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Qatar condemns Pakistan mosque blast

Qatar has expressed its strong condemnation and denunciation of the bombing that took place inside a mosque in Peshawar in Pakistan, which resulted in deaths and injuries. In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reiterated Qatar's firm stance rejecting violence and terrorism, regardless of the motives and reasons, stressing Qatar's total refusal of targeting places of worship and terrorising civilians. The ministry expressed Qatar's condolences to the families of the victims and the government and people of Pakistan, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. (QNA)

61 dead, 150 hurt in Pakistan mosque blast

Police were among 61 people killed and 150 wounded in a blast at a mosque inside a highly sensitive Pakistan police headquarters yesterday, prompting the government to put the country on high alert. The attack happened during afternoon worship in the provincial capital of Peshawar. "Many policemen are buried under the rubble," said Peshawar police chief Mohamed Ijaz Khan, who estimated between 300 and 400 officers usually attended prayers at the mosque. Page 11

Adani firms lose \$65bn in stock values

Most Adani Group shares fell sharply yesterday as the Indian conglomerate's rebuttal of a US short-seller's criticism failed to pacify investors, deepening a market rout that has now led to losses of \$65bn in the group's stock values. Data from stock exchanges yesterday showed Adani has now received bids for 1.4mn shares, or just over 3% of the 45.5mn shares on offer. The deal closes today. Sources said bankers of the country's largest secondary share sale were considering extending the timeline beyond Jan. 31, or tweaking the price due to the fall in its share price.

Philips cuts 6,000 jobs after device recall

Dutch medical tech maker Philips said yesterday that it would slash 6,000 more jobs worldwide in a bid to restore profitability after a massive recall of faulty sleep respirators. The firm revealed the "difficult but necessary" job cuts as it announced a loss of \$1.7bn for 2022, largely on the back of the safety issue. The layoffs come just months after Philips announced it was cutting 4,000 jobs. Philips is facing investigations and lawsuits in the US after it was forced to recall appliances to treat sleep problems that put people at risk of inhaling possibly toxic foam.

Validity of Hayya Card extended by one more year

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has extended the validity of the Hayya Card by one more year for people from outside Qatar, including both fans and organisers.

The extension came into effect yesterday and will remain in place until January 24, 2024.



The announcement states that the facility can be availed of by the above-mentioned Hayya Card holders subject to certain requirements. These are as follows:

- Proof of confirmed hotel reservation or accommodation with family or friends approved through the Hayya portal.
 - Passport validity for a minimum of three months upon arrival in Qatar.
 - Health insurance valid for the duration of the stay in Qatar.
 - Round-trip ticket
- Based on this extension, Hayya Card holders visiting Qatar will have access to the following:
- The 'Hayya with Me' feature,

which allows Hayya Card holders to invite up to three family members or friends.

- A multiple-entry permit to the country.
- Use of the e-Gate system for entry and exit via the State's ports.
- No fee payment is required.

The MoI added that these conditions apply to holders of all Hayya Card types used during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The ministry yesterday published the announcement on its social media platforms in various languages - Arabic, English, French, Spanish, Urdu, Hindi and Malayalam.

The decision is expected to boost the tourism prospects of Qatar, which will host various events and activities during the ongoing winter season.

Qatar Tourism, together with Qatar Airways, had recently launched the 'Feel Winter in Qatar' campaign, revealing a series of events and festivals. These include the just-concluded Qatar Balloon Festival, Disney Princess - The Concert, Qatar GKA Freestyle Kite World Cup 2023, Doha Jewellery & Watches Exhibition, Qatar International Food Festival, Shop Qatar and more.

Besides providing various benefits while in Qatar, including access to stadiums and free travel on public transport, the Hayya Card had enabled international fans to enter the country during the World Cup. Such visitors were allowed to stay in the country until January 23 this year.

FM praises Qatar-Japan relations



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani met in Tokyo yesterday with Member of the Japanese House of Representatives and President of the Japanese Parliamentary Association for Friendship with the State of Qatar Toshihiro Nikai. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and ways of supporting and developing them, especially in the economic, trade, investment, and tourism fields. HE Sheikh Mohamed also praised the relations between the two countries, the mutual trust, and the common desire to expand and strengthen them, expressing his gratitude for the efforts of the association's president to advance them. For his part, Nikai affirmed that Qatar is an important partner in Japan's energy field and stressed his country's endeavour to strengthen relations with Qatar in all fields. He also praised Qatar's hosting of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, its hospitality, and the welcome of the Japanese fans during the tournament. (QNA)

Amir chairs first meeting of Supreme Council for Economic Affairs and Investment 2023



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, Chairman of the Supreme Council for Economic Affairs and Investment, chaired yesterday the council's first meeting of 2023 at Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim Majlis at the Amir Diwan. His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani, the Deputy Chairman of the council, attended the meeting along with HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al-Thani, Executive Member of the Council, and members of the council. The council reviewed the decisions and recommendations made in the third meeting of 2022 and the project follow-up report. The council also discussed the country's economic priorities and took appropriate decisions in their regard. Also, the council was briefed on the presentations on the financial and insurance activities sector and the healthcare and social affairs sector. The council discussed the topics listed on its agenda and took the appropriate decisions. (QNA)

18 countries to take part as Katara horse festival begins tomorrow

Under the generous patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the third edition of the Katara International Arabian Horse Festival (KIAHF 2023) will begin tomorrow at the Katara Corniche with the participation of 18 countries.

Continuing until February 11, the festival has been organised by Katara - Cultural Village Foundation in co-operation with Qatar Equestrian Federation (QEF) and Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club (QREC).

In a statement yesterday, Katara said the Arabian Peninsula Horse Championship will be held from February 1-4, the Auction on February 6, and the Title Show from February 8 to 11.

The festival features a number of cultural events with more than 30 activities, including exhibitions, art workshops, competitions and live art shows. These activities will be held at the Katara Corniche.

Six artistic workshops will be held, featuring handicrafts related to equestrianism, cutting and pasting, sewing horse dolls, papier-mâché, and more.

The audience will also have the opportunity to watch an artist work on



From a previous edition of KIAHF.

a horse-sized stained glass artwork. Visitors will be able to follow the work throughout the festival while also enjoying the participation of 15 flower shops in another accompanying event on Ibn Al-Reeb Street.

A number of exhibitions have lined up for the festival, including the 'Interactive Mirrors' exhibition and others. Besides Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al Thani Museum, Qatar National Library and Postal Stamp Museum in Katara will present their distinguished collections on stamps featuring horses and equestrianism.

Eight artists will present a huge mural with wooden and mirror parts, enabling the audience to follow the drawing process live.

Further, the festival will host a

number of competitions with the participation of 30 artists from within and outside Qatar, including a competition for painters. The winners of the Nabati poetry contest, which was held earlier, will be announced on the sidelines of the festival.

According to earlier reports, the total prize money for the festival's horse show competitions amounts to over QR17mn this year, in addition to in-kind prizes for first-place holders. Of this, a total prize of QR13,900,000 has been allocated for the Title Show, in addition to valuable in-kind prizes provided by the sponsors.

The festival enjoys a large and growing interest, which is reflected in the volume of international participation with the best and finest ancient horse breeds that will be transported from different continents of the world.

Qatar will also host the World Championship for Purebred Arabian Horses in December 2023 - a result of an agreement signed by Katara with the National Centre for Agricultural Exhibitions and Competitions in France. Katara will host the 2023 and 2025 editions of the championship, which will be held for the first time outside France in 40 years.

Saudi carriers offer free stopover visa

• flynas sees great potential to scale up Qatar operations, opens office in Doha

By Pratap John
Business Editor

Saudi carrier 'flynas', a leading low-cost airline in the Middle East, sees tremendous potential to scale up operations between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, its vice-



Abdullah Suliman Aleadi (left) and Mousa al-Bahri addressing a press conference at Sharq Village yesterday. PICTURE: Thajudheen

president (International Sales) Abdulilah Suliman Aleadi said yesterday.

Currently, flynas operates daily to Riyadh and Jeddah with the state-of-the-art Airbus A320neo, Aleadi told *Gulf Times*. flynas is the only budget airline, which operates daily flights from Doha to Jeddah and Riyadh.

He said flynas looks to serve many more Qataris and expatriates living in the country as Saudi Arabia offers many attractive touristic destinations in the Kingdom.

Expatriates, he said, can make use of kingdom's new 'Stopover visa' facility, which is offered free of charge, under which all passengers travelling either on Saudia or flynas through any airport in Saudi Arabia to their final destination are eligible.

A passenger can apply for the 'Stopover visa' at the time of booking his / her flight through flynas.

flynas passengers can apply electronically for the 'Stopover visa' through its website. The stopover visa application will be passed automatically to the unified national visa platform at Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to process and issue the electronic visa immediately within four hours as maximum and send it to the beneficiary via e-mail, the airline said on its website. To Page 12

Fuwairit beach ready for kitesurfing tournament



The opening ceremony of the Visit Qatar GKA Freestyle Kite World Cup 2023 was held at Fuwairit Kite Beach yesterday. The tournament begins today and runs until February 4. It marks the launch of this year's Qatar Airways GKA Kite World Tour. Pictured are participants of the tournament. In a tweet, Qatar Airways welcomed all the riders to the first Visit Qatar GKA Freestyle Kite World Cup. The event is free to watch for visitors, who will be treated to an exhilarating display of freestyle kiting, which focuses on big air tricks, loops and jumps. The competition's prize pool ensures that some of the world's best kitesurfers are confirmed to attend. Page 12

Deputy Speaker of Shura Council highlights Qatar's interest in local, global comprehensive development

HE the Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti said yesterday that Qatar – in accordance with the directives of its wise leadership – attaches great importance to the country's comprehensive and integrated development, taking into account that it depends on the development and security of other countries.

This came in HE Dr al-Sulaiti's speech at the main session of the 17th session of the Conference of Union of Councils of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) member states, currently held in Algiers, under the title 'The Islamic World, Challenges of Modernisation and Development'.

Highlighting Qatar's contributions to the international efforts for sustainable development, she estimated the total value of grants and development assistance provided by Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) in 2021 at more than \$500mn. For

decades, Qatar has sought to assist the least developed countries and landlocked developing countries and small island developing states, and continues to do its best as a strategic partner in their development, she said.

Commenting on the Islamic world's response to challenges of modernisation and development, she drew attention to the current political and social instability in the countries of the Islamic world, their faltering economies in wake of Covid-19 repercussions, and the Russia-Ukraine crisis that triggered supply chains disruption.

The 57 Islamic countries occupy more than a fifth of the land area, with a distinguished geographical and human diversity, and abundant wealth, but the majority of them suffer from economic decline, the inability to capitalise on natural and human resources and the inability to achieve food security, aggravated by the lack of optimum management and determination

to achieve the goals of co-operation, integration and union, HE the Deputy Speaker told the conference.

She stressed that keeping pace with modernisation in all areas of life requires achieving individuals' economic and self-development.

The Islamic world is shackled by its poverty and ignorance that thwart progress despite having a religion that inspires co-operation and unity as a Muslim nation, as well as enormous and on-hand natural and human resources, she said.

The OIC parliaments need to act under the Sharia mandate requirements and devise projects, plans and strategies to achieve development and modernisation as an economic bloc, HE Dr al-Sulaiti said, calling for OIC governments to adopt the proposals of their parliaments, and work together to implement them.

She said the meeting coincides with an explosive situation in Palestine following the



HE the Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti at the Conference of Union of Councils of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) member states in Algiers.

dangerous escalation led by the occupation entity's far-right government in the Palestinian territories and its punitive measures against the Palestinian Authority and people. She highlighted in this context the Israeli ministers and settlers' storming of the Al-Aqsa Mosque courtyards and the West Bank cities that killed many Palestinians.

Qatar expresses deep sorrow and grief over the Palestinian lives that are being claimed daily, condemns the occupation forces' heinous crimes, and calls on the international community to provide the necessary protection for the Palestinian people, and to ensure that the historical and religious status of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy Islamic and

HE Dr al-Sulaiti demanded that the conference includes a closing statement clause calling on the international community to enact legislation condemning contempt of religions, criminalising insulting religious symbols, and preventing the broadcast of hate speech and religious intolerance

Christian sites are not compromised and to guarantee that the occupation entity crimes will not go unpunished, she told the conference.

