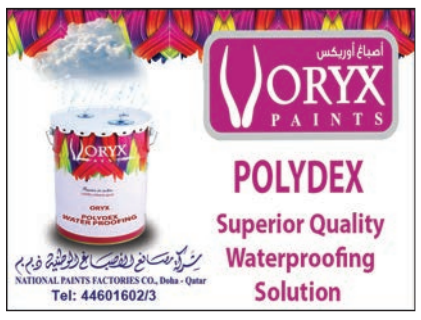
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SPORT | Page 1

Qatar players look forward to shine at FIFA U-17 World Cup







Amir, Brunei crown prince review ties

●Deputy Amir, crown prince hold official round of talks



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office of Brunei Darussalam Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah and his accompanying delegation at the Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim Majlis at the Amiri Diwan yesterday.

The meeting, held during the Brunei crown prince's official visit to Qatar, focused on bilateral relations and ways to strengthen and expand co-operation across various fields, as well as key issues of mutual interest.

At the outset, the crown prince conveyed the greetings of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam to HH the Amir, along with his wishes for the Amir's continued health and happiness and further development and prosperity for the people of Qatar.

HH the Amir reciprocated the greetings, asking the crown prince to convey his best wishes to Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah for continued good health and well-being, and to the people of Brunei Darussalam for further progress and prosperity.

The meeting was attended by His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani, HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Khulaifi, and a number of ministers and senior officials. Members of the official delegation accompanying the crown prince attended from the Brunei side.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah held a session of official talks at the Amiri Diwan yesterday, exploring opportunities to deepen bilateral co-operation and exchanging views on regional and international developments.

At the beginning of the talks, HH the Deputy Amir welcomed the Crown Prince and his accompanying delegation, wishing them a pleasant stay in Qatar and expressing hope that the visit would contribute to further strengthening and developing relations between the two countries across various sectors.

The crown prince thanked HH the Deputy Amir for the warm welcome and generous hospitality, emphasising the importance of the visit in advancing bilateral relations and opening new avenues for co-operation between Qatar and Brunei Darussalam.

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QCB eases financing for MSMEs

Qatar Central Bank (QCB) has issued new regulations allowing micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to secure financing against point-of-sale (POS) and verified electronic payment revenues, in a move aimed at easing access to credit and promoting financial inclusion. The regulations, aligned with Qatar's Third Financial Sector Strategy, seek to encourage MSMEs to expand their business activities by relaxing collateral requirements, accelerating credit approval procedures and allowing businesses to use their revenues as a source of loan repayment. In a statement yesterday, QCB said the financing framework covers revenues generated through POS devices provided either by the lending bank or other banks. Other verified electronic payment revenues generated within Qatar may also be used as a basis for financing, provided they can be substantiated. Under the new regulations, financing is capped at 30% of an enterprise's average total annual revenues, with a repayment period of up to two years, including a grace period not exceeding six months. (**QNA**)

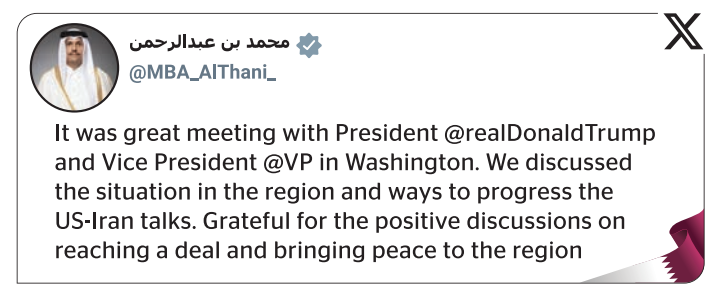
Trump meets PM, says Iran war 'militarily over'

Qatar optimistic after talks with US leadership

Monitoring Report







US President Donald Trump said yesterday there was "positive momentum" towards a deal to end the Iran war after meeting HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Abdularahman bin Jassim al-Thani at the White House.

Trump told reporters he believes war with Iran is militarily "effectively over" and that taking military action against Iran "doesn't seem to be a very necessary thing".

Trump added in a post on Truth Social that a resumption of US military strikes on Iran was "quite unlikely," saying that Gulf powers wanted to keep the status quo.

Reuters quoted Trump as saying that Qatar and Saudi Arabia were eager for a peaceful solution on the Iran conflict but the United States was ready to resume military strikes if necessary.

Trump, who met the PM, said "Qatar would rather see a peaceful solution" and "Saudi Arabia would rather see a peaceful solution" but "we're ready to go anytime we want" with strikes.

Trump though signaled he was in no rush to resume strikes, saying he was content with the US naval blockade against Iran in the Strait of Hormuz.

"We'll see where it goes," he said in a brief phone interview. "I'm prepared."

The US president said he had "an excellent conversation with Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, the Prime Minister of Qatar, wherein much was discussed with respect to the Islamic Republic of Iran".

"Most importantly, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, and others, would prefer the status quo, in other words, a continuation of the Greatest Naval Blockade in History, and the new Operation Iron Gate – Therefore, Land and Sea," he wrote on Truth Social.

"All have agreed that Iran cannot have a Nuclear Weapon – That is non-negotiable! Should there be any change with respect to developments in the Middle East, the United States of America is 'locked and loaded' and ready to go," he added.

The PM said he had positive discussions with US President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance .

"Grateful for the positive discussions on reaching a deal and bringing peace to the region," he said on X. Al Jazeera reported the meeting lasted 45 minutes and was closed to the cameras.

Qatar has been a key diplomatic intermediary between Washington and Tehran since the outbreak of the conflict on February 28

Sidra Medicine expands cord blood banking, eyes future stem-cell therapies

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Sidra Medicine is opening new frontiers in stem-cell preservation and regenerative medicine with Qatar's first Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) facility, enabling families to bank cord blood and birth-related tissues locally rather than sending them overseas, while laying the groundwork for potential future cell-based therapies.

In an exclusive interview with *Gulf Times*, Dr Chiara Cugno, Acting Division Chief and Director of the Advanced Cell Therapy Core at Sidra Medicine, said the facility was established in accordance with international standards for the manufacturing of cell and gene therapies.

The facility has already banked cord blood for more than 150 patients, with the service currently available primarily to families delivering at Sidra Medicine.

The initiative fills a significant gap in Qatar's healthcare landscape, where families seeking private cord blood banking previously had to rely on companies that collected samples locally before shipping them abroad for processing and long-term storage.

"The GMP facility was built according to international standards for the manufacturing of cells and gene therapies. The facility is licensed by Qatar's Ministry of Public Health and has been validated by a third-party company from the UK to ensure compliance with international standards," Dr Cugno said. To Page 6

Sheikha Hind elected QOC Vice-President



The Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) held its 2026 Extraordinary General Assembly yesterday, chaired by HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, President of the Qatar Olympic Committee.

The meeting finalised the composition of the QOC Board of Directors, alongside a review of the performance of Qatar's national teams and preparations for upcoming sporting events.

The General Assembly elected HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad al-Thani as Vice-President of the Qatar Olympic Committee, while Mohammed bin Yousuf al-Mana was also appointed Vice-President, following the decision of Dr Thani bin Abdulrahman al-Kuwari to step down from his position.

The Qatar Olympic Committee expressed its sincere appreciation to Dr Thani for his valuable efforts and contributions during his tenure, and wished him continued success.

The General Assembly also reviewed the results of Qatar's national teams at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games, including the medals and achievements secured across various competitions, as well as preparations for Qatar's participation in upcoming multi-sport events. To Page 2
See also Sport Page 1

From cables to clouds: MWC sketches blueprint for national AI strategies

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Doha became the meeting point this week for the question that may define the digital age: who controls artificial intelligence, and on whose terms? Speaking at the Sovereign AI and National Digital Strategies Summit, held alongside the second edition of MWC26 Doha, delegates mapped out long-term plans covering data, infrastructure, regulation and talent, the building blocks of economic resilience and diversification.

Across the sessions, one tension kept resurfacing: how to stake a credible claim in an AI landscape still taking shape, while protecting innovation, security and strategic autonomy.

Uzbekistan's Minister of Digital Technologies, Sherzod Shermatov, laid out his country's AI capabilities and its ambition to become a global hub for technology and AI startups. Young talent is Uzbekistan's strongest asset, he said, and plans are already under way to put AI to work across the economy, education, healthcare and beyond.

Greece's Secretary-General for Telecommunications and Post at the Ministry of Digital Governance, Konstantinos Karantzalos, argued that digital sovereignty is never a solo act. It can only be achieved through trusted international partnerships that deepen local expertise and give countries greater confidence in the technologies they use.

He called for co-operation on the practical essentials: resilient connectivity, access to cloud computing, and the skills needed to use AI well. Success, he underlined, will be measured by whether countries, businesses and individuals gain the confidence and capacity to shape their own digital future. To Page 2

QATAR

Deputy Amir, crown prince of Brunei hold official talks



His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office of Brunei Darussalam, Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah, held an official talks session at the Amiri Diwan yesterday morning.
At the beginning of the meeting, His Highness the Deputy Amir welcomed the Crown Prince of Brunei Darussalam and the accompanying delegation, wishing them a pleasant stay in Qatar and expressing his aspiration that the visit would contribute to strengthening and developing bilateral relations in various fields.
For his part, the crown prince of Brunei Darussalam expressed his thanks and gratitude to the Deputy Amir for the warm reception and generous hospitality, affirming the importance of the visit in propelling bilateral relations between the two countries toward broader horizons.
During the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral relations and ways to deepen and expand them in various fields, alongside the foremost regional and international issues and developments, particularly the latest developments in the region and ways to bolster regional stability. The meeting was attended by HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi; HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhater; and a number of ministers and senior officials.
From Brunei Darussalam side, the meeting was attended by Minister of Education Dr Romaizah binti Haji Mohd Salleh; HE Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office Nor Ashikin binti Haji Johari; and several members of the official delegation accompanying the crown prince.
The Deputy Amir hosted a luncheon in honour of the crown prince and his accompanying delegation. (**QNA**)



Sheikha Hind elected QOC Vice-President

From Page 1

HE Sheikh Joaan commended the achievements of Qatari athletes and national teams throughout the year, particularly their performances at the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games.
He also praised the efforts of national sports federations, committees, and technical and administrative teams in preparing athletes and supporting their participation in international competitions.
The QOC reaffirmed its commitment to developing Qatari sporting talent and expanding opportunities for athletes to compete, further strengthening Qatar's sporting presence and competitiveness in future events.

From cables to clouds: MWC sketches blueprint for national AI strategies

From Page 1

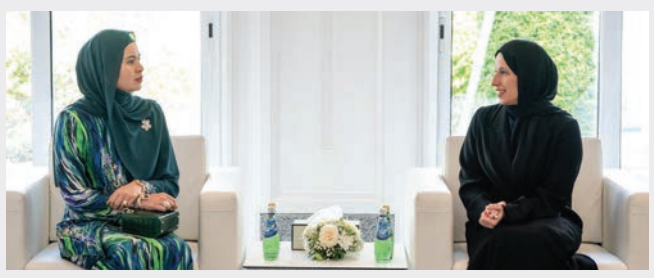


Thomas H. Perez-Ducy, a board member of the Dominican Institute of Telecommunications (INDOTEL), built his country's approach on three pillars of sovereign AI: nationwide digital infrastructure, government personnel able to use AI securely, and local expertise to develop, evaluate and apply the technology. The Dominican Republic, he said, has its sights set on becoming a regional AI hub for the entire Americas, drawing on its advanced infrastructure, particularly its submarine cable network.

During a panel discussion, Travers Nicholas, General Manager for North Gulf (Qatar and Kuwait) at Dell Technologies, offered a useful distinction: sovereign AI is about controlling how a nation uses the technology, not isolating itself from the world. Less sensitive datasets and tasks, he noted, can still run on shared or global infrastructure. Hisham Mohamed, Director of Engineering at Scale AI, said sovereignty rests on a country's ability to control its use of AI. First, countries must own their data, manage and govern it, and keep full control free of external influence.

Second, they must build their own AI infrastructure and capabilities. Third, they need skilled professionals who can operate these technologies.

Spouse of Brunei crown prince visits Shafallah Center





Princess Sarah, spouse of Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office of Brunei Darussalam Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah, visited yesterday the Shafallah Center for Persons with Disabilities, accompanied by her official delegation, to inspect its specialised care, rehabilitation, and empowerment programs.
She was welcomed upon arrival by HE the Minister of Social Development and Family and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Qatar Foundation for Social Work, Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi.
During the tour, Princess Sarah inspected the centre's integrated service system, exploring its various departments, sections, units, and facilities, and received a comprehensive briefing on key educational, therapeutic, and rehabilitative programs aimed at developing the capabilities of persons with disabilities, fostering their independence, and promoting their active community integration.
The visit also featured discussions addressing issues concerning persons with disabilities in Qatar and Brunei Darussalam, with both sides exploring avenues for enhanced cooperation and the exchange of expertise and best practices in care, empowerment, and rehabilitation to further improve quality of life for beneficiaries.
The reception was attended by CEO of Qatar Foundation for Social Work Rashid Mohammed al-Nuaimi, Executive Director of the Shafallah Center Fatima Saeed al-Saadi, and several senior officials from the centre. (**QNA**)

Amir, Brunei crown prince review ties

From Page 1



The two sides reviewed bilateral relations and discussed ways to broaden and deepen co-operation in various fields. They also exchanged views on major regional and international issues and developments, particularly the latest developments in the region and efforts to enhance regional stability.
The talks were attended by HE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi, HE Minister of Education and Higher Education Lolwah bint Rashid al-Khater, and several ministers and senior officials.
Representing Brunei Darussalam were Minister of Education Dr Romaizah binti Haji Mohd Salleh, Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office Nor Ashikin binti Haji Johari, and several members of the official delegation accompanying the Crown Prince.
Following the talks, HH the Deputy Amir hosted a luncheon in honour of the crown prince and his accompanying delegation.
Earlier, Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah had arrived at the Amiri Diwan, where an official reception ceremony was held in his honour. (**QNA**)

Crown prince of Brunei visits NMoQ







The Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office of Brunei Darussalam Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah and his accompanying delegation visited the National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ) yesterday.

