782]

Al-Qaari, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "Obscenity and vulgarity are entirely blameworthy qualities that are unbecoming of the believers..." He added: "He who is guided by Allah should avoid it (obscenity and vulgarity); accustom his tongue to good, polite language; and follow the example of the Prophets of Allah, for they are the most excellent role models." [Mirqaat Al-Mafaateeh]

There are also people who use foul, vulgar, and reprehensible words under the pretext that they were commonly used by the early Arabs! Al-Maawardi, may Allah have mercy upon, him said: "What falls into the category of vulgarity and foul language in terms of the obligation of avoiding it is all what seems disgraceful and reprehensible, even if it may be considered good and acceptable after search and deliberative contemplation."

An-Nawawi, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "Scholars said that euphemisms should be used in such situations when a person would feel ashamed to use overt language. Accordingly, sexual intercourse should be euphemistically referred to as engaging in intimacy, consummation of marriage, cohabitation, and the like... Likewise, urinating and defecating should be euphemistically referred to as answering the call of nature or relieving oneself instead of using overt words like urine or stool. Similarly, euphemism should be used for the (physical) defects that people may be ashamed to express overtly, such as leprosy, halitosis, body odour, and the like.

"Beautiful euphemistic expressions that convey the intended meaning should be used in situations like the abovementioned ones and their like. Know that such euphemisms may be used as long as there is no need to use overt language. If there is a need to use it for the purpose of clarification and education and it is feared that the addressee would not understand metaphors or would understand something different, then, in this case, one should use overt language instead to ensure that the addressee understands the correct meaning, and this is the rationale for using overt language in some Ahadith. As explained above, this was to ensure that the addressee understands the intended meaning in these contexts, as it should be given priority over mere politeness." [Al-Athkaar]

The people who need adherence to morality the most are the callers to Allah. It is unbecoming of them to act contrary to their moral principles, and their refined morality should rather manifest in all situations, regardless of how intense those situations are and no matter how wicked their opponents may be. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good or remain silent." [Saheeh Al-Bukhari: 6475] These, then, are the distinct manners of the believers. A believer should always speak good or remain silent. Speaking good has many manifestations, and silence could be of great benefit when no good could be spoken.

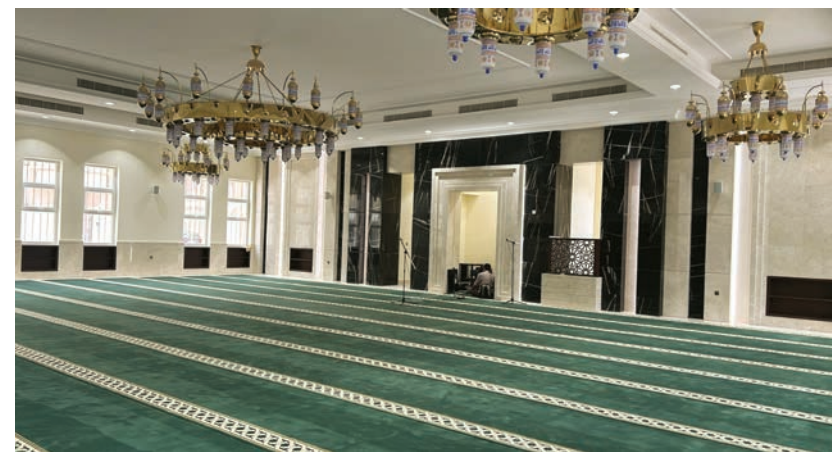
Verily, bashfulness is at the very core of the believers' morality and the central moral value of Islam. Whenever a person adheres to bashfulness, he assumes control of himself and (becomes able to) change his bad morals. Therefore, we should be perfectly mindful of integrating it in educational curricula and practicing it in our lives. The Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "Bashfulness is not to be found in anything but that it adorns it, and obscenity is not to be found in anything but that it mars it." [At-Tamheed: 9/257]

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The most wicked quality a believer may have is obscenity." It is the most wicked of all bad morals because it makes a person unsafe (to be around) and his reactions would not be trusted.

Al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "Shall I tell you what the worst diseases are? They are obscenity and bad moral character." According to this wise man, Al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, obscenity is among the most serious diseases to which people should assign care to treat it.

Al-Qaasimi, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "A person's speech mirrors his virtues and soundness of his mind. Therefore, you should confine your speech to what is good, speak little, and beware of repugnant language as it alienates the honorable people from you and instead attracts the wicked ones to you."

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



OPINION

Decoding bomb threats in Europe?

Airlines across Europe received a new wave of bomb threats yesterday, the second this week, with flights making unplanned landings and others escorted by fighter jets, though none of the threats has proved genuine. There has been no claim of responsibility and officials have not attributed blame. Airlines are not new to bomb threats, but aviation security experts say the apparent co-ordination and timing of the current incidents is unusual.

Bomb threats against planes are often communicated to airlines, airports or authorities through anonymous emails or phone calls claiming that an explosive device is on board. Authorities do not always disclose how threats are delivered because doing so could encourage copycats and compromise investigations.

