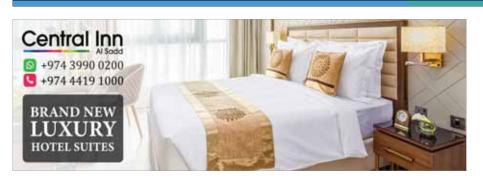
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SPORT | Page 1

Qatar International Baja boosted by global strength of FIA T3 and T4 Categories



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'Qatar a reliable global mediator'

HE the Assistant Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Salih al-Khulaifi espouses Qatar's success in ending conflicts

By Joseph Varghese

Recollecting the numerous examples of Qatar' successful mediation efforts over several years, HE the Assistant Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Salih al-Khulaifi, reiterated yesterday that Qatar is a reliable, impartial and successful international mediator.

"My country has been recognised globally for its role as an international mediator in a varieties of disputes between states, with high co-operation from regional and international part-



HE Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Salih al-Khulaifi addressing the Global Security Forum 2023 yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

ners. Qatar itself has benefited from the mediation it has participated in," he explained at the Global Security Forum 2023 held under the theme 'Reshaping the Global Order: Conflicts, Crises and Cooperation.' Qatar's foreign policy relies on strong bilateral and multilateral alliances and finding solutions to complex issues through dialogue and mediation, Dr al-Khulaifi noted.

"Qatar respects and honours all international treaties and conventions in which it is a party. Nowadays mediation is explicitly referred as a means of dispute resolution leading to bilateral and multilateral treaties. Mediation is the second most used diplomatic way of peaceful means of dispute resolution with the first one being the direct negotiations between the parties," he explained.

Dr al-Khulaifi pointed out that Qatar's long experience in the field of mediation helped the country gain the confidence and recognition from the international community after its successes in resolving many conflicts.

He highlighted Qatar's contribution to the conclusion of a truce in Yemen 2008-2010, in addition to the country's hosting of the Lebanese national dialogue, and its assistance to the governments of Djibouti and Eritrea to conclude a peace agreement to settle the border dispute between them and secure the release of prisoners.

"Qatar has been successful in the Darfur file through the signing of the Doha Document for peace in the region. Our mediation contributed to facilitating the peace agreement between the transitional government in Sudan and the armed movements signed in South Sudan. Another major mediation effort was the hosting of the talks between the United States and the Taliban that concluded with the signing of the peace agreement by the two parties," continued, the minister

The minister went on to highlight other mediation efforts of the country such as the negotiations between the Chadian parties, which culminated in the signing of the Doha Peace Agreement by the Chadian parties. **To Page 9**

Amir meets GCC secretary-general



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday at Sheikh Abdullah Bin Jassim Majlis at the Amiri Diwan with Secretary-General of the Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) Jasem Mohamed al-Budaiwi and the accompanying delegation, who called on the Amir to greet him on the occasion of his appointment as GCC Secretary-General. At the outset of the meeting, the Amir congratulated al-Budaiwi, wishing him success in performing his duties to achieve the aspirations of the GCC states. For his part, the GCC Secretary-General expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Amir for welcoming him and for Qatar's role and permanent support for the GCC march, wishing the Amir good health and wellness and Qatar and its people further development and prosperity. (QNA)

Sheikha Al Mayassa congratulates QLC Class of 2022



The achievements of 117 professionals from government, industry and commerce were celebrated at the 2022 Qatar Leadership Centre (QLC) Honouring Ceremony, held on March 13 at the Ritz-Carlton, Doha. HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Chairperson of Qatar Leadership Centre, delivered remarks at the ceremony, which recognised 63 women and 54 men for completing one of the three National Leadership Programmes: Rising Leaders, Government Leaders and Executive Leaders. Guests at the event included QLC's Board of Directors, ministers, senior State officials, members of the public and private sectors, QLC's partner universities, and family and friends of the class. Page 12

2026 World Cup to have record 104 matches

The 2026 World Cup will have 104 matches instead of the traditional 64 games due to the expanded format with 48 teams taking part, global soccer governing body FIFA said yesterday after its Congress in Kigali, Rwanda. The 2026 edition, which will be co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico, will be the first edition of the quadrennial tournament where 48 teams are taking part. **Sport Page 4**

US drone crashes after Russian intercept

A Russian Su-27 fighter jet intercepted and struck the propeller of a US military MQ-9 "Reaper" surveillance drone yesterday, causing it to crash into the Black Sea, in the first such incident since Russia's invasion of Ukraine over a year ago. Two Russian Su-27 jets carried out a reckless intercept of the spy drone before one of them collided with it at 7:03am. Several times before the collision, the Russian fighter jets dumped fuel on the MQ-9 and flew in front of the drone in unsafe manoeuvres, the US military said. "In fact, this unsafe and unprofessional act by the Russians nearly caused both aircraft to crash." Page 11

Commercial Bank 'first in Qatar' to launch UPI remittance service to India

ommercial Bank has announced the launch of UPI remittance service to India, becoming the 'first bank in Qatar' to offer this service.

UPI (Unified Payment Interface) is a real-time payment system that enables customers to transfer funds between bank accounts instantly using UPI-ID without the need for bank account details or IFSC codes while creating a beneficiary.

Using Commercial Bank digital platforms customers can now initiate UPI payments using UPI-ID. Available round-the-clock, transactions can be initiated and completed within 60 seconds. UPI-ID for the beneficiary can be easily created by visiting respective Indian bank digital platforms and by following the steps required.

Commercial Bank Group CEO Joseph Abraham commented on the launch saying: "We are delighted to announce the launch of our new UPI remittance service to India. This represents a significant step forward in our efforts to enhance the customer experience and provide more convenient, secure, and accessible financial services to our clients.

"UPI is an innovative payment system that aligns with our commitment to offer seamless banking services to our customers. We are confident that these services will support us to meet the evolving needs of our customers in today's fast-paced digital world."

Shahnawaz Rashid, executive general manager and head (Retail Banking) at Commercial Bank said, "We are excited to announce the launch of UPI, which is yet another step



towards enhancing our customers' banking experience. UPI is a game-changer in the payments ecosystem, and we are confident that it will revolutionise the way our customers make payments."

"Commercial Bank brings customers another first of its kind service in Qatar, which only emphasises on the bank's promise that 'everything is possible', the bank added in a statement yesterday.

OpenAI releases powerful AI known as GPT-4

he startup OpenAI yesterday said it is beginning to release a powerful artificial intelligence model known as GPT-4, setting the stage for human-like technology to proliferate and more competition between its backer Microsoft Corp and Alphabet Inc's Google.

OpenAI, which created the chatbot sensation ChatGPT, said that its latest technology is "multimodal," meaning images as well as text prompts can spur it to generate content. The text-input feature will be available to ChatGPT Plus subscribers and to software developers, with a waitlist, while the image-input ability remains a preview of its research.

The highly-anticipated launch signals how office workers may turn to ever-improving AI for still more tasks, as well as how technology companies are locked in competition to win business from such advances.

Alphabet Inc's Google yesterday announced a "magic wand" for its collaboration software that can draft virtually any document, days before Microsoft is expected to showcase



AI for its competing Word processor, likely powered by OpenAI.

The startup's latest technology in some cases represented a vast improvement on its prior version known as GPT-3.5, it said. In a simulation of the bar exam required of US law school graduates before professional practice, the new model scored around the top 10% of test takers, versus the older model ranking around the bottom 10%. OpenAI said.

While the two versions can appear similar in casual conversation, "the difference comes out when the complexity of the task reaches a sufficient threshold," OpenAI said, noting "GPT-4 is more reliable, creative, and able to handle much more nuanced instructions."

QATAR

Defence minister meets GCC secretary-general



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohamed al-Attiyah met with GCC Secretary-General Jassim Mohamed al-Budaiwi. The meeting dealt with discussing issues of joint interest, reviewing bilateral co-operation and the means to enhance them. The meeting was attended by Assistant GCC Secretary-General for military Affairs Major General (Pilot) Issa Rashid al-Mohannadi. (QNA)

PM meets GCC secretary-general



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met with Secretary-General of the Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) Jasem Mohamed al-Budaiwi and his accompanying delegation. The prime minister congratulated the GCC secretary-general, wishing him success in performing his duties in a way that contributes to bolstering joint Gulf action. (QNA)

Official

Amir, Dy Amir and PM condole with Saudi king

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 Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent cables of condolences to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the death of Princess Areej bint Abdullah bin Khalid bin Abdulaziz al-Saud. (QNA)

Over 35 Nato's partner countries attend Doha military conference

Doha

osted by Qatar in co-operation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato), the events of the five-day Military Strategic Partnership Conference (MSPC) 2023 and Exhibition kicked off on Monday. HE the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Staff Lieutenant-General (Pilot) Salem bin Hamad al-Nabit participated in the opening session of the conference.

The conference aims to enhance and highlight Qatar's role as a strategic ally for international peace and security, in addition to strengthening bilateral and multilateral co-operation between Nato and its leaders, and allied and partner countries.

The conference, in which more than 35 of Nato's partner countries are participating, will address several topics related to the present, future and directions of partnership of Nato, maritime security and building defence capabilities from Nato's perspective, and a review of current views on partnerships, updates of new systems, the strategic diection of the allian opments in its training.

The conference will also highlight partnerships in energy security, co-operation, factors and topics related to cybersecurity, the Nato Social Forum approach to capacity building, considerations and perspectives, as well as good governance and integrity



HE the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Staff Lieutenant-General (Pilot) Salem bin Hamad al-Nabit and other dignitaries at the opening session of the conference.

in the alliance and its building initiatives. The conference will include a range of panel discussions focusing on: Nato advisory support and assistance to partners, education and training and Nato partners, and how access to programs can be improved and designed to meet mutual needs as well as developing flexibility within the world of partnership

On the sidelines

HE the Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces Staff Lieutenant-General (Pilot) Salem bin Hamad al-Nabit met separately with Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe General Tim Radford and Chief of the



Joint Staff of the Military Forces of Colombia Vice-Admiral Jose Joaquin Garcia, on the sidelines of the Military Strategic Partnership Conference 2023, which is taking place in Doha.

During the two meetings, they discussed issues of common interest and reviewed military co-operation relations and ways to enhance and develop them.

Amir receives written message from president of Kyrgyzstan



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received a written message from President of Kyrgyztan Sadyr Japarov, pertaining to bilateral relations and means to support and enhance them. The message was received by HE the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi during his meeting with ambassador of Kyrgyztan to Qatar Chyngyz Eshimbekov. (QNA)

MoCI doubles citizens' ration quota for rice, sugar, oil, milk

he Ministry of Commerce nounced an initiative to double the share of rice, sugar, oil, and evaporated milk for citizens benefiting from food supplies for one time, coinciding with the approaching holy month of Ramadan.

In a statement yesterday, the ministry said that the double



share for every ration card would be implemented on Wednesday, March 31, 2023, affirming that subsidised food and fodder supplies are the right of the citizen and it is not permissible to assign it to others, whatever the

The ration card and its password must also be kept in a safe place and not to allow others to possess or use it so as not to be subject to legal accountability.

the MoCI initiatives during the blessed month of Ramadan 1444 AH, and in line with its keenness to support the citizens during this holy month, as spending on food commodities increases during this month and occupies the largest proportion of total expenditures.



CIArb Qatar promotes mediation in resolving commercial disputes

The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIArb) Qatar and QFC branch, as a global professional body advocating dispute avoidance and dispute management, has expressed its support in promoting mediation as an alternative mechanism for resolving commercial disputes.

The CIArb Qatar and QFC branch recently conducted a seminar in Doha featuring the relevant topic, 'Mediation for Business: A Pragmatic Means to Resolve Disputes', led by its chairman Dr Nasser al-Adba, managing partner at Omani & Partners LLP and assistant professor at Qatar University.

The event was formally commenced with an introductory message from Saad Hegazy, CIArb Qatar and QFC branch vice-chairman and partner of Resolve International, explaining the CIArb Rules, followed by Dr al-Adba's opening remarks related to the use of mediation in settling disputes from a business perspective, including the enforcement of settlement agreements across borders.

Some of the programme highlights were a key presentation from Wolf von Kumberg, independent arbitrator and mediator, Global Resolution Services, member, Arbitra, and a thought-provoking panel discussion and question & answer (Q&A) session with Kumberg and Dr Susan L Karamanian, dean of the Hamad Bin Khalifa University College of Law, which was moderated by Mar Malak Az-



Dr Nasser al-Adba delivering his opening remarks.

meh, registrar of QICDRC. Further, the event was graced by the presence of Sheikh Dr Thani bin Ali al-Thani, QICCA board member; Sultan al-Abdulla, founder and managing partner of Sultan Al-Abdulla & Partners; Ahmed Ali al-Ansari, former chairman of CI-

Arb Qatar and QFC branch; Noora al-Mannai, second legal researcher at Qatar's Ministry of Justice, CI-Arb members and supporters, industry professionals and decision

makers in the country. "In this event, CIArb Qatar and QFC branch has once again demonstrated its continuous commitment in promoting alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms, which are available for the parties for the settlement of their disputes, in a more efficient and cost-effective manner," a press statement







98th standing committee for Arab media held in Kuwait with Qatari participation

The two-day 98th regular session of the standing committee for Arab media, organised by the Media and Communication Sector of the Arab League, concluded yesterday.

The Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) participated in the meeting with a delegation headed by Media Adviser at **OMC Abdulrahman Nasser** al-Obaidan. The meeting was held after the 24th meeting of the permanent expert group concerned with following up on the role of Arab media in confronting the phenomenon of terrorism.

The two meetings aim to prepare for the work of the meeting of the 16th regular session of the Executive Office of the Council of Arab Ministers



of Information headed by Iraq, which will be held today in Kuwait with the participation of Arab information ministers. The Standing Committee for Arab Media is a pivotal mechanism for following

up on joint media work and undertaking, in accordance with the requirements of the statute of the Council of Arab Ministers of Information, to serve Arab issues, shed light on the diversity and richness

of the Arab cultural heritage through various media, and study the strategies and plans to strengthen the potential for co-operation, integration and exchange of experience.

