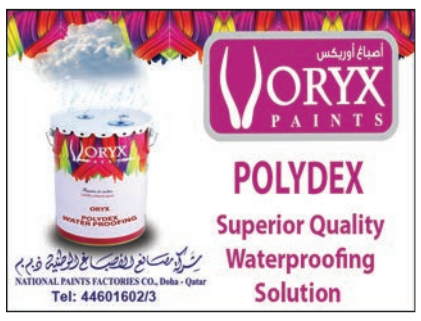
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BUSINESS | Page 1

Commercial Bank wins 'Best Wealth Tech Solution for Emerging Client Segments'







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Amir, Venezuelan leader discuss energy ties

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Venezuelan Acting President Delcy Rodriguez Gomez held an official session of talks at the Amiri Diwan yesterday.

At the outset of the meeting, HH the Amir welcomed the Venezuelan leader and her accompanying delegation in Qatar, wishing them a pleasant stay and expressing hope that her visit would contribute to strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

Gomez expressed her thanks for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to her and the accompanying delegation, looking forward to strengthening co-operation and pushing them to broader horizons to achieve common interests. In this regard, she expressed her thanks and appreciation to HH the Amir for Qatar's support for her country, especially in the wake of the earthquake that struck Venezuela.

They discussed the bilateral relations and ways to support and enhance them in various fields, in addition to exploring aspects of bilateral co-operation in the fields of energy and ways to enhance the security of its supplies. Several regional and international issues of mutual interest were also discussed.

The meeting was attended by HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani; HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Khulaifi; HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi; HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai; HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Faisal bin Thani al-Thani; and several Their Excellencies senior officials.

Those attending from the Venezuelan side included Vice-President for the Economic Sector and President of the Bank of Venezuela Calixto Ortega; Sectorial Vice-President of Communication and Culture and Minister of Communications and Information Miguel Angel Perez Pirela; Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Oliver Blanco; Minister of the Office of the President and Oversight of Government Management Juan Francisco Escalona Camargo; Minister of People's Power for Hydrocarbons Paula Henao; and several members of the official delegation accompanying the Acting President of Venezuela.

HH the Amir and the Venezuelan leader held a bilateral meeting during which they discussed co-operation between the two countries and ways to develop and strengthen it. HH the Amir also hosted a luncheon banquet in honour of the guests.

Earlier upon her arrival at the Amiri Diwan, Gomez was accorded an official reception ceremony. (**QNA**)







Moody's: Strong fiscal buffers shield Qatar against energy shifts

By Peter Alagos
Business Editor

Qatar's strong financial buffers and high creditworthiness position the country to absorb market disruptions and capture revenue windfalls during periods of elevated global energy prices, according to a global credit report.

In its latest sector assessment, Moody's Ratings grouped Qatar, rated Aa2 stable, among energy exporters with strong buffers alongside Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Australia.

The rating agency noted that heightened geopolitical tensions and a recent energy price shock have prompted governments worldwide to prioritise energy security, affordability, and industrial resilience.

Brent crude reached a peak of $118 per barrel in late October and averaged $91 per barrel year-to-date, generating higher export receipts for major hydrocarbon producers.

Across global markets, tighter gas supplies and elevated prices have triggered broad fiscal interventions, with 98 governments providing consumer fuel support by mid-October, up from 56 five months earlier. Moody's stated that liquefied natural gas-importing economies in Asia-Pacific may rely more heavily on coal generation or delay coal plant retirements when gas supply tightens. To Page 7

Qatar slams Iranian attacks on Bahrain

Qatar yesterday strongly condemned Iran's continued attacks on Bahrain, describing them as a flagrant violation of the kingdom's sovereignty and territorial integrity, international law, the UN Charter and the principles of good neighbourliness. In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs warned that the attacks constituted a dangerous escalation that threatened to undermine diplomatic efforts to contain regional tensions and restore security and stability.

The ministry reaffirmed Qatar's full solidarity with Bahrain and its unequivocal support for all measures taken by the kingdom to safeguard its sovereignty and security. (**QNA**)

Qatar reaffirms Lebanon support

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam in Doha yesterday to discuss strengthening bilateral co-operation and ongoing diplomatic efforts to ease regional tensions. They reviewed ways to expand co-operation, particularly in the energy and economic sectors, building on the outcomes of the Qatari prime minister's recent visit to Lebanon. The two leaders also exchanged views on the latest regional developments and diplomatic initiatives aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting security and stability. The PM reaffirmed Qatar's unwavering support for Lebanon's sovereignty, stability and territorial integrity, reiterating its solidarity with the Lebanese people and commitment to strengthening the country's state institutions. (**QNA**)



Historic Doha to come alive in six-month cultural journey

Skeek Al Doha set for launch on 24th

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The narrow lanes, storied neighbourhoods and treasured landmarks of old Doha are set to become the stage for a six-month journey through Qatar's living heritage, as the capital prepares to reconnect its past with the present through an immersive cultural experience celebrating the people, places and traditions that shaped its identity.

Qatar Tourism will launch Skeek Al Doha on November 24, transforming five historic landmarks into an interconnected cultural walking trail that invites residents and visitors to rediscover the city's roots through storytelling, interactive experiences, community activities and seasonal celebrations.



Running until mid-May 2027, the initiative promises more than a conventional heritage tour. It seeks to breathe new life into restored historic spaces, turning them into vibrant meeting points where memories are shared, traditions revisited and the stories of generations brought to life.

The project forms part of Qatar Tourism's broader strategy to diversify the country's tourism offering by developing distinctive experiences anchored in its cultural identity, while ensuring that historic landmarks remain relevant and accessible to contemporary audiences.

HE Qatar Tourism Chairman Saad bin Ali al-Kharji said the initiative reflected a commitment to creating meaningful visitor experiences while safeguarding the country's cultural inheritance.

"Skeek Al Doha reflects our commitment to diversifying Qatar's tourism offering by developing distinctive experiences rooted in our cultural heritage," he said. To Page 7

❐ Arab Youth Forum on Peace and Security 2026

Qatar champions youth role in regional peace

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Qatar yesterday called for a decisive shift from treating young people as spectators in peacebuilding to empowering them as architects of regional stability, as Doha brought together youth delegates from 17 Arab countries to help shape policies aimed at preventing conflicts and fostering lasting peace.

The call came at the opening of the three-day Arab Youth Forum for Peace and Security 2026, organised by the Ministry of Sports and Youth in collaboration with the Arab League and several United Nations agencies, programmes and funds.

Addressing ministers, senior officials and representatives of international organisations, HE the Ministry of Sports and Youth Undersecretary Yasir bin Abdullah al-Jamal said Qatar's hosting of the forum reflected its commitment to placing young people at the heart of peacebuilding and decision-making.

He stressed that young people, despite bearing the consequences of conflicts, humanitarian crises and digital challenges, could become powerful agents of change when equipped with knowledge, opportunities and confidence.

"Peace forged without young people's involvement does not last," he said, emphasising that development initiatives excluding their participation were equally unlikely to achieve their objectives.

Al-Jamal highlighted Qatar's investment in education, sport, culture and innovation, alongside its support for education in conflict zones, youth participation in international forums and diplomatic efforts centred on dialogue and mediation.

He said the forum would focus on two priorities — partnerships and meaningful participation — culminating in the drafting of the Doha Youth Document, intended to support implementation of the Arab Youth, Peace and Security Strategy at national and regional levels.

Egyptian Minister of Youth and Sports Gohar Nabil praised Qatar's support for Arab youth initiatives, urging governments to move beyond consultation and give young people genuine responsibilities in policymaking and monitoring implementation.

Arab League Youth and Sports Department Director Faisal Ali Ghassal said Doha's hosting offered an opportunity to translate the Arab Youth, Peace and Security Strategy (2023–2028), adopted at the 2024 Arab Summit in Bahrain, into tangible programmes.

He highlighted the importance of protecting young people affected by conflict and displacement, particularly Palestinian youth, and safeguarding their access to education and employment. To Page 7



QATAR



Qatar, France sign up digital co-operation

Qatar and France have signed a letter of intent to deepen bilateral co-operation, with both sides sharing a vision of strategic autonomy in the digital sector.

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and the French Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Industrial, Energy and Digital Sovereignty signed the letter on the sidelines of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26). It was signed by HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai and France's Minister Delegate for Artificial Intelligence and Digital Affairs Anne Le Hénanff.

The co-operation covers artificial intelligence, digital transformation, innovation, emerging technologies and other areas of mutual interest.

Commenting on the signing, the Minister of Communications and Information Technology said: "The strong ties between Qatar and France provide a solid foundation for developing new partnerships in the communications and information technology sector, particularly at a time of rapid technological advancement, especially in artificial intelligence, and the economic and development opportunities it creates. Through this letter of intent, we look forward to expanding co-operation with our French partners and leveraging our shared expertise and capabilities in advanced technologies, digital transformation, innovation and digital skills development, further strengthening international co-operation in these areas."

France's Minister Delegate for Artificial Intelligence and Digital Affairs said: "The signing of this letter of intent comes at a strategic moment, as both countries share the same vision of strategic autonomy in the digital sector and have common ambitions, in particular in AI, where France pursues a third way, and in quantum technologies."

The signing builds on long-standing bilateral relations between Qatar and France and their shared interest in expanding co-operation in future-oriented sectors. It also opens new opportunities for technology partnerships that support the growth of the digital economy and enable both countries to benefit from advances in emerging technologies.

Al-Subaie meets Arab Atomic Energy Agency director general



HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie met yesterday with Director General of the Arab Atomic Energy Agency Dr Salem Hamdi. During the meeting, they discussed avenues for co-operation between the two sides and ways to deepen and expand it, as well as a range of issues of mutual interest. (**QNA**)

Lebanese PM arrives in Doha



Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon, Dr Nawaf Salam, arrived in Doha yesterday evening on a visit to the country. Upon his arrival at Doha International Airport, the prime minister and the accompanying delegation were received by HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi, and ambassador of the Republic of Lebanon to the State of Qatar, Bilal Kabalan. (**QNA**)

MoI undersecretary meets Australian police official



HE the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Abdullah bin Khalaf bin Hattab al-Kaabi met with Assistant Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police Steve Nutt. During the meeting, the two sides discussed security co-operation and ways to support and expand it, as well as a range of matters of shared interest. (**QNA**)

Shura Council Speaker meets Mexican envoy



HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem met yesterday with ambassador of the United Mexican States to the State of Qatar Jose Guillermo Ordorica Robles. The meeting focused on co-operation between the State of Qatar and the United Mexican States and ways to strengthen and expand it, particularly in parliamentary affairs, as well as prospects for co-operation and co-ordination between the Shura Council and the Mexican Parliament to deepen bilateral relations and advance mutual interests. (**QNA**)

Acting Venezuelan president leaves Doha

Acting President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Delcy Rodriguez, left Doha yesterday evening following an official visit to the country. Acting president and the accompanying delegation were seen off upon departure from Doha International Airport by HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Faisal bin Thani al-Thani, ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Salman bin Nabit al-Khulaifi, and ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the State of Qatar Carlos Jose Mata Figueroa. (**QNA**)

Shura Speaker receives message from chairman of Kazakhstan's parliament

HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem received a written message from Chairman of Kazakhstan's Parliament (Kurultai) Aibek Dadebay, inviting HE the Speaker to visit the Republic of Kazakhstan as part of efforts to strengthen co-operation between the two countries and share legislative expertise.

The message was delivered by ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the State of Qatar Bakhyt Batyrshayev during a meeting with HE the Speaker in Doha yesterday. The meeting also focused on co-operation between the State of Qatar and the Republic of Kazakhstan and ways to bolster and expand it, particularly in parliamentary matters, as well as a range of issues of mutual interest. (**QNA**)



Qatar participates in Sixth MID Region Safety Summit

The State of Qatar, represented by the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority (QCAA), participated in the Sixth MID Region Safety Summit 2026, held in the United Arab Emirates under the theme "Shaping the Future of Aviation Safety". The summit discussed the future of the region's aviation sector and opportunities offered by innovation, advanced air mobility and artificial intelligence. It also explored ways to enhance operational resilience and facilitate the exchange of expertise among international organisations and regulatory authorities, contributing to the advancement of the aviation ecosystem across the Middle East.

As part of the summit's programme, QCAA participated in one of the sessions, delivering a presentation outlining the State of Qatar's vision and regulatory approach to emerging technologies, including electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft and advanced air mobility (AAM). This forms part of the Authority's efforts to keep pace with rapid developments in the aviation sector and promote the safe operation of these technologies. (**QNA**)

'National drill to test institutional preparedness for cyber incidents'

QNA
Doha



The National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) will launch the 13th National Cyber Drill on November 30 under the theme "Digital Sovereignty," featuring more than 150 entities across 14 vital sectors.

The national drill aims to address expanding cyberspace threats by evaluating institutional readiness to handle cyber incidents and crises, ensure business continuity for essential services, and mitigate risks tied to third-party technology providers.

Head of the Cyber Exercises Committee at NCSA Mohammed Murshid al-Mannai stated in an interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the exercise assesses organisational capabilities in cyber incident detection and digital forensics. It also tests the preparedness of executive leadership to manage crises and make informed strategic decisions based on technical data and incident reports.

Al-Mannai explained that the exercise centres on two primary technical and administrative pillars. The first pillar tests technical teams in detecting suspicious network activity, tracking adversary lateral movement, identifying breach vectors, and isolating vulnerabilities. The second pillar evaluates executive decision-making, testing co-ordination between administrative and technical teams under regulatory frameworks to ensure sound crisis response.

The exercise brings together ministries, government bodies, military institutions, healthcare facilities, financial and banking entities, critical infrastructure operators, cybersecurity service providers, and university students across 14 sectors.

Al-Mannai detailed four tailored exercise scenarios designed to match the technical infrastructure of participating institutions. The first scenario targets organisations relying on third-party service providers, testing business continuity if external services are disrupted. The second scenario focuses on cybersecurity service providers, evaluating technical capabilities and incident response protocols. The third scenario is designed for industrial control systems (ICS) and operational technology (OT) in energy, industrial, and petrochemical sectors. The fourth scenario features A Capture the Flag (CTF) competition for university students, presenting technical challenges to test problem-solving skills and develop national cybersecurity talent.

Highlighting the exercise's central theme, Al-Mannai stressed that digital sovereignty hinges on an institution's ability to maintain core services during third-party service interruptions or cloud disruptions. He cited recent global instances where artificial intelligence models and external software tools were abruptly withdrawn or restricted, directly impacting dependent organisations.

He emphasised that the drill aims to raise awareness regarding vendor lock-in risks without advocating a complete decoupling from global technology providers. Instead, it focuses on risk management and operational resilience for critical services that cannot tolerate downtime. One scenario assumes the total unavailability of external technologies, forcing entities to maintain essential operations using internal resources and degraded-mode plans.

