

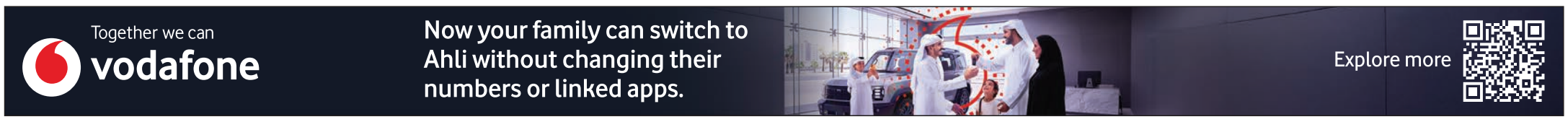
GULF TIMES

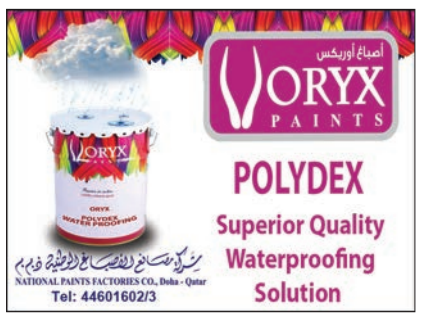
published in QATAR since 1978

SUNDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13925

November 15, 2026
Jumada II 5, 1448 AH

www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals





SPORT | Page 1

Dana leads Qatar's promising campaign at Dakar 2026 with bronze medal







Doha forum charts smarter pathways to uni success



By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Bridging the gap between school and university is no longer simply about academic preparation. It is about equipping a new generation with the scientific knowledge, technological skills and global outlook to thrive in a world being rapidly reshaped by artificial intelligence (AI).

That challenge took centre stage in Doha as more than 200 teachers, academic advisers, university officials and education policymakers gathered for the Building Bridges to Higher Education: Advancing STEM Readiness and Global Competence Forum, exploring how students can make a confident transition to higher education and unlock wider academic and career opportunities.

Organised by Weill Cornell Medicine – Qatar in partnership with the Academic Bridge Programme, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) and Unesco, the forum examined three critical themes: scientific readiness in the AI era, the transition from secondary school to university, and global citizenship through education for sustainable development.

Through three panel discussions, local and international education specialists explored how closer collaboration between schools, universities and policymakers could better prepare students for emerging opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), particularly in scientific and healthcare professions.

Forum chair Dr Rachid Bendriss, associate dean for Foundation, Student Outreach and Educational Development Programmes at Weill Cornell Medicine – Qatar, described the transition to university as a defining milestone requiring coordinated guidance from educators and academic advisers.

He said collaboration was essential to helping students navigate that journey with confidence, strengthen their scientific foundations and acquire the skills necessary to succeed in an increasingly technology-driven world. To Page 5

6THSTREET.COM
IS NOW
AIVI
Authentic Fashion & Lifestyle Destination
Delivering In
90
Minutes
Scan the QR code & download the AIVI app

Qatar, 17 nations slam Israeli strike on Gaza hospital

Qatar and 17 other Arab and Islamic countries have strongly condemned the Israeli air strike on Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis, which caused casualties among patients and medical personnel, describing it as a violation of international humanitarian law that affords special protection to healthcare facilities and workers.

In a joint statement, the foreign ministers of Qatar, Jordan, the UAE, Indonesia, Pakistan, Türkiye, Algeria, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Somalia, Oman, Palestine, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt and Mauritania also denounced continued Israeli attacks on Palestinian civilians, including strikes on tents and shelters housing displaced families.

They warned that such attacks undermined the ceasefire and efforts to restore security and stability in Gaza, while contradicting US President Donald Trump's Comprehensive Plan.

The ministers expressed grave concern over Israel's continued restrictions on humanitarian aid, shelter materials and medical supplies, warning that the measures were aggravating Gaza's humanitarian catastrophe as winter approached. To Page 11

Media City Qatar foresees nearly 70% of its licensed firms expanding abroad

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Media City Qatar has more than 560 licensed companies, nearly 70% of them expanding from outside the Middle East, its CEO has said, as the hub builds on the recent opening of Deutsche Presse-Agentur's (DPA) first GCC office there.

In an exclusive interview with *Gulf Times*, Hamad Omar al-Mannai, CEO of Media City Qatar, said the organisation welcomes national and international entities alike and provides all the amenities they need.

Al-Mannai said DPA's move to Qatar would enhance Media City Qatar's international presence and contribute to the country's growing media ecosystem.

"DPA is one of the most important news agencies and platforms. Having it at Media City Qatar adds to our international portfolio, and we look forward to seeing how it will contribute to our ecosystem," he said.

"The growing presence of international news agencies and media companies reflects Qatar's ambition to strengthen its position as a regional and global centre for media, content production and creative industries," the official added.


Hamad Omar a-Mannai. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen

The official said DPA would have plenty of opportunities to forge partnerships and explore areas of co-operation in Qatar, adding that the country plays an important role in international dialogue and global discussions.

Al-Mannai highlighted several leading international media organisations already at Media City Qatar, including CNN, Euronews and the Associated Press (AP), along with other international agencies.

He revealed that Media City Qatar now has more than 560 licensed companies across the media sector, spanning production, post-production, advertising and news services.

Outlining expansion plans, al-Mannai said attracting more international and local companies remains a key priority.

"Our main mandate is to attract different companies and help them grow from Qatar to the globe," he said. He stressed that Media City Qatar takes an inclusive approach to local and international businesses, making no distinction between Qatari and foreign companies.

Of the more than 560 licensed companies, nearly 70% are expanding from outside the Middle East, al-Mannai said, while the rest are Qatari-owned.

The organisation caters to businesses of all sizes across digital media, broadcasting, content production and creative industries. Its platform simplifies business set-up in Qatar, streamlines licensing and registration, and fosters foreign investment through tailored incentives and world-class facilities.

Al-Mannai said Media City Qatar serves as both enabler and regulator. "We are working as a regulator as well as enabler to create an integrated ecosystem in which companies can collaborate, develop and expand their operations internationally," he explained. To Page 2

Thousands of US flights cancelled, delayed



Reuters
Washington/Newark, New Jersey

Major airlines yesterday cancelled more than 4,000 US flights and delayed 3,000 more as the United States sought to recover from the longest nationwide shutdown of flights since the September 11, 2001, attacks.

The FAA on Friday issued a nationwide ground stop that halted nearly all departing flights for almost five hours due to a massive communications failure, which forced airlines to cancel nearly 10,000 flights and delay more than 7,000 others in one of the worst travel days in US history.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said yesterday at a press conference that FAA contractor L3Harris was working at a very remote location to convert a location from cooper to fibre.

"We're working to determine was whether we had incompetence, meaning was it user error or installer error from L3Harris, or did they install a faulty router? We haven't determined what the fault was," Duffy said at a press conference. To Page 11

Art Basel Qatar eyes wider economic, cultural gains

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Art Basel Qatar is expected to create opportunities beyond the art market, generating new collaborations and economic activity across design, architecture and other creative industries while strengthening Doha's international cultural connections, according to Vincenzo de Bellis, chief artistic officer and global director of Fairs at Art Basel.

The fair aims to build on Qatar's longstanding investment in museums, education, design and artistic production by connecting the country's cultural community with an international network of artists, galleries, collectors and institutions, he told *Gulf Times*.


Vincenzo de Bellis

De Bellis said hosting the international art fair could extend into several creative sectors, including architecture and publishing, with new commissions, exhibitions and partnerships potentially emerging from connections made during the event.

"What matters most is what lasts after the week itself: the relationships that form, what they make possible for artists, and the long-term benefit to the cultural community," he said.

He noted that Art Basel Qatar offered an opportunity to bring the international art world to Doha, allowing local and regional artists and galleries to engage directly with international collectors, curators and institutions.

Such encounters could lead to exhibitions and collaborations long after the fair concludes, while generating work for local designers, producers and other creative professionals. To Page 5

Golden hour at the Mina District


The setting sun bathes the Mina District in a golden glow, silhouetting last evening strollers against a fiery orange sky in a picture of serenity. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen

QATAR

Acting president of Venezuela arrives in Doha on official visit



The Acting President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Delcy Rodriguez arrived in Doha last evening on an official visit to the country. Upon arrival at Doha International Airport, the Acting President and her accompanying delegation were welcomed by HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, the ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Salman bin Nabit al-Khulaifi, and the ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the State of Qatar, Carlos Jose Mata Figueroa. (**QNA**)

Qatar calls for stronger climate commitment implementation

QNA
Antalya

The State of Qatar has called for stronger implementation of agreed climate outcomes and commitments, as well as the provision of the necessary means of implementation, including finance, technology transfer and capacity building to help developing countries in their efforts to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

This came as HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie took part in consultations on the comprehensive draft decision for the 31st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31) and the Baku High-Level Dialogue on Adaptation, held as part of the conference in Antalya, Turkiye.

Addressing the consultations, HE Dr al-Subaie outlined three priorities for Qatar: preserving the nationally determined nature of the Paris Agreement; balancing mitigation, adaptation and the means of implementation; and placing finance and support at the heart of the outcomes. He called for stronger implementation of existing agreements without introducing quantitative targets that have not been negotiated or preempting ongoing negotiations.

He stressed that calls for greater climate ambition must be matched by financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building. Developed countries must fulfil their commitments, make support more predictable and facilitate access to it, he said, adding that voluntary contributions and partnerships should complement, not replace, these obligations.



Advances in renewable energy, storage and low-emission technologies offer opportunities to accelerate emissions reductions, he noted, adding that the action agenda proposed by the conference presidency could help mobilise partnerships and investment, with the need to distinguish voluntary initiatives from negotiated commitments.

Dr al-Subaie said energy transitions must be orderly and equitable, reflect differing national circumstances, safeguard energy security and affordability, and support development pathways. Technology deployment, he added, depends on infrastructure, resilient supply chains, financing and national capacities.

Water security, resilient infrastructure and ecosystem integrity are fundamental to climate action, particularly for countries with arid or coastal environments, he said.

He noted that the negotiation process constitutes the foundation of trust among parties, calling for proposals to be circulated promptly, transparent consultations and sufficient time for review. Late additions, he cautioned, could undermine consensus and hinder implementation.

He reaffirmed the importance of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in light of different national circumstances. Success, he said, should be measured by how effectively adopted decisions enable countries to implement agreed commitments. He reiterated Qatar's commitment to constructive engagement and international cooperation to turn shared ambitions into practical outcomes.

Addressing the Baku High-Level Dialogue on Adaptation, HE Dr al-Subaie said the main challenge to implementing adaptation measures was the shortfall in the means of implementation relative to growing needs.

At the dialogue, which brought together ministers, senior officials and representatives of international organisations and financial institutions, Dr al-Subaie called for closing existing gaps, drawing on lessons learned and incorporating adaptation into investment decisions, infrastructure projects and sectoral budgets from the outset.

He stressed the need to strengthen resilience, particularly in countries with arid or coastal environments, in light of the links between water security, extreme heat, food security and coastal ecosystem protection, along with the need to develop stronger early warning systems and encourage greater participation by local communities.

HE Dr al-Subaie said the true measure of adaptation success is protecting communities and maintaining essential services, alongside fostering international and regional cooperation and providing support to the countries and communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. (**QNA**)

Qatar to host 15th conference of INTERPA from tomorrow

The State of Qatar, through the Police Academy affiliated with the Ministry of Interior (MoI), will host the 15th Conference of the International Association of Police Academies (INTERPA) from Nov 16-18, bringing together representatives of police academies and police education and training institutions from various countries to strengthen international cooperation in preparing and professionally developing police personnel.

In a statement yesterday, MoI said the conference would serve as an international platform for sharing knowledge, expertise and institutional experiences while fostering closer cooperation among relevant institutions.

The conference would also support the development of police education and training, enhance the quality of its outcomes, and boost the capabilities of police personnel to keep pace with the evolving demands of security operations. (**QNA**)

Media City Qatar foresees nearly 70% of its licensed firms expanding abroad

From Page 1

The organisation also supports and promotes the country's media landscape. "We work to streamline registration and company establishment procedures. We also provide a business-friendly regulatory framework and incentives available to all licensed companies," he said.

Al-Mannai identified strategic partnerships, talent development and infrastructure support as key pillars of the organisation's efforts to strengthen the sector.

He emphasised that building a sustainable media ecosystem requires more than attracting international brands. "It needs more elements such as supporting businesses, developing local talent and providing the necessary infrastructure. These all are equally important for a sustainable media landscape," he stressed.

Qatar showcases national climate initiatives and adaptation efforts at COP31 in Turkiye

Qatar's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has actively engaged in discussions on key international climate action issues during the 31st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31), being held in Antalya, Turkiye.

During the conference, which runs through November 20, the Qatari delegation is participating in negotiations and technical meetings covering climate adaptation, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, climate finance, transparency and capacity building, as well as the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The ministry is showcasing its projects and initiatives to improve climate data collection, prepare national reports and emissions inventories, and strengthen climate action and Qatar's nationally determined contributions.

Qatar has also set up a pavilion in the conference's Blue Zone, featuring the achievements of the ministry and national entities. These include the launch of the country's first national climate change adaptation plan, the preparation of nine climate impact and risk assessment reports covering six priority sectors, and the delivery of 10 capacity-building workshops.

The pavilion provides an opportunity for international delegations, experts and researchers to learn about Qatar's climate initiatives, exchange expertise and explore cooperation in adaptation, emissions reduction, climate finance and technology transfer. (**QNA**)

VALID FROM 15.11.2026 TO 18.11.2026., BULK PURCHASE NOT ALLOWED.

Valid only 15,16,17 Nov. 2026
QAR 5.75
تفاح أحمر أفغانستاني ا كيلو
Apple Red Afghanistan 1kg

Valid only 15-16 Nov. 2026
QAR 5.25
برتقال فالنسيا جنوب افريقي ا كيلو
Orange Valencia South Africa 1kg

Air Freight
Valid only 15-16 Nov. 2026
QAR 9.75
فراولة مصرية ا باكيت
Strawberry Egypt 1pkt

Valid only 15 Nov. 2026
QAR 11.25
بطاطس باكستانية ا كيس
Potato Pakistan 1Bag

Valid only 15 Nov. 2026
QAR 9.75
بروكلي مصري ا كيلو
Broccoli Egypt 1kg

Valid only 15-16 Nov. 2026
QAR 22.75
روبيان مزرعة طازج إماراتي ا كيلو
Fresh Farmed Prawns 20/30 UAE 1kg

QAR 56.75
موزات خروف أسترالي ا كيلو
Lamb Shank Australia 1kg

QAR 44.75
لحم بقري مفروم أسترالي ا كيلو
Beef Mince Australia 1kg

CHEF RECOMMENDS
QAR 8.00
دجاج بالزبدة بالعظم ٢٥٠ غرام
Butter Chicken Bone In 250gm

CHEF RECOMMENDS
QAR 29.00
كيك ريد فيلفت ٥٠٠ غرام
Red Velvet Cake 500gm

QAR 14.50
جبنة رومي مصرية خفيفة ٥٠٠ غرام
Egyptian Mild Roumy Cheese 500gm

QAR 11.75
بيض أبيض كبير أردني ٣٠ قطعة
Jordan White Egg Large 30's

QAR 8.50
روستي دجاجة كاملة مجمدة ا كيلو
Roasty Frozen Whole Chicken 1kg

QAR 14.50
زيتون كالاماتا جامبو يوناني ٥٠٠ غرام
Greek Kalamata Jumbo Olives 500gm

QAR 20.00
مكفيتيس دايجستيف بسكويت منوع ٤٠٠ غرام + ٢٥٪ إكسترا / حبتان
Mcvitie's Digestive Biscuits Asstd 400gm+25% Extra X 2pcs

QAR 13.75
يارا زيت دوار الشمس ١.٨ لتر
Yara Sunflower Oil 1.8ltr

5 KG.
QAR 24.50
روزانا أرز بسمتي ٥ كيلو
Rozana Basmati Rice 5kg

QAR 24.00
أومو منظف سائل للغسيل منوع ٣ كيلو
Omo Liquid Detergent Asstd 3Ltr

*T&C'S APPLY.
FREE HOME DELIVERY
FOR ALL ORDERS ABOVE QAR 89
LuLu in MINUTES
luluhypermarket.com
DOWNLOAD NOW
LuLu Hypermarket
Hypermarket in Minutes
Download on the App Store
GET IT ON Google Play

LuLu celebrates Polish culinary heritage with 'Taste of Poland'







PICTURES: Thajudheen



By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

LuLu Hypermarket has launched a weeklong festival ' Taste of Poland' celebrating the culinary delights of Poland at all its outlets in Qatar. The event highlights some of special fruits and food items sourced directly from Poland through LuLu Group's newly launched office in Warsaw, Poland.

The celebration invites shoppers to explore the rich culinary heritage and authentic flavours of Central Europe with special deals and promotions. Running through November 18, the promotion showcases an extensive assortment of speciality Polish food products, live culinary demonstrations, and cultural highlights.