Al-Subaie meets Lebanese minister



HE the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie met yesterday with Lebanese Minister of Agriculture Abbas Hajj Hassan and his accompanying delegation, who is visiting the country. They discussed bilateral relations in the agriculture and food security field and ways of enhancing co-operation in areas of common interest. (QNA)

NAMA Center holds discussion on youth and social work

QNA

ocial Development Center (Nama), an affiliate of Ministry of Social Development and Family's Qatar Foundation for Social Work, held a panel discussion on youth and social work in Qatar in co-operation with the Excellence Center for Training and Consulting of the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies.

A group of high-level local and international officials and representatives of the Nama Center and the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies as well as representatives of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) participated in the panel discussion at the headquarters of the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies.

The participants presented the mechanism and results of a study on "Youth and Social Work in the State of Qatar", which was previously prepared by Nama Center addition to the study's outputs and its contribution to the development of youth.

Participants shed light on the results of the study and how its outputs affect the social work environment in Qatar and on future plans for the programmes



and initiatives offered by Nama Center. Acting Executive Director of Nama Center Noof Ibrahim al-Abdullah said that they seek to co-operate with various parties internally and externally in order to expand options and opportunities for the promising youth, adding that Nama Center is looking forward to concluding fruitful partnerships with various local, regional and international agencies and institutions in order to improve the quality of life of members of the Oatari society in line with the pillars of the Qatar National Vision 2030 ing empowered and active youth, and in its endeavour to build their capabilities to develop their ideas so that they become a solid base that contributes effectively to the achievement of the desired goals and objectives of the national vi-

Executive Director of the Excellence Center for Training and Consulting Dr Ahmed al-Mawry appreciated the co-operation with Nama Center in organising this event, which comes as part of the centre's efforts to strengthen the partnership between the two parties by providing quality consulting services in which a group of local and international experts participate, and by contributing to improving the study's outputs and implementation mechanisms.

He stressed the centre's readiness to provide all support in the oncultations mentation of studies and to provide training services aimed at strengthening the efforts of the Nama Center to empower and develop youth capabilities in line with Qatar National Vision 2030, which represents a road map for the future of the country.





Qatar Charity marks Women's Day

atar Charity's Social Development Centre Communities, in cooperation with Naseem Medical Centre, organised various activities to mark International Women's Day.

More than 200 expatriate women from various communities took part. The event focused on highlighting the role and achievements of women in various fields, shedding light on their status and rights, and appreciating their efforts, in addition to presenting different ideas for women's empowerment.

There were literary, cultural, and art competitions, entertainment shows, and free medical examinations for women, in addition to consultations on dental health and an awareness session on the need to exercise. The literary contests included writing poetry, article and caption, apart from speech, while the art contests comprised henna designing, recycling, pencil drawing, and salad making. There were

three winners in each category. Dr Munir Ali Ibrahim, general manager of the Naseem Healthcare group, expressed his happiness with the participation of Naseem Medical Centre in the event, which comes within the framework of the group's social

responsibility and continuous

co-operation with Qatar Charity.

Wifaq Center launches 'In Our Hospitality' awareness programme

The Family Consulting Center (Wifaq), of the Qatar Foundation for Social Work affiliated with the Ministry of Social Development and the Family, launched the awareness programme 'In Our Hospitality' season 2023.

The programme includes a series of awareness and educational workshops that discuss one of the most vital issues affecting family stability, which is the balance between family life and work life.

Manea, an expert trainer in emotional intelligence and relationships, entitled 'Between My Work and My Family', with the participation of more than 70 participants from several entities in the country.

The centre said in a statement yesterday that the programme targets male and female employees from various agencies and institutions in the country and aims to educate participants about the importance of achieving integration between family and work and to educate the target group on how to best reconcile them. (QNA)



QATARGAS OPERATING COMPANY LTD Tender Invitation

No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE	
1	LTC/C/MNT/5929/22 PROVISION OF SHUTDOWN SERVICES ON CALL-OFF BASIS	15/03/2023 to 15/04/2023	0	1,000,000	15/05/2023	1

Scope of Work:

Qatargas undertake Process Plant Shutdowns of its LNG Trains, Refineries, Barzan plant and all associated process facilities including offshore periodically. CONTRACTOR shall be responsible for the safe execution of Shutdowns including detailed planning, preparation of work packs and execution of pre shutdown, shutdown, and post shutdown activities. The Contract Duration shall be for a period of five (5) years with a sole option for Company to extend the Contract Duration (in parts or in full) for up to two (2) years.

Bid Validity: Bid should be valid for 180 calendar days from the Tender Closing Date.

Place for Tender Collection and Bid Submission:

ITT document for this tender will be available in Qatargas website under Suppliers tab >Current Open Tenders. The bids shall be submitted through the Qatargas online platform (SMART by GEP).



Digital transformation top priority for Qatar: al-Muftah

QNA Geneva

atar has affirmed that digital transformation is essential to achieving Qatar National Vision 2030 and building an advanced country capable of achieving sustamable development and ensuring the continuation of a decent life for its citizens.

This came in the statement of Qatar delivered by HE the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations Office in Geneva, Dr Hind Abdul Rahman al-Muftah, during her participation in the roundtable discussion, within the framework of the annual World Summit on the Information Society Forum, being held in Geneva from March 13-17.

HE al-Muftah noted that one of Qatar's strategic priorities is to increase the information technology sector by 50% by 2024, pointing out that Qatar has achieved almost comprehensive broadband coverage, access to every home, 5G coverage, and the nearly 100% Internet usage for individu-

She recalled Qatar's commitment to supporting the proposed strategic goals and objectives of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) 2024-2027, noting the recent announcement by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of co-operation with technology providers to train 50,000 people by 2025 in advanced digital skills to accelerate digital transformation in the State of Qatar.

HE the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the UN Office in Geneva indicated that advanced technology enabled the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 to be carbonneutral for the first time ever and to develop special aircooling technology inside stadiums to ensure the health and safety of all concerned.

She pointed out that Qatar hosted from March 5-9, 2023, the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5), noting that one of the critical issues discussed at length during the conference was how to make better use of science, technology and innovation in supporting the efforts of the least developed countries to eradicate poverty, transition to sustainable development and become able to compete globally.

HE al-Muftah said that the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA) constitutes a promising document for digital development in the LDCs, expressing Qatar's commitment to work with the ITU to achieve individual and common goals.



Dolphin Energy Limited

Invitation to Tender

Tender Number	Description	Tender Bond	Deadline for Submission, 12 Noon (Qatar Time) on	
ITT-QC-TSU-161	EPC Works for Above Ground TCW (Tempered Cooling Water) Metallic Piping Network in Stream 1 & Stream 2 Headers (FMP-3014)	USD 275,000	9 th May 2023	

Dolphin Energy Limited (Qatar) is inviting companies to participate in the above Invitation to Tender. The Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Scope of Work shall include detailed EPC and commissioning for the execution of the Above Ground TCW (Tempered Cooling Water) Metallic Piping Network in the Stream 1 & Stream 2 Headers (FMP-3014).

Only companies with proven experience, possessing the required facilities and technical knowledge, as well as a demonstrated track record in multidisciplinary and brownfield EPC contracts within the oil and gas industry, especially related to process and utility piping, should apply.

The Tenderer shall attend a site visit to Dolphin Energy's onshore facilities at Ras Laffan. Further details relating to the date of visit and site access are mentioned in the 'Instructions to Tenderers' section of the Tender documents.

How to Tender

Complete instructions are included in the Invitation to Tender documents that can be downloaded from the company's website:

www.dolphinenergy.com/procurement

The World's Premier LNG Company

Jumbo offers discounts on world-class brands

atar's premium and specialised electronics retail chain Jumbo Electronics has launched its mega promotion campaign of 2023.

Loads of exciting offers on electronics, mobiles, IT products, airconditioners and home appliances are available across stores as part of the promotion, a press statement notes.

Customers are being offered discounts up to 25% on a select range of world-class brands such as LG, Harman Kardon, JBL, Ariston, Indesit, Brother, Kenwood, Blueair, Nutribullet and Oscar.

The mega promotion's key attraction are offers on almost the entire range of large-screen TVs, featurerich premium sound bars and gaming monitors. All home appliances, such as refrigerators and washing machines, are available at attractive prices along with an assured gift on every purchase above QR1,000. Out of the nine slabs available, customers will get an assured gift as per the amount spent, and top spenders (over QR100,000) will get an iPhone 14 Pro Max 256GB.

Other prizes include LG 55-inch 4K UHD TV, premium sound bar, speaker system and more. In addition, customers can also shop using their credit card at 0% interest and pay over six or 12 months as per offers from leading financial institutions such as ONB, Commercial Bank, Doha Bank and

Ahlibank. "We at Jumbo are continuously upgrading our offering for discerning consumers with smart gadgets and connected home appliances. We are committed to providing high-quality products that meet the changing needs of modern households, and our team of experts is always on hand to provide support and guidance," said Sajed Jassim Mohamed Sulaiman, vice-chairman and managing director of Jumbo Electronics, Oatar.

Also, there are quite a few new launches that mainly include fixedspeed residential air-conditioners (ACs). Customers can choose, depend-



Loads of exciting offers on electronics, mobiles, IT products, air-conditioners and home appliances are available across stores as part of the promotion

ing on the room size, from 1.5 tonnes or 2 tonnes. These newly launched air-conditioners are available at price points of OR2,499 and OR2,999, respectively.

ACs are equipped with anti-corrosive golden fin, which can withstand the salty air, rain and other corrosive elements. Unique blue hydrophilic fin does make sure that AC runs efficiently with enhanced heat transfer. With the availability of a smart mode, and at the press of a button, an AC enters fuzzy logic operation mode directly and the temperature and fan speed are automatically set based on the room temperature.

Director and CEO C V Rappai said, "Jumbo provides an impressive selection of premium, high-quality products and strive to keep pace with the rising aspirations of the people of Qatar and serve them with enthusiasm. We are committed to provide all our customers with a world-class shopping experience." Jumbo's existing and new customers will also benefit from Jumbo's loyalty programme, Mukafa. Double Mukafa points will be awarded during the promotion period to make their future purchases even more rewarding. Nojoom points can also be redeemed during the promotion period at all Jumbo touchpoints.

Jumbo has a fully transactional website and mobile app, with multiple payment options such as cash on delivery, credit card, debit card and Apple Pay. Customers can choose their preferred delivery time and get the products delivered within 24 hours. With Jumbo express delivery. selected items get delivered within two hours at their doorstep.

Starting today, the mega promotion will run at all LG brand shops and Jumbo stores. The offers are also applicable at www.jumbosouq.com and jumbosouq mobile app, available in both iOS and Android.

AlKhater in virtual meeting with Spanish state secretary

HE the Assistant Foreign Minister Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhater met yesterday via videoconferencing with State Secretary for Foreign and Global Affairs of Spain Ageles Moreno Bau. They discussed bilateral co-operation, the humanitarian situation in Turkiye and Syria after the earthquake disaster, support for education in Afghanistan and around the world, strengthening cooperation in the development field, and support for women's issues. (QNA)

In accordance with the following conditions:





Invitation to Tender

Tender / Auction Number	Subject	Tender / Auction Document Fees (Non-refundable)	Tender / Auction Bond	Tender/Auction Offer	Closing Date
AL-AWALIA/TD/2023/12	Network Support Renewal and Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) Support for Qatar Primary Materials Company ("Services")	500 QAR	35,000 QAR	Two Bids (Technical & Commercial)	22 Mar 2023 01:00 PM
AL-AWALIA/TD/2023/13	Repair of AC Duct Insulation and Installation of Cladding for Qatar Primary Materials Company ("Services")	500 QAR	5000 QAR	Two Bids (Technical & Commercial)	22 Mar 2023 01:00 PM

- Tender Documents can be collected online by sending email to tender.docs@gpmc.ga along with requested documents in point No.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 nmercial Registration (CR), Business License and Computer ID. 3. Bids are to be submitted in two sealed (in red wax) enveloos (Technical & Commercial) and addressed to Tenders and Auction Committee. Tender reference number and subject are to be clearly written on the envelops.
- provided that the last date for submitting bids is one o'clock in the afternoon on the closing day. Any bids 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
- Tender Fees are nonrefundable and can be transferred online to Account of Qatar Primary Material Company- Bank A/C (4050-651111-006) at Commercial Bank of Qatar. **IBAN No. (QA 18 CBQA 0000 0000 4050 651111 006)**. Tender reference number and subject are to be written on the deposit slip.
- 6. Tender Bond (Bank Guarantee/ Manager Cheque) must be valid for 120 days after closing date and must be submitted in separate & sealed envelope along with technical bid and a photocopy is to be attached with
- Bids must be valid for 90 days after closing date and are to be submitted in two copies (Original & Duplicate). 8. Any queries relating to the Tender Documents must only be raised in writing, preferably by email, to the address specified in the respective Tender Document. Any response issued by Oatar Primary Material Company will
- be in the form of a question and answer and will be distributed to all Tenderers without revealing the identity of the originator of the query(ies) in the Form of Tender Bulletins. Queries must be received at the address specified in the respective ITT Documentation at least five (5) calendar days prior to the Tender closing date. Any queries received after such date will be ignored.
- 9. The amount of the Performance Bond to be provided by the awarded bidder is (10% of the contract value) and its validity period; must remain valid under the contract implementation period and the guarantee period according to the terms of the tender. 10. The Technical Bids shall be opened within one week 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

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- the same conditions and prices, provided that the increase is of the same type of contracted items, works or services 12. Oatar Primary Material Company's tendering terms and conditions apply.
- 13 For any inquires about the tender except collecting the documents, please contact tender@qpmc.ga

Forbes Middle East Recognises Mohammed Miandad V P as Top 100 Healthcare Leader of 2023



Mohammed Miandad VP

orbes Middle East has recognized Mohammed Miandad V P, MD of Naseem Healthcare and Chairman & Managing Director of 33 Holdings, as one of the Top 100 Healthcare Leaders of 2023. He is one of the only four healthcare leaders from Qatar to make the prestigious list. Miandad's visionary leadership has made Naseem Healthcare a trailblazer in Qatar's healthcare industry.