HE Dr al-Sulaiti renewed the firm position of Qatar and its people on the justice of the Palestinian cause and the legitimate rights of the brotherly Palestinian people to establish their independent state on the borders of June 4, 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Denouncing the unacceptable transgressions against Islam and its sanctities, HE the Deputy Speaker said that the desecration of the Noble Qur'an by extremists in a number of countries that claim pluralism and respect for human rights under the protection of the authorities is not

the last anti-Islam transgressions.

Condemning and rejecting these criminal behaviours as catalysts for extremism, terrorism, hate speech and intolerance, HE Dr al-Sulaiti demanded that the conference includes a closing statement clause calling on the international community to enact legislation condemning contempt of religions, criminalising insulting religious symbols, and preventing the broadcast of hate speech and religious intolerance.

The Conference of Union of Councils of the OIC member states seeks to unify the efforts of the Islamic world to strengthen its position internationally, amid the geopolitical and economic conditions that are dominated by instability. (QNA)

Shura Council approves draft law on dividing inheritances

The Shura Council held yesterday its weekly meeting at Tamim bin Hamad Hall under the chairmanship of HE the Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem.

At the outset of the meeting, HE al-Ghanem briefed the members on the steps taken by the Council in light of the recent events related to the burning of copies of the Holy Qur'an in a number of countries, and with the knowledge and protection of their official

authorities. In this context, HE al-Ghanem said that the Council addressed the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC), the Arab Parliament and the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union, demanding them to take a unified Islamic stance that contributes to preventing contempt for Islam and its sanctities.

He added that the Shura Council will also address the Inter-Parliamentary Union to demand and urge it to take se-

rious steps that contribute to establishing a legislative framework that prevents and criminalises insulting religions and their sanctities.

He stressed that the Council will follow up on this matter with the parliamentary unions to ensure that Islamic sanctities are not violated, and that any transgressions against them are prevented, warning of the danger of remaining silent about these disgraceful behaviours which fuel differences and hate

speech and incite terrorism and violence. The Council then approved a draft law on the procedures for dividing inheritances, after reviewing the report of the Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee on it, and discussing the provisions of the draft law by the members of the Council.

In this regard, HE the Speaker underlined the importance and distinction of the aforementioned draft law, saying that it is of great importance, as it

deals specifically with the issue of the division of inheritance, and establishes a special legal framework regulating it, which will undoubtedly contribute to accelerating the division of inheritance and will address some issues facing the inheritors.

The Council also reviewed a draft law amending some provisions of the Customs Law promulgated by Law No 40 of 2002, referred to it by the esteemed government, and decided to refer it to the Financial and

Economic Affairs Committee to study it and submit a report thereon to the Council. The Shura Council reviewed a report on the participation of its delegation in the Euro-Mediterranean and Gulf Economic Forum, which took place in Marrakesh, Morocco, in December 2022.

The report included a presentation on the topics discussed by the forum related to the financial and commercial integration of the Euro-Mediterranean economic region and

the Gulf, the role of the private sector in achieving this integration, the threats to energy security and the guarantee of affordable supplies, within the framework of environmental transformation and the sustainable development goals in the face of climate change.

The report also underlined the role of governments and the private sector in achieving food security for the GCC countries and the Euro-Mediterranean region. (QNA)

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Respect for religions, peace, security at centre of Qatar's policy: Speaker

QNA
Doha

HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem has stressed that the policy pursued by Qatar, under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, is internally based on consolidating the efforts of sustainable development and providing all means of decent living for citizens and residents, while externally, exerting all efforts to enhance and achieve international peace and security, strengthen the co-operation between all countries, and resolve all disputes by peaceful means according to the principles of UN Charter and the rules of international law.



HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem

This came during the inauguration of the third Counter-Terrorism Co-ordination Meeting and Policy Dialogue on Border Security, being held in Doha for two days and organised by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement (based in Doha) in co-operation with the Shura Council of Qatar, to discuss the mechanism of co-ordination between parliamentary organisations and assemblies concerned with counter-terrorism.

In his speech, HE the Speaker said that this meeting, in which regional and international parliamentary organisations and assemblies whose activities cover most regions of the world, is of considerable significance due to its time and the items listed on its agenda, as well as in terms of the aspired objectives behind the meeting of this elite of representatives of organisations and assemblies in Doha.

HE al-Ghanem noted the letters of thanks sent by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to His Highness the Amir, in which he praised Qatar's huge support for all UN initiatives and the international efforts to achieve global peace through humanitarian aid, which encompasses support for international development, combating terrorism and extremism, and spread values of tolerance and peaceful co-existence among peoples without prejudice to their history, civilization, cultural values, and religious beliefs.

HE al-Ghanem indicated that during these two days, the activities accomplished during 2022 would be reviewed and evaluated in co-operation between parliamentary organizations and assemblies and UNOCT. The 2023 future activities and initiatives would

be discussed in co-ordination with the Doha-based UNOCT, which receives full support from the Shura Council and various institutions in Qatar, he added.

HE the Speaker pointed out that the meeting would address the co-ordination mechanism between the parliamentary organisations and assemblies, ways to support them to carry out their task to the fullest, and study the different aspects of policies related to counter-terrorism, especially all those related to legal and legislative aspects of border security and cross-border co-operation to prevent terrorism and dry up its sources. At a time when the civilised world is calling for respect for religions and their sanctities and for the freedom to practice religious practices, it is unfortunate to witness an escalation in the manifestations of intolerance and discrimination against religions, as well as an increase in attacks and violations of religious sanctities and symbols under the pretext of freedom of expression, HE the Speaker said.

He added that violations of people's religious sanctities are unacceptable, expressing his surprise to see that the authorities in some countries are now providing a legitimate and legal cover, by allowing some individuals to transgress religious sanctities and symbols, and even protecting them when they carry out these disgraceful behaviours.

During his speech, HE al-Ghanem said that the transgressions that the Islamic religion and sanctities have been subjected to, manifested in the act of some citizens of several European countries, who are proud of their adoption of pluralism and claim

respect for human rights and equality between them, by desecrating the Holy Qur'an – the holy book of 2bn Muslims.

This crime is one of the forms that generate and feed terrorism, and these disgraceful behaviours must be discussed in this meeting to prevent their recurrence, considering that they fuel unacceptable racism, contribute to deepening the gap between peoples and cultures, and promote hate speech, he said, stressing the need for this meeting to adopt a discussion on preventing contempt for religions, criminalising insulting religious sanctities and symbols, and including them in the legislation and regulations of international parliamentary organisations, as an approach to addressing these shameful acts.

He called on the participants of the meeting to get acquainted with Qatar and the culture of its people, and to learn about its various achievements, in addition to visiting some sports facilities that recently hosted the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, which has been widely praised for its remarkable organisational success. He indicated that Qatar and its people have harnessed all capabilities to receive the peoples of the world and host this tournament, which contributed to its great organizational success.

This remarkable success has been achieved despite all the attempts to distort, discredit, the systematic and malicious campaigns and heinous attacks – launched by some European and Western countries, which were based on false allegations and misleading statements, he added, pointing out that these allegation were repeatedly refuted not only by Qatar, but by many international and independent bodies and organisations as well.

The people of Qatar won the challenge and presented the world with the true image of their country, its ancient history, its authentic civilization and its distinguished culture, he added.

It is noteworthy that this meeting, in which representatives of regional and international parliamentary associations and unions participate, seeks to review the relevant activities and initiatives implemented and launched by parliamentary councils, including co-operation with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), in addition to discussing priority areas and geographical focus for potential future initiatives of the parliamentary assemblies, on issues related to combating terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

International MPs appreciate Qatar's efforts to combat terrorism, extremism

International lawmakers yesterday expressed appreciation for Qatar's support for all national and international efforts to combat and eliminate terrorism and prevent the spread of extremism, highlighting Doha's relentless endeavours to enhance international peace and security, as two prerequisites for sustainable development.

This came during the opening of the third Counter-Terrorism Co-ordination Meeting, organised in Doha by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Doha-based UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism, in co-operation with the Shura Council.

The meeting aims to discuss the co-ordination mechanism among parliamentary organisations and federations concerned with combating terrorism.

Extending his thanks and appreciation to Qatar for its tangible anti-terrorism efforts, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Duarte Pacheco highlighted Qatar's tangible initiatives to confront terrorism by hosting and supporting the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism, in addition to the developmental initiatives that Qatar is implementing in various countries of the world.

He said that development is extremely important to instill hope in young people's hearts, at a time when losing hope feeds terrorism, extremism and violence. He hailed the Shura Council's efforts to support combating terrorism, and to support holding such an important event, which aims to coordinate efforts and review mechanisms to confront terrorism.

In another context, he congratulated Qatar on its successful FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 hosting, stressing that this success demonstrated to the world Qatar's potential to organise high-level international events. The IPU president highlighted the scourge of terrorism and the threat it poses to societies, describing terrorism as sprawling cancer that needs all-out efforts to combat.

Warning of the danger of hate speech, Pacheco highlighted the need to devise educational programs that contribute to confronting hate speech and violence, and to allocate resources to support sustainable development programs, in a way that contributes to combating the causes of terrorism. Deputy Director of the UNOCT Mauro Miedico commended



ed Qatar's support for efforts to combat terrorism and prevent extremism, appreciating the Shura Council's efforts to back the initiatives of the Doha-based Office of the Programme on Parliamentary Participation in Combating and Preventing Terrorism.

He highlighted the efforts of the office, which obtains the Shura Council's support, and reviewed its various initiatives and efforts in achieving the UN goals, by enhancing the role of lawmakers and involving them in anti-terrorism efforts, and developing models to support victims of terrorism.

Miedico highlighted the need to address attacks on religious sanctities and places of worship, stressing that the UN developed an action plan to protect places of worship, by developing a program that supports governments to protect vulnerable groups and places of worship, as parts of the UN's key goals.

Chair of the first presidency of the Co-ordination Mechanism Reinhold Lopatka stressed the need for co-operation to confront terrorism and violence, pointing to the important role that inter-parliamentary efforts play in formulating legislative frameworks and policies in respective states, and playing a pivotal role in the implementation of commitments, directing budgets, and

exercising the needed controls. He pointed to the need to build on strengths by involving parliamentarians in counter-terrorism efforts, by holding conferences and exchanging expertise and experiences, in avoidance of prevailing double standards.

For her part, President of the Executive Committee of the African Parliamentary Union Mabel Memory Chino-mona praised the efforts made by the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism, and the initiatives it sponsors, for its contribution to bringing parliamentarians closer together, enhancing international co-operation, and supporting co-ordination between the concerned parties, to find sustainable solutions that would address the roots causes of terrorism and combating them.

She drew attention to the high-level parliamentary conference on preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, along with the role of African youth in this field, that was held in Togo, stressing that parliamentarians' response to and welcome of the initiative proved the unity not only of the peoples of Africa but among the peoples of the world, involving young people in counter-terrorism efforts. (QNA)

Speaker meets visiting dignitaries



HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem met separately yesterday with President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Duarte Pacheco and President of the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament Senator Silvia del Rosario Giacompo, on the sidelines of the inauguration of the third Counter-Terrorism Co-ordination Meeting and Policy Dialogue on Border Security. During the two meetings, they discussed efforts to counter-terrorism and co-ordination mechanism in this field and Shura Council's support for these efforts. They also discussed relations of parliamentarian co-operation between the Shura Council, IPU, and the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament and ways to strengthen them. They reviewed the main topics listed on the meeting's agenda. The meetings were attended by a number of members of the Shura Council. (QNA)



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Amir sends condolences to King Salman of Saudi Arabia

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al-Thani sent cables of condolences to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud of Saudi Arabia on the death of Prince Abdulrah bin Saud bin Abdulaziz al-Saud. (QNA)



Visuals from the honouring ceremony.

Winners of 'Sheikh Hamad Award' feted



On behalf of His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, HE Sheikh Thani bin Hamad al-Thani honoured the winners of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding at a ceremony held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel on Sunday evening.

The ceremony brought together a number of Sheikhs and ministers and a number of members of diplomatic missions accredited to Qatar, along with the ceremony's guests of writers, translators and researchers.

For the category of translation from Arabic into Turkish, Muhittin Majid won the first place award for translating Ibn Rushd's *Metaphysics*.

The second place award was shared by Mohamed Amin Mashali and Montaha Mashali for translating Taha Abdul Rahman's *Spirit of Modernity*, and Numan Qawqli for translating Mohamed Abed al-Jabri's *Intellectuals in the Arab Civilisation*.

