



Qatar attends G77+China Summit in Cuban capital



Qatar yesterday took part in the conference of the Group of 77 Plus China (G77+China) Summit, held in the Cuban capital Havana under theme "The current challenges of development, role of science, technology and innovation." HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhatier headed the Qatari delegation to the conference. **(QNA)**

Havana summit highlights Qatar's pivotal role in global diplomacy

Leaders of the Group of 77 Plus China (G77+China) are holding their summit on Sept 15-16 in the Cuban capital, Havana, under the slogan "The Current Development Challenges: The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation," with a high-level Qatari participation.

Everyone is awaiting the outcome of the summit in light of a multitrack movement and joint action at both bilateral levels among the members of the group and multilateral levels of the group as a whole, in a serious attempt to unify positions and visions on the complex and thorny crises that are ravaging all parts of the globe and to get out of them with the lowest costs, as confirmed by experts, academics and researchers whose opinions were polled by the Qatar News Agency (QNA) and who see the summit as a concerted effort that rejects hegemony and unilateralism.

Economic expert Fawaz al-Hajri affirms the importance of Qatar's participation in the summit, owing to its global presence and its balanced and calm diplomacy that has proven successful in resolving hot issues. The participation will give the summit more momentum, given the great efforts the country is making to enhance progress, stability and growth at the global level, he said.

Qatar's participation, he said, in such international summits and forums consolidates its ability and position at the regional and international levels, especially since the Havana summit seeks to enhance communication, co-operation and

With Qatari participation, Havana summit a multitrack action by G77+China to address contemporary challenges

integration among its members, strengthen co-ordination in various economic and political fields, ensure effective participation in reducing poverty rates, promote sustainable development, protect the sovereignty of countries over their natural resources, and promote fair international trade away from any economic system that may increase social and economic marginalisation.

Regarding the timing of the annual summit, Khaled Walid Mahmoud, a doctoral researcher in political science, said that its convening comes in light of many global crises and challenges. It provides a platform for co-operation and discussion of pressing issues; and participation in it enhances Qatari diplomacy as a major player in formulating global policies and contributing to achieving international stability, and it supports finding collective solutions to international issues and challenges, most notably the Palestinian cause, he said.

Dr Mohamed Hamshi, a researcher at the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies, considered the Qatari participation

in Havana summit as a continuation of the country's intense engagement in regional and global politics and its commitment to the concept and role of the effective state, through which it seeks on several levels to confirm its influential diplomatic presence in all global forums and strengthen its multilateral partnerships.

Regarding the summit's contributions to addressing issues of poverty and technical empowerment and strengthening the common interests of the countries of the South, Dr Aisha al-Basri, a researcher at the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies, said Qatar's participation is of great importance in the field of multilateral diplomacy, as it contributes to strengthening and consolidating a unified approach among the countries of the South, transcending cultural, geographical and economic differences.

Writer and economic expert Ahmed Akl stressed the importance of keeping pace with the knowledge economy. Akl added that digitisation has today become the core of the work of various institutions and companies and an essential factor for activating the investment cycle.

Qatar has succeeded in keeping pace with and catching up with these developments. We saw this during its successful hosting of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, in addition to its success in diversifying its economic, production and investment base, which in itself is a unique experience that other countries should emulate, he said. **(QNA)**

Sheikh Faleh meets Algeria's minister



HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Sheikh Dr Faleh bin Nasser bin Ahmed bin Ali al-Thani met in Algiers with Algerian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mohamed Abdelhafid Henni. During the meeting, an agreement was signed between Qatar's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and Algeria's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to rehabilitate Algeria's national centre for the breeding Houbara and endangered animals and wildlife development in the Algerian state of El Bayadh. The two sides also discussed aspects of co-operation between Qatar and Algeria in the fields of environment and wildlife, and ways to support and develop them. Qatar attaches great importance to the preservation of endangered birds and animals, as the Ministry of Environment is making great efforts to preserve and increase their numbers. **(QNA)**

Malta FM receives copy of Qatari envoy's credentials



Foreign and European Affairs and Trade Minister of Malta Ian Borg yesterday received a copy of the credentials of Rashid bin Abdullah al-Duhaimi as Qatar's ambassador in Valletta. **(QNA)**

Qatar partakes in Europol meeting on organised crime



In the framework of the agreement signed between the State of Qatar and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Co-operation (Europol), Qatar attended the Europol conference on organised crime held via video link. Assistant Director of the Communications Department for the Arab and International Police at the Ministry of Interior Major Mohamed Abdullah al-Buainain represented Qatar at the conference, along with a number of officers from the department. The conference aims to explain the procedure of collecting data on crime organisations and developing a methodology for detecting and classifying the most threatening organised criminal groups. The conference is an episode in the ongoing efforts to improve the 'Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA)' methodology. **(QNA)**

Al-Ansari underlines role of small countries in facing global polarisation

QNA
Milano

The Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI) in Milano, Italy, hosted HE the Adviser to Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari in a panel discussion on the role of Qatari foreign policy in a multi-polar world.

HE Dr al-Ansari highlighted the evolving dynamics of global diplomacy, focusing on the critical role played by small- and medium-sized countries, with Qatar's unique position as a prime example in overcoming the complexities of international polarisation.

He said that the current state of international affairs is characterised by a clear sense of international polarisation. He also touched on prevailing narratives that often oversimplify the complex world of global diplomacy. He pointed out that the global geopolitical scene

before World War II was relatively clear, with a bipolar global system dividing countries into East and West during that era. Countries could easily choose a side, even though the non-aligned countries often faced difficult choices.

The Cold War era brought a stark division that forced countries to choose between the Eastern or Western camps, he said, adding that fast forward to the present day, and narratives have evolved. The West's narrative is one of democracy versus authoritarianism, the rules-based international order, and liberal values, while the East rallies around the idea of the Global South, opposition to hegemony, national sovereignty, free markets, and the idea of strong states, he explained.

A closer examination reveals a mismatch between these narratives and the actual actions of states, which leads to an oversimplification of global dynamics, he said. Dr al-Ansari also addressed the pivotal role played by small- and medium-sized countries in the current global



Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari speaking at the panel discussion.

context, saying that those countries find themselves in a unique situation, that does not fit well with the prevailing East and West dualism.

Pointing to Qatar as a prime example, on the complexities of diplomatic obligations for small- and medium-sized countries, he said that Qatar is a major ally of the United States and a mediator in

talks between the United States and Taliban, and deals with Ukraine, Russia, Iran, and China.

Regarding the possible role of small- and medium-sized countries under the East-West model, Dr al-Ansari pointed out that developed small- and medium-sized countries can have a significant impact by supporting less developed

countries through capacity building and alliances, saying that this role is centred around reshaping the global order and reducing tensions between major powers.