The festival was inaugurated at LuLu Hypermarket, Giardino branch, in The Pearl-Qatar by Tomasz Sadzinski, ambassador of Poland to Qatar. Officials from the Polish embassy, prominent members of the business community, and invited dignitaries joined LuLu leadership to mark the occasion.

Throughout the campaign, LuLu outlets have been dressed in vibrant red-and-white Polish-themed décor. At the launch event, shoppers enjoyed live cooking sessions hosted by Polka Restaurant – Qatar's first and only Polish eatery.

Highlighting the growing bilateral trade ties between the two nations, Sadzinski praised LuLu Group's direct investment in Polish sourcing: "While we have celebrated the Taste of Poland Festival with LuLu Hypermarket in the past, this marks the first edition following the opening of LuLu Group's dedicated sourcing centre in Poland. The impact is clearly visible on the shelves today, with a much wider variety of authentic Polish goods available to shoppers. I thank LuLu Retail and its leadership for recognising the exceptional quality and taste of Polish food manufacturing, and for partnering closely with the Polish producers and our embassy to bring these products to the Qatari market."

"Polish people really understand how to manufacture food items with taste and quality. And I'm very happy that LuLu has recognised this and has partnered with Poland, with Polish manufacturers, and with our embassy here to work on delivering these products onto the Qatari market," added the ambassador.

The expanded product lineup is supported by LuLu Group's dedicated Polish sourcing office, Y International Polska Sp. z o.o., based in Warsaw. The curated festival range spans leading Polish brands across artisanal bakery goods, confectionery, snacks, beverages, and ready-to-cook meals, alongside a dedicated selection of organic products.

Through initiatives like the 'Taste of Poland' festival, LuLu Hypermarket continues to strengthen global supply chains while connecting communities in Qatar with diverse international cuisines".

STEAMathon Qatar among world's top 100 education innovations

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter



Qatar has secured a major international educational achievement, with its homegrown initiative, STEAMathon Qatar, selected among the 100 outstanding education innovations featured in HundrED's Global Collection for 2027.

The recognition places the Qatari initiative alongside 99 other innovative educational programmes from around the world, acknowledging its impact on learning and potential for expansion across different educational settings.

Developed in Qatari schools with the support of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and in collaboration with the Teach For Qatar organisation, STEAMathon Qatar has emerged as a promising model for combining practical learning, creativity, scientific thinking and sustainability. The selection followed an extensive international evaluation process involving more than 800 educational innovations. More than 250 members of the HundrED Academy contributed 3,590 reviews and assessments, examining each initiative's educational impact, scalability and potential for implementation in different contexts.

HundrED is a Finland-based international organisation dedicated to identifying, evaluating and promoting promising educational innovations worldwide.

The announcement coincided with the Global Education Forum and the HundrED Innovation Summit, held in Madrid, Spain, on November 12 and 13, 2026. Reem al-Suwaidi, assistant director of the technical office and leader of the Innovation Incubators Project, represented the ministry at the announcement, recognition and international knowledge-sharing events.

At the heart of STEAMathon Qatar is an educational approach that brings together science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) to help students tackle real-world sustainability challenges. Rather than relying solely on traditional classroom instruction, the initiative encourages students to learn through projects, explore problems and develop practical solutions. Students begin by identifying a challenge and researching its causes before designing a proposed solution, building a prototype, testing it and making improvements. This hands-on process helps develop essential skills, including critical and creative thinking, scientific research, problem-solving and teamwork. By connecting academic subjects with everyday challenges, the programme enables students to see how classroom knowledge can be applied to improve their communities and contribute to a more sustainable future.

The project was first conceived in 2020 at Saad bin Muadh Primary School for Boys by engineer Talal Ahmed, a Teach For Qatar alumnus who is currently an academic researcher at the ministry's Technical Office. The idea emerged during his participation in Teach For Qatar's Leaders Pathway programme and gradually developed through the involvement of schools, teachers and students in activities linking sustainability with the school curriculum. Its early expansion was closely associated with Qatar Sustainability Weeks in 2020, 2021 and 2022, providing opportunities to engage students in practical environmental and sustainability-related projects. A major milestone came in 2023, when the initiative won first place and the Saif al-Muallim Award, recognising it as the most sustainable and impactful project developed by Teach For Qatar alumni. The competition was organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and corporate partners ExxonMobil and Qapco, with the aim of supporting alumni-led projects and extending their impact beyond the classroom.

During the 2023–2024 academic year, the ministry adopted STEAMathon Qatar as a national initiative, extending its reach from Grade One to Grade 12. The programme received more than 130 applications from government schools, with its impact extending to tens of thousands of students and teachers.

QNL project steps up efforts to combat illicit trade in cultural heritage

Qatar National Library (QNL)'s "Himaya" project has strengthened efforts to combat the illicit trafficking of cultural property and protect documentary heritage from theft and smuggling through specialist training, international cooperation and the documentation of historical collections.

Launched in 2020, the project has also helped identify rare manuscripts offered for sale at international auctions, prompting intervention with auction houses and the withdrawal of some items from circulation.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA) ahead of the International Day against Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property, observed on November 14, Maxim Nasra, Head of the Library's Preservation and Conservation Center, stressed the importance of cooperation between cultural institutions and law enforcement agencies in protecting documentary heritage.

He said the initiative provides training for staff working in libraries, archives, museums and other cultural institutions, as well as customs officials and border authorities, on identifying, documenting and handling historical manuscripts and understanding relevant international conventions and legislation.

Among its notable achievements was the identification of a rare fragment of a Holy Qur'an dating back to the 15th century, which appeared at an auction in 2021. The manuscript had previously been documented in the Afghan National Archives in 2016.

Following the library's intervention and submission of supporting documentation, the item was withdrawn from the auction. Eight other manuscripts believed to belong to the same collection were also identified.

Nasra highlighted the Doha Workshops on Combating Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property, launched in 2022 and later developed into an international conference. Its fourth edition, held in September 2025, brought together more than 100 participants from over 20 countries.

The library has also signed a memorandum of understanding with Qatar's General Authority of Customs in 2024 and conducted training programs for customs and law enforcement officials in Qatar and Morocco in cooperation with ICESCO.

As part of its ongoing efforts, the library will organise an online international seminar today, bringing together experts from Qatar, Oman, Europe and Australia to discuss the verification of cultural artefacts' provenance, auction houses' responsibilities and mechanisms for recovering stolen heritage.

Nasra also pointed to the role of the IFLA Regional Center for Preservation and Conservation, hosted by Qatar National Library since August 2015. More than 1,000 specialists from across the region have benefited from its training programs. (**QNA**)

Ooredoo Group to convene 'Digital Ecosystem Conference & Exhibition'

Ooredoo Group will host the second edition of the 'Digital Ecosystem Conference & Exhibition' on November 16-17, 2026, at The Ritz-Carlton, Doha.

Under the theme 'Shaping Digital Economies: Policy, Sovereignty & the Future of ICT', the conference will examine how legal and regulatory frameworks can support investment in digital infrastructure and the adoption of emerging technologies, while protecting consumers and strengthening public trust.

Hilal Mohammed al-Khulaifi, Group Chief Legal and Regulatory officer, Ooredoo, said: "The decisions being made today on AI, data and connectivity will influence where investment goes and how widely its benefits are shared. We need policy frameworks that give businesses the confidence to invest and people the confidence to use digital services. This conference brings those perspectives together to identify practical steps that governments and industry can take."

The programme will explore the foundations of the AI economy, including connectivity, data centres and energy requirements, alongside questions of digital sovereignty and AI governance. Discussions will also address cybersecurity, digital identity, consumer protection and the measures needed to make digital participation more accessible and affordable.



QATAR

Commercial Bank launches Miqdam segment for Qataris



Commercial Bank has introduced Miqdam, a first-of-its-kind banking segment for Qataris, designed to match their lifestyle with exceptional privileges and financial solutions.

The name comes from a traditional Qatari word for courage and initiative and reflects a distinctive approach to banking for Qatari customers.

Miqdam customers will enjoy a range of exclusive privileges and offers. As part of the launch, the first 100 customers to join Miqdam will receive a QR20,000 travel voucher with Qatar Airways. Members will also receive exclusive offers and curated privileges on the Miqdam credit card, along with preferential interest rates on mortgage, personal and vehicle loans.

Miqdam describes someone bold enough to step forward, and in Qatari culture, someone who supports you before you even ask. It stands for courage, initiative, and leadership, qualities deeply rooted in Qatar and its people, and it is the philosophy the segment is built around.

The visual identity and card design feature the Arabian horse, a timeless symbol of authenticity and nobility, serving as a proud reflection of the Qatari identity and cultural heritage the bank honours.

Commercial Bank Group CEO Stephen Moss said, "Qatari customers have been at the heart of our story from the beginning, and serving them well means understanding their ambitions as much as their banking needs. Miqdam reflects the spirit of moving forward with confidence, and that is how we want to support Qatari customers. As a Qatari bank, this is who we are, and it is a commitment we will carry forward for generations to come."

Nasser al-Sharshani, AGM, director of Private Banking at Commercial Bank, said: "Miqdam is a word that holds deep meaning for us, and this proposition is built around the moments that matter in our customers' lives. Designed by Qataris, for Qataris, it delivers an experience that is truly considered distinctive and authentic to who we are."

Qatar Talks 2026 announces champion speakers









Qatar Talks 2026 has announced the winners of the speech competitions in various categories held at the Radisson Blu Hotel Doha.

Launched in 2004 by founder convener M I Farid, formerly known as the ICC ONE Communication Championships, it has inspired over 2,000 Qatar residents to hone their public speaking prowess, cementing its status as a platform for oratory excellence.

In the Adult's Inspirational Speech segment, Fathana Mariyam Siddik won the Champion title with her speech, "By the Time This Letter Reaches You", sharing how her father's words inspired her career path with the hope of changing lives while 2nd Place Winner, Roshan Sukheja presented "109 Stamps", captivating the audience with international experiences and lessons in kindness and patience and the 3rd Place Winner, Malek Jaouani delivered "I Refuse to be Afraid of My Own Life," sharing a real-life incident with the message that fear should not dictate decisions and that dreams are bigger than fear. Roshan Sukheja was the Champion of the Audience Poll.

In the Adult's Humorous contest, Sheeja Anis secured the Champion title with "Wrong Place, Wrong Time, Wrong Emoji," a comedic story about her father navigating a smartphone and posting unusual emojis in family groups and Shehnaz Mirza clinched 2nd place with the humorous speech title "How Can You Even Argue with That?", sharing how her father influenced her career, groom selection, and major life choices while Midhila Grace took 3rd place with the speech title "Levelling up with my Human PlayStation," humorously detailing her husband's gaming obsession. Sheeja Anis was the Champion of the Audience Poll.

The Youth speech contests brought forth highly confident students, showcasing immense talent. In the Youth Tall Tales contest, Sanjeev Sundararaj won the champion trophy with the title "My Indiana Jones," a humorous look at daily life with his father and grandmother revealing family secret.

Caitlin Hope G Carmelo secured 2nd position presented "What's Cooking Good Looking," using humour to describe swapping life situations with her brother.Harsh Thobani secured third place with "Mayhem at the High School," sharing comical experiences involving a math teacher and a friend. Sanjeev Sundararaj was the Champion of the Audience Poll.

In the Youth Inspirational speech contest, the champion's trophy was claimed by Muntasir Abdul Rasheed with the speech title "Mind Your Language," inspiring the audience with the message that languages open doors to friendship and reduce the number of strangers in the world. The 2nd Place Winner, Claire Soubie R Edu shared "The Privilege of Ordinary," encouraging audiences to speak up and make a difference while highlighting the sufferings in the World. Aaron Sudheendran took third place with "One Second Away," recounting a real-life car accident and ending with a message urging people not to delay things.

Qatar to host 3rd regular session of Arab Cybersecurity Ministers Council

The State of Qatar, represented by the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA), announced yesterday that Doha will host the third regular session of the Arab Cybersecurity Ministers Council on November 26. Bringing together ministers, heads of national cybersecurity authorities, and delegation heads from the Arab states, the meeting will consider the items on its agenda and is expected to issue a series of resolutions aimed at advancing the council's objectives and the vision of the Arab Cybersecurity Strategy.

In remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), HE the President of the NCSA, Engineer Abdulrahman bin Ali al-Farahid al-Malki, said Qatar's hosting of the third regular session reflects its firm commitment to supporting joint Arab action and strengthening regional coordination and cooperation to address rapidly evolving challenges in cyberspace.

Al-Malki added that the council provides a vital Arab framework for co-ordinating efforts and sharing expertise and experience among member states. It helps build a secure and reliable Arab cyberspace, strengthens Arab nations' ability to protect their digital interests, and enables them to keep pace with rapid technological change in support of development, growth, and prosperity.

NCSA president al-Malki said that the council provides a vital Arab framework for co-ordinating efforts and sharing expertise and experience among member states

He described the third session as an important opportunity to advance dialogue among decision-makers and cybersecurity officials across the Arab world, particularly amid current regional circumstances. The meeting provides a platform to examine key developments, risks, and cyber threats, forge shared visions, and develop proactive plans to enhance readiness, strengthen protection and response systems, and advance legislative frameworks, policies, and national and regional strategies.

He noted that holding the session outside the host country's headquarters for the first time reflects Qatar's high standing and the confidence it enjoys among other Arab states, recognising Qatar's role as an active and reliable partner in supporting Arab initiatives and strengthening joint co-operation.

Concluding his remarks to QNA, al-Malki emphasised that cybersecurity has become a fundamental pillar of national security and regional stability, as well as a key cornerstone in safeguarding countries' developmental and economic achievements, particularly amid the challenges facing the region, which call for stronger joint Arab action and unified efforts to build a more secure, stable, and reliable digital space.

Last November, Doha hosted the first Arab Cyber Exercise with the participation of 21 Arab countries and the General Secretariat of the Arab Cybersecurity Ministers Council. **(QNA)**

MoPH marks World Diabetes Day

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) is joining the global observance of World Diabetes Day 2026, marked annually on November 14.

This year's theme, "Early Action on Diabetes", underscores the importance of early diagnosis, comprehensive care and reducing the stigma associated with diabetes.

The observance focuses on turning awareness into practical early action by encouraging community members to understand their risk factors, assess their likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes, and take advantage of early screening and intervention opportunities. These measures can help prevent diabetes and reduce its complications.

As part of its ongoing national efforts to strengthen diabetes prevention, promote early detection and improve the quality and inclusiveness of healthcare services, the MoPH is implementing several priority strategic initiatives and projects. These include updating national clinical guidelines on diabetes and obesity; developing e-learning modules for healthcare providers; implementing specialised programmes to identify individuals at risk of diabetes; and enhancing the integrated health services and care for people living with diabetes.

These initiatives support the implementation of the National Action Plan for Obesity, Diabetes and Modifiable Risk Factors for Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease (2024-2030), reinforcing national collaboration and evidence-based health practices.

The Ministry is also supporting scientific research and the exchange of knowledge and expertise through a series of specialised research seminars on diabetes and obesity.

Throughout November, the MoPH is participating in a range of awareness activities in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Hamad Medical Corporation and the University of Doha for Science and Technology. These community-based activities target students, families and employees.

The activities include educational and awareness sessions, health screenings, body mass index measurements and nutritional counselling, as well as awareness-raising on the prevention of diabetes and obesity and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

The ministry has also launched an awareness campaign on risk factors and early signs of diabetes. The campaign encourages community members to assess their risk of developing type 2 diabetes and to take preventive action early, while highlighting the importance of healthy nutrition, physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has stated that more than 40% of people living with diabetes worldwide have not yet been diagnosed. Closing the diagnosis gap is a global priority, as WHO Member States have included a goal to diagnose 80% of people with diabetes by 2030 among the five global coverage targets for diabetes. **(QNA)**

THE TORCH DOHA

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Tender No.	Subject	Tender Fee	Closing Date
AT/C/1412/26	Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of OBELUX Aviation Lights and High-Pressure Sodium Vapor Lamps	QR.500/-	3.12.2026

- The tender documents are available for collection from the Finance Department (Tel.: 44465733) of The Torch Doha upon presentation of a formal letter of authorization on Company letterhead and copy of the Commercial Registration.
- The closing time will be 12.00 noon on the closing date mentioned above, any offer arriving thereafter will not be considered.
- A site visit for the above tenders is scheduled for 22nd November 2026. Interested companies are advised to purchase the tender documents before that date to be able to attend the site visit.
- Tenders are to be submitted in duplicate in a sealed envelope **(Technical and Commercial envelopes separately)** addressed to The Chairman, General Tender Committee, The Torch Doha and deposit in the tender box available at The Torch Doha Purchasing Office located in Al Waab Street, Aspire Zone.

قطر للطاقة QatarEnergy LNG

QatarEnergy LNG
Tender Invitation

No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	LTC/A/STK/7981/26, B30 Material Agreement for Supply of Refractory items without any commitment	15/11/2026 to 30/12/2026	0	25,000	30/12/2026

Scope of Work:
QatarEnergy LNG invites proposal from reputed suppliers for 5 years Material Agreement for Supply of Refractory Items without any commitment. For other tender terms & conditions, please refer full tender documents.

