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BUSINESS | Page 1

Qatar, GCC banks resilient to US lenders' distress on broad franchises: Moody's

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### Amir to meet Turkmen president today

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will meet today with President of the Republic of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedow, who arrived in Doha yesterday on a state visit. The Amir and President Berdimuhamedow will discuss bilateral relations and ways of boosting them in addition to issues of mutual concern. They will also witness the signing of a number of agreements and memoranda of understanding. **(QNA)**

### Former finance minister, others referred to court

Further to the statement issued by the Public Prosecution on May 6, 2021, regarding the arrest of the former Minister of Finance Ali Sharif al-Emadi and the conduct of an investigation against him about crimes raised in reports related to the public office: The Public Prosecution indicated that the necessary investigations in this case have been completed by interrogating the accused, hearing witnesses, and examining the technical reports. Since evidence extracted from the case documents proved that the accused committed the crimes ascribed to them, the attorney-general issued an order to refer the accused to the Criminal Court to try them for the crimes ascribed to them, which included bribery, appropriation of public money, abuse of office, abuse of power, damage to public money and money laundering. **(QNA)**

### Awqaf ministry calls for sighting of Ramadan crescent on Tuesday

The Crescent Sighting Committee at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has called upon Muslims in Qatar to sight the new crescent (hila) of the blessed month of Ramadan on Tuesday evening, Sha'ban 29, 1444 AH, according to the Qatari calendar, corresponding to March 21, 2023. The committee has said whoever witnesses the crescent should head to the headquarters of the Awqaf ministry, located in Al Dafna (Towers) to report his testimony. The committee will meet immediately after the Maghreb prayer. **(QNA)**

### UBS to take over Credit Suisse



(From L) Credit Suisse chairman Axel Lehmann, UBS Chairman Colm Kelleher and Swiss Finance Minister Karin Keller-Sutter attend a press conference in Bern yesterday.

UBS agreed to buy rival Swiss bank Credit Suisse for 3bn Swiss francs (\$3.23bn) in stock and agreed to assume up to 5bn francs (\$5.4bn) in losses, in a shotgun merger engineered by Swiss authorities to avoid more market-shaking turmoil in global banking. The deal includes 100bn Swiss francs (\$108bn) in liquidity assistance for UBS and Credit Suisse from the Swiss central bank. To enable UBS to take over Credit Suisse, the federal government is providing a loss guarantee of a maximum of 9bn Swiss francs for a clearly defined part of the portfolio, the government said.

# QOC aims for excellence in new strategy

• Three main objectives of the 2023-2030 strategy are ensuring sports excellence, promoting Olympic culture, and achieving comprehensive sports development

The Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) unveiled its 2023-2030 Strategy during a ceremony held in the presence of HE the President of Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani.

The strategy aims to achieve three main objectives: ensuring sports excellence, promoting Olympic culture, and achieving comprehensive sports development.

QOC First Vice-President Mohamed Yousef al-Mana, QOC Second Vice-President Dr Thani bin Abdulrahman al-Kuwari, HE QOC Secretary-General Jassim bin Rashid al-Buanain and a number of heads of clubs, federations and sports committees in Qatar attended the ceremony.

To achieve these objectives, the QOC is keen to continue promoting the Olympic culture by encouraging all segments of society to participate in sporting events and adopt healthy lifestyles, while also building and developing elite teams of Qatari male and female players to ensure excellence in all sports, including training, management and other technical aspects.

By hosting major sports tournaments, the QOC also seeks to promote sports tourism, support the national economy and invest in the sporting legacy left by the major tournaments hosted in Qatar recently.

At the top of QOC's priorities are the preparations of national teams, especially at the age-group level. This strategy aims to build a strategic framework and develop systematic implementation plans to develop the performance of athletes, provide for their needs, and take care of their educational, professional and health path,



HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani at the ceremony.

in addition to measuring, monitoring and evaluating their performance to ensure the achievement of interim and main goals.

HE al-Buanain said the launch of the 2023-2030 Strategy marks the beginning of a new phase of success.

He asserted that Qatari sport, through the past four decades, has been able to write a history full of achievements at all levels, pointing out that the champions from Team Qatar have left their mark at various regional and international levels.

"This year marks the beginning of a new era in our journey, and today we begin a new phase of success, after we have completed an outstanding phase of our past strategy, in which the Qatar Olympic Committee, with the efforts and co-operation of sports federations and committees, was proudly able to achieve the goals set for the previous strategy," he said. **Sport Page 1**

### Charity Iftar meals for 10,000 people daily

The General Directorate of Endowments at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has announced a project to provide Iftar meals to fasting people, at 10 sites in different regions of the country. The Director General of the General Department of Endowments, Sheikh Khalid bin Mohamed al-Thani, said that the General Department is keen to hold charity banquets annually, during the holy month of Ramadan, in order to fulfil the conditions of honourable endowers, and the objectives of the Endowment Bank for Charity. Assistant Director General of the General Department of Endowments Mohamed Yaqoub al-Ali said that this year, the department aims to provide Iftar for 10,000 fasting people daily in various sites. He urged the good people to contribute to supporting Iftar sites. **(QNA)**

QNA  
Doha

Qatar has announced it will host the 6th General Assembly of the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) from October 2-3 in conjunction with the opening of the Horticultural Expo 2023 Doha.

It was also announced that the organisation would hold the second high-level forum in Kazakhstan from June 6-8 under the chairmanship of Qatar.

The announcements were made during a press conference by the Director of the Food Security Department at the Ministry of Municipality and Chairman of the Executive Council of IOFS, Dr Masoud Jarallah al-Marri and



Officials at the press conference.

the Director General of IOFS, Yerlan Baidaulat, yesterday.

Dr Masoud Jarallah al-Marri said the



HE Sheikh Hind bint Hamad al-Thani with other dignitaries at the closing ceremony of the event.

# Groundbreaking TEDinArabic Summit concludes in Doha

• Arabic stories and experiences are making their mark on the world, summit told

The curtain has come down on the first TEDinArabic Summit – held in Doha through a partnership between Qatar Foundation (QF) and TED – with its audience hearing how having a platform for ideas and experiences to be shared in Arabic is making an impact on the world.

Under the theme 'The Butterfly Effect', the two-day summit saw more than 3,000 attendees listen to talks in Arabic by TED speakers, participate in interactive workshops, and experience the event's Arabic stations and social spaces – all with the aim of amplifying ideas in Arabic.

The closing session of the summit – attended by HE Sheikh Hind bint Hamad al-Thani, Vice-Chairperson and Chief Executive of Qatar Foundation – saw Algerian journalist Amal Arrab tell the audience: "This summit has brought us together for two days in which we have felt the impact of ideas and experiences expressed through Arab voices."

"Most importantly, our stories and experiences may differ in their features, but they are similar in their impact, no matter how small that impact may seem to our eyes," she said. "There is no doubt that they are making a great change to the world around us."

In a discussion with Arrab during the closing session, Olympic swimmer and UNHCR Goodwill ambassador Yusra Mardini spoke about how



Snapshots from the second day of the summit.



the ability of refugees to be self-reliant can be enhanced.

In 2015, she fled Syria during the country's revolution, reaching Greece by sea after travelling through Lebanon and Türkiye – with her, her sister, and two others swimming to push the boat to safety with 20 other people aboard when its engine failed.

Mardini later competed at the 2016 Olympic Games as a member of the Refugee Olympic Team, has written her memoirs, and created a foundation that allows refugees and at-risk young people to pursue their passions.

She told the TEDinArabic Summit: "Being a refugee is not a choice or an expectation. But we can choose to live our lives as refugees, to surrender and let our circumstances define us, or we can choose to fight for our dreams and

use our experiences to inspire others."

Speakers on the second day of the summit included Dr Ali al-Rashid, a Qatari engineer, researcher and expert in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity, who recounted how his experiences at the beginning of his career changed his view of the development of AI, and the possibility that it might come to dominate human intelligence.

"At the beginning of my career journey, on an airport project, I used to read people's faces, and I believed that the eye is the window to the soul," he said. "On the other hand, the process of passenger-checking was one of the most annoying issues to travellers due to overcrowding, so I started thinking about how I could find a solution to this problem." **To Page 12**

# Qatar to host 6th IOFS assembly in October

to join and ratify the statute of the IOFS in 2016 and chairs its executive council represented by the Ministry of Municipality. This membership reflects the Islamic states' trust in the significant role played by Qatar in the Islamic world.

Dr al-Marri added that the Doha meetings would witness the launch of a fund for financing projects to enable member states to use their capabilities, enhance and rationalise the management of their resources, co-ordinate among states at the level of government, facilitate the process of communication between them, and overcome difficulties and help in the fields of food security to face challenges and emergencies.

The Director of the Food Security Department at the Ministry of Municipality and Chairman of the Executive Council

of IOFS indicated that global food security faces several challenges, whether environmental or geopolitical, which require co-ordinating the efforts and setting programme and strategies that would lead to an Islamic Organisation that is capable of addressing all crises.

He pointed out that the International Islamic Food Processing Association (IFPA) is one of the leading programmes of the organisation, which it relies on to achieve food security by promoting Islamic products and increasing intra-industry trade. The IFPA provides consultations for the products' owners to compete with other producers from outside the organisation, thus creating job opportunities and income for business owners. **To Page 4**





## Health minister meets Sudanese counterpart and WHO official

HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari met yesterday with Minister of Health of Sudan Dr Haitham Mohamed Ibrahim Awadallah, on the sidelines of the Middle East Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare 2023, which is being held in Doha. They discussed relations between the countries in various health fields and ways to enhance and develop them, in addition to the most important topics addressed by the Middle East Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare. HE the Minister of Public Health also met on the sidelines of the forum, with World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr Ahmed Salim al-Mandhari. During the meeting, they discussed strengthening co-operation between Qatar and the WHO as well as the most important issues addressed by the forum. **(QNA)**



## Turkmenistan president arrives in Doha



President of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedov arrived in Doha yesterday for a state visit. The president and the accompanying delegation were welcomed upon arrival at Hamad International Airport by HE the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie, Qatar's ambassador to Turkmenistan Hamad bin Rashid al-Athba, and Acting Charge d'Affaires of Turkmenistan in Doha M T Elyasov. **(QNA)**

## Qatar leads unofficial talks to formulate political declaration for SDG Summit

HE the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations Sheikhha Alya bint Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani, along with Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations Fergal Mythen, as co-facilitators, led the unofficial consultations in New York on formulating the political declaration that will be adopted during the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit, set to be held in September 2023. HE Sheikhha Alya bint Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani pointed out that the political declaration to be adopted during the summit would be consensual, concise, action-oriented, transformational, and an ambitious document, reaffirming once again the commitment to an equitable, sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous world by 2030. **(QNA)**



## Sheikha Alya meets CTED executive director

HE the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations Sheikhha Alya bint Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani met with Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) of the United Nations Natalia Gherman. They discussed means of co-operation between Qatar and the CTED of the United Nations. Sheikhha Alya extended congratulations to the executive director on her new post, pointing out the solid and developing partnership between Qatar and the CTED. She also expressed the aspiration to continue boosting the positive and constructive partnership between the two sides and to devote efforts toward combating terrorism and violent extremism. **(QNA)**



## Assistant FM meets special envoy for Syrian crisis and anti-Daesh coalition



HE the Assistant Foreign Minister Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhatier met yesterday with the visiting Special Envoy for the Syrian crisis and the anti-Daesh coalition at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy Stefano Ravagnan. They discussed bilateral co-operation, developments in Syria, and the possible efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to the fraternal people of Syria after the earthquake disaster. **(QNA)**



Officials mark the occasion.

# WHO designates HMC Dept as collaborating centre for healthy ageing

Hamad Medical Corporation's (HMC) Department of Geriatrics and Long-Term Care has been designated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Ageing and Dementia. The Collaborating Centre initiative is designed to bring benefits to both parties, including more visibility of key projects and programmes, enabling improved opportunities to exchange information and develop technical co-operation with other international institutions as well as facilitate better access to funding for research and programme development. Dr Hanadi al-Hamad, national lead, Healthy Ageing in Qatar and chairperson of the Department of Geriatrics and Long-Term Care at HMC, is

designated as the head of the Collaborating Centre. WHO Collaborating Centres are institutions designated by the director-general to carry out activities in support of the organisation's programmes. Currently, there are over 800 WHO Collaborating Centres in some 80 member states working with WHO on areas such as nursing, occupational health, communicable diseases, nutrition, mental health, chronic diseases and health technologies. HE Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari, Minister of Public Health, praised this unique co-operation between Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Public Health and WHO, which is the third Collaborating Centre, which confirms the strong focus and commitment to local healthcare.

Dr al-Hamad said: "While some people age well and remain active and relatively illness free in older age, others are more prone to chronic diseases and disabilities that negatively impact their quality and length of life. This Collaboration Centre will support the WHO by contributing to knowledge and research on healthy ageing, including the importance of integrated care and preventative health literacy promotion." Dr Ahmed al-Mandhari, WHO regional director for Eastern Mediterranean, said: "WHO Collaborating Centres are a mechanism of co-operation in which relevant institutions are recognised by WHO as assisting the organisation in implementing its mandated work. These types of collaboration have been supporting

the achievement of WHO's planned strategic objectives at the regional and global levels for over 70 years. The objectives are related to the development and strengthening of national and regional institutional capacity; and enhancing the scientific validity of its global health work." "Our older population represent a key pillar in society and a valuable asset to the country - it is therefore fitting that we, the government, invest in promoting health awareness and healthcare services for this population group. This Collaborating Centre provides a framework for how we look after our ageing citizens more effectively," added Dr Essa al-Sulaiti, deputy national lead, Healthy Ageing and medical director of the Home Healthcare Services.

