

GULF TIMES

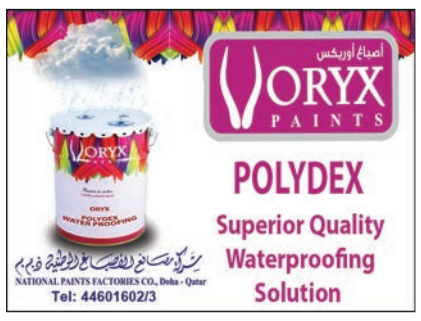
published in QATAR since 1978

TUESDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13927

November 17, 2026
Jumada II 7, 1448 AH

www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals





BUSINESS | Page 1

Commercial Bank forex services recognised at MEED MENA Banking Excellence Awards 2026







Amir, Emirati NSA seek to boost bilateral ties

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received Sheikh Tahnoon bin Zayed al-Nahyan, Deputy Ruler of Abu Dhabi and National Security Adviser of the United Arab Emirates, and his accompanying delegation at the Amiri Diwan yesterday.

The two sides reviewed the long-standing fraternal relations between Qatar and the UAE and explored ways to strengthen bilateral co-operation. They also exchanged views on a number of issues of mutual interest.

At the outset, Sheikh Tahnoon conveyed the greetings of UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan to HH the Amir, along with his wishes for continued good health and happiness and further progress and prosperity for the Qatari people.

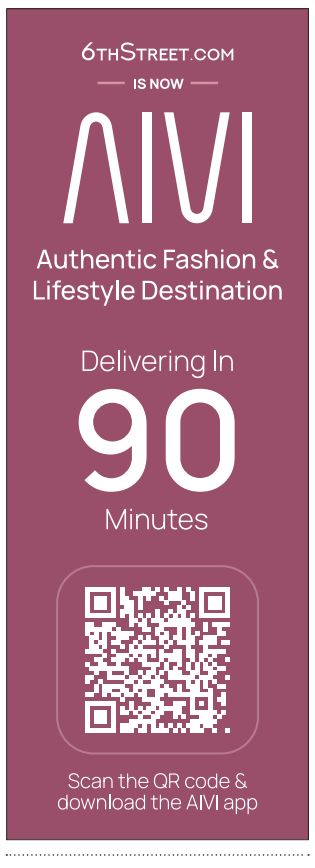
HH the Amir reciprocated the greetings, conveying his best wishes to the UAE president for continued health and well-being and to the Emirati people for further progress and prosperity.

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, and several ministers and senior officials.

The UAE delegation included Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, Deputy Chairman of the Presidential Court for Development and Fallen Heroes' Affairs; Minister of Investment Mohamed Hassan al-Suwaidi; and several senior officials.

The meeting underscored the enduring strength of Qatar-UAE relations and the importance of sustained high-level engagement at a time of heightened regional tensions. Against the backdrop of the continuing crisis, the two Gulf neighbours have maintained diplomatic contacts aimed at promoting dialogue, de-escalation and regional stability. (**QNA**)





PM, Georgian FM discuss ties and regional developments



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met Georgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Maka Botchorishvili yesterday during her visit to Qatar. They reviewed bilateral relations and ways to strengthen co-operation as well as the latest regional developments and other issues of mutual interest. (**QNA**)

Shura praises Amir's climate diplomacy

The Shura Council yesterday hailed His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's leadership in advancing Qatar's climate diplomacy and strengthening its strategic partnership with Turkiye, underscoring the country's commitment to international co-operation, regional security and sustainable development.
At its regular session chaired by HE the Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, the Council praised HH the Amir's participation in the opening session of the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Antalya, Turkiye, last Wednesday. The Council said the Amir's participation in the gathering of world leaders, government delegations and international organisations reaffirmed Qatar's determination to support global efforts to combat climate change and strengthen international co-operation in addressing environmental challenges. **To Page 4**

Qatar's early 5G push makes it a regional digital leader: GSMA

By Peter Alagos
Business Editor



GSMA head of Mena region Jawad Abbassi.
PICTURE: Shaji Kayamkulam

Qatar's early 5G deployment and deep digital infrastructure anchor its position as a regional leader in economic digitalisation, according to an industry executive.

Speaking on regional connectivity trends, GSMA head of Mena region Jawad Abbassi pointed to the expanding economic weight of mobile technologies across the Middle East and North Africa.

Citing the Mobile Economy Mena Report 2026 by GSMA Intelligence, Abbassi told *Gulf Times* in an exclusive interview that the mobile sector contributed $380bn in economic value in 2025, representing nearly 6% of regional GDP.

Abbassi noted that this contribution is forecast to reach $470bn by 2030, while the regional ecosystem already supports 2.2mn jobs and generates around $40bn in public finances through taxation and revenue sharing.

Abbassi stated that regional 5G connection share stands at around 9% and is expected to exceed 40% by 2030, driven largely by upcoming rollouts in North African markets where Qatari operator Ooredoo maintains an active footprint in Tunisia and Algeria.

According to Abbassi, Qatar's digital maturity and modern transport, aviation, and hospitality networks also underpin its five-year partnership with the Ministry of Communications to host Mobile World Congress Doha, positioning the country as a neutral global convening hub.

Despite strong infrastructure growth, Abbassi emphasised that bridging the regional usage gap remains a critical priority for governments and telecom operators.

"A full 49% of the regional population lives within a reliable mobile broadband network, but they still don't use mobile Internet even though they have the coverage and they have the service," Abbassi pointed out. **To Page 2**

Qatar, Saudi push for de-escalation

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani reaffirmed Qatar's support for diplomatic efforts to safeguard freedom of maritime navigation and secure a comprehensive agreement for lasting regional peace during a telephone conversation with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah al-Saud.
The two leaders discussed the latest regional developments, focusing on diplomatic initiatives and joint co-ordination to de-escalate tensions and strengthen regional security and stability. They also reviewed bilateral relations and ways to further enhance co-operation between Qatar and Saudi Arabia.
HE the Prime Minister reiterated Qatar's backing for all diplomatic initiatives aimed at achieving a negotiated settlement that guarantees freedom of navigation and lays the groundwork for sustainable peace across the region.

QR6.3bn plant primed to turn sewage into water, energy

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

A QR6.3bn sewage treatment plant taking shape in southern Qatar promises to transform wastewater into a valuable resource, generating reusable water and renewable energy while setting a new benchmark for sustainable infrastructure development in the country.

The ambitious Doha South Sewage Treatment Plant, Qatar's first sewage infrastructure project being developed through a public-private partnership (PPP), is already 65% complete, with its first phase scheduled for completion in the second quarter of 2028, the Public Works Authority (Ashghal) announced.

Designed to serve more than 300,000 people initially, the facility will process 150,000 cubic metres of sewage daily, with provision to quadruple capacity to 600,000 cubic metres to meet growing demand through 2045.

The project represents a major investment in Qatar's environmental future, combining advanced wastewater treatment, water recycling and energy recovery technologies with private-sector expertise and financing.

The progress announcement followed an inspection visit by Ashghal President Engineer Mohammed al-Meer, who reviewed construction milestones, treatment technologies, sludge processing facilities and expansion plans.

He emphasised strict adherence to construction schedules, quality benchmarks and safety standards to ensure operational readiness.

Al-Meer said the QR6.3bn investment, including approximately QR2.3bn in foreign capital, marked a significant milestone in expanding private-sector participation in national infrastructure.

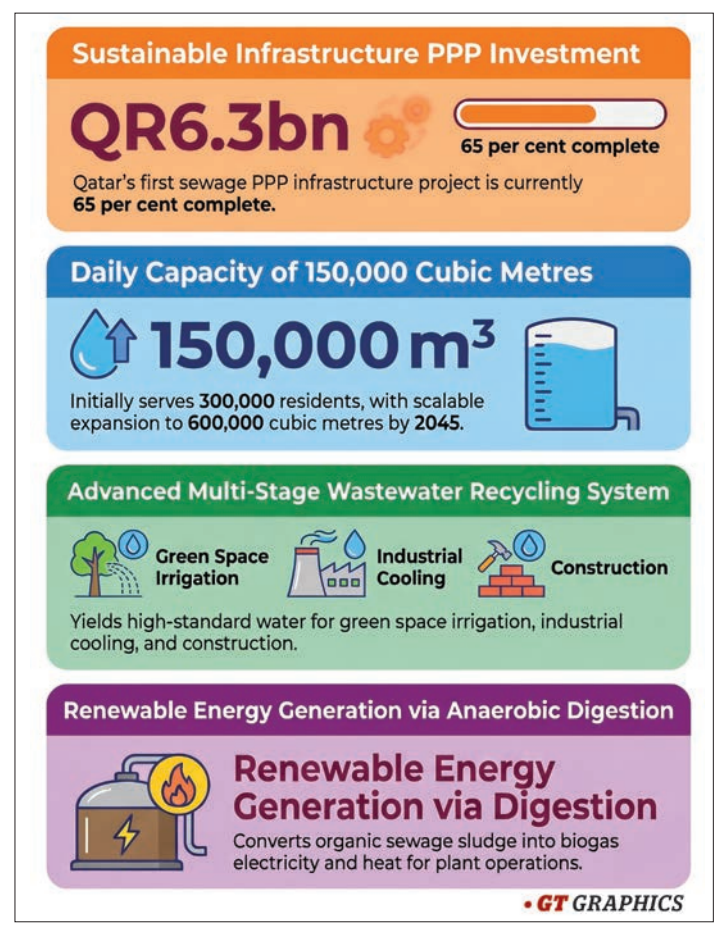
Wastewater from Al Wakra, Al Wukair, Al Mashaf and parts of the Industrial Area will reach the plant through Ashghal's existing Main Trunk Sewer.

The infrastructure includes primary filtration facilities more than 60 metres underground, a main pumping station, advanced treatment units, sludge-processing systems and odour-control facilities.

A separate pumping station will eventually distribute up to 600,000 cubic metres of treated water daily.

Using primary, secondary and tertiary treatment, ultrafiltration and ultraviolet and chlorine disinfection, the plant will produce water meeting international standards for non-potable reuse.

This recycled water will irrigate parks, green spaces and fodder farms, while also supporting industrial cooling, sand washing and dust suppression at construction sites. Surplus supplies will be stored in lagoons for future use. **To Page 4**



QATAR

Interior minister meets commandant of Royal Military Academy Sandhurst of UK



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, met yesterday with Commandant of Royal Military Academy Sandhurst of the United Kingdom, Major-General Nick Cowley. During the meeting, they discussed several topics of mutual interest and ways to enhance co-operation and the exchange of expertise in the fields of education, training, and military qualification. (**QNA**)

PM meets deputy ruler of Abu Dhabi



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with the Deputy Ruler of Abu Dhabi and National Security Adviser of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Tahnoon bin Zayed al-Nahyan, who is visiting Qatar. The meeting discussed the strong, fraternal relations between the two countries and ways to further develop and strengthen them. It also explored the latest regional developments, particularly ongoing diplomatic efforts and joint co-ordination aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting security and stability in the region, in addition to a number of other issues of common interest. (***QNA***)

Labour minister meets Turkish, Guinea envoys



HE the Minister of Labour, Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri, met yesterday with the ambassador of the Republic of Turkiye to the State of Qatar, Yakup Caymazoglu. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation between the two countries and ways to strengthen and develop them across various fields, particularly in labour and employment. (**QNA**)



HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri met yesterday with the ambassador of the Republic of Guinea to the State of Qatar Thierno Abdoulaye Sow. During the meeting, they reviewed avenues to strengthen bilateral co-operation in areas of mutual interest, particularly within the labour sector. (**QNA**)

Qatar Education Excellence Award board formed

HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhater issued a ministerial decision to form the Board of Trustees for the Qatar Education Excellence Award (QEEA).

The Board will be chaired by HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education with Assistant Undersecretary for Higher Education Affairs at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) Dr Hareb Mohamed Aljabri as Vice-Chair. Additionally, Maryam Abdullah al Mohannadi has been appointed as the Executive Director of the Award.

The board membership includes: Maryam Abdullah al-Mohannadi as Executive Director of the Award, President of the Community College of Qatar (CCQ) Dr. Khalid Mohamed al-Horr, Prof Aiman Mahmoud Erbad from Qatar University, Abeer Mohammed al-Khalifa from Qatar Foundation, Dr Nasser Saqer al-Mohannadi from QatarEnergy, Ahmed Sultan al-Ghanim from the Shura Council, Nada Abduljalil al-Mahmeed from the National Planning Council, Aysha Abdulhameed al-Mudahka from the Qatar Research, Development and Innovation Council, and Dr Maryam Jassim al-Khater from the Council of Ministers Secretariat General.

The term of membership on the board is three years, renewable for a similar period or periods.

Qatar Education Excellence Award embodies the State of Qatar's commitment to science and investment in human capital, by honouring outstanding scientific achievements and educational practices, and by highlighting national role models who inspire the younger generations.

The award also contributes to fostering research and innovation, developing human capital, and encouraging national talent to apply their knowledge and capabilities toward building a knowledge-based economy and supporting sustainable development, all in alignment with the goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030. (***QNA***)

Qatar partakes in Arab Conference for Tolerance and Peace in Cairo

The State of Qatar participated in the Arab Conference for Tolerance and Peace, held yesterday at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Arab League in Cairo, in co-operation with the Global Council for Tolerance and Peace.

The State of Qatar was represented at the conference by a delegation from the Qatar Committee for the Alliance of Civilizations, led by Secretary of the Qatar Committee for the Alliance of Civilizations, ambassador Abdullah bin Ahmed al-Sada, alongside Amna Abdulrahman al Sulaiti and Saud Ali al-Humaidi from the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to the Arab League.

In his remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), ambassador Abdullah bin Ahmed al-Sada emphasised the committee's commitment to participating in the conference. He noted that the event aims to foster a spirit of tolerance across Arab nations, while also seeking to draw upon the experiences of these countries in promoting tolerance and peace, themes that are central to the conference's agenda.



Al-Sada added that the Qatar Committee for the Alliance of Civilizations is participating in the conference with a selection of its own publications. The event serves as an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences with various countries, organisations, and civil society institutions. In this regard, he noted the committee's commitment to participating in relevant events, a commitment exemplified by its involvement in the International Conference on Islamic Cultural Heritage and its Role in Global Scientific Pathways, which was held in Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan, in September.

During the Arab Conference for Tolerance and Peace, the Arab Declaration on Tolerance and Peace was launched. The declaration was adopted pursuant to Resolution 9301 of the Council of the Arab League at the ministerial level, issued during its 166th regular session, which mandates the adoption of the declaration and urges member states to implement its provisions and achieve its objectives in coordination with the General Secretariat of the Arab League. The conference also featured a high-level session dedicated to highlighting the core tenets of the declaration and exploring ways to foster tolerance and understanding in order to achieve sustainable peace.

