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SPORT | Page 1

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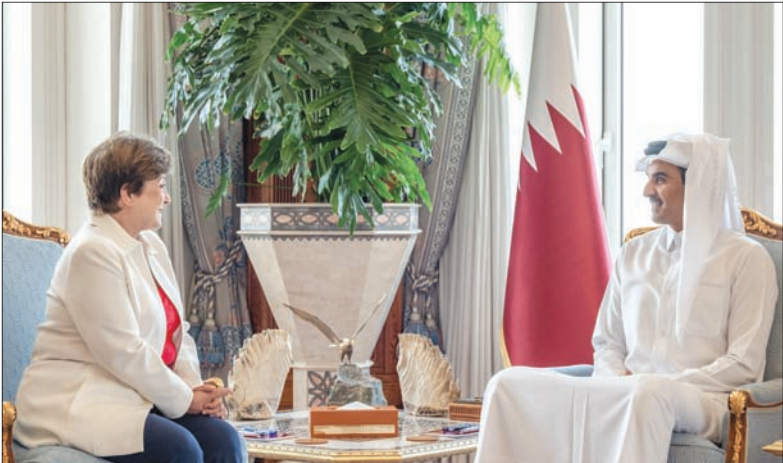
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Amir meets PM of Bangladesh



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday at the Amiri Diwan with Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina Wazed and her accompanying delegation on the occasion of her visit to the country to participate in the Qatar Economic Forum 2023. During the meeting, they discussed the bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to enhance and develop them, and several issues of common concern. A number of ministers and senior officials attended the meeting. On the Bangladeshi side, members of the accompanying delegation attended the meeting. **(QNA)**

Amir meets IMF managing director



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday at his Amiri Diwan office with Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Kristalina Georgieva and her accompanying delegation, on the occasion of her visit to the country to participate in the Qatar Economic Forum 2023. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation relations between Qatar and IMF and prospects for strengthening them, especially in the development fields. **(QNA)**

Amir meets Paraguay president



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday at the Amiri Diwan with President of the Republic of Paraguay Mario Abdo Benitez and his accompanying delegation, on the occasion of his visit to the country to participate in the Qatar Economic Forum 2023. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation relations between the two countries and prospects of enhancing them in various fields, in addition to exchanging views on the most prominent regional and international developments of common interest. A number of ministers and senior officials attended the meeting. On the Paraguayan side, a number of members of the accompanying delegation attended the meeting. **(QNA)**

Saudi, Canada to restore ties

Saudi Arabia and Canada will restore full diplomatic relations, the kingdom said yesterday, following a 2018 dispute over human rights that saw Riyadh expel Ottawa's ambassador and freeze new trade. The decision, also announced by Canada's foreign ministry, came after talks last year between Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on the sidelines of the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) Forum in Bangkok. "It has been decided to restore the level of diplomatic relations with Canada to its previous state," Saudi's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Sudanese still await aid on day 2 of truce

Fighting eased in Sudan yesterday, the second full day of a ceasefire that has allowed beleaguered civilians to venture out, even as they await safe aid corridors and escape routes. Sporadic air strikes and artillery fire still boomed across the capital, but US and Saudi observers said "fighting in Khartoum appeared to be less intense" since the one-week humanitarian pause entered into force late Monday.

DeSantis to enter US presidential race

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, whose impassioned battles over pandemic lockdowns and divisive cultural issues have endeared him to conservatives, will announce he is seeking the Republican presidential nomination, placing him on a collision course with former President Donald Trump. DeSantis will make the announcement on Twitter during a discussion with Twitter CEO Elon Musk, DeSantis' political team confirmed.

Rock queen Tina Turner dies at 83

Rock legend Tina Turner, the growling songstress who electrified audiences from the 1960s and went on to release hit records across five decades, has died at the age of 83. "It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Tina Turner," read the statement on the official Instagram page of the eight-time Grammy winner, who encountered fame first with husband Ike Turner, then as a wildly successful solo act after escaping the violent marriage. "Today we say goodbye to a dear friend who leaves us all her greatest work: her music."

Qatar pledges portion of SDR to help LDCs

IMF chief lauds Qatar's initiative

By Pratap John
Business Editor

Qatar has "shown global leadership" by pledging 20% of its Special Drawing Rights (SDR) holdings towards International Monetary Fund's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT) and Resilience Support Trust (RST) mechanisms for financial support, IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva said yesterday.

SDR is an international reserve asset created by the IMF to supplement other reserve assets of member countries. According to the IMF website, Qatar has SDR holdings of 985mn, according to Reuters.

"The pledge made today would allow the IMF to expand concessional lending to low income countries and expand lending to vulnerable-to-climate-shocks countries," Georgieva said in a video shared by the Qatar News Agency (QNA). **To Page 5**



HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari and IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva on the sidelines of Qatar Economic Forum yesterday where it was announced that Qatar pledged 20% of its Special Drawing Rights (SDR) holdings towards International Monetary Fund's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT) and Resilience Support Trust (RST) mechanisms for financial support.

Amir meets UK parliament delegation



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday at his Amiri Diwan office with a delegation of members of Parliament of the United Kingdom, headed by Member of the Parliament and Chair of All-Party Parliamentary Group on Qatar, Alun Cairns, on the occasion of their visit to the country to participate in the Qatar Economic Forum 2023. During the meeting, they discussed the friendship and strategic co-operation relations between Qatar and the United Kingdom and ways of enhancing and developing them, in addition to exchanging views on the most important regional and international developments. **(QNA)**

More stories on Pages 3,4,5 & Business Pages

QEF discusses GCC countries' competitiveness

A discussion session, held yesterday within the framework of the Third Qatar Economic Forum, focused on how can GCC countries maximise their global competitiveness in a dynamically shifting economic order. The discussion session was attended by HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari, Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Mohamed bin Abdullah al-Jadaan, in addition to Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Kristalina Georgieva.

At the beginning of the session, HE Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari welcomed his Saudi counterpart, saying that he was pleased to see many Saudi ministers present here, adding that this indicates the strong relations and partnership between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Qatar as well as the unity of the GCC countries. HE the Minister of Finance added that there were many reasons to say that this region of the world is promising, highlighting Qatar's role in this regard.

Early bird ticket offers for Qatar F1 Grand Prix

Early bird ticket sales for the Formula One Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix – the first of three sales phases – was launched by the Lusail International Circuit yesterday. The eagerly anticipated racing spectacle will be held from October 6-8 at the redesigned Lusail International Circuit.

The announcement was made during a press conference held in co-

operation with Qatar Airways, the Official Airline and Global Partner of F1 – and title sponsor of the MotoGP Grand Prix of Qatar, and the Public Works Authority Ashghal.

The F1 racing extravaganza will ensure an action-packed weekend for fans. Race attendance will be optimised through three-day Grandstand tickets and one-day General Admission tickets, with special early bird

offers up for grabs for a limited time only.

Under the special offer, General Admission tickets (single day) cost QR160 on October 6 (Family Friday), and free admission is allowed for children below 12. The ticket price for October 7 and 8 is QR400.

Three-day tickets are also available, with prices ranging from QR480 to QR1,600. **Sport Page 1**

Television is transitioning to streaming, QEF told

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Cable television is facing a rapid decline, having already diminished by nearly 50% from its peak, and is unlikely to recover, TCG co-founder and partner Peter Chernin told Qatar Economic Forum 2023 on Tuesday.

"The world of cable is unfortunately done, it is on its way out, and I don't see any scenario in which it doesn't keep going down," he said at a discussion titled "The New Business of Pop Culture".

Chernin, a renowned American businessman and investor, tackled an array of topics shaping the tech industry. His talk with Bloomberg Television anchor Caroline Hyde covered "the future of cinema, the exponential growth of streaming audio and video, the immersive world of sports and gaming, the emergence of web3 and the metaverse", among others.

He said television is transitioning to streaming, noting that news – a vital aspect of television – is also expected to migrate to streaming platforms. As an example, he cited CNN and Fox, which now offer streaming apps.



Caroline Hyde engages Peter Chernin in a discussion on 'The New Business of Pop Culture' at the Qatar Economic Forum 2023.

Chernin said that currently, linear television relies on programming, news, and sports. However, he predicted that over time, the cable subscriber base will continue to decrease, with the number of cable homes in the US already dropping below 50mn from a previous 90mn.

"Make no mistake, this is television. If you look at the US, television is streaming, cable is going away, broadcasting is going away, it is television, and so I think everything that you are used to in television over the past years will ultimately migrate to streaming," he said. **To Page 5**

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Costa Rica 1kg



قرع آيفي (تندلي) هندي ١ كيلو
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Drumstick
India 1kg



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سيريلانكي ١ كيلو
Ambul Banana
(Palayankodan)
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Turkey 1kg



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Mutton Cuts
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لحم جاموس هندي
بدون العظم ١ كيلو
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India 1kg



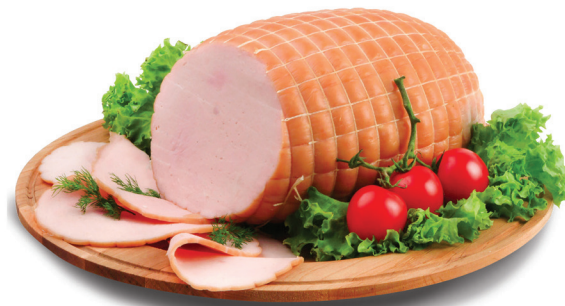
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Breakfast Round 500gm



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QATAR |

President of Paraguay awards National Order of Merit to PM



Paraguayan President Mario Abdo Benítez awarded the National Order of Merit of the Republic of Paraguay to HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani in appreciation of His Excellency's role in supporting and strengthening relations between the two countries. HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi received the decoration during his meeting yesterday with Paraguay's Foreign Minister Julio Cesar Ariola. (QNA)

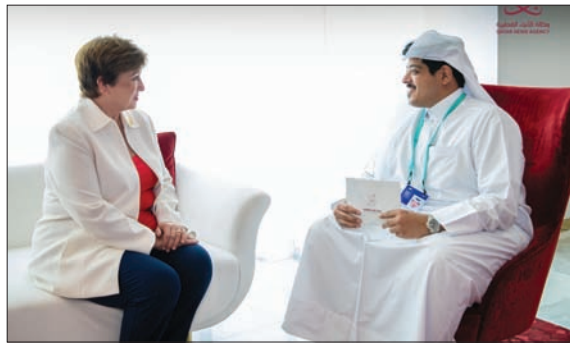
IMF managing director says Qatar's economy a shining example of reforms

QNA
Doha

International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has hailed the performance of the Qatari economy, considering it a shining example of reforms and strong institutions that lead to diversified growth to create the future economy for the people of Qatar.

In exclusive remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Georgieva said that the contribution of the non-oil sector to the growth of the economy is the strongest in the Gulf region, which indicates that the diversification that has been followed over the past years is bearing fruit.

She pointed out a pledge under which Qatar contributes 20% of its Special Drawing Rights (SDR) so that the IMF can support low-growth countries as well as those most at risk in terms of climate shocks on concessional terms, which will not only bring financial resources to these countries but also carry Qatar's reform experience to them.



The IMF Managing Director highlighted well-known Qatar's generosity and leading role in supporting vulnerable countries, considering the pledge that was announced today would allow the Fund to expand lending to low-income countries, in addition to expanding lending to countries vulnerable to shocks as a result of climate, so that they could build more flexibility in the economy, deal with floods, droughts, and other forms of climate-related natural disasters.

Georgieva expected a slowdown in global economic growth in 2023, which is expected to remain weak over the next five years. In that regard, she said that this slowdown will indeed affect Qatar's economy, yet the Qatari performance has been very good in diversifying its economy, as it is the strongest among the GCC countries in terms of non-oil economic growth, and according to the IMF

vision, and as a result, Qatar will continue to grow at a rate that exceeds the global growth. As for the GCC countries as a whole, it is a bright spot in the global economy.

She stressed that the GCC countries had done well in investing in resources derived from oil and gas, saying that the outstanding thing that the GCC countries have done is investing in human capital, education, healthcare and creating a dynamic, strong, and more flexible private sector in a faltering global economy.

She pointed out that Qatar Economic Forum is an opportunity to listen to leaders of the financial, business, and government communities in the region and understand the vision here and how to translate it on the ground.

She said that on the economic side, there are strong partnerships with the GCC countries, in particular, to support more flexible policies toward comprehensive economic growth. (QNA)



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Seara Chicken Griller 1500gm



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Al-Muraikhi meets Georgia's minister




HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met yesterday with Georgia's Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili, who is visiting the country. During the meeting, they discussed the bilateral relations. **(QNA)**

Al-Sulaiti in Doha meetings



The President of Zanzibar, Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, met yesterday with HE the Minister of Transport Jassim bin Saif al-Sulaiti, during his current visit to Doha to participate in the 3rd Qatar Economic Forum. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations in transport, and ways to support and develop them, in addition to several topics of mutual interest.



