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GULF TIMES
published in QATAR since 1978
FRIDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13930
November 20, 2026
Jumada II 10, 1448 AH
www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals

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SPORT | Page 1

Late goals give Qatar winning start to U-17 World Cup






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Amir in Berlin to bolster ties with Germany

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani arrived in Berlin yesterday on a state visit to Germany, following the conclusion of his state visit to Switzerland.

A 21-gun salute was fired to welcome HH the Amir upon his arrival in the German capital.

HH the Amir's visit to Germany is expected to inject fresh momentum into the two countries' strategic partnership, opening new avenues for co-operation in trade, investment, energy and security while strengthening diplomatic co-ordination on pressing regional and international challenges.

The visit comes as Doha and Berlin seek to deepen their longstanding relationship through an expanding strategic dialogue, intensified high-level political engagement and closer collaboration on regional security, mediation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

During the visit, HH the Amir is scheduled to hold talks with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz and other senior officials on strengthening bilateral relations, particularly in trade, the economy and investment, as well as regional and international developments of mutual concern.

The visit reflects Qatar's commitment, under the leadership of HH the Amir, to broadening its international partnerships and strengthening co-operation with friendly countries in pursuit of shared interests and mutual prosperity.

Qatar and Germany established diplomatic relations in 1973, building on commercial ties dating back more than six decades. Since then, the relationship has evolved into a multifaceted partnership encompassing political, economic, security and cultural co-operation. To Page 6

● Related stories on pages 4,5,6,11; Business pages 1,4



Amir attends Swiss working breakfast

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani attended a working breakfast hosted by Swiss President Guy Parmelin at the Amir's residence in Bern yesterday, with the participation of leading business figures and company executives from both countries.

The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral relations, expanding trade and investment co-operation, and exploring opportunities for the private sector to forge partnerships in areas of mutual interest.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, members of the official delegation accompanying HH the Amir and several senior Swiss officials attended the meeting.

Later, HH the Amir departed Bern, where he was seen off at the airport by President Guy Parmelin, Qatar's ambassador to Switzerland Mohammed bin Jaham al-Kuwari and Swiss ambassador to Qatar Florence Tinguely Mattli. To Page 6



تميم بن حمد
@TamimBinHamad

We take pride in the close relations between Qatar and Switzerland, and we look forward to building on our partnerships through practical initiatives that open new horizons for cooperation and investment. I was pleased with the atmosphere of mutual understanding during my discussions with President Guy Parmelin on advancing our bilateral cooperation in ways that serve the interests of our two countries and benefit our peoples.

Amir's visit could open new avenues for security ties: German police chief

By Faisal al-Mudahka
Editor-in-Chief/Berlin

Germany sees the official visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani as an opportunity to deepen its security partnership with Qatar, according to a senior German security official.

In an exclusive interview with *Gulf Times*, Dr Dieter Romann, President of the German Federal Police Headquarters (Bundespolizei), described the Amir's visit as a significant occasion that could give fresh impetus to bilateral security relations while delivering wider economic and social benefits to both countries.

"I regard the official visit of HH the Amir of Qatar as a great honour for our country," Romann said, expressing optimism that the high-level engagement could unlock previously unexplored opportunities for closer collaboration between the two nations.

"The visit may open up new, previously unexplored avenues for strengthening bilateral security co-operation between our two countries, bringing mutual benefits to both sides," he said.

Romann, who has headed Germany's Federal Police since August 2012 and is based at its headquarters in Potsdam, identified several specialised areas in which the two countries could strengthen their security partnership.

The proposed areas of collaboration reflect the increasingly complex nature of contemporary security challenges, which demand specialised capabilities, operational readiness and close co-ordination between international partners.

Romann placed particular emphasis on practical co-operation, including joint training exercises and the exchange of operational expertise, as effective means of strengthening institutional capabilities and mutual confidence.

Such exchanges, he explained, would allow security personnel from both countries to learn from one another's experiences, draw on lessons from past operations and avoid repeating mistakes.

Beyond the operational and technical dimensions, Romann offered a broader perspective on the value of international security partnerships, describing co-operation with Qatar as an exercise in building trust and understanding between people.

"I believe that international and bilateral co-operation with Qatar represents people-to-people understanding at its finest," he said.

"We get to know one another, building mutual trust to the point where each side is willing to entrust the other with their lives. And then, to our surprise, we discover just how much we have in common!" To Page 6



Dr Dieter Romann, left, with *Gulf Times* Editor-in-Chief Faisal al-Mudahka.

Qatar condemns Houthi attacks

Qatar has strongly condemned the continued Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia targeting civilian and economic facilities and infrastructure in Riyadh, which caused material damage to the King Abdullah Financial District.

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs described the attacks as a disgraceful act of aggression, a blatant violation of Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and international law, and an unacceptable disregard for civilian lives.

The ministry reiterated Qatar's categorical rejection of attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, calling for an immediate halt to such irresponsible acts.

It reaffirmed Qatar's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia and its support for all legitimate measures taken by the Kingdom to safeguard its sovereignty, security, territorial integrity and interests.

The ministry stressed that Saudi Arabia's security was an integral part of Qatar's own security and the collective security framework of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states. (**QNA**)

China, US, Russia issue 'Declaration toward Peace'

China, the United States and Russia issued a "Declaration toward Peace" yesterday after their leaders held an unprecedented summit, laying out common ambitions to overhaul the UN and keep the International Criminal Court in check.

Xi Jinping, Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin met in China against a complex backdrop, with Russia's years-long offensive in Ukraine grinding on, Trump bogged down in the Middle East and an ascendant China looking to strengthen its hand in East Asia.

"The three heads of state had an in-depth exchange of views on the current international situation and committed to maintaining strategic stability and international security," a White House version of the statement said.

"We discussed the question of democracy. And what is democracy? It's what? It's the liberal order that certain circles put together and still now are trying to impose on the whole world," Putin told a news conference in the southern city of Shenzhen. Page 7

Qatar, Pakistan enhance security ties



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani held separate meetings with Pakistan's Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi and Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir during his visit to Pakistan yesterday.

During his meeting with Naqvi, the two sides discussed ways to strengthen bilateral security co-operation, enhance technical and operational partnerships, and reviewed issues of mutual interest.

In his meeting with Field Marshal Munir, the two sides reviewed bilateral co-operation and exchanged views on regional developments.

"Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries, particularly in the fields of security, counter-terrorism and institutional co-operation," a statement from the Inter-Services Public Relations, the Pakistan Army's public relations wing, said.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and stability and acknowledged the longstanding fraternal ties between the two countries, it added.

Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further deepen bilateral engagement with Qatar, the statement said.

Earlier, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on security co-operation, the Pakistan Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

The MoU was signed between Lekhwiya and the Federal Constabulary. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and HE Sheikh Khalifa signed the documents, and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif witnessed the ceremony, the statement said. To Page 6

QATAR

Culture minister visits Kuwait's historic Al Salam Palace Museum



HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani has visited the Al Salam Palace Museum in Kuwait, as part of his visit to the country during Qatar's participation as Guest of Honor at the Kuwait International Book Fair.

During the visit, HE Sheikh Abdulrahman toured the museum's galleries and viewed its historical collections, which document key moments in Kuwait's history, the lives of its rulers and the civilisations that have shaped the country.

He also met Sheikha Mona Jaber al-Abdullah al-Sabah, the museum's general supervisor.

The visit took place on the sidelines of Qatar's participation in the international book fair, highlighting cultural ties between the two Gulf countries.

The Al Salam Palace is one of Kuwait's prominent historical and cultural landmarks. It originally served as a guest palace, hosting official delegations and visitors, before being converted into a museum.

Today, the museum uses modern display techniques to showcase the history of the palace and Kuwait, offering visitors an insight into the country's heritage and historical development. (**QNA**)

Interior minister meets Pakistan army chief



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani met yesterday with the Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, during his visit to Pakistan. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral co-operation and regional developments. (**QNA**)

Adviser to PM in Italy meetings



HE the Adviser to the Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majed bin Mohammed al-Ansari met in Rome with the Head of the Parliamentary Friendship Intergroup for the Gulf Countries at the Italian Parliament, Salvatore Caiata.
The meeting discussed ways to further develop and strengthen co-operation between Qatar and Italy, as well as the latest regional developments, particularly diplomatic efforts and joint co-ordination aimed at de-escalating tensions and promoting regional security and stability. During the meeting, Salvatore Caiata expressed Italy's appreciation for Qatar's mediation efforts and its role in facilitating dialogue, as well as its support for Qatari efforts to resolve conflicts through peaceful means and promote security and stability at the regional and international levels. The meeting was attended by the Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Italian Republic Khalid bin Youssef al-Sada and a number of members of the Italian Parliament. (**QNA**)



HE the Adviser to the Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majed bin Mohammed al-Ansari met yesterday in Naples with Director for the Mediterranean and the Middle East Countries at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic Maurizio Greganti.
During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations between the two countries and avenues to strengthen cooperation across various domains. The two sides also addressed the latest regional developments, focusing on ongoing diplomatic initiatives and joint coordination efforts to de-escalate tensions and promote security and stability in the region. (**QNA**)



Nama organises Social Innovation Forum 2026

The Social Innovation Forum 2026 in its second edition kicked off yesterday, at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC). Organised by the Social Development Center (Nama) – an entity operating under the umbrella of Qatar Development for Social Work, the forum is held under the patronage and in the presence of HE the Minister of Social Development and Family, Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi, with the participation of a distinguished group of experts, policymakers, and leaders in the field of social work from both within and outside the State of Qatar.

In a speech, Executive Director of the Social Development Center (Nama), Ghanem Salah al-Ali, affirmed the importance of embedding a close connection with the community as an institutional approach to social work, fostering communication, listening to people's needs and responding to them, and contributing to the design of programs and solutions rooted in the community's reality and aspirations.

Innovation begins with proximity, he added, noting that, as the scope of operations expands, a gap may emerge between institutions and the people they serve, which necessitates the establishment of an institutional approach that preserves a spirit of engagement, active listening, and responsiveness.

He pointed out that the theme of the forum in 2026 "Power of Proximity", reflects an approach to understanding and action that combines data with people's lived experiences, noting that, while figures help in grasping the scale of challenges, people's experiences provide a deeper understanding of their various dimensions, ultimately enabling the design of solutions that are responsive to people's realities and needs.

Al-Ali also pointed out that Nama places people - along with their needs and capabilities, at the core of its focus and programs, in alignment with Qatar National Vision 2030. (**QNA**)



MoECC explores use of AI to support climate action at COP31

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) explored opportunities for leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) in the collection and analysis of climate data, as well as in the preparation of reports, which aims to support the development of a climate transparency framework and enhance the efficiency of measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems.

This came during a panel discussion organised by MoECC as part of the activities made by the State of Qatar's pavilion at the 31st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31), on the subject of data, digitalisation, and AI in implementing climate action and decision-making, held in Antalya, Turkiye.

The panel discussion addressed the role of digital platforms and AI technologies in improving the accuracy of climate data and projections, monitoring emissions, developing climate policies, and supporting planning and decision-making based on scientific evidence.

Participants in the panel included representative of MoECC, Mohammed Omar al-Bader; Manager of the Sustainable Energy Programs at the Al-Attiyah Foundation, Dr Colman Hands; Director of Climate and Resilience Service at the World Food Programme (WFP), Richard Choularton; and Deputy Director-General and Director of Science and Innovation at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), Dr Irina Sandu.

The discussions addressed the requirements for governing modern technologies, ensuing their responsible and effective use, and the opportunities for employing digital solutions to monitor climate projects, evaluate their impacts, and improve the efficiency of resource utilisation.

The speakers also addressed the role of scientific research, innovation, and digital transformation in supporting the implementation of MoECC's 2024-2030 strategy, as well as in promoting environmental sustainability and improving institutional performance. They emphasised the importance of fostering collaboration among governments, research institutions, international organisations, and the technology sector to exchange expertise and develop practical, implementable solutions within the realm of climate action. (**QNA**)

Chief of Staff attends conclusion of NEL-2

Under the auspices of HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan bin Ali al-Thani, and with the attendance of HE the Chief of Staff of the Qatar Armed Forces is Lieutenant General (Pilot) Jassim bin Mohammed bin Ahmed al-Mannai, the "Final Evaluation Day", organised by the Multi-Domain Warfare Training Centre, was held. The event marked the successful completion of the Operational Alignment Programme by a Special Forces Brigade, which subsequently received final accreditation as part of the requirements for the Nato Evaluation Level 2 (NEL-2), conducted by a Nato evaluation team.

During the event, HE Lt Gen (Pilot) al-Mannai reviewed the level of readiness and combat capabilities attained by the Brigade's personnel throughout their training and preparation phases. This was demonstrated through a series of field exercises and activities that showcased their combat proficiency and alignment with Nato's established operational standards and procedures.

The event is part of the Operational Alignment Programme, which aims to enhance interoperability, elevate operational readiness, and strengthen the efficiency of participating units in planning, decision-making, and executing assigned tasks and duties within a multinational environment. Furthermore, the programme serves to assess the company's compliance with the requirements of the NEL-2 in accordance with Nato-approved standards.

The closing event was attended by a lineup senior commanders and officers from the Qatar Armed Forces, the Ministry of Interior, the Amiri Guard, and the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya). (**QNA**)



Doha Bank receives int'l recognition for strategic transformation leadership



Doha Bank has been awarded Best Banking Transformation CEO 2026 and Best Bank in Strategic Transformation Initiatives – Qatar 2026 by International Finance, recognising the bank's successful execution of its strategic transformation agenda and its progress in digital innovation, customer experience, operational excellence, and sustainability.

The awards recognise the leadership of Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Fahad bin Faisal al-Thani, Group Chief Executive Officer of Doha Bank, and the success of the Bank's enterprise transformation programme. Over the past three years, Doha Bank has delivered a comprehensive transformation programme aligned with the Qatar Central Bank Third Financial Sector Strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030. Since the launch of the transformation programme, the Bank has achieved major milestones and improved on several key performance indicators. The transformation has driven customer-centricity, growth, organisational agility, and digital innovation.

Sheikh Abdulrahman said: "These awards reflect the vision of our Board of Directors and efforts extended by our employees , in advancing Doha Bank's transformation journey. Through our Himma transformation program, we have focused on building a more agile, digitally enabled, stable, and sustainable bank that delivers greater value to customers, shareholders, and the communities we serve, while supporting Qatar's economic development and national ambitions."

The recognition comes during a key phase of Doha Bank's transformation, including the launch of refreshed corporate identity, continued investment in digital banking capabilities, enhanced ESG integration across our operations, and the successful issuance and listing of Qatar's first Sustainable Bond on the Qatar Stock Exchange, reinforcing the Bank's leadership in sustainable finance.

16 Arab, Islamic countries welcome UK and Australia's decisions to impose sanctions to illegal Israeli settlers

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Maldives, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Turkiye, and the United Arab Emirates welcome the decisions of the governments of the United Kingdom and Australia to impose sanctions in response to illegal Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including measures targeting companies involved in settlement construction. They also welcome the United Kingdom's decision to sanction an organisation obstructing the delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza. In this context, the ministers express support for all efforts to ensure accountability, including through appropriate international measures and the imposition of sanctions on entities and individuals responsible for settlement activities, including the E1 settlement plan, as well as those that support, facilitate or implement settlement expansion and annexation policies. The Ministers renew their strongest condemnation of Israel's continued settlement policies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly the "E1" settlement plan and related settlement activities east of occupied East Jerusalem, they express the hope that this decision by the UK and Australia would encourage many in the international community to follow suit. The ministers consider the above-mentioned measures to be in line with international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, including United Nations Security Council resolution 2334 (2016), and the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 19 July 2024. (**QNA**)

PHCC puts early detection in focus on World Diabetes Day

Primary Health Care Corp (PHCC) marked World Diabetes Day, observed annually on November 14 with an awareness campaign led by the Health Education Department under the Clinical Operations Directorate. Working with multidisciplinary teams at health centres, the department put the 2026–2027 theme, "Early Action on Diabetes", into practice through interactive activities that promote early detection, type 2 diabetes prevention and everyday self-management.

Dr Maryam Mohammed al-Emadi, director of Clinical Operations and Senior Consultant in Family Medicine at PHCC, emphasised that health centres connect prevention and early detection with ongoing care. She highlighted how collaboration across primary care teams supports a comprehensive approach to diabetes care, helping people manage their condition over time and reduce the risk of complications.

Dr Sarah Rashid Musa, manager of Health Education and Consultant in Community Medicine at PHCC, explained that effective diabetes education begins with understanding what people already know, what matters to them, and what makes managing their health difficult. Health Educators tailor information to each person's needs, demonstrate practical skills, use teach-back, inviting people to explain or demonstrate what they would do at home and draw on motivational interviewing to explore barriers and help people choose changes they can sustain.

In 2022, the World Health Organisation estimated that diabetes affected 830mn adults worldwide, with 23.2% in Eastern Mediterranean Region. Qatar's STEPwise survey reported prevalence of approximately 15.4% among adults aged 18-69 year. "These figures underscore the need for early action, a priority reflected in Qatar's National Action Plan for Obesity, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease (2024-2030) which supports earlier identification of people at risk and better coordination of care," Dr Sarah added.

Food models, nutrition labels and movement activities helped participants explore changes suited to their daily routines. The campaign also highlighted the value of building healthy habits from childhood, with families making balanced meals, water and active play part of everyday life. At the My Early Action Plan station, participants could choose one practical step, decide when to take it and identify who could support them.