Activating the role of small- and medium-sized countries outside the division between East and West is extremely important, Dr al-Ansari stressed adding that the

outdated idea of a single, universally applicable global model has faltered, giving way to diverse paths depending on the interests and circumstances of each country. He emphasised that from an economic standpoint.

Western models must evolve to become more inclusive, he said, pointing that Western values do not suit all countries.

Furthermore, HE Dr al-Ansari focused on the active role played by small- and medium-sized countries in diplomacy, pointing to the model of Qatar in the complex diplomatic interaction of these countries.

He voiced the belief that small- and medium-sized countries are essential participants in preventive diplomacy, mediation, seeking practical solutions, and advocating multilateralism. Small- and medium-sized countries seek to reduce tensions between major powers, he said pointing that these countries' ability to adapt remains essential in dealing with the ever-changing global political landscape.

Lebanon team wins first place in Arab Youth Anti-Corruption Hackathon

The Arab Youth Anti-Corruption Hackathon, “Coding4Integrity,” organised by the Administrative Control and Transparency Authority (ACTA) in partnership with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Microsoft Qatar, concluded yesterday with the participation of 117 programmers from 17 countries.

During the closing ceremony held at the Sheraton Hotel, the top three winners were honoured: the Code Breakers team from Lebanon, the Ravens team from Morocco, which secured the second position, and the Hama Tawiq team from Saudi Arabia, which achieved the third place. Additionally, several teams that won supporting competitions on the sidelines of the event were also recognised.

On this occasion, HE ACTA President Hamad bin Nasser al-Misnad, emphasised that the hackathon serves as a public initiative as part of Qatar’s efforts to support the international Arab community in finding innovative solutions to combat corruption using modern technology and promoting the role of youth.

He stressed the importance of harnessing and enhancing technology to combat corruption.

Al-Misnad noted that the young programmers participating in the hackathon competed in developing creative solutions aimed at enhancing integrity and transparency. They put forward ideas and initiatives worthy of respect and care, expressing his pride in

all the young participants in the event, who represent their countries with professionalism and high responsibility.

He pointed out that corruption is a serious issue present in almost every society and, if left unchecked, can undermine the resources and future of nations, affecting vulnerable groups and depriving future generations of their rights to health, education, and more.

He emphasised the importance of national and international efforts coming together to confront and counter this serious scourge and respond to its evolving challenges driven by globalisation and modern technology, which has made it easier than ever to conceal corruption.

Al-Misnad said that Qatar has spared no effort to continually enhance the legal and institutional frameworks for integrity and anti-corruption, in line with the strong values of the Qatari society that rejects all forms of corruption. Qatar seeks to become an exemplary experience that adheres to relevant international indicators.

He added that Qatar attaches great importance to contributing to international efforts to prevent and combat corruption, particularly in the context of the UN Convention against Corruption. Qatar has launched initiatives and contributions in this field, such as the Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani International Anti-Corruption Excellence Award, which is awarded annually to promi-

nent figures globally engaged in anti-corruption efforts, including young leaders.

For his part, Regional Representative of the UNODC Dr Hatem Fouad Ali said that the hackathon hosted youth from 17 countries to work on enabling them and giving them the opportunity to formulate ideas for developing software to address these challenges.

He emphasised the importance of combating corruption as a shared responsibility for everyone.

He praised the strategic partnership between Qatar and the UNODC, which has resulted in many achievements supporting countries in the region since 2015. He highlighted Doha’s hosting of the 13th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which produced binding recommendations for supporting countries in addressing these challenges. The recommendations emphasised empowering communities, youth, and innovation to combat corruption in support of integrity and transparency.

General Manager of Microsoft Qatar Lana Khalaf said that the partnership with Arab youth to combat corruption is aimed at supporting and empowering youth to use their innovative ideas and the latest technology to create solutions for the problems and challenges related to corruption. She expressed hope that this event would be the fundamental start for developing efforts and utilising the ideas presented to address these issues. (QNA)

Al-Khulaifi meets UN official in NY



HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met in New York with UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo on the sidelines of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly. During the meeting, the two sides discussed the existing Qatar-UN partnership and ways to boost and develop it, in addition to the latest regional developments. They also touched on the supporting the UN and international efforts aiming at bringing peace to conflict areas. (QNA)

Milipol Qatar delegation visits DSEI 2023 in London



A delegation from the Committee of Milipol Qatar visited the Defence and Security Equipment International Exhibition (DSEI 2023), currently being held in London. The delegation comprised Chairman of Milipol Qatar Committee Maj Gen Nasser bin Fahad al-Thani and member of the committee Colonel Nasser bin Saad al-Otaibi. The visit was aimed at viewing the latest scientific and engineering innovations and developments in security systems and safety equipment, and at promoting the Milipol Qatar Exhibition slated for 29-31 October 2024. Held in London from Sept 12-15, DSEI 2023 is one of the world biggest exhibitions in the field of defence and security technologies. (QNA)



Officials and students at the tree-planting ceremony at QU College of Pharmacy.

QU College of Pharmacy welcomes new students

The College of Pharmacy at Qatar University (QU) commenced the Fall 2023-2024 academic semester with an orientation session for first-year professional students.

They were briefed on academic curricula, faculty members, and administrative staff, in addition to the college’s policies and regulations.

Dr Muna al-Ismael, assistant dean of student affairs, delivered a welcoming address, stating: “I encourage all our newly admitted students to make the most of their

journey at the college, filled with new opportunities, growth, and learning. We, at the college, are committed to providing our students with the best educational experience and aspire to inspire them as they begin their future roles as pharmacists.”

First-year Professional Pharmacy student, Farah Salem, said: “The orientation tour was a fantastic opportunity to meet faculty members who were welcoming and eager to assist us. We learned more about the pharmacy profession, research opportunities, and

the various student life experiences that our college offers, leaving us confident that a rewarding future awaits us.”

Hamad al-Buhodood, a first-year professional pharmacy student, delivered a motivational speech. The event concluded with a tree planting ceremony, a College of Pharmacy tradition for new members. Students were invited to plant a tree on campus, symbolising their journey as it grows and thrives alongside them during their time at the College of Pharmacy.

QU Health workshop on Parkinson’s care

Qatar University (QU) Health’s Continuing Professional Development (CPD) department recently organised a workshop on multidisciplinary care in the management of Parkinson’s disease. The event aimed at enhancing the quality of care for individuals living with Parkinson’s disease.

It brought together over 70 local healthcare professionals, including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and physiotherapists, to discuss evidence-based strategies for managing Parkinson’s disease through a multidisciplinary approach.

The workshop featured a panel of experts, including Dr Gholam Aladeli, consultant neurologist, neurophysiologist, and movement disorders, Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC); Dr Abderrezaq Soltani, assistant professor in the College of Pharmacy at QU; and Dr Hanan Khalil, associate professor in the neurological Rehabilitation Physiotherapy Department at QU.

