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BUSINESS | Page 1

Baladna's revenue jumps 28% to QR986mn in 2022

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GULF TIMES

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PM holds phone call with top EU official

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani received yesterday a phone call from High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell. At the outset of the call, Borrell congratulated HE Sheikh Mohamed on his appointment as prime minister, wishing him continued success in his new post. They discussed aspects of co-operation between Qatar and the European Union, as well as a number of regional issues, including developments in Palestine and the Iranian nuclear file. **(QNA)**

Annual report on Islamic philanthropy launched

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), launched its fifth annual report on Islamic philanthropy yesterday during an event held in partnership with HE Sheikh Thani bin Abdullah al-Thani, UNHCR's Eminent Advocate, at the Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies in Doha. The event included a presentation of the report's top findings, which indicated that UNHCR was able to help more than 1.5mn people in 2022, bringing the total refugees and internally displaced persons benefiting from the Zakat and Sadaqah contributions received by the Refugee Zakat Fund, to more than 6mn people in 26 countries since its launch in 2017. **Page 6**

Macron win on pension bill risks fuelling anger

President Emmanuel Macron's move to shun the National Assembly and push through an unpopular pension system overhaul without a vote in the lower house may secure a reform he says is needed for France's finances. But it may end up a Pyrrhic victory. By using special constitutional powers instead of risking lawmakers rejecting the reform, Macron has given ammunition to the opposition and to trade union leaders who cast the reform as undemocratic. It could also play into the far-right's hands. **Page 9**

US senate acts to end Iraq war authorisation

Almost exactly 20 years after US forces invaded Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power, the US Senate moved yesterday to revoke the law that authorised then-president George W Bush to launch the war. Senators from both parties strongly supported cancelling the 2002 authorisation. The same bill also revokes the 1991 AUMF that empowered Bush's father president George HW Bush to attack Iraq after Saddam's forces invaded Kuwait. The 2002 AUMF has been mostly moribund.

US banking system sound, says Yellen

The US banking system remains sound and Americans can feel confident that their deposits will be there when needed, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said yesterday, although she denied that recent emergency actions following two large bank failures means that a blanket government guarantee now existed for all deposits. "A bank only gets that treatment (guaranteed deposits)," she said. Her comment meant that tens of billions in uninsured deposits at Silicon Valley and Signature (banks) were not lost.

COMMUNITY

See Pages: 7 & 8

Amir crowns winners of Purebred Arabian Camel Festival



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani attended yesterday the final four rounds of the annual purebred Arabian camel race festival on His Highness' sword for the 2022-2023 season at Al Shahaniya racetrack. The Amir crowned the winners of the final four races for the camels of Sheikhs on the golden trophies. The Amir also crowned the winners in the final six races of the tribes members' category. Also, the Amir honoured the sponsoring companies of the festival. The final day's competitions were attended by a number of Sheikhs and ambassadors accredited to the State, tribes members, and fans of the sport. **(QNA) Page 12**



GSF throws light on post-Covid challenges

Qatar lauded for hostage negotiation support

The Global Security Forum (GSF) 2023 closed in Doha yesterday after three days of powerful insights into the threats facing and prospects for securing a safer world. During its final day, GSF 2023's invited gathering of ministers, government officials, law enforcers, security agency heads, academia, media, and private sector leaders heard alerts and optimism impacting the post-Covid world and the prospects for technology and space advancement.

Ambassador Roger Carstens, US Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, explained that the process of securing the release of hostages and repatriating them requires negotiation and co-ordination between the Hostage Affairs Office, hostages' families and all relevant state and non-state actors. The ambassador urged increased public awareness to deter citizens from returning to detainee countries. He acknowledged a

concerning rise in wrongful detainment by state actors and said that the Levinson Act was a step in the right direction. Ambassador Carstens explained that his office prioritises the needs of hostage and detainee families and strives to support and keep them informed throughout the process, allowing media engagement if preferred.

'The only way to bring change to Afghanistan is by continuing civil resistance led by women'

President & Founder of the James W. Foley Legacy Foundation, Diane Foley – the mother of journalist Jim Foley, who lost his life as a hostage – expressed appreciation for the Levinson Act, which defines wrongful detention criteria and the need for partnerships and co-operation

with state actors, media, and other relevant parties. "We must work together on this," she said. "We need more research, we need to really have evidence-based strategies to deal with this problem," she added. Foley concluded by expressing appreciation for Qatar and its negotiation leadership.

During a panel discussion on Afghanistan's current challenges and future prospects, Fawzia Koofi, the Afghan Parliament's Former Second Deputy Speaker and leading women's rights activist, said the Taliban's ideology is unchanged and its lack of governance still prevents Afghans from writing their own narrative. Koofi said that the Taliban feel threatened by Daesh and that the only way to bring change to Afghanistan is by continuing civil resistance led by women, leveraging Taliban's fragmentation, and achieving international consensus. **To Page 5**

Qatar Kite Festival takes off



The 2023 Qatar Kite Festival began yesterday at MIA Park. The three-day event features a dazzling array of uniquely patterned kites – by teams from France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Thailand, Türkiye, the UK and the US. The timings are 2pm to 9pm today (Friday) and 11am to 9pm tomorrow (Saturday). **PICTURE: Thajudheen Page 12**

QM launches Beirut exhibition at Mathaf



One of the artworks on display at the exhibition.

Under the patronage of Qatar Museums Chairperson HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art yesterday launched Beirut and the Golden Sixties: A Manifesto of Fragility exhibition.

A part of the Qatar Creates week, the exhibition will be open until August 5. Beirut and the Golden Sixties: A Manifesto of Fragility is curated by Sam

Bardaouil and Till Fellrath, directors of Hamburger Bahnhof National Museum of Contemporary Art in Berlin, and assistant curator Natasha Gasparian.

First shown at Gropius Bau, Berlin (March 24-June 12, 2022) and at the 16th Lyon Biennial of Contemporary Art, France (September 14-December 31, 2022), the exhibition revisits a dazzling chapter from the Beirut's modern history between 1958 and 1978. **To Page 5**

Microsoft applies AI powers to 'copilot' Excel, Outlook

Microsoft pressed on with its AI revolution yesterday, announcing that it would apply the powers behind ChatGPT to its iconic Excel, Word and Outlook programmes.

The Redmond, Washington giant has been swiftly adopting language-based AI, showing less caution than its rivals despite early problems such as chatbots giving disturbing responses or blatantly inaccurate information.

Microsoft's latest chatbot, called Copilot, will put ChatGPT-like abilities to work in offices, churning out meeting transcripts, calendar entries or PowerPoint slides almost instantaneously.

The thrust of the new release is that generative AI, the term for ChatGPT style capabilities, will function as an assistant for users of Microsoft's popular workplace software and not unilaterally take over office tasks.

"You could say we've been using AI on autopilot and with this next generation of AI, we



are moving from autopilot to copilot," Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said at a virtual release event.

First open to select business customers for testing, AI will offer a draft in these applications, speeding up content creation and freeing up workers' time, Microsoft said.

The Redmond-based company, outpacing peers through investments in ChatGPT's creator OpenAI, also showcased a new "business chat" experience that can pull data and perform tasks across applications on a user's written command.

"We believe this next generation of AI will unlock a new wave of productivity growth," Satya Nadella, Microsoft's chief executive, said.

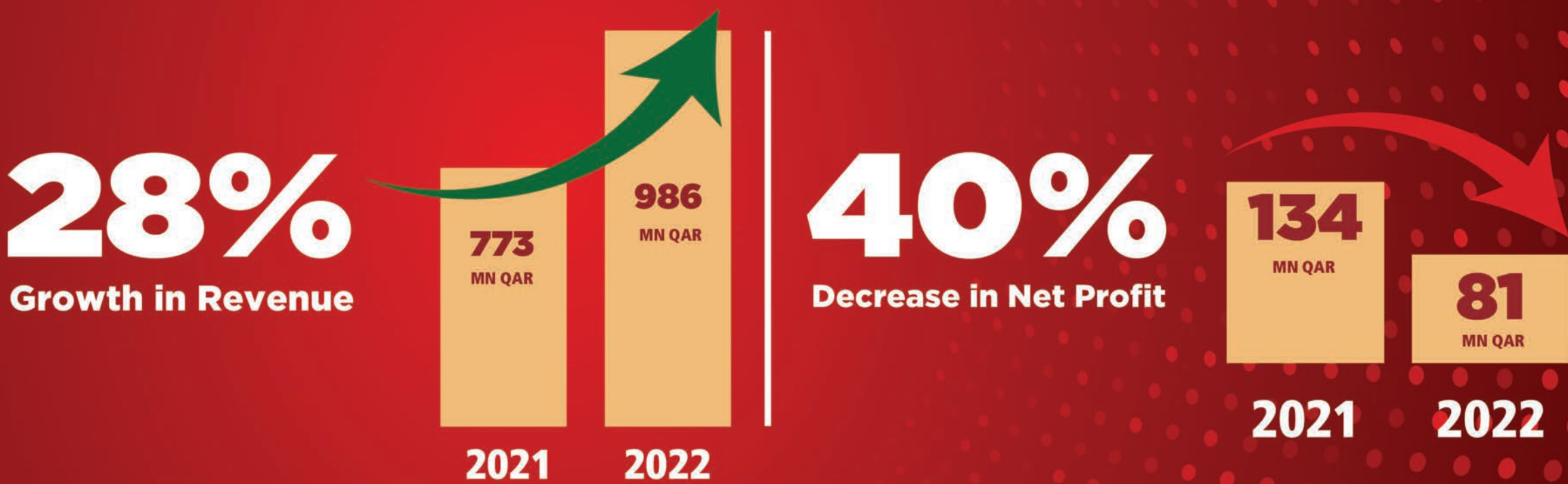
This week's drumbeat of news including new funding for AI startup Adept reflects how companies large and small are locked in a fierce competition to deploy software that could reshape how people work. **(AFP)**

BALADNA reports a significant growth in top line of 28% associated with market share increase

A decline of net profit due to the increase in cost of animal feed, raw materials, packaging material, fuel, logistics and finance cost
While the retail price of most products remains unchanged, coordination with authorities on possible solutions are being studied.



بلادنا ش.م.ع.ق.
BALADNA Q.P.S.C.



Baladna Q.P.S.C. (Baladna) announced yesterday its results for the year ended 31 December 2022.

- Revenue of QAR 986 million, representing a year-on-year growth of 28%, and net profit of QAR 81 million for the year ended 31 December 2022, compared to QAR 773 million of revenue and QAR 134 million net profit for the previous year.
- Increased market share across all product categories through an increase in sale volumes
- Optimization of the product portfolio through the introduction of value accretive products
- Strong recovery of HORECA and retail channels driven by improving market dynamics

Baladna effectively grew its top line during the twelve-month period ending on 31 December 2022, achieving a revenue of QAR 986 million, compared to QAR 773 million revenue in the previous year, representing a growth of 28%. Baladna achieved a net profit of QAR 81 million in FY22 compared to QAR 134 million in the previous year. The net profit declined due to the increase in the cost of animal feed, raw materials, packaging materials, fuel, logistics and finance cost, which negatively impacted the company's profits, results and cash flow, leading to the company's inability to pay dividends to its shareholders for 2022 results as it used to do every year.

Baladna is actively coordinating with authorities to study multiple solutions for reducing the effects of high production costs on the company's profitability.

In order to mitigate the impact of the increase of input costs, and through the implementation of management plans for new initiatives to capitalize on improving market dynamics during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™, Baladna has nevertheless managed to increase sale volumes across both the retail and HORECA (Hotels, Restaurants and Cafe) channels. This resulted in an increase in sales volumes across all product categories.

Baladna also managed to enhance operational efficiencies through a reduction in sales wastage and management of overhead costs.

Baladna is continuously assessing opportunities to enhance its product mix by developing and introducing new, innovative products and optimizing its product portfolio. During the year 2022, Baladna managed to introduce a number of new SKUs to optimize and enhance its product portfolio.

As part of the company's plans to further increase growth in the local market, Baladna is pleased to announce that the construction of the evaporated milk processing factory is progressing well and is currently in its final stages. The facility is expected to be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2023, with commercial production expected to start at the beginning of the second quarter of 2023.

Additionally, as part of Baladna's diversification strategy, the company is continuously seeking and evaluating business opportunities locally and abroad. The recent acquisition of E-Life, a Qatari detergent processing factory (75% stake), is expected to start generating revenue for the company in the year 2023.

International expansion opportunities and partnerships are key for long-term growth and remain a focus area for Baladna. Opportunities in the local market and beyond are being evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with feasibility studies currently underway. As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance operational efficiencies and support food security and self-sufficiency, Baladna is considering potential value accretive options for backward integration that would ensure the supply and quality of feed, a critical component of the company's operations.

Baladna's strategic focus remains on creating value for shareholders through its ongoing strategic initiatives within the State of Qatar. The company is committed to delivering superior products, expanding its product portfolio, and focusing on efficiency across the entire value chain.