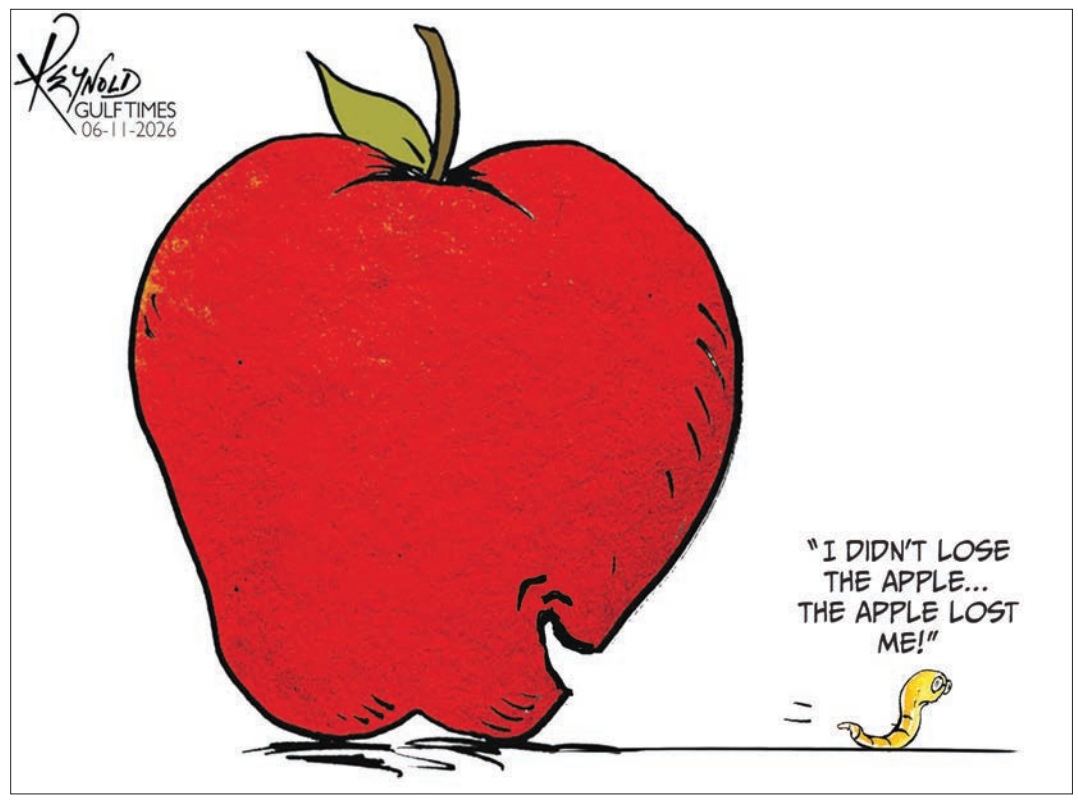
A Prague airport representative told CNN on Thursday that they had received a threat from an anonymous email addressed to the airport, and Czech police said similar emails went to other European airports. Eric Schouten, head of aviation security group Dyami, told Reuters that an airline's security department first runs the report through a checklist. It then alerts the authorities, who may scramble fighter jets or divert the plane to a designated airport for a full sweep.

The vast majority of bomb threats turn out to be false alarms, though all must be treated as real until investigated. No explosive device has been found on the planes affected this week, but every airline must decide whether a threat is credible and act accordingly. A spokesperson for the British government called this week's incidents "malicious hoax threats" and said it has "one of the most robust aviation security systems in the world".

Rhys Jones of Osprey Flight Solutions said bomb threats can stem from a wide range of motives, including political grievances, activist campaigns, criminal activity, online groups or state-linked hybrid operations. There is currently no public evidence linking this week's incidents to any specific state or organisation.

Even a false alarm can disrupt airlines' operations, with plane diversions and thorough security inspections causing delays for passengers. Carriers typically bear additional costs including fuel, passenger rebooking, crew disruption and aircraft diversions.

Schouten said a sweep means unloading passengers and baggage, searching the aircraft and reloading. That can push crews past duty limits and lead to missed connections and cancellations. Air France-KLM Chief Executive Ben Smith said on Thursday he had never previously seen threats reported in such a co-ordinated fashion. — Reuters



Human dignity at the heart of Uzbekistan's reform agenda

The government's way forward reflects the key aspects of the Constitution, which proclaims Uzbekistan a social state in which the human being, their life, freedom, honour and dignity are the ultimate value

By Feruza Eshmatova

For President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, national progress is measured not only by macroeconomic indicators or the facilities built across the country, but by qualitative shifts in people's daily lives. "The greatest achievement of New Uzbekistan is the change in people's lives, citizens who are confident in their own abilities, and a society that feels involved in the country's future," he said at a ceremony to present high state awards coinciding with the 35th anniversary of independence last August.

The government's strategy reflects the key innovations of the Constitution adopted in 2023, which proclaims Uzbekistan a social state in which the human being, their life, freedom, honour and dignity are the ultimate value (Article 13). These rights are directly applicable (Article 20), and any contradictions or ambiguities in legislation governing relations between individuals and state bodies must be interpreted in the person's favour.

Discussion of human rights overwhelmingly centres on the judicial system, yet rights are exercised every day: in classrooms, hospitals, workplaces, municipal offices, playgrounds and families.

New model

Over the past decade, Uzbekistan has built schools for 1.5mn students, kindergartens for 342,000 children and hospitals with 62,000 beds. It has also connected residential buildings housing more than 8mn people to district water supply networks. These gains reflect progress in the rights to education, health, a decent life and equal opportunity.

Expanding education, vocational training, science, research and sport are seen as the foundations of human capital. Education opens up life choices, mastering a profession paves the way to financial independence, and sport builds health and strength of character. Investing in these areas means investing in people who exercise their rights responsibly and take an active part in social life.

