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OAR **6.75**

تفاح بينك ليدي  
فرنسي ١ كيلو  
Apple Pink Lady  
(France) 1kg



OAR **8.50**  
OAR **6.50**

توت أزرق مغربي  
١ باكيت (١٢٥ غرام تقريبا)  
Blueberry Morocco 1PKT  
(approx 125gm)



OAR **7.00**  
OAR **4.50**

فاصوليا خضراء قطرية ١ كيلو  
Farm Fresh Beans  
Qatar 1kg



OAR **12.50**  
OAR **9.75**

مندرين نادور كوت  
إسباني ١ كيلو  
Nadorcott  
Mandarin Spain 1kg



OAR **8.00**  
OAR **6.25**

كمثرى روز ماري  
جنوب أفريقي ١ كيلو  
Pears Rosemary  
(South Africa) 1kg



OAR **11.50**  
OAR **8.25**

تدلي هندي ١ كيلو  
Tindly India  
1kg



OAR **27.50**  
OAR **21.50**

خس آيس بيرج  
أمريكي ١ كيلو  
Lettuce  
Iceberg USA 1kg



OAR **4.50**  
OAR **3.00**

بطاطس قبرص  
١ كيلو  
Potato  
Cyprus 1kg



OAR **7.50**  
OAR **6.00**

تمور جزائرية (رافير)  
تقريبا ٥٠٠ غرام  
Dates Algeria (RAVIER)  
Approx 500gm.



OAR **18.50**  
OAR **15.75**

تمور سايير (تقريبا ١ كيلو)  
Dates Sayer Hola  
(Apropx 1kg)



OAR **20.00**  
OAR **15.75**

تمور تونسية  
دجلة النور ١ كيلو  
Tunisian Deglet  
Noor Dates 1kg



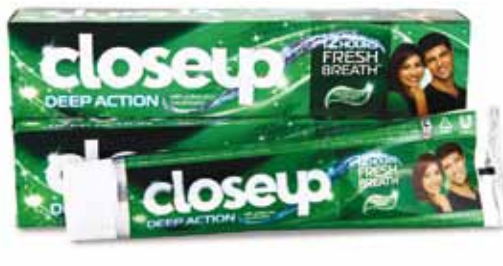
OAR **42.75**  
OAR **35.75**

قطع لحم  
ماعز باكستاني ١ كيلو  
Pakistan Mutton  
Cuts 1kg



OAR **39.75**  
OAR **31.50**

سمك باس البحر  
متوسط تركي ١ كيلو  
Sea Bass Medium  
1kg Turkey



OAR **27.00**  
OAR **18.00**

كلوس أب معجون أسنان  
منوع ١٤٥ مل / ٣ حبات  
CloseUp Toothpaste  
Asstd. 145ml x 3Pcs



OAR **66.00**  
OAR **39.00**

تايد سائل غسيل  
منوع ١.٨ لتر / حبتان  
Tide Power Gel Asstd.  
1.8Ltr X 2pcs



OAR **4.00**  
OAR **1.75**

طماطم قطرية  
١ كيلو  
Farm Fresh  
Tomato  
Qatar 1kg



OAR **2.00**  
OAR **1.00**

بصل هندي ١ كيلو  
Onion Red India  
1kg



OAR **27.75**  
OAR **17.75**

لحم بقري باكستاني  
مع العظم ١ كيلو  
Beef Bone In  
Pakistan 1KG



OAR **17.50**  
OAR **9.00**

ساديا دجاج ١.٢ كيلو  
Sadia Chicken  
1.2kg



OAR **23.75**  
OAR **12.00**

أرييل مسحوق غسيل منوع ١.٥ كيلو  
Ariel Washing Powder  
Asstd 1.5kg

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# Qatari cities witnessing developmental renaissance: Minister

QNA  
Doha

**H**E the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie confirmed that all Qatari cities have witnessed comprehensive development and urban renaissance in recent years, striking a balance between keeping pace with the developments of the modern era and preserving the authentic Qatari identity and heritage, as well as the environment and sustainability.

He was speaking to mark the Arab City Day, which falls on March 15 of every year to commemorate the establishment of the Arab Towns Organisation in 1967.

The most prominent successes achieved by the municipalities during the recent period is that all Qatari cities have been awarded the title Healthy City from the World Health Organisation (WHO), making Qatar the first country in the Middle East region to receive this title.

Six Qatari cities have also been awarded membership in the Unesco Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC). Also, Al Wakra city won the Unesco Award for Learning Cities for the year 2021, and Al Daayen city won the Arab Socially Responsible City Award for the year 2023, after being selected by the Regional Network for Social Responsibility, in recognition of its efforts in establishing distinguished practices in achieving social responsibility and sustainable development.

HE al-Subaie added that these achievements and successes of the



HE the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie

Qatari cities come as a culmination of the great efforts made by the Ministry of Municipality represented by the municipalities to improve the quality of life and improve the health and well-being of the population, in order to achieve the strategic objectives of the ministry in preserving environmentally friendly cities with green, healthy and picturesque facilities, and within the process of renaissance, development and prosperity that the country is witnessing under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani.

HE the Minister said that the municipalities played a prominent role in the projects and services provided by the ministry during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, which contributed to the success of this global sporting event whose positive echoes are still present in front of the world and will remain in the minds of millions

**The most prominent successes achieved by the municipalities during the recent period is that all Qatari cities have been awarded the title Healthy City from the World Health Organisation (WHO), making Qatar the first country in the Middle East region to receive this title**

around the world for periods to come.

At the end of his speech, HE the Minister of Municipality emphasised the continuation of the steps of comprehensive development and renaissance in all Qatari cities and raising the level of services provided to the public in all municipalities by transforming these cities into smart cities and working to increase the efficiency of digital transformation and automating procedures between them and all sectors of the ministry and the relevant authorities in the country as well as strengthening co-operation with the General Secretariat of the Arab Towns Organisation and the various member cities of the organisation, to exchange expertise among them, in an effort to develop Arab cities in order to achieve the hopes and aspirations of their residents.

## Qatar, a wedding destination like no other: Al-Baker

From Page 1

"We want this to be a family destination, where families feel comfortable, safe, feel relaxed, and have an influence that is synonymous with the hospitality that we have now," he stated. If Qatar successfully hosted the FIFA World Cup 2022, HE al-Baker pointed out that the country can also host the best and most memorable weddings. He said Qatar Airways has now acquired seaplanes that will take guests to remote resorts: one has been built and a second is set to

open in the next three months. "There are so many things to discover about Qatar so I don't only want people to come and get married here but keep in repeating honeymoons. With a destination like Qatar, you should keep on having many honeymoons," HE al-Baker said. As a tourism destination, he noted that Qatar offers curated and unique experiences: its territorial waters is home to a large number of whale sharks and dugongs for more than three months; turtle hatchings on the beaches: the world's best resorts

that can be reached without any interference; and a country that has nearly 10 months of kite surfing - "an opportunity which doesn't happen anywhere else". HE al-Baker noted that Qatar is also home to one of the best health and wellness resorts in the world - Zula. The 9th Annual Destination Wedding Planners Congress - a globally renowned platform for wedding planners, connoisseurs, hoteliers, and professionals in the luxury wedding planning industry - is also presenting panel discussions and activities.


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**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (Saturday)

**Time:** 10:00 am and 4:00 pm

**Venue:**  
La Cigale Hotel,  
60, Suhaim Bin Hamad Street,  
Al Sadd Area, Doha, Qatar

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## Qatar attends meetings of the Council of Arab Ministers for Health

Qatar participated in the 58th session of the Council of Arab Ministers for Health, which was held in Algeria. Qatar was represented in the meeting by Assistant Minister for Health Affairs of the Ministry of Public Health Dr Salih Ali al-Marri. The meeting dealt with a number of topics, including successful Arab experiences in the health field, preparations for the upcoming Arab developmental summit ...etc **(QNA)**

## GCC meeting on technical standards

Qatar has participated in the fourth meeting and seventh workshop of the specialised team to prepare technical security guidelines for the protection of petroleum, industrial and vital installations in the Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), which was held at the GCC General Secretariat headquarters in Riyadh. Captain Jassim Abdullah al-Thani of the General Directorate of Industrial Security at the Ministry of Interior represented Qatar in the meeting, which discussed the findings of the work teams in each of the GCC states regarding technical security guiding standards to get the desired results. **(QNA)**

## PM meets AUC chairperson



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday morning with Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) Moussa Faki Mahamat on the occasion of his visit to the country to participate in the 5th Global Security Forum. During the meeting, they discussed ways to enhance co-operation relations between Qatar and the African Union and the most important developments of mutual interest. **(QNA)**

## Cabinet welcomes resumption of Saudi-Iran diplomatic ties

QNA  
Doha

**H**E the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani chaired the Cabinet's regular meeting held at its seat at the Amiri Diwan. Following the meeting, HE the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs issued the following statement:

At the beginning of the meeting, the Cabinet hailed the great success achieved by the 5th United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5), which was held in Doha from March 5 to 9 under the chairmanship of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, with wide and high level international participation.

The Cabinet affirmed that the frank, rich and constructive discussions during the five-day conference, which culminated in the Doha Political Declaration and the adoption of the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA) for the 46 Least Developed Countries for the Dec-

ade 2022-2031, gave 1.2bn people living in the LDCs a new hope for a better life and a more stable and prosperous future and more respectful for the aspirations of peoples.

The Cabinet renewed Qatar's welcome of the agreement reached by Saudi Arabia and Iran to resume diplomatic relations between them, re-open their embassies and missions within a period not exceeding two months, and to activate the security co-operation agreement between them and the general agreement for co-operation in the fields of economy, trade, investment, technology, science, culture, sports, and youth.

It also affirmed that Qatar, which has always sought to resolve differences between countries through dialogue and diplomatic means, considers this agreement an important positive step that will contribute to strengthening the security and stability of the region and achieving the aspirations of its people. After that, the Cabinet considered the topics on its agenda as follows:

First: Approving a draft decree on setting a date for the election of the Central Municipal Council's members.

Second: Approving a draft Cabinet decision to form two valuation committees for expropriated property for the public benefit and assign their terms of reference.

The first committee undertakes the valuation of real estate located within the cities of Doha and Al Rayyan, and the second undertakes the valuation of real estate located within other cities and villages.

The two committees will implement its competencies and tasks stipulated in Law No. 8 of 2022 regarding the temporary expropriation and appropriation of real estate for the public use, and the regulations and decisions issued in implementation thereof.

Third: Approving a draft memorandum of understanding between the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the State of Qatar regarding small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Fourth: The Cabinet reviewed the semi-annual report of the Committee for the Regulation of Non-Qatari Ownership and Use of the Real Estate, and took the appropriate decision thereon.



**Naseem Healthcare**

**17 MARCH 2023**

**STARTS @ 6.30 AM**

**ASPIRE PARK DOHA - QATAR**

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Al-Subaie meets Georgia’s minister




HE the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie met with Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia Otar Shamugia and his accompanying delegation, who is visiting the country. They discussed the bilateral relations in the field of agriculture and food security and strengthening means of co-operation in fields of common interest. **(QNA)**

Initiative to support meat production during Ramadan

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced a new joint national initiative to support local meat production and support prices during Ramadan. The initiative is in co-operation with the Ministry of Municipality and Widam Food. It will start Saturday and will last until the end of Ramadan. The ministry said in a statement that the initiative comes to ensure the availability of red meat to citizens during the holy month of Ramadan at reasonable prices, in addition to creating a balance between supply and demand, which contributes to price stability in the markets. The ministry said that it agreed with Widam to provide 30,000 heads of local cattle to sell at low prices for citizens (two sheep per citizen). They have to present their ID to Widam’s slaughter houses in Al Shamal, Al Khor, Umm Salal, Al Wakra and Al Sheehaniya, or through the company’s app. Each sheep’s weight ranges from 30-35kg and will cost QR900. **(QNA)**

Aid disbursal for needy families in Gaza today

The Qatar Committee for Reconstruction of Gaza announced that it will start today, in co-operation with the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), the disbursement of the March batch of cash assistance to needy families in the Gaza Strip. In a statement on Wednesday, HE Chairman of the Qatar Committee for Reconstruction of Gaza Ambassador Mohamed al-Emadi said that the cash assistance will be provided to about 100,000 needy families in the governorates of the Gaza Strip, at a rate of \$100 per family. He pointed out that the distribution process will take place through the United Nations at the distribution centres identified in the governorates of the Gaza Strip, which are 300 centres and shops. The State of Qatar disburses a monthly humanitarian grant in support of the brotherly Palestinian families in Gaza, who are suffering from difficult economic and living conditions caused by the Israeli siege. **(QNA)**



**TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT**

Tender No.	Subject	Tender Fee	Closing Date
AT/C/0946/23	Laundry & Dry-Cleaning Outsourced Services for Two Years	500.00	5.04.2023
AT/C/0948/23	Fully furnished staff accommodation on rental for two years	Nil	5.04.2023
AT/C/0951/23	Supply & Delivery of Paper and Disposable Packing Materials for Two Years on Call-off Basis	500.00	5.04.2023
AT/C/0954/23	Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of CCTV Central Console Relocation	500.00	5.04.2023

The tender documents are available for collection from the Finance Department (Tel.: 44465612) of The Torch Doha upon presentation of a formal letter of authorization on Company letterhead and copy of the Commercial Registration.