Key Operating Highlights



Improved revenue performance, driven by management initiatives to capitalize on improving market dynamics during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™



Increased sales volumes across both retail and HORECA channels, and all product categories



Improved potential for further growth in the local market with the evaporated milk factory reaching the final stages of construction



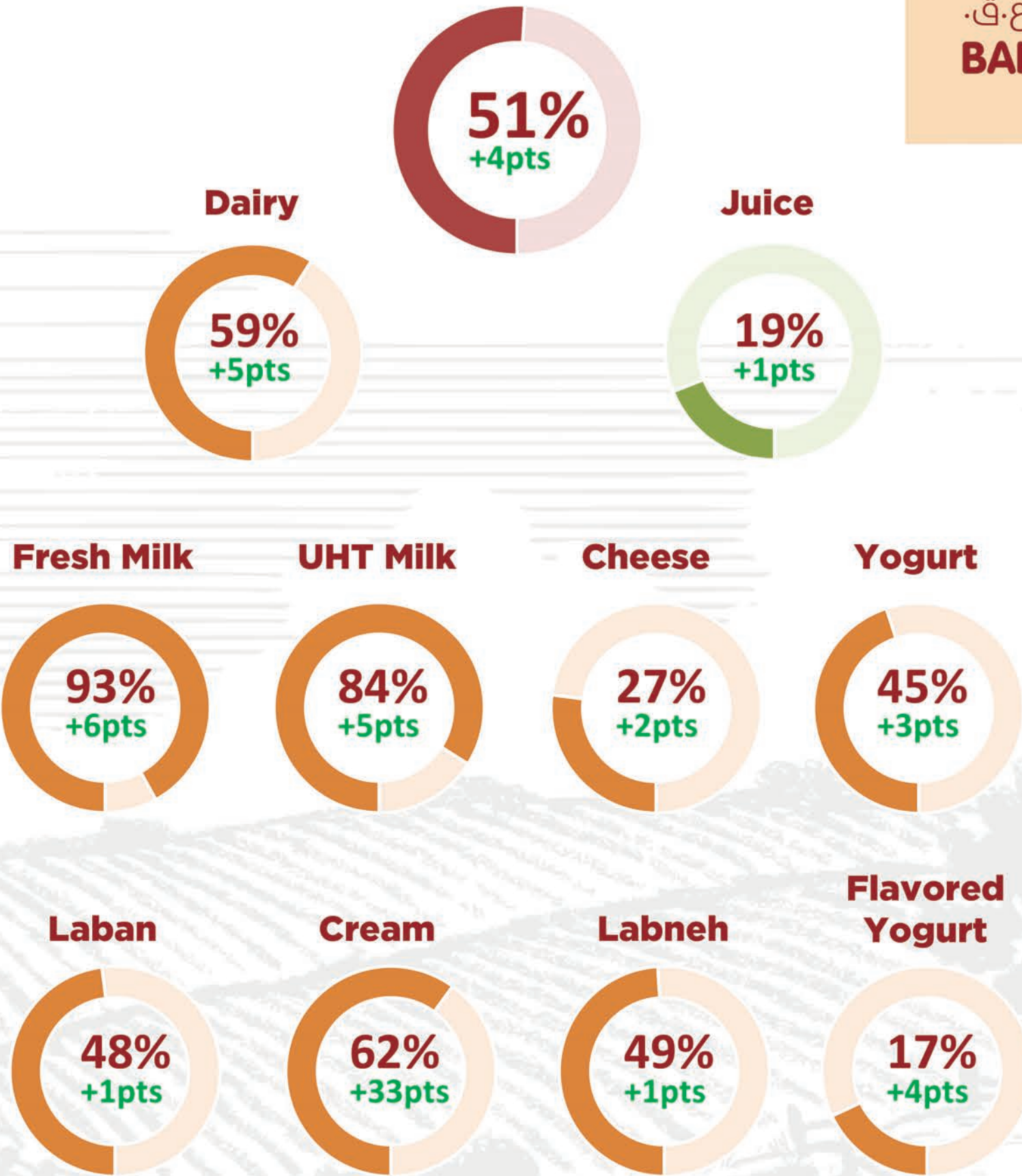
Enhanced diversification initiatives through the acquisition of a 75% stake in E-Life detergent processing factory

For the complete financial statements ,please visit www.baladna.com/investor-relations or email: ir@baladna.com

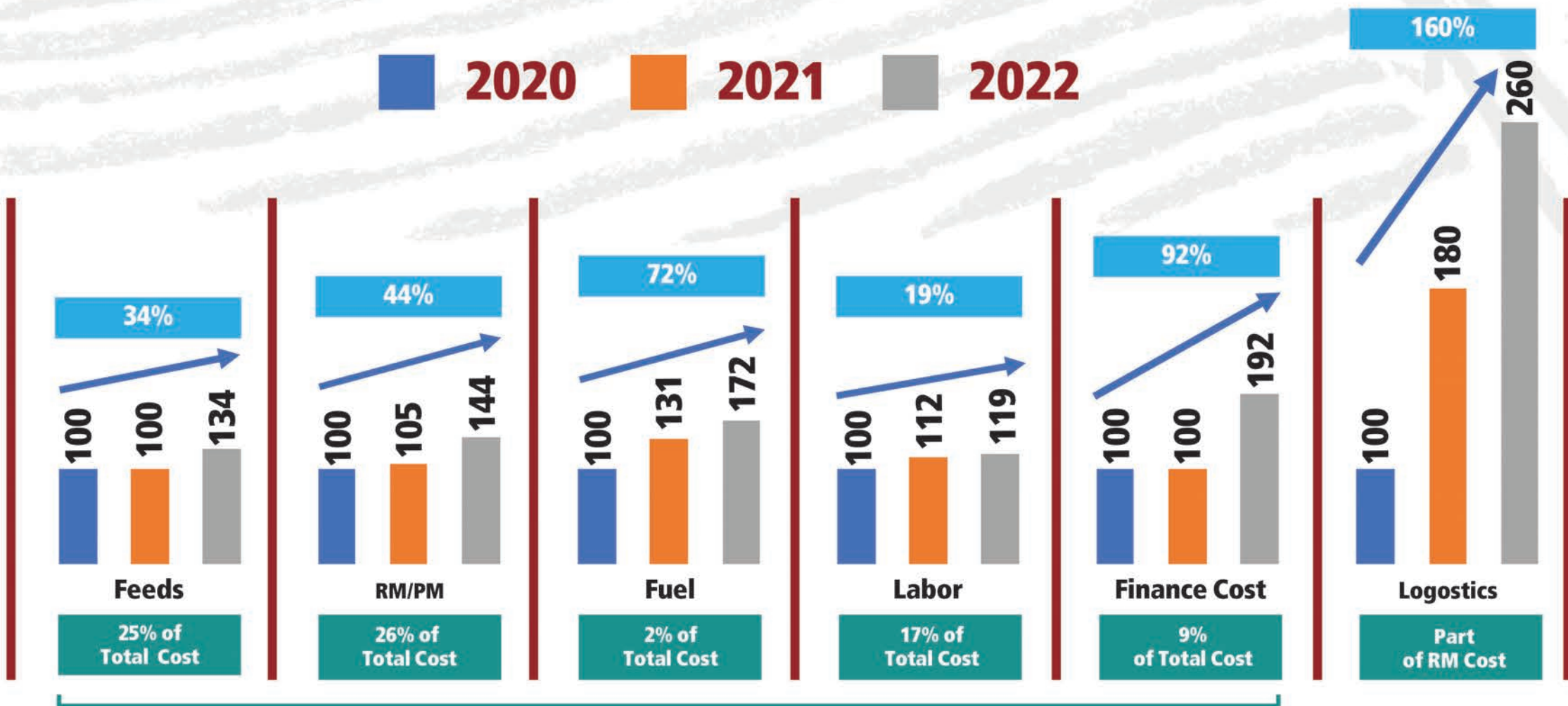


بلدنا ش.م.ع.ق.
BALADNA Q.P.S.C.

Growth in topline of 28% driven mostly by increase in market share



The Drop in Net Profit Due to International Price Increases



The above comprises of 77% of the total cost



Deputy speaker meets first deputy chairman of Ukrainian parliament



HE the Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti met yesterday with First Deputy Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (parliament) Oleksandr Kornienko, and his accompanying delegation, who is currently visiting the country. The meeting discussed aspects of co-operation between the Shura Council and the Ukrainian parliament and ways of enhancing them. The meeting was attended by a number of members of the Shura Council and the Ukrainian parliament, and ambassador of Ukraine to Qatar Kuzmenko Andrii. **(QNA)**

Official

PM receives phone call from Tunisian counterpart

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani received yesterday a phone call from Prime Minister of Tunisia Najla Bouden Romdhane. At the beginning of the phone conversation, the Tunisian PM expressed her congratulations to HE Sheikh Mohamed on his appointment as prime minister, wishing him success in the new position. The two sides also discussed bilateral relations and ways of enhancing and developing them in various fields. **(QNA)**

Interior minister meets Maldivian counterpart



HE the Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani met yesterday with Minister of Home Affairs of Maldives Sheikh Imran Abdulla, who is visiting the country. They discussed relations between the two countries in security fields, and ways to support and develop them, in addition to several issues of mutual interest. **(QNA)**

Labour minister meets ILO senior officials



HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri held a number of meetings with Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Gilbert Houngbo, Worker Vice-Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body Catelene Passchier, and ILO's Director of Multilateral Cooperation Department Christophe Perrin, on the sidelines of the ILO Governing Council in Geneva. During the meetings, aspects of joint co-operation between Qatar and the ILO and ways to support and develop them during the coming period were discussed, especially the initiative to develop capacities and train specialists in the labour sector in Qatar. He highlighted the most important achievements made during the past years through the technical co-operation programme between Qatar and the ILO, and affirmed Qatar's interest in continuing and strengthening joint co-operation, especially after the official launch of the ILO office within the United Nations House in Qatar. He noted the effective partnership with international trade unions in modernising and improving the work environment and exchanging experiences with regard to the successful experiences that have been implemented, pointing to the readiness of Qatar to provide assistance and expertise to all countries wishing to make a change in the work environment. **(QNA)**

Al-Muraikhi in Mauritania meetings



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met with Prime Minister in the Office of the President and Minister of Finance of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana Dr Ashni Singh, on the sidelines of the 49th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation in the Mauritanian capital, Nouakchott. They discussed the bilateral co-operation.



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met with Minister of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Ivorians in the Diaspora of Cote d'Ivoire Kandia Kamissoko Camara, on the sidelines of the 49th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation in Mauritania's capital Nouakchott. The two sides discussed bilateral relations. **(QNA)**

Al-Sulaiti meets El Salvador minister



HE the Minister of Transport Jassim bin Saif al-Sulaiti met with Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador Adriana Mira, who is visiting the country. They discussed bilateral relations in various fields of transportation and ways to enhance and develop them. They also discussed several topics of common interest. **(QNA)**

Second vice-president of Costa Rica meets ambassador of Qatar



Second Vice-President of Costa Rica and Minister of Sports Mary Munive Angermuller, met with ambassador of Qatar to Costa Rica Dr Khamis bin Rashid al-Kaabi. They discussed relations between the two countries. **(QNA)**

Qatar showcases innovations, capability in achieving SDGs

QNA
New York

HE the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations Sheikhha Alya bint Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani participated in the International Conference on Innovation and Technological Advances for Sustainability, organised by the University of Doha for Science and Technology in Doha.

In her speech during the conference, HE Sheikhha Alya said that science, technology, and innovation, as well as funding development, are essential means to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030 in light of the multidimensional and multifaceted crises facing the world, which got more complicated by Covid-19 pandemic, inflation, debt burdens, negative impacts of climate change, and conflicts around the world.

She noted that it is clear by now that science and technology form a solid platform on which consensus and co-ordination of efforts



HE Sheikhha Alya bint Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani

and positions are based when addressing complex issues, as demonstrated in the multilateral efforts aimed at managing several issues, including climate change, Covid-19 pandemic, water, and renewable energy.

HE Sheikhha Alya said that Qatar took long strides in innovation and advanced technology for sustainability in line with Qatar National Vision 2030, which is a comprehensive national vision that aims to achieve sustainable development across all sectors of the economy and stresses the importance of innovation, technology, and research in achieving the SDGs. She pointed out that the main achievements of Qatar in the

topics related to innovation and technology include four projects.

The first project is the Qatar Science and Technology Park, a leading central hub for research and innovation that provides a platform for technology-based startups and entrepreneurs, allowing them to develop their ideas and market them. The park works in partnership with leading international companies and research institutions to create an environment for innovation and entrepreneurship in Qatar.

The second project is Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, a non-profit organisation working on promoting education, research, and community development. Qatar Foundation has established many world-class educational and research institutions in Qatar, including Sidra Medicine and Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar.

The third project is Earthna, a non-profit centre focused on policy research and advocacy, established under Qatar Foundation (QF) to provide a comprehensive and integrated vision of envi-

ronmental, social, and economic prosperity. The fourth project is Al Kharsaah Solar photovoltaic (PV) Independent Power Producer, the first large-scale solar power plant in the country. On environmental sustainability, HE Sheikhha Alya indicated that Qatar is committed to protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development, as Qatar has implemented many initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions, preserving water resources, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

She expressed her pride in the outstanding development the country is witnessing in science and technology, stressing that advancement does not only support the development of Qatar's economy but also benefits the most vulnerable countries. She noted that Doha's hosting of the 5th United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) during the period from March 5-9 is a clear example of Qatar's role and commitment to supporting the most vulnerable groups to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Qatar, El Salvador hold second round of political consultations



Doha hosted the second round of political consultations between the ministries of foreign affairs of Qatar and El Salvador. The Qatari side was chaired by HE Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi, while it was chaired on the Salvadoran side by Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador Adriana Mira. The round of political consultations discussed bilateral co-operation in addition to other issues of joint interest. **(QNA)**

NCSA conducts training course

The National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) organised a five-day mandatory specialised training course in cyber security 'level 1' with the participation of more than 60 trainees from many governmental and non-governmental entities. Several entities, such as the Supreme Judiciary Council, the Government Communications Office, Qatar National Bank, The Amiri Diwan, the Public Prosecution, and the Public Works Authority (Ashghal) were represented. The NCSA seeks to enhance the cybersecurity competencies on a national level through training and development to combat cyber-attacks, as it is a shared responsibility between individuals and institutions to keep the nation's cyber space secured.



Qatar World Cup hosting lauded at Arab media conference in Kuwait

Kuwaiti Minister of Information and Culture Abdulrahman Badah al-Mutairi said that Qatar has made an impressive success in hosting the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. Addressing the 98th regular session of the Standing Committee for Arab Media, which was held in Kuwait, he congratulated Qatar for its success in hosting the 2022 World Cup, calling it the largest sports and media event. Al-Mutairi attributed the great

success achieved by Qatar to the professional organisation and the advanced outstanding infrastructure, pointing out that the country was able to take advantage of this global occasion to highlight authentic Arab values and express them in the best way. In his speech, al-Mutairi added that the Palestinian issue topped the agenda of the current session, reiterating his country's official and popular position in support of the Palestinian people until they

obtain their full legitimate rights in an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital, pursuant to international references, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the Arab peace initiative. He explained that the meeting dealt with many important media issues, including the Palestinian issue, addressing the phenomenon of terrorism, providing community protection against rumours and misleading

information, developing a unified strategy for co-operation with all international media companies, and adopting the Arab media map for sustainable development 2030. He stressed that these issues require close Arab co-operation between states and media organisations, in order to achieve positive interaction towards these issues in light of the widespread and rapid development of electronic media technologies. **(QNA)**

‘Qatar 2022 a celebration of humanity’

Qatar’s successful staging of the FIFA World Cup was a celebration of humanity and a truly transformational event for the entire Arab world, the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy HE Hassan al-Thawadi told the Global Security Forum, which concluded in Doha on Wednesday.

In a fireside chat he stated that the tournament provided a platform for uniting fans and dispelling stereotypes – while showcasing the power of major sporting events.

“What makes me proud is that 13 years ago we approached this tournament in a unique and innovative way. We recognised its transformative power for Qatar and the region – and were able to deliver operational excellence and the best World Cup in history,” said al-Thawadi.

“The compact concept meant fans and players were in one place. It resulted in the most



HE Hassan al-Thawadi at the Global Security Forum.

goals ever in the World Cup and some of the most exciting matches. There were representatives of all confederations in the last 16 and the greatest final of any sporting event. Fans watched more than one match a day, with some people attending every single match. I don’t think this will ever be repeated. It was a life-changing experience for so many people.”