The conference was organised to coincide with the International Day for Tolerance, an observance established by the United Nations General Assembly to be marked annually on Nov 16, with the aim of promoting the value of tolerance, in pursuit of a better life for humanity characterised by peace, acceptance of others, and mutual respect among nations and peoples. (**QNA**)

Commerce minister meets Georgia's deputy PM



HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal al-Thani, met yesterday with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Maka Botchorishvili, who is currently visiting the State. The meeting discussed co-operation relations between the two countries in trade, investment, and industry, and ways of strengthening and developing them, in addition to reviewing several topics of mutual interest. (**QNA**)

Qatar's early 5G push makes it a regional digital leader: GSMA

From Page 1

He noted that leaving nearly half of the population offline excludes millions from mobile wallets, online banking, e-commerce, and navigation services.

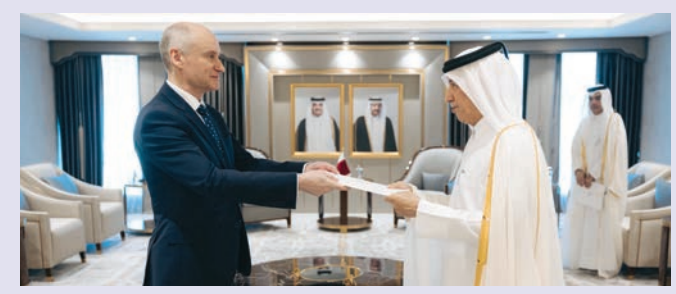
To close this gap, Abbassi called for a multi-tier approach combining digital literacy programmes with handset affordability, including initiatives to recycle billions of unused mobile phones kept in household drawers to lower carbon footprints and expand device access.

Al-Muraikhi receives copies of credentials of 5 ambassadors











HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi received copies of the credentials of the a mbassador of the Kingdom of Denmark (non-resident) Soren Jacobsen; the ambassador of Hungary David Ambrus; the ambassador of the Republic of Ireland (non-resident) Fergal Mythen; the ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania (non-resident) Ernestas Mickus; and the ambassador of the Kingdom of Bhutan (non-resident) Phub Dorji. HE al-Muraikhi wished the ambassadors success in performing their duties, assuring them of full support to advance bilateral relations between the State of Qatar and their countries to closer co-operation in various fields. (**QNA**)

Standing Committee of Convention of Law of Sea concludes training workshop

The Standing Committee of the Convention of the Law of the Sea at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concluded a training workshop yesterday. Titled 'The Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction: From Negotiations to Implementation', the workshop was attended by representatives from relevant government entities in the country.

The two-day training workshop aimed to introduce participants to the Agreement, its provisions, and implementation requirements; strengthen coordination among the relevant entities; and raise awareness of the obligations arising from it, thereby supporting the State's readiness to meet its requirements.



Delivered by specialists and legal experts, the workshop addressed a number of the Agreement's key topics and pillars, including marine genetic resources and benefit-sharing; area-based management tools, including marine protected areas; environmental impact assessments; capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology; and the Agreement's financial mechanism.

The workshop also provided participants with an opportunity to exchange knowledge and expertise, discuss the legal, technical, and institutional aspects of the Agreement, and review its national implementation requirements. This contributes to strengthening cooperation and coordination among the relevant entities and building national capacities in the protection of marine biodiversity and the conservation of its resources. (**QNA**)

Qatar hosts 15th INTERPA conference





Qatar has inaugurated the 15th International Association of Police Academies (INTERPA) Conference, bringing together representatives of police education and training institutions from around the world to discuss ways to modernise police training and strengthen international co-operation.

The three-day conference, running from November 16-18, was held under the patronage of HE Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) and Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Police Academy.

The opening was attended by HE the Minister of State for Interior Affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal bin Mohammed al-Thani, along with a number of senior officials.

The conference provides a platform for member countries to exchange expertise and best practices, with discussions focusing on developing police education and training systems, updating curricula and improving the capabilities of police personnel to meet evolving security requirements.

The first day's sessions addressed specialised topics related to strategic knowledge governance, particularly the development of institutional knowledge management in response to rapid digital transformation.

The sessions were moderated by Lt Col Dr Mohammed Owaida al-Hajri and featured contributions from Brigadier General Dr Khalifa al-Fari, Commander of Sultan Qaboos Academy for Police Sciences; Dr Nasser Khalaf al-Anazi of King Fahd Security College; and Captain Hamad Khalid al-Maliki of Qatar's Police Academy.

Discussions covered several key areas, including strategic knowledge governance, institutional pillars, data sensitivity and the management of strategic knowledge governance in the digital age.

Participants highlighted the importance of establishing effective institutional frameworks for managing and using knowledge to support decision-making and improve organisational performance.

They also stressed the need to take data privacy and sensitivity levels into account to protect information and ensure its use in accordance with established governance standards.

The sessions further examined the importance of keeping pace with digital developments and using emerging technologies to improve security operations, police education and training.

The discussions form part of the conference's broader objectives of strengthening international co-operation among police academies and training institutions, sharing institutional expertise and improving the quality and effectiveness of police education and professional development. (**QNA**)



Qatar attends 48th session of OIF ministerial conference

The State of Qatar took part in the 48th session of the Ministerial Conference of the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), held in Phnom Penh, as part of preparations for the 20th Francophonie Summit, hosted by the Kingdom of Cambodia.

The Qatari delegation was headed by the ambassador of the State of Qatar to the French Republic and Qatar's representative to the OIF Sheikh Ali bin Jassim al-Thani.

The Ministerial Conference focused on preparations for the 20th Francophonie Summit, held under the theme "Reinvesting in Peace for Shared Prosperity and Lasting Stability." It also covered the implementation of commitments made at the 19th Francophonie Summit, prospects for strengthening multilateral co-operation, and the organisation's administrative and financial matters.

The conference also discussed the draft "Phnom Penh Declaration" for the 20th Francophonie Summit, as well as a draft resolution addressing crisis situations, transitions out of crises, and the consolidation of peace within the Francophone space, which specifically commends the State of Qatar's mediation efforts aimed at ending the conflict and military escalation in the region, ongoing since February 28, as well as its efforts toward the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

In his address to the Conference, Sheikh Ali bin Jassim al-Thani highlighted the State of Qatar's sustained efforts to promote peace and stability within the Francophone space, as well as its active role in mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes. He reaffirmed Qatar's commitment to continuing its diplomatic efforts to bridge differences between parties to conflicts and foster dialogue and mutual understanding, thereby contributing to security, stability, and lasting peace.

Sheikh Ali also reaffirmed the State of Qatar's commitment to the principles and values of the OIF and its determination to continue co-operating with the organisation's member states and governments to strengthen multilateral co-operation and support joint efforts to advance peace, development, and shared prosperity throughout the Francophone community.

The OIF comprises 90 states and governments across various continents. The State of Qatar joined the organisation as an associate member in 2012 and regularly participates in its meetings and programs. (**QNA**)

Qatar highlights mediation role at Future Resilience Forum

QNA
London



The State of Qatar has reaffirmed its commitment to mediation and peaceful conflict resolution, describing the role as both an international responsibility and a national interest.

The remarks were made by HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Khulaifi during a high-level session at the Future Resilience Forum, held in the British capital, London.

HE al-Khulaifi said Qatar's security and prosperity were closely linked to stability in the region and across the world, stressing that the peaceful settlement of disputes was a firmly established principle of the country's foreign policy and enshrined in its Constitution.

He also discussed the concept of "Prosperous States", recently introduced by HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani.

Under the concept, a country's influence in the international system is determined not only by its geographical size, population or military capabilities, but also by its credibility, trust and international relationships, which enable it to build bridges and bring conflicting parties closer together.

Al-Khulaifi stressed the importance of strengthening co-operation among prosperous states in mediation and conflict resolution, drawing on their diplomatic, economic and humanitarian capabilities and expertise to support peace efforts and ensure that agreements are implemented and sustained.

He outlined Qatar's mediation efforts at regional and international levels, highlighting its successful mediation between the US and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela over the exchange of a number of prisoners.

He also referred to the State of Qatar's participation, alongside international partners, in supporting the peace process in the Republic of Colombia, as well as its joint efforts with the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Turkiye and the US concerning the Gaza Strip.

Other initiatives included Qatar's diplomatic engagement in the Great Lakes region and humanitarian efforts to reunite Ukrainian children with their families.

Al-Khulaifi emphasised the need to protect mediation efforts and the parties involved, calling for respect for the sovereignty of mediating states, the safety of negotiators and the confidentiality of discussions.

He said the attacks targeting Qatar had underlined the importance of strengthening safeguards to protect diplomatic processes.

The minister also highlighted the partnership between the State of Qatar and the United Kingdom in conflict resolution, stressing the importance of building on the memorandum of understanding signed by the two countries to develop mediation expertise and support efforts towards lasting peace.

Concluding his remarks, al-Khulaifi said the responsibility of prosperous states extended beyond securing stability and prosperity for their own populations to contributing to international peace and stability.

He stressed that even when mistrust, delays and withdrawals from negotiations threatened diplomatic efforts, prosperous states should help encourage conflicting parties to return to the negotiating table and restore confidence in the possibility of building a more peaceful future.



Qatar elected to ITU Council for 2027-2030 term

The State of Qatar has been elected to the Council of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for the 2027-2030 term, representing Region E (Asia and Australasia), securing 165 votes in elections held yesterday during the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26) in Doha.

The Council serves as the ITU's governing body between Plenipotentiary Conferences. Comprising 48 Member States, it oversees the Union's policies, strategies and activities and monitors the implementation of its decisions.

This membership represents both a responsibility toward member states and an opportunity to help craft policies that respond to their needs and support economic and social development, HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai said.

HE al-Mannai extended profound gratitude and appreciation to the ITU's member states for their confidence in the State of Qatar's membership, asserting that this membership was an outgrowth of the partnership that has bound the State of Qatar and the ITU since 1973.

Flash forward four years, and the State of Qatar would forge consensus on a triumvirate of shared priorities by invoking its expertise in creating high-end digital infrastructure and supporting creativity, HE al-Mannai told Qatar News Agency. He clarified that these priorities entail expanding comprehensive and informative communication.

He assured that the nation would embark on strengthening network flexibility and ensuring continuity of service, in addition to promoting fair access to emerging technologies while simultaneously focusing on capacity-building and developing a governance framework.

HE the Minister asserted that the State of Qatar would endeavour to work with all member states to turn these priorities into concrete results that meet their needs and help achieve socioeconomic development.

For his part, Chair-Designate of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (ITU PP-26) and President of the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA), Engineer Ahmad Abdulla al-Muslemani, said the State of Qatar's first-ever seat on the ITU Council since joining the Union in 1973 is a testament to the international community's confidence in the country, as well as its recognition of Qatar's standing and achievements in telecommunications and information technology and its vibrant international presence.

The 48-member Council plays a crucial role in managing the ITU's affairs and overseeing its strategic thrust, plans and programmes, al-Muslemani said, adding that the membership gives the State of Qatar a seat at the table in international discussions and decision-making on the future of the telecommunications and information technology sector.

As such, the State of Qatar would diligently capitalise on this membership to forge novel partnerships and expand international co-operation, al-Muslemani highlighted, emphasising that the nation would likewise promote its presence in international organisations, advance digital infrastructure and opportunities to benefit from artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, and bolster digital capabilities worldwide. (**QNA**)

QNB Group launches 'Women in Impact' programme

QNB Group has launched 'Women in Impact – Releasing Your High Potential', a dedicated talent development programme designed to empower female employees, strengthen their professional capabilities and support their continued growth within the group.

The initiative forms part of the group's broader human capital strategy to foster a high-performing and inclusive workplace while building a strong pipeline of talented female professionals equipped to contribute to the group's long-term success. It also reinforces QNB's commitment to investing in its people, in line with the human development pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

Designed to help participants realise their potential, the programme focuses on developing essential and soft skills, including self-awareness, confidence, communication, personal effectiveness, and ability to create a positive impact in their professional environments.

Through an engaging and interactive learning experience, participants are encouraged to recognise their strengths, overcome challenges, embrace a growth mindset, and take greater ownership of their professional development.

The initiative comes within QNB's firm commitment to empower female talent as essential to building a strong, resilient, and future-ready organisation. It also reflects the group's keenness to create meaningful development opportunities that enable women to unlock their potential, strengthen their confidence, and expand their professional impact. It also aims to inspire them to take ownership of their development, embrace new opportunities and contribute to the continued success of the group.

The programme covers key areas of professional development, including Emotional Intelligence for Workplace Excellence; Presentation Skills & Executive Presence; and Conversational Intelligence & the Impact of Unconscious Bias in the Workplace.

Through focused learning experiences, participants develop greater self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal effectiveness, while strengthening their ability to communicate with confidence, influence others and demonstrate executive presence.

The programme also promotes meaningful workplace conversations, supporting effective collaboration, stronger professional relationships, and informed decision-making.

Through initiatives such as Women in Impact, the group continues to foster a culture of continuous learning and professional development, empowering employees to reach their full potential while building a strong pipeline of future talent to support the group's long-term strategic ambitions.

Over 3,000 participate in Relay for Life Qatar 2026 organised by QCS



Qatar Cancer Society (QCS), in collaboration with Aspire Zone Foundation, organised the third edition of Relay for Life – Qatar 2026 recently at Aspire Olympic Hall, bringing together 3,000 participants, including cancer patients, survivors, their families, community members, and representatives of various organisations.

The event celebrated stories of recovery and resilience, honoured those who lost their lives to cancer, and highlighted the importance of community solidarity, psychosocial support, and improving the quality of life of those affected by the disease.

The event featured a symbolic group walk, with participants expressing solidarity with cancer patients and survivors. Every step carried a message of hope and support, emphasising the importance of standing together throughout the cancer journey.

The programme also included awareness-raising, interactive, and recreational activities for families and children, promoting cancer prevention, early detection, healthy lifestyles, and psychosocial support.

Building on the success of previous editions, the event reaffirmed QCS's commitment to promoting community engagement, volunteerism, and cancer awareness.

Mona Ashkanani, general manager of QCS, emphasised that the participation of 3,000 people reflects growing community awareness and a strong commitment to supporting those affected by cancer.

She said: "This remarkable turnout sends a powerful humanitarian message that fighting cancer goes beyond medical treatment. It requires comprehensive psychological, humanitarian, and community support. Today, we came together to celebrate life, renew hope, and remind every person living with cancer that they are not alone."

QATAR

Qatar Calendar announces Illusionists-Direct from Broadway to Doha



Qatar Calendar, powered by Visit Qatar, is set to bring The Illusionists – Direct from Broadway to Doha, with the spectacular live production taking place at the Qatar National Convention Centre - Al Mayassa Theatre from December 10-16.
The theatrical production invites audiences to experience the magic and grandeur of Broadway through a captivating showcase of world-class illusions, theatrical artistry, breathtaking visual effects and daring stunts. Combining imagination, technology and extraordinary human skill, the show takes audiences on an immersive journey filled with mystery, wonder and unexpected moments. The addition of The Illusionists – Direct from Broadway further enriches Qatar's year-round entertainment calendar, offering experiences that cater to the expectations of visitors from within Qatar and abroad, while further strengthening Doha's position as a preferred family tourism destination.

