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QNB Stars League: Wakrah cruise past Sailiya, Qatar SC stay in top four



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Germany to send tanks to Kyiv, allow others too

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has decided to send Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine and allow other countries such as Poland to do so while the United States may supply Abrams tanks. The decision concerns at least one company of Leopard 2 A6 tanks that will be provided out of Bundeswehr stocks, said Spiegel magazine. One company usually comprises 14 tanks. Other allies, in Scandinavia for example, intend to go along with Germany in supplying their Leopard tanks to Kyiv. Page 11

N-powered rocket being readied for Mars voyage

Nasa is partnering with a Pentagon research agency to develop a nuclear-powered rocket engine in preparation for sending astronauts to Mars. Nasa Administrator Bill Nelson said yesterday that the US space agency will team up with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to "develop and demonstrate advanced nuclear thermal propulsion technology as soon as 2027, with the help of which, astronauts could journey to and from deep space faster than ever - a major capability to prepare for crewed missions to Mars". Page 11

'US averted N-war between India, Pakistan'

Former US secretary of state Mike Pompeo wrote in a book published yesterday that India and Pakistan came close to nuclear war in 2019 and that US intervention prevented escalation. "I do not think the world properly knows just how close the India-Pakistan rivalry came to spilling over into a nuclear conflagration in February 2019," the likely future Never Give an Inch, his memoir of his time as Donald Trump's top diplomat and earlier CIA chief.

US sues Google on advt business dominance

The US Justice Department filed a lawsuit against Alphabet's Google vesterday over allegations that the company abused its dominance of the digital advertising business, "Google has used anticompetitive, exclusionary, and unlawful means to eliminate or severely diminish any threat to its dominance over digital advertising technologies," the government said in its antitrust complaint. The Justice Department asked the court to compel Google to divest its Google Ad manager suite, including its ad exchange AdX. Eight states joined the department in the lawsuit. Page 11

Doomsday Clock moves closest ever to midnight

Top scientists and security experts moved the "Doomsday Clock" forward yesterday to just 90 seconds to midnight - signalling an increased risk to humanity's survival from the nuclear shadow over the Ukraine conflict and the growing climate crisis. The new timing set by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists is closer to midnight than ever before. The hands of the clock had been at 100 seconds to midnight since January 2020. The Bulletin said it was advancing the hands of the clock by 10 seconds this year "due largely but not exclusively to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the increased risk of nuclear escalation." Page 11

Peru president calls for 'national truce'

Peru President Dina Boluarte yesterday called for a "national truce" as thousands of protesters continue to call for her resignation and fresh elections. Boluarte called for "dialogue, peace and unity" following weeks of protests that have at times turned violent, with at least 46 people killed in clashes between demonstrators and security forces. Many Peruvians remain angry at the ouster of former president Pedro Castillo, who was arrested on December 7.

PM attends graduation ceremony of Community College students



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin K HE Sheikh Khalid honoured the outstanding graduates, while CCQ's president presented the certificates to the 929 graduates of various disciplines. Held at Lusail Sport Hall, the ceremony was attended by HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem and a number of Sheikhs and ministers, academic and administrative staff, and parents of graduates. (QNA) Page 3

'Qatar Spotlight' initiative to make education more 'innovative and impactful'

By Joseph Varghese Staff Reporter

innovative and impactful in the country, Qatar Foundation (QF) plans to promote novel and unique ideas through its initiative, Qatar Spotlight, a senior official told Gulf Times yesterday.

"We have partnered with HundrEd, a non-profit organisation to deliver an event and experience to all the educators in Qatar," explained Maryam Hassan al-Hajri, director of Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives Department under Pre University Education, QF.

"We ask our educators to come up with innovations and also participate with their creative ideas so that we can share them with other educators in the country to make education more innovative and impactful," she said.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Qatar Spotlight event to celebrate the winners of the first round of the programme, al-Hajri said: "It is a unique way to get all the educators around the world to share their innovations. But we wanted to do a special spotlight in Oatar for Qatari schools. Here we are celebrating 10 winning innovations. We make a video of the innovation and then we upload it online so that all the educators can get access to it and



Maryam Hassan al-Hajri

can implement it in their schools and

classrooms and learn from each other." Al-Hajri noted that the projects have participation from schools, educational institutions and organisations that promote and influence education like Qatar National Library, Qatar Museums among others.

She explained: "The projects have to be noble ideas and at the same time impactful for the students. We are doing a second round of Qatar Spotlight in the next two years, to provide opportunities for people to come up with new ideas, and document and share them. They can make a video and submit them for Qatar Spotlight recognition. We invite all educators in Qatar

GT Exclusive

as other institutions that promote education to participate in the initiative and share their innovations.

"The innovations have to be impactful and creative as the world is changing rapidly. There is the need to innovate in the classrooms to engage the students and inspire them so that they become lifelong learners and learning becomes an enjoyable process.

"QF supports and provides assistance for the projects and upload high quality videos. It will feature the innovator and will be online for a very long time so that people can see and learn from it. We want the innovative educators to be celebrated so that it will encourage all others to think differently and come out with great ideas," she highlighted.

"We want to generate more data through these projects so that we can inform researchers and based on their findings we can develop more initiatives maximising the impact of the innovations. This is what we are focusing on. We want to do anything that is impactful, educational for students and the new generations. Those who can contribute in this endeavour can collaborate with us," added, al-Hajri. Page 12

Faisal al-Mudahka appointed CEO of Qatar Press Center

atar Press Center held a meeting of its board of directors on Monday at its headquarters, where a number of topics were discussed and the plan for the upcoming period and the activities and events schedule were approved.

Accordingly, the board approved the appointment of Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Oatar Press Center and Sheikha al-Khater as Editor-in-Chief of Gulf Times.

The board thanked Abdullah bin Hamad al-Athba, the former director general of the centre, for the efforts he exerted throughout his tenure.

Further, the board approved a number of events and seminars that would include various media, cultural and intellectual activities which could attract a broad segment of the society.

The centre had launched its first series of forums on September 11, 2022 during which it discussed the real motives behind the foreign me-



Sheikha al-Khater



Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

dia campaign against the World Cup Qatar 2022. It was attended by a remarkable audience of interested par-

The centre is to host an important forum in co-operation with the Media Development Department at Qatar Me-



dia Corporation that will be presented by Dr Abdulla Alshayji, Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University. It is scheduled for January 31 at the headquarters of the centre.

It was also decided to hold a number of training courses and honour some key figures of the Qatari media as well. The board also discussed the launch of competitions in co-operation with the local media to give an active platform for gifted Qataris in the field to express their

Fatma al-Nuaimi receives World Woman Hero Award

Davos event highlights contribution of women to Qatar World Cup 2022

The crucial role women played in helping Qatar deliver the FIFA World Cup was highlighted during an event held on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Fatma al-Nuaimi, Executive Director, Communications & Media at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, spoke during a panel session organised by the World Women Foundation (WWF) and received a World Woman Hero Award for her contribution to the tourna-

The panel explored the legacy of Qatar 2022 and the role played by women during the historic event, which con-



Fatma al-Nuaimi speaking at the event held on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland

cluded with Argentina lifting the trophy at Lusail Stadium on December 18 last year.

During the panel, al-Nuaimi said Qatar 2022 had provided a platform for women to flourish in a range of roles, with the tournament stimulating human, social, economic and environmental development across the country and the wider Middle East and Arab world, the SC said in a re-

"In Qatar, there has been huge progress in the development of women in sport - from a playing, organising and administration point of view. We invest heavily in education, which provides a platform for equal opportunities and long-term development," said al-Nuaimi, who spent more than a decade working on Qatar 2022. "At the SC, we are proud of the number of women in our organisation, including those holding senior positions and demonstrating real leadership."

The panel was moderated by Dr Carolyn Kissane, academic director of Global Affairs at New York University. Joining al-Nuaimi on the panel were Al Jazeera journalist Ghada Owais; Ghosson al-Khaled, former deputy CEO of ACICO Industries; and Malak al-Akiely, co-founder of Golden Kayan for Oil

When discussing the tournament's legacy, al-Nuaimi highlighted the impact of the Generation Amazing Foundation - a football for development programme that has positively benefited more than 1mn people globally, including young girls and women in 35 countries.

"Generation Amazing is having a major impact on the region and globally. It is providing safe spaces for young people to learn key life skills through football, such as teamwork, leadership and equality". To Page 6



Ministry opens maritime vessel registration office at Doha Port

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) yesterday opened a new maritime vessels registration office at Doha Port as part of its efforts to improve maritime transport services.

Through this office, beneficiaries can register a maritime vessel, renew an existing registration, transfer the ownership of a maritime vessel, and obtain all types of certificates for small vessels. The ministry opened the office within the framework of its plans to improve maritime transportation services to the public by expanding maritime vessels registration offices to make the services available and easy to access, Dr Saleh bin Fetais al-Marri, Assistant Undersecretary for Maritime Transport Affairs, said.

This office, according to him, will help with integrating the services at Doha Port, which is Qatar's maritime tourism destination and one of its top tourism landmarks. Currently, the ministry offers some 28 e-services for small and large vessels and work is underway to develop and automate all services for maritime vessels, large vessels and maritime certificates and licensees, in addition to developing an electronic application for all maritime services and transactions for the public, ship-owners and maritime companies, and opening a maritime vessels registration office in Al Wakra. The MoT has maritime vessels registration offices in Al Khor and Al Ruwais, in addition to the main office at the ministry's headquarters.





Through this office, beneficiaries can register a maritime vessel, renew an existing registration, transfer the ownership, and obtain all types of certificates for small vessels.

Regional sustainability conference reviews progress, hurdles on SDGs

he Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) of Qatar University (QU) hosted a two-day "Regional Conference for the Arab Region and West Asia — Global Sustainable Development Report 2023" in collaboration with the UN Office for Sustainable Development and the GIZ, Germany. The Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2023 is due for publication in September 2023.

The conference, as part of assessment of perspective of Independent Group of Scientists (IGS) from different regions of the world, seeks valuable perspectives, context specific priorities, challenges, and opportunities as well as scalable, practical tools to accelerate progress in sustainable development goals. In his speech on the occasion, QU President Dr Hassan al-Derham said: "Today, more than ever, we need peace with ourselves and our environment to build global sustainable development. Also, we urge greater co-operation and transparency on sustainable development issues. Qatar University is proud to host this conference, which tainable Development Report 2023, which is due to be published September 2023."

Al-Derham stressed that sustainability is a key research priority for Qatar University's strategy (2021-2025) and key policy strategies at the national level - in particular - the Qatar National Vision 2030.

Furthermore, he noted the need to remember the unique sustainability measures that were taken during the FIFA World Cup 2022, held in Qatar. The sustainability standards set during this World Cup were a benchmark that will change the direction of major sporting events globally in the future.

He adds: "Today and tomorrow, we will hear from a variety of field experts, government officials, academics as well as private sectors. We believe that we



HE the President of Planning and Statistics Authority Dr Saleh bin Mohamed al-Nabit speaking at the conference.



QU President Dr Hassan al-Derham speaking at the conference.

will have a clear view of the current situation and progress on the (Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the challenges that hinder their progress. Therefore, I would like to ask all of you to share your experiences and opinions, use this gather-



pants and look forward to active discussions."

HE the President of Planning and Statistics Authority Dr Saleh bin Mohamed al-Nabit noted that Qatar is interested in achieving the sustainable development goals to enhance quality of life, and sustainable development issues are a priority for the Planning and Statistics Authority, which has been translated into specific initiatives in the fields of health, education, environment and social affairs.

He also said that the conference is an important occasion to exchange views between a distinguished group of experts on development issues and support solutions for sustainable development. He referred to the efforts being made, in cooperation with all governmental and non-governmental institutions, to prepare the third national development strategy for Qatar, stressing the keenness to strengthen the interdependence between national development priorities on the one hand, and



the priorities of the international sustainable development goals 2030 on the other hand. Dr al-Nabit stressed the importance of research and studies to monitor the reality of national development and trends in the development of its indicators, as well as its role in drawing up

national strategies and rational development policies based on evidence. He pointed out that the agency issues periodic reports on international sustainable development goals, especially those related to Qatar in particular. He announced that the agency succeeded, in co-

operation with other ministries and state agencies, in issuing about 84% of the national indicators related to the sustainable development goals, which contributes to a better assessment of the progress made in implementing those ambitious goals and related evidence. (QNA)

Ministry aims to provide quality education for all, says official

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) affirmed its eagerness on achieving the goals sought by the International Day of Education, which calls on all countries to work together towards transforming into sustainable societies, improving the quality of education in all of its stages, and providing appropriate quality-education opportunities for all.

Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs Maha al-Ru-waili said in an exclusive statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA) on the occasion of the International Day of Education, that the ministry develops educational programmes from the pre-university stage all the way to university education. She added that the ministry worked on providing various alternatives for general education

tracks, offering specialised and adult learners educational, whilst not overlooking students with disabilities and talented students.

Al-Ruwaili stressed that Qatar has sought under the directives of its wise leadership to invest in people, considering education a public responsibility, based on its belief that education plays an important role in helping citizens make the best use of their energies and capabilities, thus making education one of the determinants of productivity for Qatari society. She noted that all these efforts culminated in Oatar making it on advance quality indexes of Arab and international educational institutions, stressing that the education ministry is on a path of making quality education accessible to all, as well as turning schools into beacons of knowledge and science



Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs Maha al-Ruwaili.

and accomplishing distinguished achievements in education.

Al-Ruwaili considered the International Day of Education, launched by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), and

celebrated on January 24 every year, a clear message to all parts of the world about the importance of education, constituting a cornerstone for the advancement of societies and the best and main way to achieve sustainable development.

She noted that this day promotes the principle that education is a right for all, a basic need for every individual, and the most important building block for the development and progress of any country and on any front. The UN secretary-general has affirmed that education is a basic human right, and that it is the cornerstone of societies, economies, and the potential of every person, urging civil society and the youth to continue calling for increased and better investment in quality education.