Al-Thawadi said safety and se-

curity were delivered at the highest level during the 29-day tournament, which culminated with Argentina lifting the trophy at Lusail Stadium. “There were many questions in the build-up about fans and riots and hooligans,” said al-Thawadi. “The first aspect for us as organisers was prevention – identifying troublemakers and working out how to manage and diffuse potential situations, with a goal of making sure people can have fun without an overwhelming security presence.”

“I can only commend the work that was done. There were many lessons learned and now we are in discussions with future hosts who want to discuss our experience and see how it can be applied to their own events.”

The success of Qatar’s FIFA World Cup – the first staging of the tournament in the Middle East and Arab world – speaks volumes for the power of football, he added.



The curators and other officials explaining about the Beirut and the Golden Sixties: A Manifesto of Fragility exhibition yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

QM launches Beirut exhibition

From Page 1

With more than 225 artworks and 300 archival documents from 36 collections in 16 cities worldwide, it highlights Beirut’s pivotal role in elaborating a new vision for modernity through a politically engaged art where everything seemed possible.

In recognising the complex links between the past and Beirut’s current struggles, the exhibition questions the romanticising narrative of the so-called “Golden Age” that ultimately led to the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. Showcasing the city’s unparalleled cosmopolitanism, the exhibition traces the complex entanglement of art and culture within the divergent trans-regional antagonisms of that highly charged period.

Beirut and the Golden Sixties: A Manifesto of Fragility presents the work of many internationally-known figures in the art scene, such as Etel Adnan, Huguette Caland, Paul Guiragossian, Saloua Raouda Choucair, and Shafic Abboud, as well as various renowned artists working in the region, such as Adel Saghir, Cici

Sursock, Nadia Saikali, and Rafic Charaf, among others.

The exhibition also features a newly commissioned multimedia installation by Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige about the devastating 2020 explosion in Beirut, shedding new light on the transformative effects of violence on art and artistic production and the power of poetry in opposition to chaos.

HE Sheikha Al Mayassa said: “One of the many functions of art is to recollect or reimagine a home that has been lost. One of the many functions of an art museum is to create a new home, if only a temporary one, where people who are scattered can come together for a moment, pause, and reflect. Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art is such a home. Its collection, exhibitions, and programmes bring together the visions of artists, and the voices of thinkers, from the far-flung Arab world, many of whom have personally experienced the pangs of displacement and exile. Mathaf’s exhibition Beirut and the Golden Sixties is another such ingathering. It is an extraordinary, moving, and

deeply thoughtful assemblage of artworks and documents, many by artists who are represented in Mathaf’s collection, about a place that was both fabled and troubled and that now, though lost forever, cannot be forgotten: the flourishing, cosmopolitan Beirut of 1958 through 1975.”

Zeina Arida, director of Mathaf said: “We are thrilled to present Beirut and the Golden Sixties: A Manifesto of Fragility, a unique presentation of Beirut’s history from 1958 through 1975. This exhibition paves the way to a series of exhibitions at Mathaf, which would connect artistic production to communities. I foresee Mathaf as an inclusive space, where its unique collection would always be more and more accessible to the local and international audience.

The exhibition features artists who are part of Mathaf Collection, which adds eight works from its collection and several archival documents that bring an additional understanding of the artist’s practices. We look forward to welcoming the public to delve into the events that change the history of Beirut.”

GSF throws light on post-Covid challenges

From Page 1

Meanwhile, Hekmat Karzai, Chairman of the Center for Conflict and Peace Studies and Afghanistan’s former Deputy Foreign Minister, identified a sole focus of the international community on Ukraine, but argued it gives Afghans the opportunity to advance to a stage where they’re able to effectively interface with the Taliban and exclude third parties from the conversation. He highlighted the need to rationalise funds entering Afghanistan and ensuring that it reaches the people, rather than funding Taliban soldiers.

Panelists agreed that women’s right to education remains a top priority and that an inclusive government is necessary for a brighter future for Afghanistan.

In a fireside chat on the role of sports in bringing people together, HE Hassan al-Thawadi, Secretary-General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, said that the tournament created unique bonding experiences and a platform for nations to celebrate their cultures together.

The output he said, spoke volumes about the power of sports in creating global unity and in breaking down stereotypes about the Arab World.

HE al-Thawadi highlighted the safe and secure experience that ran parallel to the sporting event as well as the international partnerships formed to ensure visitors’ safety. He added that the host nation also worked to anticipate events and put in place

processes to prevent escalation.

In her closing remarks, Lori Wachs, Board Member of the Forum’s organising team, said: “Despite the complex and multifaceted crises so many of our speakers have highlighted, it is clear that no country can address these alone; whether energy insecurity, conflict, or violent far-right movements.

In this context, cooperation at multiple levels, national, regional, and international, is even more critical.”

Findings and recommendations from GSF 2023 will be presented to key stakeholders at prestigious international meetings and events, including the United Nations, European Union, Global Counterterrorism Forum and the Global Coalition Against ISIS.

Qatar Tourism’s second Shop Qatar raffle draw for nine cash prizes starting from QR10,000 and one BMW X5 took place at Place Vendôme Mall. During Shop Qatar 2023, participants are eligible to enter a draw for mega prizes worth over QR2mn for every QR200 they spend.

The final draw will take place on March 18, at Doha Festival City, at 8pm. The grand prize is a studio apartment in The Pearl-Qatar.

The 10 winners of the second raffle draw are: QR10,000 cash prize – Alanoud Talib Sjaiffa (Qatar), voucher number 160885; Ekran Gunasan (France), 76616; Fadel Hachem (Lebanon), 60438; Mohd Khalifa M Almohannadi (Qatar), 45911; Noura al-Guteal (Saudi Arabia), 113416; Rom Nath Sapkota (Nepal), 80037; QR20,000 cash prize – Alessandro Mengoni (Italy), 21398; Mouloud

Shop Qatar second raffle draw held



Askarne (Morocco), 161071; Raghabendra Woody (India), 08424; BMX X5 – Areej Bassam (Jordan), 52227.

Shop Qatar, which runs until March 18, sees the participation of Doha Festival City, Place Vendôme, Lagoona Mall,

Landmark Mall, Al Khor Mall, City Center Doha, Hyatt Plaza, Mall of Qatar, Gulf Mall and Al Hazm.

Mada wins ESCWA digital Arabic content award

Assistive Technology Center Qatar ‘Mada’ won the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Award for Arabic Digital Content for the year 2023 for its Unified Arabic Braille Portal, the first initiative in the world to provide eight-point Braille tables in Arabic.

Mada Center was honoured with the award during the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development (AFSD) 2023, which was held in Beirut from March 14 to 16, under the slogan “Solutions and Action”.

The centre’s participation in the award comes in line with its role in improving the ecosystem

for persons with disabilities to be ICT accessible and to achieve independence, unlock their potential, enhance their capabilities, improve their quality of life, and empower them in various aspects of their lives within the framework of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

To promote its role as the leading centre for innovation in the field of ICT access in Arabic in the region and the world, and within the framework of the Mada Innovation Program, Mada Center launched in 2020, for the first time in the Arab world, the Unified Arabic Braille Portal, which provides a comprehensive and integrated reference for

the blind in the Arab world. The portal aims to enrich Arabic digital content in line with the latest international trends and best practices that are consistent with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

It is worth noting that the Unified Arabic Braille portal is the first of its kind in the world of innovation and in the Arab world, where the first computerised Arabic Braille table with eight dots was developed to support Braille abbreviations in the fields of mathematics and science, and to take advantage of the multiple advantages of this table, such as writing or reading single symbol in one cell

and supporting some computer symbols. This table is a significant addition and a quantum leap that will help users of Braille displays and speaking computer programs to have a smoother use of the Braille method.

The new tables were published in 2021 and the entire library was introduced as an open-source resource for use by screen displays. It is also available in Arabic and accessible for everyone to use, especially the blind and blind-deaf people, experts, teachers, students, software developers, assistive technology manufacturers, and those who want to learn the Braille system.

Katara to host symposium on Theatre Day

QNA

Doha

The Cultural Village Foundation (Katara) is set to mark the World Theatre Day, which falls on March 27 every year, with the aim of reviving this global occasion. The celebration will include a symposium under the title ‘Qatari Theatre... Between Reality and Hope’, in which the theatre critic Dr Hassan Rashid, the author and theatre director Hamad al-Rumaihi, and artist and director Jassem Ahmed al-Ansari will participate.

The symposium deals with the beginnings of the Qatari theatre, and the difficulties that the playwrights faced in the beginning, the formation of private theatrical groups, the factors of theatre flourishing in the ’80s and ’90s of the last century, and the challenges facing the Qatari theatre at the present time. This will be followed by proposals that would bring this theatre back to the fore again.

For his part, Director of Cultural Affairs and Events at the Cultural Village Foundation (Katara) Khalid Abdulrahim al-Sayed said that the Qatari theatre has a significant legacy that extends back nearly five decades, as Qatar is one of the first Gulf countries in which theatre has a strong presence in the cultural arena.

He pointed out that Katara sought to invest its exhibition halls equipped with the latest technology, such as the opera house, drama theatre and out-

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door theatre, in creating a theatrical movement that continues throughout the year.

Therefore, in 2017, the Katara theatre activities were launched, which are concerned with revitalising the theatre by holding many theatrical events. The desired theatrical movement also includes partnerships with Arab and Gulf countries. It should be

noted that theatre is one of the important cultural tools that the Cultural Village Foundation relies on a lot in achieving its vision of global leadership in multicultural activities.

According to Katara cultural index statistics for the period from January to December 2022, Katara presented 82 live theatrical performances.

Seminar discusses multiple facets of ‘discourse on Qatar World Cup’

By Tawfik Lamari

Staff Reporter



relations, drawing on fieldwork and interviews conducted in Qatar and elsewhere. Next, Joel Rookwood, Lecturer in Sport Management at University College Dublin, presented his paper “Building Soft Power and Avoiding Soft Disempowerment Through Football Mega-Events: Addressing Multiculturalism and Global Culture in Qatar”, through which he demonstrated the ways in which Qatar’s hosting of the World Cup was framed as an attempt to influence international audiences and build soft power.

In the second panel, “2022 Qatar World Cup in the Critical Discourse”, Marc Owen Jones, Associate Professor of Middle East Studies at Hamad bin Khalifa University, gave a paper “Reductionism and Orientalism: Ten Years of Media Representation of Qatar’s World Cup in the British Press”. Jones analysed newspaper headlines mentioning Qatar and Russia since 2010 to create a typology of themes and agenda-setting related to Qatar 2022.

Then, Mohamed El-Fatih Hamdi, Assistant Professor at Qatar University, and Hichem Akoubache, Professor at the Department of Mass Communication at Qatar University, referred in their paper “The Campaign against the Qatar World Cup: An Analysis of the French Media Dis-

course.” They illustrated French media rhetoric surrounding the event while identifying the motives behind such propagandistic and hostile discourse against Qatar, seeking to understand why the French media spread doubts about Qatar’s ability to organise this international spectacle.

The third panel “2022 Qatar World Cup from Various Positionalities” included three speakers. Laurent Bonnefoy, Researcher at the French National Centre for Scientific Research explored “Qatar 2022: Competing Narratives in Europe and in the Arab World” the antagonistic debates and narratives in the media and among decision makers before and after the 2022 World Cup. Bonnefoy analysed how these debates cannot be understood merely as opposition between the North and South and stressed a number of internal fault-lines linked to multiculturalism, Islam, and gender.

Abdulrahman Helali, Associate Professor at the Qur’an and Sunnah Program of Qatar University’s College of Sharia and Islamic Studies, presented a paper on “Qatar 2022 in Religious Discourse” to trace and analyse the religious discourse that accompanied the World Cup, which some used as an opportunity for proselytisation and advocacy.

Bouchra Zagagh, Professor of Pedagogical Sociology at the Centre Régional des Métiers de l’Education et de la Formation, presented a paper titled “Qatar 2022 from the Perspective of Arab Digital Networkers”, and used the netnography method to examine how Arab digital networkers interacted with the Qatar World Cup and the accompanying forms of the art of presence, whether in the digital space, on-site (at the stadiums), or the hybrid independent space.

In the fourth and final panel “2022 Qatar World Cup and International Relations Revisited”, Simon Chadwick, Professor of Sport and Geopolitical Economy at Skema Business School, showed how the 2022 FIFA World Cup epitomised the emergence of a new paradigm, sport as geopolitical economy, in his paper “Discourse on the Qatar World Cup: Sport’s New Geopolitical Economy”. Jan Busse, Senior Researcher at the Institute of Political Science of the University of the Bundeswehr Munich, concluded the panel with his paper “Regional Power Play: Shifting Political Dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa in the Context of Qatar’s World Cup”. He departed from the premise that football and politics are inevitably inter-related, arguing that the Qatar World Cup is closely linked to multiple regional political dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa (Mena). Accordingly, based on a practical-theoretical understanding of diplomacy which has gained prominence within International Relations, he addressed the intricacies of regional power politics and how they played out in the context of the World Cup.



With Shura Council participation, IPU General Assembly meetings conclude

QNA
Manama

The General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) concluded on Wednesday the 146th Assembly of the IPU and its related meetings, held with the participation of the Shura Council in Manama from March 11-15 under the theme *Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance*.

Over five days, the meetings witnessed discussions and sessions of the IPU General Assembly, the Governing Council, and various standing and sub-committees, as well as the organisation of a number of workshops and accompanying events, and co-ordination meetings between the various parliamentary groups.

The Shura Council delegation participated in the sessions of the last day of the meetings of the IPU General Assembly, including the closing session, which discussed topics on its agenda, including the adoption of resolutions, reports of Standing Committees, and the final document.

Among the meetings in which the Shura Council delegation participated were the meetings of the IPU Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, in which Shura Council member Mohamed bin Mahdi al-Ahbab participated, where the parliamentary momentum to combat misleading information and hateful and discriminatory content in cyberspace was discussed.

It also dealt with the issue of trafficking in orphanages and the role of parliaments in addressing it.

The sessions of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security were held under Shura Council member al-Ahbab's chairmanship, at which the committee approved its summary report on its activities adopted at the previous session of the IPU General Assembly in Rwanda last year.

As president of the committee, al-Ahbab presented a report to the plenary session.

Shura Council member Nasser bin Mohsin Bukshaisha meanwhile participated in the meetings of the Committee on United Nations Affairs, at which issues in the United Nations



The 146th IPU General Assembly took place in Manama.

and using its sessions as opportunities to mobilise parliamentarians to bring about change in the international body were discussed.

The committee discussed the achievement of gender equality in the United Nations General Assembly.