The third place award was also shared by Osman Baydar and Akdag for translating Maimonides' *The Guide for the Perplexed*, and Suner Duman for translating Ibn Taymiyyah's *Treatise on Juridical Politics*.

In the category of translation from Turkish into Arabic, Saleh



Saadawi came first for translating Muhittin Serin's *History of the Art of Calligraphy*, and Haval Dukmaq came third for translating Ibrahim Kalino's *Modern, Civilised Barbarian*. The second place award was withheld.

For the category of translation from Arabic into English, William Hutchence won the first prize for translating Mohamed Hassan Alwan's *Small Deaths*, and Leary Price came third for translating Samar Yazbek's

Al Masha'a (The woman who walks).

In the category of translation from English into Arabic, the second place award was shared by Mohamed Abdel Salam Hamshi for translating *Populism and World Politics: Exploring Inter and Transnational Dimensions* by David McDonald and others, and Ayman Haddad for translating Norman Finkelstein's *Gaza: An Inquest into its Martyrdom*. Mustafa Mohamed Abdul-

lah Qassem was in third place for translating Joseph Manning's *The Open Sea*, and Amer Sheikhoni for translating Diana Darke's *Stealing from the Sarcophagi: How Islamic Architecture Shaped Europe*. The first place award was withheld.

In the Achievement Category, HE Sheikh Thani honoured the Arab Network for Research and Publishing from Lebanon for their translations from English into Arabic, and Turkiye's *Insan Yayinlari* and *Mana Yayinlari* for their translations from Arabic into Turkish, and vice versa.

His Excellency also honoured translators Mohamed Haqi Sotshin, Burhan Koroglu from Turkiye, Mohamed Harb, Abdullah Ahmed Ibrahim al-Azab from Egypt, Nicola Dobrishan and George Gregory from Romania, Ikhtiyar Balturi from Kazakhstan, and Abdul al-Hay al-Katani from Indonesia.

Mohamed Mansour Hamzah was honoured in the dictionaries category - Bahasa language. His Excellency also delivered a number of encouragement awards to the Association of Muslim Scholars in Tanzania - Swahili language, Dar Al Karma (Egypt), Tamer Institute for Community Education, and the Egyptian translator Ahmed Shukri Mujahid. (QNA)

Translators appreciate Qatar's role in increasing, improving translated works

Intellectuals and translators from several Arab and foreign countries appreciated Qatar's role and continuous efforts in sponsoring culture and literature, which facilitates communication among civilisations and international understanding, through the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding.

In a statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA) on the sidelines of the closing ceremony of the eighth edition of the award, they stressed that the award contributed to increasing the works translated from and into Arabic from various languages of the world, and also contributed to achieving competition in improving works translated from and into different languages.

Iraq's former Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities Hassan Nazim hailed both the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding and the International Conference on Translation and Problems of Interculturalisation as important aspects to support translation in the Arab world.

Egyptian translator and former head of the National Center for Translation, Shukri Mujahid, said that the most important characteristic of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation is that it motivated quality in translation, as it also spread the culture of perfection.

He also hailed the Award's integrity that made it gain the trust of translators from Arab countries and the world.

Representative of Lebanon's Arab Network for Research and Publishing and winner of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding in the Achievement category, Qassem Mansour extended thanks to Qatar for the valuable award.



He added that the award motivates translators for further perfection, highlighting his institution's interest in translating books that deal with contemporary issues.

Turkish translator Suner Duman, who claimed the third-place award, noted the importance of the award in supporting translation from Arabic, pointing out that he presented several translations, the most important of which was the translation of Ibn Taymiyyah's *Treatise on Juridical Politics*.

Jordanian translator Youssef Hussein Bakkar, who claimed the award in 2020, hailed the award as one of the biggest and best, saying that it maintained its high level, accuracy and integrity, which encourages translators from across the world.

Romanian translator George Gregory, Professor of Arabic Language at the University of Bucharest, and winner of the Achievement Award in the Arabic-into-Romanian Translation category, said he translated the meanings of the Noble Qur'an along with many of the most important religious, philosophical and linguistic Arabic books.

He added that the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding is one of the most important Arab projects in support of Arab culture, and explained that the award is very important for translators in Romania because the award will encourage students to learn Arabic.

Turkish translator and academic, Mohamed Haqi Sochin, winner of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding in the Achievement category, said the award encourages translators because it covers different languages and creates competition for translators.

Chinese translator Shui Qingguo, Professor of Arabic Studies at the University of Foreign Studies in Beijing, said the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 has caused wide resonance in China, and aroused everyone's interest in Qatar, and added that the award deepened the bonds of friendship among people.

He pointed out that Qatar's embrace of this award and the interest in the Chinese language has found increasing enthusiasm among Chinese translators. (QNA)

Secretary-general hails Qatar's support

Secretary-General of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding Dr Hassan al-Naama has stressed that the award represents Qatar's contribution to sponsor translation from Arabic into various international languages.

Addressing the closing ceremony of the eighth edition of the award, Dr al-Naama extended thanks to His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani for sponsoring the award.

He said the award's most important parts are the diversification in the areas of translation which covers various world languages, leading to various translated cultural and intellectual productions from many nations legacies and their languages, as well as those translated from other languages into Arabic.



Dr Hassan al-Naama



Dr Baek Ha-Yoon (Lily)

Speaking on behalf of the Award's guests, Dr Baek Ha-Yoon (Lily), from South Korea, expressed appreciation with Qatar's role in supporting translation and strengthening the bonds of coexistence and international understanding, and called for paying attention to young translators, so that they can succeed the generation of pioneers in translation from different generations.

It was a pleasure that all the people of the world, especially the Korean people, got to know

Qatar more during its hosting of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, she said. She added that all lovers of the Arabic language and translators from their languages into Arabic had a mixed feeling of pride and happiness for Qatar's model of economic development and its endeavours to spread international understanding not only through sports, but through culture and interest in translation through this award that has brought together translators from all across the world on a common basis - the love of the Arabic language. (QNA)

International Conference on Translation and Problems of Interculturalisation ends

The ninth International Conference on Translation and Problems of Interculturalisation, which was organised by the Forum for Arab and International Relations, concluded in Doha on Sunday.

The second and final day of the conference saw two sessions, the first of which discussed the problems of translating philosophical concepts, while the second discussed the existing translations of religious texts and the need for re-translating them.

A number of papers were presented during the first session, where speakers touched on several topics such as translating the concepts of language philosophy; the conflict of paradigms; translation prospects; translating of some contemporary Western philosophical concepts into Arabic and creative translation.

Meanwhile, papers presented during the second session discussed topics like poetic and doctrinal errors in translating Hadiths; difficulties and errors in translating the Qur'anic text into the Romanian language; trans-



The conference discussed important issues on Arabic-Turkish translation as well as personal translation among others.

lation methodology in transferring modern works into the Turkish language and the problems of translating the Islamic jurisprudential texts, and the necessity of imposing scientific oversight.

Over two days, the conference discussed a number of axes, the most important of which were issues of Arabic-Turkish translation; personal translation and translation digitisation. (QNA)



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Invitation to Tender

In accordance with the following conditions:

| Tender Number | Subject | Tender / Auction Document Fees (Nonrefundable) | Tender / Auction Bond | Tender Offer | Closing Date |
|---------------------|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| AL-AWALIA/TD/2023/0 | Catering Services at Staff Accommodation in Sahara Washed Sand Plant (SWSP) for 3 years for Qatar Primary Materials Company ("Services") | 500 QAR | 50,000 QAR | Two Bids (Technical & Commercial) | 07 Feb 2023 01:00 PM |

1. Tender Documents can be collected online by sending email to tender.docs@qpmc.qa along with requested documents in point No.2.
2. Tender Documents will be shared only after delivery of Deposit Slip Stamped by Commercial Bank along with Authorization Letter to the delegated person signed by authorized person as per Computer ID, Copy of commercial Registration (CR), Business License and Computer ID.
3. Bids are to be submitted in two sealed (in red wax) envelopes (Technical & Commercial) and addressed to Tenders and Auction Committee. Tender reference number and subject are to be clearly written on the envelopes, provided that the last date for submitting bids is one o'clock in the afternoon on the closing day. Any bids submit after this date will not be accepted.
4. Tenderers shall submit the proposals to our head office located at Al-Saad, Suhaim bin Hamad St., Qatar First Bank Building, 10th Floor before the closing date.
5. Tender Fees are nonrefundable and can be transferred online to Account of Qatar Primary Material Company-Bank A/C (4050-651111-006) at Commercial Bank of Qatar. IBAN No. (QA 18 CBOA 0000 0000 4050 651111 006). Tender reference number and subject are to be written on the deposit slip.
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7. Bids must be valid for 90 days after closing date and are to be submitted in two copies (Original & Duplicate).
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10. The Technical Bids shall be opened within one week from the closing date.
11. Qatar Primary Material Company has the right, during the contract period, to request an increase or decrease in the amounts of the items, works or services by a percentage not exceeding (20%) of the contract value with the same conditions and prices, provided that the increase is of the same type of contracted items, works or services.
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For further Inquiry, please send your queries at Fax Number: 44479559 or email to tender@qpmc.qa or visit Qatar Primary Material Company website @ www.qpmc.qa

Assistant foreign minister meets British officials



HE the Assistant Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met separately yesterday in London with the director of Middle East Affairs at the British Foreign Office Stephen Hickey and British Special Envoy for Syria and Libya Charles King. The two meetings reviewed the bilateral relations and the latest developments in Libya and Syria. HE Dr al-Khulaifi affirmed Qatar's support for the Libyan political track, relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and all peaceful solutions that preserve Libya's unity, stability, and sovereignty. He also reaffirmed support for the UN's efforts aimed at putting an end to the Syrian crisis and the suffering of the Syrian people, in accordance with the Geneva 1 statement and Security Council Resolution 2254. -QNA

NCSA official highlights Qatar's role in personal data privacy

The director of National Cyber Governance and Assurance Affairs at the Qatar National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA), Engineer Dana al-Abdulla, has highlighted Qatar's pioneering role in protecting the privacy of personal data and stressed upon the government's efforts to raise awareness of the need and means to protect data.

In an interview with the Qatar News Agency (QNA), she said that the Data Privacy Day, marked every year on January 20, is an occasion to highlight the importance of protecting personal data for individuals and institutions.

Al-Abdulla said that the issuance of Law No 13 of 2016, by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani on protecting personal data, reflects Qatar's commitment to protecting the privacy of personal data.

She referenced the NCSA's role in implementing all laws, regulations and decisions related to data protection in Qatar, in addition to advancing partnerships with regional and global bodies involved in this field.

Al-Abdulla said Qatar is one of the first countries to issue a special law to protect the privacy of personal data; it was the first country in the Gulf region and the third in the Arab world to do so. With the enactment of this law, the govern-



Al-Abdulla during the interview.

ment set out to build capacities and promote innovation, research and development in the field of the cyber-security.

As part of the NCSA's commitment to monitor the implementation of Personal Data Privacy Protection Law, al-Abdulla indicated that a "Personal Data Privacy Protection Office", attached to the National Cyber Governance and Assurance Affairs, was established.

The Personal Data Privacy Protection Office in turn issued a set of guidelines to support stakeholders and help them understand their roles and rights.

Al-Abdulla also highlighted the principles, guidelines and tools launched by the agency to assist institutions in this field, as well as training workshops, courses and lectures aimed at raising awareness on data protection.

Annual Palestine Forum 2023

28-30 January 2023
Doha - Qatar
30-28 كانون الثاني / يناير 2023
الدوحة - قطر
#Palestine_Forum
#منتدى فلسطين



The panellists on the legal and linguistic dimensions of settler colonialism and ethnic cleansing. PICTURES: Thajudheen



Azmi Bishara



Tarek Mitri

Annual Palestine Forum closes with a reflection on the future

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

A total of 15 papers were presented yesterday on the third and final day of the inaugural Annual Palestine Forum.

The last workshop also served to wrap up the forum's discussions by directing the participants' and attendees' attention toward reflecting on the future of the Palestinian project.

The sessions of the Ostour Symposium, conducted in parallel, also concluded.

During the closing session, Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies director-general Azmi Bishara stressed the success of the forum in bringing together Palestinians from across the world to share knowledge on the field of Palestinian studies in an academic environment.