In a message to the world on this occasion, he pointed out that last year's Transforming Education Summit brought the entire world together to reconsider education systems, so that every learner can obtain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. (QNA)

Nurseries section in MoEHE website



The Ministry of Education and Higher Education's Private Education Sector has launched a nurseries section in its website (www.edu. gov.qa/en). The section features comprehensive information on 179 nurseries, including one for children with special needs. The public can send related inquiries and communicate with the ministry in this regard through pnd@edu.gov.qa





HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al-Thani honoured the outstanding graduates.

CCQ marks graduation of its Class of 2022

nder the patronage and in the presence of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al-Thani, the Community College of Qatar (CCQ) celebrated the graduation of its 11th batch of 929 associate's and bachelor's degree holders (Class of 2022).

HE Sheikh Khalid honoured the outstanding graduates and CCQ president Dr Khalid Mohamed al-Horr presented the certificates to the graduates. The ceremony was attended by a number of Sheikhs and ministers, academic and administrative staff, parents of graduates, and a number of CCQ's elite guests. The ceremony featured the graduation of the first class of the Bachelor of Science in Logistics and Supply Chain Management with 86 students; the first class of the Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology with 11 students; and the first class of the Associate of Arts in Business Administration with 41 students.

In his speech during the ceremony, Dr al-Horr congratulated the graduates, expressing his pride in their achievement. He also shed light on the efforts exerted by CCQ during the past year, including the evaluation of its 20 academic programmes that were designed according to the needs of the labour market, in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders.

CCQ conducted a comparative study with a number of regional and international colleges, as part of its continuous

efforts to promote high academic standards and high-quality programmes, it was explained.

Dr al-Horr stressed that CCQ was also keen on attracting highly qualified academic and administrative staff, and expanding its campuses to accommodate the increasing number of students, whose number is about 8,400 now. CCQ has become a higher education institution of choice for Qatari students, with 20% of the total number of Qatari students pursuing higher education.

"Today, CCQ takes pride in awarding over 5,400 degrees since its establishment in 2010. CCO also served as a bridge for more than 3,200 students to complete their higher education studies at other universi-

ties, mainly Qatar University. These accomplishments reflect our firm belief that human capital is the main driving force and ultimate objective of development, and our unwavering commitment to supporting national priorities and to being an efficient contributor to sustainable development," he added.

Dr al-Horr also highlighted CCQ's expansion in academic and strategic partnerships with a number of agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoUs) aimed at fostering academic collaboration and achieving sustainable human and social development. These included signing an articulation agreement with Lusail University to help CCQ students to complete their studies in one of the undergraduate programmes, an MoU with the Police Institute, opening Huawei ICT Academy Lab, an MoU with Qatar Voluntary Center, and an MoU with Qatar Stock Exchange. He also referred to the co-operation agreement signed with the Ministry of Interior to allow inmates of penal and correctional institutions to enrol in CCQ, pointing out that 23 inmates enrolled in CCQ's Foundation Programme.

In her speech on behalf of the Class of 2022, graduate Sabah Ali Alajji, Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration, expressed her joy and excitement about turning the graduation dream into reality after vears of study and hard work. She further explained how her class was full of dreamers who made their ambitions a reality through



CCQ, which enabled them to pursue their higher education studies by introducing flexible learning pathways that helped them main-

tain a work-study-life balance. "We, the Class of 2022, take pride in being part of CCQ, which gave us access to stateof-the-art facilities and highquality curricula that enabled us to excel in our studies and strive to make our names and our beloved country's name shine in academic and professional arenas. Our sincere thanks are due to CCQ's academic and administrative staff who supported us through the past years," she added. CCQ's 11th batch includes 929 graduates (307 male and 622 female) from the three academic divisions: 591 from the Management Sciences Division, 213 from the Liberal Arts Division and 125 from the Science and Technology Division.



Providing Best Orthopedics and Trauma Care

The Orthopedic Specialty at Doha Clinic Hospital uses the most advanced surgical procedures and implants effectively paying utmost attention to patient safety. Their consultant orthopedic surgeons perform all major and minor surgical operations. The department provides management and care for conditions involving fractures of the bones and joints, sports injuries, hand and tendon injuries, diseases of the bones, joints, back and spine problems.

r Sami Engin, Consultant Orthopedics & Traumatology at DCH, has over 20 years of experience in the field of orthopedics and trauma surgery such as knee and hip replacement, hands, elbow and shoulder surgeries, and more.

Dr Sami focuses on various orthopedic conditions and performs several orthopedic procedures, such as arthroscopic surgery in the knees and shoulders, trauma and sports injury, adult and pediatric orthopedic care, joint replacement, fracture care, etc.

Sports injuries and trauma

Sports injuries occur when playing indoor or outdoor sports or while exercising. It can result from accidents, inadequate training, improper use of protective devices, or insufficient stretching or warm-up exercises.

An 'acute' sports injury one which happens suddenly, for example by over-stretching a tendon resulting in a sprain or a fracture.

Sports injuries can also be caused by longterm over-use of a group of muscles or joints, for

example in activities which

involve running. These are known as 'chronic' (or long-term)

Dr Sami Engin,

Traumatology

Consultant Orthopedics &

"Since Qatar's population is mostly young, particularly with the large number of expat workers, knee and ligament injuries are common. Many sports injuries heal without complications or limitations. One of the keys to successful healing is seeking timely treatment. Left untreated, sports injuries can lead to permanent damage and limited range of motion. Other complications include



chronic pain, disability, and weakness. Even with treatment, trying to do too much too fast after an injury can contribute to these complications. Carefully following your doctor's advice and recovery plan is the best way to avoid long-term problems," Dr Sami said.

Trauma is the main cause of sports injuries. For acute injuries, such as ACL tear or bone fractures, this can include direct blows to a body part and excessive force from falls. Noncontact injuries can happen if the playing surface is uneven or if the athlete improperly plants a foot while running. Failing to warm up properly before activities can also lead to acute injuries, such as muscle pulls. Other causes include poor training, conditioning or form.

The risks of prolonged sitting

Sitting for an extended period of time is a requirement for anyone who is employed in a desk job in order to fulfill their responsibilities in the workplace. However, it is important to know that there is an alarming list of potential health concerns that can emerge for anyone who finds themselves sitting for hours without also engaging in a sufficient amount of consistent, physical activity

"It is not good for our muscles and joints to sit for long periods of time, because our muscles become weaker as time goes on. Due to this, you are prone to fracture easily, so it is recommended that you keep exercising, such as swimming, jumping, running, etc. When

Avoiding continual sitting also decreases the risk of falling. assists in the prevention of weak bones and muscles, and delays any onset of cognitive issues. Technological innovation and orthopedics

we move, our skeletal system becomes stronger," Dr Sami added.

Over the years, the field of orthopedics has been getting its fair share of healthcare technology advancements that help immensely in the diagnosis, treatment, and aftercare of patients with musculoskeletal conditions.

"Orthopedic surgeons have long been using orthopedic implants to replace missing bones and joints. They're also widely used to restore a damaged structure's function. For the longest time, these were pretty much the only purpose of orthopedic implants. Then smart orthopedic implants came along and opened up a whole new world for orthopedic specialists and patients alike. Smart orthopedic implants provide more than just therapeutic benefits. They also give a boost to the diagnostic capabilities of doctors, courtesy of the wireless sensors that go with the orthopedic implant itself." Dr Sami said.

With these innovations, orthopedic doctors at Doha Clinic Hospital has a wealth of tools that will enable doctors provide hassle-free treatments and surgical procedures for their patients. The orthopedic department at DCH currently provides an array of treatments such as Arthroplasty (Knee and Hip Replacement Surgery), Arthroscopy (ACL Rupture, Meniscus Repair, Meniscectomy, Synovectomy, etc.), Shoulder Surgeries (Rotator Cuff Tear, Impingement, Synovectomy, etc.), Trauma and Sports Injury Foot Surgeries (Hallux Valgus, Bunion, Ingrown Nail, etc.) Hand and Elbow Surgeries (Pinched Nerves, Ganglion, Bursitis).



QATAR

Al-Marri meets ALO chief



HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri met yesterday with the visiting Director-General of the Arab Labour Organisation (ALO) Fayez Ali al-Mutairi. During the meeting, they discussed cooperation between Qatar and the ALO in order to better tend to the labour sector issues in the Arab countries, and look into ways to further support and develop the sector. **(QNA)**

Shura Speaker meets Armenian counterpart



HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem met yesterday with the visiting Speaker of the People's Assembly of Armenia, Alen Simonyan, and his accompanying delegation. The meeting reviewed the parliamentary relations between the two countries and ways to enhance them. A number of officials and members of the Shura Council attended the meeting. **(QNA)**

Farewell to Swiss envoy



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met yesterday with Swiss ambassador to Qatar Edgar Doerig, on the occasion of the end of his tenure in the country. HE al-Muraikhi expressed thanks to the ambassador for his efforts in advancing the bilateral relations, wishing him success in his future tasks. (QNA)

Islamic cultural centre introduces community education initiatives

bdullah Bin Zaid Al Mahmoud Islamic Cultural Centre of the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has launched a programme to introduce the belief in fate and destiny and its impact on the life of a Muslim. The programme, in English, is aimed at Muslim women of the Malabar community in Qatar. The activities of the programme will continue until the end of this month.

The series of 'belief in fate and destiny' programmes, in several languages, aims to enhance belief in fate and destiny in facing the challenges of life and strengthen the spirit of

believing women to enhance their faith. The Muslim Communities Division of the Islamic Culture Department pays attention to directing awareness messages to women in general, as a full course of videos was previously presented entitled 'Maker of Generations' which included a number of educational directives for mothers in dealing with children and teenagers.

The centre launched legal education programmes for the Telugu-speaking Indian community, with one activity for men and another for women, and the number of beneficiaries reached 38 men and women.

The Department of Introducing Islam continued its educational lessons for converts from different communities. The programme of tourists saw 18 Mexicans visiting the Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque. The centre conducts weekly visits for English, Spanish and Russian speakers to the Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque throughout the week.

Mosque throughout the week.

The programme attracts dozens of visitors and tourists every week. Thousands of people visited the Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque during the World Cup.

Awqaf launches course for Qatari muezzins

The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has launched the first qualification course for new Qatari imams, muezzins and preachers in the Fiqh (jurisprudence) of purification and prayer Eleven Qatari muezzins are participating in the 15-day course. The course is conducted by Mohamed Abdul Latif al-Mahmoud. The course comes as part of the Ministry of Awgaf's plan to prepare the Qatari muezzin and provide them with the Shariah science necessary to perform this task, and graduate a new batch of qualified muezzins. The courses for preparing and qualifying Qatari muezzins, imams, and preachers are held throughout the year, under the supervision of Da'wah and Islamic Studies Department of the Religious Call and Guidance Department. The courses enable new participants to carry out their job in the right way, as the ministry takes great care of this important group of the country's youth. (QNA)

Qatar announces financial contribution to support OPCW's ChemTech Centre



Qatar has contributed 100,000 euros to a special trust fund of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to support the construction and operation of its new Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre), which is being built in the Dutch city of Nootdorp. **OPCW Director-General ambassador** Fernando Arias, HE the Permanent Representative of Oatar to the OPCW, ambassador Nasser Ibrahim al-Lengawi, expressed pleasure for aims to achieve OPCW's objectives and enhance its capabilities. For his part, the OPCW director-general expressed his sincere appreciation to the Government of Qatar for its contribution. (QNA)

Qatar-Belgium research team develops early detection system for oil tanker risks in Gulf

QNA Doha

research team affiliated with Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) has developed a system that helps identify and monitor potential oil tanker accidents in the Arabian Gulf. The system developed by HBKU through a scientific study undertaken in co-operation with Belgian University UCLouvain helps protect vital coastal facilities for seawater desalination and energy export from the risks of accidents caused by oil tankers.

In exclusive remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Dr Essam Heggy, Chief Scientist and Research Director of the Earth Science Program at the Oatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (Qeeri), under HBKU and co-facilitator of the scientific team for the study with Prof Emmanuel Hanert of UCLouvain, said that the study identified the places with high risk to vital facilities, which should be closely monitored for any natural or manmade oil tankers' accidents, which will contribute to protecting the marine environment from contamination and prevent work disruption of liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facilities and water desalination facilities.

He pointed out that this study relied on developing digital simulation models based on navigation maps, water currents, and changes in wind directions for five years and identifying the vital water desalination and LNG export facilities. In addition, the study monitored the movement of 14,000 oil tankers in the waters of the Arabian Gulf during these years to determine the locations that should be closely monitored to avoid any risk and to contribute to local and regional efforts to put an end to these risks.

He added that the study was recently published in the 'Natural Sustainability' journal and is the first Qatari study about Qatar published in that prestigious scientific journal. The study concluded that two areas in Qatar's northern and southeastern regional waters need radar satellite close monitoring, as well as areas outside Qatar's regional waters, but due to wind movement and water currents, their impact show on the Oatari coasts.

He pointed out that based on the study findings, HBKU and UCLouvain signed a co-operation agreement on studying the potential oil tanker spill accidents to contribute to the national efforts in swift and effective handling these risks if occurred to avoid any work disruption in water desalination and LNG ex-



Dr Essam Heggy

The oil spills are difficult to contain in the Arabian Gulf as the waters are shallow and form a closed sea, which means that the environmental impact of these oil spills will last for a longer time, which require swift handling before reaching relatively deep waters and before reaching the shallow waters

port facilities. In addition, the study will carry on identifying the areas vulnerable to environmental and marine risks in other locations in the Arabian Gulf to preserve the safety of seawater as oil spills can be drifted by water currents to Qatari regional

waters.

He said that the study that he undertook along with the team of Prof Emmanuel Hanert of UCLouvain, as well as other UCLouvain MA and PhD researchers, is the first of its kind as it anticipates the areas of accidents to monitor them to protect the region through a specific technology that works on early detection for oil spills.

He indicated that the reason behind the study was to find a solution to the repeated oil tanker accidents that happened over the past few years in several areas.

The oil spills are difficult to contain in the Arabian Gulf waters as the waters are shallow and form a closed sea, which means that the environmental impact of these oil spills will last for a longer time, which require swift handling before reaching relatively deep waters and before reaching the shallow waters. In this regard, he explained that the study anticipates the route of the oil spill according to what has been recorded of water current and wind movements, as they are seasonal and yearly repeated.

