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HMC to organise int’l Mental Health Conference

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) will organise the 9th Qatar International Mental Health Conference from May 25-27, in co-operation with the Primary Health Care Corporation and the Royal College of Psychiatrists in the UK. This year, the conference addresses several topics to promote education among professionals whose knowledge will ultimately benefit those in the community who seek help. Director of Public Health at the Ministry Sheikh Dr Mohamed bin Hamad al-Thani said that education was key to improving the health of the nation and the conference was an important forum to promote education among professionals. **Page 4**

Sudan factions agree to 7-day ceasefire

The Sudanese army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) agreed to a seven-day humanitarian truce and ceasefire, two negotiation sources said yesterday. The new agreement will take effect after 48 hours, the sources added. Past similar ceasefires were not honoured by the warring parties. Sudan has been mired in turmoil since a conflict broke out between the army and the RSF in mid-April. Fighting has killed 705 people and injured at least 5,287, according to the World Health Organisation. **Page 7**

Hollywood stars flood Cannes

The Hollywood cavalcade descended on Cannes yesterday for the premiere of Leonardo DiCaprio and Martin Scorsese's Native American crime epic, "Killers of the Flower Moon" which received gushing first reviews. The three-and-a-half-hour movie sees DiCaprio play alongside Scorsese's other long-time muse Robert De Niro, and charts a wave of murders among oil-rich Osage Indians in the 1920s and the birth of the FBI. After hours of waiting in the rain that has drenched the French Riviera town all week, fans went wild as DiCaprio, De Niro, and Scorsese arrived for the premiere alongside several native Americans in traditional outfits. **Page 11**

Plane crash in Swiss mountains kills three

Three people died when their light aircraft crashed yesterday in Switzerland's Ponts-de-Martel area close to the French border, the Swiss police said. The crash occurred around 0820 GMT in a forest near the village of La Combe Dernier in the canton of Neuchâtel. The pilot and his two passengers died at the scene of the accident. Rescue operations proved difficult because the crash occurred on particularly steep terrain, the police said.

ICC prosecutor on Russia's wanted list

The International Criminal Court (ICC) said yesterday that it was "undeterred" after Russia put prosecutor Karim Khan on a wanted list over his issuance of an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin. "The ICC finds these measures unacceptable. The court will remain undeterred in the conduct of its lawful mandate to ensure accountability for the gravest crimes," the Hague-based tribunal said in a statement. Khan, a Briton, issued an arrest warrant for Putin in March on the war crime accusation of unlawfully deporting Ukrainian children. The war crimes court added that it was "aware and profoundly concerned about unwarranted and unjustified coercive measures... by the authorities of the Russian Federation".

2nd round of voting for Turkish presidential election in Doha

Voting for the second and last round of the Turkish presidential election began at the embassy of Türkiye in Doha yesterday. A large number of Turkish citizens turned up to cast their votes in the presence of Dr Mustafa Goksu, ambassador of Türkiye to Qatar. The second round of voting at the embassy continues until tomorrow, from 8am-10pm. A notification from the embassy explained that voters are obliged to present a valid Turkish identification document (ID card, passport, driver's licence, etc) issued by the Turkish authorities, which has a national identity number clearly visible on it. The Turkish embassy is located in Zone 66, Street 905, Building 149, Diplomatic Area, Doha. *Image courtesy of the embassy's Facebook page* **Page 12**

Hamad Port 8th in world on Container Performance Index

Hamad Port, Qatar's main gateway to world trade, continues to impress as it has ranked eighth in the world and third in the Arab region on the Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) for 2022, Mwani Qatar said in a tweet yesterday.

The index issued by the World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelligence "reflects the port's high-quality operations, as it measures the time needed by ships to complete loading and unloading tasks", Mwani Qatar stressed.

The index confirms the high capabilities of Hamad Port, which is one of the largest ports in the Middle East, it added.

According to "The Container Port Performance Index 2022: A Comparable Assessment of Performance based on Vessel Time in Port", issued by the World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelligence: "The challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath on the sector eased in 2022, an easing that has continued into early 2023. This has resulted in an improvement in both port congestion and a reduction in logistical disruption. The improvement in 2022 has had a positive impact on the performance and ranking of some ports; where the problem was systemic, as

opposed to location specific, the inherent inefficiency remains.

"One of the 'silver linings' of the pandemic was greater awareness and focus on the resilience and efficiency of the maritime gateways, where any friction will result in tangible impacts on consumer choice, price and ultimately economic development."

The performance of a port may be assessed based on a myriad of measurements, such as: terminal capacity or space utilisation, cost, landside connectivity & services, or ship to shore interchange. **To Page 4**

Qatar condemns vandalising of its embassy building in Khartoum

●GCC chief, Saudi, Kuwait and Oman also denounce storming of Qatar mission

QNA
Doha

Qatar condemned in the strongest terms the irregular armed forces' storming and vandalising its embassy building in Khartoum.

Also, it confirmed that the embassy staff had previously been evacuated and that none of the diplomats or embassy staff were subjected to any harm.

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed the need to spare embassies, diplomatic missions, headquarters of international organisations, and civilian facilities the consequences of the fighting in Sudan and to prosecute the perpetrators and hold them accountable for the consequences of this heinous criminal act, which constitutes

a violation of international law and agreements.

The ministry reaffirmed the position of Qatar, which calls for an immediate halt to the fighting in Sudan, exercising maximum restraint, resorting to the voice of reason, giving priority to the public interest, and sparing civilians the consequences of the fighting.

The ministry also expressed Qatar's aspiration for all parties to pursue dialogue and peaceful ways to overcome differences.

The Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) expressed strong condemnation and denunciation of the irregular armed forces' storming and vandalising of the Qatari embassy's building in Khartoum and to all forms of violence and vandalism, especially those targeting premises of diplomatic mis-

sions and affiliate buildings.

In Jeddah, GCC Secretary-General Jassem al-Budaiwi reiterated the call to parties of the conflict to act quickly for stopping military operations, exercise maximum restraint, abstain from escalation, respect international agreements and diplomatic norms that guarantee sanctity and safety of diplomatic missions' premises and their employees as well as to spare civilians the effects of the conflict.

He called on all parties to the conflict for serious engagement in the Jeddah talks, to reach a comprehensive political declaration that achieves security, stability and prosperity for Sudan and its people.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has expressed its condemnation and denunciation of the storming and vandalising of the embassy of Qatar in Khartoum. **To Page 4**

Qatar International Court issues new practice guide

Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre (QICDRC) has issued the new practice guide for parties to the court, which is the key reference for its all proceedings and rules required by litigants or their legal representatives during their pleadings before the court.

The guide provides an integrated framework that includes the most important procedures of the QICDRC pertaining to witness's testimony, documents disclosure requests, the structural arguments, the chronology of lawsuit, and the appeals.

Standard directions have also been produced and are available so that parties are able to see the usual progress of a case in advance.

The QICDRC has outstanding staff from several countries with various specialisations as well as diverse legal representatives, who come from countries with different specialisations necessitating the existence of a unified practice guide to serve as an underlying reference for all, including judges, parties, and their legal representatives to effectively advance the lawsuit proceedings.

The new practice guide is available online on QICDRC's portal both in Arabic and English and its issuance comes within the framework of the QICDRC's ongoing

endeavour to upgrade its judicial services within the efforts aimed at achieving prompt justice and settling disputes effectively and smoothly through its judicial channels in accordance with the applicable world-class practices and its ironclad commitment to maintain law's sovereignty.

Established by the QFC Law No 2 of 2009, the QICDRC was founded to be the final step of Qatar's initiative to build a world-class international financial centre. It was designed to be part of the QFC strategy to advance Qatar's economic diversification efforts in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030 by attracting foreign direct investments and international businesses to Qatar. Litigants who choose to resort to the court to resolve their disputes benefit from a quick and cost-effective dispute resolution process. (QNA)

Wagner claims Ukrainian city Bakhmut captured

Russia's private army Wagner claimed yesterday the total control of the east Ukrainian city of Bakhmut, the epicentre of fighting, as Kyiv said the battle was continuing, while admitting the situation was "critical".

Bakhmut, a salt mining town that once had a population of 70,000 people, has been the scene of the longest and bloodiest battle in Moscow's more than year-long Ukraine offensive. The fall to Russia of Bakhmut, where both Moscow and Kyiv are believed to have suffered huge losses, would allow Moscow to bring home a victory after a series of humiliating defeats.

Meanwhile, Pope Francis has asked Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, head of the Italian bishops' conference, to lead a peace mission to try and stop the war in Ukraine, the Vatican said yesterday.

Zuppi has been asked "to help ease tensions in the conflict in Ukraine, in the hope, which the Holy Father has never given up, that this can initiate paths of peace," Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said.

"The timing of such a mission, and its modalities, are currently being studied," he added in a note.

Francis first spoke of a possible mission on his return from a trip to Hungary last month, telling reporters "there is a mission in course now, but it is not yet public".

He gave no more details. Zuppi, 67, was elected head of the Italian Episcopal Conference last year, and hails from the Sant'Egidio Catholic Community, which specialises in diplomacy and peace efforts.

The Vatican statement came as G7 leaders in Japan met with President

This video grab taken from a handout footage shows Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin holding a Russian national flag in front of his soldiers holding Wagner Group's flags in Bakhmut, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Zelensky and renewed their support for Ukraine, which was invaded by Russia in February 2022.

AFP adds from Hiroshima: US President Joe Biden "looks forward" to meeting Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky in Hiroshima today on the sidelines of a G7 summit in the Japanese city, the White House said.

A senior Biden administration official told reporters that the meeting was "scheduled for a little bit after" 2:00pm (0500 GMT) Sunday.

"The president will continue to reiterate the United States' firm and resolute support for Ukraine going forward," the official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said.

Earlier, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said Biden "looks forward to the opportunity to be able to sit down face-to-face" with Zelensky.

BSH Middle East and Darwish Holding celebrate 10 years of solid partnership

BSH Middle East celebrated its 10th anniversary of partnership with Darwish Holding, its exclusive Bosch distributor in Qatar, during a gathering held in Doha. The event was attended by a dedicated team from both entities to celebrate the milestone.

The partnership between BSH Middle East and Darwish Holding started in 2013, with Darwish Holding becoming the exclusive distributor of Bosch products in Qatar. Over the last 10 years, the partnership has been able to continuously grow the business and increase Bosch's share in the home appliances market in Qatar, a press statement notes.

"During the last decade, the partnership between BSH Middle East and Darwish Holding has flourished, driven by a shared commitment to excellence, innovation and customer satisfaction. With Darwish Holding's expertise and Bosch's high-quality appliances, the partnership has been able to expand its reach across Qatar, making Bosch home appliances available across all major retailers in the country and successfully involving Bosch home appliances in major projects in Qatar," the statement points out.

As part of its commitment to the Qatari market, BSH Middle East, in partnership with Darwish Holding, opened its first brand store on Salwa Road in September 2014 and then relocated to its permanent location at Lagoona Mall in October 2018. At the same time, Darwish Holding has been a perfect partner for Bosch as it took part in many premium projects across the city during the last few years, including Katara Towers, QatarEnergy District, The Seef, Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha, Floresta Gardens and Giardino Village, to name a few, and thus assuring a perfect pipeline of many other projects to come.

Bosch's commitment to providing innovative and reliable home appliances has made it the go-to choice for many customers, whether they are looking to outfit their new houses, upgrade their kitchens or make their homes more sustainable. Today, Bosch home appliances are available across all major retailers in Qatar, and Darwish Holding has a dedicated Fifty One East Service Centre with certified technicians. This ensures that customers can receive the highest qual-



Bader al-Darwish and Tomas Alonso mark the occasion.

ity of service and support for their Bosch home appliances.

BSH Home Appliances Middle East CEO Tomas Alonso, in a statement on the occasion of the anniversary, said: "At BSH, loyalty and trust are two of the main values we hold while working with our partners. In this case, we can only be proud of the business and personal relationship that developed between Bosch and Darwish Holding during these last 10 years of collaboration, based on the foundation of our mutual values. Now, as part of our DNA, let's continue working together to grow and gain a bigger market share for the years to come."

Commenting on this special occasion, Bader al-Darwish, chairman and managing director of Darwish Holding, said: "Today, as we celebrate a decade of partnership with Bosch as the brand's exclusive distributor in Qatar, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this incredible journey. I extend a special thank you to Mr Tomas Alonso and his team, who have joined us in celebrating this milestone. "Over the past decade, our team has worked tirelessly to build a very strong database of loyal customers which helped in establishing Bosch as a household name in Qatar. Our solid partnership with the brand has been instrumental in achieving outstanding growth year after year. We have developed a relationship of strong co-operation built on mutual



Over the last 10 years, the partnership has been able to continuously grow the business and increase Bosch's share in the home appliances market in Qatar.

trust and respect that has enabled us to deliver the highest quality products and after-sale services."

"As we reflect on the past 10 years, we take pride in our accomplishments, and we stay indebted to our loyal customers who have entrusted us throughout. The next decade promises to be even more exciting as we work closely with Bosch to bring them the best in German technology and know-how. I truly look forward to continued success together," he added.

BSH Middle East looks forward to continuing this partnership with Darwish Holding, bringing Bosch's innovative home appliances to even more customers and improving the lives of every home in Qatar.

Official

Amir sends cables of congratulations to president of Cameroon

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to the President of Cameroon, Paul Biya, on the anniversary of his country's National Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable of congratulations to Prime Minister Dr Joseph Dion Ngute. **(QNA)**

NHRC holds workshop for CMC elections monitoring team

QNA
Doha

The National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) has organised a workshop for the Central Municipal Council (CMC) elections monitoring team. The team, which comprises a number of members and employees of the committee, will carry out the required tasks in the electoral committees in accordance with national and international standards.

HE the Deputy Chairman of the NHRC, Dr Mohamed bin Saif al-Kuwari, the head of the Visits and Monitoring Committee, presented a paper on the importance of monitoring elections to ensure integrity and transparency.

He emphasised the right of the male or female citizens registered to participate in free and fair elections, as one of the basic human rights that should be enjoyed without discrimination. Dr al-Kuwari stressed the need for the monitoring team to enjoy independence, impartiality and objectivity, and to have the necessary lingual skills and experience to manage election affairs.

He also touched on setting a plan for election monitoring, including devel-



oping a strategic plan for recruitment, monitoring and publishing; defining mission objectives; and defining expected results from monitoring, in addition to international standards for election monitoring, which include global guidelines to promote real elections.

He explained that the goal of election monitoring is achieving a number of basic elements, which are ensuring an independent, impartial and objective evaluation of the electoral process; encouraging acceptance of election results; participating in building confidence in the electoral process;

ensuring elections safety and monitoring the protection of all human rights during the election period.

During the workshop, Dr al-Kuwari gave an explanation of the geographical targeting to provide the monitoring team with basic information and help them locate the places where large numbers of voters are located, stressing the importance of developing monitoring forms to enable the election monitoring team to systematically collect data about the election process and analyse the election procedures.

QS marks World Metrology Day

The Qatar General Organisation for Standards and Metrology (QS) joined its counterparts in the world in marking World Metrology Day, which falls on May 20, to raise awareness of the importance of metrology and its direct impact on all aspects of modern life.

On this occasion, QS said that the 2023 World Metrology Day is held under the slogan "Measurements supporting the global food system," which confirms the importance of metrology in various aspects of daily life.

QS pointed out that due to the significant increase in the volume of requests for calibration activities in the



country, it has developed the capabilities of the industrial and legal calibration laboratory, which is concerned with calibrating balances, weights, and thermometers, in addition to developing new activities in the fields of "engineering dimensions, electrical

quantities and calibration of pressure meters of all kinds. It added that the laboratory is equipped with the latest devices and technologies represented by electrical quantities calibration laboratory devices, thermal measurements calibration laboratory devices, pressure meters calibration laboratory devices, and engineering dimensions calibration laboratory devices.

World Metrology Day is celebrated to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of the Metre Convention in 1875, an international treaty that was signed in Paris that established the basis for international agreement on units of measurement. **(QNA)**

Voya Tower project on Lusail waterfront launched

Mazaya Real Estate Development Company, in partnership with Al-Namaa Real Estate Development Company, has announced the launch of 'Voya Tower' project on the Lusail waterfront. The completion of the Voya Tower project is scheduled for 2026.

According to a statement, Voya Tower provides easy access to all tourist, recreational, and service facilities in the city, and it is entirely distinguished from other buildings in the area with its exceptional exterior design. Its interior design includes numerous shared spaces, gardens, and private balconies that provide the building with magnificent views of the Lusail waterfront. In a statement, Sheikh Hamad bin Mohamed al-Thani, board member and CEO of Mazaya said: "The launch of the Voya residential project is a response to the continuous and growing demand for high-quality residential projects that provide a more distinguished and luxurious life."