It reviewed the results of the 2022 IPU survey of about 40 parliaments participating in the voluntary national reviews of the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, and also presented the 2023 survey, which it includes 42 parliaments.

Shura Council member engineer Ahmed bin

Hitmi al-Hitmi took part in sessions of the IPU Permanent Committee for Sustainable Development to discuss parliamentary efforts required to achieve environmental sustainability.

At one of the sessions, al-Hitmi highlighted Qatar's efforts to reduce carbon emissions according to plans crystallised in the Qatar National Strategy for Environment and Climate Change.

Meanwhile, the Parliamentary Network of the Non-Aligned Movement held its second conference, with al-Hitmi's participation, where the report of the network president was reviewed.

The committee discussed a draft decision on the establishment of the Parliamentary Support Group of the Parliamentary Network for the initiatives put forward by the presidency of the Non-Aligned Movement to support the global recovery after the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

Also discussed were draft resolutions on granting observer status to international parliamentary organisations and on amendments to the statutes of the Non-Aligned Movement's working methods.

Shura Council member Omair bin Abdullah al-Nuaimi participated in the Young Parliamentarians Forum, which dealt with assessing the participation of youth at the national and international levels in parliaments and the latest developments in this regard.

HE the Secretary-General of the Shura Council Dr Ahmed bin Nasser al-Fadala participated in a series of meetings of the Assembly of Secretaries-General of National Parliaments of the IPU, which were held daily.

Issues related to the work of the IPU General Secretariat were discussed.

Parliaments and legislative assemblies presented the practices of a number of countries and discussed best practices for digital parliaments.

On the sidelines of the work of the IPU General Assembly, HE Dr al-Fadala met IPU President Duarte Pacheco.

During their meeting, they discussed parliamentary co-operation, relations between the Shura Council and the IPU, and ways to enhance them, in addition to reviewing a number of topics on the IPU General Assembly's agenda.

Carrefour Qatar launches Ramadan campaign

Carrefour Qatar has announced a Ramadan campaign with discounts on a wide range of items until the end of the holy month, based on qualitative data studies and focus groups.

Insights revealed that in Qatar the leading shopping motivation during Ramadan is buying ingredients to prepare delicious Iftars and desserts, followed by grooming products, home decorations, and gifts, a statement said.

In response, Carrefour Qatar has targeted its investment primarily on food and beverages, with discounts across a wide range of commodities.

Carrefour regional director Laurent Hausknecht said: "We are here to support our surrounding communities through the hard times as well as the best of times - whether that's keeping our prices as low as possible amidst the rising cost of living, or helping families to celebrate Ramadan with those they love."

With consumers tending to shop more and buy groceries in larger volumes than usual during Ramadan, Carrefour Qatar has announced exclusive online special offers on orders, as well as a competition to enter a draw for a chance to win a car.

To encourage the spirit of giving this year, the brand is offering gift cards.

Customers will be able to purchase gift cards in denominations of QR50, QR100 and QR200.

These Ramadan gift cards can either be brought home, or donated to those in need, the statement added.

Qatar urges global action to protect people from drugs

Qatar has stressed upon prioritising assistance to developing countries to achieve the goals of sustainable development, as they are the key to political and social stability, calling for rapid and effective international action to protect people and future generations from drugs.



This came during Qatar's statement at the 66th session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), delivered by HE the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar Sultan bin Salmeen al-Mansouri (pictured).

He said that Qatar is proud to continue its active role in multilateral international action in various fields and upholding the values and principles of co-operation, partnership and solidarity in helping countries, peoples and societies suffering from economic crises, conflicts, poverty and debt.

HE al-Mansouri said that Qatar has provided many contributions, especially in the framework of strategic partnerships with the UN and other leading international institutions.

He cited the 5th UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which was hosted by Qatar this month, as the latest example of these efforts, during which Qatar donated \$60mn to support the Doha Programme of Action (DPOA) and build capacity in the least developed countries.

HE al-Mansouri also touched upon efforts made at the national level.

He said that Qatar has given priority to prevention efforts,

educating society on the harm and dangers of drugs.

He added that this is one of the most important factors for the success of its policy in the field of prevention and drug control, in addition to law enforcement efforts that include monitoring Qatar's air and sea ports, strict application of the law while updating national legislation in a way that allows quick response to changes in drug trafficking patterns and new methods of drug smuggling, while preserving the principles of Qatar's constitution and with respect for human rights.

HE the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar also spoke on the World Drug Report 2022, the first report following the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

He said that the report presents a bleak picture of the drug situation in the world, with cocaine production reaching a record high.

Seizures of synthetic drugs have also increased dramatically, and markets for these drugs are expanding into new areas.

More young people are taking drugs than previous generations, while people who need treatment are unable to get it, especially women. - **QNA**

Official joins panel discussion on ensuring right to education



Human Rights Department director Dr Turki bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud participated in a panel discussion on international co-operation to guarantee the right to education.

The panel discussion took place on the sidelines of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs celebration of Arab Human Rights Day. The ministry held the celebration in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Arab League, with participation of representatives from Unesco and the UN Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre. - **QNA**

Mazzraty features wide range of products at AgriteQ 2023

By Shafeeq Alingal
Staff Reporter

The National Group for Agriculture and Animal Products, a subsidiary of Al Mana International Holding Group, has made a strong presence for the Mazzraty brand with a wide range of poultry, dairy and vegetable products at the ongoing 10th Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ) 2023 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

"Among the attractions showcased by Mazzraty is the newly introduced marinated fresh chicken, available in five flavours," National Group for Agriculture and Animal Products

executive board member Saad al-Mana told *Gulf Times* yesterday on the sidelines of the exhibition.

A wide range of poultry products are available at the Mazzraty pavilion at AgriteQ 2023, including fresh whole chicken, fresh chicken wings, necks, thighs, whole legs, tenderloin, gizzards, hearts, livers, feet, drumsticks, breast fillet, mixed parts, fresh chicken minced meat and chicken shish tawook.

Dairy products including fresh milk, flavoured milk, labneh, cheese, yogurt, instant full cream milk powder and a variety of juices are also available at Mazzraty's booth number B109 at the event concluding on Sunday.

The products from Mazzraty farms meet the highest quality



Saad al-Mana

standards, are without chemicals or antibiotics, and are processed using state-of-the-art technology.

Al-Mana said that Mazzraty is conducting research and marketing analysis to introduce more high quality products at competitive prices.

Other Mazzraty products at AgriteQ 2023 include honey,



A wide range of Mazzraty products are available at AgriteQ 2023. **PICTURES:** Thajudheen

varieties of dates such as Zahidi, Malaki, Khudry, Safaawy, Sukkary, Suqa'ey, Khalas, Fard,

Barny and Berhi; fresh vegetables such as parsley, aubergine, bean, cucumber, squash, tomato and okra; organic fertilisers; and feed for livestock and birds.

In partnership with Kidzania, Mazzraty lends children a first-hand experience of farming and dairy production through augmented reality (AR), a blender bike, arts and crafts.

The pavilion has a live cookery show with dishes prepared by chef Ahmed al-Zamel.

Al-Mana said AgriteQ 2023 is an ideal venue for Qatari farmers and entrepreneurs to showcase and market their products and share experience while taking new lessons.

AgriteQ 2023 continues to draw crowds



An activity for children at AgriteQ 2023.

The 10th Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ) 2023, on its second day yesterday, continued to attract a large number of visitors.

The exhibition has platforms that allow farmers and experts to exchange experiences while introducing the latest trends and developments.

Gold sponsor, the Public Works Authority (Ashghal), is showcasing its most important projects and initiatives, including green buildings.

Hassad Food, another Gold sponsor, is displaying a variety of high-quality products.



A live cookery show at AgriteQ 2023.

AgriteQ 2023 witnessed yesterday the signing of an agreement between Aalaf Qatar and Al Mirqab

Industrial Investment Company for the distribution and sale of feed products.

UNHCR launches 5th annual report on Islamic philanthropy

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) launched its fifth annual report on Islamic philanthropy yesterday during a forum held in partnership with HE Sheikh Thani bin Abdullah bin Thani al-Thani, UNHCR's Eminent Advocate, at the Centre for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies in Doha.

The report aims to highlight the important role of Islamic philanthropy tools in responding to the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable people worldwide.

The forum included a presentation of the report's top findings, which indicated that the UNHCR was able to help more than 1.5mn people in 2022.

The total number of refugees and internally displaced persons benefiting from the Zakat and Sadaqah (Arabic for charity) contributions received by the Refugee Zakat Fund is now over 6mn in 26 countries since the launch of the fund in 2017.

HE Sheikh Thani's contributions assisted more than half of this number.

The report also states that the UNHCR has distributed 100% of the received Zakat



PICTURE: Thajudheen

contributions to the most vulnerable refugees and displaced families without any deduction, in the form of cash or in-kind assistance such as shelter support materials, medicines and personal hygiene supplies, in addition to providing resources to establish small businesses.

Dr Ayedh Dabsan al-Qahatani, chief executive for the Thani bin Abdullah Foundation for Humanity and UNHCR's Patron, said: "Assisting people most in need is one of the priorities of HE Sheikh Thani bin Abdullah bin Thani al-Thani."

"Refugees and internally displaced persons have long been the focus of his attention, and he generously supported the most disadvantaged refugees and internally displaced persons around the world through the UNHCR," he said.

"As the holy month of Ramadan approaches, we stress the need to continue

supporting those who were forced to flee, and we call on philanthropists around the globe to support them," al-Qahatani added. "In conclusion, we hope this report will inspire others and make a difference in the lives of those forced to flee their homes."

Khaled Khalifa, senior adviser to the High Commissioner for Islamic Philanthropy and the UNHCR's Representative to the Gulf Co-operation Council countries, expressed his gratitude to HE Sheikh Thani and his role in the advancement of Islamic philanthropy.

"The UNHCR is able to provide humanitarian assistance to thousands of refugees and displaced persons worldwide through our close partnerships with individuals and partners, including Qatar Charity and Eid Charity, and many philanthropists who have trust in our work, and those who believe in the role of philanthropy tools in

responding and alleviating the suffering of refugees, displaced persons, and their host communities," he said.

"There is no doubt that our partnership with HE Sheikh Thani bin Abdullah bin Thani al-Thani is a model to follow, and we appreciate his continuous support and commitment to advocate for refugees and displaced persons and raise public awareness about their situation and their humanitarian needs, which are growing year after year," Khalifa added.

The report also noted that during 2022, the UNHCR obtained several additional fatwas to endorse the Refugee Zakat Fund, bringing the total number of fatwas and endorsements issued by prominent Islamic scholars and institutions from around the world to 16.

The fatwas and endorsements enhance the UNHCR's access to and distribution of Zakat to eligible refugee and displaced persons, through the Fund.

Prominent scholar Professor Dr Sheikh Ali al-Qaradaghi participated in the event and expressed his support for the Shariah compliance of the Refugee Zakat Fund, as a measure that restores confidence in Islamic philanthropy programmes through the United Nations.



Wings of life



A Slender-billed Gull glides effortlessly over the sea at the Old Doha Port area as others of the species ride on the waves around sunset time the other day. Winter visitors to Qatar, gulls, colloquially called seagulls, inhabit all seven continents, the only seabird that is so widespread. It is the only seabird that can walk on land as easily as it paddles in the water and soars in the wind. It drinks both saltwater and freshwater, thanks to a desalination gland above its nostrils. Out of the 51 species of gulls, Qatar is visited by nine. PICTURE: Gulf Times news editor Bonnie James.

WCM-Q pre-medical students explore biomechanics, sports medicine

A group of 50 Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) pre-medical students recently visited Aspetar hospital to learn about the application of biomechanics in sports medicine.

The one-day trip was a unique opportunity for students to see firsthand how physics principles are used in the treatment and prevention of sports-related injuries.

The students toured different departments within the hospital, including the movement and assessment analysis laboratory and hydrotherapy pools, the altitude dormitory and climate chamber, the podiatry and virtual reality departments, the motion capture lab, and the medical imaging department. At each department the students learnt about the specific tools and technologies used to diagnose and treat athletes.

Before the tour of the facility, Dr Khalid Alkhelaiif, orthopaedic surgeon at Aspetar and a WCM-Q alumnus of the inaugural class, inspired the students by sharing his journey. He spoke about the challenges and rewards of his career in sports medicine. Dr Alkhelaiif pursued his pre-medical education and medical degree at



WCM-Q and later furthered his studies in Canada and US.

Enthusiastically describing the trip, student Alyaa Altamimi said: "It was amazing to see how the physics concepts I have been learning in class can be applied directly to medicine.

Seeing the technology and equipment used in sports medicine brought the concepts to life for me. Moreover, the tour made me realise that sports medicine is diverse, and one can venture in one of its specialties. I am also inspired to see a WCM-Q alumnus living his dream career, which moti-

vates me to continue working hard to become a physician."

Dr Mohamed Yousef, professor of physics at WCM-Q said: "With the enormous technological discoveries that are reshaping medicine, it is crucial for future doctors to have a deep understanding of the physics principles involved in treatment and diagnosis."

Aspetar is one of the affiliates of WCM-Q. Such visits help the medical students to broaden their knowledge of sports medicine and science while discovering their specialty of interest.

Ghana Independence Day Walking Football Cup celebrated



Walking Football Federation Qatar (WFFQ) organised the first ever Ghanaian Independence Day Walking Football Cup 2023 at Al Jazeera Academy football field, bringing together teams from various expatriate communities. The event, under the patronage of WFFQ Asia and Qatar president Farhan al-Sayed and Ghanaian ambassador Mohamed Nuru-deen Ismaila, witnessed the Uganda Walking Football Club

team beating Sri Lankan team, 3-1 while the third place went to Kenya who beat Ghana 2-1. Douglas Mayanga (Uganda) was the player of the tournament, Sri Lankan Mohamed Taqi won the best goalkeeper award and Nigerian Andrew Chukwudi received the fair play medal. The prize ceremony was joined by LuLu Group regional operations manager Simon Alexander.

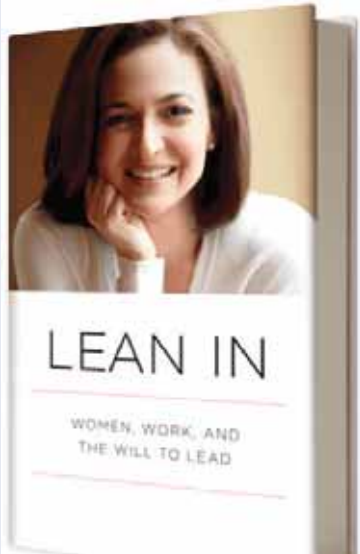
What does Capitonym mean?