# GANHRI annual meeting approves statute amendments

The Annual Meeting of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), taking place in Geneva, approved the proposed amendments to the Alliance's statute, with the aim of enhancing the accuracy and rigour of the accreditation process. The meeting decided that all National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) accredited with (A Status) and (B Status) be subject to special review, or the suspension of the accreditation classification if their circumstances changed in ways that may affect their continued compliance with the Paris Principles, in addition to providing the sub-committee on accreditation with the ability to recommend the cancellation

of NHRI's accreditation classification, when it is not possible to continue to consider them as institutions operating in accordance with the Paris Principles. In her opening speech to the General Assembly, HE Chairperson of the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) and President of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah called on national institutions to enhance co-operation and solidarity to respond to the human rights challenges facing the world, adding that wars and conflicts do not end, and violence and discrimination continue. Al-Attiyah added during GANHRI's Annual Meeting that

despite the severity of these challenges, it is time for hope, as 2023 marks the 30th anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the Paris Principles, establishing NHRIs' framework to remain independent and effective all around the world. Al-Attiyah said coinciding with this year as well is the 30th anniversary of the establishment of GANHRI, created with the mission of establishing, supporting, and strengthening NHRIs, and to make their voice heard worldwide. She added that proof of GANHRI's impressive success, is the fact that it started off with 12 members in 1993, only to include 120 NHRIs members today. Al-Attiyah stressed that there



HE Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah during her speech.

were in the past 30 years, countless examples of NHRIs' strong impact on promoting justice and

accountability, redressing victims of human rights violations, in addition to their significant

contributions to law, policies, and practices that support human rights. She pointed out the need for national institutions to draw inspiration from the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which laid down a common framework in all regions. Al-Attiyah said that one of the issues mentioned in GANHRI's five-year strategic plan is the exchange of knowledge on ways to prevent torture and ill-treatment in places of detention. In addition, the GANHRI Annual Meeting included listening to reports from the four regional networks of NHRIs, key partners in the United Nations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner

for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme and GANHRI's sub-committee on accreditation. The Alliance's Annual Meeting discussed ways to enhance the process of accreditation, and proposed changes to the statutes of GANHRI. Al-Attiyah also revealed that GANHRI's 14th International Conference will be held later this year, and said that it will be co-hosted by the NHRI's of Denmark and Ukraine. She said the conference is important for members and partners alike, with the theme of NHRIs' role in preventing and responding to torture and ill-treatment. **(QNA)**



# Qatar appeals for effective measures against Islamophobia

Qatar has called for effective measures to combat Islamophobia and all forms of intolerance, by everyone, regardless of their religion or background.

This came in Qatar's statement delivered by Second Secretary at Qatar's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva Mohamed al-Buainain, during an event organised on the sidelines of the 52nd Regular Session of Human Rights Council in Geneva, to celebrate the International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

Al-Buainain indicated that Islamophobia is not a new phenomenon, but it has been on the rise in recent years, fuelled by ignorance, prejudices and deliberate misinformation, and manifested in various forms such as verbal abuse, discrimination, physical attacks, and even the burning of the Holy Qur'an.

The Holy Qur'an has a special place in the hearts and minds of Muslims, as it is a source of guidance and inspiration, the statement said, stressing that watching it burn is very painful and unacceptable.

The statement emphasised the need to condemn acts of hatred and disrespect towards Muslims in the strongest possible terms, and take action to combat them. Regardless of our religion or background, we are all responsible to stand up against Islamophobia and all forms of blind fanaticism, the statement said, adding that people must also educate themselves, pro-



Second Secretary at Qatar's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva Mohamed al-Buainain.

mote interfaith dialogue, and work towards building bridges of understanding and respect.

Al-Buainain pointed out that Islamophobia does not only affect Muslims, but also undermines the values of justice, equality and human rights that everyone cherishes, stressing that work must be done to create a world that accepts diversity, in which every-

one is treated with dignity and respect.

On the occasion of the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, Second Secretary at Qatar's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva Mohamed al-Buainain called for pledging solidarity with Muslim brothers and sisters, and to work for a world in which all people can live in peace and harmony. (QNA)

## CSGDB launches Mazaya discount card for govt agencies' staff via Mawared system

Civil Service and Government Development Bureau (CSGDB) launched yesterday the "Mazaya" electronic discount card for employees of government agencies through the "Mawared" system, which offers discounts by more than 200 companies and stores in various fields.

The Mazaya programme officials at CSGDB said the card benefits more than 80,000 employees in the government sector and their family members, adding that it provides the best benefits to meet the employees' basic needs and to achieve job satisfaction.

The Mazaya electronic card offers discounts and offers via a wide range of companies, including the recently



opened one during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The companies include 10 categories: hotels, restaurants and cafes,

health centres, beauty centres, shops, decoration stores, event stores, fitness clubs, children's stores, toys and nurseries, transportation and communications. The Mazaya programme officials at CSGDB continue to develop the "Mazaya" discount card by adding more offers, stores, and various services to provide the best services to government sector employees.

The Mawared system provides a package of services to employees and decision-makers in the government sector in Qatar. Recently, it added the goal management and performance appraisal service to improve the performance of the government sector. (QNA)



Some of the participants in the workshop.

## Municipality ministry organises workshop on 'Humanisation of Cities'

With the aim of exchanging experiences and building capacities of urban planners and designers, the Ministry of Municipality, represented by the Urban Planning Department, organised a five-day workshop entitled "Humanisation of Cities".

The workshop was an important experience in integrating the participants into work teams from the various authorities concerned with the urban planning process, and belonging to several partner institutions from Qatar and the Gulf Co-operation Council countries.

The Urban Planning Department at the Ministry of Municipality raised through the workshop, the problem of the urban public sphere, as the workshop dealt with strategies adopted globally to preserve a populated public sphere that welcomes people, even at times when there are no events, throughout the year, and when the climate becomes harsher, and at different times of the day.

After introducing the participants to the concepts related to the humanisation of cities and the most prominent strategies adopted globally through 12 presentations by experts in the field, and by visits to humanised sites in Qatar, the participants, who were divided into six work teams, developed innovative and practical proposals, and presented designs in this regard.

Thereafter, a jury from Qatar University and relevant government departments, judged the proposals according to criteria derived from the workshop material. (QNA)

## Ministry recalls Triumph bikes

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Alfaridan Automobiles, Qatar's Triumph bikes dealership, has announced a recall of Triumph Speed Triple RS, Triumph Speed Triple RR, 2021-23 models, due to a malfunction in the engine cooling fan, which leads to the appearance of a warning for the engine coolant level.

The ministry has said the recall

campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. It will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works, and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out.

The MoCI has urged all customers

to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, enquiries and suggestions, through the call centre: 16001; e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa; Twitter: @MOCIQATAR; Instagram: MOCIQATAR; and the ministry's mobile application available on iPhone and Android devices: MOCI\_QATAR

## talabat 'an Official Sponsor of Qatar International Food Festival'

talabat, the region's leading local delivery and q-commerce platform, has said it is an Official Sponsor of the 12th Qatar International Food Festival (QIFF), the country's largest and longest-running food and drink festival, which runs until tomorrow.

QIFF is a celebration of Qatar's rich cultural diversity and vibrant food scene, and attracts visitors from all around the country. The highly anticipated annual event showcases the best of local and international cuisines, with a range of culinary delights for foodies and families alike.

Francisco Miguel De Sousa, managing director of talabat in Qatar, said: "We are delighted to be participating once again in one of the key festivals in Qatar and the region. This comes in line with our continuous efforts to be part of the rich culinary scene in Qatar, and to meet with as many local and international vendors as possible. At talabat, we strongly believe that food brings people together, and are excited to be part of this celebration in Qatar



and look forward to even more occasions in the future."

As part of its sponsorship, talabat is having a photobooth activation for visitors to capture their precious moments having their favourite meals, and live face-painting stations for kids to enjoy, ensuring

festival-goers can make the most of their time at Lusail Boulevard.

These are in addition to giving away vouchers to be used once visitors are back at their homes, to order their groceries or favourite dishes conveniently and reliably using the talabat app.

## Ministry conducts parent survey on schools' quality

The School Evaluation Department at the Evaluation Affairs Sector of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has begun implementing a parental opinion poll for the academic year 2022-2023, which the department implements annually for all public and private schools and kindergartens.

This year's survey targets all parents from kindergarten to secondary school.

Parents can participate and answer the survey questions by entering


the link published on the ministry's website or through the survey link sent to them by the student's school via text message on their mobile phone number or any other means.

The guardian has to click on the survey link and insert the QID number. Then the answer is directed to survey questions that will last no more than five minutes.

The number of guardians targeted for this year is 125,524 parents in schools. Kindergartens are also targeted.

The survey includes questions about the extent of the guardian's satisfaction with the level of quality of their children's schools and the quality of education, such as the school's communication with them, duties and evaluations, the efficiency of teachers, the curricula taught in the school and the role of the school in promoting national identity, educational and moral values among students.

The School Evaluation Department called on all parents to participate in the survey. (QNA)




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Malabar Gold & Diamonds sets aside QRI.7mn for CSR activities during Ramadan

Malabar Gold & Diamonds has announced its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes in the GCC and Far East regions for the holy month of Ramadan. The company has set aside QRI.7mn for CSR activities during Ramadan 2023. These initiatives are planned in addition to the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives conducted by the group throughout the year in the 10 countries of operation. The brand will associate with embassies, NGOs and like-minded organisations to carry out philanthropic activities throughout the holy month, including the distribution of Iftar meals and food provision kits to deserving labourers and families. "The generous initiatives, which Malabar Gold & Diamonds carries out without fail every year, are expected to be a boon for the underprivileged sections of our society," a press statement noted. Around 125,000 Iftar meals will be distributed as part of this year's Ramadan CSR initiatives across Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Malaysia, Singapore and the US. In Qatar, Iftar meals will be distributed in labour camps located at Sanaya, Al Khor and Mesaieed. The food donation drive is being conducted in association with Qatar Sparsham, Cultural Forum, Youth Forum, Global Kerala Pravasi Association,

INCASS and Kozhikode Pravasi Association. "At Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the philanthropic activities that we have carried out over the years has resulted in the betterment of numerous lives and this is a fact that we are extremely proud of. The creation of a hunger-free world is one of the key components of our ESG goals and the Ramadan initiative is in line with our larger objective. As Malabar Gold & Diamonds celebrates its 30th anniversary, we sincerely hope that our actions will leave a lasting impression and motivate other organisations to carry out similar activities," said Shamail Ahamed, managing director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds. "The CSR activities that Malabar Gold & Diamonds carries out every year are a testament to our commitment towards making a significant change in the society. Spearheaded by the goodwill of our entire team and like-minded organisations, the month-long charitable activities that we have planned for Ramadan are sure to support those of us in our society who need it the most. As we approach another holy month of piouness, generosity and reflections, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude towards our partnering organisation for their wholehearted support in this noble venture," said Abdul Salam K P, vice-chairman of Malabar Group.

British Council Qatar names The Hamilton International School as a new IELTS testing venue in Doha

The Hamilton International School, part of International Schools Partnership (ISP), has been named a new IELTS testing centre in Doha by the British Council. Students from The Hamilton International School will have access to free IELTS practice materials, mock tests and will be able to sit the official test on the school campus. "We are so happy to have partnered with the British Council and are thrilled to offer IELTS, one of the world's most reputable English language tests. At The Hamilton International School, we want to equip our students with all the required tools they need to reach their university of choice. This partnership provides one of those tools," said Terry Senior, principal of The Hamilton International School. Along with computer-delivered and paper-based testing, the agreement will also provide The Hamilton International School with IELTS mock tests with answer keys, over 30 hours of free online practice resources, IELTS orientation workshops, and IELTS Teachers Training for staff at the school. Deep Adhikari, director of Exams, UAE, Oman & Qatar, British Council, said: "We are delighted to welcome The Hamilton International School as a new IELTS testing venue in Doha. This partnership will provide students with a convenient and accessible way to take the IELTS test, a trusted and internationally recognised English language proficiency test that opens doors to academic and professional opportunities around the world. We look forward to



Officials mark the partnership.

working with The Hamilton International School to support their students' success." The IELTS on computer test offers more availability of test dates and results that can be received in 3-5 calendar days after the test has been completed. The test content, timing and structure remain the same in both options and, importantly, the speaking test remains face-to-face with a certified IELTS examiner. For those planning to apply to university, IELTS is considered the preferred test of English for academic study, recognised and accepted by 11,000 institutions around the world. It has a high in-country recognition for domestic studies too. IELTS taken on a computer is also gaining popularity among working professionals. Apart from the familiarity of using computers daily, the option to choose a slot for speaking interviews at the time of registration makes it easier for test takers to plan their test day, especially for working professionals with busy schedules.

‘Memorable Ramadan experience’ awaits at Sheraton Grand Doha

Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel is celebrating Ramadan with an "unparalleled culinary experience curated for the occasion, setting the iconic hotel as a premier venue to cherish the holy month with family and friends embracing Qatari tradition and heritage". The hotel is offering Ramadan experiences at many of its venues this year. "Whether you plan an enriching Iftar or an elevated Suhoor for your group gatherings, a full spectrum experience of Arabian hospitality awaits in the lavish Salwa Tent," a press statement noted. From sunset, guests are treated to a culinary journey at Qatar's favourite Al Hubara Tent, under its classic golden domes for QR350 per person. A wide range of delicacies is served for Iftar featuring Middle Eastern classics, international dishes, local favourites, extensive seafood spreads, live cooking counters and delectable gourmet desserts. Surrounded by loved ones and exceptional tastes, Suhoor at Al Hubara Terrace will be an experience worth enjoying for QR295 per person with a rich Suhoor buffet accompanied by melodic live music. For those who would like to embark on a royal journey of Indian flavours, Jamavar Doha invites all to share special moments with loved ones to make this holy month genuinely memorable with its special Iftar set menu for QR195 per person. "Surprise your friends and families this Ramadan with a gift of hand-crafted delicacies with the best collection of mouth-watering Arabic desserts and traditional sweets, and takeaway boxes specially curated for the holy season, starting from QR125," the statement pointed out. The celebration continues outside Qatar's favourite hotel as "Sheraton



Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel is celebrating Ramadan with an "unparalleled culinary experience curated for the occasion".



Iftar at Al Hubara.

delivers the finest outside catering options with dedicated outside catering services that can transform your event into a reality". As one of Qatar's most established hotels, Sheraton Grand Doha offers diners a sublime setting and a unique element to this year's Ramadan, the statement added. For reservations and detailed information, call +974 4485 3000 or e-mail F&Breservations.doha@sheraton-hotels.com or explore the Sheraton Grand Doha's Ramadan Brochure.