Al-Mannai stressed that performance results from the exercise will help entities identify system vulnerabilities, update business continuity frameworks, and bolster overall national cyber resilience.

Over 37,000 tonnes of plastic, metal recycled at Mesaieed centre

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter



The Solid Waste Recycling Centre in Mesaieed recovered more than 37,000 tonnes of plastic and metal in 2025, indicating the growing the role of the country's waste-treatment infrastructure in reducing landfill disposal and increasing the recovery of reusable materials.

According to figures reported by the Ministry of Municipality, the centre sorted and recovered around 25,000 tonnes of plastic and 12,000 tonnes of metal during last year, bringing the combined volume to around 37,000 tonnes. Plastic represented around 67% of the recovered materials, while metals accounted for the remaining 33%. The otherwise landfill waste materials that used to be unnecessary burden on the local environment was accordingly converted in reusable materials of good economic value that could considerably benefit various related industry with good and sustainable sources of raw material, enhancing the local efforts of encouraging circular business practices. Meanwhile, recycled plastics can be processed into new products and packaging, while recovered metals can be reintroduced into manufacturing and construction supply chains. Further, using recycled materials would reduce demand for virgin resources and the environmental impacts associated with their extraction and processing.

The Mesaieed facility is part of Qatar's broader waste-management infrastructure, which handles municipal solid waste through a combination of sorting, recycling, organic waste treatment and energy recovery. Its operations contribute to reducing the volume of waste requiring landfill disposal while recovering materials with potential economic value.

In the meantime, official figures presented by the Minister of Municipality at the Sixth Recycling Towards Sustainability Conference and Exhibition in October 2026 show that 45% of municipal solid waste was diverted from landfills in 2025. During the same year, the national Waste Treatment Centre generated more than 276,000 megawatt-hours of electricity, processed over 10,000 tonnes of used tyres and produced more than 34,000 tonnes of compost. Qatar also produced approximately 3.9mn tonnes of recycled construction materials at Rawdat Rashid.

In addition, private-sector investment in this sector has been considerably and rapidly expanding, with Al Afja recycling industrial area accommodating 61 designated facilities, comprising 29 operational factories, 19 under construction and 13 in development. The Ministry selected nine investors in 2025 to establish new recycling projects, with lease agreements signed with four investors in October 2026.

Related official efforts include the Zero Waste initiative, development of a national digital waste-management system and investment in sorting, recovery and landfill infrastructure, in addition to the ongoing intensive awareness efforts to promote separation at the source of household and public waste through the distribution of designated recycling bins across various areas and key facilities all over the country.



Safari Mall holds World Diabetes Day awareness programme

RAF Healthcare organised health awareness programme in association with Safari Group, Abeer Medical Centre, Reyada Medical Centre, Life Care Medical Centre and Imara Medical Centre in five different outlets of Safari Hyper Market on November 11, 12 and 13.

Thousands of Safari customers got benefited out of this programme marking, 2026's World Diabetes Day awareness.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr Ahmed Elasyouti, from Qatar Diabetes Association, Aathif Asharaf – MD, RAF Health, Ahmad Shahid – DGM Safari Group, Dr Nithyananda Swami, director, Abeer Medical Centre and Neelam from Dr Morepen Labs in Safari Mall Abu Hamour.

RAF Healthcare donated 500 Free Dr Morepen's Glucose Machines as a part of its social responsibility. Medical centres offered Free HbAlC, BP, SPO2, ECG, BMI and one-to-one doctors counselling.

Global health data indicates that, 40% of the adults living with diabetes remain undiagnosed. Hence the organisers emphasised that detection is very important to prevent long term complications arising out of diabetes.

RAF Healthcare along with Safari Group organised this event for the fourth year in a row from 2023. More than 6,000 individuals got benefited out of this programme in 2026 alone.

Labour minister meets Uzbek, Liberian envoys





HE the Minister of Labour, Dr Ali bin Samikh al-Marri, met yesterday with ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the State of Qatar, Ashraf Khodjaev.
The meeting addressed prospects for enhanced collaboration and reviewed matters of mutual interest concerning the labour sector.
HE the Minister of Labour, Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri, also met yesterday with ambassador of the Republic of Liberia to the State of Qatar, Mohammed B.O.S. Kenneth. The discussions focused on bilateral relations, exploring avenues to strengthen and further expand joint co-operation within the labour sector. (**QNA**)

QNB Group among 1st banks globally to offer Mastercard Advanced B2B Analytics

QNB Group is among the first banks globally to offer Mastercard Advanced B2B Analytics to its corporate clients.

The move strengthens QNB's corporate payments offering and reflects its focus on helping businesses manage payments with greater insight and efficiency.

Supplier payments are a significant part of a company's day-to-day operations, yet businesses may have limited visibility into which suppliers could accept card payments.

Mastercard Advanced B2B Analytics uses accounts payable data to help identify these opportunities, giving the group's corporate clients a clearer view of their supplier base and where virtual cards may be a viable payment option.

The capability enables businesses to prioritise supplier engagement and make more informed decisions about their payables and working capital. Its interactive dashboards bring payment insights together in a format that clients can use to assess opportunities and guide their payment strategies.

The introduction of Advanced B2B Analytics forms part of QNB Group's continued investment in corporate and transaction banking. As businesses seek more effective ways to manage their operations, QNB is expanding the tools available to its clients, combining its understanding of their needs with payment technology that can help them act on their data.

Developed by Mastercard, the platform uses analytics to assess supplier acceptance opportunities and support more targeted engagement. Through its collaboration with Mastercard, QNB Group continues to bring practical payment innovations to corporate clients in Qatar.

Al-Mannai holds meetings with int'l delegations during ITU conference

HE Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, held a series of bilateral meetings with ministers, senior government officials, and heads of delegations participating in the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26). The meetings focused on strengthening international co-operation in the ICT sector, expanding partnerships, and exchanging expertise in advanced technologies and digital transformation.

The Minister met with: Mohamed Abdoulkader Moussa Helem, Minister of Communication, Posts and Telecommunications of the Republic of Djibouti, to discuss opportunities for strengthening co-operation in the ICT sector; Michał Gramatyka, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Digital Affairs of the Republic of Poland, to explore opportunities for closer co-operation between the two countries in the digital sector; Sofiene Hemissi, Minister of Communication Technologies of the Republic of Tunisia, to discuss opportunities for strengthening bilateral co-operation and exchanging expertise in telecommunications and digital technologies; Dr Bikram Timilsina, Minister of Communication and Information Technology of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, to explore areas of co-operation in the ICT sector and Mark-Alexandre Doumba, Minister of Digital Economy, Digitalisation and Innovation of the Gabonese Republic, to discuss opportunities for co-operation in the digital economy and emerging technologies.

These meetings and engagements form part of the Ministry's efforts to strengthen relations with international partners and expand co-operation in the ICT sector. They support the exchange of expertise, the development of partnerships in advanced technologies, and shared priorities for digital development and growth in the digital economy.



In Loving Memory of

Dr. N.S. Bhat

Pioneer Orthopaedic Surgeon in Qatar

1975 – 2026

On this Remembrance Day, we fondly remember Dr. Bhat's extraordinary contributions to healthcare in Qatar, and the warmth, kindness and friendship he shared with us all.

Forever remembered with respect and affection.

Date & Time: Mon 16/11/2026 | 07:30 PM
Venue: Indian Cultural Centre Ashoka Hall

INDIAN DOCTORS' CLUB
DOHA, QATAR

QATAR



Civil Defence, Kahramaa streamline electricity substation approvals

The General Directorate of Civil Defence, represented by the Prevention Department, and Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa) signed minutes of a meeting outlining a joint working mechanism to streamline the review and approval procedures for main electrical substations and expedite the completion of vital projects, while ensuring compliance with fire safety and prevention requirements. The minutes were signed by Lieutenant Colonel (Staff) Engineer Ghanem Salem al-Nuaimi, Director of the Prevention Department, on behalf of the General Directorate of Civil Defence, and Engineer Ahmed Nasser al-Nasr, Director of Technical Affairs, on behalf of Kahramaa. The initiative aims to strengthen co-ordination and institutional collaboration between the two entities while supporting infrastructure readiness. (**QNA**)



Ministry of Environment organises diabetes awareness workshop

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change has hosted an awareness workshop at its headquarters, delivered by Al-Fonoon Surgical Hospital under the theme "Know Your Numbers... Protect Your Health", marking World Diabetes Day.

The workshop aimed to raise awareness among the Ministry's employees about the importance of diabetes prevention and early detection. The workshop, delivered by Dr Zainab Ibrahim Abdelhamid Youssef Hamouda of Al-Fonoon Surgical Hospital, featured an informative presentation on diabetes and the importance of monitoring blood sugar levels. It also covered how to recognise the symptoms of low and high blood sugar, the appropriate steps to manage both conditions, and when medical assistance should be sought.

The session provided participants with an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification, while receiving practical guidance on managing conditions associated with fluctuations in blood sugar levels. It also highlighted the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and undergoing regular medical check-ups. In addition, health vouchers were distributed, enabling the Ministry's employees to benefit from three free medical services provided by the hospital.

MoT introduces new metrolink feeder routes

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) has, since the beginning of 2026, introduced nine new metrolink feeder routes, in collaboration with public transport operators, as it continues to modernise the public transit system and enhance services integration, taking the total metrolink feeder routes to 76.

The new routes M102, M103, M119, M154, M304, M305, M307, M308, and M318 help expand metrolink's service coverage and enhance connectivity between metro stations and surrounding areas, making it easier for people to reach their destinations. They serve the metro stations of Lusail QNB, Al Sudan, Sports City, Al Waab QLM, Al Qassar, and Msheireb.

This expansion is part of MoT's strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing public transit modes integration, improving first-and last-mile mobility solutions, and aligning services with user needs and demand patterns for better operational efficiency, better travel experience, and easier access to the metro network.

The MoT reaffirms its ongoing collaboration with its partners and public transportation operators to develop the operational network and expand the reach of its services. The goal is to encourage higher public transit ridership and contribute to creating an integrated, efficient, and sustainable public transit ecosystem that keeps pace with the urban and population growth in Qatar and supports the realisation of the QNV 2030 goals. (**QNA**)

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.

'Strengthening role of youth essential for peace, stability'

QNA
Doha

Heads of youth delegations participating in the Arab Youth Forum for Peace and Security 2026, organised by the Ministry of Sports and Youth in co-operation with the League of Arab States, emphasised the importance of strengthening the role of youth in building peace and stability and expanding their participation in decision-making processes.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), delegation heads underscored the necessity of transforming strategies and recommendations into practical initiatives that address the challenges facing Arab societies. They also commended Qatar for hosting the forum, expressing their hope that the event will yield decisions that enhance the role of youth in decision-making.

Head of the Qatari youth delegation Mohammed Hamad al-Mannai stated that the forum serves as a vital platform to bolster the role of Arab youth in building peace and stability and to solidify their active participation in decision-making. He noted that the discussions focus on youth empowerment, the promotion of Arab dialogue and co-operation, and the transition from strategy to concrete implementation.

He added that young people are not merely participants in discussing challenges, but essential partners in developing solutions and shaping the future. He expressed his aspiration that the forum's proceedings will yield practical, youth-led recommendations and initiatives that contribute to fostering peace and security across Arab societies.

Al-Mannai stressed the need for moving from dialogue to action, and from recommendations to tangible impact, noting that young people serve as both leaders of the future and partners in shaping the present. Head of the Palestinian delegation Amani al-Mashni emphasised that Palestine's participation in the forum aims to share the experiences of Palestinian youth and highlight the challenges they face across political, economic, social, and educational spheres.

She noted that some of the most prominent challenges include movement and mobility restrictions, limited employment opportunities, and complex political and security conditions. Despite these circumstances, she pointed out that Palestinian youth continue working to promote security and peace within their society.

She explained that the strategy of the Higher Council for Youth and Sports in Palestine focuses on two main pillars: peace and security, and community development. Relevant authorities are working to implement this strategy and achieve its objectives despite existing obstacles.

Furthermore, she expressed her hope that participating in the forum would help bring the issues facing Palestinian youth to the attention of broader Arab platforms and facilitate an exchange of experiences to generate solutions for the challenges they encounter.

Head of the Jordanian youth delegation Dr Maher Dudin commended Qatar for hosting the forum, an event previously hosted by Jordan. He stated that empowering youth requires translating past resolutions into tangible reality, arguing that governments should provide genuine solutions to the issues facing young people rather than offering mere promises.

He highlighted various Jordanian initiatives that underscore the necessity of supporting youth and enabling them to play an active role in shaping the future, not only through education, but also by providing opportunities to contribute to the development of their communities.

Head of the Libyan delegation Haya Issam bin Ramadan emphasised the significance of Qatar hosting the forum as an Arab platform for exchanging expertise and fostering inter-state co-operation in empowering youth and engaging them in peacebuilding and security efforts.

She noted that the Libyan delegation's participation aims to share the experiences of young people in Libya while benefiting from the experiences of other Arab nations. She explained that the Libyan Ministry of Youth is currently developing the first national document for Libyan youth on peace and security.

Comprising seven core pillars addressing youth-related issues and their roles in promoting peace and security, the document seeks to transition young people from being merely affected by conflicts to becoming active partners in preventing and resolving them, while strengthening their presence in peacebuilding and security initiatives within their communities.

NTSC commemorates road crash victims

QNA
Doha



The National Traffic Safety Committee (NTSC), in collaboration with the General Directorate of Traffic and several relevant entities, organised an event marking the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims under the theme Remember-Support-Act.

The opening ceremony was attended by Director General of Traffic and Second Vice-Chairman of the National Traffic Safety Committee Brigadier Jabor Ali al-Kubaisi; Assistant Undersecretary for Land Transport Affairs at the Ministry of Transport Abdullah Saif al-Saif al-Sulaiti; and Director of the Non-Communicable Disease Prevention Programs Department at the Ministry of Public Health Sheikh Dr Mohamed bin Hamad al-Thani, alongside a host of department directors and officers, representatives of relevant entities, and students from military colleges and schools throughout the nation.

The event was intended to commemorate motor vehicle traffic crashes, remember those who lost their lives in these accidents, and promote awareness of the importance of adhering to traffic safety rules. It featured an educational documentary highlighting real-life cases of people injured in traffic accidents.

The individuals featured in the documentary shared their experiences and offered tips and guidance drawn from their own ordeals, aiming to alert road users to the dangers and consequences of traffic accidents.

An awareness exhibition was also held alongside the event, featuring a lot of entities concerned with traffic safety. They showcased their efforts, awareness programs and initiatives aimed at strengthening road safety and curbing traffic accidents and injuries.



Alfardan Corporation showcases measurable sustainability impact during QSW 2026

Alfardan Corporation, through its sustainability strategy "Athar," concluded its participation as a community partner of Qatar Sustainability Week (QSW) 2026.