Accompanied during the tour by HE the Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Qatar Museums Sheikh Thani bin Hamad al-Thani, the crown prince of Brunei viewed key exhibits across the museum's various galleries and received a comprehensive overview of its precious historical treasures and cultural collections.

The tour included galleries highlighting Qatar's early geological formation and natural environments, archaeological artifacts and rock carvings, and the traditional life of the Qatari people across both inland and coastal regions, alongside an immersive digital exhibition.

He also inspected significant items and collections related to pearls and jewellery design, in addition to touring galleries dedicated to Qatar's modern history, covering the transformative period from the discovery of oil and gas to the present day. (**QNA**)

Al Khor Urban Futures opens at Design Doha Biennial 2026





Urban Futures brings the community into this journey from the very beginning, so that local knowledge and aspirations shape every stage of the vision. Together, we hope to show how heritage and design can guide the long-term renewal of a town while preserving the identity that makes it unique."

Qatar Museums (QM) yesterday unveils Al Khor Urban Futures, the first public milestone of the Al Khor Heritage Trail, a long-term project to regenerate the coastal town's historic centre, in the presence of HE the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Qatar Museums Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani.

Presented as part of the Design Doha Biennial 2026, the exhibition runs November 5, 2026 to January 31, 2027 across Houses 37, 38 and 39 and Plaza A2 in Al Asmakh, Doha. At its heart is a pre-concept for the town, shaped by two years of conversations with residents, elders, craftspeople, farmers and businesses, as well as ministries and public bodies. Visitors are now invited to question it, test it and add to it.

CEO of Qatar Museums Mohammed Saad al-Rumaihi said: "Al Khor's heritage is the foundation on which its future will be built. Our ambition is to enrich the town's cultural life and create lasting opportunities for the people who call it home. Al Khor

Local voices are woven into the project from the outset. The Al Khor Content Committee, formed with the people of Al Khor, advises on and reviews the content, ensuring that local knowledge and perspectives guide its development.

Inside the three traditional houses, visitors journey from Al Khor's heritage to its possible future. Ideas can be shared through a large map of the town, a contribution wall or through QR codes in each room, and every response will inform the next stage of the proposal.

On Plaza A2 stands the Al Khor Canopy, designed by Kéré Architecture and built with Seashore Group. Both a gathering place and a full-scale prototype of the shade proposed along the trail, it draws on Francis Kéré's expertise in lightweight structures and local building traditions.

An accompanying public programme will feature community majlis sessions, planning workshops with residents, stakeholders and partners, guided visits and heritage walks. Programme dates will be announced in due course. (**QNA**)

Switzerland keen to bolster peace, lauds Qatari mediation

President of the National Council of Switzerland, Pierre-Andre Page, said his country and the State of Qatar are committed to continuing to work together in pursuit of promoting peace, lauding Doha's effective role in mediation efforts and its diplomatic endeavours.
In remarks to Qatar News Agency, the President noted the thriving relations between the two nations in various fields of shared interest, emphasising that both nations are quite ready to offer their good offices in support of diplomatic efforts.
During his current visit to the State of Qatar, Page highlighted that he had held constructive talks in Doha that centred on bilateral relations and avenues for reinforcing co-operation between the two nations, as well as maritime security and its implications for international commerce and traffic. He remarked that he hoped to see the relevant maritime lanes reopened as soon as possible.
The diplomatic efforts the two nations can offer take on special significance when it comes to the Gaza Strip and relations between Iran and the United States of America, the President underlined.
He underscored the increasing interest in parliamentary diplomacy and its role in complementing diplomatic efforts led by governments, promoting dialogue and contributing to resolving conflicts through peaceful means.
Concluding his remarks, the President of the National Council of Switzerland shed light on opportunities to continue boosting economic co-operation between Switzerland and the State of Qatar, particularly in the field of sustainable waste management.
He pointed out that the Doha visit comes at a particularly significant time in the course of relations between the two nations. (**QNA**)

Amir congratulates Paraguay president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to the President of the Republic of Paraguay Pedro Alliana, on the occasion of his assumption of office, wishing him success and further development and growth for the relations between the two countries. (**QNA**)

Crown prince's visit 'boosts Qatar-Brunei co-operation'



The ambassador of the State of Qatar to Brunei Darussalam Abdullah Hamad Ali al-Adham al-Marri said the visit of Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office of Brunei Darussalam, to Qatar marks an important milestone in the development of bilateral relations and reflects the two countries' shared commitment to broadening co-operation across multiple fields.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), ambassador al-Marri said the visit assumes added significance as it coincides with the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the State of Qatar and Brunei Darussalam, underscoring the depth of the ties between the two countries and the steady progress they have made over the past decades.

He said the visit offers an important opportunity to further deepen economic, trade and investment ties while opening new avenues for co-operation in sectors of mutual priority, in ways that advance shared interests and expand opportunities for investment and trade.

The ambassador noted that the visit also comes amid growing engagement between the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), creating broader prospects for closer co-operation and co-ordination between the two sides.

Al-Marri highlighted the convergence of Qatar and Brunei Darussalam's positions in international forums and their shared commitment to advancing dialogue and promoting international peace, security and stability. He stressed that both countries attach importance to collective action to address common challenges and strengthen relations among nations. (**QNA**)

Qatar Airways, Porter Airlines launch Canada codeshare

Qatar Airways announces a new codeshare agreement with Porter Airlines, expanding its reach across Canada and providing passengers with greater connectivity and travel options.
Under the agreement, Qatar Airways will place its (QR) code on select flights operated by Porter Airlines, offering passengers convenient onward connections beyond its existing Canadian gateways in Toronto (YYZ) and Montreal (YUL). By leveraging Porter Airlines' growing domestic network and strong presence in Eastern Canada, the partnership will provide greater access to destinations across the country, including Edmonton, Halifax Ottawa, St. John's, and Thunder Bay.
The collaboration will also offer travellers departing from Canada greater choice and flexibility when planning their journeys. Passengers travelling from Montreal and Toronto can connect through the award-winning Hamad International Airport in Doha to explore Qatar Airways' extensive global network of more than 170 destinations including Delhi, Manila, Dubai, and Addis Ababa. Qatar Airways continues to strengthen its presence in Canada, now operating daily services to both Toronto and Montreal, for a total of 14 weekly flights. The addition of Porter further enhances the airline's network of partnerships, creating more opportunities for customers to connect conveniently across Canada and Qatar Airways' global network. (**QNA**)

Minister of Interior meets with Omani counterpart



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani met during his visit to the Sultanate of Oman with Minister of Interior of Oman Hamoud bin Faisal al-Busaidi. They discussed the brotherly relations between the two nations and ways to deepen and expand them, particularly in security matters. (**QNA**)

DPA office at Media City Qatar to be hub of its activities in GCC

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter



Officials of Media City Qatar and DPA along with other dignitaries. **PICTURES**: Thajudheen

The newly opened office of the German Press Agency (DPA) at Media City Qatar will serve as the hub for its services and activities in the region, said the CEO of the news network, Peter Kropsch.

Speaking to *Gulf Times* on the sidelines of the ceremony, marking the opening of its office at Media City Qatar, Kropsch said: "This is our only office in the GCC countries. This will be the hub for our Arabic services for the entire Gulf region. We have journalists here on the ground. In addition we have two more office in the Mena region, one in Cairo, Egypt and the other one in Tunis, Tunisia."

The office of DPA was formally opened yesterday in the presence of a large number of dignitaries and invited guests. Speaking at the event, Hamad Omar AlMannai, CEO of Media City Qatar, said DPA's presence at Media City Qatar adds great value to the organisation's international portfolio.

"We are really pleased to welcome you to Media City Qatar. Let me say that DPA brings really important international voices and valuable journalistic expertise which we will benefit from. We are looking forward to having your contribution," said AlMannai.

DPA CEO Kropsch said that it was a dream come true for the network. "It has been a dream, and to be together with most of you, with the team of the Qatar Media City, our partners and customers, is really fulfilling," he said.



Peter Kropsch.



Hamad Omar AlMannai.

Kropsch noted two reasons for opening new hubs in the DPA network worldwide. He explained: "The one reason is that there are news from the country, which are relevant to our audiences. And the second one is that we have customers in the country. Qatar as well as the Gulf region, given the geopolitical situation and also the increasing economic links between Europe and the region, is of striking importance."

The official noted that Qatar and the Gulf region are a major focus of the network for various reasons. "The focus from Qatar will be mostly on whatever is going on in the news sector. But we will also be concentrating on sports, entertainment and arts. Another outstanding important topic is the economic relations between German and Qatari companies and also the mutual investments," he said.

Kropsch said being in Media City Qatar gives his organisation several advantages. "There are basically three advantages. First, it is a very convenient place, which makes working quite easy. The second thing is we are in a community of different media brands, which is always important for us. And the third one, I cherish the decision of Media City to move into the centre of the city which provides a lot of openings and possibilities in an urban setup," he described.

As for the news agency's plans, Kropsch said there will be many enhancements in news reporting from the region.

"The expectation is that we just enhance our reporting from the region that we will find sufficient inputs to enhance our customer community. This will also lead to more and more in-depth reporting not only for the Arabic service but also for the other newswires that DPA runs," added the official.

Regulatory guide to ensure a stable, sustainable school environment in private schools, kindergartens launched



The Ministry of Education and Higher Education launched the Regulatory Guide for Providing a Stable and Sustainable School Environment in Private Schools and Kindergartens at an event held at at its permanent headquarters.

The event drew ministry officials and representatives from private schools and kindergartens. The initiative is part of the ministry's efforts to strengthen compliance with regulatory requirements and enhance the quality of educational services, in line with the human and social development objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030. It also aims to ensure the provision of high-quality education in a safe and stable environment that protects rights and promotes national values and identity.

The guide aims to standardise the procedures for identifying and addressing violations, strengthen preventive measures, and clarify the responsibilities of licence holders, school leaders and staff. It establishes a clear regulatory framework that ensures fairness, transparency and consistency in the implementation of procedures, while supporting educational institutions in adopting preventive and corrective measures to maintain a safe, stable and sustainable learning environment.

The guide is based on the mandates of the Department of Private Schools and Kindergartens, as stipulated in Amiri Resolution No. (35) of 2022, Law No. (23) of 2015 on the Regulation of Private Schools, particularly Article (37), and its Executive Regulations, in addition to relevant decisions, policies and circulars. It operates within the framework of these legislative provisions and does not replace them or restrict the authority of the competent entities to take legal action.

Omar Abdulaziz al-Naama, assistant undersecretary for Private Education Affairs, emphasised that the guide's true value lies in its practical implementation within private educational institutions. He called on licence holders and school leaders to adopt it as a key reference in their daily operations, review and document their internal procedures, strengthen self-monitoring mechanisms, and follow up on corrective actions.

He noted that the guide represents an important step towards standardising regulatory practices and strengthening trust and co-operation between the ministry and private educational institutions, thereby supporting the quality and stability of education.

For her part, Dr Rania Mohamed, director of the Department of Private Schools and Kindergartens and Acting Director of the Department of Private School Licensing, presented the guide's main areas of focus. These include administrative operations, human resources, fees and financial affairs, student registration, academic affairs, security, health and safety, student behaviour and counselling, national values and identity, mandatory evaluation and school accreditation, as well as legal compliance and serious violations.

She explained that the guide establishes a phased approach to addressing observations and violations according to their nature, severity and impact. It also specifies the required corrective measures and timelines for addressing them, together with mechanisms for monitoring their implementation.

She stressed the importance of using the guide to enhance internal policies, improve staff readiness and strengthen ongoing institutional compliance.

The guide enables private schools and kindergartens to review their practices, verify compliance with regulatory requirements, document their procedures and address observations systematically. This will contribute to improving institutional and academic performance, safeguarding the rights of students, staff and parents, and fostering a stable and sustainable school environment.

500 native seedlings planted at Rawdat Al Samra



The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's Wildlife Development Department has organised an environmental initiative to scatter seeds and plant native wild species at Rawdat Al Samra in the Al Kharsaah area.
The initiative forms part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to complete the rehabilitation and cultivation of the natural rawdas during the 2026 season, enhance natural vegetation cover, restore wildlife habitats, and preserve biodiversity across the country.
The initiative involved scattering around 5,000 seeds of native wild plant species and planting 500 native seedlings at Rawdat Al Samra. Environmental specialists and individuals interested in environmental affairs attended, reflecting the ministry's commitment to expanding vegetation cover, rehabilitating natural rawdas, and enhancing their capacity for regeneration and long-term sustainability.

ibis & Adagio Doha celebrates 4 years of growth, innovation



Celebrating four years of hospitality in Qatar, ibis & Adagio Doha marks a journey defined by growth, innovation and a meaningful connection with the local community.
Since opening in November 2022, the dual-brand property has continued to evolve, establishing itself as more than just a place to stay.
ibis Doha features 153 contemporary guestrooms designed to accommodate both business and leisure travellers, while Adagio Doha offers a home-away-from-home experience through its Studio, One-Bedroom and Two-Bedroom serviced apartments, complete with fully equipped kitchenettes and convenient in-room facilities for extended stays.
Over the years, ibis Doha has transformed its food and beverage offering through a series of creative initiatives. The hotel also introduced an outdoor terrace experience, adding shisha and an open-air setting for guests and Doha residents.
At Charlie's Corner, the hotel's signature restaurant, themed dining experiences have helped build a loyal following, with its Asian Market Buffet, Friday Brunch, Splash & Play and Salo-Salo brunch becoming popular fixtures on the local dining calendar.
Beyond hospitality, ibis & Adagio Doha has made community engagement an integral part of its journey. Through blood donation campaigns, clothing donation drives and other charitable initiatives, the hotel continues to encourage its team members and partners to contribute to meaningful causes. Its commitment to inclusion also extends to supporting children with different abilities through workplace exposure programmes, offering opportunities to experience the hospitality industry first-hand, alongside extending special discounts and experiences to encourage greater participation and inclusion.
The hotel's community presence has also extended beyond its premises. Having participated in the Qatar International Food Festival for three consecutive years, ibis Doha earned recognition as Favourite Local Vendor at QIFF 2026, celebrating the popularity of its Sushi Tacos and the team's culinary creativity.
Building on this success, the hotel looks forward to returning to QIFF 2027 at Lusail Stadium, where it plans to showcase its signature favourites alongside exciting new culinary creations, bringing fresh and innovative flavours to the festival.
These achievements complement the hotel's strong commercial performance, with ibis Doha emerging as a top-performing property within Accor's regional portfolio.
As the two brands celebrate this milestone, their focus remains on delivering memorable experiences, creating new reasons to visit and strengthening their place within Doha's hospitality landscape.
Four years down, and the journey continues.