QPO to present Mozart Concertante Symphony

The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) will present Mozart Concertante Symphony today at Qatar National Convention Centre, Auditorium 3, bringing together the brilliance of Mozart, the youthful energy of Mendelssohn and the artistry of four distinguished musicians from within the orchestra.

At the podium will be German conductor Felix Mildenberger, whose international career has developed rapidly since winning the Donatella Flick London Symphony Orchestra Conducting Competition in 2018.

At the heart of the evening is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat Major, K. 297b, in which four wind instruments emerge as solo voices while remaining intimately connected to the orchestra. For this performance, QPO turns the spotlight on four of its own musicians: oboist Germán Díaz Blanco, clarinetist Rony Moser, bassoonist Yoshiko Koyama and horn player Peter Davida. Mozart's score is less a conventional concerto than a sophisticated musical conversation. The four soloists exchange melodies, respond to one another and continually change roles, sometimes emerging individually and at other moments blending into a single chamber-like ensemble within the orchestra.



The concert opens with Felix Mendelssohn's The Hebrides (Fingal's Cave) Overture, Op. 26, an atmospheric work inspired by the composer's encounter with the dramatic Scottish landscape and the sea surrounding Fingal's Cave.

The program then moves to Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, placing Germán Díaz Blanco, Rony Moser, Yoshiko Koyama and Peter Davida in a lively dialogue between oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn and orchestra.

Following the intermission, Felix Mildenberger and the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra return to Mendelssohn with the composer's Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 11. Written when Mendelssohn was only fifteen years old, the symphony already displays the energy, confidence and orchestral imagination that would characterise his later music.

Ooredoo Qatar says 'Shukran' to customers on Customer Day 2026



Ooredoo Qatar celebrated Customer Day 2026 under the theme 'Shukran', dedicating the day to thanking customers for their trust and loyalty. Employees met customers in person at landmarks across Doha, and a personalised gift is now waiting for eligible customers in the Ooredoo App.

The day began with a flag-off at Doha Port, where a Doha Bus carrying Ooredoo employees set off on a route through the city, with stops at West Walk, Souq Waqif, Qatar University and Plaza Mall. At each stop, colleagues from across the company, including many who do not usually work in customer-facing roles, thanked customers and members of the public in person and listened to their feedback.

To mark the occasion, eligible Prepaid and Postpaid customers will each receive a complimentary gift chosen for them, such as free data or Nojoom Points. Gifts can be claimed in the Ooredoo App from 18-25 November 2026, and every customer who claims during this period will automatically be entered into a draw to win a GWM Tank 500. The draw will take place on November 30.

Sheikh Ali bin Jabor bin Mohammad al-Thani, CEO of Ooredoo Qatar, said: "Everything we do at Ooredoo starts with our customers, and Customer Day is our chance to say Shukran in person. Today, colleagues from every part of the company went out to meet the people we serve, to listen to what matters to them and to thank them for choosing us."

QM, QC sign agreement to expand youth volunteering

Qatar Museums (QM)'s Teen Hub has signed a collaboration agreement with Qatar Charity (QC) to expand youth volunteering and community participation in Qatar. Signed at Teen Hub in Expo House, Al Bidda Park, the partnership will create meaningful opportunities for teenagers to develop their skills, take initiative and give back to their communities.

CEO of Qatar Museums Mohammed Saad al-Rumaihi said: "Investing in young people lies at the heart of Qatar Museums' commitment to the nation's cultural and social development. Our partnership with Qatar Charity brings together culture, learning and volunteering, giving teenagers the opportunity to develop their talents and make a meaningful contribution to their communities. Through Teen Hub and IZDIHAR, we hope to foster a shared sense of responsibility and nurture a generation equipped to help shape Qatar's future."

Teen Hub and Qatar Charity will create structured volunteering opportunities through the IZDIHAR initiative,



supported by shared training, logistics and communications resources. Joint community programmes will champion social responsibility and youth participation, while educational and creative projects will provide opportunities for teenagers to learn, collaborate and contribute to innovative environments.

Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Charity Yousef bin Ahmed al-Kuwari said: "We are proud to sign this agreement with Qatar Museums, reflecting our shared commitment to investing in young people and strengthening their participation in society. Through IZDIHAR and Teen Hub, we will bring together our expertise in volunteering, culture, knowledge and creativity to deliver programmes that develop teenagers' skills, encourage initiative and social responsibility, and open up opportunities for them to learn, give back and contribute confidently to their communities and their futures."

The agreement establishes a long-term framework for collaboration, supporting Teen Hub's role as a place where young people can explore their interests, build connections and take an active part in shaping their communities. (**QNA**)

QC's 'DAWAM' campaign wins Gold at Smarties Mena Awards 2026

Qatar Charity's "Dawam" ("Keep Doing Good") campaign has won Gold in the Social Impact Marketing category at the Smarties Mena Awards 2026 for its creative approach to encouraging consistent charitable giving.

The awards, organised by the Marketing + Media Alliance (MMA), recognise innovation, effectiveness, and measurable impact in marketing.

Qatar Charity said Dawam was the only competing campaign developed and delivered entirely by an in-house team, without an external marketing agency, making the win particularly significant. The campaign competed against entries from major companies across the region.

The organisation said the award reflected its team's ability to turn ideas rooted in its humanitarian mission and community values into campaigns that engage audiences and inspire positive action. It added that such efforts help strengthen a culture of charitable giving and encourage people to give consistently.

Launched in August 2025 under the message "Keep Doing Good", the campaign encouraged people to make charity a regular part of their lives rather than an activity tied to a particular season or occasion. It drew inspiration from the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "The deeds most beloved to Allah are those done consistently, even if they are small."



The campaign began with a teaser phase featuring billboards displaying a single Arabic word: "Dawam." Appearing after the summer holidays and shortly before the start of the school year, the billboards sparked public curiosity before Qatar Charity revealed the campaign's central message: "Keep Doing Good".

Short videos, digital content, and interactive social media posts extended the campaign's reach. Qatar Charity said the campaign attracted strong engagement from the public, media figures, and influencers, with its Arabic hashtag, trending in Qatar for three consecutive days.

QATAR

Qatar's crisis resilience offers lessons for Germany

GT Report
Berlin













Qatar's ability to emerge stronger from successive crises — from the blockade and the Covid-19 pandemic to the Israeli attack and the ongoing US-Iran war — offers Germany valuable lessons in national resilience, crisis management and the power of diplomacy, Qatari academics and policy experts told a high-level gathering here.

The experts argued that Qatar's experience demonstrated how a small nation could turn extraordinary geopolitical challenges into opportunities to strengthen social cohesion, reinforce national sovereignty and build international credibility, while forging a mutually beneficial partnership with Germany based on complementary strengths.

The discussion, titled Voices from Doha: Qatari Perspectives on the US-Iran War and Future Prospects, was organised by the Divan Centre in Berlin as part of its BLACK COFFEE dialogue series.

Participants included Dr Abdullah al-Otaibi, Assistant Professor in the Department of International Affairs at Qatar University; Turki al-Malki, Director of the International Policy Research Centre; al-Anoud al-Thani, Non-Resident Fellow at the Middle East Council on Global Affairs; and Mohammed al-Emadi, also a Non-Resident Fellow at the council.

The discussion was moderated by former German ambassador to Qatar Lothar Freischlader.

A central theme was that the true strength of a nation cannot be measured solely by its military capabilities or economic resources, but also by its capacity to withstand crises, preserve national unity and command international trust.

The speakers noted that Qatar's experience offered important lessons in navigating extraordinary challenges without abandoning dialogue or diplomatic engagement.

Successive crises, they observed, had strengthened solidarity within Qatari society while reinforcing the country's international standing as a reliable partner and credible mediator.

The discussion highlighted the potential for a mutually beneficial partnership between Qatar and Germany, built on their complementary strengths.

While Germany could benefit from Qatar's experience in crisis management, resilience and diplomatic engagement, Qatar could draw on Germany's advanced capabilities in engineering, technology and industrial development.

Such an exchange, the participants suggested, would give bilateral relations a broader strategic dimension extending beyond conventional political and economic co-operation.

Turning to the ongoing US-Iran war, the experts examined its implications for Gulf security, global energy markets and international stability, warning that the consequences of prolonged confrontation would extend far beyond the Middle East.

Europe, they noted, was also exposed to the economic and security repercussions of the conflict, underlining the need for greater international engagement in efforts to secure a peaceful resolution.

The discussion emphasised the importance of closer co-ordination among Gulf Co-operation Council countries in responding to shared threats, even where national interests and political priorities differed.

Participants also examined political and electoral developments in the United States and Israel and their potential influence on the region's future.

With Washington and Tehran continuing to hold divergent positions, the speakers stressed the need for strong and trusted intermediaries capable of narrowing differences and facilitating meaningful, lasting agreements.

The dialogue underscored that successful mediation required more than diplomatic access. Credibility, political courage, mutual trust and a genuine sense of responsibility were equally essential.

The participants also warned that lasting security and economic prosperity would remain elusive without respect for international law, human rights, national sovereignty and the right of peoples to self-determination.

Failure to hold those responsible for violations accountable, they cautioned, could embolden other actors and further undermine international peace and stability.

A recurring message throughout the discussion was that diplomacy should never be mistaken for weakness. Rather, the willingness to pursue negotiations amid deep divisions represented an expression of political wisdom, strength and responsibility.

The Berlin dialogue ultimately presented Qatar-Germany relations as an opportunity to demonstrate how countries with different experiences and capabilities could learn from one another while contributing to wider regional and international stability.

Its overarching message was that resilience, dialogue and mutual respect — rather than confrontation alone — offered the most credible foundations for lasting peace, security and shared prosperity.



Media City Qatar, Yango Play partner to explore opportunities for Arabic-language originals

The Film Committee at Media City Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Yango Play, a regional streaming service to explore the development, co-production and distribution of scripted and unscripted Arabic-language originals

Announced at the second edition of Doha Industry Days, the partnership also sets out potential opportunities to support a regional ecosystem that offers training, development and production opportunities for regional talent and Arab storytelling.

The partnership also considers content acquisition and licensing opportunities, such as the acquisition of digital streaming rights to Elzam, a Qatari documentary series from Katara Studios. Yango Play will seek to bring the series to audiences across the region and beyond the Middle East and North Africa. A special episode is scheduled to have its world premiere at Doha Film Festival on November 24.

The Film Committee and Yango Play will explore opportunities to support and work with production companies and industry professionals in Qatar on training, mentorship and knowledge exchange and the commitment to actively identify opportunities for Qatari and regional talent to work on future productions.

HE Hassan al-Thawadi, chairman of the Film Committee at Media City Qatar, said: "Our ambition is to build a sustainable screen industry in Qatar that creates lasting opportunities for Arabic-language productions and Qatari and regional talent. Via our partnership with Yango Play, we will explore ways to develop original Arabic-language productions, build expertise within Qatar's production sector and bring stories from across the Arab world to international audiences."

Roman Shimanskiy, chief executive of Yango Play said: "Our partnership with the Film Committee at Media City Qatar represents an important opportunity to champion Arabic storytelling and support the creative talent shaping the region's entertainment industry. Together, we look forward to exploring new collaborations that bring compelling local stories to life, create opportunities for regional talent and connect Qatari and regional productions with audiences across Mena and beyond."

Educators' role in shaping young minds highlighted at QNL forum

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter


HE Dr Hamad min Abdulaziz al-Kawari and Dr Iman Battikha.

The Qatar National Library (QNL) has concluded the third edition of its "Our Children Matter" forum, held under the theme "The Inspiring Educator: Shaping Future Generations and Empowering Libraries". The event brought together experts, educators and parents to discuss the future of child development and learning environments.

Proceedings opened with remarks by Faten Azzam, senior librarian for programmes for children and young adults, followed by a keynote address by Maram al-Mahmoud, manager of Children's and Young Adults' Programmes and Services at QNL.

Speaking about the event, al-Mahmoud said: "We are proud of the dialogue generated during this year's forum. By bringing together leading voices in parenting, early childhood education and library services, we aim to provide our community with the practical tools needed to nurture a conscious, confident and creative generation equipped with the skills necessary to excel in the future."

According to QNL, the forum drew a strong turnout, reflecting considerable public interest in the library's programmes and educational initiatives, and its role in meeting community needs and providing interactive platforms for sharing knowledge and expertise.

Participants attended presentations and interactive sessions led by a diverse line-up of regional and international specialists.

A highlight was the panel discussion titled "Inspiring Educators, Enriching Libraries, Shaping Generations", moderated by Dr Maryam al-Malki, director of the Kanaf Parental Education Centre presented the centre's work. Specialists in education, parenting and library services explored the vital collaboration between families, educators and libraries.

Iman Battikha, founder and CEO of Baby Melons and a certified parenting and education trainer with long experience in positive parenting and healthy family dynamics, presented "Know Your Parenting Personality and Its Impact on Building Future Generations". She was joined by Soulafa Selim, a certified parenting coach and Montessori educator with two decades of experience in early childhood education, who spoke on "The Role-Model Educator: How They Make a Difference in a Child's Life".

Ahmed Yousuf al-Malki, educational projects manager at Qatar Foundation's Pre-University Education Office and author of Educational Deals, delivered a session on "The Role of Parents in Raising a Self-Confident Child".

Adding an international perspective, Hugh Chang-Song, a public librarian from the Republic of Korea with more than 15 years of experience in developing public library services and expanding children's access to books and reading, gave a recorded video presentation titled "From Book Bags to Confident Readers: Children's Reading Services in Anseong Public Libraries, South Korea".

HE Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari, Minister of State and president of QNL, commented on the forum on his personal Facebook page, writing:

"I attended today the third edition of the 'Our Children Matter' forum at QNL. The first speaker was Dr Iman Battikha, a Syrian who lives in Quebec and a mother of three, two of them twins. She founded in Canada the Baby Melons academy, which offers positive parenting programmes in Arabic. I was impressed in her lecture by her ability to analyse the psychology of family members, and by her precise reading of the feelings and motives that pass between parents and children. I was glad to meet her after the session and talk about her experience with Arab families.

I enjoyed her Syrian dialect, and her name had a special resonance for me, as Iman is the name of my dear daughter and one of my favourite names. Her talk took me back to happy memories in Quebec, and to Syria, which holds a cherished place in my life and my family's. There I worked as Qatar's first ambassador, and from Homs comes the wife of my son Omran, the mother of my grandchildren Aya and Ali. In Damascus my son Tamim, May God have mercy on him, was born.

When I heard the name of the forum, I thought of Tamim. The speakers were talking about the children we raise, worry about and pray well for, and I was thinking of a part of my heart that went ahead of me to the presence of its Lord. The Arabs called a child "a piece of the liver", and I did not know how true that description was until the day I lost him. When such a piece is torn away, its place keeps aching as long as the heart beats.

I remembered my joy on the day he was born in Damascus, and wished I could return to that day, even for a moment, and hold him in my arms as I did the first time. The joy of his birth is still alive in my heart, and I still long for him whenever I mention the city where he was born. He left me children who are pieces of his heart, in whom I see something of him, and I thank God for them every day. Perhaps this is part of what gives Syria and its good people all this love in my heart.

May God have mercy on you, Tamim, piece of my heart. Never is Damascus mentioned in my presence but I say to myself: here my son was born."

Sheikh Hamad Award symposium to explore translation as a bridge between cultures

The Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding will hold a symposium titled "Towards a World That Translates and Understands" on November 24, with leading academics, researchers and translators from across the globe taking part. The event will examine how translation can build bridges between cultures and meet the intellectual and knowledge challenges facing the world. It coincides with the ceremony honouring the winners of the award's 12th edition.

The symposium reflects the award's commitment to cultural dialogue and knowledge exchange at a time of rapid scientific and technological change and growing geopolitical and cultural tensions. It begins from a central paradox: technology has vastly expanded the capacity for translation and communication, yet deep gaps in knowledge and culture persist. That raises a key question – can greater connectivity and translation alone lead to broader understanding between peoples?

Moving beyond traditional themes, the event will explore translation's ties to intellectual and scientific shifts and to the challenges of the modern world. It comprises two sessions with six presentations, followed by interactive discussions with the audience.

The first session opens at 9am and is chaired by Prof Yu Mei, professor of Arabic studies at Beijing Foreign Studies University. It will look at how translation can foster mutual understanding between the Arab world and China as Beijing's presence grows in the global economy, technology and international relations, and whether translation keeps pace with China's scientific and intellectual transformation. It will also address stereotypes and second-hand knowledge shaped by intermediary languages.

Prof Wang Youyong (Faisal) of Shanghai International Studies University will speak on the Arabisation of Chinese classics, while Dr Li Shijun (Latif) of the same university's Centre for Chinese-Arab Reform and Development Studies will trace key milestones in Arabic-to-Chinese translation in China from an area-studies perspective.

Prof Shui Qingguo (Bassam) of Beijing Foreign Studies University will present translation between Chinese and Arabic as a mirror of China's social and intellectual change. A leading translator between the two languages, he won the Sheikh Hamad Award in 2017.

The second session begins at 11am and is chaired by Dr Sidina Sidati, professor at the University of Nouakchott in Mauritania and director of the Africa Tomorrow Foundation in Dakar, Senegal. Drawing on translation experiences in Azerbaijani, Italian and Fulani, it will examine the relationship between language, knowledge and power, unequal access of cultures to global readers, and the influence of linguistic dominance on how knowledge is shaped. It will also consider translation's role in safeguarding cultural diversity and collective memory.

Prof Ahmed Sami Abdel Fattah al-Ayedi of Ain Shams University will discuss knowledge exchange between Arabic and Azerbaijani under linguistic dominance. Dr Ahmed al-Samaai of the University of Tunis will explore the translation of Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose and its reconstruction of the medieval world. Dr Mohamed Said Bah, a researcher and translator, will close with a presentation on translation as a forward-looking vision for restoring human fraternity in a tense world.