Throughout the week, Alfardan Corporation translated its sustainability commitments into a series of initiatives and activities that brought together participation from its various business sectors, including Alfardan Properties, Alfardan Automotive, Safwa, and The St Regis Hotels.

Athar initiative's activities included highlighting the achievements of the "Green Loop" food waste management initiative, which is guided by the principles of the circular economy; organising the "Youth Climate Solutions Sprint" in collaboration with Doha Hub to develop innovative solutions for reducing food waste; and hosting a community basketball match on the sustainable courts at Al Gassar Resort as part of the "From Tires to Courts" initiative.

Activities also included an interactive workshop at Nest on the environmental impact of artificial intelligence and the responsible use of technology, as well as launching an interactive sustainability competition for commercial tenants to raise awareness of environmental challenges and the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, Athar supported the "Green Run for All" in collaboration with MINI Cooper to promote physical well-being and environmental awareness, and hosted the "Leadership Voices" event, which showcased leaders' perspectives on sustainability, shared responsibility, and the importance of integrating sustainable practices across business operations and day-to-day activities.

Dr Ma'n Alhamawi, CEO of Alfardan Automotive and Chairman of Alfardan Corporation's Athar Sustainability Committee, said: "Sustainability is a business priority that requires leadership, accountability, and a long-term commitment to results. Through Athar, we are translating this commitment into action across Alfardan Corporation, strengthening collaboration between our businesses and creating lasting value for our communities. Qatar Sustainability Week reflects this approach, bringing our people and partners together while engaging the next generation in shaping practical solutions."



QRCS launches paediatric open-heart surgery convoy in Sudan's Khartoum state

Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has launched a medical convoy to perform open-heart surgeries for 15 poor children at the Ahmed Qasim Children's Hospital in Khartoum State, Sudan.

This project is part of QRCS's ongoing efforts to enhance specialised health care services in Sudan, alleviate the suffering of patients and their families, and improve children's access to high-quality medical treatment, amid significant health challenges.

Over the first two days of the mission, eight open-heart surgeries were successfully performed for children aged 1-6.

The patients are currently receiving post-operative care at the intensive care unit (ICU), under the supervision of specialised medical professionals at the host hospital.

Prior to the surgeries, specialised clinics were activated for the examination, screening, prioritisation, and exclusion of potential beneficiaries.

The launching ceremony was attended by Dr Mahmoud al-Badri, Minister of Health in Khartoum State, Dr Salah al-Din Daak, head of QRCS's representation office in Sudan, and Dr Huda al-Hassan, director-general of the Ahmed Qasim Children's Hospital.

In a statement, Dr al-Hassan described the medical convoy as a significant upgrade in the hospital's services. She praised the partnership with QRCS, which strengthened Sudanese health care institutions and secured specialised surgeries for children, giving them and their families a fresh hope.

Dr Daak promised to proceed with medical convoys and other forms of support for Sudan's health sector.

He revealed preparations for two more medical convoys: (1) ophthalmic surgeries in Dongola (Northern State) and (2) pediatric open-heart surgeries (Gezira State).

According to him, the implementation of three specialised surgical convoys in Khartoum State over the past few months was a promising sign of the recovery of health care institutions and resumption of specialised medical services.

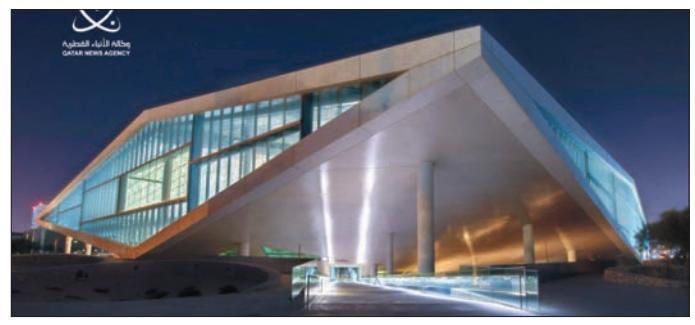
These interventions, he added, were aimed at alleviating the medical and financial burdens faced by patients, particularly those from the most vulnerable families.

As part of its nonstop backing of the Sudanese health system, QRCS is planning to launch more medical convoys as well as provide disability equipment/aids, dialysis machines and supplies, and cancer drugs.

This scheme is expected to serve around 7,200 poor and displaced patients, at a total cost of more than QR7.5mn.

QNL-hosted event rethinks protection of stolen heritage

QNA
Doha



Qatar National Library (QNL), through its Himaya Project and in collaboration with the Unesco Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen, has concluded the international symposium, "From Auction to Restitution: Protecting Cultural Property and Combating Illicit Trafficking."

Hosted yesterday to mark the International Day against Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property, the virtual event brought together global experts in international law, provenance research, and cultural heritage to address the critical challenges of tracing, documenting, and recovering looted artifacts.

Highlighting the importance of international cooperation and innovation in protecting cultural heritage, the director of the Regional Office for the Gulf States and Yemen Salah Khaled stated that: "Through initiatives such as Unesco's Virtual Museum of Stolen Cultural Objects, we are harnessing the power of innovation to make the invisible visible, strengthen public awareness, and foster the international solidarity needed to combat the illicit trade in cultural property."

Translating these global priorities into concrete action, Head of the Preservation and Conservation Center at QNL Maxim Nasra said: "This symposium highlights our commitment to protecting cultural property through our role as the IFLA PAC Regional Centre and initiatives like the Himaya project, ensuring that global and regional stakeholders are equipped to trace, safeguard, and secure the restitution of stolen heritage."

At the core of the Library's anti-trafficking mission is the Himaya Project, a dedicated initiative to counter the illegal circulation of documentary heritage.

Driven by this mandate, the Library hosts the prominent biennial Doha Conference on Combating the Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property, uniting global stakeholders, law enforcement, and cultural institutions to fortify legal frameworks.

MoEHE to aid students with disabilities pursue education

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

The new educational voucher policy has been welcomed as a significant step towards promoting equal educational opportunities and expanding choices for families seeking quality education for children with disabilities and learning difficulties.

Many educators, specialists and representatives of educational institutions noted that the initiative, launched by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, will help ease the financial burden on Qatari families while enabling students to access private schools offering specialised educational and rehabilitation services tailored to their individual needs. Under the policy, eligible students can receive annual financial support of up to QR78,000, depending on an assessment of their educational and support requirements.

The initiative is expected to strengthen inclusive education and encourage greater participation by private schools in supporting students with diverse learning needs. However, experts stress that financial assistance alone will not guarantee success.

They say the policy must be accompanied by well-equipped schools, qualified teaching and specialist staff, accessible facilities, appropriate learning resources and effective government supervision to ensure that the intended benefits reach students and their families.

Talib Afifa al-Marri, acting executive director of the Qatar Society for Special Needs, described the policy as an important move towards safeguarding the educational rights of students with disabilities and ensuring access to quality education suited to their abilities and individual circumstances.

He said the initiative goes beyond financial assistance by strengthening the concept of inclusive education and allowing students to enrol in private schools equipped with suitable programmes and services.

Al-Marri explained that the policy provides three levels of annual financial support: QR43,000 for Level One, QR53,000 for Level Two and QR78,000 for Level Three. Besides, the level of assistance is determined through a specialised assessment of each student's needs rather than simply the type or severity of disability. This approach is intended to ensure that financial support reflects the services and resources required by individual students.

The eligible categories include st udents with autism spectrum disorder, intellectual, hearing, physical and visual disabilities, combined hearing and visual impairments, and multiple disabilities. Education expert Khalifa al-Mannai said the initiative represents an important step towards supporting Qatari families and providing them with greater flexibility in choosing suitable schools for their children.

He noted that the annual assistance of up to QR78,000 could make specialised educational and rehabilitation services more accessible, but cautioned that the success of the policy would depend largely on the readiness of participating private schools.

He said schools must ensure their buildings and facilities are accessible, provide appropriate classrooms and assistive learning technologies, and recruit qualified professionals specialising in special education.

Teachers and school administrators must also receive adequate training to understand individual differences and respond effectively to the needs of students with disabilities.

Education expert Hussein al-Yafei highlighted the importance of strong monitoring and regulatory mechanisms to ensure that the policy achieves its intended objectives. He warned that government support must not become an opportunity for participating private schools to increase tuition fees or impose additional charges on parents.

He noted that the Ministry of Education and Higher Education should establish clear procedures for monitoring fees, ensuring transparency and verifying that voucher funds are directed towards the educational and rehabilitation services for which they are intended.

QRCS, Vodafone Qatar partner to strengthen first-aid culture across schools

Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has announced the sponsorship of QRCS school programme, by Vodafone Qatar, with the aim of strengthening health, humanitarian, and volunteer awareness within the school community and fostering a safer, more resilient educational environment capable of responding effectively to various emergencies.

This partnership reflects Vodafone Qatar's commitment to corporate social responsibility and its support for initiatives with sustainable social impact.

Through this collaboration, the programme will expand its reach to a larger number of students and educational staff, while promoting health awareness and reinforcing a culture of prevention and safety across schools.

Under the partnership, QRCS will deliver a series of training workshops benefiting approximately 4,000 students. Participants will receive training in first aid, health education, and initial emergency response.

In addition, a number of teachers will undergo specialised first-aid training, complemented by a range of awareness and interactive activities designed to enhance their knowledge and skills in physical and mental health, safety, and well-being.

Ranya Albordeni, head of Community Development, said: "We are pleased to see growing interest from various sectors of society in supporting the QRCS School Programme, which represents one of our flagship initiatives aimed at building a well-informed generation equipped with the essential skills needed to respond to emergencies and promote a culture of prevention and safety within schools."



We hope that our partnership with Vodafone Qatar will mark the beginning of even stronger collaboration, and we sincerely appreciate their sponsorship. Their support enables us to broaden the programme's reach and create a tangible impact that contributes to a safer educational environment and enhances preparedness for risks and emergencies," she added

Abdulhadi al-Sahli, head of Media Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility at Vodafone Qatar, stated: "At Vodafone Qatar, we are committed to supporting initiatives that generate a positive and lasting impact on society."

"Our partnership with Qatar Red Crescent Society is a natural extension of these efforts, helping to instill awareness of first-aid fundamentals and safety practices among students and teachers," he added.

"Through this collaboration, we are proud to contribute to developing essential life skills among young people and to supporting safer learning environments for future generations."

MIA to celebrate International Day of Islamic Art with a series of events

QNA
Doha

The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) is celebrating the International Day of Islamic Art, observed annually on November 18, with a cultural programme highlighting Islamic art, the diversity of its styles and its rich artistic and cultural heritage, which has evolved across different eras and cultures.

Proclaimed by Unesco in 2019, the day honours an artistic tradition that has travelled across continents and centuries.

From 9:00am to 7:00pm, MIA's Learning and Outreach Department invites visitors of all ages to look closer, make something of their own and hear the human stories woven through the collection.

The day begins in the MIA Atrium, where a morning workshop from 10:00am to 12:00pm unpacks the patterns, pigments and techniques of illumination before participants create an artwork of their own. From 2:00pm, the Atrium becomes a meeting place for every generation.

Guided tours in Arabic and English reveal the stories behind selected masterpieces until 3:00pm, while families gather for hands-on activities and young listeners follow Na'ima B. Robert's Journey Through Islamic Art at Children's Story Time, both running until 5:00pm.

At 3:00pm, Through the Curator's Eye offers an Arabic-language tour shaped by those who study and care for the collection.

The afternoon closes on a joyful note with Heritage on Stage from 4:00pm to 5:00pm, as students from schools across Qatar bring the traditions of their cultures to life.

The MIA Library hosts drop-in activities throughout the day: a Spinning Label Lab, bookmark design drawing on traditional patterns, and puzzles that reveal the logic of Islamic ornament. The Planets Kids Club meets from 4:00pm to 5:00pm before the Book Club turns at 5:00pm to Amin Maalouf's *Samarkand*, a novel that traces a manuscript of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* from medieval Persia to the deck of the Titanic.

Together, the programme reflects the spirit of the day itself: Islamic art as a living conversation between makers, places and peoples, one that continues with every visitor who joins it.

The Book Club to host a talk on Amin Maalouf's *Samarkand*, a novel that traces a manuscript of Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat from medieval Persia to the deck of the Titanic

الأولية
AL-AWALIA

Invitation to Tender

Tender / Auction Number	Subject	Tender / Auction Document Fees (Non-refundable)	Tender / Auction Bond	Tender/Auction Offer	Closing Date
AL-AWALIA/TD/2026/40	Supply And Delivery Of 5 Ton Capacity Telehandler with OEM Dozing / Pushing Attachment for Qatar Primary Materials Company ("Supplies")	500 QAR	19,000 QAR	Two Bids (Technical & Commercial)	23November 2026 02:00 PM
AL-AWALIA/TD/2026/41	Construction of the Security Fencing and Gates in Bu GLAILA RCA Operation Site for Qatar Primary Materials Company ("WORKS")	500 QAR	14,000 QAR	Two Bids (Technical & Commercial)	23 November 2026 02:00 PM
AL-AWALIA/TD/2026/42	Call-Off Agreement for the Supply and Delivery of Plant Electrical Lighting Materials for Qatar Primary Materials Company ("Supplies")	500 QAR	11,000 QAR	Two Bids (Technical & Commercial)	23 November 2026 02:00 PM

In accordance with the following conditions:

1. Tender Documents can be collected online by sending email to tender.docs@qpmc.qa along with requested documents in point No.2.
2. Tender Documents will be shared only after delivery of Deposit Slip Stamped by Commercial Bank along with Authorization Letter to the delegated person signed by authorized person as per Computer ID, Copy of commercial Registration (CR) (printed within the last 30 days), Business License and Computer ID.
3. Bids are to be submitted in two sealed (in red wax) envelops (Technical & Commercial) and addressed to Tenders and Auction Committee, Tender reference number and subject are to be clearly written on the envelops, provided that the last date for submitting bids is one o'clock in the afternoon on the closing day. Any bids submitted after this date and time will not be accepted.
4. Tenderers shall submit the proposals to our head office located at Lusail, Building No. 108, St. No. 303, Burj Marina Tower, 17th Floor before the closing date. (To get the map of the new building, please scan the QR code below).
5. Tender Fees are nonrefundable and can be transferred online to Account of Qatar Primary Material Company- Bank A/C (4050-651111-006) at Commercial Bank of Qatar. **IBAN No. (QA 18 CBQA 0000 0000 4050 651111 006).** Tender reference number and subject are to be written on the deposit slip.
6. Tender Bond (Bank Guarantee/ Manager Cheque) must be valid for 120 days after closing date and must be submitted in separate & sealed envelope along with technical bid and a photocopy is to be attached with commercial bid. Bids without tender bond will be rejected.
7. Bids must be valid for 90 days after the closing date.
8. Any queries relating to the Tender Documents must only be raised in writing, preferably by email, to the address specified in the respective Tender Document. Any response issued by Qatar Primary Material Company will be in the form of a question and answer and will be distributed to all Tenderers without revealing the identity of the originator of the query(ies) in the Form of Tender Bulletins. Queries must be received at the address specified in the respective ITT Documentation at least five (5) calendar days prior to the Tender closing date. Any queries received after such a date will be ignored.
9. The amount of the Performance Bond to be provided by the awarded bidder is (10% of the contract value) and its validity period must remain valid under the contract implementation period and the guarantee period according to the terms of the tender.
10. The Technical Bids shall be opened within one week of the closing date.
11. Qatar Primary Material Company has the right, during the contract period, to request an increase or decrease in the amounts of the items, works or services by a percentage not exceeding (20%) of the contract value with the same conditions and prices, provided that the increase is of the same type of contracted items, works or services.
12. Qatar Primary Material Company's tendering terms and conditions apply.
13. For any inquiries about the tender except collecting the documents, please contact tender@qpmc.qa
14. Location of the new building

SCAN ME

For further Inquiry, please send your queries at Fax Number: **44479559** or email to **tender@qpmc.qa**
or visit Qatar Primary Material Company website @ **www.qpmc.qa**

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Qatar Primary Materials Company (Q.P.S.C) | Head Office: Doha-Qatar, Lusail, Marina Tower No.: 108 | CR No.: 33204 | P.O Box: 22095 | Tel: +974 4447 9411
رأس المال المصرح به 200,000,000 | رأس المال المدفوع 200,000,000 | Capital 200,000,000 QAR | Paid Up Capital 200,000,000 info@qpmc.qa www.qpmc.qa

QATAR

Modern Home participates as premium sponsor at STEM Leadership Summit '26



Modern Home, a member of Darwish participated as a premium sponsor of the 4th Annual Qatar STEM Leadership Summit 2026, held recently.