By Shafqat Nabi

NI1. "March" and "march" is a pair of 'Capitonym'. What does it mean?
NI2. Michelle Yeoh is the first Asian woman to win best actress award at Oscars. She is also the first actress, to identify with their Asian heritage, to be nominated in the category. An India-born is the first Asian actress to be nominated for the award in this category. Name her. She hid her Eurasian heritage throughout her career.
NI3. What was the name of the *Star Trek* episode in the original series in which Mr Spock foils an evil computer by instructing it to compute pi to the last digit?
NI4. Mozambique, Guatemala, Haiti and Bolivia are the only four UN member states to have national flags featuring something of a kind. What is that?
NI5. 'Without X,' the director Steven Spielberg said when the composer was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Oscar, 'bikes don't really fly, nor do brooms in Quidditch matches, nor do men in red capes; there is no Force, dinosaurs do not walk the Earth, we do not wonder, we do not weep, we do not believe.' Identify X.

NI6. In September 2010, Microsoft held a dreadful parade and mock funeral for iPhone and Blackberry to celebrate the completion of its brand spanking what?
NI7. Which (pop) artiste said "In the future we will all be famous for 15 minutes"?
NI8. In 1838, which two countries went to more than three months long war over pastries, known as "The Pastry War"?
NI9. Artists at Marc Friedland Couture Communications spend over 110 person hours using high-end supplies of paper (from Gmund Paper Factory in Germany) and satin to produce envelopes for the Academy Awards. Leftovers are destroyed. Which organisation's abbreviated name is placed in the sticker that is used in the envelopes?
NI10. Identify the lady below who, with media writer Nell Scovell, co-authored *"Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead."*



Answers

NI1. A Capitonym is a word that changes its meaning (and sometimes pronunciation) when it is capitalised, the capitalisation usually applies due to one form being a proper noun or eponym. Although some pairs, such as march and March, are completely unrelated, in other cases, such as august and catholic, the capitalised form is a name that is etymologically related to the uncapitalised form.
NI2. Merle Oberon, born in Bombay, British India, in 1911. She was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actress for her performance in *The Dark Angel* (1935).
NI3. *Wolf in the Fold*.
NI4. A firearm. Mozambique is the only one of the four to feature a modern firearm instead of cannons or muskets.
NI5. John Williams. Williams' nearly 50-year artistic partnership with Spielberg includes the *Indiana Jones* films and *Jaws* as well *Schindler's List*, *E.T.*, *Jurassic Park*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Munich*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *The Adventures of Tintin*, *War Horse*, *Lincoln*, *The BFG*, *The Post* and the filmmaker's current feature, *The Fabelmans*.
NI6. A new mobile operating system Windows Phone 7.
NI7. Andy Warhol. This celebrated quote has become his most well-known statement. It led to the concept of "15 minutes of fame" - the idea that celebrity, from media scandals to memes, will almost always be fleeting.
NI8. France and Mexico. It all started when, in a complaint to King Louis-Philippe, a French pastry chef known only as Monsieur Remontel claimed that in 1832 Mexican officers looted his shop in Tacubaya (then a town on the outskirts of Mexico City).
NI9. PwC. PricewaterhouseCoopers.
NI10. Sheryl Sandberg, formerly chief operating officer (COO) of Meta Platforms.

Tribe NI.yays

In what sport would you attend a Honbasho?
Sumo. A honbasho, or Grand Sumo Tournament in English, is an official professional sumo tournament. Only honbasho results matter in determining promotion and relegation for rikishi (sumo wrestlers) on the banzuke ranking. (Muhasin Wahab, Professional, Doha)
Do you have some interesting bytes to share? And, does your vibe attract you to the 'Tribe NI.yays' Every week one question from readers will be featured here. Please do send it to us at infotainment.facttree@gmail.com. And, please do mention the school/college/company (or just 'home-sweet-home').



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS



Photo exhibition organised

A 'Women in Motion' exhibition was held in connection with International Women's Day at Qatar Photography Centre (QPC), Katara - the Cultural Village. The event featured portrait, landscape, fashion, food and newborn photographs by 14 women photographers. QPC president Abdullah Almesleh opened the exhibition organised by professional photographers Waagmi Soni and Shilpa Mannangi. Indian Cultural Centre president A P Manikantan visited the exhibition.

ICC highlights women's accomplishments



Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) celebrate International Women's Day to showcase women's accomplishments. The chief guest Meenal Bakshi, principal of DPS Monarch International School, spoke about women's empowerment.

The other guests were ICC president A P Manikantan, managing committee members, Indian Community Benevolent Forum president Shanavas Bhava, and

Indian Sports Centre president E P Abdurahiman along with the current management Committee of ICC.

Dr Pramitha Ponnappan, gynaecologist at Al Abeer Medical Centre spoke on breast cancer and cervical cancer awareness in her keynote speech. ICC managing committee member Sumaa Mahesh Gowda co-ordinated cultural performances by Team Kalakairali, Qatar Tamil Uruvugal, Kerala

Woman's Initiative Qatar, a yoga and dance performance by team Fit India, a song by Samanvi Sumanth and an item by Saree Speak showcasing various weaves of India. ICC vice-president Subramanaya Hebbagelu spoke. General secretary Krishna Kumar Bandhakavi welcomed the gathering and cultural secretary Shweta Koshti proposed a vote of thanks. Ramya Vivek compered the event.

Six achievers felicitated by Fun-Day Club



Fun-Day Club celebrated Women's day 2023 Season 2 recently. The highlight of the event was a recognition ceremony that honoured six women who have made significant contributions to society. Dr Bindu Salim (medical) Lakshaka (art), Nabeesakutty (entrepreneur), Mallika Babu (art), Rini Bijoy (agriculture), and Sr Sini Joseph (social service) were feted for their excellent achievement and services rendered to society. Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) president A P Manikantan, Indian Community Benevolent Forum president Shanavas Bava, Indian Sports Centre president Abdurahiman, ICC vice-president Subramanaya Hebbagelu, managing committee member advocate Jaffar Khan, Sumaa Mahesh Gowda and Radio 98.6 marketing manager Noufal Abdul Rahman were the chief guests. The presence of playback singer Dr Madhu Balakrishnan, actor Jayaraj Warriar, and Chandramohan Pillai was also a highlight of the event.

Cultural programmes held by IIS teachers

Ideal Indian School celebrated International Women's Day with cultural programmes by the teachers of various sections. School president Dr Hassan Kunhi M P was the chief guest and Mrs India One in a Million Winner Classic - 2022 and Mrs India Universe Quarantine Queen 2020 winner Priya Bhedi the guest of honour. Dr Ehteshamuddin recited verses from the Holy Qur'an. Tanu Madhvi welcomed the gathering. Dr Kunhi, principal Shaikh Shamim Saheb and Priya Bhedi spoke. Various fun games were organised for the teachers. The programme was compered by Padmaja Oruganti and Sharon Soans. Soumya Saravanan proposed a vote of thanks.



Special assembly at MES

International Women's Day was celebrated at MES Indian School. A special assembly in the Girls' Section saw students speak about the importance of the day, the multifarious roles that women assume in the modern world and the need to educate them for the prosperity of the society. Later in the day a special function was held in the conference hall. Principal, Dr Hameeda Kadar spoke about the significance of women in society and the

tenacity they should develop to face common issues. The principal along with other officials cut the cakes prepared by the Department of Home Science in honour of the day. This was followed by a cultural activity which included singing by teachers. Atheen Bahanan and Sumitha Nassar Abdul Venda, staff secretaries of the Boys' and Girls' Sections, respectively, co-ordinated the event.

Women workers honoured

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Share Your Humanity (SYH) Global Platform, Doha Qatar, hosted an event. Indira Menon from Poddar Pearl School was the chief guest and Nepali Women's Society chief adviser Amina Khan the special guest. SYH chief adviser Shirish Tare, founder Moni Bijay and co-founder Bijay Koirala were present at the event which saw a group of nursery school and home helpers being honoured, a statement said. Nepalese nationals Homa Kumari, Dhanmaya

Vishwakarma, Heera Kumari, Muna Gurung, Poonam Khatri, Malti Newpane, and Sandhya Aryal, Navalachumi Alagiri Narayan (Sri Lanka), Anima Rani Das (Bangladesh), Jennifer Miranda and Marisal Tejano (Philippines) were honoured. Child artists Diya Singh and Aarohi presented a dance. The programme was conducted by Parul Sharma and Sandhya Aryal. Abhijit Sarkar rendered folk songs. Chandra Sharma, Deepa Singh, Geeta Pun, Safal Koirala, Shashank Shekhar were the other performers.



Indian community leaders feted



Friends of Kozhikode (FoK Qatar) felicitated the newly-elected leaders of Indian Cultural Centre (A P Manikantan), Indian Community Benevolent Forum (Shanavas Bava) and Indian Sports Centre (E P Abdurahiman) at a ceremony. Mustafa M V, Anwar Babu and Renjith presented bouquets and Farid Thikodi and Mansoor Ali golden shawls. Indian Cultural Centre's former president P N Baburajan was the chief guest. FoK Qatar president K K Usman presided. General secretary Vipin welcomed the gathering and secretary Siraj proposed a vote of thanks.

PISQ holds Malaysian universities roadshow



Pakistan International School Qatar (PISQ) hosted its inaugural 'Yes 2 Malaysia School Roadshow' in collaboration with as many as 15 premier universities of Malaysia. The event enabled the students to make informed decisions as they switch over to the next chapter of their academic journeys.



Farewell for Indian social activist

Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) along with apex bodies, associated organisations and senior community leaders bid farewell to Pallash Kumar Das who is leaving Qatar after 15 years of professional and social service to the community. An ICC managing committee member from 2014 to 2016 and advisory council member from 2018-2020, the design consultant was actively involved with associated organisations such as Qatar Assam Society / Samanvayam, P N Baburajan, Nilagshu Dey, H P Singh Bhullar, A P Manikantan, K S Prasad, Vinod Nair, Avinash Gaekwad, Sri Raja Vijayan, Krishna Kumar Bandhakavi and Subramanaya Hebbagelu spoke.

CRIME
Israeli raid in West Bank kills four: Palestinian ministry

Israeli forces yesterday killed four Palestinians including a teenager in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry said, the latest deadly raid on Jenin. The Palestinian health ministry said 23 others had been wounded in the raid. It identified those killed as Omar Awadin, 16, Luay al-Zughair, 37, Nidal Khazim, 28 and Youssef Shreem, 29. Mahmoud al-Saadi of the Palestinian Red Crescent in Jenin said "an Israeli undercover unit stormed the city centre's Abu Bakr street". The raid comes days before a planned meeting between Palestinian and Israeli officials in Sharm el-Sheikh for talks aimed at reducing tensions ahead of the holy month of Ramadan.

OPINION
Current Indo Pacific friction 'alarming': top US admiral

The current friction in the Indo Pacific is alarming and "trending in the wrong direction", but the US presence was not an effort to contain or invite conflict with China, a senior US admiral said yesterday. Admiral John Aquilino, Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, said an "AUKUS" partnership between Australia, Britain and the US to provide Australia with nuclear-powered submarines was to boost its defence capability. "As good partners, US and the UK will go ahead and assist in the ability for Australia to defend themselves," he said after giving a lecture in Singapore, answering a question from the audience.

DECISION
India to buy \$8.5bn worth of military equipment

India yesterday approved purchases of missiles, helicopters, artillery guns and electronic warfare systems worth \$8.5bn as it sought to add more teeth to its military. The Defence Acquisition Council, the top government body for capital acquisition approvals for the Indian military, approved the orders worth Rs705bn (\$8.52bn) for all its services, the defence ministry said. All orders would be placed with Indian companies keeping with a push by the government to boost domestic defence manufacturing. The list of purchases approved included 200 additional BrahMos missiles, 50 utility helicopters and electronic warfare systems for the navy.

LAW AND ORDER
Two police officers shot dead in western Canada

Two police officers were shot dead in the line of duty early yesterday in Edmonton in Canada's western Alberta province, officials said. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau offered condolences to the families and colleagues of the officers, who local media reported were responding to a domestic call. "Every day, police officers put themselves in harm's way to keep people safe. The news that two @EdmontonPolice officers have been killed in the line of duty reminds us of that reality," Trudeau tweeted. Staff Sergeant Michael Elliott, former head of the Edmonton Police Association, said the officers were "killed near Inglewood," a residential neighbourhood in the north central part of the city.

ANNOUNCEMENT
UK bans TikTok on government devices

The UK yesterday announced a security ban on the Chinese-owned video app TikTok on government devices, in line with action by the European Union and the US. "We will do so with immediate effect," Cabinet Office minister Oliver Dowden told parliament. Western authorities have been taking an increasingly firm approach to the app, owned by the firm ByteDance, citing fears that user data could be used or abused by Chinese officials. Dowden said that experts had conducted a risk assessment of third-party apps in relation to sensitive government data. As part of the measures, government devices will only be allowed to access apps on a pre-approved list.

Anger as French govt pushes through pension reform without vote

Reuters
Paris

French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne used a special procedure to push an unpopular pensions bill through the National Assembly without a vote yesterday, amid shouts from left-wing lawmakers brandishing placards against the reform.

The move, using the so-called article 49:3 of the constitution, will ensure the bill raising the retirement age by two years to 64 is adopted after weeks of protests and fractious debate.

But it also shows President Emmanuel Macron and his government failed to garner enough of a majority in parliament, in a blow to the centrist president and his ability to win support from other parties for further reforms.

'By resorting to 49:3, the government demonstrates that it does not have a majority to approve the two-year postponement of the legal retirement age'

Borne was greeted by boos as she arrived in the National Assembly, the lower house of parliament, to announce the special procedure yesterday.

The session was suspended for two minutes after left-wing lawmakers singing the national anthem prevented Borne from speaking.

Some held placards reading "No to 64 years". When the session resumed, Borne took the floor but her speech was largely drowned out by boos and chants from opposition members of parliament and shouts of "resignation," in rare chaotic scenes in the French parliament.

"We cannot gamble on the future of our pensions, this reform is necessary," Borne told lawmakers, to explain why she was using the 49:3 procedure.

Macron and his government say raising the retirement age is necessary to get the pension

system out of the red by the end of the decade.

Far-right leader Marine Le Pen said Borne should resign. "This last-minute resort to 49:3 is an extraordinary sign of weakness," she said, adding: "She must go."

The senate, upper house, had given the green light to the bill in the morning, as expected, thanks to support from senators from the conservative Les Republicains (LR). But the afternoon vote in the National Assembly would have been a different matter.

There, LR lawmakers were split on the issue.

According to a source present at a last-minute meeting at the Elysee, Macron told Borne and others he had wanted to go for a vote.

"But I consider that the financial, economic risks (of the bill being voted down) are too big," he said, adding that was why he backed the move to skip the vote.