Dr Zachariah Nazar, the coordinator of CPD at QU Health, said: “Our goal is to empower healthcare professionals with the knowledge and tools they need to provide the best possible care to Parkinson’s disease patients. This workshop goes beyond the



Some of the participants at the workshop.

basics and delves deep into the complexities of the condition.”

Dr Aladeli emphasised the pressing need for more multidisciplinary sessions on this topic and the importance of increasing awareness and providing clinicians with the latest recommendations to deliver the best possible care to Parkinson’s disease patients. His presentation addressed not only motor and non-motor symptoms but also communication and cognition challenges faced by patients.

Dr Soltani elaborated on dis-

ease management strategies to overcome associated challenges, encompassing medications and lifestyle choices. His insights provided a comprehensive view of the holistic approach required for effective Parkinson’s disease management.

His expertise in pharmacological interventions sheds light on the complexities of Parkinson’s treatment. According to Dr Khalil exercise plays in slowing the progression of the disease and helping patients maintain their independence.

Sidra Medicine expands paediatric oncology care

Sidra Medicine, a member of Qatar Foundation, has expanded its oncology care remit with a paediatric neuro-oncology service for children and young people with malignant brain and spinal cord tumours.

The service comprises cutting-edge neurosurgery expertise and facilities, radiation and paediatric oncology. The clinical services are supported by state-of-the-art neuro-radiology and detailed anatomical pathology including molecular diagnostics. Dr Ayman Saleh, divi-

sion chief of oncology and haematology at Sidra Medicine said: “The paediatric neuro-oncology service is an extension of our comprehensive and multidisciplinary cancer care and research programme to help advance treatment and cure as well as enhance the chances of survival for children with brain or spinal cord tumours.” As a result of implementing new diagnostic techniques and services, Sidra Medicine is able to apply a precision medicine approach for the care and treatment of oncology patients, a statement added.



Dr Ayman Saleh

Gang arrested for begging operations

As part of the efforts to combat the crimes of human trafficking, the Criminal Investigation Department at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) has arrested an Asian man for exploiting other persons by deploying them for begging and paying them money in exchange. All the accused were arrested and referred to the Public Prosecution, MoI X account has posted.





The event witnessed various sports and cultural activities.

Indonesian expats mark I-Day with community gathering

The Indonesian embassy in Doha, along with the Indonesian community in Qatar, has concluded its celebrations of the 78th Independence Day (I-Day).

The peak event took place at the Al-Thakira Youth Center, Al Khor with a community gathering attended by hundreds of Indonesians.

The event witnessed various sports and cultural activities, including badminton, table tennis competitions, fun games, and an Indonesian cooking competition.

There were art performances and a bazaar showcasing Indonesian cuisine and Indonesian mode.

On the occasion, the embassy provided consular services to Indonesian citizens living in



Qatar. There was a socialisation and consultation session regarding overseas Indonesia elections which will be held next year.

The Independence Day celebration finally came to an end with a thrilling badminton final, featuring the best Indonesian players in Qatar. “This event is proof of the togetherness and spirit of unity among the Indonesian community living abroad,” said ambassador Ridwan Hassan.



Toastmasters Club Open House promotes participation



The recent Open House of the ICC Eves Toastmasters Club provided non-Toastmasters attendees with a condensed experience of the Toastmasters’ journey, encouraging their participation in the community.

Toastmasters meet



Marathi Toastmasters Club (District 116, Area 8, Div B) conducted an Open House recently. Members along with a number of guests participated.

ISC conducts novel Teachers' Day event



Teachers from all 19 Indian schools were brought together at a Teachers' Day event on September 9 by Indian Sports Centre (ISC), for a first-of-its-kind event.

Teachers were divided into four houses

with team games and individual competitions to compete, during the afternoon.

Football, throwball and tug of war were the team games and musical chair, lemon and spoon race, penalty kick and basketball throw, the individual games.

ISC president E P Abdul Rahiman inaugurated the event along with other managing committee members and physical education teachers.

Teachers, their families, and the community at large were invited to attend the

memorable event. The day was filled with sportsmanship, unity and celebration.

The closing ceremony had Indian embassy deputy chief of mission Sandeep Kumar as chief guest and first secretary and ISC co-ordinating officer Sachin

Dinkar Shankpal, the guest of honour. Indian Community Benevolent Forum president Shanavas Bava attended the closing ceremony along with senior community leaders, principals from some of the schools and other officials.

TWAQ welcomes Indian envoy



The Telangana Welfare Association Qatar (TWAQ) hosted a reception for Indian ambassador Vipul. TWAQ officials Mohamed Abdul Rauf, Khaja Nizamuddin, Ramesh Pitla, Naveed Dastagir, Radhika Saikrishna Yemula, Padmavathi, Moinuddin Bakhar Syed, Taha Mohamed Khaja, Gulam Rasool and Mohamed Shoeb were present.

PPS holds stress management workshop



Podar Pearl School (PPS) organised a workshop on stress management for the faculty of all the three campuses. The workshop was conducted by Eunoia. Clinical psychologist Dr Bindu Salim provided the training assisted by organisational psychologist Nikita Elizabeth Roy, and human resources professional and mindfulness trainer Sarah Fayyaz Shaikh. The workshop focused on understanding stress triggers and their effects, along with practical ways to overcome them.

BPS holds accountancy guidance session

A session on the nuances of how to understand and study accountancy was conducted by Birla Public School (BPS) for the students of grades 11 and 12, over two days recently.

Chartered accountant Dr S Grewal, renowned author of various textbooks on accountancy for CBSE grades 11 and 12 was the resource person. He was an active member of the syllabus and

paper design committee of CBSE for six years. Dr Grewal explained in detail the various concepts of the accountancy syllabus.

The various techniques and tricks that can be used by students for solving numericals for the exams were enumerated.

He elaborated on the various career options for Commerce students based on their capabilities and potential, how to focus

on the chosen career and the efforts to be put into making that dream come true. The students were highly motivated as they got to know about various views on accountancy. Acting principal Radhika Rele, Senior Secondary headmistress Sandhya Ramachandran, Commerce Department head Geetha Joice and teachers felicitated Dr Grewal after the session.



World Physiotherapy Day observed

In celebration of World Physiotherapy Day 2023, Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF), in association with Indian Physiotherapy Forum Qatar (IPFQ), hosted a workshop to shed light on the significance of physiotherapy in daily lives.

The chief guest, Indian embassy first secretary and ICBF co-ordinating officer Dr Vaibhav Tandale in his speech elaborated on the event's theme, 'Reduce Pain, Recover Quickly, Rebuild Strength.'

He highlighted the critical role of physiotherapy in enhancing overall well-being.