The closing time will be at 12.00 noon on the closing date mentioned above, any offer arriving thereafter will not be considered.

Tenders **(Technical and Commercial envelope separately)** are to be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to The Chairman, General Tender Committee, The Torch Doha and deposit in the tender box available at The Torch Doha Purchasing Office.

**ARPM Tender Committee announces the following Tender**

Tender No.	Subject	Fees QR.	Tender Bond QR.	Opening Date	Closing Date
ARPM/123/2023/TEN/DOH	Proposal Request for Fuel Barge Full Deck Sand Blasting including Equipment's and Accessories with Underwater Maintenance for Banana Island Resort	2,000	20,000	16-Mar-23	06-Apr-23
ARPM/124/2023/TEN/DOH	Provision of Vessel Dry Dock Services (12 Nos) for Banana Island Resort, Doha	2,000	20,000	16-Mar-23	13-Apr-23
ARPM/125/2023/TEN/DOH	Provision of Annual Maintenance of Boat Life Rafts & Fire Extinguisher Inspection & Certification for Banana Island Resort, Doha	2,000	10,000	16-Mar-23	06-Apr-23

1. Interested parties can collect copies of the tender documents from ARPM Purchasing Department, via email to m.aseef@arpm.com.qa and L.cabral@arpm.com.qa during working hours 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Fri & Sat Closed)

2. A payment of a non-refundable document's fees should be deposited in cash to:

Beneficiary Name:

Account No.

IBAN No.

Al-Rayyan Projects Management (ARPM)

0013-022375-004 (Qatar National Bank)

QA86QNBAA00000000013022375004

And the original deposit receipt should be submitted upon receiving of the terms and conditions.

3. A tender bond (as stated above), issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar and valid for 120 days from the closing date should accompany tenders. **The executed tender bond should be included with the technical offer.**

4. All tenderers MUST collect their original bonds from ARPM – Purchasing department upon expiry of the Tender Bond, unless alternative instructions are issued by ARPM.

5. Proposal to be submitted in sealed envelopes as per the RFP requirements in both HARD COPY & SOFT COPY on CD or USB.

6. Copies of valid **Company Commercial Registration, Computer Card & Authorization Letter** must be submitted in order to collect the tender documents.

7. The successful tenderer is required to submit a performance bond issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar equivalent to 10% of the total contract sum and shall be valid for a period expiring 30 days after contract expiry.

8. Offers should be valid for 90 days commencing from the closing date (as stated above).

9. ARPM has the right to increase or decrease the scope of services by 20% with the same terms and conditions.

10. ARPM is not bound to accept the lowest tender or any other tender and is under no obligation to show any reasons thereof.

11. Bids should be submitted not later than 12:00 noon on the closing date and must be deposited into the Box, provided in the ARPM Purchasing office, located at the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, ARPM, Head office and should be in sealed envelopes addressed to the Chairman - Tenders Committee, quoting the Tender Number and Subject.

12. Offers arriving thereafter may not be considered.

CHAIRMAN – TENDER COMMITTEE

TEL: 40341804

Qatar backs international efforts to achieve comprehensive justice for Syrian people

QNA  
Doha

Qatar reiterated its full support of international efforts aiming to bring comprehensive justice to the Syrian people. This came during the statement made by HE the Assistant Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi via video conference in an event organised by the US in co-operation with Syrian Network for Human Rights, with high-level participation from Qatar, US, The Netherlands and Germany.

HE al-Khulaifi expressed appreciation to the organisers of this important event, adding that Qatar shares its deep concern about human rights situation in Syria over the past years. He said that the difficult situation experienced by the Syrians has

resulted in the displacement of millions of refugees around the world, the detention and torture of thousands, the destruction of cities and the demolition of buildings.

He expressed his regrets that the crisis deteriorated as a result of the earthquakes that hit Turkiye and Syria, but noted that the State of Qatar was swift in building an airbridge and sent personnel to help in the rescue process, in a bid to alleviate the suffering of those impacted.

He pointed out that Qatar supported the United Nations Human Rights Council in its endeavour to establish the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, noting that Qatar is the main sponsor of the international, impartial and independent mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes, according to the classi-

HE the Assistant Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi

fication. international law committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

He said that Qatar hopes its support of the mechanism will lead to the achievement of comprehensive justice for the Syrian people and all

those impacted. The Assistant Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs stressed that Qatar is working proactively and participating in every effort to resolve the Syrian crisis with all our international partners and the United Nations, and Qatar adheres to its firm position that the only solution to this crisis is through finding a political solution agreed upon by all Syrian parties, in accordance with the Geneva I and Security Council Resolution No. 2254, in a way that preserves the unity and sovereignty of Syria and fulfils the aspirations of its people for security and stability.

He added that Qatar will continue supporting all efforts aiming to support people in Syria, and encouraged Qatar’s international partners to continue their efforts in the political and humanitarian fields, given the complications that doesn’t serve those struggling as a result of the crisis.

Ooredoo upgrades how people connect from home with FTTR

In a first for Qatar, Ooredoo has announced the upcoming readiness of cutting-edge technology Fibre to the Room (FTTR), a new revolutionary solution for home Internet customers.

With FTTR, customers will be able to connect every single room in their home, even their majlis, to a super-fast fibre cable, resulting in up to 10x better coverage, a stable speed everywhere at home, zero blind spots, an upgraded quality for videos and gaming, and more connected devices at maximum Internet speed.

Home Internet usage now demands higher and consistent speed,

as well as lower latency for working from home, HD+ live broadcast, 8K video streaming, several VR apps and games, smart home devices, and more. Against this demanding backdrop, FTTR will upgrade the overall customer experience.

Ooredoo Qatar CEO Sheikh Ali bin Jabor al-Thani said, “We are thrilled to be leading the charge in digital innovation yet again by testing Fibre to the Room technology in Qatar. Our commitment to delivering the latest advancements in technology is unwavering, and we are excited to be bringing soon this revolutionary solution for our customers.

“With FTTR, we are taking a major step forward in delivering faster and more reliable Internet to homes across the country. We look forward to seeing the transformative impact this technology will have on how our customers experience the digital world.”

As Ooredoo’s fibre network connects more than 99% of households in Qatar, a substantial number of customers will be able to benefit from this new solution. Ooredoo will be announcing soon the next phase of the project, bringing the solution to customer homes and helping them further upgrade their world.

Ooredoo Qatar CEO Sheikh Ali bin Jabor al-Thani.

Municipality ministry launches first phase of Qatar’s real estate platform

QNA  
Doha

The Ministry of Municipality announced the details of its project to develop and launch the first phase of Qatar’s real estate platform. The platform collects real estate data from its various sources, with the aim of storing data within a central platform to achieve the future and strategic goals of the real estate sector in Qatar, the ministry said.

The project seeks to develop a central real estate platform that provides indicators for those involved in the sector by collecting and analysing data from the various

concerned authorities in the country, the ministry added, noting that the first phase of the platform is the basic foundation on which the next stages are built to complete real estate platform development work.

In exclusive statements to Qatar News Agency (QNA), director of the Technical Office at the Ministry of Municipality Tariq Juma al-Tamimi said the platform will provide the concerned authorities with an integrated system that can be benefited from by examining the data provided by this platform that supports the principle of transparency in order to facilitate guidance for future contracts.

The real estate platform will

benefit the government agencies and the private sector, al-Tamimi said.

He added that the second phase of this project seeks a more accurate linking with the concerned authorities, and the third phase will be concerned with launching services more effectively through this platform.

He added that the real estate platform for Qatar will provide data in a more accurate and clear manner, as it works to lay the foundation stone for improving the private sector in the coming years, to reach the highest possible efficiency, indicating that the platform will provide service to all target segments, whether they are

official bodies, individuals, owners or tenants. The project came after the adoption of the strategy for the development of the real estate sector in the ministerial meeting on 1/12/2021, and accordingly, the transition from the planning stage and the adoption of the strategy to the implementation stage related to a set of steps, the most important of which is the launch of the platform, al-Tamimi added.

The use of the real estate platform will be available to most Qatari nationals and residents, he added, stressing the need to pay attention to the real estate sector as one of the most important sectors that have an impact on investments.

**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

**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).



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# CRA resolves 99 percent of telecom complaints in 2022

**QNA**  
Doha

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) announced the settlement of 99 percent of the total number of complaints it received regarding telecom services during the past year. In a statement, the CRA said that 99 percent of complaints received from telecommunications services consumers during the past year were settled, in conjunction with the World Consumer Rights Day, which falls on March 15 of each year.

During 2022, CRA received 2,389 complaints and inquiries from consumers about telecom services in Qatar. Complaints were evaluated by CRA based on a set of criteria to determine their validity to CRA's complaint process; 844 were valid complaints and CRA resolved 99 percent

of the total valid complaints received. Also, CRA is working with the telecom Service Providers; Ooredoo Qatar QPSC and Vodafone Qatar PQSC to finalize the related investigation of the remaining ones.

The statistics indicate that 76 percent of all received complaints were related to mobile services and the highest percentage of received complaints were related to packages issues, mobile number portability service, and billing of post-paid services. As for fixed-line services, the statistics indicate that they were 24 percent of the total complaints, and the most received complaints were related to internet service disconnection, internet speed, and billing complaints.

CRA Director of Consumer Affairs Amel Salem al-Hanawi said: "We mark World Consumer Rights Day by reaffirming our commitment to ensuring that telecom consumers in the State of Qatar have their rights pro-



CRA Director of Consumer Affairs Amel Salem al-Hanawi

ected. Also in line with CRA's keenness to enhance transparency, we will continue publishing the data related to consumer complaints."

She added: "CRA ensures protecting consumers' rights by developing proper regulatory instruments, granting the telecom service providers the necessary licenses, determining the necessary obligations on

them, monitoring their compliance with these obligations, and resolving consumers' complaints if not resolved by the Service Providers or if consumers are not satisfied with the provided resolution. In addition to enhancing the sustainable competition between the Service Providers to ensure the provision of innovative and high-quality services."

Under CRA's telecom complaint resolution process, consumers with a complaint are free to approach the CRA if their complaint lodged directly to their service provider about a mobile service disconnection remains open or unresolved for 48 hours, or 72 hours in case of fixed-line disconnection.

Also, if the complaint is not related to a service disconnection and remains unresolved for 30 calendar days or if the complaint is closed at any time and they were dissatisfied with the offered resolution.

## Ministry of Justice applauds Amir's issuance of law of documentation

**QNA**  
Doha

The Ministry of Justice applauded His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's issuance of Law No. 1 of 2023 on documentation.

The ministry said in a statement, in which it highlighted the most prominent features of the provisions of the new law on documentation, that the law aims to improve documentation services to keep pace with the comprehensive renaissance witnessed by the State in various fields and to facilitate the conduct of transactions as well as citizens' access to them electronically, in a step that is the first of its kind since the issuance of Law No. 9 of 1979.

Within the framework of updating legislation and keeping it in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030, the ministry noted that the provisions of the new law, which included 37 articles, were formulated to replace the law in force for about 44 years, including comprehensive and fundamental amendments that will bring about a quantum leap in the field of services provided to the public, especially services for documentation and certification of documents and proof of their history. These amendments are also characterised by their flexibility, as they have absorbed all aspects of development witnessed by the country and the Qatari society, the ministry added.

The ministry explained that the new law introduced the title of the 'notary public' for the first time, as part of a vision aimed at developing the legal cadre in the country and strengthening its position within the justice system, granting it the appropriate status, and expanding its competence.

The law fully regulated the provisions relating to the notary public. The law has stipulated that, in order to fill this position, the person carrying the title must take an oath before the minister prior to commencing their work, in order to evoke the gravity of the responsibility entrusted to them under the provisions of this law and the inadmissibility of combining their job with any other work that conflicts with the duties and responsibilities of their position.

In the context of the competence of the notary public, the law introduced a new feature, as it authorised the minister - taking into account the provisions in the agreements and treaties that regulate the work of members of the diplomatic and consular corps in the country's embassies abroad, to entrust any of the persons other than the staff of the documentation department to carry out all or some of the tasks of the notary public.

The law specified the powers of the notary public, such as conducting documentation and verifying the identity of the concerned persons, their eligibility and the validity of their consent, and the personality and capacity of those on their behalf, according to official papers. The notary public must prove this in the document required to be documented, and ensure that the document does not violate the provisions of laws and regulations.

The notary public shall certify the signatures of the concerned parties in the customary documents, upon their request, and

shall prove this in the records, and present a document of certification at the request of the concerned parties. The notary public shall also verify the date of the customary documents submitted to them for this purpose, by stamping the documents with the time and date of completion of the procedure, after proving that in the records prepared for this purpose.

The department shall put the executive formula on the copies of the documents that have been documented, which include a commitment that has a verified existence, a specific amount, and the state of performance. The department shall also accept and deposit the documents that have been documented before the foreign authorities, in accordance with the controls and procedures issued in a decision by the minister.

The law allows those who refuse to document their documents to complain to the minister within 15 days from the date of notification of the refusal at their national address. The Documentation Department shall notify the concerned persons of any update of the data at their national address within 30 days of its implementation. The concerned parties may appeal against the procedure to the minister within 15 days from the date of notification, and the minister's decision to decide on the grievance shall be final.