Leonid meteor shower to peak over Qatar tomorrow

The Qatar Calendar House announced that the Leonid meteor shower will peak over Qatar and the Northern Hemisphere from midnight Tuesday into dawn tomorrow, (November 18).
Dr Bashir Marzouk, an astronomer at the Qatar Calendar House, said the meteors will be visible to the naked eye, with no special equipment required. Observers should look toward the northeastern horizon after midnight until dawn, when around 15 meteors per hour are expected at the peak.
Viewing conditions are expected to be favourable this year, as the Moon will set before midnight, leaving the sky free of moonlight that could obstruct visibility.
The Leonids occur annually from November 6-30 as Earth passes through dust and debris left by Comet Tempel-Tuttle along its orbit around the Sun.
The particles burn up upon entering Earth's atmosphere, producing bright streaks of light known as meteors.
The best viewing locations are dark areas away from residential neighbourhoods and sources of light and environmental pollution.
The optimal viewing time is from midnight until dawn. (**QNA**)

Timor-Leste official receives copy of credentials of Qatar's ambassador



The Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Antonito de Araujo, received yesterday a copy of the credentials of the ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary (non-resident) of the State of Qatar to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Dr Sultan bin Mubarak Saad al-Dosari. (**QNA**)

Culture ministry showcases national heritage at PP-26

The Ministry of Culture (MoC) is participating in the Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (PP-26), currently taking place in Doha, with the participation of prominent leaders, policymakers and representatives of countries and international organisations involved in the telecommunications and digital technology sectors.
The ministry's participation features a pavilion that brings together modern technology and authentic culture, reflecting Qatar's commitment to showcasing its cultural identity and national heritage. The pavilion presents an image that combines the authenticity of the past with the progress of the present, keeping pace with rapid technological advances and highlighting the role of culture in supporting innovation and digital transformation.
The pavilion also provides an opportunity to introduce international audiences to Qatari culture and its heritage through the use of modern tools and technologies to present cultural content. This helps bring Qatar's national heritage to diverse international audiences and strengthen the presence of Qatari culture at international events and on global platforms.
The Plenipotentiary Conference is the highest decision-making body of the International Telecommunication Union. (**QNA**)

HMC geriatrics dept renewed as WHO collaborating centre

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) has announced the redesignation of its Department of Geriatrics and Long-Term Care as a World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Center for Healthy Ageing and Dementia for a further four years, until January 17, 2031. The renewal recognises the center's achievements since its previous designation in January 2023, as well as HMC's continued collaboration with WHO and its efforts to uphold the dignity, independence and wellbeing of older adults, share national expertise and support regional healthcare development.
Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Chief Executive Officer and Medical Director of Rumailah Hospital, and Head of the WHO Collaborating Center, Prof Hanadi al-Hamad, said: "The renewal of this designation reinforces HMC's position as an active partner in supporting WHO's priorities, particularly in ageing research, Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE), the development of long-term care systems and addressing dementia".
She added: "Through our collaboration with WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office and national partners, we remain committed to upholding the dignity of older adults, promoting their independence and enhancing their wellbeing. The renewal also reflects the collective efforts of our teams and partners in developing services and expertise that contribute to improving healthcare for older adults in Qatar and across the region." (**QNA**)

Qatar, Thailand hold round of political consultations



A round of political consultations between the foreign ministries of the State of Qatar and the Kingdom of Thailand was held in Doha yesterday. The Qatari side was headed by HE the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi, while the Thai side was headed by the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, Sarun Charoensawan. During the round of consultations, co-operation relations between the two countries were discussed, along with ways to support and enhance them. (**QNA**)

Shura praises Amir's climate diplomacy

From Page 1

The Council also welcomed the outcomes of the 12th session of the Qatar-Turkiye Supreme Strategic Committee, co-chaired by HH the Amir and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.
The meeting culminated in the signing of a mutual defence agreement and the exchange of several agreements and memoranda of understanding across various sectors.
The Council said the outcomes reflected the depth of bilateral relations and the strength of the strategic partnership between Qatar and Turkiye, opening new avenues for co-operation while advancing the shared interests of both countries and their peoples.
It added that the agreements would also contribute to regional security, stability and peace.
Following the opening proceedings, Secretary-General Nayef bin Mohammed al-Mahmoud presented the session's agenda, and the Council approved the minutes of its previous meeting.
The Council subsequently examined a government-referred draft law regulating precious metals and gemstones and referred it to the Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs for detailed consideration and submission of its recommendations.
It also reviewed the government's response to its proposal to strengthen the social, cultural and values-based role of sports clubs and their activities.
The matter was referred to the Committee on Education, Culture, Sports and Information for further examination, with instructions to submit its findings to the Council.
The Council also reviewed reports on the participation of two members in international parliamentary engagements held via videoconference last August.
These included Engineer Ahmed bin Hitmi al-Hitmi's participation in the GCC co-ordination meeting of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly and Dr Mona bint Abdulrahman al-Musallamani's participation in an Inter-Parliamentary Union seminar titled "From victims to voices: advancing prevention through justice, resilience and parliamentary action".

QR6.3bn plant primed to turn sewage into water, energy

From Page 1



In another environmental dividend, organic sewage sludge will undergo anaerobic digestion to produce biogas, generating electricity and heat for plant operations and reducing dependence on the national power grid.
Under the 25-year PPP agreement, the developer will design, finance, construct, operate and maintain the facility before transferring responsibility to Ashghal.
Al Attiyah Company chairman Abdulaziz bin Mohammed al-Attiyah said the consortium, in which his company is the largest shareholder, was combining local and international expertise while creating opportunities for Qatari suppliers and contractors. Future expansions would further broaden private-sector participation.
The project advances Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Third National Development Strategy 2024–2030 through improved water efficiency, cleaner energy, reduced emissions and sustainable resource management.

The Transport Company
MOWASALAT (KARWA)

Mowasalat (Karwa) announces the following tender:

Tender Ref. No.	Tender Title	Tender Fee	Electronic Tender Fee Payment Dates	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
TC/040/ITC/2026	Renewal of Cloudflare Enterprise Services for Mowasalat (Karwa)	QAR 1,000	17 to 23 November 2026	QAR 23,000	16 December 2026
TC/044/EGS/2026	Maintenance for Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) and Computer Room Air Conditioning (CRAC) Units in Mowasalat Facilities	QAR 1,000		QAR 45,000	20 December 2026

CONDITIONS:

- **Interested bidder shall pay the tender fee to Mowasalat Bank Account details as shown:**

Beneficiary Name	MOWASALAT-KARWA COMPANY
A/C No.	0013 - 011272 - 060
IBAN	QA07 QNBA 0000 0000 0013 0112 7206 0
Swift Code No.	QNBAQAQA
Branch Address	Corporate Branch, P.O Box 1000, Doha - Qatar
Currency	QAR
CR No.	26887

- Bidder must submit proof of tender fee payment (Bank Deposit Slip + A Signed & Stamped Expression of Interest (indicating Tender Ref. No. and Title / Company Name and details of nominated contact person i.e., Tel. No., Fax No., and Email address) + Copy of valid Commercial Registration to Mowasalat Secretary - Tender Committee at email: **tenders@mowasalat.com**
- **Tender documents will be released via email on the next working day after the tender fee payment date to all bidders who have submitted the bank deposit slip and other documents requested.**
- **Bonds: Tender Bond & Performance Bond:** Bids must be accompanied by Bonds issued by a local bank operating in the State of Qatar as per the Qatar Central Bank template. Further details of bonds can be found in the tender documents. ***Bids without Tender Bond shall not be considered.***
- **Tender validity:** Bid validity period shall be 180 days from the bid closing date.
- **Tender documents submission:** Bids must be submitted in 3 separately sealed (**IN RED WAX**) envelopes addressed to **Secretary - Tender Committee** clearly highlighting the Tender Ref. No. & Tender Title:
  - **Envelope 1# must** include the Technical Bid submission (1 Original + 1 non-Editable copy in a USB)
  - **Envelope 2# must** include Commercial Bid submission (1 Original + 1 Editable MS Excel spreadsheet copied in a USB)
  - **Envelope 3# must** include the Tender Bond (1 Original) + 3 years Audited Financial Statements.
- **Bid Closing Date:** Bid submission deadline is **12.00 noon Doha Local Time** as on the Bid closing date shown above. The 3 envelopes must be handed over to the Office of The Secretary - Tender Committee, located at Mowasalat Head Office, Industrial Area. Any tender submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

Tel.: 4458 8724 Fax: 4458 8850

Supplier Registration *Mowasalat Location*

karwa | dohalimousine | karwa services | mowasalat medical center | Karwa Academy | Karwa Technologies

Environmental initiative at Rawdat Wadi Athna



The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's Wildlife Development Department has organised an environmental initiative at Rawdat Wadi Athna, involving the planting of 300 seedlings of native wild plants and the scattering of 3,000 seeds of local wild plant species.
The initiative was carried out with the participation of a number of department specialists and employees, alongside a group of volunteer children, as part of the Ministry's ongoing efforts to preserve Qatar's rawdas (natural meadows), develop natural vegetation cover and raise awareness of the importance of protecting the country's terrestrial environment.
The event is an extension of the Ministry's field programmes and initiatives aimed at rehabilitating rawdas, supporting natural vegetation and preserving native wild plants.
These efforts include planting species suited to Qatar's environment and scattering their seeds in appropriate locations to support plant growth and propagation and promote the natural regeneration of vegetation within the rawda.
Meanwhile, the Ministry is set to implement programmes and initiatives aimed at protecting and rehabilitating rawdas, developing vegetation cover, preserving native wild plants and strengthening community participation, contributing to the protection of Qatar's land environment and the preservation of its natural heritage for present and future generations.

Japanese embassy honours DFI official



The embassy of Japan hosted a special ceremony to confer the Ambassador's Commendation upon Abdulla al-Mosallam, chief administrative officer of the Doha Film Institute (DFI), deputy director of the Doha Film Festival, and founder of Geekdom, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to promoting mutual understanding and cultural exchange between Japan and the State of Qatar.
During the ceremony, Naoto Hisajima, ambassador of Japan presented the Certificate of Commendation and a commemorative gift to al-Mosallam in the presence of Fatma Alremaihi - CEO of Doha Film Institute; Ahmad al-Sharif, head of Geekdom and Ashma Guiamadin - Geekdom Marketing & Community Engagement Manager.
Ambassador Hisajima referred to al-Mosallam as a "visionary cultural leader and a dear friend of Japan". He highlighted al- Mosallam's establishment of Geekdom in 2013, noting how the platform has successfully promoted Japanese pop culture across Qatar and fostered a vibrant community for enthusiasts of anime, manga, and gaming.
Ambassador Hisajima also expressed the embassy's deep gratitude for al- Mosallam's continuous support and close collaboration on numerous bilateral initiatives, including co-hosting the Qatar – Japan illustration contest, serving as a contest judge, and generously providing Geekdom's venue for embassy award ceremony this year.
Upon receiving the commendation, al- Mosallam expressed his appreciation for the honour and reaffirmed his commitment to further strengthening cultural ties between the two nations.
The Ambassador's Commendation is awarded to individuals and organisations that have made significant contributions to the promotion of mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and Qatar.

UDC concludes celebration of Qatar Sustainability Week

The United Development Company (UDC) has successfully concluded its participation in the 11th edition of Qatar Sustainability Week (QSW) 2026. The programme featured six environmental, educational and community-focused initiatives engaging residents, visitors, employees and schools across both destinations.

Commenting on the conclusion of this year's programme, Abdullatif Ali al-Yafei, executive director of Public Services at UDC, said: "Qatar Sustainability Week allowed us to turn sustainability from an idea into something people could experience and take part in. Through environmental initiatives, education and community activities across The Pearl and Gewan Islands, we encouraged people of all ages to participate and take action. The strong engagement from the community reflects that lasting impact is created when people feel part of it."



The programme opened with the SDG Ambassadors Sustainable Race, which attracted more than 200 participants and featured 17 learning stations representing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The SDG Ambassadors' "The Pearl in Children's Eyes" exhibition at Qanat Quartier showcased 50 artworks created using paintings and recycled materials, highlighting children's perspectives on sustainability and marine conservation.

UDC also raised awareness through sustainability-themed sculptures at the entrances to The Pearl and Gewan Islands and green lighting at its buildings.

Mangrove restoration was a key focus, with UDC working alongside the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and Earthna to highlight the ecological importance of mangroves.

The initiative included an awareness display on Gewan Island and an employee activation at UDC offices, where employees adopted and planted around 140 mangrove saplings for eventual planting at Al Aaliya Island.

MOECC highlights MRV Systems' role in boosting climate transparency at COP31

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) organised a panel discussion on the role of Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) systems in enhancing the accuracy of emissions data and assessing the effectiveness of climate policies.

The discussion was held as part of Qatar Pavilion programme at the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in Antalya, Turkiye.

Held under the title "Measurement, Reporting and Verification Systems: Enabling Implementation and Accountability," the session explored the requirements for collecting, managing and verifying climate data, as well as its use in monitoring greenhouse gas emissions reductions and measuring the outcomes of national climate actions. The ministry highlighted its efforts to develop an integrated national climate transparency framework, including strengthening data collection and analysis, developing emissions reporting mechanisms at the facility level, and monitoring the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

The discussions focused on ways to leverage climate data to support government decision-making, guide climate investments, and evaluate policies and measures, thereby helping identify implementation needs and improve planning.

DFF 2026 to honour Nandita Das, Taim Hasan with Creative Excellence Awards

QNA
Doha

Doha Film Festival (DFF) 2026 will honour acclaimed Indian filmmaker and actor Nandita Das and renowned Syrian actor Taim Hasan with its Creative Excellence Awards during the opening ceremony on Thursday at Katara's Opera House. The festival runs from November 19 to 27.

The awards recognise exceptional contributions to cinema through lasting artistic influence and powerful human stories that resonate across cultures.

Both artists are celebrated for exploring identity, history and the human experience through storytelling.

CEO of Doha Film Institute and Director of Doha Film Festival, Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, said: "Cinema transcends borders, challenges perceptions and brings us closer to our shared humanity. Nandita Das and Taim Hasan represent the very best of this power".

She added: "Their remarkable artistry, courage of expression and unwavering commitment to authentic storytelling resonates far beyond geographical and cultural boundaries."

"They remind us that cinema is a force that can shape how we see, understand and connect with one another. We are honoured to recognize these two artists at Doha Film Festival whose creative legacies continue to inspire audiences and a new generation of filmmakers," she added.

Nandita Das has acted in more than 40 feature films across 10 languages over three decades, working with leading directors. Her directorial debut, *Firaaq* (2008), premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival, while *Manto* (2018), based on the life of writer Saadat Hasan Manto, premiered at Cannes. She has also served twice on the Cannes jury.

Taim Hasan is one of the Arab world's most acclaimed screen actors. He rose to prominence in Hatem Ali's historical dramas *Al Zir Salem* (2000) and Saladin (2001), followed by leading roles in *Nizar Qabbani* (2005) and *King Farouk* (2007), for which he won the Gold Medal for Best Actor at the Cairo Arab Media Festival. His later work includes the five-season series *Al Hayba*.

The awards reflect the festival's commitment to celebrating artists who expand the possibilities of cinema and enrich the global creative landscape.

Supported by partners including Katara, Media City Qatar, the Film Committee and Visit Qatar, the festival brings together filmmakers, audiences and industry figures from the region and beyond to celebrate original storytelling.