HE the Minister of Transport Jassim bin Saif al-Sulaiti met yesterday with the Chairman and Managing Director of the Suez Canal Authority of Egypt Admiral Osama Rabie. During the meeting, the two sides discussed aspects of bilateral co-operation between the two countries in the fields of ports and various maritime transport activities, and ways to enhance and develop them. **(QNA)**

Ghana president hopeful of restoring stability

The Russia-Ukraine war as well as the Covid-19 pandemic had a very detrimental impact on Ghana's economy, forcing the country to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for assistance to face the economic challenges of the country, Ghana President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo told the Qatar Economic Forum 2023, powered by Bloomberg yesterday.

"Ghana had carried out several economic reforms and my country had reached economic stability and the orientation towards growth prior to Covid-19 pandemic and the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, which had a catastrophic impact on Ghana's economy. This necessitated us to approach IMF to face the economic problems that led to high inflation and currency depreciation that the country faced," he explained.

Akufo-Addo was speaking to Jennifer Zabasajja, correspondent, Bloomberg Television on the second day of the forum. The president stated that in 2017, Ghana recorded a growth rate of 3.4% of the gross domestic product, the slowest figure over the past 20 years, which showed the indicators going in the wrong direction causing high inflation and interest rates, which led to launching of comprehensive reform programmes to re-advance the economy.

"We positively corrected the paths when I became the president in 2017.



President of Ghana Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo at the Qatar Economic Forum 2023 yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

The growth rate increased to 7%, the currency stabilised, and the interest and inflation rates declined. However, the recent crises have led to a regression of our economy due to the catastrophic repercussions that they had on Ghana's economy," explained the president.

He hoped that the reforms undertaken by his country recently will contribute to repositioning the economy and restoring the overall stability of the country. He said: "We will implement everything we can to provide to prepare successful programmes, impose systematic controls on public spending, and provide incentives for the development of investments in the private sector. This will hopefully

help us get the country back on track of progress," he continued.

Regarding the guarantees provided to the IMF, he said that guarantees were provided to the IMF, represented by rationalising the government spending and developing models for domestic income.

"Ghana's leadership and economy are open to everyone in the spirit of friendship for anyone who wants to build positive relations with it leading to real advancement. Ghana is making great efforts to introduce cocoa into the market. There are many investors in the private sector looking forward to the possibilities available for the production of chocolate in Ghana," Akufo-Addo added.

Cabinet nod to decision on concession for industrial zone

QNA
Doha

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohamed al-Attiyah chaired the Cabinet's regular meeting held yesterday at the Amiri Diwan. Following the meeting, HE the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs issued the following statement:

At the beginning of the meeting, the Cabinet was briefed on the 32nd regular session of the Arab League Council at the summit level, which was held last Friday in Jeddah, with the participation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani.

The Cabinet expressed its hope that the results of the summit would contribute to strengthening joint Arab action, resolving the issues of the Arab nation, and meeting the aspirations of its people.

Afterwards, the Cabinet considered the topics on its agenda as follows: First: Approval of a draft Amiri decision establishing the Qatar Government Excellence Award.

Second: Decision of the Cabinet regarding the conditions and con-

trols of granting the developer the concession to develop and manage an industrial zone. The preparation of the draft decision comes based on the provisions of Article 3 of Law No 8 of 2018 regarding industrial zones, which stipulates that – by a decision of the Cabinet based on a proposal by Minister of Commerce and Industry, the developer may be granted a concession to develop and manage an industrial zone under a concession contract, in accordance with the conditions and controls to be issued by a decision of the Cabinet based on the minister's proposals.

Third, Approval of: 1- Draft decision of the Minister of Municipality regarding the planning and architectural conditions and controls for commercial stores located in residential areas (Amiri grant stores).

2- Draft decision of the Minister of Commerce and Industry specifying the commercial activities that are permitted to be practised in commercial stores located in residential areas (Amiri grant stores).

Fourth: Approval of the amendment of some provisions of the financial services regulations of Qatar Financial Centre (QFC)'s regulatory authority.

The amendment aims to achieve

flexibility in implementing the decisions issued by the regulatory authority's board of directors.

Fifth, Approval of: 1- A draft agreement between the government of the State of Qatar and the government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on mutual administrative assistance in the customs field.

2- A draft agreement between the government of Qatar and Uruguay on the elimination of double taxation with regard to taxes on income and the prevention of tax avoidance and evasion.

3- A draft memorandum of understanding for co-operation in the fields of health between the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in Qatar and the Ministry of Interior in Hungary.

Sixth, the Cabinet reviewed the following topics and made the appropriate decisions in their regard: 1- The financial statements and audited accounts of Qatar International Court (civil and commercial court) and QFC Regulatory Tribunal.

2- The annual report of the Standing Committee for Rescue and Relief Operations and Humanitarian Aids for Areas Afflicted by Catastrophes in Brotherly and Friendly Countries.

3- The results of the Global Ministerial Summit on Patient Safety.



QAFCO
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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
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REF. NO	DESCRIPTION OF WORKS	LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION
EOI-370617/2022	Asset Integrity Management System	21/06/2023

Introduction/Background:
Qatar Fertiliser Company (hereinafter termed as "Company" or "QAFCO") is one of world's largest producer of Urea, operating 6 trains of Ammonia and Urea Plants in its complex at Mesaieed in the State of Qatar. Company also produces Melamine, Urea Formaldehyde Concentrate and Aqueous Ammonia in its' Complex. The plants are in two sites, Q1-4 Site and Q5-6 Site with a distance of 1500 m between them.

To maintain its assets in a timely and a cost-efficient manner, QAFCO has embarked upon a program to identify & develop potential Bidders competent in the respective discipline as stated below and invite them to submit their credentials and their intention to bid.

Brief Scope of work:

- AIMS (Asset Integrity Management System) for Static equipment, Piping and Relief Valves.
- RBI software tool using API 580/581 methodology for all types of pressure equipment, piping and PRDs seamlessly integrate into the AIMS.
- Corrosion monitoring system to manage CMLs.
- User friendly Asset Integrity Management Dashboard configured to QAFCO requirements.
- Civil asset module including Qualitative risk assessment (Configured to QAFCO requirements) with integration to AIMS.
- Availability of supporting tools as given below and provided within agreed time frame as a part of AIMS.

- Corrosion monitoring
- IOW monitoring
- Reporting module
- Recommended action follow up
- Integrity management trends
- NDT reports module
- Lifting equipment management
- Welding quality control management
- Project quality control module
- Reformer temperature monitoring
- Turn around job management

Online Meeting:
Online meeting through MS team shall be conducted to brief about the Scope of Work. Bidders are requested to send e-mails of those persons who shall attend the online meeting. Time and date will be shared to bidders who are interested.

Submission Requirements:
The potential bidders shall submit the following mandatory documents in File Transfer Protocol (like box.com, wetransfer, etc) along with covering letter:

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2. Contractor to specify experience and reference of similar scope with equivalent complexity executed:
 - a. Scope of work.
 - b. Value of contract in million QAR
 - c. Contractual duration and actual completion date.
 - d. Contractual strategy and main/critical sub vendors/contractor list.
 - e. Organization chart and Manpower histogram of previous similar scope.
 - f. Actual completion of contract
 - g. Client's name
 - h. Location
 - i. Contact details of the client (QAFCO may approach the client directly for the feedback)
 - j. Safety performance in previous scope(s).
3. Contractor Execution methodology that would be followed for this project.
4. A brief method statement and proposed implementation plan.
5. An overview and introduction of their company, its business and experience in executing such Projects. Relevant documentation detailing / demonstrating competency of the potential bidder including Commercial registration and owner's details, firm size, affiliates, capabilities, organization structure, profile / experience of key personnel, list of manpower with CVs of key personnel location, current tendered workload, other facilities & resources, QA system /QC philosophy and past Safety performance.

Submission Instructions:

- QAFCO requests interested bidders to submit their 'Expression of Interest' for the above as per the below options:
 - a. By email to purchase@qafco.com.qa (max size of the mail size shall be 4MB).
 - b. In case the mail size is more than 4MB, upload the documents in File Transfer Protocol (like box.com, we transfer, etc) and email the link to purchase@qafco.com.qa to download at our end.
 - c. In both the above options, please ensure to clearly specify the EOI Reference No in the mail subject.
 - d. Any clarification and communication regarding this 'Expression of Interest' (EOI) shall only be addressed to the Contracting and Procurement Section Coordinator, Mr. Hamad Al-Athbi on Tel No. +974 44227795 and/or Email: halathbi@qafco.com.qa

NOTE:
QAFCO shall not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred in connection with preparation or delivery of 'Expression of Interest' document. QAFCO reserves the right to reject any or all 'Expression of Interest' at its sole discretion without assigning any reason, whatsoever. This notice is only for inviting 'Expression of Interest' (EOI) to decide further course of action and not for prequalification. Response to this invitation shall not confer any right, whatsoever, for being considered for award of Contract at any stage.

‘Sanctions on Russia would be harmful to Georgia’s economy’

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Imposing sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine war will not only harm Georgia but also “devastate” its economy, Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili has said. He made the observation while addressing the Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg yesterday.

Garibashvili's government has refused to impose economic sanctions and direct flights from Russia to Georgia resumed last week. “Not only would we harm Georgia, but we would also devastate our economy and jeopardise the interests of our country and our people if we were to impose any form of economic sanctions on Russia,” Garibashvili said.

Interacting with Manus Cranny, Bloomberg Television anchor, the Georgian PM said Europe has not faced a challenge such as the Russia-Ukraine war since the Second World War. “Therefore, this war affects all of us. Let me remind you that Georgia experienced a war in 2008, and we know precisely what it entails. We are aware that approximately 20% of Ukrainian territory is currently occupied by Russia; this is the current status quo. What will happen tomorrow, I don't know, and I can't say. I believe nobody knows.”

He noted that there are no signs that the war would end soon and that is the problem. “We also do not witness enough efforts from the international community to take proper measures, encourage consultations and promote peace talks,” he noted.



Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili in conversation. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

Garibashvili criticised the international community for not taking action, including sanctions, during the 2008 conflict between his country and Russia.

“Let me go back to the war in 2008. Do you remember if anyone imposed sanctions on Russia because of our war? Where is the logic of ‘Our war is not a war’ but in Ukraine it is? No one in the world had proper reactions, and I would say adequate reactions, to that war. Well, I have to say that we were quite disappointed that business as usual continued with Russia after the 2008 war,” he said.

“The result of that war, a devastating war, is that 20% of our territory was taken over by Russia. Russia built two military bases on our historic lands.”

Garibashvili also highlighted the relationship between Georgia and the US, stressing that the latter is an important strategic partner.

“We are very thankful for everything America has done for us, as well as Europe. Georgia has its sovereign rights to

have its own national interests. And as I explained, we have economic trade relations with Russia, we have 1mm ethnic Georgians, our citizens, who live in Russia. To have flights with Russia is very normal.

“It doesn't mean that we are engaged in some kind of political consultation. As I said, this is part of economic trade relations... like the European Union does, like America does.”

Regarding China, he said: “With China, we have a very good relationship. We have a free trade agreement with China, and we do increase trade, economic ties with China. What China has been trying to do during this crisis is a really wise move because China has been trying to mediate between Ukraine and Russia.

“I would welcome efforts from any country, from any leader, who would encourage peace talks, mediate, negotiate, and who would try to make some efforts to resolve the issue,” the Georgian prime minister added.

Bigger role of AI in travel and tourism highlighted at QEF '23

By **Joey Aguilar**
Staff Reporter

Businesses that fail to overcome Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digitisation challenges risk being left behind in rapidly evolving industries, according to travel and tourism industry experts who addressed the second day of the Qatar Economic Forum 2023 yesterday.

“The booking system now depends so much on AI and chatbots ... If you haven’t been overcoming your digitisation problems quickly, you’re gonna be left way behind and we’re seeing that happen very rapidly,” Minor International founder and chairman William Ellwood Heinecke said.

Heinecke, along with Accor Group chairman and CEO Sebastien Bazin, Capital A CEO Tan Sri Tony Fernandes, was speaking at a discussion titled ‘Tourism Opening Up’. It was moderated by

Bloomberg Live Experiences Deputy Global Editor Mallika Kapur.

Heinecke highlighted the increasing reliance on AI and chatbots, particularly in the booking systems of different business entities. About concerns on the limitations of AI such as the failure of chatbots fail to provide accurate answers and leave customers without any human assistance, he noted that different customer segments have varying preferences.