Physiotherapists Arun Christopher and Priyank Jain were the resource persons. Christopher provided insights into



common mistakes individuals make in their daily lives and shared valuable do's and don'ts for a healthier lifestyle. Jain engaged the audience with practical stretches and exercises. ICBF president Shanavas Bava and IPFQ president Mohamed Shafi spoke.

ICBF general secretary Var-

key Boban co-ordinated the event, supported by managing committee members Zareena Ahad, Shankar Goud, Abdul Raouf Kondotty, as well as IPFQ managing committee members Mohamed Hussain Vanimel and Bijju Nirmal. ICBF treasurer Kuldeep Kour proposed a vote of thanks.

Milestone meeting



Qatar Tamil Toastmasters Club held its 200th milestone meeting and felicitated its past presidents from 2014 until 2022-23.

QYP conference focuses on entrepreneurship, climate change

Qatar Youth Power (QYP) Conference 2023 recently brought together 250 students, 19 guest speakers, eight sponsors and three partners, in addition to hundreds online.

Organised by 16 high school and university students, the third annual conference consisted of interactive workshops, keynote speeches, and panel discussions on a range of issues and topics including entrepreneurship, climate change, diplomacy, and emotional intelligence.

Guest speakers included Nawal Akram, a disability advocate acknowledged on BBC's 100 Women programme; Dr Evren Tok, associate dean of community engagement at the Hamad Bin Khalifa University's College of Public Policy; and Jose Saucedo of Deap Qatar. QYP was formed in 2021 by then 17-year-old Natalie Magness, who is currently the executive director.





Military strikes Gaza after border violence

AFP
Gaza City

The Israeli military said it launched an air strike on Gaza yesterday, following violence at a border rally in which health officials said multiple Palestinians were wounded.

The strike was the first since early July, when Israel responded to rocket fire from Gaza launched after its deadliest Israeli raid in the occupied West Bank in years.

The army said it hit “a military post belonging to the Hamas organisation in the northern Gaza Strip.” A military spokesman said the air strike hit an area where Palestinians had gathered earlier yesterday, near the permanently closed Karni crossing.

A security source in the Palestinian territory said that Israel “bombed a resistance observation post east of Gaza City,” requesting anonymity as he was not authorised to speak publicly to the media.

There were no immediate reports of injuries resulting from the air strike.

Earlier yesterday, an AFP journalist at the protest saw Palestinians throwing rocks and explosives towards Israeli forces, across the frontier, and two demonstrators with gunshot wounds.

Plumes of black smoke filled the area after Palestinians set tyres ablaze.

Twelve Gazans were wounded at various rallies along the border, the territory’s health ministry said.

The Israeli military said “several explosive devices and grenades” were hurled at soldiers, none of whom were hurt. The air strike comes after an explosion killed at least five Gazans during a border rally on Wednesday.

A bomb which may have been a hand grenade detonated while being carried by a protester, a witness told AFP on condition of anonymity. Hamas seized control of Gaza in 2007 and Israel has since imposed a crippling blockade.

There have been multiple wars fought between Gaza-based fighters and Israel in recent years. At least 34 Palestinians and one Israeli were killed in five days of cross-border exchanges in May.



Palestinian demonstrators run for cover during clashes with soldiers along the Israel-Gaza border, east of Khan Yunis town in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

UN says quake-hit Morocco could demand assistance

AFP
Geneva

The United Nations yesterday said Morocco could ask for aid “today or tomorrow” to help it recover and rebuild following a devastating earthquake that has killed nearly 3,000 people and destroyed tens of thousands of homes.

“We are expecting and hoping, but expecting from our discussions with the Moroccan authorities that the request for assistance will go out within today or tomorrow,” UN aid chief Martin Griffiths told reporters in Geneva. Morocco has allowed rescue

teams to come to its aid from Spain, Britain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates since the magnitude 6.8 quake struck last Friday, but has declined offers from several other nations, including the United States, France and some Middle Eastern countries. “We are ready to work and we’re ready to provide support on co-ordination,” Griffiths said, adding that “the next phase is to provide aid to those survivors — shelter, food, medical supplies”.

“It is only in the recent day or so that in Morocco, the shift has been from finding survivors to helping survivors to survive. And that’s when aid is of the highest importance,” he added.



People bring donated supplies to a collection point in Libya’s capital Tripoli, yesterday, before their transfer to aid affected residents following devastating floods in eastern cities.

Libya’s flood-ravaged Derna in hunt for thousands missing

AFP
Derna, Libya

Rescuers sifted through mud and rubble yesterday in their search for people missing from the tsunami-sized flash flood that swept through the Libyan port city of Derna, killing more than 3,000.

The surge of water burst two upstream dams on Sunday, turning Derna into an apocalyptic wasteland with entire city blocks and untold numbers of people washed out into the Mediterranean.

The UN launched an appeal for more than \$71mn to assist hundreds of thousands in need and warned the “extent of the problem” remains unclear.

An AFP journalist in Derna said central neighbourhoods on either side of the river, which normally dries up at this time of year, looked as if a steam roller had passed through, uprooting trees and buildings and hurling vehicles onto the port’s breakwaters.

Teams from the Libyan Red Crescent are “still searching for possible survivors and clearing bodies from the rubble in the most damaged areas” of Derna, its spokesman Tawfik Shoukri said.

Other teams were trying yesterday to deliver much-needed aid to families in the eastern part of the city, which had been spared the worst of the flooding but was cut off by road, he added.

He pointed the “very high” level of destruction in the city, but declined to give figures for the number of dead.

Officials in the east of the di-



Volunteers walk past damaged homes after the Mediterranean storm “Daniel” hit Libya’s eastern city of Derna, yesterday.

vided country gave different toll estimates, with one speaking of at least 3,840 dead.

“We don’t know the extent of the problem,” UN aid chief Martin Griffiths said yesterday in Geneva, as he called for co-ordination between Libya’s two rival administrations — the UN-backed, internationally recognised government in Tripoli, and one based in the disaster-hit east.

While most fear the death toll will be much higher, Tamer Ramadan of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said there was still hope of finding survivors but declined to give a figure.

The International Organisation for Migration meanwhile said “over 38,640” people were left homeless in eastern Libya, 30,000 of them in Derna.

Hundreds of body bags now line Derna’s mud-caked streets, awaiting mass burials, as trauma-

tised and grieving residents search mangled buildings for missing loved ones and bulldozers clear streets of debris and mountains of sand.

“We are trying to take DNA samples and pictures of the victims before their burial to help with identification later on,” Lieutenant Tarek al-Kharraz, a spokesman for the east-based government, told a Libyan news channel.

In one flooded home, a rescue team pumped out the water to reveal a woman’s lifeless arms still clutching her dead child, the AFP journalist reported.