Within the framework of the facilities that have been created, and for the first time, the law has authorised the procedures for documenting papers, contracts, attestation, records, requests and other procedures stipulated in the law to be carried out electronically, and that copies and electronic procedures referred to have the same legal authority as original papers. An electronic register is established in the department in which all agencies are registered, and the law obliges those concerned to register agencies issued to them before 2011 within one year from the date of enforcement of the provisions of this law.

The new law came to meet the needs of the comprehensive economic renaissance that Qatar is witnessing, and the consequent social developments, as well as facilitating citizens, residents and auditors to document official documents, as it has developed solutions to the process of documenting documents for those who are unable to sign or who cannot speak or write fluently in Arabic. The law also permits non-Arabic speakers or those who do not speak Arabic fluently, to seek the assistance of a translator accredited by the ministry, who shall sign the document with the contracting parties.

It is noteworthy that the provisions of the law were comprehensive and reinforcing to the requirements of economic development, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030, and in the provision of an integrated legal framework for the work and activities of documentation, certification of official documents and proof of the date on them.

The law defines documentation as a procedure performed by the notary public, or whoever is authorised by the minister, according to which the will of the concerned parties is recorded in an official document. The notary public is defined as the employee in charge of documentation, certification and proof of history, in accordance with the provisions of the law.

## Scores benefit from QC 'Alaqraboon' drive

**QNA**  
Doha

Qatar Charity (QC) said that its 'Alaqraboon' initiative delivered social assistance worth nearly QR195mn to 4,102 cases, and implemented approximately 296 programs and initiatives through its community development centres in 2022.

The beneficiaries of humanitarian aid in Qatar included families with limited income, those in debt, the sick, widows, people with special needs, students, the elderly, families of prisoners, and divorced women, while sponsorships were provided to orphans, students, and families with special needs. The number of those sponsored by the QC reached 1,000.

Qatar Charity's cultural, social, and awareness programmes targeted workers, families, expatriate communities, students, children, women, youth, people with special needs, and the elderly, in addition to orphans and widows. As QC attaches significant attention to community services, it launched the 'Alaqraboon' initiative last month, which includes a bunch of community programmes and initiatives and educational and awareness activities implemented within Qatar.

The initiative includes social assistance programmes that work to receive and study requests for assistance for appropriate cases, and sponsorships for those most in need within the local community, empower families in Qatar through training, and support small business owners, in addition to developing new programmes to raise financial awareness through workshops, lectures, consultations, and community initiatives.

The 'Alaqraboon' initiative also includes the expatriate communities fund programme, which contributes to supporting their members and implementing various projects for them, and the worker support fund to help those who have problems with their companies and those who need to pay the treatment cost. The initiative also includes awareness, educational, and health activities for them, in addition to providing in-kind materials to them. Besides, there are programmes of partnership with local commercial entities for community service.

The QC is keen to recruit and involve volunteers in charitable and humanitarian work within and outside Qatar and raise awareness of voluntary work in the community. In this regard, Qatar Charity launched the Initiatives and Volunteering Incubator 'Ezdehar' (QNA)



## Directorate of Endowments launches 'Giving Basket' campaign for Ramadan

**QNA**  
Doha

The General Directorate of Endowments at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs announced the launch of the 'Giving Basket' campaign for the fourth year in a row, in co-operation with Hifz Al Naema Center, after the campaign benefited 4,329 needy families in Qatar during the holy month of Ramadan last year.

Director-General of the General

Administration of Endowments Dr Sheikh Khalid bin Mohamed bin Ghanim al-Thani said in a press conference on launching the campaign for the year 1444, which was attended by several directors and heads of departments and Director of Hifz Al Naema Center Eng Ali Ayed al-Qahtani, that the 'Giving Basket' is one of the pioneering initiatives launched by the directorate since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in co-operation with Hifz Al Naema Center, to deliver food baskets to needy families and work-

ers. He pointed out the continuation of the campaign for this year. For his part, the Director of Hifz Al Naema Center Eng Ali bin Ayed al-Qahtani praised the support of the General Directorate of Endowments for the 'Giving Basket' project, and co-operation with the centre to deliver these food baskets to needy families.

He noted that the initiative had a good impact on the hearts of the beneficiaries, calling on the charitable people to participate and contribute to this initiative through the various endowment methods.

The 'Giving Basket' initiative and the accompanying campaign were launched by the General Administration of Endowments at the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs to promote the culture of giving, spreading the spirit of sympathy and compassion among different segments of society, and spreading the spirits of giving in the holy month.

The Giving Basket includes all needs for the holy month of Ramadan and it varies according to the number of family members.


## Qatar takes part in Arab League energy expert panel meeting



The 16th meeting of the expert committee on renewable energy and energy efficiency was hosted at the Arab League General Secretariat's headquarters in Cairo with the participation of Qatar, represented by the Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation (Kahramaa).

In his speech at the meeting, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Economic Affairs sector in the Arab League ambassador Dr Ali bin Ibrahim al-Malki stressed the significance of the meeting and the matters at hand, in the participation of a group of Arab renewable energy and energy efficiency experts, along with representatives of regional and international organisations.

Al-Malki pointed out that green hydrogen is at the top of the meeting's agenda, noting that the Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Council for Electricity set the agenda's topics in co-operation with the German government, due to the Council's interest, given the exacerbation of the global energy crisis as well as the Arab strategy for green hydrogen, in addition to energy transition in the Arab region, electric cars, water desalination, and renewable energy. He also indicated that an agreement will be reached at the meeting in relation to the Arab Energy Efficiency Day competition, celebrated annually on May 21. (QNA)



**قطر للطاقة  
QatarEnergy**

**The General, Limited Tenders Committees and Supply Chain Department  
announces the following Tenders:**

**Important Notice:**  
Suppliers and Contractors who are already registered with QatarEnergy via e-Registration system and are in possession of a valid SAP ID issued by QatarEnergy can "Buy Tender Online and download Tender Document" from QatarEnergy website. Effective 1st February 2016, payment of Tender Fee by Cash and Manual collection of Tender Document is discontinued.

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Tender Sale Period		Tender Closing Date	Tender Bond	Bond Curr.	Tender Fee	Fee Curr.
		Start Date	End Date					
1.	LT23MT00118	16.03.2023	22.03.2023	03.04.2023	2,000.00	QAR	N/A	
Title of Tender : <b>SALE &amp; REMOVAL OF OPERATIONS MATERIALS</b>								
Mid-Tender Meeting Location : To be advised if required								
Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time : To be advised if required								
2.	LT23MT0025	23.03.2023	29.03.2023	10.04.2023	2,000.00	QAR	N/A	
Title of Tender : <b>SALE &amp; REMOVAL OF THERMOCOUPLE &amp; MAINTENANCE ITEMS</b>								
Mid-Tender Meeting Location : To be advised if required								
Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time : To be advised if required								
3.	LT23MT0027	23.03.2023	29.03.2023	10.04.2023	2,000.00	QAR	N/A	
Title of Tender : <b>SALE &amp; REMOVAL OF IT ITEMS</b>								
Mid-Tender Meeting Location : To be advised if required								
Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time : To be advised if required								
4.	LT23MT0028	16.03.2023	22.03.2023	10.04.2023	2,000.00	QAR	N/A	
Title of Tender : <b>SALE &amp; REMOVAL OF MOV SPARES</b>								
Mid-Tender Meeting Location : To be advised if required								
Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time : To be advised if required								

- Tender documents can be purchased and downloaded from QatarEnergy Website-> Supply Management -> Tenders page during the Tender Sale Period mentioned above against each Tender. Request for issuance of Tender after the specified Tender Sale Period will not be entertained.
- Always refer to QatarEnergy Website ([www.qatarenergy.qa](http://www.qatarenergy.qa)) -> Supply Management -> Tenders page for up to date information on QatarEnergy Tenders. Subscribe to Tender Alert to receive notification in your email on new Tenders
- Changes to Tender Sale Period and Bid Closing Date will be updated in QatarEnergy website only.
- Brief Scopes of Work for the above tenders are posted on the QatarEnergy website
- QatarEnergy invites all prospective Suppliers and Contractors interested to participate in QatarEnergy Tenders to register online and obtain a QatarEnergy SAP Vendor Code, a mandatory requirement for the issue of Tender Documents by QatarEnergy.
- Suppliers and Contractors who are in possession of a valid SAP ID issued by QatarEnergy are instructed to maintain their Company Registration and Communication details upto date and valid via QatarEnergy e-Registration system on urgent basis.
- No queries will be entertained, or bids received, from entities who have not purchased tender documents in compliance with the above provisions.

**For more information about QatarEnergy and its Tenders, Please visit our website: <http://www.qatarenergy.qa>**





# ‘Qumra’s focus on strengthening diversity of new cinematic voices’

The Doha Film Institute’s (DFI) annual talent incubator event for Arab and international cinema, Qumra 2023, focuses on building long-term relationships with the Qumra Masters, industry professionals and filmmakers, and strengthening the diversity of new cinematic voices emerging from the Arab region and across the world, observed CEO Fatma Hassan Alremaihi.

At a press briefing at the closing the in-person event yesterday, she said Qumra has contributed significantly to enhancing the film ecosystem in Qatar and the region by offering a space for emerging filmmakers to express their creative ideas and transform them into compelling cinema. Qumra delegates will continue to take part in online sessions with their mentors from March 19 to 21.

Alremaihi said Qumra is an example of the year-round support that the DFI offers to filmmakers.

“Many of our filmmakers return as mentors, while international indus-



Fatma Alremaihi

try professionals continue to offer their support and guidance to emerging filmmakers. Our support does not confine to first- and second-time filmmakers but also through post-production grants, we are contributing to building a vibrant cinematic industry

from and for the region and the world.”

Underlining the positive impact of Qumra to Qatar and the region’s film industry, she said: “Our priority and focus has been to support the Arab film industry, and our relationships go ahead of and beyond Qumra. One of our values is to build relationships and pay attention to the filmmakers, and our ecosystem continues to evolve. Our goal is to be as diverse as possible and to provide our participants with in-depth knowledge on all the diverse aspects of filmmaking.”

She said the grants and financing initiatives of the DFI, along with the year-round support offered, has helped build a strong body of work emerging from the region, including several Qatari feature films that are in various stages of production.

“This edition of Qumra provided a platform for new projects, such as series, that evolved in tune with the current trends and following the pandemic, when we continued to offer support

through online editions of the event,” said Alremaihi. “We want to provide all projects, across features, documentaries, shorts and series, to achieve the necessary global exposure, including festivals, film funds, and distribution platforms.”

Alremaihi said that the institute believes in giving a free hand to the directors. “We are not commissioning them to make films; we are facilitators, and we want the directors to work on their projects at their pace. Our approach is to be available for them across their script-to-screen journey. We also do not involve in the filmmakers’ selection of themes, but fully focus on providing a nurturing environment to bring their projects to life.”

This year, Qumra hosted over 200 international industry experts from 41 countries who are mentoring 44 films, including feature narratives, documentaries, web series and shorts by emerging talents. The projects chosen are from 23 countries.

## Aamal Services awarded new contracts by Mowasalat



Aamal Company (Aamal) has announced that its fully-owned subsidiary, Aamal Services, was recently awarded two new contracts by Mowasalat. The QR100mn five-year contracts, which will start from April 1, 2023, are for the provision of both cleaning and pest control services, and vehicle washing services. Aamal Company CEO Rashid bin Ali al-Mansoori said, “I am truly pleased to witness Aamal Services winning such remarkable contracts with Mowasalat. These contracts are a result of Aamal Services’ efficient delivery of similar contracts during the World Cup FIFA Qatar 2022, where the company demonstrated its commitment to the high-quality services it provides, which always makes Aamal Services the partner-of-choice for market-leading clients in various fields. I would hereby like to take this opportunity to thank Mowasalat for their trust and express my gratitude for all the hard work of the Aamal Service team.”



## Vodafone Qatar announces new yellow iPhone 14, iPhone 14 Plus

Vodafone Qatar announced the new yellow iPhone 14 and iPhone 14 Plus, which comes with ‘a durable ceramic shield front cover, an updated internal design for better sustained performance and easier repairs, and the longest battery life of any iPhone ever’.

The new yellow iPhone 14 and iPhone 14 Plus are now available in Vodafone retail stores and on its website, with prices starting from QR2,949. Additionally, Vodafone is exclusively offering customers a second-year warranty worth QR295 with every iPhone 14 purchase.

Vodafone Qatar was recently awarded the world’s fastest network, and its 5G network covers 75% of Doha and reaches 70% of Qatar’s population, giving instant Giga fast 5G speeds. Vodafone is also offering unlimited 5G plans, with unlimited local data, local calls and much more.

Diego Camberos, chief operating officer at Vodafone



Qatar, commented: “We aim to consistently deliver the latest cutting-edge products to our customers, and are excited to launch the new iPhone line-up

underpinned by our super-fast GigaNet network.” Complete pricing and availability details are available from [www.vf.qa/eshop](http://www.vf.qa/eshop)

# QatarDebate in UN LDC conference

As part of the participation of QatarDebate Centre – a member of Qatar Foundation, in the recent fifth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries, a debate on ‘Centralising Youth voices in the Development Agenda’ was held, a statement said yesterday.

The debaters were from different backgrounds and fields. From Qatar, the speakers were, Al Anood al-Thani, a Georgetown University in Qatar student, and the coach of Qatar national debate team 2020.