The symposium forms part of the award's cultural activities promoting translation as a means of bringing cultures closer and enriching exchange between Arabic and the world's languages. The winners' ceremony will be held in Doha the same evening, when the results of the 12th edition will be announced and outstanding translation efforts honoured.

Qatari envoy: Amir's visit underscores depth of longstanding relations

QNA
Doha



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's visit to the Federal Republic of Germany carries particular significance, reflecting the depth of the longstanding relations between the two countries and the strong foundations of political understanding, mutual trust and co-operation that underpin their partnership, Qatar's ambassador to Germany Abdullah bin Ibrahim al-Hamar said.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), the ambassador said the visit comes as Qatar-Germany relations continue to gain momentum, with bilateral ties expanding across the political, economic, investment, cultural and scientific fields since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1973.

The ambassador said the visit marks an important milestone in advancing bilateral relations and further strengthening the strategic partnership between the two countries, building on the Memorandum of Understanding on establishing the Qatar-Germany Strategic Dialogue, signed in May 2023. The MoU provides an institutional framework for enhancing political co-ordination and expanding co-operation across a broad range of areas.

He stressed that the significance of the MoU extends beyond its immediate outcomes, laying the groundwork for a new phase of partnership based on a shared vision for the future and mutual interests.

Ambassador al-Hamar highlighted the robust and multifaceted nature of Qatar-Germany relations, which have evolved well beyond traditional areas of co-operation into a strategic partnership underpinned by regular high-level visits, political consultations and close co-ordination between the two countries. He said the Strategic Dialogue represents an important step toward giving greater institutional depth to co-operation.

He said Qatar-Germany economic ties have gained significant momentum, with Qatar-Germany bilateral trade exceeding $2.02bn in 2025, an 11.8% increase from the previous year. More than 300 German companies are currently operating in Qatar across a wide range of sectors, he noted.

Beyond trade and investment, he said, economic co-operation between the two countries extends to energy, education, scientific research, culture, infrastructure and advanced industries, with growing mutual interest in expanding partnerships in technology, artificial intelligence, digital transformation and research and development.

Ambassador al-Hamar said the upcoming talks will address ways to further develop political, economic and investment relations and strengthen the strategic partnership, alongside regional and international developments, particularly the situation in the Middle East, the Palestinian cause and developments in Gaza, Syria and Lebanon, as well as challenges related to regional security, international maritime navigation and the resilience of global supply chains.

He stressed the importance of intensifying diplomatic efforts and concerted action to safeguard security and stability and prevent the escalation and widening of tensions and conflicts. In this context, he emphasised that Qatar and Germany share a commitment to dialogue and diplomacy, respect for international law and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Among the most promising areas for bilateral co-operation, he said, are artificial intelligence, semiconductors, advanced computing, cybersecurity, quantum technologies, robotics, smart manufacturing and medical technology. He also underscored the importance of strengthening links among universities, research institutions, startups and industrial companies, creating an ecosystem capable of translating scientific research and technological innovation into commercially viable ventures and practical applications.

He highlighted the importance of connecting German companies, particularly startups and SMEs, with Qatar's growing economic and innovation ecosystem and leveraging international platforms hosted by Qatar, including Web Summit Qatar, to create opportunities for these companies to expand into regional markets.

On mediation and conflict resolution, ambassador al-Hamar said Qatar regards dialogue and diplomacy as the most sustainable means of addressing conflicts and building lasting peace. He stressed that mediation is not merely a mechanism for containing crises, but a means of building trust, bridging differences and creating the conditions for durable peace and stability.

Germany, he noted, is an important partner in this area, given its political and diplomatic weight, its influential role within the European Union and internationally, and its commitment to regional stability and political solutions to crises. Closer co-ordination between the two countries, he added, can reinforce diplomatic and humanitarian efforts and create greater space for dialogue, particularly in the Middle East.

On energy co-operation, The ambassador highlighted Qatar's leading global position as a reliable partner in supporting global energy security. He said co-operation with Germany has gained significant momentum, particularly following the signing of the Qatar-Germany Energy Partnership in May 2022, which established a framework for dialogue, co-ordination and the exchange of expertise.

Ambassador al-Hamar underscored the importance of translating the considerable potential of Qatar and Germany into concrete projects and initiatives capable of delivering tangible and sustainable results. He reaffirmed the Qatari Embassy's commitment to further strengthening ties among governmental, economic, cultural and academic institutions in both countries and to turning the strong political relationship between Qatar and Germany into concrete opportunities, initiatives and projects that advance the shared interests of the two friendly countries.

German ambassador: Amir's visit highlights strong partnership

QNA
Doha



Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the State of Qatar Oliver Owcza affirmed that the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Federal Republic of Germany holds great significance in light of current international developments.

The ambassador noted that the visit reflects the depth of the friendship and partnership between the two countries, as well as their shared commitment to dialogue, stability, and the strengthening of international co-operation.

The ambassador told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the visit conveys a clear message: Qatar and Germany are determined to work together to address current challenges and shape future opportunities. He noted that close partnerships, built on trust and mutual respect, are becoming increasingly important in a world defined by uncertainty and rapid change. He emphasised that the priority lies in translating the excellent political relations between the two countries into tangible, mutually beneficial outcomes, particularly in the fields of security, economy, investment, and technology, as well as culture and education. He further pointed out that the Qatari-German partnership is increasingly integrating strategic political dialogue with practical avenues for joint co-operation.

He described the relations between the State of Qatar and the Federal Republic of Germany as "excellent." He noted that they are founded on mutual trust, close political dialogue, and growing economic ties. He pointed out that the establishment of a strategic dialogue between the two countries has served as a significant milestone in elevating bilateral relations to a new level, a process further bolstered by the frequent exchange of high-level visits.

The ambassador highlighted that the State of Qatar is a significant investor in Germany with a long-standing presence in the German economy. Meanwhile, for many years, German companies have contributed their expertise and technologies to Qatar's development journey, serving as a strong partner in the realisation of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

Regarding the prospects for economic and investment co-operation, he indicated that the economic relations between the two countries are built on a solid foundation. Nevertheless, there remains significant potential for further expansion, particularly in fields such as AI, advanced manufacturing, digital technologies, and startups. He voiced his aspiration to forge a genuine Qatari-German partnership in technological leadership by leveraging the respective strengths of both sides, connecting capital with innovation, scientific research, and industrial expertise, thereby generating mutual benefits and fostering greater co-operation in future-oriented sectors.

Regarding the energy sector, the ambassador emphasised that the State of Qatar is an important and reliable partner for Germany in terms of energy security, noting that co-operation in the liquefied natural gas (LNG) sector serves as a tangible example of the integration between the two countries.

The ambassador also pointed to significant potential for expanding co-operation to include renewable energy, hydrogen, energy efficiency, and innovative technologies. He explained that the German-Qatari energy partnership provides an important framework for deepening collaboration in these areas, in line with a shared commitment toward a more sustainable future in the energy sector.

Regarding cultural, educational, and scientific co-operation, He emphasised that ties between peoples form the core of any sustainable partnership. He noted that friendships, personal experiences, and mutual understanding between societies and cultures add genuine depth to political and economic relations. In this context, he pointed to the upcoming opening of a pavilion in Doha dedicated to the German artist Gerhard Richter, one of Germany's key contemporary artists, as an example of the role art and culture play in building bridges between the two countries and enriching their bilateral relations. He further expressed his aspiration to strengthen exchange programmes involving universities, researchers, students, and young professionals from both countries.

He emphasised that investing in the younger generation is one of the most important areas of work for a shared future, noting that Qatar and Germany offer extensive opportunities for learning and the exchange of expertise and knowledge across scientific, cultural, and educational fields.

In a related context, the ambassador highlighted the commitment of both countries to diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. He expressed his appreciation for Qatar's role in mediation, notably its ability to engage with parties that had not spoken to one another for years. He said that this role serves as a vital diplomatic asset, especially amid growing international polarisation. He further emphasised that Qatar and Germany share a firm conviction that lasting peace can only be achieved through dialogue.

He indicated that the strategic dialogue between the two countries provides a suitable framework for enhancing co-ordination regarding regional and international challenges, with specific opportunities to develop co-operation in the areas of mediation, humanitarian diplomacy, and efforts aimed at preventing further escalation.

Regarding the future of the strategic partnership between the two countries, the ambassador voiced his aspiration for the next phase to focus on transforming strong political relations into broader, practical co-operation. This includes continuing to build upon existing partnerships in the energy and investment sectors, expanding the scope of collaboration in technological innovation and scientific research, and strengthening ties between the startup ecosystems of both nations.

Qatari-German ties evolve into multi-level partnership: Experts

QNA
Doha



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's upcoming visit to the Federal Republic of Germany carries exceptional significance in terms of its timing and geopolitical implications, coming amid highly sensitive regional and international developments.

The visit strengthens the strategic partnership between the two countries, extending beyond bilateral and trade co-operation to encompass major regional and international issues. This partnership is underpinned by the strong relations between Qatar and Germany and their respective positions on the international and regional stages.

Experts and analysts told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that relations between Qatar and Germany have witnessed significant progress in recent years, evolving beyond traditional diplomatic ties into a multi-dimensional partnership spanning political, economic and diplomatic fields.

They said the two countries are working to strengthen political and diplomatic co-ordination on regional and international crises, particularly developments in the Middle East, the Palestinian cause, and the security and humanitarian challenges arising from armed conflicts. Discussions also extend to the implications of the Russia-Ukraine war for European security and global economic stability.

Dr Nafja Sabbah al-Kuwari, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Qatar University, said HH the Amir's visit to Germany presents an opportunity to advance political understandings and co-ordinate efforts to address regional and international challenges.

She said the visit would also allow both countries to build on their complementary roles in supporting diplomatic efforts aimed at containing escalation and reaching sustainable political settlements.

In remarks to QNA, al-Kuwari said the Qatar-Germany partnership was gaining increasing strategic importance amid the political and security challenges facing the international system.

She noted that Qatar's extensive experience in mediation, managing negotiations and establishing communication channels with various parties complements Germany's political and institutional influence within the European Union and its ability to mobilise support for diplomatic initiatives.

The partnership's significance, she added, lies in leveraging the two countries' respective capabilities and instruments of influence to strengthen diplomatic co-ordination, help contain conflicts and facilitate political settlements.

She cited Qatar's successful mediation efforts in several areas, including the 2020 Doha Agreement between the US and the Taliban, joint efforts with Egypt and the US to reach a ceasefire agreement in the Gaza Strip in 2025, and mediation initiatives involving the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the M23 movement, alongside other efforts to contain regional and international crises.

Al-Kuwari said the complementary roles of Qatar and Germany could help move diplomatic efforts beyond temporary de-escalation towards more sustainable settlements. However, achieving this would depend on political will, the readiness of conflicting parties to make the necessary concessions and their commitment to implementing agreements.

Meanwhile, Dr Maryam al-Kuwari, Director of the Gulf Studies Centre at Qatar University, said HH the Amir's visit to Germany carried particular strategic importance amid an unsettled international order characterised by rapid geopolitical shifts and interconnected challenges involving regional and international security, energy security, global economic stability and supply chains.

Speaking to QNA, she highlighted the qualitative progress in Qatar-Germany relations in recent years, driven by growing shared economic and investment interests, enhanced political consultations and diplomatic co-ordination, as well as the launch of a strategic dialogue between the two countries.

She outlined several interconnected strategic priorities for Qatar-Germany dialogue.

The first, she said, is strengthening political and diplomatic co-ordination on regional and international crises, particularly developments in the Middle East, the Palestinian cause and the security and humanitarian challenges resulting from armed conflicts, as well as the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on European security and global economic stability.

The second priority is enhancing energy security and diversifying supply sources, an area that has gained growing importance in bilateral relations since 2022.

She explained that changes in European energy markets prompted Germany to reassess its energy security strategies and reduce its dependence on limited energy sources. This has highlighted Qatar's role as an important strategic partner, given its advanced capabilities in liquefied natural gas (LNG) production and exports.

Qatar's expertise in developing long-term energy projects, she added, also creates opportunities for co-operation in hydrogen, renewable energy and low-emission technologies, helping balance energy security requirements with the transition towards a more sustainable economy.

Concluding her remarks to QNA, the Director of the Gulf Studies Centre identified a third priority: deepening economic, investment, trade and technological co-operation between the two countries, particularly by building on the complementarity between Qatar's investment capabilities and Germany's industrial and technological expertise.

Dr Ali Bakir, Research Professor of International Affairs, Security and Defence at Qatar University, also highlighted the significance of HH the Amir's visit to Germany in helping de-escalating crises in the region and around the world.

Speaking to QNA, Bakir said joint co-ordination between Qatar and Germany in addressing regional challenges would help advance bilateral relations and expand co-operation between the two countries.

He noted that Qatar-Germany co-operation had extended beyond political and diplomatic affairs to encompass economic relations and energy security, reflecting the increasingly diverse nature of their partnership.

He stressed the importance of complementary roles and co-ordinated multilateral efforts in supporting peaceful and diplomatic initiatives to resolve regional and international conflicts and crises, noting Qatar's prominent regional and international standing in mediation and conflict resolution.

Bakir said co-ordination among the various parties and influential stakeholders, beyond the framework of bilateral relations, could help exert pressure on conflicting parties and create conditions conducive to achieving tangible results towards ending crises.

He added that the nature and scale of current regional and international crises had exceeded the capacity of any single country to address them, regardless of its political, diplomatic, defence or economic capabilities.

This, he said, makes co-ordinated action among powers and stakeholders with shared interests essential to achieving regional and international security and stability, upholding international law and resolving disputes through peaceful means.

Meanwhile, Dr Ahmed Ghaith al-Kuwari, legal adviser and expert in international political relations, said the significance of HH the Amir's visit to Germany lies in the ability of Qatar and Germany to manage crises, contribute effectively to addressing their root causes and leverage shared interests to promote international peace and security.

Speaking to QNA, Dr Ahmed al-Kuwari said Qatar-Germany relations were undergoing a strategic transformation, moving beyond the traditional focus on trade volumes towards a multi-level partnership capable of fostering political understandings amid an international environment increasingly characterised by interconnected crises.

He said an objective assessment of relations between Doha and Berlin points to a shift towards a broader approach shaped by international developments, with both sides recognising the political, economic and diplomatic tools at each other's disposal in managing regional and international crises.

He added that the two countries share an understanding that regional stability is no longer a purely geographical concern confined to conflict zones, but has become an integral part of the wider international framework of the economic security and the energy and trade security.

On efforts to de-escalate tensions in the region, Dr Ahmed al-Kuwari highlighted the complementary roles of Doha's diplomatic and negotiating efforts and Berlin's position within the European and Nato frameworks.

He said this combination brings together Qatar's negotiation expertise and ability to engage with various parties with Germany's economic and political weight, particularly in reconstruction, humanitarian assistance and influencing Western policy approaches.

Dr al-Kuwari said the real challenge in the Gaza Strip was no longer limited to reaching ceasefire agreements, but also involved addressing the root causes of the crisis and establishing a political and legal framework that would ensure sustainable reconstruction and prevent a recurrence of escalation.

He added that de-escalation in Lebanon similarly requires support for state institutions and the Lebanese army, as well as the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, in a manner that safeguards the country's sovereignty.

The Qatar-Germany partnership, he concluded, represents a model of strategic co-operation built on the complementary use of diplomatic, political and economic instruments. This strengthens opportunities for joint co-ordination on regional and international issues, supports efforts to promote security and stability, and expands prospects for peaceful conflict resolution amid rapid changes and growing challenges in the international order.

QATAR



Amir in Berlin to bolster ties with Germany

From Page 1

Political and diplomatic engagement remains a central pillar of the relationship, with both countries sharing a commitment to regional stability, multilateral diplomacy and resolving conflicts through dialogue.

A significant milestone came in May 2023, when Qatar and Germany signed a memorandum of understanding establishing a strategic dialogue to provide an institutional framework for closer consultation, co-ordination and long-term co-operation.

The agreement has helped lay the groundwork for expanding bilateral engagement and identifying new areas of mutual interest.

Relations have gained further momentum through a series of high-level exchanges in recent years, including German President Steinmeier's working visit to Doha in November 2023 and HH the Amir's official visit to Berlin in October 2024.

In February this year, HH the Amir held official talks with Chancellor Merz at the Amiri Diwan, focusing on strengthening the strategic partnership in the economy, investment, trade, energy and military co-operation, alongside key regional and international developments.

More recently, on November 3, HH the Amir received Bavaria's Minister-President Markus Söder and his accompanying delegation at the Amiri Diwan. Discussions covered defence, security, economic co-operation, technology, innovation and investment opportunities.

The growing diplomatic engagement has also been reflected in co-ordination on regional security issues, particularly efforts to reduce tensions and safeguard maritime navigation.

On November 10, HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani participated in a ministerial meeting in Paris involving Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the European Group of Four — France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom — on the sidelines of the G7 ministerial meeting hosted by France.

The discussions focused on regional developments, diplomatic initiatives aimed at de-escalation and efforts to strengthen security and stability.

Particular attention was given to securing freedom of maritime navigation and advancing a comprehensive agreement capable of delivering lasting peace in the region.

Preparations for the Qatar-Germany Strategic Dialogue have also gathered pace. On October 27, HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad held a virtual meeting with German Minister for Economic Co-operation and Development Reem Alabali to review arrangements and co-ordination for the dialogue.