DI hosts 7th Mena conference to address youth challenges

The Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) is hosting the 7th Adolescents Health Conference in the Middle East and North Africa, in partnership with the Arab Coalition for Adolescent Health and Medicine and Juzoor Foundation for Health and Social Development, under the theme "Generation Empowered: From Vulnerability to Strength,"

Running until today, the conference brings together officials, researchers, academics, experts, practitioners and adolescents to strengthen regional co-operation and develop evidence-based policies and programmes addressing young people's needs.

In his opening remarks, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Khalifa bin Issa bin Abdullah al-Kubaisi said empowering adolescents and young people to address psychological and social challenges is vital to the future of societies.

He called for stronger co-operation among academic institutions, policymakers and social service providers, stressing that strong societies are built not only by protecting their members from vulnerability, but by empowering them to overcome it.



He said empowerment means more than protecting young people from risks; it requires developing their abilities and opportunities to contribute to society.

Vulnerability is not inevitable, he added, and strength does not develop in isolation. It grows through cohesive families, supportive environments, informed social policies and institutions capable of turning challenges into opportunities for empowerment.

Al-Kubaisi highlighted investment in people under Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Third National Development Strategy is reaping rewards, noting that family stability and cohesion underpin social development.

President of the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies Dr Abdelwahab El Affendi stressed the need to translate academic knowledge into practical initiatives with tangible benefits for communities.

He highlighted the Institute's Social Work Programme and partnerships with academic and professional institutions in Palestine and across the Arab world to exchange expertise and address shared social and health challenges.

President of the Arab Coalition for Adolescent Health and Medicine Dr Umaiyeh Khammash said the conference provides a platform for Arab scientific and professional co-operation to address challenges facing adolescents. He called for moving beyond discussing problems to developing solutions and shaping policy.

Reviewing the coalition's work since its establishment in 2014, Dr Khammash highlighted its role in connecting researchers, experts and policymakers and advancing adolescent health and well-being. Key regional challenges include mental health, nutrition, conflicts, digital transformation and climate change.

He said the conference received more than 200 research papers and scientific contributions, with 80 papers scheduled for presentation. He stressed the importance of turning research into practical solutions and partnerships that advance policies and programmes for young people.

Head of the Social Work Programme at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies Dr Ferdoos Alissa said moving from vulnerability to strength requires recognising adolescents' abilities, potential and right to participate in decisions affecting their lives, rather than viewing them solely as recipients of care and protection.



QOSM opens two new exhibitions

QNA
Doha

The 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum (QOSM) has opened two new exhibitions that look at sporting greatness from very different angles.

Threaded Momentum: The Spirit of the Games presents five athlete portraits by Olympic Heritage | Artist in Residence Segun Owolabi, while Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait follows one of football's greatest players for an entire match.

Multimedia artist Segun Owolabi works at the crossroads of craft and code. He uses an algorithm of his own design to generate the path of each thread, building his portraits through tension, repetition, patience and accumulation — the same discipline that shapes an athlete.

Each of the five portraits focuses on one quality that defines the spirit of the Olympic Games: endurance, survival, self-knowledge, transformation and connection. The series reminds visitors that this spirit reaches beyond winning. It lives in the personal stories behind every great performance, and in the forces that keep people moving forward in sport and in life.

The exhibition is part of the Olympic Heritage | Artists in Residence program, a joint initiative by 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum and The Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland.

(2006) by Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno is an experimental film about French football icon Zinedine Zidane. It captures him in real time during Real Madrid's La Liga match against Villarreal at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in Madrid on 23 April 2005.

Seventeen synchronised cameras placed around the stadium follow Zidane close up and from afar, staying with him even when the play moves elsewhere. Set to a specially commissioned soundtrack by Scottish rock band Mogwai, the installation offers a rare view of a champion's concentration, movement and presence on the pitch, and a deeper understanding of how a match unfolds.

15th Kashta exhibition concludes with focus on youth empowerment

The Simaisma and Al Daayen Youth Centre has concluded the 15th edition of the "Kashta" Exhibition, organised in collaboration with Lusail Sports Club under the "Youth and Trade" project, with the participation of entrepreneurs, productive families, and local businesses.

This edition went beyond a traditional commercial exhibition, offering an integrated community platform that promoted national products, celebrated Qatari heritage, supported local entrepreneurship, and empowered young people through practical involvement in event management and operations. A key highlight was the "Sanaat Deertna" exhibition, which provided productive families with an opportunity to showcase their products, connect with consumers, and explore new marketing opportunities. The programme also featured practical workshops on facility operations, sales and customer service, and investment fundamentals through the "Young Investor" initiative.



At the conclusion, the centre expressed its appreciation to the Ministry of Sports and Youth, Lusail Sports Club, participating organisations, productive families, entrepreneurs, organisers, volunteers, and media representatives for their contributions to the exhibition's success.

The 15th edition of Kashta reinforces the centre's commitment to youth development, supporting national production, preserving Qatari heritage, and strengthening community partnerships, in line with the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030.

Qatar Charity's Board of Directors holds meeting



Qatar Charity's Board of Directors held its regular meeting, chaired by Sheikh Hamad bin Nasser bin Jassim al-Thani, chairman of the Board of Directors, to review the organisation's performance and assess progress on its strategic plan in light of developments in the region.

The board reviewed Qatar Charity's financial and administrative performance and the latest advances in its use of digital solutions and artificial intelligence.

It also examined recommendations submitted by the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee covering the previous reporting period and issued its recommendations accordingly.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MISS LALADA OPASTIRAKUL

holder of

THAILAND Passport No. AC3841316
QID No. 29376400468

hereby change my name

from

MISS LALADA OPASTIRAKUL

to

LALADA OPASTIRAKUL

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MAHFUZUR RAHAMAN

holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. EK0476030
QID No. 28905028983

hereby change my name

from

MAHFUZUR RAHAMAN

to

MAFUZUR RAHAMAN

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MOSTOFA MIAH

holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. A24018161
QID No. 28805010778

hereby change my name

from

MOSTOFA MIAH

to

MOSTAFA MIAH

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

QATAR

Diabetes is a whole-body condition:
The check-ups that keep it in control

Aster HOSPITAL CLINIC PHARMACY
We'll Treat You Well



With nearly one in four adults in Qatar living with diabetes, doctors urge a review every three months and yearly checks for the heart, nerves and eyes.

Diabetes rarely announces itself. For many people, the first sign is not thirst or tiredness but a complication that has been developing quietly for years: a blurred patch in their vision, numb feet or a heart problem.

The scale in Qatar is significant. According to the International Diabetes Federation, around 409,300 adults here were living with diabetes in 2024, close to one in four adults. Nearly half of them did not know it.

Following World Diabetes Day on November 14, doctors at Aster Hospital and Aster Medical Centres in Qatar are urging people to treat diabetes as what it is: a whole-body disease that needs a team, not just a once-a-year prescription refill.

The three-month rhythm

"Diabetes control is measured in months, not days," says Dr Jobin Rajan Benjamin, Specialist – Internal Medicine. "The HbA1c test shows your average sugar over the past three months, so a review every three months lets us adjust treatment before damage builds up. Bring your sugar readings, your medicines and your questions. Blood pressure, cholesterol, kidney function and weight matter as much as the sugar number."

Protecting the heart

High blood sugar damages blood vessels over time, raising the risk of heart attack and stroke. "Heart disease is a major cause of death in people with diabetes, and it can be silent," says Dr Joji Mathews, Specialist-Cardiology. "Breathlessness on climbing the stairs, chest tightness or unusual tiredness should never be dismissed. A yearly heart check, along with good control of blood pressure and cholesterol, can help prevent serious events."

Listening to the nerves

"Burning, tingling or numbness in the feet is often the first sign of diabetic nerve damage," says Dr Harsha Bhatia, Consultant Neurology. "Many patients ignore it until they get a wound they cannot feel. Inspect your feet every day for cuts, sores, or red spots, and have a healthcare provider perform a comprehensive foot exam at least once a year.Tell your doctor about any change in sensation. Early and strict control of blood sugar can slow the damage and ease the pain."

Saving sight

"Diabetic eye disease usually causes no symptoms in its early stages, which is exactly when it is most treatable," says Dr Neethu Abraham, Ophthalmology Specialist. "By the time vision is blurred, the damage may already be advanced, and treatment becomes much more difficult. So it is importantly that a person with diabetes should have a dilated eye examination at least once a year, even if their eyesight seems fine."

Teeth and skin

Diabetes also raises the risk of gum disease, and gum infection in turn makes blood sugar harder to control. "Bleeding or swollen gums are a warning sign," says Dr Riaz Ahamed, Periodontist. "A dental check-up every six months should be part of every diabetes care plan."

Dr Anila Konthankuzhi, Dermatology Specialist, adds: "Slow-healing cuts, repeated fungal and bacterial skin infections, and very dry, itchy skin can all point to poorly controlled sugar. Moisturise daily, keep skin folds dry, and have any wound that isn't healing checked promptly."

What you should do now

- Get your blood sugar checked, whatever your age, especially if diabetes runs in your family.
- If you have diabetes, see your physician every three months and ask for your HbA1c result.
- Book a yearly eye examination, heart check and foot assessment, or follow the schedule your doctor sets.
- Bring a list of your medicines and recent sugar readings to every visit.
- Walk for at least 30 minutes a day, cut down on sugary drinks and fried food, and stop smoking.

"Diabetes care works best as a team," says Dr Jobin. "When the physician, cardiologist, neurologist and eye specialist follow one plan, patients stay healthier for longer."

Aster Hospital has a dedicated Diabetic Care Clinic, and Aster Hospital and Aster Medical Centres in Qatar offer consultations in internal medicine, cardiology, neurology, ophthalmology, dentistry and dermatology.

SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO
SHINE YOUR BUSINESS!



Advertise on our
TUESDAY SPECIAL ADVERTISING PAGE
for maximum exposure and set your brand soar high!

Contact us on
gtadv@gulf-times.com or 444 666 21



FROM 20% TO 45%
BIG SALE
28TH OCTOBER 2026
26TH NOVEMBER 2026
New Trade Co. Shops at The Centre
Salwa Road . Tel: 44440202, 44424626
Shop with Confidence
For Complaints and Suggestions 16001
SSC-00125576

AXESS POWER
MADE IN ITALY
SYSTEM WORKS UNINTERRUPTED
PREMIUM SMF/ VRLA BATTERY
APPLICATIONS
UPS System
Central Battery System
Fire Alarm & Security System
Solar System
ELV System
CCTV & Networking
Elevators & Escalators
Golf Buggy
MOI - QCD APPROVED
MOI - SSD APPROVED
Middle East's No1 Battery Wholesaler
AAGE INTERNATIONAL WLL
77454461 | 77934461 | 55004461 | 33558861
sales@aageinternational.com | www.aageinternational.com
AAGE INTERNATIONAL

QUALITY HOSES FOR A STRONGER TOMORROW
TECHNO TRUST TRADING W.L.L. - YOUR TRUSTED INDUSTRIAL PARTNER
HYDRAULIC HOSES & INDUSTRIAL HOSES - PREMIUM HOSE SOLUTIONS
READY STOCK AVAILABLE - FAST DELIVERY ACROSS QATAR
HYDRAULIC HOSES: SAE 100 R1AT, SAE 100R2AT, EN857 1SC/2SC, EN856 4SP/4SH, R13, R15
INDUSTRIAL HOSES - AIR, WATER, STEAM, NITROGEN
TECHNO TRUST TRADING W.L.L. | Tel: 974 44606367/66 | Fax: +974 44606368
Building 155, Zone 91, Street 3081, Birkat Al Awamer, P.O. Box 40492 | Mob: +974 5548 3612 | E-Mail: hydraulic@technotrustwll.com
Working Hours: 08:00-17:00 (GMT+3) | Web: www.technotrustwll.com
NEXONGATES
QUALITY HOSES • RELIABLE SUPPLY • FAST DELIVERY

Soya Bean Milk
V-SOY
Plant-based Goodness
LOW SUGAR
ORIGINAL
MULTI-GRAIN
GOLDEN-GRAIN
COCOA
V-Soy Middle East
V-Soy, The Smart Soy Solution for Quality Life.
Authorized Distributor: Al Maya International WLL, Doha-Qatar
Tel: +974 4441 6441 / 4441 0890 E-mail:almaya.qatar@almaya.com

GWM
Tamweel Al Jazeera Finance
GO INTO 2027 WITH MORE
BUY NOW & START PAYING IN JANUARY 2027
0% DOWN PAYMENT
EXPLORE THE HAVAL JOLION LINEUP, HAVAL H7, HAVAL H6 GT, AND TANK 300
FREE REGISTRATION
FIRST SERVICE FREE
FREE TINTING
FREE INSURANCE
Offer valid from 18 October 2026 till 30 December 2026 | *Terms and conditions apply
BOOK YOUR TEST DRIVE TODAY !
51880001 Airport Road, Doha, Qatar
www.gwmqatar.com gwm.qatar
TEYSEER MOTORS WLL
Ministry of Commerce and Industry
Shop with Confidence
For Complaints and Suggestions 16001 License Number SOC-00125049

Clicks versus credibility: QPC warns of attention economy's toll on news

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Latest instalment of Qatar Press Center's 'Media Terminology' series examines the race among digital platforms to win audiences without sacrificing accuracy

The Qatar Press Center (QPC) has released a new instalment in its "Media Terminology" series, which defines key media concepts and explains their meaning. The initiative aims to strengthen media literacy and help the public engage critically and consciously with news and digital content.

The latest issue focuses on the "attention economy", a term that captures the competition among media outlets and digital platforms to hold the public's attention and secure as much of its time and engagement as possible.

The term treats the audience's time and focus as finite resources with economic value. Online, media outlets, platforms and advertisers vie to attract users and keep them engaged for as long as possible, thereby maximising revenue from views, clicks and advertisements.

Platforms use a range of techniques to achieve this, including frequent notifications, curiosity-provoking headlines, short-form videos, auto-play features, infinite scrolling and recommendations tailored to a user's interests and digital behaviour.

The attention economy has reshaped how news is produced and presented. The contest for audience time has pushed many outlets to rely increasingly on short-form content, vertical video, striking imagery and sensationalist headlines, while views, clicks and shares have become influential in choosing topics and shaping stories.

While such methods widen reach and deliver information quickly, they pose professional challenges, particularly when sensationalism outweighs news value, or when exaggerated and misleading headlines are used as clickbait at the expense of accuracy, credibility and context.

Several cases illustrate the problem. Australian website news.com.au ran a headline declaring the death of the Great Barrier Reef after a widespread coral bleaching event, even though the documented damage did not mean the reef had died entirely.

In the United Kingdom, the Independent Press Standards Organisation ruled that a headline in The Times about a £1,000 tax on families was misleading and required the newspaper to publish a correction on its front page.

The Daily Mail, too, was compelled to publish a correction over a headline about a tax on family holidays after it was found to have breached accuracy standards.

Such examples show how the pursuit of views can lead to inaccurate information, damaging an outlet's reputation and eroding public trust. Balancing the drive to attract readers with accuracy, verification and professional responsibility therefore remains essential for journalism.