“Today... when we look at those under 35s and over 35s, you’re gonna find people who want luxury but still don’t want that personal contact, and then you’re gonna find other people that are, in the older category, that want that personal contact.”

“You’re gonna find both, and smart operators and smart hotels are going to be able to find how they can use both, and digitisation in terms of how to make our people more effective is very critical,” he said.



(From left) Mallika Kapur with William Ellwood Heinecke, Tan Sri Tony Fernandes, and Sebastien Bazin at the Qatar Economic Forum, discussing the role of AI in the travel and tourism industries. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

Citing the difficulty of achieving multilingual support with human resources alone, Heinecke noted that AI significantly

helps in addressing customer inquiries quickly and efficiently due to its language capabilities. Fernandes echoed a similar

view saying that AI-powered systems will eventually replace humans in certain customer service areas, especially with

companies that handle huge volumes of clients.

“But right now you just have the mix of both. To handle and carry 90mn people, to have a call centre to deal with those is not feasible, generally waiting for ages online, so a lot of it can be done self-service.

“We’ve been through nightmares, like refunds, etc, so AI definitely will help, it’s gonna make the customer more in control and have quicker decisions so we’re big believers.

“So on the operation side in terms of scheduling, in terms of predictive maintenance, we’ll have a much more reliable airline through operational excellence by the use of AI. It just cannot be done by humans. So it’s an exciting period. I don’t see, every industrial revolution, people would predict the end of jobs, it always gets better so we are a big believer,” he said. Bazin, however, highlighted the human aspect of the hospitality

industry and emphasised that AI should not be present during a guest’s stay, asserting that no one wants to be served or welcomed by a robot.

“Anything before, after the stay, AI is an enhancer and a remarkable tool. During your stay, 24 hours, 72 hours, I do not want to have any AI. None of you wants to be served by a robot, you don’t wanna be welcomed by a robot, or if you do, don’t come with me,” Bazin said.

Such industry, he noted, depends on human capital, and telling people that they will be replaced by robots would lead to increased unemployment. “Our hospitality industry is made of men and women and if you have to wait and don’t understand one another for 10 minutes, it is part of our job. You have unforeseen events, three, five times a day in a hotel and it is actually resolved by a man and a woman so I do not want any AI during your stay, period,” Bazin added.

Game-worn sports collectibles drive Gen Z to auction houses

By **Joey Aguilar**
Staff Reporter

Game-worn sports collectibles, from Michael Jordan jersey and shoes to Diego Maradona’s 1986 jersey, and other unique items continue to captivate many Generation Z (Gen Z), driving their interest in auction rooms, according to Sotheby’s CEO Charles F Stewart.

“(Gen Z) investing in new categories... game-worn sports

collectibles is a huge trend and we have set and broke our own records many times in shoes, in worn jerseys,” he said at a discussion titled ‘The World of Art and Luxury’ with Bloomberg Television anchor Manus Cranny at the Qatar Economic Forum 2023 yesterday.

Stewart noted that the Jordan jersey set a new benchmark for game-worn jerseys, sold for a record-breaking \$10.1mn. It surpassed the \$9.3mn Diego Maradona’s “Hand of God” jersey from the 1986 World Cup

and the \$5.8mn Kobe Bryant jersey, worn during the 2007-2008 NBA season. He acknowledged the basketball legend’s unparalleled status in the field of collectibles, both in terms of jerseys and shoes. “I think Gen Z is interested in things that are unique, in a world of homogeneity, ‘how do you stand out; ‘how do you think about self-expression;’ finding unique objects whether it is a 1945 Cartier bracelet or Freddie Mercury collectibles, not something that you get anywhere. That brings

interest into our auction rooms over and over,” said Stewart, who also underlined the importance of ‘digital-first engagement’ to capture the attention of Gen Z. About the recent luxury art and jewellery sales in New York and Geneva, he said both events displayed strong resilience, revealing that more than \$1.8bn worth of art was sold in a week and with many records being set and notable strength observed in the high-end segment.

About the preferences of Sotheby’s clients, the super-

rich and true buyers, in 2023, Stewart said that clients are particularly attracted to items that possess a unique appeal and scarcity. “What we’ve seen, anything that has a particular appeal, real scarcity, work that is fresh to market or an object, we see these across categories, it might be painting. In Geneva last week, we’ve set a record for a very rare Daytona Rolex John Player special, sold for CHF2.2mn, so things that are fresh and scarce have a particular appeal,” he added.



Manus Cranny engages Charles F Stewart in a conversation at Qatar Economic Forum 2023 yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

Sheikh Hasina highlights her country’s progress

By **Joseph Varghese**
Staff Reporter

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told the Qatar Economic Forum 2023, Powered by Bloomberg yesterday said that her country’s economy is very robust with plans to turn into a developed nation by 2041.

“We have recently graduated from the LDC (Least Developed Country) status and we are working hard to make the country a developed nation by 2041. We will start a programme in 2026, and will adopt a number of other

programmes to achieve many developmental goals. We have several targets for 2041 such as providing a high income status of \$12,500 per capita GDP,” said Sheikh Hasina while interacting with Haslina Amin of Bloomberg.

She also said that the world is facing a rise in inflation and an increase in oil, food and fertiliser prices, and the Covid-19 pandemic as well as the Russian-Ukrainian war, have put additional pressure on the global economy. The Bangladesh PM described the conditions in her country during the 1970s and 1980s, and the impact of the conflict at that time on economic conditions of citizens and the lack

of growth. She pointed out that her attachment to her country prompted her to form a government in 1996, which made some progress for the country.

In 2008, she formed a new government and began planning for the economic and social development of the country, with priorities aimed at achieving food security, healthcare, housing and others, as the percentage of the gross domestic product reached about 8.1%. Sheikh Hasina said her country continued to achieve gradual growth until the start of the pandemic, as the whole world suffered from its repercussions on global economies.

As soon as the economy began to gradually recover, the Russian-Ukrainian crisis began. This has led to the rise in the interest rates along with inflation that picked up as a result of the rise in the prices of oil, food, fertilisers and other basic materials,” she continued.

“Our government is working on developing the infrastructure, providing basic services to citizens, as well as focusing on renewable sources of energy. Our foreign policy is based on having good ties and avoiding the interference in the internal affairs of countries, or siding with one party against the other,” she added.

Momentum Media opens educational career guidance program at MES



Momentum Media has always been committed to supporting educational initiatives that shape the lives of young individuals. Recognizing the need for career guidance and higher education opportunities, we have taken the initiative to organize EDU DRIVE. Our goal is to provide students with comprehensive information and resources that will enable them to make informed decisions about their future.

EDU DRIVE will bring together renowned universities, colleges, educational consultants, and coaching centers from various countries including India, Qatar, Malta, Canada, Malaysia, Australia, and New Zealand. We are honored to have the support and involvement of the Centre for Information and Guidance India in this event. CIGI plays a pivotal role in educating and guiding students about their future prospects after completing their 12th grade. Their expert guidance will undoubtedly be valuable to students attending the event.

We are privileged to host distinguished speakers and guests at this event. Dr. Saleel

Hassan, Firoz PT, Abdul Jazeem, Henna Lulu, Faisal AK, and others will share their valuable insights and expertise on various educational and career-related topics.

Mark your calendars for May 25th, 26th, and 27th, as these are the dates for this event. Admission is free for all attendees, and we encourage students to pre-register to avail special gifts. Individual counseling sessions will be available at the venue, allowing students to receive personalized guidance from experts.

We invite students, parents, and education enthusiasts to join us and explore the vast array of opportunities that await them.

The press meet was attended by Saifudheen CK, Executive Director-Momentum Media, Fazalul Haque, Event Director-Edu Drive 2023, Haksar CH, Director-Reigate Builders (P) Ltd, Rahul Jaiswal from Jain University, Oshil Hariparsad - Operations Manager Professional Language Centre, Abdul Razak, Managing Director Alert Qatar.

Television is transitioning ...


From Page 1

With ongoing challenges in the cable industry, Chernin said the increasing capital investment in streaming, along with potential regulatory changes and the importance of international content, positions it for further transformations in the coming years. About streamers ending up being deeply global companies and all US based, he attributed their success to two primary factors: First, he stressed the importance of capital investment where these companies possess the necessary funds and determination to grow on a global scale; second, the regulatory landscape as a contributing factor where streaming platforms experienced limited regulatory constraints over the past several years, allowing them to expand internationally. Seeing the value of international content, Chernin said TCG recently acquired a Turkish production company and is currently engaged in negotiations to buy a Mexican-Spanish company. “We are investing in international content because it is an area we believe in. I think Turkish is in some ways the most prominent Middle Eastern content. The thing that really attracts us to Turkey is, it is a big country, 130mn people, good economy and their content exports extremely well both to the Middle East and to Latin America, so we look at it as an opportunity to get into the Middle East,” he added.

Qatar pledges portion ...

From Page 1

Meanwhile, the official announcement between Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Finance and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), titled Qatar’s SDRs commitment to the IMF, was issued yesterday during the third edition of the Qatar Economic Forum. “The announcement demonstrates Qatar’s leadership role in supporting least developed countries (LDCs) overcome economic shocks and challenges,” Ministry of Finance said. Georgieva hailed the performance of the Qatari economy, considering it a shining example of reforms and strong institutions that lead to diversified growth to create the future economy for the people of Qatar. She said that the contribution of the non-oil sector to the growth of the economy is the strongest in the Gulf region, which indicates that the diversification that has been followed over the past years is bearing fruit. She pointed out a pledge under which Qatar contributes 20% of its Special Drawing Rights (SDR) so that the IMF can support low-growth countries as well as those most at risk in terms of climate shocks on concessional terms, which will not only bring financial resources to these countries but also carry Qatar’s reform experience to them.



The Transport Company

MOWASALAT (KARWA)

Mowasalat (Karwa) announces the following tender:

Tender Ref. No.	Tender Title	Tender Fee	Electronic Tender Fee Payment Dates	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
TC/010/LTS/2023	Lease of 7-Seater MPV or SUV Vehicles for a period of 3 Years	QAR 2,000	28 May 2023 to 01 June 2023	QAR 136,000	04 July 2023

CONDITIONS:

► Interested bidder shall pay the tender fee as shown above to Mowasalat Bank Account details:

► Bidder must submit proof of tender fee payment (Bank Deposit Slip + A Signed & Stamped Expression of Interest (indicating Tender Ref. No. and Title / Company Name and details of nominated contact person i.e., Tel. No., Fax No., and Email address) + Copy of valid Commercial Registration to Mowasalat Secretary - Tender Committee at email: abharti@mowasalat.com; rsayed@mowasalat.com.

► Tender documents will be released via email on the last date of tender fee payment to all bidders who have submitted the bank deposit slip and other documents requested (i.e., **the next working day 04 June 2023**).



► **Bonds: Tender Bond & Performance Bond:** Bids must be accompanied by Bonds issued by a local bank operating in the State of Qatar as per the Qatar Central Bank template. Further details of bonds can be found in the tender documents. *Bids without Tender Bond shall not be considered.*

► **Tender validity:** Bid validity period shall be 180 days from the bid closing date.

► **Tender documents submission:** Bids must be submitted in 3 separate sealed (**IN RED WAX**) envelopes addressed to **Secretary - Tender Committee** clearly highlighting the Tender Ref. No. & Tender Title:


- Envelope 1# must include the Technical Bid submission (1 Original + 1 Non-Editable copy in a USB).
- Envelope 2# must include Commercial Bid submission (1 Original + 1 Editable MS Excel spreadsheet copied in a USB).
- Envelope 3# must include the Tender Bond (1 Original).

► **Bid Closing Date:** Bid submission deadline is **12.00 noon Doha Local Time** as on the Bid closing date shown above. The 3 envelopes must be handed over to the Office of The Secretary-Tenders Committee, located Mowasalat Head Office, Industrial Area. Any tender submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

Supplier registration Mowasalat location

Tel.: 4458 8724 Fax: 4458 8850



Qatari aircraft with food aid arrives in Sudan; new group of 197 people evacuated



A Qatari airplane carrying 39 tonnes of food aid, provided by Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) and Qatar Charity (QC), arrived yesterday at Port Sudan airport in Sudan.

The aid comes within the framework of the support offered by Qatar to the people of Sudan and its full support for their steadfastness in facing the difficult conditions currently due to the continuation of fighting.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the evacuation of 197 people, holders of Qatari residency, from Sudan by a Qatari airplane that took off from the Port Sudan airport, bringing the total number of evacuated people to 1,241 residents.