Abdelaziz Bousmya, who lives in the Chiha neighbourhood which was spared by the wall of water that devastated lower-lying districts, said he lost loved ones.

“They are all either buried under the mud or got swept out to sea by the floodwaters,” the 29-year-old said, accusing the authorities

of failing to take preventive measures. The floods were caused by hurricane-strength Storm Daniel, compounded by the poor infrastructure in Libya, which was plunged into turmoil after a Nato-backed uprising toppled and killed long-time dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

Two rival administrations vie for power in the country’s east and west, but the flooding has precipitated a rare show of solidarity.

The disaster prompted an outpouring of aid, with rival television channels on both sides of the country simultaneously screening a telethon to gather funds for the victims.

Military strongman Khalifa Haftar, who backs the east-based administration, arrived in Derna yesterday to “follow up on rescue operations,” Libyan media said.

World Meteorological Organisation chief Petteri Taalas said many deaths could have been avoided if early warning and emergency management systems had functioned properly in the war-scarred country.

“They could have issued the warnings and the emergency management forces would have been able to carry out the evacuation of the people, and we could have avoided most of the human casualties.”

Access to Derna remains severely hampered as roads and bridges have been destroyed and power and phone lines cut to wide areas. The UN said that “with the collapse of most roads, the municipality (of Derna) is urging relevant authorities to establish a sea corridor for emergency relief and evacuations.”

Burkina expels French defence attache for ‘subversive activities’

Burkina Faso’s foreign ministry has notified France of the expulsion of the embassy’s military attache for “subversive activities”, in the latest sign of failing relations between the former allies, AFP reported from Ouagadougou. In a letter seen by AFP yesterday, the ministry warned that attache Emmanuel Pasquier and his team had two weeks to leave the Sahel nation, which underwent two military coups last year. The letter added that the French military mission in Ouagadougou would be closed. France, which withdrew troops from its former colony in the face of mounting hostility after Captain Ibrahim Traore seized power in September 2022, rejected the accusation. “The accusation of subversive activities is obviously fanciful,” a foreign ministry spokesperson told AFP in Paris. France recalled its ambassador from Ouagadougou after the September coup and has not replaced the envoy. The Burkinabe authorities in recent months have suspended the French TV outlets LCI and France24 as well as Radio France Internationale (RFI) and expelled the correspondents of the French newspapers Liberation and Le Monde. Since the French pullout in January, Burkina has developed closer contacts with Russia, an ally of the junta in neighbouring Mali.

Protesters seek phase out of fossil fuels



Climate protesters take part in a demonstration along a street in Abuja, Nigeria, yesterday.

Iran seizes two foreign tankers for alleged smuggling

Iran has seized two oil tankers allegedly carrying smuggled fuel in the Gulf and arrested their crews, state television announced yesterday, AFP reported from Tehran. “The Revolutionary Guards naval forces seized two ships over the course of the last two days,” state television said, citing Mohamed-Sharif Shirali, a Guards commander.

“The seized tankers... flying the flags of Panama and Tanzania were transporting more than 1.5mn litres (400,000 gallons) of Iranian oil and gas,” he said. “The Guards escorted the confiscated ships to

the port of Mahshahr” in the country’s southwest, Shirali said. “Thirty-seven crew members were handed over to judicial authorities in Mahshahr,” he added. In recent weeks, the US military has intensified its presence in the Gulf, accusing Iran of seizing vessels, or attempting to, in this shipping lane that is strategic to global trade.

On July 6, the US military said the Guards had seized a commercial ship in the Gulf, one day after having accused Iranian forces of carrying out two similar attempts off the coast of Oman.

Macron says envoy to Niger ‘literally held hostage’

AFP
Semur-en-Auxois

President Emmanuel Macron said yesterday that France’s envoy to Niger is living like a hostage in the French embassy and accused military rulers of blocking food deliveries to the mission.

The ambassador is living off “military rations,” Macron told reporters in the French town of Semur-en-Auxois.

“As we speak, we have an ambassador and diplomatic staff who are literally being held hostage in the French embassy,” he said.

“They are preventing food deliveries,” he said, in an apparent reference to Niger’s new military rulers. “He is eating military rations.”

Niger’s military leaders told French ambassador Sylvain Itte he had to leave the country after they overthrew President Mohamed Bazoum on July 26.

But a 48-hour ultimatum for him to leave, issued in August, passed with him still in place as the French government refused to comply, or to recognise the military regime as legitimate.

The coup has been condemned

by France and most of Niger’s neighbours. Macron said the envoy “cannot go out, he is persona non grata and he is being refused food”.

Asked whether France would consider bringing him home, Macron said: “I will do whatever we agree with President Bazoum because he is the legitimate authority and I speak with him every day.”

Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna later said the ambassador “is working” and would stay at his post for as long as Paris wished. “He is very useful for us with his contacts and those of his team,” Colonna told LCI television, adding the ambassador still had a small team with him.

France keeps about 1,500 soldiers in Niger, and said earlier this month that any redeployment could only be negotiated with Bazoum. The country’s new leaders have torn up military co-operation agreements with France and asked the troops to leave quickly.

Macron has for weeks rejected the call to remove the French ambassador, a stance backed by the EU which has described the demand as “a provocation”.

World leaders to meet at UN as big powers vie for developing states

Reuters

United Nations

World leaders meet at the United Nations next week in the shadow of geopolitical tensions — largely fuelled by the war in Ukraine — as Russia and China vie with the United States and Europe to win over developing countries.

Russia's war in Ukraine, well into its second year, will again be a focus of the annual gathering in New York, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky attending in person for the first time since the conflict started. Also high on the agenda this year will be concerns of the Global South, in part a reflection of the increased attention put on the developing world by Western nations eager to secure its support for the effort to isolate Russia.

Several top-level meetings happening during the General Assembly focus on priorities of developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia: climate, health, financing for development, and how to get the Sustainable Development Goals — a global “to do” list created in 2015 — on track.

“This is a year when the countries of the Global South have set the agenda,” said Richard Gowan, UN director of the

International Crisis Group think tank. “Non-western countries have played this moment quite effectively,” he said. “I think they have taken advantage of the fact that they know that the US, on one hand, and then Russia on the other, want their support.”

The Ukraine war is just one reason for the focus on developing countries. Over the past decade China has doled out hundreds of billions of dollars in loans for much-needed infrastructure projects as part of its Belt and Road initiative, which has come under criticism for saddling many nations with heavy debts. The United States and its allies have recently tried to counter China's growing influence with their own pledges of money for development and climate aid.

Ahead of the New York meetings, diplomats acknowledged their focus on the developing world but dismissed suggestions that rivalry played a role. US Ambassador to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, described the UN gathering as a chance for small countries to “lay out their priorities to us” and that she doesn't view it “as being a competition between big powers.”