Bid Validity: Bid Offer should be valid for **365** calendar days from the Tender Closing Date.

Place for Tender Collection and Bid Submission:
ITT document for this tender will be available in QatarEnergy LNG website under Suppliers tab >Current Open Tenders. The bids shall be submitted through the QatarEnergy LNG online platform (SMART by GEP).

Note: Local Companies (established under the Laws of State of Qatar with local Commercial Registration) are advised to refer to the tender documentation and In-Country Value (ICV) Digital Portal: - https://icv.qa/en-US/ for details of ICV compliance that may be applicable.

SVN
SVN Real Estate, CR No. 143841, Doha, State of Qatar

INVITATION FOR COMPETITIVE BIDS

ACQUISITION OF CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS
LUSAIL BOULEVARD – DOHA, QATAR

SVN invites qualified companies, institutions, and investors to submit competitive purchase offers for **Building C12**, a completed freehold commercial property strategically located on Lusail Boulevard, near Lusail Towers, within Qatar's emerging financial and business district.

The property offers an opportunity for organizations seeking to establish a prestigious corporate headquarters with office accommodation, retail facilities, and dedicated parking.

PROPERTY SPECIFICATIONS

Description	Details
Property	Building Name: C12
Location	Lusail Boulevard, Fox Hills
Ownership	Freehold
Land Area	2,440 sqm
Total Built-Up Area	13,626 sqm
Net Leasable Area	5,332.59 sqm
Office Accommodation	25 office units across 5 floors
Retail Accommodation	4 commercial units
Parking	Approximately 125 spaces
Configuration	3 Basements + Ground + Mezzanine + 5 Floors + Roof

COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROCESS

Interested parties are invited to submit their best purchase offers for the **entire building**. Detailed property information, independent valuation, existing tenancy details, and site inspections will be made available to qualified bidders upon request.

BID SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 25th NOVEMBER 2026

Offers should include the **proposed purchase price, payment terms, evidence of financial capability, and anticipated completion date**.

The seller reserves the right to accept or reject any bid or negotiate directly with selected bidders. Completion is subject to applicable approvals, existing property rights, mortgage release, and definitive agreements.

ENQUIRIES & BID SUBMISSION
SVN Real Estate
All inquiries, requests for tender documentation, and purchase offers must be directed to SVN.
Email: admin@svnqatar.com
Tel: 00974 6647 7575

SERIOUS ENQUIRIES FROM QUALIFIED PURCHASERS ONLY

MDD strengthens role as community hub during winter



By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Msheireb Downtown Doha continues to be the destination of choice for national institutions, international bodies and the private sector to engage the public. In recent weeks, the city has hosted a series of national, sporting and community events organised by its partners, as Msheireb Properties, the developer and operator of Msheireb Downtown Doha, launches its winter programme under the 'Msheireb My Vibe' campaign.

Barahat Msheireb hosted the unveiling of the Official Tissot Countdown Clock for the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027, led by FIBA and the tournament's Local Organising Committee. The square also welcomed Qatar Police music and ceremonial performances, as well as Cars & Coffee, which brought car enthusiasts together with a selection of local coffee brands.

Msheireb Museums heritage houses continue to serve as spaces for community dialogue. Building on this role, it hosted the Between the Architectures panel at Mohammed Bin Jassim House, the first public screening in the Middle East of Becoming Nature Positive, in partnership with Earthna, and an ICOM Qatar panel held alongside ICOM Arab's regional meeting in Doha. It also held the fifth Science Cafe together with Sidra Medicine. These sessions bring specialists and the community together around culture, sustainability and health, adding an educational dimension to the season's entertainment.. These events reflect the trust that partners place in Msheireb Downtown Doha and its role as a platform where government, sporting and commercial entities engage with the community in a sustainable urban environment rooted in Qatari heritage.

At the heart of this is Barahat Msheireb, the region's largest open-air covered pedestrian square, designed as a contemporary majlis for the city, which welcomed a record 6,703,885 visitors last winter, a 4.8% increase year on year.

Noora al-Qubaisi, acting senior director of Corporate Communications at Msheireb Properties, said: "Msheireb Downtown Doha was designed as a living city that brings people together and nurtures connection and belonging. Our partners' choice to host events here reflects their confidence in its standing and in its role in building the Msheireb community and enriching Qatar's cultural and social landscape. Through this winter's Msheireb My Vibe programme, we continue to build on that confidence with experiences that bring the Msheireb community together, attract visitors to the city and turn its squares and facilities into vibrant spaces for meeting and engagement throughout the season."

The winter programme opens with the return of Downtown Tech Summit on November 17, followed by the Inc. Arabia Best in Business Awards, Qatar Edition on November 18 and Qatar National Day celebrations on December 18.

On January 14 and 15 2027, the fourth edition of the Baraha Musical Concert returns to Barahat Msheireb, presented with Al Jazeera Orchestra and Choir for the second year running. Building on the audience response to its first appearance in January 2026, the orchestra will pair its ensemble performances with solo sets by Qatari singers, in arrangements drawn from the musical heritage of the Arabian Peninsula. Tickets are available on the Msheireb website.

The season will also see the return of Baraha Cinema and Hosh Msheireb, along with the Qatar National Sports Day event, Art Basel Qatar and a dedicated Ramadan programme.

Doha forum charts smarter pathways to uni success

From Page 1

Academic Bridge Programme director Dr Saheim Khalaf al-Temimi echoed that assessment, emphasising that university readiness demanded more than academic achievement. Strong foundations, self-confidence and an understanding of available opportunities were equally important.

He said the partnership sought to translate educational dialogue into practical solutions benefiting students and society.

MoEHE's Higher Education Institutions Department director Dr Batool Hashem al-Sayed stressed that preparing students for the future was a continuous responsibility shared across educational institutions.

She highlighted the importance of helping students make informed academic choices aligned with national development priorities and evolving global demands, particularly in STEM disciplines.

Unesco Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen director Salah Khaled broadened the discussion beyond academic qualifications, arguing that tomorrow's graduates must also possess the values, adaptability and global awareness necessary to confront complex challenges.

He emphasised that stronger school-university partnerships could create more inclusive pathways into science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM), while nurturing responsible global citizens committed to sustainable development.

The forum reinforced a central message: educational success depends increasingly on seamless collaboration between institutions rather than isolated efforts at individual stages of learning.

For Qatar, the initiative also underscored the importance of connecting classroom learning with higher education, scientific innovation and workforce development, helping cultivate the skilled national talent needed for a knowledge-based economy.



QC launches cochlear implant drive in Mauritania

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Qatar Charity has launched a cochlear implant campaign for deaf children in Mauritania in co-operation with the country's Ministry of Health. The initiative is one of four medical campaigns providing cochlear implants, treatment for heart defects, cataract surgery, and treatment for malnutrition.

The launch was attended by Cheikh Baye Ould M'Khaitrate, secretary-general of Mauritania's Ministry of Health; Hamoudi Cheikhna Ali, secretary-general of the Ministry of Social Action, Childhood and Family; Shaheen bin Ali al-Kaabi, Qatar's ambassador to Mauritania; Ibrahim Abdulrahman al-Janahi, Qatar Charity's director of development operations; and Omer Abdelaziz Mohamed, director of Qatar Charity's Mauritania Branch.

Ibrahim al-Janahi, Qatar Charity's director of development operations, said the cochlear implant programme for deaf children in Mauritania is part of ongoing efforts under the organisation's "27th Night Challenge" campaign, held last Ramadan to provide specialised healthcare for children and families most in need. He thanked the Mauritanian authorities, healthcare institutions, specialist medical teams, and all partners who helped make the program possible. Al-Janahi said a cochlear implant is more than a medical intervention. For a child, it opens a new window onto the world of sound, speech, learning, and communication. It also offers an opportunity to participate more fully in family, school, and community life and to approach the future with confidence and hope.

Qatar's ambassador to Mauritania, Shaheen bin Ali al-Kaabi, welcomed the launch of the programme, which aims to provide cochlear implants for 12 children. Qatar Charity is implementing the initiative in co-operation with the Specialties Hospital, with a specialist medical team sent specifically to perform the procedures.

The ambassador said the close ties between Qatar and Mauritania continue to grow across a range of sectors. He highlighted healthcare co-operation as a strong example of this relationship, noting that such initiatives support human development and improve quality of life for those most in need.

Art Basel Qatar eyes wider economic, cultural gains

From Page 1

"The real measure isn't what happens during the fair week. It's whether those encounters give people reasons to return to Doha, collaborate, and stay engaged throughout the year," de Bellis said.

He stressed that Art Basel Qatar had also adopted a distinctive approach to the traditional art fair format, building its inaugural edition around solo presentations featuring one artist per gallery within a broader curatorial framework.

Developed under the artistic direction of Wael Shawky, the format encourages visitors to spend more time engaging with individual artworks while allowing galleries to make more focused artistic propositions.

De Bellis said the approach would continue in the 2027 edition, with Wassan al-Khudhairi taking over as artistic director and bringing a new curatorial perspective to the fair.

Each edition, he said, should have its own character while contributing to a coherent long-term vision for Art Basel Qatar.

He stressed that the fair would continue to balance artistic ambition with commercial relevance, arguing that the two should reinforce rather than compete with each other.

"It's still very much an art fair, and the market remains essential. I believe artistic ambition and commercial success can reinforce one another," he said.

De Bellis identified audience and collector development as fundamental to the long-term success of the Doha edition.

He said Qatar and the wider region already had committed collectors, but building a stronger art market would also require engaging new audiences and encouraging a younger generation to develop an interest in collecting.

"Collecting isn't simply a transaction; it begins with curiosity, knowledge, and relationships with artists and galleries," he said.

In this regard, Art Basel has launched Collectors Majlis, a pilot programme for new and emerging collectors that will form part of its year-round market development activities in the region.

The initiative aims to help participants understand how collections are built, how the art market operates and how to engage more confidently with galleries and artworks.

De Bellis said the objective was to ensure that learning and relationships continued beyond the annual fair, creating a more engaged community around contemporary art.

He also pointed to Qatar's potential role in broadening international discussions about contemporary art from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia.

With the international art world becoming less dependent on a handful of traditional centres, Qatar's institutions, collections and sustained cultural investment have helped position the country as an important platform for artistic exchange, he said.

He added that the conversation should not focus solely on increasing the international visibility of artists from the region, but also on encouraging a deeper understanding of their contemporary practices.

"These artists are already part of the international conversation. The opportunity is to engage with them on their own terms, rather than through frameworks set elsewhere," he said.

Looking ahead to the January 2027 edition, de Bellis said the priority was to translate the fair's long-term ambitions into strong artistic presentations and meaningful engagement between galleries, collectors and institutions.

He said the success of the Doha edition would depend on bringing together ambitious artistic propositions and a marketplace in which collectors and institutions could engage with the work.

"That is the real potential of Art Basel Qatar: showing that a fair can be artistically rigorous and commercially relevant, without compromising either," he said.

Tender - Waseef

Waseef Asset Management (Waseef) would like to invite competent Service Providers for the below Open Tenders:

Tender Number	Tender Title	Tender Bond (QAR)	Non-refundable Tender Fee (QAR)	Last Date of Tender Document Collection	Tender Submission Date
GTC/WSF/MSD/DEM/37/2026	TENDER FOR DEMOLITION AND SITE CLEARANCE OF CAMPS 1, 2, 3, HEALTH CENTER AND LAUNDRY BUILDING IN MESAIEED LABOR ACCOMMODATION	280,000	5,000	November 29, 2026	December 14, 2026
GTC/WSF/NAU/TSE/36/2026	TENDER FOR THE PROVISION OF TWO (2) YEARS COMPREHENSIVE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES FOR THE TSE REVERSE OSMOSIS (RO) POLISHING PLANT FOR NAUFAR HOSPITAL	50,000	500	November 29, 2026	December 14, 2026
GTC/WSF/BDC/IPCCTV/40/2026	TENDER FOR DESIGN & BUILT, INSTALLATION, TESTING, COMISSIONING & MOI HANDING OVER OF IPCCTV SYSTEM FOR BARWA DISTRICT COOLING PLANTS - EAST & WEST BUILDINGS	18,000	500	November 29, 2026	December 14, 2026

The Tender Document will be available from **November 15, 2026** upon receipt of the required documentation at **tender@waseef.qa.**

To collect please provide the following:

1. Authorization Letter on Company letterhead, copy of valid Commercial Registration and valid Identification of the representative.
2. Bank deposit slip carrying tender number and subject details. Tender fee shall be deposited to Account Name – Waseef Asset Management Co., Account Number **0002-105222-200** with Al Rayan Bank, **IBAN: QA65 MAFR 0000 0000 0002 1052 2220 0**

Minimum requirements for the tender:

GTC/WSF/MSD/DEM/37/2026

1. The tenderer shall possess a valid Commercial Registration and Trade License in Qatar covering demolition and removal of buildings.
2. Ability to obtain and comply with demolition permits and approvals from the relevant authorities before commencement of demolition works - Ministry of Municipality, Kahramaa, Civil Defence, Mesaieed Industrial City/Qatar Energy (if applicable) and any other authorities.

GTC/WSF/NAU/TSE/36/2026

1. The Tenderer shall have a minimum of seven (7) years of proven experience in the operation, maintenance, troubleshooting, and performance optimization of water treatment facilities, including STPs, TSE RO polishing plants, and associated process equipment.

GTC/WSF/BDC/IPCCTV/40/2026

1. The Tenderer shall have a minimum of 10 years' experience in IPCCTV Systems installations and MOI-SSD Compliance requirements.
2. The Tenderer shall possess all necessary licenses and approvals required to perform IPCCTV installation works in Qatar, including registration with the relevant authorities where applicable.
3. The Tenderer shall have a valid MOI-SSD license under the Company Name.

Please note the following:

1. Tenderers should submit a bid bond issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar, valid for 120 days from the tender closing date, corresponding to an expiry date of April 13, 2027.
2. Technical and Commercial offers must be submitted in separate sealed envelopes and delivered to the below-mentioned address: GTC Secretary, 3rd floor, Waseef Head Office, New Waseef Tower (formerly Alaqaria Tower), Museum Park Street, Doha, Qatar

LET US MANAGE YOUR WORLD

LIQUIDATION NOTICE
Pursuant to the Judgment of the Investment and Commercial Court in Case No. FIINCOMCOM2026/04777 First Instance / Commercial Companies Disputes / Dissolution and Liquidation of Company – Third Investment Circuit

Ordering the dissolution and liquidation of the following company:

No.	Company Name	C.R. No.	Est. ID
1	Karam Alkhaleej Contracting and Décor Company (W.L.L.)	51038	12247008

The company has been placed "Under Liquidation" and Mr. Khalid Ghanim Al-Kubaisi has been appointed as Judicial Liquidator to carry out the liquidation procedures of the company. Accordingly, the Liquidator invites anyone having dues or claims against the above company to send a letter supported by the relevant papers and supporting documents to the e-mail: alkubaisiexpert@hotmail.com, and anyone owing amounts or rights to the said company to settle them to the Liquidator within 45 days from the date of this notice.
Or call Tel. 66062929, or P.O. Box 837, Doha – Qatar.

Qatar Rail recognises winners of the 3rd edition of its 'Zero Harm Awards'

Qatar Railways Company (Qatar Rail) held the third edition of its "Zero Harm Awards" ceremony in the presence of its CEO, Jassim Mohammed al-Ansari and members of the executive and senior management to celebrate the finalists and recognise the winners for their achievements in advancing the company's Zero Harm vision.

Building on the success of the 2024 and 2025 editions, the awards recognize and celebrate outstanding achievements in Health, Safety, Security, Wellbeing, Environment, and Sustainability.

This year's edition received 130 nominations from Qatar Rail, its service providers, and subcontractors, an increase of more than 38% compared to the inaugural edition in 2024, indicating growing participation since the awards were launched. Nine of the eleven categories were reviewed by the Health and Safety Team and Subject Matter Experts from across the organization to arrive at a shortlist of finalists.

Commenting on the occasion, Abdulrahman Ali al-Malik, chief of Programme Delivery at Qatar Rail said: "Three editions on, the Zero Harm Awards continue to reflect a safety culture that is shared by everyone at Qatar Rail and our service providers. The growing participation this year shows that safety is increasingly seen as a collective responsibility, and we remain committed to recognizing those who lead by example in building a safer and more sustainable workplace. We congratulate the winners on their excellence and their commitment to supporting the company's efforts and distinguished leadership in strengthening the safety culture across all divisions." Through recognition, reward, and continuous improvement, the program reinforces Qatar Rail's commitment to fostering a strong safety culture across all its operations and projects, in line with its vision of injury- and harm-free operations.

QATAR/WORLD

COP31: World Bank, GCC, COMESA join forces to mobilise carbon finance

QNA
Antalya

The Global Carbon Council (GCC), an independent and internationally recognised carbon standard from the Global South, launched the Energy Access Programme Standard (EAPS) in collaboration with the World Bank and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) during the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) in Antalya, Turkiye.