He added: "The company is preparing to launch several diverse projects in Qatar and Gulf countries. The company's vision for investment in the Qatari real estate sector is based on Qatar National Vision 2030, which Mazaya strongly supports through projects that meet the needs of the country's real estate market."

Sheikh Faisal bin Fahd al-Thani, chairman, Al-Namaa Real Estate Development Company, expressed his gratitude for this initiative, saying, "The launch of the Voya project on the waterfront comes amidst a great sense of optimism about the future of the real estate market in the Gulf countries in general and Qatar in particular, as it is one of the fastest-growing modern residential destinations in the world and a hub for flourishing and evolving projects and investments. In line with Qatar National Vision 2030, we will continue our journey towards providing modern and contemporary housing in order to grant residents and investors the utmost luxury according to the highest standards and meet their needs in all aspects



The Voya Tower project, which includes some 119 diverse housing units, is scheduled for completion in 2026.

to achieve sustainable development and pass it on to future generations."

The residential Voya Tower project includes 119 diverse housing units, including apartments and chalets for sale. The residential units feature a modern and practical design, ranging from one-bedroom to four-bedroom units. Some of them have balconies with magnificent views of the Lusail waterfront. The tower offers comprehensive amenities such as outdoor activities, swimming pools, a gymnasium, and a health club, as well as direct access to the beach for relaxation and water sports.

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Glimpses from the awards ceremony.



Top institutions win CSR awards

The Qatar CSR Summit 2023, hosted by Qatar University (QU) under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, concluded on Thursday evening with the Qatar CSR Awards official gala dinner.

In a speech at the beginning of the ceremony, Dr Saif al-Hajari, CEO of the Qatar National Programme for Social Responsibility, thanked the sponsors and supporters of the conference and exhibition. He praised their efforts in the field of social development through the various initiatives and programmes that were reviewed during the event.

He noted that the awards ceremony “comes to highlight these efforts to be an example to be followed for how to serve society, the environment and people”.

Haidar Mshaimesh, general manager of IFP Qatar, organiser of the Qatar CSR Summit, said the Qatar CSR Awards included 20 different categories covering most economic sectors.

According to an official press statement, the Ministry of Municipality won the award for the best social responsibility initiative in the government sector for the rainwater drainage project and the initiative to plant Imm trees, while the ministries of Defence and Justice won appreciation awards for their overall efforts in this field.

Qatar Red Crescent Society won the Best NGO Initiative Award for its volunteering programme. The Best Private Sector Initiative Award went to Seashore Group for its leadership and various programmes in the fields of sustainability and recycling, while Al Faisal Holding and

Aamal Group received an appreciation award in this category in recognition of their continuous contribution to many social development initiatives.

In the multinational corporate category, DHL Express won the award for its initiative in collaboration with the Mind Center for Empowering People with Special Needs. QNB Group was the first to win the award in the category of banking and financial sector, as QNB is the leading bank among national banks in the field of social responsibility, and its initiatives and programmes in this field cover various aspects of social responsibility in the fields of development, education, environment and others, a press statement notes.

QIIB received an appreciation award in the same category.

In the energy sector, the award went to Shell Qatar for

its NXplorers Youth Education Programme, while Qatar Cool received an award in the same category for its environmental initiatives. In the ICT sector, Ooredoo came in first place as the company adopts the principles of social responsibility in various aspects of its work and is keen to harness these principles for community development, while Bevol was recognised for its work in enabling volunteer programmes and volunteers.

In the education sector category, Hamad Medical Corporation's Itqan Clinical Simulation Center won the award for its role in training and developing the skills of health professionals at various levels. In the health sector, the award went to Weill Cornell Medicine.

In recognition of its exceptional efforts in the sports sector, the Supreme Committee for

Delivery & Legacy (SC) received the award for the Tamreen and Generation Amazing initiatives. In the tourism and hospitality sector, the Women's Circle initiative to empower women from Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel received the first prize, while Qatar Tourism received an award for its overall social contributions.

In the food sector, talabat won the award for its innovative initiatives in employing advanced technology to serve the community, while McDonald's Qatar won for 'Rahlatuna'. In the retail sector, the award went to Apparel Group for its partnership with Qatar Charity on the Taif project, and Carrefour Qatar for partnering with Qatar Foundation's Ma'an Education Project.

In the Facilities Management category, FMM received the award in recognition of its green

approach to its day-to-day operations. United Development Company also ranked first in the real estate development category, while Al Rayyan Water Company was first in the industrial sector.

As for the environmental sector, which witnessed the highest number of nominations, Al-Waad Company for Industries and Packaging came in first place for the comprehensive self-sufficiency system under which the company operates, while Sasol and Realis Design received appreciation awards in this category.

In the media production sector, Dallah Media Group won the first place.

The Civil Aviation Authority and Al-Attiyah Foundation also received appreciation awards in recognition of the social development efforts of both organisations. The ceremony concluded

with the honouring of Prof Dr Rana Sobh, dean of the College of Business and Economics at Qatar University, and head of the Conference Committee, for her guiding and supervising role of the conference work.

Jack Saba, general manager of Mubadara CSR Foundation, said the conference witnessed the meeting of major national institutions active in the field of social responsibility at QU as part of the Qatar CSR Summit, which was rich in valuable discussions on the prospects of social responsibility in Qatar.

“With the awarding conclusion, we look forward to the coming year that we hope will witness an increase in the number of national companies participating in the event to contribute to spreading the principles of social responsibility in the Qatari business community,” he said.

Shell NXplorers honoured with ‘Best CSR Initiative in Energy Sector’

Qatar Shell's NXplorers programme, a school-based initiative that develops children's critical thinking and creativity skills, won the 'Best CSR Initiative in the Energy Sector' award during the Qatar CSR Summit 2023. An esteemed panel of judges recognised the organisers of NXplorers for their “dedication and commitment towards corporate social responsibility in Qatar”.

Rashid al-Sulaiti, deputy general manager at Qatar Shell, said: “In the four years since NXplorers was implemented in Qatar, we have seen significant growth and impact with the programme. Students and teachers have embraced it with open arms and every year we see more innovative and creative projects.

“Shell is extremely proud of the positive contribution the programme is making. I would like to thank everyone involved, especially our partners – the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Qatar Scientific Club and Ibtechar.”

Receiving the award, Moza al-Darwish, who leads the Shell NXplorers programme, said: “Shell NXplorers is such a rewarding initiative to be part of. The students



An esteemed panel of judges recognised the organisers of NXplorers for their “dedication and commitment towards corporate social responsibility in Qatar”.

and their projects are an inspiration – they show an immense level of ingenuity to tackle complex issues. Receiving this award is a testament to the hard work of the students, teachers and our partners, who are a driving force behind the programme.”

NXplorers is implemented under a strategic partnership between Qatar Shell, the Ministry of

Education and Higher Education, and Qatar Scientific Club, with support from Ibtechar.

The fourth edition of the programme is coming to a close. High school students will be recognised for their innovative projects during the NXplorers 2023 closing ceremony next week. Twelve teams have been shortlisted as finalists, with four teams to be crowned as

national champions. Shell's NXplorers programme is implemented in 20 countries and has benefited more than 35,000 students. The programme allows students to appreciate the strong partnership between educational institutions and industry, connecting them with leaders, instructors and industry experts who serve as positive role models.

Ooredoo recognised for CSR commitment

Ooredoo received the 'Best CSR Initiatives in the ICT Sector' award at the Qatar CSR Awards 2023 gala dinner for the company's corporate social responsibility initiatives. Moza Khalid al-Muhammadi, director of CSR, Sponsorship and Media at Ooredoo, received the award at the gala dinner.

As part of Ooredoo's participation in the summit, al-Muhammadi delivered an overview of Ooredoo's CSR initiatives, during which she launched a new initiative with partner Seashore to promote and encourage sustainability. The initiative enabled the techco's customers to bring their unwanted devices to be recycled and receive Nojoom points as a reward.

Sheikh Ali bin Jabor al-Thani, Ooredoo Qatar CEO, said: “We were delighted to receive recognition for our CSR efforts from such an esteemed panel of judges. We have long had a firm commitment to integrating CSR across our operations, as a core pillar of our corporate strategy, and to have our commitment, evident in our many initiatives designed to support and give back to our community, recognised in such a



Moza Khalid al-Muhammadi receiving the award on behalf of Ooredoo.

way is high praise indeed.”

Ooredoo acted as Exclusive Telecommunications Sponsor at Qatar CSR Summit 2023, which was held under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani. Stakeholders from both the public and private sectors benefited from the opportunity to explore the integration of CSR into the core business, as well as build relationships with key partners in both sectors to promote their

brands and initiatives. Sheikh Ali added: “Qatar CSR Summit 2023 offered an invaluable opportunity to major organisations from a number of industries and verticals and we were proud to take part, share our experiences, and collaborate for the good of our country.

“Ooredoo is committed to continuing its efforts towards promoting sustainable social and environmental development in Qatar and we look forward to implementing more initiatives to create a better future for all.”

Qatar promoting culturaldiversity for sustainable development

QNA
Doha

Qatari and international officials underlined that Qatar has succeeded in promoting the cultural diversity to be a critical tributary for sustainable development. Talking to Qatar News Agency (QNA) on the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development which is marked on May 21 each year, they noted Qatar's interest in promoting coexistence, alliance of civilisations, right to cultural diversity and enhance innovation that contributes to development.

HE the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the Unesco Dr Nasser bin Hamad al-Hanzab said Qatar believes in the role of culture, not only as a tributary to dialogue among civilisations, but also as a fundamental pillar of its National Vision 2030, along with the sustainable development goals 2030 that was endorsed by the UN in 2015.

The Ministry of Culture and several cultural institutions such as Qatar Museums and the Cultural Village Foundation – Katara have supported creativity such as art, diverse cultural activities, crafts, music and plastic art, Dr al-Hanzab pointed out, adding that Qatar has dedicated the general art and creativity to them rendering them ubiquitous across the country.

He said that Qatar has present-

ed a model to the international community on the methods of achieving the sustainable development goals through supporting young people to engage in cultural and innovative activities until some of their arts become globalised, including the support provided by the Doha Film Institute to young people in Qatar to refine their artistic talents through local and international engagements.

This support has an essential role in bolstering the culture's role in achieving the national development and promoting Qatar's cultural role at the international level, he noted.

Dr al-Hanzab emphasised that Qatar strives to promote the cultural diversity in development fields through its national policies and vision and has provided the conducive environment for creativity through a wide spectrum of cultural institutions operating in various fields.

Qatar is one of the countries that supports the Unesco's plans and programmes regarding the sector of culture, he noted, adding that Qatar joined the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions of 2005 on April 21, 2009, and is a key partner of Unesco through its multiple initiatives and comprehensive commitments in co-operation with the international community.

He pointed out that Qatar plays a critical role in bolstering region-

al and international co-operation mechanisms on the alliance of civilisations and understanding among nations, as well as Qatar's contribution to the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) that was established in 2010 to support and implement the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in the developing countries, in addition to implementing numerous programs worldwide to support the members states.

He stated that such contribution has led to Qatar being elected as member in the Unesco Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2019, for the period 2019-2023, to resume the position of the chairman of the 15th session of the IGC in 2022.

In addition, Dr al-Hanzab noted Qatar's efforts and support afforded to the Unesco in the context of its membership in this convention as one of the international decision makers in cultural diversity which underscores the cultural dimension of Qatar's vision and its orientation towards this diversity, he said.

He affirmed that Qatar plays a pivotal role in bolstering regional and international mechanisms through multiple initiatives such as the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International understanding and others, lauding Qatar's success in presenting


a landmark edition of the World Cup 2022, stressing that the world appreciated the dazzling activities and a wide range of cultural events that were provided by Qatar making such an edition excellent in terms of culture.

For his part, the Director of the Unesco Regional Office in Doha, Salah El Din Zaki Khaled, asserted the Unesco's keenness to support creative and cultural activities, in addition to promoting and protecting the freedom of all forms of cultural expressions in light of a consolidated conviction that investment in creativity can change communities, making them meaningful and more inclusive.

Culture is an active and vital driver for sustainable development and is essential to achieve the sustainable development goals of 2030, he pointed out, adding that culture contributes to human, social and economic development, as well as good education, social integration, sustainable cities, and environment etc.

He praised the efforts undertaken by Qatar in improving the career, social and economic status for the artists and those who work in the sector of culture whether in Qatar or other countries, noting that Doha has joined the network of the creative cities in design area, along with its participation in the Unesco World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development MONDIACULT 2022 - that was held in Mexico.

He hailed the burgeoning ar-




Dr. Nasser bin Hamad Al Hanzab
HE Permanent Representative of Qatar to the UNESCO

Exclusive Statements to Qatar News Agency

“The State of Qatar believes in the role of culture, not only as a tributary to dialogue among civilizations, but also as a fundamental pillar of its national vision 2030”

“The State of Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Culture and several cultural institutions, have really supported creativity and enabling young people”

“Qatar plays a critical role in bolstering regional and international cooperation mechanisms on the alliance of civilizations and understanding among nations”




Salah El Din Zaki
HE Director of the UNESCO Regional Office in Doha

“The UNESCO is keen to support creative and cultural activities, in addition to promoting and protecting the freedom of all forms of cultural expressions”

“On the occasion of celebrating the World Day for Cultural Diversity, we appreciate the efforts of our permanent partners in the State of Qatar”

“The UNESCO looks forward to cooperating with the State of Qatar and working together in pursuit of promoting the creative economy and countering its challenges”



Qatar News Agency | Qnapphoto | Qna_Sports | Qna_gg.qa

tistic and creative movement that has evolved in Qatar in the recent years, either through the efforts made by the Ministry of Culture, or the Qatar Museums which leads several initiatives in the areas of culture, arts and creativity promoting Qatar's outstanding

role in rapprochement and intercultural dialogue.

Khaled said the Unesco looks forward to co-operating with Qatar and working together in pursuit of promoting the creative economy and countering its challenges, pointing out that the

Unesco's celebration of this day on May 21, each year is not essentially dedicated to highlighting the world's rich cultures, but rather to emphasising the fundamental role of intercultural dialogue in achieving peace and sustainable development.

Education ministry wraps up mathematics activities, competitions for 2022-2023 academic year



The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), represented by the Mathematics Department of the Educational Guidance Department, concluded its activities and events for the 2022-2023 academic year in a closing ceremony that witnessed the announcement of the results and the distribution of prizes for the winners.

Director of the MoEHE's Educational Guidance Department, Maryam al-Emadi, said these achievements by students in the field of mathematics are the result of their efforts, noting that mathematics is one of the basic subjects that helps students to think and innovate.

She said that the MoEHE seeks, through the activities and competitions by the department, to develop the capabilities of students and provide them with skills and knowledge.

Al-Emadi stressed that the education sector will spare no effort in providing support and encouragement to students to develop their skills and capabilities to build a promising generation capable of confronting challenges and keep pace with development.

The competitions are part of the ministry's plan to raise the level of education and students, spread the culture of scientific competition, and achieve Qatar National Vision 2030.

The competitions target all students in public and private schools according to specific standards and constantly-updated controls.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, 114 male and female students won in various competitions. - QNA

Conference to highlight mental health, well-being, psychiatry

Supporting the mental health and well-being of Qatar's population is high on the agenda for the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC).

The ninth Qatar International Mental Health Conference, to be held at the Sheraton Doha from May 25-27, will feature the largest programme to date relevant for any professionals interested in mental health and well-being.

It is supported by the Primary Health Care Corporation in Qatar and the Royal College of Psychiatrists in the UK.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is committed to making mental health and well-being for all a global priority.

The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean has worked closely with Qatar on mental health-related projects over the past decade.

This collaborative commitment will see six WHO mental health experts speaking at the conference, including Dr Khalid Saeed, regional adviser at the

WHO's Mental Health and Substance Abuse Programme, who will talk about *Transforming Mental Health for All*.

MoPH Director of Public Health Sheikh Dr Mohamed al-Thani said "education is key to improving the health of our nation".

"To ensure that we are able to deliver the most effective mental health services possible, particularly in a culturally diverse and complex society such as ours here in Qatar, we need to foster a culture of learning and knowledge sharing," he noted. "This conference is an important forum to promote education among professionals whose knowledge will ultimately benefit those in the community who seek help."