Awareness of the concept means resisting the lure of sensationalist headlines, verifying the source and substance of a story, and looking beyond headlines and viral posts. It also means distinguishing content that offers genuine knowledge from content designed solely to provoke emotion or drive engagement.

In a digital landscape synonymous with cut-throat competition, it is judicious to ascertain if the content provides information worth one's time or is simply trying to hijack one's attention.

MoEHE launches initiative to combat bullying at schools

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter



The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has stepped up efforts to combat school bullying and promote a culture of respect, tolerance and acceptance among students through a special gathering titled "Respect and Tolerance Ambassadors," held as part of its flagship "My School, My Community" project.

Organised by the ministry's School and Student Affairs Department, the event took place at the ministry's permanent headquarters theatre in observance of the International Day Against Bullying. It aimed to empower students to take leadership roles in promoting positive behaviour, strengthening relationships among their peers and helping create safe, inclusive and supportive learning environments.

The gathering brought together students participating in the project, school psychologists and social workers, parents, senior ministry officials, school principals and representatives of partner organisations involved in promoting student wellbeing and positive behaviour.

Maryam al-Nasf al-Buainain, Director of the School and Student Affairs Department, said the initiative forms part of an awareness campaign under "My School, My Community," one of the ministry's strategic projects designed to strengthen co-operation between schools, families and community institutions. She stressed that raising awareness of bullying and its educational, psychological and social consequences is essential to preventing its spread and establishing a school culture rooted in respect, tolerance and rejection of violence.

The project involves programmes and activities led by social workers to encourage positive behaviour, promote co-operation and build healthy relationships, ultimately ensuring a stimulating educational environment in which students can learn and develop with confidence.

Fatima Youssef al-Obaidli, assistant Director of the department, highlighted the importance of embedding respect, tolerance and empathy into everyday school life. She noted that bullying remains a significant educational and social challenge requiring co-ordinated action by families, schools and the wider community.

She also stressed the important role students can play as ambassadors of respect by encouraging positive conduct, embracing differences and supporting classmates, helping ensure that every student feels safe, valued and accepted. The programme featured a video introducing the Respect and Tolerance Ambassadors, alongside presentations outlining the ministry's anti-bullying initiatives and the media campaign under the "My School, My Community" project.

Participants also heard about the efforts of key community partners, including the Ministry of Interior's Juvenile Police Department, the Ministry of Social Development and Family through the Wifaq Centre, and the Social Rehabilitation and Protection Centre (AMAN). A particularly engaging segment featured a video presentation of a play titled "Together Towards a Bullying-Free School Environment," prepared by students of Sumaya Primary School for Girls.

The gathering included a specialised workshop, "Strategies for Prevention and Early Intervention in Addressing School Bullying," delivered by Dr Ahmed Refaat, Psychological Consultant at the Student Protection and Care Section.

The workshop explored practical approaches to identifying bullying, intervening at an early stage and promoting tolerance, empathy and social inclusion.

The ministry outlined a comprehensive range of measures under the project, including anti-bullying policies, awareness and prevention campaigns, intervention programmes, early detection through questionnaires, specialised training for psychologists and research initiatives. Co-operation with local community institutions also forms a central part of the strategy.

Meanwhile, Amr Abdel Moneim Nady, Social Consultant at the Student Protection and Care Section, presented the project's media campaign for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Launched on October 1, 2026, the campaign will continue until April 30, 2027, targeting participating government schools across different educational stages. Its objectives include raising awareness of bullying, its various forms and harmful consequences, equipping students with the skills to respond safely and report incidents, and strengthening co-operation between schools, families and community organisations.



Over 1,000 participate in 3rd edition of Aamal Ride

Aamal Company QPSC ("Aamal"), organised the third edition of "Aamal Ride" recently at Doha Port, attracting over 1,000 participants. The event was held in co-ordination with the Ministry of Sports and Youth and Qatar Cyclists.

Part of Aamal's corporate social responsibility initiatives, the ride aims to encourage members of the community to adopt healthy, active lifestyles and raise awareness of health, wellbeing and sustainability.

It also highlights cycling as both a form of exercise that improves physical fitness and an environmentally friendly means of transport. Aamal Ride was also included in the activities for Qatar Sustainability Week, supporting Qatar's wider sustainability initiatives by encouraging active lifestyles and promoting cycling as an environmentally friendly means of transport.

The event featured routes of varying distances, reaching up to 40km from Doha Port to The Pearl Island, alongside a dedicated 5km children's route, encouraging participation across different ages and fitness levels. Children's activities and a range of other sports activities also offered participants and their families an enjoyable combination of sport and recreation.

This edition saw strong participation from employees across the Aamal Group, reflecting their engagement with the Company's community initiatives and their interest in sport and health.

Several prominent figures from the cycling community also took part, including Abdullah Hamadi, Abdullah AlSiddiqi, Hamza Shukfa, Dr Jamal AlQatami, Khalifa al-Khulaifi and Nasser al-Khulaifi, alongside many other cycling enthusiasts.

Rashid bin Ali al-Mansoori, chief executive officer of Aamal Company commented: "We are delighted that the third edition of Aamal Ride brought together over 1,000 participants around a shared message of health, physical activity and community connection. We offered a variety of routes and activities to enable children, families and experienced cyclists to take part and enjoy the event."

Makkah pact nations to meet in Islamabad: Dar

AFP
Islamabad

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar said yesterday that the top-level security committee of the Makkah defence agreement was expected to meet in Islamabad later this month.

Pakistan signed the mutual defence pact with Saudi Arabia and Turkiye in August, pledging to come to each other's aid in the event of an attack.

"The apex committee of this body... will be actually meeting, hopefully, end of this month in Islamabad," Dar said.

Saudi Arabia has faced repeated attacks by the Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen, with the group targeting cities, oil facilities and shipping since fighting in Yemen's civil war intensified in July.


Mohammad Ishaq Dar (**AFP**)

The attacks coincided with the expansion of the war in the Middle East, which began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran in February and has since drawn in countries across the region.

Iran FM says neighbours back new Hormuz plan

AFP
Islamabad

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said yesterday that a 10-nation regional bloc had backed Tehran's proposed plan to reopen the Strait of Hormuz as part of efforts to end the war with the US.

Tehran has said it is ready to reopen the strait within two days if Washington agrees to its conditions, having previously proposed a one-week timeline. "The meeting responded positively and, by supporting the plan proposed by Iran, namely the two-day plan, expressed hope that this plan would lead to a definitive and comprehensive ceasefire," Araghchi told reporters in Islamabad.

Araghchi arrived in Pakistan late on Sunday for a meeting of the Economic Co-operation Organisation, a group of nations from Central and South Asia and the Middle East.


Iran's FM Abbas Araghchi. (**AFP**)

Speaking at a press conference at the conclusion of the meeting, Pakistani Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar said he had held "very candid, very frank" discussions with Araghchi, confirming that Iran had put forward a two-day proposal to the US.

He said Washington had not yet responded. "I'm sure, hopefully very soon, that we... hear from the other side," Dar said.

Iran's foreign ministry said Araghchi held a telephone conversation with his Russian counterpart to discuss "the latest political and diplomatic efforts... aimed at maintaining peace and security in the region".

Senior officials from Pakistan, Turkiye, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attended the meeting in Pakistan's capital.

Officials from Afghanistan, also part of the organisation, were not present.

The US and Israel launched the devastating war on February 28, killing members of Iran's leadership and demanding it cease any nuclear-related activities.

The war plunged the Middle East into violence, with Tehran's retaliatory strikes targeting Washington's Gulf allies and sending global energy prices skyrocketing.

Efforts to end the conflict have stalled.

Tehran has insisted that Washington meet conditions including the release of frozen assets abroad, sanctions relief and an end to the US naval blockade of Iranian ports in exchange for reopening the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran has blockaded the waterway, which is a vital global energy conduit, since the start of the war.

Pakistan brokered a June accord that led to a brief halt in fighting between the US and Iran and set a roadmap for further agreement on reopening the strait and for negotiations on Tehran's nuclear programme.

For healthy living: Anti-smoking campaign to target 100,000 youth in first year

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Zemam Anti-Smoking Society has announced an ambitious programme to combat smoking, aimed at reaching 100,000 young people during its first year, producing 120 awareness materials and launching a digital platform to strengthen tobacco prevention initiatives, pointed out Abdulaziz al-Ishaq, general manager of Zemam

He outlined three major programmes focusing on preventing tobacco addiction, protecting non-smokers from exposure to tobacco smoke and helping smokers quit. Further, he stressed that combating smoking requires a collective effort involving families, schools, healthcare institutions, businesses and the wider community. He said the society aims to move beyond short-term awareness campaigns towards sustainable initiatives supported by measurable performance indicators.

He noted that data shows that around 12.1% of school students aged 13 to 15 use tobacco products, while 11.3% use electronic cigarettes, which requires urgent early intervention. He warned that the growing popularity of modern tobacco and nicotine products, particularly among younger age groups, calls for more innovative awareness strategies.

In the meantime, the first initiative, titled "Protecting Society from Tobacco Addiction", will primarily target students aged 13 to 22 through digital campaigns, interactive activities and competitions. The programme aims to reach at least 100,000 young people in its first year, produce and distribute 120 educational materials, and organise two competitions for school and university students.

A dedicated digital platform will also be launched, while partnerships with educational and healthcare institutions will help expand the campaign's reach. Surveys and performance indicators will be used to assess changes in public awareness and knowledge.

Further, al-Ishaq cautioned against the widespread misconception that electronic cigarettes are harmless or less addictive than conventional tobacco products. He called for youth-oriented messages delivered through social media, short videos and interactive activities, with young people themselves encouraged to participate in producing awareness content.

The second programme, "Protecting Non-Smokers from the Harm of Tobacco", will promote smoke-free workplaces through cooperation with public and private sector organisations.

It will encourage institutions to introduce internal policies, alongside staff training and awareness activities designed to protect employees and visitors from second-hand smoke.

The third initiative, "Helping Addicts Quit Smoking", will focus on strengthening healthcare professionals' skills in counselling and supporting people seeking to overcome nicotine dependence.

Al-Ishaq said quitting can involve physical and psychological withdrawal symptoms, making professional medical, behavioural and psychological support essential for lasting success.

He also emphasised that returning to smoking after an unsuccessful attempt should not be regarded as failure. Instead, individuals should identify the triggers behind the relapse and develop a new quitting strategy with appropriate professional guidance.

Accordingly, he described families and schools as the first line of defence against tobacco addiction among children and young people, encouraging parents to set positive examples, maintain open communication with their children and equip them with the confidence to resist harmful social influences.

Besides, schools should promote interactive activities and involve students and social counsellors in identifying potential risks at an early stage.

He warned that second-hand smoke poses serious health risks, particularly to children, older people and those with respiratory conditions. Exposure can increase the likelihood of respiratory infections and asthma attacks.

He stressed that there is no safe level of exposure to tobacco smoke, adding that opening windows or using ventilation systems cannot provide complete protection. Families were urged to maintain completely smoke-free homes.

Li Qiang lauds ties with Asean ahead of Trump visit

Reuters
Manila

Chinese Premier Li Qiang yesterday hailed what he called "truly extraordinary" achievements of China and Southeast Asia in the face of global trade restrictions, expressing Beijing's commitment to free trade at a summit ahead of US President Donald Trump's arrival.

In remarks to leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Manila, Li said that at a time of growing unilateralism and protectionism and recurring geopolitical conflict, economic relations between China and Asean had only strengthened.

"The past five years have been truly extraordinary, and the achievements we scored have not come easily," he said, citing annual trade with the 11-member Asean last year of more than $1tn and cumulative two-way investment of more than $500bn.

"We remain firmly committed to safeguarding multilateralism and promoting free trade and endeavour to make the pie bigger," he said.

China is Asean's biggest trading partner and a key source of investment, but the biggest economies of the bloc — which has a combined GDP of more than $3.9tn — are keen to expand ties with the US amid trade and diplomatic uncertainty under the Trump administration.

According to a readout of Li's remarks by state news agency Xinhua, he said that in today's turbulent world "it is all the more important for China and Asean to stand united, ward off interference, and work together".

Anti-Trump protests are expected when he arrives in Manila, after four days of demonstrations and the burning of Trump effigies by leftist groups, students, and workers demanding an end to the Middle East war and the scrapping of the US-led Pax Silica initiative.

In Manila, Trump will meet Asean leaders and attend his first meeting of the Quad group of Indo-Pacific powers — the US, Japan, Australia and India — the first such gathering in two years.

His predecessor Joe Biden saw the Quad as a signature foreign policy achievement and stressed the importance of maintaining it during his six meetings with the group.

The Quad is widely considered an attempt to counterbalance China's influence in the region, including by Beijing, although its members have said the grouping is not directed against any one country.

Asean held talks yesterday with the leaders of Australia, Republic of Korea and the UN, whose Secretary-General Antonio Guterres reiterated calls for a ceasefire in Ukraine and for greater humanitarian access in war-torn Myanmar.

The Asean leaders' summit ended on Sunday without completing a protracted code of conduct with Beijing to try to manage disputes over the South China Sea, which Asean chair the Philippines had hoped could be wrapped up this year.

Asean also resolved to continue its policy of excluding Myanmar's leaders from its summits, but left the door open for a return if "sustained and concrete progress" on a peace plan agreed long ago with Asean can be demonstrated.

Xi, Trump, Putin to discuss 'world peace', says China

AFP
Beijing

The leaders of China, Russia and the United States will discuss "world peace" when they hold their first trilateral summit in Shenzhen this week, Beijing said yesterday.

Presidents Xi Jinping, Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin are due to meet in the southern Chinese city on Thursday on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit.

China has provided few details as to what the three leaders will discuss but said they would hold "in-depth exchanges on safeguarding world peace and promoting strategic stability in major-power relations".

"It will be of ground-breaking significance," foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a news briefing yesterday, hours after Beijing confirmed the meeting.

The Kremlin said "the significance and symbolism of this meeting are hard to overestimate".

Top Chinese and US diplomats have previously raised the possibility that the three-way talks could broach the sensitive subject of denuclearisation.

Washington, which dislikes China's rapidly expanding nuclear arsenal, said it wants Beijing to be part of a nuclear arms control deal.

Beijing, however, has long maintained that the US and Russia should reduce their giant nuclear arsenals before it agrees to talks on its own stockpile.

After a US-Russia bilateral treaty on nuclear weapons expired in February, Trump called for a "better agreement" including China.



Russia's President Vladimir Putin, US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping. (**AFP/File Photo**)

Trump 'could meet with Kim Jong-un in China'

US President Donald Trump yesterday said he could meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in China, in a surprise announcement as he left the White House at the start of a trip to Asia.
"We may meet with Kim Jong-un," Trump told reporters, adding that President Xi Jinping might invite Kim when leaders gather in Shenzhen for the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) summit. (**AFP**)

Beijing at the time declined to join disarmament negotiations.

But in a call this week, China's top diplomat Wang Yi and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio "agreed on the importance of meaningful leader-level conversations to advance goals such as peace and denuclearisation", the US State Department said.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said yesterday that if the three leaders "really commit themselves to a meaningful denuclearisation, it will be a great achievement for the world".