Beyond political engagement, Qatar and Germany maintain an extensive network of agreements and memoranda of understanding covering energy, industry, trade, healthcare, culture, sport, solar energy, civil aviation and air transport.

These include agreements on the promotion and protection of mutual investments and the establishment of a Joint Committee for Trade, Economic and Technical Co-operation, which has facilitated meetings, conferences and seminars over the years.

Economic relations remain a particularly important dimension of the partnership, with Germany's advanced industrial and technological capabilities complementing Qatar's investment strength and ambitions for economic diversification.

Germany, with a population exceeding 83mn and an area of approximately 357,000sq km, is the European Union's largest economy and, according to 2026 estimates, the world's third-largest by nominal gross domestic product.

Its globally competitive automotive, machinery, equipment and chemical industries, together with a strong services sector, underpin an export-oriented economy deeply integrated into international trade.

Against this backdrop, HH the Amir's visit is expected to reinforce the strategic importance of Qatar-Germany relations, consolidating decades of co-operation while laying the foundation for a broader partnership spanning economic growth, technological advancement and regional stability. (**QNA**)

Amir attends Swiss working breakfast

From Page 1

Following his departure from Switzerland, HH the Amir sent a cable to President Parmelin expressing his sincere thanks and appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to him and the accompanying delegation during the visit.

HH the Amir also expressed his pleasure at meeting the Swiss president and exchanging views on issues of mutual interest, as well as ways to further develop and strengthen bilateral relations across various fields for the benefit of both countries and their peoples. HH the Amir wished President Parmelin continued health, happiness and success, and the Swiss people further progress and prosperity.



Amir's visit could open new avenues for security ties: German police chief

From Page 1

His remarks underscored the human dimension of security co-operation, in which professional relationships forged through shared training and operational experience can develop into enduring institutional partnerships.

Romann also highlighted the broader dividends of closer security ties, arguing that their benefits extend well beyond law enforcement and public safety. Stronger security and stability, he said, can create conditions conducive to economic activity, investment and prosperity, ultimately contributing to the well-being of people in both countries.



Dr Dieter Romann

Asked about the prospects for further exchanges and enhanced co-operation between the German and Qatari security authorities, Romann acknowledged that decisions on the future direction and scope of bilateral engagement rested with the political leadership.

"That is a question for HH the Amir, the German Chancellor and the interior ministers of our two countries to answer," he said.

Nevertheless, the German police chief made clear his personal commitment to sustaining the relationship.

"For my part, I look forward to continuing our journey of close co-operation," he said.

His comments come as HH the Amir's visit to Germany places renewed focus on the scope for expanding bilateral engagement, with security co-operation emerging as an area offering opportunities for practical collaboration, institutional exchanges and a stronger partnership between Doha and Berlin.

Egypt's Abu Zahra wins 'First of the First' Qur'an competition

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Egypt's Abdelfattah Abdelhamid Abdelfattah Abu Zahra has won the "First of the First" (Awwal al-Awa'il) international Qur'an competition in Doha, securing the title and a QR1mn grand prize.

The winner was announced at the closing ceremony yesterday at Al-Majlis Hall in the Sheraton Doha Hotel, under the patronage of HE the Minister of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs Ghanem bin Shaheen al-Ghanem.

Abu Zahra topped a field of 10 finalists from Libya, Egypt, Bangladesh, Niger and Chad. They competed before an international jury in the final rounds on November 16 and 17. Organised by the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, "First of the First" is the international branch of the Sheikh Jassim bin Muhammad bin Thani Holy Qur'an Competition, now in its 31st edition. The third edition of the international branch brought together top finishers from international Qur'an competitions.



Abdelfattah Abdelhamid Abdelfattah Abu Zahra. **PICTURE:** Tawfik Lamari

The competition began on November 9 at the Imam Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab Mosque. Participants also visited local landmarks, including the Sheikh Abdullah bin Zaid al-Mahmoud Islamic Cultural Centre.

Libya's finalists were Ahmed Hussein Othman al-Alam, Jamal al-Din Abdulsalam al-Zuwair, Abdulrahman Abduljalil Muhammad Ibrahim al-Jahani and Abdulhamid Jumaa Abdulhamid Saad. Egypt was represented by Ahmed Yousri Muhammad, Ahmed Muhammad Saleh Ibrahim Issa and Abu Zahra.

The remaining finalists were Osama Mawlana Muhammad Shihab al-Din Chowdhury of Bangladesh, Ubaidallah Boubacar Ango of Niger and Muhammad Adam Muhammad of Chad. At the ceremony's conclusion, HE Ghanem bin Shaheen al-Ghanem honoured *Gulf Times* alongside other local newspapers and media outlets.



CRA hosts 'Beyond Tomorrow' dialogue for youth

QNA
Doha

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) yesterday hosted a youth dialogue titled 'Beyond Tomorrow: Youth Digital Wellbeing — Leveraging Technology for Future Generations' at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC), on the sidelines of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26).

The dialogue brought together various generations, featuring speakers from eight International Telecommunication Union (ITU) member states. Participants included international leaders, representatives from governments, the private sector, academia, and the sports sector, as well as a number of young people and members of the ITU Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Board.

The discussions focused on three key themes reflecting the human journey through different stages of life: "Move", exploring the role of technology in supporting physical activity and sports participation; "Live", examining the use of emerging technologies and artificial intelligence to enhance health and quality of life; and "Thrive", focusing on expanding educational opportunities, skills development, and creativity.

Representing the State of Qatar in the dialogue were Hussain Ali Behzad, a football player for Al-Shamal Sports Club; Hadi Suleiman, a computer science student at Qatar University; and Ali Fawaz al-Aji, Qatar's youth delegate to the UN and a youth advocate with the Education Above All Foundation.

Participants discussed the importance of meaningful connectivity, digital inclusion, and the engagement of youth in shaping the digital future, aligning with the objectives of Resolution 198 from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference, which focuses on the empowerment of youth.

In this context, Engineer Hussain Abdullah Sallat, Director of Public Relations and Communications at the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA), emphasised that the role of youth extends beyond merely using technology; they are key partners in shaping the future. He underscored the necessity for regulatory frameworks to keep pace with technological advancements, while accounting for the needs of both current and future generations, in line with the goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

Furthermore, the dialogue saw the launch of a Qatari initiative titled the "Legacy Wall." This initiative aims to document the aspirations of various generations regarding the digital future and to foster a shared responsibility for leveraging technology to benefit humanity and future generations. It aligns with the State of Qatar's efforts to ensure a lasting, sustainable impact from its hosting of the 2026 ITU Plenipotentiary Conference.

The initiative provides a platform for youth, leaders, and experts from around the world to express their hopes for what technology can achieve for future generations, as well as the steps and commitments required today to realise those aspirations.

The initiative enabled speakers and attendees to share their insights and aspirations via an interactive digital platform. These contributions were displayed live during the event and will subsequently be compiled into a digital booklet documenting these visions and commitments. This will serve as a knowledge legacy, originating in Doha and extending its impact well beyond the conference, ensuring that the aspirations of youth and future generations remain central to the international dialogue on the future of digital transformation.

Qatar, Pakistan enhance security ties

From Page 1

The PMO said Sharif warmly welcomed the visiting dignitary on his first visit to Pakistan and reaffirmed the longstanding brotherly relations between the two countries. He expressed the hope that the visit would further strengthen co-operation between the interior ministries and relevant institutions of both countries, it said.

The PM also conveyed his greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and thanked the country's leadership for its unwavering support to Pakistan.

He particularly appreciated Qatar's continued supply of liquefied natural gas, which helps meet Pakistan's energy requirements, the statement said.



HMC organises Arab Nurses and Midwives conference

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

The Sixth Arab Nurses and Midwives Conference, hosted by Qatar, commenced yesterday. The opening day and inaugural session were held at the Grand Hyatt Doha Hotel in the presence of Ali Janahi, Hamad Medical Corporation's (HMC) acting assistant managing director and Dr Khalid Mohammed al-Jalham, chief medical officer at HMC, with the conference proceedings continuing on the second and third days at HMC's ITQAN Clinical Simulation and Innovation Centre.

The conference is organised with the support and partnership of the Ministry of Public Health, Primary Health Care Corporation, Sidra Medicine, Aspetar, Qatar University, Doha University of Science and Technology, Qatar Armed Forces Medical Services, Lekhwiya Clinic, Ministry of Interior Medical Services and Naufar. The conference is being held under the theme: "Arab Nurses and Midwives: Empowered to Achieve a Strong, Sustainable, and Healthier Region."

Mariam Nooh al-Mutawa, HMC's Chief Nursing Officer and chairperson of the conference, said: "At this conference, we celebrate nursing and midwifery professionals, whose expertise and innovation contribute to improving the lives of individuals, families and communities across the region. As we gather in Qatar, we renew our shared commitment to advancing the nursing and midwifery professions, building a healthier society, strengthening the healthcare workforce and delivering world-class, person-centred care, in alignment with Qatar National Vision 2030, the National Health Strategy, HMC's Strategy 2024–2030, and the Nursing and Midwifery Strategy."

Muna al-Hetmi, acting assistant executive director of nursing and midwifery education at HMC and chairperson of the conference organising committee, said: "The conference brings together nursing and midwifery leaders and professionals from across the Arab world, providing a platform for experts to meet, exchange ideas and build sustainable partnerships that strengthen collaboration among nursing and midwifery professionals in the region."

The conference is being held with the participation of 22 Arab countries. It includes an opening session celebrating the journey of nursing and midwifery professionals and their role in shaping the future, as well as a keynote session entitled "Nurses & Midwives at the Policy Table: Influencing, Driving and Transforming." Several educational sessions and workshops will also take place throughout the conference.

China, US, Russia issue 'Declaration toward Peace' after first summit

AFP
Shenzhen

China, the US and Russia issued a "Declaration toward Peace" yesterday after their leaders held an unprecedented summit, laying out common ambitions to overhaul the UN and keep the International Criminal Court in check.

The statement after Xi Jinping, Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin met in China said they wanted to protect diplomatic immunity for state officials and also boost supply and production of refined petroleum products.

"The three heads of state had an in-depth exchange of views on the current international situation and committed to maintaining strategic stability and international security," a White House version of the statement said.

The powwow took place with Russia's years-long offensive in Ukraine grinding on, Trump bogged down in the Middle East and an ascendant China looking to strengthen its hand in East Asia.

"We discussed the question of democracy. And what is democracy? It's what? It's the liberal order that certain circles put together and still now are trying to impose on the whole world," Putin told a news conference in Shenzhen.

The three men made opening remarks touching on weighty topics from nuclear weapons to the war in Ukraine as they met around a large, dark round table with a pink flower arrangement at its centre.

The discussion behind closed doors in Kylin Villa ended after an hour and 20 minutes.

Trump said the leaders were "making history", while Putin said they wrote a new "page in the history of diplomacy".

"The three countries share a common perspective on safeguarding world peace," Xi said.

In their joint statement, the leaders "recognised that the principle of state consent and respect for immunities of State officials are of paramount importance, and concurred that the International Criminal Court and other similar bodies must not abuse their jurisdiction".

Putin is subject to an ICC arrest warrant, while Trump's administration has vowed to dismantle the court "brick by brick".

The leaders said they were "committed to reform the UN so that the UN can respond more effectively to global challenges and conform to its fundamental mission of international peace and security".

The joint statement said the countries "plan to increase the production and supply of refined petroleum products for the benefit of all nations. They reaffirmed the importance of stable energy flows".



Russia's President Vladimir Putin, China's President Xi Jinping and US President Donald Trump arrive for a trilateral meeting at Kylin Villa on the sidelines of the Apec Summit in Shenzhen, yesterday. (**AFP**)

The summit stoked fears that the three powerful men want to divide the globe into spheres of influence, for example by making decisions impacting Ukraine over the heads of Kyiv or Europe.

Earlier yesterday, Trump and Putin held a meeting — their first since August 2025 — with the 80-year-old US president calling the Russian his "friend". Putin responded in English: "Nice to meet you."

Trump and Xi then came together — their third time this year — for one-on-one discussions, with the US leader highlighting a "very special relationship".

Putin, 74, and Xi, 73, held talks on Wednesday — their 50th meeting, the Chinese president said.

Beijing, Washington and Moscow previously gave different accounts of the agenda for the three-way meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) summit, a forum of 21 economies around the Pacific Rim.

Washington initially signalled that Ukraine was off the table, before Trump said the war would feature. Xi does not view the conflict as China's problem to solve.

Critics warned that the optics from the meeting would be damaging for the US president

The meeting "gives Putin a platform to legitimise his war of aggression over Ukraine with seemingly little repercussions", said Lyle Morris at the Asia Society Policy Institute.

"Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin are playing Donald Trump like a cheap violin," Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said.

Washington had also flagged up the Iran war and nuclear disarmament as topics of discussion, after a US-Russia bilateral treaty on atomic weapons expired in February.

Beijing has long maintained that the US and Russia must reduce their giant nuclear arsenals before it agrees to talks on its smaller stockpile.

The final statement said that the countries "will conduct a dialogue on reducing nuclear risks and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons."

The extraordinary meeting preceded equally unusual scenes as the leaders arrived in the southern Chinese city and tech hub for the talks.

Breaking with decades of diplomatic protocol, Xi received Trump at the airport, with the men briefly hugging before a red-carpet greeting complete with cheering children and a flyover.

On his Asia trip, which also included a stop in the Philippines, Trump had floated the idea of a possible meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in China.

There had been no official response from Pyongyang before the US president left Shenzhen.



Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi walks past China's President Xi Jinping (right) after they shook hands before leaders take a group photo during the ApecSummit in Shenzhen, yesterday. (**AFP**)

Japan wants 'constructive and stable' China ties

AFP
Tokyo

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, on her first trip to China since taking office, said yesterday that she intends to build a "constructive and stable relationship" with Beijing.

The premier's trip to Shenzhen for the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) summit was also her first to China since making comments about Taiwan a year ago that caused a sharp deterioration in relations with Beijing.

"We intend to comprehensively advance our strategic and mutually beneficial relationship... pursuing dialogue to safeguard the national interests of both sides, and build a constructive and stable relationship," Takaichi said during a news conference on the sidelines of the summit.

Last year, Takaichi suggested that Tokyo could intervene militarily if Beijing sought to take Taiwan by force. A furious China, which views the democratic island as part of its territory, retaliated with trade restrictions and warned its citizens not to travel to Japan.

Yesterday, she said that "China is an important neighbour", adding: "Precisely because there are pending issues and challenges between Japan and China, we believe it is important to engage in dialogue and maintain communication."

By yesterday afternoon Takaichi had not held any formal meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, although the two leaders have shaken hands twice.

However, the Japanese premier spoke with Russia's President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the regional summit, in her first face-to-face talks with him since she became prime minister.

The meeting came as relations between Tokyo and Moscow are also at a low point after a Japanese journalist was arrested in Russia on spying allegations and assets of a Japanese tobacco firm were seized.

"We spoke for more than 30 minutes," Takaichi told reporters in Shenzhen. "We took the necessary time to have a thorough exchange, from the Japanese side's standpoint, on the current case involving the detention of a Japanese national and on the treatment of Japanese companies."

The Kremlin ordered this month the seizure of Japan Tobacco International's Russian assets, sparking an immediate protest from Tokyo.

Takaichi said she and Putin agreed to "maintain communication at various levels, including direct contact between the two of us".

The talks came a day after Japan lodged a protest with Moscow over suspected Russian aircraft that had entered its airspace, prompting Tokyo to scramble fighter jets.

Russia and Japan also have a decades-old dispute over the status of a string of islands in the Pacific Ocean.

Myanmar guilty of genocide against Rohingya, says ICJ

AFP
The Hague

Myanmar committed genocide against its Rohingya minority, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) said yesterday in an historic ruling, ordering refugees be given safe passage home and awarded compensation.

The ruling by the top UN court was the first time in its 80-year history that ICJ judges have determined that a state committed genocide, and is likely to be seen as justice for Rohingya victims of Myanmar's brutal 2017 crackdown.

"The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has committed genocide against the Rohingya group in northern Rakhine State," said ICJ President Yuji Iwasawa, pronouncing the verdict in the court's Great Hall of Justice in The Hague.

In Cox's Bazar, now the world's biggest refugee camp, hundreds followed proceedings from The Hague on a giant screen, many breaking down in tears when Iwasawa pronounced the verdict of genocide.

Mohammed Osman, whose parents and four siblings were killed by the Myanmar military, said the verdict had proved that "we were not lying about the genocide".

"I am overwhelmed... But we have achieved only 50 % of what we wanted. We will achieve 100 % when we are repatriated with dignity," Osman, 20, told AFP.

For nearly three hours, Iwasawa laid out searing evidence of Myanmar's atrocities against its mostly Muslim Rohingya minority during the campaign, which forced hundreds of thousands to flee into neighbouring Bangladesh.

Myanmar's security forces killed thousands of Rohingya civilians, committed "widespread sexual violence" against women and "extreme violence" against children, Iwasawa said.



Rohingya refugees watch the International Court of Justice ruling over whether Myanmar committed genocide against Rohingya Muslims, on a screen at a camp in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, yesterday. (**AFP**)

The ICJ said the evidence pointed to around 10,000 killed in Myanmar's so-called "clearance operations" to repress the Rohingya community.

Rohingya villages were "systemically destroyed" and replaced with non-Rohingya inhabitants, said the ICJ, ruling that the "only reasonable inference" was that Myanmar intended to destroy the population — a key test for genocide.

The court ordered Myanmar to "allow and facilitate the safe, voluntary, and dignified return to their place of residence" for those who fled the violence. UN chief Antonio Guterres swiftly called on Myanmar to allow that to happen.