He added that these accidents impact fishery and environmental diversity as the death of algae and coral reefs puts the coasts at risk of erosion as they serve as the first line of defence against waves erosion of the coasts. In addition, most passing vessels are not from the Arab region, making it difficult to hold them accountable for these risks.

Dr Essam Heggy affirmed that the study stresses the need for early preparation for such accidents to maintain the Gulf area from climate changes, stressing the need to continue the studies concerned with monitoring the increasing climate and environmental risks in the Gulf.

Talking to QNA, Dr Heggy revealed the existence of co-operation between Qatar Foundation (QF), Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) and Nasa in a scientific satellite study project which aims at understanding sea level change in desert and arid regions such as the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa

and North Africa.

This is to study the effects of rising ocean water levels on the coastal environment of these important regions which have hundreds of millions of people and the most important energy export facilities around the world by understanding the movements of ice melt in the North and South Poles by using radar technology to image the thickness of the ice at the poles and their expected impact on ocean rise in the next 100 years.

This is in addition to studying the distribution of groundwater at a depth of the first 20m from the earth's surface in the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa where the

importance of the study appears in identifying non-deep groundwater sources to deal with drought periods and the sustainability of the environment and agriculture in the Arab world, pointing out that the preliminary study of the project has been completed and the completion of the following stages is being studied.

can be implemented in the next stage with a number of experiments in the desert of Qatar and a number of Arab countries using an airborne satellite model to complete the studies, aspiring to see the launch of the satellite in 2027 which will operate for two years and can be extended to four years with a complete survey of ice formation in the poles and a survey of groundwater reservoirs. He pointed out that researchers from HBKU, Nasa, a number of European and American universities and universities in the Arab world are participating in the project.

Dr Heggy affirmed the importance of studying the climate and the factors of climate change in Qatar as the climate is closely linked to the Qatari identity, stressing that studying changes in the Arab world is also a necessity as knowledge of the future of climate changes answers many questions related to the sustainability of natural resources and food security, and proposes appropriate solutions to crises related to climate or water scarcity, etc., which cannot be solved without accurate meteoralogy.

Dr Heggy, who is also a researcher at California University, stressed on the importance of the fundamental role undertaken by scientists with their varying specialisations in developing thought in their communities, reviewing the inherited knowledge and developing it, and creating what is new to anticipate the foreseeable future.

He asserted that science is the secret of the world's renaissance, and the interest in education is the start, calling for a semi-unified educational policy that brings curricula closer in the Arab world, with the importance of real investment in education and increase expenditure on education and scientific research even in the difficult economic circumstances, promote the profession of teacher and improve schools' status in the Arab region.

The intellectual problems facing the Arab region are difficult, but are not impossible, he said, adding that their solution requires a societal change in order for knowledge to be the national identity, and the return of Arab scientists from abroad to contribute to a civilized and real renaissance for the Arab region.

شركة الكهرباء والماء القطريـة شمه. و QATAR ELECTRICITY&WATER CO. a.e.s.c

QATAR ELECTRICITY AND WATER COMPANY Q.P.S.C STATE OF QATAR

PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CLEARING AGENTS AND FREIGHT FORWARDERS

Companies who are providing the above services to the leading firms in Qatar are invited to submit pre-qualification documents.

The pre-qualification documents shall contain the following: -

- Commercial registration
- Related licenses and certificates
- Corporate Organization Chart
- Financial Statement for the last 3 years
- List of Clients for the last 5 years
- Details of Company's Health, Safety and Environmental Policy
- Company Profile

Required documents should be uploaded to

www.qewc.com/qewc/tenders

Before 11:00 AM on 01.02.2023

For More Information please contact us via email: 1482@qewc.com

Best-selling Mazda CX-5 wins US award

The 2023 Mazda CX-5 has been named 'Best Compact SUV for the Money' by US News & World Report, according to a statement from the brand's sole agent in Qatar, National Car Company, citing Mazda North American Operations.

The 2023 CX-5 is Mazda's bestselling vehicle in the US as well as the rest of the world, it was explained. "The Mazda CX-5 combines desirable features, such as standard all-wheel drive, with a top spot in our rankings," said Jim Sharifi, managing editor at US News Best Cars.

"The CX-5 also offers a competitive price and low ownership costs, but many of its best attributes are noticeable right out of the gate. Buyers will appreciate that the CX-5 really shines when it comes to interior quality, and sporty driving dynamics help it deliver a unique and rewarding driving experience.' National Car Company, the sole agent for Mazda in Qatar for over five decades, have the entire range of sedans and Mazda SUVs displayed at their state-of-theart showroom at Al Nasr, open

The critically acclaimed CX-5 has received numerous top industry and safety awards including the Insurance **Institute for Highway Safety** (IIHS) TOP SAFETY PICK+.

Thursdays and 4.30pm-8.30pm on Fridays.

For 2023, the CX-5 is available with an all-new Rhodium White exterior premium paint colour, complimenting Mazda's Kodo design. As with all of Mazda's SUVs, all 2023 CX-5 models retain standard i-Activ all-wheel drive.

The critically acclaimed CX-5 has received numerous top industry and safety awards including the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) TOP SAFETY PICK+. The CX-5 was the first vehicle to earn a Good rating in IIHS's new. tougher side impact test. All the engineering and safety features that contributed to these awards have been carried over to the 2023 model year as standard features. These include Mazda Radar Cruise Control with Stop and Go, Smart Brake Support, Advanced Smart City Brake Support, Blind Spot

Monitoring, Rear Cross-Traffic Alert, and Lane Departure Warning with Lane Keep Assist. Mazda remains the only brand with its entire model line-up available in Qatar exclusively made in Japan with exceptional quality and workmanship and all Mazda sedans and SUVs have been awarded with "2022 IIHS Safety Pick Plus" ratings, a clear indication of Mazda's human centric approach in building cars, the statement

National Car Company has announced special offers on 2023 model sedans and SUVs. This includes free comprehensive insurance for one year, two years or 30,000km free service (whichever comes first) and free registration on all the latest 2023 models. Customers purchasing 2023 models can take advantage of five years unlimited km warranty along with five years roadside assistance among other customer-friendly purchase packages. The 2023 Mazda CX-5 is available in eight packages. More information can be had from the Mazda showroom (44435965/44417859) or www.







Veggies and more at Mahaseel



The seventh edition of Mahaseel Festival, currently under way in the southern area of Katara, continues to offer a wide variety of quality vegetables and other local products. The vegetables available include eggplant, tomatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, mushrooms, potatoes, cucumber, capsicum, broccoli, courgette, beans, gourd, peas and chillis, as well as locally produced honey, dates, date syrup, flowers, ornamental plants and dairy and poultry products. Katara said in a tweet that the festival also features artistic activities for children and awareness workshops, in addition to rides for kids.







INVITATION TO SUBMIT PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS

Invitation to Submit a Pre-Qualification for the Provision of Operation and Maintenance of Wet Services Utilities at Ras Bufontas and Umm Alhoul Free Zones The Qatar Free Zones Authority (QFZ) would like to invite competent and experienced local companies to a Pre-Qualification for the following Project:

Project Title and Number

Provision of Operation and Maintenance Services of Wet Services Utilities at Ras Bufontas and Umm Alhoul Free Zones

Tender No: RBF&UAH/015/2022/A

Pre - Qualification Documentation Issue:

The Pre-Qualification Documents shall only be issued in soft copy from the following email address contracts@qfz.gov.qa. Participants are required to submit their expression of interest to the same email address, along with proof of payment of the Pre-Qualification Fee to be able to receive the Pre-Qualification Documents.

High Level Description of the Tender

The selected Service Provider will provide the Operation and Maintenance for Wet Services Utilities on a 24 Hour, 7 Days per week, 365-day basis for the QFZ building and infrastructure facilities at both Free Zone sites.

The selected Service Provider will be required to provide the Planned Preventative Maintenance, Reactive Maintenance, Emergency Call-out Maintenance and General Repairs of the Wet Services Utilities, in accordance with an overall Maintenance Plan and Programme, and in coordination with the FM Provider appointed by

Wet Services Utilities consist of: Potable Water networks, Domestic Water Systems, Foul Sewer networks, Storm Water networks, TSE networks and TSE Pumping Stations.

Eligibility of Tenders:

In order to pre-qualify, tenderers must be able to demonstrate the following:

- 1. Be able to demonstrate compliance with local Qatar trading requirements.
- 2. Experienced Contractor with similar previous experience, necessary skills with fully capable and sufficient resources to successfully deliver the requirements of the scope of services.
- 3. Proof of ability to provide and maintain a Performance Bond of 10% of the Accepted Contract Sum for a minimum of 12 months from a registered bank in Qatar.

Pre-Qualification Fees

A fee of 2,000 QAR is applicable to obtain this Pre-Qualification questionnaire. The Pre-Qualification Fee must be paid and confirmed by QFZ prior to the issue of the Pre-Qualification Documents (Please mention the name of your company upon making bank deposit or transfer)

The Pre-Qualification Fee is payable to the following bank account:

Name of Account: FREEZONE Bank Name: Masraf Al Rayan Branch: Main Current Account No. 0003 1155 00 001 IBAN No. QA97MAFR00000000003115500001

Closing of Date for Submission of Request for Pre-Qualification Questionnaire:

Pre-qualification documentation must be submitted to QFZ not later than 09 February 2023 and must be submitted in accordance with the instruction in this notice.

Qatar Free Zone Authority

www.qfz.gov.qa

Al Meera

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

إعلان طرح مناقصة

تعلن شركة الميرة للمواد الاستهلاكية(ش.م.ع.ق) عن طرح المناقصة التالية: Al Meera Consumer Goods Company (Q.P.S.C) announces the following tender:

تاريخ الاقفال Closing Date	الضمان البنكىي Tender Bond	تاریخ استلام الوثائق Date of Collection documents	قیمة الوثائق Tender Fees	نظام تقديم العطاءات Bidding System	التخصص/ فئات التصنيف Specialization /Classification	Ti+lo	رقم المناقصة Tender No.
r,rm/r/rr	۲٥,۰۰۰ ریال قطر <i>ي</i>	۲۰۲۳/۱/۲٦ ۲۰۲۳/۲/۸ حما <u>ا</u>	۱۵۰۰ ریال قطري	ثلاثة مظاريف (مظروف فني + مظروف مالي + الضمان البنكي	الشركات ذات الاختصاص	توفير عمالة لتحميل وتنزيل المواد التموينية لمدة عامين	ሶ ·Ր۳/Ր
22/2/2023	QAR 25,000	From 26 January to 8 February 2023	QAR 1,500	Three separate sealed envelopes Technical Proposals + Financial Proposals + Tender	Competent companies	Providing Labour for Tamween Loading and Unloading for 2 Years	2/2023

- The tender documents can be obtained from the head office of Al Meera Consumer Goods Company (Qatar Tower, next to Burj Al Gassar, opposite Ezdan Towers) 24th Floor, Majlis Al Taawon Street, Dafna).
- To obtain the tender documents, an authorization letter from the company must be presented, in addition to a copy of the Company ID (Computer Card) and a copy of a valid commercial registration
- Attached bank guarantee from a bank approved in the State of Qatar, as indicated above, as a temporary deposit for a period of 120 days under the name of Al Meera Consumer Goods Company.
- Bid validity period is ninety days from the tender closing date.
- Performance Bond for the selected company shall be for 90 days after completion date.
- Bid Submission Deadline is twelve o'clock in the noon of the tender closing day (Wednesday). Any tenderer submitted after this deadline will not be considered.
- Tenders must be submitted in sealed envelopes stamped with the seal of the company, addressed to Tenders & Auctions Committee, and delivered to the Secretary of the Committee at the above mentioned

- يمكن الحصول علم وثائق المناقصة من مقر شركة الميرة للمواد الاستهلاكية (برج قطر، بجوار برج القصار مقابل أبراج ازدان) - الطابع الرابع والعشرون، شارع مجلس التعاون، الدفنة.
- للحصول علم وثائق المناقصة يجب إبراز كتاب تفويض من الشركة، صورة قيد المنشأة وصورة من الرخصة التجارية والسجل التجاري سارية المفعول.
- يرفق ضمان مصرفي من أحد البنوك المعتمدة في دولة قطر حسب ما هو مبين أعلاه كتأمين موقت لمدة (١٢٠) يوماً بإسم شركة الميرة للمواد الاستهلاكية.
- مدة سريان العطاء هي تسعين يوماً من تاريخ إقفال
- على من ترسو عليه المناقصة تقديم ضمان مصرفي نهائي بما نسبته ۱۰٪ من قيمة العقد العقد العقد العادي بما نسبته ۱۰٪ من قيمة العقد لمدة (٩٠) يوماً من تاريخ انتهاء الأعمال.
 - سيكون آخر موعد لتقديم العطاءات هو الساعة الثانية عشر من مساء يوم الاقفال (الاربعاء)، ولن يلتفت إلى أي عطاء يرد بعد هذا الموعد المحدد.
 - تقدم العطاءات داخل مظاريف مغلقة ومختومة بخاتم الشركة، ومعنونة بإسم السادة / لجنة المناقصات والمزايدات، وتسلم لأمانة سر اللجنة بمقرها المذكور أعلاه.

Secretary of Tenders & Auctions Committee Tel. 40119196 • email: m.alaa@almeera.com.ga Al Meera Consumer Goods Company (Q.P.S.C) Qatar Tower (next to Al Qassar Tower opposite to Ezdan Towers) - Floor 24 Majlis Al Taawon Street, Al Dafna, Doha - Qatar

سكرتير لجنة المناقصات والمزايدات m.alaa@almeera.com.qa • ٤٠١١٩١٩٦ شركة الميرة للمواد الاستهلاكية (ش.م.ع.ق) برج قطر (بجوار برج القصار مقابل ابراج ازدان) – الطابق الرابع والعشرون شارع مجلس التعاون، الدفنة، الدوحة - قطر





HE Dr Mutlaq bin Maiid al-Oahtani

Qatar's role in mediation and dispute settlement highlighted

The most important challenges facing international agreements and international law in general are the mechanisms for implementing them, HE Dr Mutlaq bin Majid al-Qahtani, the Minister of Foreign Affairs' special envoy for combating terrorism and mediation in dispute settlement, told Al Rayyan TV yesterday.