He then introduced Marwan Barghouti, political figure and political prisoner for the last 21 years, whose words from the cell were read out by his partner, lawyer, and politician Fadwa Barghouti.

Barghouti discussed the challenges facing the Palestinian national project, including:

- The struggle to return the unity of the Palestinian people through one national project
- The unity of the Palestinian cause
- Zionist settler colonialism
- The emphasis on Arab identity
- The humanitarian struggle
- Reinforcing the importance of resistance in all its forms
- The crisis of the Palestinian national movement
- The struggle for women's right to equality and dignity
- A leading Palestinian force with a political culture that views the Palestinians as worthy of dignity, equality, and justice.

Barghouti concluded by reflecting on the importance of the forum as a step that reinforces the unity of Palestinians and the unified aim of all those working for the Palestinian cause.

The first session of the third day revolved around three main themes: the legal and linguistic dimensions of settler colonialism and ethnic cleansing, gender perspectives on Palestine, and Palestine from a historical perspective.

Nine papers focusing on these themes were presented. Three papers looked at the Israeli settler colonial regime from a legal and linguistic lens.

In his paper *Ethnic Cleansing as a Tool for Consolidating Settler Colonialism and Apartheid in Jerusalem*, Nizar Ayoub studied the policy of systematic ethnic cleansing as a tool of the Israeli settler colonial regime to maintain a Jewish majority in Jerusalem.

Three other papers focused on the theme of gender and Palestine.

Camelia Ibrahim-Dwairy's paper, *The Case of Single Palestinian Men in Israel: Between Patriarchal and Israeli Oppression*, examined the discourse of single Palestinian men living within the Green Line amid a patriarchal society.

A further three papers discussed Palestine from a historical perspective.

In a paper titled *Ma kansh fihi! Oral Narratives as a Missing Source for the Military Historiography of the Palestine War 1947-1949*, Bilal Shalash reviewed the outputs of two projects, a Birzeit University project on depopulated villages and the Nakba Testimony Programme, which reflect the military history of the 1948 war.

We are heading towards one-state solution: expert

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Professor Saul J Takahashi, the director of Osaka Jogakuin University's Research Institute of International Collaboration and Coexistence in the 21st Century, presented yesterday a paper on *Linguistic Rights of 148 Palestinians at the Annual Palestine Forum*.

The scholar, who has spent five years in Palestine and well-versed in the Palestinian issue, spoke to *Gulf Times* on the linguistic rights and self-determination of the Palestinian people.

"I see that the Israelis have been doing this for a long time ... and it is not just language, it is the appropriation of Palestinian food like humus, which they present as Israeli food, for example," Prof Takahashi said. "They have been after the eradication of the Palestinian people as a whole, through culture, history, renaming place names."

"In 1948 the whole thing was geared towards the eradication of the Palestinian people as a whole, not just in physical sense, but culturally, linguistically, everything, and that is a gross violation of international law," he added.

"Self-determination translated into hard reality through the continuous lobbying and putting on pressure on the international community to abide by the standards that they themselves have adopted," Prof Takahashi said.

"Of course the Palestinians have been doing this and they will continue doing this," he continued.

"Finally, I think we are seeing it bear fruit, through the recognition of Israel as practicing apartheid by very prominent international human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs)," the academic pointed out. "Finally, the International Criminal Court ... we see it starting to move, Insha Allah."

"Also the UN General Assembly has asked the International Court of Justice to provide an opinion on the continuing occupation," he added.

"Once again, not perfect, not full, but still moving in the right direction. Certainly, we are moving in the right direction," Prof Takahashi emphasised. "Also, the political shifts in the US are definitely favourable towards moving in the right direction."

"Insha Allah, I am a human rights person, so I do think that the good guys will win in the end, and justice will triumph."



Professor Saul J Takahashi at the forum.

"As an international lawyer, I think certainly that the entire two-state solution paradigm is based on injustice," he stated. "It is based on the partition of the Palestinian people's country," Prof Takahashi

explained. "That the two-state paradigm has been going on and on since 1947, the partition resolution, ... it is based on a gross injustice."

"I do not see how the two-state solution but that," he said. "It is important that we have peace in Palestine, the true peace can only be achieved with true justice."

"I have a problem with seeing how this can be possible under the two-state solution, which is impossible now in any case, with all the Israeli colonies dotting the West Bank," Prof Takahashi remarked. "I just do not see that it is going to happen."

"So, I do think that we are heading towards a one-state solution, what exactly that means, we have to see," he said. "There has to be insuring justice in any kind of one-state solution that means addressing past violations."

"Without the US policies changing, it is hard to see any serious change in the situation in Palestine, but that is coming and that is already taking place," he added.

"So, definitely, Insha Allah I see it happen. Of course, political issues should also be resolved amongst Palestinian factions ... they need to be sorted out, so that it cannot be used as an excuse for not allowing self-determination," Prof Takahashi concluded.

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61.7% rise in air passengers during Nov-Dec 2022: CAA

The months of November and December 2022 saw a 61.7% increase in the number of air passengers compared to the same months in 2021, according to data issued by the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) yesterday.

The Air Transport Statistics for the two months also revealed a 33.9% rise in aircraft movement in the same period.

The data released on social media

showed there were 43,600 aircraft movements in November and December 2022 compared to 32,557 during the same months in the previous year.

Similarly, the number of passengers increased from 4,239,856 in November and December 2021 to 6,857,758 during the same months in 2022.

"This increase coincided with Qatar's hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, be-

tween November 20 and December 18, during which the Qatari airspace witnessed significantly large operational intensity," the CAA said in a statement.

Meanwhile, air freight and mail showed a decline of 17.2% in November and December 2022 as compared to the same months in 2021, dropping to 368,365 tonnes from 444,686 tonnes in the said period.

PHCC advisory on preparing for annual health check

The Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has provided advice on how often one should see the doctor and how to prepare for the annual health check.

"The annual health check will give you an overview of your current health, help identify any future health risks, and offer you practical ways to get healthier and fitter.

"It's a great opportunity to refocus your attention on prevention and screening to ensure a healthy lifestyle," PHCC said in the advisory.

How often should I see my family physician?

Routine check-ups with your family physician are generally recommended to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and the regularity of routine check-ups may be based on your age, risk factors and current health status. PHCC recommends at least once a year even if you are in good health.

If you are a patient with a

chronic disease, you should be seeing your doctor more frequently, regardless of your age. Your family physician will be the one to determine the frequency of your visits depending on your results and risk factors.

PHCC offers annual health checks, a preventative check that is carried out to detect and recognise any health issues early, and identifying and reducing any risks that may lead to disease.

What is an annual health check?

The PHCC annual health check is a general health check designed to assess a patient for preventative diseases conditions that may arise in the future.

What happens at an annual health check-up?

The annual health check takes place in two appointments. The initial appointment is delivered using a simple questionnaire, and you will be able to raise any

questions you may have and discuss your current health status. The team will also complete necessary lab tests as well as measurements to support the assessment process.

During the second - and follow-up - appointment, your family physician will discuss your lab results and further discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Your family physician will then advise you on the best measures you can take to maintain good health and also discuss any treatment plans if they are necessary for you based on your results.

How can I prepare for my annual health check?

Accordingly for your appointment date, it is encouraged that you think about how you have been feeling recently. You could prepare details of your lifestyle, including eating habits, exercise routine, sleeping patterns as well as informa-

tion about your family health history.

What are some of the benefits of an annual health check?

- Recognising potential health risks early for better health outcomes.
- Encouragement for positive lifestyle changes.
- Identifying genetic risk elements.
- Specific health examinations, such as those done for certain cancers.
- Patients feel empowered and best equipped to maintain or enhance their health.

Currently, PHCC operates 30 primary healthcare centres. Registered Qatari patients are eligible for the annual health checks as well as non-Qataris according to the approved criteria. For all categories, patients aged under 18, pregnant women, those with known non-communicable diseases, and unregistered individuals are excluded.



Michael Guenoun, HE Akbar al-Baker and Badr al-Meer cut a ribbon to open the boutique.

TimeVallee opens its first Middle East flagship boutique at HIA

TimeVallee, a luxury watches multi-brand boutique, opened its first boutique in the Middle East at Qatar's Hamad International Airport (HIA), it was announced yesterday.

Located at Qatar Duty Free (QDF), TimeVallee houses many prestigious Swiss luxury watchmakers from heritage and more contemporary Maisons including Baume et Mercier, Bell and Ross, Cartier, Hublot, IWC, Jaeger LeCoultre, Panerai, Piaget, Tag Heuer and the first Watchfinder in the region.

The boutique offers a seamless customer experience throughout all the showcased Maisons, in addition to a customer service and a pre-owned watches

lounge by the renowned Watchfinder, a statement said. The official opening of the two-storey multi-brand boutique was celebrated at a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The event was attended by VIP guests and officiated by Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, HE Akbar al-Baker, along with HIA chief operating officer engineer Badr al-Meer, QDF vice-president Thabet Musleh and CEO of TimeVallee, Michael Guenoun.

The store features an impressive 3D screen to showcase the Maisons in an impactful yet futuristic way. TimeVallee also boasts an omni-channel client journey and interactive experiences with a client-centric approach. By combining inno-

vative phygital (the concept of using technology to bridge the digital world with the physical world) luxury with personalised services, shoppers can visit the discovery counter, with its state-of-the-art digital technology to explore best-sellers, latest pieces, limited-edition and Maison collections. Guenoun said: "The boutique's unique design, space, and customer service set us apart and we believe it will be an important addition to the luxury retail landscape in the Middle East."

Musleh added: "We are very proud to launch the first TimeVallee boutique in the region; adding on to many other world-firsts and exclusives at Qatar Duty Free."



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GULF TIMES

GAC fetes Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Wildlife Development Department



The General Authority of Customs (GAC) has honoured the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Wildlife Development Department, as the fastest government entity in customs clearance time for 2022, during a ceremony held by GAC on the occasion of the International Customs Day. HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari handed the appreciation certificate to Mohamed Ahmed al-Khanji, director of Wildlife Development Department.



Arabic language Doha Prize competition concludes in Moscow

The activities of the Arabic language "Doha Prize" competition for university students in Russia, organised by the Qatari embassy in Moscow in co-operation with Qatar University, has concluded.

The competition was supervised by the embassy's second secretary Abdullah al-Saei and a jury that included a number of orientalists and professors from various universities in Russia and Qatar University.

Seven students won the prize, whose final phase was hosted by the embassy.

The winners received a scholarship to continue learning the Arabic language for a year at Qatar University.

The competition, which takes place in several phases, received applications by more than 400



male and female students from various universities in Russia. The first phase took place and

the test results were announced. Afterward, interviews were conducted in the second phase

virtually, then 31 male and female students competed in the final stage.

Al-Saei said in his closing speech that the Doha Prize competition, which the embassy is organising annually since 2018, has become an important milestone in the development of cultural exchange in education, pointing out that it provides participating students from Russian universities with an opportunity to test their language skills and gives the winners a unique opportunity to continue their studies in Qatar.

The competition reflects Qatar's interest in spreading Arabic as a tool for civilised communication, and building bridges of communication and rapprochement between Arab, Islamic culture and other cultures. (QNA)

Qatar Charity signs agreement with IOM to support Yemen's vulnerable households

Qatar Charity (QC) has signed an agreement with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to provide rapid financial assistance to vulnerable households in Yemen.

Under the agreement, QC will provide IOM with a funding of \$500,000 to help more than 10,000 crisis affected individuals have improved access to basic goods, services, and livelihood opportunities.

The agreement was signed by Nawaf Abdulla AlHammadi, chief of operations and international partnerships officer at QC and Iman Ereiqtat, chief of mission, IOM Qatar.

The 'Provision of Rapid Financial Assistance to Vulnerable Households in Yemen' project will support the vulnerable households in Ma'rib, Lahj, Hadramout and the West Coast areas of AlHodeidah and South Taiz with rapid means to improve their living conditions, and allow them to meet their most critical needs, through provision of multi-purpose cash assistance to support livelihoods.

"People of Yemen continue to face the humanitarian crisis in the country, and the needs on the ground are growing. Thanks to the generous contribution of Qatar Charity, thousands of crisis-affected individuals with their family members will benefit from the intervention," said Ereiqtat.