Judges also told Myanmar it must investigate and punish anyone suspected of committing genocide, providing for compensation to be determined at a later date.

While the decisions of the ICJ are binding and cannot be appealed, the court has no way of enforcing its verdicts, and it remains to be seen whether Myanmar's rulers will adhere to the orders.

But the ruling will likely heap more international pressure on its leader Min Aung Hlaing.

He commanded the military during the Rohingya crackdown before ousting the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in a 2021 coup.

This year, he was installed as civilian president following deeply restricted elections and is waging a diplomatic campaign for legitimacy — which may be complicated by the ruling.

The diplomatic reverberations were immediate, with Britain saying it would expel Myanmar's defence attache in the wake of the verdict.

The watershed ICJ judgment was also being closely watched by legal experts for clues into how the court will rule in another high-profile case before it — whether Israel has committed genocide in Gaza.

The ruling provides "a significant precedent for victims of genocide, and other grave crimes, across the world in their own quest for justice," said Maria Elena Vignoli, senior international justice counsel at Human Rights Watch.

The case was brought by The Gambia under the 1948 UN Genocide Convention, which allows any state to bring a case against another it suspects of breaching the international agreement set up after World War II.

The African country's justice minister told reporters at the court the verdict was a victory for the Rohingya, who had suffered great hardships.

"They survived. They testified. And today, they will believe," said Dawda Jallow.

Myanmar had always denied genocide, arguing that its actions targeted a military uprising from insurgents after a series of attacks left a dozen security personnel dead.

"Myanmar was not obliged to remain idle and allow terrorists to have free rein," its representative Ko Ko Hlaing told judges during hearings on the case in January.

There was no immediate reaction from the Myanmar authorities.

A Rohingya activist in Yangon said they were "really satisfied" by the decision, but feared potential blowback against the community still in Myanmar.

"Many displaced Rohingya who left Rakhine because of fighting arrived in Yangon and other places in the country. We hope nothing serious happens," said the activist, who declined to be named for security reasons.

"Everyone wants to live peacefully. We want the world to prevent any genocide here," the activist added.

Korea's SC orders retrial for ex-PM over martial law attempt

Republic of Korea's Supreme Court yesterday overturned former prime minister Han Duck-soo's 15-year prison sentence for his role in the brief imposition of martial law two years ago, sending the case back to a lower court.
Former President Yoon Suk-yeol declared martial law in December 2024, saying it was needed to root out "anti-state forces" and overcome political deadlock.
Although it only lasted about six hours, the attempt sent shockwaves through a country long viewed as one of Asia's most resilient democracies.
In making their ruling, a majority of Supreme Court justices disagreed with the appellate court's finding that Han, 77, had arranged a cabinet meeting for Yoon, intending to give legitimacy to the declaration of martial law.
The Supreme Court, however, did agree with the appellate court's finding that after martial law was declared, Han showed intent to "subvert constitutional order", citing actions such as the seeking of cabinet members' signatures on related documents.
The special prosecution team for Han's case said in a statement that they respect the court's ruling.
Han has denied wrongdoing in relation to all charges except one for perjury. He said last year that while he regretted not being able to stop Yoon from declaring martial law, he "never agreed to it or tried to help."
Yoon, who has denied wrongdoing, saying he exercised his powers as president, was convicted of insurrection in February and sentenced to life in prison.
He has appealed and awaits that ruling, which is scheduled for January.
In a separate case on Thursday, the Supreme Court upheld a four-year jail term for Kim Keon Hee, Yoon's wife. She has been in prison since August 2025, convicted of stock trading manipulation and accepting bribes. (**Reuters**)

Indonesian daycare principal jailed for child abuse

An Indonesian court sentenced a daycare principal to five years' imprisonment yesterday for the physical abuse of toddlers at a facility in the city of Yogyakarta, a case that sparked nationwide outrage.
Anita Palupi Indahsari was arrested in April along with 11 daycare workers and the head of the foundation running the centre after CCTV footage circulating on social media showed toddlers lying on the floor wearing only nappies, their hands and feet bound with rags.
She was "legally and convincingly guilty" of child neglect, running an educational facility without a permit, and for "allowing violence against children to be carried out continuously", ruled Yogyakarta judge Sunaryanto, who like many Indonesians goes by one name.
Sunaryanto ordered Anita to pay 510mn rupiah ($27,935) in fines on top of her prison sentence.
The punishment was more lenient than the 10 years sought by prosecutors.
A parent at the court, Tri Susilawati, told reporters the sentence was not adequate for "what they have done to our children".
She said she hoped prosecutors would file an appeal.
The same court last month sentenced 11 daycare workers, all women, to up to three years in prison.
The footage of conditions at the facility became a public scandal, and the centre was closed soon afterwards. (**AFP**)



Daycare principal Anita Palupi Indahsari (right) is consoled by a relative after receiving her verdict in Yogyakarta, yesterday. (**AFP**)

Kim visits university as speculation mounts over Trump talks

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un visited a naval university and construction sites, state media reported yesterday, as speculation mounts over a possible summit with US President Donald Trump in China this week.

Kim's whereabouts have drawn scrutiny since Trump arrived in Shenzhen on Wednesday for the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) summit and high-stakes talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The report comes as Trump, who met Kim three times during his first term, raised the possibility of another bilateral with the North Korean leader as he flew to Asia this week for two sets of regional summits.

Beijing, Pyongyang's key ally, said on Tuesday it had "no information" on a possible meeting, but hours later in Manila, Tr ump said Kim "would like to" meet in China.



North Korean leader Kim Jong-un inspecting the construction site of the Ragwonpho greenhouse branch farm in Ragwon County, South Hamgyong Province, on Wednesday. (**AFP**)

Pyongyang has yet to respond to Trump's remarks, with state media instead showing Kim visiting a ski resort and sacred Mount Paektu earlier this week, followed by a visit to a naval university on Wednesday — where he stressed the importance of maritime defence.

During the visit to the university on the country's eastern coast, Kim said "sustained confrontation with the most wicked enemies urgently call for training more able naval combat system experts", Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said.

State media images showed Kim walking through the venue as students in military uniforms saluted him.

Korea's presidential official said on Wednesday that the future of the North Korea-US dialogue "remains an unknown territory, and nothing is yet certain".

"During the process of contact with China, we didn't hear anything in particular, and it seemed that China had a similar level of information and understanding as we did." (**AFP**)

WORLD

Modi calls on Indian firms to scale globally

Reuters
New Delhi

Indian industry cannot take its huge domestic market for granted, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told industry leaders yesterday, urging businesses to compete globally in an era when resources were being weaponised.

"Our domestic market should not be our comfort zone. We should gain confidence from it and compete internationally," Modi told a meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi.

Modi urged industry to keep national interests at the forefront before making long-term investment decisions, saying in an era of weaponisation of resources, it was everyone's responsibility to keep the country safe.

Indian industry would have to manufacture and produce according to global demands and set up reliable supply mechanisms, not just rely on 1.4bn people at home to meet its demands, the prime minister said.

"I have exempted income up to 12 lakhs ($13,000) (from tax), but have you increased salaries? Have you increased the number of employees?" Modi asked, telling industry leaders that their "hunger" for tax exemptions was such that it could never be fulfilled.

Modi also cited the spree of free-trade agreements that India has signed, including with the EU and the UK, and said industry should take advantage of the opportunities that they presented.

"Free trade agreements with big economies means that (there are) there are doors open for you all. Have you'll come up with a plan to take advantage of this or do I need to intervene there as well?" Modi said.

Strengthening India's domestic production has been a priority for Modi since he came to power in 2014, especially in sectors such as high-end semiconductors, defence, metals and the labour-intensive leather industry.

Harry says would rejoin military to fight Russia if needed

AFP
London

Britain's Prince Harry said he would "sign up again" to serve in the military and fight against Russia if needed, in an interview from Ukraine with *The Telegraph* aired yesterday.

"I think there's a lot that the whole world can learn from Ukraine," the prince said during an unannounced visit to the western city of Lviv over the weekend.

"If asked to sign up again, if the need is there, then I will 100% be there to serve my country alongside my fellow veterans and service personnel."

Harry, a former British army officer and the younger son of King Charles III, made his fourth visit to Ukraine since Russia's 2022 invasion to meet wounded veterans and medics.

The prince is also the founder of the Invictus Games for wounded veterans and met athletes hoping to represent Ukraine at next year's games in the British city of Birmingham.

"Just because there's not drones, bullets, and rockets flying at us, that doesn't mean that we're not at war," he told the British daily's "Ukraine: The Latest" podcast.


Britain's Prince Harry signs a board at the Superhumans Centre, a specialised medical, prosthetics, and rehabilitation facility in Lviv, Ukraine. (**Reuters**)

"I feel very confident that Europe has a united front, and it would be fantastic to have more American support for that as well," he added.

Earlier on his weekend visit to Lviv he told wounded veterans and medics specialising in war injuries: "You're going to win the war".

He repeated that sentiment on the podcast, insisting that "Ukraine are winning" and "there is no version where Russia is making any more advances".

The 42-year-old prince has previously spoken about being moved by witnessing death and life-changing injuries while on deployment in Afghanistan, and launched the Invictus Games in 2014 when he was still in the British army.

Harry, his wife Meghan and their two children moved back to the UK earlier this year from California amid an enduring rift with the royal family and his brother and heir-to-the-throne Prince William.

But the Sussex couple have launched themselves back into public life since their surprise return, carrying out engagements and visiting the EU parliament last week for an event about the dangers children face online.

Violence rises in Bangladesh as Hasina supporters escalate protests

Reuters
Dhaka

Fresh violence broke out in Bangladesh yesterday as former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's supporters tried to bring businesses and public transport to a halt, with mixed success, and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman blamed India for the unrest.

Unrelated protests by garment workers demanding higher wages also continued in some districts, with hundreds of workers blocking a highway into the capital Dhaka, forcing factories to close.

The rising unrest in the Muslim-majority nation of 175mn people — the world's second-biggest garment exporter after China — threatens the fragile stability established since elections this year brought Rahman, a political opponent of Hasina's outlawed Awami League, to power.

Tensions have risen since Hasina, who fled after a student uprising against her rule in August 2024 and lives in exile in India, said she planned to return in December.

The Awami League called yesterday's nationwide lockdown at the end of a week-long campaign of protests and rallies against the government's rejection of her request for a new passport that would allow her to return. The attempted shutdown was successful mostly in the southern districts where the League is strongest.


Supporters of former Bangladeshi prime minister Sheikh Hasina march during a nationwide shutdown called by her supporters in Gopalganj, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

Rahman's government has accused Awami League leaders outside Bangladesh of fanning the violence and vowed action. Awami League leaders, most of them in hiding, could not be reached for comment.

At a public event in the northern district of Lalmonirhat, Rahman said Awami League leaders "have not looked at the interests of Bangladesh and its people".

"At the same time, the country across the border, where they have fled to, is their master ... To satisfy those masters, they have again started conspiring against Bangladesh, and its people," he said, without naming India.

The Indian foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

After Hasina was ousted, relations with India deteriorated sharply under the interim government of Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus in Dhaka.

Ties have improved slightly since Rahman took office in February, although tensions over Hasina's continued presence in India remain a major irritant.

Police said two members of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party had been killed on Wednesday night, while the houses of two BNP lawmakers in Hasina's home district of Gopalganj were vandalised and set alight.

Awami League supporters also attacked some markets and vandalised some shops in Gopalganj town, they said.

At least six buses and pickup vans were set on fire along with a section of railway line, and crude bomb blasts were reported across six districts overnight. A bus and a truck were set on fire yesterday on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway, police said, adding that the bus passengers had escaped unharmed.

To deter violence, 97 platoons of the paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh have fanned out across seven districts, including Gopalganj and Faridpur, considered to have many Hasina supporters, a Guard spokesperson said.

In Dhaka, police arrested 107 people suspected of links to the Awami League and its affiliated organisations in the space of 24 hours, including former education minister Nurul Islam Nahid, police said.

Yunus' ancestral home in the port city of Chattogram, about 300km (185 miles) southeast of Dhaka, was set on fire late on Wednesday.

It was likely that flammable substances had been thrown into an unused ground-floor room, police officer Mozammel Haque said. He said Yunus' paternal family members, who live on the upper floors, were safe.

Reuters could not immediately reach the Yunus Centre think tank, which speaks on his behalf.

UK tribunal confirms govt order demanding access to Apple data

Reuters
London

The British government has issued an order to bypass encryption to access customer data held by Apple, a London tribunal confirmed yesterday, rejecting an argument that revealing its existence could damage national security.

The government had said that it could not comment on the existence of the order, known as a technical capability notice, because it operated a policy of "neither confirm nor deny" on security matters.

However, the Investigatory Powers Tribunal said the amount of information already in the public domain meant that confirming it would do little, if any, damage.

There was no immediate comment from the British government or Apple. Campaign group Liberty, which challenged the government alongside Privacy International, called the ruling "a victory for transparency".

In January last year, Britain issued an initial notice for what is known as a back door to allow it access to encrypted cloud backups of data of US and British citizens.

That demand was dropped following months of negotiations with US President Donald Trump's administration, but in July Britain issued a second notice that applied just to Apple's UK customers.

Apple launched a renewed challenge against the government at the tribunal, a specialist court, but had been unable to give public details on why because of legal restrictions.

Civil rights groups and Apple had told the tribunal at a hearing in September the British government's "neither confirm nor deny" policy was an affront to open justice and prevented meaningful public discussion.

The Investigatory Powers Tribunal said in its ruling that the government "has not established that it would be damaging to national security to reveal in these proceedings, as is the case, that (Britain's interior ministry) has given Apple a technical capability notice."

Yesterday's ruling was merely to consider whether the notice could be publicly acknowledged and a trial to decide the substance of the case is not expected until next year.

The tribunal said it had also handed down private judgments which could not be disclosed without "damaging the public interest".

The British government's lawyer had argued abandoning the "neither confirm nor deny" stance posed a national security risk and would "provide material assistance to hostile actors."

However, lawyers for Privacy International and Liberty said the refusal to confirm the order's existence had become "farcical" after US politicians and officials publicly referred to the original order and unnamed UK government sources confirmed it.

The tribunal agreed, citing media reports in the *Times* and the *Financial Times* newspapers which it said appeared to have come from "private media briefings provided by government officials".

Akiko Hart, director of Liberty, said in a statement: "The public deserve to know when the government's actions undermine their privacy and safety, and we welcome the tribunal's decision, which will shine more light on these secretive powers."

India begins evacuations ahead of third cyclone within a month

India's eastern state of Odisha evacuated more than 47,000 people by yesterday, before the region's third severe cyclonic storm in less than a month is set to hit land.

Cyclone Akvan is likely to cross the coastal states of Odisha and southern neighbouring Andhra Pradesh by noon today, weather officials said, with heavy rain expected yesterday. Odisha evacuated more than 47,000 people, the office of its chief minister said. Authorities also ordered the closure of all schools and kindergarten centres in some districts.

"No evacuations in Andhra Pradesh yet," state disaster management official Prakhar Jain told Reuters. "The storm has reduced in intensity" Andhra Pradesh evacuated thousands of coastal dwellers this month ahead of severe cyclonic storm Murasu, while Cyclone Arnab, in late October, killed at least six.

"The pattern (of three cyclones within a month) in 2026 is mostly similar to that of 1987," top government weather expert Mrutyunjay Mohapatra told Reuters. After the 1987 monsoon, three cyclonic storms struck in the Bay of Bengal in quick succession. (**Reuters**)

Pacific islands declare El Nino crisis

Fiji and Tonga have declared that severe droughts fuelled by the El Nino weather phenomenon are reaching crisis levels in the South Pacific.

Drought in the region is strongly linked to the El Nino pattern, which dries up the rains that typically keep tropical islands lush and green.

El Nino warms surface temperatures in parts of the Pacific Ocean, bringing worldwide changes in wind, heat and rain.

The current El Nino is expected to become one of the most powerful on record, experts have warned.

The Fiji government said "the ongoing El Nino drought has reached crisis thresholds", forcing the declaration of a nationwide disaster.

"Families across Fiji are concerned about the availability of water and the impacts of prolonged dry conditions on their daily lives," Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka said on Wednesday.

"Farmers are worried about their crops and livestock. These concerns are real." (**AFP**)

Schools in UK, Nigeria win global prizes

Reuters
London

Schools in Britain, Nigeria, Brazil, Pakistan and Republic of Korea were named winners of the World's Best School Prizes yesterday for work including supporting student well-being, helping under-served communities and co-ordinating support for children with complex learning needs.

The winners are invited to January's World Schools Summit in London to present their approaches to policymakers and education figures, organiser T4 Education, a global network for educators, said.

The annual prize comes weeks after high school pupils in France blockaded schools demanding renovation of their buildings, more teachers and university reforms — a movement that broadened into protests over the cost of living, drawing in trade unionists and activists and at times turning violent.

Swiss Cottage School, Development and Research Centre, a London state primary and secondary special school, won the Community Collaboration prize for bringing together different services to support pupils with complex learning needs, many from lower-income backgrounds. The school links education, community participation, therapy, healthcare and employability support, connecting classroom learning to the wider world.


Pupils are photographed at G-School in Seoul, Korea. (**Reuters**)

Slum2School Green Academy in Epe, Nigeria, won the Environmental Action prize. The charity-run kindergarten and primary school, which serves about 250 children from river communities, was recognised for its environmentally designed buildings and a model combining practical, project- and play-based learning.