The agreements should have mechanisms for implementation and supervising the process," he said. "The second point is,

to what extent the agreement in question was drafted by the mediator or the parties themselves in a manner consistent with international law, which would ensure some commitment to it."

"The third point is about the level of regional and international commitment to the agreement, in particular if it was taken to the United Nations and a decision or statement issued by the Security Council to abide by it, giving it another aspect of legitimacy," HE Dr al-Qahtani said.

"The obligation lies first and foremost with the parties themselves. If Qatar mediates an agreement between two parties, we take all these measures in accordance with international law, and also approved by the United Nations, then it becomes binding in the first place," he continued.

"If this agreement fails, it does not mean that Oatar has failed," he said. "Those who failed are the parties to the agreement who

failed to implement the agreement and did not deal with the agreement in good faith."

"The first and last burden of implementing the agreement or not rests with the parties to the conflict themselves and does not fall on the mediator," he stated.

"Of course, in some agreements related to peace negotiations, the final provisions present a mechanism for settling the dispute concerning the application, interpretation or implementation," the official said.

"Or, the parties go to a mediator who solves this issue, or resort to arbitration or to the International Court of Justice, all of these issues are dealt with according to the agreement," he added. "In some cases, if there is an indication that a dispute or violation of this agreement is done by any party, then the other party will resort to the mediator again, who must take the appropriate decision based on the provisions of

Qatar Charity distributes winter clothes to orphans, the poor and needy in Yemen

s part of its "Warm Hearts" winter campaign, Qatar Charity (QC) has distributed winter clothes to 342 orphans, the poor and the needy in Yemen.

This assistance comes within the framework of care programmes for orphans, alleviating the suffering of groups of poor people, and extending a helping hand to mitigate the risks of the severe winter cold, a press statement notes

"I thank the benevolent people in Qatar and Qatar Charity for adopting the winter clothes project, which came at the right time due to the need of our children for it," Nayef al-Kulaisi, the mother of an orphan, said. "I am pleased with these clothes because they protect my son from the severity

"Helping orphans is a seed of good, and whoever seeks to plant it will reap its fruits in heaven," said Aziz Saleh, who is the grandfather of two beneficiary orphans.

"We know that the good people in Qatar do not (demand or require) our thanks, as they seek reward from God Almighty, but what they do has a great impact on the hearts of the orphans whose joy we saw today," said Yahya al-Gharsi, the uncle of one of the orphans.

Oatar Charity launched the winter campaign in October and has provided early assistance in northern Syria.



It also proceeded with assistance for severe cold, rain and snow through aid convoys, starting this month to help refugees and poor families.

The number of these convoys is 250. The initiative targets about half a million refugees, displaced persons and poor families in six countries -Lebanon, Turkiye, Pakistan, Jordan, Syria and Yemen.

The aid included the distribution of food baskets and winter supplies such as winter clothes, blankets, heaters and

The first instalment of the campaign covered Syrian refugee camps in Lebanon and families.

A delegation from the QC visited each of the centres of Bekaa, Akkar and Arsal in Lebanon. They distributed the winter aid to the recipients.

this agreement." Fatma al-Nuaimi

receives **World Woman Hero Award**

From Page 1

Al-Nuaimi said: "I'm humbled to receive this award. It means a lot to be in a room with so many inspirational women and collect an award for what we achieved because of the World

Dash added: "Fatma is a true inspiration to females in the region and all over the world. Her contribution to such a successful tournament deserved recognition and we were proud to have her play such a key role in our first Davos event."

QU to hold 2nd **World Congress** of Engineering and Technology

atar University (QU)'s College of Engineering (QU-CENG) has announced that the 2nd World Congress of Engineering and Technology (WCET) will be organised at the QU from February 5-8 under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al-Thani.

The WCET will involve the 2nd International Conference on Civil Infrastructure and Construction (CIC 2023), and the International Conference on Vibration Problems (ICOVP).

The CIC 2023 is co-organised by Qatar Unirsity, the Ministry of Municipality, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), and the Public Works Authority

Ariane Real Estate Company will participate as a platinum sponsor, and PORR as a silver

The conference is also sponsored by the Qatar

National Research Fund (QNRF).

ICOVP is sponsored by the QNRF and benefits from Australian Engineers Society as professional partner.

The CIC 2023 proceedings will be published through QU Press.

In his speech at a press conference, OU-CENG dean Dr Khalid Kamal Naji said: "The congress will include plenary sessions and keynote lectures on various topics related to vibrations, infrastructure and construction."

"We expect that the congress will provide a forum for exchanging technical information, nating high-quality res presenting new policies and scientific progress in this area," he added. "Delegates from more than 40 nationalities are participating in the congress, with over 300 research and technical papers to be discussed."

Ibrahim Abbas, director of the Infrastructure Planning Department at the Ministry of Munic-



Officials from the organising entities.

ipality, said: "We would like to thank Qatar University for organising the 2nd World Congress of Engineering and Technology."

"We are pleased to be part of this initiative, which comes for the second time after the success of the first edition of the congress, as it expresses co-operation between the two parties to support common goals," he said.

Dr Mohamed bin Saif al-Kuwari, environmental expert and engineering consultant at the MoECC, said: "The MoECC pays great attention to green and sustainable infrastructure and construction buildings ... through the use of reto reduce pollution and waste, and enable recycling and use ... by creating unique designs that take into account air quality and the efficient use of energy, water and other resources."

"(The ministry) also takes into account the health factors of workers and users during construction and building operations, such as re-

ducing dust levels by air recycling according to advanced systems to reduce the incidence of respiratory diseases, etc," he added.

"The Public Works Authority participates in the 2nd International Conference on Infrastructure and Construction as a strategic partner and main organiser of the conference, as Ashghal is the entity responsible for the implementation of infrastructure projects and public buildings in Qatar," said Ashghal Technical Office director Salem al-Shawi.

"We seek to achieve more and follow up on project implementation and management plans building and construction system that keeps pace with the great development witnessed by the country in accordance with the highest international quality standards," he added.

"CIC 2023 will cover four themes. These are 'Contemporary issues in Construction Engineering and Management, 'Advances in Infrastructure Sustainability, Renovation, and Monitoring', 'Sustainable Architecture and Urban Planning for Society Wellbeing', and 'Water, Environment and Climate Change," said Civil and Architectural Engineering Department head Prof Mohamed Hussain.

The conference will have a number of professional partners, such as engineering societies, including the Qatar Society of Engineers. the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Institute of Civil Engineers, the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, the Lean Construction Institute - Qatar, Earthna, Engineers Australia, the Chartered Institute of I the American Concrete Institute (ACI) - Qatar

The conference will feature world-class keynote speakers from top international engineering organisations and societies beside key executive members from the infrastructure and construction sector in Qatar.



Katara general manager Prof al-Sulaiti with Al Oannas Oatari Society chairman Ali bin Khatem al-Mehshadi.





Prof al-Sulaiti releasing a homing pigeon at the festival yesterday

Thrills abound at Marmi 2023

The number of winners and qualifiers at the Haddad Al Tahadi competitions (where the falcon has to hunt a homing pigeon within certain parameters) rose to 75 peregrine falcons yesterday during the pre-final rounds at the ongoing 14th edition of Qatar International Falcons and Hunting Festival (Marmi 2023).

Despite the cloudy, rainy and windy weather, both the homing pigeons and falcons gave excellent performance.

This year's figure is the biggest since the festival started 14 years ago, with 75 homing pigeons falling prey to the talons of the fal-

Ali Sultan al-Humaidi, head of Haddad Al

Tahadi Committee at Marmi 2023, said this season has been exceptional and showed the capabilities of the falcons and their owners. Accordingly, the Supreme Organising Committee of Marmi 2023 has decided to set next Thursday and Friday as the days for the

finals of Haddad Al Tahadi. Katara - the Cultural Village general manager Prof Khalid bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti, who visited the festival yesterday, stated that Marmi 2023 maintains the cultural heritage of the country and enhances the original Qatari identity and heritage.

He noted that Qatari youth are increasingly embracing this heritage sport, as the number of the registered contestants has been on the rise, with 1,000 participants for this edition of Marmi.

Prof al-Sulaiti also highly appreciated the sustainable nature of the falconry festival, with many falcon owners keen to release their falcons back into nature after the hunting season is over, as has been done for six successive years.

The official also pointed out that the festival has been gaining more popularity and attracts large numbers of participants and visitors from the GCC region and the Arab countries.

Marmi 2023, organised by Al Qannas Qatari Society at Sabkhat Marmi in the Sealine Area, under the patronage of HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, will conclude on



Qatar's envoy to EU participates in Arab ambassadors' meeting with Palestinian prime minister in Brussels

Oatar's ambassador to the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato) Abdulaziz bin Ahmed al-Malki participated in the meeting of ambassadors and heads of Arab diplomatic missions accredited in Brussels with Palestinian Prime Minister Mohamed Shtayyeh and Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Riyad al-Malki, at the invitation of the

Palestinian mission to the European Union In his speech during the meeting, al-Malki reiterated Oatar's firm stance toward the justice of the Palestinian cause, the legitimate rights of the fraternal people of Palestine, and the establishment of the independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. - QNA

Traffic awareness session



Officials of the Traffic Awareness Department at the General Directorate of Traffic visited Dallah Driving School yesterday as part of the future drivers education programme. An awareness lecture was presented, covering traffic law, traffic safety requirements, and the most common traffic violations



LuLu eyes electric vehicles to upgrade its transport fleet

By Peter Alagos Business Reporte

uLu Group is planning _to upgrade its transport ┛fleet in Qatar with electric vehicles (EVs) as part of its "green strategy" and sustainability efforts, a top official told Gulf Times.

"To become net-zero, the next focus will be on alternative energy sources to fuel our operations, including solar. We are also looking at electrifying our fleet, as well as our supply chain," Dr Moham-ed Althaf, director of LuLu Group International, said in an exclusive interview.

"We are already using a very complex algorithm so that we don't waste our transportation space: for every container that we bring in, we make sure that transport will be optimised," he explained.

Dr Althaf also stressed that LuLu Group will prioritise energy-efficient options when procuring equipment. It is also looking at phasing out old vehicles and focusing on end-of-life product management.

"From this year, we have already put a policy that for



Dr Mohamed Althaf, director of LuLu Group International.

anything we buy in 2023, we will look for the electric options first. And then, moving forward, we will phase out whatever old legacy vehicle

system that we have. "Also, we want to start reaching out to our own suppliers and stakeholders and ask them where we can work together, either by helping them make their supply chain carbon-neutral or energy efficient. We are exploring ways to do that. We are planning to install EV charging stations in our new outlets and later on in our old stores," Dr Althaf explained.

He further explained that LuLu Group will continue innovating its existing stores to ensure that even old branches will maintain energy efficiency during operations, citing the 18-year-old Al Khor

"I always have the empirical data, which shows what we can do. Another strategy is end-of-life product management. Because some of our stores are very old, we want to make sure that our chillers and freezers don't have any negative impact. How do we extend the life cycle and how do we make them more energy efficient are among the other projects in the pipe-

line," Dr Althaf emphasised. He added: "What is significant about our Al Messila branch is that we retrofitted a seven-year-old building. Similarly, Al Meshaf store was a regular-looking building, which was operational for the last five years.

"Whereas for all the new stores that we have announced, we have already incorporated sustainability principles in the design stage. And more importantly, we are utilising IoT to achieve energy efficiency, thus making these stores cutting-edge."

International Conference on Translation to begin on Saturday

The 9th International Conference on Translation and Problems of Interculturalisation will kick off next Saturday at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Doha, with the participation of 150

translators and academics from around the world. Organised by the Forum of Arabic and International Relations, the two-day conference will discuss an array of researches and scientific experiences with the attendees' varying cultures and languages.

Director of the Forum of Arabic and International Relations Dr Mohamed Hamed al-Ahmari will deliver an inaugural speech before the con-

The first session will discuss the issues of Turkish-Arabic translation, the second session will focus on personal translation, the third will be dedicated to contemporary translation and diversified translation. On the second day, the fifth session will tackle problems of translating the philosophical concepts, with the sixth session dedicated to the topic of translating religious texts and the need to retranslate them.

A host of senior translators from across the world will participate in the conference, including the former Iraqi Minister of Culture, and head of the Unesco Chair at Kufa's university Dr Hassan Nadhem, as well as other professional trans-

The conclusion of the conference will see the closing ceremony for Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding, where winners of the 8th session of the award will be crowned. The nominated works include various fields of human sciences, including Islamic studies, literature, philosophy, social sciences,

Qatar to showcase publications at Cairo international book fair

atar, represented by the Ministry of Culture and several Qatari publishwill participate in the 54th edition of the Cairo International Book Fair (CIBF), due to

kick off today.

The Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKU Press) and Dar Al Watad for Publishing and Distribution are among the Qatari publishers whose publications will go on display in the fair which runs until Feb 6.

The Ministry of Culture's participation in international book fairs seeks to introduce Qatari intellectual production to large audiences of readers to learn about the continuous development in the publishing industry in Qatar, as well as in enhancing co-operation and exchanging experiences with workers in the field of culture and the publishing industry.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Executive Director of HBKU Press Bachar Chebaro ascribed the participation to HBKU's continuous commitment to showcasing its best publications to Arab and international audiences, given the CIBF's prestige as one of the largest and well-established book fairs in the region, with its huge pavilions that accommodate a large number of publishers from across the world.

The HBKU Press actively participates in regional and international cultural events out of its keenness to continue backing Arab talents, and to pay further attention and appreciation to Arab literature and narration, Chebaro said.

Amira al-Rifai from Dar Al Watad said that 20 of the company's publications would be on exhibition at Qatar's pavilion, highlighting the company's recent publications on law, novels

hailed the participation in the international fair as a contribution to introducing the Arab reader to publications and in consolidating the cultural relationship between writers and Arab readers.