Joining her was Pragyan Acharya, a Nepali student from Georgetown University in Qatar, president of the Georgetown Debate Club, and director of the Debate network Nepal; along with Sara al-Maadheed, a Qatar University student, young climate activist and a member in Youth4Climate Pre-CoP 26.

The international speakers were Ahmed Iqbal Chaudhary (former mayor of Narowal in Pakistan and the director of the Local Democratic Dialogue project between Dehleez and Pakistan), Omar Ajdiny (chairman of the Youth Forum, a political party, North Macedonia); and Hanna



al-Tigani (human rights and social justice activist).

One of the most important points discussed was that the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals provide a common agenda for peace and prosperity now and in the future. These goals address the global challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental deterioration, peace and justice.

The debate was moderated by QatarDebate’s debate instructor, Mubarrat Wassey who said that youth are the main drivers of the successful implementation of UN’s Sustainable Development Goals in their capacities as

thinkers, change makers, creators and future leaders. These discussions are important to unify and communicate their voices.

“The debate’s course and the refutation of the issue and proposals were the alarm that confirmed the importance of intellectual discussions and the hope that communicating ideas to people and presenting views is a proof to reconsider the public’s concepts and preconceived ideas.”

The participants presented their ideas and evidences supported with a logical analysis away from bias and dispersion

# Hassad Food CEO reviews agricultural co-operation with Lebanon, France

Chief Executive Officer of Hassad Food Eng. Mohamed bin Badr al-Sadah met separately with Lebanon’s Minister of Agriculture Abbas Hajj and regional adviser for agricultural affairs in the French economic mission Stephane Sandra.

Al-Sadah reviewed with the Lebanese Minister of Agriculture Hassad’s projects and investment strategy. The minister expressed his interest in having a partnership with the Qatari company in the field of agricultural investment.

In his meeting with the regional advisor for agricultural affairs in the French economic mission,



the Hassad Food CEO discussed topics of common interest in the fields of food and agricultural



investment, and the consideration of establishing a partnership between the Hassad Food and

French companies, in a way that enhances the depth of bilateral economic relations. (QNA)

## Indian bike models’ recall announced

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Protech Powered Sports Co., has announced the recall of Indian bikes: Chief and Scout, 2021-2022 models, due to a possible defect in the fuel pump that might lead to the engine stopping suddenly.

The recall campaign comes within the framework of the MoCI’s continuous ef-

forts to protect consumers and ensure that dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs.

The MoCI said it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out.

The MoCI urged all customers to re-

port any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquires and suggestions through the following channels: Call centre: 16001, e-mail: [info@moci.gov.qa](mailto:info@moci.gov.qa), Twitter: @MOCIQATAR, Instagram: MOCIQATAR, MoCI mobile app for android and iOS: MOCIQATAR

## ANNOUNCEMENT

I, VICENTE PIEDADE D SOUZA

holder of

INDIAN Passport No. L3863485  
QID No. 27435643955

hereby change my name

from

VICENTE PIEDADE D SOUZA

to

VICENTE PIEDADE SOUZA

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

## ARIU in partnership with University of Derby initiates coastal cleanup day



As part of its corporate social responsibility activities, Al Rayyan International University College (ARIU) in partnership with the University of Derby organised a coastal clean-up of Gharyia Beach in Al Shamal. The event was organised in co-ordination with Al Shamal Municipality, which provided additional support in the organisation of the clean-up. Both students and staff at ARIU participated in the exercise. “Since we are the only higher education institution in Qatar specialised in offering academic programmes in tourism, hospitality, and international business, we are strongly committed to spreading awareness about environmental protection, and further enhancing the attractiveness of the tourist resources in Qatar,” said Prof Ivan Ninov, executive dean of ARIU in partnership with the University of Derby. “Over the years, we have organised several beach clean-ups and hope to enthuse more citizens and residents to become involved in keeping Qatar’s beaches clean and preserve them for future use,” he added.



# Qatar calls on nations to continue raising awareness on women's important participation in judiciary

**QNA**  
New York

**H**E the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, Sheikha Alia bint Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani, called on the international community to continue efforts to raise awareness on the importance of women's participation in the judiciary, and to implement the principle and standards of transparency to ensure non-discrimination between the genders, in respect and application of the relevant international constitutions, laws and treaties.

HE Sheikha Alia was speaking at a conference titled 'Arab Women in the Judiciary: Achievements and Challenges,' organised by the International Center for Human Sciences (under the auspices of Unesco, in co-operation with the College of Law at Qatar University (QU), on the occasion of the International Women's Day and the International Day of Women Judges.

HE Sheikha Alia commended the constructive institutional partnership through which the conference was organised and which comes in celebration of these two high-profile occasions that are linked to achievements that are a source of pride for Qatar represented by the International Day of Women Judges initiative launched by Qatar at the second high-level meeting of the Global Judicial Integrity Network, from February 25-27 2020 in Doha.

She pointed out that the initiative was sponsored and approved as a UN resolution at the level of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), after the efforts of Qatar, where the permanent delegation in New York finalised the draft resolution and mobilised the necessary international support for it. She noted that it was approved and issued under No. 75/274 in April 2021, marking a historic victory for women globally.

The resolution, which has adopted March 10 of each year as a day to celebrate women judges worldwide, confirms in its meaning the importance of women's participation in public institutions, especially in the judiciary, HE Sheikha Alia said.



HE Sheikha Alia bint Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani

She expressed her delight with the regional conference's title 'Arab Women in the Judiciary: Achievements and Challenges,' considering it a positive title that celebrates and documents the struggles and achievements of Arab women in the field of justice, and foresees the future by facing challenges in order to achieve more accomplishments for the benefit of Arab women and Arab societies.

The progress and development of women is a necessary condition for the progress, development and prosperity of all societies, she added.

Since 1961, the year where the first female Arab judge was appointed in Morocco, there has been a general positive current trend in women's access to the judiciary in the Arab world from, and even at the level of international judicial and judicial institutions, HE Sheikha Alia said.

She highlighted Qatar's achievements in the field of empowering women, preserving their rights, and ensuring equality between them and men, pointing out that the Qatari constitution and law fully guarantees justice and equality among all citizens, without discrimination under any consideration or background whatsoever.

HE Sheikha Alia bint Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani underlined the effective role played by the wise leadership of Qatar, represented by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, within the framework of encouraging women and girls, and providing them with opportunities in the fields of public life, occupations and entrepreneurship in all fields, including the judiciary.

HE Sheikha Alia saluted the generation of pioneering Qatari women in the judiciary, especially Dr Hissa al-Sulaiti, who is a graduate of QU's College of Law, and was appointed by an Amiri decree in 2010 as the first woman judge in the Qatar. HE Sheikha Alia stressed that Dr al-Sulaiti's experience has inspired many women and girls to join the judiciary in Qatar.

She called on young female jurists and Qatari law students to take the initiative, especially since the future and opportunities are open to them, indicating that Qatar is working with determination to raise the percentage of women in the judiciary to 30% by 2030, in accordance with Qatar National Vision.

HE Sheikha Alia said the issue of empowering women in the judiciary must remain a constant item on the priority agenda, explaining that equality in participation, inclusive institutions, and gender justice are the pillars of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

She commended women judges, calling them to exert more efforts in networking and to weave effective relations and partnerships among them through professional associations to raise capabilities and professional development, in addition to assisting and guiding young women lawyers who wish to join the field of justice.

HE Sheikha Alia concluded her speech by saying that the most important advice she can offer young Qatari women lies in the need to show initiative, responsibility, ambition, will, patience, and positivity.

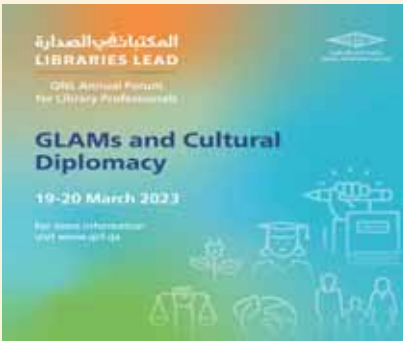
She highlighted the abundance of opportunities and a promising future, emphasising Qatar's ambitions, especially since hosting a remarkably unprecedented edition of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

## QNL's second annual 'Libraries Lead' forum to focus on cultural diplomacy

Qatar National Library (QNL) will host the second edition of the 'Libraries Lead' forum from March 19-20. This year's theme explores how galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAMs) leverage soft power to promote diplomacy locally and between nations. Speakers from national and university libraries, museums, and cultural centres around the world will participate and share their cultural diplomacy initiatives. These range from repatriating cultural heritage items, to facilitating cultural exchanges in the arts, sports, literature, music, science, and business, and creating cultural programmes that enhance relations between diverse groups.

While cultural ambassadorship in GLAMs is under-represented in research, its significance is evident in collections, programming, exhibitions, and collaborations that represent national interests and international relations. The 'Libraries Lead' forum aims to highlight the importance of these initiatives in promoting the exchange of ideas, values, and traditions to strengthen relationships and promote cooperation locally and internationally. HE the Minister of State and President of Qatar National Library, Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari, will address the forum, alongside influential speakers including Dr Nabhan al-Harrasi, President of the Arab Federation for Libraries and Information, discussing the role of universities in promoting cultural diplomacy. HE Dr al-Kawari said: "The 'Libraries Lead' forum provides a platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration among library professionals and cultural ambassadors. Culture, in all its facets and dimensions, brings peoples and nations closer together and formal and informal cultural institutions have an indispensable role in shaping a country's cultural identity and serving as ambassadors of communication and acquaintance among the peoples of the world."

"Qatar National Library is an ambassador of Arab culture, knowledge, science, and creativity, and it will continue to be an ambassador of its culture, identity, language, and heritage," he added. Encouraging early registration for the forum, Tan Huisim, executive director of Qatar National Library said: "We are pleased to host the second edition of Libraries Lead. We anticipate another valuable opportunity to share experiences and ideas on the topic of cultural diplomacy efforts and on how we can preserve our cultural heritage for future generations. Library professionals are always eager to learn from their peers and



explore innovative ways to leverage the power of national cultural assets to promote cooperation both locally and globally."

The first day will explore the diplomatic role of Qatari GLAMs, among other themes, including a talk on "Guinness World Records as a Tool for Cultural Diplomacy", by Susan Parker Leavy and Boluwatife Agbelusi from the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA). Poster presentations will reflect on the breadth of roles played by GLAMs, with topics such as "The World is at our Fingertips", by Al-Anoud Abdullah al-Kaabi and Hussein Jassim al-Haddad, from Al-Noor Center for the Blind, and "Open Licensing in GLAMs: A Road Map for Cultural Diplomacy" by Dr Alwaleed Alkhaja, of Qatar National Library. Continuing the knowledge exchange, day two will feature a panel discussion on "Harnessing Culture to Strengthen Local, Regional, and International Relations".

Engaging lightning talks by speakers from Qatari and international universities will broaden the discussion to focus on "National Libraries as Political Catalysts", "Brave Afghan Refugees Sharing their Stories with the MIA Library", and "The Diplomatic Role of the Palestinian National Library". The 2023 forum will once again ensure a vibrant exchange of knowledge between practitioners that identifies best practices, the potential for co-operation, and new forms of cultural engagement. The successful inaugural 'Libraries Lead' forum saw professionals from the region and internationally combine their knowledge to help achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In its second edition, the 'Libraries Lead' forum offers an excellent opportunity for library professionals and cultural ambassadors to connect and share their experiences and ideas on cultural diplomacy initiatives. **(QNA)**

## QBRI concludes stem cells symposium

The Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University has concluded the 'Translational Advances in Stem Cells for Diabetes Symposium', organised by the Steering Committee of Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI)-Harvard Stem Cell Institute (HSCI) Agreement.

The two-day event at Minaretein on the HBKU campus in Education City, Doha, aimed to promote research interaction and collaboration at the intersection of diabetes and stem cell biology, a statement said.

The symposium featured a panel discussion during the conference, titled "Stem cell therapy for diabetes: from basic science to clinical translation." The discussion was moderated by Dr Essam Abdelalim, scientist at QBRI and chair of the Steering Committee of the QBRI-HSCI Agreement, and featured esteemed experts.

They included Prof Camillo Ricordi, director of the Diabetes Research Institute and the Cell Transplant Center, University of Miami; Prof Kenji Osafune, head, Department of Cell Growth and Differentiation, Center for IPS Cell Research and Application, Kyoto University; Dr Adrian Teo, principal investigator, Institute of Molecular



and Cell Biology, Singapore's Agency for Science, Technology, and Research; Prof Dr Matthias Hebrok, director, Center for Organoid Systems and Tissue Engineering, Technical University Munich.

The keynote speeches were from renowned scientists in the fields of diabetes and stem cells, including Dr Ramona Pop, interim research director, Melton Lab, Harvard Stem Cell Institute; and Prof Miriam Cnop, director, Center for Diabetes Research, Université Libre de Bruxelles as well as multiple local speakers.

Participants presented cutting-edge research in this field, including stem cell-derived pancreatic islets for cell therapy, the understanding of diabetes pathogenesis using stem cells, the establishment of clinically relevant iPSCs, and precision medicine in diabetes.