Public primary school Escola Municipal GET IV Centenario won the Overcoming Adversity prize for its hands-on learning model focused on creativity, emotional development and student leadership, serving 261 students. Based in Rio de Janeiro's Complexo da Maré favela community, the school was closed for 37 days in 2024 because of local violence. .

The Supporting Healthy Lives award went to TNS Beaconhouse, an independent school in Lahore with more than 1,100 students across kindergarten, primary and secondary levels, for its approach to supporting neurodivergent learners.

Independent secondary school G-School in Seoul won the Innovation prize. Each of its nearly 70 students takes on a long-term social problem-solving project; one team persuaded 27 local businesses to install wheelchair ramps to improve accessibility.

Red crabs begin annual march to sea on Christmas Island

More than 100mn red crabs on Australia's Christmas Island have begun their annual migration from the forest to the sea, conservationists said this week.

The yearly march of the crabs on the remote territory in the Indian Ocean comes when the rainy season hits and the crustaceans move to the sea to breed.

The timing of their epic migration through forests, across roads and over bridges is tied to lunar cycles — the crabs hope to spawn "before dawn on a receding high tide during the moon's last quarter", Parks Australia said.

It requires months of preparation by conservationists on the island, which lies 350 kilometres (217 miles) south of Indonesia and more than a thousand kilometres from the Australian mainland.

"People travel from around the world to witness this incredible wildlife spectacle on Christmas Island," Parks Australia's Christmas Island National Park Manager Chris Chartres said. "Ongoing conservation efforts have been crucial to the species' recovery, particularly work to control yellow crazy ants, one of the biggest threats to red crabs."

Those ants — called "crazy" for their frenetic behaviour when disturbed — had displaced an estimated tens of millions of the crabs by occupying their burrows.

But efforts to control them have seen the crab population rebound from around 50mn to the current levels, conservationists said.

"That's a great sign the population is thriving," Chartres said.

"Red crabs are the island's keystone species."

"They play a critical role in maintaining the health of the forest, so when the crabs are doing well, the whole ecosystem benefits." (**AFP**)


Thousands of red crabs heading towards the sea during their annual migration on Australia's Christmas Island, yesterday. (**AFP**)

The right to life in Islam

Allah Almighty honoured man and created him with His own Hand and blew into him from His Spirit. Then, He made His angels prostrate to him and subjected to him all that is in the heavens and the earth – all from Him. Moreover, He made him a successor on earth and bestowed talents and blessings upon him so that he can dominate the earth. He preferred him over all beasts and animals. Man cannot fulfil his goals unless he takes his rights in full. At the forefront of these rights, which are guaranteed by Islam, is the right to life – an inviolable right.

Allah, the Exalted, says (what means): {And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden [to be killed] except by [legal] right.} [Qur'an 6:151]. The right that permits the taking of souls was explained by the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), when he reportedly said: "It is not permissible to spill the blood of a Muslim except in three cases: the married person who commits adultery, a life for a life, and the one who forsakes his religion and separates from the group." [Muslim]

Out of its great concern for the protection of life, Islam threatens those who deem it permissible to kill with the severest punishment. In the Qur'an, Allah Almighty says (what means): {But whoever kills a believer intentionally – his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and Allah has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a great punishment.} [Qur'an 4:93]

Moreover, it is clearly indicated in authentic hadiths that killing a believer is one of the gravest sins. In a hadith via Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib, may Allah be pleased with him, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "If this world were to be destroyed, that would be less significant before Allah than the unlawful killing of a believer." [Ibn Majah] In another hadith on the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "If the inhabitants of the heavens and the inhabitants of the earth all took part in shedding the blood of a believer, then Allah would cast them (all) in the Fire." [At-Tirmithi] Also, Ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "He who helps in (the spilling of) the blood of a Muslim, even with half a word, it will be written between his eyes on the Day of Judgment 'Desperate of the mercy of Allah'." [Al-Bayhaqi]

The Noble Qur'an prohibits us from killing our children out of fear of poverty and starvation. A Qur'anic verse reads (what means): {And do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Indeed, their killing is ever a great sin.} [Qur'an 17:31]

In another verse that speaks about a common practice among the Arabs during the pre-Islamic era of ignorance, Allah, The Exalted, says (what means): {And when the girl [who was] buried alive is asked for what sin she was killed.} [Qur'an 81:8-9] This equally applies to the non-Muslims who live under the rule of a Muslim nation and enter into an agreement of protection with the Muslim ruler – be they Jews or Christians.

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "Whoever killed a mu'ahid (a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims) shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise, even though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years." [Al-Bukhari] Moreover, Allah, the Exalted, says (what means): {So if they remove themselves from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not made for you a cause [for fighting] against them.} [Qur'an 4:90]

This also applies to the one who commits suicide. Allah Almighty warns us against this, saying (what means): {And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful.} [Qur'an 4:29] Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "He who commits suicide by throttling shall keep on throttling himself in the Hellfire, and he who commits suicide by stabbing himself shall keep on stabbing himself in Hellfire." [Al-Bukhari]

Hence, Allah Almighty legislated retribution and the killing of the intentional killer as a revenge from him and purification for society. Allah Almighty says (what means): {And there is for you in legal retribution [saving of] life, O you [people] of understanding, that you may become righteous.} [Qur'an 2:179] Even in manslaughter, Allah, the Exalted, does not exempt the killer from liability. Rather, He made it obligatory upon him to set a slave free and give ransom. If he cannot free a slave, he is required to fast for two consecutive months. Ransom for manslaughter is ordained by Islam so that people do not take life lightly and to inspire respect for the human soul.

Undoubtedly, the first thing about which the servants will render account on the Day of Judgment is murder. The erudite Andalusian scholar Ibn Hazm, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "I do not know of any sin, after polytheism, greater than killing a believer without right or abandoning prayer." The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, is reported to have said: "Every sin may be forgiven by Allah except a man who dies as a disbeliever or a man who kills his (Muslim) brother." [An-Nasa'i] In another hadith, he, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "A servant continues to guard his faith (and thus hopes for the mercy of Allah) so long as he does not shed blood unjustly." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

This is Islam. It came to preserve the human soul and the blood of Muslims, lest people may take Muslim blood lightly.

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



The prohibition of usurpation

According to the faqihs, usurpation refers to usurping other's possessions by force without having the right to take them.

Usurpation is prohibited according to juristic consensus, for Allah, The Exalted, Says (what means): {And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly...} [Qur'an 2:188]

Usurpation is considered one of the grievous ways of eating up money unjustly, for the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), said: "Verily, your blood, property and honour are sacred to one another (as Muslims)." (Muslim)

He, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, also said: "The property of a Muslim is not lawful (to be taken) except by his consent." (Abu Ya' la in his Musnad')

The usurped wealth could be real estate or a movable property; the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "If anyone extorts a span of land unjustly, his neck will be encircled with it down seven earths (on the Day of Resurrection)." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

A usurper has to repent to Allah, The Almighty and Ever-Majestic, and return whatever he has extorted to its rightful owners, asking them for forgiveness. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "Whoever wrongs anyone in a matter that concerns his honour or any other matter should ask his forgiveness as soon as possible, before a time comes when there is neither dinar nor dirham (i.e. before the Day of Resurrection when wealth cannot compensate for one's wrongdoing); if the usurper has good deeds, they will be taken from him according to his usurpation, and if he has no good deeds, the sins of the oppressed person will be loaded on him." (Al-Bukhari)

If the usurped property is available, he should return it in the same condition he has taken it, but if it is damaged, he should return its equivalent.

Imam al-Muwaffaq said: "Scholars unanimously agree that it is obligatory to return the usurped property if it is still in the same condition and unchanged." (Al-Mughni and Ash-Sharh AI-Kabir)

Furthermore, the usurper has to pay back the usurped property along with the profit he has made through it, be it connected with the property or separated. This is because the profit is the outcome of what has been taken unjustly, so it belongs to its rightful owner just like the original usurped property.

If the usurper has built on the usurped land or has planted vegetation therein, he has to remove the building or the crop in the case the rightful owner demands so. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "The unjust root (planted in someone's land without his permission) has no right." [At-Tirmithi and other compilers of Hadith; At-Tirmithi regarded it as a hasan (good) Hadith]

If so doing will negatively affect the land, the usurper has to compensate for the damage. He has also to remove the remains of the crop or the structure so that he may deliver the land in good condition to its rightful owner.

The usurper has also to pay a compensation for using the land from the date of its usurpation until its delivery, as he has unrightfully prevented its owner from using it during that period. Moreover, if the usurper withholds the usurped property until its value and price are reduced, he has to pay it back according to its original price according to the sound opinion in this regard.

On the other hand, if the usurped object is mixed with something else that can be distinguished from it - like wheat and barley — the usurper has to separate what he has usurped and return it. If he has mixed it with something that cannot be distinguished, such as mixing wheat with wheat, he has to pay back the usurped object in measure or weight. Yet, if he has mixed the usurped object with something of inferior or superior quality, or with something different but indistinguishable, the mixture is to be sold and each one of them is to be given his share of the price. In this case, if the value of usurped property is less in the mixture than its value when unmixed, the usurper has to compensate the owner for the decrease in its price.

Among the juristic opinions in this connection is that whoever takes the usurped property from the usurper is financially liable for it in case it is damaged in his possession.

There are ten examples of people who may take a usurped property from the usurper:

1. One who may buy the usurped object from the usurper or the like.
2. One who may rent the usurped object from the usurper.
3. One who may be granted the usurped object by the usurper gratis.
4. One who may take possession of the usurped object on behalf of the usurper such as a trustee or a deputy.
5. One who may borrow the usurped object from the usurper.
6. One who may usurp the usurped object from the first usurper.
7. One who may have the usurped object at his disposal, such as a speculator on behalf of the usurper.
8. One who may marry an appropriated bondmaid from her usurper.
9. One whom the usurper may grant, not sell him, the usurped object as a compensation for something.
10. One who may damage the usurped object while having it on behalf of the usurper.

In all these cases, if the second party is aware that the object is originally usurped, he becomes financially liable for it for obtaining something without the permission of its rightful owner. However, if he is unaware of that, the original usurper shoulders the liability.

If the usurped property is something that is usually rented, the usurper is to pay compensation estimated according to the period of his possession of the usurped property. This is because utilities represent assets, so they have to be paid for just like real estate.

All the dealings of a usurper on the usurped object are invalid, as they are carried out without the permission of the rightful owner.

If the usurper does not know the owner of the usurped object and thus is unable to return it to him, he should deliver it to the ruler (or the one in authority) to put it in its right place or give it in charity on behalf of its owner. In so doing, the real owner of the usurped object will get the reward of charity, and the usurper becomes free from the guilt.

The usurpation of a property is not limited to taking it by force; it rather includes seizing it through unjust disputes and false oaths. Allah, The Exalted, Says (what means): {And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful].} [Qur'an 2:188]

Allah Almighty also Says (what means): {Indeed, those who exchange the covenant of Allah and their [own] oaths for a small price will have no share in the Hereafter, and Allah will not speak to them or look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them; and they will have a painful punishment?} [Qur'an 3:77]

In fact, the Divine command is so strong and binding, and the punishment of violating it is so severe.

Moreover, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "If anyone extorts a span of land unjustly, his neck will be encircled with it down seven earths (on the Day of Resurrection)." (Abu Daawood, At-Tirmithi, Al-Bukhari)

He, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, also said: "If I gave some one's right to another (mistakenly because of the latter's tricky presentation of the case), he (the latter) should never take it, for I would be really giving him a piece of fire." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

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'Whoever relieves a believer of some worldly distress...'

It was narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), said: "Whoever relieves a believer of some worldly distress, Allah will relieve him of some of the distress of the Day of Resurrection. Whoever alleviates the hardship of an insolvent debtor (i.e. grants him respite or writes off his debt), Allah will alleviate his hardship in the worldly life and the Hereafter. Whoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in the worldly life and the Hereafter. Allah continues to help a slave so long as he is helping his fellow brother. Whoever treads a path in quest of knowledge, Allah will direct him to a path leading him easily to Paradise. Whenever a group of people assemble in a House of Allah (mosque) to recite and study the Qur'an, tranquillity will descend upon them, mercy will engulf them, the angels will surround them, and Allah will make mention of them to those (the angels) in His proximity. He who lags behind in good doing (i.e. hindered because of his evil deeds), his noble lineage will be of no avail to him (on the Day of Judgment)." [Muslim]

Islam fosters noble morals, encourages them, holds them in a refined status, and designates great and abundant rewards for adhering to them, as underlined in this Hadith cited in Saheeh Muslim.

In the beginning of his directive, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, urged us to relieve the distress of the believers. There is no doubt that this is a great good deed in the sight of Allah, The Exalted, and is highly appreciated by people. Life is full of hardships and difficulties, and we are destined to face sundry suffering and sorrows in it. Distress may overwhelm a believer so much that his heart and mind would be clouded with confusion and remain unable to find a way out!

At such harsh times, how great it is for a Muslim to hasten to assist his fellow Muslim brother, extend a helping hand to him, and strive to relieve or mitigate his distress. This gracious expression of sympathy has a deep impact on the heart of the distressed person, and therefore it is appropriate that its reward should be that Allah, The Exalted, would relieve the doer of a graver and harsher distress (on the Day of Judgment); which is the distress of standing before Him for reckoning and being held accountable for one's deeds, and receiving the due punishment. How great and generous this reward is!

Among the noble morals is forgiving the debts of insolvent debtors. Islam urges creditors to give respite to insolvent debtors in straitened circumstances until their situation improves. Allah, The Exalted, Says (what means): {And if someone is in hardship, then [let there be] postponement until [a time of] ease.} [Qur'an 2:280] What is even more rewardable is for a creditor to give up some of his rights and forgive part of the debt he is owed. This is evidenced by what was narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "A man used to give loans to the people, and he would say to his servant: 'If the debtor is in hardship, relieve him of the debt so that perhaps Allah may relieve us (i.e. forgive us).' So when he met Allah (i.e., when he died), Allah relieved him (i.e. forgave him)." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

The Hadith then urges concealing the faults of the Muslims and refraining from finding fault in them and pursuing their mistakes and lapses. This is another example of the refined morals with which our glorious Shari'ah is adorned. Verily, the infallible person is the one whom Allah grants infallibility. No matter how pious and righteous a Muslim may be, he is still liable to error. He might commit a sin; however, he dislikes his neglect in fulfilling the rights of Allah and hates that people be aware of his error and negligence. So if a Muslim sees or learns of his fellow Muslim's faults, he should conceal them rather than expose them, without neglecting the duty of offering him sincere advice and reminding him of Allah.

The virtue of such concealing of faults was reported in the Sunnah. It was narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbaas, may Allah be pleased with them, that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "Whoever conceals the fault of his Muslim brother, Allah will conceal his fault on the Day of Judgment." [Ibn Maajah] Meanwhile, pursuing people's faults is repulsive to the sound human nature as well as forbidden by the Shari'ah. Stern warnings against it were reported in the Shari'ah texts. It was narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with them, that the Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, once ascended the pulpit and called out with a raised voice: "O you who accepted Islam with his tongue while faith has not reached his heart! Do not harm Muslims, nor disgrace them, nor spy on them to expose their secrets. For indeed whoever pursues his Muslim brother's faults, Allah will pursue his faults and expose him, even if he were in the depths of his house." [At-Tirmithi]

Given the high position and refined status of knowledge in Islam, the Hadith emphasised its virtue and significance. It is the path that leads a person to Paradise. Those who devote themselves to knowledge are the guiding beacons that illuminate the way before the Muslim nation and the heirs of the Prophets and Messengers of Allah. Therefore, Allah, The Exalted, honors them with this refined status and high position. It was narrated on the authority of Abu Ad-Dardaa', may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "The angels lower their wings in approval of the seeker of knowledge, and everyone in the heavens and on earth seeks forgiveness for the scholar, even the fish in the sea. The superiority of a scholar over a worshipper is like the superiority of the moon over all other heavenly bodies." [Ahmad] They are the people of Thikr (remembrance of Allah) and piety; how vast the gap between a knowledgeable and an ignorant person is!

The best field of knowledge to which a Muslim should devote his time is learning the Qur'an and promoting its sciences, as stated in the authentic Hadith that reads: "The best amongst you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it." This superiority is derived from the relatedness of such knowledge to the Speech of Allah, The Exalted; the distinction of a given field of knowledge is commensurate to the distinction of its subject matter.

Now contemplate the rewards that Allah, The Exalted, promised those who assemble in a mosque, reciting the Qur'an and pondering over its meanings. He promised them four things: tranquillity will descend upon them, the divine mercy will engulf them, the noble angels will surround them, and the fourth and greatest reward of all is that Allah will make mention of them to those (the angels) in His proximity and praise them before His angels. If this was the only reward received for reciting Thikr, it would indeed be enough!

However, such great rewards are only earned through diligence and striving, and they have nothing to do with a person's (social) status and prestige. None should be tempted by his noble descent and status because the sole criterion of superiority between people in the sight of Allah is righteous deeds. There is no consideration for a person's social status or prestige if he neglects performing good deeds , and this is why Allah, The Exalted, Says (what means): {So when the Horn is blown, no relationship will there be among them that Day, nor will they ask about one another.} [Qur'an 23:101] Even the Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, did not avail his uncle Abu Taalib anything before Allah! He, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, underlined this meaning in his comprehensive statement: "He who lags behind in good doing (i.e. hindered because of his evil deeds), his noble lineage will be of no avail to him (on the Day of Judgment)."