Under Miandad's leadership, Naseem Healthcare has become one of the most well-known medical facilities in Qatar, providing care to over 90,000 patients each month from 95 different countries through its 7 branches. The subsidiary of 33 Holdings, which employs over 1,500 people, also launched a state-of-the-art surgical centre in 2022, dedicated to providing the best surgical care in the region. As part of Naseem Humans, the CSR arm of Naseem Healthcare, QR 1 million worth

of financial assistance has been announced to provide access to surgical care at Naseem Surgical Centre for those in need.

Forbes Middle East's Top 100 Healthcare Leaders of 2023 list recognizes the leading figures in the region's healthcare industry who are making significant contributions to the sector's development. Miandad's inclusion on this list highlights his innovative approach to healthcare services and his commitment to driving the industry forward.

With more than 15 years of experience in healthcare management, Miandad has led Naseem Healthcare in becoming the largest private healthcare provider in Qatar. His strategic vision and operational expertise have enabled the company to deliver exceptional patient care and remain at the forefront of the industry.

In addition to his role as Managing Director of Naseem services in Qatar.

Healthcare, Miandad is also the Chairman and Managing Director of 33 Holdings, a diversified conglomerate with interests in multiple sectors, including healthcare, trading, real estate, logistics, IT, fashion, mining, and education. With a presence in seven countries around the world, 33 Holdings has become a leader in these industries under Miandad's strategic guidance and vision.

"Naseem Healthcare's success is not just due to my leadership but the entire team's relentless pursuit of excellence," said Miandad.

"We are dedicated to providing the best healthcare services and ensuring that our patients receive the highest standard of care possible."

Naseem Healthcare's commitment to providing the highest standard of care has been acknowledged by numerous awards and accolades, including the coveted JCI (Joint Commission International) accreditation, which is awarded to healthcare organizations that meet the highest international standards in patient care and safety.

"This recognition is not just for me but for the entire team at Naseem Healthcare and 33 Holdings," added Miandad. "I am grateful for the support and hard work of everyone involved in making Naseem Healthcare a success."

Miandad's inclusion in the Top 100 Healthcare Leaders list by Forbes Middle East is a clear indication of his unwavering commitment and devotion to delivering top-notch healthcare



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QNL, HBKU hold inaugural 'Cultural Salon'

atar National Library(QNL) in collaboration with Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), held the first event of the newly-launched initiative, 'Cultural Salon,' to create a positive atmosphere that enriches culture and raises public awareness through a series of

The discussion on the impact of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 on the country and the region was attended by HE the Minister of State and QNL president Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari, HBKU president Dr Ahmad M Hasnah and other senior

Qatar Press Centre president Mohamed al-Rumaihi moderated the session, which featured Dr Ibrahim Arafat (professor of political science at HBKU) and Ayman Jada (broadcaster, sports commentator, and former director of beIN Sports).

Dr al-Kawari, said: "I am excited to see the "Cultural Salon" event we have been promising for so long finally come to fruition. The opening session exceeded my expectations, thanks in large part to al-Rumaihi, Dr Arafat and Jada, for sharing their knowledge on this important subject. I am confident that the upcoming salon sessions will be just as successful."

Dr Hasnah, noted: "This session addressed a crucial topic. To me, the World Cup was a cultural testament to Qatar and the Arab and Islamic world, showcasing not only our ability to organise



HE Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari and Dr Ahmad M Hasnah with other dignitaries at the event.

such events but also revealing the true image of Arabs to the world." Jada highlighted that football is

not just a game, but a significant part of culture that unites people. He stated that the criticism directed towards Qatar, claiming that it lacks a football history, is unfounded and incorrect. This is because the Football League had existed in Qatar for half a century prior to hosting the World Cup. The success of the World Cup demonstrated the country's ability to compete and excel globally, and also exposed the racism of Western thinking towards Arabs

and Muslims. Dr Arafat reflected on the lessons that can be learned from the World Cup and how Qatar's success has left a lasting impression.

He further identified several issues that continue to affect the relationship between Arabs and the wider world, including Islamophobia, economic exploitation and media bias amongst

He argued that while the World Cup challenged prevailing global mental legacies about Arabs and Muslims, changing the status and image of Arabs in the global order cannot be achieved by a single event, nor can it be demanded by one Arab state.

The 'Cultural Salon' will host a series of events throughout the year, featuring experts from various fields. It aims to support the country's cultural and intellectual scene, providing a platform for diverse voices and perspectives.

GAAQ wins Zeeenah Initiative prize

GEMS American Academy Qatar (GAAQ) won the 'Coeducational Schools' category of the Zeeenah Initiative, launched by the Supervisory Committee of Beautification of Roads and Public Places in Qatar, in collaboration with various ministries, to beautify public places and buildings for the FIFA World Cup Oatar 2022.

GAAQ had submitted an art and decoration plan at the beginning of the school year, showcasing the talents of their students and teachers by creating art pieces inspired by all 32 participating countries of the World Cup, a statement said

The award has come with a cash prize of QR40,000, which would be used to develop a dedicated pottery and ceramics room, integrated into the curriculum to boost creativity, problem-solving skills, and sensory development among students.

The Zeeenah Initiative was a collaborative effort between the Supervisory Committee of Beautification of Roads and Public Places for Delivery and Legacy, Ministry of Municipality, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Culture, Oatar Museums. and Central Municipal Council. The initiative aimed to beautify and decorate the facades of workplaces, schools, universities, and real estate in Oatar for the World Cup. Marvam al-Muhamadi, a fourthgrade Qatari student, shared her experience of creating artwork that commemorated the country of Tunisia.

"It was an extraordinary experience! I learned a lot about Tunisia, and

new and different. Usually, when I make art, I have a plan in mind, and I stick to it, but this time it was different. We were able to work on different pieces and express our creativity in unique ways, and it all came together to create something beautiful and meaningful. "By trying something new, I was

able to broaden my perspective and gain a deeper understanding of a foreign culture, all while expressing myself artistically." The school's leadership, art and mu-

sic teachers, and marketing team worked with students on various World-Cup inspired art pieces and The Pre-K to Grade 5 (Elementary)

students and teachers created

artworks on the 32 World Cup countries by identifying a favourite artist from each country, cultivating original artwork centred around each artist's design style, as well as incorporating elements of Qatar's heritage and culture in these pieces. Teachers and students in Grades 6-12 (Upper School) created portraits of the event as well as a 3-step mural of players from each country running through the desert towards the World Cup final at

They developed two additional murals: one depicting Qatar's 2022 Vision in reflection of its past until now and the other showcasing a life-sized map of Qatar, flags of participating countries, and its eight stadiums. GAAO's art and music teachers. Angelique Kuyper, Adam Merrick, Casey Riley, Martin Farragher, Agna Bednarczyk, and Laura le Roux had spearheaded the work behind the

Lusail Stadium.



TedinArabic Summit offers opportunities to discover experiences from across Arab world

The countdown is continuing to the first TEDinArabic Summit, organised through a partnership between Qatar Foundation and TED and its audience will have the opportunity for experiences that combine knowledge and fun from countries across the Arab world.

Alongside keynote talks in Arabic by TED speakers who will tell their inspiring stories and share their ideas, the summit - which takes place at Qatar National Convention Centre in Doha from March 18-19 under the theme The Butterfly Effect - will allow people to interact, learn, and connect with other participants through interactive talks, workshops, and other opportunities to exchange and develop ideas.

These Discovery Sessions will include Abeer Bayazidi and Bassam Alasad of from Greener Screen/Creative Media Solutions outline the impact of filmmaking on climate action, and how the power of images and words can inspire people to act to protect the environment; while a session by Aziza Chaouni, assistant professor of architecture at the University of Toronto, will discuss strategies for tackling water scarcity challenges, from households to entire cities.

Many sessions and workshops will be centred around the Arabic language, with Nayef Alibrahim, CEO of Ibtechar Digital Solutions, highlighting the the key issue of teaching Arabic, both as a tool and as an essential part of shaping today's human identity.

Meanwhile, Qatar Foundation International will host a session about teaching and learning Arabic for non-native speakers of the language; and Jordanian designer and artist Hussein Alazaat will present a workshop



on Arabic calligraphy, giving attendees the opportunity to explore new techniques in this art form and the endless possibilities offered

A group of Palestinian influencers, including activist Mona El-Kurd, Elia Ghorbiah, and Tarek al-Bakri, are leading a workshop titled 'Defend Your Case With Your Talent', with Alaa al-Qaq presenting the Khazaeen initiative on documenting and archiving stories from Palestine. And comedian and activist Maysoon Zayid will bring her legendary standup comedy to Doha as she performs her comedy in the Palestinian dialect, as well as sharing her own life story.

Well-known names from across the Arab world are joining the TEDinArabic Summit to present the TED speakers, including Qatari TV presenter Saud al-Mudahka; Algerian TV presenter Amel Arab; Palestinian writer and poet Asmaa al-Hajj; Moza AlHajri, a student at OF partner university Georgetown University in Qatar and a QatarDebate participant; and Essa al-Mannai, director of DADU Children's Museum.

Arabic sign language will be available for all the TED talks.

Years of Culture partners with QF. TED for first TEDinArabic Summit

Qatar Museums' (QM) Years of Culture initiative, an annual bilatera cultural exchange programme initiated by chairperson HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani in 2012, will collaborate

with the TEDinArabic Summit in Doha, organised through a partnership between Oatar Foundation (OF) and TED.

Years of Culture events seek to deepen understanding between Qatar and partner countries and sustain long-term engagement through creative interactions like the initiative's two Discovery Workshops taking place at the first-ever TEDinArabic Summit, which takes place from March 18-19 at Qatar National Convention Centre

The workshops led by renowned local illustrator Jowhara, will focus on watercolour journaling inspired by the recently published Travel Book of Culture by French artist Lapin. Combining the spirit of exploration and adventure profiled in the Travel Book of Culture with a community-focused workshop is just the type of rich experi-



Travel Book of Culture cover

ence that can be borne out of dialogue between different cultures. In a press statement, Aisha Ghanem al-Attiya, director of Cultural Diplomacy for QM, emphasised the importance of this collaboration, saving: "The Discovery Sessions will be a solid testament to our legacies of cross-cultural connections established during Oatar-France 2020 and Oatar-MENASA 2022 Years of Culture.'

HBKU hosts first alumni reunion

amad Bin Khalifa Uni-versity (HBKU) hosted its inaugural alumni reunion, launching a platform for the graduates to network and celebrate their accomplishments

Designated alumni ambassadors from the HBKU colleges -Islamic Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences, Science and Engineering, Law, Health and Life Sciences, Public Policy - took to the stage to share their personal stories since graduating.

Dr Michael J Benedik, provost, HBKU, said: "We were delighted to welcome members of our growing alumni community back to HBKU. Their achievements reflect our determination to empower students to become future leaders and entrepreneurs focused on finding novel solutions for national and global challenges."

"Seeing how our alumni community has taken their education



from our world-class graduatelevel programmes to propel their personal and professional development forward is a remarkable achievement for our entire university. The HBKU Alumni Reunion is the ideal platform to

provide them opportunities to connect with one another and nurture multidisciplinary collaborations while also serving as a bridge between our alumni and current students," said Dr Maryam Hamad al-Mannai, vice-

president of Student Affairs, HBKU.

Through its Office of Student Affairs, HBKU builds bridges between members of its community, including both current students and alumni, and cultivates a culture of support in which diversity is valued and embraced. It is part of the university's educational mandate to create and promote opportunities for its alumni community, which is composed of over 1,500 members.

Build Your House Exhibition 2023 adds more exhibitors

uild Your House Exhibition (BYH) 2023 has announced the Ministry of Municipality and Qatar Chamber as support partners at the event being held from May 15 to 18 at Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC), a

statement said. Ministry of Municipality's public relations department director Dr Fayeqa Abdullah Ashkanani, said: "We play a pivotal role in the field of building requirements and permits, and our participation at Build Your House Exhibition 2023 introduces visitors to the many services provided by the Ministry of Municipality to the public and

enhances the concerted efforts of public and private sectors to serve the Qatari community.

"The exhibition is an opportunity to introduce the great efforts made by the Ministry of Municipality in co-operation with partners to simplify all procedures and requirements related to licensing and construction - including developing the electronic system. We can speak to event visitors about information related to building their homes, such as the best procedures for obtaining permits, approvals, and construction opera-

"The Ministry of Municipal-

ity, under the directives of HE the Minister Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie, are always keen to support and encourage investment in the real estate sector. Qatar is enjoying a comprehensive urban renaissance, and we strive to facilitate its development. We have improved legal registration and documentation, developing the building permit system, issuing the regulations guide, an important reference document for developers, real estate agents and consulting offices in the country."

On the nature of the Ministry of Municipality's participation at the BYH Exhibition, Dr Fayeqa Ashkanani stated: "There will be a pavilion that presents the prominent projects, programmes, and services in the field of building and construction. Several senior officials from the Ministry of Municipality will also participate in panel discussions and workshops throughout the event. The Ministry of Municipality is always keen to communicate with the public and present services to them round the clock, whether through the website or the application on smart devices and social media or through direct communication via the unified call centre (184) and the customer service offices. They can

also answer questions related to the tasks and specialisations of the ministry."

This year, Ashghal is the official partner of BYH. The sustainability partner is Kahramaa, official airline Qatar Airways. The event is also supported by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the General Directorate of Civil Defence.