The international keynote presentations include Dr Trudi Seneviratne, consultant perinatal psychiatrist and registrar of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, UK, who will be speaking on women's mental health, and Prof Paul Gately, chief executive of MoreLife and professor of

Exercise and Obesity at Carnegie School of Sport at Leeds Beckett University, UK, who will present on the Impact of obesity on well-being across the life.

The conference will also feature diverse speakers, including Dr Al Sayyida Basma al-Said from Oman, a mental health specialist who will explain the cultural context of mental health and empowerment.

Michael Richardson, Generation Amazing master coach at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, will highlight the Generation Amazing example of *Sports for mental health*.

Iain Tulley, National Health Strategy lead for Mental Health in Qatar and chief executive of the Mental Health Service at the HMC, said that Qatar has demonstrated a commitment to promoting mental health and well-being.

"This conference is an ideal platform to showcase both international expertise as well as local achievements and best practice," he said. "I am delighted that at this event we can showcase the results of the

collaboration with partners such as Qatar Airways, who are doing exceptional work in promoting staff well-being, or the work that is done with schools that is designed to help children, teachers and parents deal with many common challenges faced by young people today."

"In addition, we will share lessons learned from the National Mental Health Helpline, delivering professional support to frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic," Tulley added.

The extensive list of speakers includes experts from Qatar Foundation, Qatar University, Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar, Sidra Medicine, Naufar, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies and Young Mothers Qatar.

The conference will offer up to 23 continuing professional development (CPD) hours for in-person attendance, and up to 13.75 CPD hours for virtual attendance.

More information on the programme and speakers is available online at <https://www.hamad.qa/9QJMHCH>

Hamad Port 8th in the world on Container Performance Index

From Page 1

The aim of the CPPI is to pinpoint areas for enhancement that can ultimately benefit all parties involved, ranging from shipping lines to national governments and consumers.

It is designed to act as a point of reference for important stakeholders in the global economy, including port authorities and operators, national governments, supranational organisations, development agencies, and various maritime interests.

This is the third iteration of the CPPI.

Hamad Port had handled 520,324E/T (freight tonnes) of bulk and 983,033E/T of break-bulk during 2022.

It also added five new services to its growing shipping lines network during 2022 as part of its continuous journey of expansion and in view of Qatar's growing trade ties with the rest of the world.

The new services provide additional opportunities for direct trade between Qatar and the world, cementing the port's role towards achieving the goals aimed at transforming Qatar into a vibrant regional trade hub, Mwani Qatar had said, adding it would also provide regular service, faster and cost-effective transit.

In February this year, it was announced that Hamad Port had crossed the 8mn container throughput milestone since the start of operations in December 2016.

The achievement of the 8mn TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) mark will further encourage shipping lines to add Hamad Port in the rotation of their mainline services calling the Middle East region and use it as one of the regional transshipment hubs, according to QTerminals.

The port also registered the highest-ever volume of break-bulk handled in March 2023 - 291,427 freight tonnes.

Hamad Port offers opportunities to create cargo movement towards the upper Gulf, supporting countries such as Kuwait and Iraq, and south towards Oman.

First physical education research exhibition held



The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has organised the first physical education research exhibition, with the aim of shedding light on the field of physical education and health as they are among the most important basic areas related to the health and physical aspects of students.

The exhibition was held by the physical education section of the MoEHE's Educational Guidance Department to pay attention to problems and challenges and to adopt ideas to develop physical education classes and activities through the formation of a research committee, given the great importance of physical education in improving the complementary aspects of the health and physical field such as enhancing self-confidence and developing personality.

Head of the physical education section, Faisal al-Badr, said that the research committee seeks to spread the culture of scientific research in relation to physical education and determine its priorities, establish a database and research statistics related to physical education and sports, support research on the subject through encouragement and presentation support, publish outstanding research, follow up on its activation, and benefit from the results of the activation.


Physical education instructor and head of the committee, Aisha al-Mohannadi, said that the committee endeavours to advance scientific research to achieve a research environment complementary to Qatar Vision 2030, encourage scientific competencies among faculty members and push them towards keeping pace with the rapid progress of science and technology, creativity, innovation and development in the field of physical education.

The physical education section adopts specialised scientific research by establishing the committee that is concerned with methods to develop it and solve its problems.

Forty researches competed for participation, of which seven were selected to take part in the exhibition. - QNA



The exhibition was held by the physical education section of the MoEHE's Educational Guidance Department.

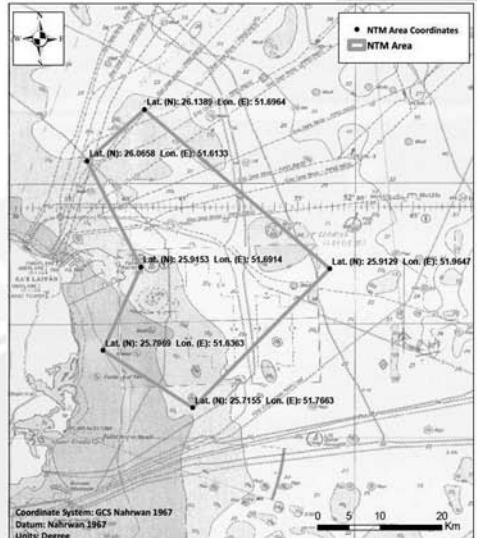


Public Announcement
To all Ships, Fishermen and Mariners
Acquisition of Geophysical Survey
Seismic Survey Works Offshore Qatar from 01st April 2023 - 30th June 2023

Pursuant to and under directives from the Department of Marine Regulations, Ministry of Transport, State of Qatar, this announcement is to inform all Vessels, Mariners and Fishermen that Qatargas Operating Company Limited (Qatargas) intends to perform a seismic survey in the location bound by the coordinates shown in the diagram below.

All Vessels, Mariners and Fishermen are expected to keep clear of locations during survey operations.

Qatargas takes no responsibility for any loss or damage caused to outside parties in association with this operation, following publication of this notice.



Any further inquiries should be addressed to:
Tel. +974 44738250

Qatargas Operating Company Limited
PO Box 22668
Doha, Qatar
T: +974 4473 6000
F: +974 4473 6666
www.qatargas.com

Qatar condemns attack on its embassy building in Khartoum

From Page 1

The Saudi foreign ministry stressed that the kingdom completely rejects all forms of violence and vandalism against diplomatic missions and representations, calling on all Sudanese sides to adhere to calm as agreed during the latest talks in Jeddah, and engage in the political track that seeks to reach a just and comprehensive solution to the crisis.

The Kuwaiti foreign ministry also condemned the attack on Qatar's embassy building in Khartoum.

In a statement, the ministry affirmed utter rejection of all forms of violence and sabotage targeting offices of the diplomatic missions in Sudan that constitute blatant violation of the international law and the 1961 Vienna treaty.

The Sultanate of Oman condemned the attack on Qatar's embassy building in Khartoum as well.

In a statement, the Omani foreign ministry affirmed Oman's stance rejecting of all forms of violence and sabotage targeting diplomatic missions, stressing the importance of providing protection to the diplomatic premises in accordance with the international laws and norms regulating diplomatic work. Page 7



INVITATION TO TENDER

QP - SASOL joint venture
أوريكس لتحويل الغاز إلى سوائل المحدودة
ORYX GTL Limited

ORYX GTL Limited is pleased to announce the following tender(s):

S. No.	Tender Ref.	Tender Title	Tender Bond (QAR)	Bid Closing Date & Tender Bond Validity Period
1	STC-CN-002-23-FM	Call-off Contract for Ras Laffan Potable Water Supply	45,500/-	14 Jun 2023 at 12.00 noon & 180 days
2	TC-CN-011-23-HS	Call-off Contract for Supply of Security Personnel Manpower	137,000/-	14 Jun 2023 at 12.00 noon & 180 days
3	TC-CN-009-23-MC	Call-off Contract for Refractory Maintenance Services	500,580/-	14 Jun 2023 at 12.00 noon & 180 days
4	STC-MT-024-23-MC	Supply of Expanded Perlite for Cryogenic Insulation	45,500/-	13 Jun 2023 at 12.00 noon & 180 days

Companies wishing to register their interest and obtain Tender Document(s) for the above Tender(s) must pay a non-refundable registration fee and register with ORYX GTL as detailed below:

Tender Registration Fee	QAR 500/- (Non-refundable) per Tender
Payable to	ORYX GTL Limited
IBAN (29 Digits)	QA23QNBA00000000013010705001
Bank	Qatar National Bank - HQ or any branch (cash only)
Registration Dates	From 21 st May 2023 to 25 th May 2023 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Registration Process and Requirements:	Write an e-mail to oryxgtltenders@oryxgtl.com.qa with the following attachments: 1. Copy of Commercial Registration (CR) 2. Copy of bank deposit slip of the Tender Registration Fee.

COMPANIES WHO HAVE PAID THE NON-REFUNDABLE REGISTRATION FEE BUT FAILED TO FORMALLY REGISTER AT THE DATE AND TIME STATED ABOVE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED AS ACCEPTABLE TENDERER.

TENDER BOND SHALL BE ISSUED BY A BANK REGISTERED IN THE STATE OF QATAR.

For more information about ORYX GTL and its tenders, please visit our website: <https://www.oryxgtl.com.qa>

QU's Young Scientists Centre wins awards at innovation fair

The Qatar University (QU) Young Scientists Centre (YSC) participated for the third year in a row in the International Innovation Exhibition (ISIF 2023), which was held recently in Istanbul, Türkiye, in conjunction with the TE-KNOFEST Festival, which is the largest event in the country to showcase inventions and innovations in different fields.

It is also a scientific and social event to raise awareness of the importance of innovation and creativity for all ages, and a cultural event to gain knowledge through various workshops.

This year, 424 projects and innovations participated, which were presented to a committee of specialised arbitrators and festival officials. The centre displayed in a special booth three research projects that were developed at QU by researchers and high school students. It received a total of four medals - two silver medals, a bronze medal and a special award - in recognition of the projects.

The silver medal was won by Ahad Abdullah and Waad Abdullah from Zubaida Secondary School for Girls for their research titled 'Synthesis of BaTiO₃/CoFe₂O₄ nanocomposite using hydrothermal method for photo-electrochemical water splitting', under the supervision of Dr Arti Mishra and Dr Jolly Bhadra from the Qatar University Young Scientists Centre. In this study, the BaTiO₃/CoFe₂O₄ nanocomposite material was synthesised using the hydrothermal photoelectrochemical water splitting method to provide accessible energy sources.

A group of students from Omar Bin Al Khattab Secondary School for Boys, namely Mubarak al-Kamali, Khalifa al-Rumailhi, Ahmed Mahmoud and Abdul-Rahman al-Kaabi, won the silver medal and a special prize for a project titled 'Game Theory in Artificial Intelligence: Innovation in Football Game', through their participation in the Science in Sports programme offered by the YSC.



QU-YSC won four medals - two silver, a bronze and a special award - in recognition of its projects.

The project revolves around the application of Artificial Intelligence to collect multiple data during football matches, to be used in developing plans and strategies.

Finally, the bronze medal was won by a research titled 'Study

of NaCl concentration effects on carbon steel at elevated temperatures'. This study examined the epoxy coating of carbon steel, and the coating was able to prevent corrosion with different concentrations of sodium chloride at different temperatures.

Students Jassim awl-Kuwari and Abdulaziz al-Kaabi participated in the research under the supervision of Dr Bhadra from the YSC.

On achieving this great success, Prof Dr Noora Jabor al-Thani, director of the YSC, congratulated the students of the centre, and said: "We have seen the great and positive impact of the programmes and efforts of the Young Scientists Centre, and their importance in refining students' research and practical skills and creating an environment that develops their passion for creativity.

"Today, we see our students innovating globally and locally, finding applied solutions in various fields, and raising the country's status at the largest international platforms and forums for invention and innovation."

Prof Dr Noora al-Thani thanked the sponsors of the centre, namely the Qatar National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, and Unesco, Doha office.



QFFD, Turkish AFAD to set up an integrated city in northern Syria

Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) has signed an agreement with the Turkish Presidency of Disaster and Emergency Management (AFAD) to support the project of establishing an integrated city in northern Syria.

The agreement aims to benefit 70,000 individuals, provide means for a decent livelihood for Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as support their resilience.

The co-operation of QFFD with AFAD is part of the Fund's

efforts to support the Syrian people. Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, Qatar has been eager to respond and provide humanitarian and relief aid to the Syrian people based on its strong belief in their right to a decent life.

These essential aids were established in several projects that covered various fundamental sectors such as health, education, economic empowerment, as well as relief and winter assistance, aimed at improving the means of livelihood for the Syrian people. (QNA)



ASPIRE KATARA HOSPITALITY

Announces the following tender

S/N	Tender No.	Tender Package	Tender Bond	Tender Fees	Closing Date	Tender Offer
1	AKH/SS-00498/23	Supply & Delivery of Fresh Fruits, Vegetable Herbs On Call-Off Basis For AKH Managed Restaurants	QR 50,000	QR 850	04 June 2023	Two Envelopes (Technical & Financial)

• Company may register and obtain the Electronic Tender Documents (e-TD) upon submission of Company's copy of the following:

- > Valid Commercial Registration (CR)
- > Computer Card
- > Trade License

> Stamped receipt as proof of payment for the non-refundable tender fee (QR 850.00) which should be paid to Barwa Bank, Account No. 100000107777, IBAN: QA56BRWA00000000100000107777 (Aspire Katara Hospitality).

> Interested Company may send the scanned copy of these four (4) essential documents to AKH E-mail: info@akh.com.qa > These four (4) documents shall be the prerequisite to register as a Tenderer and to obtain the e-TD.

> **Imperative: Please put the Tender No. and Tender Title as subject in your email**

• AKH shall only accept and send the Electronic Tender Documents (e-TD) via email to interested Company who are in full compliance with the above prerequisites.

• The period for tender registration and obtaining the e-TD shall be from **May 21st, 2023, up to May 28th, 2023 (working days).**

• All enquiries and requests related to this tender shall be officially in writing to be addressed and delivered to:

Attn: Tender Committee Chairman, Aspire Katara Hospitality, P.O. Box 10737, Doha, Qatar, Fax No. +974 4449 3901. Tenderer(s) may also send the scanned copy of its inquiry to AKH E-mails: info@akh.com.qa and tenders@akh.com.qa

• The last day for the Tenderer's to raise queries shall be on **May 28th, 2023** any queries after this date will be disregarded.

• Tenders are to be submitted in duplicate (1 Original + 1 Copy) and 1 Soft Copy (scanned copy of the "Original" in PDF format) along with the Tender Bond of QR 50,000 obtained from a Bank registered in Doha, Qatar, to be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the Tenders Committee Chairman of Aspire Katara Hospitality, endorsed in Arabic and English and to be deposited in the tender box of Aspire Katara Hospitality, 29th Floor, Al-Asmakh Tower, Majlis Al Taawon Street, Doha, West Bay, (Location: https://tinyurl.com/x3d8db5s)

• The closing time will be on or before **12:00 PM**, on the closing date mentioned above, any offer arriving thereafter will not be considered.

• Offer must be valid for 120 days from the Tender Closing Date.

• The successful tenderer shall submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the Contract Sum from approved bank with a registered office in Qatar and valid until thirty (30) calendar days after the expiration of contract period.



The mobile clinic provides medical services and medicines free of charge to the stranded and displaced patients in Port Sudan.



QC provides health services to displaced, stranded people in Port Sudan

Qatar Charity (QC) has said it continues to provide health services in Sudan through the mobile clinic project launched in mid-May.

This comes as part of its continued efforts to help those affected by the fighting in the country, a press statement notes.

The mobile clinic provides medical services and medicines free of charge to the stranded and displaced patients in Port Sudan, where several trained medical personnel (a doctor, a pharmacist, a medical assistant and a nurse) were provided to run the clinic.

Nearly 50 patients visit the mobile clinic daily. It will continue to provide healthcare to the displaced and the stranded for a month, moving between various camps.

Qatar Charity will evaluate the clinic's work a month after its launch, and it might be extended when needed. QC is also considering launching another mobile clinic to operate in other conflict-affected areas.

In addition to implementing the mobile clinic

and food aid project for those affected, Qatar Charity intends to provide personal hygiene kits to the displaced and the stranded in Port Sudan.

Official bodies and the families of the stranded have expressed their praise for the successive humanitarian aid provided by QC to those affected by the fighting.

The Humanitarian Aid commissioner in the Red Sea State, Ali Mahmoud al-Amin, praised the quick response of Qatar Charity by providing various food and medical aid to the stranded, the displaced and the host families in Port Sudan since the beginning of the crisis.