QATAR

Minister underscores Qatar's commitment to deepening co-operation at PP-26



The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26) opened in Doha yesterday under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani.

The conference, organised by the ITU and hosted by Qatar through the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA), will run through Nov. 27 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC), broadly bringing together ministers, officials, representatives of member states, international organisations and the technology sector.

In his opening remarks, HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai said the State of Qatar's hosting of the conference embodies its commitment to deepening international co-operation and contributing to charting the future of the telecommunications and information technology sector, while expanding opportunities to ensure inclusive and enduring digital connectivity for all.

HE al-Mannai noted that the participating ministers had held a meeting on the eve of the conference's opening, during which they launched the Doha Ministerial Declaration, which materialises a shared message that digital connectivity should provide genuine opportunities for everyone and help build a more inclusive and enduring digital future.

The ITU has brought the world's countries together for more than a century and a half around a common goal of strengthening communication and cross-border co-operation, HE the Minister said, emphasising that the current conference continues this mission at a time when digital technology has become an integral part of virtually every aspect of daily life.

The Minister pointed out that the decisions emerging from the conference would not be confined to meeting rooms but would extend to squarely affect the lives of individuals and communities, including students who remain beyond the reach of networks, communities that still lack telecommunications services, and entrepreneurs awaiting opportunities to access the Internet, stressing that expanding connectivity represents a responsibility and a commitment to all these people.

HE al-Mannai continued that the State of Qatar's hosting of the conference alongside MWC26 Doha offers an incredible opportunity to bring together government ambitions and industrial creativity, while strengthening dialogue and partnerships between policymakers and technology leaders, thereby contributing to shaping the contours of the digital future.

Considerably more work remains to be accomplished, given that more than two billion people worldwide are still unconnected to the Internet, in addition to the substantial numbers of users who are not yet able to fully benefit from its potential and advantages, HE the Minister clarified.

He maintained that the shared goal is to bridge the digital divide and ensure that connectivity delivers concrete and meaningful benefits to people everywhere, noting that the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence-powered technologies poses new challenges that require collective action.

HE al-Mannai highlighted that failure to guarantee equitable access to computing capabilities, data and the necessary skills could give rise to a new digital divide, adding to existing disparities. This, he noted, calls for stronger international co-operation to ensure that opportunities to benefit from these technologies are distributed fairly and inclusively.

He likewise noted that digital infrastructure has now become a foremost imperative for every individual, as essential services, economies, education and health care all depend on it, asserting that building secure, resilient and inclusive digital infrastructure is a shared responsibility that cannot be postponed.

HE al-Mannai hoped that the conference's deliberations and decisions would help strengthen international co-operation and build a more interconnected digital future that provides broader opportunities for everyone. **(QNA)**

Qatar a model of enduring commitment to digital development: ITU secretary-general



Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Doreen Bogdan-Martin, said she was grateful for the State of Qatar's experience in digital transformation, describing it as a model of what sustained commitment to people-centred digital development can achieve, and highlighting that 99 percent of the State of Qatar's population is connected to the Internet.

In remarks delivered at the opening of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26) in Doha, which Qatar is hosting through Nov 27, Bogdan-Martin said the high connectivity rate reflects the widespread deployment of fibre-optic networks and advanced mobile telecom networks, alongside the nation's continued support for digital development.

She emphasised that the world is witnessing an extraordinary phase of digital advancement, as technology becomes increasingly integral to sectors, economies and public services, underscoring the importance of substantially strengthening international co-operation to ensure an interconnected, secure and inclusive digital future for all.

HE the Secretary-General pointed out that the conference is taking place amid rapid digital transformation, driven principally by rapid advances in artificial intelligence technologies. However, she noted, nations are entering this phase with vastly different levels of readiness and capabilities, making collective action essential to ensure that every single person can benefit from the opportunities technology has to offer.

The world is grappling with uncertainty, as critical infrastructure and the systems on which people depend are facing mounting tests during crises, Bogdan-Martin noted, stressing that telecom networks must remain resilient, reliable and accessible, particularly when people need them most.

In addition, Bogdan-Martin noted that the conference's theme, Together for a Connected Digital Future, reflects the nature of today's challenges, given the deep interdependence of digital systems, asserting that no country or institution can, acting alone, guarantee the resilience, security and inclusivity of these systems. She added that addressing such challenges requires a collective effort.

Bogdan-Martin revisited key milestones in the ITU's history, noting that nearly 120 years ago, the International Radiotelegraph Conference in Berlin adopted the first Radio Regulations. She pointed out that Doha, meanwhile, hosted the World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2006, just four months after the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society.

She elaborated that the 2006 conference in Doha culminated in the adoption of the Doha Action Plan, which sought to advance the vision of the World Summit on the Information Society, bridge the digital divide and improve people's lives, with particular emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

The Secretary-General commended the State of Qatar's substantial efforts in hosting the conference, which carries particular significance as it convenes at an advanced stage of the artificial intelligence era, amid the rise of smart economies and next-generation infrastructure. **(QNA)**

Mobile AI set to reshape ME tech landscape: Huawei executive

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter



Dr Mohamed Madkour

AI and advanced connectivity could accelerate autonomous transport, robotics and intelligent services across the Middle East over the next five years, a senior Huawei executive said at MWC26 in Doha.

Dr Mohamed Madkour, vice-president of ICT Solutions and Marketing for Huawei Middle East and Central Asia, said the convergence of 5G-Advanced and artificial intelligence would usher in what he described as the mobile AI era, creating opportunities for technologies extending well beyond smartphones and conventional telecommunications.

Speaking to *Gulf Times* on the sidelines of Mobile World Congress (MWC26) Doha, Madkour said the region, among the early adopters of 5G technology, is now well positioned to embrace the next generation of intelligent applications.

"Now, combining AI with 5G-Advanced, with all of the new flavours and types of intelligence, whether it's generative AI, agentic AI or even physical AI, puts us right at the beginning of the mobile AI era," he said. He identified autonomous cars, wearable devices, smart glasses, robots and drones as technologies expected to gain greater prominence over the coming five years.

"This is the opportunity in the next five years," Madkour said, adding that the convergence of computing power and connectivity would be a major driver of the region's technological development.

He said this transformation would also create opportunities to deliver differentiated, guaranteed experiences that consumers receive and that are tailored to their devices, services, locations and offerings. Such an approach, he noted, would create new value for both consumers and telecommunications operators.

He said the Middle East has demonstrated early leadership in adopting and expanding 5G networks, providing a foundation for integrating more advanced digital capabilities. Huawei is also advancing its artificial intelligence strategy, with a particular focus on agentic AI, which enables intelligent agents to perform tasks and support operations with greater autonomy.

Madkour said the company's approach involved integrating intelligence throughout the technology value chain, from infrastructure and management platforms to applications and services. "We have been talking about an all-intelligence strategy for a long time. This year, we are still advancing intelligence and injecting intelligence into every single aspect of the whole value chain," he said.

He cited autonomous network management and autonomous user experience management as examples of how AI agents could improve the operation and delivery of telecommunications services.

Alongside technological advancement, Madkour highlighted resilience as a regional priority, particularly amid ongoing geopolitical uncertainty. "We always say we provide resilience by design for all of our customers, not only for infrastructure, but also for operations and business," he said.

Turning to Qatar, Madkour described the country as one of the world's most connected nations and highlighted Huawei's 24-year presence in the market. He stressed that Huawei's work in Qatar had consistently been aligned with the country's national priorities and development vision, with the company continuing to support its digital transformation ambitions under Qatar National Vision 2030.

He said Huawei was proud to contribute to Qatar's digital development, particularly by advancing 5G toward the agentic AI era and continuing collaboration with local stakeholders. Huawei is participating in MWC Doha for the second consecutive year, with Madkour describing the event as more than a technology showcase.

He said the gathering provided an opportunity for collaboration between technology providers, customers and other industry stakeholders to advance digital transformation across the Gulf.

The company's focus, he explained, extends beyond supplying infrastructure and services to offering broader transformation solutions built around connectivity, computing, data centres and cloud technologies. "Resilience is key, intelligence is key, and the region has the vision and the passion," Madkour said.

لجنة المناقصات والمزايدات
TENDER AND AUCTION COMMITTEE

تعلن لجنة المناقصات والمزايدات بالحرس الأميري عن طرح المزايدة التالية :

Announce the following Auction:

تاريخ الاقفال	الفئة / التخصص	نظام تقديم العطاءات	قيمة التأمين المؤقت	قيمة الوثائق	الموضوع	رقم المزايدة
Tender Closing Date	Tenderer's Classification /Grade	Envelope System	Tender Bond – QR	Document Fee –QR	Tender Title	Auction Number
2026/11/22	كافتيريا / مطعم Cafeteria/Restaurant	مظروف واحد One envelope	5000	200	تأجير موقع كافتيريا بمجمع مساكن برزان العائلية لمدة (3) سنوات Leasing of a cafeteria at the Barzan Family Housing Complex for a period of (3) years	2026/03/م

Conditions :

- A copy of the **Auction** documents can be obtained from the Tender & auction committe located in the Amiri Guard Barzan Camp during official working hours after having deposited a non-refundable amount of money into the Amiri Guard QNB account No . 0013-013303-058 .
- The tender documents are handed over to a company representative after submitting an authorization letter from the company / organization , a copy of the ID , the commercial register , a contractors classification certificate with regard to contracting companies and the receipt showing that the value of the documents has been paid .
- The deadline for the submission of the tenders will be at 12:00 a.m. of the closing date. Any tender submitted after the deadline will be rejected .
- A letter of credit / a certified cheque issued by one of the banks operating in Qatar covering the amount indicated above as a temporary guarantee for (120) days .
- The tender quotation shall be valid for (90) days with effect from the date on which the tender envelopes are opened .
- The original tenders together with copies are put into the tender & auction committee box located at the Amiri Guard Barzan Camp .
- Both the technical tender and financial tender have to be enveloped in one case max-sealed and addressed to the head of the AG Tender & Auction Committee with reference to the **Auction** number and title .
- The successful tenderer has to submit a final guarantee amounting to (10%) of the total contract value , and valid for (90) days after the project has been accomplished .
- Any tenderer that does not comply with the above conditions will be excluded

الشروط:

- يمكن الحصول على نسخة من مستندات هذه المزايدة من لجنة المناقصات والمزايدات بمعسكر الحرس الأميري (برزان) خلال أوقات الدوام الرسمي ، وذلك مقابل دفع قيمة وثائق المزايدة الغير قابلة للرد لدى بنك قطر الوطني بحساب الحرس الأميري رقم (058-013303-0013).
- تسلم الوثائق لمندوب الشركة بعد إبراز كتاب تفويض من الشركة / المؤسسة + صورة من البطاقة الشخصية + سجل تجاري + شهادة تصنيف مقاول في ما يخص شركات المقاولات + الايصال الدال على سداد قيمة الوثائق .
- سيكون آخر موعد لتقديم العطاءات هو الساعة الثانية عشر من صباح يوم الإقفال ، ولن يُلتفت لإي عطاء يرد بعد الموعد المحدد.
- يجب أن يرفق مع العطاء خطاب ضمان مصرفي / شيك مصدق من أحد البنوك العاملة في دولة قطر بالقيمة المبينة أعلاه كتأمين مؤقت لمدة (120) يوم.
- يجب أن يكون العرض صالحاً لمدة (90) يوماً من تاريخ فتح المظاريف.
- تودع العطاءات بصندوق لجنة المناقصات والمزايدات ، الكائن بمعسكر الحرس الأميري (برزان) من أصل وصورة .
- يجب ان يكون العطاء الفني والمالي داخل مظروف واحد مغلق ومختوم بالشمع الاحمر ومعنون باسم رئيس لجنة المناقصات والمزايدات بالحرس الاميري , ويكتب عليه رقم المزايدة وموضوعها .
- يقدم صاحب العطاء المقبول تأميناً نهائيا بمقدار (10%) من إجمالي القيمة الراسيه عليه , ويسري لمدة لاتقل عن (90يوماً) بعد الانتهاء من تنفيذ المشروع .
- سوف يتم استبعاد أي عطاء لا يلتزم بالشروط أعلاه .

للاستفسار يرجى الاتصال على هاتف رقم ت (44220292) (44220293) ف (44220266)
(tender@qag.gov.qa)
For Further Information / Queries please contact Tel No 44220292 Fax No. 44220266
Chairman of the Committee of tenders and auctions
Amiri Guard
رئيس لجنة المناقصات والمزايدات
الحرس الأميري

Dukhan Bank announces November winners in Thara'a account prize draw

Dukhan Bank has announced the names of the most recent round of draw winners for Thara'a, its Shariah-compliant savings account, at the bank's headquarters.
The draw was recently conducted under the supervision of a representative of the Qualitative License and Market Control Department at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
In this month's draw, Fatima al-Rumaihi and Fatima al-Sayed each won the top prize of QR20,000.
The following winners each received QR5,000: Huda al-Saad, Ikram Akili, Fatima al-Emadi, Anya Chomsamnieng, Ahmed Elenabe, Abdulaziz Shajaie, Mohammed Alomer, Naeima Alsafdii, Hassan al-Mohamedi, Mohammed al-Kuwari, Lolwa Amone, Maryam Alnaimi, Hassan Abuzaid, Hamdy Abo Rawash, Majid al-Majid, Hazem Alhalman, Reyouf al-Marri, Fadwa Mahmoud,



Naseem Alasfoor, Danyah Assalah, Maryam Albader, Abdulaziz al-Ghrairi, Ebrahim al-Tamimi, Lamia Saad, Ahmad al-Mohannadi, Sharlah Patal, Ammar Abdelhafez M Alshahrouri, Heba Kotb, Mubarak al-Kaabi, Maryam Gul, Saoud al-Naemi, Eisa al-Kaabi, Hana Houimel, Venkatraman Gopalakrishnan, Sedreya al-Abdulla, Mohammed al-Madouri, Ali al-Abdulla, Bassem Hmiedan, Nasser Albalushi, Fahad al-Kuwari, Emad Alnajjar, Rakesh Kovval, Hanan al-Abdulla, Abdulla al-Badi, Khalifa al-Shareef, Jamal Albuainain, Azlan Osman, Alreem al-Emadi, Shejoon Alkorbi, Faisal Almuhannadi, Shamsulalam Din, Saoud al-Saad, Rashid al-Athba, Muna Alyafei, Saleh Alagi, Jassim Alsaygh, Hamad Alfalase, Shoeb Ahmed, Kristina Bagateliya, and Hamad al-Muftah.
Dukhan Bank continues its customer-centric approach with its enhanced Thara'a savings account campaign, reaffirming its commitment to rewarding clients. Running until December 31, 2026, the campaign offers more customers the chance to win, with four grand prizes of QR1mn each, alongside multiple monthly prizes, including two monthly prizes of QR20,000 and 60 monthly prizes of QR5,000, awarded through scheduled draws throughout the year.