Resorting to the measure is likely to further enrage unions, protesters and left-wing opposition parties that say the pension overhaul is unfair and unnecessary.

"This government is not worthy of our Fifth Republic, of French democracy," Fabien Roussel, head of the French Communist Party said.

Socialist Party head Olivier Faure said earlier yesterday that such a move could unleash "an uncontrollable anger" after weeks of rolling strikes and protests.

Le Pen's National Rally and the left-wing France Insoumise (France Unbowed) said they would request a vote of no confidence in the government.

However that is unlikely to pass as most conservative lawmakers would likely not back it.

"By resorting to 49:3, the government demonstrates that it does not have a majority to approve the two-year postponement of the legal retirement age," Laurent Berger, the leader of CFDT, France's main union, said on Twitter, urging authorities to "listen to the workers."

Teachers strike over pay in New Zealand



New Zealand teachers and early childhood educators gather outside Wellington's Parliament House as part of a nationwide strike for better pay and conditions, in Wellington, New Zealand, yesterday.

US releases video of Russia jet 'intercepting' US drone

Reuters
Washington

The Pentagon yesterday released a de-classified video showing a Russian military jet intercept a US drone downed over the Black Sea two days ago, rare footage that highlights the risks of a direct clash between the world's leading nuclear powers.

The US has said Tuesday's incident shows Russia is behaving irresponsibly in international airspace, while Moscow accuses Washington of trying to escalate tensions near Crimea, the Ukrainian peninsula it forcibly annexed

in 2014. Meanwhile, on the battlefield in eastern Ukraine, Kyiv's forces continued to withstand Russian assaults on the now-ruined city of Bakhmut.

Reuters reporters heard a constant rumble of artillery on all sides at about 1.5km from the frontline.

"Sometimes we see groups of seven people (Russian soldiers). We strike, three fall and the rest continue to advance," said Mar-ian, 21, a member of Ukraine's 80th Air Assault Brigade, at a mortar position, describing his experiences along the front.

The brigade fired seven mortars from that position, while small

arms fire could also be heard in the distance. The release of the Pentagon video came a day after US and Russian defence ministers and military chiefs held phone conversations over the incident that saw the MQ-9 Reaper drone crash into the sea while on a reconnaissance mission in international airspace. In the roughly 40-second video, a Russian Su-27 fighter jet comes very close to the US drone and dumps what US officials say was jet fuel near it in an apparent effort to damage the American aircraft as it flew over the Black Sea.

It also shows the loss of the drone by Russian jets was intentional, but it was unclear whether

a Russian jet, which the Pentagon says resulted from its collision with the drone.

The video ends with images of the drone's damaged propeller, which the Pentagon says resulted from the collision, making the aircraft inoperable.

Russia has denied any collision and said the drone crashed after making "sharp manoeuvres", having "provocatively" flown close to the Russian air space near Crimea. General Mark Milley, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff said on Wednesday it was clear that the intercept and harassment of the drone by Russian jets was intentional, but it was unclear whether

the Russian pilots meant to slam their aircraft into the drone — a move that could also put them at risk.

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu told US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin that US drone flights near Crimea's coast "were provocative in nature" and could lead to "an escalation... in the Black Sea zone," a ministry statement said. Russia, the statement said, has "no interest" in escalation "but will in future react in due proportion" and the two countries should "act with a maximum of responsibility", including by having military lines of communication in a crisis.

Pakistan ex-PM Khan's plea to suspend arrest warrant rejected

Reuters
Lahore, Pakistan

Pakistani court yesterday rejected former prime minister Imran Khan's plea to suspend an arrest warrant issued against him, stoking fears of a renewed confrontation between his supporters and security forces.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, hundreds of Khan's supporters, armed with batons, iron-rods and sling-shots, had surrounded his home in Lahore and fought pitched battles with security forces attempting to arrest him.

Yesterday's rejection of Khan's bid to have the arrest warrant suspended came hours after a higher court had ordered police to postpone the operation to arrest the former cricket star until today, bringing a temporary lull in the stand-off.

The arrest warrant was issued by a court in Islamabad when

Khan failed to appear before it over charges that he unlawfully sold state gifts given to him by foreign dignitaries when he was prime minister from 2018 to 2022.

Khan denies the charges.

The Election Commission of Pakistan had found him guilty and barred Khan from holding public office for one parliamentary term.

Khan, 70, had filed an appeal with the Islamabad court to suspend the warrant, submitting an undertaking that he would appear before it voluntarily on Saturday.

But the court said such an undertaking was insufficient, given Khan's previous conduct.

"It is concluded that the application is not justified by law as well as fact, which is hereby rejected," said the Islamabad court's order.

The violence in Khan's Lahore neighbourhood, in which protesters torched police vehicles, a water-cannon truck and scores of cars and motorcycles and hurled by cars and motorcycles and hurled petrol bombs at security forces

firing tear gas and rubber bullets, raised fears of a new political stand-off in Pakistan, which is already grappling with an economic crisis.

The trouble subsided after the Lahore high court halted the police operation.

Police said they would seek further directions from the high court today.

Provincial information minister Amir Mir said there were militants among Khan's supporters outside his house.

"We have received credible reports that militants were amongst the people who attacked police," he told a news conference. "One of them has served eight years in prison." Khan's aide Shafqat Mehmood dismissed that as a "fabricated story, based on lies".

Although there were no police outside Khan's home yesterday, witnesses said supporters armed with batons, bamboo sticks, iron rods and cutters had set up pickets and barricades.

Martial arts training



An instructor (in white) leads schoolgirls during a martial arts class for self-defence at a school in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, yesterday.

Foxconn 'wins AirPods order, plans \$200mn factory in India'

Taiwanese contract manufacturer Foxconn has won an order to make AirPods for Apple Inc and plans to build a factory in India to produce the wireless earphones, two people with direct knowledge of the matter said. The deal will see Foxconn, the world's largest contract electronics maker and assembler of around 70% of all iPhones, become an AirPods supplier for the first time and underlines efforts by the key Apple supplier to further diversify production away from China. AirPods are currently made by a range of Chinese suppliers. One source said Foxconn will invest more than \$200mn in the new India AirPods plant in the southern Indian state of Telangana. It wasn't immediately clear how much the AirPods order would be worth. The person, who requested anonymity as the matter was not public yet, said Foxconn officials had debated internally for months about whether to assemble AirPods due to relatively lower profit margins on making the

device, but ultimately opted to go ahead with the deal to "reinforce engagement" with Apple. "That way, we are more likely to get orders for their new products," the person said. The decision to set up production in India was requested by Apple, according to the source. Foxconn vies with Taiwanese rivals such as Wistron Corporation and Pegatron Corporation to win more orders from Apple, the world's most valuable company. A subsidiary, Foxconn Interconnect Technology, plans to start construction of a manufacturing facility in Telangana in the second half of this year and begin production by the end of 2024 at the earliest, the person said. Shares in the Foxconn unit jumped nearly 9% after Reuters first reported the news, reversing an earlier loss of 2.2%. A second person with direct knowledge of the matter, who also declined to be identified as the matter was not yet public, said the Foxconn subsidiary will make AirPods in India without providing further details.

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GULF**TIMES**

Some US banks facing stock rout may need to seek partners

Some US regional banks are under pressure after the collapse of two lenders within days, with industry executives and advisers saying they could be forced to seek saviors if a rout in their stocks doesn't let up.

US regulators announced extraordinary measures on Sunday following the collapse of SVB Financial Group and Signature Bank, offering a safety net to banks pressured by fleeing depositors. On Monday, President Joe Biden vowed to take action to ensure the safety of the banking system.

But the intervention did little to prop up the banks' shares, which slumped on Monday, posing a major impediment to growing their businesses and getting funding.

"If this continues to escalate you will have a liquidity drain from the mid to small banks," said David Ellison, a portfolio manager at Hennessy Funds, which had a position in Signature Bank.

Raising private capital could help inspire confidence again in their stocks. Possible outcomes for under-pressure regional banks could see a stronger rival take over a weaker, or cash infusions from investors such as private equity, the industry sources said.

Over the weekend, some private equity firms had studied the possibility of an investment in banks whose shares plummeted such as First Republic Bank and PacWest Bancorp, according to two industry sources with knowledge of the matter. They did not go ahead as the investors wanted to see what the government would do to alleviate pressure on the banking sector, the sources said.

With the emergency measures in place, those possibilities could be revived in the coming days.

Regional bank stocks are 'an incredible bargain now' according to billionaire investor Bill Ackman

have the backings of large institutional investors.

There could be other ways for banks to try to shore up confidence, too. First Republic, for example, secured additional financing from JPMorgan Chase & Co, although that did not keep its stock from falling on Monday.

Investors voted with their feet on Monday, putting bank stocks under pressure around the world. The KBW regional banking index fell 5.4% and the S&P 500 banking index dropped 6% in a chaotic day when several banks saw multiple trading halts because of the size of the moves.


Weighing on sentiment was the federal government's statement that shareholders and certain unsecured debtholders would not be protected — something that might give investors in the banks pause.

"This is not a bailout. So investors think it's a relative gamble staying around owning regional banks before knowing what will change in regulation," said Brian Levitt, global market strategist for Invesco.


There are also other hurdles to deals. The Biden administration has taken a tough stance on deals over antitrust concerns and it is not clear whether they would be receptive to rescue transactions now.


Still, investors may find deals in the battered sector. Regional bank stocks are "an incredible bargain now," billionaire investor Bill Ackman said on Twitter on Monday.

"There's value in these banks, they are not all alike," said Michael Farr, chief executive of investment advisory firm Farr, Miller & Washington who owns banks stocks including PNC and Truist. "You do your homework and see where real value exists." — Reuters


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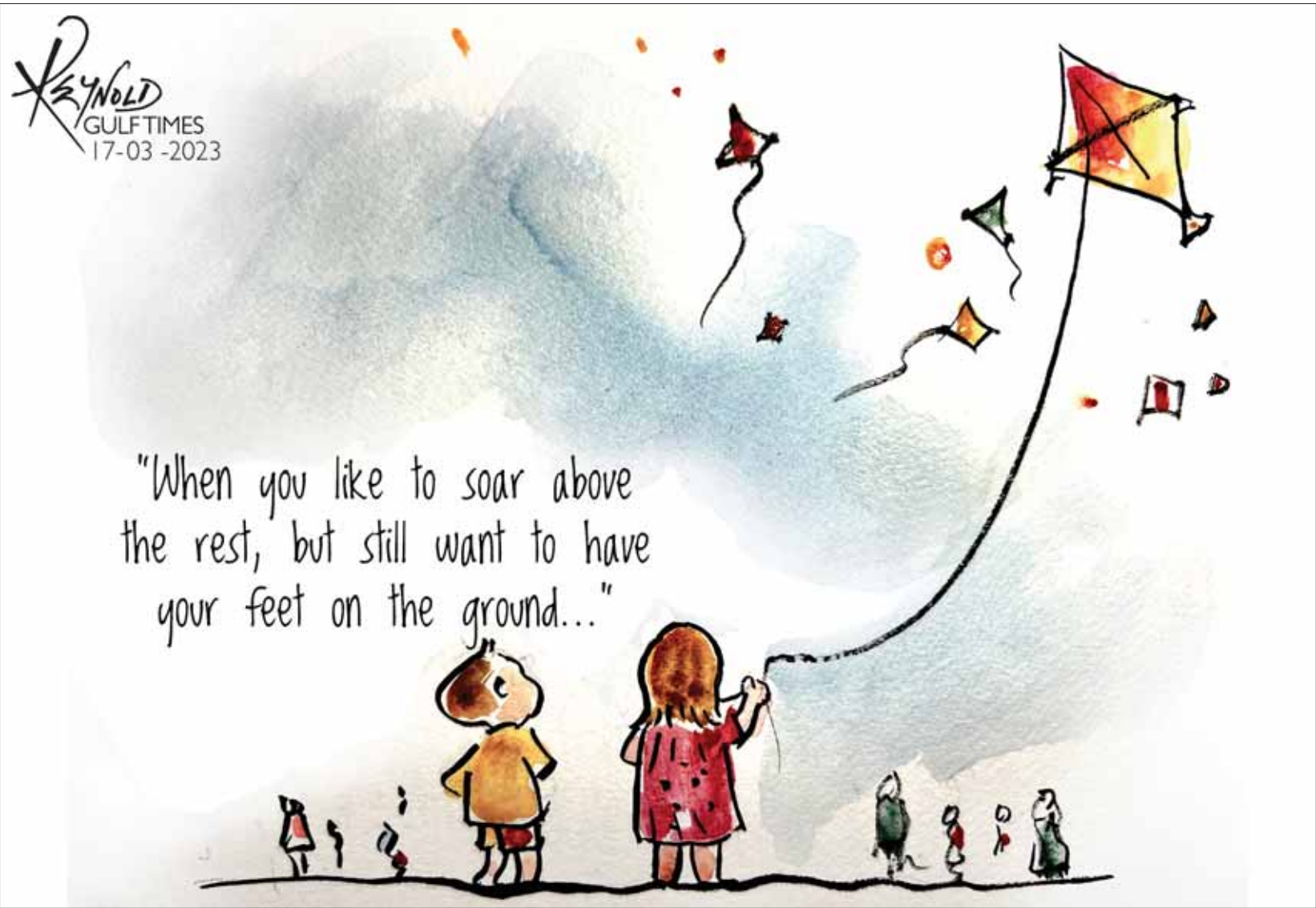
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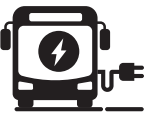
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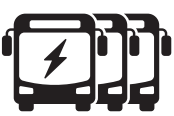
Can Pakistan's electric buses reduce urban air pollution?



Urban air pollution is major concern for Pakistan



Financial capital Karachi launches fleet of e-buses



Analysts say a wider transport overhaul is needed

By Imran Mukhtar
Islamabad

For Karachi-based Raja Kamran, swapping his motorcycle commute for Pakistan's first-ever electric bus service has saved cash — and helped him avoid some of the city's pollution.

A small fleet of fully electric buses started operating in the country's financial capital in January as part of a government drive to cut worsening air pollution produced by vehicles and industry, power plants and brick kilns, as well as the burning of solid waste.

"The electric bus service has not only decreased my weekly travelling costs, but also helped (with) my ... health problems," the 50-year-old journalist said by phone, noting that he had suffered back pain while riding his motorcycle to work.

However, Kamran said there were not enough e-buses — only 10 of the initial fleet of 50 are currently running — and that he sometimes had to wait 45 minutes to catch one of them.

Urban air pollution is a major and longstanding problem across Pakistan, with the country ranking third worldwide out of 118 nations for worst air quality in 2021, according to IQAir, a Swiss pollution technology company.