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OPINION

Russian military aircraft deployment sends potent message to Asia

In staging its most significant deployment of military aircraft across East Asia in possibly more than a decade this week, Russia displayed its enduring reach and likely sending a potent message in the week of US-China-Russia meeting. Two Tu-95 strategic bombers, known to Nato as "Bears", flanked by two long-range tankers, remained on the tarmac of Danang airport on Wednesday, after Russian military aircraft alarmed the air forces of both Taiwan and Japan on Tuesday as they flew south from Russia's Far East.

The flights took place just ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's arrival in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen for the Apec Summit and just as leaders, including US President Donald Trump, gathered in Manila for an Asean meeting. "The deployment was clearly intended to remind regional states that, despite ongoing war in Ukraine, Moscow can still project power into Southeast Asia," said Ian Storey, a security scholar at Singapore's ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

The last known deployment of Russian strategic airpower to Vietnam was in 2014, Storey said, when Hanoi offered Russian warships and aircraft preferential access to Moscow's Cold War-era base at Cam Ranh Bay and the airfield at Danang -- both sites developed by US forces at the height of the Vietnam War. Back then, Russia deployed tanker aircraft to Danang to support Tu-95 flights near the major US air and naval bases on the Pacific island of Guam, Storey said. He added he was not aware of later instances and that deployments may have been suspended after the then-administration of US President Barack Obama complained to Hanoi.

The Tu-95s, some of which are nuclear capable, are sometimes deployed for intelligence gathering and surveillance, military attaches say. Last year, Moscow asked to revive the arrangement, but Hanoi was initially hesitant, said Nguyen The Phuong, an expert on Vietnam security at Australia's University of New South Wales. Phuong said this week's deployment was ostensibly for refuelling and signalled a change in approach that could herald further deployments.

Vietnam's foreign ministry, Russia's defence ministry and its embassy in Hanoi did not respond to requests for comment. The US State Department also did not respond to a request for comment on the flight of the aircraft near Japan and Taiwan. Chieh Chung, a researcher from Taiwan's defence ministry think-tank, the Institute for National Defense and Security Research, said this was not the first time Russian military aircraft had been spotted near Taiwan, pointing to previous incidents in 1986 and 2010, both involving Tu-95s.

"Russia chose to make this politically charged flight before US-China-Russia leaders summit," he said. Chieh added he could not rule out that the aim was to project an image of tight China-Russia co-operation ahead of that summit. China and Russia have close political and military ties and Moscow has repeatedly backed Beijing's territorial claims over Taiwan. China's air force and navy already operate around Taiwan daily.

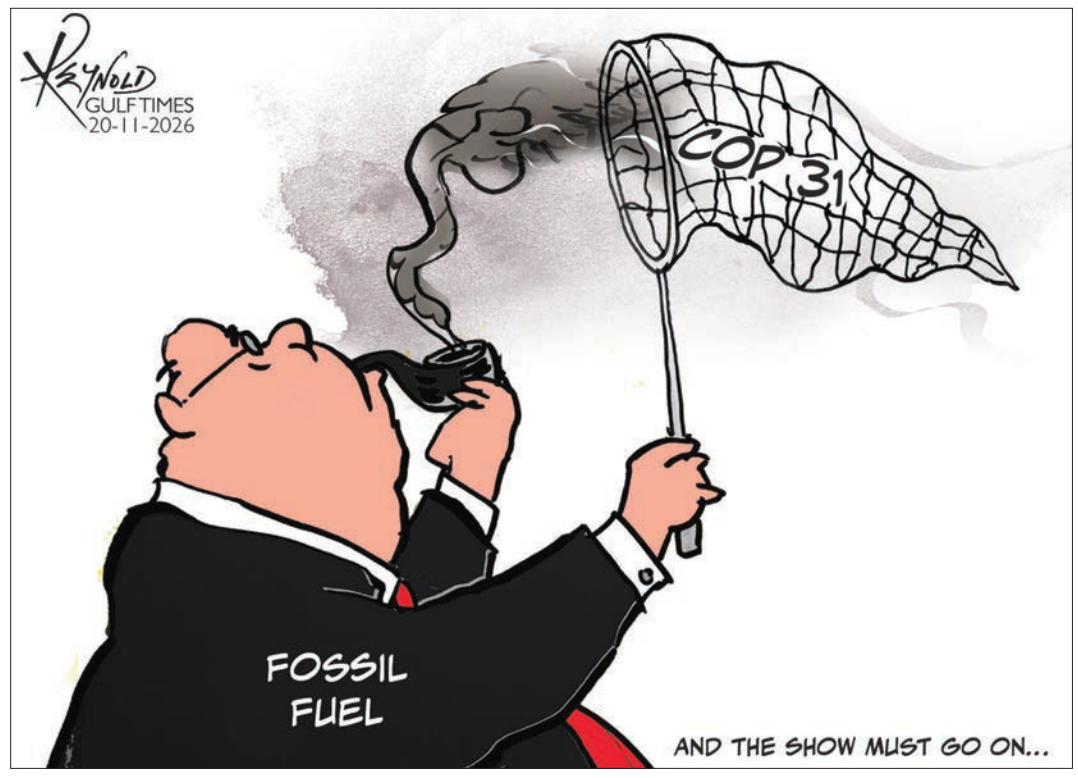
Huang Chih-wei, vice chief of Taiwan's General Staff, told reporters in Taipei on Wednesday that the Russian flights "posed a threat to the peaceful and stable status quo in the Asia-Pacific region."

Phuong said Hanoi could also have been motivated by the prospect of military procurement benefits. Russia is by far Vietnam's main arms supplier. Hanoi has publicly sought to diversify its suppliers since 2022, when Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. But Vietnam remains dependent on Russian parts and technical support, while talks on additional supplies have continued. —Reuters

One for the family



German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, French President Emmanuel Macron, US President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and others stand for a family photo at the summit of the so-called 'Coalition of the Willing' group of pro-Ukrainian countries at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany, yesterday. (**Reuters**)



Oman marks National Day amid ongoing journey of achievements

QNA
Doha

The Sultanate of Oman celebrates its National Day today -- an occasion marked annually on November 20th. It is a time to reflect upon a journey of construction, development, and modernization. Under the leadership of Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, the Sultanate continues to consolidate the achievements of its renewed renaissance, while strengthening its economic, political, and diplomatic standing. This progress is guided by the "Oman 2040" vision, which aims to enhance the competitiveness of the national economy, diversify income sources, empower the youth, improve the quality of life, and foster the foundations for prosperity and well-being.

The celebration of the Sultanate's National Day serves as a profound expression of national belonging and pride, reflecting the sophisticated character of Omani society. Through successive generations, these values of patriotism and pride have been upheld as a cultural ethos-one that preserves the authenticity of Omani society and safeguards its achievements.

The National Day stands as a beacon, illuminating the continuous, dedicated efforts toward realizing the goals set forth in the "Oman 2040" vision. Indeed, several key indicators have already surpassed the targets established for the initial phase of the vision-a success that serves as an impetus for other sectors to reach their own respective objectives.



The port district of Muttrah, with its corniche and harbour, are at the north-eastern edge of Omani capital Muscat. **PICTURE:** Ondrej Zvacek/Wikipedia

Inherent potential

The Sultanate of Oman is actively pursuing the goals of this vision through a series of national programs and projects across various sectors. These initiatives focus on leveraging the nation's inherent potential and resources, developing productive and service-oriented sectors, and building a diversified economy capable of adapting to regional and international changes.

The first-quarter report on the 'Oman Vision 2040' highlights five years of transformation and progress in the nation's development journey (2020-2025), spanning economic, financial, social, and environmental spheres. During the 2021-2025 period, the average annual economic growth rose to approximately 3.2%, with increased contributions from private and foreign direct investment. Meanwhile, public debt declined from 65.9% to 34.6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and the Sultanate of Oman regained its investment-grade credit rating.

Furthermore, the share of renewable energy in total energy consumption reached 9%, and the social protection framework expanded to cover more than 1.5mn beneficiaries by the end of 2025. Significant strides were also made in innovation, human development, and the modernization of the legislative and regulatory systems.

The report underscores the progress achieved by the Sultanate of Oman across several global competitiveness indicators. Notably, the country advanced from 76th place in 2020 to 39th in 2026 on the Index of Economic Freedom, and climbed 61 places on the Environmental Performance Index to reach 49th globally. Additionally, improvements were recorded in indicators related to governance, government efficiency, regulatory quality, and youth development.

Efforts continue under the Eleventh Five-Year Development Plan (2026-2030), which focuses on achieving economic and social development priorities, expanding the role of the private sector, enhancing the efficiency of spending and investment, and creating job opportunities for national talent.

On the economic and financial front, the Sultanate of Oman achieved indicators in 2026 that reflect its ongoing commitment to consolidating fiscal sustainability and strengthening confidence in the national economy. In September, S&P Global Ratings affirmed the Sultanate of Oman's credit rating at an investment-grade level (BBB-) with a stable outlook, while raising its forecast for real GDP growth to approximately 3.5% for the current year. The agency projected a fiscal surplus equivalent to 4.8% of GDP, and foreign exchange reserves reached approximately $19.5bn by the end of June 2026-a testament to the national economy's resilience in the face of external fluctuations.

Regarding public finance, the state's total revenue rose by 16% by the end of the third quarter of the current year, reaching approximately 9.828 bn Omani Rials, compared to 8.481bn Omani Rials during the same period in 2025. Meanwhile, public expenditure stood at approximately 9.738bn Omani Rials, leading to a reduction in the fiscal deficit and resulting in a budget surplus of approximately 90mn Omani Rials.

As part of efforts toward economic diversification, the Sultanate of Oman's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)-at constant prices-recorded a growth of 5.1% during the second quarter of 2026, reaching approximately 9.9bn Omani Rials. This growth was driven by a 14.7% increase in oil-related activities and a 0.7% rise in non-oil activities.

Regarding the economic sector, the GDP contribution of the wholesale and retail trade sector-at current prices-grew by 5% during the first half of the current year, reaching approximately 1.735bn Omani Rials. Meanwhile, foreign investment in this sector rose by 9.7%, totaling approximately 305.3mn Omani Rials. According to data from S&P Global Ratings, non-oil economic activity grew by approximately 1.3% year-on-year during the same period.

In line with efforts to strengthen the Sultanate of Oman's position on the global business and financial map, 2026 saw significant progress with the establishment of the Oman Global Financial Centre. This initiative aligns with the Sultanate's strategic objectives to diversify the national economy, bolster its status as a global hub for financial services, attract capital, and foster innovation.

In the trade and logistics sector, cargo volumes at the Port of Salalah increased by 15%, and at the Port of Sohar by 52%, during the first half of 2026. This reflects growing logistics activity and underscores the importance of Omani ports in supporting regional and international trade, as well as in diversifying sources of national income.

Industrial sector

In the industrial sector, efforts continued toward localising industries and increasing the value-added to local resources through projects located in industrial cities, economic zones, and free zones. These initiatives encompass chemical, food, and manufacturing industries. Notably, the first phase of a wind turbine manufacturing project was launched in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, with an investment exceeding 70mn Omani Rials and an annual production capacity of up to 1,000 megawatts.

Furthermore, the Special Economic Zone at Duqm saw the implementation of infrastructure development projects, including the opening of a 51-km dual-carriageway connecting Duqm Airport to the crude oil storage tanks at Ras Markaz.

Empowering the national workforce and creating job opportunities serve as key pillars of development and a central focus in building a sustainable economy centered on the Omani people.

By the end of September 2026, the Ministry of Labour had secured 53,525 opportunities-encompassing direct employment, job replacement, and training linked to employment-achieving 89% of its annual target. This figure reflects the significant efforts dedicated to expanding horizons for national talent and equipping them to contribute across various economic sectors.

In the realm of innovation and competitiveness, the Sultanate of Oman has made progress in the innovation inputs pillar of the 2026 Global Innovation Index (GII). Oman climbed eight places to reach 47th globally, up from 55th the previous year. In the overall GII ranking-published annually by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and covering 139 economies worldwide-Oman maintained its position at 69th globally.

The report's findings indicate that, within the overall index, 15 of Oman's sub-indicators rank among the top 40 globally. Specifically, the Sultanate secured 9th place worldwide for net foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows as a percentage of GDP, 14th place for the development of specialized clusters, and 16th place for electricity production per million inhabitants. These results underscore the Sultanate's inherent strengths, policies, and programs that foster and support innovation.

In the realm of foreign policy and international relations, 2026 witnessed notable diplomatic activity through the overseas visits of Sultan Haitham bin Tariq to several countries across Europe, Asia, and Africa. These visits reflected the Sultanate's commitment to strengthening its international relations, expanding co-operation in the political, economic, investment, and cultural spheres, forging new partnerships with friendly nations, and enhancing its presence and role within both its regional and international environment.

Furthermore, in reaffirming the core tenets of its foreign policy, the Sultanate of Oman -- in its address to the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York -- emphasized an approach rooted in the principles of good neighbourliness, respect for the sovereignty and independence of states, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, and adherence to international law and the UN Charter. This underscores the Sultanate's dedication to fostering relations based on mutual respect and constructive co-operation, as well as its commitment to contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Amidst regional and international developments, the Sultanate of Oman continues to fulfill its diplomatic role by advocating for dialogue, mutual understanding, restraint, de-escalation, and the containment of crises through political solutions-all with the aim of preserving the region's security and stability, and sparing its peoples the repercussions of conflict.

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Qatar-Germany cultural ties drive human diplomacy: QM chief

QNA
Doha

Amid growing diplomatic and cultural engagement between the State of Qatar and the Federal Republic of Germany, and in concurrence with the official visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Berlin, HE the Chairperson of Qatar Museums' (QM) Board of Trustees Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani outlined in an exclusive interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA) her strategic vision for the future of museum and knowledge partnerships between the two countries, and how cultural exchange and modern technologies can build bridges of human connection and preserve shared heritage for future generations.

Against the backdrop of growing cultural relations between the State of Qatar and Germany, and given Germany's long-established museum institutions and extensive expertise in preserving collections and human heritage, and regarding how Her Excellency views the prospects for developing strategic partnerships between Qatar Museums and German museum institutions that would extend beyond organising joint exhibitions to exchanging expertise and producing knowledge, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani said that the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Germany embodied the essence of diplomacy, which was rooted in human connection, adding that such encounters fostered mutual understanding, built trust and broadened opportunities for co-operation, adding that these were also the objectives Qatar sought to achieve through cultural exchange.

This has been seen in many stages of co-operation, Her Excellency added, most recently through the creation of the 'Doha Pavilion' for Gerhard Richter, one of Germany's leading contemporary artists, and the presentation of his project at the New National Gallery in Berlin, hosted by its director, Klaus Biesenbach.

Such projects are the outcome of relationships between individuals and institutions who believe in the value of joint work and what each side can contribute to the other.

Her Excellency said that she had also recently visited the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin, where its director, Stefan Weber, had introduced her to the Aleppo Room and its artistic and historical significance. She noted that such encounters served as a reminder that safeguarding cultural heritage was a shared responsibility that transcended national borders, while offering museums opportunities to learn from one another, deepen their understanding of this heritage, and pass on their collections and the knowledge they embody to future generations.

Her Excellency underlined that growing cultural exchange between Qatar and Germany was expanding opportunities for co-operation between their institutions in research, academic studies, collection preservation and specialised expertise. She added that the true value of partnership lay in opening new horizons for learning and knowledge production, with co-operation continuing beyond individual exhibitions and events.

Discussing the extent to which cultural co-operation between Qatar and Germany could help build bridges for deeper dialogue between the two societies, introduce German audiences to Arab and Islamic culture, and provide Qatari audiences with opportunities to explore Germany's cultural and artistic heritage beyond stereotypes and preconceived notions, HE the Chairperson of Qatar Museums said that every cultural exchange initiative between Qatar and Germany brought the two countries closer together and provided an opportunity to discover what they had in common and celebrate their shared humanity.

Her Excellency highlighted that this rapprochement began with genuine openness towards others and a sincere desire to understand them beyond stereotypes and preconceived judgements. She noted that when German audiences became acquainted with Arab and Islamic culture, and Qatari audiences discovered the richness of Germany's artistic and cultural heritage, both societies gained an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of one another through direct experience and dialogue. She emphasised that this was where the value of culture in relations between peoples became evident, as it enabled people to discover one another and listen to others tell their stories in their own voices.

She added that growing closer did not mean abandoning one's cultural identity or becoming alike. Rather, she highlighted that the beauty of culture lay in its ability to bring different worlds together and transform differences from barriers separating people into opportunities for discovery, understanding and communication.

On how museum co-operation could support joint programmes targeting young people and new generations, raising their awareness of cultural diversity and humanity's shared history, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa said Qatar Museums had close ties with German cultural institutions that could create new learning and discovery opportunities for young people. She cited co-operation with Hamburger Bahnhof, whose directors, Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, jointly curated Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art's inaugural exhibition, adding that she looked forward to exploring new areas of co-operation with them based on this longstanding relationship.

She said the programmes of the forthcoming Lusail Museum would be particularly important in this regard, given their focus on exploring relations between East and West, past and present. These programmes, she noted, would enable young people to examine history from multiple perspectives, discover the connections forged between cultures over centuries, and understand their impact on shaping today's world.

She said the key value of these experiences lay in the questions they raised among younger generations and the intellectual horizons they opened up, adding that museums were not only places to learn about the past but also spaces where young people could understand themselves and others and recognise cultural diversity as an integral part of shared human history.

On the opportunities for co-operation between Qatar Museums and German cultural institutions amid global transformations in the museum sector, particularly in digitisation, artificial intelligence and interactive exhibition techniques, and how such co-operation could move beyond exchanging experiences to launching innovative projects with lasting cultural impact, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa said Qatar Museums had recently welcomed UTOPIA at M7, noting that the company had built its business model around artificial intelligence since its establishment, using Qatar as a base to establish and invest in technology startups. She added that Qatar Museums, in co-operation with partners such as the Qatar Investment Authority and Qatar Development Bank, was exploring ways to develop AI partnerships.