He said QC was at the forefront of organisations that took the initiative to extend a helping hand to the needy in various fields.

For his part, Abu Jihad al-Shaer, one of the stranded Syrians, said they had been stranded in Port Sudan for 14 days, during which Qatar Charity's field teams provided aid to many women, children and youth, and worked to secure the necessary assistance to those in need.



Qatar Chemical Company Limited

Al Dafna - Amwal Tower - First Floor
P.O. 24646 Doha / Qatar - Tel. 44847111 - Fax 44847695
Website: www.qchem.com.qa

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR TENDER

No.	Document No.	Description	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1.	QC/TC/A/17/23	Internal Audit Services on Call-off Basis	QR 45,500	12:00 hrs on June 13 th 2023
Brief Scope: Contractor will be providing the required resources on call-off basis to complement Company's in-house Internal Audit resources for providing the required internal audit services.				

Tender Documents for the above description can be obtained as follows:

A. Pay to Bank and send the original receipt with authorization letter via email
For each tender pay a **non-refundable document fee (cash only) of QR 1,000/-** Payable to Q-Chem, Bank Account (Contract Services - Tender) - Account Number 001-242007-003 with HSBC Bank) and submit the original receipt with an Authorization letter on Tenderer Company Letterhead with ID copy of the Tenderer representative via email to **tadvertisment@qchem.com.qa** In the authorization letter Tenderer shall nominate a single focal point with contact mobile number, **official email address**, office number, fax number for the communications related to this tender for the transfer and receipt of the tender documents.

B. Date and Time of Tender documents Issuance via email
Tender documents issuance from **21st May 2023 to 25th May 2023, 8am-12noon.**

C. Proposal details

Proposals should be valid for **240 days** from the tender closing date. Tender must be accompanied by a Bank Guarantee (Tender Bond) issued by one of the Qatari Banks or by a Bank operating in Qatar and should be valid for **240 days** from the tender closing date.

D. Submission of Proposals

Guidelines for Electronic Bids Submission is attached in the Tender documents.



QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY
INVITATION TO TENDER

QAFCO ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING TENDER

TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION OF WORKS	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER FEE RECEIPT SUBMISSION DATES	TENDER CLOSING DATE
RFQ-370269	PROVISION OF ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT (ERM) SOFTWARE SERVICES	500/- (Non-refundable)	6% of the Bid Value	21.05.2023 22.05.2023 23.05.2023 24.05.2023 25.05.2023 28.05.2023 29.05.2023	21.06.2023

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

• During the period this tender is offered, the interested bidders shall first deposit appropriate Tender Fee amount in cash (Cheque will not be accepted) into Company's following Account at any QNB branch:

- Account Name : **QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY (QAFCO)**
- Account Number : **0013-025828-058**
- IBAN : **QA51QNB000000000013025828058**
- Bank Name : **QATAR NATIONAL BANK**

• The interested Bidders shall mention their company's name and Tender Number on the payment receipt provided by the bank and submit it as Tender Fee receipt.

• Besides the Tender Fee receipt (which should have the Tender Number and bidder's name clearly mentioned on it), interested bidders shall also submit a copy of the valid Commercial Registration, an authorization letter from their company with the name, telephone, fax and e-mail ID of the focal point for this tender (**Very Important**), during the submission of Tender Fee Receipt for ensuring electronic receipt of the Tender Document.

• Tender Fee Receipt along with the specified documents shall be submitted to **purchase@qafco.com.qa** on the dates indicated above, after payment of Tender Fee (nonrefundable).

• After submission of the above documents to the above email, Tender Document will be provided through an electronic platform separately after the last date of Tender Fee Receipt Submission Date.

• For any queries related to non-receipt of the tender documents after the last date of Tender Fee Receipt Submission Date, you may contact at **purchase@qafco.com.qa** or on 44227797

• Technical & Commercial details and Submission Procedures will be specified in the Tender Documents.

• The Company will not consider any offer without the enclosure of the Tender Bond.

• Bids shall be submitted at QAFCO Tender Office, between 0930 - 1100 hours during the Holy month of Ramadan and 0930 - 1130 hours and 1230 - 1400 hours, of any working day of the Company, on/before the "Tender Closing Date".

EAA Foundation hosts iEARN-Qatar Open House

Education Above All (EAA) Foundation's programme, Reach Out to Asia (Rota), held the annual exhibition of school projects as part of the International Education and Resource Network (iEARN)-Qatar programme.

The 2023 iEARN-Qatar Open House was held on May 18 at The Fourth Assalam school, showcasing projects from Qatar as well as from Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen, who joined virtually. This event provided an excellent opportunity for students and teachers to present their hard work and accomplishments from the 2022-23 school year, and highlight their iEARN projects.

The event was attended by Ministry of Education and Higher Education representatives Ali Abdul Razzaq al-Marafi, secretary-general of the Qatar National Committee for Education, Culture and Science, Abdullah al-Abdulla, executive director of the Rota Programme, and representatives from Unesco and Unicef. This year, more than 30 teachers from schools in Qatar, Tunisia, Lebanon, Yemen and Jordan participated in the digitised Arabic iEARN training and the workshops last February and implemented their iEARN-



Participants with officials.

Qatar projects. The teachers who attended the iEARN training implemented, with their students, collaborative iEARN projects. More than 230 students completed their iEARN projects and presented them in the open house exhibition.

The participating schools from Qatar were The First, Second and Fifth Assalam Schools, Al Ahnaf Bin Qays Boys, Al Bayan Second Primary School for Girls, Abdullah Bin Ali Al-Misnad School for Boys and Abdullah Bin Turki Al-Subaie Preparatory School for Boys.

In addition, the following schools joined virtually: Al Hasaad

Al Tarbawi schools from Jordan; Hajj Bahaa Eddine Hariri School and Ali Bin Abi Talib School - Makassed, from Lebanon.

"This event is to showcase the students' iEARN projects that contribute to improving the health and welfare of our planet and people worldwide. By integrating project based learning and international collaboration among young people via the Internet, iEARN exemplifies a rich learning experience for youth to enhance life skills while contributing to community development and the Sustainable Development Goals," said al-Abdulla, executive director of the Rota

Programme. Through facilitating meaningful collaboration among peers from different countries of the world, iEARN projects contribute to ingraining social responsibility and leadership, which helps raise civic awareness among young people, which in turn impacts social, economic and environment-friendly individual practices.

Acknowledging the significant role iEARN-Qatar has played in enhancing educational quality, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education has endorsed the Rota Programme proposition to extend the programme to every school across Qatar.

ICBF seeks nominations to honour long-serving workers in Qatar

The expat forum has revealed that it will honour five outstanding long-serving labourers on the occasion of the forum's Labour Day celebrations

By Shafeeq Alingal
Staff Reporter

Reaching out to the blue-collar workforce, the Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF) has announced that it will honour five outstanding long-serving labourers on the occasion of the forum's Labour Day celebrations.

This comes as part of ICBF's efforts to ensure the welfare of the workforce while making the organisation inclusive and accessible for all. The winners will be felicitated for their unwavering commitment and multiple contributions to Qatar's progress.



Accordingly, ICBF is seeking nominations for its initiative to honour five long-serving labourers who have been residents of Qatar for more than 30 years.

They will be honoured at the 'Labour Day Rang Tarang 2023' celebrations to be held at the Asian Town Cricket Stadium parking on



ICBF officials addressing the press conference. PICTURE: Thajudheen

May 26, from 5pm-10pm. "Individuals are being nominated for the award and the winners will be selected by an independent jury," ICBF president Shanavas Bava said while addressing a press conference in this regard yesterday.

Named 'Rang Tarang,' the Labour Day celebration will be held in co-ordination with the Indian embassy. Some government departments are also expected to participate in this event, ICBF said in a press statement.

The event will showcase a variety of cultural programmes featuring Indian blue-collar workers in Qatar, associate organisations of ICBF and various Indian cultural groups in the country. Indian embassy officials and eminent personalities from Qatar are expected to grace the occasion, according to ICBF.

The organisers said the event will feature cultural performances and bring the labour community together in a joyous atmosphere. "The event is a testament to ICBF's commitment to recognising and celebrating the hardworking individuals who have shaped the nation," the ICBF president said.

ICBF is inviting all community members to come forward and nominate individuals "who have tirelessly dedicated themselves" to their work and our community, and are working with an organisation or with their sponsor as domestic help. No freelancers are eligible to participate. "If you know someone deserving of this recognition, we encourage you to submit their names with following supporting documents," ICBF said in a public announcement.

Individuals who have dedicated over three decades of their lives as low-income employees in Qatar will be considered

for the award. Nominations can be sent to icbfqatar@gmail.com along with the name, length of residency in Qatar, nature of work and details of company or organisation. The nomination should include the contact details and brief description of the nominee. The deadline for the nomination is May 22.

ICBF general secretary Varkey Boban can be contacted at 66100744 for further details. ICBF functionaries have urged all community members to nominate individuals.

Explaining the recent accomplishments of the organisation, Bava said ICBF distributed Iftar kits during Ramadan. Food kits were distributed among needy labourers and fishermen. "The ICBF insurance desk has been set up at community events, further increasing awareness and participation in the insurance scheme," he added.

ICBF has been organising workshops for shelter inmates at the embassy, equipping them with essential skills and knowledge while covering various topics, including stitching, vocational training, art and craft, henna designing and language classes.

The repatriation team has handled 26 death cases, ensuring the smooth return of the deceased to their home countries. "ICBF has been actively engaged in supporting jail visitation and assisting the relatives of inmates," the ICBF president said.

Advisory Board chairman S A M Bash-eer, general secretary Boban, vice-president Deepak Shetty, Programme Committee chairman Vinod Nair, secretary Mohamed Kunhi T K and treasurer Kuldeep Kaur were also present.



The all-new MG RX5.

All-new MG RX5 2023 is 'more style, tech and comfort'

The all-new MG RX5 represents the new, second generation popular SUV, reflecting the British-born brand's commitment to diversify its line-up by unveiling a sporty new model.

The SUV is available in Qatar at Auto Class Cars, the authorised general distributor of MG in the country, at its showroom on Salwa Road.

"Available in three trims, the all-new 2023 MG RX5 will strengthen the British-born brand's increasingly popular model portfolio, offering customers even more style, technology and travelling comfort at great value prices," a press statement noted.

Incorporating 22 stylish design enhancements, eight performance upgrades and 25 configuration upgrades, the all-new MG RX5 2023 is designed to provide a "healthy and comfortable, safe and efficient, intelligent and connected travel experience".

The arrival of the MG's newest SUV is set to help the brand reinforce its position in the top six of Middle East car makers, the statement pointed out.

The all-new MG RX5 2023 harnesses the latest technology with the introduction of a second-generation Net Blue petrol engine, offering more power and greater efficiency.

This 1.5T high-pressure direct injection turbocharged unit delivers 171hp and maximum torque of 275Nm – a significant 10% higher than its predecessor – powering the new model to a top speed of 190km/h, while its fuel economy figure is 6.8 litres/100km.

All models are equipped with an innovative 7-speed Dual Clutch Transmission for smoother, more efficient gear changes and optimum reliability.

A new digital computing design method was adopted for the all-new MG RX5 2023 in order to develop its youthful, dynamic looks. This is most noticeable at the front,



A view of the interior.

where the new, eye-catching and wide three-dimensional geometric grille is flanked by sleek, full crystal LED headlights with C-shaped daytime running lights. The rear echoes the front, with a solid and stable stance.

Designers of MG's newest SUV were inspired by the intelligence and originality of home design to create a truly natural and comfortable cabin space. The aesthetically designed cabin is padded with soft materials to ensure total comfort for occupants during their journey. The central control panel integrates a stylish, hi-tech 14.1" HD vertical touchscreen, that floats up and over the redesigned dashboard.

There are plenty of storage spaces and even a wireless mobile phone charger on top-of-the-range models. MG's designers placed a firm emphasis on using technology to make the MG RX5's cabin a healthy place to be. In a "world first", a UVC deep ultraviolet optical antivirus system completely sterilises the flow of air into the car through the air conditioning.

The impressive specification levels include the availability of leather seats, a 12.3" virtual cluster panel with trip computer, a 6-way electric driver seat with lumbar support, 4-way electric passenger seats, a panoramic sunroof, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, GPS navigation, as well as front, side and curtain airbags.

Cruise control, push-button ignition, keyless entry and a rear view camera are

all fitted as standard, with a 360-degree parking view camera on full-option models.

MG cars are renowned for featuring the latest safety technology and the all-new MG RX5 2023 is no different. Occupant safety is prioritised by the installation of a body structure that comprises over 65% high strength steel to minimise the impact of any collision by absorbing the energy.

The all-new MG RX5 has undergone many rigorous quality tests to ensure it meets the highest safety and durability expectations. These include a 5mm km road evaluation test, 500,000 hours of laboratory bench tests, light toggle durability tests incorporating 200,000 repetitions and testing the doors by opening and closing them 120,000 times.

The standard Electronic Stability Programme includes eight safety functions, with ABS, EBD, EBA, ARP, CBC HDC, TCS and BDW enhancing driving stability in extreme road conditions or in situations involving aggressive driving to ensure driving safety.

The all-new MG RX5 2023 offers a greatly enhanced travelling experience for all occupants. The chassis features multiple improvements, including an upgraded shock absorber system, to deliver a more stable and comfortable ride.

All-new MG RX5 2023 models will benefit from the brand's acclaimed six-year/200,000km warranty.

Waseef wins bid to offer services to Lekhwiya

Waseef, a leading facilities management, maintenance and real estate marketing company, has won the bid to provide consulting services for the management of facilities and buildings of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) at the Al Duhail and Salwa camps. According to an official press statement, Waseef said it will employ all its expertise and skills in this field to meet the needs of the project. This will be done while ensuring that all aspirations are achieved in the most productive, comfortable,

reliable, sustainable and effective way, and by preserving the highest value of these facilities and buildings. The press statement noted that Waseef has great ability in real estate management and marketing, as well as the necessary experience in managing, operating, maintaining and leasing real estate facilities, whether for the private or government sector, such as ministries, towers, multi-service buildings, residential complexes and commercial complexes. Waseef provides its services to more than 15 companies in Qatar.

QF's Academic Bridge Programme marks graduation

Qatar Foundation's (QF) Academic Bridge Programme (ABP), under the umbrella of QF's Pre-University Education (PUE), recently celebrated its graduation ceremony at the PUE Theatre Hall in Education City.

This year, 116 Education City (EC) ABP students graduated, bringing the total number of alumni to 3,689. Around 72% of the students this year are Qatari.

So far, members of the Class of 2023 have received a total of 90+ offers of admission to one or more of the EC universities, other universities in Qatar, the United Kingdom, the US, Can-

ada, Bahrain, Germany and Ireland, a press statement noted.

Dr Bryan Lewallen, director of the ABP, welcomed the attendees and shared his thoughts with the Class of 2023. "To our graduates, I want to thank you for your efforts and for trying to do your best, in order to realise your dreams. Some people look at the ABP and think that we are only about teaching English, mathematics, computer skills and science, but the ABP has taught you more than that." He added: "The ABP taught you to believe in yourself, to do your very best every day, to be on time, to do the work, in order to succeed. In



Glimpses from the ceremony.

life, nothing worthwhile is ever easy. You know that now, and what you have accomplished should make you and your families proud." The ABP Class of 2023 valedictorian, Reel Elmasri

Yousif, said: "The Academic Bridge Programme has united us all in that we were all in the journey of seeking our dreams, and thankfully, many have already achieved their goals. Some might

have found their passion. Others may have secured their seat in their dream university. And many may have created a valuable friendship." Reel will continue to the next chapter of her academic



journey at Qatar Foundation, as she got accepted into Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar.

ABP distinguished alumna and keynote speaker Dr Mashael al-Shafai, Class of 2005, said: "The Academic Bridge Programme was one of the most important steps in my academic life. Through the ABP, I was able to

gain a lot of knowledge, analytical skills, and self-confidence. The ABP enabled me to fulfil the admission requirement necessary to join international universities as well as to enrol in my dream specialisation, 'The Study of Genetics'. Indeed, I have received a bachelor's degree with honours."

Air strikes and heavy fighting shake Khartoum

AFP
Khartoum

Air strikes and artillery exchanges shook the Sudanese capital yesterday and armed men ransacked the Qatari embassy as the country's warring generals kept up their struggle for control.

Khartoum residents said that heavy fighting raged despite repeated international calls for a humanitarian truce.

The area around the state television building in Khartoum's sister city Omdurman was one of the sites bombarded, witnesses said.