Held at the Arab Climate Pavilion, jointly hosted by GCC and the League of Arab States in the COP31 Blue Zone, the launch introduced a digitally enabled carbon crediting framework designed to mobilise high-integrity carbon finance for energy access projects, accelerate investment, and expand access to clean electricity and cooking solutions across Eastern and Southern Africa.

Developed and operated by GCC following its selection by the World Bank, the EAPS and its associated digital platform are intended to support eligible projects under initiatives such as the World Bank's Accelerating Sustainable and Clean Energy Access Transformation (ASCENT) Programme. Supporting Mission 300, ASCENT aims to provide electricity access to 100mn people and clean cooking solutions to 20mn people across more than 20 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.

The standard establishes a carbon crediting pathway for eligible off-grid solar systems, mini-grids, grid extensions and clean cooking projects. Its integration of digital Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (DMRV) is designed to improve the accuracy and transparency of emissions monitoring while reducing carbon credit generation costs and time.

Conventional carbon crediting processes can involve lengthy monitoring and verification cycles, creating financial and administrative barriers for project developers, particularly those implementing smaller, geographically dispersed activities. The GCC-developed framework addresses these challenges through digital data collection, automated emissions calculations and streamlined processing within the ASCENT Portal.



Dr Yousef Alhorr

By integrating monitored operational data with carbon accounting requirements, the system seeks to accelerate the transition from verified mitigation outcomes to credit issuance, subject to applicable programme requirements and independent verification.

The framework also supports the aggregation of smaller projects, helping improve their access to carbon markets and potential financing opportunities.

Delivering the opening address, Dr Yousef Alhorr, Founding Chairman of the Global Carbon Council, described the initiative as an important outcome of GCC's collaboration with the World Bank, particularly in advancing digital approaches to carbon crediting.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Alhorr said: "Access to carbon finance should not be constrained by processes that take years to deliver results. Our collaboration with the World Bank on the Energy Access Programme represents an important shift towards more efficient, digitally enabled carbon crediting. By integrating real-time monitoring with credible verification and accounting systems, we are working to reduce issuance timelines from years to potentially weeks or days, where the necessary requirements are met. This can make a meaningful difference to the financial viability of energy access projects and, ultimately, to the communities that depend on them."

Giovanni Ruta, Global Manager, Climate Analytics, Policy and Regulation at the World Bank Group, welcomed the launch and acknowledged GCC's technical contribution. According to Ruta, the EAPS offers an opportunity to convert geographically dispersed energy access activities into transparent and verifiable carbon assets. Digital MRV and regional aggregation can strengthen traceability, improve cost efficiency and build the confidence needed to attract private investment.

The World Bank estimates that providing electricity access to 100mn people could require approximately $15bn. Public and multilateral development finance will remain central to achieving this ambition, mobilising private capital and additional financing mechanisms is essential to expanding access.

UN official urges Iran, US to let fertilisers through Hormuz

AFP
Antalya, Turkiye

Iran and the US should "immediately" allow fertiliser shipments through the Strait of Hormuz to ease the crisis in some of the most vulnerable countries, a senior UN official said yesterday.

Jorge Moreira da Silva, head of the UN Office for Project Services, told the COP31 climate talks in the Turkish resort city of Antalya that the lack of fertilisers could push millions into poverty.

The Iranian blockade of the vital waterway, which started after the joint US-Israeli attack against Iran in late February, has choked shipping in the region and beyond. The US blockade of Iranian ports has further complicated matters.

While Iran and the US are still trying to negotiate an end to the conflict, Moreira da Silva said he had the same message for both countries.

"They should continue their negotiations about the comprehensive deal — but that deal should not avoid an immediate, exceptional, limited, and time-bound solution for the fertilisers," he said.

"Basically what we need is five vessels a day with fertilisers," he added.

Moreira da Silva heads up the UN task force dedicated to facilitating the safe passage of fertilisers during the crisis.

Before the conflict, a third of the world's fertilisers passed through the Strait of Hormuz, and since the blockades, their prices had risen by 30%, da Silva said.


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

'So it's very important that we are aware that countries such as Mozambique, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka are facing very significant impact,'
— Moreira da Silva

"But what I think is not sufficiently recognized is the disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable countries," he added.

Sudan's finance minister recently told him that the price of food there had doubled in six months, he added. In Nepal, they had told him that farmers could no longer afford to buy fertilisers.

"So it's very important that we are aware that countries such as Mozambique, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka are facing very significant impact."

The effects of this shortage could be catastrophic, he warned.

"If we continue missing the planting seasons in different parts of the world we may have 45mn people facing severe and acute food insecurity," he said.

"We may have 30mn people being forced into poverty."

The UN had a system ready to get fertiliser shipments moving within seven to 10 days, he said.

Journalists in Syria in the crosshairs as Israeli forces open fire in Quneitra

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The General Union of Arab Journalists has condemned the opening of fire by Israeli occupation forces on field media personnel in the countryside of Quneitra Governorate on November 9 as they carried out their duties and has called for an urgent international investigation.

In a show of solidarity, the Qatari Press Center (QPC) echoed the union's assertion that targeting journalists is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, which guarantees their protection during field assignments. Such practices, the union said, do not merely target individuals; they strike at the journalistic profession itself and represent a direct assault on press freedom and the public's right to access information.

The union warned of grave threats facing journalists in Syria, particularly in the south, noting that continued attacks jeopardise their safety and their ability to document violations. It held the Israeli occupation authorities legally and morally responsible for their safety throughout Syrian territory.

Firing on journalists, raiding their homes and intimidating their families constitute serious violations of press freedom, international humanitarian law and international resolutions on the protection of media workers, it said.

The union urged the International Criminal Court, human rights institutions and relevant international organisations to launch an urgent investigation, identify those responsible and bring them to justice so that perpetrators do not go unpunished.



The Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) also condemned the targeting of journalists in the Quneitra countryside, saying attempts to stop media personnel from reporting facts and documenting civilians' suffering amount to an assault on press freedom and the public's right to know.

The agency stressed that targeting media workers threatens their safety and hinders them from exposing the violations to which civilians are subjected. SANA reaffirmed its commitment to reporting the truth and underscored journalists' right to work freely and safely, without intimidation or targeted attacks.

Journalists in southern Syria describe constant danger while covering Israeli incursions, compounded by drones, military patrols and the risk of coming under fire or being arrested.

Nour Hassan, a correspondent for the website Al-Modon, said journalists live in constant fear while covering the incursions, facing the risk of gunfire or projectiles launched from drones.

He recounted an assignment during which the area came under artillery fire that set about 20 dunums of land ablaze. Shortly afterwards, his media team was targeted by a drone, forcing them to withdraw, and a second projectile then struck.

Hassan said Israeli rifles, tanks and artillery are frequently directed at journalists in the field. The dangers also permeate daily life, he added, with their homes under constant surveillance by Israeli drones.

Mohammad Fahd, a correspondent for Syria TV, said journalistic work in Quneitra has become fraught with daily risks, which begin the moment a journalist leaves home for field assignments.

Covering Israeli attacks and military incursions exposes media personnel to direct targeting, raids and arrest, he explained, all worsened by the persistent presence of Israeli patrols across the region. The fear and instability have extended to his family: his wife and children live in constant anxiety, fearing that their home might be raided again or that he could be arrested while at work.

First of Firsts Qur'an Competition moves into final stage as 42 vie for top honours

QNA
Doha

The first stage of the third edition of First of the Firsts, the international branch of the Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani Noble Qur'an Competition, wrapped up yesterday, drawing 42 contestants from 19 countries. HE Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Ghanem bin Shaheen bin Ghanem al-Ghanem attended the conclusion of the six-day in-person competitions at Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque, which drew a tremendous public turnout.

The first stage aimed to select the top 10 contestants for the final round after they underwent rigorous tests in memorising the entire Holy Qur'an with proper recitation and Tajweed, as well as learning the meanings of Quranic words. The judging criteria covered memorisation proficiency, understanding of the approved text, quality of performance, application of Tajweed rules and vocal excellence.

Deputy Chairman of the Sheikh Jassim Qur'an Competition Committee, Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Abdulaziz al-Thani, said the previous two editions had robustly augmented the competition's international presence and immeasurably strengthened its standing among Quranic events. He emphasised that the current edition had drawn an incredibly strong response, with the organising panel receiving a plethora of messages and inquiries about registration dates and participation procedures — a testament to the standing the competition had attained.

The committee endeavours to preserve and bolster this international standing through careful planning, close attention to organisational and technical details, and efforts to foster its partnerships, co-operation and agreements, Sheikh Abdulrahman highlighted.

He asserted that the panel seeks to turbocharge the media's role as an essential partner in ensuring the success of events and conveying the competition's message to audiences at home and abroad.

Sheikh Abdulrahman explained that attracting a contingent of Qur'an memorisers was a key distinguishing feature, as the contest principally targets winners of first places in accredited international Qu'ran competitions.

This makes it far more selective than competitions open to Qur'an memorisers at large, while giving it considerable competitive value and strengthening contestants' desire to take part, he elaborated.

The QR1mn prize for the first-place winner further enhances its appeal, placing it among the competitions offering the most substantial financial awards, Sheikh Abdulrahman recalled.

He stated that this competition does not target Qur'an memorisers at large, rather, it focuses on an elite group of winners and title-holders of international competitions. He explained that it likewise stands apart through its interpretation curriculum, which covers the entire book, unlike many competitions that limit their coverage to specific portions.



Sheikh Abdulrahman said the judging committee comprises well-versed scholarly figures with principal expertise in Qur'anic adjudication, stressing that refining selection and judging criteria is central to advancing the competition and bolstering its credibility.

He further suggested that the current edition had witnessed substantial improvements to its online evaluation system, which is characterised by precision and undergoes periodic upgrades.

The committee adopted a preliminary remote screening mechanism to ensure that the strongest contestants reach Qatar. Rather than limiting participation to first-place winners, it endeavours to select the elite from among them, Sheikh Abdulrahman pointed out. Sheikh Abdulrahman noted that the 40 contestants who arrived in Qatar represent an elite group of participants in international Qur'an competitions.

Sheikh Abdulrahman further recalled that the competition is raising the bar in international Quranic competition, with enhanced judging standards, a more rigorous selection process and growing media exposure. Organisers say the improvements are already evident, emphasising that the latest refinements to selection and judging may not be immediately apparent to the public. Their impact, however, is evidently being felt by judges, organisers and contestants. The committee endeavours to make each edition more advanced and distinctive, he said.

Sheikh Abdulrahman further highlighted the tremendous media attention surrounding this edition, both at home and abroad, noting the massive coverage and live broadcasts on several channels partnered with Qatar Media Corp that have substantially widened the competition's reach, taking its message to a far broader audience.

Chairman of the Supreme Judging Committee for the third edition of the first of the firsts, Sheikh Dr Ahmed Eissa al-Masrawi, said the competition stands apart by the nature, number and difficulty of its questions as its format makes it a far more demanding test of Quranic memorisation and mastery than an ordinary competition.

He said that contestants must identify similar Quranic passages from the very first word in each question. The task is incredibly challenging, given the plethora of similar passages and the precision needed to pinpoint each one, al-Masrawi said. Contestants have demonstrated an incredibly high level of preparation and mastery. Their determination to compete for the QR1mn prize has fuelled a fiercely competitive atmosphere among participants from several countries. Each is dead-set on securing first place and claiming the award, al-Masrawi elaborated.

Al-Masrawi remarked that intensive preparation has strengthened contestants' memorisation and command of similar Qur'anic passages, making the questions substantially easier to tackle.

He asserted that the competition is, by far, unlike any other Qur'an competition in the Arab and Islamic worlds. Judges were selected from several countries, with the committee drawing on high-profile academic credentials and massive expertise in Quranic adjudication. This, he said, is worth a great deal in safeguarding the quality of the competition and the credibility of its results.

In essence, the competition began with 98 contestants from 35 countries. Of those, 82 from 33 countries took part in the preliminary rounds. Only 42 contestants representing 19 countries advanced to the in-person stage in Doha.

Results are due tomorrow, when the draw for the final stage will also take place. The top 10 contestants will compete on Monday and Tuesday, with the closing ceremony scheduled for Thursday.

Nasa's Voyager 1 probe poised to achieve mega-distance exploration milestone

Reuters
Washington

Nasa's Voyager 1 has already travelled farther than any other spacecraft from Earth since its launch in 1977. The probe, which exited our solar system years ago and is journeying through interstellar space, is now on the cusp of a remarkable milestone — traversing a light-day, the distance light travels in 24 hours.

A light-day is about 26bn km. The US space agency said Voyager 1, flying at almost 61,000 kph through the virtual vacuum of space, will reach that distance from Earth on Wednesday at 5:16am ET. The robotic spacecraft has the distinction of being the most distant human-made object.

"I view it as an engineering milestone, marking the amazing longevity of Voyager 1 — and also an engineering achievement to be able to communicate with Voyager 1 at its distance," said astrophysicist Alan Cummings, a senior research scientist in the Space Radiation Laboratory at Caltech who has been a Voyager program scientist since 1973.

A light-year may be a more familiar concept for many people, a metric used for vast cosmic distances. It is the distance a particle of light, called a photon, travels in a year - about 9.5tn km. For instance, the closest stars beyond our solar system are the three that make up the Alpha Centauri system, about 4.24 light-years away.

Voyager 1 and twin spacecraft Voyager 2 were launched 49 years ago, exploring planets in the outer solar system before continuing onward. Voyager 1 was carried into space on September 5, 1977, atop a Titan IIIE-Centaur rocket from Cape Canaveral in Florida 16 days after the launch of Voyager 2, but overtook its twin within months.

"Voyager 1 returned a wealth of new information about Jupiter and Saturn, and their moons," Cummings said.

It discovered a thin ring around Jupiter and two previously undetected Jovian moons, Thebe and Metis. It then spotted five new moons around Saturn as well as a ring called the G-ring.

"Voyager 2 took a different path through the solar system after they launched in 1977, in order to visit Uranus and Neptune. Voyager 2 is on pace to be one light-day away from Earth in nine more years, in November 2035," Cummings said.

Voyager 1 crossed the outer edge of the heliosphere, a protective bubble of particles and magnetic fields produced by the sun, and entered interstellar space in 2012, continuing to collect data.

"It was the first spacecraft to report the energy spectra of galactic cosmic rays (fast-moving energetic particles) at low energies. Those energetic particles are not observable inside the heliosphere because of the push-back by the solar wind. This was the holy grail of low-energy cosmic ray physics," said Cummings, an expert in cosmic rays.

Voyager 2 entered interstellar space in 2018. Cummings became part of the Voyager scientific team by accident after a balloon-borne experiment concerning cosmic rays that was the basis of his Caltech doctoral thesis failed to land in northern Canada as planned. "It went around the world a time and a half, and was eventually captured by the Soviet Union. It landed apparently without the benefit of the parachute and was essentially destroyed," Cummings said.

"It was decided that the experiment was finished, and I was offered a job on the Voyager Cosmic Ray Subsystem (instrument) fairly soon after it began development in 1973. I've been working on it and analysing data from it for 53 years," Cummings said.

Both Voyagers carry a Golden Record, a device intended to communicate Earth's story to any intelligent extraterrestrial beings who may encounter the spacecraft. The phonograph record, a 12-inch gold-plated copper disk, contains various images and sounds to convey our planet's culture.



Protestors demonstrate outside the venue of the Denver event. (**AFP**)

Democrats gather to mull cost-cutting agenda

Reuters
Denver

Fresh from a midterm election landslide, Democrats met in Denver this week united in wanting to deliver voters relief from high costs, but split over how to achieve that, what lessons to draw from their victory and how combative they should be towards President Donald Trump.

Despite the celebratory mood after the November 3 rout of Republicans, tensions between moderates and a restive progressive wing surfaced at the party's first major gathering since its victory, along with anxiety that the party could squander the opportunity voters had handed it.

The gathering offered an early glimpse of the battle to define its future as prospective 2028 presidential candidates and senior leaders debated how to turn electoral success into a governing agenda while navigating longstanding ideological and generational divides.

The conference, hosted by Majority Democrats, a group that advocates for younger party leaders and against left-wing activism, offered a forum for the jockeying now underway as Democrats debate what lessons to draw from their midterm win and begin the search for a 2028 White House standard-bearer.

Speakers disagreed over whether to embrace a bolder progressive agenda or tack towards the centre, exposing competing approaches to lowering food, healthcare and housing costs, while working alongside Trump, who retains veto power for two more years.

California Representative Ro Khanna, a progressive and potential presidential candidate, urged Democrats to stop chasing the political centre and embrace a bolder agenda, including universal healthcare, a wealth tax, a $25 federal minimum wage, deep Pentagon cuts and abolishing US Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

By contrast, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro, a moderate and another potential 2028 contender, argued the party should move beyond ideological litmus tests, saying voters "don't give a damn" about such debates and care instead about whether Democrats can deliver results.

The breadth of the Democratic victories has allowed moderates and progressives to argue that voters have endorsed their vision for the party's future. "It's to be expected that there will be a big debate because the Democratic victory was so broad it swept in centrists, southern Democrats and more progressive and left-wing Democrats," Democratic strategist Elaine Kamarck told Reuters.