The CIBF, one of the most respected book fairs in the region and the world, brings together 1,047 publishers and 51 countries. It will feature 500 cultural events on the sidelines of its activities and held in the presence of a group of poets and writers who will discuss the latest publications. (QNA)

Cloudy conditions with rain likely today: Met Dept



Poor visibility is expected in some places in the early hours today due to misty to foggy conditions, along with thundery rain and strong winds, the Qatar Met department has said. The forecast for offshore areas, too, says thundershowers are likely today in addition to windy conditions and high seas at times. The wind speed may go up to 29 knots offshore and 25 knots inshore, with the sea level rising to 9ft. The detailed forecast says cloudy conditions are expected today with a chance of rain, which may be thundery in some places at times. Similar conditions are also likely offshore. The temperature, meanwhile, is expected to range from 18-23C in Doha today. Doha and other parts of the country received rain of varying intensity yesterday along with windy and cloudy conditions. PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam and Thajudheen



Being Well Deserved! OMODA 5 Won the "Best Science and Technology SUV Award"



MODA 5 has won wide attention as the first global vehicle of Chery since its birth, especially its technology configuration, which is comparable to the premium luxury products. Recently, OMODA 5 has obtained the 2022 "Best Science and Technology SUV Award" issued by Qatar Automobile Association, which can be deemed as a well-deserved reputation.

As a pioneer of future, OMODA 5 is equipped with multiple intelligent technologies, which not only brings an immersive intelligent driving experience to fashionable users, but

also effectively improves the active and passive safety performance.

OMODA 5 adopts two 10.25-inch seamless duplex screens, and the combination of one core and two screens realizes the interconnection between the central control and instruments, breaking the inherent shape of the central control screen. In addition, the INS multi-color luminous AC controller boasts atmosphere lights of 64 colors, which can not only be linked with the driving mode and unlocking/ door opening state, but also present the fantastic effect of breathing lights with the change of air conditioner



temperature and music rhythm, as if you were in the parallel universe with a stunning and dynamic feeling.

In the intelligent cabin of OMODA 5, the user may control the execution of various functions of the vehicle through the ASR system instead of pressing keys, thus realizing convenient and fast control of multimedia, air conditioner, and

other devices. Moreover, OMODA 5 has the functions of remote unlocking and vehicle starting. The user may turn on the air conditioner in advance and locate the vehicle via remote control, thus enjoying a more reassuring travel.

What's more, OMODA 5 has just won a "five-star" security

Among them, the ADAS system equipped with OMODA 5, which has more than 16 functions, has achieved comprehensive superior performance in intelligent configuration, making great contributions to the "five-star" security rating.

As a fashionable and rating issued by Euro NCAP. personalized product specially created for global young people, while embracing young users, OMODA 5 has stayed committed to chasing personalities, pursuing fashion trends and exploring the charm of intelligent technology together with global young urban

QATAR



HE Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz al-Khulaifi and other officials.

Georgetown students learn about real-world diplomacy during assistant FM's visit

t Qatar Foundation partner Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q), Qatari diplomats and government officials enrolled in Georgetown University's Executive Master's in Diplomacy and International Affairs (EMDIA) programme welcomed HE Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz al-Khulaifi, Assistant Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs at the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

The event was part of an EM-DIA course on 'Small States and Alliances' co-taught by Dr Rory Miller, professor at GU-Q, and Dr Fahad al-Marri, postdoctoral fellow at GU-Q, who are also the co-leads of the Small States Research Programme.

The topic of HE Dr al-Khulaifi's presentation was 'Qatar's Dispute Resolution Role in Regional Cases'.

The talk was followed by an "engaging and illuminating" question-and-answer session, a press statement noted.

Students also had the opportunity to discuss a hypothetical scenario in regional dispute resolution as a way to further develop their skills in dealing with real-world situations.

"We were very honoured to host HE al-Khulaifi. He provid-

The challenges facing the

International Humanitarian

Law (IHL) were discussed in

detail at an event hosted by

Humanitarian Studies (CHS), in

collaboration with the Human

Rights Programme at the Doha

Institute for Graduate Studies

Society (QRCS), on Monday.

Marco Sassòli, professor of IHL

and director of the Department

of Public International Law and

International Organisations at

public lecture, shed light on the

the University of Geneva, in a

theoretical law concepts and

its practical aspects, the role of

the region in law enforcement,

light of the escalating intensity

globally, especially in Ukraine,

Ethiopia, and other conflicts.

discussing IHL, its axes and

such as human rights law

relationship with other laws.

studies, and conflict studies.

It distinguished between the

types of international and non-

international armed conflicts,

and some cases which are no

longer classified as an armed

conflict, such as the case of

Prof Sassòli presented the

and the laxity in holding

accountable violations and

former Sudanese president

Omar al-Bashir is being held

accountable whilst turning a

blind eye to Israeli violations

against Palestinian civilians.

recent challenges facing IHL,

such as the double standards

of the international community

crimes by some parties - where

Afghanistan.

international relations, security

and pace of armed conflicts

Yemen, Palestine, Syria,

The lecture focused on

and ways to enhance the respect and application of it in

and Qatar Red Crescent

Challenges facing International

Humanitarian Law discussed

ed our students with invaluable real-world insights on some of the key issues in regional diplomacy in the contemporary era," said Dr Miller.

Dr al-Marri said, "We are grateful that His Excellency took time out of his busy schedule to contribute to our goal of providing Qatari diplomats and other students with both the practical and theoretical knowledge to help them in their professional roles".

The EMDIA master's degree programme is open to highly qualified Qatari diplomats nominated by the MoFA, Qatari officials engaged in foreign or national security policy nominated by their ministries, and other practitioners from the Middle East region nominated by their governments.

Through the programme, students and working professionals gain a deep understanding of the complex global issues facing governments, organisations and individuals, as well as the tools and strategies needed to navigate these challenges.

Information about the programme and how to enrol is available on the website of Georgetown University in Washing-

that the absence of a clear

definition of terrorism posed

Ukrainian conflict, pointing

to the fact that the violations

committed by the Ukrainian

committed by the Russian side,

as well as within the contexts

of the conflicts in Afghanistan,

Yemen, Syria, and Palestine.

Prof Sassoli also stressed the

operations that only serve to

harm civilians, and to activate

need to respect IHL during

indiscriminate targeting

mechanisms of dialogue between the conflicting parties

in IHL, including non-state

QRCS hosted Prof Sassòli in a

closed discussion session on

Sunday. Attended by academics,

legal experts, and the relevant

institutions, the session tackled

of IHL in the Middle East and

North Africa (Mena) region.

It also concentrated on the

pivotal role of international law

in protecting civilians during

armed conflict in different

challenges that are facing

its application. The session

discussed the possibility of

parties in raising the level

of respect for IHL, and the

around IHL rights amongst

Prof Sassoli has served as a

Committee of the Red Cross

(ICRC) and as a professor

in number of prestigious

universities and academic

potential victims.

adapting IHL to contemporary

conflicts, the role of the different

importance of raising awareness

legal official in the International

regions, and the current

the application and enforcement

armed groups.

side are no less than those

a 'challenge' to the application

of IHI. He talked about the role

QU, Al-Attiyah Foundation enhance co-operation

atar University (QU) and the Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah International Foundation for Energy and Sustainable Development yesterday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance bilateral co-operation in areas of common interest.

The MoU was signed by Vice-President of QU for Research and Graduate Studies, Prof Mariam al-Ali al-Maadeed, and member of the Al-Attiyah Foundation's Board of Trustees, Fahad bin Hamad al-Mohannadi

Under the MoU, the two parties would exchange expertise and information, including bulletins, periodicals, studies, statistics and data, as well as the co-operation in organising conferences, meetings, training, and other possible fields.

Al-Maadeed said the MoU represents an advanced step towards achieving the goal of sustainable development in broader access to energy and improving the efficiency of using renewable energy by 2030.

She added that both sides share many common goals in energy and sustainable devel-





opment, contributing to the best implementation of sustainable national development

projects and programmes. She stressed the MoU will enhance the university's work related to research, sustainable development and climate change, and achieve the university's mission to excel in studies and research related to local and regional challenges and contribute positively to achieving the needs of society and the country.

HE the President of Al-Attiyah Foundation, Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah, who virtually attended the signing ceremony, said that co-operation with QU practically translates the goals of social responsibility that the Foundation seeks to achieve, and turns them into joint programmes and activities that contribute to improving aspects of social development in Oatar.

He added that "the MoU expresses Al-Attiyah Foundation's confidence in the importance of co-operation with QU as a distinguished scientific beacon and pioneering academic edifice, noting that the MoU seeks to establish a strategic partnership between the two parties and to enhance means of cooperation in a number of fields. the most prominent of which is the exchange of experiences in the academic and research field, and the use of experts in various aspects of common interest."

Al-Mohannadi said that the strong and effective relationship between both sides dates back to years ago, and is based on common values and aspirations with regard to education and sustainable energy.

He pointed out that a group of Al-Attiyah Foundation experts gave lectures and presentations to postgraduate students on various topics. (QNA)

Doha Film Institute announces mega project

By Joey Aguilar

Staff Reporter

Aspiring actors in Qatar will have the chance to be part of one of the country's most significant feature film projects produced by the Doha Film Institute (DFI) to date, with 200 secondary and 30 major roles.
"We are proud to be producing one of the

largest and most prominent feature film projects in the history of Qatar, and it will be shot at several locations across the country," DFI posted on its social media pages.

DFI noted that it is now looking for actors and actresses from "our diverse creative community" to take part in the film.
Auditions, it added, are open to all valid QID-

holders of any age, gender, nationality and acting experience.

"Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend, as there are over 200 background roles and 30 feature roles available," DFI stressed.
DFI said it is keen to be meeting both aspiring and established actors who

are interested in being

considered for roles in

as short films by emerging Qatari filmmakers have brought together various talents in Qatar. The institute also organises workshops for aspiring professional film actors and directors, and "trains participants in the art of filming great

performances"

projects produced through

DFI's previous projects such

its Oatari Film Fund.

Calling All Aspiring Actors!

Be Part of Qatai Filmmaking History.
Auditions are open to all wald
QO-holders of any age, grotes, reationality and acting experience.
Apply Hood:

التابية اللهاية المداولة حوالم المداولة المداولة على المداولة المداولة على المداولة المداولة على المداولة المداو



The Qatari delegation was headed by Mashael Ali al-Hammadi, Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Information Technology Affairs at MCIT.

MCIT delegation visits UN HQ to enhance digital government indices

n official delegation from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) visited the UN headquarters in New York City, US, to enhance direct co-operation with the UN, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the UN University, in addition to research and co-ordination to develop and improve indicators for Qatar, specifically the UN egovernment index.

The Qatari delegation was headed by Mashael Ali al-Hammadi, Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Information Technology Affairs at MCIT. She was accompanied by a number of MCIT officials, Dr Hassan al-Derbasti, director of Planning and Quality Department; Abdulla al-Emadi; Yousuf al-Sahlawi; and Ali al-Kubaisi.

The Qatari delegation met with senior UN officials and experts and discussed ways to improve indicators related to digital government in Qatar. Insights were provided on global trends in the areas of digital government, sustainable development, integrated electronic services, citizen engagement, open government data, and the use of emerging technologies, such as synthetic technology, data analytics, cloud technology, APIs, and the Internet of Things.

Al-Hammadi said: "This visit is an important opportunity to review Qatar's most important achievements and successes in the field of digital government for these prestigious international institutions, as well as enhance the ministry's knowledge of how international organisations evaluate member states and understand global trends in this regard, in addition to strengthening co-operation with experts in the UN and direct access to the latest plans and strategies to improve government services. This will reflect positively on the country's evaluation in the upcoming surveys of the digital government index." She added: "We will continue

She added: "We will continue to work closely with the UN and other international organisations to strengthen digital government capacities and explore innovative solutions to drive progress towards sustainable development goals."

development goals.

"We also recognise the need to act as a global community to address the challenges and opportunities provided by technologies on an ongoing basis, so we look forward to working with our colleagues from member states of the UN to promote the principle of co-operation in the field of digital government."

The visit is an important step in Qatar's ongoing efforts to strengthen its digital government capabilities and services and to provide its citizens with the best possible digital services that would improve the lives of their citizens and support the process of sustainable development.

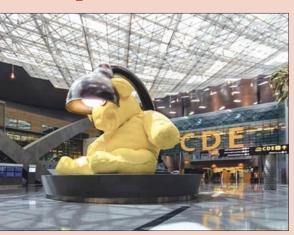
Ford model recalled

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Almana Motors Company, has announced the recall of Ford Territory, 2023 model, due to a defect in the vehicle software in affected vehicles. Some radio channels may not be selectable at their usual frequency. In addition, some channels cannot be searched manually or automatically.

The recall campaign comes within the framework of the MoCl's continuous efforts to protect consumers and ensure that dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The MoCl said it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out.

The MoCI urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquires and suggestions through the following channels: call centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, Twitter: @MOCIQATAR, Instagram: MOCIQATAR, MoCI mobile app for android and iOS: MOCIQATAR

Qatar Airways, QDF announce Avios can now be collected and spent at HIA



of Oatar Airways Privilege Club (ORPC) will be able to collect and spend Avios at almost 200 outlets at Hamad International Airport (HIA) in partnership with Qatar Duty Free (QDF). This came into effect yesterday. In another innovation, passengers at all departure points will be rewarded with Avios points upon check in, which will be credited up to 120 minutes before their flights' departure, Qatar Airways said in a statement. This will allow members of Oatar Airways Privilege Club to then collect and spend Avios at the World's Best Airport as part of their journey. Avios can be used in an expansive list of luxury fashion outlets and worldclass dining options at the HIA, which has recently launched a major expansion which features a luxury shopping hub, Orchard, set in a tropical garden that includes one-of-a-kind brand offerings. **Qatar Airways Group** Chief Executive HE Akbar al-Baker said, "We have enhanced and upgraded our redemption options for our loyalty members and we are

In an industry first, members

enabling access to a truly unique airport shopping and dining experience. A first-in-the-world initiative. this demonstrates our commitment for going the extra mile when enhancing the quality of our offerings by providing members with a seamless experience. We encourage everyone travelling through HIA to avail themselves of this experience and opportunity as there has never been an easier way to collect and spend Avios.' Avios is the reward currency of Qatar Airways Privilege Club and preferred currency of the airline, offering its most regular flyers extraordinary payment products. Avios can be used in conjunction with cash offering a part payment option. Avios are collected when members or their nominated family members fly with Qatar Airways, oneworld airlines, plus QR's airline partners. Avios can also be collected with more than 100 global partners and co-branded payment cards. Avios can be spent in multiple ways and the most recent enhancement is shopping and dining at Qatar



Prof Marco Sassoli delivering the lecture.