Nawaf Abdulla AlHammadi and Iman Ereiqtat at the agreement signing.

Matthew Huber, chief of IOM Mission in Yemen, said: "IOM Yemen highly values its partnership with Qatar Charity in efforts to meet our common goal of reaching the neediest in Yemen due to the difficult conditions left by years of conflict. IOM is very thankful for this contribution, and we look forward to working with Qatar Charity on this programme and broadening our partnership in other initiatives that benefit those in hard-to-reach areas."

"We are proud to sign this agreement, which we hope will contribute to alleviating the suffering of thousands of our

brothers in Yemen," said AlHammadi. He noted that QC is keen to enhance and strengthen the existing co-operation with IOM to reach the largest number of needy people around the world. QC will intensify work in Yemen in support of stability and development, he said.

AlHammadi also underlined QC's keenness to utilise its expertise, potential, and capabilities to serve the vulnerable and communities in need through co-operation and partnership with many international humanitarian organisations, networks, and alliances.

Alecso lauds Qatar efforts in education development

The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (Alecso) hailed Qatar's efforts and initiatives in developing education and culture, serving the Arabic language by improving its teaching and dissemination in the world, and empowering the youth and women.

The organisation also praised the continuous work undertaken by Qatar to upgrade its education and curricula, making them accessible to all.

This came in a speech delivered by Alecso's senior education specialist Dr Hechmi Ardhaoui during the training course currently held in Doha by the Qatar National Commission for Education, Culture and Science in co-operation with Alecso.

The course aims to enable educational leaders in Arab countries to develop their competencies, the status of their national cadres, and their educational qualifications for teaching pre-university stages, and ways of using, evaluating,



and updating them to ensure the quality of the outputs of this type of education.

Among the objectives of the training course are familiarising participants with the terms of reference for setting frameworks to describe qualifications and their components, identifying the features of each educational stage through characterising qualifications based on learning outcomes, and using national

qualifications frameworks to harmonise them or equate them with regional and international qualifications frameworks to facilitate the link between different tracks and mutual recognition of qualifications.

During the activities of the training course, Dr Amr Moussa Mahasneh, an expert at Alecso, explained the Arab framework for describing the qualifications of pre-university education,

which he said is divided into two branches.

One of the branches is related to bringing the components of Arab educational systems closer together, taking into account capabilities and specificities, in a way that allows learners and teachers to move from one system to another, and the other is related to the concern of the Arab countries to catch up with advanced educational systems, he said.

Mahasneh touched on the framework's general objectives in achieving a number of strategies, including unifying concepts related to the Arab framework for describing pre-university education qualifications, ensuring an acceptable level of internal homogeneity between education systems in Arab countries, providing an Arab guiding approach to developing national frameworks for education standards, and encouraging interaction in educational projects in these countries. (QNA)

Ford model recalled

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Almana Motors Company, has announced the recall of Ford F-150 2016 model, as in some of the affected vehicles dust can enter the inner parts of the steering wheel clock spring, causing the steering wheel to lose illumination and the steering wheel control, horn, and airbag lights to malfunction. The recall campaign comes within the framework of the MoCI's continuous efforts to protect consumers and ensure that dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The MoCI 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

Police College 'among fastest-growing, most distinguished in region'

President of the Police Academy Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Majid al-Sulaiti said the Police College, despite its short life, has made great achievements at the academic and training levels, making it one of the fastest growing and distinguished police colleges in the region.

In an interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA), on the occasion of the celebration of the fifth batch of the Police College scheduled for February 2, Brig Gen al-Sulaiti said: "Despite its recent history, the college's excellence and development on all academic and training tracks make it one of the fastest-growing and distinguished police colleges in the region, earning it a prestigious regional and international presence."

He praised the wise leadership's unlimited support for the Police College, noting that the achievements made at various levels would not have seen the light without the wise leadership's interest and great support for the college.

He said this year's graduation ceremony will witness many new performances, which differ greatly from the ones witnessed previously.

The president of the Police Academy stated that the number of graduates of the fifth batch is 100, including 78 Qatari graduates, and 22 graduates from brotherly Arab countries.

Speaking about the achievements, he explained that the college, in terms of its academic career, has made significant strides since its establishment, in addition to the stability of the approved curricula in legal and police courses, general courses, and languages. Efforts have been made to develop the educational programme to keep pace with the latest developments at all levels.

He indicated that the development plans adopted at the Police College proceeded according to a comprehensive vision, which did not stop at the



President of the Police Academy Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Majid al-Sulaiti.

academic level only, but went beyond it to the training track, as the college, since its establishment, has followed a unique path, inspired by the best inter-

national experiences in peer colleges, and added innovative systems and programmes to it, as well as focusing on elaborate and accurate implementation in the field.

In a related context, he pointed out that the best cadres in the fields of military and sports training have been selected, including officers and trainers, to supervise the application of these advanced training curricula, so that this effort is reflected in the outstanding performance of the college's candidates in all national activities of the country, and in their high performance in implementing all training plans and programmes.

"Today, as it celebrates the fifth batch, the college confirms that it was born a giant indeed. Its ambition does not stop at any limit in the development process, in preparing scientifically and practically trained cadres in the legal and police fields, especially after the transformation into a comprehensive Police Academy,"

Brig Gen al-Sulaiti added.

He said that since the graduation of the first batch in 2019, the college has been providing the Ministry of Interior and the military authorities in the country with well-trained cadres in law and policing science, adding that this reinforces the various security sectors with qualified Qatari cadres, as the total number of graduates from the previous batches reached 520, of whom 430 were Qatari graduates.

The college has added new programmes, in addition to supporting tracks, research fields, and practical programmes for students in the departments of the Ministry of Interior and related authorities, he noted, highlighting the remarkable success that the college has achieved in its newly applied courses pertaining to legal clinics, image simulation and the art of debate.

On the scientific and research level, he stated that the faculty members

have published scientific works in the fields of law, police and general courses, which represent a real addition to the legal and police library in Qatar.

The Police College has adopted three specialised training programmes as part of its endeavour to be a pioneer in developing the best training strategies, namely 'thunderbolt, skydiving, and diving' to be the first in the region to offer these programmes that require high physical fitness, stamina, as well as psychological and mental readiness, and the ability to make decisions, he added.

He also pointed out that the Police College served as a core for the establishment of the Police Academy (which was announced late 2022), with the aim of bringing together academic, research, training and security and police educational units under one umbrella, noting that the college continues its course towards achieving its goals. (QNA)

Meeting urges active co-operation between QU and media organisations

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

The success of aspiring media persons in the country could be better realised through active co-operation between Qatar University (QU) and the media outlets and platforms, it was suggested yesterday at a co-ordination meeting at QU to empower media students and graduates.

The meeting was inaugurated by Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) CEO HE Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Thani al-Thani alongside QU president Dr Hassan al-Derham. The event was organised by QU's Media Department, in co-operation with QMC, aiming at refining student skills, developing their capabilities, and opening training and employment opportunities with the participation of officials from a number of media institutions in the country.

A considerable number of media students and graduates, who participated in the meeting, were able to voice their concerns and discuss issues of interest with the senior media officials and representatives.

HE Sheikh Abdulaziz pointed out that the "meeting is very important because it promotes partnership between two institu-



Dr Hassan al-Derham



HE Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Thani al-Thani

tions interested in developing the media profession in Qatar; Qatar University and Qatar Media Corporation. The university prepares future leaders and gives them the skills to ensure that they practice the profession perfectly, and the institution subsequently refines their experiences and talents and provides them with practical skills in order to respond to the needs of the Qatari labour market."

Dr al-Derham, expressed his hopes that the meeting would be a turning point in the relationship between the Media Department and QMC. He pointed out that the event represents a practical translation of QU's strategic plan aimed at providing society with graduates who meet the various developmental needs sought by the state.

He noted that the meeting comes as a co-operation initiative between QU and QMC, stress-

ing the need for more integration between the academic world and the job sector to maintain the soft power of media in keeping national unity, upholding the image of the country and promoting the value of the solidarity.

Sheikh Abdulaziz advised the students to work hard to realise their dream and be ready to face and overcome the challenges involved in the field of media as the job of a journalist needs a well-equipped person to take the initiative round-the-clock and be able to explore the facts and undertake all the involved responsibilities to present his or her audience with reliable and authentic in-depth material.

Saad al-Rumaihi, former director of Qatar TV, stressed that those who want to join the field of the media should pursue this with genuine passion for the profession, so as to create their



Gulf Times editor-in-chief Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka speaks at the event.

own creative content. He urged the students to go for their aspiration step-by-step and strive to build their career through diligent daily practice.

The editors-in-chief of many Qatari newspapers took part in the meeting and expressed their readiness to support the media graduates and aspiring media persons through an open door policy, through which they can get practical field training in journalism and expand their creativity and skills.



Saad al-Rumaihi

Qatari media achievements stressed

Addressing the meeting, Gulf Times editor-in-chief Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka stressed that the achievements of the Qatari media have to be recognised and introduced to the new generations. "We have excelled in the sports media and the recent 25th Arabian Gulf Cup in Iraq was given excellent coverage by a Qatari journalist to just give a recent example. Besides, Al Jazeera network's channels have changed the outlook of the media in the Arab World. Also, in the arts and music field, Sout Al Khaleej Radio has been offering elite distinguished experience to the listeners," pointed out al-Mudahka. The components of a positive work environment in the field of media is strongly present and available in Qatar, but have to be effectively utilised, he added.

VCUarts Qatar and QU explore machine learning, AI in healthcare

An academic each from the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) and VCU Richmond are collaborating with scholars from Qatar University (QU) to use various machine learning algorithms and possibly Artificial Intelligence (AI) regimes to improve human health.

Dr Ryad Ghanam is a professor of mathematics at VCUarts Qatar's Liberal Arts and Sciences department and Dr Edward Boone, a professor at the Department of Statistical Sciences and Operations Research at VCU's College of Humanities and Sciences, in Richmond.

Researchers at QU are working on relating various genetic, metabolic, and proteomic measurements to predict the risk of heart attacks, stroke, atherosclerosis, and diabetes. They have all the measurements of these factors and are trying to make sense of how to relate these factors to disease status.

The Mathematical Data Science Lab led by Dr Ghanam and Dr Boone, is collaborating with



Researchers from VCUarts Qatar, VCU and QU.

QU's researchers to build an effective model for this study.

"We are dealing with big data and need to develop machine learning techniques such as Linear Discriminant Analysis and Support Vector Machines to handle this situation. I am

very grateful to VCUarts Qatar and Qatar Foundation for providing me with the necessary resources to be able to carry out the calculations and advance my research," Dr Ghanam said.

"The collaboration is a prime example of how our Mathemat-

ical Data Science Lab, part of VCUarts Qatar's Institute for Creative Research can have a strong impact on the research being conducted in Qatar, and also on research that has the potential to improve human health," he added.

HMC trauma team warns of dangers of driving during foggy weather

The Hamad Injury Prevention Programme at Hamad Medical Corporation's (HMC) Hamad Trauma Centre is warning drivers to take proven safety precautions during foggy weather conditions and times of low visibility.

Dr Rafael Consunji, director of the HIPP, the community outreach arm of HMC's Hamad Trauma Centre says road safety during this foggy season is a major area of concern.

"Fog is a cloud that touches the ground. Fog can be thin or thick, meaning people have difficulty seeing through it. In some conditions, fog can be so thick that it makes passing cars, other vehicles and pedestrians invisible.

"Driving in foggy conditions requires special safe driving techniques. It is believed that this environmental road hazard is one of the most dangerous as one's ability to see other vehicles can plummet to zero in a matter of seconds.

"This makes it very challenging to drive in high-speed traffic, and people should be more vigilant when sharing the road in congested areas as there could be many road users, even cyclists and pedestrians, who could be at high-risk of not being seen.

"Fog can be one of the most dangerous weather conditions for both new and experienced drivers. It has the potential to reduce visibility suddenly, so it is critical that drivers stay focused on the road in order to



Dr Rafael Consunji

stay safe. Severe weather demands your undivided attention, so be sure to reduce any possible distractions by turning the radio down, removing your earphones or turning off that phone to keep your attention fully on the road.

"Avoid using hazard warning lights unless you have completely stopped or are driving extremely slowly (less than 20km per hour), your vehicle has broken down on the side of the road, a tyre is being changed, or your vehicle is being towed.