Trump retains significant executive authority to block much of the Democrats' agenda, complicating the party's efforts to lower costs, the central issue voters gave Democrats control of Congress to fix. One of the most striking debates in Denver centred on how to govern with Trump still in the White House.

James Talarico, the first Democrat elected to the US Senate from Texas since 1988, urged Democrats to work with Trump.

"We should make the final two years of his presidency the most productive of any presidency in American history," Talarico said, drawing tepid applause. "We're tired of being pitted against each other."

China, US discuss tariffs, farm trade

Reuters
Beijing

China and the US discussed tariff cuts, agricultural trade and other issues at their first trade council meeting on Friday, China's Commerce Ministry said yesterday.

"The two sides held candid, in-depth and constructive exchanges on implementing the outcomes of previous China-US economic and trade talks, including tariffs, a reciprocal '$30 billion-for-$30 billion' tariff-cut arrangement, agricultural trade and other issues of mutual concern," the ministry said.

It did not say whether any agreements were reached. Both sides will continue using the council to address trade concerns, expand co-operation and reduce outstanding issues, the ministry added.

Following a September summit between Presidents Xi Jinping and Donald Trump in Washington, the two sides proposed a $60bn package of reciprocal tariff cuts, including roughly $17bn worth of US farm goods that China imported in 2024, but the plan has yet to be finalised.

Chinese purchases of US farm goods other than soybeans are on track to hit a seven-year low this year, despite an agreement to buy $17bn annually through 2028, a Reuters analysis of customs data showed earlier this month, underscoring persistent uncertainty over the deal.

Beijing has repeatedly urged Washington to implement the $60bn tariff-reduction deal, calling it a prerequisite for increasing purchases of US farm goods. The White House said Trump will meet Xi on Thursday on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum in Shenzhen.

Trump aims to cut the power of judges again

Reuters
Washington

When President Donald Trump's administration convinced the US Supreme Court last year to restrict the ability of federal judges to block his actions nationwide — a major boost to his power — the ruling left untouched a separate tool that some of them have used to stymie presidential policies.

Now Trump is taking aim at that tool as well in another challenge to judicial authority that could further insulate his far-reaching agenda against broad legal attacks.

An appeal filed by Trump's Justice Department now pending before the Supreme Court urges the justices to curtail the longstanding ability of judges to halt the actions of federal agencies that hold immense power to carry out the Republican president's policy priorities. According to the administration, courts should not be able to shut down an agency's regulation entirely, instead limiting any relief granted only to the specific plaintiffs in a given case.

Aditya Bamzai, a University of Virginia expert in administrative law, said a win for Trump in the case could let the US government continue to enforce rules broadly on all but the plaintiffs in a given case, potentially for years as litigation plays out, even after judges have deemed them unlawful.

Siding with Trump "would give more flexibility to the executive branch," Bamzai said.

"Whether you like or dislike that flexibility can perhaps depend on whether you like or dislike a particular administration's policies," Bamzai added.

Since returning to office in January 2025, Trump and his allies have castigated judges who have impeded his policies — deriding some as radical or corrupt — even as he tests the limits of presidential powers. At the Trump administration's behest, the Supreme Court in June 2025 clamped down on nationwide — or "universal" — injunctions that can block the government from enforcing a policy against anyone, not just the challengers who sued. Judges had increasingly deployed these orders in a wide array of cases against Trump, including those alleging violations of the US Constitution.



A view of the US Supreme Court in Washington, DC. (**AFP**)

The new appeal arises from a challenge by Texas medical providers to federal rules implementing a statute Trump signed into law during his first term in office to limit unexpected medical bills. The appeal forms part of the administration's concerted push to make it harder for the judiciary to impede executive actions. The Supreme Court is expected to consider whether to take up the case early next year.

The kinds of lawsuits targeted by Trump's administration are brought under a 1946 US law called the Administrative Procedure Act, or APA, which governs the way federal agencies operate including how regulations are implemented.

Judges and appeals courts have long claimed the power under this statute to "hold unlawful and set aside" agency regulations they deem illegal, invalidating them on a universal basis.

Since Trump returned to office, his administration has faced hundreds of lawsuits challenging his aggressive moves to limit immigration, pursue mass deportation, end diversity initiatives and curtail transgender rights, among other actions, that have pushed the boundaries of presidential authority.

Various plaintiffs have sued by invoking the APA in numerous cases including to fight the termination of humanitarian legal status for hundreds of thousands of migrants living in the US, major cuts to research grants related to racial minorities, and the use of a mass voter verification system to conduct sweeping citizenship checks.

Proponents, including numerous state governments that regularly sue the federal government, say this judicial tool is an essential bulwark against executive overreach.

Others say the APA is important to maintain uniform regulations applied equally to everyone. "When an agency adopts a rule that has been held to be unlawful, sometimes the only sensible solution is to wipe it off the books," said law professor Ronald Levin of Washington University in St. Louis.

"You can't have a food-safety rule that applies only to some. You can't have an auto-safety manufacturing rule that applies only to some manufacturers," Levin said. "It's a tool they (judges) should have — not one they should use in every case, but... there are some cases where the need for it is compelling."

The court's 2025 ruling restricting the power of judges came in litigation over Trump's bid to limit birthright citizenship, a right long recognized in the US. That ruling addressed judicial power, not the legality of Trump's birthright citizenship directive.

Trump tells advisers he may hold off attacks on Iran if not provoked: Sources

Reuters
Washington/Riyadh

President Donald Trump has told senior advisers in recent days that he may hold off on attacking Iran if the US faces no new provocations from Tehran or the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen, according to three people familiar with the matter.

Trump has alternated between threats of escalating the war with new strikes and winding down hostilities, and current and former officials say he does not appear to have made up his mind about how to resolve the unpopular conflict, which he launched in February with Israel.

But in meetings with his national security advisers and after a series of intelligence briefings, Trump said he was considering holding off on strikes, said the people, who, like others interviewed for this story, spoke on condition of anonymity.

He has also indicated sympathy for allies in the region who have asked him not to return to a full-fledged war.

"I could end it immediately, but at the request of the nations that I am looking to protect, we are doing it a little bit longer way, a bit more civilly," Trump told sports broadcaster Stephen A Smith on Thursday.

The war has hiked global fuel prices and proven unpopular with US voters, who handed control of Congress to the Democrats in last week's midterm elections. In a Reuters/Ipsos poll taken shortly before the November 3 elections, 55% of Americans said the war was not worth the cost, and Vice President JD Vance cited it as the reason Trump's Republicans lost Congress.

Trump's private comments build on public remarks playing down the likelihood of major warfare resuming.

"As Commander-in-Chief, President Trump is the architect and sole decision-maker who holds all the cards and will always ensure that America's interests are protected," a White House official said in a statement.

"The United States is in a very strong position with control of the Strait of Hormuz and the Iranian economy collapsing. Only President Trump knows what he will do, and when."

The CIA and Office of the Director of National Intelligence did not respond to requests for comment.



President Donald Trump speaks in the James S Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House in Washington, DC. (**Reuters/File Photo**)

In phone calls over the past two weeks, Trump asked for opinions from Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, who both urged him not to resume attacks on Iran, according to a senior US official and another person familiar with the matter.

They, however, said Trump made no commitment to either of the two leaders.

Trump told bin Salman on October 31 that he was planning to attack after the elections, but the crown prince pleaded for him to hold off, arguing that economic sanctions against Iran were working, according to two more people familiar with the discussion.

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry did not respond to a request for comment.

Trump has spoken with Erdogan three times since October 28, according to Turkiye's presidency. An official readout from the November 7 call stressed that tensions between Iran and the US need to end.

US intelligence agencies have assessed that the US naval blockade and economic sanctions are hurting the Iranian economy and would continue to put pressure on Tehran, two US officials briefed on the intelligence said.

Building on its months-long blockade of Iranian sea traffic, the US military is also seeking to prevent weapons and other sanctioned material from entering the country by land or through the Caspian Sea, Reuters first reported last week.

At the same time, the US military is ready to escalate if needed, three more people familiar with US planning said.

A third aircraft carrier is moving into the Middle East in the coming days to replace one of the two currently operating in the region, but all three carriers could stay if needed, the people said.

Trump could opt to bomb Iran's underground nuclear facilities, one of the people familiar with Trump's calls with the Saudi and Turkish leaders said. But the US has already struck those facilities, and it is unclear whether further strikes would be successful.

US intelligence agencies have assessed that renewed strikes would not significantly shift Iran's demands in negotiations, two US officials said.

Trump was also briefed on US weapon stockpiles, some of which have drawn down to worrying levels, the two people familiar with the intelligence briefings said. Reuters reported in August that the US had used "virtually all" of its long-range precision munitions, and another person briefed on the matter said they have not been replenished.

"The United States Military has enough munitions and ammo to serve all of the Commander-in-Chief's strategic goals and beyond," the White House official said.

Israeli officials have continued to lobby the administration to engage in another military campaign, according to a US official.

Trump signaled this week that the US has already achieved what it could from negotiations, but did not say whether he would resume strikes.

"We don't need a deal with Iran," Trump said in a social media post on Thursday. "We've got their money, Hundreds of Billions of Dollars, and we've got their Strait!"

WORLD

Rubio takes swipe at international law, attacks ICC in speech to legal group

AFP
Washington

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio took aim Friday at what he deemed the "weaponisation of international law," calling it a tool of the elite, and issued a stark warning to the International Criminal Court.

Rubio cautioned the ICC against "quoting laws to men with swords," as he accused the Hague-based tribunal of trying to enforce rules that Washington does not recognise.

His remarks to the Federalist Society National Lawyers Convention came around a month after the United States announced new sanctions on the ICC, vowing to cripple its operations.

The court prosecutes individuals accused of the gravest atrocities and acts as a last resort when countries do not have adequate legal systems to ensure accountability.

The US signed the Rome Statute establishing the ICC but never ratified the treaty. Israel, Russia and China are also not ICC members.

Rubio's keynote address at the conservative group, where he received a standing ovation, marks his first major US speech since the Republican Party's sweeping losses in midterm elections earlier this month.

Rubio said Friday that international law had been invoked against "nearly every major foreign policy decision" of the Trump administration, from boat strikes in the Caribbean to the capture of Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro.


Secretary of State Marco Rubio. (**Reuters**)

He charged that such law was not neutral, but has been an "instrument" for the global elite to advance their interests.

The top US diplomat previously said Washington would bar transactions with what he called a "rogue court," stepping up a long-running campaign by US President Donald Trump's government against the ICC.

Washington has vowed to dismantle the court, angered as judges issued an arrest warrant for Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over alleged crimes in Gaza. Rubio on Friday renewed criticism of the ICC, calling it accountable to no one although "armed with the power to investigate, to prosecute, to persecute and to jail our citizens, according to laws we neither consent nor control."

He added: "If they're foolish enough to try to enforce their paper decrees on Americans, our answer will probably be the same as the Roman general Pompey when he said to those who were trying to invoke their city's charters against his legions."

"He said: 'Stop quoting laws to men with swords!'"

The venue of Rubio's remarks, a gathering of the legal profession, could further speculation that he is looking beyond his foreign policy portfolio. Past presidential hopefuls have also addressed the conference.

Rubio is widely seen as a possible successor to Trump, although he has dismissed reports that he was planning to leave the administration to prepare for a 2028 election run.

Trump, Xi, Putin to hold historic meeting in China

AFP
Washington

Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping will hold the first three-way meeting between the leaders of the US, Russia and China at a summit in Shenzhen next week, the White House said late on Friday. Trump wants to talk about reducing nuclear arsenals at the trilateral talks on Thursday and is also set to bring up his war in Iran — but he is not expected to discuss Russia's war in Ukraine, US officials said.

The three leaders will meet on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation summit in the southern Chinese city, White House spokeswoman Olivia Wales told reporters.

"The president has made it clear that, among other topics, he will discuss the reduction of nuclear weapons in the world. This proliferation, President Trump believes, is very dangerous," Wales said.

One of the major conflicts dominating Trump's second term as president will feature, but the other will not, the US officials said.

"I think the president does intend to talk about Iran in the trilateral meeting with Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin," a senior US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told reporters on a call.

Washington has a "whole other track" of negotiations with Kyiv and Moscow aimed at ending the war in Ukraine, the official added, referring to talks that US envoys have had in recent days with Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

"China is not really a part of that track, so it doesn't seem appropriate to have the Ukraine discussion there," the official added.



New pop art painting dubbed "Shenzhen 26" by Russian artist Alexey Sergienko, depicting U.S. President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping and dedicated to the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit in Shenzhen, unveiled in Saint Petersburg, Russia, November 12, 2026. (**Reuters/File Photo**)

The meeting calls back to the 1945 Yalta summit in the Soviet Union, where then-US president Franklin D Roosevelt, Britain's Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin laid out the post-WWII settlement and new territorial boundaries in Europe.

Zelensky has raised the alarm that the meeting in Shenzhen could be a Yalta-like "redistribution of spheres of influence" for the 21st century.

The Trump administration has sought to reassert US dominance over the "Western hemisphere" — including by capturing Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in January — but splitting the world among great powers like it's 1945 may not guarantee security.

Trump will also hold a bilateral working lunch and meeting with the Chinese president on Thursday — their fourth meeting since the US president's return to power last year.

But Trump is not scheduled to have a separate one-on-one with Putin.

Among other topics, Nvidia chief executive Jensen Huang's resignation over an affair with an alleged Chinese spy is not expected to come up in Trump's meetings with Xi, the officials said.

"The situation with Nvidia should not really have any bearing on the trip," a second US senior official said.

The US also did not plan to discuss export controls on sensitive chip technology, which were at the heart of the Nvidia scandal.

"We do not negotiate American export controls. These are national security matters that we develop in the administration... and we don't expect it to figure at all in any of our conversations with the Chinese while we're there," the second official said.

Tesla and SpaceX boss Elon Musk will accompany Trump on his trip to China but will not be involved in the meeting with Xi and Putin, the officials said.

Trump will leave Washington on Monday and arrive in the Philippines on Tuesday for a summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) before heading to Shenzhen.


Pope Leo XIV walking towards a Peruvian Air Force helicopter. (**AFP**)

Inca heartland 'suffering' as villages empty: Pope

AFP
Santa Cruz de Succhabamba, Peru

Pope Leo XIV warned yesterday that the heartland of the ancient Inca Empire was "suffering," as the remote, poverty-stricken communities he served as a missionary in Peru shrink dramatically.

The head of the world's 1.4bn Catholics flew by helicopter to the isolated town of Santa Cruz de Succhabamba in the Andes mountains — an area he visited on horseback when he lived in Peru as priest Robert Francis Prevost.

Despite undergoing cancer surgery just one month ago, the 71-year-old pope was determined to visit the town — which sits among green peaks at an altitude of over 2,000 metres — during his 12-day tour of South America.

Gathered in front of colorful murals of the pope, thousands of faithful in the streets of Santa Cruz cheered his arrival.

At an open-air Mass, the pontiff spoke with pleasure of returning to the "steep hills, ravines and fertile valleys, in a land with Andean roots, where the Inca Empire flourished and which is the cradle of a profound Christian faith."

But the communities are now under threat, he said, acknowledging the "suffering of those who are forced to leave their homeland in search of a better future" in the great coastal cities, such as Lima and Trujillo.

Over 40% of the population in the Cajamarca region, where Santa Cruz de Succhabamba is located, live in poverty — the highest such figure in the country, according to official data.

The region has lost the most inhabitants to internal migration in Peru, with some 729,000 people who were born there now living elsewhere. Communities were also grappling with "declining birth rates that are emptying villages," and the unequal distribution of the land's resources, Leo said.

But he praised those who, "with ingenuity and an entrepreneurial spirit, strive to provide people with dignified jobs," from farmers to shopkeepers and small-business owners.

Leo did a tour in a pope-mobile, waving to pilgrims who have travelled across the region to see him, many camping out overnight or walking mountain paths from surrounding villages in the morning.

"We are filled with joy and happiness that he is returning," Idaura Fernandez said.

Irma Villobos, 61, who was born in Santa Cruz but lives in Chiclayo near the coast, said Leo's visit was "very profound, very significant," and she hoped his presence would "transform" the province.

Jorge Villegas, vicar general of the Diocese of Chiclayo and a member of the organising committee for the pope's trip to Peru, said Leo had originally wanted to add a second stop in an even more remote location.

SpaceX's Starship set for return to Earth after booster catch aborted

AFP
Starbase, Texas

SpaceX's Starship spacecraft was "healthy" as it orbited the Earth and on track to return yesterday to its Texas launch site, where Elon Musk's company was planning to "catch" the vehicle for the first time.

It was the 15th test flight of the world's biggest and most powerful rocket system, originally meant to feature a groundbreaking twin capture of both the Super Heavy booster and the Starship.

Successful recoveries of both stages would have marked a milestone in the space industry's decades-long pursuit of fully reusable rocket systems that can drastically reduce mission costs and make frequent launches possible.

But that achievement slipped out of reach minutes after the 124-meter rocket blasted off Friday afternoon from its launch pad at Starbase.

After the mid-air separation of the two stages, the Super Heavy booster was initially set for capture at Launch Pad 2, SpaceX spokesman Dan Huot said.