OFFICIAL.

Egypt's Sisi heads to India amid investment push

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi begins a visit to India today where he will meet business leaders and be a guest of honour at India's January 26 Republic Day. The trip will include discussions on strengthening economic relations between the two countries and reviewing opportunities for Indian investment in Egypt, a statement from the Egyptian presidency said. Egypt is trying to drum up foreign investment as it tries to manage a dollar shortage that has led to a sharp depreciation of the Egyptian pound. Last year it sought help from Gulf allies and the International Monetary Fund after the economic fallout from the war in Ukraine exacerbated its underlying challenges.

DECISIO

Twitter account of Indian actress restored after ban

The Twitter account of leading Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut has been restored two years after she was banned following a tweet urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to subdue one of his political opponents. Ranaut sent a screenshot of her Twitter handle @KanganaTeam from her Instagram account yesterday and said she was "glad to be back on Twitter". Twitter did not immediately respond to a query from Reuters on the restoration of Ranaut's account. Twitter suspended Ranaut's account in May 2021 for "repeated violations" of its hateful conduct and abusive behaviour policies. Ranaut is known for her ardent support of Modi.

India minister queries top court's revelations

A recent action of India's Supreme Court in making public some details of reports by intelligence agencies regarding the selection of judges was a matter of "grave concern", the law minister said. A deadlock in appointments of judges to some High Courts stems from a difference of opinion between the judiciary and the government, which wants a greater say in their selection, a move some legal experts see as a bid to influence the judiciary. "Putting in the public domain sacred and sensitive reports of RAW and IB is a matter of grave concern," Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said, referring to intelligence agencies, the Research and Analysis Wing and the Intelligence Bureau.

Britain's Princess Eugenie pregnant with second child

Britain's Princess Eugenie, a niece of King Charles, is expecting her second child with husband Jack Brooksbank later this year, she announced yesterday. Eugenie married Brooksbank at Windsor Castle in 2018 and their first child, a son named August, was born in February 2021. "We're so excited to share that there will be a new addition to our family this summer," Eugenie said on her Instagram page, alongside a picture of her with son August. Eugenie, 11th in line to the British throne, is the younger daughter of the king's brother Prince Andrew and his ex-wife Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York.

New Zealand premier bids emotional farewell

Jacinda Ardern yesterday bid an emotional farewell on her last day as prime minister, speaking of the kindness and empathy New Zealanders have shown her, but said she was ready to be a sister and a mother. Days after stunning the world by announcing she had "no more in the tank" to lead the country and would step down, the 42-year-old arrived at a gathering of politicians and Maori elders in the small town of Ratana, north of the capital Wellington, and was instantly surrounded by supporters seeking photographs. "Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the greatest privilege of my life," Ardern told the gathering in a speech.

China offers Lanka debt moratorium

Reuters

New Delhi/Colombo

he Export-Import Bank of China has offered Sri Lanka a two-year moratorium on its debt and said it will support the country's efforts to secure a \$2.9bn loan from the International Monetary Fund, according to a letter reviewed by Reuters.

Regional rivals China and India are the biggest bilateral lenders to Sri Lanka, a country of 22mn people that is facing its worst economic crisis in seven decades.

India wrote to the IMF earlier this month, saying it would commit to supporting Sri Lanka with financing and debt relief, but the island nation also needs the backing of China in order to reach a final agreement with the global lender.

However, China's January 19 letter, sent to the finance ministry, may not be enough for Sri Lanka to immediately gain the IMF's approval for the critical loan, a Sri Lankan source with

knowledge of the matter said.

According to the letter, China
EximBank said it was going to
provide "an extension on the
debt service due in 2022 and 2023
as an immediate contingency
measure" based on Sri Lanka's
request

At the end of 2020, China EximBank had loaned Sri Lanka \$2.83bn which is 3.5% of the island's debt, according to an IMF report released in March last

"You will not have to repay the principal and interest due of the bank's loans during the abovementioned period," the letter

"Meanwhile, we would like to expedite the negotiation process with your side regarding medium and long-term debt treatment in this window period."

Sri Lanka owed Chinese lenders \$7.4bn, or nearly a fifth of its public external debt, by the end of last year, calculations by the China Africa Research Initiative

"The bank will support Sri Lanka in your application for the IMF Extended Fund Facility (EFF) to help relieve the liquidity strain," China's letter said.

One Sri Lankan source, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the confidential discussions, said the island nation had hoped for a clear assurance from Beijing on the lines of what India provided to the IMF.

"China was expected to do more," the source said, "This is much less than what is required and expected of them."

In a letter directly addressed to the IMF, India said last week that the financing or debt relief provided by Export-Import Bank of India would be consistent with restoring debt sustainability under the IMF-supported programme.

Another government source with direct knowledge of the talks told Reuters that Sri Lanka would likely share China's letter with the IMF and seek their opinion on its contents.

"That may be the best way to understand if this is in line with the IMF's expectations or stronger assurances are needed," the source said. It is unclear what debt re-

lief major lenders such as China

– the world's largest bilateral
lender – and India are willing to
make further down the line.

Western countries such as

Western countries such as the US and multilateral lenders are pressing Beijing to offer debt relief to emerging economies in distress, and have criticised Beijing for slow progress.

However, news from Zambia on Monday suggests China could be playing a more proactive role.

Speaking in the capital Lusaka, the head of the International Monetary Fund Kristalina Georgieva said the lender had reached an understanding in principle with China about plans to restructure Zambia's debt.

China will de facto accept NPV (net present value) reduction on the basis of significant stretching of the maturities and reduction of interest, Georgieva said.

Sri Lanka's foreign and finance ministries and China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to questions

Three dead in India building crash



Three people were killed and dozens feared trapped after a four-storey building collapsed in India, officials said yesterday. The state's deputy chief minister Brajesh Pathak said three people had been killed in the accident in the northern city of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh state. The state's director general of police (DGP) said the collapse appeared to be the effect of an earthquake that occurred earlier in the day. A 5.8-magnitude earthquake struck western Nepal yesterday afternoon, around 440km from Lucknow.

UN Palestinian refugee agency seeks \$1.6bn

AFP Geneva

he UN agency for Palestinian refugees yesterday appealed for \$1.6bn for its work in 2023, and called for Arab countries especially to show more solidarity.

UNRWA — which provides services to nearly 6mn Palestinians registered in the Palestinian territories, including Israeliannexed east Jerusalem, as well as in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria — warned that "compounding challenges" had placed it under "immense strain".

"immense strain".

The agency, which counts

nearly 30,000 staff — most of them Palestinian refugees — runs more than 700 schools that offer education to half a million children, and provides health, sanitation and social services, including food and cash assistance.

Out of the \$1.6bn requested, UNRWA said \$848mn was needed for such core services.

It said another \$781.6mn was needed for emergency operations

UNRWA warned that the needs have been skyrocketing as global crises, inflation and disruptions in global supply chains have contributed to surging poverty and unemployment levels among Palestinians.

But despite growing needs, its budget and the amount appealed for have not budged for three years, amid an unwillingness by donors to boost funding levels.

UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini launched the appeal at a meeting with donors in Geneva, explaining that what the agency was asking for was really the minimum required.

"We can ask the double, but... the resources over the last 10 years have stagnated," he said. "There is a kind of glass ceiling, which shows that there hasn't been a readiness to go beyond this."

He pointed to general donor fatigue at a time when multiple

global crises are competing for attention and funds.

"It is not very popular, politically, in donors countries to substantially increase support to UNRWA," he said.

UNRWA has long faced chronic budget shortfalls, which worsened dramatically in 2018 when former US president Donald Trump cut support to the agency. His administration branded UNRWA "irredeemably flawed", siding with Israeli criticisms of the agency founded in 1949, a year after Israel's creation.

US President Joe Biden's administration has fully restored support, providing \$340mn in 2022, making it the agency's

Two hundred children who

arrived in the UK seeking

largest donor. But UNRWA is still struggling.

Last year, it raised less than \$1.2bn of the \$1.6bn it had appealed for, Lazzarini said.

"It is true that in 2022 we

"It is true that in 2022, we succeeded to keep all our services running for the Palestinian refugees," he said, adding though that this "came at a cost, at a very high cost."

"For the fourth consecutive year, we are ending with a large deficit of above \$70mn."

Lazzarini called especially on Arab countries to translate the solidarity they express with the Palestinians "into tangible and substantial resources to UNRWA."

Judge probing Beirut blast takes aim at top justice officials

AFP Beirut

ebanon's judge Tarek Bitar, who is investigating the deadly 2020 Beirut port blast, has charged Lebanon's top prosecutor and seven others with probable intent to murder, arson and other crimes, an official said yesterday.

Bitar had sparked surprise in Lebanon a day before when he charged eight top security and judicial officials, among them prosecutor general Ghassan Oueidat, reviving a probe that was suspended for over a year amid vehement political and legal pushback.

The more than one dozen senior officials now in his sights over the disaster also include the head of general security, Abbas Ibrahim, and state security agency chief Tony Saliba, summoning them for questioning next month.

The Beirut port blast of August 4, 2020 — one of history's biggest non-nuclear explosions — destroyed most of Beirut port and swathes of the capital, killing more than 215 people and injuring over 6,500.

Authorities said the megaexplosion was sparked by a fire in a portside warehouse, where a vast stockpile of the volatile industrial chemical ammonium nitrate had been haphazardly stored for years.

Relatives of the dead have been holding monthly vigils, seeking justice and accountability over the disaster which they blame on the crisis-torn country's entrenched ruling class, which is widely deemed inept and corrupt.

A US state department spokesperson yesterday said that "we support and urge Lebanese authorities to complete a swift and transparent investigation into the horrific explocion at the Port of Beigut"

sion at the Port of Beirut". Lebanese state institutions have been reluctant to cooperate with the probe, which began the same month as the explosion.

The prosecution service rejected the resumption of the probe, according to a document seen by AFP yesterday.

"We were only informed of Bitar's decision through the media," Oueidat, the top prosecutor, said. "Since he considers that the general prosecution doesn't exist, we will also act like he doesn't exist."

Bitar's probe has been met with strong opposition from government figures.

Demonstrations were held to demand his dismissal in October 2021, when a gun battle broke out at a Beirut rally and seven people were killed.

"Port investigation: Tarek Bitar has gone mad," ran the headline of the *Al-Akhbar* daily, which also accused him of acting "on the basis of American orders and with European judicial support".

Tourists flock to Manila



Travellers from China arrive at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, in Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines, yesterday.

200 young unaccompanied asylum-seekers missing: UK

asylum without their parents in the last 18 months are missing, Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick said yesterday. Thirteen of them are under 16 and one is a girl, he told parliament, adding that they were mostly Albanian. The Observer newspaper on Sunday said young asylum-seekers were being "kidnapped" by criminal gangs outside their hotel in Brighton in southern England, "Children are literally being picked up from outside the building, disappearing and not being found. They're being taken from the street by traffickers," a source working for government contractor Mitie told the newspaper. Sussex Police said they had received no reports of people being kidnapped from hotels in Brighton, but that it did receive a report of two children housed at one of the hotels getting into a car nearby in May 2022. "The vehicle was stopped on the M25 (motorway) and two men were arrested on suspicion of intent

to commit human trafficking," said the force. "Three young passengers were taken into the care of the Home Office.' Jenrick said that since July 2021 there have been "440 missing occurrences", where asylum seekers did not return to their hotels, where they are staying voluntarily. He added that there was "a significant security presence at the hotel" along with nurses and social workers. "Those security guards are there to protect the staff and the minors and to raise any suspicious activity immediately with the local police," said the minister. Eighty-eight percent of the missing incidents involve Albanian nationals. "When any child goes missing, a multi-agency missing persons protocol is mobilised alongside the police and relevant local authority," Jenrick said, "Many of those who have gone missing are subsequently traced," he said. More than 200.000 missing incidents are recorded in children's care facilities across England and Wales each year, according to government figures.



COMMENT

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GULF & TIMES

Recession fears ebbing, but world economy not out of the woods yet

As 2022 was drawing to a close, there were mounting concerns that the war in Ukraine, energy crisis, soaring inflation and the rising cost of servicing debt could trigger a global recession.

But a variety of factors – a sooner-than-expected reopening of China's economy, a warmer-than-normal winter in energy-strapped Europe and a sustained fall in US inflation – are combining to dissipate some of the gloom that engulfed financial markets at the end of 2022 and fanning hopes the world can dodge a recession.

Data released on Friday showed the UK economy unexpectedly growing in November, and Germany also avoiding contraction at the end of 2022.

"It is less bad than we feared a couple of months ago," Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, said at the final WEF panel discussion on Friday. She signalled that the IMF may raise its previous forecast of

2.7% global growth for this year at the end of the month, while still cautioning against high expectations.

European Central Bank president Christine Lagarde was

similarly upbeat for the eurozone economy, saying the "news has become much more positive in the last few weeks".

The rhetoric has shifted from talk of a recession in the 20-nation club to "a small contraction", she said.

Europe's economy grew in January for the first time since June, a closely watched survey showed yesterday. The S&P Global Flash Eurozone purchasing managers' index (PMI) rose to 50.2 in January from 49.3 in December.

A figure higher than 50 indicates growth.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz told Bloomberg that his country, which was heavily reliant on Russian gas before the war.

"It is less bad than we feared a couple of months ago," says IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva will avoid a recession that had been previously predicted for Europe's biggest economy.

The world economy may also get another boost from China's decision to scrap its zero-Covid policy.

Vice Premier Liu He told the WEF that the situation in his country has "comprehensively returned to normal".

For sure, there are some reasons for the guarded optimism.