China's UN ambassador Zhang Jun told Reuters that Beijing has “no intention to compete with anyone else” and that, as

China's conditions improved, the country was “willing to do more in return for developing countries but we are not competing.” Similarly, Russia's UN ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told Reuters that Moscow was not “trying to enchant anyone.”

“We're just what we are and we will never condition our friendship with anybody on stepping in line and doing what we want — unlike some of our colleagues here who are twisting arms,” he said. Top-level talks between China, Russia and the US are out of the question next week as President Joe Biden will be the only leader to attend from the permanent five veto-wielding UN Security Council members.

Three years after leaders were forced to send video messages to the week-long UN General Assembly meeting during the Covid-19 pandemic, the more than 140 heads of state and government and dozens of ministers are due to turn up in person.

“It is a one-of-a-kind moment each year for leaders from every corner of the globe to not only assess the state of the world — but to act for the common good,” said UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. “People are looking to their leaders for a way out of this mess,” he said, citing the climate crisis, escalating conflicts, a global cost-of-living crisis, soaring inequalities and dramatic technological dis-

ruptions. Zelensky is expected to address the General Assembly on Tuesday and speak at a UN Security Council meeting on Ukraine on Wednesday that could place him at the same table as Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. Nebenzia predicted the planned council meeting would simply be a “big show.”

Western diplomats are keen to show that their efforts to diplomatically target Russia over the war in Ukraine does not mean they can't focus on other crises and issues important to the rest of the world. “It's not a case of either/or. We need to do both,” said British UN ambassador Barbara Woodward, describing Russia's invasion as “an attack on everything the UN stands for.”

Still, a senior European diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, cautioned that geopolitical tensions could push more developing countries away from Western-led efforts and toward the Brics group — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — in the hope that it can “better deliver on some of the interests of the developing world.”

Last month, the Brics — where China is the heavyweight — added half a dozen more countries to the bloc in a push to reshuffle a world order it sees as outdated.

The UN is unable “to show African youths’ that their impatience for jobs can



A view of United Nations headquarters in New York, US.

be answered by democracy not soldiers,” said an African diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity.

“If no one is standing with them, then the Brics — whatever they offer — will be attractive,” the diplomat said.

UN chief calls for equality for Global South at Cuba G77 summit

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres yesterday praised efforts to support the Global South in the international arena as he opened a summit of the G77 group of developing nations and China with host Cuba. The focus is the scientific and technological divide between rich and poor countries and its impact on development. Guterres said greater international equality was essential to building the consensus needed to tackle climate change and inequality. “The world is failing developing nations” he said, expressing the hope that the meeting would strengthen participants’ clout on a wide range of issues. He echoed climate advocates who have long urged developed nations, including top greenhouse gas polluters like the United States, to pay to mitigate climate change and lessen the weight of foreign debt. Battered by extreme weather, the pandemic, international tensions and economic difficulties, developing countries are pressing for fair treatment from developed nations regarding international finance to sharing technology. This year Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel heads up the G77, the UN's largest organisation. He cited statistics showing 84mn children are at risk of being out of school by 2023 and over 660mn people are without electricity, adding these disparities now include the internet and advances in digital technology. “Science, technology and innovation have reached the unimaginable,” he said, “that in conditions of greater equality and justice could insure more dignified and comfortable lives for the population of almost the entire planet,” Diaz-Canel said. He added that science and technology “play a transcendental role in promoting productivity, efficiency, creating added value, humanizing working conditions, promoting well-being and guaranteeing development,” he said. — **Reuters**

US auto workers go on strike, winning support from Biden

AFP

Wayne, United States

Workers at the “Big Three” US auto manufacturers went on strike yesterday in a first-ever co-ordinated action to demand pay raises, winning strong support from President Joe Biden whose pro-union stand is crucial to his 2024 re-election hopes.

A dramatic walkout — observed outside a Detroit-area Ford plant with rowdy honking and cheers at the arrival of the United Auto Workers’ leader — followed a failed last-minute push by General Motors, Ford and Stellantis to produce an agreement before the deadline late Thursday.

It is a limited strike incorporating about 12,700 of the 150,000 workers represented by the UAW. However, the decision by the rival companies’ employees to co-ordinate sent a powerful message in their battle for pay increases of 40%.

The disruption in the crucial sector, involving iconic brands like Jeep, poses a threat to the US economy, which is walking a thin line between strong growth and fighting inflation.

But Biden, who has cast himself a major trade unions supporter, gave his backing to the strikers, saying he understood their “frustration.” Speaking on live TV from the White House, Biden said workers had not been able to benefit from enormous corporate profits.

“Those record profits have not been shared fairly,” Biden said.

“The companies have made some significant offers but I believe they should go further to ensure that record corporate profits mean record contracts for the UAW.”

He said he was sending two representatives to Detroit to help with negotiations.

The powerful UAW has so far re-

frained from joining other leading unions in endorsing Biden's 2024 re-election bid. UAW President Shawn Fain said shortly before the strike took effect that “tonight, for the first time in our history, we will strike all three of the Big Three at once.”

Fain said the union would strike at one plant at each company: a GM factory in Wentzville, Missouri; a Stellantis facility in Toledo, Ohio; and a Ford plant in Wayne, Michigan, but only in the final assembly and paint operations. The UAW said the strike could expand if demands are not met. “They're starting it off right,” said Rachel Judd, who joined the post-midnight rally in Wayne. Judd works at Ford's neighbouring facility in Livonia.

“If negotiations don't keep moving forward, more plants will be added,” she said.

Many hourly workers say the auto giants must produce significantly better packages to make up for what they call meagre wages and benefit cuts after the 2008 financial crisis, when both GM and Chrysler, now part of Stellantis, underwent bankruptcy reorganizations.

All three companies have been highly profitable in recent years.

“This company has been making money off of us for years,” said Paul Sievert, who has worked at Ford's Wayne plant for 29 years. “I think it's time that we got back.”

UAW's demands include a 40-percent hike in wages, which Fain has said is needed to match rises in CEO pay.

Other sticking points include raising pay and benefits for junior employees to match the level of more seasoned workers, who currently make a top rate of around \$32 an hour.

General Motors upped its offer Thursday, lifting a proposed wage increase to 20 percent. The company had previously proposed an 18 percent rise, according to the UAW.



US President Joe Biden delivers remarks on the contract negotiations between the United Auto Workers and the Big 3 auto companies, at the White House in Washington, DC.

In a statement yesterday, GM said it would “continue to bargain in good faith with the union to reach an agreement as quickly as possible.”

Ford officials have expressed disappointment at the UAW's stance. The 120-year-old Michigan company has more hourly workers than the other two companies and considers itself pro-union.

Sievert welcomed Ford's favourable posture towards unions but “they need to step up.” “Show us that, you know, you care about us and we care about you,” he said.