Earlier, Qatar evacuated its citizens, who were in Sudan, and 1,044 persons, holders of Qatari residency. The ministry reiterated Qatar's keenness on security and stability in Sudan. (QNA)

Qatar Charity sustains its support for stranded Sudanese

Qatar Charity (QC) continues to provide humanitarian aid to those affected by the fighting and those stranded at the Arqin crossing on the Sudanese-Egyptian border.

Field teams continued to provide thousands of hot meals with the support of the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD). QC distributed 6,000 hot meals, at the rate of 1,000 per day, while arrangements are being made to continue providing foodstuffs for another week due to the exacerbation of the crisis and the needs of many stranded at the Arqin crossing.

At a time when QC's humanitarian aid flights continue within the Qatar air bridge, many official and popular bodies have expressed their great appreciation for the humanitarian response and the co-ordination with the local authorities in the Wadi Halfa locality, to which the border crossing belongs, to ensure that food aid reaches those in need.



Field teams continued to provide thousands of hot meals with the support of the Qatar Fund for Development.

Ahmed Fadil Farouk, director of the Arqin Crossing, thanked QC for the meals it provided to those stranded at the crossing.

Engineer Hossam El-Din Mahmoud Abdel-Rahim, one of the stranded individuals, explained that he came to the Arqin crossing from Khartoum because of the fighting, and he thanked QC for standing by the affected Sudanese people in the difficult circumstances.

Amal Ahmed, who stayed at the Arqin crossing for three days, thanked the QC teams for the critical support. The field teams of QC, with the support of the QFFD, has been providing hot meals to those affected by the fighting and those stranded in the city of Port Sudan.

Since the beginning of last week, they began distributing 20,000 meals at a rate of 3,000 per day for a week, to those stranded and awaiting evacuation in Port Sudan in complex human conditions.

Awqaf minister meets Algerian counterpart



HE the Minister of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs Ghanem bin Shaheen al-Ghanem met yesterday with the visiting Algerian Minister of Religious Affairs and Endowments Youssef Belmahdi and the accompanying delegation. The meeting discussed aspects of co-operation and ways to support and develop them in the Islamic affairs field. (QNA)

Public Prosecution wins 'HH Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award'

The Public Prosecution won the "HH Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award" in its 22nd session for its excellence in the digital transformation sector.

Crown Prince of Kuwait Sheikh Mishal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah handed over the award to HE the Attorney-General Dr Issa bin Saad al-Jafali al-Nuaimi at a ceremony at Bayan Palace in Kuwait.

The Public Prosecution received this award in recognition of its excellence in digital transformation in the judiciary field, providing modern electronic services which enhances the efficiency of the Public Prosecution in carrying out its competencies and speeding up judicial procedures. It is also for achieving criminal justice in the country, in accordance



with Qatar National Vision 2030. The Informatics Award was judged by an arbitration board that includes a distinguished group of technical experts and specialists in the field of informatics from academic bodies and e-governments in the Arab world. (QNA)

Vietnam president receives credentials of Qatar's envoy



Vietnamese President Vo Van Thuong received yesterday the credentials of Khalid Ali Abdullah Abel as Qatar's ambassador in Hanoi. The ambassador conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the president, and his wishes of good health and happiness to him, and continued progress and prosperity to the government and people of Vietnam. President Thuong entrusted the ambassador with his greetings to the Amir, wishing His Highness good health and happiness, and Qatar continued progress and development. (QNA)

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MOHAMMAD BORHAN UDDIN
MOHAMMAD ALI

holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. EK0168381
QID No. 27605002742

hereby change my name

from

MOHAMMAD BORHAN UDDIN
MOHAMMAD ALI

to

MOHAMMAD BORHAN UDDIN

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

QFFD pact with Lebanon hospital to aid more than 1,000 critical patients

Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) has signed an agreement with St John's Hospital in Lebanon to provide quality health services to critical patients.

The agreement will benefit more than 1,000 critical patients as they will have access to quality health services and contribute to boosting the demand for health facilities.

The Fund's work within the hospital will develop the efficiency of health services for patients. Sharing the costs of health together with external assistance would compensate for the shortfall in the contributions of guarantor funds, and boost the demand for health facilities in order to continue their humanitarian tasks and customary professionalism. (QNA)



Korean rescued after falling from ship

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) yesterday announced that the Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue teams succeeded in rescuing a Korean national after he fell from a merchant ship that

had entered Qatari waters.

In a Twitter statement, the ministry said the "Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue teams of the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security, the Internal Security Force (Le-

khwiya), the Amiri Naval Forces and the Amiri Air Force rescued, in a joint operation, a Korean citizen after he fell from a merchant ship that had entered Qatari waters."

The statement explained that

the joint search and rescue teams acted immediately after receiving information and intensified search operations at the location of the ship and surrounding marine areas by using specialised marine gadgets and helicopters.

The missing person was rescued from the water after a 24-hour joint effort, following which he was transported directly to Hamad Hospital for necessary medical aid, the statement added. (QNA)

Kahramaa signs pact with DI

The Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation (Kahramaa) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Centre of Excellence for Training and Consulting at Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI).

The MoU, according to an official Kahramaa press statement, was signed with the aim of building bridges of co-operation and co-ordination between the two sides in order to invest in available opportunities and joint work in research fields and various scientific and training events.

The agreement extends for three years, renewable, while ensuring mutual benefit for the two institutions.

The first training programme designed under this co-operation, titled 'Kahramaa Excel', will be launched during the current week with the aim of preparing a group of managers and heads of departments to fulfil the job competencies specified for the leadership track in line with its vision and objectives. The programme will last for three months in various phases.

This agreement represents a starting point for a constructive relationship that will support training programmes to qualify employees. The memorandum intends mainly to benefit from the training and development courses offered by the Centre of Excellence at the institute, which will design and implement training courses according to the needs of the institution.

Also, there will be seminars, conferences and workshops on topics of common interest. The centre will also carry out studies and provide advice to Kahramaa within the contexts related to its work.

For its part, Kahramaa will provide practical and summer training for the institute's students according to the requirements of their study programmes and specialisations in addition to arranging field visits to its facilities and project sites. This agreement will also open a wide horizon for the exchange of experiences in the areas of administrative and institutional development between the two parties.

The signing ceremony was attended by Dr Abdullah Mohsen al-Wahidi, director of Shared Services Affairs at Kahramaa, and Iman al-Sulaiti from Doha Institute for Graduate Studies.

Dr al-Wahidi said Kahramaa gives much importance to co-ordination with academic bodies working in the field of knowledge production and scientific research.



Officials mark the partnership.

QNB celebrates graduation of employees from Kawader Malia Programme 2023

QNB has celebrated the graduation of 10 of its employees in the eighth batch of the National Kawader Malia programme, 'Financial Cadres' 2023, launched by Qatar Finance and Business Academy, in partnership with the Qatar Central Bank and a number of other strategic partners.

The programme aims to professionally empower Qatari nationals who have recently graduated or who have recently joined the labour market, in the fields of finance and business, in addition to encouraging future generations to take an interest in these specialisations and develop their aspirations and skills by providing distinguished professional development programmes and certificates from internationally accredited centres.

The bank's diamond sponsorship of the programme, which aims to qualify graduates or recently recruited employees to assume leadership positions in the financial services sector, is in line with the development goals that support the Qatar National Vision 2030.

In this context, Abdullah Nasser al-Khalifa, senior executive vice-president, QNB Group Human Capital, said: "As a leading financial institution locally and internationally, we are keen to participate in supporting and developing a generation of Qatari leaders in the financial sector."

"We are proud of the graduation of a number of our qualified employees in the eighth batch of Kawader Malia Programme 2023, which will constitute a milestone in their professional future. These types of programmes



Glimpses from the graduation ceremony.



motivate many to develop their skills and move forward towards achieving their ambitions in line with market requirements and the state's national vision."

The graduation ceremony was organised by Qatar Finance and Business Academy in the presence of senior officials from the banking and financial sector.

Nando's Qatar finalist to compete in global showdown in Malaysia

Nando's Qatar, the home of legendary flame-grilled Peri-Peri chicken, announced the tremendous success of its National Master Grillers Challenge. The exhilarating event unfolded at the Nando's C-ring road branch in Financial Square, where exceptional grillers from diverse Nando's restaurants across Qatar gathered to demonstrate their outstanding abilities and vie for the highly sought-after top spot.



The Nando's Master Grillers Challenge serves as a global platform where Nando's grillers come together to celebrate and showcase the art of grilling. This annual event gathers the finest grillers from more than 20 countries, all vying to demonstrate their exceptional grilling skills. Each participant is evaluated based on their mastery of the specific operational expertise that defines Nando's flame-grilled, Peri-Peri Chicken and sets it apart.

The judging criteria encompass various aspects, including hygiene practices, efficient racking and loading of grills, achieving perfect flame grill marks, consistent skin coloring, and expert chopping techniques. Furthermore, the chicken prepared by the grillers must meet high standards in terms



Winner Bishnu Gurung, National Master Griller, Nando's Salwa Road branch

of tenderness, juiciness, and temperature. The competition ultimately aims to recognize and honor those grillers who consistently deliver outstanding results and uphold the essence of Nando's unique grilling tradition.

Bishnu Gurung, hailing from the Salwa Road branch of Nando's, blazed a trail of success in a sizzling competition, ultimately emerging as the triumphant victor and earning the prestigious title of National Master Griller. Bishnu's unrivaled grilling prowess, coupled with an unwavering passion and commitment to achieving perfection, rightfully earned him this esteemed recognition. As a result of his remarkable achievement, Bishnu Gurung will have the opportunity to represent Nando's Qatar on the international stage in Malaysia later this year. There, he will go head-to-head against the crème de la crème of Nando's grillers from around the world, showcasing his skills and vying for top honours.

Balu Subramonian, Head of Operations at Nando's Qatar, said: "The National Master Grillers Challenge is a testament to Nando's commitment to excellence and unwavering dedication to providing unparalleled culinary experiences for our fans. This annual event is an embodiment of Nando's values, celebrating the art of grilling and the passion that

goes into creating our flame-grilled Peri-Peri chicken. It also highlights how Nando's positively impacts the lives of our people, nurturing talent and fostering a sense of camaraderie among our team members, or as we like to call them – Nandocas."

Sajed Sulaiman, Vice Chairman & Managing Director of Oryx Group and Nando's Qatar, expressed gratitude to all participants and the dedicated Nando's team behind the National Master Grillers Challenge for their contributions



to the event's resounding success. While honouring the winner, he took the opportunity to commend the entire team for their unwavering dedication in embodying Nando's core values of Pride, Passion, Courage, Integrity, and Family.

"Nando's Qatar extends a special appreciation to Mazzraty – its local poultry partner – for their invaluable support as a co-sponsor of the event. Mazzraty's commitment to delivering excellent products aligns perfectly with Nando's vision of providing customers with an exceptional dining experience that captures the true essence of Nando's," Sajed added.



The event not only stands as a platform to celebrate the exceptional culinary skills of talented grillers within Nando's, but also serves as a testament to the company's unwavering commitment to excellence. It showcases Nando's dedication to delighting customers with tantalizing and mouthwatering meals, crafted with passion and precision. By showcasing the mastery of its grillers, Nando's demonstrates its ongoing pursuit of culinary excellence and its commitment to providing an unforgettable dining experience to its valued patrons.

Qatar Airways partners with MoECC to take part in Qatar Whale Shark Conservation Forum

Under the patronage of HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Sheikh Dr Faleh bin Nasser bin Ahmed bin Ali al-Thani, Qatar Airways, Qatar Tourism and Discover Qatar joined forces to support the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) in organising the Qatar Whale Shark Conservation Forum 2023. The event on biodiversity attempted to educate attendees on the preservation of this endangered species. The two-day forum was held in partnership with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) on May 22 and 23.

Qatar is home to one of the largest whale shark congregations on Earth. These are gentle and beautiful creatures, which congregate in huge numbers in the waters off the coast of Qatar, between the months of April and September. They are unfortunately under threat due to unregulated fishing worldwide. The forum intends to inform and spread awareness on these creatures. Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive HE Akbar al-Baker said: "Qatar has the largest concentration of whale sharks in the world; making it the only place visitors can see so many in a single sighting. Unfortunately, the marine life

is in danger due to the unregulated fishing seen all over the world. As part of Qatar Airways' commitment toward the environment, we fully support the forum's initiative and as the official Airline Partner, we are proud to have invited a number of experts and speakers in the field of whale sharks at regional and neighbouring levels to address the issue and raise awareness." As part of the social responsibility towards the environment, and in order to spread awareness about the whale sharks, the Qatar Whale Shark Conservation Forum is pushing for preservation efforts, as well as raising the attendees' awareness about



these creatures. The information includes marine biodiversity and the importance of protecting these endangered species. Further, Qatar pushes for responsible tourism, where visitors can safely observe, as well as learn about these gentle creatures. To enjoy the unique experience yourself, guests can book Discover Qatar's once-in-a-lifetime tours to view Whale Sharks This Summer. For more information and to book, visit www.discoverqatar.qa/wsoq Discover Qatar is the only operator in Qatar licensed by Qatar Tourism to operate this eco-tour.