Bad-quality air is a leading cause of death in the South Asian nation of about 224 million people, resulting in an estimated 236,000 premature deaths in 2019, the latest Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study says.

With concerns growing over the



Citizens travel in the newly launched electric bus near the airport area in Karachi.

number of vehicles on the roads — there were 30.7mn in Pakistan in 2020, up from 9.6mn in 2011 — cities such as Peshawar and Karachi have announced plans to promote greener transport.

Karachi's 50 e-buses can each carry at least 70 passengers and travel 240km on a single charge.

The fleet, which cost \$15mn, was funded through a public-private partnership, with a transport company purchasing the buses and operating them for eight years before the Sindh provincial government takes over as owner.

The government is now in talks with the Asian Development Bank, seeking a loan of about \$30mn to purchase an additional 100 buses, according to Abdul Haleem Shaikh, secretary of Sindh's transport and mass transit department.

"We want to provide people with emission-free, comfortable and luxury buses along with trained staff

to discourage them from using their smoke-emitting cars and motorbikes," he said.

Yet environmental and urban experts have questioned whether the small number of electric buses will have a significant impact, and called for a much wider and more meaningful transport overhaul.

Consecutive climate disasters — from heatwaves to forest fires — have struck Pakistan in the last few years, and the country is still recovering from unprecedented floods in 2022.

But air pollution remains one of the country's main environmental concerns, with at least 40% of dirty air in Pakistan produced by vehicles, the country's climate change ministry has said.

In November 2019, Pakistan's government set a target to bring a half million electric motorcycles and rickshaws, along with more than 100,000 electric cars, buses and

trucks, into the transportation system within five years. The current overall number on the roads is unknown.

Pakistan has a longer-term goal of ensuring that a third of all cars and trucks and half of motorcycles and buses sold by 2030 are electric, and has generally vowed to ramp up its efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions in the years leading up to that date.

In the northwestern city of Peshawar, the provincial government is taking old buses off the road and replacing them with diesel-electric hybrid models as part of a new public transport system.

And in Karachi, in a push separate from the 50 new e-buses, the government has been rolling out a network of 250 vehicles fuelled by bio-methane produced from water buffalo manure.

Yet the bus initiatives in Karachi — both newer and older — have been criticised by some analysts, who say they do not do enough to lower pollution.

A better focus would have been reducing the total number of cars and motorcycles on the roads, and creating more public awareness about the impact of air pollution, said Mohamed Toheed, associate director at the Karachi Urban Lab of the Institute of Business Administration.

"A commuter that uses his own smoke-emitting vehicle or bike to get to his workplace does not understand what cruelty he is committing with the environment," he said.

Yasir Husain of the Darya Lab, a consultancy firm dealing with environmental issues, said at least 1,500 rather than 150 e-buses would be needed to have any impact in reducing emissions in Karachi.

"The government also should provide soft loans through easy financing to promote the use of e-bikes, and e-rickshaws," said Husain, who is also the founder of Green Pakistan Coalition, an advocacy group.

Shaikh, the transport secretary, acknowledged that the 150 new electric buses would not do much to reduce air pollution in isolation, but pointed to the bio-methane vehicles and also highlighted the 29 traditional bus routes covering the city.

He said Pakistan's current economic crisis and the financial toll of the 2022 flooding would not hinder the rollout of more e-buses, as such funding would come from international lenders.

Bhevish Kumar, a 24-year-old entrepreneur, said he had been taking the new e-buses to attend business meetings but was sceptical that the limited fleet would really do much to clean Karachi's choking air.

"There is need for its expansion and more penetration of e-bus services into the city's transport system to ensure that people do not burn ... fuel in their vehicles," he said. — Thomson Reuters Foundation



An electric bus waits for more passengers at the Sea View stop in the neighbourhood of Defence Housing Authority in Karachi.



The Prophet deserves special rights

By Umm AbdurRahman Hirschfelder

Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, deserves special rights, which are due only to the final Prophet and Messenger. These rights have been enjoined upon us by Allah and are part of safeguarding the perfect religion of Islam. Unfortunately many Muslims today have become confused with regard to these rights and have innovated practices that have no basis in Islam. The Prophet himself knew that such practices would happen and warned against them, “Beware of newly invented matters (in religion that is) for every invented matter (in religion) is a cursed innovation which leads astray” (Tirmithi and Abu Dawud)

So as Muslims we must stick to giving our Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, his rights as commanded by Allah and stay away from the innovations that either ignore these rights or take them to extremes.

Allah sent Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, to all of mankind, with the divine message of *la ilaha illallah* (there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah). He brought glad tidings of Paradise to the believers and warning of the punishment of Hellfire to the disbelievers. He called to tawheed, the belief that Allah is the sole Creator and Lord of the universe, and therefore He alone should be worshipped. Believing in Allah is also believing in His Messenger.

To believe in him

There is no doubt that the first of our Prophet's rights is to believe in him and to believe in the message he was sent with. Allah says, “Believe in Allah and His Messenger and the light which He sent down.” (64:8) Qadhi Eyadh said in his famous and important book about the rights of the Prophet, *Ash-Shifaa*, that, “Belief in the Prophet Muhammad is therefore an obligation for every individual. Belief is not complete without it and Islam is only valid with it.”

Allah has linked belief in Him with belief in His Messenger. They are inseparable. This is what shahadah, the declaration of faith, means. Even if a person follows other prophets like Musa and Eesa, *alaihemas salam*, he is not a believer until he completely follows the teachings of Muhammad. Abu Hurairah, *radhiAllahu ‘anh*u, reported that the Messenger of Allah said: “I was commanded to fight people until they testify that there is no god but Allah and believe in me and what I have brought. When they do that, their blood and property are protected from me except for a right (they owe). Their reckoning is with Allah.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

Believing in the Prophet, therefore, is about living according to his guidance. It is much more than just mere recognition of the fact that he is a prophet. Allah says, “When the hypocrites come to you, they say, ‘We testify that you are the Messenger of Allah’ and Allah knows that you are His Messenger and Allah testifies that the hypocrites are liars.” (63:1)

At the time of the Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, the Jews who lived in Arabia had been waiting for the promised Prophet that they knew of from their scriptures. But when Muhammad came they rejected him out of arrogance because he was not a Jew. Many of the rabbis, however, recognised that he was a Prophet but did not accept him or believe in him. Allah says about them, “Those to whom We gave the scriptures recognise him as they recognise their sons. But verily, a party of them conceal the truth while they know it.” (2:146)



Ibn Ishaq reports in his biography of the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, that Safiya bint Huyayy said, “I was the favourite child of my father and my Uncle Abu Yasir. When I was present they took no notice of their other children. When the apostle was staying in Quba with the brother ‘Amr ibn ‘Auf, the two went to see him before daybreak and did not return until after nightfall, weary, worn out, drooping and feeble. I went up to them in childish pleasure as I always did, and they were so sunk in gloom that they took no notice of me. I heard my uncle say to my father, ‘Is he the one? Do you recognise him?’ Can you be sure?’ ‘Yes!’ ‘And what do you feel about him?’ ‘By God I shall be his enemy as long as I live!’”

Believing in something is more than just recognising that it exists. Satan, as explained in the Qur'an, recognises that Allah exists yet he is the worst of the disbelievers.

To obey him

The second right, which is due to our beloved Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, is that we obey him. Allah says, “O you who believe, obey Allah and His Messenger.” (8:20) Allah has mentioned obedience to the Messenger in connection with obedience to Him. You cannot have one without the other. Obeying the Messenger means, following his commands and staying away from what he has prohibited. Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, said: “All of my ummah will enter Paradise except for those who refuse to.” They asked, “O Messenger of Allah, who will refuse?” He replied, “Whoever obeys me will enter the Paradise. Whoever disobeys me has refused.” (Bukhari)

To follow him

Allah says, “You have a good model in the Messenger of Allah for one who hopes for (the meeting with) Allah and the Last Day.” (33:21) Commenting on this verse, Imam Tirmithi said, “To take the Messenger as a model means to emulate him, follow his *Summah* and avoid opposition to him in either word or action.” We should strive to follow his mode of life, his sayings, and doings, his conduct and manners.

We can see from Prophet's companions, the way in which they emulated the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, followed his examples, and modelled their behaviours upon his. This is what it means to follow the Prophet Muhammad. A man from Khalid ibn Asid's family asked Abdullah ibn Umar, “Abu Abdurrahman. We find the ‘fear salah’ and the ‘salah at home’ in the Qur'an, but we do not find the ‘travelling salah’.” Ibn

Umar said, “My nephew, Allah sent Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, to us when we did not know anything. We do as we saw him doing.”

When Umar, *radhiAllahu ‘anh*u, looked at the black stone he said, “You are a stone and can neither help nor harm. If I had not seen the Messenger of Allah kiss you, I would not have kissed you.” Then he kissed it. Umar ibn Abdul Aziz said, “The Messenger of Allah made a *Summah* and the people in command after him made *Summahs*. To adopt them is to confirm the Book of Allah and to act on them is to obey Allah and strengthen the deen of Allah. It is not for anyone to change the *Summah*, or alter it, or to look into the opinion of those who oppose it. Whoever follows it, is guided. Whoever seeks help by it, will have victory. Whoever opposes it and follows other than the path of the believers, Allah will entrust him to what he turns to and will roast him in the hellfire, which is a bad ending.”

To love him

A Muslim must love the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, truthfully. Allah says, “Say, if your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your tribe and the possessions you have earned, the commerce you fear may slacken, dwellings you love – if these are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and to struggle in His way, then wait until Allah brings His command.” (9:245)

The Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, said, “None of you will believe until I am more beloved to you than your children, your fathers and his people.” Umar ibn al-Khattab said to the Prophet, “I love you more than anything except my soul, which is between my two sides.” The Prophet replied, “None of you will believe until I am dearer to him than his own soul.” Umar said, “By the One who sent down the Book to you, I love you more than my soul which is between my two sides.” The Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, said, “Now O Umar, now you have it.”

Related to this love is *nasiha*. *Nasiha* is usually translated as good counsel and sincere conduct. It is “used to designate the desire for what is good for the one who is its object.” Linguistically it means purity. The Messenger of Allah said, “The *deen* is *nasiha*. The deen is *nasiha*. The deen is *nasiha*.” They asked, “To whom, Messenger of Allah?” He said, “To Allah and His Book and His Messenger and the imams of the Muslims and the common people.” *Nasiha* to the Messenger of Allah is confirming his Prophethood, obeying him, supporting and protecting him, and following his *Summah*.

‘alaihi wa sallam, said: “Whoever has a favour done for him and says ‘Jazak Allahu khayran’ has done his utmost to thank him.” [At-Tirmithi]

“Done his utmost to thank him,” means that he has done his utmost to express his gratitude, because he has acknowledged his shortcomings and that he is unable to reward and thank him enough, so he refers the matter to Allah, to reward him in the best manner. It is said that: “If you are unable to give him back in kind, then speak at length thanking him and supplicating for him.” [Tuhfat Al-Ahwathi]

The Permanent Committee (a supreme Islamic judicial authority in Saudi Arabia) was asked a similar question) and replied as follows:

“There is nothing wrong with accepting it (an amount of money as a gift), without you (the recipient) longing for that, and you can respond in kind if you are able to with an appropriate gift, or you can supplicate for him, because the Prophet, *sallallaahu*

Abu Bakr al-Ajurri said, “*Nasiha* for his sake includes two types of sincere conduct. One is *nasiha* during his lifetime and the other is *nasiha* after his death.” During his lifetime it was helping, protecting, and obeying him. After his death it is “by maintaining esteem, respect and great love for him. By persevering in learning his *Summah* and understanding his *Shari'ah*. It is to love for the people of his house and his companions, avoiding things disliked in his *Summah* and what deviates from it.”

As loving the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, is an obligation, it comes with an excellent reward. Anas, *radhiAllahu ‘anh*u, said that a man came to the Prophet and asked, “When will the last Hour come, Messenger of Allah?” He said, “What have you prepared for it?” He said, “I have not prepared a lot of salah or fasting or charity for it, but I love Allah and His Messenger.” The Prophet said, “You will be with the one you love.” He also said, “Whoever loves me will be with me in the Garden.”

Love for the Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, manifests itself in many ways. One will prefer what the Prophet came with, over his own desires. His anger against people will be for the sake of Allah. He will mention the Prophet often. He will have a yearning to meet him. He will exalt and respect him and be humble when he hears his name mentioned. He will have love for the Qur'an, which the Prophet brought. He will have compassion for his community, striving for their best interests. And another sign of love for the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, is that he who aspires to it, does without in this world and prefers poverty. The Prophet said, “Poverty for those among you who love me comes quicker than a flood from the top of the mountain to the bottom.”

To respect him

Allah says, “O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of good news and a Warner, so believe in Allah and His Messenger and help him and respect him.” (48:7-8) Respect for the Prophet includes honouring him, exalting him, calling him with the noblest title such as the Messenger of Allah or Prophet of Allah. It includes putting his opinion over our own and defending him if he is verbally abused.

Malik said that when he was asked about Ayyub as-Sakhtiyani he said, “I have not reported from anyone without Ayyub being better than him.” He went on, “I went on Haj twice and watched him. Whenever the Messenger of Allah was mentioned, he wept until his eyes were red. When I saw him do that and the respect he had

for the Prophet, I wrote down things from him.”

Respect for the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, also includes respecting his family. The Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, said, “Recognition of the family of Muhammad is freedom from the fire. Love of the family of Muhammad is crossing over the *Sirat*. Friendship for the family of Muhammad is safety from the fire.” He also said about al-Hasan and al-Husayn, his grandsons, “Whoever loves these two and their father and mother will be with me on the day of rising.” Abu Bakr said, “Respect Muhammad by respecting the people of his house.”

It also includes respecting his companions. Allah says about those who pledged allegiance to the Prophet at al-Hudaybiyah, “Allah was pleased with the believers when they gave allegiance to you under the tree.” (48:18) The Prophet said, “Do not curse my companions. If any of you were to spend the weight of (mount) Uhud in gold, it still would not reach the measure of one of them or even one-half of it.”

Likewise, it is forbidden to curse the Prophet Muhammad. Allah said, “Those who harm Allah and His Messenger, Allah has cursed them in this world and the next world. He has prepared a humiliating punishment for them.” (33:57) The Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, said, “Whoever curses a prophet, kill him. Whoever curses my companions, beat him.”

It is also not allowed to even joke about the Prophet or the religion of Islam. Allah said, “If you ask them, they declare, ‘We were only talking idly and joking.’ Say, ‘Was it Allah and His *qayh* and His Messenger that you were mocking?’” (9:65) It is reported that in the course of the campaign of Tabuk, a man came up one day and declared, “We have seen no people with greater appetite, more lying, or more cowardly in battle than the Prophet of Allah and his reciting companions.” Awf ibn Malik rose and said, “It is rather you that are a liar. You are a hypocrite, pretending to be a Muslim. I shall tell the Prophet of Allah about you.”