In a statement, Senate Democratic Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, a key Biden ally, urged the car companies to “bargain in good faith to quickly reach a new contract that is fair to workers.”



GM workers with the UAW Local 2250 Union strike outside the General Motors Wentzville Assembly Plant in Wentzville, Missouri.

Uber to appeal Brazil court's \$205mn fine for irregular labour relations

Uber said it rejected a ruling from a Brazilian labour court ordering the ride-hailing firm to pay 1bn reais (\$205mn) in fines for irregular working relations with the drivers on its app. The sentence, handed down by a Sao Paulo state court, also ordered Uber to recognize its employment relationships with all its app's drivers and register their professional work cards, with a penalty of 10,000 reais for each unregistered worker.

The lawsuit, filed in November 2021 with Brazil's public prosecutor's office, accused the company of controlling the way in which professionals' activities should be carried out, “which constitutes an employment relationship.” Uber said it will appeal the decision and will not adopt any of the measures listed in the sentence before all applicable resources have been exhausted. — **Reuters**

Half of Americans interested in getting updated Covid shot: poll

Reuters

Washington

About half of Americans are interested in getting an updated Covid-19 vaccine more than three years after the virus infected millions and upended daily life across the United States and around the world, according to a new Reuters/Ipsos poll.

The results suggest that more might be willing to get a booster shot than a year ago when only around roughly one in six Americans opted for an updated shot, according to data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The nationwide online poll, which concluded on Thursday, showed that almost 30% of respondents were very interested in getting the vaccine and another 24% were somewhat interested. Almost 17% were not very interested and 30% were not interest-

ed at all. US public health officials earlier this week recommended updated Covid-19 vaccines from Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna that target a recently circulating Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

US officials are advising a much broader use of the vaccine — by everyone age 6 months and up — compared with the recommendations of many European countries, which prioritise the elderly and other vulnerable groups. The World Health Organisation's latest advice says additional doses beyond the first two doses and one booster are not routinely recommended other than in older adults and certain at-risk groups such as those who have other illnesses.

Around 14% of those not interested in getting the booster said it was because they had Covid already while another 14% said they believed their previous vaccinations provided sufficient protection. Around 3% said their age

Almost 42% said they were mainly interested in getting the vaccine to reduce their risk of severe illness

group does not need the vaccine.

The number of Americans hospitalised with Covid-19 has risen in recent weeks, but remains far below the levels seen in the dark days of the pandemic between 2020 and early 2022.

Some 54% of respondents in the Reuters/Ipsos poll said they were “personally” concerned about the spread of the virus, down from 77% in a poll taken three years ago. At the height of the pandemic, in early 2020, some 90% of poll respondents were concerned.

Almost 42% said they were mainly interested in getting the vaccine to reduce their risk of

severe illness. Demand for the vaccine had dropped sharply after 2021 when it first became available and more than 240mn people in the US, or 73% of the population, received at least one shot.

During the last revaccination campaign, when most Americans had either already had the Covid virus or been previously vaccinated, only around 56.5mn people got the updated booster shots, CDC data shows.

That's far below the annual US flu vaccine market of around 160mn shots. Covid-19 vaccinations have also roiled US politics, with many Republicans seeing the push for vaccination as government overreach. Only 34% of Republicans said they would be interested in getting the updated vaccine, compared with 77% of Democrats.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, who is seeking the Republican nomination for the 2024 presidential contest, on Wednesday

urged people in his state under age 65 not to get the vaccination. Some 36% of people not interested in the vaccine said their main reason was because they think the vaccine is dangerous, and another 5% said they did not believe Covid makes people sick.

“It really concerns me that over 30% think it is dangerous when there's really no credible evidence of that, yet a lot of disinformation and, honestly, fear mongering,” said Dr Jesse Goodman, an infectious disease expert at Georgetown University in Washington and a former chief scientist at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. “This does illustrate the power of misinformation and disinformation combined with anxiety,” he said.

The Reuters/Ipsos poll was conducted online and nationwide between Sept 8 and Sept 14, gathering responses from 4,413 US adults. It had a credibility interval, a measure of precision, of about 2 percentage points.



DECISION

Australia closes ‘dodgy’ climate emissions loophole

Australia yesterday said it is permanently cancelling ‘dodgy’ credits for historical greenhouse gas cuts, stopping any future government from using them as a loophole. The country had amassed credits equal to more than a year’s worth of global warming emissions, after exceeding what were widely seen as low-bar targets negotiated before the 2015 Paris agreement. “Their permanent cancellation means no future government can use this loophole to meet their climate targets,” the government said. “Their use was rightly characterised at home and abroad as an accounting trick - and an excuse not to have any climate or energy policy,” it said.

TRADE

Indonesia rice imports spike as Jakarta shores up stocks

Indonesia recorded a large increase in rice imports in the first eight months this year compared to the same period last year as Southeast Asia’s biggest economy seeks to boost stocks. Global rice prices rose to a 15-year high last week after top producer India’s decision in July to ban exports of non-basmati rice. Indonesia imported 1.59mn tonnes of rice from January to August this year, Statistics Indonesia head Amalia Adininggar Widayasanti said, while more than 429,000 tonnes of rice were imported for the whole of 2022. “Rice imports from January and August 2023 experienced quite a high increase compared to the same period last year,” Widayasanti said.

OFFICIAL

Cambodia PM Hun Manet meets China’s Xi in Beijing

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet met Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday, looking to build on the close ties his father Hun Sen built with Beijing. Hun Sen ruled Cambodia for almost four decades, and handed over the premiership to his son in August. Under his government, Cambodia became one of Beijing’s strongest allies in Southeast Asia, receiving huge sums of Chinese investment. At Beijing’s Great Hall of the People yesterday, Xi said Hun Sen had made “historic contributions to the cause of Sino-Cambodian friendship”, and urged him to visit China often, according to a readout of his meeting with Hun Manet from broadcaster CCTV.

TOURISM

Visa on arrival for Chinese, Indian tourists to Myanmar

Myanmar will offer visas on arrival to Chinese and Indian tourists, state media reported, as the ruling junta seeks to lure back foreign visitors and their cash. A start date for the one-year trial scheme “will be announced soon”, the Global New Light of Myanmar reported, citing the junta’s immigration ministry. Holders of the visas will be “allowed to visit all sites apart from restricted areas for security concerns”, said the newspaper report. Currently citizens of both countries must apply for a tourist visa online, or at a Myanmar embassy. The junta’s tourism ministry is also working to attract travellers from Russia.

China defence minister ‘under probe for corrupt procurement’

Reuters
Washington

Defence Minister Li Shangfu, who has been missing from public view for more than two weeks, has been placed under investigation by Chinese authorities, according to 10 people familiar with the matter.

The investigation into Li relates to procurement of military equipment, according to a regional security official and three people in direct contact with the Chinese military.