Organised by the International Business & Economic Forum, the summit brought together educational leaders, policymakers, researchers, and technology innovators to explore the future of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, digital transformation, and emerging technologies in learning environments.

As part of its participation, Modern Home presented a dedicated showcase of Apple technologies and education solutions, highlighting how innovative devices and an integrated ecosystem can empower educators, inspire creativity, encourage collaboration, and enhance the learning experience. Through hands-on demonstrations, visitors had the opportunity to explore technologies designed to support interactive teaching, student engagement, and the evolving needs of schools, universities, and educational institutions.

Throughout the two-day event, Modern Home also delivered a series of public presentations, offering attendees insights into the role of technology in transforming educational environments and creating more engaging, collaborative, and future-ready learning experiences. These sessions complemented the interactive demonstrations and provided opportunities to explore how innovative solutions can support educators and equip students with essential skills for the future.

The participation further highlighted Modern Home's expertise in delivering integrated technology solutions tailored to the education sector. From equipment supply and distribution to system design, integration, and authorised service and support, Modern Home provides institutions with comprehensive solutions backed by technical expertise and long-term customer support.

Beyond its dedicated Apple showcase at the summit, Modern Home's education technology portfolio includes leading international brands such as BenQ, Promethean, Sony Professional, Bose Professional, Yamaha Professional, and Sennheiser, offering a broad range of interactive learning, audio-visual, and integrated technology solutions designed to meet the evolving needs of educational institutions.

Recognising education as a fundamental pillar of a knowledge-driven society, Modern Home remains committed to supporting educational institutions in Qatar with world-class technologies that respond to their evolving needs. This commitment reflects Darwish Holding's longstanding legacy of introducing leading international brands and innovative solutions to the Qatari market.

Turning discarded materials into blooming works of art

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter


An art work at the exhibition.

Coinciding with the launch of an exhibition of paintings and sculptures, Amal al-Sada says recycling materials opens new horizons for creativity.

Qatari artist Amal al-Sada has unveiled an exhibition of handcrafted floral works at Al Dana Club's Yaka Hall.

The showcase features a diverse collection of paintings, sculptures and innovative designs that marry the beauty of flowers with meticulous craftsmanship.

Drawing on a variety of materials and artistic techniques, it reflects the evolution of al-Sada's journey in handicrafts while encouraging creativity and the repurposing of discarded materials.

This is al-Sada's second solo exhibition in handicrafts, but the first devoted entirely to flowers. The artist offers a fresh perspective, using a wide range of materials and experimenting with techniques and styles distinct from those of her earlier show.

She also places special emphasis on the backdrop accompanying each piece, regarding it as vital to highlighting the artworks and enhancing their presence.

Al-Sada said her philosophy towards work and creativity is captured in the phrase "I can." Life itself, she explained, much like painting and art, is a philosophy. That conviction drives her to keep experimenting, refining her ideas and turning them into tangible works. She noted that the paintings and designs on display reflect the progress she strives to achieve in her handcrafted creations.

The exhibition went beyond floral paintings in varied colours and forms, also featuring striking sculptures and artistic compositions that turned the venue into a space where art and nature converge.

It even drew photography enthusiasts, who found the diverse works and designs a perfect aesthetic backdrop for capturing images and documenting the details of the show.

Al-Sada expressed delight at the positive reception of the exhibition, which focused on handicrafts and upcycling.

She said the turnout reflects the community's interest in innovative ideas, particularly the importance of turning discarded materials and simple everyday items into pieces with both aesthetic value and an environmental message.

"Discarded materials and simple resources are a treasure in the hands of an artist; they can be transformed into truly exceptional, creative works," she added.

Al-Sada also noted that the diverse range of visitors, including art and creativity enthusiasts as well as family and friends, had a significant, positive impact and served as a powerful incentive to pursue new creative endeavours.



Qatar Charity implements 77 projects in Burkina Faso

Qatar Charity implemented 77 water projects in Burkina Faso during the first ten months of 2026 at total cost of approximately QR 776,000 and the projects are expected to benefit 24,650 people.

The completed projects comprise three artesian wells equipped with water storage tanks, 11 artesian wells, and 63 shallow wells fitted with hand pumps. These projects help provide clean, safe water sources close to communities and strengthen water security in the targeted areas.

Most of the projects were concentrated in five municipalities in Oubritenga Province in central Burkina Faso: Loumbila, Nagréongo, Ziniaré, Wimego, and Sourgoubila. These areas were selected because of their urgent need for safe water sources.

The projects were implemented in response to essential needs identified by the relevant government authorities, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Animal and Fisheries Resources, as part of their co-operation with Qatar Charity to provide safe, nearby water sources for government and educational institutions, neighbourhoods, and remote villages. The projects help reduce the time and effort spent collecting water, particularly for women and children. They also reduce reliance on unsafe water sources, improve health and living conditions, and promote community stability.

Nawaga Kabore Yanogo Florence, regional director, Agriculture, Water and Biological Resources, thanked Qatar Charity for its support for residents of the targeted areas, highlighting the tangible impact of the water projects on their lives.

She said: "We have all seen the significant impact of the completed wells in easing residents' hardships and reducing the difficulties they faced in accessing water, as well as improving quality of life and promoting community stability."

MoECC highlights key findings of Qatar's 2025 state of the environment report

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) has highlighted the key themes of Qatar's 2025 State of the Environment Report during an introductory lecture titled "Know Your Environment and Contribute to Its Sustainability" at an event.

The lecture was organised as part of Qatar Sustainability Week 2026. It was attended by a delegation from Oman, comprising specialists and officials working in the fields of environment and sustainability.

The event provided an opportunity to exchange expertise and explore Qatar's experience in preparing national environmental reports.

The lecture aimed to raise awareness of the state of the environment in the country. It did so through the introduction of the report as a national reference providing a comprehensive assessment of the country's environmental conditions, while supporting efforts to protect the environment and achieve sustainability.

Further, the presentation covered how to access the report and make effective use of its contents, highlighting its main sections, key topics and environmental indicators.

It also explained how the report's data can be used to support studies and research, anticipate future environmental trends, formulate policies and inform evidence-based decision-making.

Convention holds workshop on Marine Biodiversity Treaty

QNA
Doha



A two-day training workshop titled "The Convention on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction: From Negotiations to Implementation" opened yesterday, organised by the Standing Committee on the Law of the Sea Convention at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the participation of representatives from relevant government entities in Qatar.

The workshop aims to familiarise participants with the agreement and its implementation requirements, strengthen national co-ordination on the matter, and address marine genetic resources, marine protected areas, environmental impact assessments, capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology, as well as the agreement's financial mechanism.

In his opening remarks, Ali Mohammed al-Yarbooi, a member of the Standing Committee on the Law of the Sea Convention, said the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, known as the BBNJ Agreement, marked an important milestone in the development of international law of the sea and in efforts to protect the marine environment and conserve its resources.

He said the workshop was particularly important in light of Qatar's accession to the agreement on Jan 14, 2026, and its entry into force for Qatar on Feb 13, 2026. This entails the need to understand its provisions and obligations, as well as a shared national responsibility for its implementation and for identifying the co-ordination and co-operation required among the entities.

Al-Yarbooi commended the committee's initiative in organising the workshop, saying it reflected its commitment to translating interest in the BBNJ Agreement into practical steps to strengthen national understanding of its provisions and implementation requirements.

He said Qatar's interest in maritime affairs stemmed from the importance of the marine environment and its resources, their connection to sustainable development and regional and international co-operation, and the need to keep pace with developments in the international marine governance framework.

The agreement, he noted, adds an important dimension to international efforts to protect marine biodiversity through a comprehensive framework addressing the key elements of such protection. He added that the importance of these elements extended beyond their legal and environmental dimensions to include scientific, technical and institutional aspects, as well as the need to co-ordinate the roles of relevant national entities.

ANNOUNCEMENT

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Any objection, please contact
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Huawei Qatar honours outstanding ICT talents at ceremony



Huawei Qatar hosted its ICT Academy Annual Achievements and Student Awards Ceremony 2025–2026, recognising outstanding students, academic and industry partners for their contributions to ICT education and talent development in Qatar.

The ceremony also served as an occasion to announce the launch of the 11th Huawei ICT Competition 2026–2027 in Qatar, following the commencement of the competition across the Middle East and Central Asia region.

Through its ICT Academy programme and strategic partnerships with academic institutions, Huawei continues to bridge the gap between education and employment, equipping students with industry-relevant skills and supporting future career pathways.

The event brought together distinguished guests, senior officials, university leaders, deans, faculty members, industry partners, and students to celebrate achievements in ICT education and strengthen collaboration in developing Qatar's future digital talent.

Lyn Xiong, CEO, Huawei Qatar said: "At Huawei, we firmly believe that bridging the gap between academic knowledge and real-world industry demands is essential to developing future-ready digital talent. As artificial intelligence continues to reshape industries, technological innovation and talent development must advance together. Through our established partnerships with leading universities in Qatar, we are committed to strengthening academia–industry collaboration and equipping young talent with cutting-edge knowledge, practical skills, and hands-on experience."

Dr Hareb Mohamed al-Jabri, Assistant Undersecretary for Higher Education Affairs at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, said: "These initiatives underscore the importance of partnerships between higher education institutions and the technology sector in nurturing a skilled workforce capable of transforming knowledge into added value, contributing to Qatar National Vision and the development of a knowledge-based, innovation-driven economy."

During the ceremony, Huawei recognised the achievements of students and teams participating in the Huawei ICT Competition 2025–2026, honoring their technical excellence, creativity, and innovation.

Aspetar strengthens scientific board with leading experts

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Aspetar, Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Hospital, has strengthened its Scientific Advisory Board with five prominent international experts, in a step that reflects the hospital's commitment to advancing its scientific and medical ecosystem and drawing on world-class expertise in sports medicine, orthopaedic surgery, sports rehabilitation, performance science and the care of elite athletes.

The new board members are Dr Neal El Attrache, Dr Carly Day, Prof Andrew M Jones, Dr Mathieu Lacome and Daniel Lewindon bringing together diverse expertise ranging from surgery and athlete medical care to performance science, analytics and applied physiology.

The Scientific Advisory Board will provide independent scientific advice and recommendations in support of Aspetar's clinical services, scientific research, medical education and strategic development, helping the hospital continue to apply global standards and enhance the quality of care provided to athletes.

Khalid Ali al-Mawlawi, acting director-general of Aspetar, said: "The formation of the Scientific Advisory Board with this distinguished group of international experts represents an important milestone in Aspetar's journey to uphold the highest standards of medical and scientific excellence. We are not simply attracting world-renowned names; we are bringing together diverse expertise from medicine, surgery, scientific research and performance science around a shared vision: advancing the care of athletes and translating scientific knowledge into practices with real impact."

Dr Neal El Attrache is one of the most internationally recognised names in orthopaedic surgery, sports medicine and elite athlete care, with a career spanning more than three decades. He currently serves as Executive Director of Medical Services and Senior Orthopaedic Surgeon for the Los Angeles Rams and the Los Angeles Dodgers in the United States, and practices at the Cedars-Sinai Kerlan-Jobe Institute. He is a past President of the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine.



Dr Carly Day is a specialist in sports medicine and athlete health and wellbeing. She serves as Head Team Physician for Purdue University Athletics in the United States, where she oversees medical care for more than 500 student-athletes, and is a team physician for the United States Soccer U-20 Women's National Team. She is a past president of the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, bringing to the board direct experience in integrated athlete care.

Prof Andrew M Jones is professor of Applied Physiology at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom and one of the world's leading experts in exercise physiology and endurance performance. He has authored more than 400 peer-reviewed scientific publications, serves as Editor-in-Chief of Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise and is President-Elect of the European College of Sport Science.

Dr Mathieu Lacome is Director of Performance at Paris Saint-Germain Football Club in France, working within the club's Medical and Performance Department. A sports scientist with approximately 15 years of experience in elite football and rugby, he was previously Chief Football Performance Officer at Parma Calcio, and his work focuses on training-load and response frameworks and data-driven approaches to athlete development.

Daniel Lewindon is Performance Director at Tottenham Hotspur Football Club in the English Premier League, where he is responsible for medical, sports science, nutrition and psychology across the club's men's, women's and academy teams.

His experience spans elite football, rugby and tennis, including previous leadership roles with City Football Group, the Lawn Tennis Association and England Rugby, strengthening the board's applied dimension in meeting the demands of elite athletes.

MoCI, QDB organise workshop on competition regulation legislation

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Qatar Development Bank (QDB), organised a workshop titled 'Protection of Competition and Prevention of Monopolistic Practices Law: What Your Business Needs to Know', featuring the participation of small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owners.
The workshop aimed to introduce the fundamental concepts of competition protection and the key provisions of Law No. 19 of 2006 on the Protection of Competition and Prevention of Monopolistic Practices, including its scope of application and enforcement authorities. It also clarified the legal rights and obligations incumbent upon businesses, bolstering their ability to conduct commercial operations within approved legislative frameworks.
The session addressed several key themes, including anti-competitive agreements and practices, abuse of market dominance, such as price fixing, market sharing, and bid rigging among competitors, alongside statutory exemptions and penalties, as well as obligations governing economic concentration and notification procedures.
Furthermore, the workshop reviewed mechanisms for filing reports and complaints regarding anti-competitive practices, the stages for reviewing and adjudicating them, and the competencies of the Competition Protection Department at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Committee for the Protection of Competition and Prevention of Monopolistic Practices. It also highlighted services offered by the department, including confidential reporting channels and voluntary reviews of economic concentration applications prior to formal notification. **(QNA)**

Historic Doha to come alive in six-month cultural journey

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"By connecting historic landmarks through a single cultural route, we are activating heritage assets and creating new ways for residents and visitors to engage with the history, identity and traditions that have shaped our nation."