The power struggle between regular army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his former deputy turned rival Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who heads the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), erupted into fighting on April 15.

The conflict has killed hundreds of people, most of them civilians, and displaced more than 1mn.

The UN has warned of a fast-deteriorating humanitarian situation in Africa's third-largest country, where one in three people already relied on aid before the war.

On Friday, Burhan sacked Daglo, giving his title of vice president of the ruling Sovereign Council to former rebel leader Malik Agar, and appointed three allies to top jobs in the military.

A former rebel leader who signed a peace deal with Khartoum authorities in 2020, Agar said in a statement yesterday he was determined to try to "end the war" and press for negotiations.

He also addressed Daglo directly saying "Sudan's stability can only be re-established by a professional and unified army".

The integration of the RSF into the regular armed forces has been the main bone of contention between Daglo and Burhan. The force, which traces its origins to the notorious Janjaweed militia recruited in the early 2000s to crush a rebellion by ethnic minority groups in Darfur, is highly mobile but has a repu-



Members of Sudanese security forces affiliated with the army search a car without a licence plate in Khartoum, yesterday.

Blinken speaks with Burhan about talks to reach ceasefire

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said yesterday he spoke with Sudanese army leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan about efforts to reach another short-term ceasefire in the strife-torn country, Reuters reported. "I spoke this morning with Sudanese General Burhan about ongoing talks to reach an effective short-term ceasefire to facilitate humanitarian assistance and restore essential services desperately needed by the Sudanese people," Blinken said on Twitter.

tation for being ill-disciplined.

Its fighters have been accused of widespread break-ins and looting, including at diplomatic missions and aid group offices.

Yesterday, Qatar's embassy was the latest diplomatic mission to be attacked, drawing condemnation from Doha.

"The State of Qatar condemned

in the strongest terms the irregular armed forces' storming and vandalising its embassy building in Khartoum," the foreign ministry said.

"The embassy staff had previously been evacuated and... none of the diplomats or embassy staff were subjected to any harm," the ministry said..

The embassies of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye have also come under attack in recent weeks.

Yesterday's attack came a day after Arab leaders meeting at a summit in Saudi Arabia urged Sudan's feuding generals to halt the fighting.

There have been multiple failed truce efforts since the fighting started, and representatives of both sides have been holding talks in Saudi Arabia.

Asked about those talks, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan said on Friday that the focus was "on reaching a truce that allows Sudanese civilians to take a breather".

Although the main fighting is being played out in Khartoum, the violence has also spread to the war-ravaged western region of Darfur, where the RSF has its roots.

Congo security forces fire tear gas, clash with anti-govt protesters

Reuters
Kinshasa

Democratic Republic of Congo security forces fired tear gas and fought running battles in the streets of the capital Kinshasa with anti-government protesters demonstrating yesterday over alleged irregularities in voter registration.

The protesters are also angry over the rising cost of living and the prolonged insecurity in the east of the country, where armed militias and rebel groups have been carrying out attacks that have killed hundreds and displaced over a million.

Around a dozen protesters were detained by security forces just after the start of the demonstration, which was called for by opposition leaders.

"The procession is not allowed to come here, this is not the authorised route," police commander Faustin Numbi said at the scene of the clashes.

Congo is due to hold a general election on Dec 20 in which President Felix Tshisekedi is expected to seek a second term.

But political tension is on the rise in the world's leading cobalt producer, with some opposition candidates complaining of delays and alleged irregularities in a voter registration drive that they say is being conducted to their disadvantage. Four opposition leaders including Martin Fayulu, who came second in the 2018 presidential election, and Moise Katumbi, a millionaire businessman and former regional governor who is expected to run in 2023, called for the protest yesterday.

"It's sad, you see, they are firing tear gas. Just before, it was real ammunition," Katumbi told journalists near the protest venue in Kinshasa.

Fayulu said by telephone that his



Anti-government demonstrators hold a helmet snatched from a security forces member, as they take part in a riot after security forces broke up an attempted demonstration organised by the opposition and civil society members over alleged irregularities in voter registration for the upcoming December elections, in Kinshasa, yesterday.



Security forces members patrol during the clashes with anti-government protesters in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, yesterday.

vehicle was surrounded by security forces who continued to fire tear gas to disperse demonstrators.

"The electoral register is not reli-

able and we'll not compromise on this issue," Fayulu added. Congo's electoral commission is expected to publish voter registration data today.

OIC, Arab countries condemn attack on Qatari embassy in Khartoum

The Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) and Arab countries have condemned the storming and vandalising of the Qatari embassy building in Khartoum by irregular armed forces.

In a statement, the OIC General Secretariat condemned the repeated targeting of diplomatic buildings, stressing the need to respect the sanctity of diplomatic buildings, provide the necessary protection for them and for diplomats, and adhere to international agreements, especially the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

The Jordanian Foreign Ministry also condemned the attack.

In a statement, it expressed Jordan's solidarity with Qatar and its strong condemnation of all forms of violence and vandalism, especially those that target diplomatic buildings.

The ministry stressed the need to



respect the rules of international law and relevant international agreements.

For its part, the United Arab Emirates strongly condemned the attack, stressing the importance of protecting diplomatic buildings according to the customs and charters that govern and regulate diplomatic work.

The UAE Foreign Ministry expressed

its strong condemnation of these criminal acts that aim to destabilise security and stability in contravention of moral and human values and principle.

The ministry underscored the importance of intensifying efforts aimed at a ceasefire, a return to the political framework and dialogue, and advancing in the transitional phase to reach the desired political stability and security in Sudan.

The Yemeni Foreign Ministry also expressed its condemnation of the storming and vandalising of the headquarters of the Qatari embassy.

The ministry affirmed Yemen's solidarity with Qatar and its rejection of all acts of violence and sabotage including the violation of the sanctity of diplomatic missions, noting that this constitutes a violation of international laws and covenants. (QNA)

Senegal opposition leader seeks safety guarantees for trial

AFP
Dakar

Senegalese opposition leader Ousmane Sonko yesterday demanded guarantees of his personal safety as a condition for attending his trial for alleged physical abuse.

Sonko is scheduled to appear in court on Tuesday in a legal showdown that has sparked tensions in the West African country.

His trial opened on May 16 but was immediately adjourned until May 23 after he failed to attend.

"The day I am given guarantees, I will come to Dakar and on Tuesday I will be in court. If all the (security) conditions are met, I will be there," he said in an interview on television Friday night. In Dakar, the police "made me suffer violence, brutality. My house

is barricaded and they tried to assassinate me," he said in the Wolof language, accusing the authorities.

"I am chased everywhere. I was injured. My activists receive tear gas canisters or are arrested by the hundreds. The judicial institution must not be the armed wing of the executive to eliminate a presidential candidate" for the 2024 elections, he added.

Sonko, president of the PASTEF-Partiots party, came in third in the 2019 election against incumbent Macky Sall, and intends to stand again next year. Sonko said he did not receive a summons for his trial over the alleged rape of an employee at a beauty salon where he went for a massage.

The 48-year-old, who was also recently sentenced to a six-month suspended prison sentence for defamation and insults against the tourism minister, has denied the charge.

He says the legal cases against him are a plot aimed at barring him from contesting the 2024 vote.

Supporters of Sonko clashed with police on Monday and Tuesday in the southern city of Ziguinchor, where he is mayor. There was also unrest in the capital Dakar and elsewhere. Authorities reported three deaths but the connection with the clashes was not clear.

Political tensions have also been stoked by Sall's refusal to rule out running for a third term as president, a move his opponents say would be unconstitutional.

Senegal is traditionally a beacon of stability in troubled West Africa, but in recent years has been buffeted by turbulence that has at times turned deadly.

When Sonko was arrested in 2021, several days of protests left at least 12 people dead.

As the whole country welcomes the summer season, Banana Island Resort Doha, the top destination for luxury holidays in Qatar, is delighted to revel in the scorching heat and unlimited fun that go with this time of the year. Specially curated offers provide an elevated island experience by allowing guests to take pleasure in a range of thrilling recreational activities and indulge in the resort's diverse facilities, while spending the most memorable times with loved ones.



In terms of island accommodation, the options have expanded as new layouts are added to the selection of room categories that suit the needs of guests and live up to their aspirations.



The Deluxe Beach Terrace Rooms on the ground level of Family Block are excellent for families with little ones, due to its easy access to the Kids' Park and lagoon pool. Parents can enjoy some quiet time at the nearby lagoon pool while keeping an eye on their kids happily splashing in the kids' pool. As the sun is about to set, guests can choose to have afternoon tea at the open terrace or ask for a sumptuous picnic set-up for the whole family.

Guests who book these spacious 55-square meter rooms can expect adorable daily towel art and tailor-made bed decorations. Parents can request for a customized gender-themed kids' room amenities to fit their children's desires. Kids' Passports are available for the young ones to collect stamps as they participate in different activities around the island during their stay. Surprise amazing gifts will be given once the stamps are completed.

The island's culinary offerings are flourishing as well, with the launch of its newest Aloha Brunch every Friday at Azraq restaurant, from 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm. Diners will be transported to Hawaii without having to leave Doha, immersing themselves in refreshing ambiance and rich gastronomic delights such as the popular poke bowls.

Guests are encouraged to come in their colourful Hawaiian shirts and summer floral dresses to complete the tropical vibes. There will be a kids' play area with superheroes theme, where they can enjoy activities like face painting, bouncy castle, and a lot more.

On top of this, the little ones will have the lion's share during the whole summer extravaganza, as Banana Island has prepared a daily action-packed schedule to keep them entertained from morning until evening. Activities include arts and crafts, board games, cinema under the stars, sand castle making, and a host of other indoor and outdoor recreation. Beach and watersports activities for adults are also in full swing, enhancing the summer staycation experience on the island.

G7 calls for developing global technical standards for artificial intelligence

Reuters/AFP
Tokyo/Hiroshima

Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) nations have called for the development and adoption of technical standards to keep artificial intelligence (AI) “trustworthy”, saying that governance of the technology has not kept pace with its growth.

While the G7 leaders, meeting in Hiroshima, Japan, recognised that the approaches to achieving “the common vision and goal of trustworthy AI may vary”, they said in a statement the rules for digital technologies like AI should be “in line with our shared democratic values”.

The agreement came after the Euro-

pean Union, which participates in the G7, inched closer this month to passing legislation to regulate AI technology, potentially the world’s first comprehensive AI law that could form a precedent among the advanced economies.

“We want AI systems to be accurate, reliable, safe and non-discriminatory, regardless of their origin,” European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Friday.

The G7 leaders said they “need to immediately take stock of the opportunities and challenges of generative AI”, a subset of the technology popularised by the ChatGPT app.

OpenAI’s ChatGPT pushed Elon Musk and a group of AI experts to raise an alarm in March calling for a six-month pause in developing more pow-

erful systems, citing potential risks to society.

A month later, EU lawmakers urged world leaders to find ways to control AI technologies, saying they were developing faster than expected.

The United States so far has taken a cautious approach on governing AI, with President Joe Biden last month saying it remained to be seen whether AI is dangerous.

Sam Altman, chief executive of Microsoft-backed OpenAI, told a Senate panel on Tuesday that the US should consider licensing and testing requirements for development of AI models.

Japan, this year’s chair of G7, has been even more accommodative, pledging support for public and industrial adoption of AI while monitoring its risks.

“It’s important to properly deal with both the potentials and risks,” Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told the government’s AI council last week.

The Western nations’ differing approaches to AI are in contrast to China’s restrictive policy.

Its cyberspace regulator in April unveiled draft measures to align generative AI-powered services with the country’s core socialist values.

While acknowledging differences on how AI should be regulated, the G7 leaders agreed on Friday to create a ministerial forum dubbed the “Hiroshima AI process” to discuss issues around generative AI, such as copyrights and disinformation, by the end of this year.

The working group will be set up to

tackle issues from copyright to disinformation, the seven leading economies said in a final communique released during a summit in Hiroshima, Japan.

“We recognise the need to immediately take stock of the opportunities and challenges of generative AI, which is increasingly prominent across countries and sectors,” the G7 statement said. “We task relevant ministers to establish the Hiroshima AI process, through a G7 working group, in an inclusive manner ... for discussions on generative AI by the end of this year.”

“These discussions could include topics such as governance, safeguard of intellectual property rights including copyrights, promotion of transparency, response to foreign information ma-

nipulation, including disinformation, and responsible utilisation of these technologies,” it added.

The new working group will be organised in co-operation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) group of developed countries and the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI), the statement added.

The summit followed a G7 digital ministers’ meeting last month, where its members – the US, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Canada and the EU – said they should adopt “risk-based” AI rules.

The EU and US are also expected to exchange views on the emerging technologies at the Trade and Technology Council in Sweden on May 30-31.

Ukraine’s Zelensky courts G7 leaders

Reuters/AFP
Hiroshima

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky huddled with G7 leaders on a landmark visit to Hiroshima yesterday, securing long-sought access to US fighter jets and mounting a diplomatic offensive.

European officials have said that it was crucial that Zelensky came in person first to Friday’s Arab League summit in Saudi Arabia and now to the Hiroshima gathering so that he could outline Ukraine’s view of how the war with Russia can be ended.

“I think this is a unique opportunity to (have) exchanges with a lot of countries from the south and express your situation, express a message and share a view,” French President Emmanuel Macron said. “I do believe it can be a game-changer.”

His surprise summit appearance is his furthest foray from Kyiv since Russia’s invasion began 15 months ago, and offers a chance to confer not only with allies but unaligned powers, including India and Brazil.

His bold diplomatic gambit appeared to have paid off.

Zelensky won a “historic”

White House decision allowing Kyiv to acquire F-16 fighter jets, the most sophisticated material yet supplied by the West, with the promise of more to come.

Zelensky said the jets would not help the war effort immediately, but the decision was “a great result”.

“I’m very happy,” he said, as he held a string of meetings with G7 leaders, including those from Italy, Britain, France and Germany. “It really will help our society, our people to save houses, families.”

The trip is an opportunity to press his plan for a peace process contingent on Russian withdrawals, and woo powers like India and Brazil which have not condemned Moscow’s war.

India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Zelensky for the first time since the war began and offered some measure of support.

“I understand your pain and the pain of Ukrainian citizens very well,” Modi said. “I can assure you that to resolve this India and, me personally, will do whatever we can do,” Modi said.

Zelensky “thanked India for supporting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of our country”, according to Ukrainian officials.



US President Joe Biden, Japan’s Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and other world leaders take part in a Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment event during the G7 Leaders’ Summit in Hiroshima.



This handout photograph taken and released by the Ukrainian Presidential Press Service yesterday shows President Volodymyr Zelensky and France’s President Emmanuel Macron during their meeting on the sidelines of the G7 Leaders’ Summit in Hiroshima.



Police officers monitor traffic along a street at the end of the second day of the G7 Summit Leaders’ Meeting in Hiroshima, late yesterday.



Japan’s First Lady Yuko Kishida (left), Heiko von der Leyen (husband of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen), Akshata Murty (wife of British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak), Britta Ernst (wife of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz) and US First Lady Jill Biden (right) pose for a photo during a visit to Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima island, near Hiroshima, on the sidelines of the G7 Summit Leaders’ Meeting.

Modi, whose country forms the so-called Brics group alongside Brazil and China, has not distanced itself Russia.

Its oil deals with Russia are seen as undermining Western sanctions by allowing Russia to continue benefiting from energy revenues.

India’s fuel purchases from Russia were not discussed in yesterday’s meeting, India’s foreign secretary, Vinay Kwatra, told reporters.

New Delhi says it is defending its own interests in buying Russian oil.

A diplomatic source said Brazilian president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva also planned to speak to Zelensky, despite previously accusing the West of “encouraging the war”.

After a bloody winter of fighting that saw Russian gains in the eastern city of Bakhmut,

Ukraine’s forces have regrouped for a counteroffensive but they remain dependent on the flow of Western weaponry.

Military experts say the aircraft would be a significant upgrade from Ukraine’s ageing Soviet-era fleet, offering greater ability to eventually strike targets in the air or on the ground.

They are also a potent symbol of Western support for Ukraine, forestalling any talk of waning interest as the conflict grinds on.

Mick Ryan, a strategist and retired Australian major-general, called the decision “very significant”.

“F-16s have the sensors and weapon systems that are either equal to, or overmatch, Russian fighters,” he told AFP, saying the jets would make life “more difficult” for Russian missile-launching aircraft operating in and around Ukraine.

Russia’s top diplomat has accused G7 leaders of a determination to “contain” both Russia and China.