Rawad Sleem, co-founder and general manager of NeXTfairs for Exhibitions and Conferences, said: "With an increased event capacity and an additional day added, Build Your House Exhibition 2023 builds on our previous success, ensuring visitors and exhibitors enjoy a collaborative platform that facilitates business. We are extremely proud of our impact on Qatar's urban renaissance and the business we have stimulated by bringing consultants and clients together. We urge consultants and contractors

to book their event space. "Participating at Build Your House Exhibition is a fantastic opportunity to network with peers and meet a niche audience ready to sign contracts that are set to bolster your business."

BYH 2023 will have exhibitors from Canada, Iran, Italy, Oman, the UK, and companies from Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Belgium, China, Algeria, India, and Turki-

The Knowledge Sharing Conference, open during the four event days, will have daily talks and sessions starting at 11am, and cooking demos at Nabina Holding Group's exhibition stand, which will host famous local and international chefs and bloggers.

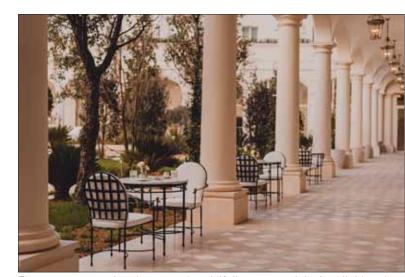
BYH 2023 at QNCC will open to the public from from May 15 to 18, from 10am to 10pm. Overseas visitors can enjoy a 15% discount on air fares as BYH 2023 has signed an exclusive discount with Qatar Airways, the statement added.



An exterior view of Carlton Cannes, A Regent Hotel



The opening of Carlton Cannes, A Regent Hotel is an exciting addition to IHG's growing luxury and lifestyle portfolio.



The two-year grand-scale renovation skilfully preserved the hotel's historic features

Katara Hospitality, IHG Hotels & Resorts open Carlton Cannes



The inaugural ceremony of Carlton Cannes, A Regent Hotel.

atara Hospitality, the leading global hotel owner, developer and operator based in Qatar, has unveiled the legendary Carlton Cannes, a statement said yesterday.

"We are honoured to witness the opening ceremony of the Carlton Cannes, as it revives the property's prestigious past while marking a new step forward in the region's long tradition of hospitality," Katara Hospitality CEO Nasser Matar Alkawari stated.

"Katara Hospitality is globally renowned for creating landmark hospitality gems that enhance the tourism landscape in the markets we operate, and such a momentous occasion further illustrates our continued success within the global luxury tourism sector," he explained.

The ribbon cutting opening ceremony was attended by Katara Hospitality deputy chairman and Qatari Diar CEO engineer Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah, Qatar's ambassador to France Sheikh Ali bin Jassim al-Thani, Katara Hospitality board member and Qatar's Investment Promotion Agency CEO Sheikh Ali Alwaleed al-Thani, IHG's EMEAA Regional CEO Kenneth Macpherson, senior vice-president and Europe managing director Karin Sheppard,

Luxury and Premium Brands senior vice-president Jane Mackie, Luxury Brands vice-president Tom Rowntree, Cannes Mayor David Lisnard, Cultural Affairs regional director Bénédicte Lefeuvre and other officials.

"This a landmark day in Regent's 50-year history and an exciting addition to the ever IHG's Luxury & Lifestyle Collection. Carlton Cannes marks the 8th opening for the brand and starts an exciting set of Regent openings in key global locations," Macpherson said.

The epitome of elegance and the

'Grande Dame' of Cannes' hotel scene, the property's majestic Belle Epoque façade – framed by twin domes – has been breathtakingly restored giving new life to this historic gem. With 332 rooms and suites – 72 of which have a sea view – and 37 branded residences, the hotel has been reimagined by acclaimed French interior designer Tristan Auer, famed for his careful-yet-bold approach to heritage buildings and

bespoke work for the likes of Cartier.
"We are thrilled to reopen the doors of this wonderful building and truly look forward to welcoming our guests, loyal and new," general manager Giuseppe Vincelli said.

The two-year grand-scale renovation skilfully preserved the hotel's historic features and added two wings, measuring 20,000sq m and home to luxury residences, envelop the rear of the property.

This has created an enclosed garden landscaped with 22,000 plants and flowers, peristyle alcoves, sleek sunbathing decks, handcrafted cabanas and the largest hotel infinity pool in Cannes. The hotel also has a brand new 900sq m fitness and spa complex – The C Club – which includes a full-size boxing ring and state-of-the-art gym, yoga and Pilates studio.

Carlton Cannes, A Regent Hotel, located in the heart of Cote d'Azur, is one of very few landmark hotels recognisable from a plane. The commanding silhouette stands as its own beachfront city block, overlooking the prestigious beachfront promenade, La Croisette.

The seventh floor of the hotel has four signature suites, dutifully named to celebrate the legacy of the property. These include The Katara Suite, The Grace Kelly Suite, The Cary Grant Suite, and The Kirk Douglas Suite.

On the sixth floor is The Alfred Hitchcock Suite, the exact room

where the famous scene between Grace Kelly and Cary Grant in the master of suspense's *To Catch a Thief* was filmed.

In the other tower on the same floor, The Suzanne Lenglen Suite, pays tribute to the eponymous tennis legend, who famously played the Match of the Century at the hotel in 1926 – spreading the love for clay courts, which started here, leading the way for Roland Garros to become the only Grand Slam tournament played on clay.

One of the grandest additions to the hotel is the 37 elegantly designed residences, located in the two new wings. Ranging from 85 to 500sq m, the residences are designed as lavish Mediterranean homes, with all the amenities for leisurely extended stays and access to all of the hotel's services, including room service, pool and wellness centre.

On the top floor is an exclusive 1,000sq m penthouse, with a grand 500sq m of living space topped by a private landscaped rooftop of the same size, which includes a private jacuzzi. The hotel has three restaurants, three bars, a Tea Lounge and a Cigar Lounge.

The addition of Carlton Cannes to the Regent Hotels & Resorts port-

folio marks an historic milestone. Regent Hotels & Resorts joined IHG Hotels & Resorts in 2018.

Tom Rowntree, vice president of Luxury Brands at IHG Hotels & Resorts, said: "The return of Carlton Cannes and the launch of the new era of Regent marks the next chapter being penned, where history melts into the future."

The opening of Carlton Cannes, A Regent Hotel is described as an exciting addition to IHG's growing luxury and lifestyle portfolio, which includes iconic properties in destinations such as Hong Kong, London, New York, Dubai, Paris and Singapore.

Guests will also have access to the loyalty programme, IHG One Rewards. Carlton Cannes, A Regent Hotel will join Regent Chongqing, Regent Shanghai, Regent Phu Quoc and the soon-to-open Regent Hong Kong in crafting the most refined experiences for modern trendsetters. This opening is set to be closely followed by Regent Bali and Regent Shanghai On The Bund in late 2023, as well as a to-be-announced North American location.

Rooms with panoramic sea view start from €1,200 per night, the statement added.

Municipalities intensify food safety inspections ahead of Ramadan

The Ministry of Municipality's health sections across all the municipalities have intensified their inspection and control efforts to ensure the safety of food products on display in the local market and their compliance with the set relevant regulations as part of the preparations for the holy month of Ramadan. At Doha municipality, an inspection and awareness campaign was launched with the participation of 10 teams supervised by Hamad Sultan al-Shahwani, assistant director of the municipal control department and Najlaa al-Hail, head of the health control section.

The campaign carried out 5,500 inspection tours that resulted in issuing 179 violation reports according to the stipulations of law no 8 for 1990 on the regulation of human food control. Besides, administrative decisions were issued to shut nine violating food outlets and the amendment of the status of 132 other commercial facilities, in addition to taking 104 randomly selected samples to check the validity of food products.

Al Rayyan Municipality has adopted an intensive work plan that included scheduling day and afternoon inspection campaigns at the various commercial outlets and Al Sailiya Central Market. The inspectors will maintain some presence at the central market to monitor its operations.

The awareness campaigns will also target the delivery companies to raise their awareness on the best ways to maintain the safety of food items.

The health control inspectors at Al Daayen Municipality has carried out a campaign targeting catering kitchens, and food preparation centres with food samples collected for lab tests. Al Shamal Municipality is carrying out a comprehensive food health inspection campaign that targets all the retailers until Ramadan. Al Wakra Municipality conducted an inspection campaign for three days that targeted the major food retailers.

The General Cleanliness Department has intensified its cleaning efforts with special focus on mosques, and the roads surrounding and leading to them.

In addition, a field work plan has been adopted for cleaning

operations during Ramadan, as the field teams will work in three shifts, involving 134 supervisors, 1,795 workers, 701 drivers, and 745 vehicles and equipment.



Qatar Philharmonic presents *The Best of Brass* concert on March 20

The Qatar Philharmonic will present on March 20 a highenergy *Best of Brass* concert at the Pre-University Education Theatre in Education City.

The concert combines traditional classics with contemporary songs, to create an exciting musical



experience for all attendees led by the famous conductor Bob Ross.

The Philharmonic has prepared a special programme through a group of instrumentals, such as *Angels* for Robbie Williams and the Pink Panther Theme for Henry Mancini, in addition to playing some of the traditional music such as *Marching the Blues* for Brass and *Skirl* for Brass.

The highlight of the concert will be a performance of Richard Strauss's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, one of the most famous and challenging pieces for brass instruments. Tickets can be purchased from Q-Tickets, and entry will not be allowed those under six years.

It is worth noting that the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra performs and promotes western and Arabic music to inspire the children and adults of Qatar and the Arab world to create and enjoy music. It has won international acclaim for its exceptional performance and commitment to promoting musical excellence.

The Philharmonic was established in 2007 as a centre affiliated with the Qatar Foundation through the mixing of cultures, seeks to send a message of peace to the world. (QNA)

Milaha's Ordinary and Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting Approved Distribution of 35% Cash Dividend



atar Navigation Q.P.S.C. ("Milaha") held its Ordinary and Extraordinary Annual General Assembly Meeting virtually, today, at the Company's headquarters, during which the Shareholders approved Ordinary General Assembly Meeting agenda, including the company's audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2022.



The Ordinary General Assembly Meeting ratified all items on its agenda including the proposal of the Board of Directors to distribute a cash dividend of 35% of the nominal share value, equivalent to QR 0.35 per share. The Ordinary General Assembly also approved assigning "PricewaterhouseCoopers" as Auditors for the year 2023.



Addressing the meeting, H.E Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al-Thani, Chairman of Milaha's Board of Directors, presented an overview of the Company's activities and consolidated financial results, as Milaha reported a net profit of QR 1.013 billion in 2022, compared to QR 724 million in 2021.

In his speech, H.E the Chairman of the Board of Directors commended that the financial results witnessed significant breakthroughs and steady increases in profit ratios. As for the operational side, there is a significant development in quality of services and core business provided by Milaha, which has been reflected positively on the Groups financial and operational performance.

The Extraordinary General Assembly ratified the increase of the percentage of Non-Qatari ownership in the company's capital from 49% to 100%, after obtaining all the necessary approvals from the concerned authorities. Authorizing H.E. Chairman of the Board of Directors to complete all the necessary procedures.



We would like to draw the attention to Milaha's Shareholders that dividend distribution will commence on Monday March 13, 2023, through all Qatar National Bank (QNB) branches. QNB will provide full support services to ensure Shareholders can efficiently collect and manage their earned dividends.

QATAR

AFLI president commends QNL's contribution in preserving Arab heritage

President of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information (AFLI) Dr Nabhan bin Harith al-Harrasi affirmed that Qatar National Library (QNL) is a prominent cultural and scientific resource not only for the Arab world, but also throughout the world.

In an exclusive interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA) on Monday, AFLI president said Qatar was able, in a few years, to emerge and excel through a wide range of cultural activities and events that have contributed to introducing Arab culture and intellectual heritage, and praised the role of Qatar National Library in preserving the Arab heritage through its existing and ongoing project to digitise the region's documents.

He explained that this project contributed to preserving and introducing these documents, which have become a source for researchers and scholars, especially in the field of history.

He added that communication between Qatar National Library and the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information has been continuing since the opening of the library, noting that co-operation has been strengthened over time.

In a previous meeting between the library and the AFLI president, it was agreed for a set of co-operation programmes, including participation in the QNL Annual Forum for Library Professionals, which will be held on March 19 for two days, during which participants from libraries, museums and cultural centres from all over the world will exchange talks and experiences about their initiatives in the field of cultural diplomacy.

Representatives of Qatar National Library also participate in AFLI activities, the most important of which is the annual AFLI conference

Dr al-Harrasi, a Library and Information Science Associate Professor and Dean of the College of Arts and Social Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University in the Sultanate of Oman, appreciated QNL's role as the Regional Centre for the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) to preserve heritage in the Arab world, stressing that the library had this status, due to its cultural and scientific location in the region, and due to its continuous activity in linking knowledge to society, as well as the scientific communication network established by the library with regional and international organications.

Choosing Qatar National Library as the IFLA Regional Centre to introduce the world to Arab intellectual heritage enhances civilisational communication between East and West, he added.

Regarding the existence of a database on libraries in the Arab world, he said that there is a database of researches published in the library and information sector called Al-Hadi database, but there is no map of Arab libraries. He stressed that the Federation contributes to developing the skills of librarians in preserving documents and manuscripts, as it provides continuous training programmes in all sectors, including the preservation of documents and manuscripts.

He underlined that in the past years, AFLI organised many training programmes and workshops in the field of archives and docu-



President of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information Dr Nabhan bin Harith al-Harrasi.

ments, which touched on preserving documents and manuscripts, and digitising and making them available, adding that it intends to organise a symposium and a workshop in this field next May in Tunisia, during which issues related to converting documents into electronic sources will be addressed, in addition to reviewing some pioneering experiences in the Arab world in document management

Al-Harrasi affirmed that all Arab countries fall under the umbrella of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information and receive great attention, and that the countries in which libraries were exposed to security risks and challenges are under the concern and study of the Federation, noting that the AFLI issued a special book on libraries in Palestine, and another book on the challenges faced by libraries in light of the Covid-19 crisis, and is currently planning to hold a symposium on libraries affected in conflict-prone areas, based on AFLI's role in supporting and preserving Arab library heritage.