Officials at the workshop.

PHCC holds diabetes research workshop in co-operation with Harvard University

The Primary Health Care Corporation's (PHCC) Workforce Development and Training (WDT) Directorate organised a workshop for the first time in Qatar, in co-operation with the Joslin Diabetes Centre at Harvard Medical School, US, the world's largest diabetes research centre. Joslin has the world's largest team of board-certified physicians treating diabetes and its complications, as well as the largest staff of Certified Diabetes Educators anywhere in the world. Joslin also supports the world's largest diabetes research team with more than 40 faculty level investigators for a total of more than 300 researchers. Layla al-Jasmi, executive director of PHCC's WDT, spoke at the workshop that saw active participation of more than 360 partakers, including fam-

ily physicians, general practitioners, pharmacists, and supportive healthcare practitioners from PHCC, Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), Qatar Red Crescent, and the military and police clinics. A number of attendees from the private sector and a number of senior figures in the medical field were also present as guests of honour from HMC, Qatar Diabetes Association, and Qatar Red Crescent. Al-Jasmi stressed that diabetes is a growing global challenge for healthcare. The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) estimated that 537mn adults (20-79 years) are living with diabetes in 2021. This number is predicted to rise to 643mn by 2030 and 783mn by 2045. Diabetes is also a major health challenge for Qatar.

To address this serious and growing problem, Qatar's National Diabetes Strategy (QNDS) was developed. One of the key commitments of the QNDS is to "build and maintain a strong and empowered workforce to deliver the future model of diabetes care where every healthcare professional has a robust understanding of diabetes and diabetes care options." She added "the organisation of such educational activities, including these training and educational events and workshops, along with the application of interprofessional education, supports our vision to develop a highly skilled and enthusiastic workforce in the field of healthcare, including the strategic commitments of PHCC towards Qatar National Vision 2030."

HMC marks World Hypertension Day

To raise awareness of hypertension and promote the importance of knowing accurate blood pressure measurement methods, Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) highlighted World Hypertension Day by organising an awareness activity at Hamad General Hospital's Outpatient Department. This year, the theme was "Measure Your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control It, Live Longer". World Hypertension Day is designated and initiated by The World Hypertension League, which is itself an umbrella to organisations of 85 national hypertension societies and leagues. "Hypertension, also known as high or raised blood pressure, is a condition in which the blood vessels have persistently raised pressure. Blood is carried from the heart to all parts of the body in the vessels.

Each time the heart beats, it pumps blood into the vessels. Blood pressure is created by the force of blood pushing against the walls of blood vessels as it is pumped by the heart. The higher the pressure, the harder the heart has to pump," explained, Dr Arif Idris Fadul Mutwali, senior consultant physician and nephrologist, HMC. He explained that hypertension is a serious medical condition and can increase the risk of heart, brain, kidney and other diseases. "High blood pressure is a major cause of premature death worldwide, with upwards of one in four men and one in five women having the condition. The burden of hypertension is felt disproportionately in low- and middle-income countries, where two thirds of cases are found, largely due to increased risk factors in those populations in recent decades. Around

half of people living with hypertension are unaware of their condition, putting them at risk of avoidable medical complications and death," he noted. "We are committed to creating awareness and prevention of chronic diseases such as hypertension by highlighting World Hypertension Day because many people with the condition do not notice symptoms and may be unaware there is a problem. Symptoms can include early morning headaches, nosebleeds, irregular heart rhythms, vision changes, and buzzing in the ears. More severe forms may exhibit fatigue, nausea, vomiting, confusion, anxiety, chest pain, and muscle tremors. If left untreated, hypertension can cause persistent chest pain (also called angina), heart attacks, heart failure, and an irregular heartbeat, which can lead to sudden death," Dr Mutwali explained.



HMC highlights the risks of high blood pressure.

Preparations complete as 13,497 students gear up to take General Secondary Exams

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has completed all preparations for the start of the end-of-semester exams "first round" for the General and Specialised Secondary Certificates for the academic year 2022-23, which will start on Sunday, May 28, and will continue until June 7. In an interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA), Assistant Undersecretary for Evaluation Affairs at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education Khaled Abdullah al-Harqan said 13,497 students will take the examinations this year at 77 centres at schools. Early preparations included the completion of setting exam questions for the general secondary certificate, in a balanced manner, by specialised teams formed for this purpose from the education and evaluation sectors of the ministry, as well as completing the printing and packaging of the questions, so that it will be ready for the start of the exams next Sunday morning. Al-Harqan stressed that the MoEHE attaches great importance to the safety and confidentiality of the General Secondary Certificate exams, its strength and efficiency and the interest of the student. He pointed out that all exam questions for each subject are sent to schools early on the morning of the exam itself, and are delivered in coordination with the schools. In addition, there are controls for opening question boxes and envelopes inside schools at a specific time within the responsibilities of school administrations under the supervision of representatives and specialists of the evaluation sector. With regard to the committees charged with correcting test questions and evaluating grades, he said that the selection of teachers assigned to this task has been completed, bearing in mind that the correction process takes place in the evening on the day of the test itself within the committees designated for this purpose. Regarding the organisational matters related to exams, school committees have been formed and they are responsible for the process of supervising and monitoring exams in schools. He urged the school administration to explain the various controls and procedures related to the proper conduct of exams to students and work to provide the appropriate environment for them to perform their exams with ease and comfort and in an atmosphere that motivates them to succeed and excel. He also advised parents to help their children study and provide everything needed at home to get the highest scores and stand by them during the exam period. Students were also urged to work hard. Al-Harqan reassured all parents and students, that the ministry is keen on ensuring that every student gets their full right. There are specialised committees for reviewing and auditing, ensuring correctness and safety of correction, monitoring and estimating grades, and ensuring the safety of procedures for all these stages until the results are announced, within the examination controls so that each student gets their full right. On whether the exam controls include instructions on how to deal with exceptional cases, such as illness, for example, the assistant undersecretary said that there are special committees in schools to deal with such cases according to the circumstances of each case. He said students should double their efforts and stay away from anything that distracts them from studying for their exams, so that they may achieve success and excellence. (QNA)



Khaled Abdullah al-Harqan

Mannai Heavy Equipment receives Eicher Overall Best Distributor - Middle East Award for the fourth consecutive year



During the Annual Dealer Conference - Eicher 2023 Ceremony in Dubai last week, Mannai Heavy Equipment of Mannai Trading Company WLL, a member of Mannai Corporation QPSC, has been awarded the Overall Best Distributor - Middle East Award 2022-23 for the fourth consecutive year, it exemplifies the success and commitment of Mannai Heavy Equipment in the industry, an annual recognition given to dealerships that deliver industry best practice, outstanding customer service and sales performance, in addition to two other

awards, the 25 Years of Association and the International Technical Skill Contest (Master Technician - MTECH) Award which has been awarded to the service team who demonstrated exemplary performance during a competition with other overseas teams. Speaking on the occasion, Rajesh Krishnan, Group General Manager, Mannai Auto Group, said that "Mannai will continue to raise the bar for customer satisfaction while continuing to deliver superior value to its customers". Hashim Elgendi, Deputy General Manager - Sales of the Heavy Equipment

Division said: "Mannai has played a major role in supporting Qatar's development and booming economy, and reassured that HEG will constantly pursue to deliver superior economic benefits to its customers, partners, employees, and the community. Volvo - Eicher Commercial Vehicles, the giant vehicle manufacturer in India, produces a large range of commercial vehicles including all types of trucks starting from light to heavy duties, in addition to the bus ranges 35 and 66 seaters buses.

Sheikha Dr Aisha featured in *Time* magazine

Time magazine has featured Sheikha Dr Aisha bint Faleh al-Thani, founder and chairperson of Al Faleh Educational Holding (AFEH) in its May 2023 edition, a statement said. The focus was on Qatar hosting the World Cup and why Qatar is an attractive investment destination. Sheikha Dr Aisha commented: "With Qatar successfully hosting the 2022 World Cup, we are looking way beyond 2030 now, our mission is to provide future generations the skill they will need to build on the dream behind Vision 2030". When asked about listing the company on the Qatar Stock Exchange Venture market, Sheikha Dr Aisha said: "Al Faleh Educational Holding's listing was a great success. Our share price increased by 50% on the first day, and I was delighted to see a number of foreign funds investing in the company, in particular from the education sector." AFEH has made waves across the country's education sector in recent years by championing diversity and inclusion, as



Sheikha Dr Aisha bint Faleh al-Thani

well as providing high-quality educational products and services to students of all backgrounds and ages within its schools and university. Earlier this year Sheikha Dr Aisha was recognised by Forbes Middle East in its '100 Most Powerful Businesswomen' for 2023. The institution has made significant strides in education over the years, becoming the first woman-led Qatari company to go public, and the first educational institution to be listed on the stock exchange. Notably, AFEH is Shariah compliant, making it a popular choice for Muslim students. "Although we are part of a sector and business characterised primarily by long term investment, we are proud that we have made a number of achievements throughout the last 20 years," the chairperson said. "Al Faleh Educational Holding is moving forward with its expansion activities, while maintaining quality and applying the highest standards in the operation and management of

educational campuses, to achieve the growth and returns to shareholders," she added. In 2017, AFEH invested in higher education by partnering with the top-ranked University of Aberdeen to establish AFG College, the first British university to open a campus in Qatar offering undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes that focus on employability and discipline offering in Qatar that meets local, regional and international demand. In April 2021, AFEH's dedication to education and development was also demonstrated by its listing on the Qatar Stock Exchange Venture Market, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030. AFEH's subsidiaries include Doha International Kindergarten and Doha Academy Al Waab, Doha Academy Salwa branch and AFG College with the University of Aberdeen. All of Doha Academy Schools are accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the statement added.

HBKU partners with QDB on Education City Innovative Entrepreneurship Programme

Hamad Bin Khalifa University's (HBKU) Innovation Centre and Qatar Development Bank (QDB) recently launched a partnership to deliver the 2nd cycle of the Education City Innovative Entrepreneurship Programme, a statement said. Held annually, the 18-month programme is a long-term initiative that gives entrepreneurial-minded members of the Qatar Foundation community the support they need to commercialise business ideas that address the priority ideas outlined in the Qatar Strategic Development Strategy.

Each participant will be offered capacity building training, one-to-one consultations, eligibility to apply for QR100,000 seed funding exclusive to the Programme and mentoring sessions.

Under the partnership, five of the most promising participants will be awarded the opportunity to join QDB's flagship Lean Startup programme – delivered by Qatar Business Incubation Centre – enabling them to transform their ideas into innovative startups. The



programme also gives entrepreneurs access to seasoned mentors and the chance to pitch their ideas to investors.

"The HBKU community is home to talented minds that aspire to affect positive change in their communities. Partnering with QDB enables us to help them find their entrepreneurial spirit and provide them the support necessary to embark on fulfilling careers as entrepreneurs at the head of locally grown businesses," said Abeer

Salman al-Hammadi, HBKU's director of Innovation Centre and Economic Development.

"Our collaboration with HBKU's Innovation Centre enables us to extend our backing to an increasing number of budding entrepreneurs and SMEs, further advancing our mission of fostering Qatar's knowledge-based economy and strengthening its position as a regional entrepreneurship hub where aspiring innovators find the necessary support to deliver on their ambi-

tions," said Dr Hamad Salem Mejjegheer, executive director of Advisory and Incubation at QDB.

Through multidisciplinary academic programmes and national research capabilities, HBKU prepares future leaders with an entrepreneurial mindset to shape novel solutions for positive, global impact.

The university inspires a mindset of continuous growth and participation in an environment of lifelong self-development, the statement added.

WCM-Q telehealth elective aims for future of healthcare delivery

Third- and fourth-year medical students from Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) participated in the second iteration of an in-demand elective on telehealth, further demonstrating the growing importance of remote technology-driven patient care.

Titled "Telehealth and Tele Simulation Clinical Elective," the two-week online elective was held in collaboration with the Weill Cornell Medicine Centre for Virtual Care (CVC) in New York.

The course was designed to encourage medical students to learn about and practice conducting remote interprofessional simulated patient evaluations with the aid of diverse technologies, emphasising the impact of telehealth, telemedicine, and technologies on provider-to-provider and provider-to-patient communication and interpersonal skills.