The Pearl Food Festival returns to Porto Arabia with an expanded culinary, family experience

United Development Company (UDC), the master developer of The Pearl and Gewan Islands, is bringing The Pearl Food Festival back to Porto Arabia from November 11 to 21.

Sponsored by Qatar Airways Privilege Club, with Snoonu as National Delivery Partner, the third edition will build on the festival's success as a lively gathering for residents and visitors, celebrating food, family and the community spirit of The Pearl Island.

More than 40 food booths will bring together an eclectic mix of culinary concepts from The Pearl Island and beyond, offering visitors a broader mix of flavours and new discoveries. The selection will feature cuisines from across Asia, Italy and the wider region, reflecting the diversity of Doha's dining scene and making the festival a welcoming place to explore different culinary traditions along the Porto Arabia waterfront.



The festival will also offer plenty for families to enjoy, with a dedicated kids' zone featuring inflatables, carnival games, crafts and face painting. Across the festival grounds, visitors will enjoy live entertainment, a series of photo moments, and giant food-themed installations.

Qatar Airways Privilege Club's role as Official Sponsor and Snoonu's role as National Delivery Partner will be brought to life through on-site activations and giveaways. These partner-led experiences will give visitors opportunities to engage with both partners during their visit and add an interactive dimension to the festival.

Through its growing programme of food concepts and family experiences, The Pearl Food Festival reflects UDC's ongoing commitment to creating vibrant destinations and memorable experiences for the community. The third edition will welcome residents and visitors to enjoy Porto Arabia's waterfront setting (18-22 La Croisette) and discover an extensive mix of flavours from November 11 to 21, between 3pm and 11pm on weekdays and 3pm to midnight on weekends.

Major judicial reforms introduced to fast-track court proceedings

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

A comprehensive package of judicial reforms has been introduced to modernise court procedures, accelerate dispute resolution, and strengthen legal safeguards for litigants, following the issuance of Law No. 14 of 2026 amending certain provisions of the Civil and Commercial Procedure Law No. 13 of 1990.

The law, approved by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, was published in the 21st edition of the Official Gazette issued by the Ministry of Justice on Sunday. The Supreme Judiciary Council said the legislation marks a further step in implementing the National Initiative for the Development of Justice Systems, reflecting the country's efforts to enhance judicial efficiency, simplify litigation procedures, and accelerate case settlement in line with the requirements of digital transformation.

The council also highlighted several significant amendments to modernise the litigation process, including the introduction of an integrated electronic system for managing civil cases, updated regulations governing remote hearings, and greater opportunities for parties to settle disputes amicably through mediation.

One notable change is the establishment of a dedicated office in each court to prepare civil cases before referring them to the competent judicial chamber. Further, litigants, with their mutual consent, may resort to mediation to resolve disputes outside the courtroom, helping reduce the workload on courts and shorten litigation periods. The amendments also raise the financial jurisdiction of the Minor Court to cases valued at up to QR1mn and allow the establishment of specialised judicial chambers, including those responsible for hearing cases involving government entities.

A major component of the reform concerns the digitalisation of judicial procedures. The law requires courts to deposit judgments electronically on the day they are issued, enabling litigants to access decisions immediately and initiate appeals without waiting for the traditional process of depositing judgments.

The legislation also sets clearer deadlines for legal challenges, with a 15-working-day period for appeals and a 30-working-day deadline for filing cassation appeals. In addition, procedural deadlines will now be calculated according to official working days rather than calendar days. Further, the Supreme Judiciary Council stressed the importance of litigants monitoring judicial notifications received through their registered national addresses to ensure they do not miss legally prescribed deadlines.

The Ministry of Justice noted that the amendments were designed to improve the overall justice system, enhance procedural efficiency, accelerate the settlement of disputes and reinforce legal guarantees for litigants, while promoting greater transparency and fairness.

The ministry also highlighted measures to ensure greater clarity and fairness in litigation costs through clearly defined schedules for court fees and guarantees. Under the new provisions, cases valued at no more than QR30,000 will be exempt from guarantees. Litigants may also apply for exemptions from court fees or request their postponement through the Judicial Assistance Committee, subject to the circumstances of each case.

The Supreme Judiciary Council said the legislation marks a further step in implementing the National Initiative for the Development of Justice Systems

To safeguard litigants' rights, the legislation empowers courts to correct procedural deficiencies rather than allow such shortcomings to undermine the parties' legal claims. These include outstanding court fees or guarantees, missing documents and legal memoranda, and deficiencies in powers of attorney.

Meanwhile, the law strengthens the legal status of electronic evidence by recognising the evidentiary value of electronic correspondence, conversations, signatures and documents, provided they meet the applicable legal requirements.

Electronic communications may be accepted as evidence where their authenticity can be established, and the sender's identity can be determined. Another important area addressed by the legislation is judicial receivership, with updated provisions defining the responsibilities, rights and powers of court-appointed receivers. The rules require receivers to safeguard and manage assets placed under their supervision, return them together with any revenues and proceeds generated, and submit accounts to the court and relevant parties.

The amendments further reorganise the procedures governing court orders on petitions and payment orders. To accelerate judicial responses, orders on petitions must be issued no later than the day after submission. In addition, the legislation consolidates the legal framework governing cassation appeals by incorporating provisions regulating cassation challenges in non-criminal matters into the Civil and Commercial Procedure Law, while repealing Law No. 12 of 2005, which previously governed such appeals.



Carrefour Qatar strengthens support for national products, local manufacturers

Carrefour Qatar is proudly participating in National Product Week, organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry from November 5 to 12 under the slogan "Choose Better, Choose Local."

The initiative highlights the quality of Qatari-made products and encourages consumers to support local businesses and manufacturers.

Through its participation, Carrefour Qatar reaffirms its commitment to supporting the national economy by providing local suppliers and manufacturers with greater visibility and access to customers through its nationwide store network and the MAF Carrefour App.

Carrefour Qatar offers a diverse selection of locally produced goods across multiple categories, with special offers that make it easier for customers to discover and choose Qatari products as part of their everyday shopping.

The initiative also reflects Carrefour's ongoing efforts to strengthen partnerships with local suppliers, promote sustainable economic growth, and contribute to the development of Qatar's retail and manufacturing sectors.



By encouraging customers to choose locally made products, Carrefour Qatar continues to support national industries, strengthen consumer confidence in Qatari brands, and contribute to a more sustainable and diversified economy.



Environmental health symposium held

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's Environmental Monitoring and Inspection Department has participated in an environmental health symposium titled "Assessing the Impact of Air Quality and Heat on Public Health," organised by the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI) at the Research and Development Complex of Hamad Bin Khalifa University.

The symposium brought together a distinguished group of researchers and experts from Harvard University in the United States, Imperial College London in the United Kingdom, and Hamad Bin Khalifa University, as well as representatives from national entities concerned with public health and the environment in Qatar.

The symposium highlighted the importance of utilising scientific research findings to inform environmental and public health policies and deepen understanding of the relationship between air quality, heat, and human health. These efforts help develop effective strategies to mitigate environmental and health risks.

Vodafone Qatar, Digital Delmar sign MoU to advance AI-powered healthcare in Qatar

Vodafone Qatar and Digital Delmar have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore opportunities for collaboration, combining Vodafone Qatar's advanced connectivity, customer channels and market reach with Digital Delmar's AI-powered healthcare ecosystem.

The MoU was signed at MWC26 Doha by Sheikh Sultan al-Thani, head of Public Sector Sales at Vodafone Qatar, and Engineer Ahmed El Naggar, CEO of Digital Delmar.

The partnership will assess opportunities to introduce connected healthcare solutions in Qatar, including elderly care and independent living support, remote home monitoring, enterprise healthcare solutions and consumer-focused services.

The companies will also explore business-to-business, business-to-business-to-consumer and direct-to-consumer opportunities. Vodafone Qatar's customer channels will play a central role in expanding access to proactive, personalised and connected care across homes, workplaces and the wider community.



This collaboration aims to support Qatar's vision for a healthier and more connected society. As part of this, both organisations will explore the introduction of Anees, a consumer solution designed to monitor older people and people with disabilities, with AI-powered capabilities that can predict potential falls and health issues. The solution aims to support independent living and quality of life while giving families and caregivers greater reassurance.

Mohamed Mohsin Alyafei, Enterprise Business Unit director at Vodafone Qatar, said: "At Vodafone Qatar, we recognise the important role that advanced connectivity and digital technologies can play in supporting the evolving needs of Qatar's healthcare sector. Through this MoU with Digital Delmar, we look forward to exploring how AI-powered healthcare solutions can support independent living, improve access to care and contribute to Qatar's ongoing digital transformation."

El Naggar said: "At Digital Delmar, we believe the future of healthcare is not defined by where care is delivered, but by how intelligently and seamlessly it reaches people. Our collaboration with Vodafone Qatar represents an important step toward transforming this vision into reality. By combining Vodafone Qatar's advanced connectivity and extensive market reach with Digital Delmar's AI-powered healthcare technologies, we aim to create a connected healthcare ecosystem that brings care closer to people, at home, at work and wherever they are.

"From intelligent elderly monitoring through Anees to remote healthcare and corporate wellness, our ambition is to make healthcare more proactive, accessible and personalised, while contributing to Qatar's vision for a smarter, healthier and more connected society."

QC opens 'Al Adaam' camp for displaced people in Lebanon

Qatar Charity (QC) inaugurated the "Al Adaam" camp in Lebanon under the patronage of, and in the presence of, Lebanese Minister of Social Affairs Dr Haneen Sayed. The opening was also attended by Mohammed Zahra, director of Qatar Charity's Lebanon Office. The camp aims to provide temporary, safe shelter for 640 displaced people from affected families forced to leave their homes in southern Lebanon.

The project responds to the needs of families whose homes have been destroyed or damaged beyond habitability. It provides temporary accommodation in prefabricated housing units (caravans) until their homes can be repaired or rebuilt, or permanent housing alternatives become available.

Speaking at the opening, Lebanese Minister of Social Affairs Dr Haneen Sayed affirmed that the State of Qatar has consistently stood by Lebanon. She noted that the project allows families to move from school shelters to better accommodation that preserves their dignity and privacy.

For his part, Hassan Bazzi, Mayor of Froun, thanked Qatar Charity for completing the project, explaining that it will provide housing for more than 19 families who have lost their homes and ensure their privacy and dignity.

The project is part of Qatar Charity's efforts to address winter-related risks and respond to urgent humanitarian needs in Lebanon, focusing on providing temporary shelter that preserves the privacy and dignity of affected families during displacement.

Affected families face challenges that extend beyond the loss of their homes, including rising rental costs and disruptions to essential services, alongside pressure on shelters and host communities.

UN Figures Highlight the Scale of Humanitarian Needs

According to updates from the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), approximately one million people had self-registered as displaced since the escalation began in Lebanon, based on figures from June 2026. As of 2 July 2026, around 500,000 people remained displaced, including 47,143 people in 430 collective shelters, despite the return of hundreds of thousands to their areas of origin.



These updates describe the humanitarian crisis as severe and volatile, amid continued displacement and damage to infrastructure and essential services. They also indicate that returns remain limited and fraught with risks due to security incidents, damaged homes, disrupted services and explosive remnants of war—factors that hinder safe, voluntary and dignified return.

Temporary Housing and Essential Services

The camp comprises prefabricated housing units equipped with basic living necessities, including lighting, electrical outlets and suitable sanitation facilities, as well as safe spaces that respect the privacy of beneficiary families. This shelter is intended as a transitional solution, not a substitute for permanent housing.

Relevant Lebanese national and local authorities and institutions were consulted to select the site and identify eligible families, using clear, transparent criteria that prioritise those most in need. The project also takes account of protection and psychological well-being needs, particularly those of children, women, older people and persons with disabilities, to reduce the risks associated with repeated displacement and living in unsafe or unsuitable conditions.

Supporting Stability Until Permanent Solutions Are Available

The "Al Adaam" camp aims to ease the burdens of displacement and rental costs and reduce overcrowding in shelters. It also seeks to support family and social stability and enable families to remain close to their areas of origin until they can repair or rebuild their homes.

Transitional shelter solutions are important because families need time to complete repairs and reconstruction, while coping with the financial, social and psychological burdens of losing their homes.

The project is expected to improve temporary living conditions and reduce the health and social risks associated with displacement, pending the conditions needed for a safe return and the availability of permanent housing solutions.