Another strategic dimension is a new model of interaction between people and the state. This means empowering citizens to raise the bureaucratic obstacles they encounter, building the capacity to hear their appeals, providing protection and redress when rights are violated, and expanding public oversight of the actions, or negligence, of public authorities. These are the key pillars of the human rights agenda.

Community-based networks in each local mahalla (district) embody this idea. As the primary institution of citizen self-governance and the most accessible authority, the mahalla is usually the first to learn of residents' daily lives, needs and problems. The new 'Mahalla's Seven' system identifies challenges at family and household level and addresses employment, business, and youth and women's affairs in a cross-cutting manner.

As a result, more than a hundred types of social services and forms of assistance have been brought down to community level through one-stop 'Inson' centres.


Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. (**AFP**)

People no longer have to wander between agencies, and services are available on demand.

Poverty alleviation combines vocational training, job creation, preferential loans, subsidies and land plot allocation. These tools help people build a sustainable source of income and take control of their own lives.

Legal and institutional shifts in gender equality are also significant. Guarantees of equal rights and opportunities, protection against misconduct and violence, liability for sexual harassment and domestic violence, and stronger protection order mechanisms treat violence not as an 'in-house family affair' but as a violation of human rights.

Judicial interpretation alone, however, cannot help a woman who has suffered violence. A safe place to live, psychological support, social protection, legal advice and institutions that stand by her are what is most needed and most achievable. The rights of persons with disabilities similarly reflect the improved quality of life resulting from the reforms.

The 2020 Law 'On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' and Uzbekistan's 2021 ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities marked a paradigm shift. Persons with disabilities are no longer treated as recipients of social welfare, but recognised as independent rights holders.

The approach extends to prisons. Under a roadmap developed at the Ombudsman's initiative, together with the Prosecutor General's Office, the Interior Ministry and the National Centre for Human Rights, ramps have been installed at a number of penal institutions, Braille books supplied to prison libraries, and bathrooms refitted with tailor-made facilities.

The roadmap aims to prevent torture and bring conditions for inmates with disabilities into line with international standards. Convicts with mobility impairments are now paired with a healthy prisoner who is paid to provide care. This is tangible evidence that human rights remain inviolable even behind the closed doors of restricted-access facilities.

Ultimately, if rights were protected only within the mandates of public authorities, the state apparatus would become inefficient and slow to respond.

Uzbekistan therefore fosters the engagement of NGOs, civil society institutions, human rights activists, journalists and bloggers in public oversight. The 2018 Law 'On Public Oversight' was the first step, and the Concept for Civil Society Development, public councils under government bodies and public debate mechanisms have since opened wider room for such engagement.

NGOs are far from passive observers of development. They act as partners of the government, identifying and conveying people's needs, assessing the local impact of legal acts and suggesting alternative solutions.

Well-reasoned media criticism, monitoring by human rights defenders and locally accumulated NGO experience help reveal adverse impacts and emerging challenges promptly. Such joint efforts improve the quality of government decisions and encourage wider public involvement in reform.

The Ombudsman bridges the individual and the state in this dialogue, including through engagement with civil society representatives. As a parliamentary institution, the Ombudsman oversees the implementation of legislation, examines appeals from the public, and recommends remedies for bottlenecks in both legislation and procedural practice.

Together with public groups, the Ombudsman conducts monitoring visits to closed facilities. These examine housing conditions, medical care, nutrition, sanitary standards, unimpeded access to lodging appeals, and compliance with international standards for preventing torture and inhuman treatment.

Group and individual interviews with convicts and prisoners form the core of these visits, and complaints gathered through in-prison 'Ombudsman's mailboxes' are followed up with remedial action. Freedom of movement may be restricted by judicial decision, but human dignity must remain unimpaired regardless of an individual's whereabouts. These missions therefore focus on protecting human dignity, preventing torture and embedding a culture of human rights in closed facilities.

Reform agenda

Uzbekistan intends to press ahead with its long-term, human rights-centred reform agenda. At the anniversary ceremony, President Mirziyoyev announced seven national programmes for the coming years, designed to further enhance human dignity. They cover knowledge and skills as the main driver of progress; healthy lives and rising life expectancy; a high-tech, high-productivity model of economic growth; a radical shift in the approach to water resources and the environment; the genuine independence of courts and the rule of law as a shared moral value; empowering mahalla communities to drive social progress; and strengthening Uzbekistan's image as a peaceful and hospitable country.

Each sphere is linked to human rights. Education enables self-actualisation, healthcare guarantees a decent life, a high-tech economy generates employment and income, and ecology creates the conditions for a clean and safe environment. The rule of law builds confidence in justice, and the community stands beside each citizen as the closest source of social support. Peace and friendship, meanwhile, are the shared values that connect human rights, stability and progress.

Uzbekistan is therefore relying on human rights as the cornerstone of its democratic development strategy. The country firmly believes that respect for human dignity reinforces confidence in justice. That, in turn, boosts efficiency at every level of society, creating a virtuous cycle of self-sustained democracy and progress.

• *The writer is Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) of Oliy Majlis in Uzbekistan.*


Kalan Mosque is an architectural monument located in Bukhara, Uzbekistan. (**PICTURE**: Jean-Pierre Dalbera/ Wikipedia)


The Japanese Gardens in Tashkent. (**PICTURE:** Behrami/Wikipedia)

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Meloni blasts Europe's 'disarray' on Ukraine talks

AFP
Brussels

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has slammed Europe's "disorderly" approach to Ukraine negotiations and demanded the EU decide who speaks on its behalf, in a letter seen by AFP yesterday.