FOCUS ON IT

In his interview, the President of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information (AFLI) Dr Nabhan al-Harrasi stressed the need to invest in information technology in the work of libraries, for people to obtain knowledge quickly, with high efficiency.

Technology has greatly interfered with the information services provided by libraries during the past three decades with the advent of the global information network and which has contributed to managing the huge amount of knowledge that would otherwise have been difficult to control without databases and search engines, he said, stressing the ability of libraries, with high efficiency, to adapt technology to serve its goals, and to strengthen its relationship with beneficiaries and researchers.

He added that in light of the knowledge explosion and the huge amount of information sources, after the spread of Web 2.0, content management systems appeared to organise information and facilitate its retrieval.

These systems have succeeded to a large extent in achieving these goals, and have evolved through systems by introducing more accurate techniques and tools that re-

spond to the needs of researchers, highly intelligent systems.

In the future, it is expected that content management systems will witness a huge leap, especially after the introduction of Artificial Intelligence.

The digitisation of documents and sources of information has become necessary now to link the past with the present, Dr al-Harrasi said, adding that digitisation has also contributed to preserving heritage and making it widely available via the Internet.

Many countries, such as Australia and the United Kingdom, have worked to digitise their archives of documents and make them available to the public to enhance knowledge, and to introduce the world to their intellectual heritage, he stressed. The national libraries are primarily responsible for preserving the heritage of nations, collecting intellectual production, introducing it, and promoting civilised and cultural communication. These principles are compatible with the policies and strategies pursued by countries.

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

National libraries are the basis for achieving cultural diplomacy, and the foundation for preserving identity and community values, and contribute significantly to implanting the principles of reading, especially for young people, he added.

President of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information concluded his interview by saying that the transformation to a knowledge economy requires the availability of information and databases, as well as the existence of institutions capable of providing consultations, especially in planning and decision-making, and these requirements are provided by national libraries, he said, pointing out that therefore, national libraries have and still contribute to this transformation, and have always been a main axis in promoting knowledge in society, which contributes to the formation and creation of non-traditional economies. The next AFLI annual conference will be hosted by Saudi Arabia from Nov 14 to 16, he noted.

The Federation's annual conference will address the importance of investing in culture and the role that libraries can play in this regard. It will also include topics on entrepreneurship in the library sector and creative industries and will bring together about 500 specialists in the library and information sector.

The conference will also reflect Arab and regional experiences in this field.

The Arab Federation for Libraries and Information is an independent, non-governmental Arab organisation established in 1986

It is considered the largest umbrella for specialists and professionals in the library and information sector in the Arab world, based on the principles of consolidating the culture of reading, interest in the library sector, scientific publishing, and works to consolidate the values of the library profession.

The Federation has a statute that was voted on by the federation's general committee, and it serves as the constitution regulating elections and membership. It defines the federation's objectives, directions, organisational structures, committees, and the tasks of the federation's executive office. (QNA)



US ambassador Timmy Davis in conversation with Ali Velshi yesterday at the Global Security

Qatar a remarkable place with great stability, modernity, culture: US envoy

By Joseph Varghese Staff Reporter

atar is a spectacular country with great opportunities and stability, the US ambassador Timmy Davis said yesterday at the Global Security Forum 2023 in a fireside chat.

"I can think of 20 countries in the world that Americans might want to visit. They could visit Qatar instead and get what they were getting in those 20 countries"

"Qatar is a remarkable spot in the world with great stability, modernity and culture. It aims to be the destination for tourism and sports and it is an Arabic speaking country where everyone also speaks English," the envoy told Canadian television journalist Ali Velshi, host of Velshi and a chief correspondent at MSNBC.

The Global Security Forum 2023, under the slogan "Reshaping the features of the global system: conflicts, crises and co-operation," focuses on the international approach to managing conflicts, crises and co-operation.

"I would suggest the American people that this (Qatar) is a place where all of them can come and enjoy themselves for tourism. American businesses need to understand this is a place that you can come, create relationships, co-operation and opportunities," added the ambassador.

"I can think of 20 countries in the world that Americans might want to visit. They could visit Qatar instead and get what they were getting in those 20 countries," he highlighted.

Praising the advanced level of relations between the two friendly countries, Davis said: "Qatar has become a force for good, not only at the regional level, but at the international level, and we have a strategic partnership with it and wellestablished economic and security relations."

Davis said that the US highly appreciates what Qatar is doing at the regional and international levels, and

the humanitarian aid it provides around the world.

He also cited the example of Qatar's humanitarian aid of \$100mn to the US for the Katrina hurricane victims. "This is what we seek to confirm over and over again in the United States, so that everyone realises the importance of this relationship for us," he said.

The US envoy also praised the remarkable development witnessed in Qatar at various levels and its stability, security and openness to the world. He highlighted the stable and distinctive environment it provides for companies, businesses and other areas as well.

Davis also had words of praise for Qatar's superb organisation of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, highlighting that it was the best tournament so far. He also acknowledged the reforms that Qatar had initiated to regulate the labour market and protect the rights of workers. The Global Security Forum 2023 that includes discussions on topics such as the global energy crisis, sustainable economies, and competition of powers, will conclude today.



Panellists at the session on 'Evolving Security Challenges and Threat Landscapes' at the Globa Security Forum, yesterday.

Focus on threat of cyber-attacks stressed due to change in cybersecurity landscape

By Shafeeq Alingal Staff Reporter

he cyber security landscape has changed and the countries and agencies need to focus on the looming threat of cyber-attacks, experts told the Global Security Forum (GSF) yesterday.

While attending the session on 'Evolving Security Challenges and Threat Landscapes', Anjana Rajan, assistant national cyber director for technology security, The White House, said the cybersecurity landscape has fundamentally changed and noted that future conflicts may include cyber warfare.

"An hour before Russian troops set foot in Ukraine, there was a state-sponsored Russian cyber-attack on an American satellite company. The future of global conflict

now includes outer space, and the weapon will include cyber warfare," she stated.

Moderated by Mark Mazzetti, Washington investigative correspondent, New York Times, the session discussed the significant changes over the past two decades in security challenges and threat landscapes. It was noted that concerns about the potential of terror outfits to motivate and inspire attacks remains a persistent concern.

The session also discussed the increased focus on domestic violent extremism, racially and ethnically motivated actors, including with international connections, and evolving partnerships on counter-terrorism.

"What we are seeing are individuals picking up scattered ideas from multiple sources online and the result is a diabolical mixture of violence. And as a result, you see terrorist tactics being used by individuals who display very little cognisable ideology," noted Rebecca Weiner, assistant commissioner of the Intelligence and Counterterrorism Bureau, New York City Police Department

Police Department.
Retired Col Chris Costa, executive director, International Spy Museum and former special assistant to the president and senior director for Counterterrorism, US National Security Council, said countries have to be concerned about anti-government terrorism and noted that the US government continues to focus on counter-terrorism while taking up efforts to eliminate the extremist threats.

Gregory LoGerfo, deputy co-ordinator for Regional and Multilateral Affairs, US Department of State, said there is a looming threat of cyber terrorist attack that needs to be countered.

WCM-Q, int'l experts review whether metformin is a drug for all diseases

Researchers from Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) have together with colleagues from Canada and the US, reviewed whether metformin is a drug that can protect against diseases other than type 2 diabetes.

The review was published in Metabolism, a leading journal dedicated to human metabolism research.

In the late 1950s, metformin was used to treat type 2 diabetes. Today, the drug continues to be the preferred choice for millions of people living with the condition. A collection of encouraging pre-clinical and clinical findings has sparked interest in re-purposing the drug to treat several other diseases, such as Covid-19.

Titled 'Metformin: Is it a drug for all reasons and diseases?' The objectives of the review were to evaluate the putative mechanism(s) of action of metformin, analyse the controversial evidence for metformin's effectiveness in the treatment of diseases other than type 2 diabetes, assess the reproducibility of the data, and reach an informed conclusion as to whether metformin is a drug for all diseases and rea-

The review concluded that "the primary clinical benefits of metformin result from its



Dr Ross MacDonald, and Dr Isra Marei.

insulin-sensitising and antihyperglycaemic effects that secondarily contribute to a reduced risk of a number of diseases and thereby enhancing healthspan." In addition, there is no evidence to suggest that metformin "exerts significant direct anti-inflammatory effects other than indirectly via its positive effects on glucose metabolism."

As such, the anti-inflammatory and endothelial-vascular protective effects of the drug are likely to be the primary reason for health improvements witnessed in Covid-19 patients, especially since the most severely affected patients are clinically obese and carry pre-existing diabetes.

The WCM-Q contributing team included Dr Chris R Trig-

gle, professor of pharmacology; Dr Hong Ding, associate professor of research in pharmacology; Dr Isra Marei, postdoctoral associate in pharmacology; Dr Ross MacDonald, librarian of scholarly communications; WCM-Q alumnus Dr Ibrahim Mohamed, and fourth-year medical student Khalifa Bshesh.

International collaborators included Canada-based Kevin Ye, MSc, department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology, Simon Fraser University; and Dr Morley D Hollenberg, professor, department of Physiology and Pharmacology, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary; in addition to Dr Michael A Hill, interim director at Dalton Cardiovascular Research Center,

ment of Medical Pharmacology and Physiology, School of Medicine, University of Missouri, US.
Dr Triggle said: "Reviewed pre-clinical and clinical data highlights the benefits of met

and professor at the depart-

highlights the benefits of metformin in protecting against a series of diseases. It is, however, important to also keep in mind that since metformin is not metabolised and is excreted unchanged, the environmental impact of the drug is an emerging issue that has been linked to endocrine disruption in fish. In addition, but based to date on a single study from Denmark that was published in 2022, the drug's extensive use in type 2 diabetes has also raised concerns over its effects on human reproduction. More studies are therefore needed to determine the full impact of metformin. That said, interest in metformin is likely to continue to grow in the years to come."

Drs Ding and Triggle re-

ceived support from the

Biomedical Research Pro-

gramme at WCM-Q, while

Dr Marei was supported by
ECRA Award from the Qatar National Research Fund
(a member of Qatar Foundation) and the L'Oreal-Unesco for Women in Science Middle
East Regional Young Talents
Programme, 2020.

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HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani and other dignitaries at the seminar vesterday

Seminar Series discusses architecture in Arab culture

By Tawfik Lamari Staff Reporter

In the presence of HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, the activities of the Seminar Series 2023 continued yesterday, as the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) hosted the renowned architect Professor Abdul Wahed al-Wakil.

He talked about the 'Art of Architecture' in order to explore the mutual impact between culture as a carrier of the spirit of people and architecture, and its reflections on the cultures of societies, in line with the requirements of the change and development they are witnessing. The seminar was moderated by journalist Ahmed Abdullah.

Professor al-Wakil stressed there is a similarity in the world's architectural construction throughout history. There is a model that usually exists in the human subconscious mind, and the ancient Egyptian was distinguished in symbols, which he succeeded in expressing through hieroglyphic writ-

"Buildings were in his simple style and he excelled in designing them in circular shapes. The same style was used by many people later, including the English. Simplicity in general is the most important characteristic of all ancient civilisations. But disaster struck later, represented in modern cities that did not observe the simplest laws of architecture, nor did they reconcile it with nature. So they became crowded without spaces, and if these spaces existed, then they were devoted

Al-Wakil said the character of "the Islamic city was a form of domes and minarets, but now the character has faded and cars have become obstructive to movement and restrict the human being. The return of the Arab city with its ancient beauty requires a return to its original culture, with adher-



Professor Abdul Wahed al-Wakil addressing the seminar yesterday.

ence to the laws of architecture, and the availability of harmony between the elements of architecture."

He pointed out that "the specialists in the field of architecture must realise that there are constants and variables. At a time when constants must be adhered to, we find that the variables are subject to technological progress, but the changes should not be shocking, and they must come smoothly and in harmony with the developments of the times. Just as technology should not undermine the civilisation and culture of any, but complement it."

Al-Wakil touched on the importance of the existence of crafts, which he said should not be wiped out by modern mechanisation, pointing out that many specialists in the field of engineering have confirmed over the past decades that machines cannot harm

the aesthetics of craftsmen.
"Although the Japanese industries left out handicrafts once, we find that Japan itself has recently restored these crafts. We in our Arab countries have become aware of their importance, and therefore we must realise that

nothing can harm nature," al-Wakil concluded. An Egyptian architect, al-Wakil is the recipient of two Aga Khan Awards for Architecture, the King Fahd Award for Research in Islamic Architecture (1985), an award and trophy for his achievements in the city of Madinah (1994), as well as the prestigious 2009 Driehaus

He is considered the foremost practitioner of masonry construction in Islamic architecture today. His commitment to the traditions of construction as an integral component of contemporary architecture enlightens all aspects of his architecture and urbanism.

Al-Wakil has built mosques, public buildings and private residences. He built the Halawa House at Agamy beach, using a large quantity of limestone from the area and blending traditional Egyptian architecture with that of the French Riviera. The famed architect is well-known for his awe-inspiring mosques in Saudi Arabia and beyond. He is considered to be one of the foremost contemporary authorities on Islamic architecture.

Qumra Master Jacqueline West underlines key role of studying characters in-depth

a our-time Academy Award nominee for Best Achievement in Costume Design Qumra Master Jacqueline West described her creative process to emerging filmmakers at Qumra 2023, underlining the importance of studying the characters in-depth, engaging in extensive research and reading every possible material.

"Once you learn all about the film, the characters, you dress them to reveal the onion skins, the multiple layers, and get the actors to the crux of the character," she said while explaining that "costume design is 50% design and 50% psychology."

Nominated for the Academy Award for Quills (2000), The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (2008), The Revenant (2015) and Dune: Part One (2021), West pointed out that she first seeks the approval of her design concepts from the director and only then approaches the actors.