"If one continues to use their hazard lights as they drive in the fog, then they lose the ability to use their signal lights to warn other road users of their intentions to turn or change lanes. This practice can

significantly increase your chance of a crash and injury, low beam headlights or fog lights are sufficient to be seen," Dr Consunji said.

"We will continue to support our partners from Hamad Trauma Centre to raise the awareness among the general public to make all road users in Qatar safer. And for this we have planned to organise future co-operative awareness activities and campaigns to support the safe use of roads and reduce the rate of accidents and injuries," said Brig Mohamed Radi al-Hajri, director of the Traffic Awareness Department of the Ministry of Interior.

Dr Consunji added: "In order to promote safe driving and reduce road injuries we recommend that all motorists keep a safe distance from other road users and to turn on their headlights, on low beam, or use fog lights. This way we avoid blinding other road users and we make ourselves readily visible. During low visibility or foggy conditions, we advise road users to take proven safety measures. Delay your departure until fog clears, be more visible by using fog or low-beam headlights, not hazard flashers, slow down and open the windows and ensure all passengers are using a seatbelt or child car seat. Keep in mind that sometimes the best driving decision you can make is to stay off the road completely until the weather clears."

US embassy to celebrate Black History Month through film and literature

In honour of Black History Month, the US embassy in Qatar will celebrate the contributions of Black Americans by hosting a series of weekly book readings and film screenings around Doha throughout February. The US celebrates Black History Month every February to honour Black Americans' history, culture and achievements. The following events, all open to the public, will take place throughout Doha during Black History Month:

- On February 1 at 7pm, a US diplomat will read aloud an excerpt of acclaimed US author Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, at Volume Cafe, The Pearl Island (ages 16 and up).
- On February 8 at 4pm, US author Dr Darius Walker will read aloud his children's book *The Ship and the Jungle* at the Education City Gift Shop, Oxygen Park (ages 5-12).
- On February 15 at 5.30pm, a US diplomat will read aloud excerpts from the autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr at Georgetown University (ages 14 and up).
- On February 22 at 9.30am, a US diplomat will read aloud the children's book *Computer Decoder: Dorothy Vaughan* at



Qatar National Library (ages 5-8). A discussion will follow each reading. The public is invited to attend the free readings with prior registration at qa.usembassy.gov. The US Film Festival will be held from February 26-28, highlighting Black American stories in three popular films, including family-friendly options. A different film will be screened each day of the festival at 7pm. The public is invited to attend the free film screenings with prior registration at qa.usembassy.gov. The embassy has advised people to follow it on social media for venue details as soon

as they are announced. US ambassador to Qatar Timmy Davis said, "Black History Month is a time to recognise diversity as a strength in every community and serves as an opportunity to reflect on our mutual values of inclusion and tolerance. Inclusion begins with representation in every facet of society, including the arts, which is why we invite everyone to learn about and celebrate the occasion with us through books and films highlighting Black Americans' stories." To learn more about these and other activities, visit qa.usembassy.gov and follow the embassy on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter on @USEmbassyDoha

Sidra Medicine takes part in precision medicine conference

A team of researchers and physicians from Sidra Medicine, a member of Qatar Foundation, were at Precision Medicine World Conference (PMWC 2023) in California last week to showcase how it has made precision medicine a reality for children with rare diseases in Qatar.

The Sidra Medicine delegation at PMWC 2023 included chief medical officer Prof Ziyad M Hijazi, chief research officer Dr Khalid Fakhro, Endocrinology division chief Prof Khalid Hussain, attending paediatric neurologist and epileptologist Dr Ruba Benini and Advanced Cell Core Therapy director and attending physician in paediatric haematology and oncology Dr Chiara Cugno, as well as Research Operations and Strategy Director Dr Max Renault.

Prof Hijazi said: "PMWC 2023 was a fantastic opportunity for us to highlight Qatar Foundation's investment in precision health and precision medicine, through an entity like ours. I



Prof Ziyad Hijazi and Dr Khalid Fakhro at the event.

was very proud of our groundbreaking case studies and clinical research that showed how we have made precision medicine a reality and used our genomics know-how to transform patient care in Qatar."

In a panel session titled 'Building Future Precision Care in Qatar', Prof Hijazi and Dr Fakhro, along with Dr Edison Liu, the former president and CEO

of the Jackson Laboratory and member of the Research board at Sidra Medicine, explored the bench to bedside pathways of care for patients at the hospital.

Sidra Medicine was also part of the 'Challenges and Opportunities for National Precision Medicine Initiatives' panel with Microsoft, where Dr Fakhro talked about the precision medicine initiatives being undertaken at Sidra Medicine and how they were transforming healthcare for patients in Qatar.

Dr Fakhro concluded: "Sidra Medicine not only has the clinical and research expertise, technology, innovation and skill sets, we are now in a strong position to contribute to the global knowledge economy. Our experience with Middle Eastern genotypes and phenotypes as well as with novel diseases, is a game changer in the precision medicine field. We are seeing a lot of interest in collaborations related to precision oncology; data sharing for rare diseases and pharmacogenomics."



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GULF TIMES

Top ICC awards add further sheen to Brand Babar

Babar Azam, in plain speak, means the 'Lion King'. While comparisons – more noticeably, with Indian superstar Virat Kohli, who incidentally himself hailed Babar as the best last year – are odious, the fact that they are even made underpins his soaring reputation as the man to beat.

Last week, Babar grabbed two top ICC awards that reinforced his standing as one of the world's best willow-wielders. The Pakistani captain won the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for 'ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year' and was also declared the 'ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year' for his phenomenal run in 2022.

In 2022, Babar amassed 1,184 Test runs at a tick under 70; 679 at 85 in ODI cricket, and led his side to the T20 World Cup final in Australia, besides making 735 runs at a strike rate of 123 in T20Is.

The technically sound and stylish batter also figured prominently as a part of the 'ICC Men's Test Team of the Year'. Additionally, he was also named as the captain of the 'ICC Men's ODI Team of the Year'.

The last one comes at an interesting time given how ironically, he is currently copping a motivated campaign in Pakistan against his captaincy, with calls made by a certain section of the media to remove him from the leadership on the back of a spate of Test match losses at home.

While it is true that Babar has endured a lean run as Test captain of late – leading to series losses to Australia and England as well as a drawn series against New Zealand where however, Pakistan came agonisingly close to victory – missing from the debate is how he was severely handicapped by the continuing absence of Pakistan's envious pace battery led by Shaheen Shah Afridi, the most penetrating pacer in the game across all formats.

While Afridi is still not available after sustaining an injury in an attempt to take a difficult catch during the T20 World Cup final against England late last year, Babar also did not always have the rest of the pace attack available to him thanks to injuries.

I think Babar's still got a little bit of improvement to come, which is a pretty scary thought with what he's been able to do, pretty much across all three formats' – Ricky Ponting, ICC Hall of Famer

But while public memory is prone to be fickle, the campaign against Babar picked up after the recent change in the Pakistan Cricket Board where Najam Sethi, a prominent media personality, who is considered close to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, was suddenly installed at the head of a management committee to oversee the running of the board.

Sethi replaced Ramiz Raja, a former cricket captain and commentator, who was appointed by former prime minister Imran Khan and survived only a little over a year of his three-year elected term. Unfortunately, cricket in Pakistan despite being a force of unity amongst citizens of all shades has historically, suffered from these apparent political changes.

It is in this context that Babar appeared to have become a 'collateral' with speculation rife smack in the middle of an ongoing series against New Zealand of an imminent change. This was reinforced with the intriguing appointment of Shan Masood, a favourite of Sethi, as the vice-captain of the ODI team in place of Mohamed Rizwan, a stalwart first choice selection in the shorter formats.

An incensed Babar initially declined to include Masood in the ODI playing eleven – exercising his right as captain – before relenting in the last ODI where Masood failed to make the opportunity count.

But with Babar winning the prestigious ICC awards, it has apparently, for now at least, offset the questionable move to remove him as Test captain. The facetious if aborted attempt makes little cricketering sense given how a captain is only as good as the team he inherits and only if there is a worthy replacement, who, is not only better than Babar, but also an automatic selection in the team first, and has a decent future ahead of him, should such a move be even considered.

For the record, Babar still maintains the best success percentage across all formats for any Pakistan captain – 71 years after the country became a full member of the ICC.

Former Australian captain and ICC Hall of Famer Ricky Ponting was only stating the obvious when reacting to Babar's ICC recognition, he said: "You've only got to look at when he plays, how long he bats for in Test matches, how he controls the innings in one-day games, how he's sort of got the ability to go up and down the gears as a batsman when the game and the situation needs him to."

"I think Babar's still got a little bit of improvement to come, which is a pretty scary thought with what he's been able to do, pretty much across all three formats," he concluded.

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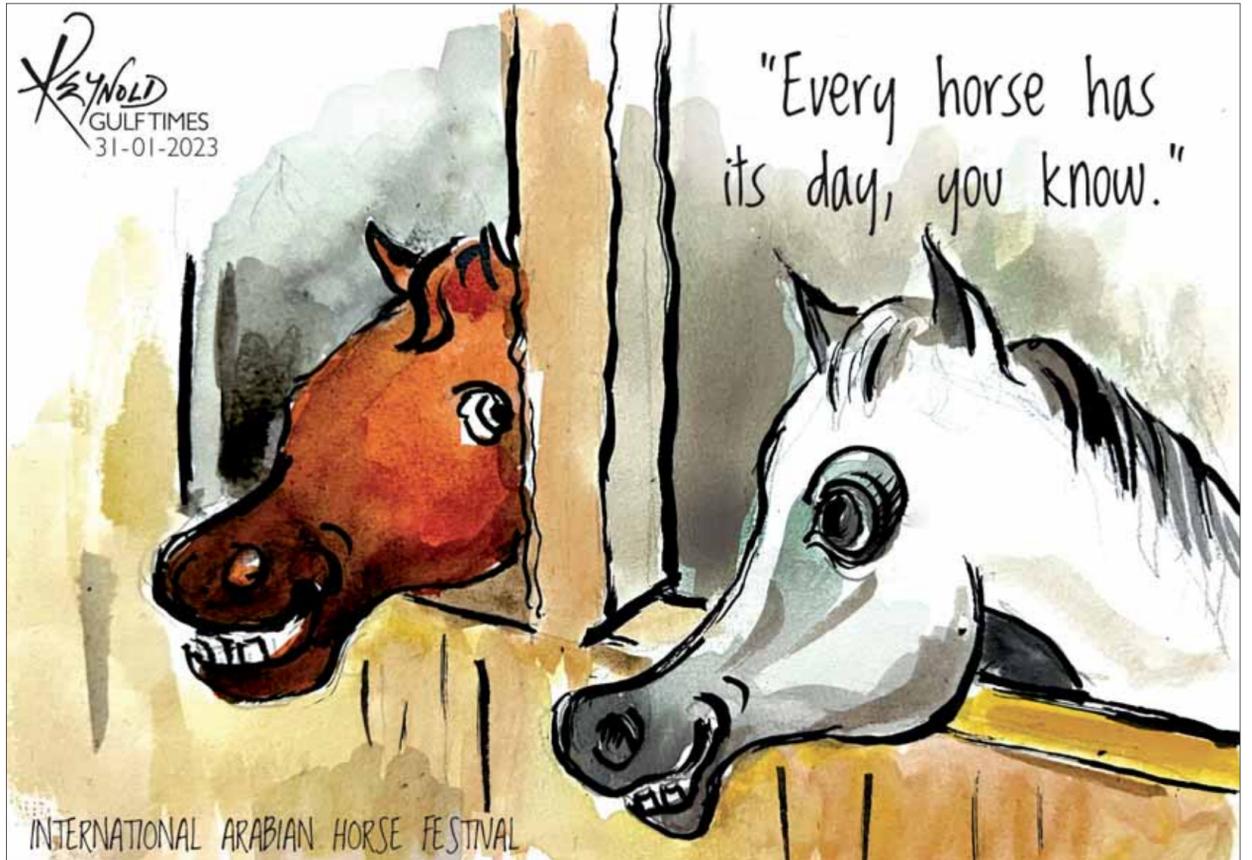
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Everyone loses in a fractured world

If the 'Great Fracture' plays out, world GDP would shrink by 1.5% in annual terms; prices rise virtually across the board; and the delivery of global public goods severely diminished

By Andrew Sheng and Xiao Geng
Hong Kong

At the latest annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres offered an unusually frank assessment of the international order's current predicament. With the world "plagued by a perfect storm on a number of fronts," he said, "we need co-operation, yet we face fragmentation."