In the message to European Council chief Antonio Costa, who chairs summits of EU leaders, Meloni complained about the recent proliferation of meetings in different formats for talks on Russia's war on Ukraine.

"All this is making us look utterly lacking in credibility in handling one of the most complicated dossiers our nations are facing," the Italian leader wrote.

"I am convinced that we all realise how, by giving the image of a Europe that is proceeding in disarray, we are doing nothing but serving the interests of those who want this war to continue."

As examples she cited recent talks in Miami and Oslo as well as meetings this week in Brussels between representatives of Ukraine, the United States, several European countries, Nato and the EU.

She also mentioned a call between the leaders of Norway and Finland and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"I want it on record that I will not go along with this dynamic, nor do I intend to stand by and watch it unfold," Meloni wrote.

"Proceeding in disarray, with initiatives that chase and overlap one another, will not help us, neither with our partners nor with those we must convince to stop a senseless aggression."

The Italian leader said that she wanted EU leaders to decide "once and for all who sits at the negotiating table on behalf of the European Union, and with what mandate."

Meloni said she was not requesting a role for herself or Italy.

She asked that the issue be discussed at a summit of EU leaders in Dublin this month, and for a formal decision to be taken at a second meeting in December.

"Otherwise, I fear we risk condemning Europe to irrelevance in the negotiating process," she said.

Meloni initially called for the EU to name a single envoy to deal with talks on the Ukraine war at the start of this year, but the push fizzled out.

Europe has long been seeking to play a bigger role in US-led efforts to stop the fighting in Ukraine.

After they largely stalled, Washington has revived its push in recent weeks and will meet with Russian and Ukrainian officials in Abu Dhabi next week.

Melania Trump urges enduring Ukraine truce at White House

AFP
Washington

US First Lady Melania Trump called for a "more enduring" ceasefire in Ukraine as she hosted a rare meeting between officials from the war-torn country and its invader Russia at the White House yesterday.

The unprecedented meeting hoped to build on a localised six-day truce in the starvation-hit Ukrainian city of Oleshky that US President Donald Trump's wife had announced last month.

"Now we must use the courage we brought to Oleshky to find common ground through a shared concern for the suffering of innocent people," Melania Trump told reporters.

"Together, we can create something more enduring than a temporary ceasefire."

The Slovenian-born former model said she was sending the envoys back with personal letters to Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

She urged them to use the Oleshky ceasefire — the longest truce so far in the Russian invasion that began in February 2022 — as a "spark in a world of darkness."

"The ceasefire in Oleshky would not be possible without President Putin and President Zelensky. Their co-operation establishes a meaningful precedent for advancing peace throughout the region," she added.



US First Lady Melania Trump hands over letters to Ukrainian and Russian representatives, to be delivered to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Russian President Vladimir Putin, at the White House in Washington, DC, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

The rare halt in fighting, which was respected by both sides, allowed roads to be demined and residents to depart for either Ukraine or Russia.

Russian envoy Kirill Dmitriev said he thanked Melania Trump on Putin's behalf for her "distinguished humanitarian role" in brokering the truce in Oleshky and for work on reuniting children separated from their families by the war.

They include children allegedly abducted by Russia.

The White House meeting also reunited Russia's human rights ombudsman Yana Lantratova and her counterpart from Kyiv, Dmytro Lubinets, who formed an unlikely bond during the Oleshky ceasefire.

The pair were on the ground in the devastated town, addressing the media together on efforts to evacuate residents and deliver aid, in one of the most substantial instances of co-operation between the warring countries.

The US first lady's efforts come ahead of trilateral talks next week in Abu Dhabi aimed at ending the Ukraine war — the first between Russian, Ukraine and the US since February.

The talks have revived hopes for ending the grinding war, although a recent rapprochement between Donald Trump and Putin has raised concerns the US could turn its back on Kyiv.

Trump had promised to end the Ukraine war within 24 hours of taking office in January 2025 but his peace efforts have been intermittent, with the Iran war taking much of his attention this year.

Zelensky said he had a "very detailed, hour-and-a-half-long" conversation with US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner ahead of the Abu Dhabi talks.

The Ukrainian president awarded Melania Trump a national honour for her role in brokering the Oleshky ceasefire, which Lubinets personally presented at the White House.

"I hereby decree that the Order of Princess Olga, First Class, be awarded to Melania Trump, First Lady of the US of America," a decree read on the Ukrainian presidential website.

The US first lady stunned the world when she announced in October 2025 that she had established a secret channel of communication with Putin in a bid to reunite war-separated children.

She has since played a growing but still behind-the-scenes diplomatic role in the Ukraine conflict — even as her husband campaigns openly to win the Nobel Peace Prize despite his own failed efforts to end the war.

New hoax bomb threats hit European flights

AFP
Rome

Italian, French and Bulgarian fighter jets scrambled yesterday as about 20 commercial flights were hit by a third day of hoax bomb alerts across Europe, authorities and airlines said.

No claim of responsibility was made for all the flights, but threats against flights sent to airports in Rome and Sofia, seen by AFP, contained misogynistic messages and claimed to be from "fighters of the Male State".

The hoaxes involved flights from Greece to Britain, but particularly targeted low-cost carriers and flights to or from Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Italy.

Three flights were diverted but all the jets landed safely with no explosives found.

At least five flights received an air force escort after receiving bomb threats.

Bulgaria's air force escorted three Ryanair planes headed for Sofia from Madrid, Copenhagen, and London. All three planes were inspected and no explosives found, an interior ministry spokesperson told AFP.