Dr Omar Albagha, acting executive direc-

tor of QBRI, said "the discussions and presentations were insightful and inspiring, and we hope they will lead to further advancements in stem cell therapy for diabetes. This event also highlights QBRI's dedication to supporting cutting-edge research that has the potential to positively impact the lives of people with diabetes." Dr Abdelalim said: "By fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing, we can accelerate the pace of scientific discovery and ultimately improve patient outcomes." The successful conclusion of the symposium is a testament to QBRI's commitment to promoting research collaboration and advancing knowledge in the field of stem cell therapy for diabetes. QBRI looks forward to hosting more events that will facilitate the exchange of ideas and help accelerate progress in diabetes research, the statement added.

## QU announces second faculty-led spinoff, ClearExhaust LLC

Qatar University (QU) yesterday announced the spinoff of its second faculty led startup named ClearExhaust LLC. The spin-off was founded by Dr Samer Fikry, professor and scientist of mechanical engineering at QU's College of Engineering.

The founder along with his team of mechanical systems design and engineering have developed a novel design and technology, that promises to radically reduce carbon emissions from diesel engines, which are a major contributor to global warming.

The spinoff of ClearExhaust is a direct result of QU's recently accelerated steps towards establishing a holistic economic development ecosystem in the university to enable scaling up the transfer of its innovations, knowledge, research and development into sustainable socio-economic impact for Qatar, and contributing to Qatar National Vision 2030.

QU President, Dr Hassan al-Derham commented on the occasion saying, "Qatar University has launched Qatar University Holding Company (QU Holding) in its process to institutionalise sustainable economic development as a third QU core mission, side-by-side with QU's mission in education and research. QU Holding serves as a legal and support platform enabling QU faculty, researchers, staff and students to translate their innovations and R&D into socio-economic impact."

He adds, "The Office of Strategic Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (SIEED) at Qatar University was launched as the other platform in



institutionalising economic development at QU, and has been rolling out several training and coaching programmes, from which ClearExhaust LLC has emerged." Vice-President for Academic Affairs at QU, Dr Omar al-Ansari, stated: "We are delighted to see another faculty-led startup emerge from QU's academic sector and colleges. We have made universal innovation and entrepreneurship competencies a priority for implementation in our academic programmes and educational experience across all disciplines as part of QU's commitment and strategic focus on innovation & entrepreneurship." CEO and founder of ClearExhaust LLC, Dr Samer Ahmed, explains "Emissions from diesel engines are considered a major source of pollution worldwide. The smoke emitted from these engines is extremely harmful to human health as it causes severe diseases like cancer and asthma, it's bad for the environment, and contributes to global warming. ClearExhaust LLC produced the first product that eliminates 100% of smoke emission from diesel vehicles and significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions at the same time. Our goal is to have our product installed on



all moving and stationary diesel engines worldwide, with the aim of having a clean and smoke-free atmosphere."

Dr Samer added "We are also very grateful to the new SIEED Office at Qatar University and QU Holding Company for helping us through the incubation and registration process of ClearExhaust LLC, as well as for their continued strategic involvement as members of our Board of Directors." Secretary of QU Holding Company Board of Directors, and Director of QU SIEED Office, Dr Mahmoud Abdulwahed, said, "Qatar University is the first university in Qatar, and one of a very few in the Arab world, to adopt a holistic and ecosystem approach for maximising its role as a catalyst for sustainable socio-economic development of the country, through innovation, entrepreneurship, and knowledge transfer across its education and research sectors."

He adds, "ClearExhaust LLC is the second faculty-led spin-off, and is among several others in the pipeline to emerge on a regular basis as a result of the newly adopted QU Economic Development strategy." **(QNA)**

## PRINTEMPS DOHA AND CARNER BARCELONA HOST PRIVATE PERFUME LAUNCH

*Signature perfumes that transmit the cosmopolitan and Mediterranean spirit of Barcelona*



**C**arner Barcelona, a young and accessible brand from Spain, launched its latest fragrance in Printemps at Doha Oasis in the presence of Carner Barcelona founder Joaquim Carner.

Dedicated to the creation of niche perfumes that transmit the essence of Barcelona, its contemporary lifestyle and the deep admiration for its culture in all its forms and facets, Carner Barcelona's distinctive perfumes are developed by master perfumers, world recognized noses using the best available ingredients.

A brand that entrusts the entire production to local manufacturers, Carner Barcelona strengthens their ties with the Middle East by launching REVOLUCIÓN exclusively in the region, including Printemps Doha, the largest luxury department store in the Middle East at Doha Oasis.

Representing the following relevant moment in history that lead us to the present moment, Revolucion is a leathery and metallic perfume that transmits the social and manufacturing force of the Industrial Revolution.





# Key role of human rights institutions’ financial and administrative independence stressed

HE the President of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) and Chairperson of Qatar’s National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah stressed the need for national human rights institutions to enjoy financial and administrative independence, which is one of the basic conditions for their classification and approval of their membership in the GANHRI, and for them to gain the confidence of the international community.

Addressing the GANHRI 2023 annual meeting at the UN Office in Geneva, she said the process of accrediting and classifying national institutions according to their commitment to the Paris Principles represents the core of the work of the joint coalition, and the essence of its collective responsibility in order to ensure a trustworthy, robust and transparent process that supports members of the coalition at all stages of the process.

The meeting brought together heads of the four regional networks – the Americas, Asia, Europe and Africa, regional co-ordinators, and the chairperson of the Subcommittee on Accreditation, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Programme Development (UNDP). Her Excellency added that the aim of the accreditation process is to ensure the support of national human rights institutions, and



HE Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah

to prepare them to implement the Paris Principles in practice, while recognising their comprehensiveness and universality as standards, and studying how to apply them in the operations and activities of national human rights institutions within the specificities of national contexts, and pointed out that the coalition will organise its 14th international conference later this year, with the participation of national human rights institutions, including the Danish and Ukrainian entities.

She stressed the importance of this gathering of members and partners, and highlighted that the topic of the conference, which will discuss the role of na-

tional human rights institutions in preventing and responding to torture and ill-treatment, is a very important topic.

The conference will be an opportunity for members and its partners to show solidarity with the National Institution for Human Rights in Ukraine during this difficult time, she added.

HE Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah also praised the contribution of the national institutions and the four-member network of the coalition in developing GANHRI’s five-year strategic plan (2022/2023), noting that the plan was finalised in accordance with a consultative process that is consistent with the collective vision of the

coalition. In the same context, she held separate meetings with Chairperson of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions Elasto Hilarius Mugwadi, President of the Americas Network for Human Rights Raquel Caballero de Guevara, President of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions Doo-Hwan Song and Chair of the Network European Union for Human Rights Sirpa Rautio.

During the meetings, she clarified that the GANHRI comes amid difficult times for human rights and their defenders, including national human rights institutions, and stressed at the same time that the GANHRI will always work, alongside regional networks and partners to support member national institutions in their work.

The GANHRI’s Assembly will encourage everyone to participate and engage in the meeting, which will take important decisions aimed at strengthening the alliance and national human rights institutions around the world, and it will present a new strategic plan for the period (2023/2027), Her Excellency said.

Everyone is looking forward to working together to overcome challenges in the field of human rights, strengthening the role of national human rights institutions in protecting and preserving internationally agreed human rights principles, and promoting their application to include everyone, she added. (QNA)

# Global Security Forum discusses online threats and steps to counter effectively

By Shafeeq Alingal  
Staff Reporter

THE Global Security Forum (GSF), which concluded yesterday, discussed the current nature of the threats and the measures taken by governments, communities, and the private sector.

A session on ‘Countering Extremism, Hate and Disinformation Online’ threw light on the looming threats while analysing the ways to counter extremism and hate citing disinformation as a critical priority for states and organisations to counter effectively.

Also highlighted were the mechanisms to confront malicious adversaries and to mitigate the influence of violent extremists and terrorist groups while implementing measures that range from tackling the technical aspects of disinformation to the narratives and strategies used by violent groups.

Moderated by Michael Isikoff, chief investigative correspondent, Yahoo! News, the session had Amy Larsen, director of strategy and business management, Microsoft; Dina Hussein, global head of policy development and expert partnerships, Meta (Facebook) and Zach Schwitzky, co-founder, Limbik.

Dina noted that Facebook is in constant contact with governments while working to fight disinformation and online hatred. “When civil society objects to some publication or wants to report something, we have channels dedicated to dealing with these matters. We have law enforcement teams that communicate with different



Michael Isikoff, Dina Hussein, Amy Larsen, and Zach Schwitzky at session on ‘Countering Extremism, Hate and Disinformation Online’ at the Global Security Forum yesterday.

governments around the world,” she said. Dina added that Facebook has created its own definition of terrorism after consulting with the UN and other stakeholders. “Our definition allows us to look at multiple indicators and is ideologically agnostic.”

Amy Larsen noted that Microsoft’s information ecosystem pillar involves working on restoring and rebuilding journalism and protecting journalists, while also producing media literacy content and providing educational resources.

“The pillar of our vital information system is based on working to rebuild the press

and protect journalists, while at the same time producing media training content and providing educational resources,” she said, noting that Microsoft could see the increase in cyber activity from its headquarters in Redmond before the first shots were fired in Ukraine from Russia.

“Whether or not something is actually true, if it’s believed by a segment of the population, it’s potentially consequential,” said Zach Schwitzky. He noted that even proven truths can’t hold up in an info space when the audience doesn’t trust the messenger adding Limbik is coming up with creative ways to mitigate disinformation before it spreads.

# Al Meera Smart store opens exclusively for Meera Rewards programme members

AL Meera Consumer Goods has opened the much-anticipated first fully autonomous and checkout-free Al Meera Smart store for its loyalty programme Meera Rewards members.

To gain access to the store, Meera Rewards members will have to click on the Al Meera smart tab on the Meera Rewards app and enter their credit card details for only one time, after which a QR code will pop up. Then, customers can scan the code to experience the seamless shopping process. The process is



applicable to credit card holders only. Al Meera will make access to

the smart store available to the members of the community in the second phase of the process.

Al Meera is inviting all members of the community to download the programme and enjoy the smart shopping experience.

The Meera Rewards programme allows customers to earn and redeem points at all Al Meera branches and other partners in the country. Customers can join for free by downloading the mobile app on Google Play or Apple Store and then registering for a digital membership ID. Customers have to show this to the cashier when they want to earn or redeem Meera Reward points.



The unique Doha collection on display in a pop-up retail store at Fire Station.

# PSG, Clown Skateboards and Fatima al-Sharshani launch Doha capsule collection at Qatar Creates Week

PARIS Saint-Germain (PSG) Football Club unveiled its newest collection stemming from their collaboration with UK brand, Clown Skateboards, at Qatar Creates Week 2023 yesterday.

Qatar Creates is the year-round national cultural movement that curates, promotes, and celebrates the diversity of cultural activities in the country.

It recently announced the upcoming spring and summer public programme showcasing art, culture and creativity that kicked off on March 10, and includes a series of programmes, panels and tours which will run until March 18.

The Doha capsule range, inspired by the art of calligraphist artist Fatima al-Sharshani, uses a unique pattern that reflects Qatar’s creative culture, and forms part of the PSG x Clown Skateboard Collection, highlighting cities such as Paris, New York, and Los Angeles; locations where PSG maintains a year-round presence through its flagship retail stores.

In a press statement, al-Sharshani said: “To be able to share my passion for Arabic calligraphy and work together with PSG x Clown Skateboard on this fantastic project is a great honour. The design we have created for the Doha capsule collection combines the vibrant and abstract shapes of contemporary graffiti, with the loops and swirls of traditional calligraphic letters, and perfectly captures the city’s lively modern and artistic scene which stays true to its traditional values. I am very proud to represent Qatar in this international collaboration, and to share the beauty of this art form with the world.”

The new collection was presented publicly for the first time at Fire Station – Doha’s leading contemporary art space which hosts a world-class artist residency programme designed to nurture, energise and promote Qatar’s artistic and creative community. Founded in 2015, it is located in a former fire station that has been repurposed to serve the needs of the artists in residence.

Fabien Allegre, chief brand officer of PSG Football Club, said: “We are extremely proud to continue our collaboration project with Clown Skateboard and add a unique spin by giving creative direction to the incredibly talented Fatima al-Sharshani for this exclusive Doha collection.

“Fatima’s work is characterised by a delicate aesthetic that combines the poeticism and tradition of Arabic calligraphy with modern and



Calligraphist artist Fatima al-Sharshani speaks at the unveiling of the new collection yesterday as PSG’s chief brand officer Fabien Allegre looks on. PICTURES: Thajudheen



A skateboarder performs a stunt yesterday at the event.



abstract design. Fatima has innovatively combined our two worlds in this project, and we are ecstatic to be able to present it alongside this distinctive range of designs that embody passion, energy, and fun.”

The unique Doha collection, made from an array of striking and vibrant organic materials, includes four t-shirts, two long-sleeve shirts, a hoodie, a hat, a tote bag, and limited-edition skateboards.

The launch event showcased this exclusive range in a pop-up retail store presenting the latest collection, as well as the imaginative “Wall of Skate” mural,

which features a reimagined display of forty skateboards decorated with Fatima al-Sharshani’s distinctive calligraphic design.

“The Wall of Skate” mural will be dismantled following the exhibition, and each skateboard will be dispatched to Paris, Los Angeles, New York and Tokyo, giving fans the chance to participate in a ‘Treasure Hunt’ and locate the skateboards which are on display around each city.