He said the approach would strengthen Qatar's cultural tourism appeal while preserving its heritage for future generations, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

At the heart of Skeek Al Doha are five restored destinations, each opening a different window onto the capital's transformation from a close-knit community of traditional neighbourhoods into a modern metropolis.

Fereej al-Asmakh offers a glimpse into the rhythms of traditional neighbourhood life, where communal bonds and everyday customs formed the fabric of society. Bayt al-Zaman traces Doha's architectural heritage, commercial traditions and family memories, evoking the character of a city shaped by trade and human connections.

The Founder's House Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed al-Thani takes visitors deeper into Qatar's historical foundations, exploring the leadership values and defining moments that helped forge the nation's identity.

At Doha Stadium, the spotlight shifts to the country's sporting heritage, tracing the beginnings of a footballing journey that would eventually place Qatar on the global sporting map.

Dar al-Kutub al-Qatariya completes the trail with a celebration of intellectual heritage, highlighting the role of books, archives and historical records in safeguarding the nation's collective memory.

The experience will evolve throughout its six-month run, with a changing calendar of workshops, cultural events and interactive performances designed to reflect the seasons and major occasions in Qatar's social and cultural life.





December will bring Qatar National Day celebrations, followed by family-oriented cultural activities in January and sporting experiences around National Sport Day in February.

Ramadan evenings in March will evoke the warmth of traditional Qatari hospitality, with activities showcasing local crafts and customs, while special Eid al-Fitr programming will add to the festive atmosphere.

A defining feature of Skeek Al Doha is the involvement of local communities in shaping its content and character. Rather than presenting heritage solely through monuments and historical accounts, the initiative draws on the lived experiences, recollections and traditions of people whose stories form an integral part of Doha's evolution.

This intergenerational approach places local voices at the centre of the visitor experience, allowing older generations to pass on their memories while younger audiences discover the cultural foundations of the city they inhabit today.

For Qatar Tourism, the initiative also represents a longer-term investment in cultural tourism, demonstrating how historic spaces can be revitalised without losing their authenticity.

By weaving together architecture, sport, literature, community life and national history, Skeek Al Doha aims to offer a richer understanding of the capital's character — not simply as a city of striking modern landmarks, but as a place whose enduring identity lives in its old streets, shared memories and timeless traditions.

Moody's: Strong fiscal buffers shield Qatar against energy shifts

From Page 1

Meanwhile, hydrocarbon producers in the Gulf continue to channel export revenues into long-term economic transformation.
Moody's stated that net fuel exports still account for about 33% to 38% of gross domestic product in Qatar, Kuwait, and Iraq, compared with 16% to 28% in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Oman.
Saudi Arabia has accelerated renewable energy capacity additions for domestic consumption and new industries such as hydrogen from a low base, the report noted.
For Gulf hydrocarbon exporters, the rating agency pointed out that nuclear power frees hydrocarbons for export rather than reducing import risk, though cost, construction timelines, and regional safety concerns keep expansion cautious and uneven.
The UAE's Barakah plant remains the region's only operating nuclear station, supplying about 25% of domestic electricity, while a July agreement between the US and Saudi Arabia opens a path to domestic enrichment.
Over the medium term, Moody's stated that global decarbonisation policies and rising renewable electricity generation could lower hydrocarbon demand.
The agency noted that sovereign credit outcomes during this pragmatic energy transition will depend on fiscal space, institutional execution capacity, and access to finance.
Exporters with lower production costs and substantial financial reserves remain far better insulated against long-term demand shifts than producers with high fiscal break-even prices and limited buffers, it added.

Qatar champions youth role in regional peace

From Page 1

UN Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs Felipe Paullier, addressing participants from New York, urged stronger institutional support for youth-led peacebuilding initiatives, particularly those involving young people affected by conflict.

Qatar's Youth Affairs Department Director Fawaz al-Musifri told QNA that the forum supported UN Security Council Resolution 2250 and sought to ensure young people's proposals influenced regional peace and security policies.

He said recommendations prepared with the Arab League's technical team would be submitted for adoption and circulated among Arab countries.

Unicef Deputy Regional Director Abdul Aziz Fofana underscored the urgency of action, revealing that 44.8mn children across the region required humanitarian assistance, while at least 30mn remained out of school.

He warned that youth unemployment and barriers facing young women further threatened regional stability, urging governments to provide sustained resources and ensure the forum's recommendations translated into measurable results.

The gathering aims to establish a lasting framework for youth participation, reinforcing Doha's role as a platform for regional dialogue and co-operation.

Asean kids promote environmental awareness





The 2026 Asean Kids for Green Qatar Painting Competition brought together young artists from Asean communities across Qatar, highlighting the importance of environmental protection, sustainability and international friendship through the universal language of art.

Jointly organised by the Asean Committee in Doha (ACD) and the Fire Station Centre for Contemporary Art Practices, the competition provided children with an opportunity to express their ideas, concerns and aspirations for a greener future through creative paintings. The initiative also celebrated the strong bonds of friendship and co-operation between Asean member states and Qatar.

The opening ceremony was attended by Baraa Talal Abdulkarim, general manager of the Fire Station Centre for Contemporary Art Practices, alongside ambassadors, heads of mission and representatives of Asean member states in Qatar, as well as parents, children and members of the media.

Addressing the gathering, ambassador of Vietnam to Qatar Nguyen Huy Hiep, speaking on behalf of the ACD, welcomed the participants and guests and highlighted the importance of engaging younger generations in environmental protection and sustainable development.

He noted that safeguarding the environment was a shared responsibility that extended beyond governments and organisations, requiring the active participation of individuals and families.

He stressed that encouraging children to appreciate nature and care for their surroundings from an early age was essential to building a greener and more sustainable future. The ambassador said the competition offered children a valuable platform to communicate their thoughts and creative ideas about environmental issues through art. He added that each painting reflected the participants' imagination while conveying important messages about protecting nature, keeping communities clean and promoting environmentally responsible lifestyles.

He further stressed the educational value of the initiative, saying that activities of this kind could help children develop a stronger sense of environmental responsibility while encouraging them to share their perspectives and engage with important global challenges.

Beyond its environmental objectives, the competition served as an opportunity to strengthen connections among Asean diplomatic missions and communities in Qatar, while further promoting friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation between Asean and Qatar. Accordingly, ambassador Nguyen expressed his appreciation to the Fire Station Centre for Contemporary Art Practices for its partnership and support in organising the event. He also thanked the Asean embassies, members of the Asean community in Qatar, parents, media representatives and everyone involved in preparing the competition.

In the meantime, the Asean Committee in Doha presented the Fire Station with a collaborative canvas painting created on-site by members of Asean embassies and the wider Asean community in Qatar.

The artwork symbolised unity, cultural exchange and the collective commitment to environmental awareness.

WORLD

Asean backs Myanmar engagement, peace plan

Reuters
Manila

Southeast Asian leaders reaffirmed the need to keep engaging with Myanmar while sticking with a plan calling for an immediate end to violence in the war-torn country, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said yesterday.

Chairing the annual summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Manila, Marcos said the 11-member bloc agreed to pursue "constructive and principled engagement" while adhering to its five-point peace plan, Asean's framework for responding to the crisis in Myanmar since a 2021 coup.

The summit is under pressure 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 Myanmar's civil war.

The army-backed government wants to normalise ties with Asean after its leaders were barred from summits in 2021 for not de-escalating conflict in the wake of the military coup that brought them to power.

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

Coup leader-turned-president Min Aung Hlaing's military has received support from China, India and Russia. His administration has gained increasing international recognition in recent months, including secret talks with US officials as the Trump administration reverses years of isolation.

Marcos, expressing hope that Asean could advance the implementation of the peace plan, said leaders should ask "what more can we do for Myanmar" as the crisis continued to displace families, disrupt communities and affect the country's youth.

In addition to seeking an end to the fighting, Asean's Myanmar framework calls for constructive dialogue among all parties and offers the bloc's mediation and humanitarian assistance.

Asean, China fail to conclude South China Sea code of conduct

Reuters
Manila



Myanmar Director-General of the Asean Affairs Department Han Win Aung, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul, East Timorese Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao, Vietnamese Prime Minister Le Minh Hung, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong, Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Hangchuon Naron and Laotian Prime Minister Saleumxay Kommasith pose for a picture during the 49th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit retreat sessions in Manila yesterday. (**AFP**)

Asean and China were unable to conclude negotiations on a long-delayed South China Sea code of conduct under the Philippines' chairmanship, despite reaching provisional agreement on about 80% of the draft, Manila's foreign minister said yesterday.

Negotiations on an Asean-China Code of Conduct in the South China Sea have dragged on for over two decades, but the Philippines, as current chair, had committed to speed up those talks and conclude the code this year.

"There is no conclusion yet," Philippine foreign minister Ma Theresa Lazaro told a press conference at a summit of the 11-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Manila, adding that several key issues remain unresolved, including questions over whether the code would be legally binding.

"The Asean countries plus China have also different views on how things are," she added.

China's Southeast Asian neighbours want the code to be grounded in international law, which they have repeatedly accused Beijing of disregarding as it asserts its sovereignty over nearly all of the South China Sea.

Beijing maintains that its actions in the South China Sea have been lawful and professional.

China's extensive maritime claims overlap with the exclusive economic zones of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, making a functional code essential to preventing any escalation of tensions and managing incidents at sea.

An international arbitration tribunal ruled in 2016 that China's sweeping claims have no basis under international law, a decision that Beijing rejects.

Manila and Beijing have been locked in a series of maritime confrontations in recent years, with the Philippines accusing China of repeated aggressive actions inside its exclusive economic zone, including dangerous manoeuvres, water-cannoning and disrupting resupply missions.

China, for its part, has accused the Philippines of intruding into what it claims as its territory.

Analysts say the disagreements are not only between Asean and China.

Collin Koh, a senior fellow at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, said divisions among Asean members, including over the geographical scope of the code, had also slowed negotiations.

"Other than Beijing, intramural divergences within Asean also play a significant role," he said.

Koh said the remaining differences would be difficult to resolve and would require "major concessions" from the various parties.

Singapore will inherit the task of trying to secure agreement on the code of conduct when it assumes the Asean chairmanship next year.

Trade war in focus at Asean summit ahead of Trump arrival

AFP
Manila



Protesters scuffle with police officers during a protest against US President Donald Trump's upcoming visit and participation, in the first day of the 49th Asean Summit in Manila, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

A key summit opened Sunday in Manila, with Southeast Asian heads of state grappling with the Middle East crisis and their own regional flashpoints and global leaders finding common ground over US President Donald Trump's trade war.

Trump is scheduled to arrive tomorrow, near the summit's conclusion, a visit that will include a meeting with the leaders of his fellow Quad countries India, Japan and Australia — the first such sitdown of his second term.

But it was the US leader's tariff blizzard that Brazil's newly re-elected President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva had on his mind yesterday in Manila.

"Brazil has learned an extraordinary lesson after the US decided to impose tariffs (on other countries)," he told reporters on the sidelines of the 11-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit.

"Instead of weeping or begging the US government ... to have pity on us, we decided to look for other partners for us to sell and for us to buy from," he said, noting his country's trade with regional states Indonesia and Vietnam had jumped 15 and 13%, respectively.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney sounded a similar note at the summit a day earlier while touting a new Philippine free-trade deal and Asean trade talks he said had been "substantially concluded".

The two 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.

Lula told reporters he had met with Carney on the summit's sidelines, inviting him to make an official visit to Brazil, and that he hoped to double trade with Canada.

Nearly 20,000 police officers have been deployed around Metro Manila for the summit, with progressive groups predicting a turnout of thousands tomorrow for an anti-Trump march on the summit site.

Much of the uproar targets the US Pax Silica programme — a supply-chain initiative designed to counter China's dominance in semiconductors and rare earths — whose flagship Philippine project, a 1,620-hectare AI manufacturing hub north of Manila, threatens to displace Indigenous families.

Yesterday, a crowd of about 200 protesters, some carrying signs reading "the Philippines is not for sale" and "Ban Trump!" clashed with police who blocked an attempted march.

AFP reporters saw at least three demonstrators taken away by officers.

Two issues that have vexed Asean leaders for years — a languishing South China Sea "Code of Conduct" and the relationship with war-torn Myanmar — will be Singapore's problem when the bloc's rotating chair passes to the city-state in 2027.

Myanmar has been excluded from high-level Asean meetings since a 2021 military coup that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and triggered an ongoing civil war.

Yesterday, a joint Asean statement called for "calibrated engagement" with the Myanmar government, echoing language Thailand has used for months.

Korea probes top exam scorer after AI cheating confession

AFP
Seoul

Korean police said yesterday they had launched an investigation after the top scorer in a national tax accountant exam admitted to using artificial intelligence to cheat.

The candidate, who ranked first in both rounds of the qualification exam held in April and July, confessed through his lawyer that he used AI to obtain answers during the tests.

His score of 397.5 out of 400 points in the first round, with only one wrong answer out of 160 questions, had sparked accusations that he cheated using smart glasses, which he initially denied.

"We received a written confession through the test taker's lawyer this morning regarding cheating on the tax accountant exam," the Seoul Metropolitan Police Agency said, adding the case had been assigned to investigators.

In a video posted on his lawyer's YouTube channel, the candidate said he "deeply regretted" what he had done.

"I used a miniature camera to photograph the exam questions and sent them to AI, then checked the answers on my smartphone," he said.

The individual said he had struggled financially after leaving his job to start a business.

"I wanted to make money, and I hated seeing myself disappointing my parents after quitting a good job," he said.

His lawyer said further details would not be disclosed over concerns other cheaters could copy the method.

The examination is administered by the Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRDK), which said two supervisors were present when the candidate sat the test.

HRDK president Lee Byung-hoon apologised for the incident and said the agency would file a criminal complaint against the test-taker for obstruction of business.

With the highly competitive annual college entrance test, known as the "Suneung", due to take place on November 19, the presidential office said it was treating the issue seriously.

At a meeting held yesterday, officials decided to comprehensively investigate all suspected cases of cheating involving AI across national qualification examinations, according to the presidential office.

Authorities have recently stepped up efforts against cheating involving smart glasses.

The HRDK said yesterday an "AI inspector" caught a test taker wearing smart glasses during a gas engineer certification exam last month.