Qatar to host sixth IOFS General Assembly in October

From Page 1

Dr Masoud Jarallah al-Marri reviewed the arrangements related to hosting the event and the importance of the organisation's role to improve the situation of food security in the countries of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC). He noted that the General Assembly of the IOFS would be attended by the ministers of agriculture and specialists in food security issues from 57 Islamic countries, in addition to officials from more than 25 international organisations specialised in food security. The number of participants is expected to exceed 250. The organisation's General Assembly is seen as a platform for exchanging and co-ordinating joint efforts among Islamic countries to strengthen food security. IOFS Director General Prof Yerlan Baidaulat, highlighted the great role of Qatar in the activities of the organisation, especially in the field of agriculture and animal production and Doha's contributions to resolving many issues facing the region and the world. Baidaulat pointed out that the organisation deals with 57 member states of the organisation, which are mostly concerned with achieving food security, while 28 face the risk of hunger, malnutrition and natural disasters, which affect their food situation and security. He added that the Islamic market is large and 80% of Halal food is imported from non-Islamic countries. Therefore, the organisation is working to develop supply chains, strengthen the capabilities of farmers, support small farms with consultations, and the provision of cheap and effective technology to face water scarcity and climate changes, he said. The director general of the organisation stated that the sixth General Assembly of the IOFS will discuss a number of important issues, including the challenges of food security, support for businessmen and governments to deal with social and economic conditions, implementation of animal farm projects, provision of bread, development of supply chains, provision of agricultural technology and the need to attract international companies and

centres specialised in the fields of food security, reviewing the status quo and implementing the 10-year strategy, supporting the private sector, and reviewing the organisation's annual report. During the press conference, it was also announced that the organisation will hold the second high-level forum, which will be held from June 6 to 8, 2023, in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan, under the chairmanship of Qatar and with the participation of representatives of more than 23 member states. With more than 1,000 participants, the second edition of the forum will be an opportunity to confirm FAO's commitment to assisting member states in ensuring sustainable food systems. The forum aims to create a unique, dynamic and unprecedented platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue, with a focus on exchanging advanced agricultural technologies, advancing science and research in order to adapt agriculture to marginal environments, promoting the concept of smart agriculture, transforming food supplies and value chains, and facilitating strategic partnerships for business opportunities. Investments in agriculture, and youth empowerment for sustainable food systems. On June 6, 2023, IOFS will hold a youth biotechnology forum titled 'Biotechnology for Food Security and Climate Resilience' where future food security experts, agro-entrepreneurs, farmers, IT professionals and students from the agriculture sector will hold working sessions and discussions on pressing challenges in agriculture from a modern perspective. Young people's interest in this economic sector will, in the long term, help strengthen rural development and national and regional food systems. The main part of the IOFS high-level Forum on Food Security will be held on June 7, 2023, and will focus on three main sectors: food safety, advanced technologies and innovations. The important part of the forum on trade and investment will also be held within the Astana International Forum from June 8-9. It will serve as a platform for eminent delegates from governments, international organisations, businesses and academia, to address the four major global challenges including foreign

policy, security, sustainability, energy, climate, economics and finance. During the meetings of the Fifth General Assembly of the Islamic Organisation for Food Security on October 11, 2022, Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Municipality, was elected Chair of the Executive Council of the organisation due to the great role it plays in the framework of joint work with the countries of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation to advance the issues of the Islamic nation. Qatar has made great efforts in the field of achieving food security, within the realisation of the Qatar National Vision 2030, to achieve sustainable development as part of the national programme for food security, which contributes to making the Qatar National Vision 2030 a reality. These efforts have contributed to Qatar's advanced ranks in recent years in the global food security index, which confirms that work in implementing the national strategy for food security is progressing according to plan. The Islamic Organisation for Food Security is a specialised institution affiliated with the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation which was established in 2013. The first meeting of the General Assembly was held in 2016. The organisation attaches importance to food security for all countries of the Islamic world and its reflection on the social, economic and political aspects. The main objectives of the organisation include providing expertise and technical knowledge to member countries in various aspects of sustainable agriculture, rural development, food security and biotechnology, assessing and monitoring the food security situation in member countries to be able to identify emergency situations, providing social safety nets and humanitarian assistance through food security reserves through co-ordinating, formulating and implementing common agricultural policies such as sharing and transferring appropriate technology and public food management systems, addressing problems such as desertification, deforestation, erosion and salinity, and mobilising, managing financial and agricultural resources to enhance food security. (QNA)

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# Lusail University launches two master programmes in tie-up with UN agencies

By **Shafeeq Alingal**  
Staff Reporter

As part of Lusail University's expansion of academic programmes at the master's level, the university yesterday launched master programmes in International Criminal Justice and in International Affairs and Public Policy. The first is in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) while the second is in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

The Master Programme in International Criminal Justice is the culmination of a strategic partnership with UNODC aimed at enhancing crime prevention through education for sustainable, peaceful and inclusive communities. Lusail University's objectives and willingness to raise awareness on the prevention of organised crime, corruption and terrorism in accordance with existing international conventions, standards and norms have coincided with UNODC's efforts and contributions to national and international efforts to prevent and combat crime through many approaches. These include the promotion of human well-being through educational measures.

While addressing a press conference at the university, Professor Nitham Hindi, President of Lusail University, said that the objectives of the International Criminal Justice Master programme is helping students develop the tools and skills in drafting plans, legislation and writing reports. The programmes will prepare students to acquire the legal skills in criminal justice, cross-border crimes and counter-terrorism

initiatives in a complex international context while encouraging analytical, critical and creative thinking skills, and providing the student with an extensive theoretical and practical knowledge in the area of criminal justice and human rights. "It will also increase awareness of professional ethics and social values to underline the impact of crime on international relations," he said.

The International Criminal Justice Master Programme is based on promoting community awareness of crimes as a sustainable development goal that Qatar is pursuing. The programme was also an effective response to the contents of the Doha Declaration 2015, which emphasised the importance of education as a tool for crime prevention and urged support for the rule of law. The programme also reflects the goals of the Education for Justice Initiative E4J which is supported by Qatar and seeks to transfer knowledge and achieve a deeper understanding of rule of law issues.

The programme will have an English and Arabic track. It's also benchmarked with international programmes and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime oversight. It's a two-year programme consisting of 36 credit hours distributed over four semesters. The programme has four concentrations. These are combating money laundering and terrorism financing, anti-corruption, human trafficking and migrant smuggling and cybercrime.

Prof Nitham said that the programme learning outcomes are "to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the principles of organised and international crime, and to participate in the planning and drafting laws and legislations, to write academic



Officials making the announcement. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

research and legal reports, in addition to demonstrate knowledge of human rights, the rule of law, and the principle of justice, as well as knowledge of the court appeal processes related to international crime within national and international courts, and to determine areas of cross-border crime and its international jurisdiction."

This high-quality programme will provide an opportunity for all students with a bachelor's degree in various disciplines to study criminal justice. It is also designed in line with the laws applicable in the State of Qatar and focuses on applied legal studies and practical and experimental programmes in order to refine the student's skills and prepare him for the labour market.

The Master of Arts in International Affairs and Public Policy programme is offered by Lusail University in co-operation with its strategic partner UNITAR. This programme comes in response to the high demand in Qatar and the region for a Master of Arts in International Affairs and Public Policy. It addresses

the needs of the workforce in the domestic, regional and international labour market, especially as the field of international affairs and public policy becomes increasingly important with the growth of the world and its interdependence through trade and business. It's also an interesting topic with a heavy focus on the economy, culture, education and political science and examining its impact on society. This unique programme addresses two critical areas: international affairs with its various issues and public policy with its decisions that create the outcomes of the political system.

The programme has many advantages, as faculty members serving in the programme have significant experience in teaching and international work and they are well-known and qualified. The programme will be made available with two tracks with first in Arabic and second in English. The programme aims at engaging students to work collaboratively with international experts in multidisciplinary and multicultural contexts, develop students' competence in deal-

ing with challenges through the design public policies and their implications at global, regional and national levels, enhance students' technical, analytical and research skills to contribute to the generation of knowledge in the fields of international affairs, public policy and diplomacy, demonstrate to students the philosophies, theories and principles as well as key issues and concepts in international affairs and international relation.

Prof Nitham said the master programme in International Affairs and Public Policy is the first and only programme in the Middle East in cooperation with UNITAR. "The programme will begin in August 2023 (Fall semester 2023). This comes as part of Lusail University's strategic plan. The programme is characterised by the fact that it supports the Qatar National Vision 2030 while stressing the need for an educational system that rises to the level of distinguished international educational systems and provides citizens with what meets their needs and the needs of the Qatari society and includes educational curricula

and training programmes that respond to the needs of the current and future labour market. It's also based on an analysis of the needs of the local labour market and has high quality in terms of the teaching and learning process, indicators of quality assurance and international accreditation, and is taught by a specialised group of faculty members," he said.

Regarding the admission criteria, Fatma al-Mesleh, Vice-President for Student Affairs, said the candidate must have a bachelor's degree from a university accredited by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education of Qatar with a GPA of at least 2.0/4.0 (C) or equivalent in case of at least three years' practical experience after and should pass the personal interview with the admissions committee.

The application for the two master's programmes can be submitted online at the university's website with all personal and academic data, experience certificates and a curriculum vitae.

Al-Mesleh said the applications are transferred to the Interview committee, noting that the application is open until April 27, and the interviews will be held from April 30 to May 30, while admission decisions will be announced on June 7 and studies will begin on August 20.

Dr Moulay Hicham Idrissi, Dean of the College of Law, said the master's programme in criminal justice, which is the first in the region, aims to meet the need of Qatar to promote the principles of international criminal justice and the rule of law at the educational level. "As the programme is considered an actual response to the contents of the 2015 Doha Declaration,

which emphasised the importance of education as a tool to prevent crime and support the rule of law," he said noting that this programme embodies the goals of the "Education for Justice" initiative, which is supported by Qatar in an effort to impart knowledge and achieve a deeper understanding of issues related to the rule of law.

Dr Ramzi Nasser, Dean of the College of Education and Arts, said the Master of Arts programme in International Affairs and Public Policy is important because it focuses on studying the impact of economics, culture, education and political science on society. He added that the programme aims to provide students with theories, philosophies and concepts in international affairs and relations, in addition to improving their technical, analytical and research skills.

Lusail University is witnessing remarkable development since it opened its doors for the first time in September 2020. In addition to being the first national private university in the State of Qatar, the university has been known for being responsive to the needs of the workforce, in addition to the success of the current high-quality academic programmes, which witnessed the enrolment of about 2,000 students full-time student since opening in fall 2020 and is known for its ability to maintain high academic standards. The university offers 15 undergraduate programmes in various academic disciplines from 4 colleges: the College of Education and Arts, the College of Law, the College of Commerce and Business and the College of Information Technology, and in three languages: Arabic, English and French.

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### Head of Operations

Shall be capable of handling the overall operations of Aesthetic Clinic, Beauty Salon, and Products distribution. Shall provide strategic, financial, and operational leadership to the Company. Should be able to expand business operations to various locations in Oman. Should have managed hospitals, aesthetic clinics or any related field in the health sector such as the pharmaceutical industry. Possess a strong sales and marketing background (including digital marketing). Should have a minimum of 10 years' experience with strong leadership and management qualities. Excellent at business development. Capable of maintaining healthy business relationships with customers and key suppliers.

### Products Head

Should be able to lead and successfully manage the sales and marketing team. Able to forecast sales and stock planning. Should be capable of introducing new product brands (medical and non-medical) to Oman and expand the product distribution portfolio. Demonstrate excellent skills in connecting and developing long-term business relations with key stakeholders like suppliers and customers. Deliver presentations to corporations. Shall be energetic and a go-getter with Minimum 8 years' relevant experience in FMCG / Distribution industry and possess channel domain knowledge of pharmacies/retail stores.

### Marketing Manager

The candidate shall be responsible for the success of the brand or brands at hand. Develop marketing strategies to increase a brand's value and performance, including brand positioning, brand experience, market share, and profitability. Ability to develop, implement, and manage an omni channel marketing plan, program, and campaign for an entire organization (or lines of business within an organization) in order to attract new customers and retain existing ones. A baccalaureate or master's degree in marketing/ communications, with more than eight years of experience with the ability to handle brand management, social media campaigns, and organizing events in a similar industry is preferred. Candidate should be Arabic speaking.

### Aesthetic Clinic Manager / Practice Manager

Should be capable of overseeing the overall operations and hygiene standards of the clinic. Be able to manage every aspect of the daily operations and ensure the highest quality of service is provided for clients, while adhering to complete compliance with Clinic SOP and Ministry of Health standards. Will be responsible for supervising staff, scheduling shifts, promoting services, and ensuring updated records of expenses and revenues. Should have a minimum of 6 years of supervisory experience. Shall hold a Baccalaureate and/or master's degree in healthcare or business administration, medical services administration, or a similar field. Experienced in the healthcare industry either as a Registered Nurse or in a similar medical administrative role. Experience may substitute for education.

### Salon Manager (Female)

Should be capable of handling the overall operations of the beauty salon. Responsible for profit and customer satisfaction, leading a team of salon staff to provide excellent services, maximize profit and follow all health and safety regulations. Ensure the highest quality of service is provided for clients, while driving compliance with Salon SOP and the highest level of hygiene standards. Responsible for setting annual budgets and setting targets and KPIs. Shall hold a Baccalaureate and/or master's degree with experience in the beauty industry. Should have minimum 5 years of supervisory experience in a similar role in managing overall operations, which includes financial, sales and business development, administrative and customer service activities.

### Dermatologist / Cosmetologist

Shall provide professional consultation and advice on effective aesthetic treatment solutions for the patient and will perform a wide range of injectable, non-invasive and non-surgical procedures in the clinic. Provide clinical direction and strong professional leadership to all nursing and Clinical staff. Will lead and drive the delivery of excellent clinical standards of care. Drive a culture of safety, effectiveness, and continuous improvement for the patient

experience. Shall be a medical graduate from an accredited medical college or university with an MD (Master's Degree) with minimum 5 years of relevant experience post specialization in dermatology / cosmetology. Degree / Certification from US / Europe / Australia will be an advantage. Must have strong experience of various aesthetic procedures such as injection of Fillers and Botox, Skin Booster, Hyaluronic Acid, Peels, Mesotherapy, Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP), Microdermabrasion, Cryolipolysis, Laser & Plexr, Morpheus8, CO2 laser, tattoo removal laser, etc. Speaking in Arabic is an advantage but not a must.

### Aesthetic Nurse

The aesthetic nurse will assist dermatologists in the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of skin conditions. Will assist in performing skin exams, assessing a patient's condition, recording the patient's medical history and test results, and doing follow-ups. Shall hold a baccalaureate in Nursing from an accredited college or university or equivalent. Should have more than 5 years of continuous work experience in dermatology and/or cosmetic/aesthetic dermatology. It will be an added advantage to have additional certification in any skin care treatment, such as cosmetology. Spoken Arabic is an advantage but not a must. Candidate should be very passionate in skin care solutions and up to date with all latest technologies in the market.

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## Supply of sheep to Widam begins



As part of the government's support for livestock owners in the country, and in line with the joint initiatives of the Ministry of Municipality, Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Widam Food, to encourage local sheep production, local sheep raisers and owners have started supplying their sheep to Widam to be marketed throughout the holy month of Ramadan. The initiative for this year was first announced at the start of February as registration started as part of the national initiative to encourage local production and subsidise sheep meat for Ramadan. Accordingly, livestock and barn owners registered for this at the Ministry of Municipality.

## Carrefour Qatar, Mastercard join hands to offer extra value for online customers

Carrefour Qatar announced that it has signed an agreement with Mastercard, a global technology company in the payments industry, to offer their customers additional value online in 2023.

According to the agreement, online shoppers purchasing from Carrefour Qatar's e-commerce platform, and paying for their purchases using Mastercard Platinum, World or World Elite credit cards, will enjoy a 20% discount on their total bill at the checkout by using the code "MA20" in the promotional code box.