Awf then went to the Prophet to inform him but found that revelation had already preceded him. (When the news reached) the man, he mounted on his camel, sought the Prophet of Allah and said, “But we were only joking, trying to pass the time while travelling.” Ibn Umar said, “He was clinging to the saddle belt of the Prophet's camel as it ran, his feet and legs being battered by the rough ground and repeating, ‘But we were only joking.’ And the Prophet insisting without turning his face to him, ‘Joking? Joking with Allah, with His revelation? With His Prophet?’”

To judge according to his Shari'ah

The sixth right of the Prophet Muhammad is to judge by him and be pleased with his judgement. Allah said, “If you quarrel over anything, then refer it back to Allah and the Messenger.” (4:58) Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to look in the Qur'an and the *Hadith* of the Messenger of Allah when we have a question about something. We must follow the laws that the Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, brought and judge by them, and rule according to them.

At the time of the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, when he was once reciting, “They took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords beside Allah, and the messiah, son of Maryam, while they were commanded to worship none but One deity, none has the right to be worshipped but He. Praise and glory be to Him, far above

is He from having the partners they associate.” (9:31)

A former Christian, Adi ibn Hatim, said, “O Allah's Messenger. They do not worship them.” Allah's Messenger said, “They certainly do. They (ie, the rabbis and monks) made lawful things as unlawful and unlawful things as lawful, and they (ie, Jews and Christians) followed them, and by doing so, they really worshipped them.”

We cannot put our own desires above the laws of Allah and that which the Messenger brought. To do so essentially, is to believe that we know better than Allah. Allah is our Creator and He knows us better than we know our ourselves. “Verily, he is the All-Knower of what is in the chests.” (67:13) He knows what is best for us and He has perfect wisdom and He is just in all that He decrees. Ruling by other than what Allah revealed is therefore tantamount to disbelief.

To send prayers and salaam

The seventh right that is due to the Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, is saying the *salah* and *salaam* upon him. Allah says, “Allah sends His *salah* (blessings, mercy) on the Prophet and His angels too (ask Allah to bless and forgive him). O you who believe, send your salah on him and (you should) greet him with the Islamic way of greeting (ie ‘*assalamu alaikum*’).” (33:56) Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, said, “Whoever blesses me once, Allah blesses him with 10 salahs and 10 wrong actions fall away from him and he is raised by 10 degrees.” And he said, “The nearest people to me on the Day of Rising will be those who have said the most salahs on me.”

The Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, taught one way in which to say the *salah* on him. Abu Humayd as-Saidi said that they said, “Messenger of Allah, how should we pray on you?” He replied, “Say, O Allah, bless Muhammad and his wives and his descendants as You blessed the family of Ibrahim and grant blessing to Muhammad and his wives and descendants as You granted blessing to the family of Ibrahim. You are the Praiseworthy, Glorious.” This is the tashahud, which is said in the sitting of the *salah*. Another way is to say, ‘*sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*’ when the Prophet is mentioned.

The meaning of sending *salaam* upon the Prophet is asking Allah to preserve him from any harm coming to him and it is also a greeting to the Prophet. Abu Hurairah said that the Messenger of Allah said, “Whenever anyone greets me with peace, Allah will return my soul to me so that I can return the greeting.” The Prophet also said, “I will hear whoever blesses me at my grave. If someone is far away and blesses me, that is also conveyed to me.”

Since Allah has commanded that we send *salah* and *salaams* upon the Prophet Muhammad then it is a general obligation and not restricted to a specific time. The obligation is that we must do it at least once. However, saying it more than once is highly recommended and is the *Summah*.

Other times include when one is supplicating to Allah for something. Ibn Mas'ud said, “When one of you wants to ask Allah for something, he should begin by praising and extolling Him as He deserves, and then by blessing the Prophet. Then his supplication is more likely to be accepted.” Likewise, during the *Aathan*, on Friday, when entering the masjid and leaving the masjid, at the funeral salah, and when writing letters, are other highly recommended times. The Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, said, “Whoever blesses me in a book or a letter, the angels continue to ask forgiveness for him as long as my name is on it.”

Giving gifts strengthens bonds of relations

Gift-giving is one of the good manners that maintains and strengthens relations between the giver and the recipient. It is one of the acts that Prophet Muhammad, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam* (may Allah exalt his mention), recommended Muslims to do. Al-Bukhari, may Allah have mercy upon him, narrated that ‘Aa’isha, may Allah be pleased with her, said: “The Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, used to accept gifts and reward people for giving them.”

The phrase: “Reward people for giving them,” means giving the giver (at a later time) something of equal value at least in return.

This *Hadith* (narration) indicates that accepting gifts and giving something of equal value (or more) to the giver is the way of the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*.

The Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, enjoined responding in kind to favours, as he said in an authentic

narration: “Whoever does you a favour, respond in kind, and if you cannot find the means of doing so, then keep praying for him until you think that you have responded in kind.” [Abu Dawood]

“Whoever does you a favour,” means, whoever treats you kindly in word or deed or by gifting you.

“Respond in kind,” means to treat him kindly just as he has treated you kindly.

“If you cannot find the means of doing so” means if you do not have the money.

“Until you think that you have responded in kind” means, repeatedly supplicate for him until you think that you have rewarded him his due.

One of the Du‘aa’ forms that one can say is ‘*Jazaka Allahu khayran*’ (may Allah reward you with good). At-Tirmithi, may Allah have mercy upon him, narrated that Usamah Ibn Zayd, may Allah be pleased with him, said: The Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu*

‘alaihi wa sallam, said: “Whoever has a favour done for him and says ‘Jazak Allahu khayran’ has done his utmost to thank him.” [At-Tirmithi]

“Done his utmost to thank him,” means that he has done his utmost to express his gratitude, because he has acknowledged his shortcomings and that he is unable to reward and thank him enough, so he refers the matter to Allah, to reward him in the best manner. It is said that: “If you are unable to give him back in kind, then speak at length thanking him and supplicating for him.” [Tuhfat Al-Ahwathi]

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‘alaihi wa sallam, said: “Whoever does you a favour, respond in kind ... (the aforementioned *Hadith*).” [Fatawa Al-Lajnah Al-Daa'imah]

Difference between charity and gift-giving

Charity is given to the poor and the needy to meet their needs, and is done with the intention of seeking the Pleasure of Allah. Its intention is not limited to a specific person; rather it is given to any poor or needy one.

On the other hand, a gift is not necessarily given to a poor person, rather it may be given to rich or poor; the intention is to show friendship and to honour the recipient.

Both of them – charity and gift-giving – are righteous deeds for which a person will be rewarded (and please his Lord), but which is better?

Ibn Taymiyah, may Allah have mercy upon him, stated that *Sadaqah* (charity) is that which is given for the sake of Allah as an act of worship, without

intending to give it to a specific person and without seeking anything in return, rather it is given for charitable causes, such as to the needy. A gift is given with the intention of honouring a specific person, either because the recipient is your friend whom you love, or because you want something in return.

Hence, the Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, used to accept gifts and reward people for them, so that no one could remind him of their favours, but he did not accept the “refuse” of people that they gave to purify themselves of sins, namely charity. He did not accept charity for this and other reasons.

Once this is understood, then charity is better, but there is a sense in which a gift is better than charity, such as giving a gift to the Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, during his lifetime out of love for him. Also, gifts which a person gives to a relative in order to uphold the ties of

kinship or to a brother in Islam may be better than charity.

Based on this, giving to one of your relatives may be better than giving charity, because it is more befitting to uphold the ties of kinship. The same may apply if you give a gift to a friend of yours, because that will strengthen the bonds of love between you. The Prophet, *sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, said: “Exchange gifts, as that will lead to increasing your love to one another.” [Al-Bukhari]

What the *Hadith* means is that giving gifts may generate and increase love.

To sum up, gifting vs. giving charity is dependent on the situation but, in principle, spending in charity takes precedence.

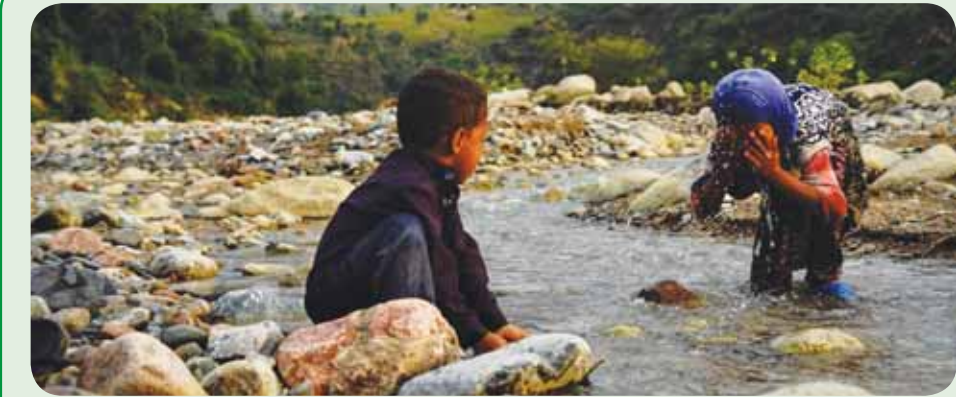
Article source: <http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/>



Amir crowns Purebred Arabian Camel Festival winners



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani attended yesterday the final four rounds of the annual purebred Arabian camel race festival on His Highness' sword for the 2022-2023 season at Al Shahaniya racetrack. He crowned the winners of the final four races for the camels of Sheikhs. His Highness the Amir also crowned the winners in the final six races of the tribes members' category. His Highness the Amir also honoured the sponsoring companies of the festival. The final day's competitions were attended by a number of sheikhs and ambassadors accredited to Qatar, tribes members, and fans of the sport. - QNA



The Tasweer Photo Festival Qatar will run until May 20 at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam



Tasweer Photo Festival opens



The biennial Tasweer Photo Festival Qatar launched its fifth exhibition yesterday at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art on the topic *I Am The Traveler And Also The Road*. New work by 12 recipients of Tasweer's annual grant award are on display until May 20 at the event organised by Qatar Museums (QM) as part of Qatar Creates, the year-round national cultural movement that curates, promotes and celebrates the diversity of cultural activities in Qatar. The festival brings together photographers and photographic communities from Qatar and the Western Asia and North Africa (WANA) region. Established under the leadership of QM Chairperson HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Tasweer builds on Qatar's commitment to nurture artistic talent, support creative industries, and further develop the nation's creative economy. A key element of Tasweer Photo Festival Qatar are two awards dedicated to Sheikh Saoud al-Thani (1966-2014), one of Qatar's greatest collectors, who largely shaped the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA)'s extraordinary collection. The exhibition features the unique photographic

approaches of the recipients in 2021 and 2022 of Tasweer's Sheikh Saoud al-Thani Project Award grants that live in the WANA region. The featured photographers are Rula Halawani (Palestine), Mona Hassan (Egypt), Mohamed El-shamy (Qatar), Shaima al-Tamimi (Qatar), Samar Sayed Baiomy (Egypt), Hayat al-Sharif (Yemen), Fethi Sahrui (Algeria), Salih Basheer (Sudan), Fatema A M al-Doh (Qatar), Reem Falaknaz (Oman), Mouneb Nassar (Syria), and Abdo Shanan (Algeria). Complementing the presentation at Mathaf, the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) will host a pop-up version of the exhibition on March 18-19, during the TED in Arabic, a joint initiative with TED and Qatar Foundation (QF). "The Sheikh Saoud al-Thani Awards programmes actively seek out and showcase the most modern, diverse, and talented photographers in the region, both established and up-and-coming," Tasweer managing director Khalifa al-Obaidly said. "We have been eagerly awaiting the opportunity to display the exceptional bodies of work produced by our grant award winners from 2021 and 2022 on the walls of the prestigious Mathaf gallery," he added.



The 2023 Qatar Kite Festival, which began yesterday at MIA Park, features a dazzling array of uniquely patterned kites. **PICTURES:** Thajudheen



Qatar Kite Festival begins at MIA Park

The 2023 Qatar Kite Festival began yesterday at MIA Park. The three-day event features a dazzling array of uniquely patterned kites, by teams from France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkiye, the UK and the US. The event with Qatar Museums (QM) as the venue partner will include activities for children, such as an inflatables games area (adjacent to the entrance of the MIA), and two kite-building workshops located in front of Al Riwaq gallery and on the alley of Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) park hills. The 2023 Qatar Kite Festival is an initiative of Safe Flight Solutions, the organiser of the Qatar Balloon Festival Series, and asfary.com, a statement explained. The workshops will be led by seasoned kite-flying professional Iqbal Husain, who at age five learnt how to build Pakistani fighter kites, and now crafts traditional kites made from bamboo and recycled Japanese washi paper. Children of all ages will learn how to use eco-friendly paper and biodegradable materials to draw, build, and paint their own kites, and once finished, will watch them be flown by professionals. The timings are 2pm-9pm today and 11am to 9pm tomorrow, the statement added.



Second edition of 'Whale Sharks in Qatar' tours from May 18

Discover Qatar, the destination management company of Qatar Airways, has announced that the second edition of its "Whale Sharks in Qatar" tours will begin from tomorrow, May 18, and run until the end of August. Daily tours and private charters can be booked exclusively through the Discover Qatar and Qatar Airways Holidays online platforms. The tours depart every Thursday to Sunday for eight hours on a 40-seater catamaran, and starts from \$249 per person. Nature enthusiasts can also avail private charters on a luxury yacht with a capacity up to 16 guests. Both tours include an expert guide, with Wi-Fi,

refreshments, and breakfast and lunch provided. Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive HE Akbar al-Baker said: "Our second edition of the exclusive 'Whale Sharks in Qatar' tours, offered through Discover Qatar, presents an unmissable opportunity for nature lovers to witness and interact with the grand and gentle creatures of the sea." "We are proud to call Qatar a home to one of the largest congregations of whale sharks in the world, and remain committed to being the leading destination to connect people from all over the world with such fascinating marine life," he said. Qatar has the largest concentration of whale sharks in the world, making it the only place visitors

can see so many in a single sighting. Often referred to as "gentle giants", they are estimated to have existed for 60mn years, can live up to 100 years, and grow up to 12m in length. Launched in 2022, the "Whale Sharks of Qatar" tour has been a resounding success, with nearly 500 explorers becoming the first to observe up to 300 whale sharks congregating off the northeastern coast of Qatar. Discover Qatar have also produced a detailed e-brochure which provides more information about the tours. More information is available at <https://www.discoverqatar.qa/whale-sharks-of-qatar/>