But near the end of its descent "the booster aborted itself for a GNC (guidance, navigation and control) issue that it detected," he said.

It diverted instead to the Gulf of Mexico just off the launch site, where it automatically self-destructed before hitting the water.


The SpaceX Starship 42 and Super Heavy v3 Booster 22 lift off on its 15th test flight from the SpaceX launch complex in Starbase. (**Reuters**)

Meanwhile, the Starship spacecraft that gives the rocket system its name was orbiting the Earth, which it was expected to do 14 times before returning Saturday.

"Starship and its heat shield are healthy," SpaceX said around seven hours after the mission started.

"We're not tracking any issues right now with the vehicle or with the range for our return, so everything continuing to look good," Huot said.

Starship on Friday launched 26 satellites to join others in Musk's Starlink satellite internet constellation. Clayton Swope, an aerospace expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, called the mission a "mixed bag so far" after the failure to catch the Super Heavy, something SpaceX has done three times previously.

"At least the Starship made it to orbit, like on the last test flight," he said.

Some versions of the Starship spacecraft are designed to launch internet satellites and data centers into orbit, while other iterations will be made to ferry people to the Moon and Mars.

US space agency Nasa is counting on Starship to serve as a lunar lander on its Artemis mission, and administrator Jared Isaacman congratulated SpaceX on Friday for "another spectacular launch" — without mentioning the booster disappointment.

SpaceX plans to return Starship to Earth after more than 22 hours of flight and recover it at around 3:20pm yesterday.


The Super Heavy v3 Booster 22 explodes during an aborted return to the SpaceX launch complex in Starbase. (**Reuters**)

The "catch" is extraordinarily complex because the spaceship will be falling much faster and from a much higher altitude than the booster. Like the three previous Super Heavy recoveries, Starship is meant to carry out a controlled descent and nestle between two mechanical "chopstick arms" at the launch site.

"We'll only go for it if the ship passes all of these system checks and decision gates along the way, and there are lots of them," SpaceX commentator Kate Tice said.

Due to the risks of losing control

Starship on Friday launched 26 satellites to join others in Musk's Starlink satellite internet constellation

of Starship, SpaceX has planned for various scenarios where it will shorten the test flight and plunge the spaceship into the Pacific Ocean if necessary.

Musk, the world's richest person, has already revolutionised the space sector with the partially reusable Falcon rockets, which regularly launch satellites and carry astronauts to the International Space Station. But the Starship project has been plagued by years-long delays as SpaceX grapples with novel engineering challenges, including the unsolved problem of transferring fuel to the spaceship while in orbit — a requirement for any journey to the Moon or Mars.

Following SpaceX's high-profile stock market debut in June that raised about $85.7bn, the company is investing heavily in production and launch capabilities.

During a tour of its million-square-foot (93,000-square-meter) factory at Starbase on Friday, SpaceX officials told journalists that it now has the capability to produce a spaceship every two weeks and a booster every four weeks.

Asean unity faces test as energy crisis, regional conflicts loom over summit

Reuters
Manila



From left: Malaysia Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry Johari Abdul Ghani, Myanmar Union Minister for National Planning, Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Aung Kyaw Hoe, Philippines Trade and Industry Chief of Staff Bianca Pearl Sykimte, Thailand Vice Minister for Commerce Kirida Bhaopichitr, Timor-Leste Vice Prime Minister Kalbuadi Lay, Vietnam Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Luong Hoang Thai, Philippines Secretary of Trade and Industry Ma. Cristina Aldeguer-Roque, Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong, Brunei Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Abdul Manaf Metussin, Cambodia Secretary of State at the Ministry of Commerce Pich Rithi, Indonesia Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto, Laos Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce Manothong Vongsay, and Asean Deputy Secretary-General for Economic Community Satvinder Singh pose for a group picture during the 28th Meeting of the Asean Economic Community Council yesterday in Manila. (**Reuters**)

Southeast Asian foreign ministers begin meetings in Manila yesterday as the regional bloc seeks a co-ordinated response to surging energy costs, security tensions, and an approaching El Niño, challenges Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr has said demand collective action.

"Especially at a time when we face multiple crises, from rising oil prices to security concerns and the approaching El Niño, Asean needs to act as one," Marcos said ahead of the meetings, which the Philippines will chair. "It is very important that we are united and find plans and solutions to address these problems."

The meetings open a weekend of diplomacy culminating in the November 15-17 Asean summit, where Asean leaders will hold talks with counterparts from major powers including the US, China and Japan, and discuss wide-ranging issues from the economic fallout from the Middle East conflict, Myanmar, the South China Sea to transboundary pollution.

The gathering comes as the Philippines and other import-dependent Southeast Asian economies grapple with higher fuel costs, which have squeezed households and businesses and added to inflation pressures. The crisis has also exposed the limits of regional energy security, with proposals for a shared oil stockpile still under study.

A summit on the Asia Zero Emission Community, a Japan-led framework that aims to achieve energy security, economic growth and decarbonisation at the same time, will also be held next week.

US President Donald Trump, who will be in Manila for the summit, said this week he was unlikely to order new military strikes on Iran after appeals from countries including Qatar. The comments offered some reassurance to energy markets, though the prospect of renewed military action and disruption to oil supplies remains a concern for fuel-importing countries.

For ordinary Filipinos, the impact of the conflict has been more immediate.

Ahead of the meetings, 50-year-old jeepney driver Lito Albino appealed to Trump to help end the conflict, saying ordinary workers were bearing the consequences of a war they had no part in.

He said the conflict involving Iran had forced him to work longer hours for less money, and with three children and household expenses to cover, higher fuel costs had made it increasingly difficult to support his family.

"No one truly wins in a war. It is the poor and marginalised people like us who suffer the most," Albino said.

Myanmar will also test Asean's ability to maintain a common position on the crisis that has engulfed the country since the military seized power in 2021.

Leaders are expected to review the implementation of the bloc's five-point consensus, its main framework for addressing the crisis, Philippine foreign ministry spokesperson Dominic Xavier Imperial said at a press conference on Friday. Their decision will be reflected in a negotiated document to be issued after the summit.

The South China Sea will feature in discussions with China, with negotiations on a long-delayed Code of Conduct about 70% complete, Imperial said. He said the figure represented overall progress in negotiations, not the proportion of text agreed.

Beyond the diplomatic meetings, Trump's visit is expected to draw protests from workers, students and left-wing groups, calling for an end to the Middle East conflict and the US-led Pax Silica to be scrapped.

Myanmar will also feature in protests planned during the summit, with activists demanding that Asean maintain its exclusion of coup leader-turned-president Min Aung Hlaing from leaders' meetings.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government in a 2021 coup, triggering a civil war that the UN estimates has killed 100,000 people and displaced more than 3.5mn.

Hlaing's military has received support from China, India and Russia. His administration has gained increasing international recognition in recent months, with some Asean countries re-engaging and US officials holding secret talks as the Trump administration reverses years of isolation.

Trump, other Quad leaders to meet in Manila on Tuesday, sources say

Reuters
Manila

Leaders of the US, Japan, Australia and India are expected to meet on Tuesday on the sidelines of a key Asian meeting in Manila, two people familiar with the planning said, marking the first summit of the "Quad" nations in two years.

The Quad group of Indo-Pacific powers is widely considered a counterweight to China's growing influence in the region, although its members have said the grouping is not directed against any one country.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio indicated last month that the Quad leaders could meet on the sidelines of the summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which begins today in the Philippine capital.

The supply of critical minerals is expected to be on the Quad summit agenda, one of the people said.

"The leaders are likely to take up the issue of free and unimpeded commercial shipping lanes in order to secure energy supplies from across the world," said the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity as he is not authorised to speak with the media. "The issue of attacks on commercial ships is very likely to be taken up."

The second person, from the Philippine government and briefed on the preparations, said the Quad leaders were expected to gather shortly after US President Donald Trump arrives in Manila on Tuesday, the last day of the Asean summit.

The Manila gathering would be the first Quad leaders' meeting since Trump returned to office last year.

Quad leaders last met in September 2024 in Delaware, reaffirming their commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific and announcing initiatives to strengthen maritime security cooperation.

Strike on displaced persons camp kills 12 in Myanmar

AFP
Ponnagyun, Myanmar

A Myanmar military air strike on a camp housing people displaced by the civil war killed 12 people in the westernmost state of Rakhine, witnesses and a rescue worker said yesterday.

Chit Su Wai, a 27-year-old shopkeeper, sobbed as she described how her daughter, aunt and mother were killed on Friday evening in Byar La IDP camp in Ponnagyun township, northeast of state capital Sittwe.

"All I saw was their bodies scattered in pain. I could not find words to describe it. And we were lost with crying," she said.

"It has broken our family. There were no others except my family. We did not hear the sound of the fighter jet — it just came and dropped the bombs."

Myanmar has been consumed by civil war since the military staged a coup five years ago, provoking armed resistance from democracy activists and ethnic minority factions that have long held sway in the nation's fringes.

The western coastal state of Rakhine is among the regions worst hit by the war. Controlled almost entirely by the ethnic minority Arakan Army (AA), it has been blockaded by the military and pummelled with regular airstrikes.

It was not possible to contact the Myanmar military for comment on the latest attack.

Chit Su Wai said 12 people died in Friday's attack, a toll confirmed by Khine Hein Htet, chairman of the Phyusin Yin Khwin Foundation, a rescue and emergency service.

Khine Hein Htet said a five-year-old was among the dead, while 18 were also injured in the camp, where many residents had been living for four years.

"They believed the camp was safe, and they sheltered there together. When we arrived at the scene, most of the victims had died in one place," the 24-year-old said.

He said it was not a combat area, adding: "We never thought this camp would be targeted."

The village was a mess of collapsed bamboo houses yesterday, the wreckage of an upturned vehicle mixed among the debris of household goods and clothes.

Locals had already removed the bodies, wrapping them in yellow and red plastic and burying them in makeshift graves.

Aung Kyaw Min, a 45-year-old tuktuk driver, described how he rushed to the village where his brother and sister lived after hearing of the attack.

"My sister's body was already headless while my brother was lying dead," he said, crying.

The next day, he discovered his mother had also been killed, while other relatives, including a 10-year-old, were missing.

His sister was a seamstress who took care of their mother. His brother was a tuktuk driver like him.

"Now all of them — my sister, brother, including my mother — were all killed. My niece and nephews are still missing, I don't know where to find them," he said.

The ACLED monitor estimates that more than 100,000 people have been killed in Myanmar on all sides since the civil war began.



People walk through the wreckage of destroyed makeshift shelters at an internally displaced persons camp following a Myanmar military air strike in Ponnagyun Township, Rakhine State, yesterday. (**AFP**)

Canada PM touts Philippine trade deal on Asia tour



Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney (centre) speaks at a press conference following a bilateral meeting with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos in Manila yesterday. (**AFP**)

AFP
Manila

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said yesterday that Ottawa had successfully concluded negotiations for a sweeping free-trade pact with the Philippines, as it seeks ways to reduce its reliance on the US.

The US-Canada trade war has ruptured what was once one of the world's closest economic partnerships.

While Canada's trade surplus edged up in September, driven by higher oil exports, US President Donald Trump's tariffs also pinched multiple sectors, data showed.

The deal with the Philippines was about six months away from being signed, Carney told reporters on the sidelines of a regional summit in Manila, where Trump is expected to arrive Tuesday.

He added a broader agreement was also in the works with the entirety of the 11-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), with those talks "substantially concluded".

The pacts were "part of a strategy of developing a dense web of reliable partners to create more opportunities... and reducing our relative reliance on the US," Carney said.

Calling the deal with Manila the "most comprehensive... accord that the Philippines has signed," Carney said he expected trade between the countries to triple in the next decade.

Total trade between the two countries stood at about $2.4bn in 2025.

The deal will drop over 90% of tariff lines and cover areas ranging from agriculture to aerospace to artificial intelligence, Carney said without revealing specifics.

The deal with Asean, meanwhile, would be the "first trade agreement... outside of Asia" for the bloc, Carney said, noting "more than $50bn a year in two-way trade, up nearly 25% in the past year".

In a separate statement, Manila said it expected the trade pact to be completed in the coming year.

Carney has maintained that trade with the US, a cornerstone of the Canadian economy, will not return to a pre-Trump normal and that his country must urgently diversify its trading relationships.

The Canadian prime minister is on a multi-nation trip that will next take him to the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh for a biennial Francophonie summit before he heads north for the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) meetings in China's Shenzhen.

There, he will meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping to discuss Canada's trade commitments with Beijing, he said.

Asean not easing Myanmar approach: bloc's special envoy

Asean is not relaxing its approach to Myanmar under its Five-Point Consensus, though proposals concerning the country's participation in high-level meetings remain under discussion, the bloc's special envoy on Myanmar said yesterday.

The Five-Point Consensus is Asean's main framework for responding to the crisis in Myanmar after a military coup there in 2021. It calls, among other things, for an immediate end to violence and the launch of constructive dialogue among all parties, and offers Asean mediation and humanitarian assistance.

Asean is under increasing pressure ahead of a summit of its leaders in Manila that starts today to ease a five-year ban on Myanmar's military-backed leaders attending high-level meetings. Thailand and several other members have stepped up engagement with Myanmar despite its ongoing civil war.

Asean special envoy and Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Ma. Theresa Lazaro said a draft review of the Five-Point Consensus was still under negotiation and that "a number of proposals" would be presented to the Asean leaders.

"To answer you bluntly, there is no easing (of the approach to Myanmar). There is still the Five-Point Consensus," Lazaro told a press conference, when asked whether the review could lead to adjustments to restrictions on Myanmar's political leadership.

Asked about Thailand's call to allow Myanmar's foreign minister to participate in meetings of Asean foreign ministers, Lazaro said it remained under discussion, but no decision had been made to allow the minister to take Myanmar's seat.

"It's still there on the table. It's still a subject of discussion," she said. (**Reuters**

Modi summons telecom secretary over website takedowns: sources

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office summoned the telecommunications secretary yesterday to explain how officials ordered the takedown of more than 100 websites based on court orders that Reuters revealed were fake, two government sources said.

The intervention from Modi's office signals intensifying scrutiny after Reuters revealed on Wednesday that telecom officials directed internet providers to block 129 illegal betting websites based on fake High Court orders which were emailed to officials by people posing as lawyers.

While online betting is illegal in India, the case has raised concerns that a lack of safeguards in India's content-takedown system could allow falsified court documents to be used to block legitimate websites.

The findings have triggered one criminal investigation by state police against unknown persons for forgery and cheating.

Modi's office summoned Telecom Secretary Amit Agrawal to appear and explain the lapse, cutting short Agrawal's trip to another state, said the two government officials with knowledge of the matter.

Agrawal is the most senior bureaucrat in the telecommunications ministry, which oversees everyone from big telecom operators to internet providers.

"The action taken by the Department of Telecommunications against betting accounts was carried out through the relevant field officers," said one of the people.

Agrawal and his ministry did not respond to Reuters queries, and neither did Modi's office.

Court precedents generated using AI have caused concerns among judges the world over. India's Supreme Court in July set aside a tribunal's orders that relied on non-existent judgments, and a US judge recently disqualified lawyers over use of fabricated legal citations. (Reuters)

Bangladesh garment-makers threaten to quit wage talks

Unions representing Bangladeshi garment manufacturers threatened yesterday to walk away from wage negotiations and shut factories indefinitely if protesters kept vandalising them during demonstrations for higher pay.

The two main manufacturing unions — the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) — sharpened their rhetoric yesterday.

"BGMEA and BKMEA have questioned the justification of continuing to participate in wage board negotiations without any assurance that the factories will be protected," BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan said at a news briefing in the capital Dhaka.

"If the situation persists, we must reconsider," Khan said.

"Garment factories that have been unable to continue production due to the ongoing unrest will remain indefinitely closed from tomorrow under... Bangladesh's labour law," he added.



Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association president Mahmud Hasan Khan (right) speaks during a press meeting in Dhaka yesterday. (**AFP**)

Workers say rising food, housing, transport and healthcare costs have eroded their purchasing power in a country where inflation is running at around 8%.

They are demanding a minimum monthly wage of 30,000 taka ($240) — a 140% increase on the current 12,500 taka. (**AFP**)

OPINION

AI shakeout lands convertible investors of tech firms better terms

The autumn rout in AI stocks has reset the market for convertible securities often used by technology firms keen to raise funds cheaply, in a development that has investors breathing a sigh of relief. A wave of convertible issues this week bears terms that more evenly balance the priorities of fundraising companies with those of investors who want to participate in further stock-market rallies, analysts said.

Dropbox's $1.1bn convertible offering, priced on Tuesday, carried a conversion premium of about 25%, about 10 percentage points below the third-quarter average of 35%, according to data from independent advisory firm Matthews South. Akamai issued two convertible bonds this week, each paying 1% in interest, up from the average rate of 0.75% in the third quarter.

"I was hoping for an adjustment like the one we had in the past couple of days," said Nicolo Bocchin, global head of fixed income at Azimut Group, referring to the steep selloff in AI companies last week.