To mark the unique collaboration, Fire Station: Artists in Residence will offer free skateboarding and art lessons for all ages until April 1.



Skateboarders in the rink during the Qatar Creates event yesterday.



# Andalusian history takes spotlight at Seminar Series

By Tawfik Lamari  
Staff Reporter

In the presence of HE Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, the activities of the “Seminar Series 2023” continued yesterday, at the Wisdom Hall of the Ministry of Culture under the title “History of Andalusia” with the participation of critic and novelist Dr Nizar Chakroun, cultural adviser at the Ministry of Culture, and members of the “Himma” team.

“Himma” was recently produced by the Ministry of Culture on Andalusian history. The members of the team are Saudi journalist and poet Badr Lami, Qatari media figures Saud al-Kuwari and Mohamed al-Shahrani. The seminar was moderated by Iman al-Kaabbi, director of the Qatari Media Center.

Dr Nizar Chakroun presented a paper titled “What is the necessity today for the study of Andalusian history” (92 AH – 711 CE / 798 AH – 1492 CE). He emphasised that “returning to Andalusian history constitutes an essential step for understanding the elements of the Arab-Islamic identity. It is not possible to exclude more than eight centuries of civilisation from thinking about the cultural identity of the Arabs today. Just as the Andalusian cultural heritage cannot remain away from the Arab generations who have the right to see the symbolic wealth left by the Andalusian civilisation in Arab civilisation first and in human civilisation second.”

He pointed out “the need for a new discourse regarding that rich civilisation, so that this discourse will enable us to determine its components and its role in creating a model of progress in a period when the West was mired in its darkness.” Indicating that Spanish intellectuals have recently awakened to their neglect of the “Andalusian civilisation” as a component of their identity, so they returned to studying it, although its features are visible in their language, lifestyles, and urbanisation.

Dr Nizar Chakroun, pointed out that many Spanish writers in the nineteenth century suffered from the consequences of dealing with the Arab presence in Spain due to the entry into force of the Inquisition Courts law, which was abolished in 1824 CE. But its content continued to be worked on in the norms of Spanish society for years. Chakroun stressed that the conquest of



HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani attends the seminar.



The panel members discuss Andalusian history during the second Seminar Series.

Andalusia in 711 CE was not just a geographical expansion or the spread of the Islamic religion only in the Iberian Peninsula, but rather it was a starting point for the establishment of a civilisation.

Chakroun stressed that the Andalusian culture was influenced by the scientific, intellectual and literary production of the Muslim Arabs in the East. It took many of its components, but was distinguished from it, as Andalusia became, after less than two centuries, the destination of the people of the East. He continued: “Andalusian poetry was not the only literary form that reflected the spirit of renaissance in the Andalusian literary and intellectual movement, and it was not the only influential one in Europe. Ironically, since the thirteenth century CE, Europe has benefited from the fruits of the Andalusian intellectual and scientific renaissance, while the Arabs outside Andalusia in those centuries and beyond did not pay attention to the importance of Andalusian culture.”

Chakroun said that “the most important gains of the Andalusian civilisation is that it dealt with the Arab cultural herit-

age that preceded it in a critical manner. The Andalusians realised that each stage of civilisation has its challenges, and the present cannot be measured by the emptiness. Their concept of time was different from what previous cultures looked at, which made Western modernity later adopt this concept. Thinking about the present prevails over thinking about the past, and this is a concept that we should adhere to and think about our present more than thinking about the past, in order to learn from this civilisation that is still in need of research and discovery.”

Dr Nizar Chakroun called for the importance of establishing a centre dedicated to the study of Andalusian civilisation to be a new civilised starting point.

The journalist Badr Lamy talked about the “Himma” programme, explaining that the programme tried to answer in a simple way many questions such as the reason for the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula, and what are the challenges that Muslims faced regarding the conquest? In order to understand the history of this period. The idea came from the Culture Minister, HE Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Ha-

mad al-Thani, in order to focus on the aspiration of the men who conquered Andalusia, based on the aspiration that the Islamic faith placed in the hearts of these conquerors. The two Qatari journalists, Saud al-Kuwari and Mohamed al-Shahrani, talked about their role in preparing and participating in the “Himma” programme. Stressing that the efforts of the work team, sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, yielded filming from the same event sites to bring information closer to the viewers.

The seminar was accompanied by comments from the poet Dr Hassan al-Nama, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding, who appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Culture in promoting societal culture, and pointed out that Qatar’s interest in the history of Andalusia is not recent, but rather an inspiration for a legacy dating back to the history of the former ruler of Qatar Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah al-Thani, who was the first to direct the interests of the Arab region and the Gulf to the study of Andalusia out of his admiration for its heritage, and that was at a time of scarcity of information.

## Corinthia Yacht Club announces Ramadan menu

Corinthia Yacht Club has announced the launch of an all new Iftar and Suhoor menu to celebrate the Holy Month of Ramadan.

The Iftar set menu, served in the private dining room and overlooking the waters of the Pearl Marina, is available from sunset until 8pm daily for QR270 per person, featuring signature Arabic and Mediterranean cuisine.

The Suhoor menu, served from 8pm to 2am for QR295 per person, comes with two options; a set menu or a la carte, both featuring an assortment of culinary creations.



Both the Iftar and Suhoor menus feature a crafted range of mocktails and Corinthia’s freshly roasted coffee and premium tea selections. “This Ramadan, we aim to showcase

the very best of what Corinthia has to offer in welcoming atmosphere that reflects the magnanimous spirit of this special month,” said managing director Matthew Dixon.

# Qatar marks Arab Human Rights Day

Qatar marked the Arab Human Rights Day, which falls on March 16 of each year under the theme “the right to quality education”, with an event co-organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Arab League, the Qatar National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, and the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf states.

In her speech marking the occasion, HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi stressed that obtaining a quality education is the bedrock to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the actual method to enjoy all other rights.

Her Excellency added that the wise leadership of Qatar, led by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, has a strong belief that education is a human right for all who reside in Qatar, a pillar of progress for societies, and a basic right to achieve democracy and sustainable development, as it is the first driver for development, and that its an effective and dependable tool to push life forward.

Therefore, education in Qatar has received continuous attention and support at all levels. She indicated that promoting and protecting human rights, including the right to education, has become a strategic choice for Qatar as it has always been the main focus of the development processes pursued by Qatar.

Qatar National Vision 2030 included axes and pillars that deal with the main issues of human rights in the fields of education, health, environment, expat labour rights, child and elderly rights, and women empowerment.

She noted the role of the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), which seeks, in co-operation with ministries, institutions, civil society organisations, and international and regional organisations, to raise awareness among citizens and residents on the right to education.

She noted that Her Highness Sheikhha Moza bint Nasser was the first to adopt these initiatives, out of her sincere belief and strong desire to protect and enhance every child’s access to quality education.

Her Highness established the Education Above All Foundation, out of which several programmes emerged, such as Educate A Child (EAC), Al Fakhoora, Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC), and Reach Out To Asia to provide basic education to millions of children out of school. Her Highness contributed to the resolution submitted by Qatar to the United Nations General Assembly on the Right to Education in Emergency Situations, which was adopted unanimously. Her Highness’ meeting with members of the UN Security Council in 2011 resulted in the issuance of Council Resolution No 1998, which criminalises attacks on schools and hospitals. Her Highness also proposed to the Social Forum of the Human Rights Council 2019 in Geneva to

allocate an international day to protect education, and September 9 of each year was adopted to mark International Day to Protect Education from Attack.

HE Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi valued the role of the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) in supporting education in developing countries by providing financial grants and joint agreements with relevant organisations and supporting development projects to provide education in all its stages, especially technical and vocational education. QFFD has provided quality learning opportunities for about 10mn children in more than 50 countries around the world, in addition to providing funding for the implementation of development programmes, which in turn promote the right to education. She stressed the importance of celebrating Arab Human Rights Day in emphasising that schools, educational institutions, and universities should be spared the scourge of wars and conflicts, and to recognise their civil and humanitarian nature, protect them, and not target them and to always remain a safe haven to promote peace, development, and stability.

HE the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi affirmed the right of every individual to enjoy the right to education as an inherent human rights that includes the full development of the human personality and the preservation of human dignity, and the empowerment of every person to contribute effectively to society, and the development of the human element and investment in human being in a way that leads to the consolidation and respect for human rights. He also pointed to what His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani said in a speech before the Inter-Parliamentary Union: “Education in our time has become a social right that has turned into an integral part of human rights, and has been included in Goal 4 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Investing in quality education is one of the most important elements of building the economy, advancing societies, and achieving growth and prosperity. But ignorance is one of the most important obstacles to people’s growth and renaissance. It also stokes intolerance and racism, and facilitates the dissemination of preconceived notions against the different other.”

Director of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf states Abdulrahman al-Assimi expressed his pride that the Gulf states have achieved the noble goal and won the first place in the field of human right to education, thanks to the support of the wise political leaders to the educational system. Chairman of the Arab Human Rights Committee (Charter Committee) Jaber bin Saleh al-Marri expressed his pride in marking the Arab Human Rights Day in Qatar and its important significance which reflects the achievements made here and that dazzled everyone during the World Cup, (QNA)

## AgriteQ commences with stress on food security

### From Page 1

AgriteQ 2023 has brought together industry experts, researchers, and innovators from around the world to showcase the latest technologies and products in agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry. The exhibition has participation of more than 675 companies, including 523 from outside Qatar from the agricultural, food and animal production sectors, spread over an area of 29,000sq m. Out of the more than 55 countries participating in the exhibition, 30 are attending through official national pavilions and the others through companies, embassies and commercial offices

in Doha. More than 10 entities from the private sector and government agencies are sponsoring the exhibition. The event, which runs until March 19, offers a unique opportunity for visitors to explore the latest trends, engage with key players in the industry, and discover new solutions to enhance their agricultural practices. With a focus on sustainable agriculture and food security, AgriteQ is an essential event for anyone involved in the agricultural sector.

“This edition of AgriteQ is considered the biggest ever, with the participation of more than 100 farms, and that’s the biggest number of farms to gather in Qatar in one place” said the Organising Committee chairman Mohamed Ali al-Khouri.

# Qatar Airways partners with Culture Ministry and chef al-Tamimi to refresh menu

In partnership with the Ministry of Culture, Qatar Airways has worked with the decorated Qatari culinary artist Aisha al-Tamimi to refresh the onboard and lounges menu.

The local Qatari dishes will be available for passengers travelling on various routes including North America, Asia, Australia, Europe and GCC, a Qatar Airways statement said yesterday.

The new menu features some of the most iconic national dishes that Qatar is known for, prepared using locally sourced organic ingredients and spices. The new meals include entrees, main courses and desserts.

Qatari Chicken Machboos, Madrubah, Mashkool, Jareesh and breakfast platter are on the menu.

HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, stated that the partnership with Qatar Airways will showcase, embrace and promote the Qatari Culture in various fields across the airline.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, HE Akbar al-Baker, said: “Food is a universal language that is appreciated by all travellers, and our country is admired for the aromatic flavours of its national dishes.



Chef Aisha al-Tamimi

The new onboard meals will further elevate the travel experience, and bring passengers one step closer to what its like to dine in Qatar.”

Chef al-Tamimi, said: “Food is an integral part of every civilisation, and it is one of the tangible elements that brings pride to every

citizen. In my partnership with Qatar Airways, I ensured that my dishes are authentic to the Qatari heritage that I am very proud of, and I am happy to bring my local cuisine onboard this impressive airline.”

Embracing the local ingredients, the airline has chosen to use chef Aisha’s personally made spices for all the dishes. Her signature key ingredients include: cardamom, black pepper, salt, cumin, black lime, paprika and red chilli peppers.

In April 2022, Qatar Airways had extended its collaboration with a Thai award-winning celebrity cook, Chef Ian Kittichai, to launch a menu of the signature Thai dishes for passengers departing from Bangkok and Phuket. Passengers with specific dietary requirements or restrictions can request ahead of their travels, special meals that do not sacrifice quality or flavour. The special meals use high quality local ingredients that align with each passenger’s needs. The airline has created meals for every dietary need, including vegan and vegetarian, religious needs, medical needs and even children’s meals. Passengers flying in the award-winning Qsuite Business Class seat can dine on demand at any point throughout their flight.

## Kahramaa launches 11 contests to promote environmental sustainability and to rationalise energy consumption

The Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa), represented by the Energy Conservation and Efficiency Department (Tarsheed), yesterday announced the launching of 11 competitions to promote environmental sustainability and to rationalise energy and water consumption.

The competitions are held at the local and global levels. An official Kahramaa statement stated that Tarsheed has started receiving participation requests for all categories. “Government and private sectors and individuals can take part and the application will

be received until April 10 through Tarsheed page on Kahramaa’s official website <https://www.km.qa/Tarsheed/Pages/TarsheedCompetition.aspx>. The terms and conditions of the competitions can be downloaded from the website.

The competition has three international and eight local categories while covering a wide range of disciplines and categories. The international competitions include Tarsheed awards for Conserving Building, Best Smart Application In The Field Of Sustainability and Best Building Retrofitting. These categories are also open for local participants.

## ‘Qatar capable of making genuine difference in agriculture to achieve food security’

Lebanese Minister of Agriculture Abbas Haj Hassan has stressed the capability of Qatar to make a genuine difference in all agricultural fields to achieve food security, which is at the forefront of strategic priorities for all countries of the world.