French fighters accompanied an Aer Lingus flight from Dublin that was headed to Rome, forcing it to land at the Evreux military base 100 kilometres (60 miles) west of Paris, the prime minister's office in Paris said.



An Aer Lingus Airbus A320 plane is seen at Evreux military air base after the flight from Dublin to Rome was diverted to France following a bomb threat, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

"Since the pilot did not co-operate as expected with authorities, the Prime Minister immediately ordered fighter jets to intercept the aircraft and escort it," it said.

The Aer Lingus pilot had "allegedly refused" to land at the military base, "preferring a civilian airport", Evreux prosecutor Remi Coutin told AFP.

The Ryanair flight from London to Sofia was diverted to Plovdiv Airport, east of the capital, while a Wizz Air flight from Milan to Warsaw was re-routed to Vienna, the airlines said.

A message sent to multiple e-mail addresses for Sofia airport and viewed by AFP said that "explosive devices" had been placed on three Ryanair flights headed for Bulgaria.

"You are all accomplices in a criminal conspiracy and for this we want to annihilate you," read the message.

"We, fighters of the Male State, with our actions today will leave a mark in history. Your feminist regime will remember it forever. The explosion will occur in 60 minutes. Today your skies will turn red," it said.

Italian newspaper *Il Corriere della Sera* published the same text — but with warnings directed at two flights headed for Rome — sent to ADR, the company that manages Rome's airports. A company source confirmed the report to AFP.

There is a far-right movement in Russia called the Male State, but AFP could not immediately confirm any link to the message.

The group in 2021 was designated as an "extremist" organisation by the Russian courts but then supported Russia's invasion of Ukraine the following year.

"Today we don't know to what extent they are connected to those in power," Osborn said.

Prague Airport spokeswoman Denisa Hejtmankova told AFP the airport had received threats in e-mails from anonymous addresses.

The EU's transport commissioner, Apostolos Tzitzikostas, wrote on X that it was "too early to draw conclusions on whether the reported incidents are linked."

But European authorities say there has been rise in hybrid attacks, sometimes linked to Russia or Iran.

Most of the flights targeted yesterday landed without incident at their original destinations.

Those included a Lot Polish Airlines flight from Warsaw to Brussels, a Wizz Air flight from Milan to Bucharest and an AirSerbia flight from Belgrade to Bucharest.

In the Czech Republic, four targeted planes bound for Prague flown by Ryanair, Easy Jet and Sky Express all landed safely.

Danish police said two threatened planes landed in Copenhagen as scheduled.

Armenia to apply for EU membership by 2028: PM

AFP
Yerevan

Armenia plans to formally apply for European Union (EU) membership by 2028, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said yesterday, signalling a further shift away from longtime ally Russia.

Armenia's relations with Moscow have deteriorated sharply after Yerevan accused Russia of failing to protect it against arch-foe neighbour Azerbaijan.

In 2020 and 2023, Baku recaptured its breakaway Karabakh region, long controlled by Armenian separatists, prompting the enclave's ethnic-Armenian population — more than 100,000 people — to flee for Armenia.

Yerevan has since pursued an increasingly pro-Western foreign policy and distanced itself from traditional ally Moscow's orbit.

"We have begun a process of creating an alternative so that our people have the opportunity to choose," Pashinyan told a news conference.

"It is clear to me that this process will ultimately lead us, in 2027 or 2028, to formally submit an application to begin the process of joining the EU as a full member."

He said Yerevan had no immediate plans to withdraw from the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), a trade bloc grouping several former Soviet states.

"We are not planning to leave the EAEU," he said, adding that the bloc's members had raised the prospect of Armenia holding a referendum on its future alignment.

Moscow has repeatedly said that membership of both blocs would not be possible due to conflicting rules.

Pashinyan also said Armenia "had lost interest" in the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), a military alliance in which it has frozen participation.

"Our interest in the CSTO has been exhausted. We have no further interest in the CSTO," he said.

In April 2025, Armenia adopted a law launching the process of seeking EU membership, though the legislation did not itself constitute a formal application.

Pashinyan's foreign policy U-turn and swing towards the West has angered the Kremlin.

Earlier this year, Moscow imposed trade restrictions on Armenian agricultural exports and threatened to cut preferential energy supplies.

Serbia probes spy chief over election meddling

Serbian prosecutors yesterday ordered the country's intelligence chief to be questioned over alleged interference in last month's elections, which saw a student-led movement oust the long-ruling nationalist party.
Vladimir Orlic, 43, head of the Security Intelligence Agency (BIA), is a close ally of defeated leader Aleksandar Vucic and a former senior official in his right-wing Serbian Progressive Party (SNS).
Prosecutors said a criminal complaint accused Orlic and several BIA officials of "abuse of office, violating voting rights and coercion", and demanded that they be questioned.
Belgrade prominent lawyer Ivan Ninic, who filed the complaint, alleged BIA employees had been forced to collect pledges of support for the SNS as part of their duties.
Prosecutors also ordered police to examine a separate complaint by Ninic against the justice minister and prison officials over alleged electoral offences in prisons.
The developments come amid arrests of senior police officers as students push for sweeping institutional reforms. (**AFP**)

Largely peaceful marches take place across France as workers stage strike

Reuters
Paris/Lyon

Nationwide demonstrations unfolded largely peacefully, despite some clashes with police in Paris and Lyon, yesterday during a one-day strike by some public sector workers in a renewed challenge to President Emmanuel Macron.