The offer applies to all online merchandise from Carrefour Qatar's e-commerce platform until November 30. Shoppers who hold Mastercard can enjoy a maximum QR60 discount per purchase once a month and will earn standard points from their respective loyalty programmes towards their purchases.

This agreement builds on the long-term strategic partnership between Carrefour Qatar



and Mastercard and reflects both companies' commitment to providing unique value to their loyal customers through innovation, a press statement notes.

Laurent Hausknecht, Carrefour regional director, said: "We are pleased to partner with a leading company with unique successes such as Mastercard, and to jointly offer this rewarding initiative to our customers, all with an aim to provide an easy and enjoyable online shopping

experience on our award-winning e-commerce platform."

Erdem Çakar, country manager, Qatar and Kuwait, Mastercard, added: "We are delighted to partner with Carrefour as we aim to bring cardholders even more value in 2023. This initiative builds on our efforts to drive the country's digital transformation agenda and meet the needs of its people as more consumers turn to the safety and convenience of online shopping experiences."

## EAA provides education opportunities for vulnerable children in Somalia

As a part of its Ramadan campaign, The Education Above All (EAA) Foundation is opening new opportunities of education for the most marginalised out-of-school children in Somalia.

The 'Educate your children II' project aims to address obstacles to educational access for out-of-school children affected by political and economic instability, refugee status and internal displacement, social exclusion and poverty in Somalia.

This project is being implemented across 17 districts within the five Somalia regional states of Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, South West and Puntland.

The project's primary goal is to ensure more than 80,000 out of school children affected by instability, displacement, social exclusion and poverty in Somalia have access and the opportunity to complete quality primary education.

The EAA foundation's Ramadan campaign is slated to create a strong, unique buzz among people during the holy month of Ramadan. Its goal is to



raise awareness to support and educate every boy and girl and ensure no child is left behind.

Investing 783 riyals is enough to educate a child in quality primary education for a total of three years in Somalia. 100% of all funds will be used for education projects, and donations can

be made at the EAA website - <https://donate.educationaboveall.org/en/projects> or at EAA partner's check-out counters in Carrefour, LuLu, Monoprix and Mega Mart supermarkets while shopping for your daily needs or simply through talabat's Education Above All store.

## World-renowned primatologist Dr Jane Goodall visits United School International at The Pearl Island

Dr Jane Goodall, the world-renowned primatologist and environmental scientist, visited United School International (USI) at The Pearl Island.

Goodall arrived in Qatar as a guest of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser to speak at the 2023 Earthna Summit on 'Building New Sustainability Pathways for Hot and Arid Environments'.

While in Qatar, Goodall visited USI, which opened its doors to students in August 2022 and has quickly become an integral part of the educational landscape of Doha, a press statement noted.

USI's younger students had the opportunity to speak with Dr Goodall about the environmental projects they've been working on in their classrooms. Some of the older students also heard Dr Goodall speak about her life's work and her 'Roots and Shoots' programme, which supports the next generation in understanding the power and influence of their voice and actions to create change.

"Through nearly 60 years of groundbreaking work, Dr Goodall has not only shown us the urgent need to protect chimpanzees from extinction, but she has also redefined species conservation to include the needs of local people and the environment.

"Today, she travels the world speaking about the threats facing chimpanzees and environmental crises, urging each of us to take action on behalf of all living things and the planet we share," the statement said.

This was an opportunity for USI's students to meet a truly inspirational figure. Aside from being one of the world's leading scientists and conservationists, Goodall is also a UN Messenger of Peace, the statement added.

USI is a partnership between United Development Company (UDC) and UK-based Orbital Education.

The school is currently home to more than 700 students, studying an enhanced British curriculum as part of an outstanding international education.



Dr Jane Goodall during her visit to the school.



## Providing an authentic and unique hospitality experience Al Najada Hotel reveals its Ramadan Offers



Al Najada Hotel Doha has introduced a set of exquisite and appealing offers for the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, conceptualized to provide an authentic and unique experience for families, individuals, and corporate, enjoy the exclusive atmosphere and spend a distinctive and unforgettable Ramadan experience at one of the most prestigious destinations in Qatar.

During the holy month, Al Baraha Restaurant, overlooking Al Najada



Square, will provide gourmets for those looking to relish the most delicious Arab and international cuisine through the luxurious daily iftar buffet in an exceptional atmosphere inside the restaurant or in its outdoor courtyard.

The iftar buffet which will be prepared by the hotels talented chefs will be packed with a variety and fresh options, starting with various selection of soups and cold & hot appetizers to a diverse selection of oriental and western main courses, all the way to various types of sweets and juices.

Furthermore, "Al Baraha" will welcome during the holy month kids under six years to enjoy the buffet for free, while those below 12 will be entitled to get 50% discount. To share with the guests the best of Ramadan, Al Najada Hotel is offering a 10% discount on the booking of 10 Persons or more, and 15%

off for groups over 50 people.

To provide an unmatched stay experience combining both authenticity and modernity, Al Najada Hotel launched the special Ramadan accommodation offer starting from March 23 to April 22, which guarantees the opportunity to enjoy a distinctive hospitable atmosphere.

The stay includes accommodation for two in one of the hotel's iconic rooms, the ability to upgrade the room for free (subject to room availability), iftar & Suhour for two at Al Baraha Restaurant, in addition to a 20% discount on spa treatments, and early check-in and late check-out (subject to room availability).



With the hotel's constant endeavor to enrich the experience of the guests by providing top-class service, Al Baraha restaurant will be introducing for the first time the Ramadan Ghabga from 9:00 pm until 1:00 am, providing the opportunity to the largest number of guests to enjoy the Ramadan atmosphere and traditional design secured by the restaurant's high ceiling and vibrantly colorful furniture and its distinctive outdoor courtyard, which makes the place the ideal destination for gatherings and spending the most enjoyable and unforgettable times.

## UDST hosts 'insightful panel discussion on mental health'

University of Doha for Science and Technology's (UDST) Student Success and Counselling (SSC) department hosted an insightful panel discussion on mental health.

The in-person event, open to all UDST students and staff, brought together experts in the field of psychology and mental health to explore the impact of loneliness on mental health, specific ways to address loneliness, and strategies for building better relationships, making meaningful connections and maintaining positive mental well-being.

President Dr Salem Al-Naemi, said: "At UDST, we strive to create an environment where our students feel supported and can better understand how to look after each facet of their health and well-being. This event is an important step towards that goal. We know that loneliness can have a profound impact on mental health, but it is also a challenge that can be addressed. By bringing together experts and students, we hope not only to provide practical strategies for

combating loneliness and building a more connected community - equipping our students with the tools they need - but also to normalise important conversations about mental health on campus."

Myriad factors can have detrimental effects on both the physical, and psychological, well-being of students attending university. Loneliness is a common issue among students, and developing strong connections with oneself and others is a well-known strategy for alleviating the feeling of being lonely.

The panel discussion centred around why connection to others is so powerful, what 'being connected' actually means, and the different tools students can apply to increase their success in this area.

The panel discussion featured a diverse group of speakers, including mental health professionals and educators.

External guests included Dr Atif Magbool, a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist with over 22 years

of experience, and lead consultant for the CAMHS Hospital Service at Sidra Medicine, and Tina Balachandran, a clinical director and licensed clinical psychologist with over 18 years of experience, and founder of health and well-being consultancy, Flourishing Minds Clinic.

The panel discussion is part of UDST's ongoing efforts to ensure students have access to the information and support they need to stay mentally healthy. Specifically, it formed part of SSC's 'Connect to Grow' initiative, which also comes under the social media hashtag #mentalhealthatudst.

The SSC department, a part of the UDST's Student Affairs section, is dedicated to supporting students' personal growth through a range of practical guidance, support centres, events and awareness workshops. Alongside mental health counselling, the department also provides academic support in the form of soft skills development and peer tutoring, career advisory, and accessibility support.





# Teyseer Motors unveils all new Grand Vitara at its revamped Suzuki showroom



Teyseer Motors, which has been the exclusive dealer of Suzuki in Qatar for nearly 50 years, announced the grand opening of their newly renovated Suzuki showroom recently. The event was graced by various dignitaries, including YAMAMOTO Yoshiharu, First Secretary- Embassy of Japan in Qatar, Kinji Saito, Director and Senior Managing Officer - Global Automobile Marketing, Suzuki Motors Corporation, and Koichi Suzuki, Managing Officer Middle East and Africa Automobile Marketing, Suzuki Motors Corporation.

The event also marks the culmination of a highly successful year in 2022 for Suzuki, during which the brand achieved a position among the top 5 in the Qatari market.

The highlight of the event was the launch of the new Suzuki Grand Vitara, which was unveiled using 3D Projection Mapping Technology - a first-of-its-kind experience for any car brand in Qatar. The technology brought the car to life with stunning visual effects, showcasing its unique features and design in a truly immersive way.

Customers can now enjoy a contemporary and lavish environment to peruse Suzuki's latest offerings, with the newly revamped showroom. The space has been designed to offer a stress-free and delightful experience, with everything from the latest models to after-sales services easily accessible to customers.

Adel Mannai- Deputy chairman of Teyseer Group emphasized on the customer centricity approach of Teyseer Motors. "We treat our business partners, suppliers, employees and customers with respect and dignity," he says. "Respect, Business Ethics, Transparency and Professionalism are the recipe to our success with Suzuki in Qatar," Mannai added.

Speaking at the event, Kinji

Saito, Director and Senior Managing Officer - Global Automobile Marketing, Suzuki Motors Corporation said, "We are delighted to be partnering with Teyseer Motors to launch the new Suzuki Grand Vitara in Qatar. We see a great potential in Qatar for Suzuki specially after the World Cup and we shall work with our partner Teyseer Motors to continue to provide the best quality products to our customers" .

During a media interaction, K S Kumar, the Chief Operating Officer at Teyseer Motors, said: "At Teyseer Motors, we are committed to provide our customers the best possible service. Our aim is to consistently enhance their experience, and to achieve this we have two key strategies. Firstly, we utilize digital technology to improve our services. For instance, we have launched a mobile app that allows customers to book services easily from their phones, and we also offer mobile services at their convenience. Secondly, we strive to introduce innovative initiatives regularly to ensure that our customers not only experience convenience but also receive an overall improved service."

## Grand Vitara 2023

The 2023 Suzuki Grand Vitara represents an unparalleled breakthrough, unmatched by any predecessor in the last eight years. This unique venture has the capacity to enhance the brand's collection and revolutionize the landscape of current vehicles.

From a stylistic standpoint, the Suzuki Grand Vitara 2023 is a captivating specimen. The front facade exudes an aura of modernity and elegance, with a meticulously landscaped terrain adorned with LED strips and recessed lamps that seamlessly blend into a colossal grille, proudly bearing the manufacturer's emblem on the lighting fixtures.

The front apron is an aesthetic masterpiece, encapsulating



modernity and complexity in equal measure.

The rear of the vehicle is equally captivating, with sleek connecting lights that span across the entire length of the light strip, giving it a sense of numerical versatility. As an SUV, it boasts a multitude of features, accentuated by its massive bumpers and casing that envelop the lower edges of the vehicle's body.

The interior cabin of the 2023 Suzuki Grand Vitara features the signature design of this renowned Japanese automaker, with a distinctly modern aesthetic that is not overly flashy. Though it may not have any extravagant features, the cabin provides a high level of ergonomics and practical solutions that can be relied upon.

Analog clocks remain a notable feature, rendering them readable to the naked eye. Although the computer control sticks may be perceived as antiquated, they remain serviceable. Conversely, the independent weather panel earns a plethora of accolades for the center console's prodigious touch screen and superb interface.

The Grand Vitara's wheelbase matches that of the esteemed S-Cross, thereby bestowing upon it an ample cabin, accommodating up to four occupants. Judging hardware quality solely by graphics alone is an exercise in futility. Nonetheless, the opulent stitching and entry of burgundy invigorate the ensemble's overall aesthetic. It



is our conjecture that it surpasses the current crop of Vitara models.

## Technical specs

The Suzuki Grand Vitara 2023 boasts a length of 4345 mm, a width of 1795 mm, a height of 1645 mm, and a wheelbase of 2600 mm.

Unquestionably, this revelation does not inspire awe. It would seem that the models are sufficiently dissimilar in their visage to enable co-production. However, it behooves us to acknowledge that this conveyance rests upon the TECT framework, a constituent widely implemented in this marque's petite auto assemblage.

The inaugural fusion mechanism (Progressive Smart Hybrid) boasts a 1.5-liter petrol engine that manifests 101 Horsepower and 135 Newton

meters of torque, coupled with an aesthetically pleasing design. A five-speed manual gearbox or a six-speed automatic transmission can administer the power to either the front or all four wheels.

The novel iteration of the model is furnished with dual hybrid systems: the conventional and the smooth (HEV).

The second microchip is engineered by Toyota, where the plug-in hybrid electric vehicle, furnished with a 1.5-liter powertrain and an electric unit, galvanizes the 2023 Suzuki Grand Vitara, conferring 114 horsepower and 141 Newton meters of torque. The power is transmitted to the front axle through the continuously variable transmission (CVT). Astonishingly, despite being a self-regulating hybrid, the battery has the capability to cover an electric range of up to 25 kilometres.

## Performance of every terrain

A companion up for all endeavours: Befriend a multi-purpose performer embracing the most challenging surfaces and weather conditions. Powered by efficient strong hybrid system and 48V SHVS mild hybrid system.

Equipped with ALLGRIP SELECT. Fuelled by the authentic



Suzuki SUV-genes: effortless joy behind the wheel enhanced by maximum grip at all times.

The compact and lightweight strong hybrid system offers both fuel-efficient hybrid and EV driving. It consists of the 1.5 DUALJET engine, a Motor Generator Unit (MGU), AGS (Auto Gear Shift) and a power pack (140V lithium-ion battery and inverter). The highly efficient, high-output MGU enables EV driving by powering the vehicle alone and assists the engine to accelerate the vehicle. It also enables EV driving in reverse and fills in the torque gap while the clutch is disengaged for smoother shifting. When driving at a constant speed, the MGU utilises engine power to efficiently generate electricity that expands the EV driving range and frequency for high fuel efficiency and quiet driving. During deceleration, it retrieves large amounts of kinetic energy to recharge the battery and help maintain sufficient battery power.

## Lane departure warning

When driving at 60 km/h or faster, the monocular camera detects the left and right white lane markers and alerts the driver with a warning sound and an indicator light when it determines that the vehicle has strayed out of its lane.

## Lane departure prevention

When driving at 65 km/h or faster, the monocular camera is used to recognise the driving lane. After deducing that lane departure is likely to occur, the system automatically assists the driver in returning the vehicle to its lane by controlling the steering via the electric power steering system.

## Blind spot monitor

When the indicator is turned on and there is a vehicle detected in a blind spot, the indicator will flash rapidly along with a warning sound to make lane changing safer. Blind spot monitor detects vehicles in or approaching the rear blind spots on either side of the vehicle.