In October, the government announced plans to file criminal complaints against students caught using such devices in the national university entrance exam.

PM's speeches are mostly all his own work, says UK govt

Downing Street has played down photos published in a Sunday newspaper that appeared to show one of Prime Minister Andy Burnham's aides using AI to prepare a speech.
The *Mail on Sunday* posted the snap of the aide, using ChatGPT to rework a speech of the Labour leader while on board a train.
The images were said to have been taken on Friday by a fellow passenger before Burnham gave a speech to the Welsh Labour party conference in Cardiff.
A Downing Street spokesperson insisted yesterday: "The PM writes most of his own speeches.
"An aide sought feedback on a speech draft that had already been written," they were quoted as saying by the domestic Press Association news agency.
The newspaper said the aide used the AI app to ask how to make the speech more "emotive". PA said the suggestions from ChatGPT did not make it into the final speech. (**AFP**)

Philippines, Australia sign defence pact

Reuters
Manila



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese looks on as Philippines' Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, Australian ambassador to the Philippines Marc Innes-Brown hold signed Defence Co-operation Arrangement documents at the international port in Manila yesterday. (**AFP**)

The Philippines and Australia signed a defence co-operation arrangement yesterday that Manila said would lower bureaucratic hurdles to joint military activities, as the two countries further deepen security ties.

Philippine Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro said the arrangement would streamline implementation of the bilateral Status of Visiting Forces Agreement, or SOVFA, by simplifying co-ordination procedures.

"Rather than 100 steps to do a single thing, it will just now take 10," Teodoro told reporters, describing the deal as an "anti-red tape measure" for implementing SOVFA.

He said the arrangement would pave the way for closer co-operation involving maritime, air and land forces, as well as humanitarian and disaster response, and would bolster the Philippines' "credible deterrence posture" including in the South China Sea.

The Philippines has been broadening its network of security ties while complementing a long-standing alliance with its treaty partner, the United States, in the face of what it describes as China's aggressive behaviour in the South China Sea, where countries have overlapping maritime claims.

Australia has consistently supported Manila's position on the strategic waterway, backing a 2016 ruling by an international arbitral tribunal that China's sweeping claims have no basis under international law, a decision Beijing rejects.

Beijing maintains that its actions in the South China Sea have been lawful and professional. It routinely opposes Manila's joint military activities with its allied partners, saying such drills heighten tensions in the region.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese witnessed the signing of the defence pact in Manila, where he is attending a summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

He said the agreement would enhance maritime awareness and information sharing and increase strategic dialogue, training, interoperability and defence infrastructure development.

Albanese announced additional Australian investment in maritime domain awareness, including drone technology, equipment and training aimed at improving detection of maritime and cybersecurity threats.

Prince William to be joined by wife Kate for visit to India

Reuters
London

Kate, Britain's Princess of Wales, will undertake her biggest foreign trip since having treatment for cancer when she joins her husband Prince William in India for his annual Earthshot Prize awards this week.

Heir-to-the-throne William, 44, and Kate are flying out for a series of events across Mumbai during a three-day visit that includes tomorrow's awards ceremony.

For Kate, 44, the trip marks her most high-profile overseas visit since she had preventative chemotherapy for an unspecified form of cancer in 2024. While she is now in remission, she says the illness still impacts her life.

William, who, like his father King Charles, has made campaigning on the environment one of his biggest causes, founded the Earthshot Prize in 2020 with the aim of finding solutions to climate change. It awards five winners £1mn ($1.3mn) each to scale up their projects.

"For the prince, Earthshot is ultimately about replacing pessimism with possibility," a spokesperson for the couple's office at Kensington Palace said.

"It is about demonstrating that while the environmental challenges facing our planet are serious, the ingenuity, determination and creativity being applied to solving them are every bit as powerful."

At the awards ceremony, which organisers say will be its biggest so far, the royals will be joined by a number of celebrities including Indian cricketing great Sachin Tendulkar, actors Alia Bhatt and Rami Malek, and British pop group Take That, who will give their first-ever performance in India.

"To be performing here for the very first time, after all these years, and alongside the extraordinary people creating a better future for our planet — is really special," the group said in a statement.

Away from Earthshot, the royals will also attend events linked to Indian cricket, fashion and cinema.

Since her illness, Kate has significantly reduced her official workload, saying she was taking each day as it comes. While her public appearances have gradually increased, she has not joined William on any previous foreign trips.

Her only significant overseas visit since 2024 came in May when she travelled alone to Italy for two days as part of her work focusing on early childhood development.

"I was told in hospital that my recovery would not be linear. There will be good days and bad days, that it will take time," she said in an interview published this week in the latest edition of *Country Life* magazine, for which William was guest editor.

Ukrainian strikes hit major industrial city, Russia targets military sites

AFP
Moscow

Ukraine yesterday claimed responsibility for strikes on a major petrochemical plant and an oil refinery in the central Russian city of Nizhnekamsk, as Russian and pro-Russian authorities reported three deaths elsewhere.

"On the night of November 15, units of Ukraine's Defence Forces reached Nizhnekamsk in Tatarstan," the military said on Telegram.

"Two enterprises that feed the Russian war with raw materials and fuel came under attack."

One of the targets was Nizhnekamskneftekhim, a major petrochemical complex owned by leading Russian company Sibur, and a nearby refinery, it added.

Nearly five years after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Kyiv has stepped up cross-border attacks and in occupied territories, particularly by targeting industrial and oil infrastructure.

Nizhnekamsk mayor Radmir Belyaev confirmed what he said was a "massive and prolonged attack by enemy drones", which caused damage to facilities.

Six people were wounded in the strikes, which also damaged a residential building, he said, adding that air quality monitoring had been put in place.

Nizhnekamsk, a city of about 240,000 people, is often dubbed the "petrochemical capital" of Tatarstan.


The site of a drone strike in Chornomorsk city, Odesa region. (**AFP**)

Videos published on social networks, which AFP has not authenticated, showed flames and thick smoke rising above the industrial site.

Other Ukrainian strikes killed one person in Taganrog, an industrial port city near the border, said regional governor Yuri Slyusar.

A lorry driver and an elderly woman were also killed in the occupied Lugansk region, according to Leonid Pasechnik, the regional leader installed by the Russian authority.

The defence ministry in Moscow said in a statement that it had shot down 533 Ukrainian drones between Saturday night and Sunday morning over a dozen regions of Russia and annexed Crimea.

Ukrainian forces also claimed a strike at a military production site and two launch sites for aircraft and drones in the western Russian regions of Bryansk, Astrakhan and Oryol.

Russia's defence ministry said it had targeted transport and production infrastructure used for military purposes, including locomotives, as well as military sites.

Ukraine said several people had been wounded in a number of regions while energy operators reported significant power outages from Russian strikes in the Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk and Odesa regions.

Three ships struck near Romanian shipping canal in Black Sea: PM

Reuters
Bucharest

Drones have struck three commercial ships in the Black Sea near Romania's Sulina canal, Prime Minister Luca Niculescu said yesterday, adding that his armed forces had scrambled fighter jets twice.

Defence Minister Stefan Radu Oprea said there were no casualties and that the ships' crews had managed to control the fires on board after the strikes late on Saturday.

A growing series of deadly strikes on merchant ships near Nato members Romania and Bulgaria shows how the escalating maritime war between Russia and Ukraine is expanding into a major challenge for the transatlantic alliance in the Black Sea.

The Sulina canal is a key Romanian shipping lane which links the Danube river to the Black Sea and is used by Ukraine for exports.

Romanian officials did not identify the origin of the drones but said they were a direct consequence of Russia's war in Ukraine.

"These incidents are unacceptable and constitute a violation of international law," Niculescu said. "They reflect the deteriorating security situation caused by Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine."

Russia has denied targeting Ukraine's neighbours with drones. Oprea said the three struck ships were Greek-flagged oil and chemical tanker Evia Petrol V, bulk carrier Marsol and oil products tanker Ali Najafov, both under the flag of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Evia Petrol V and Marsol were struck 4 and 5 nautical miles southeast of the Sulina canal, the defence ministry said, inside Romanian territorial waters.

Oprea said a separate general cargo ship was hit by a drone late on Friday, also with no casualties. Private television station Digi24 said the vessel was Palau-flagged general cargo ship Larissa 1. "On Tuesday and Wednesday I will be in Brussels for the meeting with my fellow (defence) ministers," Oprea said.

"We need the solidarity of our allies, shown through patrols with surveillance aircraft and through equipment for counter-drone warfare."

France temporarily relocated the Atlantique 2 maritime patrols aircraft to Romania after it asked for reinforcement.

Many of the ships hit in October and November were anchored near or sailing to or from the Sulina canal.

Czechs stage huge rally against public-media funding overhaul

AFP
Prague

Hundreds of thousands of Czechs rallied in Prague yesterday against the nationalist government's plan to overhaul public-media funding, which critics see as a threat to press freedom.

The government of billionaire Prime Minister Andrej Babis wants to switch from funding Czech TV and Czech Radio through licence fees paid by viewers and listeners to payments from the state budget.

Opponents say the move will stifle media freedom as it will make the outlets more dependent on the state.

"We need to keep media independent. The government is taking steps to control them, cut their funding and affect what they broadcast," computer programmer Jan Snasel told AFP at the rally.

Mikulas Minar, head of the mn Moments for Democracy group organising the rally, said that "between 350,000 and 450,000 people" showed up on the sunny afternoon yesterday.

Many wore triangular paper hats similar to a popular animated character from Czech TV that has become a symbol of the protest, while others sported banners saying "we won't give media away".


Participants wave Czech flags during a rally in Prague. (**AFP**)

Babis's coalition, comprising his catch-all ANO party, the far-right SPD and the Eurosceptic Motorists, insists the plan will not affect editorial independence or programme content — but broadcasters need to cut costs.

The proposal has already led to several large street protests since Culture Minister Oto Klempir introduced it in April.

Thousands demonstrated last month after the parliament rushed through a bill outlining the plans in a controversial overnight vote in the first of three readings, turning the time of the vote — 4:36 — into another symbol.

On November 3, Czech TV and Czech Radio staff went on a one-day strike, while thousands including university students rallied across the country.

But yesterday's rally spilled over into a broader protest against the Babis government. "I have come to support free media, Czech TV, Czech Radio, but also culture, environment protection, there are so many issues. It's not only about media," Prague teacher and researcher Lucie Fajfrova said.

Protesters also targeted far-right parliament speaker Tomio Okamura, the SPD chairman.

Minar presented a petition calling on the government to withdraw the media financing bill, but also to dismiss Okamura, accusing his "pro-Russian SPD" of endangering national security.

The mn Moments group brought an estimated quarter of a mn protesters to each of the three previous rallies against Babis — two during his first stint as premier from 2017 to 2021 and one in March this year.

However, Babis's ANO still enjoys the backing of some 30% in opinion polls.

The proposed media reform, which would slash state television and radio budgets by around 15 %, has attracted international attention. The European Broadcasting Union, the European Federation of Journalists, Reporters Without Borders and the International Press Institute have all criticised it.

They have accused Babis of mirroring the muzzling of public media carried out by his allies in other countries, notably Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico and Hungary's ex-leader Viktor Orban.

Trust in the media is low in the Czech Republic, at around 30 to 33%, according to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2026.

"Public service broadcasters remain the most trusted brands, despite increasing attempts by various political actors to undermine their credibility," the report said.

Babis said last week that "nobody wants to control public media, let alone nationalise them" and that "none of what the people are protesting against... is true".

Triumphant Democrats descend on COP31 snubbed by Trump

AFP
Antalya

Fresh from their US midterm election triumph, an emboldened group of Democratic lawmakers descended on the COP31 climate talks shunned by President Donald Trump on Saturday to signal their commitment to tackling global warming.

The 18-strong delegation joined the annual UN conference in Turkiye after their party regained control of both chambers of Congress in a landslide victory last week cheered by climate campaigners. "Many of our allies and partners across the world think the US has not been predictable or dependable. So we have a lot of trust to earn back," Florida Representative Kathy Castor told AFP.

"We have so much work to do. And yes, I hope the US gets back on track with urgent climate action," she said after the group took photos in front of a large COP31 sign in a sprawling expo centre.

The election has been a topic of discussion at COP31 in Antalya, with hopes that Democrats can restore some clean energy policies and that a pro-climate president can be elected in two years.

"What happened in the US is remarkable, and a much needed shift that we all needed, not only from a climate perspective, but overall," Harjeet Singh, strategic advisor to the Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative, told AFP.

In January 2025, Trump rolled back some of the clean energy policies of his predecessors, promoted oil drilling, pulled the US out of the Paris Agreement and kept his country out of the UN's climate negotiations. "It is absolutely shameful that the Trump administration operates this way, that this is an administration that is filled with climate deniers, that is beholden to big oil in the US," Yassamin Ansari, an Arizona lawmaker, told AFP.

Ansari and other members of the delegation spoke at a panel focused on the midterm elections, attracting a crowd that overflowed outside the "America Is All In" pavilion.

The group reminded COP31 delegates that, while Trump has rejected clean energy, US states and local governments have continued to promote renewables and other pro-climate policies.

A group of US mayors and governors visited COP31 earlier this week, along with former US vice president Al Gore and former US climate envoy and secretary of state John Kerry.

"Despite the setbacks that we're experiencing through this Trump administration, climate action is alive in America," California Congressman Raul Ruiz told the panel.

The president's Republican party was handed a resounding defeat last week in large part due to anger over soaring energy prices and Trump's costly war with Iran.

Democrats have vowed to use their majority in the House and the Senate to launch investigations into the administration's climate policies and propose clean energy legislation. But Trump still has two years left in office and has vowed to wield his veto power.

"At a time where Americans from all political backgrounds want to see their energy bills reduced, this administration will be very hard pressed to veto legislation that will bring down costs for the American people," Ansari said.

Brazil's Lula to meet Spain PM in Madrid today

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, on his first foreign trip since winning re-election last month, will visit Madrid today and meet with Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, according to an official schedule.

Lula, who was in the Philippines for a regional summit, was expected to land in Madrid yesterday night before an 11am meeting with Sanchez today at his official Moncloa residence.

Sanchez has been campaigning for re-election in the November 29 polls.

During his tour, which also saw him attend the COP31 climate talks in Turkiye, world leaders have congratulated Lula on his victory. (**AFP**)

After sabotage bid Estonia closes Russia border

Estonia said yesterday it would close its border with Russia after stopping what it said was an attempted arson attack by Russia's GRU military intelligence on a drone factory.

"Estonia will close all Estonian-Russian border crossing points as of 1 December," Foreign Minister Margus Tsahkna posted on X, citing "clear evidence" that the GRU had ordered the attack.