"We have been for a long time... talking and requesting the need of disarmament in the nuclear field, and we believe that we will only be entirely safe when we would be entirely (without) nuclear weapons," Guterres said during an Asean summit in the Philippines.

Trump has said the three leaders will also likely discuss his war in Iran.

"We'll talk a lot of things, including denuclearisation, but we'll be talking a lot of things. We're trying to end the war in Iran," Trump told reporters on Sunday.

China, a top economic partner of Iran, has long sought to mediate in the conflict triggered by US-Israeli strikes on Tehran.

The months-long crisis, which has at times spilled over into neighbouring countries, has disrupted global shipping and sent oil prices soaring globally.

Trump said in late October that the United States had knocked out much of Iran's military but still has to "take care of" one or two targets.

China, meanwhile, says avoiding a return to hostilities is a "top priority", and has in recent weeks hosted leaders and diplomats from various Middle Eastern countries in an effort to persuade parties back to the negotiating table.

In contrast, the subject of Russia's invasion of Ukraine could prove to be a no-go during the talks this week.

A *Wall Street Journal* report last month said that Putin wanted the three-way talks to broker a peace deal in Ukraine that would be favourable to Moscow, which launched its invasion in 2022.

However, it is unlikely that Xi or Trump would touch on the highly sensitive topic.

US officials say Trump is not expected to raise the issue.

And German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier has said Xi showed "irritation" in a recent meeting when the idea of the trilateral talks covering Ukraine came up.

"He explicitly pointed out that this is a European conflict, in which the Europeans must also be at the table," Steinmeier told ARD.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has warned that the meeting could be a Yalta-like "redistribution of spheres of influence" for the 21st century.

Prince William in India for Earthshot Prize

AFP
Mumbai

Britain's Prince William played street cricket and took a metro ride in India's financial capital Mumbai yesterday ahead of hosting his environmental Earthshot Prize, on a visit that will also include a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The future king, accompanied by his wife Princess Catherine, took part in India's beloved game of "gully" cricket with batting legend Sachin Tendulkar in the Ballard Estate area of the city.

The princess, dressed in a lime-green blazer and white trousers, tried her hand at batting before posing for photographs with young local players.

The three-day visit is the first official overseas trip undertaken together by the couple in four years, with Catherine's cancer diagnosis and treatment limiting international travel.

The royal couple also hopped on for a ride in the city's metro train to highlight sustainable travel.

"Catherine and I are delighted to be in India for this year's Earthshot Prize," the Prince of Wales said in a social media post.

The prize, which supports innovative solutions to the world's most pressing environmental challenges, selects five winners from 15 finalists in categories covering nature conservation, ocean protection, waste reduction, climate action and clean air.



Britain's William and Kate, Prince and Princess of Wales, pose for a picture with former Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and children at the Ballard Estate, known for its impromptu gully cricket games, during their visit for the sixth annual Earthshot Prize Awards in Mumbai, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

Each winner will receive £1mn ($1.3mn) at today night's ceremony to expand their work.

Hosted by filmmaker Karan Johar, the event is expected to draw Oscar-winning actor Rami Malek and Bollywood stars Alia Bhatt and Sonam Kapoor.

William said that India had "become one of the most exciting places in the world for environmental innovation, with people across the country developing practical solutions to some of the greatest challenges we all share".

"I am very appreciative that the royal family has taken up such a noble cause," Tendulkar, international cricket's all-time leading run-scorer, told reporters.

The clean-air category includes Indian vehicle manufacturer Mahindra Last Mile Mobility, which is expanding its electric three-wheeler business. Other finalists include Uganda's AirQo, which uses artificial intelligence and pollution monitors to track air quality, and Argentina's Satellites on Fire, which uses satellite data and artificial intelligence to detect wildfires.

"We know that there are still great challenges but we cannot wait for everyone to agree before we act," William said at a ceremony where the Earthshot finalists were introduced.

"We all want clean air to breathe, a chance to build good lives... these are not ambitions that divide us, they are ambitions that unite us."

The seaside city of Mumbai faces persistent air pollution, although it is spared the choking winter smog that engulfs northern India.

New Delhi, where the royal couple will travel on Wednesday, was shrouded in toxic smog on Monday, as vehicle emissions, farm fires and industrial pollution choke the capital.

Readings of cancer-causing PM2.5 fine particles hit 556 micrograms per cubic metre in New Delhi yesterday, according to monitoring organisation IQAir, more than 37 times the World Health Organisation's recommended daily limit.

A 2024 study in *The Lancet* Planetary Health estimated that fine-particle air pollution was linked to 3.8mn deaths in India between 2009 and 2019, equivalent to five % of all deaths over that period.

Hasina to return home despite 'threat of death'

AFP
New Delhi

Ousted Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina, sentenced to capital punishment after she was toppled in 2024, told AFP yesterday she would return home in December despite "the threat of death".

Hasina fled to India in August 2024 after a student-led uprising ended her iron-fisted 15-year rule, and has remained in hiding ever since.

She was sentenced to death in absentia last year after a Bangladeshi court convicted her of crimes against humanity over a deadly crackdown on protesters.

"I am fully aware of the risks I face if I return," she told AFP in an email interview.

"But I have made my decision, and no threat of death will keep me away from my own country."

Her insistence on going back comes days after Bangladesh said she would face execution if she returned, adding that she has no further legal recourse after missing the deadline to appeal against her conviction.

The 79-year-old has repeatedly rejected the legitimacy of the trial.

Dhaka has sought her extradition from India, which says the request is under legal review.

Hasina said the stance was "contradictory".

"For months, they have demanded my return. Yet now that I am taking practical steps to come home, they appear to be more interested in threatening me... than actually allowing it to happen," she said.

"Frankly, I find these contradictory statements from the Bangladeshi authorities rather revealing."

Analysts suggest her promise to return is an attempt to remain politically relevant, retain the loyalty of supporters and keep alive a party that once dominated Bangladesh but whose activities are now banned.

She may also be counting on the possibility that the government would find it difficult to execute the daughter of Bangladesh's founding leader, despite her death sentence.

Hasina denied that her Awami League party was involved in a recent spate of petrol bomb attacks in Bangladesh, as authorities have alleged.

"Extradition is a matter between two sovereign states. India will make its own decisions according to its laws, policies and national interests," she said.

"I do not wish to die. I want to live and continue serving my country. But if death is the price I must pay for returning home, I am prepared to face it."

Vietnam court jails over 180 in investment fraud case

A Vietnamese court jailed more than 180 people yesterday in a multimillion-dollar cyberfraud case, among them a celebrity investor from a television contest for entrepreneurs.
The Hanoi court convicted most of the 188 defendants of money laundering and fraud over an investment scheme in which a total of approximately $60mn was stolen from more than 900 people, a court clerk said.
Most were sentenced to more than 10 years in prison, said the clerk, who declined to be named because they were not authorised to speak to media.
The scam network's ringleader Pho Duc Nam, alias Mr Pips, and its operator Le Khac Ngo, alias Mr Hunter, were both sentenced to life in prison, according to the clerk.
During the two-week trial, state media said the network was started in 2019, with 1,700 people working for dozens of foreign exchange and international securities trading platforms, soliciting investments.
They created online communities and deployed individuals to pose as financial experts or successful investors in an effort to build trust with potential clients.
Prosecutors were quoted in state media as saying some victims were forced to take on debt or sell off assets after losing their money to the scheme.
Known as "Shark Binh", Nguyen Hoa Binh, a celebrity investor on the television show *Shark Tank Vietnam*, was handed a 10-year sentence for money laundering.
Binh — once a chairman of NextTech, which has been called "Vietnam's Alibaba" — earlier testified in court of his founding of another company in 2012 which he built into a group of more than 10 firms that Nam's network used to launder money, according to state news site VnExpress.
Binh is under investigation in a separate case for allegedly withdrawing large sums from 30,000 investors' cryptocurrency accounts, state media has said.
Victims of transnational online scams in East Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand lost up to $114.1bn last year, a UN report said in July — with estimated losses at least tripling from 2023. (**AFP**)

Indonesia apologises to Malaysia, Singapore over wildfire haze

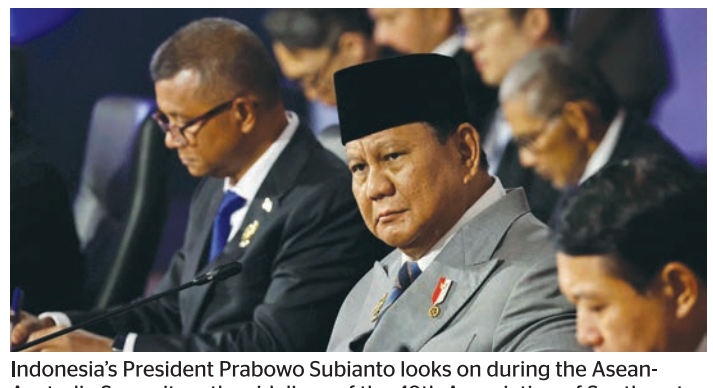
AFP
Jakarta

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has apologised to Malaysia and Singapore over a toxic haze caused by rampant wildfires in his country that polluted the skies of Indonesia's neighbours.

The months-long blazes on Borneo, Sumatra and Papua islands razed vast tracts of land and produced air pollution that sickened hundreds of thousands at home and drifted across borders to Malaysia and Singapore.

Prabowo told a summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) in Manila on Sunday that the transboundary haze was "not our fault" and insisted that "we have done our best."

However, "on behalf of the Indonesian government, Indonesian people, we apologise if we have created suffering for the people of Singapore and Malaysia," Prabowo told leaders of Asean member states, according to a video of the plenary session released by the presidential secretariat.



Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto looks on during the Asean-Australia Summit on the sidelines of the 49th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit in Manila yesterday. (**AFP**)

Wildfires have burned through 2.88mn hectares (7.1mn acres) so far in 2026, according to the Nusantara Atlas deforestation monitor, an area 18 times the size of London.

Researchers said last week that a strong El Nino weather phenomenon, climate change, deforestation and peatland drainage for mining and plantations have supercharged this year's Indonesian fire season.

Prabowo said Indonesian authorities have revoked 17 land concessions from corporations in connection with the blazes and 26 others are under investigation.

Australian MP leaves hospital after attack

An Australian lawmaker said she was "full of gratitude" yesterday as she was discharged from hospital following an alleged attack in October that resulted in her losing both legs.
Independent politician Helen Haines was struck outside her office in rural Australia, suffering grievous injuries that would eventually lead to the amputation of her legs.
The attack has sparked much soul-searching in a country where political violence is rare — but where police have documented a steady rise in threats towards elected officials.
The Alfred Hospital in Melbourne said the 65-year-old had been discharged four weeks after she was airlifted in for emergency treatment.
Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said he was in regular contact with Haines and her family, and wished her the best for her recovery. (**AFP**)

OPINION

Tougher curbs on AI chip sales to China likely after Nvidia CEO resigns

US lawmakers from both parties are pushing for tougher restrictions on China's access to advanced artificial intelligence chips following media reports about former Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang's affair with a suspected Chinese spy, which has increased scrutiny of the company's role in US national security.

Huang stepped down on Thursday, days after reports of an affair with an executive at a Singapore-based tech company whom US authorities suspect of spying for Beijing. Nvidia did not address Huang's actions in its statement; he has admitted to an extramarital affair without naming the person.

Nvidia's advanced AI chips are widely used to develop cutting-edge AI models, making the company key to the US race against China to build superior AI systems. The US for years has sought to limit China's access to Nvidia's most advanced chips, though Chinese companies have repeatedly found ways around those restrictions. Huang supported allowing more exports to China.

House Speaker Mike Johnson said Thursday that the growing consensus in Congress favours new restrictions on chip exports to China.

Here are the proposals Congress is weighing. A handful of lawmakers want to attach them to the annual defence authorisation bill, a must-pass measure that funds the military and typically attracts bipartisan support. A Senate version of the legislation already includes several of them, including the AI Overwatch Act, Chip Security Act and Match Act.

US law gives the Commerce Department broad authority to block or allow advanced chip exports without congressional input.

Senator Elizabeth Warren, a Democrat from Massachusetts, and Senator Jim Banks, an Indiana Republican, argue export-control decisions with major national security implications should face greater congressional oversight.

Their proposed AI Overwatch Act would give Congress a larger role in reviewing changes to export rules. The measure is significant for Nvidia because it could make it harder for future administrations to loosen restrictions on sales of its advanced chips to China.

Nvidia's revenue from chip sales to Chinese data centres for now is near zero, according to an August company statement, and the company doesn't expect that to change in the third quarter.

The Chip Security Act seeks to address a recurring problem of advanced chips legally sold abroad but later diverted to China.

The bill would require chipmakers to track the location of advanced AI processors and notify the government if they suspect chips have reached prohibited users.

For Nvidia, the measure could create new compliance costs and reporting obligations. The Semiconductor Industry Association, whose members include Nvidia, has said mandatory tracking requirements could be costly for the industry.

The Match Act would pressure US allies to restrict sales and maintenance of advanced chipmaking equipment destined for China.

Allies such as the Netherlands and Japan are home to ASML and Tokyo Electron , which make tools used to manufacture semiconductors.

The bill would not directly restrict Nvidia's chip sales. Supporters argue it could make it more difficult for China to develop its own advanced AI chips to compete with Nvidia in the long term.

The Remote Access Security Act targets a growing workaround used by Chinese AI companies.

Instead of purchasing advanced chips directly, some Chinese firms rent computing power from overseas data centres equipped with Nvidia chips and access the systems remotely.

The bill would give the Commerce Department authority to regulate that activity. The legislation passed the House in January and is awaiting Senate consideration.

Among the proposals under consideration, this could have the most direct effect on Nvidia. The company said in July that the measure, if enacted, could have "a material impact on our business."

Reuters reported on Thursday that Chinese AI companies are rushing to secure access to Nvidia-powered computing capacity outside China, on concerns that the controversy surrounding Huang could accelerate Washington's effort to tighten restrictions. — Reuters

Commemoration of student uprising in Athens



A Palestinian flag placed next to carnations in a monument in memory of the victims of the 1973 student's uprising against the US-backed military junta at the Athens' polytechnic school yesterday. The traditional demonstration of students and unions from the Athens' polytechnic school to the US embassy to commemorate the student uprising of November 17, 1973 against the dictatorship of colonels (1967-1974) will take place today. (**AFP**)



Breast cancer in the family – genetic insights from the Arab population

When a breast cancer diagnosis is made, it often raises questions about hereditary risk. Dr Julie Decock explores how new QBRI research is helping to answer these questions for Arab populations



October marks Breast Cancer Awareness Month, when attention turns to the importance of early detection, prevention, and advances in treatment and care. Understanding breast cancer risk includes awareness of lifestyle factors that are within an individual's control, such as physical activity, diet and alcohol consumption, and those that we cannot alter, including gender, age and genetic blueprint.

Most breast cancers are not caused by a single genetic change. However, when several members of a family develop breast cancer, especially at a younger age, this may indicate an inherited susceptibility to the disease. Advancing our understanding of this predisposition is becoming increasingly important as medicine moves towards more personalised approaches to assess risk, prevent disease and select treatments. Yet, an important question remains: how well do we understand these risks when some populations remain underrepresented in genetic research?