The elective enables students to describe and differentiate between telehealth and telemedicine; define and apply principles of interprofessional education and collaborative practice; understand and assess the benefits and suitability of using augmented and mixed reality as emergent technologies; conduct virtual video patient encounters and interprofessional patient



Dr Stella Major

evaluations; view examples of strategies used by telemedicine practitioners to evaluate and provide patient care; and become familiar with the development of and challenges faced by different countries in delivering patient care through telehealth/telemedicine.

In addition, students learned about the importance of lighting, screen movement, and presentation skills when conducting patient encounters, along with other logistical, ethical, and legal considerations.

The course was sponsored by Dr Stella Major, associate professor of family medicine in clinical medicine and director of the Clinical Skills and Simulation Lab at WCM-Q.

Guest faculty included Sweden-based Joseph Yang, digital educator and instructional designer; and from the CVC, Dr Kristie Busch, assistant professor of clinical emergency medicine; Dr Peter Greenwald, assistant professor of clinical emergency medicine, vice chair of clinical strategy and innovation, and director of telemedicine in the WCM Department of Emergency Medicine; Denzil Coleman, administrative director; and Dr Neel Naik, director of emergency medicine simulation education and assistant professor of clinical emergency medicine in the Department of Emergency Medicine.

Dr Major said: "The Covid-19 pandemic has taught us to be more mindful of how we spend our time and to explore more effective ways of delivering and ensuring healthcare continuity. I believe that the way forward is hybrid patient care. With this in mind, technology is now more central to our practice than ever before, and telehealth is increasingly becoming an important part of our future medical profession. Telehealth is a tool our medical students will need to become familiar with – it will be as critical as teaching our students how to use the stethoscope."

Al-Ansari & Associates win key ME award

Al-Ansari & Associates, a Doha-based law firm, has emerged as the winner of the prestigious Corporate Team of the Year award in the Middle East, surpassing 10 international firms in the process, a statement said. The firm's commendable achievement can be attributed to its instrumental role in drafting significant legislation that has facilitated the hosting of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, including the necessary executive decisions and circulars for the legislation's implementation. The award ceremony, organised by Law.com and the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) Middle East, took place in Dubai. The ACC is an esteemed international association with a membership base of over 35,000 professionals across 85 countries. Law.com International is a renowned legal authority delivering comprehensive coverage of news and insights from the UK and offers global perspectives on the legal industry. Al-Ansari & Associates embarked on their work for the World Cup back in 2014 when they were entrusted by the



Salman A al-Ansari

Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy to conduct a thorough review of Qatar's existing legislation. This review aimed to identify legal gaps and served as the foundation for the drafting of Law No. 10 of 2021, known as the "Enabling Law," which outlined the

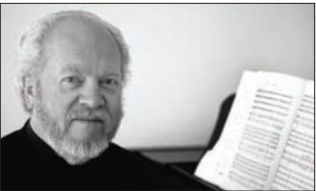
necessary measures for hosting the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

Expressing his delight on the occasion, Salman A al-Ansari, partner at Al-Ansari & Associates, stated, "We are thrilled to receive the Corporate Team of the Year award in the Middle East, recognising our contribution to the world's largest sporting event. It is important to acknowledge that this award is a testament not only to our hard work but also to the collaborative efforts of our partners at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Company, and the Security Committee."

Over the years, Al-Ansari & Associates have actively participated in various international competitions and have been the recipients of numerous accolades for their exceptional legal services, particularly from 2014 to 2023. Additionally, they were also nominated, alongside several international law offices, for the prestigious Law Firm of the Year Award in the employment category at the 2023 Middle East Legal Awards, the statement added.

Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra concert on Saturday

The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) is presenting a concert featuring Brahms' intimate colossus Concerto No. 2 in B-Flat Major, and de Falla's inspired El Sombrero de Tres Picos (Three-Cornered Hat) on Saturday (May 27) at Qatar National Convention Centre's auditorium 3 at 7.30pm. Performing under the baton of Pablo Mielgo, the orchestra will be joined by German classical pianist Gerhard Oppitz. Mielgo is considered one of the most prominent Spanish musicians of his generation, not only as a conductor, but also as the founder of international music projects. Oppitz was born in Frauenau (in the Bavarian Forest) in 1953. At the age of five, he began to play the piano and debuted with a



Gerhard Oppitz

performance of Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor when he was eleven. In 1977, he was awarded first prize at the Artur Schnabel Competition, after convincing an international jury, with Artur Schnabel himself as its head, by performing the fifth Piano concerto by Beethoven and the First Piano Concerto by Brahms. This event marked the beginning



Pablo Mielgo

of his worldwide concert activities – recitals in the major music centres of Europe, America and East Asia, as well as collaborations with the most renowned conductors and orchestras. His main interest is the classical-romantic repertoire, although he has always devoted himself to music of the twentieth century, as well, playing premier performances of several piano concertos.

Executive Chef Dinner Series at Hakkasan Doha

In celebration of Hakkasan being the recipient of one Michelin star each at Hakkasan in London's Mayfair and Hanway Place, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi, the modern Cantonese cuisine brand brings a first-of-its-kind dinner series that marks this amazing feat.

An open-to-the-public, reservations only event, the Hakkasan Executive Chef Dinner Series brings together four executive and head chefs at Hakkasan Doha on June 7, a statement said yesterday.

The dinner series will include the top Hakkasan chefs from Mayfair and Hanway Place, London, Dubai and Abu Dhabi. These seasoned culinary leaders took inspiration from timeless signature entrees, mixed in their own locality's flavour and added decades of collective expertise to design a curated Cantonese menu only to be found at Hakkasan. The special four-

course menu, with two dishes served per course, represents each of the four Hakkasan culinary masters.

The Hakkasan culinary team involved and their contribution to this collaboration includes the following chefs, who will also be at the helm of the kitchen as they collectively host this unique dinner series per market.

The menu includes: Chef Michael Zhen, head chef, Hakkasan Mayfair: Dim sum two style with lobster and cheese bean curd wrap, gratin scallop dumpling, spicy curry sauce; Wild freshwater king prawn salad with sakura cress, pickled purple and orange carrot, plum and sweet chilli dressing.

Chef Andrew Lee, executive chef, Hakkasan Abu Dhabi: Supreme snow crab saffron soup, urchin king crab dumpling; Peking duck duet includes Peking



Chef Andrew Lee, executive chef, Hakkasan Abu Dhabi

duck with caviar, black truffle roasted duck puff.

Chef Andy Toh, executive chef, Hakkasan Dubai: Wok-seared wild John Dory with flying fish roe, selection Kristal caviar, heirloom carrot confit, carrot broth; Sauteed seasonal



Chef Andy Toh, executive chef, Hakkasan Dubai

asparagus, seasonal mushroom with fermented black bean, Lao Gan Ma chilli.

Chef Keith Lim, head chef, Hakkasan Hanway Place: Braised Wagyu short rib with baby onion, pickled mustard, Supreme stock ribbon noodle,



Chef Keith Lim, head chef, Hakkasan Hanway Place

soft-boiled egg with Nameko mushroom, shaved black truffle.

Culinary oversight is provided by executive chef Andrew Yeo from Tao Group Hospitality's London culinary team and pastry direction by chef Romain



Chef Michael Zhen, head chef, Hakkasan Mayfair

Cornu, global corporate pastry chef, Tao Group Hospitality.

In 2022, both Hakkasan Dubai and Hakkasan Abu Dhabi were awarded one Michelin Star each in the Michelin Guide's debut in both Middle East markets. Hakkasan Dubai and Hak-

kasan Abu Dhabi join London's Hakkasan Hanway Place and Hakkasan Mayfair as Michelin Star recipients within the Hakkasan brand.

Less than two years after Hakkasan Hanway Place opened, it gained a Michelin star, making it the first Chinese restaurant in the UK to be recognised by the prestigious Michelin Guide. When Hakkasan opened in Mayfair in 2012, it went on to be awarded a Michelin star less than a year after opening. Both London restaurants have retained their stars to date.

The Executive Chef Dinner Series at Hakkasan Doha at The St Regis Doha is priced at QR528 per person and open-to-the-public for reservations. More information is available from +974 4446 0170 or through <https://hakkasan.com/doha/reservations/>, <https://hakkasan.com/doha/> or via Instagram @hakkasandoha

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Regulators dust off rulebooks to tackle generative AI

As the race to develop more powerful artificial intelligence services like ChatGPT accelerates, some regulators are relying on old laws to control a technology that could upend the way societies and businesses operate.

The European Union is at the forefront of drafting new AI rules that could set the global benchmark to address privacy and safety concerns that have arisen with the rapid advances in the generative AI technology behind OpenAI's ChatGPT.

But it will take several years for the legislation to be enforced. "In absence of regulations, the only thing governments can do is to apply existing rules," said Massimiliano Cinnaghi, a European data governance expert at consultancy BIP.

"If it's about protecting personal data, they apply data protection laws, if it's a threat to safety of people, there are regulations that have not been specifically defined for AI, but they are still applicable."

In April, Europe's national privacy watchdogs set up a task force to address issues with ChatGPT after Italian regulator Garante had the service taken offline, accusing OpenAI of violating the EU's GDPR, a wide-ranging privacy regime enacted in 2018.

ChatGPT was reinstated after the US company agreed to install age verification features and let European users block their information from being used to train the AI model.

The agency will begin examining other generative AI tools more broadly, a source close to Garante told Reuters. Data protection authorities in France and Spain also launched in April probes into OpenAI's compliance with privacy laws.

They aim to apply existing rules from copyright and data privacy to two key issues: the data fed into models and the content they produce

Generative AI models have become well known for making mistakes, or "hallucinations", spewing up misinformation with uncanny certainty.

Such errors could have serious consequences. If a bank or government department used AI to speed up decision-making, individuals could be unfairly rejected for loans or benefit payments. Big tech companies including Alphabet's Google and Microsoft Corp had stopped using AI products deemed ethically dicey, like financial products.

Regulators aim to apply existing rules covering everything from copyright and data privacy to two key issues: the data fed into models and the content they produce, according to six regulators and

experts in the United States and Europe.

Agencies in the two regions are being encouraged to "interpret and reinterpret their mandates," said Suresh Venkatasubramanian, a former technology adviser to the White House. He cited the US Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) investigation of algorithms for discriminatory practices under existing regulatory powers.

In the EU, proposals for the bloc's AI Act will force companies like OpenAI to disclose any copyrighted material – such as books or photographs – used to train their models, leaving them vulnerable to legal challenges.

Proving copyright infringement will not be straightforward though, according to Sergey Lagodinsky, one of several politicians involved in drafting the EU proposals.

"It's like reading hundreds of novels before you write your own," he said. "If you actually copy something and publish it, that's one thing. But if you're not directly plagiarising someone else's material, it doesn't matter what you trained yourself on."

French data regulator CNIL has started "thinking creatively" about how existing laws might apply to AI, according to Bertrand Pailhes, its technology lead. For example, in France discrimination claims are usually handled by the Défenseur des Droits (Defender of Rights). However, its lack of expertise in AI bias has prompted CNIL to take a lead on the issue, he said.

"We are looking at the full range of effects, although our focus remains on data protection and privacy," he told Reuters.

The organisation is considering using a provision of GDPR which protects individuals from automated decision-making.

"At this stage, I can't say if it's enough, legally," Pailhes said. "It will take some time to build an opinion, and there is a risk that different regulators will take different views."

In Britain, the Financial Conduct Authority is one of several state regulators that has been tasked with drawing up new guidelines covering AI. It is consulting with the Alan Turing Institute in London, alongside other legal and academic institutions, to improve its understanding of the technology, a spokesperson told Reuters.

While regulators adapt to the pace of technological advances, some industry insiders have called for greater engagement with corporate leaders.

Harry Borovick, general counsel at Luminance, a startup which uses AI to process legal documents, told Reuters that dialogue between regulators and companies had been "limited" so far.

"This doesn't be particularly well in terms of the future," he said. "Regulators seem either slow or unwilling to implement the approaches which would enable the right balance between consumer protection and business growth." – Reuters

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"That's Future!
And it's real!"



How will National Blockchain Blueprint aid development of Qatar's IT industry?



By Dr Mohamed Abdallah (left) and Dr Aiman Erbad
Doha

Blockchain has grown in popularity and attention over the past few years, offering a decentralised and distributed digital ledger that records transactions in a secure and transparent manner. The technology has a range of applications across various industries, including finance, healthcare, logistics, and more. As such, countries around the world, including Qatar, are exploring the potential of blockchain technology.