There has been little resistance from any directors or actors to her creative approach, which is akin to "being a special shopper for the characters."

With an outstanding ouvre of works including The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (2003), State of Play (2009), The Tree of Life (2011), and Seventh Son (2014), among others, West owned her own clothing store and was a sought-after fashion designer in Berkeley, California. That, in turn, was inspired by her mother, also a designer. "I had a mannequin in my room that I dressed instead of dolls," laughed West, "and I always loved that."

Though she was strong in science, West changed her major to Art History at college, which in



hindsight brings that exceptional attention to detail in West's designs for films.

Her knowledge of art history was also a reason director Philip Kaufman asked her to design the costumes for *Henry & June* (1990) starring Fred Ward and Uma Thurman.

She used a lot of artbooks and looked at paintings, "and I was reading, reading and reading" – a process that West continues to this day for her projects.

For independent spirited film that she earlier worked on as well as big budget studio movies, West has the same creative approach. West leaves behind "one talisman for every character that brings out his or her inner richness that tells a story in a quick read. You must also consider the comfort of actors

 as they have to do stunts and action. Drawing is conceptual, real clothes have to be alive."

Known to be a stickler for designing under budget, West does not have a permanent team, although she admits that her daughter, who also joined her in Doha, "has been my secret weapon on many films."

As a costume designer, West says the most important aspect in her work is "having the right fabric, as it guides the look and feel." She elaborated on her work for *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, a seminal movie that allowed her to design costumes over a period spanning a hundred years.

For *The Revenant*, the costume design task was equally daunting, having to design ten sets of the same costume for the first scene they shot. She

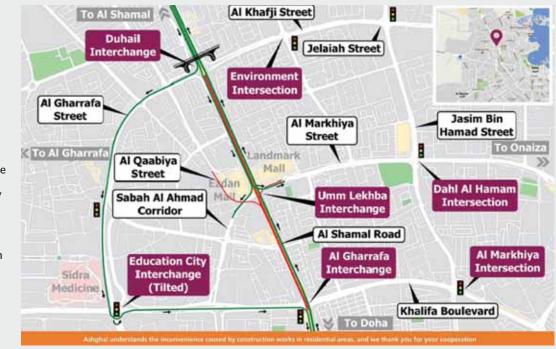
had to use special techniques, including mixing black wax into every dress to make them look dirty. There was little reference material she could bank on for the film as the costumes of the trappers are not documented.

When it came to *Dune*, which has a cult following, West looked into the ancient past to design the futuristic costumes as the film's director Denis Villeneuve, who had already tried out many other designers, did not want a typical sci-fi look.

She created what she calls the 'Mod-evial' style – where she sought inspiration from the Templars and the medieval world and looked into the future. West is now looking forward to her work with Martin Scorsese for his upcoming film Killers of the Flower Moon.

Eight-hour closure on Al Shamal Road

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) eight-hour closure on Al Shamal Road, for traffic heading to Doha from north between Duhail Interchange and AI Gharrafa (Passports) Interchange from 2am to 10am on Friday. The closure in co-ordination with the General Directorate of Traffic is for gantry installation. During the closure, road users coming from the north in the direction of Doha can turn right at Duhail Interchange and use Al Gharrafa Street to reach Al Gharrafa Interchange and their destinations. Road users coming from the north in the



direction of Sabah Al-Ahmad Corridor can keep driving on Al Shamal Road, then use Umm Lekhba (Landmark) Interchange to reach their destinations. Ashghal will install road signs advising motorists of the temporary closure and has requested all to follow and abide by the speed limit to ensure safety.

'Qatar a reliable international mediator'

From Page 1

He pointed out that the foreign policy of Qatar relies on strong bilateral and multilateral alliances, and finding solutions to disputes through dialogue and mediation while respecting the sovereign rights of all countries.

The minister called upon the international community to strengthen strong regulatory frameworks that favour mediation in international relations and work to address regional conflicts and disputes with wisdom and patience, with the aim of advancing the sustainability of international

peace and security.

"A trusted and neutral mediator can play a very important role by bringing the parties together, by listening to them carefully and proposing peaceful settlement to the conflicts. Sustainability of the agreement is also important. One of the crucial lessons that Qatar has learned during these times is the importance of sustaining the agreement," added Dr al-Khulaifi.

Qatar underlines enduring co-operation with UN counter-terrorism agencies

atar reiterated its commitment to continue co-operating with relevant UN counter-terrorism agencies and its condemnation of all acts of terrorism, regardless of their place, motives and justifications.

This came during the statement of Qatar delivered by First Secretary at the Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Mahdi al-Yami, during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism within the framework of 52nd session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Al-Yami affirmed that the phenomena of terrorism and violent extremism pose a threat to international peace and security, human rights, and achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He stressed that the policies taken and measures to counter



First Secretary at the Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Mahdi al-Yami attending the session in Geneva.

and combat the two phenomena should not lead to undermining human rights and the rule of law, and should comply with international standards and laws and be consistent with the four pillars of the global counter-terrorism strategy.

He pointed out that Qatar continues to update its counter-terrorism legislations and policies,

the last of which was Law No 20 for 2019 on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism Law in line with international standards, and in pace with developments concerned with harnessing modern technology to eliminate terrorism and extremism.

He considered Qatar's hosting of UNOCT International Hub on Behavioural Insights to Counter Terrorism and UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism as leading projects within the strategic partnership between Qatar and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT).

Abdullah al-Yami stressed that the support provided by Qatar has enabled the implementation of several initiatives and programmes to prevent using modern and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes, including the United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel ('CT Travel') and the Global Counter-Terrorism Programme on Autonomous and Remotely Operated Systems (AROS Programme), to enhance the capabilities of states to counter threats. (QNA)



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SVB fallout: Global convulsions, contagion fears, \$465bn stock wipeout

Global finance industry is facing an upheaval after the spectacular failure of Silicon Valley Bank, followed by the sudden closure of New York's Signature Bank by state regulators on Sunday.

SVB's sudden demise and the aftershocks reverberating from America's biggest bank failure in almost 15 years have rattled the industry in the US and beyond.

As the only publicly traded bank focused on Silicon Valley and new tech ventures, SVB was deeply embedded in the US startup scene.

According to its website, SVB did business with nearly half of all US venture capital-backed startups and 44% of US venture-backed tech and healthcare companies that went public last year.

On March 8, its parent company, SVB Financial Group, announced it had sold \$21bn of securities from its portfolio at a loss of \$1.8bn and would sell 2.25bn in new shares to shore up its finances. That unnerved a number of prominent venture capitalists, which were said to have instructed their portfolio businesses to pull their cash from the bank.

By March 10, the effort to raise new equity or find a buyer had been abandoned, and the bank was put into receivership by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

Several factors – some unique to SVB; others systemic in banking – came together to cause SVB's downfall.

Behind most of them are the rapid interest-rate increases pushed through over the last year by the US Federal Reserve to tame the highest inflation in decades.

The aggregate market value of companies included in the customer bases. **MSCI World** Financials **Index and** the MSCI EM **Financials Index dropped** by about **\$465bn over** Friday and **Monday**

One consequence of those hikes that hit SVB especially hard was the sharp downturn in the highflying tech companies that had been the source of its rapid growth; while most banks have broader

As venture capital dried up, SVB's clients tapped their deposits to withdraw cash they needed to keep going.

Risk assets got pummelled last week, with the US stock benchmark suffering its worst week since September. Wall Street's so-called "fear gauge" spiked, with the Cboe Volatility Index rising above 30 for the first time since October.

The aggregate market value of companies included in the MSCI World Financials Index and the MSCI EM Financials Index dropped by about \$465bn over Friday and Monday, according to a Bloomberg report.

But several experts have said any ripple effects in the rest of the banking sector may be limited as larger institutions have more diverse portfolios and deposit clientele than SVB did.

The turmoil has caused a rapid repricing in markets for where the Fed will take policy. Swaps traders are now pricing a less than one-in-two chance the Fed will hike by another quarter point this cycle.

US banks had booked \$620bn in unrealised losses on their availablefor-sale and held-to-maturity debts at the end of last year, according to filings with the FDIC.

US President Joe Biden pledged on Monday to do whatever was needed to address a banking crisis.

US regulators have put together an emergency package of support for financial institutions. The moves are designed to prevent any further failures by easing fears of large losses among uninsured big depositors, even as a debate continues over how widespread the problems are.

SVB's collapse, the largest bank failure since the 2009 financial crisis, has raised questions about hidden weaknesses that could have consequences for customers and employees and potentially highlight issues in other banks.

SVB's plight could lead to a loss of confidence, tougher regulation and investor scepticism about the financial health of smaller US banks that were seen as adequately capitalised after regulators forced banks to hold more capital in the aftermath of the 2008 crisis, according to experts.

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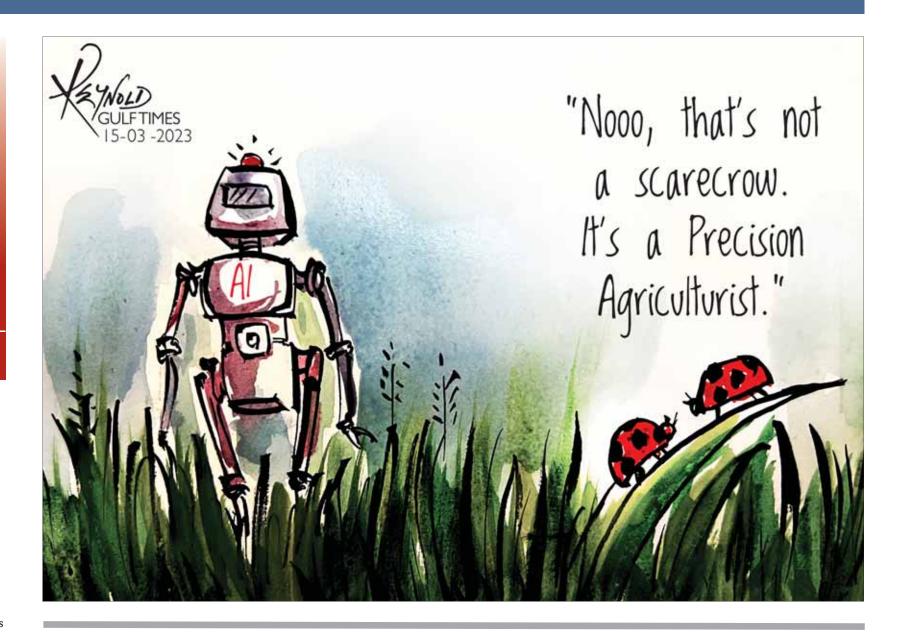
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The interplay of Islamic ethics and human rights

By Dr Samer Rashwani

cholars have explored the moral dimensions of human rights for decades. There's a consensus that human rights are an essential feature of any just and moral society, as well as being universal, inalienable, and indivisible. Many scholars also make the case that human rights should serve as the foundation for ethical and legal discourses.

Our time has aptly been described as an 'age of rights' in which rights-based morality is consistently promoted. The language of rights seem the whole spectrum of moral and legal language. Human rights are used in many circumstances to replace ethics and are taken for granted in a way that somehow constitutes another way of 'doing ethics'.

On the other hand, philosophers such as Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, and Amartya Sen contend that such an approach not only undermines but also operates against a range of other morally significant human relationships and attitudes. These include community, solidarity, care, compassion, and benevolence, all of which play an essential role in our lives.

They argue that focusing on individual rights can lead to a fragmented society in which people are less likely to feel a sense of obligation or responsibility to others. It has also been argued that the concept of rights is a product of historical circumstances that risk turning morality upside down if it encourages self-righteous claims and a sense of entitlement.

Recently, human rights have evolved into a field of study with an interdisciplinary framework, integrating insights from disciplines such as philosophy, ethics, politics, education, psychology, anthropology, and bioethics. The interplay between these disciplines and human rights understood as a moral framework, is becoming a thriving field of research.

Professional ethical codes already include elements related to human rights and social justice. However, some scholars argue that human rights and social justice are not to be contained as simply "elements" but as a foundation upon which these codes are developed and understood. One such example is the role of human rights in the medical field, where medical professionals are obligated to respect the human rights of their patients, including the right to privacy, informed consent, and dignity. This

relationship is underscored by ethical codes, such as the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki, which sets standards for medical research involving human subjects. Another example is the relationship

between human rights and business ethics. Many companies have adopted policies that outline their commitment to respecting the human rights of their employees, suppliers, and customers and avoiding actions that may violate them. This relationship is governed by

international standards, such as the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which provide guidance on how to align business operations with human r The relationship between human rights and ethics can also be seen in many other areas, such as environmental ethics, criminal justice, and education.

Human rights and ethics, particularly from an Islamic perspective, have also been a topic of discussion and study among Islamic studies scholars and related fields for several decades. Many have explored the concept of human rights in light of the Qur'an, Hadith, and other Islamic religious texts. They have sought to identify ways in which Islamic ethics and values intersect with the idea of human rights.

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There has also been significant discussion among Muslim scholars and thinkers about the compatibility of Islamic law and human rights norms and the role that Islamic ethics can play in developing a comprehensive theory of human rights.

To help shape and guide contemporary debates, the Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics (CILE), based at the College of Islamic Studies at Hamad bin Khalifa University, is convening its 10th international conference on 'The Interplay of Islamic Ethics and Human Rights?

The event will gather renowned experts on Islamic studies, law, politics, anthropology, and bioethics to revisit the moral foundations of human rights and explore novel avenues for exploring their intersection and interplay between various disciplines. The conference is not concerned with worn-out questions about the relationship, compatibility, or reconciliation between conventional international human rights and Islamic law. Attention will instead turn to fresh and profound discussions about the interplay between Islamic ethics and social, economic, and political rights.

Case studies will focus on the rights of refugees and survivors of mass atrocities, including their psychological and mental health; as well as bioethics and related concepts, such as human dignity, respect for human vulnerability, and personal integrity.