Price pressures are easing worldwide, in part because global growth has slowed but also due to an untangling of supply chains that were tied in knots by the pandemic and Russia's invasion of

Ukraine.
US consumer prices rose 6.5% in December from a year earlier, down from a high of 9.1% in June.

The ebbing of inflation will support the purchasing power of consumers who spent much of the last year squeezed by rising prices, especially for such essentials as energy, food and rents.

The world economy, nevertheless, is not out of the woods just yet. With the Federal Reserve, the ECB and several peers still pushing ahead with higher interest rates, the risk of a slump later in the year can't be dismissed, especially if inflation proves sticky and doesn't retreat as much as central banks want.

Despite the budding optimism, the World Bank has slashed its growth forecasts for most countries and regions, and warned new shocks could still lead to a recession.

It would mark "the third weakest pace of growth in nearly three decades, overshadowed only by the global recessions caused by the pandemic and the global financial crisis," the World Bank said.

While the risk of a near-term global recession has diminished, there's still a 70% chance of a slump later this year or in 2024, according to JPMorgan Chase & Co chief economist Bruce Kasman.

The bottom line: The world economy has begun the new year on a more optimistic note, though there's still now no guarantee 2023 will end on a stronger note.

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Holding fort: South Africa assumes the Brics mantle



Ghulam Hoosein AsmalAmbassador of the Republic of South Africa to Qatar

n January 1, 2023, South Africa assumed the role of the Chair of Brics for 2023 and envisages hosting the 15th Brics Summit of Heads of State and Government during August this year.

August this year.

Brics is an acronym for the influential plurilateral grouping of some of the world's leading emerging market economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

The five countries of Brics are home to almost 40% of the world's population, 30% of land coverage, 18% of world trade, and 25% of the global nominal GDP. Their collective contribution to global economic growth over the last decade has almost reached 50%, which makes this group of states a leading power in global economic development.

Brics aims to promote peace and security towards a just multi-polar world order based on the rule of international law, equality, mutual respect, cooperation, co-ordinated action and collective decision-making of all states.

Brics has not only enhanced the voice of emerging markets and developing countries in the world, but also established itself as an important platform for promoting South-South co-operation. Brics co-operation has been widely recognised by developing countries, and its status and role in multilateral mechanisms such as the United Nations, the G20, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Fund (IMF).

In the midst of the current post
Covid-19 global economic crisis, many
countries in the world are looking to Brics
member states as the new locomotives for
global economic growth and to provide
renewed impetus to global economic
co-operation. For example, Brics trade
and investment with low-income
countries have served as an alternative to
traditional financial players and a major
support system in the wake of the global
financial crisis.

For the duration of South Africa's Chairship of Brics, it has adopted the theme: "Brics and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism."

The theme reflects the value of Brics as a partnership of leading emerging markets and developing countries to provide leadership and momentum towards global growth, sustainable development, and meaningful and equal

participation of the global South in the global system. It also emphasises the need to restructure the global political, economic, and financial architecture to be more equitable, balanced and representative.

South Africa's membership within Brics is consistent with its foreign policy objectives of strengthening South-South relations especially within the context of international relations and co-operation between Asian, African, and Latin American countries – collectively known as countries of the South.

South Africa's positive role in global governance structures as well as its position within organisations of the South, notably the African Union (AU), the Group of G77 (G77) and China and Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is appreciated by Brics and other likeminded partners.

South Africa is also the only African country represented in the Group of 20 (G20), which has become an important institution on the reform of the financial and economic global governance architecture.

Over the past 16 years since the establishment of Brics, the foundation for co-operation has been consolidated and the areas of co-operation have been expanded.

Brics has become an all-round and multi-level framework, with Brics summit playing a leading role, supported by Brics Meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Meetings of National Security Advisers, carrying out practical co-operation in dozens of areas such as economy and trade, finance, science and technology, industry, agriculture, culture, education, health, think tanks, and friendship cities.

and friendship cities.
With the growing strength of the five countries, Brics co-operation has deepened and become more tangible. The influence of Brics co-operation has gone beyond the five countries and become a constructive force for boosting world economic growth, improving global governance, and promoting democracy in international relations.

South Africa's theme for 2023 is "Brics and Africa: Partnership

for Mutually Accelerated Growth,
Sustainable Development and Inclusive
Multilateralism" emphasises that Brics
co-operation responds to the needs of
the larger international community,
and should provide leadership and
momentum towards global growth,
sustainable development, and inclusion
of the global South in the world system

of the global South in the world system.
The following priorities encapsulate

Firstly, developing a partnership towards an equitable just transition

Recent erratic weather experiences have confirmed that climate change is a growing threat to human wellbeing. Consequently, tackling climate change requires urgent, significant, and transformational changes across all sectors of the economy. Brics is committed to exploring opportunities to manage the risks associated with climate change and consequently improving the lives and futures of the global citizenry.

Secondly, transforming education

and skills development for the future
Education and continuous skills
development are long term solutions
towards development and eradicating
poverty. Under this priority, existing
co-operation and initiatives towards
knowledge creation and knowledge
exchange to unlock opportunities for the
future will be pursued.

Thirdly, unlocking opportunities through the African Continental Free Trade Agreement

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement establishes the largest free trade area in the world measured by the number of countries participating. The pact connects 1.3bn people across 55 countries with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) valued at US\$3.4tn. It has the potential to lift 30mn people out of extreme poverty.

Thus, the AfĆFTA creates a predictable environment for investments in Africa by the Brics partners, particularly in infrastructure development. Under this priority, priority will be given to building

a partnership between Brics and Africa to unlock mutually beneficial opportunities for increased trade, investment, and infrastructure development.

Fourthly, strengthening postpandemic socio-economic recovery and the attainment of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Developmen

The 2030 Agenda contains a set of shared objectives, known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs cover issues the promotion of decent work, the fight against poverty, inequalities and climate change, the need for greater gender equality, free quality education and stronger institutions.

Under this priority, strategies towards placing Brics economies at the centre of global economic growth and post Covid-19 recovery will be embarked upon.

Brics will look to identify solutions for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and promote that equity, fairness, and a recognition of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities should underpin the Brics response.

Lastly, strengthening multilateralism, including working toward real reform of global governance institutions and strengthening the meaningful participation of women in peace processes

Without compromising on the common vision of a more equitable, fair, balanced, just and representative global political, economic, and financial system, Brics will build on recent reform achievements. It will identify achievable, meaningful, and timeous reforms that can be realised under pressure of collective voice and influence.

South Africa recognises the importance to address the marginalisation of women in peace processes as lasting peace, security and sustainable development cannot be achieved without the inclusion of women in conflict resolution as well as in post conflict reconstruction.





Power returns to Pakistan a day after massive outage

By Nasir Jaffry and Kaneez Fatima, AFP



A power transmission tower is seen a day after a country-wide power breakdown in Karachi yesterday. (Reuters)

The national power grid was restored in Pakistan, the energy minister said yesterday, a day after a nationwide breakdown left most of the country's 220mn people without electricity and caused tens of millions of dollars in industry losses. The outage started around 7:30am on Monday, a

failure linked to a cost-cutting measure as Pakistan grapples with an economic crisis.

Energy Minister Khurram Dastgir Khan said the grid was repaired at around 5:15am but load-shedding would continue over the next two days as coal and nuclear plants were brought back online. "There is a need to invest in the energy sector,

especially to improve the distribution system, which has long been neglected," he told reporters in Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed "sincere regrets for the inconvenience our citizens suffered".

An inquiry is under way and "responsibility will be

fixed", he said on Twitter. Electricity returned to urban centres overnight, including the mega cities of Karachi and Lahore. Secretary-General of the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association Shahid Sattar estimated losses of \$70mn to the sector, Pakistan's largest exporter and a crucial booster of foreign exchange reserves. Around 90% of factories were shut down on Monday, with natural gas supplies too "patchy" to stand in, he said.

"Each time there is a power cut the mill has to be restarted from scratch, which takes up a lot of time and resources," he told AFP.

"We can't pick up from where we stopped. All that thread that's in the middle of being dyed and treated, et cetera, cannot be used again. So we face massive losses that way.'

Khan pledged that industries would be guarded from the load-shedding anticipated in the coming

The economy is already hobbled by rampant inflation, a falling rupee and severely low foreign exchange reserves, with the power cut piling extra

pressure on small businesses. Pakistan's power system is complex and precarious, and problems can quickly cascade. Khan earlier said a variation in frequency on the

national grid caused the initial breakdown, as power generation units were turned on early Monday

The units are temporarily switched off on winter nights to save fuel, he had told reporters. Localised power cuts and load-shedding are daily government institutions are often kept running by private generators. But the machines are beyond the means of most citizens and small businesses. In Karachi, hundreds of water pumps were also offline during the power cut, heaping more problems on the more than 15mn residents of Pakistan's

Schools mostly continued either in the dark or using battery-powered lighting.

A similar breakdown in January 2021 affected the entire country, after a fault occurred in southern Pakistan, tripping the national transmission system.

By Ariba Shahid and Waseem Sattar, Reuters

Pakistan's worst power outage in months

became a source of humour for some in the

country of 220mn, where an energy network

frequent blackouts and electricity rationing.

mobile phone services, it didn't stop many

"Scenes at the home of that friend who has

In a village outside the southeastern city

of Jacobabad in Sindh province, a Reuters

correspondent saw a single solar panel on the

"Nowadays everybody has solar panels ... but

they face trouble at night because they have

no other source of power," said Sara Khan, the

principal of a girls' school in Jacobabad, which

In many big cities, including the capital

Islamabad and financial hub Karachi, many

sources: solar panels, uninterrupted power

residents have installed at least three backup

supply (UPS) units and fuel-powered generators. "Electricity problems are common here," said Karachi-based lawyer Ishtiaq Ahmed. "People have alternative arrangements, but these also

A popular meme taken from a Spiderman comic book showed three Spidermen standing in a circle, pointing to each other and saying "I have a UPS but it isn't charged"; "I have a generator that runs on fuel, but there is no fuel"; "I have a solar

last up to 18 hours a day.

have their limit."

panel but there is no sunlight".

regularly goes through scheduled blackouts that

roof of the one-room home of a family of melon

solar panels," Twitter user @zoeneedstherapy

captioned a photo showing a single power outlet

with five mobile phone chargers sticking out of

media to share jokes and memes.

desperately in need of an upgrade can lead to

Although the outage affected the Internet and

Pakistanis from taking to Twitter and other social

Germany to okay heavy battle tanks for Ukraine

- Poland submits request to Germany to supply tanks to Kyiv
- US may drop opposition to providing Abrams tanks
- **■** Ukraine officials dismissed in biggest shake-up of war

By Andreas Rinke and Tom **Balmforth. Reuters**

ermany will send Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine and allow other countries such as Poland to do the same to help Kyiv fight off Russia's invasion, while the United States may supply Abrams tanks, two sources familiar with the matter told Reuters.

While there was no official confirmation from Berlin or Washington by late yesterday, officials in Kyiv swiftly hailed what they said was a potential gamechanger on the battlefield in a war that is now 11 months

"A few hundred tanks for our tank crews - the best tank crews in the world. This is what is going to become a real punching fist of democracy against the autocracy from the bog," Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's administration. wrote on Telegram.

Kyiv has pleaded for months for Western tanks that it says it desperately needs to give its forces the firepower and mobility to break through Russian defensive lines and recapture occupied territory in the east and south.

government A German spokesperson and the foreign and the defence ministries in Berlin declined to comment.

The German decision concerns at least one company of Leopard 2 A6 tanks, said Der Spiegel magazine, which first reported the news. One company usually comprises 14 tanks.

"Today, the Chancellor made a decision that no-one took lightly. The fact that Germany will support Ukraine with the Leopard tank is a strong sign of solidarity," Christian Duerr, parliamentary leader of the co-governing Free Democrats (FDP), was quoted as saying by t-online news portal.

yesterday, Separately Ukraine dismissed more than a dozen senior officials including governors of several major

battlefield provinces, part of an anti-corruption drive by Zelensky's government made more critical by the need to keep its Western backers onside.

Among Ukrainian officials who resigned or were dismissed yesterday were the governors of the Kyiv, Sumy, Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. Kherson, Zaporizhzhia and adjacent Dnipropetrovsk are frontline provinces now. Kviv and Sumv were major bat tlefields earlier in the war.

A deputy defence minister, a deputy prosecutor, a deputy head of Zelensky's office and two deputy ministers responsible for regional development were among the others who

Some, though not all, had been linked with corruption allegations. Ukraine has a history of graft and shaky governance, and is under international pressure to show it can be a reliable steward of billions of dollars in Western aid.

Zelensky aide Mykhailo Podolyak tweeted: "The presi-

dent sees and hears society. And he directly responds to a key public demand - justice for all."

The purge came two days after a deputy infrastructure minister was arrested and accused of siphoning off \$400,000 from contracts to buy generators - one of the first big corruption scandals to become public since the war began 11 months ago.

The Defence Ministry said Deputy Defence Minister Vyacheslav Shapovalov, responsible for supplying troops, had resigned to retain trust after what it called untrue media accusations of corruption. It followed a newspaper report that the ministry overpaid for food for troops, which the ministry denied.

Kyrylo Tymoshenko, deputy chief of staff in Zelensky's office, announced his own resignation, also citing no reason. He had helped run the president's 2019 election campaign and more recently had a role in overseeing regional policy.

3 dead, gunman on run in state of Washington

A gunman who shot dead three people in what police say was a random attack was being hunted in the western US state of Washington yesterday. The attack came on the heels of two mass shootings in California that have left 18 people dead as the United States grapples yet again with the horror of spiralling gun violence.

Police in the city of Yakima say a man killed three people at a convenience store overnight in an apparently unprovoked attack.

'It appears to be a random situation," Yakima Police

Chief Matthew Murray said. "There was no apparent conflict between the parties.

They just walked in and started shooting." Murray said officers were examining surveillance footage from the area around the Circle K store after the attack at 3:30am.

"The first shooting was inside the store. Then he came outside the store and shot a victim outside the store and then went across the street and apparently shot one more person.

"We have three confirmed deceased parties."