The College of Science and Engineering at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), as well as the College of Engineering at Qatar University (QU), and the Communications and Regulatory Authority jointly developed the National Blockchain Blueprint, aimed at defining the requirements and incentives necessary for the adoption of blockchain technology in Qatar. The blueprint has several goals, including facilitating the emergence of startups and new companies, identifying successful methods through pilot projects, promoting creativity and innovation, and upgrading infrastructure to enable a conducive environment for blockchain technology.

One of the key recommendations of the blueprint is to encourage the development of pilot projects in priority sectors such as Fintech, Energy, and Health. As blockchain technology is still relatively new and experimental, it is essential to test its feasibility, identify technical problems and investigate



Blockchain technology concept with diagram of chain and encrypted blocks with the businessman's hand working with modern technology and digital layer effect as business strategy concept.

potential solutions, and determine the costs associated with switching to a blockchain-based solution. Pilot projects provide opportunities to achieve these goals while also validating the benefits of switching from a centralised to a decentralised solution.

Another way to boost the adoption of blockchain technology is to provide an adequate incubation environment for promising blockchain startups. Qatar has made significant efforts to create a vibrant entrepreneurship ecosystem by establishing important institutions and organisations to help entrepreneurs, including the Qatar Development Bank (QDB), Center for Entrepreneurship (Qatar University), Qatar Business Incubation Center (QBIC), Digital Incubation Center (DIC), Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP), and Qatar Foundation (QF). These organisations offer resources and support for entrepreneurs to develop and launch their business ideas. A recommendation is to create a new consortium-based funding

organisation that involves all stakeholders to promote blockchain-based startups and businesses.

In addition to supporting startups, the blueprint aims to promote creativity and innovation in this field by proposing upgrades to the country's infrastructure, the importing of specialised expertise and competencies, and the inclusion of emerging technologies in the national education system's curricula.

Qatar is already poised to become a hub for advanced research, including in the fields of artificial intelligence and blockchain technology. The country has invested heavily in advanced information and communication technology infrastructure and supported the opening of a regional data centre that provides public cloud services.

To facilitate the deployment and testing of new blockchain applications, one consideration could be hosting a high-performance cloud-based blockchain platform to accelerate prototyping and testing. Another recommendation is to create a physically

distributed blockchain network among different institutions, including ministries and universities, which can serve as a testbed that can also host actual blockchain applications. By having a distributed network, blockchain-based solutions can be tested in a real-world environment, and the risks and potential opportunities can be identified.

The National Blockchain Blueprint can aid in the development of an innovative IT industry within Qatar. By following its recommendations, the country can promote the adoption of blockchain technology in priority sectors, create a conducive environment for blockchain startups and businesses, and upgrade infrastructure to facilitate the deployment and testing of new blockchain applications. Ultimately, this can lead to a range of benefits for the Qatari economy, including increased efficiency, transparency, and security.

● Dr Mohamed Abdallah and Dr Aiman Erbad, Associate Professors at HBKU's College of Science and Engineering.

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Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF), was founded in 2010 as a research-intensive university that acts as a catalyst for transformative change in Qatar and the region while having global impact. Located in Education City, HBKU is committed to building and cultivating human capacity through an enriching academic experience, innovative ecosystem, and unique partnerships. HBKU delivers multidisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programmes through its colleges, and provides opportunities for research and scholarship through its institutes and centres. For more information about HBKU, visit www.hbku.edu.qa

To beat Trump, DeSantis needs an unwieldy coalition

By James Oliphant and Jason Lange
Washington

If Ron DeSantis hopes to defeat Donald Trump and win the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, he will ultimately have to bring every possible anti-Trump voter he can into the fold. But even that likely will not be enough, political analysts say.

DeSantis will also have to pull some supporters away from Trump – and that could make for a tricky balancing act that DeSantis is already struggling with.

"You can't court MAGA while courting the rest of the party," said Chris Stirewalt, a Republican analyst with the American Enterprise Institute, referring to Trump's diehard supporters in his Make America Great Again movement. "That's a difficult decision he is going to have to make."

The Florida governor plans to announce his presidential bid on Wednesday after months of speculation. With deep financial resources and a growing national profile, DeSantis will quickly become Trump's top rival in the race.

But he will have much work to do: Reuters/Ipsos polling conducted this month showed Trump backed by 49% of Republicans and DeSantis 19%.

DeSantis' initial challenge is that the anti-Trump field is fractured. Nikki Haley, Trump's former ambassador to the United Nations, and Tim Scott, a



This combination of pictures shows Ron DeSantis (left) and Donald Trump. (AFP)

US senator from South Carolina, among others, are already in the race, with more candidates such as Trump's former vice-president, Mike Pence, perhaps to follow.

DeSantis' campaign will have to figure out how to appeal to mainstream Republicans turned off by Trump while also finding ways to attract conservative voters who may be unsure about supporting Trump in 2024 even if they have backed him before.

"He can't win the nomination with only non-Trump votes," said Sarah Isgur, a veteran of several Republican presidential campaigns. "He has to peel voters away from Trump."

A longtime Republican pollster, Whit Ayres, argues that the Republican electorate is divided into three segments, with Trump die-hards comprising about 30-35% of the party, anti-Trump voters making up about 10% and the rest somewhere in between – what he calls "maybe-Trumpers."

"It looks to me like DeSantis is going after the

always-Trumpers rather than the maybe-Trumpers," Ayres said.

That's a waste of time, Ayres said. Instead, DeSantis' mission should be to convince "voters looking for an alternative to Trump that he's the right guy."

Stirewalt agrees, saying DeSantis needs to first build a strong base within the segment of the party not aligned with Trump before he can try to broaden his appeal.

"He needs a launchpad," Stirewalt said. DeSantis appears, however, to have chosen to court the party's most conservative voters – and those most likely to stay with Trump – to the dismay of some potential donors and supporters.

As governor, he made it easier for residents to carry concealed weapons. He suggested supporting Ukraine was not in the national interest before backtracking under a fire storm of criticism.

And his continued blood feud with Walt Disney Co., one of the largest employers in Florida, has baffled some traditional Republicans who prefer a hands-off approach to corporate governance.

DeSantis' political team did not respond to a request for comment.

In a telephone call with donors last week, DeSantis said Trump would not be able to beat Democratic President Joe Biden and that he was the only one capable of winning both the Republican primary and the general election, according to the *New York Times*, which listened to the call. – Reuters

Minister affirms Qatar's success in overcoming pandemic challenges

QNA
Geneva

HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari affirmed yesterday that Qatar, under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, has successfully faced the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and has one of the lowest mortality rates while keeping economic activities from the effects of the pandemic.

Speaking at the World Health Assembly held in Geneva, Dr al-Kuwari stressed Qatar's commitment to supporting the World Health Organisation (WHO) in its mission of promoting health and wellness for all people.

The minister thanked the WHO and the member states of the Eastern Mediterranean Region for choosing Qatar to represent the Region in the Executive Board of the WHO.

"On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the WHO, we are celebrating 75 years of achievements and milestones in the field of public health and advances in key disciplines such as the eradication of smallpox, the development of

vaccines and the promotion of public health initiatives globally. We also celebrate our gathering, our solidarity, our consensus and the strategic role we all play through WHO in managing global health," she said.

Dr al-Kuwari added: "We are also celebrating the end of the Covid-19 pandemic as a public health emergency that has raised global concern, recognising that we have all passed a very difficult period where the global health community has had to face unprecedented global challenges with the Covid-19 pandemic and its impacts, which have placed enormous burdens on populations and health systems around the world."

She expressed her appreciation and gratitude to all healthcare and public health workers in our countries, at the WHO and all partner institutions for their dedication and great services, especially in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The Qatar National Vision 2030's focus on health and well-being has led to significant investments in health. All of Qatar's municipalities have been awarded the title of Healthy Cities in addition to Qatar Foundation's Education City and Qatar University, making Qatar the first country in the



HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari speaking at the World Health Assembly held in Geneva yesterday.

world to receive such title," she added.

Dr al-Kuwari said: "We are investing in healthcare workforce development specialities networks and protecting the healthcare professionals. We are committed to contribute from our side to the Sustainable Development Goals such

as ending Tuberculosis by 2030, eliminating maternal to child transmission of HIV and Hepatitis, combating Antimicrobial Resistance, and expanding on multisectoral collaboration as well as bringing additional innovative approaches and technologies to healthcare."

She noted that Qatar de-

livered during the pandemic a healthy, safe and successful FIFA World Cup tournament with no smoking and no alcohol in its stadiums, and that the country strengthened preparedness and response and organised health services in such a way to accommodate all visitors and players needs and ensure

access to services to all of the population. She stressed that Qatar is committed to enhancing the role of the health sector in climate action, taking stock and moving forward as a positively engaged sector.

"We are implementing a Sport for Health project at a national and global level with WHO to promote healthy lifestyles, enhance physical activity, healthy nutrition, and access to mental health services. Building a legacy of knowledge and learning for safe and healthy mass sports gatherings with best practices and innovations will be part of the projects objectives to benefit other countries that are planning to host similar events in the future," Dr al-Kuwari added.

The minister pointed out that Qatar has recently hosted the 5th meeting of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in March and His Highness the Amir has committed \$60mn funding for the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action, which is a ten-year plan to tap into the potential of the LDCs by implementing renewed and strengthened commitments between the LDCs and their development partners, including the private sector, civil society, and governments at all levels.

She said: "We all want a

strong WHO as we embark on the post pandemic phase, enhancing our co-operation and solidarity for a better prepared world especially as we assess the impact of crises, whether they be natural disasters or wars and conflicts threatening health gains and progress everywhere. We are working against the clock on many of our commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals and to the future generations, especially as we face the havoc created by conflict and violence in many parts of the world. For the health and well-being of all, we need to work together toward universal health access and peace."

It is worth mentioning that the meeting's agenda of the 76th session of the World Health Assembly continues in Geneva, Switzerland, from May 21-30. The key theme of this year's meetings is "75 years of improving public health". The Assembly will discuss several key topics themes under WHO's four pillars: One billion more people benefiting from universal health coverage, one billion more people better protected from health emergencies, one billion more people enjoying better health and well-being and more effective and efficient WHO providing better support to countries.

UDST announces eight new programmes

The University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) yesterday announced the launch of eight new programmes.

UDST President Dr Salem Al-Naemi said a press conference that these programmes were created to address the market needs and contribute to economic growth in Qatar and across the world. The new programmes include Bachelor's degree in marine engineering, smart manufacturing engineering, software engineering, and midwifery, in addition to a post-diploma Bachelor in Midwifery, a Master's programme in sustainable tourism management, a post-graduate diploma in inter-professional neonatal intensive care, and a post-graduate diploma in STEM/TVET education. "All new programmes are available for the Fall 2023 semester and are open for admission," Dr Al-Naemi said.

The marine engineering programme is the first occupationally dedicated undergraduate programme in Qatar and exclusive to UDST. It meets international standards and accreditation and relies on a customised curriculum to answer local needs, codes, and practices in Qatar, particularly related to LNG shipping. It will support the mega expansion of LNG production and shipping in Qatar.

The smart manufacturing engineering programme is unique and a necessity in a rapidly evolving economy and will prepare students to integrate high-level skills in managing smart manufacturing and design processes. The software engineering programme will graduate software experts who are needed in the new era of automation impacting almost all industries and businesses. The Master's programme in sustainable tourism is designed to attract students who wish to develop specialist skills in managing sustainable tourism, eco-tourism, and heritage tourism. The midwifery programme is inaugural to Qatar and addresses the country's need to develop "home-grown" midwives who can contribute to its vision for healthy women leading to healthy pregnancies. The programme is aligned with the International Confederation of Midwives standards of education that will prepare midwives to provide skilled, knowledgeable and compassionate care for childbearing women, new-born infants and families across the continuum from pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, birth, postpartum and the early weeks of life. The inter-professional neonatal intensive care programme is developed in response

to Qatar's workforce needs for speciality education to prepare health professionals working with high intensity care neonates in neonatal intensive care units. It will be offered through micro-credentialing to support working health professionals to return to upscale their specialised knowledge and skills to care for vulnerable babies.

The STEM/TVET Education programme is designed for bachelor's degree graduates, industry professionals, and qualified professional educators, who are interested in gaining the knowledge, skills and competencies to work as Educators/Trainers/Lab Instructors/Experiential Learning Facilitators in education environments utilising STEM/TVET curricula and industrial training settings.

"At UDST, we continuously strive to provide world-class education and offer our students programs that give them real-life experiences and prepare them to lead the careers of the future. We are pleased with our increasing number of students which has reached 7,000 so far, and we are happy to see that the new generation and their parents have become more aware of the importance of applied education. Our students learn in simulated environments and get the chance to experience the professional world through our partners' network as well. It is through a critical and integrative learning experience that UDST builds graduates with employable skills," Dr Al-Naemi said.