Earlier yesterday, Prime Minister Kristen Michal wrote on X that the GRU had ordered a "sabotage attempt" at the Estonian defence company Threod Systems on Saturday night. "Extensive damage was averted thanks to heightened security measures. The attackers have been detained," he added. The foiled attack happened in Viimsi, north of the capital, Tallinn. Tsahkna, in his later post, said: "Russia must understand that hostile actions against Estonia come with consequences. (**AFP**)

Nations grapple with loss of 1.5C target at UN climate summit

AFP
Antalya

For a decade, the 1.5C goal has served as the north star of climate action, a line nations pledged to hold to avoid the worst ravages of a warming planet.

But at this year's global climate conference — the first since the UN said the 1.5C threshold would be missed — nations appear unsure how to take the news.

The world has already warmed about 1.4C above pre-industrial times and the UN declared in September that crossing 1.5C — the most ambitious target threshold of the Paris accord — was imminent and unavoidable.

Yet in Turkiye, where the COP31 negotiations are at the midway point, some nations are clinging to the goal, particularly those on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr, whose Pacific island nation is threatened by rising seas, said the 1.5C target should be taken as "an abstract target".


Protesters during a Climate Pride to demand climate and social justice and a rapid and fair exit from fossil fuels, in central Rome. (**AFP**)

"It is an existential threat to our food, our economies and sovereignty," he told world leaders in Antalya.

Some countries want a final deal at COP31 to affirm that 1.5C remains the "right goal", according to a summary of negotiating positions released by Australia, which is chairing the talks.

There's also a push for language about returning to 1.5C "as soon as possible" and that global temperatures are "still able" to be lowered once exceeding the threshold.

In private, some negotiators are sceptical but reluctant to abandon a target seen as essential to driving the fastest possible cuts in planet-heating greenhouse gas emissions.

Others are spying an opportunity to jettison 1.5C, several observers of the ongoing closed-door climate negotiations told AFP. This includes the Arab Group and Like-Minded Developing Countries, these sources said — two negotiating blocs of emerging economies including Saudi Arabia and India.

One senior delegate from a western nation warned of a "potential backsliding" in climate action should those efforts succeed at COP31.

Jasper Inventor, head of Greenpeace's delegation in Antalya, said some developing nations worried "a stronger reference" to 1.5C could mean greater pressure to cut emissions without extra financial help.

Among the wish-list of negotiating priorities released on Thursday, some nations also urged a rejection of "grey literature" — an oblique reference seen as a possible swipe at the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

In September, UNEP published a first-of-its-kind study into "overshoot" scenarios, exploring how the world might possibly bring global temperatures back down to 1.5C by 2100 once the threshold is breached.

At COP31, outgoing UN chief Antonio Guterres — who spent his decade in office rallying nations behind 1.5C — said any overshoot must be "as small as possible for as short a time as possible".

Under the Paris agreement, nearly 200 nations agreed to keep warming "well below" 2C while pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5C.

But as scientific evidence mounted in the years after the accord, the lower threshold took on ever greater urgency.

Beyond 1.5C, scientists say, the risks of global warming rise sharply — from more severe floods and heatwaves to irreversible changes to the planet like the permanent loss of coral reefs.

But the idea that warming can be reversed to 1.5C is uncertain, said Pierre Friedlingstein, a climate scientist from the University of Exeter and lead author of the benchmark Global Carbon Budget study.

OPINION

Warning systems race to keep pace

Twice a day during the rainy season, Raquel Izarra climbs to the roof of her home in the eastern Lima suburb of Santa Inés Bajo and measures how much rain has fallen using a homemade gauge, before sending the data to the authorities using WhatsApp.

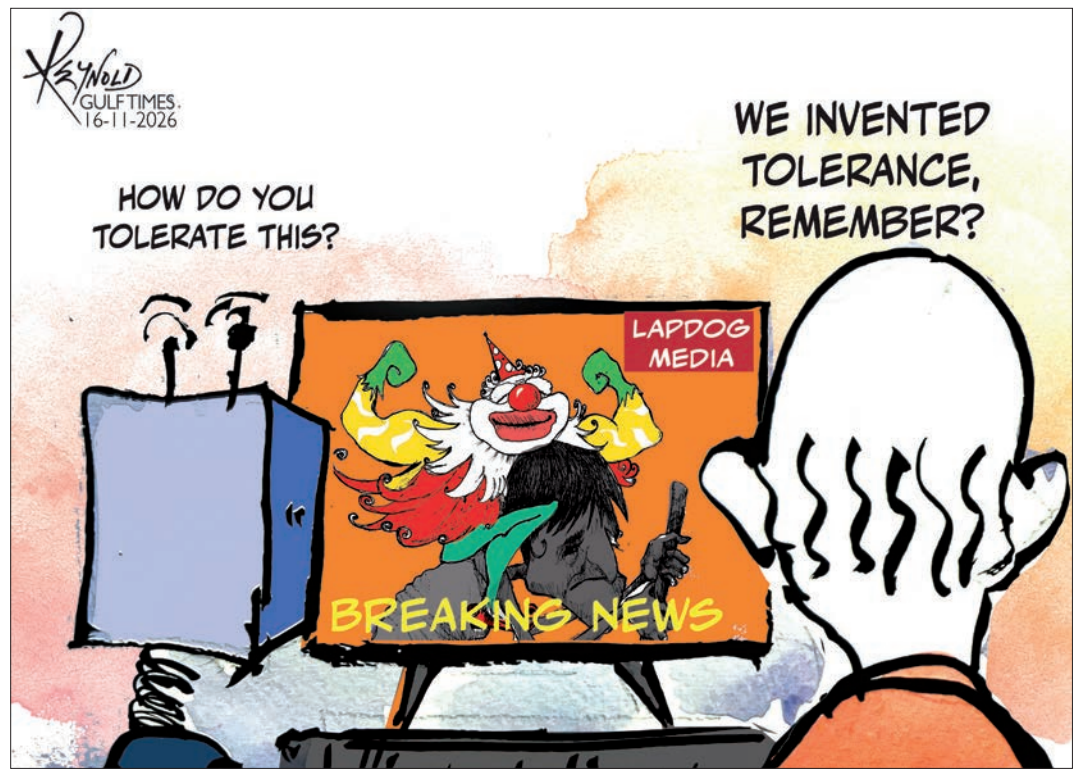
Together with more than 60 other volunteers, she is trying to ensure her community will have time to prepare should heavy rains trigger flooding and mudslides in the low-income area, as they did in 2017. "Every year the rainfall situation has been getting worse," Izarra said. "Now, with this, we feel safer."

"We know that when it rains for more than, I don't know, three, four or five days and it maintains a certain level, that means that the ravine above is going to give way, the ravine is going to activate. That means we start giving warnings."

Global warming has increased the risk of extreme weather events and equipping communities such as Izarra's to cope will be one of the debates at the COP31 talks in Turkey, which will end on November 20. A draft UN report seen by Reuters, which measured progress across risk knowledge; detection, monitoring and forecasting; warning dissemination; and preparedness and response, found gaps remained, especially around operational readiness and financing. The head of the UN's Office for Disaster Risk Reduction said a 2027 target of full coverage for everybody was unlikely to be met. More than two-thirds, or 136, of countries, have some early warning capacity. That represents a 143% increase since reporting began in 2015, but still only 64 of them had capability across all four pillars, the report found.

Data from the Lloyd's Register Foundation's World Risk Poll cited in the UN report also showed that in low-income and lower-middle-income countries, fewer than half of those warned were able to act on the warning compared with three-quarters in upper-middle-income countries. Of people surveyed in 2025 who said they had experienced a disaster in the previous five years, 80% had received at least one warning, the poll found, but the distribution varied. In East Asia, 95% of people had been warned, compared with 47% in Central and Western Africa.

James Kinyangi, head of Climate and Policy at the African Development Bank, told Reuters the extra investment required in Africa ranged between $5bn and $10bn. He said the bank was working with more than 30 countries to develop systems, but more than 20 others needed financial and technical support to build infrastructure, capacity and early-warning services. The UN report said 38 countries have fully operational cell-broadcast warning systems and another 17 are in the final stages of developing them. It said $500mn would be enough to extend coverage to every country and maintain it for three years. — Reuters



Europe pays for Ukraine, but refuses Trump's war with Iran

By Jasim al-Azzawi



The Atlantic alliance now has a price list. Europe pays more to keep Ukraine fighting. Washington sells the weapons and pursues a settlement. When Donald Trump asks Europe to help confront Iran, European governments resist. The disputes expose something deeper than a quarrel over money: allies increasingly disagree about danger.

For Ukrainians sheltering from Russian missiles, this is no abstract debate. It determines whether air defences arrive and whether a diplomatic bargain protects their country or leaves it exposed. For Europeans, it raises an uncomfortable question: how much influence does financing a war buy when someone else controls essential weapons?

Trump described the transaction plainly in July 2025: "We're sending weapons to Nato, and Nato is paying for those weapons, 100%." The institutional shorthand obscures the mechanism. Participating allies finance American equipment for Ukraine. Washington remains indispensable, but Trump wants others to carry more of the cost of resisting Russia.

This is not a complete American withdrawal. On 13 November, Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte said deliveries through its PURL purchasing program were continuing, including Patriots. His description captured the imbalance: "the US still providing crucial aid into Ukraine, paid for by Europeans and Canada". Europe pays; America retains leverage.

The contrast with Joe Biden is sharper than a comparison with Barack Obama. Russia began its war against Ukraine in 2014. The full-scale invasion began on February 24, 2022. Biden built the coalition that answered that assault. Trump inherited it, then recast support around transactions, allied spending, and accelerated negotiations.

Europe's predicament is therefore real, but "abandoned" is too simple. Its dependence persists even as its financial responsibility grows. Kiel Institute analyst Federico Mellace put it directly: "Europe continues to depend on the access to US weapons systems to sustain its military support for Ukraine." Money has not bought independence.

Nor can Europe's commitments be dismissed as rhetorical. The EU's €90bn Ukraine Support Loan covers 2026 and 2027. That is a substantial political undertaking, not proof that every promised euro has arrived. Loans, allocations and delivered assistance are different things. They should not be added together for dramatic effect.

Territory remains the obstacle that weapons purchases cannot resolve. Russia claims Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia, alongside Crimea, annexed in 2014. Only Donetsk and Luhansk constitute the Donbas. Moscow's claims do not establish sovereignty. Russia has claimed entire regions without controlling all their territory. Annexation declarations cannot erase that distinction.

Putin offered his own verdict in September 2022: "Russia has four new regions." The United Nations General Assembly rejected the attempted annexations. Russian constitutional provisions do not override international law. Treating Moscow's position as legally irreversible would concede the argument before negotiations begin. An occupying power cannot legislate international consent.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz in Berlin. (**AFP**)

Zelensky has been equally clear. "Ukrainians will not give their land to occupiers," he said in August 2025, invoking Ukraine's constitution. That does not make every possible ceasefire impossible. It makes the distinction between accepting a battlefield reality and signing away sovereignty central to any credible negotiation over Ukraine's future.

American analyst Richard Haass has challenged the language of territorial compromise. "The so-called land swaps being discussed are in reality Ukrainian land transfers," he wrote in August 2025, "either of land Russia occupies or covets." A ceasefire can defer sovereignty. A treaty surrendering it would impose a fundamentally different obligation.

It is therefore misleading to say that everyone agrees Ukraine must concede. Some analysts envisage an armistice leaving Russia in de facto control of occupied land, without legal recognition. That is an assessment of military constraints, not an endorsement of conquest. Whether Moscow would accept such ambiguity remains profoundly uncertain.

Russia also seeks to prevent Ukrainian Nato membership and constrain Ukraine's security relationship with the West. The dispute extends beyond a line on a map. It concerns whether Ukraine can remain sufficiently armed and politically independent to survive the next crisis. Moscow's stated security concerns cannot justify invading its neighbor.

The latest diplomacy illustrates both possibilities and limits. November's Abu Dhabi talks produced an agreement in principle on a major prisoner exchange, without a broader settlement. Calling that achievement minor misses its meaning for families awaiting relatives. But humanitarian progress should not be mistaken for agreement on territory or security.

Trump's envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, have pursued shuttle diplomacy.

At Dublin's European Political Community summit, Europe's place became an issue in its own right. "We need to have the Europeans at the table," Kushner said. The concession acknowledges reality: a settlement affecting European security requires European political consent.

Emmanuel Macron insisted: "At the end of the day we will be the one to define and decide for our future security as Europeans, have no doubt about it." Yet insisting on a voice is easier than organising one. Europe's financial weight still exceeds its ability to negotiate as a united bloc.

Iran exposes the reverse side of this disagreement. In March, EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said: "This is not Europe's war, but Europe's interests are directly at stake." The qualification matters. Europe cannot insulate itself from disrupted shipping, energy shocks, or regional escalation. Refusing combat does not confer immunity.

Germany's Friedrich Merz challenged the strategy behind the operation: "To this day, there is no convincing plan for how this operation could succeed." Macron said France was "not party to the conflict". These were refusals to join the fighting, not declarations that diplomacy, maritime protection or security no longer mattered.

For Middle Eastern audiences, the contrast is revealing. European governments treat Russian aggression as an immediate threat to their security. They have resisted treating Washington's chosen military course against Iran as an automatic allied obligation. That selectivity reflects geography and national interests. It also exposes the limits of Atlantic solidarity.

The danger is that selective solidarity hardens into mutual abandonment. Washington cannot expect European obedience while reducing partnership to payment. Europe cannot finance Ukraine's resistance indefinitely without shaping the diplomacy. Ukrainians need protection from conquest. Iranians need protection from another disastrous escalation. Neither should become collateral damage in this estrangement.

• The writer is a prominent news anchor, programme presenter and media instructor.

The new era in American politics



By Kristian Coates Ulrichsen

If 'a week is a long time in politics,' as former British Prime Minister Harold Wilson is said to have remarked in the 1960s, then two years is an eternity. When Donald Trump completed the mother of all political comebacks in November 2024, winning a sizeable majority in the Electoral College as well as becoming the first Republican since George W Bush in 2004 to win a majority of the popular vote, it seemed as if a new era had dawned in American politics.

As Trump hit the ground running when he re-entered the Oval Office in January 2025 and set about dismantling the legacy of his predecessor and gutting large sections of the federal bureaucracy, it seemed as if nothing could stop or slow him down. How times have changed.

With the stunning victory of Scott Colom as he flipped Mississippi from Republican to Democrat control for the first time in decades and will become the first Black Senator from the state since 1874, the Democrats now control 55 seats in the Senate and could end up with 56 if Mary Peltola retains the narrow lead she currently holds in Alaska. If the Democrats win Alaska it would mean a nine-seat swing which would be the largest in the Senate since 1980, the year of Ronald Reagan's first election victory.

In the House of Representatives, the defeat of MAGA stalwart Lauren Boebert in Colorado underlined how the Republicans can no longer take seats deep in their midwestern (as well as Deep South) heartlands for granted. Such results would have been inconceivable a year ago, when the Democrats were still reeling from their pummelling in the 2024 election and dealing with the fallout from Joe Biden's controversial decision to run for re-election, the failure of Kamala Harris to offer any real or meaningful prospect of change, and deep internal divisions over issues such as Gaza.