Several high-profile politicians attended the protests, including presidential candidates Jean-Luc Melenchon and Raphael Glucksmann. They follow demonstrations over living costs, public services and education that have triggered the worst civil unrest France has seen in years.

The Interior Ministry said 600,000 people had participated in protests around the country, while the CGT union, one of the organisers, said 1.6mn had taken part.

In Paris, the mood was festive at the start, featuring a diverse group of participants singing "La Marseillaise" and some carnival-like floats. The one-day strike, which some energy workers and teachers joined, shut the Eiffel Tower, but there were no major disruptions to transport.



A protester swings to throw an object during a demonstration as part of a nationwide day of strikes and protests over wages, in Nantes, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

However, about two hours in, some of the people at the front of the march clashed with police, who fired tear gas. Paris police said some hooded individuals committed acts of vandalism, which police responded to immediately in order to stop and isolate them.

French Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu will hold a meeting with workers' and employers' groups on November 9 about the cost of living and salaries.

In Lyon, riot police fired tear gas and charged a group of protesters, some of whom were seen shouting anti-police slogans and dressed all in black, with face coverings. The Interior Ministry said the police there had been confronted by several hundred protesters and that the violence had been contained although tensions remained high.

The unrest comes only five months before a presidential election which could pit far-right candidate Marine Le Pen against hard-left rival Melenchon in a second-round run-off. Macron, who is serving his second term and is unpopular, cannot run again.

The Interior Ministry said people throwing fireworks had caused a fire at a high school near the city of Toulouse in the southwest yesterday morning, forcing pupils and staff to evacuate the building while firefighters doused the flames.

France extends maritime patrol plane's stay in Black Sea after cargo ship attacks

Reuters
Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base

A French maritime patrol aircraft deployed to Romania to bolster surveillance after a series of deadly strikes on merchant ships in the Black Sea on the edge of Nato's eastern flank will extend its stay by several weeks, its commander said yesterday.

The attacks have shown how the escalating maritime war between Russia and Ukraine is expanding into a major challenge for Nato in the Black Sea that has left member states such as Romania and Bulgaria exposed.

The Black Sea is crucial for shipments of grain, oil and oil products and is shared by Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia and Turkiye, as well as Ukraine and Russia. Russia has denied targeting Ukraine's neighbours.

France temporarily relocated the Atlantique 2 aircraft — designed to detect submarines, warships and small threats including sea drones and mines — to the Romanian Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base on October 18 after Nato members Romania and Bulgaria asked Nato for reinforcements.

"The Atlantique 2 presence will be maintained for a few weeks from now on. We are here to ensure the safety of navigation of the commercial traffic in the Black Sea," said the aircraft's commander, whose identity was not given by the French naval forces for security purposes.

It had initially been deployed to Romania until November 6.

At least nine cargo ships were hit near the coast of Romania and Bulgaria in October, with some 34 sailors reported dead or missing.

The plane was able to detect the three sea drones which ultimately struck and sank the Greek-owned container vessel Contship Jet in Bulgaria's exclusive economic zone on October 28.

The commander said they notified Bulgarian authorities and the vessel an hour before the sea drones struck, enabling the crew in that instance to come away unscathed.

"We are a surveillance aircraft," the plane's commander said. "We are able to detect. We are not able to neutralise and intercept these kind of drones."

Nato said this week the alliance had committed to investing more than $40bn in counter-drone capabilities in the next five years. It said its commitment to defending all its members, including those on the Black Sea, was "ironclad".

QATAR

Design Doha Biennial 2026 opens

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

On view through January 31, 2027, the second edition of the biennial features 20 exhibitions, new commissions, public installations and cultural programmes showcasing the region's design heritage alongside bold new approaches to materials, making and production

Qatar Museums (QM) opened Design Doha Biennial 2026 yesterday, bringing together designers, artisans and creative practitioners from across the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) and beyond to explore how traditional knowledge, craftsmanship and contemporary innovation are shaping the future of design.

On view through January 31, 2027, the second edition of the biennial features 20 exhibitions, new commissions, public installations and cultural programmes showcasing the region's design heritage alongside bold new approaches to materials, making and production.

Presented under the curatorial vision Translating Knowledge: From Ancestral Systems to Economic Futures, the 2026 edition highlights how traditional practices continue to inform contemporary design and production. The programme unfolds across Doha, with the historic neighbourhood of Fereej Al Asmakh serving as its central hub, while the headline exhibition, Arab Design Now 2026, is presented in Msheireb Downtown Doha.

Fahad al-Obaidly, director of Design Doha, said: "Design Doha 2026 celebrates the extraordinary talent and knowledge found across our region. From the historic houses of Fereej Al Asmakh to new installations across the city, this edition creates a space for designers, artisans and communities to share ideas, develop new work and connect with audiences. We want to celebrate the people behind design, the knowledge passed between generations and the possibilities this creates for the future."

Glenn Adamson, artistic director of Design Doha, said: "The 2026 edition looks at design as a form of knowledge that evolves across generations, cultures and communities. Across the MENASA region, we see extraordinary traditions of making that continue to inspire new ideas and approaches to contemporary design. This biennial celebrates that exchange between past and present, while asking how the knowledge and skills of today can shape the design practices and economies of tomorrow."

Arab Design Now 2026

The biennial's headline exhibition, Arab Design Now 2026, curated by Noura Al Sayeh, features 81 designers, artisans and makers, 78 new commissions and 17 newly commissioned films. The exhibition celebrates the relationship between traditional craftsmanship and contemporary design.