She added that there were promising prospects for Qatar-Germany co-operation in this field, particularly in using modern technologies to enrich the museum experience, expand access to knowledge and create new ways to engage with art and heritage. She stressed that ensuring a lasting cultural impact required keeping the human purpose at the heart of every initiative and continually asking who the innovations served and how they could enrich people's lives.

On building on the legacy of the Qatar-Germany Year of Culture 2017 to further strengthen co-operation between the two countries, she said the initiative had left a rich legacy whose impact could still be seen in projects and ideas that continued to grow after its events had concluded. This, she noted, was the true value of the Years of Culture initiative: ensuring that its outcomes extend beyond the duration of its events and open new horizons for co-operation and learning.

She pointed out that "German Design Pioneers," held during that year, helped pave the way for the Doha Design Biennial, whose second edition recently opened, and inspired the forthcoming Qatar Auto Museum. The exhibition of masterpieces of contemporary art from the Deutsche Bank Collection at Fire Station: Artist in Residence also provided a rich artistic and educational experience, particularly for artists in the residency programme and for art students in Qatar more broadly.

She explained that the cultural exchange created valuable opportunities for both sides. The "Heya Arabian Fashion" exhibition allowed German partners to discover the wealth of creative fashion talent in Qatar and the region, which continues to be celebrated annually through the Fashion Trust Arabia awards.

In sports, the friendly match between the Qatar and Germany women's national football teams was one of the milestones in bringing the two sides closer ahead of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, when Qatar welcomed Germany and the entire world.

To preserve the legacy of the tournament, she said, it was decided that the Qatar Quadrennial events, held every four years, would open on November 20, the anniversary of the tournament's opening, reaffirming the ability of sports and culture to bring peoples closer together.

HE Sheikha Al Mayassa stressed that building on this legacy means continuing to nurture the relationships established during the Year of Culture and creating opportunities for the ideas and experiences that brought the two sides together to develop into new projects and partnerships.

The success of cultural exchange, she said, is measured not only by what is achieved in a single year, but by its ability to establish lasting relationships whose impact extends to future generations.



Chairman of Qatar Chamber: Amir's visit serves as boost to bilateral strategic relations

QNA
Doha

Chairman of Qatar Chamber Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim bin Mohammed al-Thani affirmed that the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Federal Republic of Germany represents an important step towards strengthening bilateral ties and expanding the strategic partnership between the two countries, particularly in the economic, trade, and investment fields.

Sheikh Khalifa told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the visit carries particular significance given the uncertainty affecting the global economy as a result of regional crises and geopolitical tensions, which have heightened concerns over international trade, energy markets, and the stability of global supply chains.

The Chairman of Qatar Chamber noted that these developments have highlighted the importance of strengthening relations with economic partners to maintain economic stability.

He also praised the wise leadership of HH the Amir and his continuous efforts to expand Qatar's international partnerships and reinforce its position as a reliable economic partner.

He affirmed that Qatar and Germany enjoy longstanding relations founded on mutual trust



and a shared commitment to economic development, noting that Germany is one of Qatar's most important economic partners in Europe.

Sheikh Khalifa pointed out that His Highness's visits to key international partners, including the Federal Republic of Germany, reflect the State of Qatar's commitment to constructive dialogue, enhanced economic engagement, and the development of partnerships capable of delivering long-term benefits.

He said that the economic strengths of both countries offer significant potential for further co-operation, as Germany's industrial expertise, technological advancement, and global commercial presence complement Qatar's investment capabilities, strategic location, and ambitious economic diversification plans. Together, these strengths provide a solid foundation for expanding trade, attracting investment, and developing partnerships that generate sustainable value for both countries.

The Chairman of Qatar Chamber highlighted the significant contribution of German companies to the development of Qatar's industrial sector, pointing to their established presence in the energy, infrastructure, technology, engineering, and manufacturing sectors. Through their expertise and advanced technologies, these companies have supported major development projects, facilitated knowledge transfer, and contributed to building local capabilities.

In turn, Qatar has established itself as a major strategic investor in the German economy, reflecting the depth of mutual trust and shared benefits underpinning bilateral relations. He stressed that the visit of HH the Amir represents an important opportunity to give renewed momentum to this partnership and open new horizons for practical economic co-operation.

Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani concluded his statement by expressing confidence that His Highness's visit would mark an important new chapter in Qatari-German relations, strengthen the foundations of friendship and mutual trust, and open broader prospects for trade, investment, and co-operation between the two countries, benefiting the private sectors in both Qatar and Germany.

GCO, Qatar embassy in Berlin hold Web Summit Qatar 2027 promotional events

The Government Communications Office (GCO) and the Embassy of the State of Qatar in Germany organised the third and fourth Runway to Web Summit Qatar 2027 promotional events, in Berlin and Dusseldorf in Germany.

The events were held as part of preparations for the fourth edition of Web Summit Qatar, the largest and fastest-growing technology event in the Middle East and North Africa, which will take place at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre from Jan 31 to Feb 3, 2027.

The events brought together more than 150 founders, investors, entrepreneurs and representatives from Germany's innovation ecosystem. Discussions at both events focused on strengthening ties between the Qatari and German technology sectors, supporting startup growth and expanding access to investment and international markets.

In his opening remarks in Berlin, Abdullah al-Hamar, ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Federal Republic of Germany and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Der Divan — The Arabic Cultural House, welcomed attendees and stressed the importance of bilateral co-operation in keeping pace with technological developments and making the most of the opportunities they offer.

The ambassador said: "Artificial intelligence, digital technologies, and innovation are reshaping our economies and creating opportunities across the world. Germany brings world-class engineering,



industrial expertise, and technological excellence. Qatar brings ambition, investment, and growing capabilities in artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure, entrepreneurship, and economic diversification. Together, we can create new opportunities for businesses, startups, entrepreneurs, and innovators."

He praised the German participation in the 2026 edition, which witnessed the presence of more than 200 participants representing 89 companies, along with institutional partners and representatives of a number of German states.

He added: "Our ambition is to welcome an even stronger German presence in Doha, with more startups, entrepreneurs, investors, and established companies. We see tremendous potential for German technology companies to access new markets, develop partnerships, and expand their international reach through Qatar."

Meanwhile, Soud Ahmed al-Boinin, Director of Studies and Strategic Planning at the GCO, highlighted the growing standing of Web Summit Qatar as a regional platform that brings together entrepreneurs, investors, and startups, giving them broader opportunities to connect and build partnerships in the region.

He added that about 2,300 companies submitted applications to establish their businesses in Qatar during the last edition of the event, the majority of which had already completed the establishment procedures, an indication of the attractiveness of the Qatari business environment and the opportunities it provides for the growth of startups and attracting investments.

Al-Boinin also noted the growing partnership with Germany and the increase in the participation of German startups at the summit, stating that the German delegation was the largest among the 22 government delegations present at the previous edition, having doubled in size to over 200 participants.

He further emphasised that this growing German presence within Qatar's business ecosystem encourages more European companies to join the summit and explore opportunities for collaboration and investment in Qatar. **(QNA)**

Energy partnership reflects Qatar's role as a trusted energy source globally

Qatari-German relations in the energy sector are witnessing rapid strategic development aimed at strengthening energy security, diversifying supply sources, and supporting the transition towards a low-carbon economy. In this context, Qatar and Germany are linked by a liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply agreement signed by QatarEnergy and ConocoPhillips to supply approximately 2mn tonnes of LNG annually from Ras Laffan in Qatar to an LNG terminal in northern Germany for at least 15 years, starting this year.

In 2022, Qatar and Germany also signed an agreement providing for regular meetings between the two sides and the establishment of a working group focused on developing commercial relations in LNG and hydrogen, alongside another working group specialising in renewable energy. According to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy's website, the Qatari-German energy partnership provides a formal platform for high-level dialogue, knowledge exchange and private sector engagement. It also contributes to strengthening Germany's energy security by consolidating strategic cooperation and aligning perspectives between Germany and Qatar on key issues in the sector.

The ministry added that the partnership reflected Qatar's role as a major global energy supplier and Germany's interest in strengthening its international energy relations while advancing its efforts to reduce carbon emissions. The partnership has provided a platform for deepening mutual understanding of strategic priorities, including energy security and the energy transition.

The partnership aims to provide a platform for strengthening bilateral co-operation in the energy sector by encouraging dialogue and supporting knowledge exchange on emerging issues related to the energy transition. By bringing together stakeholders from the public and private sectors, the partnership helps identify opportunities for practical co-operation and develop concrete projects. It also promotes co-operation on energy security by connecting key stakeholders and fostering a shared understanding of future energy systems and supply structures.

In this context, economist and energy expert Al Anoud al-Shuaibi told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Germany came at a time when the world was facing numerous economic and geopolitical challenges, particularly concerning energy security and supply stability. She noted that Qatari-German relations in the energy sector were of considerable importance, given Qatar's global standing in LNG production and exports, alongside Germany's economic and industrial strength and technological expertise.

Al-Shuaibi highlighted the long-term LNG supply agreements signed by QatarEnergy and ConocoPhillips in 2022 as one of the most significant milestones in co-operation between the two countries, providing for the supply of up to 2mn tonnes annually to Germany for at least 15 years.

For his part, economist Dr Abdullah al-Khater said that the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani conveyed a message of reassurance to Germany and the wider world that Qatar would remain a reliable energy supplier despite the geopolitical circumstances affecting the region.

In similar remarks to QNA, al-Khater said that the visit came at an important time, as Qatar continued, amid the current regional circumstances, to take a proactive approach to strengthening partnerships with countries around the world and maintaining communication with its partners, particularly in Europe and Germany, to reaffirm its position as a reliable energy supplier.

He explained that this approach also reflected Qatar's confidence in its existing capabilities and resources. Al-Khater affirmed that the visit of HH the Amir to Germany sent a reassuring message to all of Qatar's economic partners and demonstrated the country's ability to fulfil this significant role, particularly through partnerships in the energy sector, which was vital, fundamental and central to European economies and the German economy in particular. **(QNA)**

QATAR



Glimpses from the opening ceremony. **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam



DFI CEO Fatma Hassan Alremaihi. **(Supplied picture)**

DFF marks a powerful showcase of global cinema, emerging talent

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Doha Film Festival (DFF) 2026 set the stage for the next nine days honouring the transformative power of cinema and cross-cultural dialogue with the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) premiere of *The Station* (Yemen, Jordan, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, 2026), the debut feature by Yemeni-Scottish filmmaker Sara Ishaq.

During the opening ceremony, HE Sheikh Thani bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Qatar Fund for Development, presented acclaimed Indian filmmaker and actor Nandita Das and renowned Syrian actor Taim Hassan with the DFF 2026 Creative Excellence Award for their outstanding artistic contribution to storytelling.

Other dignitaries attending the opening night ceremony included HE Hassan al-Thawadi, Chairman of the Film Committee at Media City Qatar; HE Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kuwari, Minister of State and President of Qatar National Library; and Hamad Omar al-Mannai, Chief Executive Officer of Media City Qatar and Eng Abdulaziz Ali al-Mawlawi, CEO of Visit Qatar among others. Ambassadors to Qatar from over 18 countries also attended.

Also joining on the red carpet was the team behind *The Station*, including director Sara Ishaq; co-writer and producer Nadia Eliewat; co-producer Nicolas Leprétre; and cast members Manal al-Mulaiki, Abeer Mohammed, Amal Esmail, Shorooq Mohammed, Randa Mohammed and Fatima Muthanna.

Additional special guests in attendance included the International Feature Film Competition Jury, led by Japanese filmmaker Naomi Kawase with Adam Bessa, Dora Bouchoucha, Gianfranco Rosi and Kamal Aljafari; filmmakers and artists including Hwang Dong-hyuk, Elia Suleiman, Rashid Masharawi, Mohamed Hefzy, Sheila Atim, Nomzamo Mbatha, Saja Kilani, Manal Issa, Mohamed Saad, Hani Khalifa, Yasmine Hamdan, Tamer Nafar, Gims and Brigitte Lacombe; and journalist Mehdi Hasan among others.



Opening Night, *The Station*. **(Supplied picture)**

Addressing the ceremony, Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director, and CEO of Doha Film Institute, said: "Doha Film Institute began 16 years ago to support filmmakers from our region and the world, and to create space for important voices to be heard across the world. Even in the most challenging times, we have continued to stand alongside storytellers and champion stories that deserve to be seen and remembered."

"DFI is proud to have supported Sara Ishaq's debut feature, *The Station*, which embodies the courage of filmmakers who tell the stories that others try to silence. It slips between bullets and shells, through the corridors of senseless war, and transcends borders to speak to audiences everywhere."

With prizes totalling over $300,000, DFF features four main competition sections are: International Feature Film Competition, International Short Film Competition, Made in Qatar Competition and the Ajyal Film Competition.

Over the course of the festival, audiences can look forward to a lineup of world and Middle East and North Africa (Mena) premieres, alongside DFF Talks, live music performances, Geekdom activations, industry sessions, community screenings and activations across Doha.





Saudi actress Ahd Kamal and DFI CEO Fatma Hassan Alremaihi. **(Supplied picture)**

HBKU College of Law advances international legal co-operation

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

The College of Law at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) is strengthening its role in advancing international legal co-operation, dispute resolution and legal capacity-building in Qatar and the wider region, according to its dean, Dr Susan L Karamanian.

Speaking to 'Gulf Times' recently on the sidelines of an international legal conference hosted by the college, Dr Karamanian highlighted the importance of bringing international legal experts together to address growing challenges facing the international legal order.

Dr Karaminian said: Qatar is an important venue for such discussions, given its longstanding support for international organisations and its prominent role in mediating international disputes."

As for the role of the college, the dean said that the institute is at the forefront of supporting the international and national legal capabilities. She explained: "The college offers a course in international dispute resolution and regularly organises conferences, lectures and academic discussions addressing mechanisms for resolving disputes at the international level. Our faculty members involve in international developments, including the signing of the Singapore Convention on Mediation, which is an example of the college's engagement with global legal frameworks."



Dr Susan L Karamanian

Dr Karamanian said one of the college's central priorities was building legal capacity in areas of strategic importance to Qatar, particularly law and technology, cybersecurity, environmental protection and climate change. "In the technology sector," she highlighted, "the college has the academic expertise in developing legal standards relating to blockchain technology, cross-border data flows and associated regulatory challenges. Our research and academic work also help support Qatar's efforts to align its legal frameworks with international standards."

"Environmental law and sustainable development represent another major area of focus. Through our Unesco Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development, the college has undertaken initiatives examining Qatar's legislation and its alignment with the country's obligations under the Paris Agreement,' continued the dean.

Dr Karamanian emphasised the importance of legal frameworks in addressing environmental challenges, particularly in an arid country such as Qatar. The college also offers what she described as the country's first course in environmental law, alongside an energy law course that incorporates environmental considerations.

"These academic programmes aim to equip students and professionals with the legal knowledge required to address the increasingly complex relationship between energy, environmental sustainability and climate change," noted the dean. Reflecting on the college's achievements, Dr Karamanian expressed pride in its graduates and their growing presence in international institutions. "One of our graduates is currently working in Geneva at Qatar's mission, focusing on issues related to the World Trade Organisation and the World Intellectual Property Organisation. Such achievements demonstrates the college's success in preparing legal professionals capable of representing Qatar and contributing to important international discussions at the highest levels."

Dr Karamanian reaffirmed the college's commitment to producing highly skilled legal professionals, advancing international legal scholarship and addressing emerging challenges at the intersection of law, technology, sustainability and global governance.

Doha Tattoo Festival returns with 9 military bands from eight countries

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Doha Tattoo Festival will return in December with nine military bands from eight countries, expanding its programme following the success of its first edition, organisers announced at a press conference.

The second edition of the Doha Tattoo Festival will take place at Katara Cultural Village from December 14 to 17, bringing together military music, precision marching formations and a wider range of public entertainment.

The expanded edition will feature nine participating military bands representing eight countries, marking a significant step in the festival's international reach. Sara Saleh, project lead from the Festivals and Events Department at Visit Qatar, said the upcoming edition would build on the response to the inaugural festival, with a larger programme and increased international participation.

"The second edition of this festival comes in a larger scale than the first edition after the big success that we witnessed, thankfully," she said. Saleh said the festival was designed to offer audiences a distinctive experience by combining the musical traditions of military bands with the discipline, coordination and precision of marching formations.

"This festival is a unique event that brings together the military music in addition to the precision of the marching formation on ground," she said. She added that the number of participating countries and bands had increased for the second edition, reflecting the festival's growing international dimension.



Sara Saleh

"This edition will also be larger in terms of the participating countries and bands. We will have nine participating military bands from eight different countries," Saleh said. Beyond the main performances, the festival will also feature a dedicated village area offering a variety of activities and entertainment for visitors. The area will include restaurants and coffee shops, providing families and visitors with additional options to enjoy the festival atmosphere beyond the military performances.

According to Saleh, the village area will be accessible to the public free of charge from December 13, a day before the official festival dates, and will operate daily from 4pm to 11pm.

The expanded public programme is expected to give visitors more opportunities to engage with the event, making it an experience that extends beyond the performances themselves.

With military bands bringing together music and synchronised formations, the festival aims to offer audiences an opportunity to experience a distinctive cultural spectacle while showcasing international traditions in Qatar. The four-day event will run until December 17 at Katara Cultural Village, while the public village activities will begin on December 13.