Qatar Foundation

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond Value (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
CO-RFQ-559	Supply and Installation of Stone Flooring including Removal of Old Flooring at QNCC	1,000.00	N/A	03 December 2026 2:00 PM
CO-RFQ-566	Supply, Installation, Integration, Testing & Commissioning including Programming and Configuration of New Fire Alarm Detectors at various locations in Qatar Foundation	1,000.00	N/A	07 December 2026 2:00 PM
CO-RFQ-567	Supply and Installation of Building Management System (BMS) Controllers including Configuration, Testing and Integration of all Software and Hardware Components in QSTP	500.00	N/A	08 December 2026 2:00 PM

Qatar Foundation (QF) Procurement Directorate is inviting companies to participate in the above listed public tenders. To receive the tender documents, please follow the below steps:

1) **Supplier Registration** It is mandatory to be registered as a supplier with QF in order to participate in the above tender(s). Only QF registered suppliers will be allowed to pay the tender fees online. Therefore, please visit QF website at https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration to complete the Supplier Registration process.

Tender Fee: Interested bidders can Sign in by visiting this link https://suppliers.qf.org.qa/abstract and pay the respective non-refundable and non-transferrable tender fee online.
All Tender Fees are to be paid using credit cards only.

Tender Fee Payment Dates: Payment of Tender Fee online will be from **10th November 2026 to 19th November 2026.**

2) All bidders, who are registered and have paid the required tender fees online to QF, will then be granted access to download the Tender Document.

3) Technical and commercial bids need to be submitted and attached online in QF Supplier Portal as per instructions provided in the "Supplier Portal" work instruction.

- The commercial bid must be valid for **180 days** from Bid Closing Date.
- The commercial bid must be accompanied by a bank guarantee (tender bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for **180 days** from the bid closing date (where applicable as per the Tender documents).
- The successful tenderer will be required to submit a performance bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
- Qatar Foundation special qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.

Note: All work instructions for Supplier registration and Supplier portal can be found in below link:
https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration

QATAR

Sheikha Al Mayassa opens 'Bu'ed Nadhar' exhibition at Liwan

Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Qatar Museums(QM), HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani yesteray opened "Bu'ed Nadhar", an exhibition bringing together 32 works by 16 artists and designers developed through five of Liwan's residency and collaborative programmes. Presented as part of Design Doha 2026, the exhibition offers a collective view of the ideas, materials and creative practices that have emerged from Liwan's residency programmes to date.

"Bu'ed Nadhar" is on view at Liwan Design Studios and Labs from 5 November 2026 to 31 January 2027.

Meaning Beyond Immediate Vision, "Bu'ed Nadhar" considers design through the relationship between the past, present and future. The title reflects the idea that design extends beyond form and function, drawing on cultural memory, inherited knowledge and material practices while remaining open to experimentation, reinterpretation and new approaches to making.

Through its residency programmes, Liwan has brought artists and designers into direct exchange with craftspeople, mentors, workshops, suppliers, production facilities and natural landscapes in Qatar and abroad. "Bu'ed Nadhar" brings the outcomes of these exchanges together, showing how sustained research, collaboration and hands-on production can lead to new design practices and forms.





The exhibition also highlights Qatar as a site of design production, where local materials, industries, workshops and landscapes provide the foundations for experimentation and making. Across the exhibition, clay, palm leaves, wood, fibres, sand, glass, metal and upholstery are transformed into furniture, vessels, installations and sculptural works that reinterpret cultural knowledge through contemporary design.

Director of Liwan Design Studios and Labs and Curator of "Bu'ed Nadhar", Aisha Nasser al-Sowaidi said: "The exhibition brings together the outcomes of several of Liwan's residency programmes and gives us the opportunity to see how these different exchanges and collaborations have developed over time. Our residencies give artists and designers the space to research, experiment and work directly with craftspeople, materials and production networks. The exhibition reflects how these experiences can lead to new work while remaining connected to the knowledge, traditions and environments that shape design in this region."

Each residency takes a different approach to research, mentorship, material exploration and production.

For the Ideas FROMM. Industry Residency, Liwan members Asma Shaklame, Abdulla Al Obaidly and Noora Al Henzab were selected to work under the mentorship of FROMM.Lab. In collaboration with local suppliers and production facilities across Doha's Industrial Area, they explored wood, upholstery, glass and metal through the lens of Qatar's industrial and urban landscape, demonstrating how local materials and production processes can inspire new design ideas.

Shaping and Crafting the Future Residency, developed by Liwan with Campus MaNa in Burgundy, France, presents work by Aia Zaina, Haya Abu al-Saad, Reema Abu Hassan and Bashair Al Khulaifi. The projects combine material experimentation, environmental responsibility and creative reuse to propose more responsible approaches to design.

The Liwan Craft Residency, Oasis: Our Design Ecosystem, led and curated by Asma Derouiche, brought designers together with artisans, workshops and industry partners to reinterpret culturally significant objects through contemporary materials and production methods.

Developed within the residency under the mentorship of Cristian Mohaded, Hayakum reimagines the traditional date container through Qatar's culture of hospitality and gathering.

"Bu'ed Nadhar" also reflects Liwan's wider role in supporting artists and designers from research and mentorship through to production and exhibition, while contributing to Qatar's growing design ecosystem. (**QNA**)

Indonesian ID celebration



Indonesian ambassador to Qatar Syahda Guruh Langkah Samudera (centre), along with Minister of Municipality HE Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiya (2nd, left) and HE Minister of State Engineer Essa bin Hilal al-Kuwari (2nd, right), as well as the ambassador Ibrahim bin Yousef Fakhro, director of the Protocol Department at Ministry of Foreign Affairs (right), and Ali Ibrahim Ahmed, ambassador of Eritrea and the dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Qatar (left), led the cake-cutting ceremony to mark the 81st anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Indonesia yesterday at The Ritz-Carlton Doha. **PICTURE**: Shaji Kayamkulam

Kahramaa completes smart meter replacement

Qatar General Electricity and Water Corp (Kahramaa) has announced the completion of its project to transition electricity subscribers across the country to smart electricity meters.

The operator explained that the project is part of its strategic initiatives aimed at utilising modern digital technologies and solutions to develop its service system in order to keep pace with technological advancements, meet subscribers' needs, improve service quality and enhance their overall experience. It further explained that smart meters offer several benefits, most notably improving the accuracy and reliability of electricity consumption readings, enhancing operational efficiency, and further improving customer services.

These improvements will support the development of a more efficient, flexible and reliable electricity network.

Kahramaa encourages subscribers who still have old electricity meters to contact the Corp to report them and arrange for their replacement with smart meters, enabling them to benefit from the enhanced services and features offered by the smart metering system.

Kahramaa affirmed its continued commitment to implementing development projects and initiatives and adopting modern technological solutions to enhance operational efficiency, improve service standards and provide subscribers with a more advanced and reliable experience. (**QNA**)



MCIT hosts ministerial roundtable to discuss key priorities of ICT sector

Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), hosted a ministerial roundtable in Doha on Sunday to discuss key priorities shaping the future of the information and communications technology (ICT) sector, ahead of the opening of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26) yesterday.

The roundtable, chaired by HE Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai and held under the title "The Doha Declaration: Leading Digital Transformation Towards a More Inclusive and Sustainable Future," brought together ministers and senior officials from ITU Member States.

Held as part of the ministerial programme accompanying PP-26, the roundtable served as a platform for dialogue and the exchange of views for participants on some of the major developments transforming the ICT sector, as well as on areas requiring stronger co-ordination and international co-operation in the years ahead.

Al-Mannai said the discussions came at a time of rapid change across the communications and information technology sector, underscoring the need for collective efforts to keep pace with emerging opportunities and challenges.

He said the Plenipotentiary Conference would offer an important opportunity to define the ITU's priorities for the years ahead and strengthen its capacity to support member states.

He expressed hope that the discussions in Doha would contribute to building broader consensus on shared priorities and channeling international co-operation towards tangible outcomes.

The roundtable addressed a range of issues, including meaningful and universal connectivity, the development of networks and services, and the resilience and continuity of digital infrastructure.

Participants also discussed the opportunities and challenges associated with emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence and satellite communications.

The discussions also focused on the Doha Declaration and explored shared messages that could help guide international co-operation and strengthen countries' ability to harness the benefits of technological progress. (**QNA**)

Exploring Qatar's leadership in harnessing AI for smart mobility, sustainable aviation

QNA
Doha



Sessions of the "Smart Mobility Summit," held on the second day of MWC26 Doha, highlighted the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in shaping the future of sustainable transport and the Middle East's growing influence in the sector.

The sessions covered key themes, including " Physical AI and 5G: The Next Frontier in Mobility" and " Connecting Digital Airspace: Realising 5G Impact." Discussions also examined Gulf nations' accelerating investment in autonomous vehicles, advanced air mobility, and AI-powered transport systems.

The summit brought together experts and representatives from major corporations and international industry organisations. Proceedings opened with presentations and remarks by experts from the GSMA, Strategy & Middle East, and Ookla.

In a keynote address, Head of Corporate Services at Ooredoo Qatar Hassan Ismael al-Emadi outlined the company's key telecommunications milestones including the launch of the world's first commercial 5G network in 2018, the subsequent deployment of the country's first 5G standalone (SA) core, and, most recently, the launch of the "5G Plus" network on October 15.

He said the latest network combines a standalone core with advanced capabilities to meet the evolving needs of the aviation and public safety sectors.

Al-Emadi described 5G networks as a key driver of innovation in the digital future of airspace, highlighting Qatar's leadership in using advanced technology to support aviation and public safety.

The summit also featured presentations by experts from Ericsson and Eonetics, alongside panel discussions and roundtables involving specialists from Strategy&, Huawei (Middle East & Asia), Vodafone Qatar, Ooredoo Qatar, and GSMA Fusion.

Participants explored how integrating high-performance infrastructure could support sustainable urban innovation and the development of smart mobility ecosystems.

They also discussed ways to attract international strategic partnerships and foster innovation in the transport sector of the future.

Organised by the GSMA in partnership with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the second edition of MWC26 Doha kicked off on Sunday at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center under the theme "The IQ Era."

Sidra Medicine expands cord blood banking, eyes future stem-cell therapies

From Page 1

Cord blood banking was among the first services introduced at the facility, reflecting Sidra Medicine's commitment to building domestic expertise in advanced cell therapy and the preservation of biological materials.

Dr Cugno described the concept as "sovereign biology", underscoring the importance of developing national capabilities to collect, process and preserve biological materials, particularly for Qatari families and residents planning to remain in the country.

Unlike conventional commercial cord blood banking providers, Sidra Medicine operates the service within an academic medical centre, integrating scientific research, rigorous quality assurance and clinical expertise into its operations.

Cord blood is an established source of haematopoietic stem cells, which are used in transplantation to treat a range of blood and immune system disorders. Depending on human leukocyte antigen (HLA) compatibility, these cells may benefit not only the child from whom they were collected but also other family members.

Dr Cugno explained that cord blood is one of three principal sources of stem cells used in haematopoietic transplantation, alongside bone marrow and stem cells collected from peripheral blood.

"One advantage of cord blood stem cells is their relatively immature immune characteristics, meaning they have had less exposure to foreign antigens. This can allow greater flexibility in HLA matching and reduce certain complications associated with transplantation," she explained.



The cord blood banking services team at Sidra Medicine. (Dr Chiara Cugno, fourth from right)

However, the number of stem cells collected at birth can limit their suitability for larger recipients. Dr Cugno said a typical stored cord blood unit would generally contain sufficient cells for a recipient weighing up to approximately 40kg, making it particularly valuable in paediatric transplantation.

Beyond cord blood, Sidra Medicine also offers families the option of preserving other birth-related tissues, including the amniotic membrane, placental tissue and a section of the umbilical cord.

"The collected biological material is cryopreserved at temperatures below minus 180 degrees Celsius using liquid nitrogen or its vapour. Research and practical experience indicate that appropriately stored cells can remain viable for at least 20 to 30 years. Stored samples can also be assessed through testing of a small aliquot to determine cell viability without compromising the main preserved product," Dr Cugno said.

While haematopoietic stem-cell transplantation is an established medical application of cord blood, researchers are exploring its potential in treating other conditions. Clinical trials are investigating cord blood-derived cells for conditions including hypoxic-ischaemic injury in newborns, autism and cerebral palsy, although these applications remain experimental.

Dr Cugno also emphasised the potential benefits of establishing a national cord blood bank alongside private banking services in Qatar.

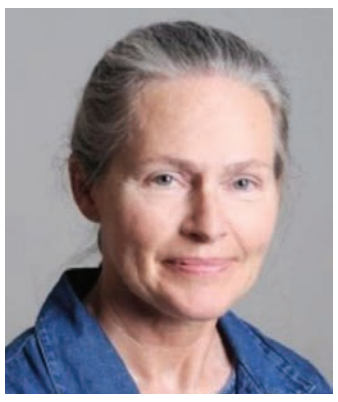
"A national inventory could create a pool of donated cord blood units for patients requiring transplantation, potentially improving the chances of finding suitable matches," she said.

"Such an initiative could be particularly relevant in Qatar, where population-specific genetic characteristics and HLA profiles may influence the availability of compatible donors. Locally collected and banked units could therefore help address the needs of patients seeking suitable matches within the population," Dr Cugno stressed.

Looking ahead, Sidra Medicine's ambitions extend well beyond the long-term preservation of biological materials. The institution aims to build lasting relationships with families, keep pace with scientific advances and collaborate with research centres exploring new therapeutic applications for cord blood-derived cells, Dr Cugno concluded.

Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar Faculty Member Diana Woodcock Explores Women's Resilience in New Poetry Collection

Dark Flowers and Survivors draws on the stories of women across cultures and generations and their enduring connection to the natural world





Diana Woodcock, Associate Professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar), explores women's resilience, resistance and relationship with the natural world in her latest poetry collection, Dark Flowers and Survivors.

The collection brings together poems inspired by women Woodcock has encountered throughout her life, alongside figures drawn from history, mythology and ancient narratives. Spanning cultures and generations, the poems reflect on women's capacity to endure conditions that diminish their lives while retaining their humanity, dignity and connection to the earth.