Convertible bonds have been particularly attractive to technology companies because they allow firms to borrow at lower interest rates than conventional debt. They give investors the option of converting their debt to shares if the stock price rises above a predetermined level.

Pricing terms were skewed in favour of issuers during a deluge of issuance, much of it by AI players, in the first nine months of 2026, investors said.

US convertible sales increased to about $153.6bn by the end of October from $98.6bn over the same period last year, according to data from Dealogic. "In the past few years, these deals were priced with premiums that I don't remember in history," said Bocchin.

Alphabet sold $19bn of converts in June and Oracle $5bn in February, alongside repeated deals from neoclouds such as CoreWeave and Nebius. "The convert market is quite disproportionately exposed to the AI narrative," said Venu Krishna, head of convertibles strategy at Barclays. About 70% of the record issuance this year is AI-linked and 45% is core AI infrastructure, he added.

This isn't the first year in which terms loosened. In 2025, 46 convertible bond deals carried no interest, according to data from Matthews South, compared with 11 in 2024. But questions about the sustainability of the AI boom have brought forth a reality check. The FTSE Russell US Convertible bonds index has fallen about 17.5% from its all-time peak in June, leaving it up just under 2% for the year.

US convertibles lost more than 6% last month, their worst October since 2008, Barclays data showed. "We got to a point where there were some frothy new issues being priced at levels that were fairly aggressive. And in these last couple of weeks, the market has responded to that," said Michael Barry, fixed income portfolio manager at Wellington Management.

Buyers of convertible bonds have favored issuers outside data centers recently. Xcel Energy sold $2.2bn of converts last week and fintech firm SS&C raised about $1bn in an upsized deal.

Both were trading above their offer prices, said Tracy Maitland, president and chief investment officer at Advent Capital Management. Eli Pars, co-chief investment officer and co-head of convertible strategies at Calamos Investments, said it was hard to predict when convertible volumes would bounce back. "But I haven't seen any reason why it should be coming from issuers other than those it's been coming from. That probably means more neocloud issuance." — Reuters

Swept by the wave



People are hit by a wave as they are caught off guard along the seafront in the French Riviera city of Nice. (**AFP**)



Asean faces Myanmar dilemma as some members pursue closer ties

Philippines says Asean leaders will review Myanmar peace plan's implementation

Thailand wants Myanmar's foreign minister admitted to Asean meetings, Thai foreign minister says

Analysts warn diverging outreach is weakening Asean's stalled Five-Point Consensus

By Panu Wongcha-um
Reuters

Asean is under increasing pressure at its upcoming summit to ease a five-year ban on Myanmar's military-backed leaders attending high-level meetings, after Thailand and several other members stepped up engagement despite the country's ongoing civil war.

Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations are set to review their decision to exclude Myanmar when they meet in Manila from November 15 to November 17.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since 2021, when then-military chief Min Aung Hlaing ousted the elected government in a coup, unleashing armed conflict across much of the country that has killed more than 100,000 people.

Its political leadership has been barred from Asean summits and foreign ministers' meetings over its failure to implement the Five-Point Consensus, a peace plan agreed after the coup.

But nearly half the bloc's 11 members have stepped up bilateral engagement since elections in December and January, won overwhelmingly by the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party in the absence of any viable opposition.

Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia have this year welcomed Min Aung Hlaing on official visits. Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim pledged in October to work towards Myanmar's reintegration into the bloc. Thailand is now openly calling for restrictions to be eased.

"For Thailand, we believe that the next step is to have the Foreign Minister of Myanmar participate in the Asean meetings at the level of Foreign Minister," Thai Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow told reporters after visiting Myanmar on Thursday. He hoped sufficient progress would allow a decision on Myanmar's participation by Thailand's chairmanship in 2028 at the latest. Engaging policymakers would help convey Asean's concerns directly to decision-makers, he said, while stressing that the decision rested with the bloc's foreign ministers.

SEPARATE DIPLOMATIC TRACKS

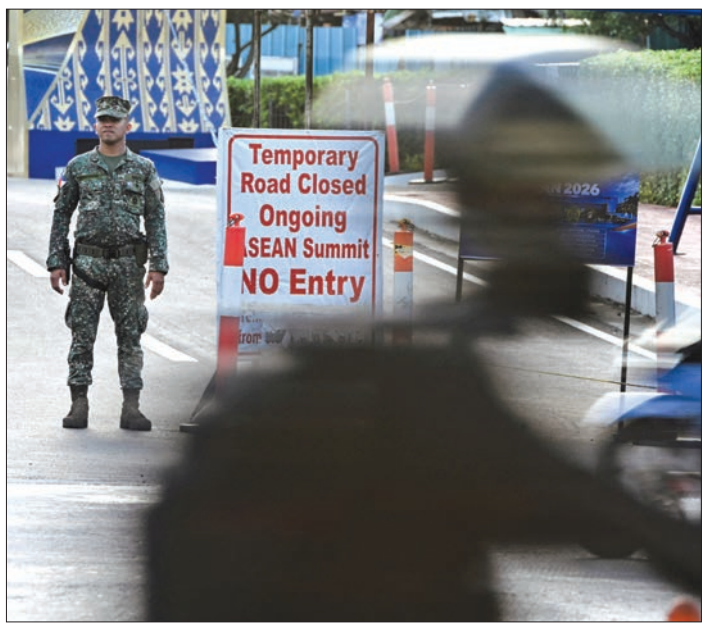
Analysts say the shifting approaches put pressure on the Five-Point Consensus, which calls for an end to violence, inclusive dialogue, humanitarian assistance and mediation by an envoy able to meet all parties. Leaders will issue a negotiated document reviewing its implementation at the upcoming Asean summit, Dominic Xavier Imperial, a spokesperson for the Philippines, said on Friday.

"I think the Five-Point Consensus now has been overtaken by events," said Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a political scientist at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University. Implementation has made little headway. Civil war continues, millions remain displaced and efforts to bring the warring parties into dialogue have yet to produce a breakthrough.

Aung San Suu Kyi, the country's civilian leader and a Nobel Peace Prize winner, has been detained since the coup. She was moved to house arrest in April, following the military-engineered election, but while a Red Cross official was allowed to meet her in August, no foreign leader or envoy has been able to despite requests.



Asean delegates pose for a group picture in Manila yesterday. (**AFP**)



A member of the Philippine military stands by a closed-off road as motorists pass by near the venues for the 49th Asean Summit in Pasay, Metro Manila, Philippines, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

Thailand has repeatedly offered to facilitate talks between Myanmar's government and ethnic armed groups along its border. Sihasak said Myanmar had agreed in principle to send a delegation to any talks, but gave no date. Philippine Foreign Secretary Theresa Lazaro, Asean's special envoy, visited Myanmar on a humanitarian mission in October.

But the envoy's role, which changes each year with Asean's rotating chairmanship, is also under scrutiny. "Myanmar's been keen to do away with the Special Envoy entirely," said a Southeast Asian diplomat who declined to be named, adding that ongoing discussions had also covered appointing a permanent envoy. "But if no consensus on either of these approaches, then the status quo will remain," the diplomat said.

TESTING ASEAN UNITY

Thailand's assertive engagement reflects the country's concerns over fighting spilling across its long land border with Myanmar, alongside trade, migrant workers and energy co-operation.

But Thitinan said Bangkok's "calibrated re-engagement" had pressured other capitals to follow suit, leaving Singapore, next year's chair, to reconcile divergent approaches.

"It should not have been a blank cheque; it should not have been an open-ended reception and recognition," he said, advocating conditions including political prisoner releases, humanitarian access and an end to military airstrikes.

Human Rights Watch has urged Asean to maintain restrictions and increase pressure on the military to end abuses and pursue a transition to civilian rule. Warmer bilateral ties do not automatically change Asean policy, however, said Simon Tay, chairman of the Singapore Institute of International Affairs. The consensus remains unless members collectively agree otherwise.

"There is room for both good cop and bad cop within Asean, provided these different approaches remain within the 5PC framework," he said. "Otherwise, Myanmar could simply play one against the other." Tay advocates interim goals including regular access to Aung San Suu Kyi, reduced violence and humanitarian aid. "Asean can be pragmatic without being premature," he said. "Political acceptance should follow progress, not precede it."

GULF TIMES
CHAIRMAN
Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka
DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR
Kamran Rehmat

P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar
editor@gulf-times.com
4435 0478 (News)
4446 6404 (Sport)
44466636 (Home delivery)
facebook.com/gulftimes
X.com/gulftimes_Qatar
instagram.com/gulftimes
youtube.com/GulftimesVideos

To Advertise: gtadv@gulf-times.com
Display: 4446 6621 **Classified**: 4446 6609 gtcad@gulf-times.com
Subscription: circulation@gulf-times.com

© 2026 Gulf Times. All rights reserved

Thousands of US flights cancelled, delayed

From Page 1

The issue led to data overloading other communications centres.
"We had over 1,000 connection attempts every four to five seconds, and what that did was gave us issues with our communication with airplanes, and it also caused some disruption with our radar," Duffy added.
Delta Air Lines, United Airlines and American Airlines all cancelled about 20% of their flights yesterday, while JetBlue canceled 40%.
Duffy said an AI scheduling tool or cyberattacks were not to blame.
Though the FAA eventually lifted the ground stop on Friday night around 8:15pm ET, the disruption for passengers was far from over, with tens of thousands of people still stranded at airports around the country. Airlines were trying to unclog airports and get flight crews and other personnel in position to recover from the massive disruption.
Many major airports said they could not handle any more diversions as they tried to get airplanes back in the sky. Many college football teams were stranded Friday and struggled to find ways to get to games yesterday.
American Airlines late on Friday said it was prioritising flights to international destinations and to smaller cities outside its major hubs to position aircraft and crews for a faster recovery.
The FAA issued the ground stop because of an outage that appeared to be affecting a network that handles critical radio frequencies used by air traffic controllers to communicate with pilots, according to two airline officials.
The contractor that oversees the network, L3Harris, did not respond to a request for comment.
Friday's problem is the latest and most dramatic sign of strain on a US air traffic control system beset by ageing technology, equipment and communications problems and a shortage of several thousand controllers.
Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy on Friday called for $50bn in funding to upgrade air traffic control systems, up from $30bn he had sought earlier. "This is an emergency," he said.
Duffy said the trouble began at 3:36pm ET, when air traffic control centres experienced instability in radar and communications systems.
"Our switches, our routers actually got overloaded with data and they started to give us inconsistencies in the data from those routers and because of that we shut the system down," Duffy said, adding that air traffic personnel never completely lost radar or communications as they guided thousands of planes to landings.
Duffy said the immediate problem had been fixed and that flying was safe, but warned that a broader overhaul of the air traffic control system was needed to prevent similar failures.
Earlier on Friday, before the outage, the White House and Department of Transportation had urged Congress to approve $30.1bn to upgrade aged airports and air traffic control infrastructure.
"What we have is an incredibly old air traffic control system," Duffy said. "Give us the money to fix it."
Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin said there was "zero evidence" so far that the outage resulted from a cyberattack or a rogue AI system, though investigators had not ruled out either possibility.
The National Security Agency was working with the Department of Homeland Security on the investigation, he added.
From Boston to Seattle and New York to Los Angeles, passengers on Friday night crowded departure halls and airline desks as delays and cancellations mounted and aircraft remained parked at gates.
"I might cry at some point but not yet," said Louise Maher, 47, who was stuck at Newark Liberty International Airport after the aviation meltdown disrupted her British Airways flight to London.
Because the FAA was responsible for the delays, airlines are not required to provide compensation to stranded passengers.
The only other nationwide ground stop since the September 11 attacks came in January 2023, when the FAA halted domestic departures for about 90 minutes.
Investors were already pricing in a financial hit to airlines. Shares of American, United and Delta fell between 1% and 2% in after-hours trading late Friday, while JetBlue Airways dropped about 3%.

UN climate chief urges nations to agree as COP31 confronts fossil fuel divide

Reuters
Antalya, Turkiye



Logo of COP31 in Antalya. (**AFP**)

The UN's top climate official urged negotiators at the COP31 conference in Turkiye yesterday to move swiftly towards a deal and "avoid tactical delays" as the summit heads into its second and final week.

The annual UN climate conference faces new challenges this year as a slew of crises from war to inflation push global warming down the list of priorities for world governments. "Each country has a view. Every country has a voice. Getting agreement on every word, every sentence is tough but vital work," Simon Stiell told the summit, adding, "There is no collective success without compromise from every party. As we head into the second week, I urge parties to move swiftly to the hardest issues and to avoid tactical delays."

Big fossil fuel producers and consumers at the talks are resisting any deal that would specify firm new targets or a shift away from oil, gas and coal, observers said, posing a challenge for summit host Turkiye and lead negotiator Australia to land the kind of ambitious agreement climate advocates say is needed to address global warming.

A UN report last month found the world is already on course to exceed the 1.5 degrees Celsius warming threshold, a limit scientists say should prevent the worst effects of climate change.

COP31 host Turkiye is striving to place a proposal to expand global electrification at the centre of an eventual deal, saying the plan will lead to faster emissions cuts by speeding the shift away from fossil fuel-powered cars, boilers, furnaces and other equipment.

The proposal does not require the increased electricity use to come from renewable sources, however, disappointing observers and delegations that want countries to more clearly map out their transition away from fossil fuels.

Major oil producers such as Saudi Arabia and Russia have traditionally resisted language constraining fossil fuels, while large developing economies such as India have opposed measures they say could limit their development and energy choices, a dynamic that has compromised the outcomes of past deals.

The world's biggest oil consumer, the United States, meanwhile, has skipped the talks for the second year in a row under President Donald Trump, who has called global warming a hoax and promoted continued use of fossil fuels.

Asked how he viewed the progress in talks so far, Stiell said: "All I can say at this stage is engagement has been constructive. We know where those natural tensions lie."

US suggested Kyiv cede land to Russia for Nato: Zelensky

AFP
Kyiv


President Volodymyr Zelensky reacts on the sidelines of the ninth meeting of the European Political Community (EPC), in Dublin. (**AFP**)

Washington suggested Kyiv cede land to Moscow in exchange for joining Nato, President Volodymyr Zelensky said in comments released yesterday, saying his country's relationship with the Western alliance is "back on the agenda."

Zelensky also warned of the dangers of Moscow's push to redraw "influence" in Europe and said the Kremlin was "betting everything" on this winter's military campaign.

Moscow has pounded Ukraine in the run-up to winter, with Russian President Vladimir Putin showing no sign of backing down.

US envoys Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff met both Putin and Zelensky Thursday after two days of talks in Abu Dhabi, which ended with no breakthrough.

Negotiations did, however, lead to agreements that European countries join future talks on ending the war.

In Dublin on Friday, Europe chose five countries — France, Germany, Italy, the UK and Poland — to send representatives to the talks.

"The Americans raised a question: 'What if Ukraine joins Nato? Would Ukraine withdraw from Donbas?' This was the first time this had been raised," Zelensky said, adding:

"After providing Ukraine with this kind of defence support, seeing this kind of development of our army and this strength in our defence, they cannot simply let Ukraine go."

He believed "Nato is back on the agenda" as Ukraine — with almost five years of combat experience — can make the alliance "stronger."

Nato and Washington have not yet commented.

Kyiv — seeking post-war support for its army — was in talks on "specific" guarantees from Western countries, Zelensky said. Before agreeing to anything, he added, he would ask Ukrainians "do we accept it or not?".

He insisted Ukraine would not recognise any land seized by Moscow's troops as Russian.

Russia has consistently said Kyiv joining Nato is a red line and in 2022 launched its invasion, saying the West planned to incorporate Ukraine into the alliance.

Putin has for years logged grievances at Nato. Meeting US envoys this week, he ruled out agreeing to foreign peacekeeping troops in Ukraine.

And throughout the negotiations, the Kremlin has ruled out wider ceasefires.

But Putin earlier this week proposed a "humanitarian " mission to the eastern town of Kostyantynivka — which Moscow announced it had seized in summer but where Kyiv says fighting continues.

Zelensky said this was a ploy to get Kyiv to withdraw from the embattled city and open the road to more settlements in the Donetsk region.

If Ukraine gave up Kostyantynivka, "their next steps will be our other cities in Donbas."

"That is the thinking behind this idea", Zelensky added.

Moscow's troops have inched westwards but have been unable to seize the whole of the Donetsk region.

Moscow, Zelensky said, had also rejected an energy ceasefire at the Abu Dhabi talks.

Russia has tried to reframe negotiations on ending the war — Europe's worst since WWII — into a conversation on the continent's wider security.

In 2021, before its Ukraine invasion, Moscow issued an ultimatum to the West to pull back Nato troops from eastern Europe.

This week, Moscow's chief negotiator Vladimir Medinsky said the Kremlin's aim now was for a "new, modern Yalta" — referring to the 1945 conference in which Western leaders divided Europe with Joseph Stalin.

The European leaders have reacted coolly to the propsal for a new security architecture. "We do not need to discuss that, it already exists," Germany's Friedrich Merz said Friday.

Zelensky and his European allies have insisted that securing a ceasefire must be a priority in any talks.

"We cannot turn everything upside down and start by talking about changing the security framework in the world," Zelensky said.