Organised around five themes, the exhibition highlights the creative processes, materials and communities behind the works, including the relationships between designers and the artisans who contribute to their production. The exhibition is accompanied by the publication Arab Design Now Volume 2, released yesterday.

Exhibitions Across Doha

Across Fereej Al Asmakh and other locations in Doha, an additional 19 exhibitions are presented in collaboration with regional and international institutions and creative partners, exploring the intersections of design, architecture, craft, material innovation, and cultural heritage.

Highlights include The Sower by Mexican designer Fernando Laposse, presented as part of the Qatar Canada Mexico 2026 Year of Culture, which connects the desert ecologies of Mexico and Qatar; Aslan's Love, presented by Turquoise Mountain, celebrating Palestinian craft traditions; and Post-Oil 2026, a Saudi Modern initiative by Bricklab, which looks at the materials that have changed the Gulf's built environment.

Al Khor Urban Futures presents an early vision for the regeneration of Al Khor's historic centre, developed following two years of conversations with the local community. Presented across three traditional houses in Fereej Al Asmakh, the installation features a full-scale canopy designed by Kere Architecture and invites visitors to contribute ideas that will inform the next stage of the Al Khor Heritage Trail project.

Other exhibitions include The Muqarnas of Sadu, which reinterprets traditional weaving as a large-scale architectural installation; The Thread That Binds, inviting visitors to participate in a collective weaving project; and Monumental: A Monobloc's Memoir, which reimagines the familiar plastic chair as a sculptural work inspired by everyday life in the Arab world.

Public Design Commissions

Five new Public Design Commissions introduce site-specific installations across Fereej Al Asmakh, creating spaces for gathering, interaction and public use. Curated by Javier Pena Ibanez, director of Concentrico, and supported by Qatar Public Works Authority (Ashghal) as Visionary Partner, the installations draw inspiration from regional approaches to architecture, climate and materials.

The selected projects are Falajscape by Studio By Three, Shoreline by platau, Salsabil by Meriem Chabani (New South), Cooling Pots by Haitam Daoudi and Oscar Cruz Garcia and Palm Construct by Abdalla Almulla. Together, they introduce contemporary approaches to shade, cooling, water and communal spaces.

Design Doha Prize 2026

The Design Doha Prize returns with 20 finalists across four categories: Craft, Product Design, Furniture Design and Emerging Talents. Chaired by HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, chairperson of Qatar Museums, the prize is overseen by a 24-member international jury headed by acclaimed designer India Mahdavi. Four winners will be announced on November 7 at the Museum of Islamic Art. Together, they will receive a support package of QR 800,000, alongside mentorship, residency, production and commercial opportunities.

Opening Programme and Public Events

From November 5 to 7, the biennial's opening programme features curated exhibition tours, conversations, workshops, performances and networking events. At the Design Doha Hub, Art for Tomorrow hosts discussions with international creative voices on the future of art and design. Visitors can also participate in hands-on workshops at the House of Makin and informal conversations with designers and curators.

Design Doha Connect provides professional networking opportunities for designers, collectors, buyers and industry representatives, while live performances, film screenings and guided tours take place across Fereej Al Asmakh.

Design Doha Biennial 2026 is part of Evolution Nation, a campaign honouring Qatar's cultural journey over the past 50 years, since the founding of the National Museum of Qatar. Curated by Qatar Creates, the national initiative positions Qatar as a global hub for art, culture and creativity.

Design Doha Biennial 2026 is supported by a number of partners and sponsors, including Qatar Rail, Qatar Tourism, Qatar Calendar, the Public Works Authority (Ashghal), the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, the Government Communications Office, Doha Design District, Jotun, the British Council, and Dana Alfardan Music. Their support has contributed to bringing the Biennial's exhibitions, public installations and programmes to audiences across Doha.

Qatar Boat Show traces history of Old Doha Port

QNA
Doha



The Qatar Boat Show is offering visitors a journey through the rich maritime history of Old Doha Port through a chronological exhibition entitled 'A Tale of the Sea and a Meeting Point of the World', unveiled for the first time at the VIP entrance as part of the third edition of the event, which runs until November 7 at Old Doha Port.

Set against the backdrop of the very port that witnessed the beginnings of this historic journey, the exhibition recounts the story of Old Doha Port and explores the deep-rooted relationship between the people of Qatar and the sea, an enduring bond that has shaped the country's identity, heritage and cultural traditions. It also traces the port's transformation from a historic commercial harbour into a prominent tourist destination and the country's official maritime gateway.

Through an extensive collection of original documents, photographs, video footage and archival materials, the exhibition takes visitors through successive chapters of the port's history, offering an insight into its evolution and its close connection with Qatar's economic, urban and social development.

The journey begins in the 1950s, when the port was known as Al Fardah and its Merchants' Wharf served as the principal hub of maritime trade. This formative period continued until 1966, when a decree regulating Qatar's seaports was issued, marking an important milestone in the organisation of the country's maritime infrastructure. The exhibition then moves into the 1960s and 1970s, a period that witnessed the transformation of Al Fardah from a traditional trading harbour into an officially established port. The inauguration of New Doha Port in 1971 ushered in a new chapter, as the facility began receiving commercial vessels and prominent international dignitaries. Among its distinguished visitors was Queen Elizabeth II, who arrived aboard the Royal Yacht Britannia in the late 1970s.