Simultaneously, the second Trump administration was moving aggressively to exert its power across a wide range of areas that were more traditionally the preserve of Congress, which was reduced to a supine shell of its usual presence in the autumn of 2025, exemplified by the 43-day shutdown which paralysed the government in October and November last year.

Amid a sense of deep Democratic gloom and rampant Republican exuberance, it was easy for many to imagine in 2025 that a new political reality had set in, a reality defined and shaped by the 'tech bros' who seemed omnipresent in and around the White House.

While numerous of the administration's more controversial decisions were eventually curbed by legal rulings of overreach, judicial time moved far more slowly than political time as the adage that 'you need to break eggs to make an omelette' proved to be true, time and again.

And yet, the first signs of a shifting of the tide emerged in the 'off-year' elections in November 2025, a traditionally lower-key affair than the presidential and midterm elections yet historically a reliable indicator of changes to the public mood.

Mikie Sherrill won the gubernatorial election in New Jersey (a Democrat hold) while Abigail Spanberger won back the governorship of Virginia from the Republicans. In each case, the Democrats chose a woman who was a military veteran and who campaigned on the same issues of affordability and the cost of living that had propelled Trump back into office one year previously. Elsewhere, the Democrats made significant gains down-ballot in both states, and Zohran Mamdani rose to superstardom in the New York mayoralty race, as indications that voter concerns over the economy were beginning to break through, well before the Iran War began.

Despite the growing doubts over the economy, spurred on by the effects (and the unpredictability) of the president's tariff policies, President Trump began 2026 in a far stronger position than he ends it. The unforced error of initiating military operations against Iran without a clear or coherent plan and endgame, and the shocks of the resultant economic and energy disruption, have inflicted great political damage on the president. The flaws in the president's character, evident to many from his first administration yet seemingly turbocharged in his second, appear to have contributed to his reluctance to strike a deal with Iran to end the war, despite the unprecedented level of concessions in the memorandum of understanding in June which went further than any previous US offer since 1979.

For Trump, the 'art of the deal' seems to have deserted him just when he needs that ability the most. What happens next, in the 'lame duck' session of Congress as well as the final two years of the Trump era, is anyone's guess, and underlines the uncertainty that pervades any analysis of American politics at a time of extraordinary volatility across the globe.

For a decade, the most powerful man in the world has been a man in his 70s and 80s, and in both political parties the pipeline of younger talent had been blocked by the Biden and Trump era. For Republicans as well as Democrats, the campaign to secure the nomination in 2028 is shaping up to be a free-for-all with no clear favourite.

There is also likely to be a battle for the future direction of gravity in each party, between MAGA and more traditional neoconservatives on the right and between progressives and centrists on the left. A flailing and soon to be divided government adds to the challenges facing the United States in the weeks and months ahead.

The spate of cyber incidents in recent weeks, from the PHP code flaw discovered in late October to the outages affecting Microsoft and grounding thousands of flights across the country last week, could not come at a worse time. Whether these incidents are the result of software or update malfunctions or are linked to plots by adversaries to disrupt normal life, as seen in the bomb threats against thousands of schools in Europe, remains to be seen, but they are indicative of tough times ahead.

• *The writer is a leading scholar specialising in Gulf politics and international political economy, and a fellow at the Baker Institute and co-director of the Middle East Energy Roundtable.*



US President Donald Trump with Vice-President JD Vance. (**AFP**)

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QATAR

Body clock in focus: How quality sleep is linked to wellbeing, productivity

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

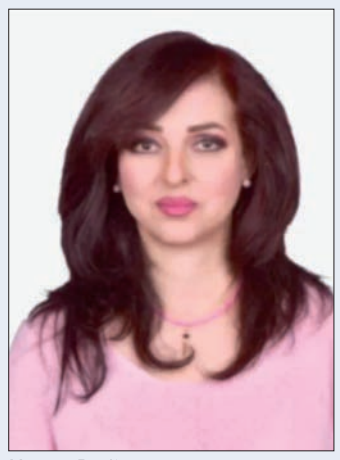
The writer and co-ordinator at the Al Jasra Cultural and Social Club, affiliated to the Ministry of Culture, Hanan Badie, in an interview with *Gulf Times*, raised the issue of co-relation between human biological clock with the over all wellbeing of an individual and productivity.

She argued professional commitment has long been associated with waking up early, as if arriving at the office in the early morning were a definitive sign of seriousness, discipline and productivity. But what if this system, to which we have grown accustomed over decades, does not align with our natural physiology? Could starting the workday early be a hidden cause of chronic fatigue, poor concentration and declining performance?

Almost a decade back, similar arguments were raised by researchers and academicians who put sleep and the imperativeness of body clock being in sync with work schedules in their research works. One researcher termed sleep as a "strategic resource.

In 2015, Dr Paul Kelley, a researcher specialising in sleep and biological rhythms at the University of Oxford, made a striking claim: he likened forcing employees to begin work before 10am to "torture", highlighting the damaging effects of sleep deprivation on health and performance.

The statement sparked a broad debate on the relationship between work schedules and the human biological clock.


Hanen Badie

Speaking at the British Science Festival, Dr Kelley argued that the body clock shifts with age.

A 10-year-old fits comfortably into a nine-to-five day, he said, and so does an adult of about 55, but in between, "depending on your age, you really need to be starting around three hours later, which is entirely natural."

He recommended that staff start at 10am, and suggested that children aged eight to 10 begin school no earlier than 8.30am, 16-year-olds at 10am and 18-year-olds at 11am.

The human body is governed by an internal system known as the biological clock, which regulates the sleep-wake cycle. Sleep patterns vary from person to person, and such differences are not necessarily a sign of laziness or a lack of discipline; they are often linked to genetics, age, lifestyle and exposure to light. Imposing a uniform start time may therefore not suit everyone, especially when employees must wake up before they have had enough sleep simply to arrive on time.

Researchers describe these natural differences as chronotypes: some people, known as "larks", wake and go to bed early, while "owls" wake later and stay up late.

Even so, the average teenager sleeps and wakes later than younger children or older adults.

The significance of Kelley's statement is that it points to a problem beyond morning drowsiness. "Sleep is not a luxury to be sacrificed for work; it is a fundamental necessity for physical and mental health," Badie explained.

When early rising makes sleep loss a recurring problem, the ability to focus and pay attention may decline, while fatigue and irritability increase. In the long term, chronic sleep deprivation is linked to a higher risk of health problems, including metabolic disorders and cardiovascular disease.

"Ultimately, this perspective raises a question about the very concept of productivity: do we want an employee who arrives at their desk as early as possible, or one who is healthy, clear-minded and truly able to contribute effectively?" she asked.

Perhaps the core of the problem lies in a culture that treats exhaustion as the natural price of success. Scientific evidence suggests that adequate sleep is not an obstacle to achievement but one of its essential prerequisites.

Material innovation giving impetus to Doha design scene

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Designers in Doha are turning attention to the materials behind everyday objects, as a three-day showcase explores how experimentation, public engagement and collaboration can shape Qatar's growing creative scene further.

The growing importance of material innovation, creative experimentation and opportunities for emerging designers took centre stage as Tomorrow Matters: New Materialities in Design opened yesterday at Sada, Doha Design District, in Msheireb Downtown Doha.

Running until Tuesday, the showcase brings together design installations, discussions and hands-on workshops exploring experimental materials, living surfaces and regenerative approaches to making objects. It builds on Designed to Last, an earlier showcase examining how stories, memories and emotional connections give objects lasting value.

The initiative also highlights the role of platforms such as Doha Design District in connecting creative practitioners, encouraging experimentation and making design more accessible to the wider public.

Yasmeen Suleiman, designer, educator and head of the Materials Library at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar), said such initiatives were important in supporting creative practices and introducing designers to different approaches to making.

"Since Design District is really trying to platform a lot of creative and design professionals, I think it's very important to have these kinds of events to be able to support creative practice and different creative processes," she said.

She emphasised that understanding materials was an important part of this process, adding that she was looking forward to the exploration and discussions taking place over the three days.

Suleiman also highlighted the importance of bringing the public closer to the creative process, saying that opportunities to experience how things are made could help bridge the gap between designers and audiences.



A glimpse of the panel discussion at the event.


Yasmeen Suleiman

'The more diverse we're able to get in terms of the different opportunities and activities that happen, the better. It makes the scene and the community richer,' — Yasmeen Suleiman

"Any opportunity where the public is able to experience a little bit of what the process is like for any kind of creative process, I think bridges that gap and makes it a little bit more understandable for the public," she said.

She added that such experiences allowed people to engage with something different from their usual day-to-day activities in Doha. Suleiman described the city's expanding cultural and creative scene as a positive development, noting that growing interest, investment and participation were creating more opportunities for the sector.

"The more diverse we're able to get in terms of the different opportunities and activities that happen, the better. It makes the scene and the community richer," she said.

The importance of supporting designers beyond the conceptual stage was also highlighted by Dana Said, head of FROMM.Lab, who said the organisation worked to help transform initial ideas into finished design pieces.

She explained that FROMM.Lab supports designers throughout the development process, while creating opportunities for them to present their work at design fairs and bring products to the market.

"We're specialised in design specifically and we think we contribute to the design ecosystem of Qatar by providing support to the designers and giving them opportunities to realise their ideas, their initial concepts into final pieces of design," Said said.

She pointed to FROMM.Lab's


Dana Said

participation in the Doha Design Biennale through its Interlaced exhibition in Fereej Al Asmakh. One of the 12 works displayed was developed in collaboration with Lebanese designer Maher Hteid, who was selected as a finalist in a design competition launched by the organisation in 2025.

Said described Doha Design District as a significant platform for showcasing the work of designers and artists based in the city, particularly as Qatar continues to develop its cultural and design landscape. Looking ahead, she said FROMM.Lab was also preparing new projects and collaborations for Milan Design Week 2027, where it participates annually.



Community screenings at Doha Film Festival 2026

Doha Film Festival (DFF), presented by Doha Film Institute (DFI), is expanding the magical power of movies with a specially curated programme designed to celebrate film heritage and make the cinema experience more accessible for audiences of all ages and abilities.

A major highlight this year is the launch of DFF Classics, a new programme celebrating the enduring artistic and culturally significant cinema with landmark films restored in partnership with the World Cinema Foundation and Doha Film Institute.

The first edition of the programme features the acclaimed *The Battle of Algiers* (1966) by Gillo Pontecorvo, which won Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival, and Shadi Abdel Salam's *The Night of Counting the Years* (1969), widely regarded as a defining work of Egyptian and Arab cinema.

Screening with audio description, sign-language interpretation and enhanced subtitles, DFF's inclusive screening, presented in partnership with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Hamad Bin Khalifa University and with support of Katara Studios features Hassan Hadi's acclaimed film *The President's Cake*, as part of the Institute's commitment to making cinema accessible to audiences of all abilities.

The Battle of Algiers (Italy/Algeria) by Gillo Pontecorvo- Gillo Pontecorvo's landmark, Golden Lion-winner chronicles the struggle for independence from colonial rule through the experiences of Algerian revolutionaries and the forces sent to suppress them.

The Night of Counting the Years (Egypt) by Shadi Abdel Salam-when a young man discovers that his community has been secretly trading ancient Egyptian treasures for generations, he faces a profound dilemma between family loyalty and protecting his country's cultural heritage.

The President's Cake (Iraq) by Hassan Hadi — In 1990s Iraq, nine-year-old Lamia embarks on a challenging journey across her city to gather ingredients for a cake she has been assigned to make for the president's birthday. Taking place from November 19–27, Doha Film Festival brings together filmmakers, audiences and industry voices from the region and beyond.

Cloud cover over Doha


As the weather gets into cooler days and strong winds lashed across the country, thick clouds could be seen across Doha sky yesterday. **PICTURE**; Shaji Kayamkulam

Qatar-Poland relations gain momentum through trade, culture co-operation

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Qatar and Poland are further strengthening their bilateral relations through expanded co-operation in energy, trade, culture, tourism and political dialogue, with both the countries seeking to build on their long-standing partnership and explore new areas of collaboration, said the ambassador of Poland to Qatar.

Speaking to Gulf Times, the Polish Ambassador Tomasz Sadzinski, said the relationship between the two countries is diverse and continues to offer significant opportunities for growth.

The ambassador described the energy co-operation as a cornerstone of the bilateral partnership, while highlighting opportunities to expand economic exchanges beyond the energy sector. He said cultural initiatives play an important role in bringing the two nations closer by introducing Qatar's residents to Polish traditions, products and cuisine.

"One of the best ways to understand a country better is through its cuisine and food," Sadzinski said, adding that such things help showcase Poland's strengths and its potential for co-operation with Qatar.

According to the envoy, both the countries maintain regular political dialogue, covering regional and international developments, including the situation in the Gulf, Qatar's mediation efforts, the conflict in Ukraine and issues on the United Nations agenda.

"Trade relations are also gaining momentum, with Poland expanding its exports to Qatar and other markets in the region. Polish exports are increasingly diversified, with food products accounting for around 20% of the export volumes, alongside machinery, engines, electronics, dairy products and confectionery," noted the ambassador.


Polish Ambassador Tomasz Sadziński. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen.

He welcomed the growing appreciation of Polish food products in Qatar, noting that the quality and variety of these products were creating further opportunities for Polish businesses. He explained that the products currently reaching Qatar were being transported by air cargo, while container shipments were also on their way.

The ambassador expressed optimism that the range of products would expand further by the end of the year, with additional growth expected next year.

He added that the Polish side was ready to support businesses interested in joining the initiative and developing commercial partnerships with Qatar.

The Polish envoy noted that connectivity between the two countries is another factor supporting the expansion of trade and tourism.

"Qatar Airways operates two daily flights between Doha and Warsaw, providing convenient connections for passengers travelling between the two countries. In addition to passenger services, Qatar Airways operates cargo flights to Warsaw and Katowice, one of Poland's major cities, facilitating the movement of goods between the markets," he explained.

Furthermore, ambassador Sadzinski pointed out that beyond trade and energy, cultural co-operation and tourism are becoming increasingly important dimensions of Qatar-Poland relations.

He highlighted the ongoing co-operation with Qatari museums, Polish cultural institutions and the Doha Film Institute to introduce audiences in Qatar to Polish culture, cinema and heritage.

"Tourism exchanges between the two countries have also been growing, with increasing interest among Qatari travellers in visiting Poland and Polish visitors travelling to Qatar," he said.

"Travel exchanges would increase further as regional tensions ease, as Qatar is spearheading mediation efforts contributing to the regional stability," he highlighted.

The ambassador added that the two countries had an ambitious but realistic agenda for expanding their partnership, particularly in trade and economic co-operation.

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