In his remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA) on the sidelines of the opening of the 10th Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ) at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center (DECC), he said that this exhibition comes within Qatar’s future vision and strategy to achieve self-sufficiency, particularly in light of the threats to achieving food security in several countries around the world.

The Lebanese Minister of Agriculture praised Qatar’s efforts to increase local production, raise self-sufficiency, and to achieve Qatar’s food security according to best practices and the latest agricultural

technologies, and stressed the keenness and interest of Lebanon in promoting the collaborative relationship with Qatar in all fields. Abbas Haj Hassan said the Lebanese participation in AgriteQ included 14 companies, and expressed his hope to increase the level of participation in the Expo 2023 Doha, which will be distinguished and pioneering. He indicated that Qatari officials have a great responsibility to make a success of the exhibition, especially after the Qatar’s dazzling success in hosting and organising the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. He noted the opening of Qatar’s markets to Lebanese products, and emphasised the Lebanese government’s commitment to safely delivering Lebanese food products to various consumers around the world, pointing out the competitiveness and high quality of the food products. (QNA)



**CHAIRMAN**  
Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

**Deputy Managing Editor**  
K T Chacko

P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar

editor@gulf-times.com

44350478 (News),  
44466404 (Sport),  
44466636 (Home delivery)

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**GULF TIMES**

# Patchwork fixes to Ukraine grain shortfall leave world vulnerable

A patchwork of fixes and increased crop plantings around the world to counter the impact of war in Ukraine on global grain supplies are not enough to ward off further risks of disruption.

Extensive damage to Ukraine's farm sector and uncertainty that the UN's grain export corridor deal will be renewed this month suggest food prices may remain elevated, increasing the potential of hunger if other problems arise, agriculture experts warn.

Meanwhile, adverse weather, including a historic drought in No. 3 corn exporter Argentina, highlights the risks of increasingly severe weather around the world for food supplies.

A year after Russia's war on major grains producer Ukraine sent global crop values to decade highs on fears of shortages, prices of key crops have reverted back to pre-war levels, with benchmark corn futures down 10% and wheat futures more than 20% lower than the days before the invasion.

"The world has had some time to patch some holes," said Dan Basse, president of AgResource Co in Chicago, citing larger-than-anticipated Russian wheat exports and the grain export corridor deal that allowed some 3mn tonnes of grain per month to be exported from Ukraine's Black Sea ports.

"If we don't have another supply shock somewhere, the world can get by on the diminishment of Ukrainian grain. But it's tenuous. Things have to go right," he said.

Importing nations avoided a worst-case scenario as a record Russian wheat crop that was exempted from sanctions and bumper harvests in Australia and Canada helped offset sharply reduced Ukrainian wheat shipments. A surge in Brazilian corn production, meanwhile, blunted the impact of lower supplies from Ukraine and a weaker-than-expected harvest in the United States, the world's top exporter of the feed grain.

The UN food agency's world price index in February was down 19% from a record hit last March.

**Prices are likely to remain volatile this year, particularly during planting and key crop development phases**

"Luck has played some role in events ... the combination of good weather (in some breadbasket areas) and strong producer supply response has kept market prices from rebounding back to the high levels of early 2022," said Joseph Glauber, senior research fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute.

But prices are likely to remain volatile this year, particularly during planting and key crop development phases, as global grain stocks remain tighter than normal.

"With production in Ukraine assumed to be even smaller in the coming season, other exporters will again be required to step to the plate, adding further impetus to cropping weather over the next year or so," said International Grains Council (IGC) economist Alexander Karavaytsev.

Global wheat stocks are projected to thin to just over a three-month supply by the end of the 2022/23 season, the tightest in eight years, according to US Department of Agriculture (USDA) data. Corn stocks were seen at an 81-day supply, down 22% from a recent supply peak six years ago.

Global grain merchants and fertiliser makers warned that the world would need multiple good harvests to rebuild supplies.

"The world is looking to the other breadbaskets ... to make up for some of this gap," said Ken Seitz, CEO of the world's biggest fertiliser producer, Nutrien Ltd, in an interview.

Although Brazil is expected to harvest a record 125mn-tonne corn crop this year, production in No. 3 exporter Argentina is seen dropping to the lowest level in at least five years after the worst drought in 60 years, USDA data showed.

Rising interest rates and a strong US dollar, which makes dollar-denominated commodities more expensive for buyers holding other currencies, have heightened the risks for importing countries, IGC's Karavaytsev said.

The Black Sea grain export initiative will be key to determining global grain supplies going forward, analysts said.

A renewal would allow exports to flow in the near term while continued access to global markets may encourage more Ukrainian growers to plant this spring despite the ongoing war, they said.

But high input costs, farm equipment losses and safety concerns suggest seedlings will be even smaller than last year.

Ukraine recaptured farmer Borys Kalynovskyi's fields in the northeastern Kharkiv region from Russian occupation in autumn, but much of his land was heavily mined.

"It's very, very dangerous for workers right now to try even to do something in the fields," he said. — Reuters

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# How to fix platform economy

By Daron Acemoglu & Simon Johnson  
Boston

Meta (Facebook), Alphabet (Google), Microsoft, Twitter, and a few other tech companies have come to dominate what we see and hear on the Internet, shaping hundreds of millions of people's perceptions of the world.

In pursuit of advertising revenue, their algorithms are programmed to show us content that will hold our attention – including extremist videos, disinformation, and material designed to stimulate envy, insecurity, and anger. With the rapid development of "large language models" such as ChatGPT and Bard, Big Tech's hold on impressionable minds will only strengthen, with potentially scary consequences.

But other outcomes are possible. Companies could deploy the latest wave of artificial intelligence much more responsibly, and two current court cases serve as warnings to those pursuing socially destructive business models. But we also need public-policy interventions to break up the largest tech companies and to tax digital advertising. These policy levers can help change Big Tech's pernicious business model, thereby preventing the platforms from inflicting so much emotional harm on their users – especially vulnerable young people.

The legal cases include Gonzales v Google, which is currently before the US Supreme Court. At issue is the tech industry's insistence that Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act exempts platform companies from any liability for third-party content

that they host. If platforms are acting more like news outlets than mere online repositories when they recommend videos, tweets, or posts, they should be held to the same standard as established media, which, under existing defamation laws, are not allowed to publish what they know to be untrue.

Hence, in a \$1.6bn lawsuit filed against Fox News, Dominion Voting Systems has uncovered ample evidence that Fox's top on-air hosts and executives were well aware (and told each other) that former president Donald Trump's claims of election fraud were entirely false. Dominion thus has a strong claim to damages if it can show that Fox knowingly spread falsehoods about Dominion's voting machines in the 2020 election. Shouldn't online platforms whose algorithms disseminated the same lies be held to the same standard?

Addressing such questions has become even more urgent now that programs like ChatGPT are poised to reshape the Internet. These sophisticated algorithmic recommenders could potentially be trained not to promote extreme content or deliberate lies, and not to encourage extreme emotions.

If an algorithm is exploitative or manipulative toward children (or anyone else, for that matter), the responsibility for such harm should lie with the humans in charge. After all, AIs at this level are not operating autonomously of human decision-making. To claim otherwise is to grant their creators legal immunity.

Tech companies should no longer be able to excuse their own inattention or negligence by arguing that "there's too much data" for them to monitor.

That wealth of data is the source of their profits, and the sheer abundance of content on their platforms is what makes their AIs so potent. While they should enjoy a reasonable degree of protection against liability for what someone else posts on their site, this should apply only to passive content that the platforms do not in any way recommend to other users. Active content that is algorithmically pushed out to millions of people to generate revenue is a different matter. Indeed, it is just like traditional publishing, only much more powerful.

If a daily newspaper publishes a commentary by a terrorist, some readers will probably stop subscribing. But since most individuals do not want to walk away from their existing online social networks, we need government regulation to re-empower consumers.

First, the largest platform companies should be broken up to create more intense competition between recommendation algorithms and their trainers. But for this to work in the public's interest, platforms also must be required to allow a user's social network to be transferred to a different platform. The same "interoperability" rationale allows you to keep your cell-phone number when you change carriers. Social-media and digital-content consumers should be able to vote with their feet when they don't like what a platform is promoting.

Second, and even more importantly, we need to force an adjustment in the prevailing Big Tech business model, which is based on harvesting vast amounts of user data and monetising it through digital-advertising sales. This business model explains why disinformation, outrage, and

insecurity are so prevalent online. Emotional manipulation maximises user engagement, enabling more intrusive data collection and higher profits.

A tax on digital advertising is one of the only practical ways to change this extraordinarily destructive business model. It would reduce platforms' temptation to maximise user engagement through emotional manipulation; and, if coupled with limits on data collection, it would provide incentives to develop alternative approaches, such as subscription-based models.

Another advantage of a digital-advertising tax is that it could be set even higher for content promoted to people under 21. Selling cigarettes or alcohol to minors is a serious criminal offence. While it is not feasible to forbid young people from seeing content that damages their mental health, a high rate of taxation on advertising revenues derived from promoting such material is entirely appropriate. The proceeds could be devoted to strengthening mental-health programmes, not least those for teen suicide prevention. If there is any doubt about which content is hurting young people, we can just ask the AI recommendation algorithm. — Project Syndicate

● Daron Acemoglu, Professor of Economics at MIT, is a co-author (with Simon Johnson) of the forthcoming Power and Progress: Our Thousand-Year Struggle Over Technology and Prosperity.

● Simon Johnson, a former chief economist at the International Monetary Fund, is a professor at MIT's Sloan School of Management.

**ChatGPT**

Examples	Capabilities	Limitations
"Explain quantum computing in simple terms" →	Remembers what user said earlier in the conversation	May occasionally generate incorrect information
"Get any creative ideas for a 10 year old's birthday?" →	Allows user to provide follow-up corrections	May occasionally produce harmful instructions or biased content
"How do I make an HTTP request in Javascript?" →	Trained to decline inappropriate requests	Limited knowledge of events and current date/time

**If an algorithm is exploitative or manipulative toward children (or anyone else, for that matter), the responsibility for such harm should lie with the humans in charge. After all, AIs at this level are not operating autonomously of human decision-making. To claim otherwise is to grant their creators legal immunity**

**WARNING:** With the rapid development of "large language models" such as ChatGPT, Big Tech's hold on impressionable minds will only strengthen, with potentially scary consequences.



**DISASTER**  
**Malawi appeals for global aid after cyclone ‘tragedy’**

Malawi’s President Lazarus Chakwera yesterday appealed for more international assistance to tackle the “national tragedy” unleashed by Cyclone Freddy, as he visited areas devastated by the deadly storm. “I appeal for more assistance from international partners and donors in the face of destruction and damage caused by Tropical Cyclone Freddy,” Chakwera said at a funeral for some of the victims in the southern city of Blantyre. Meanwhile, rescuers scrambled to reach survivors in Malawi’s battered city of Blantyre, after Cyclone Freddy triggered floods and landslides that have killed more than 240 people across two countries.

**OPINION**  
**Australian subs deal could have ‘deadly consequences’**

A ex-Australia premier rubbished the country’s nuke-powered sub deal, saying it unnecessarily targeted China and could have “deadly consequences”. Australia announced it would buy up to five US subs in an effort to bulk up Western muscle in the face of a rising China. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the deal was the country’s biggest-ever military upgrade, while US President Joe Biden said it would ensure the region remained “free and open”. But ex-PM Paul Keating has derided it as a “great misadventure”. “History will be the judge of this project in the end, but I want my name clearly recorded among those who say it is a great mistake,” he said.

**APPEAL**  
**India seeks world focus on global poverty issues**

Russia’s war in Ukraine has brought the world to a standstill when urgent action is needed to address growing global poverty, India’s G20 summit negotiator Amitabh Kant said. India, which holds the bloc’s presidency this year, has sought to highlight the economic impact of the conflict as well as poorer countries’ debt. “Europe cannot bring growth, poverty, global debt, all developmental issues to a standstill across the world,” Kant said. “Especially when the south is suffering, especially when 75 countries are suffering from global debt, especially when 200mn people have gone below poverty line. Can that one war bring the entire world to a standstill?”

**ALERT**  
**Weather threatens Indian winter crops’ harvest**

Untimely rains and hailstorms could damage India’s key winter-sown crops such as wheat, rapeseed and chickpeas just before harvesting begins for plants that have already suffered some heat stress, industry and weather department officials said. India’s weather department has warned key growing states in central, northern, and western regions could receive more rain and hailstorms in the next 10 days. That could curtail production and lift food inflation, which the government and central bank have been trying to contain. A drop in wheat production could make it difficult for New Delhi to replenish inventories.

**PEOPLE**  
**Team in Bangladesh for Rohingya return plan**

A Myanmar delegation is visiting Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh this week to verify a few hundred potential returnees for a pilot repatriation project, though a Bangladeshi official said it was unclear when they would be going home. Nearly 1mn Rohingya Muslim refugees are living in camps in the border district of Cox’s Bazar in Bangladesh, most having fled a military-led crackdown in Myanmar in 2017. Bangladesh’s Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner in Cox’s Bazar, Mohamed Mizanur Rahman, said there was a list of 1,140 Rohingya who are to be repatriated through the pilot project, of which 711 have had their cases cleared.