## Rear cross traffic alert

When backing out of a parking space, for example, this function helps you avoid collisions. If the sensors detect a vehicle approaching the rear blind spots, a warning sound, a flashing side-mirror indicator and a notification in the multi-information display alert you to the situation.

## Dual Sensor Brake Support (DSBS)

When in forward motion, the monocular camera and the laser sensor determine if there is a risk of collision with a vehicle or pedestrian. Upon detecting a





# Expo 2023 Doha concludes participation in AgriteQ

Expo 2023 Doha has concluded its participation in the 10th edition of the Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ 2023) that took place at Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) from March 15-19.

This was the third time that the Expo team has taken part in the fair, offering Expo 2023 Doha excellent exposure to local, regional and international stakeholders, as well as experts from the agricultural sector, a press statement noted.

This time, Expo 2023 Doha used AgriteQ as a platform to launch its first campaign titled *Which side are you on.*

Through an immersive digital platform and activations at the centre of the Expo 2023 Doha stand, the Expo invited all visitors to choose a version of our planet's future – desertified or green.

Using powerful visual language, the campaign highlights the consequences of rampant desertification, showcasing dry land next to green and fresh grass and encouraging everyone to choose the right side in the battle against desertification.

The presentation of a limited Expo 2023 Doha edition of stamps was another important highlight of the event.

With the first edition endorsed and signed personally by His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani during



HE the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie with officials at the signing of agreements with Hassad Food (left) and the Qatar Basketball Federation (right).

his visit at the Expo stand, this unique stamp collection aims at to keep Expo 2023 Doha in the hearts and minds of the people of Qatar – before, during and after the event, the statement said.

During AgriteQ, Expo 2023 Doha also continued to enlarge the network of partners, signing official agreements with Qatar's champion of food security, Hassad Food, and the Qatar Basketball Federation, named as Expo 2023 Doha official partners in food security and sports, respectively.

In line with its sustainability commitment, Expo 2023 Doha has also taken part in the AgriteQ-led Recycling Day to highlight the importance of recycling for the environment and healthier livelihoods.

Expo 2023 Doha's event and communications manager Hayfa al-Otaibi said: "AgriteQ has been a catalyst of Qatar's progress in agriculture and food security for a decade, and we have been happy to be part of this flagship event for the third time as we share the same values, goals, and aspirations for the future of our country."

"Driving innovation in agriculture and making it more sustainable is crucial to ensure global food security and build sustainable and healthy livelihoods for future generations," she said. "AgriteQ was an excellent occasion for us to connect with key stakeholders and businesses in agriculture, and to invite them to come to Al Bidda Park starting October 2 to take part in Expo 2023 Doha."

# India showcased at AgriteQ 2023

The embassy of India and the Indian Business and Professionals Council (IBPC Qatar) jointly participated in the 10th Qatar International Agriculture Exhibition (AgriteQ) at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) from March 15-19.

The Indian pavilion showcased several companies that specialise in agricultural technology, farming and gardening tools, and millet-based food products.

HE the Minister of Transport Jassim bin Saif al-Sulaiti and HE Akbar al-Baker, Group Chief Executive of Qatar Airways and Chairman of Qatar Tourism, inaugurated the Indian pavilion.

Accompanying the chief guests were Indian ambassador Dr Deepak Mittal, IBPC president Jaffer Us Sadik and IBPC officials.

The Indian ambassador said that AgriteQ has been at the forefront of providing a platform for local and international agriculture stakeholders to exchange expertise, discover trends and developments, and seize business opportunities in this vital sector while highlighting innovation in agricultural techniques, local and international food products and pinpoint the roadmap to achieve food security and



HE the Minister of Transport Jassim bin Saif al-Sulaiti, HE Akbar al-Baker, Dr Deepak Mittal, Jaffer Us Sadik and other officials at the opening of the pavilion.

sustainable development.

The envoy said he is proud to see that India has a lot to offer to Qatar in this sector, and emphasised the importance of millets, a press statement noted.

Millets are a group of small-seeded grains that are packed with nutrients and offer many health benefits.

They are good for digestion, lower the risk of heart disease, help control diabetes, boost energy levels, improve bone health and support weight loss.

Overall, millets are a nutritious and healthy food that can offer many health benefits.

These are versatile and can be used in a variety of dishes, making them a great addition to any healthy diet.

The United Nations General

Assembly (UNGA) had declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets following a proposal submitted by the Indian government.

IBPC president Jaffer highlighted that AgriteQ 2023 is a platform for exchanging knowledge, ideas and best practices in agriculture, and that sustainable agriculture is the key to a better future.

The IBPC is committed to promoting millets through AgriteQ.

"India can play a major role in Qatar's food security, as 58% of India's population is involved in agriculture and aquaculture, contributing \$277bn annually to the Indian economy," the statement said. "India's exports of agricultural and allied products stood at \$42bn in 2022."

# Al Jazeera Printing Press Annual Day held



The Annual Day of Al Jazeera Printing Press for the year 2022 was held recently at Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas. Awards were distributed to employees by the director, Jacob Kannath, for the best performance in 2022.

# International translation conference concludes

The Translation and Interpreting Institute (TII), part of Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU)'s College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), concluded its 12th International Translation Conference recently at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC).

The conference, held as part of the TII's 10th anniversary and centred around the theme of *Translation and Creativity: An Interdisciplinary Encounter*, saw 180 local and international participants.

Thirty experts, speakers and guests from 19 countries shared their experiences and knowledge across a range of fields and contexts between translation and creativity, and how these are evolving within relevant disciplines and different parts of the world – through rapid technological advances, copyright policies, and political form.

The event's itinerary included a variety of talks on creativity, presented by specialists in audiovisual, literary, media, machine translation and interpreting fields.

The schedule encompassed academic panels, professional workshops, and a showing of *The Translator*, a 2020 film that recounts the story of a translator who ventures back to Syria after



The conference saw 30 experts, speakers and guests from 19 countries.

his brother's capture by the Assad government.

Following the screening, one of the film's directors, Dr Rana Kazkaz, who also serves as an assistant professor at Northwestern University in Qatar, led a question-and-answer session.

"While it's always a privilege to organise and host this event, the 12th edition of the International Translation Conference is particularly poignant," said CHSS founding dean Dr Amal Al-Malki. "Over the past 10 years, the TII has offered world-class education training and service in translation, interpreting and foreign languages."

"But we have never stood still. Our work has been informed by emerging trends and technological advances; and it has responded to global challenges and needs," he said. "This conference reflects our place at the forefront of translation studies globally, a place where we intend to stay."

The Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF), part of the Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council, co-sponsored the event as part of their commitment to foster original research in the humanities and other fields according to the country's research priorities.

Launched in 2010, the biennial conference serves as a Mena (Middle East and North Africa) region-based platform that gathers scholars and career professionals in the translation and interpreting field to delve into contemporary topics at the theoretical and practical level.

"Through co-sponsoring the 12th edition of the International Translation Conference, QRDI Council/QNRF is pleased to have contributed in bringing experts together to discuss aspects related to creativity in the fields of audiovisual, literary, media, machine translation and interpreting," said Dr Hatem Mhenni of the QRDI Council.



Participants engaged in two days of discussions on intersections between translation and creativity.

# QC organises Umrah trip for outstanding orphans

Qatar Charity (QC) organised a Umrah trip for 20 orphans from Pakistan as part of its "Rofaqa" initiative.

Yousuf Abdulla al-Khulaifi, general supervisor of the "Rofaqa" initiative, welcomed the orphans, praising their excellence and congratulating them for performing Umrah.

Supervisors of the Umrah trip from the QC's headquarters and its Pakistan office accompanied the children in performing Umrah and visiting Medina and other places.

In a statement, al-Khulaifi said that the Umrah trip is part of the QC's keenness to provide comprehensive care to the orphans through the "Rofaqa" initiative and encourage them to excel in various aspects.

He added that the QC organises various activities for them to contribute to improving their knowledge and developing their capabilities.

The official noted that the orphans who participated in this trip were selected based on their excellence in the fields of memorising the Holy Qur'an, their academic achievement, and behavioural discipline.

He said that the 10-day Umrah trip included a visit to Masjid al-Haram (the Great Mosque of Makkah) and Al-Masjid An-Nabawi (the Prophet's Mosque), in addition to visits to holy sites, historical mosques and



A snapshot from the QC initiative.

museums at Makkah and Medina.

The trip also comprised cultural activities and competitions.

The orphans expressed delight with the Umrah trip.

"When I heard that I was selected for performing Umrah, I could not control my tears of joy," said 16-year-old Mohamed Ahmad. "This is the biggest wish of my life, which Qatar Charity and its donors fulfilled."

Shayan Khan, 15, said: "It was my wish to recite the Qur'an in Medina, but I never expected that it would come true so quickly. I am very thankful to Qatar Charity and donors who gave me an opportunity for this trip."

Before the Umrah trip, the QC's Pakistan office provided Ihram (Umrah dress), shoes, hand-carry bags, personal hygiene kits and necessary items to the sponsored orphans.

# QRCS, KRCS enhance healthcare services for refugees, local community in Bangladesh

A joint delegation from the Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) and Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has launched a project to support District Sadar Hospital in Bangladesh.

With funding from the KRCS, the project is carried out by the QRCS's representation mission in Bangladesh, in co-ordination with the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS).

The project involves the procurement of 100 medical beds with all collaterals to support several departments of the hospital, especially the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (Ob-Gen), to double its capacity.

The hospital's warehouse has also received non-medical consumables, such as sterilisation and cleaning materials/tools, bedsheets, blankets, mosquito nets and other supplies that last for one year, with the aim of upgrading hygiene and reducing infection, a press statement noted.

The hospital offers primary and secondary healthcare services in diverse specialties for a community of 48,000 refugees and locals in Cox's Bazar district.

The joint delegation handed over the in-kind donation to the hospital's management, supervised the installation and operation of medical beds, and assessed their impact on medical care for inpatients.

The delegation also held a meeting with the hospital's management to discuss the development process and how to best utilise the materials for the benefit of patients and meet the



Snapshots from the initiative in Bangladesh.

hospital's ongoing needs.

Khaled al-Mutairi, volunteer management officer at the KRCS, said this project was part of their humanitarian support for the health sector in Bangladesh, in partnership with the QRCS, for the hospital to be able to receive more patients, amid a growing demand on healthcare in the district's only central hospital.

Abdullah Fouda, donor relations expert at the QRCS, noted that the project came under the strategic partnership with KRCS that has resulted in joint humanitarian projects to support vulnerable people in many countries, including Bangladesh.

In particular, he said, they are about to complete a \$3mn project to improve shelter conditions and healthcare for the benefit of more than 1,200 refugee families.

This project involves the construction of adequate housing



units, as well as multiple free-of-charge healthcare services at camp clinics, such as medical examinations, treatment, and community outreach activities.

Abdelmounaim Mhindate, head of the QRCS mission in Bangladesh, said the project monitoring and evaluation visits, and meetings with patients

and health officials, showed the great impact of the project.

Hospital chairman Dr Munir Alrahman thanked the QRCS and KRCS for this contribution, which would considerably help improve patient experience, sustain the hospital to continue to serve customers, and reduce infection rates.



# Former Taiwan president Ma to visit China in landmark trip

Reuters  
Taipei

Former Taiwan president Ma Ying-jeou will visit China this month, his office said yesterday, the first time a former or current Taiwanese leader has visited since the defeated Republic of China government fled to the island in 1949.

The trip will be at a time of heightened tensions between Beijing and Taipei as China keeps up its military and political pressure to try and get democratically-elected Taiwan to accept Chinese sovereignty.

Ma, who remains a senior member of Taiwan's Kuomintang (KMT) opposition party, held a landmark meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Singapore

in late 2015, shortly before current Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen was elected. Ma's office said that he would visit China from March 27 to April 7 and go to the cities of Nanjing, Wuhan, Changsha, Chongqing and Shanghai.

He will meet students and visit sites connected to World War II and China's conflict with Japan as well as those related to the 1911 revolution which overthrew the

last Chinese emperor and ushered in the Republic of China, his office said. The Republic of China remains Taiwan's official name.

It did not say if he would meet any Chinese officials or leaders, including whether he would meet Xi.

The KMT, which traditionally favours close ties with China but strongly denies being pro-Beijing, has been stepping up its engage-

ment with China since both China and Taiwan eased Covid-related travel restrictions.

Last month the KMT's deputy chairman Andrew Hsia visited Beijing and met with senior Communist Party leader Wang Huning. Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) seized on Hsia's China trip to attack the KMT for being too close to Beijing and wanting to sell out Taiwan,

and criticised Hsia for going to "pay court to the communists".

The KMT says it is important to keep lines of communication open with China, especially given the current tensions.

China has rebuffed repeated calls from Tsai for talks, believing her to be a separatist.

She says only Taiwan's people can decide their future and rejects China's sovereignty claims.

Meanwhile, China's embassy in Britain yesterday condemned a visit this week by British lawmakers to Taiwan, saying they were insisting on visiting the island despite China's strong opposition.

Taiwan's presidential office said the group of six lawmakers from the British-Taiwanese All-Party Parliamentary Group would meet President Tsai Ing-wen in Taipei today.

## No pledge made to help US defend Taiwan in sub deal: Australia

Reuters  
Sydney

Australia "absolutely" did not promise to support the US in any military conflict over Taiwan in return for a deal to acquire US nuclear-powered attack submarines, Australia's Defence Minister Richard Marles said yesterday.

Australia, the US and Britain unveiled the multi-decade AUKUS project on Monday. Canberra is to buy the US Virginia-class military submarines, with Britain and Australia eventually producing and operating a new submarine class, SSN-AUKUS.

Australia's centre-left Labor government says the A\$368bn (\$246bn) deal is necessary given China's military buildup in the region, which it has labelled the largest since World War II.

Asked whether Australia had given the US any commitment to help during a conflict over Taiwan in return for access to the submarines, Marles told ABC television: "Of course not, and nor was one sought". He said there was "absolutely not" a quid pro quo obligation on Australia from the deal. China views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory and has never renounced the option of force to take the island back.

President Joe Biden has said the US would defend Taiwan in the event of "an unprecedented attack" by China.

Under the AUKUS deal, which Asian allies welcomed but which Beijing has called an act of nuclear proliferation, the US will sell Australia three subs, built by General Dynamics, in the early 2030s, with an option for Australia to buy two more.

Australian Trade Minister Don Farrell said yesterday he was confident a scheduled visit to China to meet his counterpart Wang Wentao would go ahead, despite AUKUS. Farrell said last month the meeting was a signal that Australia-China relations were thawing.

## Kashmir's Tulip Garden inaugurated



Women wearing traditional Kashmiri dress walk past flowers at the Tulip Garden in Srinagar, India, yesterday. The lieutenant governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha, inaugurated the Tulip Garden in Srinagar yesterday.