In fact, the perfect storm is better likened to a tsunami. Its components – including supply-chain disruptions, an energy crunch, a cost-of-living crisis, slowing global growth, and a lurch toward climate disaster – are all at least partly consequences of the tectonic rift between China and the United States.

If what Guterres calls the "Great Fracture" plays out, the world will have "two different sets of trade rules, two dominant currencies, two Internets, and two conflicting strategies on artificial intelligence."

The costs would be tremendous. World GDP would shrink by 1.5%, or more than \$1.4tn in annual terms; prices would rise virtually across the board; and the delivery of global public goods would be severely diminished.

It is not difficult to understand why. Since the end of World War II, the world has been reaping

unprecedented peace dividends. With the US overseeing a relatively stable rules-based world order, globalisation took off, enabling Europe's post-war recovery in the 1950s and 1960s, the East Asian miracle in the 1970s and 1980s, Central and Eastern Europe's development in the 1990s and 2010s, and China's precipitous economic rise.

While this transformation was enabled by US global leadership, it also gradually diluted American hegemony, as other countries rose to prominence. This dynamic helps to explain the backlash in the US against globalisation and the countries that have benefited from it. Americans who felt left behind romanticised the era of US-centred unipolarity, and blamed "revisionist" rising powers – especially China – for supposedly eroding their prosperity. This set the stage for the Great Fracture.

But the East-West split is not the only rift that is jeopardising our collective future. Guterres also highlighted the risks raised by the deepening North-South divide, noting that inhabitants of the wealthier North seem not to grasp "the degree of frustration and even anger in the Global South." After all, while the North enjoys all the benefits of industrialization and cutting-edge technology, the resource-endowed South remains beset by poverty and instability, owing not least to the legacy of colonialism.

In fact, S&P Global Vice Chairman Daniel Yergin casts the North-South divide as fundamentally

an energy-transition challenge. From the coal-fuelled Industrial Revolution to the electricity-enabled Information Age, energy has been integral to the West's rise to global dominance. Now, the North is seeking to shift away from fossil fuels, without sacrificing the wealth gained from its past emissions, while urging the South to pursue climate-friendly development.

"The new North-South divide," Yergin concludes, "reflects disagreement over climate and transition policies, their impact on development, and who is responsible for cumulative and new emissions and who pays?"

This illustrates a broader reality: the interests of the North's smaller, wealthier, aging populations diverge sharply from those of the larger, poorer, younger populations of the South. Most countries in the Global South attempt to avoid taking sides in geopolitical conflicts – most notably in the Sino-American rivalry – because they are more concerned with ensuring their own development. For these countries, the senseless East-West conflict appears set to lead to mutual assured deflation, if not to mutual assured destruction. So, they try to stay out of it.

But the South cannot escape the consequences of the North's actions. For example, just as the Ukraine War left Europe scrambling for alternative energy supplies, it has created major food and fertiliser shortages in the Global South. As Western (or Western-led) institutions increase environment-related conditionality on development funding, the South may be forced to look elsewhere.

If the Great Fracture is completed, if nuclear powers lock horns in a hot war, and if the North fails to get its climate house in order, the South will become collateral damage. After all, no country in the Global South – not even India – has the economic, political, or military heft to challenge the North.

The global North often touts its democratic credentials. But the case for democracy is founded on the system's ability to represent diverse opinions, cultures, and values – not only those of the wealthiest or most powerful. If the world order is to survive, it will have to function essentially as a global democracy – and that means balancing the needs and priorities of the North with those of the South.

At the same time, closing the East-West rift is crucial. The Great Fracture implies a vicious cycle: when we externalise blame for our problems, we divert valuable resources away from effective solutions, exacerbating the problems and increasing the amount of wasted resources. This reduces our chances of addressing the interconnected challenges we face – not least climate change – while raising the risk of conflict.

Given this, it is good news that Chinese vice-premier Liu He recently met with US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen to discuss restoring macroeconomic policy cooperation between the two countries. But national-security hawks still dominate the global agenda, so defence considerations continue to distort economic policy. Unless the world's leading powers credibly commit to a more cooperative and inclusive future, we may find ourselves living in an irrevocably divided world, roiled by climate change, and hurtling toward global conflict. – Project Syndicate

● Andrew Sheng, a distinguished fellow at the Asia Global Institute at the University of Hong Kong, is a member of the UNEP Advisory Council on Sustainable Finance. Xiao Geng, Chairman of the Hong Kong Institution for International Finance, is a professor and Director of the Institute of Policy and Practice at the Shenzhen Finance Institute at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen.



Participants are seen during a session of the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in Davos on January 17. (AFP)

Schoolkids lost third of a year's learning to pandemic: study

School-aged students lost more than a third of a year's worth of learning early on in the pandemic and have still not caught up, posing "a real problem for this generation," researchers warned yesterday. The Covid-19 pandemic caused one of history's greatest disruptions to education, with 95 percent of students worldwide affected by school closures, and online teaching becoming far more common. To find out how much this upheaval affected students, a European team carried out the largest review of research on the subject yet conducted. They analysed 42 studies published between March 2020 and August 2022 across 15 countries, including several European and South American nations as well as the United States, South Africa and Australia. The study found that children aged between five and 18 had lost the equivalent of 35% of a normal year's worth of education. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds were disproportionately affected, as were those in poorer countries, according to the study in the journal *Nature Human Behaviour*. "The learning crisis is an equality crisis," said the study's lead author Bastian Betthausen, a researcher at France's Sciences Po university. The researchers also found larger "learning deficits" for maths than for reading. "This may be due to parents being better able to help their children with reading compared to maths exercises," Betthausen told a press briefing. Most of the learning deficits came during school closures at the start of the pandemic. Efforts by children, parents, schools and governments since may have prevented further losses but have not made up for the lost ground, the study said. "Education is one of – if not the – key predictor for children's school-to-work transition, their success in the labour market, their success in building up their own livelihoods," Betthausen said. "This is potentially going to be a real problem for this generation that experienced the pandemic in school," he said. The researchers called for governments to take up policy initiatives to help this generation recover their losses. More research is needed to understand the scale of the problem going forward, particularly in less developed countries, they added. Betthausen called on policymakers to stay focused on the issue. "I get the sense that maybe attention is diverted away a little bit by other current events, and it's important that we remember that these learning deficits are still there," he said.

Tyre Nichols' mother, stepfather to attend State of Union speech

The mother and stepfather of Tyre Nichols, the Black man WHO was fatally beaten by Memphis police officers, have accepted an invitation to attend US President Joe Biden's State of the Union address in February. Congressional Black Caucus executive director Vincent Evans tweeted on Sunday that the caucus chairman, US Representative Steven Horsford, invited Nichols' parents to Washington for the State of the Union address, and that they have accepted the invitation. Nichols repeatedly cried, "Mom! Mom!" as the five Memphis police officers charged with the Black motorist's murder pummelled him with kicks, punches and baton blows after a January 7 traffic stop, video released by the city on Friday showed. The officers, all Black, were dismissed from the police department. Nichols, 29, was hospitalised and died of his injuries three days after the confrontation in the city where he lived with his mother and stepfather and worked at FedEx. Police also suspended a sixth officer in the case. The Congressional Black Caucus also said it was in talks with the White House about a meeting to discuss police reform. Nichols' death marked the latest high-profile instance of police officers accused of using excessive force in the deaths of Black people and other minorities in recent years. Biden spoke on Friday to Nichols' mother, RowVaughn Wells, and his stepfather, Rodney Wells. Nichols' mother hoped the tragedy could lead to a "greater good," the family's attorney said. Biden will deliver his second State of the Union address on February 7. Biden is expected to use the speech, which is delivered during a joint session of Congress, as an unofficial start to the 2024 presidential campaign season.

Spain govt to alter rape law to fix loopholes

Spain's left-wing government said yesterday it would modify a landmark law aimed at fighting sexual violence to close a loophole that has let some convicted offenders reduce their sentences. Since the law came into force in October, around 20 offenders have reportedly been released and 300 others have seen their sentences reduced. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez's Socialist party has announced plans to reform the law. "In the coming days, we will present a draft bill, a meticulous text that will provide a response and a solution to these undesired effects which we obviously don't want to see repeated in the future," said Education Minister Pilar Algeria, who is also party spokeswoman. "Logically, the best way to specifically address these undesired effects would be to increase the penalties for sexual offenders," she told reporters. The controversy erupted barely six weeks after the entry into force of the "Only yes means yes" law, which reformed the criminal code in a bid to define all non-consensual sex as rape. The overall aim of the law was to shift the focus in cases of sexual violence from the victims' resistance to a woman's free and clearly expressed consent. To this end, the charge of sexual abuse was dropped and everything was grouped under sexual assault. The range of penalties was widened to include all possibilities under that single term. The law effectively reduces the minimum and the maximum punishment in certain specific cases and hundreds have applied to have their sentences revised.

Police among 61 dead, 150 hurt in Pak mosque blast

AFP
Peshawar

Police were among 61 people killed and 150 wounded in a blast at a mosque inside a highly sensitive Pakistan police headquarters yesterday, prompting the government to put the country on high alert.

The attack happened during afternoon worship in the provincial capital of Peshawar, close to former tribal areas along the Afghan border where militancy has been steadily rising.

A frantic rescue mission was underway at the mosque, which had an entire wall and some of its roof blown out.

"Many policemen are buried under the rubble," said Peshawar police chief Mohamed Ijaz Khan, who estimated between 300 and 400 officers usually attended prayers at the mosque.

"Efforts are being made to get them out safely," he added.

Bloodied survivors emerged limping from the wreckage, while bodies were ferried away in ambulances.

"It's an emergency situation," Mohamed Asim Khan, a spokesman for the main hospital in Peshawar, told AFP. The death toll continued to rise as more bodies were pulled from the debris, rising to 61 killed with more than 150 wounded.

As darkness fell, at least four men were still trapped in the wreckage, visible through cracks in the concrete.

"We have given them oxygen so that they don't have problems in breathing," said Bilal Ahmad Faizi, a spokesperson for the rescue or-



People and rescue workers gather in the mosque in Peshawar after the blast. (Reuters)

ganisation 1122. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack, amid a worsening security situation in the country.

The police headquarters in Peshawar is in one of the most tightly controlled areas of the city, housing intelligence and counter-terrorism bureaus, and is next door to the regional secretariat.

Provinces around the country announced they were on high alert after the blast, with checkpoints ramped up and extra security forces deployed, while in the capital Islamabad snipers were deployed on buildings and at city entrance points. "Terrorists want to create

fear by targeting those who perform the duty of defending Pakistan," said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a statement.

"Those fighting against Pakistan will be wiped out from the face of earth."

Officers said the blast came from the second row of worshippers, with bomb disposal teams probing the possibility of a suicide attack.

Shahid Ali, a policeman who survived, said the explosion took place seconds after the imam started prayers. "I saw black smoke rising to the sky. I ran out to save my life," the 47-year-old told AFP.

"The screams of the people are

still echoing in my mind," he added. "People were screaming for help."

The drastic security breach came on the day United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan had been due to visit Islamabad, although the trip was cancelled at the last minute due to bad weather.

Pakistan is also preparing to host an International Monetary Fund (IMF) delegation today as it works towards unlocking a vital bailout loan to prevent a looming default.

United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken extended his condolences while describing it as a "horrific attack".

On Long Island beach, a dead end



A US Coast Guard (USCG) officer walks past a dead male humpback whale that, according to town officials, washed ashore overnight on Long Island's south facing shore in Lido Beach, New York yesterday. (Reuters)

8 dead in mass shooting at S Africa birthday party

Gunmen killed eight people and wounded three others at a birthday party in South Africa at the weekend before fleeing, police said. Officers have given no indication of a motive for Sunday's shooting. The incident follows a spate of mass gun attacks last year that shocked the nation. In July, gunmen killed 19 people in random shootings within hours of each other. "These victims were killed by criminals, and we will not rest until we find out what happened and who was responsible for (this) callous and cold-blooded attack on these unsuspecting victims," said Eastern Cape South African Police Service Commissioner Nomthetheli Lillian Mene. The shooting was carried out by two attackers on Sunday afternoon at a house in Kwazakele, Gqeberha, police said.