Hereditary Breast Cancer

Hereditary breast cancer occurs because of inherited changes in genes that increase cancer risk, known as cancer susceptibility genes. These genetic changes are called germline gene variants because they are present in all cells in the body from conception and can be passed from one generation to the next.

The best-known genes associated with hereditary breast cancer are BRCA1 and BRCA2, which play important roles in repairing damaged DNA. Harmful variants in these genes can substantially increase the risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Individuals who inherit harmful BRCA1 and BRCA2 alterations have a lifetime breast cancer risk of approximately 70%, although the actual risk varies between individuals. Identifying such variants can therefore have important implications not only for the treatment and overall clinical care of a patient, but also for relatives who may carry the same gene variant. However, not all hereditary breast tumours can be linked back to harmful BRCA1/2 gene alterations. Current guidelines from the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) define specific inherited variants in the CDH1, PALB2, PTEN, STK11, and TP53 genes to be associated with a significantly higher risk of breast cancer, while variants in several other genes are defined to be associated with more moderate increases in risk.

Genetic risk can also arise from the combined effects of many common genetic variants, which individually might have only minor impact. Polygenic risk scores (PRS) combine information from hundreds or even millions of these variants to estimate a person's inherited predisposition to breast cancer. Importantly, genetic variants that are common in one population may be less common in another, and their contribution to disease risk may also differ per population.

As such, risk estimates developed using predominantly Caucasian populations may not accurately reflect risk in other populations. Expanding genetic research to include diverse populations is therefore important for developing risk assessment approaches that are relevant for different populations.

Population-Specific Insights from a Qatar-Led Study

Research led by the Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI), part of Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), is providing new insights into hereditary breast cancer in Arab populations. In collaboration with the King Hussein Cancer Center in Jordan and researchers from the Qatar Computing Research Center (QCRI), also part of HBKU, the work addresses a knowledge gap in the genetic landscape of hereditary breast cancer.

Emerging studies from the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region have demonstrated why population-specific genetic research is critical. Differences in the frequency and distribution of genetic variants have been observed among Arab populations. Previous research from Qatar highlighted differences in the distribution of cancer-predisposing variants across population groups, including individuals of Persian and Arabian Peninsula origins. In Saudi Arabia, breast cancer patients who did not carry harmful BRCA1/2 variants were found to have harmful variants in the moderate-risk ATM gene. These findings illustrate that Caucasian-focused studies may limit our understanding of genetic factors that may contribute to enhanced cancer risk in Arab populations.

In a recent study by HBKU scientists, published in npj Breast Cancer, researchers studied the presence of genetic variants in 180 Arab patients from Jordan with high-risk familial breast cancer who tested negative for harmful BRCA1/BRCA2 variants. Comparative genetic analysis of approximately 6,000 healthy Arab women, participating in the Qatar Precision Health Institute biorepository programme, identified several harmful variants in the high-risk genes PALB2 and TP53, and in the moderate-risk genes ATM and BARD1 in patients, but not in healthy women. Notably, they also found a variant in the high-risk TP53 gene, as well as variants in the cancer-related PASK and CHEK1 genes. While TP53 is an established breast cancer risk gene, the biological and clinical significance of the specific variants identified in these genes remains unclear and requires further study.

These findings support the possibility that inherited changes in genes other than BRCA1 and BRCA2 contribute to hereditary breast cancer in Arab populations. However, whether these variants represent population-specific risk factors remains unknown. The need for population-specific research is further highlighted by the analysis of 120 existing breast cancer polygenic risk scores, largely developed using populations of European ancestry, with fewer than half distinguishing patients from healthy individuals in the study cohort. Ongoing work aims to extend these findings to other Arab populations, including the Qatari population in collaboration with Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC).

From Population Genomics to Precision Medicine

The QBRI-led study on hereditary breast cancer is part of a broader effort to understand the biological and genetic factors that contribute to breast cancer in Arab populations. Precision medicine goes beyond identifying a single genetic risk factor. It involves understanding why cancer develops and advances, and why patients can respond differently to the same treatment.

This may include identifying individuals and families who could benefit from closer surveillance, developing biomarkers to predict treatment response, discovering new therapeutic targets, and selecting treatments based on the characteristics of an individual's tumour. By combining research across different levels - from population genomics to the molecular and functional characterisation of individual tumours – QBRI researchers aim to contribute to a more comprehensive and locally relevant approach to precision medicine. Together, these efforts can help advance breast cancer care that is better informed by the biological and genetic diversity of populations across the region.

• *Dr Julie Decock is a Senior Scientist at Hamad Bin Khalifa University's Qatar Biomedical Research Institute.*

About Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Innovating Today, Shaping Tomorrow.

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF), is a leading, innovation-centric university committed to advancing education and research to address critical challenges facing Qatar and beyond. HBKU develops multidisciplinary academic programs and national research capabilities that drive collaboration with leading global institutions. The university is dedicated to equipping future leaders with an entrepreneurial mindset and advancing innovative solutions that create a positive global impact.

For more information about HBKU, its colleges, research institutes, and initiatives, please visit www.hbku.edu.qa To stay up to date on our social media activities, follow our accounts on: LinkedIn, Instagram, X, and Facebook. For any media inquiries, please contact: media@hbku.edu.qa.

GULF TIMES

CHAIRMAN
Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR
Kamran Rehmat

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

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

© 2026 Gulf Times. All rights reserved

French troops deployed in Ukraine on secret training mission, source says

AFP
Paris

French soldiers have been operating in Ukraine for several months to train Ukrainian personnel and help maintain equipment, a source familiar with the matter told AFP yesterday.

The source said the mission of a small contingent of French troops excludes any combat role. They spoke to AFP on condition of anonymity after Radio France Internationale (RFI) first revealed the presence of French troops in the war-torn country earlier yesterday.

"The rotation of French trainers supporting Ukraine in France, Poland, or occasionally in Ukraine is a reality," the source told AFP. "But this is not a military operation. There is absolutely no intention of engaging in coercive actions."

The French armed forces' general staff did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The source did not give details on the number of troops involved.

Russian leader Vladimir Putin has repeatedly argued that Russia is effectively fighting the "collective West" in Ukraine, a term he uses primarily to refer to Nato countries and their allies.

No foreign governments have officially announced the deployment of regular combat troops to fight alongside Ukrainian forces in the country since it was invaded by Russia in 2022.

Ukraine receives support from Europe and the US in the form of military equipment, financial assistance and intelligence.

In March, Britain announced that British engineers were on the ground in Ukraine, working side-by-side with Ukrainians to service and repair military vehicles.

North Korea, a key ally of the Kremlin, has sent troops to support Russia's war effort in return for economic benefits and military technology.

Citing sources, RFI said French lawmakers had not been informed of the deployment of the confidential mission, led by a French general and codenamed "Volia", which can be translated as "freedom" and "will" from Ukrainian.

The source told AFP the French authorities believe parliamentary approval is not necessary given the deployment's limited scale and non-combat role.

The RFI report did not say how many soldiers took part in the mission, which has been present in Ukraine since at least the summer of 2026. It described a "light and flexible" structure made up of "small teams deployed on short-term assignments". They are not combat troops, whose presence in Ukraine France has been denying.

Several sources described as being familiar with the matter told RFI that an official "Gerfaut" mission in Poland serves as a cover for the presence of French troops in Ukraine and acts as a gateway for deployments into the country.

The Gerfaut mission is a French military detachment deployed in Poland since 2023 as part of the European Union's military assistance initiative supporting Ukraine.

Under that framework, French army personnel are tasked with training officers who will go on to command Ukrainian combat units.

French daily Le Monde said yesterday that beyond training and repair missions, France also maintained personnel in Ukraine attached to intelligence units, carrying out observation missions "much closer to the front line".

Since 2023, 25,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been trained by the French army, both in France and in Poland.

France will hold presidential elections in a two-round vote in April and May to choose a successor to Emmanuel Macron, who has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine.

The far-right National Rally (RN) party, whose leader Marine Le Pen is the frontrunner to replace Macron, has said France would cut financial aid to Ukraine within six months if she is elected president.

Macron said at the weekend that countries seeking to limit aid to Ukraine wanted to impose an "unjust peace" and warned that it was a recipe for another war. He has spearheaded efforts to forge a co-ordinated response to defending Ukraine, proposing that Kyiv's allies send a force to Ukraine.

Led by France and the UK, the Multinational Force – Ukraine (MNF-U) was set up in 2025 and has an operational headquarters in Paris.

EU ministers approve EU-Syria deal expected to boost ties, Kallas says

Reuters
Brussels


Kaja Kallas holds a press conference in Brussels. (**Reuters**)

European Union foreign ministers agreed yesterday to move ahead with a deal to deepen ties with Syria, foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said, reviving an accord first drafted in 2008.

A discussion paper, prepared by the bloc's diplomatic service ahead of the meeting, sketched one of Brussels' most ambitious efforts yet to normalise ties with Syria, less than two years after Bashar al-Assad's fall ended decades of authoritarian rule and reshaped regional alliances.

"The EU seeks a major upgrade in its ties with Syria, and today ministers supported moving ahead with the EU-Syria Association Agreement," EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas told reporters after a monthly foreign ministers' meeting in Brussels. An association agreement typically paves the way for closer trade ties and economic and political co-operation.

She said diplomats would now work through the technical and legal details to finalise the agreement, which would create a framework for free trade, political dialogue and broader co-operation between Brussels and Damascus.

Syria faces enormous reconstruction needs after nearly 14 years of civil war. Its new authorities have sought foreign investment to rebuild the country and revive trade after years of international isolation. "Everybody said that we need to engage with Syria because if we don't engage, then this vacuum will be filled by other players," Kallas said.

She added that once the 2008 accord was finalised, work would begin to negotiate revisions to the pact so that elements such as conditionality on human rights and Damascus' previous support for Russia in the war against Ukraine were taken into consideration.

Russia's intervention in Syria's civil war helped keep Assad in power for years and secured Moscow's strategic foothold on the Mediterranean. Since his overthrow, however, the Kremlin has been trying to secure a new deal with the current authorities to preserve access to the Tartous naval facility and Hmeimim air base, assets that underpin its military reach in the region.

Warning signs: High risk of nuclear accident in Ukraine

Reuters
Oslo


A general view shows the Rivne Nuclear Power Plant in Rivne region, Ukraine. (**Reuters/File Photo**)

The risk of a nuclear accident in Ukraine is increasing this winter, nuclear safety regulators representing 38 countries said yesterday, urging Russia to stop its attacks on the country's power infrastructure.

Moscow has stepped up its drone and missile attacks on Ukrainian energy installations, such as plants, power lines and electricity substations, a system already weakened after nearly five years of conflict.

"Together we... express our deep concern about the increasing risks to nuclear safety arising from Russia's war against Ukraine, and its continued attacks on the country's energy infrastructure," the bodies said in a joint statement seen by Reuters ahead of publication.

"Together, (we) see an urgent need for Russia to cease attacks against Ukraine's nuclear facilities and the energy infrastructure essential to their safe operation."

The regulators' key concern is that, without a stable electricity supply from the grid, it becomes more and more difficult for Ukrainian nuclear plants to keep their nuclear material cool and avoid a meltdown.

If that were to occur, there could be releases of radioactivity into the air as happened during the 1986 Chornobyl disaster, considered to be the world's worst civil nuclear accident.

The accident spread iodine-131, caesium-134 and caesium-137 across parts of Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, and northern and central Europe.

The bodies behind the call are HERCA, the Heads of the European Radiological Protection Competent Authorities; WENRA, the Western European Nuclear Regulators Association; and NORA, the Heads of the Nordic Radiation Safety Authorities.

Together they represent 38 countries, including all EU countries, the US, Britain, Canada and Japan, among others.

In an interview, Per Strand, the head of HERCA and NORA, said Russian attacks had become deadlier in recent weeks, for example, by using drones that carry bigger payloads and are more precise in their targeting.

"Because of this new tactic of the Russians,... clearly the highest risk will be this winter for a nuclear accident," he told Reuters.

The worst-case scenario, he said, would be a nationwide blackout of the Ukrainian power grid that would affect Ukraine's nine producing nuclear reactors simultaneously.

"Nine reactors at the same time with the potential of (radioactive) releases would be quite a severe situation," he said.

He stressed that the situation could be avoided if action was taken now and Russia was pressured to stop its attacks on energy infrastructure.

If not, European countries must work together on their emergency preparedness to tackle the possible consequences of a nuclear accident, he said.

On Saturday, the International Atomic Energy Agency said military activity had caused instability in Ukraine's electricity in the preceding week, resulting in power reductions at some operating units in the country's nuclear power plants.

Ukraine has four nuclear power plants, of which three are in operation, providing some 80% of the power used this winter. Its fourth, Zaporizhzhia, Europe's largest, is under Russian control in an area close to the front line.

It is not currently producing electricity but relies on external power to keep the nuclear material cool and avoid a meltdown. The plant's equipment is powered by electricity supplied from Ukraine.

Since the start of the war, Zaporizhzhia has lost off-site power 27 times, the IAEA said on Saturday, forcing it to switch to emergency diesel generators. Since late March, the plant has relied on a single off-site power line, the IAEA said.

Russia and Ukraine accuse each other of striking the nuclear plant and of severing power lines leading to it.

Disagreement simmers over next Ukraine peace talks

A senior Kremlin aide said yesterday that Russia had not yet agreed to the participation of European representatives in the next round of Ukraine peace talks, contradicting comments by US negotiators after talks in Moscow that the Europeans would be at the next negotiations.

Russian, Ukrainian and US officials held talks in Abu Dhabi last week for the first time in nine months. Two US envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, then met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow and said afterwards that Europe would take part in the next round of negotiations.

But Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov, though he did not reference the US comments directly, told reporters: "What is currently being discussed is holding the next round (of talks) in a trilateral format. These talks resumed in Abu Dhabi several days ago, and it was agreed that they would continue. The date has not yet been agreed and the expansion of the format - some people are talking about it - but it has not been agreed with us."

Asked what would need to happen for Russia to consent to Europe participating, Ushakov said: "A great deal would have to be done before that could be agreed. In particular, it may be necessary to hold another round, or perhaps more than one round, of trilateral talks."

He said their involvement depended on Russia receiving "a clear signal from the Europeans about what they want and what constructive, substantive contribution they can make to a successful settlement in Ukraine."

Russia and the European Union, Britain and Ukraine remain far apart when it comes to how the war should end. European Council President Antonio Costa said on Friday that European Union leaders had agreed that Europe's team for Ukraine peace talks will comprise five major military powers - non-member Britain plus France, Germany, Italy and Poland - and EU institutions. (**Reuters**)

Former PM Imran Khan appeals for urgent medical help, says he 'may not return alive'

Reuters
Islamabad

Pakistan's jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan appealed yesterday to the country's Supreme Court for urgent medical attention, saying his and his wife's health was failing and that court orders for their treatment had not been implemented.

Khan, 74, who has been in prison since 2023, said in a letter sent through his lawyer to the chief justice that doctors had told him he was "highly vulnerable to a brain hemorrhage and cardiac arrest" He said his wife, Bushra Bibi, who is also in jail, could lose her sight permanently, and that this had prompted him to write.