The suspect, named as 21-year-old local Jarid Haddock, then made off in a stolen car from a nearby gas station, Murray said. Police initially believed a fourth victim was in that

car, but later said they did not think any other people had been hurt. "This is a dangerous person and it's random so there

is a danger to the community," he said. 'We don't have a motive, we don't know why. We will do everything we can to locate and apprehend that

US sues Google for 'corrupting competition'

The US Justice Department filed a lawsuit against Alphabet's Google yesterday over allegations that the company abused its dominance of the digital advertising business.

"Google has used anticompetitive, exclusionary, and unlawful means to eliminate or severely diminish any threat to its dominance over digital advertising technologies," the government said in its antitrust complaint. The Justice Department asked the court to compel Google to divest its Google Ad manager suite, including its ad exchange AdX.

Google said the lawsuit is "doubling down on a flawed argument that would slow innovation, raise advertising fees, and make it harder for thousands of small businesses and publishers to grow.'

The lawsuit is the second federal antitrust complaint filed against Google, alleging violations of antitrust law in how the company acquires or maintains its dominance. The Justice Department lawsuit filed against Google in 2020 focuses on its monopoly in search and is scheduled to go to trial in September. Eight states joined the department in the lawsuit filed on Tuesday, including Google's home state of California. Google shares were down 1.6% yesterday. The lawsuit tackles a critical business at Google that is responsible for 80% of its revenue.

Nasa, Pentagon developing nuclear-powered rocket

Nasa is partnering with a Pentagon research agency to develop a nuclear-powered rocket engine in preparation for sending astronauts to Mars. Nasa Administrator Bill Nelson said yesterday that the US space agency will team up with the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to "develop and demonstrate advanced nuclear thermal propulsion technology as soon as 2027." could journey to and from deep space faster than ever – a major capability to prepare for crewed missions to Mars," Nelson said in a statement. DARPA is the Pentagon's research and development arm and has played a role in many of the notable innovations of the 20th century including the Internet. Nasa said nuclear thermal rockets can be three or more times more efficient than conventional chemical propulsion and would reduce transit time. essential for an eventual mission to Mars.

'Doomsday Clock' moves to 90 secs to midnight as N-threat rises

By Katharine Jackson, Reuters Washington

Atomic scientists set the "Doomsday Clock" closer to midnight than ever before yesterday, saying threats of nuclear war, disease, and climate volatility have been exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, putting humanity at greater risk of annihilation.

The "Doomsday Clock," created by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists to illustrate how close humanity has come to the end of the world, moved its "time" in 2023 to 90 seconds to midnight, 10 seconds closer than it has been for the past three years. Midnight on this clock marks the theoretical point of annihilation. The clock's hands are moved closer to or further away from midnight based on scientists' reading of existential threats at a particular time The new time reflects a world in which Russia's invasion of Ukraine has revived

fears of nuclear war. nuclear weapons remind the world that escalation of the conflict by accident, intention or miscalculation is a terrible risk. The possibilities that the conflict could spin out of anyone's control remains high," Rachel Bronson, the bulletin's president and CEO told a news conference in Washington yesterday. The bulletin's announcement will for the



In this handout photo provided by Hastings Group Media yesterday, the Doomsday Clock reads "90 seconds to midnight". (AFP)

first time be translated from English into attention, Bronson said. A Chicago-based non-profit organisation, the bulletin updates the clock's time

annually based on information regarding catastrophic risks to the planet and humanity. The organisation's board of scientists and other experts in nuclear technology and climate science, including 13 Nobel Laureates, discuss world events

the clock each year. Apocalyptic threats reflected by the clock include politics, weapons, technology, climate change and pandemics.

and determine where to place the hands of

The clock had been set to 100 seconds to midnight since 2020, which was already the closest it had ever come to midnight The board said the war in Ukraine had also heightened the risk that biological weapons could be deployed if the conflict continued.

"The continuing stream of disinformation about bioweapons' laboratories in Ukraine raises concerns that Russia itself may be thinking of deploying such weapons," Bronson said.

Sivan Kartha, a bulletin board member and scientist at the Stockholm Environmental Institute, said natural gas prices pushed to new heights by the war had also spurred. companies to develop sources of natural gas outside of Russia and turned power plants to coal as an alternative power source.

from burning fossil fuels, after having rebounded from the Covid economic decline to an all-time-high in 2021, continue to rise in 2022 and hit another record high... With emissions still rising, weather extremes continue, and were even more clearly attributable to climate change," Kartha said, pointing to the devastating flooding in Pakistan in 2022 as an example

Everything Everywhere All at Once tops Oscar noms Pakistanis make light of frequent power outages

By Andrew Marszal, AFP

urreal sci-fi flick Everything Everywhere All At Once topped the Oscar nominations yesterday with 11, as Hollywood formally kicked off the race to the all-important Academy Awards.

German anti-war movie All Quiet on the Western Front and Irish black comedy The Banshees of Inisherin followed with nine nominations each from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which will hand out the awards on March 12.

As expected, Academy voters also rewarded blockbusters such as Tom Cruise's Top Gun: Maverick and Avatar: The Way of Water for helping to bring audiences back to movie theatres after the pandemic.

Both were nominated for best picture, Tinseltown's most coveted prize, although another crowdpleaser - Black Panther: Wakanda Forever - missed out. The remaining best picture slots

went to rock-and-roll biopic Elvis,

almost four decades ago - and best lead actress for Michelle Yeoh. Yeoh becomes just the second Asian woman ever nominated for lead actress in 95 years of Oscars

The Fabelmans, Cate Blanchett's

latest tour-de-force Tar, Cannes

festival-winning satire Triangle

of Sadness and literary adaptation

Everywhere All At Once portrays

a Chinese-American immigrant

family undergoing a tax audit, who

are quickly drawn into an inter-di-

mensional battle to save the multi-

It became a huge word-of-

The film earned four acting nom-

inations for its cast, including best

supporting actor for Ke Huy Quan

- who appeared as a child in Indi-

ana Jones and The Temple of Doom

mouth hit and has grossed more

verse from a powerful villain.

than \$100mn worldwide.

Absurdist indie film Everything

Women Talking.

Her co-star Stephanie Hsu was also nominated for supporting actress, along with Hong Chau of The Whale, in a banner year for Asian "I think this is beyond just me,"

Yeoh told The Hollywood Reporter

after the nominations were announced.

"It represents so many who have hoped to be seen in this way, to have a seat at the table, to say, 'I am of value too, I need to be seen too?" "My phone is going completely

bananas from Hong Kong and Asia and China," Yeoh added. But there was controversy else-

where in the lead actress category, as no Black women were nominated, despite Viola Davis (The Woman King) and Danielle Deadwyler (Till) having been seen as frontrunners. Instead the remaining slots went

to Ana de Armas (Blonde), Michelle Williams (The Fabelmans) and Andrea Riseborough for tiny indie film To Leslie, which benefited from an unusual, 11th-hour campaign mounted by celebrity friends of the British actress.

All five men in the running for best actor are first-time nominees, with Brendan Fraser (The Whale), Colin Farrell (The Banshees of Inisherin) and Austin Butler (Elvis) considered joint favourites.

The remaining slots went to Paul Mescal in Aftersun and Bill Nighy in Living. In the best supporting actress category, Angela Bassett

became the first star in a Marvel superhero movie to ever earn an Oscar acting nomination with Black Panther: Wakanda Forever.

Spielberg made the best director shortlist, but no women were nominated in the category, sparking quick social media backlash.

Speaking before the nominations, Variety senior awards editor Clayton Davis told AFP this was one of the more unpredictable Oscars races, in part due to the recent massive growth in the number of international Academy voters.

Those members have been credited with surprises such as South Korea's Parasite winning best picture in 2020. This year, they got behind Netflix's All Quiet on the Western Front, a World War I drama based on a German novel of the same name.

An early Hollywood film adaptation of the same book won best picture at the third Academy Awards in 1930.

Actors Riz Ahmed (Sound of Metal) and Allison Williams (Girls) unveiled the Oscar nominations early yesterday morning from Los Angeles.

Television ratings for award

shows including the Oscars have trended downwards, as Academy voters in recent years have veered toward honouring lesser-known indie hits like Nomadland and

Many in the industry were hoping for a healthy spread of nominations among 2022's crowd-pleasing sequels, which were sorely needed as giants such as Cineworld, the world's second biggest cinema chain, filed for bankruptcy protection. As it turned out, James Cameron's sci-fi epic Avatar: The Way of Water - which sailed past the \$2bn mark globally last weekend earned four nominations.

Top Gun: Maverick, Cruise's long-awaited sequel to his huge 1986 hit which came out in May during highly uncertain times for movie theatres and earned around \$1.5bn, received six.

"That's the one that feels like it could actually win best picture," said Davis, before the announce-

"What better story the day after the Oscars air, than that the movie that saved movies was named the best movie? That's a good story to



The nominees for Best Actor in a Leading Role for the 95th Academy Awards from left: Austin Butler, Colin Farrell, Brendan Fraser, Paul Mescal and Bill Nighy



The nominees for best actress for the 95th Academy Awards from left: Ana de Armas, Michelle Yeoh, Andrea Riseborough, Michelle Williams and Cate Blanchett.







Sheikha Noof Ahmed al-Thani (right) with the winners of a project.

Left: HE the Minister of **Education and Higher Education** Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi and QF officials at the booth of a winning project. PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam





Qatar Spotlight showcases 10 innovative educational projects

By Joseph Varghese

The Qatar Foundation (QF) initia-

Qatar Spotlight, a joint initiative between the QF and non-profit organisative, Qatar Spotlight, announced tion HundrED, features the brightest and honoured yesterday 10 winning projects for their innovative ideas in innovations in the field of pre-university education, created by educators in Qatar. These innovations, which are capable of being scaled around the world and

university level, include topics like biomedical, farming, and virtual learning. "I feel pride and happiness in the innovations of students and teachers that contribute to making education an enjoyable and attractive experience, and instil the value of research and exploration among our students," said HE al-

Sheikha Noof Ahmed al-Thani, the executive director for Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships at the QF's Pre-University Education, addressed the gathering.

the presence of HE the Minister of Edu-

cation and Higher Education Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi and QF offi-

making an impact on education at pre-

"We are pleased with the large number of innovations submitted to this initiative, an indication of the success of its first edition in Qatar," she said. "It reflects the ability of educators in schools throughout Qatar to innovate."

"We are proud of the innovations presented today and their success in reaching the final stage, so that they can be recognised by people around the world," Sheikha Noof added. "Every unique practice that can help children progress and thrive, however simple, is an inno-"We will continue to support educa-

ongoing partnership with HundrED, and we invite everyone to apply and particitive," she said. Qatar Spotlight was launched during the 2019 LEAPS Summit through a part-

tors and their innovations through our

nership between the QF's Pre-University Education and HundrED, an organisation that identifies and shares innovations in K-12 education.

The initiative aims to promote innovation in pre-university education, and



Snapshots from the event





to provide an opportunity to members of Qatar's educational sector to submit their ideas, with Qatar Spotlight sharing the 10 most impactful and scalable submissions with a wider global network of educators.

pandemic hit the world in early 2020, it was clear that the education sector was going through tremendous changes and challenges," HundrED executive director Lasse Leponiemi explained. "Schools closed, we moved to distance and hybrid learning, and all over the world teachers were doing their best to support stu-

"Today, I want to congratulate all educators, teachers and other stakeholders." he continued. "Through collaboration, dedication, and love of learning, you have managed to support young people through these challenging years."

10 winning projects a The Biotechnology and Biomedical Engineering Programme by Qatar Science & Technology Secondary School for

The Ethics Curriculum from the QF's Qatar Academy Al Wakra

The Farm Your Country programme by Al Faisal Without Boarders Founda-

The Glocalisation Initiative by the QF's Tariq Bin Ziad School The Museum in Residence Project

by the Oatar Children's Museum at Sherborne Qatar Preparatory School The My Friend Robot project by the

Quests by the QF's Academyati The Science and Sustainability Club project by the QF's Qatar Academy

The Science Book Forum Project by

the Qatar National Library The Virtual Learning Resources project by the Juwayriyah bint Al-Harith Primary School for Girls.





A view of a meadow. Inset: A native tree species being planted in a meadow.

Measures urged to preserve meadows

isitors to the meadows (Rawdah) should not drive through the area and avoid lighting any fires directly on the ground, a senior official of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has said.

"We hope that all the visitors to the meadows park their vehicles on the outskirts and enter on foot," Saad Ibrahim al-Kaabi, head of the MoECC's land rehabilitation unit, told local Arabic daily

Referring to the closed meadows, the official said they are under restoration to give them the necessary time to grow and regain their vitality.

Al-Kaabi stressed that the Public Re-

lations Department at the ministry is keen on improving public awareness on the importance of preserving the mead-

"These meadows are a national heritage and wealth that should be maintained besides being an important component of the local environment," he urged.

Al-Kaabi warned that anybody who commits environmental violations will be referred to the prosecution and then to the court.

The official also stressed that the cleaning campaigns of the various meadows across the country will continue with various community partnerships, and include planting more native trees.



Exhibition of works by Georgian artist Mikheil Eristavi open until January 28



The exhibition puts a spotlight on 'the power and beauty of Arabian horses'

By Joey Aguilar Staff Reporter

The embassy of Georgia in Doha, in cooperation with Katara - the Cultural Village, has organised an exhibition by Georgian artist Mikheil Eristavi, marking the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Qatar and Georgia.

The "The Divine Horses" exhibition, which runs until January 28 at Katara building 47 -Gallery 1, showcases 20 paintings and graphics, including pieces from private collections and

some specially created for the show. Georgian ambassador Nikoloz Revazishvili and Katara general manager Prof Khalid bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti led the exhibition's inauguration, which was attended by envoys of vari-



Prof al-Sulaiti and Georgian ambassador Revazishvili (sixth from left) with Mikheil Eristavi (second left) and ambassadors of different embassies in Doha.

ous countries and representatives of the diplomatic corps, academia and art groups, as well as Georgians residing in Qatar.

spotlight on "the power and beauty of Arabian horses" - one of the core symbols of the Arabian Peninsula - representing the main theme The embassy noted that the exhibition puts a of Eristavi's works.