# Pyongyang fires ballistic missile as US-S Korea drills continue

AFP  
Seoul

North Korea fired a short-range ballistic missile yesterday, Seoul's military said, the fourth show of force in a week as South Korea and the US stage major military drills.

Seoul and Washington have ramped up defence co-operation in the face of growing military and nuclear threats from the North, which has conducted a series of increasingly provocative banned weapons tests in recent months.

South Korea and the US are in the middle of 11 days of joint drills known as Freedom Shield, their largest in five years.

North Korea views all such exercises as rehearsals for invasion and has repeatedly warned it would take "overwhelming" action in response.

"Our military detected one short-range ballistic missile fired from around the Tongchang-ri area in North Pyongan province at 11.05am (0205GMT) towards the East Sea," South Korea's joint chiefs of staff (JCS) said, referring to the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan.

The missile flew 800kms and was under analysis by US and South Korean intelligence, the JCS said in a statement, calling the launch "a serious provocation" that violated UN sanctions.

"Our military will maintain a solid readiness posture based on its ability to overwhelmingly respond to any provocation by North Korea, while carrying out intensive and thorough combined exercises and drills," it said.

Tokyo also confirmed the

launch, with deputy defence minister Toshiro Ino telling reporters Japan had "lodged a vehement protest to and strongly condemned (North Korea) through our embassy in Beijing".

"North Korea's behaviour threatens international peace and security, and is unacceptable," Ino added.

The US military's Indo-Pacific Command condemned the launch, saying it highlighted "the destabilising impact" of North Korea's banned weapons programmes.

South Korea's defence ministry said hours after the launch it had staged joint air drills with the US featuring at least one US B-1B long-range bomber.

The drills also involved South Korean F-35A stealth fighter jets and US F-16 fighters and took place as part of the Freedom Shield exercise.

The exercise had "greatly enhanced the allies' interoperability...and wartime capabilities", the ministry said in a statement.

The latest launch came a day after North Korean state media reported that more than 800,000 young North Koreans had volunteered to join the army to fight "US imperialists".

The young volunteers were determined to "mercilessly wipe out the war maniacs" and joined the army to "defend the country", the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

On Thursday, Pyongyang test-fired its largest and most powerful intercontinental ballistic missile, the Hwasong-17, its second ICBM test this year.

It described the launch as a response to the "frantic" US-South Korea drills.

That launch drew condemnation from G7 foreign ministers

yesterday, saying "North Korea's reckless behaviour demands a swift and unified response by the international community, including further significant measures by the UNSC".

The UN Security Council is expected to hold an emergency meeting today over the ICBM launch at the request of the US and Japan, Yonhap news agency reported.

In a statement carried by KCNA yesterday, the North's foreign ministry "strongly" warned the US and other countries about including "legitimate self-defensive countermeasures of the DPRK for the discussion of the UNSC".

DPRK is the acronym of North Korea's official name.

In a separate statement, the foreign ministry also slammed the US ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield over a recent UN meeting over the North's human rights abuses.

"If the US is so worried about the 'human rights situation' in the DPRK, it should explain why it is so obsessed with the implementation of the most unethical sanctions," the statement said, warning the moves will result in "irreversible security instability" for the US.

Analysts previously said North Korea would likely use the drills as an excuse to carry out more missile launches and perhaps even a nuclear test.

The ICBM launch followed two short-range ballistic missiles on Tuesday and two strategic cruise missiles fired from a submarine last Sunday.

The recent flurry of aggression by Pyongyang has pushed Seoul and Tokyo to mend fences over historical disputes and try to boost security co-operation.

# India police arrests 78 in hunt for Sikh separatist

AFP  
New Delhi

A manhunt for a radical Sikh preacher in India entered its second day yesterday, after authorities shut mobile Internet in the state of Punjab and arrested 78 of his supporters.

Amritpal Singh rose to prominence in recent months demanding the creation of Khalistan, a separate Sikh homeland, and with his hardline interpretation of Sikhism at rallies in rural pockets of the northern state of some 30mn people.

Last month Singh, 30, and his supporters armed with swords, knives and guns raided a police station after one of his aides was arrested for alleged assault and attempted kidnapping.

The brazen daytime raid in the outskirts of Amritsar left several police injured and heaped pressure on authorities to act against Singh.

After the operation began on

Saturday, Punjab police tweeted late in the day that 78 had been arrested in the "mega crackdown". But Singh himself was not thought to be among them.

Yesterday, there was a major police presence across Punjab, especially in rural pockets and around Singh's village of Jallapur Khara, local media reported.

The police said that its "manhunt" was ongoing and the overall "situation is under control, citizens (are) requested to not believe in rumours".

Local media reports said that the Punjab government ordered the mobile Internet shut down to be in place until noon (0630GMT) today.

It was worried that social media could be used to spread rumours and misinformation which could spark street violence.

Indian authorities frequently shut down mobile Internet services, particularly in the restive northern region of Kashmir.

Punjab — with about 58% Sikhs and 39% Hindus — was

rocked by a violent separatist movement for Khalistan in the 1980s and early 1990s when thousands of people died.

The violence peaked in 1984 after a botched raid against a few hundred radical separatists, some of them armed, inside the Golden Temple headed by the headline Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.

This led to the assassination of India's prime minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh security guards a few months later, which in turn sparked anti-Sikh riots in Delhi and elsewhere that left several thousand more people dead.

The separatist movement later lost a lot of support, with its most vocal advocates today primarily among the Punjabi diaspora in Canada, Australia, Britain and elsewhere.

India has often complained to respective governments over the activities of Sikh separatists who, it says, have been trying to revive the insurgency with a massive financial push.

# 19 die in Bangladesh bus crash



Firefighters douse the bus with water after the accident in Madaripur yesterday.

Reuters  
Dhaka,

A speeding bus veered off a major expressway in central Bangladesh and plunged into a ditch, killing at least 19 people and injured dozens, police said.

The death toll could rise further as some of the injured passengers are in critical condition, said Anowar Hossain, police official of Shibchar, where the crash occurred.

The city is 80km away from the capital Dhaka.

The bus, carrying more than 40 passengers, fell about 30 feet into a roadside ditch after breaking through the railing of the newly-built Padma river bridge expressway, Hossain said.

The driver, who was killed, appeared to have lost control of the vehicle after the tyre of the bus burst, he said, adding that the cause of the accident was under investigation.

Road accidents are common in Bangladesh, often blamed on reckless driving, old vehicles and poor safety rules, and killing thousands each year.



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**GULF**  **TIMES**

# Food-system revolution is coming

Disruption is coming to the agriculture sector. Around the world, livestock farmers are leaving the land, policymakers are targeting the harmful environmental and social effects of industrial meat production, and consumers are shifting away from meat to embrace healthier, more sustainable alternatives. With the sector approaching a crossroads, decision-makers in government, industry, and civil society will need to heed the lessons from major transitions in other industries and start preparing.

The preparation will require a careful inventory of farmers, workers, and consumers' needs. While farmers are growing older and leaving the land for other pursuits or retirement, the agriculture sector is struggling to attract new entrants – and not just in richer industrialised countries. For every farm manager under 40, there are three over the age of 65 in Europe; and from Sub-Saharan Africa to Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, the number of older people living in rural areas is increasing while the number of young people declines.

At the same time, farms are becoming larger, and small farm operations are being squeezed. Owing to the challenging economics of farming and the power of a small number of giant industry incumbents, farms are being consolidated in the name of efficiency and economies of scale. As a result, the European Union lost more than one-third of its farms, and 40% of its livestock farms, from 2005 to 2020. Policymakers are thus left to consider whether and how to protect family farms, and how to avoid the risks of animal-welfare violations, poor working conditions, and diseases that are inherent in industrial livestock farming.

Policymakers are also waking up to the compelling body of evidence about industrial meat production's environmental harms. While agriculture accounts for nearly one-third of all greenhouse-gas emissions, livestock alone (particularly cattle) contribute nearly 15%. Moreover, animal agriculture is the main cause of deforestation and biodiversity loss. Forests are razed to free up land not just for animal grazing but also for the additional crops needed to feed those animals. Beef production alone takes up some 60% of land used for agriculture, even though it contributes less than 2% of total calories consumed globally.

While livestock and agriculture have traditionally been excluded from most emissions-reduction schemes, policymakers in Denmark, the Netherlands, and New Zealand are already working to close this gap, and many other countries will soon follow suit. The question now is not whether there will be increased regulation of the livestock industry, but what shape and form it will take. Farmers and companies alike should be prepared to adapt to changes that are now inevitable.

Finally, consumers, too, are shifting away from meat and dairy. Over the past decade, the average person's meat consumption has decreased by almost 17% in the United Kingdom and by 11% in Germany. Notwithstanding a recent slowdown, there is still growth in the uptake of alternative proteins – a food source that produces only a tiny fraction of the negative environmental and animal-welfare effects of traditional meat products. Plant-based meat and milk sales are already trending up across the board in the EU, but also in countries like Thailand and South Africa. When these products reach taste and price parity with meat, their uptake by consumers could accelerate very quickly indeed.


Public policy also has a role to play. Livestock farming tends to be heavily subsidised in many countries, owing to the sector's low margins and high levels of debt. As sales fall, declining revenue is likely to have significant welfare implications for farmers and other workers tied to the industrial meat-production systems.



Given the complexities of these interacting trends, policymakers and corporate leaders need to start getting in front of this issue now. The experience of other sectors that have begun decarbonising – not least energy – shows that a planned and guided transition is always better than an ad hoc, unmanaged process.

One need look no further than last year's farmer protests in The Netherlands or New Zealand to see how abruptly climate policies can be disrupted when workers and communities feel left out. Unfortunately, we still have only a limited understanding of how best to integrate policy and corporate action to reduce food-system emissions while also protecting livelihoods. Since resisting change is not an option, policymakers and corporate leaders would do well to start thinking about how they will manage it in the coming years.

— Project Syndicate

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# Confronting the global water crisis in earnest

By Mariana Mazzucato, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Johan Rockström, and Tharman Shanmugaratnam  
London

The world's water crisis can no longer be ignored. Unless we manage water properly, we will neither tackle climate change nor meet most of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Last year's unprecedented floods, droughts, cyclonic storms, and heatwaves showed what is coming. But while such disasters garner plenty of attention, the underlying water crisis does not. Water-related challenges – whether there is too much or too little, or whether it is dirty and unsafe – are already fuelling chronic food and health insecurity in entire regions. Every 80 seconds, a child under five dies from a disease caused by polluted water; and hundreds of millions more are growing up stunted and with diminished lifetime prospects.

Making matters worse, we have entered a vicious cycle in which the interaction of the water crisis, global warming, and the loss of biodiversity and natural capital exacerbates all three. Wetland erosion and lost soil moisture risk turning some of the planet's great carbon stores into new sources of greenhouse-gas emissions, with devastating consequences for the climate.

No country can rely on its own territory for more than half the rainfall it receives. Everyone's fresh water ultimately comes from precipitation, which depends on the presence of stable oceans, intact forests, and healthy ecosystems in other countries and regions. Yet the capacity of both land and ocean systems to generate water is being destabilised.

As co-chairs of the Global Commission on the Economics of Water, we are calling for collective action to overcome the water crisis. We must marshal a response that is bolder, more integrated across sectors, more networked at the national and global levels, and more equitable than previous efforts. Our work shows that this will require a new "economics of water," as well as a comprehensive strategy to address seven key points.

First, we must recognise the global water cycle as a common good, and manage it accordingly. Since everyone is ultimately connected through water, we must work together to break the vicious cycle and put water back on a sustainable trajectory. That will require a vision based on justice and equity for all communities everywhere.

Second, we must adopt a mission-driven approach encompassing all the key roles that water plays in human well-being. That means treating safe water for domestic use as a human right, and acting collectively to stabilise the global hydrological cycle by managing water use in industry. To ensure food security and resilient food supply chains, and to preserve biodiversity and natural carbon sinks, we will need a revolution in both green

(rain-fed) and blue (irrigated) water management.

In addition to mobilising diverse stakeholders, we will need to use innovation policies and industrial strategies to catalyse solutions to the water crisis. We should scale up investments in water through new public-private partnerships that are as ambitious as those that got us to the moon 50 years ago; but we must attach conditions to ensure that collectively created value is shared widely.

Third, we need to stop underpricing water. With proper pricing and targeted support for the poor, water would be used more efficiently in every sector, more equitably across every community, and more sustainably both locally and globally. But our decision-making also must account for water's non-economic value, to ensure that we are protecting the broader ecosystem on which the water cycle (and human societies) depend.

Fourth, we must phase out some

\$700bn of annual agriculture and water subsidies – which often fuel excessive water consumption and other environmentally damaging practices – and reduce the leakages in today's water-delivery systems. Doing so would free up significant resources with which to incentivise water conservation and support the poor directly.

Fifth, we should establish Just Water Partnerships (JWPs) to ensure that low- and middle-income countries can invest in water access, resilience, and sustainability, in ways that contribute both to their national development goals and the global common good.

JWPs would help to bring together several financing streams, not only by re-channeling inefficient domestic subsidies toward better uses, but also by enabling multilateral development banks and development-finance institutions to leverage public finance and crowd in more private capital. The economic returns on these investments would vastly exceed their

costs, especially if JWPs are designed to maximise synergies with initiatives to address climate change and achieve more inclusive growth.

Sixth, we should support more dynamic innovation to extend the reach of scarce water resources. Again, such investments will yield high returns. Going to the moon produced advances not only in aerospace but also in nutrition, electronics, communications, materials, and software. Likewise, focusing our attention on the water challenge means doing many things differently, which will lead to creative breakthroughs across many sectors.

For example, fortifying freshwater-storage systems will require us to reimagine how we manage wetlands and groundwater resources that have been dangerously depleted. Developing an urban circular (recycling-oriented) economy for water will create a new logic for treating industrial and urban wastewater. Adopting precision irrigation, drought-resilient rain-fed farming, and less water-intensive crops will move us toward more sustainable food systems and higher incomes for farmers. And water footprints in manufacturing can be reduced, including through the reuse of water in producing critical materials such as the lithium we need for widespread electrification.

Lastly, we must reshape multilateral governance for water. The current system is highly fragmented and inadequate to the challenge. One useful tool is trade policy. By incorporating water-conservation standards in trade agreements, we can encourage more sustainable practices and discourage wasteful water subsidies. We also must use multilateralism to develop skills and capacity globally, and to protect the farmers, women, indigenous peoples, and consumers who are at the frontlines of water conservation.

We still have a chance to convert the water crisis into a global opportunity for economy-wide progress and a new social contract with justice and equity at its centre. Failing that, we will no longer have a safe Earth system.