"At seventy-four, this unrelenting state is taking me to a place from which I may not return alive," Khan said.

He also said long periods of solitary confinement had taken a toll on his mental health and that authorities had not followed a medical board recommendation to allow him more contact with his family. Authorities said they took Khan to hospital for an eye examination last week and returned him to his cell

In August, the Supreme Court ordered the government to move him to a private hospital in the capital, Islamabad, after he sought intervention over his deteriorating health.

The cricketer-turned-politician has faced multiple corruption charges since he lost power in a no-confidence vote in 2022.

All of Khan's convictions bar one have been suspended or overturned, with appeals pending. He denies wrongdoing and says the charges are politically motivated, a claim the government denies.

Climate justice: COP31 draft deal calls for 'accelerated action' to exit fossil fuels

AFP
Antalya

COP31 co-host Australia unveiled the first draft of a broad political deal yesterday, setting out sharply divergent positions on climate policy while calling for a faster phase-out of fossil fuels.

The sweeping, 18-page proposal underscores the gulf that nearly 200 nations must bridge to reach consensus before global climate talks in Turkiye wrap up Friday.

"It won't be the final draft," Australia's Climate Minister Chris Bowen, who is overseeing the marathon negotiations in Antalya, told reporters. "There are elements in this draft that not all parties will agree on. That is a given."

Negotiators immediately retreated to closed-door meetings to digest the proposals.

"There's a lot in it... it's a process that will take time," a negotiator from a European Union country told AFP after leaving one such meeting. The draft "cover decision" is an overarching political statement designed to sum up what countries agreed and set the course for future climate action.

Its call for "accelerated action to phase out fossil fuels" could encounter strong resistance, with language aimed at curbing coal, oil and gas – the main drivers of global warming – highly contested at UN climate talks.

Many countries have pressed for strong language on fossil fuels in Antalya after last year's summit in Brazil ended without any explicit mention of them at all in its final agreement.

"We will need to find some kind of balance," Belgian Climate Minister Jean-Luc Crucke told AFP, acknowledging that some oil and gas-producing nations held "reservations" over the proposals about energy.

The draft also calls for rich nations to provide at least $120bn for adaptation measures, a key demand of developing countries on the frontlines of climate change.


Australian Minister for Climate Change and Energy and President of COP31 Negotiations, Chris Bowen, speaks during a press conference at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, (**Reuters**)

"We are positive about it but unfortunately there is no agreement yet and we continue to push for it," Raju Pandit, a climate negotiator from Nepal, told AFP.

This goes to the heart of long-running tensions over the responsibility of wealthy countries most responsible for greenhouse gas emissions to assist poorer nations bearing the brunt of global warming.

Countries are also asked to contribute to a global goal to raise electricity's share of final energy demand to 35% by 2035 – a centrepiece initiative of COP31 host Turkiye.

Among the draft's more striking positions is a call for wealthy nations to "achieve net zero emissions by 2030" – a target few could hope to realistically meet. "They definitely decided to put out a very expansive first text," veteran COP observer and policy analyst at the E3G think tank Alden Meyer told AFP. "They're sort of going to see what flies and see what the reaction is."

The draft evokes "deep concern" over the impending breach of the Paris accord's 1.5C target and "resolves" to return global warming to below this threshold "as early as possible this century".

Nations have disagreed at COP31 over how to respond to the 1.5C overshoot while a separate row has erupted over the role of science and the IPCC, the global authority on climate change.

Dozens of countries, including many European and low-lying island nations, are pushing for the IPCC's critical next reports to be published before nations review carbon-cutting efforts at COP33 in 2028. But a smaller number of countries, most notably Saudi Arabia and India, want publication pushed back to 2029.

The draft recognised the "central role of the best-available science" and called for the IPCC reports to be available "in time" for the 2028 stocktake.

The summit unfolds against a difficult backdrop, with a conflict-driven energy crisis and soaring geopolitical tensions tempering expectations of a major outcome.

Wopke Hoekstra, the European Union's climate envoy, said expectations are low for this COP as the situation was "complex and we're encountering pushback internationally on climate action".

Bowen said negotiators would be concentrating on "those issues where people can find common ground".

QATAR



14 schools showcase creativity, AI at QNL exhibition

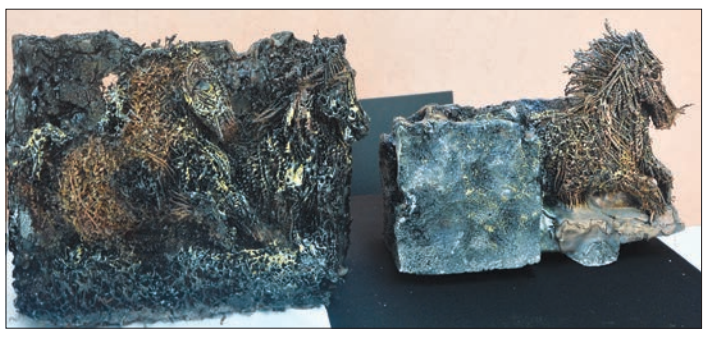


By Sara Eljack
Staff Reporter

Fourteen schools across Qatar are showcasing students' creative work at the Mulhamoon Exhibition 2026: Ideas, Art, and AI, which opened at Qatar National Library (QNL) yesterday.

HE Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari, Minister of State and President of QNL, inaugurated the exhibition, which the library organised in collaboration with Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU).

Speaking to *Gulf Times*, Ghanima Badr al-Darwish, head of Children's and Young Adults' Programmes at QNL, said 14 schools, including seven primary and seven preparatory schools, were taking part in the exhibition.



PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam

"We also included a school for students with hearing disabilities, as people with disabilities are among the main groups we aim to engage," she said.

The exhibition takes students through three stages. They begin by writing original stories, which other students turn into drawings and artwork. They then use artificial intelligence to create digital versions of their work.

Students can compare their original drawings with AI-generated images to see how technology changes or interprets their ideas.

"We want students to learn how to use artificial intelligence wisely. The idea should come from their own minds, while AI should help them develop it rather than replace their thinking," al-Darwish told *Gulf Times*.

During the opening ceremony, Maram al-Mahmoud, manager of Children's and Young Adults' Programs and Services at QNL, said the exhibition gave students an opportunity to share their views about the future of technology.

She said students expressed their hopes and concerns through their stories and artwork, reflecting how they see a future in which technology will play a greater role in everyday life.

"Some students discovered how AI could add new details to their work, while others found that it changed their original ideas or did not fully understand what they wanted to express," she said.

Al-Mahmoud said Mulhamoon was the fourth student exhibition organised by QNL, providing children with opportunities to develop their artistic and literary talents.

She also highlighted the exhibition's accessibility features, which allow visitors with visual and hearing disabilities to explore the displayed works.

Writers, artists and specialists worked with students throughout the programme, helping them develop their stories and artwork.

The exhibition runs until March 12, 2027, giving visitors an opportunity to explore students' work and learn how they used AI in the creative process.

HBKU launches I'dad platform

By Joseph Varghese
Staff reporter

To support the students and the alumni in building their career and industry interactions, Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), has launched a very innovative new platform named I'dad.

Speaking to *Gulf Times*, on the sidelines of the launch event, Rashid S Adiba, director of Community Outreach and Student Relations, said: " I'dad is an initiative designed to strengthen links between students, alumni and employers while providing opportunities for professional growth and career development. It aims to help students gain practical experience, develop professional skills and improve their employment prospects while pursuing their academic studies."

Adiba stated that HBKU has invited a number of organisations to take part in the initiative and they will provide valuable inputs to the students and the academic community.

"Participating organisations represent a wide range of sectors, including banking, healthcare, engineering and sports, as well as government institutions and private companies. The participation of organisations from different sectors would provide students with opportunities to explore career pathways relevant to their academic qualifications and professional interests," he explained.



Rashid S Adiba



Dr Maryam Hamad al-Mannai

During the launch event, Adiba also delivered a live demonstration of I'dad, followed by career networking sessions involving leading companies and career partners in Qatar. The career development platform aims to connect students, alumni, employers, and career partners to strengthen the relationship between academic learning and professional opportunities.

I'dad also provides employers and career partners with opportunities to engage directly with emerging talent and contribute to workforce development through internships, professional mentoring, real-world projects, workshops, and employment opportunities.

Dr Maryam Hamad al-Mannai, vice-president for Student Affairs, HBKU, said: "At HBKU, we believe that equipping our students with the knowledge, competencies, and experiences, they need to succeed helps create meaningful connections with the world of work. I'dad reflects this commitment by bringing education and industry closer together through a continuous, personalised, and technology-enabled career development journey. It is an investment in our students, our graduates, and the future talent of Qatar."

More than a job-search platform, I'dad represents HBKU's integrated approach to career development. It supports students from their first year of study and throughout their professional journeys beyond graduation. By connecting education with industry, the platform enables students and graduates to develop their skills, gain practical experience, and explore career pathways aligned with their aspirations and the evolving labour market.

I'dad is a comprehensive set of tools to make career development a continuous process rather than a single transition from university to employment. A personalised career roadmap helps students align their skills, interests, and aspirations with future career opportunities, while a digital portfolio brings together their verified skills, competencies, and achievements. A career readiness score identifies strengths and areas for further development, while intelligent talent matching connects students with opportunities based on their profiles and career goals.

The platform also introduces an alumni mentorship network that links students with graduates who can offer professional guidance, experience, and networks. Lifelong career development features will support continued growth beyond graduation. Through its talent intelligence & impact capabilities, HBKU and its partners can gain valuable insights into career outcomes, emerging skills gaps, and changing employer needs.

Through I'dad, HBKU is demonstrating its commitment to student development beyond the classroom and reinforcing the role of career preparation as an integral part of higher education. The platform also reflects the university's commitment to ensuring that its academic environment responds to professional realities and Qatar's talent needs.



Officials and guests at the launch event of the I'dad. **PICTURES**: Thajudheen

Doha designers blend heritage, sustainability

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Designers in Doha are looking to recycled materials, digital fabrication and traditional craft to shape a more sustainable design culture while ensuring heritage continues to evolve for generations to come.

That intersection between old and new emerged strongly at Tomorrow Matters: New Materialities in Design, a three-day programme at Doha Design District bringing together installations, talks and hands-on workshops focused on experimental materials, living surfaces and regenerative approaches to making.

French designer and artist Marwane Soumer, founder of Studio Soumer, told *Gulf Times* that his work deliberately challenges the idea that tradition, technology, art and design belong in separate categories.

"The idea behind my project is that I connect traditions and heritage with new technologies and new materials," he said.



Marwane Soumer



Richard Wilson

Soumer, who has been working independently in Doha for more than two years, uses traditional Sadu weaving patterns and reinterprets them through 3D printing using recycled PETG plastic, commonly found in water and soft-drink bottles.

For him, technology should extend the life of cultural practices rather than displace them.

"Tradition and heritage is not dead, it's meant to live and it is supposed to live through new technologies," he said.

"New technologies are not here to take over the space of traditions and heritage, but they are here to serve it."

That philosophy also shapes the way he produces his pieces. Soumer digitally designs and 3D prints objects before completing them by hand, approaching the technology itself as a craft rather than simply a manufacturing tool.

"I use new technologies not as a way to produce a final product, but I use it as a craft," he said.

Richard Wilson, founder and creative director of Colab, said greater awareness of materials could also help push Qatar's design sector towards more sustainable choices.

Colab, a purpose-built materials library, showcased 20 innovative materials during Tomorrow Matters, encouraging architects, interior designers and product designers to explore recycled, upcycled and sustainable alternatives.

"We aim to share knowledge and inspire the next generation of designers," Wilson told Gulf Times.

He said the longer-term ambition goes beyond simply introducing international materials to designers in Qatar.

"Hopefully in the next five years we'll see more sustainable materials being used in Qatar, or we'll see materials being developed here," Wilson said.

"That would be the biggest success of this event."

For both designers, the future of making is therefore less about choosing between tradition and innovation than finding ways for the two to strengthen one another.

Soumer added: "Between past and future, and between art and design, there are no boundaries. They are just lands to explore."



Media City Qatar, Assouline launch book on Qatar's architectural heritage

Media City Qatar has launched *The Ned Doha: A New Age of Luxury*, in partnership with international publisher Assouline, at an event attended by leading figures from Qatar's cultural, architectural and creative sectors.

The book is the first in a multi-volume collaboration highlighting Qatar's heritage, culture and development. Written by travel journalist Nicola Chilton, it documents the transformation of the former Ministry of Interior building into The Ned Doha hotel, featuring photographs and insights from architects, designers and artists on its history and distinctive architecture.

Reflecting on the significance of the publication in his opening remarks, CEO of Media City Qatar Hamad Omar AlMannai said: "This book tells an important part of Qatar's development story, which is the vision to balance modernisation with the preservation of Qatar's identity."

He added: "This is the first book in our partnership with Assouline, and we hope to document more of these stories and celebrate the places, people and milestones that have shaped Qatar."

"Celebrating *The Ned Doha: A New Age of Luxury*' with Media City Qatar and Assouline gives us an occasion to reflect on the decisions behind the hotel we operate today," said Managing Director of The Ned Doha Massimiliano (Max) Binda.

The partnership supports Media City Qatar's efforts to develop the media and content sectors and bring stories from Qatar and the region to global audiences. **(QNA)**

Years of Culture, JEDARIART bring Qatari artist to Mexico City for new public mural

As part of the Qatar, Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture, Qatari artist Huda Basahal is creating a new public mural in Mexico City, bringing together visual references from Qatar and Mexico in a dream-like celebration of cultural exchange. Presented through Qatar Museums' JEDARIART programme, the project will see Basahal transform a public space in the city's San Lucas neighbourhood with an artwork inspired by its location near a historic education centre, as well as flora and fauna from both countries.

Titled Between Two Lands, embodies her artistic practice which brings heritage into contemporary visual expression through cheerful imagery and recognisable elements from both countries. Mexican references include animals such as the axolotl and quetzal, flowers such as marigolds and dahlias, and a tree inspired by *Lilus Kikus*, a children's book by Mexican writer and journalist Elena Poniatowska; the mural will be located near the community centre bearing Poniatowska's name in Coyoacán. These appear alongside Qatari elements such as traditional jewellery, designs inspired by the Thoub Al Nashil — a traditional Qatari women's ceremonial garment characterised by its flowing silhouette, wide sleeves and intricate gold and silver thread embroidery, traditionally worn for special occasions, as well as the falcon and native flowers including Al Qatf and Artiplex.

Created with the Community Muralists Programme with Secretary for Culture of the Mexico City Government, and TRAMA, the mural draws inspiration from its location near Utopía Elena Poniatowska Amor, a community centre in Coyoacán offering cultural, educational, recreational and social services. Built on the reclaimed El Parián site, the centre spans nearly 20,000 square metres and serves more than 130,000 residents.

Speaking about her creative approach, Huda Basahal said: "I enjoy creating compositions that allow the viewer to discover something new each time they look at them. For this mural, I was particularly interested in exploring the visual possibilities of combining elements from Qatar and Mexico. Some of these references are quite different, while others share unexpected similarities." **(QNA)**