'The Interplay of Islamic Ethics and Human Rights' will also reflect the intricacy of human rights as both moral and legal concepts, a reality that continues to spark complex discussions among philosophers, legal experts, political scientists, and religious scholars. Such multifaceted interplay between the various moral dimensions of human rights raises questions that cross multiple disciplines, such as the development of a sound Islamic rights-based theory of morality. These issues, and more, will be approached from various angles, such as theological ethics, Islamic legal theory, jurisprudence, philosophical ethics, literature, political ethics, applied ethics, and Islamic bioethics. 'A multidisciplinary approach is essential for uncovering common and conflicting principles and practices across various fields, disciplines, and cultures.

• Dr Samer Rashwani is a scholar of Qur'anic studies and Islamic intellectual history. His teaching and research concentrate on the trajectories of Islamic scholarship on the Qur'an from the early centuries onwards; and investigate new hermeneutical approaches to the Qur'an. Currently, he is Senior Researcher of Master of Arts in Applied Islamic Ethics at Hamad Bin Khalifa University's College of Islamic Studies.

(The Research Center for Islamic Legislation and Ethics' (CILE) 10th International Conference on 'The Interplay of Islamic Ethics and Human Rights' takes place from March 15-16 at the Auditorium, Minaretein, Education City, Doha).



graduate programs through its colleges, and provides opportunities

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Clashes as Pakistan police try again to arrest ex-PM Khan

Reuters/AFP

akistani police and supporters of Imran Khan fought pitched battles outside the former prime minister's home in Lahore yesterday, wounding several on both sides, ahead of his expected arrest, a government spokesman and witnesses said.

Police hit Khan supporters in baton charges and lobbed tear gas canisters, some of which landed on the lawns of Khan's house, according to video images released by his party.

Local Geo TV showed a helicopter hovering over the house, adding that Internet connection had been cut in the

"We will arrest Imran Khan today and present him in court," said Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah at a public rally telecast live on local TV chan-

A lower trial court in the capital Islamabad had issued the arrest warrant for Khan for unlawfully selling state gifts while in power from 2018-2022, his aide Fawad Chaudhry told Reuters. Khan aide Shah Mehmood

Qureshi told reporters that the former prime minister had secured "protective bail" from a

"Our understanding is that the police can't arrest Imran Khan," he said.

Khan has been demanding a snap election in protest rallies across the country since his ouster from office in a parliamentary vote early last year.

That demand was rejected by his successor, Shehbaz Sharif, who has said that the vote would be held as scheduled later this year.

Khan was shot and wounded in one of these rallies.

Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers started the violence, government spokesman Amir Mir told Reuters. "If Imran Khan ensures his presence in the court, it will be good, otherwise the law will take its course."

Khan called on his supporters to stand up for the supremacy of the law.

"Police have arrived here to put me in prison," he said in a video recorded statement posted on Twitter. "They believe the nation will go into slumber when Imran Khan goes to jail."

"If something happens to me, or sent to jail, or they kill me, you've to prove that this nation will continue to struggle even without Imran Khan,"

Mir said the government had called out paramilitary forces to help control the situation.

It is the second time in recent weeks that police have been despatched from the capital Islamabad to Khan's home in the eastern city of Lahore to serve an arrest warrant after he skipped several court dates linked to a corruption case, citing security concerns.

"We have come here just for the compliance of the court order," deputy inspector-general of police Syed Shahzad Nadeem told reporters.

Khan's supporters started pelting police with stones and bricks, and in response police directed a water cannon at them and in some cases baton charged them, he said.

Live TV footage showed Khan supporters also using sling-shots and attacking the police with bricks and sticks.

Khan has been embroiled in several court cases since his

A small number of his supporters also blocked roads in protest against Khan's possible arrest in other cities.

As the political melodrama unfolds ahead of an election due no later than October, Pakistan is in the grip of a stark economic downturn, risking default if help cannot be secured from the International Monetary Fund.

The security situation is also deteriorating with a spate of deadly attacks on police headquarters, linked to the Pakistan

China removes sweeping visa curbs on foreigners

hina said it will start re-issuing all categories of visas to foreigners from today, dropping the final cross-border control measure it imposed three years ago to guard against the spread of the coronavirus (Covid-19).

The move, which comes after authorities last month declared victory over a recent surge in the virus, is expected to help rekindle a \$17tn economy that has suffered one of its slowest rates of growth in nearly half a century last year.

Areas in China that required no visas prior to the pandemic will revert to visa-free entry, the foreign ministry said yesterday. This will include the southern tourist island of Hainan and

cruise ships passing through Shanghai port. Visa-free entry to the southern manufacturing hub of Guang-

dong for foreigners from Hong Kong and Macau will also be re-The ministry also said foreigners holding visas issued before March 28, 2020 that are still within their validity dates will also

be able to enter China. China, which withdrew its advisory to citizens against foreign travel in January, also added another 40 countries to its list

for which group tours are allowed, bringing the total number of countries to 60. The list, however, still excludes Japan, South Korea, Australia

and the United States. In 2022, just 115.7mn cross-border trips were made in and out of

China, with foreigners accounting for around 4.5mn. By contrast, China logged 670mn overall trips in 2019 before

the arrival of Covid-19, with foreigners accounting for 97.7mn. Beijing abandoned its draconian zero-Covid-19 policies in December and in January cancelled quarantine requirements for in-

coming travellers. New Premier Li Qiang said on Monday that China took less than two months to achieve a "smooth transition" in its response to Covid-19 and that the country's strategies and measures had been completely correct. - **Reuters**

Radioactive cylinder goes missing

Thai authorities are scrambling to find a cylinder containing dangerous radioactive material that went missing from a power station, officials said yesterday, warning of serious health risks from direct exposure.

Staff at the coal-fired plant in Prachinburi Province, east of Bangkok, noticed the steel tube, 30cm (12") long and 13cm wide, was missing during routine checks on Friday.

The company believes it may have fallen from a wall mount, about

A weekend search failed to locate the 25kg (55-pound) tube containing highly radioactive Caesium-137, said Kittiphan Chitpentham of the National Power Supply Public Company, which owns the plant.

18m (59') high, days earlier. Radiation tests at the plant show that it has been taken off the

premises. "We are asking people in the area to help find it," Prachinburi

governor Narong Nakornjinda told AFP.

"The radioactive material was in a closed and protected condition, but if someone opens it and is exposed to the substance, it could cause a rash and burns," he warned.

The missing cylinder is part of a device used to measure steam Officials have not said how much Caesium-137 is inside it. - AFP

Biden and allies unveil nuclear submarine plan for Australia

San Diego/Canberra

The United States, Australia and Britain unveiled details of a plan to provide Australia with nuclearpowered attack submarines from the early 2030s to counter China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific.

Addressing a ceremony at the US naval base in San Diego, accompanied by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, US President Joe Biden called the agreement under the 2021 AUKUS partnership part of a shared commitment to a freeand-open Indo-Pacific region with two of America's "most stalwart and capable

Sunak called it "a powerful partnership", adding: "For the first time ever it will mean three fleets of submarines working together across the Atlantic and Pacific keeping our oceans free ... for decades to come."

Under the deal, which was welcomed by its Asian allies yesterday but has angered Beijing, the United States intends to sell Australia three US Virginia class nuclearpowered submarines, which are built by General Dynamics, in the early 2030s, with an option for Australia to buy two more if needed, a joint statement said.

It said the multi-stage project would culminate with British and Australian production and operation of a new submarine class - SSN-AUKUS - a "trilaterally developed" vessel based on Britain's nextgeneration design that would be built in Britain and Australia and include "cutting edge" US technologies.

Britain would take delivery of its first SSN-AUKUS submarine in the late 2030s, and Australia would receive its first in the early 2040s.

The vessels will be built by BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce.

"The AUKUS agreement we confirm here in San Diego represents the biggest single investment in Australia's defence capability in our history, strengthening Australia's national security and stability in our region," Albanese said at the cer-

AUKUS will be the first time Washington has shared nuclear-propulsion technology since it did so with Britain in the 1950s.

Biden stressed that the submarines would be nuclear-powered, not nuclear armed: "These boats will not have nuclear weapons of any kind on them."

However, the deal comes with an eyewatering bill for Australia with cost estimated to go up to A\$368bn (\$245bn) by

Albanese defended the spending, saying that it is "an economic plan, not just a defence and security plan".

He said he expected AUKUS would result in A\$6bn invested in Australia's industrial capability over the next four years and create about 20,000 direct jobs over the next 30.

He said it would require funding amounting to about 0.15% of GDP per year. Australia's defence minister, Richard Marles, said it is an investment in the nation's security.

"It is an investment that we cannot afford not to make," Marles told a news conference in Canberra.

China has condemned AUKUS as an illegal act of nuclear proliferation.

The plan "constitutes serious nuclear proliferation risks, undermines international non-proliferation system, fuels arms races, and hurts peace and stability", China's permanent mission to the United Nations said in a tweet after the announcement.

Asked if he is worried that China would see the AUKUS submarine deal as aggression, Biden replied "no".

He said he expected to speak to Chinese leader Xi Jinping, but would not say when. US national security adviser Jake Sullivan pointed on Friday to Beijing's own military build-up, including nuclearpowered submarines, saying: "We have communicated with them about AUKUS and sought more information from them about their intentions."

Australia offered China a briefing on the submarine deal, Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles said.

In launching the partnership, Australia also upset France by abruptly cancelling a deal to buy French conventional subma-

The agreement will see US and British submarines deployed in Western Australia as soon as 2027 to help train Australian crews and bolster deterrence.

US officials said this would involve four US submarines and one British in a few years.

This first phase of the plan is already underway with the US Virginia-class nuclear-powered attack submarine Asheville visiting Perth in Western Australia, officials said.

The US assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, Daniel Kritenbrink, said in a media briefing yesterday that the US had informed its partners in Southeast Asia about the AUKUS plan, including in Indonesia and Malaysia, last week "to explain clearly what AUKUS is and what AUKUS is not".

A senior US official said AUKUS reflected mounting Indo-Pacific threats, not just from China towards self-ruled Taiwan and in the contested South China Sea, but also from Russia, which has conducted joint exercises with China, and North Korea as

Albanese called Japan Prime Minister Fumio Kishida yesterday to brief him on the launch, with Kishida saying the deal will contribute to regional peace and stability, and that Japan has consistently supported this initiative", his foreign ministry said in a statement.

Rare manta rays caught off coast of Gaza

Dozens of manta rays were laid out Monday on a beach in the blockaded Gaza Strip as local Palestinian fishermen celebrated the mass catch. The rare fish flock to the Mediterranean waters off the coast of Gaza every year in March and April. Fishing is a major commercial activity in Gaza, which has been under an Israeli-led blockade since 2007, when Islamist movement Hamas took over the

Fisherman Bashir Shoueikh caught more than 10 of the rays, each weighing between 200-300kg.

They sell for around 12 shekels (\$3.30) per kg. "Each boat carries between 20-30 of these fish," Shoueikh told AFP. "People like them a lot." The fishing zone off Gaza, determined by Israel, varies from 5-16 nautical miles, depending on the security situation.

The two species of manta ray - manta alfredi and manta birostris - are both on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's red list of threatened species due to their declining numbers.



A woman poses for photos under cherry blossoms as people come out to Ueno Park in Tokyo.

Early start again for Tokyo's cherry blossoms

AFP Tokyo

apan announced the official start of Tokyo's cherry blossom season yesterday, 10 days earlier than usual and tied with a record early start seen nly twice before.

In past years the country's meteorologists have linked the increasingly early blooms to climate change, and temperatures in Tokyo have been unseasonably mild in recent days. Tokyo's official cherry bloom records go back 70

years and the delicate white-pink flowers have only appeared this early in 2021 and 2020, according to the weather agency. Japan's sakura or cherry blossom season is fever-

ishly anticipated by locals and visitors alike, and the announcement of the Tokyo season start was alerted by major news agencies and covered live on The blooms are traditionally celebrated with

hanami, or viewing parties, with picnics - and sometimes festivities - organised beneath the trees. However, the public had been asked not to throw the parties during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, and the tourists that usually flood into the country for the season were kept out with strict border closures. Borders reopened last October, and Tokyo parks

have announced blossom revellers will be allowed to gather freely for the first time since 2019. The season is announced underway based on

the progress of blossoms on a signal tree at Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine, where an official from the Japan Meteorological Agency stood before media and onlookers to make the announcement. "Today, on March 14, we hereby declare the saku-

ra blossoming in Tokyo," he said, in an announcement that came six days earlier than last year.

"We've seen many warm days in March," the official said, adding: "Climate change may also have played a part."

The blooms of the ubiquitous somei-yoshino strain, which accounts for more than 90% of the cherry trees planted in Japan, last only around a week and tend to emerge simultaneously in a given region because the trees are clones of a single speci-

"Congratulations on the blooming!" an onlooker shouted after the official announcement, to a round of enthusiastic applause.

US drone collides with Russian fighter jet

Russian Su-27 fighter jet struck the propeller of a US military Reaper surveillance drone yesterday, causing it to crash into the Black Sea in an incident that has been condemned as "reckless' by the US

military. White House spokesman John Kirby said that although there have been other such intercepts, this one was noteworthy because it was "unsafe and unprofessional".

US President Joe Biden had been briefed about the incident,

In Brussels, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato)'s senior military commander, General Christopher Cavoli, informed allies about the incident, an alliance official said.

It occurred as Russian troops pushed forward in waves along the frontline in eastern Ukraine. while President Vladimir Putin reaffirmed his view that Russia's very existence as a state was at stake in the war.

In the eastern Donbas region, Russia and Ukraine are locked in the bloodiest infantry battle in Europe since WWII after Moscow launched a winter offensive. Putin has framed Moscow's year-long war invasion as a defensive pushback against what he sees as a hostile West bent on expanding into territories historically ruled by Russia.