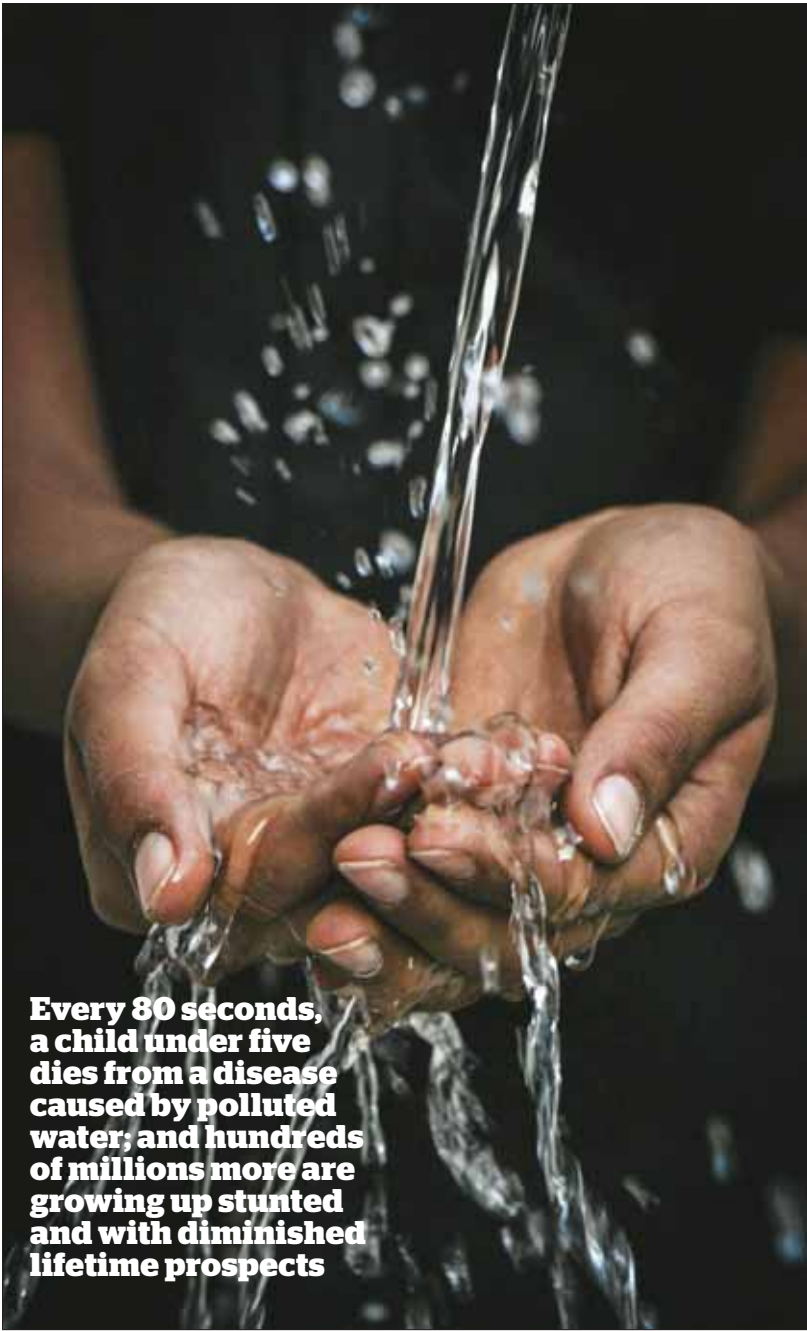
— Project Syndicate

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● Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, *Director-General of the World Trade Organisation*, is a former finance minister and foreign minister of Nigeria and a former managing director of the World Bank.

● Johan Rockström is Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research.

● Tharman Shanmugaratnam, *Senior Minister in Singapore's cabinet*, is Chair of the Group of Thirty.





## Canada makes immigration easier for Turks, Syrians

Canada has moved to ease immigration for Turkish and Syrian citizens already in the country, a month after an earthquake killed more than 50,000 people in the two countries.

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake on February 6 killed more than 45,000 people in Turkey and thousands more in neighbouring Syria, and devastated hundreds of thousands of buildings.

"Canada is committed to providing relief to those impacted by the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria," said Sean Fraser, the minister for immigration, refugees and citizenship.

The new measures would allow, for example, people from those countries to apply for work permits that authorise foreigners to work for any employer for a specified period.

"Today we are introducing new measures that make it easier for Turkish and Syrian nationals to extend their stay in Canada and be with their families, while continuing to work and study in a safe environment," Fraser added.

The announcement comes 10 days after the UN urged the international community to speed up its settlement of Syrian refugees from areas affected by the earthquake in Turkey. - **AFP**

# Putin visits Mariupol in his first trip to an occupied territory

AFP/Reuters

Kyiv

Russian President Vladimir Putin made a surprise trip to Mariupol, the Kremlin said yesterday, his first visit to territory captured from Ukraine since the start of Moscow's invasion.

Just hours after Putin visited Crimea to mark the ninth anniversary of the peninsula's annexation, video distributed by the Kremlin showed him landing by helicopter in Mariupol, the port city that Moscow captured after a long siege last spring.

The visit triggered an angry reaction from Ukraine, with a presidential aide blasting its "cynicism" and "lack of remorse".

The Russian leader took a tour of the city and was seen driving a car.

The Kremlin said he visited a rebuilt musical theatre and followed the presentation of a report on reconstruction work.

"Do you live here? Do you like it?" Putin was shown asking residents.

"Very much. It's a little piece of heaven that we have here now," a woman replied, clasping her hands and thanking Putin for "the victory".

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that the visit was "spontaneous", adding that Putin's movements around the city and his meeting with locals were not planned.

He added that the visit took place "very late" on Saturday and in the early hours of yesterday.

It was Putin's first trip to the eastern Donbass region since he launched the invasion in February 2022, and comes almost a year after Moscow announced the capture of Mariupol after a campaign that saw the destruction of the Azovstal steel works, the last holdout of Ukrainian forces in the strategic port city.

Mariupol was left devastated after Moscow relentlessly bombarded the city on the shores of the Sea of Azov and subjected it to a brutal siege.

"The criminal always returns to the crime scene ... the murderer of thousands of Mariupol families came to admire the ruins of the city and (its) graves," Ukrainian presidential aide Mykhaylo Podolyak said on Twitter. "Cynicism and lack of remorse."

Ukraine's defence ministry said on Twitter that Putin visited the city at night "as befits a thief".

"He watched the 'rebuilding of the city' ... at night. Probably in order not to see the city, killed by his 'liberation'; in the light of day," the exiled Mariupol city council said on its Telegram account.

The visit comes ahead of a trip to Moscow this week by Chinese President Xi Jinping, widely seen as a diplomatic coup for Putin.

Beijing, a strategic ally of Moscow, has touted the trip as a "visit for peace" as it seeks to play mediator in the Ukraine conflict.

China has sought to position itself as a neutral party, urging Moscow and Kyiv to open negotiations.

However, Western leaders have repeatedly criticised Beijing for failing to condemn Russia's offensive, accusing it of providing Moscow with diplomatic cover for its campaign.

Putin also met army chiefs including the chief of the general staff, Valery Gerasimov, in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don near the border with Ukraine, the Kremlin said.

He also made an unannounced visit to Crimea on Saturday, with Russian state TV showing him visiting the Black Sea port city of Sevastopol accompanied by the local Moscow-appointed governor Mikhail Razvozhaev.

Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 following a referendum that was not recognised by Kyiv and the international community.

The weekend visits came after the International Criminal Court (ICC), based in The Hague, issued an arrest warrant for Putin over Russia's alleged deportation of thousands of Ukrainian children during the conflict.

Kyiv says more than 16,000 Ukrain-

ian children have been deported to Russia since the start of the conflict, many of them placed in institutions and foster homes.

ICC prosecutor Karim Khan told AFP that Putin is now liable for arrest if he set foot in any of the court's more than 120 member states.

The 70-year-old Russian leader has not commented publicly on the warrant but the Kremlin dismissed its validity as "void" since Russia did not recognise the ICC's jurisdiction.

Fighting on the ground is concentrated in the eastern Donetsk region of Ukraine, particularly the city of Bakhmut.

Russia last autumn announced the annexation of Donetsk along with three other Ukrainian territories - Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia - despite not fulfilling controlling them.

Russian shelling yesterday killed three people and injured two others in the village of Kamianske in the southern Zaporizhzhia region, the regional administration said.

## Israel, Palestinians agree to set up 'mechanism' to curb violence

Israel and the Palestinian Authority have agreed to establish a mechanism to curb violence during a meeting aimed at preventing already surging violence from escalating further when the holy month of Ramadan begins later this week.

In a statement issued at the end of a meeting in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm al-Sheikh that was also attended by US, Egyptian and Jordanian officials, the parties emphasised the necessity of both Israelis and Palestinians preventing any actions that would

disrupt the sanctity of Holy Sites in Jerusalem during Ramadan.

The parties reaffirmed the necessity of de-escalation, and reconfirmed commitments made at a previous meeting in Aqaba last month.

These included an Israeli commitment to stop discussion of any new settlement units for four months, and to stop authorisation of any outposts for six months.

Islamist group Hamas, which controls the blockaded

Gaza Strip, has insisted that it "rejects the Sharm al-Sheikh conference and conferences that aim for calm", senior member Mussa Abu Marzouk said in a statement.

"Our choice ... is to escalate the resistance in the face of the occupation", he added.

Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine said in a joint statement that Israel "takes advantage of these security meetings to launch more aggression". - **Reuters/AFP**

# French govt defiant on pension reform ahead of crucial no-confidence votes

Reuters/AFP

Paris

President Emmanuel Macron faces a crucial moment today when the French National Assembly is due to vote on no-confidence motions filed after his government bypassed parliament on Thursday to push through an unpopular rise in the state pension age.

The move, which followed weeks of protests against the pension overhaul, triggered three nights of unrest and demonstrations in Paris and throughout the country, with hundreds of people arrested, reminiscent of the Yellow Vest protests that erupted in late 2018 over high fuel prices.

However, while today's votes may put on display the level of anger at Macron's government, they are unlikely to bring it down.

Opposition lawmakers filed two motions of no-confidence in parliament on Friday.

Centrist group Liot proposed a multiparty no-confidence motion, which was co-signed by the far-left Nupes alliance.

Hours later, France's far-right National Rally party, which has 88 National Assembly members, also filed a no-confidence motion.

However, even though Macron's party lost its absolute majority in the lower house after elections last year, there was little chance the multiparty motion would go through - unless a surprise alliance of lawmakers from all sides is formed from the far-left to the far-right.

The leaders of the conservative Les Republicains (LR) party have ruled out such an alliance.

None of them had sponsored the first no-confidence motion filed on Friday.

However, the party still faced some pressure.

In the southern city of Nice, the political office of Eric Ciotti, leader of Les Republicains, was ransacked overnight and tags were left threatening riots if the motion was not supported.

"They want through violence to put pressure on my vote on Monday. I will never yield to the new disciples of the Terror," Ciotti wrote on Twitter yesterday.

He has previously said that he would not "add chaos to chaos" by kicking the government out.

Another Republicans lawmaker, Frederique Meunier, told broadcaster BFM that she had received hundreds of sometimes-threatening e-mails over the pension reform.

"It's harassment," she said.



A French police officer in riot gear stands next to a fire during a demonstration in Bordeaux, southwestern France.

"We feel like they're going to cut our heads off tomorrow."

Macron's overhaul raises the pension age by two years to 64, which the government says is essential to ensure the system does not go bust.

Even if the government sur-

vives today's no confidence vote, a broad alliance of France's main unions has said it would continue to mobilise to try to force a U-turn on the changes.

A day of nationwide industrial action is scheduled for Thursday.

Laurent Berger, leader of the moderate CFDT labour union, told French daily *Liberation* that the pension reform was "not a failure, it is a shipwreck" for the government.

Philippe Martinez, leader of the hard-left CGT labour union,

said on BFM television that he condemned violence but it was Macron's "responsibility if the level of anger is so high".

Macron's approval ratings have fallen four points in the past month to 28%, according to an IFOP-*Journal du Dimanche* poll, their lowest level since the "Yellow Vest" crisis.

Strikes at the country's refineries persisted over the weekend, raising concerns of potential fuel shortages.

Less than 4% of French petrol stations were however experiencing supply disruptions, Rene-Jean Souquet-Grumey, an official for the Mobilians petrol stations federation, told Franceinfo radio yesterday.

Rolling strikes continued on the railways, while rubbish has piled up on the streets of Paris after refuse workers joined the action.

Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire told *Le Parisien* newspaper, commenting on prospects for today's votes: "I think there will be no majority to bring down the government. But this will be a moment of truth".

"Is the pension reform worth bringing down the government and (creating) political disorder? The answer is clearly no," he said. "Everyone must take his responsibilities."

## Montenegro organises election for new president

Montenegrins voted yesterday in a presidential election pitting the Adriatic nation's longest serving leader Milo Djukanovic against a range of rivals hoping to shake up the country's political scene. The election follows months of deadlock after the government was hit with a no-confidence vote in August but continued to rule, kicking off a wave of protests and calls for snap polls for the parliament. The latter were called for June 11 by

Djukanovic on Friday, a day after he had dissolved parliament as a three-month deadline expired for the prime minister designate to form a new government. Montenegro's president has a largely ceremonial role, with most political power resting with the prime minister. If none of the seven candidates secures more than 50% of the vote - a likely outcome - a run-off will be held on April 2. - **AFP**

# Trump camp slams 'political' prosecution as Democrats brace for 'unrest'

AFP

Washington

Senior Republicans have echoed Donald Trump's claim that a looming indictment in a hush-money case would amount to political "persecution", while Democrats warned that his call for protests could trigger a repeat of chaos his supporters unleashed at the US Capitol.

In an explosive announcement on Saturday, the former president said he expected to be "arrested" tomorrow (Tuesday) in connection with a grand jury inquiry into a 2016 payment to an adult entertainment actor, allegedly to keep her from revealing a past affair with Trump.

Even potential Republican rivals in the still-evolving 2024 presidential race reacted sharply. "I'm taken aback at the idea of indicting a former president of the United States at a time

when there's a crimewave in New York City," Trump's former vice-president Mike Pence said on ABC's *This Week*.

"It just feels like a politically charged prosecution here," he said. "I just feel like it's just not what the American people want to see."

The Manhattan District Attorney's Office has not confirmed any plans for an indictment, though multiple signs - including the recent appearances before the grand jury of Trump's former fixer Michael Cohen and the actor known as Stormy Daniels - point to a quick conclusion.

Trump has denied any untoward involvement with Daniels.

However, law enforcement agencies are preparing for a possible indictment, with chaotic scenes outside the Manhattan Criminal Court a near-certainty if it does happen.

The possibility of a former president being arrested has fanned passions and injected considerable uncertainty into the 2024 campaign.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, a vocal supporter of the former president, called a possible indictment "an effort that's ongoing, never-ending to destroy Donald Trump, everything around Donald Trump".