Russia was exiled from the then-Group of Eight in 2014, when President Vladimir Putin’s forces annexed Crimea.

Until now, US President Joe Biden had effectively vetoed the transfer of US-made F-16s, with officials citing long pilot training times and the risk of escalating the conflict with Russia.

US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan insisted there had been no about-turn in US policy, and the decision was based on the “exigencies of the conflict”.

He added that Ukraine had committed to not using US military equipment to hit targets inside Russia.

“We are going to do everything we can to support Ukraine in its

defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and we are also going to proceed in a way that avoids World War III,” he said.

With the US veto lifted, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak quickly announced that Britain would “work together with the US and the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark to get Ukraine the combat air capability it needs”.

Ahead of Zelensky’s arrival, G7 leaders had also taken aim at China, denouncing efforts to “weaponise” trade and supply chains, saying they would “fail and face consequences” – a thinly veiled swipe.

The group said it would also address vulnerabilities in supply chains for “critical goods” like minerals, semiconductors and batteries.

“What we have done over 20 years with China, encouraging development, was right, but maybe we should have been more careful on critical material, supply chains and those elements,” an EU official said.

The grouping also warned China against its “militarisation” in the South China Sea and urged Beijing to press Russia to end its invasion of Ukraine.

The G7 insisted however that it still seeks “constructive and stable relations” with China.

China hit back, expressing its “strong dissatisfaction” with the G7’s final communique.

The three-day G7 meeting in the Japanese city of Hiroshima has already agreed new sanctions on Russia and measures to stand up to what it called China’s economic coercion, drawing the ire of Moscow and a complaint to the summit host Japan from Beijing.

G7 nations – the US, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Canada – are grappling with the challenges posed by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and tensions with China, including over Taiwan, the self-ruled island Beijing claims as its own.

G7 aligns on shared ‘de-risk, not decouple’ approach to China

China expresses ‘strong dissatisfaction’ with G7 communique

Reuters/AFP
Hiroshima/Beijing

The Group of Seven (G7) rich nations, concerned by tensions with Beijing, outlined yesterday a shared approach towards China, looking to “de-risk, not decouple” economic engagement with a country regarded as the factory of the world.

The heads of the world’s leading democracies meeting in the Japanese city of Hiroshima said they were prepared to build “constructive and stable” relations with Beijing while reducing their dependence on trade with the world’s second largest economy.

“Our policy approaches are not de-

signed to harm China, we do not seek to thwart China’s economic progress and development,” they said in a communique issued on the second day of the three day summit. “We are not decoupling or turning inwards. At the same time, we recognise that economic resilience requires de-risking and diversifying.”

The leaders noted that co-operation with China was necessary given its role in the international community and size of its economy, as well as areas of common interest such as climate and conservation efforts.

However, they said they would take steps to protect sensitive technology that could threaten national security, without unduly limiting trade and investment.

“We act in our national interest,” the communique said.

The communique also reaffirmed the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait as indispensable to security and prosperity in the international community.

Briefing reporters earlier, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said that nothing in the G7 statement should come as a surprise to China, given that the concerns of G7 members were “well known” to Beijing.

“I think you will find the China language to be totally straightforward. It is not hostile or gratuitous. It is just direct and candid,” he said, adding that the statement emerged after consultations with G7 partners in recent years.

Sullivan said the United States expected economic engagement to continue with China, but was still working through the timing regarding planned phone calls, visits and meetings for various administration officials with their Chinese counterparts.

Each country would determine its own approach, he said.

The United States had been working to develop the legal authorities for a targeted set of outbound investment controls and would lay out its approach after “full consultations” with G7 partners, Sullivan said.

China has expressed “strong dissatisfaction” with the G7 communique.

China’s foreign ministry hit back yesterday evening, saying that the G7’s “approach has no international credibility whatsoever”.

“The G7 insisted on manipulating China-related issues, smearing and attacking China,” a spokesman for the foreign ministry said in a statement. “China expresses its strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition and has lodged an official protest with Japan, the host country of the summit, as well as other relevant parties.”

The G7 statement stressed “the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait”, but Beijing responded by criticising the bloc for not showing clear opposition to Taiwan independence.

“The G7 trumpets that it wants to move towards a peaceful, stable and prosperous world. But in fact it is hindering world peace, undermining regional stability and inhibiting the development of other countries,” the spokesman said.

Parish believes it is crucial for Zelensky to have a one-on-one with key leaders, such as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has pointedly refrained from condemning the Russian invasion, or Brazil’s Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who has not sent weapons to Ukraine or joined sanctions on Russia.

“We were able to convince the Japanese presidency” of the G7 “not only to invite President Zelensky to Hiroshima, but to allow him to exchange” with these emerging countries, during a session scheduled for today at the end of the summit, said the French official. “It’s France’s initiative.”

Paris is hoping for a strong declaration at the end of the summit today that would show international unity behind “respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine” and the need to “create together the conditions for peace” – AFP

Top Aussie TV journalist quits show over racism

One of Australia's top television journalists has opened a bout of national soul-searching by quitting his show over the racist abuse he faces as an Indigenous man in the spotlight.

An award-winning journalist with the ABC, Stan Grant said the national broadcaster had lodged a complaint with Twitter about the "relentless racial filth" he endured.

However, he added that he saw the media itself "lie and distort my words" and depict him as "hate-filled" after he raised Britain's colonial persecution of Indigenous Australians during the ABC's coverage of King Charles III's coronation.

"I pointed out that the crown represents the invasion and theft of our land," Grant said in an article published Friday on the ABC's website. "Police wearing the seal of the crown took children from their families. Under the crown our people were massacred."

His coronation commentary was heavily criticised as being one-sided and inappropriate by some conservative media.

Grant said that he spoke out of love for Australia because he needed to tell the truth that Indigenous people still have the highest rates of imprisonment and poverty.

The 59-year-old announced he would walk away as presenter after the next episode of the ABC's Q+A current affairs discussion programme tomorrow.

Grant took his own employer to task.

"I am writing this because no-one at the ABC - whose producers invited me onto their coronation coverage as a guest - has uttered one word of public support. Not one ABC executive has publicly refuted the lies written or spoken about me."

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese offered his support to Grant, telling journalists: "You can have respect for different views without engaging in vilification."

ABC news director Justin Stevens also issued a statement backing Grant, saying that he had faced "grotesque racial abuse, including threats to his safety".

Other colleagues spoke out, too.

"There are no words adequate to express the horror we feel at this. Stan is brilliant and cherished," said Sarah Ferguson, presenter of the ABC's flagship evening current affairs programme, *The 7.30 Report*.

Osman Faruqi, culture news editor for *The Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*, who previously worked at the ABC, said that staffing at the national broadcaster was not representative of the cultural mix of Australia.

However, the issue went further than the national broadcaster, he said in an opinion piece yesterday.

"It's also bigger than the media. There is a toxicity around race that resides deep within this country, infecting all of our institutions - the media, sport, arts, business and politics," Faruqi said. - **AFP**

Quad leaders pledge to uphold peace and stability in Indo-Pacific region

AFP
Hiroshima

The leaders of the Quad group - Australia, India, Japan and the United States - delivered thinly veiled swipe at Beijing's behaviour yesterday at a summit in Hiroshima.

US President Joe Biden and his three partners in the group did not mention China by name but the communist superpower was clearly the target of language in a joint statement calling for "peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific maritime domain".

"We strongly oppose destabilizing or unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion," the statement said, using diplomatic language that appeared to refer to China's economic tactics to gain leverage over poorer countries and also its military expansion in the Pacific.

"We express serious concern at the militarization of disputed features, the dangerous use of coastguard and maritime militia vessels, and efforts to disrupt other countries' offshore resource exploitation activities," the statement added, clearly referring to Chinese construction of bases on former offshore reefs and harassment of non-Chinese vessels in disputed waters.

The Quad leaders held their meeting while already gathered in Hiroshima for a Group of 7 summit.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese had been meant to host Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Sydney next week.

However, Biden pulled out, saying that he had to return to Washington from Japan today to negotiate with Republican opponents on the US debt ceiling.

Biden apologised for forcing the change in plans and has invited Albanese to make a state visit to the White House.

In their statement, they stressed the Quad's support for infrastructure improvements across the vast Asia-Pacific region, while saying, in another apparent dig at China, that they wanted to assist such investments but would "not impose unsustainable debt burdens" on recipients of assistance.

Among the projects the Quad leaders highlighted was the "urgent need to support quality undersea cable networks in the Indo-Pacific, which are key to global growth and prosperity".

They announced a partnership aiming to draw on their countries' expertise in the specialist maritime cable sector.

They also said that an existing pilot



US President Joe Biden participates in a Quad Leaders' meeting with Prime Ministers Fumio Kishida of Japan, Narendra Modi of India, and Anthony Albanese of Australia, in Hiroshima.

programme for high-tech monitoring of illegal fishing would expand.

And they said they were "deeply con-

cerned" by repression in Myanmar, and they condemned "North Korea's destabilising ballistic missile launches and

pursuit of nuclear weapons in violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions".

Sick of sewage, Britons take to the sea to protest water companies' pollution

Reuters
Brighton

Thousands of Britons took to the sea and rivers yesterday to demand an end to sewage pollution by water companies, highlighting a topic that is likely to be an issue at the next general election.

A national "paddle-out" at 12 locations across the United Kingdom, including Brighton in the south, Windermere in the Lake District, Plymouth in the south west and Edinburgh in Scotland, was organised by campaign groups "Surfers Against Sewage" and "Ocean Activists".

About 200 paddleboarders protested off the coast of the southern English resort of Brighton.

To the beat of a drumming band and waving placards, the protesters called on Britain's water companies to do more to prevent sewage discharges.

"We are sick of this sewage and they need to take action," Izzy Ross, Surfers Against Sewage's campaign manager told Reuters. "We need to see an end to sewage discharges into bathing waters by 2030, and we need to see a 90% reduction in sewage discharges across the country."

The protest was held as water companies face the biggest wave of public criticism over the dumping of raw sewage and the poor quality of rivers and beaches since the industry was privatised by the then Conservative government in 1989.

Public anger has been fuelled by the payment of dividends to investors and large salaries and bonuses to water industry executives.

The release of sewage into waterways is only supposed to happen during exceptional rainfall to stop it backing up into homes.

However, in 2022, water companies in England alone released raw sewage into riv-



People participate in the 'Surfers Against Sewage' protest next to Saltburn Beach in Saltburn, Britain.

ers and the sea 301,091 times, an average of 825 times a day, according to data from the Environment Agency.

Campaigners say water companies are discharging much more often than they should, including when there has been no rain.

The situation has been blamed on decades of under-investment in infrastructure.

On Thursday, Water UK, the trade body representing the UK water industry, apologised, said the public was right to be upset, and said more should have been done to address the issue of spillages sooner.

It said the industry would invest £10bn (\$12.6bn) in "the biggest modernisation of sewers since the Victorian era" to cut waste outflows.

However, its pledge was dismissed by campaigners, who said it still had to be signed off by regulator Ofwat, while the investment would ultimately be paid for by customers.

Campaigners also highlighted that the sum was significantly less than the £56bn of investment the government has said is needed to end the routine release of sewage into waterways.

Taiwan president vows to keep 'status quo' on ties with China

Reuters/AFP
Taipei

Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen has vowed to maintain the status quo of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait amid high tensions with China, which has stepped up military pressure on the democratically governed island.

Under Tsai's two terms as president, the self-ruled island has seen stepped-up warplanes and sea incursions from China - which claims Taiwan as its territory to be claimed one day, by force if necessary.

Taiwan will not provoke and will not bow to Chinese pressure, Tsai said in a speech in the presidential office in Taipei marking the seventh anniversary of her governance.

Beijing has rebuffed calls for talks from Tsai, regarding her to be a separatist. Tsai has repeatedly vowed to defend Taiwan's freedom and democracy.

"War is not an option. Neither side can unilaterally change the status quo with non-peaceful means," Tsai said. "Maintaining the status quo of peace and stability is the consensus for both the world and Taiwan."

"Although Taiwan is surrounded by risks, it is by no means a risk maker. We are a responsible risk manager and Taiwan will stand together with democratic countries and communities around the world to jointly defuse the risks," she said.

Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) rich nations agreed that they are seeking a peaceful resolution to issues on Taiwan, the host of the G7 summit in Hiroshima, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, said on Friday.

Tsai said Taiwan officials are in discussions with US President Joe Biden's administra-

tion on sending \$500mn worth of weapons aid to Taiwan, adding that the aid was meant to address deliveries of weapons delayed due to the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

She stressed the global importance of Taiwan's supply chain, which produces most of the world's advanced semiconductor chips, and vowed to keep the most advanced chip technologies and research and development centres in Taiwan.

Taiwan is gearing up for a key presidential election in mid-January, with China tensions set to top the campaign agenda.

Representing Taiwan's main opposition Kuomintang (KMT) party for the key vote in mid-January, New Taipei City mayor Hou Yu-ih said yesterday that Taiwan faces a choice between "peace and war" under Tsai's rule and he vowed to keep regional stability through unspecified "dialogue and exchanges".

"The fears for war will never drive away the hope for peace," Hou said at an event in Taipei to kick off his election campaign, vowing to defend the Republic of China, Taiwan's official name.

Hou is running against Taiwan Vice-President William Lai from the ruling Democratic Progressive Party.

Due to the democratic island's term limits, 66-year-old Tsai will not be standing for election.

The KMT, which favours close ties with China, has framed the 2024 vote as a choice between war and peace.

In the presidential office when asked about the opposition's stance on the elections, Tsai said maintaining peace should be the consensus for all political parties in Taiwan, and that one should not "sell the fears of war for elections gains".

Britain's record holding climber says Mt Everest is now 'dry, more rocky'

Mount Everest is losing snow and turning "dry and rocky", British climber Kenton Cool, who made his 17th ascent of the world's highest peak this week, the most by a foreigner, said yesterday. The 49-year-old Cool, who climbed the 8,849m peak for the first time in 2004, said the giant mountain appears to be drying now. "If you go back to early mid-2000s there used to be a lot of snow," he told Reuters in an interview in Kathmandu after returning from his record-setting expedition which was confirmed by Nepali and hiking officials this week. "A general trend of the mountain is to be more rocky and less snow ... but it changes year on year." Cool said he had never seen the types of rock falls he saw on the Lhotse Face, along the route to the Everest summit, before. "That shows how dry the mountain is now ... I think that is because of the lack of precipitation, a lack of snowfall. It could be global warming or any environmental change of some sort," he said. Climate scientists say the earth's temperature has increased by an average of 0.74°C Celsius over the past 100 years, but warming across the Himalayas has been greater than the global averages. Officials have said the average temperature in Nepal was rising by 0.06°C annually. - **Reuters**

AFP
Dili

East Timor holds parliamentary elections today with independence hero Xanana Gusmao hoping to make a comeback as prime minister and end political deadlock in Asia's youngest country.

The polls are the fifth for the legislature since East Timor became independent from Indonesia in 2002 after 24 years of occupation.

The tiny nation of 1.3mn is one of the poorest in the world and is still grappling with the after-effects of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and natural disasters.

Voters will elect 65 members of the national parliament in elections expected to be a showdown between the two main parties, the National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT), and Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor, also known as Fretilin.

The CNRT is led by Gusmao, the country's first president until 2007, while Fretilin's leader is former prime minister Mari Alkatiri.

Both are considered independence-era icons and veterans



In this picture taken this week, former East Timor president Xanana Gusmao (centre) attends a National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT) party rally in Dili.

of East Timor politics but have been locked in a bitter feud for decades.

The CNRT won a presidential election last year after capturing 62% of the vote in a run-off, with Nobel Peace laureate and Gusmao ally Jose Ramos-Horta installed in the post.

However, the country has been

stuck in political deadlock because parliament is controlled by a coalition led by Fretilin.

Gusmao is hoping to build on the momentum of last year's presidential poll by capturing control of the legislature but might need to form an alliance with smaller parties.

Fretilin leaders have vowed to

secure a clear victory and retain their lead in parliament.

Polling stations will be open until 3pm local time today, with more than 890,000 registered voters expected to cast their ballots.

Younger generations make up a large part of the electorate in a country where 65% of the popu-

lation are below 30.

Rivania do Rego, a 25-year-old student at the Universidade da Paz, said he is betting on Gusmao returning as prime minister "because he is a fighter who represents equality and is very well known in many countries".

"We see many young people who sympathise with him, because he has charisma," he told AFP.

Environmental activist Agapito Guterres dos Santos, 26, said he also thought it likely Gusmao would reclaim power.