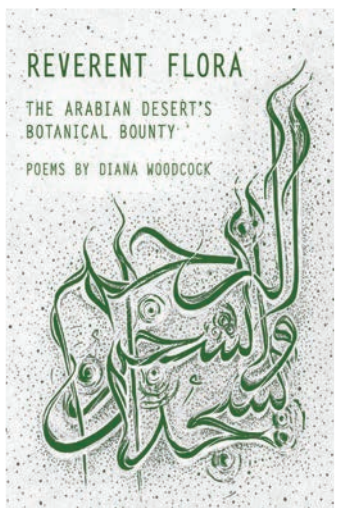
"In many ways, Dark Flowers and Survivors is a testament to the power contained within women's relationships with nature, and their capacity to heal and embolden," Woodcock said. "Although many of the narratives are sorrowful, they also reveal the remarkable strength women find in seemingly small acts, from observing shifting sands and protecting wildlife to gardening in the midst of war."

Woodcock's perspective has been shaped by nearly eight years spent living and working in Tibet, Macau and along the Thai-Cambodian border, where she taught and worked with refugees. She also served as an editor of a magazine for young women. The collection draws on years of listening closely to women's experiences, with poems inspired by the stories of an Afghan poet, an Indigenous woman, Arab women and Tibetan nuns, among others.

The book marks a new emphasis within Woodcock's extensive body of work, which has long explored the intersections of poetry, environmental ethics, human rights and spirituality. She is the author of eight chapbooks and seven full-length poetry collections.

Woodcock has taught creative writing, environmental literature and composition in VCUarts Qatar's Liberal Arts and Sciences program since 2004. She holds a PhD in creative writing from Lancaster University, where her research examined the role of poetry in the search for an environmental ethic.

Her previous publications include Heaven Underfoot (2023), Holy Sparks (2023) and Facing Aridity (2021). She received the 2022 Codhill Press Pauline Uchmanowicz Poetry Award and the 2011 Vernice Quebodeaux Pathways Poetry Prize for Women and has been nominated four times for a Pushcart Prize.



Her 2025 collection, Reverent Flora: The Arabian Desert's Botanical Bounty, won the Poetry/Nature category at the 2026 International Book Awards, presented by American Book Fest.











QATAR

MWC26 session delves deep into future of AI

QNA
Doha



A panel discussion on the second day of MWC26 in Doha explored the future of artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential to address real-world challenges.

The session featured Reem al-Mansouri, Assistant Undersecretary for Digital Industry Affairs at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology; Jack Hidary, Founder and CEO of SandboxAQ, a company specialising in quantitative artificial intelligence (AI); and Lindy Kouyoumji, Partner at global consulting firm Oliver Wyman. Participants examined how AI can move from ambition to tangible impact, alongside rapid technological advances and the evolving landscape of AI models.

Al-Mansouri emphasised that translating AI aspirations into practical results requires a comprehensive transformation of organisational practices, closer public-private collaboration, and the infrastructure, data, and skills needed to support wider adoption.

She explained that the pace of AI development requires governments to take a different approach from that used for traditional technology projects.

Qatar, she noted, has adopted an approach focused on accelerating progress and strengthening cooperation among entities to build an integrated AI ecosystem.

The government's role, she said, is to create an enabling environment by developing shared infrastructure, improving data readiness, and establishing the necessary frameworks. These measures will enable the private sector and other institutions to develop applications and solutions that harness emerging technologies.

Al-Mansouri stressed that the success of AI applications depends primarily on institutional readiness and clear objectives. Each application, she said, should have a clearly defined purpose and demonstrate how it will improve processes and deliver tangible value, rather than merely keep pace with technological developments.

On future skills, she affirmed thata AI does not eliminate the human role but reshapes jobs and responsibilities. She highlighted the importance of critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and teamwork, alongside the skills needed to use smart tools effectively.

Al-Mansouri added that the transition to an AI-driven economy requires a clear institutional vision and alignment between technology and human resources. This, she said, will help translate technological capabilities into practical results that strengthen institutional performance and support economic development.

Panelists also examined the evolution of AI models, noting that large language models such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude have made significant advances in understanding information and interacting through natural language. The greater challenge, they said, is to develop models that can understand the real world and its complexities, moving beyond text and document processing.

They highlighted the importance of specialised models trained on scientific and real-world data. Such models can support AI applications in discovering new materials, developing battery chemistry, improving energy production processes, and researching solutions to environmental and health challenges.

The next phase, speakers explained, will combine large language models with specialised scientific models rather than rely on a single model type. Large language models will facilitate natural-language interaction, while specialised models will provide the scientific knowledge and computational capabilities needed to tackle complex problems.

The speakers stressed that these applications require accurate scientific data grounded in the real world. With this foundation, AI can move beyond information retrieval to support discovery and innovation, offering practical solutions to challenges affecting people, the economy, and the environment.



Qatar's mediation efforts at the heart of 52nd Diplomatic Training global forum

QNA
Doha

The 52nd International Forum on Diplomatic Training commenced yesterday under the theme "Beyond Diplomatic Training: Preparing Diplomats for a World in Transformation." Organised by the Diplomatic Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the forum runs through Wednesday.

The event is held under the patronage of Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi, with participation from leaders and officials of diplomatic academies, institutes, and international relations training institutions worldwide.

HE Minister of State and President of Qatar National Library, Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari, attended the opening ceremony as the keynote speaker.

In his opening remarks, Director of the Diplomatic Institute at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Abdulaziz bin Mohammed al-Horr, emphasised that preparing future diplomats requires solid knowledge, cognitive flexibility, and the ability to assess and navigate complex situations. He underscored the importance of continuous learning, simulation, experiential training, and the conscious employment of artificial intelligence while preserving a diplomat's independent professional judgment.

Dr al-Horr explained that the forum integrates strategic dialogue, interactive learning, institutional partnerships, and cultural diplomacy, while providing a space for youth and innovation.

He expressed hope that the draft Doha Declaration would help shape joint commitments to advance diplomatic training.

In his keynote address, Dr al-Kawari stressed that rapid global shifts demand diplomats equipped with knowledge, communication tools, and the flexibility to handle unexpected situations. Drawing on milestones from his diplomatic career, he highlighted diplomacy's role in fostering understanding and placing humanity at the core of its mission.

For her part, director of the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University, Barbara Bodine, emphasised the importance of preparing diplomats for transformations and crises, as well as their capacity to identify interests, uphold values, and work towards peace and stability.

Director of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, Dr Martin Eichtinger, praised Qatar's role in mediation and facilitation, stressing the importance of developing diplomatic training programmes to keep pace with geopolitical and technological changes while training the next generation of diplomats.

Music Affairs Centre participates in int'l forum on diplomatic training

The Music Affairs Centre, operating under the Ministry of Culture, participated in the cultural programme accompanying the 52nd session of the International Forum on Diplomatic Training.'
As part of its participation, the centre presented a musical evening featuring an oud trio and a takht sharqi (traditional Arabic ensemble), showcasing a selection of Qatari songs and masterpieces of Arabic music. Director of the Diplomatic Institute at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Abdulaziz al-Horr praised the ongoing cultural co-operation with the Ministry of Culture, highlighting its vital role in showcasing Qatar's rich artistic heritage, including the traditional ardah dance, maritime arts, and distinctive Qatari music characterised by its unique rhythms and melodies.
The aim of the centre with the participation was to highlight Qatar's cultural and artistic identity, promote its musical heritage as a key pillar of national culture, and underscore the pivotal role of the arts in fostering dialogue and cultural exchange among nations. (**QNA**)

QU advances industry collaboration with new agreements at MWC26 Doha

Qatar University (QU) strengthened its engagement with industry at MWC26 Doha yesterday, as the Qatar Mobility Innovations Center (QMIC), a QU research centre, signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with Es'hailSat and Vodafone Qatar.

The agreements form part of QU's wider participation in the three-day event, where the university is bringing together researchers, students and industry specialists to explore how academic knowledge and innovation can address practical challenges.

The agreement with Es'hailSat explores AI-powered troubleshooting solutions, while the MoU with Vodafone Qatar establishes a framework for collaboration in technology and innovation.

Executive Director of QMIC Dr Mohammed al-Sada said: "These agreements reflect QMIC's commitment to taking applied research beyond the lab and into real-world use. By combining our expertise in artificial intelligence and connected systems with the capabilities of Es'hailSat and Vodafone Qatar, we aim to develop practical solutions that support Qatar's digital transformation and the ambitions of Qatar National Vision 2030."

Beyond the agreements, QU's booth is placing researchers in direct dialogue with industry and government specialists.

The three-day event, which will observe its final day today, had on agenda to cover ten expert talks and three panel discussions across areas including cybersecurity, next-generation mobile networks, satellite technology, smart mobility, health and AI in sports analytics.

Specialists from Es'hailSat, Ashghal, Qatar Rail, Aspire and Aspetar are joining QU researchers to exchange perspectives on technological challenges and opportunities for collaboration.

Vice President for Research and Innovation at QU Prof Aiman Erbad said: "Our participation at MWC creates opportunities for researchers to engage with industry, for students to demonstrate their capabilities and for promising technologies to reach potential partners. As Qatar's national university, we have an important role in developing the knowledge and talent that contribute to national priorities, while pursuing research with relevance beyond Qatar."

Visitors can explore 12 innovations developed through QU's research ecosystem. Six live demonstrations include QU's first nanosatellite (QUbeSat1), an AI-powered wearable (MSK Plus), a robotic arm that responds to spoken Arabic and English (Waleef), a remote rescue robot (Ain), an AI video analytics platform (Falcon-I) and a heat-stress monitoring system (Humidex). Six intellectual property displays present QU-developed technologies available for industry partnership and licensing in healthcare (ECG-Restore, Colon Cancer Detector, VitroFlow), cybersecurity (GeoCrypt), disaster response (LifeRadar) and sustainable mobility (VoltGuard).

QU students are presenting their own projects at the booth, applying AI and robotics to real-world needs, from emergency response and sports performance to Qatari Sign Language recognition and locating lost belongings.

Student entrepreneurs are presenting their business ideas through the Next Generation Entrepreneurs Challenge 2026, which concludes today with the announcement of the top three finalists.

Qatar University is participating in the conference for the second consecutive year as the Official Education Partner, leveraging this international platform to connect its research and talent with partners capable of supporting their further development and expanding their reach and impact.

MCIT, Cisco announce collaboration for development of digital solutions

QNA
Doha



The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and Cisco signed a collaboration agreement under Cisco's Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) programme on the sidelines of MWC26 Doha.

The agreement aims to expand the adoption of AI applications and develop advanced digital solutions that improve service delivery and operational efficiency across vital sectors, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Digital Agenda 2030.

The agreement was signed by Eman Ahmed al-Kuwari, director of the Digital Innovation Department at MCIT, and Hasan Khan, general manager of Cisco Qatar. Under the agreement, MCIT and Cisco will work with government entities and businesses to develop innovative solutions that support digital transformation across priority sectors, including healthcare, tourism, national infrastructure, transportation and logistics.

Al-Kuwari said: "Qatar's Digital Agenda 2030 sets a clear direction for building a competitive, knowledge-based digital economy. Artificial intelligence, secure digital infrastructure, and national talent are central to that ambition. This collaboration with Cisco is part of the Ministry's broader approach of working with global technology leaders to turn national priorities into practical outcomes for government, industry, and society."

The collaboration aligns with Qatar's priorities in AI and digital infrastructure and focuses on three key pillars: artificial intelligence, safety and security, and digital experiences. Workforce development underpins all three pillars, with Cisco continuing to support national talent through Cisco Networking Academy, which provides education and training in AI, networking, cybersecurity, and essential digital skills to prepare Qatar's workforce for future employment opportunities.

Khan from Cisco Qatar, said: "Qatar's digital ambitions are underpinned by infrastructure that is secure, AI-ready, and supported by local expertise. This agreement with MCIT gives us a clear framework to contribute to each of these, building on our long-term collaboration in the country. Through co-innovation with government and industry, and the continued work of Cisco Networking Academy, we aim to support Qatar's technology capabilities as it advances its Digital Agenda 2030."

The agreement builds on seven years of collaboration in Qatar under Cisco's CDA programme, a global co-investment initiative active in 62 countries that aligns technology with national and industrial priorities.

In Qatar, the programme has supported public and private sector initiatives across energy, transportation and aviation, as well as major international events, media and culture. In parallel, Cisco Networking Academy has trained 30,000 learners through 25 academies across the country to date.

WCM-Q students honoured for academic achievement at Dean's Honour List event

Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) foundation and pre-medical students were recognised for earning a place on the prestigious Dean's Honour List for the 2025-2026 Academic Year.

Sixty-two students in the pre-medical programme were honoured, making it the longest list in WCM-Q history. Forty-two students made the list in the Fall 2025 semester, including 19 second-year pre-medical students and 23 first-years. In the Spring 2026 Semester, a total of 58 students secured a spot on the list, comprising 26 second-year pre-medical students and 32 first-years. Some students made it to the list twice. Additionally, six Foundation Programme students were honoured for scoring a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or higher.



The event brought together WCM-Q faculty, students, alumni, and families to celebrate the students and encourage them to maintain their outstanding performance. The ceremony also saw the launch of the newly created Dr Syed Naqi Award, which recognises outstanding achievement by a pre-medical student who has been promoted to the first year of the medical curriculum.

Speaking at the event, Dr Javaid Sheikh, dean of WCM-Q, said: "Despite your demanding academic schedules, you still managed to remain actively involved in extracurricular activities, and you have excelled not only academically but also at a professional level. Let me also remind you that you are part of a very special institution; over the past quarter-century, WCM-Q has become an iconic institution in the region, with strong recognition in the United States."

WCM-Q alumnus Dr Mohamed al-Hajjaji, class of 2016, now an attending paediatrician at Sidra Medicine, was the keynote speaker.

He said: "One of the most important lessons I learned throughout medical school and residency is that academic performance is only one dimension of excellence, and that success becomes more meaningful when it serves others. Some of you will become physicians, researchers, educators, or leaders, and along the way, not everything will go according to plan. There will be challenges, unexpected turns, and moments when you question your decisions. When those moments come, remember that your journey does not need to be perfect to be meaningful."

During the event, Dr Sheikh presented the inaugural Dr Syed Naqi Award to second-year medical student Shahd Aljoudi. Dr Sheikh said: "The winner of this award is a student who best exemplifies the outstanding character exhibited by Dr Naqi during his 14 years on the faculty at WCM-Q. Dr Naqi created a lasting impression on students and co-workers through his encyclopedic knowledge of immunology, enduring dedication and professionalism, forthright character, and positive regard for others."