UDST has more than 60 programs that fall under five main streams: Engineering Technology, Business Management, Computing and Information Technology, Health Sciences and General Education. Applicants can register online through the website "udst.edu.qa". Both Qatari citizens and children of Qatari women are exempt from tuition fees for undergraduate programs. Academic entry criteria differ according to programs, nevertheless students need to present a high school graduation certificate, with an overall average of minimum 60% or an equivalent required score or higher on the UDST English Placement Test, or an equivalent; and completion of the Math Placement Test. Applicants who do not meet the entrance requirements may be considered for the Foundation Program designed to help them acquire the needed skills to enter their programme of choice.



UDST president Dr Salem Al-Naemi announcing the new programmes yesterday. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen

World Cup 'helped promote physical, mental health'



QNA
Geneva

On the sidelines of the 76th World Health Assembly in Geneva, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in partnership with the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC) organised an event to highlight the aims and achievements of the Sport for Health partnership at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The event was attended by HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari and senior representatives from the World Health Organisation and Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, as well as health leaders, organisers of major sporting events and a number of international sports stars.

In October 2021, Qatar, through the MoPH and SC, signed a three-year partnership with the World Health Organisation, working closely with FIFA, to make the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 a beacon for physical and mental health promotion, and a model for ensuring future mega sport events are healthy and safe.

The side event brought key stakeholders together to discuss their experience and planning approach in hosting mega-sporting events including the core components of legacy, and to garner support from all involved stakeholders towards a sustained global movement for sport and health.

During the event, Dr al-Kuwari explained that through the Sport for Health initiative, the partners have created an unprecedented model for or-

ganisers of future mega sports event to follow. "In 2021, the Sport for Health partners came together to set ambitious goals, using the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 as a platform to promote health for people around the world. Sport and health are intrinsically linked, and through the FIFA World Cup, the most watched sporting event in the world, we had a wonderful platform to promote health to communities across the globe."

Dr al-Kuwari said: "This event brings together the participation of many health and sports leaders to share their experiences and to learn from each other how we can use future mega sporting events as catalysts for action to protect and promote health. This is an innovative strategy for achieving our public health objectives

through a truly health in all policies, whole of government approach. I am confident this can be the basis for an innovative and long-lasting international collaboration."

Throughout the event, delegates heard from a number of sports organisers and health leaders, including the Minister of Health of the Republic of Ghana Kwaku Agyemang-Manu; WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region Regional Director, Dr Ahmed al-Mandhari; Assistant Secretary in the Office of Global Affairs for the US Department of Health and Human Services, Loyce Pace; Chair of Qatar's FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Health Strategic Command Group, Dr Ahmed al-Mohamed; and Head of Olympic Games Impact and Legacy, International Olympics Committee, Tania Braga.

Decoupling with China not possible, says Petraeus

General David H Petraeus (retd), partner at KKR and chairman at the KKR Global Institute, spoke on various issues at the third Qatar Economic Forum, powered by Bloomberg, including the return of a multipolar world, China and the Ukraine conflict.

He sat down with John Micklethwait, editor-in-chief, as part of a session four at the forum.

"The continued rise of China and then the friction that has evolved between the West and China is the single biggest issue that has led to this, the resurgence of Russia and the brutal invasion of Ukraine, all these are factors that have returned us to an era of great power rivalry," he said.

"We think decoupling with China is not possible. In fact, last year the US and China had the greatest trade that they

have ever had. China is the number three trading partner for the US behind our two continental US, Mexico and Canada trade agreements, and we are the largest trading partner for China. Selective decoupling is taking place, however, de-risking is what the EU called it."

Regarding Taiwan, he said: "I think it is still unlikely. We get a vote, if you will, we, the West collectively, the US. Deterrence is what we are seeking. And deterrence is founded on two elements. A potential adversary's assessment of your capabilities on the one hand, and your willingness to employ them on the other. It's incumbent on us, and our allies and partners together, to make sure we are transforming our capabilities, hardening, improving resilience in the Indo-Pacific region. And also making sure there aren't doubts about

our willingness to deploy our capabilities we have without trying to be provocative. The desire is to prevent it, to deter it."

Referring to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, General Petraeus said: "Keep in mind that the Russians have suffered losses across the board since the beginning, except for the modest gains they have made in the south. Essentially, they have seized a city that they themselves have destroyed. The Ukrainians are conducting highly impressive, combined arms operations. So, it is not the case at all that they cannot win. Now, I am not saying that they will retake all of it this year, let alone Crimea, but I believe it can position them in a way that, suddenly, I hope (Vladimir) Putin realises that Russia is not going to endure more suffering than the Ukrainians, Europeans and Americans. That's the key factor here."

Sheikha Jawaher meets wife of Paraguayan president

Her Highness Consort of His Highness the Amir Sheikhah Jawaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim al-Thani met yesterday evening at Lusail Palace with Silvana Lopez, wife of the Paraguayan president, and the accompanying delegation. During the meeting, they exchanged cordial talks on a host of topics of mutual concern. (QNA)

Sheikha Moza meets Zanzibar president's wife

Her Highness Sheikhah Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Education Above All Foundation (EAA), met yesterday with Mariam Mwinyi, wife of the Zanzibar president. During the meeting, they discussed the EAA projects and efforts to reduce the number of out-of-school children in her country. (QNA)
PICTURE: Aisha al-Musallam

Sheikha Moza meets Paraguayan president's wife

Her Highness Sheikhah Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Education Above All Foundation (EAA), met yesterday with Silvana Lopez, wife of the Paraguayan president. During the meeting, EAA projects in Paraguay were discussed. Her Highness also thanked the president's wife for her efforts and active role in supporting the EAA projects and the education sector. (QNA)
PICTURE: A R al-Baker

GU-Q students share experiences about museums and research projects with Sheikha Al Mayassa

Qatar Museums (QM) Chairperson HE Sheikhah Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, engaged students and graduates of QF partner Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) in a vibrant discussion about their vital role as key stakeholders in the continued growth and success of QM through their rigorous research and study of politics, economics, history and culture.

In a conversation moderated by GU-Q dean Dr Safwan Masri, and held in the university's library, HE Sheikhah Al Mayassa commended the dean for his efforts in integrating museums into the university's curriculum, particularly highlighting a collaborative class with QM titled 'Theorising Art in Qatar', which took place at different museums in Qatar each week.

Dean Dr Masri noted: "Our students and alumni shared their ideas, research projects, and experiences about museums in Qatar and were inspired to further the cause of art, heritage, and cultural diplomacy as a central pillar of human develop-



ment. We are so grateful for our strategic partnership with QM and HE Sheikhah Al Mayassa's ongoing support for our educational mission."

Alumni and students shared their research projects about cultural diplomacy and art history, and were encouraged by HE Sheikhah Al Mayassa to share their findings and participate in connecting the dots between cultural institutions, society, the private sector, and educational institutions in order to fully transform Qatar into a knowledge society.

Participants also shared their experiences taking the "Theorising Art in Qatar" course. Participant Aisha AlMuhannadi (SFS'23), said: "It was an enriching opportunity...the most amazing part was being able to study in the museums, and touring all the museums that we have in Qatar." For Benjamin Kurian (SFS'23), the course showed him a new side to a country he grew up in. "I have learned a lot more about Qatar, about the history



of this nation and the Arabian Peninsula, and the world in general through my visits to the museums, by looking at each and every piece of art. Having the classes connected to the museum is a change of environment and it enriches your knowledge."

HE Sheikhah Al Mayassa also discussed the purpose and vision behind the evolution of Qatar's museums, spanning three distinct phases over the past 25 years. She noted that the first phase focused on heritage and identity, with the establishment of the Museum of Islamic Art, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art and the National Museum of Qatar.

The second phase concentrated on social development, marked by the recent inauguration of the Sports Museum and the upcoming launch of the Dadu Children's Museum. Finally, the third and final phase will highlight global outreach, featuring the Lusail Museum, the Qatar Auto Museum, and other institutions.

In her final words, HE Sheikhah Al Mayassa encouraged students to think of museums as hubs of learning not just about Qatar, but the world and its interconnections through art, artefacts, and the human experiences they invoke.

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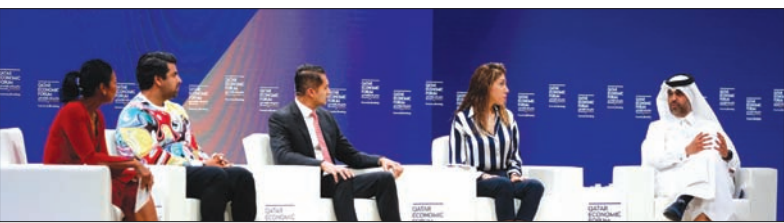
Meet Our Representative At The MES School Doha, Qatar

Qatar 'is developing laws to regulate Artificial Intelligence'

HE the President of the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau (CSGDB) Abdulaziz bin Nasser al-Khalifa underlined that Qatar is pioneering in developing laws regulating the issue of handling Artificial Intelligence (AI) and said the road is clear for the country concerning the utilisation of the AI, asserting that communication is ongoing between the public and private sectors along with the Qatari legislator, to achieve the greatest possible benefit in this field.

In a panel discussion held under the title: "Artificial Intelligence in Real Life" within the ongoing Qatar Economic Forum in Doha, al-Khalifa added that Qatar follows the footsteps of Europe in utilising the AI, integrating it in many applications, setting the fundamental structure and the regulating laws that serve Qatar National Vision 2030, as well as solidifying the smart e-governance.

Qatar has enormous potential in material and human resources, includ-



ing the necessary skills to deal with AI, al-Khalifa pointed out, noting that Qatar managed to harness the AI in organising the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and fan management through the cutting-edge technologies and ancillary applications, and has subsequently established Kawader National E-Recruitment Portal to fulfil the job supply and demand market, in addition to other applications for health tips, to protect the citizens from diseases.

Regarding his anticipation of the future of the AI for job opportunities, al-Khalifa outlined that it is difficult to predict the future, but said such a field will have positive impacts and will create new jobs and refine users and governments' skills by the same token Internet has done. Therefore, AI should be handled well, for harnessing it for the service of humanity, exploring solutions, along with safeguarding data, privacy and security, he said.

For their part, the session's keynote speakers stressed the importance of raising awareness of handling AI which has imposed itself on the reality of daily life and whose utilisation has dramatically increased, after ChatGPT was used as an assisting factor in production and marketing process. (QNA)

Monoprix Qatar rolls out first-ever sensory-friendly shopping in country



A visual from the launch ceremony. Right: The sensory hours, observed every day from 8am to 10am, include various measures.

Ali Bin Ali Holding — Monoprix Qatar has launched 'Sensory Friendly Hours' at its Iconic 2022 outlet.

This makes Monoprix Qatar the first-ever sensory-friendly supermarket in the country. The venture, with the slogan 'Towards a more inclusive community', was launched on May 14 in collaboration with Step by Step Centre for Special Needs.

A press statement from Ali Bin Ali Holding described it as a "proud endeavour for the entire group".

"Shopping can be overwhelming for individuals with sensory sensitivities, and Monoprix's 'Sensory Hours' is committed to providing a safe and comfortable environment for all our customers," the statement noted. The sensory hours, observed every day from 8am to 10am, include dimming store lights, turning off music and announcements over the PA and mitigating cash register noise. Staff are also encouraged to speak more softly and not perform certain tasks, such as gathering grocery carts.

On May 22, the 'Sensory Friendly Hours' at Monoprix Iconic 2022 was officially launched at a gathering in the presence of parents and children from Step by Step Centre, regional general manager of Monoprix Sebastien Farhat and director of Step

by Step Centre for Special Needs Nasreen Sharif. The session was headed by the chair of Psychiatry at Sidra Medicine and chair of Qatar's National Autism Plan Working Group, Dr Waqar Mohamed Waqar Azeem, who provided an overview of sensory processing challenges and their impact. He highlighted the importance of sensory-friendly initiatives and encouraged the community for continued support and participation in sensory-friendly initiatives.

Speaking about the initiative, Farhat said: "At Monoprix, we want everyone to feel welcome in our stores. Not all needs are visible and small changes can make a big difference to our customers. We pride ourselves on creating an inclusive environment that reflects our commitment to contribute towards creating an inclusive community in Qatar."

The Step by Step Centre previously trained the Monoprix staff on how to be sensitive in their approach towards customers with sensory difficulties and how to assist them appropriately when required. Reasonable adjustments were suggested and put in place at the supermarket for the sensory-friendly hours in order to reduce the sensory overload along with the provision of a quiet corner.