"But the people also want to see more significant changes when we have a new government," he added.

Seventeen parties in total are contesting the elections.

"The East Timorese are tired of political battles and instability. They put the blame for the deadlock on the dispute between Gusmao and Alkatiri," said Christine Cabasset at Irasec, a Bangkok-based research centre focused on Southeast Asia.

East Timor is also still grappling with the effects of a devastating cyclone that struck in 2021.

The storm killed at least 40 people while transforming communities into wastelands of mud and uprooted trees.

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GULF TIMES

IMF hails Qatar’s structural reforms with economic diversification

Qatar’s near- to medium-term outlook is relatively favourable supported by the ongoing LNG expansion in offshore North Field and sustained domestic demand.

In its recent report on Qatar economy, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) noted the ambitious structural reform agenda underpins Qatar’s economic diversification efforts to build a more inclusive, knowledge-based and greener economy.

IMF made a special mention of Qatar’s historic hosting of FIFA World Cup and said a decade of the nation’s plan to diversify the economy culminated into the successful hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, with very strong growth registered last year.

Qatar is well placed to leverage the top-notch infrastructure built and capitalise on the momentum and visibility created by the World Cup as the government lays out its 3rd National Development Strategy (NDS) to help achieve the ambitions of Qatar National Vision 2030.

IMF praised Qatar’s efforts at tackling Covid-19 and said the country managed the pandemic well, providing a safe environment for the first major global sport event since the pandemic.

Qatar has smoothly navigated the recent global economic and market volatility. The Russian war in Ukraine highlighted risks from geopolitical tensions, including the impact on energy prices, and the role of natural gas in safeguarding energy security, opening up opportunities for Qatar.

QCB has maintained price and financial stability. The banking sector turmoil originating from the US has had only a limited and temporary impact on the domestic financial system.

After very strong growth in 2022 boosted by the World Cup, the economy is expected to normalise in the near term while the outlook remains relatively favourable.

Real GDP growth is expected at 2–2.5% in 2023–24 on robust domestic demand and the ongoing LNG expansion, with inflation moderating gradually to around 3%.

Medium-term growth is likely to rise to around 4–4.5% after the North Field expansion starts boosting LNG production.

Aided by buoyant export revenue and public spending, the fiscal and external current accounts are projected to be in surpluses throughout the medium term.

Risks to the outlook are broadly balanced. Downside risks stem mainly from an unfavourable global environment, including a sharper-than-expected global growth slowdown, tighter and more volatile global financial conditions, increased commodity price volatility, and further worsening of geopolitical tensions.

On the upside, accelerated reform efforts guided by the 3rd National Development Strategy, to be unveiled in the summer of 2023, could boost productivity and promote economic diversification. Sustained high hydrocarbon prices would further strengthen the outlook.

Fiscal discipline has been broadly maintained in 2022, with most of the hydrocarbon windfalls saved and overall expenditure largely kept within the budget envelope.

As a result, fiscal surplus rose to around 10% of GDP in 2022, from close to zero in 2021. Qatar’s debt declined by 16 percentage points to around 42% of GDP during the same period.

The 2023 budget balances continued discipline and sustaining domestic demand.

IMF is of the view that Qatar’s upcoming medium-term budget, for 2023–25, will be developed following the release of the 3rd National Development Strategy to balance aspiration for transformation and fiscal discipline.

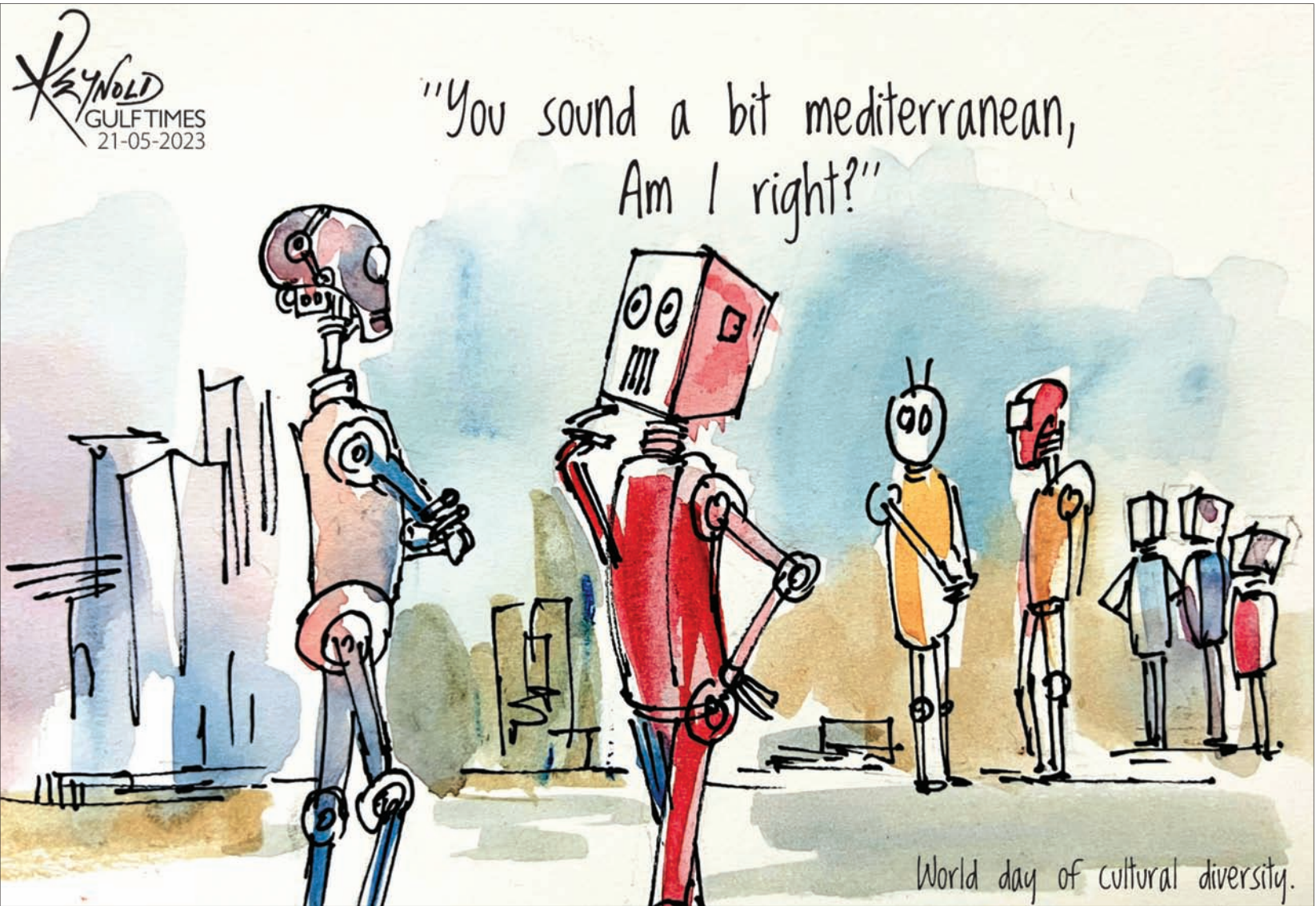
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Climate crisis won’t solve on its own: need to walk the talk

By William Ruto
Nairobi

Last year in Berlin, the great Kenyan long-distance runner Eliud Kipchoge broke the world marathon record, clocking 02:01:09 and beating his previous time by 30 seconds. His success has made him a legend not only in Kenya but globally. It offers a useful lesson for everyone involved in the fight against climate change. Kipchoge’s winning strategy is rooted in the science of running (as well as 120 miles of hard work every week), and our own approach to the climate crisis must involve the same level of commitment and focus.

As temperatures keep rising and emissions soar, the planet, too, continues to break (dangerous) new records. But with determination and follow-through, we – together with institutional partners and other governments – can start to run faster to get ahead of the climate crisis. Success will depend on following the latest science and mobilising a joint, broad-based effort of governments and citizens.

In March, the world’s top climate experts and governments signed off on the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change synthesis report. Once again, the IPCC’s message was stark: Humans have permanently changed the planet, and global warming is already killing people, destroying nature, and

making the world poorer. Though African countries have contributed the least to the problem, they are bearing the brunt of the damage.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Africa accounts for less than 3% of the world’s energy-related carbon dioxide emissions, and 600mn Africans – an outrageous figure – still do not have access to electricity.

Climate change is a shared problem that the global community must solve by working together, especially given the disproportionate burden being placed on those who are least responsible. During his recent visit to Kenya, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and I held talks on ways to address the climate crisis. Through the Germany-Kenya Climate and Development Partnership, our two countries have committed to deepen our collaboration on climate-resilient development and renewable energy, including by supporting green-hydrogen production and sustainable agriculture.

We are currently a long way from limiting global warming to 1.5C or even 2C, as envisaged by the Paris climate agreement. The climate crisis will not solve itself. On the contrary, we must ensure that global greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions peak before 2025 at the latest, and then fall by at least 43% by 2030.

This is the year to drive that transformation. The United Nations Climate Change Conference this November-December (COP28) offers an opportunity to accelerate the energy transition, supercharge the growth of renewables, and commit to phase out all fossil fuels – starting with coal.

Kenya is on track to meet these

goals. We already generate 92% of our power from clean sources and we have committed to achieving a 100% clean electricity network by 2030.

Similarly, renewables generated 46% of Germany’s electricity in 2022 and the government has committed to increase that to 80% by 2030. Critically, these commitments will not only ensure clean power and a safer environment; they will also create jobs, attract investment, and make our economies more secure and resilient in the face of volatile oil and gas prices.

But it is important that we run this race as a team. According to the IEA, the global ratio of clean-energy investments to dirty-energy investments must increase sixfold by 2030 (from 1.5:1 to 9:1).

With a strong partnership between Africa, Europe, and the rest of the international community, Kenya, with its abundant resources, can make significant contributions to decarbonisation and the global transition to a net-zero economy. We must unlock climate finance and investment, so that we can harness our potential for green economic growth. But to do that, we will need to fix the current international financial system, which has proven inadequate for dealing fairly with multifaceted global crises, from the Covid-19 pandemic and the climate emergency to debt distress across the Global South.

Next month’s Summit for a New Global Financial Pact, in Paris, provides an opportunity for Europe to galvanise support for reforming the international financial system. The international community must

recognise our potential to help solve global problems and take steps to ensure win-win outcomes. That means providing access to affordable, adequate, and sustainable financing that is delivered in a timely manner.

As we reduce emissions, we also need to prepare our people and our housing, agriculture, and food systems for rising temperatures and extreme weather events. Meeting the 2021 COP26 commitment to double global climate-adaptation financing by 2025 remains crucial for protecting people and nature. The latest IPCC report is clear: climate change and insufficient adaptation and mitigation efforts are reversing development gains and undermining economic stability.

But we also must remember that adaptation has limits, and that climate change is already threatening millions of peoples’ lives today. As the IPCC shows, reducing GHG emissions by 43% this decade and stabilising global warming at or below 1.5C is still our best chance to keep the problem at a manageable scale. Kenya’s climate summit in September will provide a key opportunity to showcase the continent’s commitment, potential, and opportunities to deal with the climate crisis. We need all governments to step up and agree to phase out unabated fossil-fuel use. We need reforms to make our financial institutions and systems fit for purpose. And we need to take climate action seriously. In the words of Eliud Kipchoge, the key to success is to “walk your talk.” – Project Syndicate

● William Ruto is President of Kenya.



Smoke rises from stacks of a thermal power station in Sofia. (AFP)

Octogenarian architect aims to flood-proof Pakistan

Ashraf Khan, AFP
Tando Allahyar

At 82 years old, architect Yasmeen Lari is forging the way in fortifying Pakistan's rural communities living on the frontline of climate change.

Lari, Pakistan's first woman architect, has ditched a lifetime of multi-million dollar projects in the megacity of Karachi to develop pioneering flood-proof bamboo houses.

The few pilot settlements already constructed are credited with saving families from the worst of the catastrophic monsoon flooding that put a third of the country underwater last year.

"We continued to live in them," said Khomo Kohli, a 45-year-old resident of Pono Colony village, which is a few hundred kilometres outside of Karachi.

"The rest of the residents had to move onto the road where they lived for two months until the water receded."

Now, Lari is campaigning to scale up the project to one million houses made from affordable local materials, bringing new jobs to the most vulnerable areas.

"I call it a kind of co-building and co-creation, because the people have an

equal part in embellishing it and making it comfortable for themselves," she said.

The architect, who trained in the United Kingdom, is behind some of Karachi's most notable buildings, including brutalist constructions such as the Pakistan State Oil headquarters, as well as a string of luxury homes.

As she was considering retirement, a series of natural disasters — including a massive 2005 earthquake and 2010 floods — stiffened her resolve to continue working with her Heritage Foundation of Pakistan, which manages her rural projects.

"I had to find the solution, or find a way by which I could build up the capacities of people so that they could fend for themselves, rather than waiting for outside help," she told AFP.

"My motto is zero carbon, zero waste, zero donor, which I think leads to zero poverty," she said.

Climate change is making monsoon rains heavier and more unpredictable, scientists say, raising the urgency to flood-proof the country — particularly as the poorest live in the most vulnerable areas.

Pakistan, with the world's fifth-largest population, is responsible for less than one percent of global greenhouse gas emissions but is one of the nations



Architect Yasmeen Lari, the head of Heritage Foundation of Pakistan, speaks during an interview at her garden in Karachi. Right: A woman applies mud to her flood-resistant open kitchen at Sanjar Chang village in Tando Allahyar district. (AFP)



most vulnerable to the effects of extreme weather.

Pono Colony, with around 100 houses, was developed just months before catastrophic monsoon rains arrived last summer and displaced eight million people.

The village's elevated homes are protected from rushing water, while their bamboo skeletons — pierced deep into the ground — can withstand pressure without being uprooted.

Known locally as "chanwara", the mud huts are an improved take on the traditional single-room houses dotted along the landscape of southern Sindh province and Rajasthan state in India.

They require only locally available materials: lime, clay, bamboo and thatching. With straightforward training to locals, they can be assembled at a cost of around \$170 — around an eighth of the cost of a cement and brick house.

In rural Sindh, tens of thousands of

people are still displaced and stagnant water stands in large parts of farmland almost a year after the country's worst-ever floods.

The World Bank and Asian Development Bank in a joint study estimated Pakistan sustained \$32bn in damage and economic losses and would require \$16bn for reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Lari recalls working on social housing in Lahore in the 1970s, when local

women pored over her plans and probed her on where their chickens would live.

"Those chickens have really remained with me, the women's needs are really the uppermost when I'm designing," she said.

This time around, the redesign of traditional stoves has become a significant feature — now lifted off the floor.

"Earlier, the stove would have been on the ground level and so it was immensely unhygienic. The small children would burn themselves on the flames, stray dogs would lick pots and germs would spread," said Champa Kanji, who has been trained by Lari's team to build stoves for homes across Sindh.

"Seeing women becoming independent and empowered gives me immense pleasure," Lari said.

Lari's work has been recognised by the Royal Institute of British Architects, which awarded her the 2023 Royal Gold Medal for her dedication to using architecture to change people's lives.

"An inspirational figure, she moved from a large practice centred on the needs of international clients to focussing solely on humanitarian causes," RIBA president Simon Allford said.

"This is wonderful feeling," Lari said.

"But of course it also makes my tasks harder. I have got to make sure that I now deliver."

Greece recovers hundreds of antiquities from art thief

Greece said it has recovered hundreds of looted Neolithic to Byzantine artefacts including a second century bronze statue of Alexander the Great from a notorious British antiquities dealer after a 17-year legal battle. The fight to repatriate the trove of 351 objects began in 2006 with authorities investigating the eponymous company of Robin Symes in the country and abroad, Greece's Culture Minister Lina Medoni said in a statement late Friday.

The recovery came years after Italian and Swiss police in 2016 recovered a haul of archaeological artefacts stolen from Italy and stored by Symes, a key figure in the illegal antiquities trade with ties to Italian tomb raiders.

The Italian booty was found in a storage unit at the Geneva Freeport but Greece's culture ministry did not specify if its recovery was linked to the Italian haul.

The extensive collection repatriated to Greece includes notable pieces such as a Neolithic-era statuette carved from white stone, dating back to the 4th millennium BC.

Other significant finds include an Early Cycladic figurine dating to between 3200 and 2700BC, a damaged marble statue of an Archaic kore from 550-500BC and an Archaic marble head of either a kore or a sphinx from 550-500BC.