Even Governor Chris Sununu of New Hampshire, an outspoken Trump critic and a potential rival for the 2024 nomination, suggested that an indictment could generate a powerful backlash.

"I think it's building a lot of sympathy for the former president," he told CNN talk show *State of the Union*.

"It does drastically change the paradigm, as we go into the '24 election," he said, adding of a possible indictment: "It's going to be a circus."

Trump's call on his Truth Social platform for his backers to "Protest! Protest! Protest!" and "Take our nation back!" was seen by Democrats as a worrying echo of his language ahead of the January 6, 2021 rioting by his supporters at the US Capitol.

Pence, Sununu and other Republicans defended the right to protest any legal action against Trump, so long as people do so peacefully.

However, Pence's former chief of staff, Marc Short, told CNN that "trying to encourage protests in the shadow of January 6th is reckless".

Democrats said they feared Trump's call could provoke violence.

Nancy Pelosi, the former House of Representatives speaker, has called Trump's announcement "reckless", saying that he was trying to "foment unrest among his supporters".

Democrat Mark Kelly recalled being in the Senate chamber when the January 6 riots forced him and other lawmakers to seek shelter, and expressed concern that Trump urging protests could spark a repeat of life-threatening unrest.

"I think it's going to be important for law enforcement to pay attention to protests and make sure it doesn't rise to the level of violence" seen

at the Capitol two years ago, Kelly said on CNN.

Short suggested that Trump might be drawing attention to the Manhattan case to plant the notion that other state and federal inquiries into his past actions, seen as legally more serious, are "all politically based".

The current House speaker, Republican Kevin McCarthy, said on Saturday that Trump's arrest would be "an outrageous abuse of power by a radical DA", adding he would direct congressional committees to investigate whether federal funds are "being used to subvert our democracy".

Some saw that as a thinly veiled threat to the office of Manhattan district attorney Alvin Bragg, who is leading the hush-money inquiry.

As security agencies prepared for possible protests outside his courthouse, Bragg told staff on Saturday in an internal message that intimidation or threats against them would not be tolerated, NBC reported.



# Seminar Series ends with discussion on impact of Islamic civilisation on West

By Tawfik Lamari  
Staff Reporter

The second edition of the Seminar Series concluded yesterday evening in the presence of HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, HE the Minister of Justice Masoud bin Mohamed al-Ameri, a number of other dignitaries, and a large gathering of intellectuals and interested citizens and residents.

The Seminar Series was organised by the Ministry of Culture over a period of two weeks, in co-operation with Qatar University, the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies, and Qatar National Library.

Moroccan academic and preacher Dr Saeed al-Kamali spoke on the topic of *The Impact of Islamic Civilisation on the West*, which witnessed a large audience and was moderated by preacher Youssef Achir.

He presented what European historians have narrated about the influence of the Islamic civilisation on the West, and said there are several opinions in this regard.

Some of these were critical while others had a fair view of the civilisation of Muslims.

The claims of the group holding unfavourable views have since been invalidated by evidence found in history in view of the stream of Muslim scholars' contributions in various fields.

Dr al-Kamali explained that some books and opinions have been fair to Muslims, adding: "Some authors and historians, such as French writer Voltaire, were fair to Muslims when he said 'we owe them physics, chemistry, medicine, astronomy and even the arts'. Voltaire also said that 'we owe them algebra', and he meant the Arabs."

"Voltaire said this was a great invention, which seems to be the flame of the human mind, and by that he meant that the human



HE Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, HE Masoud bin Mohamed al-Ameri and other dignitaries at the event. (Inset) Dr Saeed al-Kamali. **PICTURES:** Noushad Thekkayil

mind was in darkness (ignorance) and was lit by the Arabs' invention of algebra," he said. "Also, Western Orientalist Gustave said in his book, *Civilisation of the Arabs* that 'the Arabs taught us medicine, philosophy, physics, chemistry and even the arts'."

Then, Dr al-Kamali spoke about the impact of the Islamic religion on Arabs, as "it moved them from the state of illiteracy to knowledge and proficiency, and from the state of ignorance to the state of literacy."

"Then, the Arabs understood through Islam that they are the successors on earth," he continued. "That they are required to rebuild it, and they understood that through its reconstruction, they will construct their hereafter."

"Islam stimulated people to work, emphasising that many of the honourable hadiths of the Prophet (PBUH) urged Muslims to construct the land, which they did, as it appears from their achievements in the first century CE, when they became allies on this approach," he added.

Dr al-Kamali referred to the Islamic civilisation's interest in all fields of engineering, starting with urbanisation and construction to establishing the bases of military engineering since the first century CE, when

rules were set for the creation of military monuments that protected the country since the era of Muawiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan, while stressing that Andalusia was an important and great station.

Elements of Islamic civilisation also penetrated Europe.

Dr al-Kamali made a comparison based on the testimonies of Western writers in the history of Europe in the Middle Ages and between Andalusia, which was advanced scientifically, intellectually and cultured.

Its streets were paved and luminous, and there were means to preserve the environment, unlike European capitals that did not know about lighting, nor did they have elementary knowledge or know how to get rid of dirt.

On the other hand, Andalusia boasted of universities, observatories, laboratories and libraries, and there were more than 70 public libraries in Spain.

Dr al-Kamali also mentioned the contributions made by the Islamic civilisation in mathematics, and many other contributions, which the West benefited from and built upon them later, and which made Western writers keen to translate the books written by Muslims on mathematics.

# AgriteQ 2023 bolsters Qatar's food security measures

More than 35,000 people visited the 10th edition of the Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ 2023), which concluded yesterday at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

According to an official press statement from the Ministry of Municipality, 523 international companies from 55 countries and 152 local companies participated in the exhibition.

AgriteQ 2023 also hosted workshops and discussions on agricultural and food security issues.

During the exhibition, 120 tonnes of packaged dates were handed over to Katrina Gaillouzi, deputy director of the World Food Programme (WFP) Office and the programme representative in the GCC.

This comes as part of Qatar supporting the operations of the WFP in some countries.



HE the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie honoured a number of participants and sponsors. Supplied picture

Qatar has been a strong donor to the WFP since 2004, as this contribution is made annually in the form of packed dates that are purchased locally.

On the final day, HE the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah

bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie honoured a number of participants and sponsors.

The exhibition witnessed the signing of contracts and a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Municipality and a group of participating entities.

The scientific conference accompanying the exhibition also concluded yesterday after holding four workshops, during which 54 working papers dealing with research and studies on food security were presented.

The papers discussed various topics while covering innovations and technology in the agricultural sector and climate change issues along with the ways to tackle them.

The papers also discussed the National Strategy for Food Security while addressing the ways to promote and develop Qatar's strategy for food security.

The papers stressed the need to spread awareness about locally made food and support local food production.



Snapshots from AgriteQ 2023, which concluded yesterday. **PICTURE:** Noushad Thekkayil

# New exhibition explores *The Curious Desert*

Qatar Museums (QM) is presenting *The Curious Desert*, a new exhibition conceived by Olafur Eliasson for a site in the desert outside of Al Thakhira Mangrove Reserve and for the galleries of the National Museum of Qatar (NMQ) in Doha, until August 15.

Located within and outside the museum, the exhibition includes new site-specific works that continue to explore the Icelandic-Danish artist's abiding interests in light and colour, geometric studies, ecological awareness and more-than-human relationships.

The exhibition is presented as part of Qatar Creates, the year-round national cultural movement that curates, promotes and celebrates the diversity of cultural activities in Qatar.

HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Chairperson of Qatar Museums, said: "*The Curious Desert* by Olafur Eliasson illustrates the power and problem-solving ability of art."

"Olafur's profound body of work, including the new installations in the Qatari desert, opens an important dialogue about the environment, one of the most pressing topics of our time, in the context of our nation's natural landscapes," she said. "This exhibition is unique in its presentation, which exists both inside and outside of the National Museum of Qatar, to further

**Qatar Museums presents the new exhibition conceived by Olafur Eliasson for a site in the desert outside of Al Thakhira Mangrove Reserve and for the NMQ galleries in Doha, until August 15**

demonstrate how art is not confined to galleries, but is around us, everywhere, to inspire and educate."

"It is an extraordinary opportunity to create artworks for the sabkha near Al Thakhira Mangrove Reserve," Eliasson said. "The sun, the wind, the nearby lagoon saltwater – they all help co-produce the artworks that visitors will encounter here."

"I hope the artworks in turn may sensitise people to the singular landscape and to the more-than-human agencies at work," he continued. "The other half of my exhibition, at the National Museum of Qatar, is an assembly of embodied thoughts and actions from over 25 years of working as an artist."

"These two natural cultural sites enrich each other – together they make up *The Curious Desert*," Eliasson said.

Located in a sabkha habitat 64km northeast of Doha, near the Al Thakhira Mangrove Reserve, 12 temporary pavilions enclose a series of new, experimental artworks that respond to the

ephemeral natural phenomena of the local environment, such as sunlight, wind and water.

The first three outdoor pavilions explore optical phenomena, making use of rainbows, shadows and mirrors to create mesmerising effects, while pavilions five through seven contain innovative drawing machines that enlist the elements of the sabkha habitat to create artworks that will later be displayed within the exhibition at the NMQ.

The final three pavilions bring this environment into dialogue with others, with materials such as obsidian and glacial mud from Iceland.

Among the projects located in the 12 desert pavilions are:

○ **Rainbow incubator:** 11 prisms, arranged along the top of a reflective sphere according to the path of the sun at Al Thakhira, bend and break the daylight entering the sphere, causing it to appear at different times of the year as a perfectly circular rainbow.

○ **Saltwater-drawing observatory:** two circular canvases – one white and the other black – turn slowly on motors as water, mixed with black and white pigments respectively, drips down onto the spinning surfaces.

The wind causes the drawing utensil to move across the surface of the turning page, leaving undulating marks upon the surface.

The drawings, portraits of the weather conditions at the location, are then periodically shown at the NMQ.

○ **Solar incense burner:** a single glass sphere uses the rays of the sun to ignite a selection of scents typical of Qatar and the region – oud, musk and amber, among others.

Each burns for one hour, functioning as a clock by marking the time of day with scent.

○ **Your obsidian garden:** inspired by Eliasson's hikes through volcanic obsidian fields in the Icelandic highlands, the artwork in this pavilion features black, shiny obsidian that stands out in stark contrast to the sandy ground, appearing to have erupted from beneath the desert.

Eliasson and the QM worked with an ecologist to conduct an extensive survey of the site near Al Thakhira to ensure the protection of its



HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani and others engaged in a discussion. Supplied picture

native plants and non-human inhabitants, such as the Arabian Red Fox.

Inside the NMQ, an extensive presentation of works from throughout the artist's career invites viewers to situate themselves anew in relation to expansive light installations, photo series from Iceland, complex geometric studies, watercolours, optical devices, and a sprawling research map.

Works featured at the National Museum include:

○ **The living lighthouse, 2023:** a new installation comprising broad bands of colourful light that crawl across the walls of this circular room, wrapping visitors in a vibrant, ever-changing light installation.

○ **The Research map, 2019:** a sprawling pin wall that charts the research and ideas that have inspired Eliasson and his studio in recent years.

The map can be seen as a space of micro-storytelling, where seemingly unrelated contents vibrate next to each other and create new meaning.

○ **Photography series depicting the natural landscapes of Iceland:** including the glacier melt series, 1999/2019, 2019, the inner cave series, 1998, and the horizon series, 2002 – selected with the landscape of Qatar in mind.

○ Artworks created by drawing and painting machines installed outdoors near the Al Thakhira Mangrove Forest.

The presentation of *The Curious Desert* follows Qatar Museums' October 2022 unveiling of Eliasson's outdoor installation commissioned for the desert near the Ain Mohamed heritage site in northern Qatar.

The artwork, *Shadows Travelling on the Sea of the Day* (2022), continues the Icelandic-Danish artist's longstanding exploration of the interplay between human perception and the natural world.



A two-part film created by Tigerlily Production for Studio Olafur Eliasson and Qatar Museums captures the development of Eliasson's installation, *Shadows Travelling on the Sea of the Day*, and his exhibition, *The Curious Desert*.

The film created for *Shadows Travelling on the Sea of the Day* will be on view at the Mohamed Jassim Al Khulaifi Library of the NMQ, together with a special reading room dedicated to Eliasson, which collects a broad selection of catalogues covering the artist's production, starting from the his first solo exhibition in the nineties running up to the present.

The screening of the premier of the film about *The Curious Desert* will be announced during the course of the exhibition.

A richly illustrated publication – documenting the exhibition and its development in photographs and artist sketches – will be available from late summer.

The book will contextualise the exhibition, with a special focus on Eliasson's site-specific installations in the Qatari desert.

Throughout this publication, themes explored will raise pertinent questions around the global climate emergency, including vulnerability, responsibility and urgency.

The book will be available in English and Arabic.



A snapshot from the launch of the exhibition at the NMQ. **PICTURES:** Thajudheen

# Groundbreaking TEDinArabic Summit concludes in Doha



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Dr al-Rashid researched the possibility of detecting stress through the eye from a medical point of view, and his research confirmed that the eye is a reliable indicator for identifying any type of stress.

"Today, we can develop or innovate anything using AI," he said. "But we must never forget that AI lacks feelings, which are the main driving force for everything around us, and as long as our feelings are alive, we will always be safe."

Jordanian entrepreneur Mohamed Shaker, founder and chief executive of ArabiaWeather, spoke on *How can Artificial Intelligence help in treating climate crises?*, focusing on the need for societies to understand the link between climate change, human behaviour, and the expansion of cities.

"Using AI, we created a method that can be used to enhance the accuracy of weather forecasting, where we convert all social media posts from video, photos, or text into weather-related data," he said. "We then developed a platform through which people can share im-

ages, and then we collect and process this using AI techniques to reach more accurate weather results."

"This is one of dozens of initiatives through which we can use AI to achieve climate adaptation," Shaker said.

The final day of the summit also featured a musical performance by the Lebanese band Ikleel Aljabal, as well as a nostalgia-themed performance of cartoon songs by Tarek Tourgane and family.

The summit is a cornerstone of the three-year partnership between the QF and TED to establish TEDinAra-

bic, which is enabling ideas and stories from across the Arabic-speaking world to be shared with a global audience.

Through TEDinArabic – TED's first initiative in the Arabic language – three regional events have been hosted in Qatar, Jordan and Morocco, while a digital platform has also been created to act as a vault of TEDinArabic content, including blogs, videos, and TED Talks.

Partners who supported the TEDinArabic Summit include Qatar Museums' Years of Culture initiative – which provided a grant enabling young people from across the Arab world to attend



the event, Tasweer, Alif Stores, Doha Film Institute, Geekdom, the QF's Doha Debates, the Generation Amazing Foundation, Enbat, QINWAN, and Al Jazeera Media Network's AJ+ platform.

The QF's Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra collaborated for the musical performance at the summit's opening ceremony.