Putin accuses the West of using Ukraine as a tool to inflict "strategic defeat" on Russia.

Kyiv and its Western allies say Moscow is waging an unprovoked war of conquest that has destroyed Ukrainian cities, killed thousands of people and forced millions more to flee their homes.

Philippine officer jailed for killing teens in rare drug war conviction

A Philippine police officer has been found guilty of killing two teenagers during former president Rodrigo Duterte's drug war, court documents obtained by AFP yesterday showed, a rare conviction of one of the crackdown's enforcers.

During his six-year term, which ended in June 2022, Duterte openly ordered police to shoot dead drug suspects if officers' lives were in danger

More than 6,200 people died in the anti-narcotics campaign, according to official figures, but rights groups estimate the actual figure was in the tens of thousands. Only three police officers had previously been convicted for killing

a suspect during the crackdown, which sparked an investigation at the International Criminal Court (ICC). On March 1, a Manila court ruled that Jefrey Perez was guilty of murdering Reynaldo De Guzman, 14, and Carl Arnaiz, 19, in 2017, according to a copy of the verdict shared by the public attorney's

Perez was sentenced on the same day to a minimum of 20 years

He was already serving a lengthy jail sentence after being found guilty by a different court in November of torturing the teenagers. His co-accused, police officer Ricky Arquilita, died during the first

Legal bid for more compensation for Bhopal gas disaster victims fails

India's Supreme Court has rejected the government's plea seeking more compensation from Union Carbide Corporation for victims of a gas leak in the central Indian city of Bhopal that resulted in one of the world's worst industrial disasters.

In the early hours of December 3, 1984, methyl isocyanate gas leaked from a pesticide factory, owned by the American company, in the state capital of Madhya Pradesh. More than 500,000 people were poisoned that night and the

official death toll exceeded 5,000. Following the disaster, the government sued Union Carbide and the company agreed to pay an out-of-court settlement of \$470mn in

damages in 1989. The government approached the country's top court in 2010 seeking enhanced compensation for the victims. Dow Chemical, which now owns Union Carbide, denied liability,

saying that it bought the company a decade after Union Carbide

settled its liabilities with the Indian government. - Reuters

Two pedestrians in Canada killed, nine injured as truck runs them over

Two men were killed in Canada and nine other pedestrians were injured when they were run over by a pickup truck in a small northern town, police said.

The 38-year-old man was arrested after the collision, which took place on Monday in Amqui, located about 400 miles (650km) northeast of Montreal.

The truck driver did so intentionally, police said yesterday. "What the probe shows is the actions were premeditated. (It) also shows that the people were targeted at random," said Claude Doiron, a spokesperson for the provincial police force. Doiron, speaking to reporters in televised remarks, said the suspect was co-operating in the investigation but his motives remained

Cyclone Freddy kills 190 in Malawi

unknown. - AFP/Reuters

Cyclone Freddy, one of the most powerful storms ever recorded in the southern hemisphere, has killed 190 people in Malawi after ripping through southern Africa for the second time in a month, Malawi's government said yesterday.

The district around the commercial hub of Blantyre was among the hardest-hit.

Severe flooding and rain damaged roads and bridges, hampering relief operations.

Freddy has also left a trail of destruction in Mozambique, where it made landfall over the weekend. More than 22,000 people there were seeking shelter away from

their homes. The latest death toll in Malawi is a jump from 99 reported on Monday, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs said. As heavy rains continued to pummel the country, 584 people have been injured and 37 are still missing, it said in a statement. Last week Cyclone Freddy unofficially broke the World

Meteorological Organisation's benchmark as the longest-lasting

tropical cyclone on record, set in 1994 for a 31-day storm named

Researchers will now study whether Freddy is the new titleholder, a process likely to take months. - Reuters/AFP



Finance minister underscores Qatar's support for private sector

E the Minister of Finance and Chairman of Qatar Development Bank (QDB) Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari affirmed Qatar's constant endeavour to support the private sector and help the entrepreneurial system reach competitive levels in various fields.

He pointed to the state's role in the competitiveness of the Oatari products, supporting and assisting exports by opening global markets, enabling the digital transformation of emerging companies, and exploring prospects for sustainability and green transformation.

Addressing the SME Excellence Awards 2022 ceremony yesterday, the minister said that Qatar continues this journey of success with greater responsibility than ever before, adding that the state's efforts at various levels have been reflected in economic indicators, with the Qatar economy maintaining positive growth rates during 2022, recording over 4% growth during the second and third quarters, supported by the growth of non-oil sectors such as transport and trade as well as manufacturing and operational industries.

HE al-Kuwari said that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are an important component of the private sector in Oatar, accounting for over 90% of private sector establishments and a key source of employment.

He also cited their role in promoting innovation and creativity in business activities, and noted that the initiatives and programmes presented by the state for this category, including the initiatives of the QDB in co-operation with the concerned authorities, have contributed to enhancing the growth opportunities of these enterprises.



HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin

The minister went on to say that these programmes covered the basic needs of companies, including access to financing, access to markets, education, training and incubation services as well as the continuous development of the business environment.

HE al-Kuwari added that the achievements of Qatari SMEs have been reflected in a number of international reports, such as the report of the Global Monitor of Entrepreneurship 2021-2022, where Qatar ranked 14th globally in the field of early-stage entrepreneurial activity, and first in the pioneering activity of employees.

Qatar is also ranked second in the Middle East and ninth globally in the local entrepreneurship environment index.

The QDB honoured yesterday 50 SMEs that presented sustainable business models and contributed positively

to the growth of the national economy in Qatar, during the third edition of SME Excellence Awards 2022.

The list aims to provide a platform for small and medium-sized companies to showcase their successes, honour the best performers among them, create a motivating atmosphere within the business community in Qatar, and create a culture that adopts best practices and excellence in business.

As many as 310 companies have applied for the award, representing 13 industrial and service sectors.

These companies have undergone an independent, accredited evaluation to determine the best among them.

This evaluation includes several criteria, including financial performance, sustainability, innovation, and other

HE al-Kuwari said that the entre-

PM honours distinguished **SMEs for 2022**

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani honoured the 50 winners of the SME Excellence Awards 2022 during a ceremony at Mondrian Doha yesterday. At the outset of the ceremony, a documentary was screened on entrepreneurship in Qatar and the ways of creating a robust economic work environment based on innovation and sustainability, as well as creating a competitive environment that encourages growth and development.

HE Sheikh Mohamed also witnessed a presentation on the companies' contributions to the growth of Qatar's economy, covering 13 industrial and service sectors in the fields of information technology, healthcare, industries, manufacturing, marketing, electronics, education, trade, food products, maritime sector, transportation, as well as fashion and

A number of sheikhs and ministers, as well as senior officials, owners of the winning enterprises, and guests attended the ceremony. - QNA

> preneurs of the 50 companies honoured at ceremony were able to set an example of excellence and efficiency in their respective sectors by using international tools and standards ranging from digital transformation to operational excellence and environment preservation.

> He highlighted the exceptional achievement by Qatar last year in hosting the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, and expressed his pride in the SMEs that contributed to making this achievement, whether in infrastructure, technology or other fields.

> The minister expressed happiness at honouring the distinguished Qatari SMEs for the year 2022, praising their efforts, performance and contributions to the growth of the national economy and their endeavours in achieving Qatar National Vision 2030. (QNA)

Sheikha Al Mayassa congratulates QLC Class of 2022

The achievements of 117 professionals from government, industry and commerce were celebrated at the 2022 Qatar Leadership Centre (QLC) Honouring Ceremony, held on March 13 at the Ritz

Carlton, Doha. HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Chairperson of Oatar Leadership Centre, delivered remarks at the ceremony, which recognised 63 women and 54 men for completing one of the three National Leadership Programmes: Rising Leaders, Government Leaders and Executive Leaders.

In her remarks, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa said: "We are proud to recognise these exceptional men and women, all highly skilled professionals, who will leave QLC to go forth to their respective organisations and make an impact."

"The Class of 2022 is especially significant as they have completed their studies during the year of FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, an achievement that carries special weight in light of the challenges experienced by Qatar during the preparation and execution of that momentous event," she continued.

"QLC's customised programmes provide a range of critical tools needed given the complexity of today's public and private sectors. These professionals are now ready to elevate their careers as a part of the next generation of Qatari decision makers. Their time is now," she concluded.

The Class of 2022 is the 10th cadre of professionals to have completed the programmes since the establishment of QLC by an Amiri Decree in

HE Sheikh Dr Abdulla bin Ali bin Saoud al-Thani, Managing Director and Vice-Chairman, Board of Directors, congratulated the newest alumni: "We are here to honour these outstanding professionals who will contribute to shaping a future

of prosperity and well-being for coming generations.

"They are now a part of more than 800 Qatari alumni who have completed QLC's National Leadership Programmes. We are proud of them and look forward to seeing the continued professional development of these exceptional individuals."

Dr Ahmad Abdulla al-Kuwari, General Manager of QLC, noted: "QLC has equipped these professional managers with the latest solution-oriented business practices, which is exactly what their organisations expect of them. Furthermore, our partnerships with top academic institutions have given them access to some of the world's pre-eminent experts."

Guests at the event included QLC's Board of Directors, ministers, senior State officials, members of the public and private sectors, QLC's partner universities, and family and friends of the class

QLC has built a network of Service College.

local, regional and international partnerships to support the development of the National Leadership Programmes, including the University of Cambridge, the University of Chicago, Duke University, Georgetown University, Harvard University, HEC Paris in Qatar, Oxford University and Qatar University, in addition to specialised institutes such as the Al Jazeera Institute for Media, and the Singapore Civil

Biennial Tasweer photo fest opens

he biennial Tasweer Photo Festival Qatar has officially inaugurated its 2023 edition, bringing together photographers and photographic communities from Qatar and the Western Asia and North Africa (WANA) region.

Tasweer opened four exhibitions yesterday: Doha Fashion Fridays and A Chance To Breathe exhibitions at M7, Qatar's epicentre for innovation and entrepreneurship in design, fashion, and tech; Hadeer Omar: And Thereafter immersive installation at Al Koot Fort; and Mashael al-Hejazi: My Mother Lulwa's House installation at Mailis Barahat Al Jufairi.

The exhibitions and installations are on view until May 20.

Tasweer is organised by Qatar Museums (QM) and presented as part of Qatar Creates, the year-round national cultural movement that curates, promotes, and celebrates the diversity of cultural activities in Qatar.

Established under the leadership of QM Chairperson HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Tasweer builds on Qatar's commitment to nurture artistic talent, support creative industries, and further develop the nation's creative economy.

"The medium of photography can tell stories and convey meaning like no other," she said in a statement. "Yet, despite photography's popularity and accessibility, the number of opportunities for the artform to be recognised, studied, and discussed with practitioners, critics, and enthusiasts are becoming fewer, especially in our region."

"As we prepare for our second Tasweer biennial, we build on our 2021 success with a more robust presentation of exhibitions, an even larger platform for Qatari and international creatives to display their work, and an enhanced schedule of programmes for the public to enjoy," HE Sheikha Al Mayassa said.

At M7, Doha Fashion Fridays presents a unique collaborative project, initiated in 2017 on Instagram by artists Khalid Albaih and Aparna Jayakumar, in which migrant workers in Qatar are photographed and interviewed on Fridays, their day of rest.

Using fashion as a lens, the project tells narratives about the diverse migrant population that has come to Qatar with dreams and aspi-

The second exhibition at M7, A Chance To Breathe, presents the work of three Rohingya refugees - Azimul Hasson, Dil Kayas, and Omal Khair - who have documented their personal experience inside Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, the largest refugee camp in the world.

Doha Debates teamed up with the human rights organisation Fortify Rights in 2018 to train and support the three artists. A 23-minute documentary film, titled EXO-

DUS, 2022, produced by Doha Debates will be presented alongside the exhibition. The fellowships will continue over the

course of Tasweer 2023, as the artists photograph inside Cox's Bazaar during Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr in collaboration with Doha Fashion Fridays' Aparna Jayakumar and Shaima al-Tamimi.

The images will be added to the presentation of A Chance to Breathe throughout its run, in dialogue with the Doha Fashion Fridays exhibition, which is also being presented at M7.

Acclaimed Qatari photographer and Tasweer director Khalifa al-Obaidly said: "Tasweer presents a dynamic and integrated schedule of various exhibitions, specially commissioned installations at historic sites, cross-cultural partnerships, workshops, and more."

"We are pleased to be reactivating two commissioned installations that stimulate Qatar's heritage locations in addition to the exhibitions at M7," he said.

At Al Koot Fort, on the edge of Souq Waqif, And Thereafter presents an immersive installation by Qatar resident artist Hadeer Omar in collaboration with Sonic Jeel, an artistic collective exploring hybrid-media, initiated by Michael Hersrud, Simone Muscolino, and multidisciplinary designer Katia Kolovea.

For this site-specific installation, Omar drew upon the surrounding areas of Souq Waqif as sources of inspiration, weaving together traditional and contemporary aspects of daily life, translating and transforming them into surreal immersive environments.

The artist creates a sense of the myriad sensory experiences in the souq through captured images and sounds, all uniquely choreographed in the designated spaces of the fort.

At Majlis Barahat Al Jufairi, My Mother Lulwa's House presents an installation by Qatari artist Mashael al-Hejazi that honours the



Mashael al-Hejazi's My Mother Lulwa's House.





I Am The Traveller And Also The Road by Rula Halawani.

Left: And Thereafter by Hadeer

Right: Doha Fashion Fridays - image by Aparna Jayakumar.



A Chance To Breathe by Azimul Hasson.

social and architectural character of this historic district of Doha and the collective memories and narratives of the Al Baraha commu-

nity, where she had lived during her childhood. The overarching theme of her work is to reinhabit this traditional Qatari place with the



characteristics of a loving home and family, interwoven through the spaces of the majlis, the mother's room, and the liwan (courtyard).