Greece has been fighting to repatriate looted artefacts from museums and private collections around the world. Three fragments of Athens' Parthenon temple, kept by the Vatican for centuries, were returned to Greece in March in what Pope Francis has called a gesture of friendship.



Supporters of the left-wing party MERA25 gather during the party's main election campaign rally in Athens yesterday, ahead of the general elections today. (AFP)

Artists lead effort to restore Simone's childhood home

AFP
New York

A group of US artists have spearheaded efforts to preserve musical great and civil rights activist Nina Simone's childhood home as a cultural site, auctioning artworks and organising a gala yesterday in New York to raise funds.

Organisers hope the funding drive, also supported by tennis champion Venus Williams, will raise some \$2mn to restore the property where the genre-defying musician first started playing piano.

The modest wooden house is perched on a grassy hill in the small town of Tryon in rural North Carolina, in the southeastern United States.

It had fallen into disrepair when, in 2017, four African American artists, Julie Mehretu, Ellen Gallagher, Rashid Johnson and Adam Pendleton, purchased it and launched a crowdfunding campaign to turn the property into a cultural site suitable for visitors.

"The home where Nina Simone was born and spent her early years is of cultural importance," Pendleton told AFP at the Pace Gallery in New York, where the art works being auctioned were exhibited last week.

"And it's important that it remains, as a place that people can both see and visit, because it's a way of keeping Nina and her legacy, her music, alive for generations to come," he added.

Atypical 'mad cow disease' case detected in US

US health officials have detected an atypical case of "mad cow disease" in a beef cow at a slaughter plant in the state of South Carolina. The US Department of Agriculture said in a statement that the animal "never entered slaughter channels and at no time presented a risk to the food supply or to human health in the United States."

The agency said that the United States has a "negligible risk status" for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), as the neurologic disease is officially called, and "we do not expect any trade impacts as a result of this finding."

BSE is linked to the fatal human condition Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease if contaminated meat is eaten. The atypical variant sporadically occurs in older cattle, while the classic form is spread when farmers feed their herds with the meat and bone meal of infected animals.

Greece goes to polls with widespread apathy, indifference

AFP
Patras

Greek elections have a reputation of being raucous affairs, with loud arguments at taverns or street protests — but the vibe is muted ahead of today's polls, as voters doubt the main parties' ability to lift their economic woes.

Outgoing conservative Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis of New Democracy and his Syriza party rival, leftist Alexis Tsipras, are vying for power in the country's most uncertain general election in a decade.

"Our lives will not change the next day, whoever wins," said Nikos Kalaitzidis, 32, who works at a gas station in Thessaloniki, the country's second largest city.

For Chrysa Papadimitriou, 43, there was just "apathy and indifference among most voters this time."

"You don't hear political discussions like in the past and most people avoid talking openly about who they will vote for," she said.

With the abstention rate already at 42% in the 2019 election, analysts have warned that the number of people who skip the polls may increase this time given the apparent lack of interest. And the high chance that today's polls will be inconclusive and require a second round because of new electoral rules, mean some may sit out the ballot given it seems

unlikely to be the determining vote. Any second round is likely to take place in July.

Noting the likelihood that a possible second ballot could boost abstention, the centre-right daily *Ta Nea* warned voters not to let that happen.

"Anyone who fails to vote does not have the right to an opinion on how the parties are serving their public role," it said.

But optician shop owner Vasilius Kalyvas said that the feeling that little will change was at the root of the disinterest.

"Going by the conversations with people, they are disillusioned with both major parties," the 55-year-old told AFP from Greece's third largest city Patras.

"Greeks have no way out at the moment," he said. "I want a government that claims and supports the interests of the people and helps the economy grow. From what I see, this is not the case."

Stavroula, 31, giving only her first name, said she will not make the trip to her hometown of Peloponnese to cast her vote.

"What's the point? The politicians coax us with promises that they won't meet," she said in Athens, accusing both Mitsotakis and Tsipras of doing "nothing to improve the situation of the most precarious."

Retiree Martina Vassiliadou, 69, said that "Our lives have become very difficult because of inflation. "This is what worries me the most. Our pensions

have dwindled over the years," she said, adding that what she is drawing monthly was insufficient to pay for bills, food and medication.

"What we hear on TV about increases in pensions is a joke," she charged.

The level of apathy could even be higher among Greece's first-time voters, who number 440,000 and make up eight percent of the electorate.

Only one in four people aged 17-24 voted in the last election in 2019, said Maria Karaklioumi, a political analyst for polling company RASS.

High-school student Nefeli Zouganeli, 16, admitted that most of her classmates are fed up with the main parties and will likely skip the vote or pick one of the dozens of small parties with little hopes of making it to parliament.

But Tsipras has touted salary hikes — including a higher minimum wage pegged to inflation — among his election promises.

And Mitsotakis has argued that his last four years have laid the foundations of economic stability that Greece can build on.

At rallies, the Harvard graduate underlined that he has delivered on his previous promises to bring steady growth, tax cuts and tougher immigration rules.

He also shrugged off the lack of apparent excitement over this year's vote, saying that "dramatisation of politics is also progress for the country".

Hollywood royalty floods DiCaprio-Scorsese premiere

The Hollywood cavalcade descended on Cannes yesterday for the premiere of Leonardo DiCaprio and Martin Scorsese's Native American crime epic, *Killers of the Flower Moon*.

The three-and-a-half-hour movie, which includes Scorsese's other long-time muse Robert De Niro, charts a wave of murders among the wealthy Osage Indians in the 1920s and the birth of the FBI. After hours of waiting in the rain that has drenched the French Riviera town all week, fans went wild as DiCaprio, De Niro, and Scorsese arrived for the premiere alongside several native Americans in traditional outfits.

Jesse Plemons, who is also in the film, arrived with his wife Kirsten Dunst, while Salma Hayek, Cate Blanchett, and former Spiderman Tobey Maguire were also spotted on the red carpet.

Another round of Hollywood royalty will arrive for Natalie Portman and Julianne Moore's

premiere *May December*, which looks at the relationship between an older woman and a schoolboy, still married years after their relationship became a tabloid scandal.

The competition for the festival's top prize Palme d'Or is heating up.

An early front-runner is British director Jonathan Glazer's *The Zone of Interest*, a unique and horrifying look at the private life of a Nazi officer working at the Auschwitz concentration camp. Critics were near-unanimous in their praise, with *Variety* calling it "chilling and profound, meditative and immersive, a movie that holds human darkness up to the light and examines it as if under a microscope".

But there was also huge warmth for *Four Daughters*, a heart-breaking documentary about radicalisation within a Tunisian family that is both inventive and engaging.

That may go down well with jury president Ruben Ostlund, last year's winner for *Triangle of*



US actor Leonardo DiCaprio poses for selfies as he arrives for the screening of the film *Killers of the Flower Moon* during the 76th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes yesterday. (AFP)

Sadness, who likes his arthouse films with some lighter touches.

A total of 21 films are in the main competition, which concludes

on May 27, including previous winners such as Japan's

Hirokazu Kore-eda, Germany's Wim Wenders and Britain's Ken Loach.

The weather has been untypically wet this year, but Cannes has had no shortage of splashy moments since kicking off on Tuesday with the controversial appearance of Johnny Depp.

In his first movie since a bitter trial with ex-wife Amber Heard, Depp played French King Louis XV in *Jeanne du Barry*, which received middling reviews, and festival director Thierry Fremaux irked online critics by saying "I don't care" about Depp's legal woes.

The festival also saw an emotional appearance from Harrison Ford, receiving an honorary Palme d'Or at the world premiere of "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny. At the risk of turning this year's Cannes into a festival of ageing Hollywood males, there was also an honorary Palme for Michael Douglas, and an appearance from Sean Penn as a grizzled New York

paramedic in *Black Flies*. But all eyes were on the Scorsese film uniting three icons of Italian-American cinema.

DiCaprio and De Niro are both long-time Scorsese collaborators. But the director has never before cast them in the same film, apart from a funny short in 2015, *Taxi Driver*, in which they competed for a part in his next movie. The film world is also painfully aware that it may be one of the last movies from the master behind *Goodfellas*, *Raging Bull* and *Taxi Driver*. In a poignant interview earlier this week, the 80-year-old Scorsese told Deadline: "I'm old... I want to tell stories, and there's no more time."

Taxi Driver won the Palme d'Or in 1976, but he has not been back in the Cannes competition since 1985's lesser-known *After Hours*, though he did serve as jury president in 1998.

Killers of the Flower Moon, which was funded by Apple, is showing out of competition.



From the Ability Friendly Recognition Awards ceremony.



Mark Hughes

QF's Ability Friendly Programme honours participants and coaches

The dedication, perseverance and achievements of participants and coaches of Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Ability Friendly Programme – which provides inclusive sporting opportunities to Qatar's community – were recognised at a ceremony where they were awarded with certificates and medals for their accomplishments.

Mark Hughes, director of Awsaj Academy, part of QF's Pre-University Education, said: "The Ability Friendly Recognition Awards ceremony serves a vital purpose in our organisation. It provides a platform to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the past year.

"Moreover, it brings together participants, dedicated families and hardworking coaches and programme staff for a meaningful gathering. This event offers us a privileged opportunity to interact, socialise and strengthen the bonds within our re-

markable community," Hughes said the programme empowers individuals with diverse abilities, fostering inclusivity, skill development and meaningful interactions, removing barriers and providing equal opportunities for all to engage in sports programmes and events.

"The event has a significant impact on the morale and motivation of participants and coaches, providing an opportunity to socialise, create memories and strengthen the community," he noted.

"The Ability Friendly Programme fosters a sense of belonging and transforms lives, motivating all involved."

Aisha Jassim al-Ali, the mother of one of the participants awarded during the ceremony, said: "Seeing my son, with his special needs, being honoured on this annual occasion fills my heart with immense pride. The programme



Aisha Jassim al-Ali and her son Jassim.

has been a tremendous blessing, offering him opportunities for growth and development.

"Through his commitment to training, he has not only acquired valuable skills but also blossomed in his ability to communicate and connect with his fellow colleagues. I am grateful

for how this program has positively impacted his life, fostering a sense of belonging and empowering him to reach his full potential. It is a true testament to the transformative power of inclusion and support."

Nabila Fadaoui, the mother of



Nabila Fadaoui and her son Yosef.

another child participating in the programme, said seeing her son being honoured gave her a profound sense of happiness and pride: "His journey has been one of overcoming countless psychological, physical, and social difficulties, and it is with immense gratitude that I

acknowledge the invaluable role played by his dedicated trainers. Their unwavering support, patience and belief in his abilities have been instrumental in his growth and progress.

"This moment of recognition is a testament to his resilience, determination and the count-

less hours of hard work he has invested. It is a celebration of his triumphs over adversity, highlighting his unique journey of personal development and self-discovery."

She also believes that he perceives himself differently, saying: "He no longer sees his disability as a hindrance but rather as an opportunity for growth and contribution.

"Through the nurturing environment provided by the programme and the guidance of his trainers, he has come to understand that he is an integral part of our community. He has discovered his own worth, feeling a strong sense of belonging and purpose." Qatar Foundation's Ability Friendly Programme offers sessions the year round. To find out more information about the programme, or to participate and volunteer, one can e-mail abilityfriendly@qf.org.qa

29 recipients of DFI's 2023 Spring Grants cycle announced at Cannes Film Festival

The Doha Film Institute (DFI) underlined its commitment to nurturing emerging voices in cinema from across the world yesterday at Cannes Film Festival 2023 with the announcement of the recipients of its 2023 Spring Grants cycle. A total of 29 films from 18 countries have been selected for the current cycle of the Middle East region's longest-serving film development initiative that has supported over 750 diverse projects from 75 countries to date.

Awarded in two cycles – Spring and Fall, the Institute Grants programme has evolved as one of the flagship film funding initiatives focused on strengthening a vibrant creative ecosystem and supporting emerging voices from all over the world to help them realise their cinematic aspirations, a press statement notes.

The Grants support projects that include feature and short narratives, documentaries and experimentals as well as TV series. In addition to Qatar, recipients of the 2023 Spring Grants include film projects from Algeria, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Lebanon, Mongolia, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sudan and Tunisia.

Recipients include 12 women filmmakers and 10 returning grantees along with four projects



Banel & Adama (France, Senegal, Mali, Qatar) by Ramata-Toulaye Sy.

from Qatar-based talent, underlining the Institute's commitment to supporting important voices and the continued evolution of independent cinema from the region and beyond.

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, chief executive officer of DFI, said: "We are on a mission to discover and promote original and independent voices in cinema, and have had the great privilege of supporting the most powerful and important voices from the region and beyond through our Grants programme.

"Our Spring Grants 2023 reinforces our continued commitment to filmmakers globally who have once again impressed us with the diversity and depth of the original themes they are exploring in their stories. This cur-

rent cycle of projects was chosen from hundreds of compelling submissions, and we are proud to bring these soulful stories to global audiences."

The 2023 Spring Grants recipients are:

Mena – Feature Narrative – Development

Kohl & Cardamom (Egypt, Sweden, Qatar) by Fady Atallah.

Rabies (Lebanon, Qatar) by Sandra Tabet.

To Bled or Not to Bled (France, Algeria, Qatar) by Azedine Kasri.

Mena – Feature Narrative – Production

A Quarter to Thursday in Algiers (Algeria, France, Belgium, Qatar) by Sofia Djama.

Aicha (Tunisia, France, Saudi Arabia, Qatar) by Mehdi M Bar-



L'mina (France, Morocco, Qatar) by Rande Maroufi.

saoui.

Aisha Can't Fly Away Anymore (Egypt, Tunisia, Qatar) by Morad Mostafa.

La mer au loin (France, Qatar) by Said Hamich Benlarbi.

Mena – Feature Narrative – Post-Production

Back to Alexandria (Switzerland, France, Qatar) by Tamer Ruggli.

East of Noon (Egypt, the Netherlands, Qatar) by Hala Elkoussy.

Non-Mena – Feature Narrative – Post-Production

Banel & Adama (France, Senegal, Mali, Qatar) by Ramata-Toulaye Sy.

Excursion (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Norway, France, Qatar) by Una Gunjak.

Lost Country (France, Serbia, Luxembourg, Croatia, Qatar) by Vladimir Perisic.

The Women (Germany, Italy, Qatar) by The Maw Naing.

Ze (France, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Germany, Qatar) by Lkhagvadulam Purev-Ochir.

Mena – Feature – Experimental/Essay – Development

Tell it to Bridges (Lebanon, Qatar) by Ali Hammoud.

Mena – Feature Documentary – Production

I Am One of Them (Poland, Qatar) by Nadim Suleiman.

Mena – Feature Documentary – Post-Production

The Language of Fire (Algeria, France, Qatar) by Tarek Sami.



Ze (France, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Germany, Qatar) by Lkhagvadulam Purev-Ochir.

Non-Mena – Feature Documentary – Post-Production

Ozogoche (Ecuador, Qatar) by Joe Houlberg.

Rising Up at Night (Democratic Republic of the Congo, Belgium, Germany, Burkina Faso, Qatar) by Nelson Makengo.

Mena – TV Series – Development

Dyounf (Guests) (Palestine, Qatar) by Saleh Saadi.

Halaa (Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Qatar) by Amal al-Muftah.

Mena – Web Series – Production

The House That My Mother Built (Sudan, Qatar) by Alyaa Musa.

Mena – Shorts – Narrative – Production

Autumn (Qatar) by Aisha al-Jaidah.

The Experiment (Qatar) by Abdulla Alhor.

The Day I Smoked a Cigarette with My Father (Egypt, France, Qatar) by Sameh Alaa.

Mena – Shorts Documentary – Production

Fast Net Palestine (France, Qatar) by Mohamed Khamkham.

Mena – Shorts – Experimental/Essay – Production

No Reaching Hand (Qatar) by Batla Aldosari.

L'mina (France, Morocco, Qatar) by Rande Maroufi.

The Grocery List (Bahrain, Qatar) by Taqwa Ali.

Second round of voting for Turkish presidential election begins at Doha embassy



Voting for the second and last round of the Turkish presidential election began at the embassy of Türkiye in Doha yesterday. A large number of Turkish citizens turned up to cast their votes in the presence of Dr Mustafa Goksu, ambassador of Türkiye to Qatar. The second round of voting at the embassy continues until tomorrow, from 8am-10pm. A notification from the embassy explained that voters are obliged to present a valid Turkish identification document (ID card, passport, driver's licence, etc) issued by the Turkish authorities, which has a national identity number clearly visible on it. The Turkish embassy is located in Zone 66, Street 905, Building 149, Diplomatic Area, Doha. Images courtesy of the embassy's Facebook page.