Aljoudi said: "When I was told I would receive the award, it felt surreal. I couldn't believe it. It's such an honour. I hope to pursue a career in interventional cardiology after training in internal medicine in cardiology. My years at WCM-Q have been the best years of my life; it has been one of the greatest opportunities, including the extracurricular activities and the people."

Nawaf al-Mudahka empowers young leaders to inaugurate 15th Kashta Exhibition

In a move reflecting confidence in the capabilities of Qatari youth and a commitment to nurturing a new generation of young leaders, Nawaf Mohammed al-Mudahka, chairman of Sumaisma and Al Daayen Youth Centre, entrusted two young men, Mubarak Sultan al-Kuwari and Mohammed Salman al-Mudahka, with the honour of opening the 15th edition of the Kashta Exhibition, which opened last week at the centre's headquarters.

Al-Mudahka said the initiative reflects the centre's approach to empowering young people and involving them in leadership positions and decision-making.

The two young men will manage the exhibition's media campaign, oversee the preparation and organisation of the daily programme of events and activities, and actively participate in the exhibition's overall management, including co-ordinating its programmes and monitoring their implementation.

He explained that Kashta has become an established youth and community tradition over more than 14 years, evolving into a platform that supports entrepreneurs



Nawaf al-Mudahka

and productive families while preserving Qatar's authentic cultural heritage. He stressed that sustaining this success requires transferring experience and responsibilities to younger generations and giving them opportunities to lead youth initiatives and projects.

"We believe that young people do not learn leadership through words alone, but through trust, practical experience and taking responsibility," he said.

"That is why we have decided to put our young people at the forefront, entrusting them with the honour of opening the exhibition as well as the responsibility of managing and organising it," a-Mudahka added.

"This will make Kashta a practical school for developing young leaders and a genuine opportunity for them to gain experience in planning, media, event management and decision-making."

The centre's chairman noted that the initiative aligns with the Ministry of Sports and Youth's objectives of investing in the potential of young Qataris and strengthening their contribution to community development.

He added that the centre plans to expand young people's participation in leading its programmes and initiatives in the coming period, ensuring their continuity and further development.

"Yesterday, Mr Sultan al-Kuwari laid the foundations of this legacy, building its first pillars through a vision and dedication that spanned more than 14 years. Today, we confidently pass the baton to our young people so they can continue this journey, preserve this authentic heritage and develop it for future generations," al-Mudahka said.

"Previous generations created the beginnings, and our young people today will lead the future."

Science Café 2026 session explores Sidra Medicine's handling of fertility cases

By Sara Eljack
Staff Reporter

Sidra Medicine is using advanced genetic research and multidisciplinary medical teams to investigate complex fertility cases, including those where conventional tests have failed to identify the cause, Dr Johnny Awwad, executive chair of Women's Services and division chief of Reproductive Medicine at Sidra Medicine, said during a Science Café 2026 session in Doha yesterday.

The session, titled "Health and Future Generations: Your Guide to Fertility", was organised by Sidra Medicine in partnership with Msheireb Museums at Bin Jelmood House in Msheireb Downtown Doha. Dr Awwad explained how the hospital combines fertility treatment with scientific research to investigate challenging cases and explore possible treatment options.

"We have a very close collaboration with our research facility," he said, highlighting the importance of connecting clinical care with advanced scientific studies.

He explained that Sidra Medicine conducts advanced genomic studies and sequencing to investigate fertility problems that remain unexplained after conventional medical assessments.



Science Cafe session at Msheireb, titled "Health and Future Generations: Your Guide to Fertility". **PICTURE**: Thajudheen

"What we do is that we do advanced genomic studies and sequencing itself," Dr Awwad said.

According to Dr Awwad, multidisciplinary teams review complex fertility cases, bringing together reproductive medicine specialists, researchers and laboratory experts.

These teams examine patients' medical histories and test results to determine whether further investigations could help identify the underlying causes of infertility. He said researchers may recommend specialised tests that are not available in commercial laboratories when standard investigations fail to provide clear answers.

"And sometimes we get an answer that has a treatment today. Sometimes an answer that has a treatment tomorrow," he said.

Dr Awwad also highlighted the role of embryologists, physicians and specialised nurses in providing fertility care. He explained that treatment plans take into account patients' medical histories, individual needs and personal circumstances. The presentation covered assisted reproductive technologies, including in vitro fertilisation (IVF), in which eggs and sperm are brought together outside the body.

Dr Awwad also discussed a procedure in which sperm is injected directly into an egg, particularly in cases involving male fertility problems. He noted that some couples experience unexplained infertility, where medical investigations do not identify a clear cause. The session also addressed the importance of fertility awareness, genetic screening and healthy lifestyle choices in supporting reproductive health.

Dr Sahar Isa Da'as, founder of the Science Café series at Sidra Medicine, said the initiative aims to provide the community with clear, evidence-based information about health, wellbeing and fertility. She explained that reproductive health begins with the overall wellbeing of people, and can influence the health of future generations. The discussion covered four main themes: reproductive health and wellbeing, genetic screening and counselling, regular medical check-ups, and functional medicine and nutrition.

Participants stressed on the imperativeness of premarital screening, testing for inherited conditions and genetic counselling in helping individuals make informed decisions.

The session also explored how nutrition, sleep, physical activity and stress can affect reproductive health. Dr Houda Ferjani, medical director of Zulal Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som, moderated the discussion.

'Cultural exchanges can deepen Qatar-Canada ties beyond diplomacy'

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Cultural exchanges can strengthen Qatar–Canada relations by building personal connections and mutual understanding beyond traditional diplomatic and economic co-operation, acclaimed conductor Charles Olivieri-Munroe has said.

Speaking to *Gulf Times* following his conducting debut with the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO), Olivieri-Munroe said initiatives such as the Qatar, Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture give people from different backgrounds opportunities to connect in ways formal agreements cannot.

"Diplomacy and trade create the framework between two countries, but culture is where people actually meet one another.

"When a Canadian musician stands in front of a Qatari audience, or Qatari artists bring their work to Toronto or Montreal, something happens that no agreement on paper can achieve: people begin to feel curious about each other, and then to trust each other," he said.

Olivieri-Munroe stressed that artistic collaboration could also foster a deeper understanding between societies because it requires people to listen, adapt and work towards a shared outcome.

"An orchestra is a group of people from very different backgrounds who have to listen to one another intensely, adjust, give way, and agree on a single shared result, in real time. That is a very good model for understanding between nations," he said.

Born in Malta, raised in Toronto and based in Prague since 1997, Olivieri-Munroe said his international career had given him a personal appreciation of the role culture plays in connecting people across borders.

He has worked with orchestras across Europe, North America, Asia and Australia, including the Israel Philharmonic, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

His conducting debut with the QPO also marked his first engagement in the Arab world.

"I come here very much as a Canadian who has spent a lifetime moving between cultures," he said, adding that a Year of Culture provides a public platform for such encounters and highlights the human dimension of international relations.

The conductor described Qatar's growing investment in cultural institutions and infrastructure as an important factor in establishing the country as an international cultural partner.



Charles Olivieri-Munroe

He cited QPO's multinational composition as an example of how Doha has become a meeting point for musicians from different parts of the world.

"What makes Qatar interesting is its position: a bridge between East and West, with the openness to bring the great Western repertoire here while also nurturing its own Arab musical heritage.

"That combination of confidence in its own identity and curiosity about the rest of the world is exactly what makes cultural collaboration rich and two-directional," he said.

Olivieri-Munroe also stressed that cultural partnerships should extend beyond activities organised during a designated year, arguing that their success should be measured by the lasting relationships and institutions they establish.

He suggested formal partnerships between orchestras, conservatories and universities, recurring student and musician exchanges, and jointly commissioned compositions as ways to sustain cooperation.

"The key is to think beyond the calendar year from the very beginning. If the Year of Culture leaves behind even two or three such long-term partnerships, with clear agreements and regular activity, it will have succeeded," he said.

Drawing on his own experience, he cited his approximately 30-year relationship with the North Czech Philharmonic in Teplice as an example of how personal commitment can develop into a lasting institutional partnership.

For Qatar and Canada, he sees considerable scope to expand cooperation in orchestral performances, music education, and opportunities for emerging musicians.

One proposal he suggested was establishing a Canada–Qatar Youth Orchestra Academy, bringing together talented young musicians from both countries for a recurring summer programme.

The initiative could alternate between Doha and a Canadian city, with participants training alongside musicians from the QPO and Canadian orchestras.

HBKU professors receive 2026 Arab researchers award

Dr Haitham Abu-Rub and Dr Mowafaq Househ, distinguished professors at the College of Science and Engineering (CSE) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), have received the 2026 Arab Researchers Award. Organised annually by the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, the award is the first Arab initiative dedicated to recognising scientific research and honouring Arab researchers' contributions. Dr Abu-Rub received the award in Engineering and Technological Sciences in recognition of his efforts to find innovative solutions for smart electric power grid technologies. The award also acknowledges his outstanding research contributions and scientific achievements in advancing various areas of smart grids, including integrating clean renewable energy, electric vehicle technologies, and applying artificial intelligence to optimize the operation of power grid assets. Dr Househ was awarded for his contributions to medical and health sciences, particularly in telemedicine and digital health. His work supports remote monitoring of chronic conditions such as diabetes, accessing healthcare beyond regular working hours, and connects patients to healthcare professionals worldwide. The award reflects the remarkable progress of HBKU's pioneering research in smart electric power grids and its efforts to generate advanced knowledge and lead pioneering research both locally and internationally. It also recognises the excellence of the research conducted, the high value of contributions to advancing scientific knowledge, and its role in serving and supporting the Arab scientific community. Commenting on this achievement, Dr Mounir Hamdi, dean, CSE said: "This award reflects Hamad Bin Khalifa University's ongoing efforts to create an integrated ecosystem for scientists and researchers, enabling them to develop innovative solutions and research that address challenges facing Qatar and the world. Such recognition represents a significant research achievement that aligns with Qatar's goals in sustainable energy, innovation, and building a knowledge-based economy."



Dr Mowafaq Househ receiving the award.



Dr Haitham Abu-Rub receiving the award.

Youth Fest gives young people a bigger role in shaping community experiences

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Youth Fest 2026 brought together more than 260 volunteers and over 120 partner organisations, as Qatar Museums' Teen Hub gave young people a greater role in shaping its second edition.

The three-day festival, delivered by Qatar Museums' Teen Hub in strategic partnership with Earthna, concluded on Saturday (November 7) with a closing ceremony at the Teen Hub in the Expo Building, Al Bidda Park, where young creators, performers, entrepreneurs, volunteers and activity leaders who contributed to the programme were recognised.

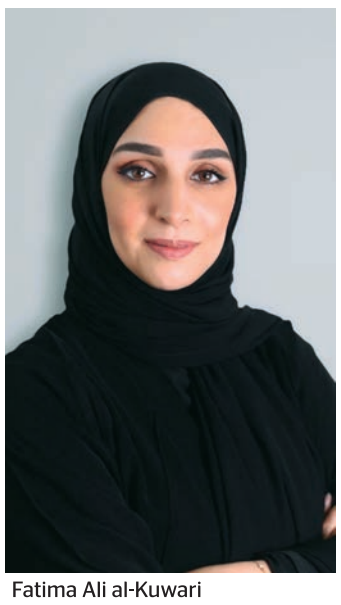
The festival focused on giving them practical opportunities to take responsibility, develop skills and become actively involved in organising and delivering community experiences.

Fatima Ali al-Kuwari, deputy director of Operations, said the main objective was to create a space where young people could learn, express their creativity and discover opportunities while taking on meaningful roles.

The second edition drew 10 young people to the organising team, alongside 260 volunteers and more than 30 young talents. It also brought together 120 companies, institutions and partner organisations, with representation from 11 universities.

Al-Kuwari said the scale and diversity of participation were among the key features distinguishing this year's edition.

The festival was also held as part of Qatar Sustainability Week, organised by Earthna, and in partnership with Unicef, giving young people opportunities to engage with sustainability through educational activities and community-based experiences.



Fatima Ali al-Kuwari

At the heart of the programme was Teen Hub's approach to making young people contributors to the experience rather than simply attendees.

She explained that young people were given opportunities to plan, organise and work in teams, helping them develop leadership, communication and decision-making skills.

Practical workshops and technical and creative activities, including those delivered through Studio 5, were also designed to help participants explore their interests, strengthen their abilities and turn ideas into practical steps.

Engagement with universities, institutions and participating organisations further connected young people with learning opportunities and potential future pathways.

"These are important aspects of fostering an entrepreneurial spirit and developing skills associated with entrepreneurship," al-Kuwari said.

The programme also addressed issues extending beyond creativity and professional development. Activities covered climate and water awareness in collaboration with Unicef, alongside wellbeing, volunteering and community engagement, with organisations including Naufar and the Qatar Red Crescent taking part.

For Al Kuwari, the festival's impact should be measured not only by the activities delivered, but also by what participants take away from the experience.

"We hope that every young person leaves the festival having gained something from the experience, whether it is a new skill, knowledge or connections that could open doors to future opportunities," she said.

She added that the experiences were intended to strengthen young people's understanding of their responsibilities towards themselves and their communities, while encouraging them to take a positive interest in issues that matter to them.

The closing ceremony brought the second edition to a celebratory end, with awards and recognition for those who helped deliver the programme.

OPINION

Lula's election win dashes US hopes of quick access to Brazil's rare earths

The re-election of leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva as Brazil's president will likely dash US President Donald Trump's hopes of securing fast access to the world's second-largest rare earth reserves.

A victory last month for Lula's challenger Flavio Bolsonaro — whose family is close to Trump — could have sped up US investment in Brazil's mineral wealth, helping Washington in its race with China for the raw materials key to modern manufacturing.

Instead, Lula's government plans new regulations for the sector to be set out by the new National Council for the Industrialisation of Critical and Strategic Minerals (CIMCE), three council members told Reuters ahead of its first meeting on Thursday, attended by Lula.

US investment will still be welcome, but the council will prioritise processing rare earths within Brazil rather than exporting them as raw materials, they said.