A family member, Chinese Tys, said her brothers Vusumzi and Andile Sishuba were celebrating Vusumzi's birthday when they were shot and killed.

"As the family we are in a state of shock and disbelief," she told Reuters.

Two of the injured people are still in hospital. The third wounded person was discharged.

South Africa has one of the world's highest murder rates, with around 20,000 people killed every year out of a population of 60mn.

According to campaign group Gun Free South Africa, there are about 3mn guns registered in the country, though there are many more unregistered.

Police Minister Bheki Cele visited the site of the shooting yesterday.

Blinken reaffirms two-state solution

Reuters
Jerusalem

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken urged Israelis and Palestinians to ease tensions yesterday during a visit to Jerusalem, reaffirming a long-stalled peace vision of two states side by side as the only path forward.

Arriving amid the bloodiest violence in years, Blinken focused on a Palestinian gun spree outside a synagogue that put Israel on high alert but also cautioned against any celebration or avenging of such bloodshed.

Seven people were shot dead in Friday's attack by an East Jerusalem man who was himself killed by police. Lionised by many fellow Palestinians, he had no known links to militant groups.

A day earlier, Israel carried out an unusually deep raid on the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank, killing 10 residents, most of them gunmen. At least 35 Palestinians, including fighters and civilians, have died in violence surging since January 1, medical officials say.

"It is the responsibility of everyone to take steps to calm tensions rather than inflame them," Blinken told reporters after landing in Tel Aviv.

Friday's rampage, he said, "was more than an attack on individuals. It was also an attack on the universal act of practising one's faith. We condemn it in the strongest terms."

"And we condemn all those who celebrate these and any other acts of terrorism that take innocent lives, no matter who the victim is or what they believe. Calls for vengeance against more innocent victims are not the answer."

Blinken is due to see Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas today.

International Olympic Committee 'promoter of war': Ukraine

AFP
Kyiv

Ukrainian presidential aide Mykhaylo Podolyak yesterday called the International Olympic Committee a "promoter of war" after the sports body said it was considering ways for Russian athletes to compete at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

The IOC said last week it was examining a "pathway" for Russians to take part in the summer Games next year, probably as neutral athletes rather than under their national flag.

Russia and its ally Belarus have been sidelined from most Olympic sports since Russian forces invaded Ukraine last February.

"(The) IOC is a promoter of war, murder and destruction. The IOC

watches with pleasure Russia destroying Ukraine and then offers Russia a platform to promote genocide and encourages their further killings," Podolyak said on Twitter.

"Obviously Russian money that buys Olympic hypocrisy doesn't have a smell of Ukrainian blood. Right, Mr Bach?" he added, referring to IOC president Thomas Bach.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said Sunday Russia's participation in the Paris Olympics would amount to showing that "terror can allegedly be something acceptable".

"As if it is possible to turn a blind eye to what Russia is doing to Kherson, to Kharkiv, to Bakhmut and Avdiivka," Zelensky said in his nightly address, referring to cities under constant Russian attacks.

Zelensky added that he had sent

a letter to President Emmanuel Macron on the matter following a phone call with the French leader last week. "We must be sure that Russia will not be able to use it (the Olympics) or any other international sporting event to promote aggression or its state chauvinism," he said.

Ukraine's Sports Minister Vadym Goutzeit has warned his country could boycott next year's Olympics if Russian and Belarusian athletes are allowed to take part. Ukraine's foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba said yesterday that of the 71 medals that Russian competitors won at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, 45 were won by athletes who were members of the Central Sports Club of the Russian Army, or CSKA.

"The army that commits atrocities, kills, rapes, and loots," Kuleba

said. "This is whom the ignorant IOC wants to put under (the) white flag allowing (them) to compete."

The Olympic Council of Asia last week offered Russian and Belarusian athletes the chance to compete in this year's Asian Games.

That was a significant move because it allows athletes from those two countries to gain qualifying standards they need to compete at the Paris Olympics.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo has said she would be in favour of Russians taking part in Paris as neutrals but the Paris organisers have no say over which nations compete in Olympic Games.

The IOC reiterated last week that the international federations for each Olympic sport were "the sole authority for its international competitions."

3 years on, Covid still a global emergency, says WHO

Three years to the day after the World Health Organisation sounded the highest level of global alert over Covid-19, it said yesterday the pandemic remains an international emergency. WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus reached that conclusion following the recommendations of the United Nations health agency's emergency committee, which on Friday held its 14th meeting since the start of the crisis. The WHO first declared a so-called public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) – its highest possible level of global alert – on January 30, 2020, over what was then called the novel coronavirus. When it sounded the alarm, fewer than 100 cases and no deaths had been detected outside China. Since then, more than 752mn confirmed cases of Covid-19 have been reported to the WHO, including more than 6.8mn deaths, though the true numbers are thought to be far higher. Addressing the WHO's executive board in Geneva yesterday, Tedros acknowledged that "as we enter the fourth year of the pandemic, there is no doubt we are in a far better situation now than we were a year ago, when the Omicron wave was at its peak". But, he added, "since the beginning of December, weekly reported deaths have been rising". "In the past eight weeks, more than 170,000 people have lost their lives to Covid-19." Weekly death rates had dropped from more than 70,000 per week at the start of 2022 to below 10,000 in October. But they began swiftly rising again in early December, driven especially by a dramatic outbreak in China, after Beijing lifted its tight Covid restrictions. In mid-January, almost 40,000 Covid weekly deaths were reported – more than half of them in China. Back in 2020, when the global crisis was also concentrated in China, WHO's declaration of a PHEIC failed to elicit the urgent global response required. It was only after Tedros described the worsening Covid situation as a pandemic on March 11, 2020, that many countries realised the danger. Three years later, WHO said yesterday that the emergency committee deemed the pandemic is "probably at a transition point". Tedros "appreciates the advice of the committee to navigate this transition carefully and mitigate the potential negative consequences", it said. But Tedros reiterated his concern over a dramatic drop in surveillance of the virus through testing and sequencing. He also voiced disappointment that many vulnerable people remain un- or under-vaccinated and lack access to the drugs needed to treat severe Covid disease. "We can't control the virus but we can do more to address the vulnerabilities in populations and health systems," he said. "That means vaccinating 100% of the most at-risk groups. It means increasing access to testing and early antiviral use." Yesterday's decision came as the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) warned that the world remained "dangerously unprepared" for the next crisis. "The Covid-19 pandemic should be a wake-up call for the global community to prepare now for the next health crisis," said IFRC secretary general Jagan Chapagain. "The next pandemic could be just around the corner," he warned. "If the experience of Covid-19 won't quicken our steps toward preparedness, what will?"



Lilibeth V Pono was received upon arrival by Ibrahim Yousif Abdullah Fakhro. Pictures courtesy of Philippine embassy

First female Philippine envoy to Qatar arrives

Lilibeth V Pono, the first female Philippine ambassador to Qatar, arrived in Doha on Sunday and was received by Ibrahim Yousif Abdullah Fakhro, director of the Protocol Department at Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the officers and staff of the Philippine embassy in Doha.

This was announced by the embassy on its website and social media.

Prior to her arrival in Qatar, Pono served as charge d'affaires ad interim at the Philippines embassy in Germany, from February 2018 to April 2019, and from July 2021 until January this year.

She was previously assigned to the Philippine embassies in Switzerland (2010-2014), Italy (2009-2010), the Vatican (2008-2009), and Japan (2000-2007).

A foreign service officer since 1997, Pono also held various executive positions in the Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs.

She previously served as executive director at the Office of Asset Management and Support Services, the Office of Consular Affairs, and at the Office of Fiscal Management Services.

In her earlier years in the department, Pono also held the position of director at the Office of Asian and Pacific Affairs (South Asia Division) and at the Financial Planning Division of the Office of Fiscal Management Services.

Also a certified public accountant, Pono speaks Filipino, Cebuano, English, Italian, and Spanish.



Saudi carrier flynas opens office in Doha

Saudi carrier "flynas", a leading low-cost airline in the Middle East, sees tremendous potential to scale up operations between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, its vice-president (International Sales) Abdullah Suliman Aleadi said yesterday.

flynas has also opened its office in Doha, at Fereej Abdul Aziz on B-Ring Road, adjacent to Avens Travel and Tours.

Aleadi, senior manager (planning and bilateral relations) Abdulla M al-Mousa, and Ahmed al-Rayes, chairman of Al Rayes Group, jointly opened the office in the presence of flynas corporate communications manager Mousa al-Bahri, senior manager (Ground operations) Fahad al-Qahtani, and regional manager (Gulf and Middle East) Syed Mazharudheen.

Naser Karukappadath, managing director of Avens Travel and Tours, the general sales agent (GSA) of flynas in Qatar, along with flynas Doha manager Ali Anakkayan, welcomed the dignitaries.

Pictured is the cake-cutting ceremony.

Saudi carriers offering free stopover visa

From Page 1

Aleadi said flynas now operates 1,500 weekly flights to more than 70 domestic and international destinations including those across the GCC, India, Egypt, Turkiye, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

A recent flynas press release said that the airline doubled annual growth in operation and performance during 2022, by recording 91% growth in passenger numbers to 8.7mn; flights by 45% to 66,000 and seat capacity by 46%.

Additionally, flynas launched some 16 new destinations and 30 new routes as its fleet up-scaled to 43 aircraft.

Moreover, the company's board of directors approved raising the booking orders of 250 aircraft, in line with the goals of the Saudi Vision 2030, and the civil aviation strategy to reach 330mn passengers, 250 international destinations and 100mn tourists annually.

Meanwhile, flynas opened its office in Doha in Fereej Abdul Aziz on B-Ring Road, adjacent to Avens Travel and Tours.

Fuwairit ready for some kitesurfing action today



The opening ceremony of the Visit Qatar GKA Freestyle Kite World Cup 2023 was held at Fuwairit Kite Beach yesterday.

The tournament begins today and runs until February 4.

It marks the launch of this year's Qatar Airways GKA Kite World Tour.

In a tweet, Qatar Airways welcomed all the riders to the first Visit Qatar GKA Freestyle Kite World Cup.

The event is free to watch for visitors, who will be treated to an exhilarating display of freestyle kiting, which focuses on big air tricks, loops and jumps.

The competition's prize pool ensures that some of the world's best kitesurfers are confirmed to attend.

Fuwairit Kite Beach is one of Qatar's most exciting new attractions and an upcoming global kitesurfing hotspot.

The resort, which opened to guests in October last year and is designed to reflect the laidback kitesurfing lifestyle, sits on white sands beside a shallow enclosed lagoon that enjoys consistent winds and warm, flat water - perfect conditions for kitesurfing.

In addition to hosting large-scale competitions and events, Fuwairit Kite Beach offers accommodation and lessons for kitesurfing enthusiasts, from those who are new to the sport through to seasoned professionals.

The Visit Qatar GKA Freestyle Kite World Cup Finals 2023 will also be held in Qatar at the end of the year.



Cruise ship brings in 3,949 tourists



The two-year old AIDAcosma arrived at Doha Port, Qatar's gateway to marine tourism, on its third visit in the 2022/23 cruise season, carrying 3,949 tourists and 1,400 crew members, Mwani Qatar said yesterday.

With a length of 345m, width of 54m and draft of 8.6m, AIDAcosma, which is operated by German cruise line AIDA Cruises and flies the Italian flag, is one of the largest cruise ships in the fleet of the company, which is a subsidiary of Carnival Corporation & plc.

The ship has 20 decks and over 2,700 rooms, and can accommodate up to 6,600 passengers in addition to a crew of 1,636 members.

Steps to submit Cheque Complaints

On Metrash2 and MOI Website
www.moi.gov.qa

- Specify the type of the accused (personal/corporate).
- Choose the nearest Security Department/Police Station to the bank in which the check was bounced.
- Enter the details of the accused.
- Enter the details of the bounced cheques.

MOI infographic on steps to submit cheque complaints

In simple steps you can submit cheque complaints through the Ministry of Interior (MOI) website and Metrash2 app, the MOI said in an infographic on Twitter.

Ensuring safety measures for children in entertainment and play areas

protects them from slip and fall injuries and assures happy and safe leisure trips.

MOI infographic on ensuring safety measures for children

Compliance with child safety guidelines in entertainment areas enhances their safety and protects them from accidents, the Ministry of Interior said in an infographic it tweeted.