# Hunt pledges reforms to spur slow economy

Reuters  
London

Finance Minister Jeremy Hunt yesterday announced a plan that he hopes will speed up Britain’s stagnating economy, including childcare and pension reforms to get more people into work and corporate tax breaks to boost weak business investment.

Saying the world’s sixth-biggest economy was now set to avoid a recession this year – even if it will still contract – Hunt said he would extend help for households hit by soaring energy bills and freeze a tax on fuel.

“In the face of enormous challenges, I report today on a British economy which is proving the doubters wrong,” Hunt said, to jeers from the opposition Labour Party which is riding high in opinion polls ahead of an election expected next year.

“In the autumn we took difficult decisions to deliver stability and sound money,” said Hunt, who was rushed into the Treasury last October to undo the plans for tax cuts that sowed chaos in financial markets during Liz Truss’s brief premiership.

“Since mid-October, 10-year gilt rates have fallen, debt servicing costs are down, mortgage rates are lower and inflation has peaked. The International Monetary Fund says our approach means the UK economy is on the right track.”

Labour leader Keir Starmer accused Hunt of “dressing up stagnation as stability” and said Britain “is on a path of managed decline.” After the shocks of Brexit, a heavy Covid-19 hit and double-digit inflation, Britain’s is the only Group of Seven economy yet to recover its pre-pandemic size, having already suffered a decade of near-stagnant income growth.

Hunt and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak resisted calls from some lawmakers in their ruling Conservative Party – alarmed by the biggest tax burden on the economy since World War II – for big tax cuts now.

But he found money to extend energy bill subsidies for households by three months and a

decade-long fuel duty freeze for another year.

Despite that help, and lower inflation than previously expected, living standards in Britain remain on track for a record fall over the two years to the end of March 2024, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) independent forecasters said.

“Over this two-year period, households can expect to be substantially less well off on average than they were at the beginning of it,” Paul Johnson, director of the non-partisan Institute for Fiscal Studies, told the BBC, pointing to big tax increases announced by Hunt in November.

“So households aren’t going to be feeling great at the end of this.” In a bid to speed up economic growth, Hunt expanded free childcare to children under two in England as a way to get more young parents into work.

Campaigners said the £4bn (\$4.8bn) annual price tag was too small to fix high childcare costs.

Another measure to boost the size of the workforce abolished penalties for people breaking thresholds on pension contributions in an attempt to keep more older people in work.

The OBR said it was hard to forecast the impact of Hunt’s attempts to get more workers into the jobs market and it warned that the participation rate – people in work or looking for it – was set to hit a 23-year low next year before rising again.

Hunt also announced a new incentive for business investment that will allow companies to offset 100% of their capital expenditure against profits, although that represented a scaling-back of tax breaks under a previous scheme.

The OBR said the change would not cushion all the pain for companies whose corporate tax rate will leap next month to represent its heaviest burden on businesses since the tax was introduced in 1965.

Other measures included more investment in nuclear power.

Hunt said the government would add £11bn to the defence budget – which has been stretched by Britain’s support for Ukraine in its war with Russia – over the next five years.

## Nor’easter buries parts of New England, floods threaten California



Ten of thousands of New England and New York homes and businesses were without power yesterday in the aftermath of a Nor’easter that dumped up to three feet of snow on the region, while a new atmospheric river storm raised the threat of more flooding in California. In the Northeast, the late-winter blizzard dumped about two feet of snow in the Berkshire mountains of western Massachusetts and northwestern Connecticut, and a foot or more in parts of New York’s Hudson Valley. Across Massachusetts the accumulations varied greatly. In Colrain in the northwestern part of the state near the Vermont border, 36 inches of snow was on the ground, while Boston’s suburbs had about an inch. Half of all flights out of Albany International Airport, in upstate New York, were cancelled on Tuesday, according to flight tacking website FlightAware, while hundreds of more were grounded in New York City and Boston airports.

# Moscow warns US aircraft away from air space after drone crash

Reuters  
Washington/Kyiv

Moscow yesterday warned Washington to keep well away from its air space, after a US drone intercepted by Russian jets crashed into the Black Sea, the first known direct confrontation between the superpowers since Russia invaded Ukraine.

Washington and Moscow traded blame for the incident, which took place in international air space near territory Russia claims to have annexed from Ukraine.

Moscow called it proof that the US was directly participating in the war; Washington called it an act of Russian recklessness.

Russia said it would try to recover the drone wreckage from the sea.

Washington said it might never be recovered, and steps had been taken to ensure Russia could not gain intelligence from the wreckage.

“The Americans keep saying they’re not taking part in military operations. This is the latest confirmation that they are directly participating in these activities – in the war,” Kremlin Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patru-

shev said. The US military said two Russian Su-27 fighter planes had approached one of its MQ-9 Reaper drones on a reconnaissance mission over international waters. The fighters harassed the drone and sprayed fuel on it, before one clipped the drone’s propeller, causing it to crash into the sea.

“This incident demonstrates a lack of competence in addition to being unsafe and unprofessional,” said James B Hecker, commander of US air forces in Europe.

White House spokesman John Kirby said US officials had told Russia’s ambassador Anatoly

Antonov that Moscow must be more careful: “The message was: Don’t do this again.”

According to Russia’s account, there was no collision.

The drone crashed after making “sharp manoeuvres”, having “deliberately and provocatively” flown close to Russian air space.

Moscow had scrambled its fighters to identify it.

“The unacceptable activity of the US military in the close proximity to our borders is a cause for concern,” Antonov, the ambassador, said in a statement, accusing Washington of using drones to “gather intelligence which is subsequently used by the Kyiv

regime to strike at our armed forces and territory”.

“Let us ask a rhetorical question: if, for example, a Russian strike drone appeared near New York or San Francisco, how would the US Air Force and Navy react?” he said, calling on Washington to “stop making sorties near the Russian borders”.

The Kremlin said there had been no high-level contacts with Washington over the incident, describing bilateral relations as “lamentable”.

Kyiv, for its part, said the incident showed Moscow was willing to “expand the conflict zone” to draw in other countries.

# Pakistan police postpone arrest of ex-PM Khan, easing unrest

Reuters  
Lahore, Pakistan

Pakistan court yesterday ordered police to suspend an operation to arrest former prime minister Imran Khan, bringing a halt to pitched battles in which police baton-charged supporters of the former cricketer and fired water cannon and tear gas.

Security forces withdrew from around his home in the eastern city of Lahore, easing political instability in the nuclear-armed nation which is struggling with an economic crisis and awaiting an International Monetary Fund bailout.

The Lahore high court ordered police to postpone their efforts to arrest Khan until today, provincial information minister Amir Mir said.

Earlier, a senior police official said security forces had withdrawn to accommodate cricket’s Pakistan Super League (PSL),

the country’s top sporting event, which is being held at a stadium nearby.

The operation to arrest Khan came after a lower court in the capital Islamabad issued a warrant against him for defying orders to present himself in court over charges that he unlawfully sold state gifts given to him by foreign dignitaries when he was prime minister from 2018 to 2022.

In a tweet, Khan said he had signed a “surety bond” that would guarantee his appearance in the court by a March 18 deadline, and senior aide Fawad Chaudhry said Khan’s party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, had asked the court to stop the police action.

According to a list shared by Information Minister Maryum Aurangzeb last year, the gifts given to Khan include seven watches, including one valued at 85mn rupees (about \$300,000).

The list, which Reuters could not independently verify, also

contained perfumes, diamond jewellery and dinner sets.

Khan has denied wrongdoing. Pakistan’s 2024 dollar-denominated bonds slumped almost 7 cents on the dollar after the clashes, while the rest of the curve fell as much as 3.3 cents on the dollar. Current Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said a staff-level agreement with the IMF would come soon.

Pakistan is expecting to unlock \$1.1bn from the IMF, which will be critical in helping it avoid defaulting on external debt obligations. “Pakistan and the IMF do appear to be nearing a deal, but the IMF remain nervous,” said Gareth Leather, a senior economist in the Emerging Asia team at Capital Economics. “Partly this is because of the country’s volatile politics.”

They could agree a deal with the current government, only to find it has been replaced a month later with a PM more hostile to the IMF.

## Plastic rocks



Researcher Giovana Rebelo holds “plastic rocks” found on Trindade Island in the state of Espirito Santo, at the laboratory of the Federal University of Parana, in Curitiba state of Parana, Brazil. The geology of Brazil’s volcanic Trindade Island has fascinated scientists for years, but the discovery of rocks made from plastic debris in this remote turtle refuge is sparking alarm. Melted plastic has become intertwined with rocks on the island, located 1,140km from the southeastern state of Espirito Santo.

## India ‘plans new security testing for smartphones, crackdown on apps’

India plans to force smartphone makers to allow removal of pre-installed apps and mandate screening of major operating system updates under proposed new security rules, according to two people and a government document. The plan for new rules, details of which have not been previously reported, could extend launch timelines in the world’s No.2 smartphone market and lead to losses in business from pre-installed apps for players including Samsung, Xiaomi, Vivo, and Apple. India’s IT ministry is considering these rules amid concerns about spying and abuse of user data, said a senior government official, one of the two people who spoke on condition of anonymity as the information is not yet public. “Pre-installed apps can be a weak security point and we want to ensure no foreign nations, including China, are exploiting it. It’s a matter of national security,” the official added. Chinese manufacturers account for more than half of all smartphone sales in India.

India’s minister for state for IT, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, however, said the news was “plain wrong” and that “there is no ‘security testing’ or ‘crackdown’ as story suggests”. He added, in a post on Twitter, that there was an ongoing consultation between the government and the industry. He did not elaborate. India has ramped up scrutiny of Chinese businesses since a 2020 border clash between the neighbours, banning more than 300 Chinese apps, including TikTok. It has also intensified scrutiny of investments by Chinese firms. Globally too, many nations have imposed restrictions on the use of technology from Chinese firms like Huawei and Hikvision on fears Beijing could use them to spy on foreign citizens. China denies these allegations. Currently, most smartphones come with pre-installed apps that cannot be deleted, such as Chinese smartphone maker Xiaomi’s app store GetApps, Samsung’s payment app Samsung Pay mini and iPhone maker Apple’s browser Safari.





Roving entertainment shows at QIFF enthrall visitors.



Georgian chef Georgi Alugishvili and Qatari chef Aisha al-Tamimi, along with Georgian ambassador Nikoloz Revazishvili, at a recent live cooking demonstration at QIFF 2023.



Activities for children at the venue.

# QIFF offers visitors a taste of the world

By Joey Aguilar  
Staff Reporter

The variety of food offerings – a mix of Arab and international cuisines – at the 12th Qatar International Food Festival (QIFF) continues to lure thousands of residents and visitors, highlighting the country's diverse and vibrant gastronomic landscape.

The latest edition of the annual festivity, taking place at Al Sa'ad Plaza in Lusail Boulevard, a modern and iconic venue, features more than 80 culinary vendors and several other activations, entertainment and live cooking demonstrations such as the Georgian culinary show.

Georgian chef Georgi Alugishvili, along with Qatari chef Aisha al-Tamimi, prepared authentic Georgian dishes at a recent live demonstration, which was attended by Georgian ambassador Nikoloz Revazishvili, community members and other guests.

Highlighting the history and popularity of Georgian cuisine, the envoy said: "Food plays a very important role in Georgian identity. The foods and flavours of Georgia reflect the country's geographic setting. For centuries, Georgia served as a stop on East-West trade routes. As traders passed through, the Georgians borrowed and assimilated the flavours and culinary traditions of visitors."

"Georgian cuisine now incorporates flavours and influences from the foods of Mediterranean, Persian and Asian cuisines. With time, each Georgian region has developed its own distinctive

contributions to the country's culinary identity. People travelling from Qatar to Georgia fall in love with Georgian food and, as a result, Georgian cuisine is gaining more and more popularity in Qatar."

He added that two Georgian restaurants opened in Doha recently – Mosavali at Doha Oasis and Al Terrace at Souq Waqif, both showcasing authentic Georgian cuisine. According to Revazishvili, traditional Georgian cuisine combines fresh meats, fresh vegetables, herbs and spices into distinctly flavourful dishes that are considered among the healthiest in the world. He noted that for foreigners, Georgian cuisine is mostly associated with Khachapuri – a cheese-filled bread – or Khinkali – meat-stuffed dumplings.

"However, Georgian gastro culture can offer a wide range of traditional courses. One of them is Chakapuli – lamb stew with fresh greens, also Kharcho – beef stew with walnuts and Georgian spices, along with other traditional dishes. The menus at Georgian restaurants in Doha provide a wide variety of authentic Georgian dishes," he said.

About the event, Revazishvili said QIFF has proven to be one of the most attractive festivals for gastronomy lovers, where international and local cuisines are well presented, giving visitors an array of options to choose from and experience the diverse cuisine.

He stressed that family-friendly entertainment and the chance to meet and learn from the most talented chefs provide a truly captivating experience for all visitors at QIFF.

Stalls at the Qatar International Food Festival are witnessing hectic activity.  
**PICTURES:** Thajudheen, Joey Aguilar and Georgian embassy

Entertainment galore at QIFF.



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+974 44191441  
+974 44099088  
+974 44482555  
+974 44118704  
+974 44689058

FOR ALL BULK PURCHASE  
Phone no: +974 74481312  
E-mail: corporatesales@safarigroup.net

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