Visitors are subsequently taken through the period extending from the 1980s to 2015, when the port's facilities expanded and its functions diversified in tandem with Qatar's accelerating economic and urban development. This era reflected the growing importance of maritime infrastructure in supporting the country's transformation and expanding its international connections.

A new chapter in the port's history began in 2016, when commercial operations were transferred to Hamad Port, paving the way for an ambitious redevelopment project that reimagined the historic harbour as a vibrant tourism destination. The transformation has brought together Qatar's rich maritime heritage and a contemporary array of distinctive cultural, leisure and visitor experiences, breathing new life into a landmark deeply embedded in the nation's collective memory.

Extending its historical narrative through to the present day, the exhibition illustrates how the port's evolution has remained closely intertwined with Qatar's broader development, highlighting its longstanding role in shaping Doha's relationship with the sea and serving as a vital gateway for trade, travel and international engagement.

The exhibition also underscores how the transformation of Old Doha Port represents a continuation of its heritage rather than a departure from it. By preserving the country's maritime identity and historical character while embracing modernity, the redevelopment has sought to strike a balance between authenticity and innovation, in keeping with the aspirations of Qatar National Vision 2030.

The exhibition is the result of collaborative efforts between Old Doha Port and several national institutions and organisations, which contributed historical information, archival records and visual materials to document and bring the port's story to life. Participating entities include Qatar Museums, Qatar National Library, Qatar National Archives, the Ministry of Municipality, Qatar Navigation Company (Milaha), Al Kass Sports Channels, Atlas Bookstore and Qatar Creates.

Through this carefully curated historical narrative, the Qatar Boat Show extends beyond its showcase of maritime and boating experiences to celebrate the enduring significance of the sea in Qatar's national story, offering visitors a deeper appreciation of how Old Doha Port has evolved while retaining its place at the heart of the country's maritime heritage.

Qatar Boat Show: A key event for marine tourism

The third edition of the Qatar Boat Show 2026 at Old Doha Port under the patronage of HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, drew a large audience, including dignitaries, guests and marine industry enthusiasts from around the world.

CEO of Old Doha Port and Chairman of the Organising Committee Eng Mohammed Abdullah al-Mulla told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the Qatar Boat Show is one of the strategic objectives and pillars of Old Doha Port, aimed at strengthening the port's and Qatar's position on the marine tourism map. He noted that the third edition stands out for the number of participating companies and brands, with 546 brands from 14 countries on display. Gulf participation has increased by 30% this year, while 70% of exhibitors have renewed their participation.

The Qatar Boat Show also continues to build strong partnerships with leading figures in the global marine industry. He stressed that the show is not limited to marine industry professionals. Efforts have been made to enrich the experience of participants and visitors through a variety of activities, several permanent cafes and floating cafes, as well as collaboration with Qatar Museums and Qatar Creates on a comprehensive art exhibition.

The exhibition highlights the historical significance of Old Doha Port in the 1950s, traces its development through various stages, and documents its transformation from a commercial port into a tourism destination. As part of efforts to highlight Qatar's maritime heritage, and alongside the exhibition 'A Maritime Legacy and a Gateway to the World', which recounts the port's journey from its early beginnings, the traditional stitched Baggarah dhow was displayed at the VIP entrance.

Presented by the Qatar Creates initiative and part of Qatar Museums' collection, the vessel is believed to date back to before 1899, representing more than 125 years of history. It was used for pearl diving and transporting light cargo between Gulf ports. This Baggarah closely resembles the traditional Qatari stitched Baggarah known as 'Umm Al Hanaya' and embodies the shared maritime heritage of Qatar and the Gulf countries.

For centuries, such dhows helped strengthen commercial and cultural ties among the peoples of the region. The OSHAR Art Gallery also presented a show titled 'The Sea in the Memory of Qatari Art', featuring works by Qatari artist Yousef Ahmad celebrating the deep-rooted relationship between the people of Qatar and the sea. **(QNA)**

MoT takes part in Qatar Boat Show

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) is taking part in the Qatar Boat Show 2026. At its stand, MoT, a strategic partner, is highlighting several maritime initiatives and services. The Water Taxi is one of them -- a project designed to advance the nation's public transit system. A scale model is on display, showcasing the project's three key facilities and stops: Lusail City, The Pearl-Qatar, and the West Bay (Corniche).

The project offers waterborne mobility solutions that harness cutting-edge, eco-friendly technology. This helps diversify mobility options and foster an integrated, sustainable transportation network in step with Qatar's vision for sustainable development.

Continuing to raise awareness of maritime security and safety procedures, MoT is showcasing maritime navigational aids (NAVAIDs) to help visitors understand their role in enhancing navigational safety and guiding crews and captains to avoid danger zones. The MoT stand helps visitors learn more about maritime markers and buoys, including the meaning of each one, their colours, and signals, according to the IALA Region A system adopted in Qatar.

Visitors to the MoT stand can also learn about MoT's digital maritime services available on the ministry's "Darb" app, where users can complete transactions anytime, anywhere, saving time and effort.

Using the Darb app, users can easily register a new small craft, renew a small craft's registration, amend a small craft's specifications, have a lost or damaged registration card replaced, deregister a small craft, issue owners' sequence certificates, amend ownership, and access mortgage and mortgage release services, as well as card delivery via Qatar Post.

Children visiting the MoT stand can also try the 'little captain' route and learn about maritime navigation aids in a simple, interactive way, enhancing their understanding of maritime safety.

The MoT remains committed to supporting major national events that help enhance Qatar's global ranking in tourism, marine activities, and superyachts.