New rules will govern investment incentives and classification of priority projects in rare earths, which are essential to the tech, auto and energy industries.

"What's most important is to produce more in Brazil. To process, manufacture, add value and invest in knowledge, research and development," said Marco Lage, a CIMCE member. "That's what China has been doing for 30 years."

Trump wanted preferential access to Brazil's rare earths, a US State Department official with knowledge of discussions between the countries told Reuters earlier this year. After meeting Trump in May, Flavio Bolsonaro promised a "long-term strategic partnership" over the deposits.

In a statement to Reuters, the White House said diversifying the US minerals supply chain is in the best interest of the US and Brazil.

"Under President Trump, this administration is committed to pursuing new opportunities to strengthen our partnerships and deliver tangible results for the American people on this important issue," said White House spokesperson Matthew Middleton.

Analysts expected Flavio Bolsonaro would scrap CIMCE if he became president, freeing firms from pressure to develop a downstream rare earths industry.

Now, Brazil wants foreign investors to engage in processing and refining locally and to share technology, said Eracy Lafuente, a CIMCE member and chief of staff to the governor of Bahia state, a Lula stronghold.

Both the US and China have a lot to contribute to Brazil's aims, said Lage, who represents mining municipalities on CIMCE.

Even with a strong government push, there are limits to what can be done quickly in Brazil, said Ramon Barua, CEO of Aclara Resources, which is developing a rare earths mine in Brazil's central Goias state. The company is also working on technology for the separation of rare earths in the US.

"Even if we wanted — or even if President Lula wanted — to have separation in Brazil today, I don't think that's possible," Barua said. "We need to acquire the technology first."

Lula signed into law Brazil's National Policy for Critical and Strategic Minerals about two weeks before the first round of voting.

The move created CIMCE, kickstarting the regulatory framework overhaul, setting up investment incentives and risk-mitigation mechanisms for potential investors.

At its first meeting, the council, made up of government officials, outsiders such as Lage and Lafuente and industry representatives, decided 27 minerals fall under CIMCE's purview, with rare earths among them and classed as a "high priority" to Brazil. — Reuters

G7 summit in Paris



From left: Britain's Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband; Germany's Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul; US Secretary of State Marco Rubio; France's Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Noel Barrot; EU High Representative and Vice-President for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas; and Canada's Foreign Minister Anita Anand; attend a working lunch focused on international crises and challenges during the G7 foreign ministers summit at the Quai d'Orsay in Paris yesterday. During their two-day gathering (Nov 9-10), G7 foreign ministers are set to discuss support for Ukraine as it battles Moscow's invasion, alongside efforts to stabilise the Middle East. The meeting brings together officials from the G7 and partner countries including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, South Korea, Brazil and Ukraine. (**AFP**)



Climate finance, justice take centre stage at COP31 summit in Antalya



QNA
Doha

All eyes are on the Turkish city of Antalya, which hosting the UN Climate Change Conference (COP31), a move that reinforces Turkiye's role in international co-operation to combat climate change. The conference is being attended by heads of state, ministers, scientists, and private-sector leaders, alongside non-governmental organisations and international bodies, with the aim of shaping the next phase of climate action.

Climate justice sits at the forefront of recommendations proposed for the conference, which is taking place from Nov 9-20. Turkiye is hosting the event, while Australia will lead the formal negotiations, a joint arrangement that places the responsibility on both nations to demonstrate credible climate leadership. The Turkish presidency of the conference aims to position Antalya as a stepping stone, moving from dialogue to consensus, and from consensus to action, while prioritising areas such as food security, resilient cities, oceans and seas, clean energy, green manufacturing, health, education, and waste reduction.

COP31 is being held under the theme 'COP of the Future: COP of Implementation.' Its vision rests on three main pillars: dialogue, consensus, and action; translating pledges into reality; and accelerating the reduction of emissions.

The conference serves as the largest international summit for negotiating and fostering global co-operation on climate change, a crisis that spares no country, society, or economy, making collaboration among nations vital to addressing this global challenge.

Climate negotiations have already made notable progress, bringing down projected global temperature increases from over 4C to 2.6C. However, further and more rapid action is still required to protect all people and economies.

The conference agenda is expected to focus on strengthening nationally determined contributions, climate finance mechanisms, the transformation of economies and the energy sector, carbon reduction strategies, and nature-based solutions.



Murat Kurum, COP31 President and Turkiye's Minister of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change, gives a speech during the opening session of the COP31 UN Climate Change Conference at the Antalya Expo Center yesterday. (**AFP**)

Urgent global challenges, such as rising sea levels, water scarcity, food security, and the loss of biodiversity, are also being addressed through concrete climate risk management strategies. More than 90 heads of state and around 300 ministers are expected to participate in the conference, alongside representatives from various institutions and civil society organisations from across the globe.

The conference takes on particular significance as the world nears the threshold of exceeding the 1.5C limit for global temperature rise above pre-industrial levels, a warning acknowledged by the UN in September. The conference also follows record-breaking heatwaves and climate-related disasters that have claimed thousands of lives and caused damage to homes, agricultural land, and infrastructure across various parts of the world, underscoring the urgent need to move from pledges to concrete action, focused on reducing emissions and providing the necessary funding for climate adaptation.

These international climate meetings have been held annually since 1995 and have led to significant global achievements, such as the 2015 Paris Agreement. This agreement has set the world on the right path to slow down, and eventually halt, climate change, which is already causing rising temperatures, more intense storms, prolonged droughts, and sea-level rise.

The conference includes a global summit for heads of state and government, held on Nov. 11-12 under the patronage of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The conference features opening sessions, national statements, and roundtables focused on resilient cities, climate finance, the circular economy, and blue climate action.

The conference designated Nov 9 as COP Health Day, positioning health as a priority under the theme 'Dynamic and Resilient Health Systems.' The COP presidency, in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, is preparing to launch the 'Antalya Initiative for Health Resilience,' which aims to shift the discourse on climate and health from the realm of international pledges and discussions toward practical policies and actionable, measurable interventions.

In a statement issued on Nov. 6, the World Health Organisation (WHO) explained that the initiative aims to translate scientific evidence, international experience and good practices into concrete policies and measurable actions, promote the sharing of successful practices among countries, and strengthen the resilience of health systems to climate-related risks.

Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Climate Action and Just Transition Selwin Hart said that the COP31 conference in Antalya will not solve the climate crisis in the span of two weeks, but it could help remove some of the barriers preventing available solutions from reaching those who need them most.

In an interview with UN News, Hart explained that these annual gatherings allow governments to assess progress and negotiate how to address a challenge that no single nation can solve on its own. "There's now a clear recognition that addressing the climate crisis requires all hands on deck," Hart added.

He further noted that the conference places a particular focus on implementation; Turkiye is promoting initiatives related to clean energy, food security, sustainable cities, eco-friendly industries, the oceans, and waste reduction, emphasising the need to move beyond mere promises and focus on practical solutions.

In a report published on Nov 4, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) emphasised that developing countries will require approximately $305bn annually by 2035 to build their resilience and mitigate risks associated with climate change.

The UNEP explained that, although global warming is on track to exceed the threshold of 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, the funding allocated to help communities adapt to climate change remains far below actual needs. It noted that even if international public funding for adaptation were tripled, it would cover only 29% of these requirements at most.

Although the world today possesses more tools than ever before to address climate change, millions of people remain unable to benefit from them. With the rapid development of clean energy technologies, the challenge facing nations at the annual COP climate conference is no longer limited to finding solutions; it now extends to ensuring that these solutions are affordable and accessible to all. The world had witnessed catastrophic floods, deadly heatwaves, and prolonged droughts in 2026, and scientists warn that the world is on a path to exceed the threshold of a 1.5C rise in global temperatures above pre-industrial levels.

Three reports from the UN Climate Change office show that an increasing number of governments are taking comprehensive climate action across all sectors of their economies to harness the immense benefits of clean energy and climate resilience. These reports provide further evidence that nearly all major economies, as well as many small and medium-sized ones, now view climate action as a key driver for economic growth, job creation, and the provision of secure, affordable energy.

While these reports serve as a reminder of the daunting challenges currently facing the international community, they also demonstrate the resilience of nations and their continued progress. This is particularly significant given that the impacts of climate change are inflicting ever-greater harm on populations and economies with each passing year.
The reports underscore that climate action leads to safer communities, more competitive economies, and lower costs for households, governments, and businesses, all the more relevant in light of the ongoing crisis surrounding the cost of fossil fuels.

However, this year's reports once again show that collective progress remains clearly insufficient, that global transitions are highly uneven, and that many countries face significant obstacles in achieving their goals and commitments.

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Qatar Foundation Drives Youth Basketball Growth as Jr. NBA Reaches 80 Teams in Third Season

By Noor Alrawi



Qatar Foundation (QF) continues to strengthen its role in community sports and youth development, with the Jr. NBA Qatar programme reaching a new milestone of 80 teams in its third season, compared to just 30 teams when it was launched in 2024.

The remarkable growth reflects Qatar Foundation's ongoing commitment to developing grassroots sports, discovering young talent and creating opportunities for children and teenagers to develop their abilities in a supportive and inclusive sporting environment.

Delivered in collaboration with the National Basketball Association (NBA) and a network of strategic sporting partners, the programme has become an important platform for promoting basketball, encouraging active lifestyles and instilling values of teamwork, leadership, discipline and sportsmanship among younger generations.

Speaking exclusively to *Gulf Times*, Alexandru Rosca, Director of Community Sports Activation at Qatar Foundation, said the programme had experienced significant growth since its launch, expanding from 30 teams in the inaugural season to 68 in its second season, before reaching 80 registered teams this year.

He explained that the expansion has been accompanied by the introduction of new age categories, including U16, alongside a dedicated U12 school category, providing more opportunities for boys and girls to participate and progress through different stages of development.

Qatar Foundation at the Heart of Community Sports Development

Qatar Foundation's contribution to the programme extends beyond organising a basketball competition. Through its Sport Community Activation initiatives, QF works to connect sporting programmes, facilities and partnerships, creating opportunities for communities to participate in sports and embrace healthier lifestyles.

Rosca emphasised that the programme's main objective is to encourage young people to play regularly, improve their skills and develop a lasting connection with sport.

"Beyond the numbers, we are seeing growing interest among young players, schools, academies, coaches and families. For Qatar Foundation, this reflects our commitment to bringing communities together, creating participation pathways and strengthening the wider QF sport ecosystem," he said.

He added that the collaboration with the NBA, Qatar Basketball Federation, Qatar Sports Investments and other partners plays an important role in strengthening grassroots basketball and expanding sporting opportunities across Qatar.

80 Teams Reflect Growing Interest in Basketball

The expansion of Jr. NBA from 30 teams in its first season to 68 in its second and 80 in its third demonstrates the growing popularity of basketball among young people in Qatar.

The introduction of additional age categories has further strengthened the programme, offering participants more opportunities to develop their abilities and experience organised competition.

According to Rosca, the growing engagement of schools, academies, coaches, families and young players demonstrates that Jr. NBA is becoming more than a sporting competition.

"It is building a community around youth basketball," he said, highlighting the importance of creating an environment where young players can develop their passion for the game and remain engaged in sport beyond the competition itself.

Developing Skills, Building Character and Discovering Potential

While basketball remains at the centre of the initiative, Qatar Foundation places equal importance on the personal development of its young participants.

Through the programme, children are encouraged to develop teamwork, leadership, discipline, confidence, respect and sportsmanship.

"Basketball is the vehicle, but youth development is the bigger objective," Rosca said.

He explained that participants are encouraged to support their teammates, respect coaches and opponents, and respond positively to challenges.

Qatar Foundation's efforts also extend to supporting the wider basketball ecosystem through school clinics and development opportunities for coaches and referees, recognising that the development of the sport requires investment in all those involved.

Inclusive Opportunities Through Strategic Partnerships

Creating accessible sporting opportunities for children from different backgrounds remains an important part of Qatar Foundation's community sports vision.

Through collaboration with the NBA, Qatar Basketball Federation, Qatar Sports Investments, schools, academies and other partners, the programme aims to bring basketball closer to communities across Qatar.

Rosca noted that QF's focus is on connecting programmes, venues and partnerships to encourage wider participation and support the development of young people.

The introduction of new categories this season further reflects the programme's ambition to expand participation and create more opportunities for both boys and girls.

Two-Day Basketball Celebration at Education City

One of the major highlights of the third season will be the finals, scheduled for November 13 and 14 at Education City.

The two-day event will bring together young players, families and basketball enthusiasts to celebrate the achievements of the participating teams.

The first day will feature the U14 and U16 boys' and girls' semi-finals, alongside skills and shooting challenges. The second day will include the U12, U14 and U16 finals and third-place games, followed by closing activities and the presentation of awards and Jr. NBA championship rings.

Rosca described the finals as an opportunity to celebrate not only the competition but also the development of the players and the basketball community that has grown around the programme.

A Lasting Legacy Beyond the Court

Looking ahead, Qatar Foundation aims to continue expanding Jr. NBA and strengthening its contribution to the wider development of basketball in Qatar.

Rosca said the programme forms part of a broader journey to create stronger development pathways for young players, schools, academies, coaches and referees.

"Our ambition is to create a lasting legacy through stronger development pathways, more opportunities for girls and boys, better-supported coaches and referees, and more active communities," he said.

> "Our ambition is to build a lasting legacy through stronger development pathways and wider sporting opportunities for young people"
>
> **– Alexandru Rosca**
> *Director of Community Sports Activation,* Qatar Foundation

He also encouraged parents to give their children opportunities to participate in basketball and other sports through schools, clubs, academies and Qatar Foundation programmes.

His message to young people was simple: "You do not need to be a great basketball player to start. You simply need to start. Come, play, learn and enjoy the experience."

From its initial 30 teams to an impressive 80 in its third season, Jr. NBA reflects Qatar Foundation's growing impact on community sports and youth development.

Through its strategic partnerships, commitment to grassroots participation and focus on developing young talent, Qatar Foundation continues to demonstrate how sport can serve as a powerful platform for building stronger communities, nurturing future generations and promoting a healthier, more active society in Qatar.











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