"This war must be ended first."

Moscow's "idea of a redistribution of power in Europe" is "very dangerous... it is precisely things like this that lead to wars and escalations", he warned.

Donald Trump's administration has for almost two years tried to reach a breakthrough in talks between Russia and Ukraine.

Qatar, 17 nations slam Israeli strike on Gaza hospital

From Page 1

They said inadequate shelter and deteriorating water, sanitation and healthcare services were placing civilian lives at grave risk, particularly children and infants, who could once again succumb to freezing temperatures.
The ministers urged Israel to heed international appeals, including those from the Board of Peace, to increase humanitarian assistance and immediately fulfil its obligations under the Sharm El-Sheikh Agreement, Trump's Comprehensive Plan and UN Security Council Resolution 2803 (2025).
They stressed that Israel must uphold the ceasefire, protect civilians and medical facilities, and guarantee the safe, sustained and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance in sufficient quantities, including shelter materials and equipment needed to restore essential infrastructure.
Israel must also allow UN agencies and humanitarian organisations to carry out their mandates without obstruction, they said.
The ministers emphasised that these first-phase commitments were binding upon signature and must be implemented without further delay or additional political and security conditions that could obstruct humanitarian access.
They insisted that urgently needed humanitarian assistance must not be made conditional on progress in subsequent phases of the peace plan.
The statement called on the United States and the Board of Peace to intensify efforts, within their respective roles, to ensure Israel's full compliance with its commitments and the removal of all restrictions on humanitarian aid entering Gaza. Such measures, the ministers said, were essential to preserving the credibility of the agreements and consolidating the ceasefire.
They reaffirmed their determination to work with regional and international partners to sustain the ceasefire, implement all phases of the peace plan and expand humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people. (**QNA**)

Zelensky slams SpaceX for speed caps

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky escalated his criticism of SpaceX yesterday, saying speed restrictions on its military-grade Starshield satellite terminals had dangerous political implications and undermined critical air defences.
Zelensky said Starshield terminals operating in temporarily Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine had been limited to a maximum speed of 161 kph for the past five days, hampering Ukraine's military capabilities.
The Ukrainian Defence Ministry has raised the issue with SpaceX at the institutional level, Zelensky said. "The restrictions have now been in place for five days. They say it is some kind of technical issue."
"If you impose restrictions there, you are already partially recognising the temporarily occupied territories as not ours. And that is why I believe we have the right to raise this issue and restore the speed — so that there are no restrictions at all." He said the speed restrictions made it more difficult for Ukrainian air defence units to intercept Russian jet-powered drones and made Ukrainian cities more vulnerable. (**Reuters**)

Pakistan's minister to make rare India visit for SCO talks

Pakistan will send a minister to India for a regional conference next week, Islamabad said yesterday, the first such visit since the two foes fought a four-day conflict last year.
Climate Change Minister Musadik Malik will represent Pakistan at the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) Civilisational Dialogue in New Delhi from November 20 to 22, the Pakistani foreign ministry said in a statement.
It will be the first trip to India by a Pakistani federal minister since former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari attended an SCO meeting in Goa in May 2023.
Nuclear-armed India and Pakistan share a deep distrust and have fought multiple wars since gaining independence in 1947, primarily over the Muslim-majority region of Kashmir, which both countries claim. In May 2025, the countries fought a deadly four-day conflict after armed gunmen killed over two dozen tourists, mostly Hindus, in Kashmir. New Delhi has accused Islamabad of backing the attack, a charge vehemently denied by Pakistan. (**AFP**)

Six held over deadly steel plant blast that killed 17 in Turkiye

AFP
Aliaga, Turkiye


Metalworkers and trade union members demonstrate outside the HABAS steel plant, in Aliaga, about 60 km north of the port city of Izmir, in western Turkiye. (**AFP**)

Six people were arrested overnight after a huge blast at a steel plant near the western city of Izmir killed 17 workers, with grieving families waiting Tuesday to receive their loved ones' bodies for burial.

Onlookers said Monday's massive explosion felt like "an earthquake" when it ripped through the HABAS steel factory in Aliaga, a district 60km north of Izmir known for shipbreaking and heavy industry.

Police have so far detained six people in connection with the incident, with Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar warning "the number could rise".

The deadly blast at one of Turkiye's top steel producers also left around a dozen people injured, at least one in critical condition.

Outside the forensic institute in Aliaga, bereaved family members told AFP they had been waiting all night for confirmation that their loved ones had been identified so they could be laid to rest.

"We have been here since yesterday, we're waiting for the DNA results. Since the bodies are in a condition that makes visual identification impossible, the identification process is carried out through DNA analysis," said Turgut Dilek, saying his nephew Ozcan Efe was one of the dead.

Meanwhile, there was no word on the fate of a 40-year-old man who set himself alight outside the factory on Monday evening and was taken to hospital with severe injuries, IHA news agency said.

The man had worked for years as a truck driver at the factory, IHA said, without mention of earlier reports that his brother had died in the blast.

Workers' groups have accused HABAS of a chequered safety record, and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday vowed that investigators would get to the bottom of what happened.

Turkiye's pro-Kurdish DEM party — which said late Monday "not a single party must go unpunished" at the factory — sent a delegation to visit the families and the injured on Tuesday led by its co-chair Tulay Hatimogullari.

Jailed Istanbul mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, Erdogan's chief political rival, also demanded accountability.

"Workplace deaths are not fate. The causes of the accident must be fully established, and anyone who was negligent or at fault must be held accountable," he wrote on X.

Izmir governor Suleyman Elban said the explosion happened during "a boiler replacement operation".

Contacted by AFP, HABAS declined to respond to any questions.

On Monday, police detained two representatives of a workers' collective outside Aliaga hospital while trying to make a statement about workplace safety issues, a spokesman told AFP.

Workers' groups have called a protest in Aliaga on Tuesday, saying: "STOP this hell of exploitation in which dozens of our comrades have died and hundreds were left disabled because of employers' greed!"

QATAR

Ceramics, cuisine offer a meeting point for Mexican, Qatari cultures

Mexican designer hopes Doha showcase will foster lasting creative ties

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

A plate, a cup, or a bowl may seem like an ordinary household object, but for Mexican ceramic designer Perla Valtierra, each can become part of the stories, conversations, and memories created around a shared meal.This relationship between handmade objects and everyday life informs her work, which is being presented in Doha alongside Mexican chef Elena Reygadas's Panadería Rosetta residency at Mihad Cafe. It is set to conclude today (November 15), as part of the Qatar, Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture.

For Valtierra, ceramics and food are closely connected because both reflect cultural traditions, craftsmanship and the ways people come together. "I think food and ceramics have always belonged together. Both are deeply connected to our daily lives, our traditions, and the way we share moments with others," she told 'Gulf Times'.

She believes the value of ceramics becomes most apparent when the objects are used, rather than simply displayed. "A plate, a cup, or a bowl becomes part of someone's everyday rituals, conversations, and memories," she said. The collaboration brings together two aspects of contemporary Mexican creative practice: Reygadas's approach to food and ingredients, and Valtierra's exploration of clay, form and handmade objects.

Valtierra said she admires Reygadas's sensitivity towards ingredients, traditions and the people behind them, noting that both share an appreciation for craftsmanship and the creative process.

"There is something special about experiencing a culture through food and the objects that accompany it. It's such an intimate and universal way of connecting with people," she said.The presentation also offers visitors an opportunity to encounter contemporary Mexican design through objects intended to be part of everyday life.


A handcrafted terracotta cup by Mexican designer Perla Valtierra, showcasing contemporary Mexican ceramics and traditional craftsmanship.

Valtierra hopes audiences will engage with her ceramics by appreciating their textures, colours, proportions and the subtle variations that make each piece distinctive. She does not believe an understanding of an object's cultural background is necessary to appreciate it.

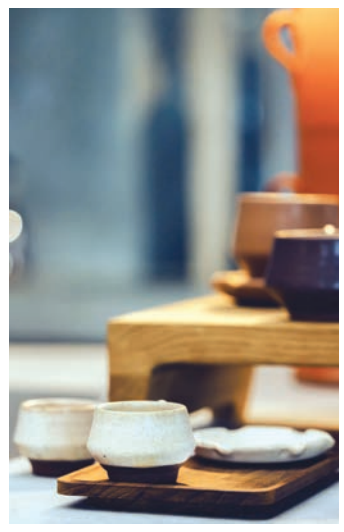
"Sometimes there's simply an emotional connection to a shape, a material, or a colour," she said.

Her approach reflects a wider interest in how handmade objects can communicate cultural identity across geographical boundaries. Although Mexico and Qatar have different histories and artistic traditions, Valtierra sees craftsmanship as a shared way to express cultural identity and preserve knowledge passed down through generations.

She is particularly interested in discovering how different cultures work with similar materials and techniques, and how ordinary objects can carry deeper cultural meanings. Her experience in Doha has also encouraged her to learn more about Qatar's own craft traditions and the work of local artists and designers.

Valtierra hopes the encounter will extend beyond the presentation at Mihad Café, creating opportunities for Mexican and Qatari artisans and designers to exchange ideas, collaborate and learn from one another. Having explored different creative environments in Paris, Kyoto and Brussels, she believes encounters with other cultures can influence how artists understand materials and approach their work. "Travelling and experiencing new cultures changes the way you see things, often in unexpected ways," she said.

She would like to see the Year of Culture generate lasting relationships between creative communities, particularly through shared workshops, collaborations and exchanges of technical knowledge.


Handmade ceramic cups and tableware by Mexican designer Perla Valtierra.

For Valtierra, the most meaningful outcome may not necessarily be a new design or collection, but the connections established through the experience. "Some of the most meaningful experiences I've had have come from spending time in workshops, exchanging ideas, and discovering different ways of working with materials," she said. She hopes visitors who encounter her ceramics in Doha will find something that resonates with them and perhaps take home a piece that becomes part of their own everyday rituals and stories.

Empower 2026 puts youth voices at heart of peace, security discussions

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Organised by Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, the three-day Empower 2026 conference brought together young participants, including more than 30 delegates from outside Qatar to discuss the role of youth in advancing peace and security amid ongoing geopolitical challenges.

The conference featured 14 sessions, including panel discussions and workshops, with participants engaging with experts and representatives from various institutions.

Its key outcome was a youth declaration, which will be taken forward to the Arab Youth Peace and Security Forum to discuss the recommendations and outcomes emerging from the conference.

Speaking to 'Gulf Times', Mana al-Ansari, chief economic empowerment officer at EAA Foundation, said the organisation was proud to host the latest edition, describing Empower as a leading youth platform in Qatar with ambitions to expand its international reach.

"We're proud to have almost 300 youth participants taking part in this edition. Over 30 of them are coming from outside of Qatar, especially in this geopolitical situation. That was an amazing win," he said.

Highlighting the declaration as the conference's most significant outcome, al-Ansari said: "By the end of the three days, we'll have the youth declaration. And the youth declaration will be taken over into the Arab Youth Peace and Security Forum to discuss the outcomes of Empower that, inshallah, will shape the future."


Aisha Ahmed al-Emadi


Ali Fawaz al-Ajji


Mana al-Ansari

He also highlighted the advantages of today's younger generation, particularly their access to technology, information and greater confidence in expressing their views.

"This generation is way more better than previous generations in terms of access to technology, access to information, as well as confidence," he said.

The conference's youth-led approach was another defining feature, with young people taking responsibility for organising and delivering its activities. Ali Fawaz al-Ajji, an EAA youth advocate and one of the conference organisers, said Empower was designed to give young people ownership of the platform rather than simply positioning them as participants.

"This is a conference made from the youth and it is made for the youth," he said, explaining that its committees, organisations, projects and exhibitions were all organised and presented by young people.

He stressed that youth participation in such platforms was essential because decisions made today would directly affect younger generations. "Every decision we make affects youth. And so youth should have an impactful role to play in the decision-making and in understanding the process by which these decisions are made," al-Ajji said.

For participants, the conference also provided an opportunity to exchange ideas and learn directly from specialists working across different sectors.

Aisha Ahmed al-Emadi, an EAA youth advocate and student at Georgetown University in Qatar, said the theme of peace and security was chosen by the youth committees because of its relevance to developments in the region and around the world.

She said the conference combined panel discussions with workshops involving organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme, Qatar Fund for Development and Hamad Bin Khalifa University. Young participants were able to interact with experts through simulations, practical experiences and discussions, gaining insights beyond the classroom.

Culture Ministry names 15 finalists for Akhlaq Calligraphy Award

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Culture announced yesterday the names of 15 calligraphers shortlisted for the finals of the second Akhlaq Award - International Arabic Calligraphy Art Competition for 2026, as part of its efforts to promote Arabic calligraphy, encourage creative talent and reinforce the art's stature as an enduring component of Arab and Islamic cultural identity.

The finalists are Muhannad Daifallah Abdulqaisi, Bilal Mukhtar Salah Atiya, Kirzan Abu Bakr Karim, Muhammad Abu Bakr Siddiq, Nour Faisal, Ali Irani, Hussam al-Matar, Ahmad Ali Namazi, Omar Nour Fouad Alaywa, Ahmad Abdulhadi bin Shamsoul, Ahmad Majid Jabbar, Abdulrahman Hassan Ibrahim al-Saidi, Safouh al-Mustafa, Abdulrahman al-Muhammadi al-Maliki and Abdulwahab Saif.

The international contest is organized by the ministry in recognition of the significance of Arabic calligraphy as one of the foremost creative arts that have helped chart Arab and Islamic civilization, embodying the interlocking of the beauty of letters and humanitarian and moral indications.

The notion behind the award is grounded in highlighting the relationship between the aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy and the loftiness of virtuous values by incorporating value-laden texts into artistic works that reflect the traditional foundations and authentic rules of Arabic calligraphy.

The competition has received submissions from calligraphers and creatives at home and abroad under specific artistic criteria, including limiting each contestant to one entry, selecting the text from an approved list of 20 sentences for the first stage, and essentially hewing to the time-honoured rules of Arabic calligraphy.

The contest has designated Jali Thuluth for the first stage and Regular Thuluth for the second, requiring contestants to execute their works using traditional inks on Ahar paper and submit digital copies at a resolution of at least 600 dots per inch (dpi).

Contestants have been prohibited from adding signatures or any identifying marks that could reveal their identity, thereby safeguarding the confidentiality and integrity of the judging process. The ministry is allocating valuable cash prizes for the award.

Empower 2026 calls for participation of young peacebuilders, advocates

Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, a global foundation working to expand access to quality education and economic opportunities, in partnership with the Ministry of Sports and Youth as the Official Partner, concluded the 17th edition of the Empower Youth Conference at Andaz Doha by Hyatt.

The three-day conference brought together young people from across Qatar, alongside policymakers, United Nations representatives, civil society organisations, academics, youth representatives and experts.

Held under the theme "Youth Leading for Peace and Security," Empower 2026 placed young people at the centre of the programme. Youth committees helped shape the theme, sessions and activities, while youth advocates served as speakers, moderators and masters of ceremony throughout the conference.

The conference concluded with the presentation of the Empower 2026 Youth Declaration, developed by participating youth delegates as a call to action for policymakers and decision-makers. The declaration reflects the voices, priorities and proposed solutions of young people and is structured around four interconnected pillars of the global Youth, Peace and Security agenda: participation, protection, prevention and partnerships.

The declaration calls for meaningful youth participation in decisions on peace, security and development; safe and enabling environments for young peacebuilders and advocates; stronger action on the root causes of conflict through education, economic empowerment and social cohesion; and sustainable partnerships between young people, governments, international organisations, the private sector, civil society and Sport for Development stakeholders.

Arwa Musaaed, executive director of Rota Programme, said: "What we saw at Empower was young people moving beyond participation to leadership. They shaped the theme, challenged ideas and turned three days of dialogue into practical recommendations.

The Youth Declaration is not an end point; it gives us and our partners a clear responsibility to keep opening spaces where young people can influence decisions affecting their education, opportunities, peace and security."

Fawaz al-Musaifri, director of the Youth Affairs Department at the Ministry of Sports and Youth, said: "Empower 2026 demonstrated the value of giving young people the confidence and space to engage with national and regional priorities. The ministry's partnership with EAA Foundation reflects our commitment to youth leadership, participation and initiative.



We welcome the recommendations developed by the participants and look forward to seeing their contribution continue beyond the conference."

Across the three-day programme, participants took part in 18 interactive workshops, four panel discussions and four Power Speeches. The sessions examined meaningful youth participation in decision-making; the protection of young peacebuilders; education and economic opportunity as foundations for peace; and the contribution of sport and cross-sector partnerships to resilience and social cohesion.

The Empower 2026 Youth Exhibition provided an additional platform for youth-led ideas, projects and partner initiatives, enabling participants to connect with peers and organisations working across education, economic empowerment, peacebuilding and community development.

EAA Youth representatives will present the Empower 2026 Youth Declaration at the Arab Youth Forum for Peace and Security, taking place in Doha from November 15 to 17. This next step will carry the participants' recommendations into a wider regional dialogue and create an opportunity to connect youth priorities with policy discussions on peace and security.