Reuters was unable to obtain details on which equipment purchases were under scrutiny.

Eight senior officials from the Chinese military’s procurement unit, which Li led from 2017-2022, are also under investigation, according to two of the people in direct contact with the military.

The probe into Li, who was appointed as defence minister in March, and the eight officials is being carried out by the military’s powerful disciplinary inspection commission, those two people said.

Reuters’ detailed examination of the allegations against Li and the timing of the probe is based on interviews with sources who inter-

act regularly with senior Chinese political and defence leaders, and regional officials with close knowledge of Chinese politics.

A Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman told reporters yesterday she was not aware of the situation. The state council and the defence ministry did not immediately return requests for comment. Li could not immediately be reached.

The *Financial Times* reported yesterday, citing US officials, that the US government believes Li has been placed under investigation for corruption.

The *Wall Street Journal* cited a person close to decision making in Beijing as saying he had been taken away last week for questioning.

The US state department didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment on the media reports that US intelligence officials believed Li was under investigation for corruption.

US ambassador to Japan, Rahm Emanuel, yesterday posed the question on X, formerly Twitter, whether Li was under house arrest. The US embassy in Tokyo did not immediately have further comment.

Li was last seen in Beijing on August 29 giving a key-note speech at a security forum with African na-

tions. Earlier that month, he also visited Russia and Belarus.

The probe into the minister started shortly after his return from that trip, according to a person in direct contact with the military and two foreign security officials briefed on the case.

By September 3, his ministry had cancelled a visit by Li to Vietnam for an annual defence meeting between the two countries scheduled for September 7-8, according to a Vietnamese official. Beijing told officials in Hanoi that Li had a “health condition” when it postponed the event, two Vietnamese officials said.

Li’s failure to attend that meeting, and talks with a senior Singaporean military official in China the same week, raised questions among regional diplomats and social media users about his whereabouts.

The probe into Li follows China’s unexplained replacement of Foreign Minister Qin Gang in July after a prolonged absence from public view and a shake-up of the leadership of the People’s Liberation Army’s elite Rocket Force, which is responsible for conventional and nuclear missiles. Chinese officials initially said Qin’s absence was also due to health reasons.

Firefighters battle Indonesia wildfire



Motorists drive on a road as wildfire burns in North Indralaya, Ogan Ilir regency, South Sumatra province, Indonesia. Firefighters were yesterday battling large peatland fires that have covered Palembang, a city of nearly 2mn people, in a haze for weeks, officials said. The fire has burned through 75 hectares of peatland in the Ogan Ilir regency of South Sumatra province and around the toll road connecting it to Palembang, officials said.

Blocked Thai PM challenger Pita resigns as party leader

AFF
Bangkok

Pita Limjaroenrat, whose reformist party won the most seats at Thailand’s national elections in May, resigned as its leader yesterday.

The young challenger led the Move Forward Party (MFP) to the top spot in the polls, capitalising on a swell of voters disenchanted at a near-decade of junta-backed rule, before he was blocked by

conservatives and suspended as an MP. The MFP left a partnership with opposition rivals Pheu Thai, who went on to form a coalition government with pro-military parties, and said they would go into opposition.

“I resigned as the MFP’s party leader to pave the way for an MP that is able to have a voice in parliament, be the opposition leader,” Pita wrote on his official Facebook page. Under current rules, the leader of the opposition must be an MP. “Due to my MP suspen-

sion, I won’t be able to get my MP position and be opposition leader in the near future,” Pita wrote.

He was suspended in July while waiting for the Constitutional Court’s ruling over his ownership of shares in a now-defunct media company. MPs are prohibited from owning media shares, under the Thai constitution.

Pita emphasised the importance of the role, writing that it was like “the prow (of a ship) that determines the direction of the opposition”.

Beijing sanctions two US firms over Taiwan arms sales

Beijing yesterday sanctioned two US defence companies, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman, over their roles in supplying arms to Taiwan. The US Congress, under the Taiwan Relations Act, requires the supply of weapons to the self-governing democracy for its defence. President Joe Biden’s administration has recently announced a slew of arms sales to the island, including one that for the first time approved direct US military aid to Taiwan under an assistance programme aimed at foreign governments. “Despite China’s firm opposition, the US government is determined to provide weapons to Taiwan... seriously harming China’s sovereignty and security interests, and going further and further on the wrong and dangerous road of arming Taiwan,” Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said at a regular press briefing.

International Coastal Cleanup Day marked



Filipino activists pick up trash, ahead of the International Coastal Cleanup Day, along the coastline of Freedom Island in Paranaque City, Metro Manila, Philippines, yesterday.

Lanka economy shrank 3.1% in Q2, reveals data

Reuters
Colombo

Sri Lanka’s economy shrank 3.1% in the April-June quarter, official data showed yesterday, as the country struggles to claw out of its worst financial crisis in decades.

The downturn was driven by high inflation, a depreciating currency and lower purchasing power, the census and statistics department said in a statement.

The agriculture sector grew 3.6% from a year earlier, but output from industries contracted 11.5% and services dropped 0.8%, the department said.

Sri Lanka’s central bank projects that gross domestic product (GDP) will shrink by 2% this year, having contracted 7.8% in 2022, after the island’s economy fell into a severe foreign

exchange crisis that decimated growth. The economy contracted 11.5% in the first three months of this year but activity has gradually stabilised since the government managed to secure a \$2.9bn bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in March.

“The contraction is slowing down and we are expecting things to have bottomed out during the second quarter and then return to growth from the third quarter,” said Dimantha Mathew, head of research at First Capital.

“The July-September quarter would be the first time in six quarters that Sri Lanka may post positive growth.” Growth readings in the third quarter will also be aided by comparison with a weak 2022, sharply lower inflation and support measures by Sri Lanka’s central bank, which slashed interest rates by 450 basis points in June and July to foster growth.

N Korea’s Kim inspects fighter jet plant in Russia

Reuters
Moscow/Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un yesterday inspected a Russian fighter jet factory that is under Western sanctions, part of a visit Washington and its allies fear could strengthen Russia’s military in Ukraine and bolster Pyongyang’s missile programme.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Kim discussed military matters, the war in Ukraine and deepening co-operation when they met at a summit on Wednesday.

South Korea and the US yesterday said military co-operation be-

tween North Korea and Russia was a violation of UN sanctions against Pyongyang, and that the allies would ensure there is a price to pay.

Putin told reporters that Russia was “not going to violate anything”, but would keep developing relations with North Korea. His spokesman said no agreements had been signed during Kim’s visit on military issues or any other topic.

Kim, 39, yesterday visited aviation facilities in the far eastern city of Komsomolsk-on-Amur, the Yuri Gagarin Aviation Plant and the Yakovlev plant, both units of United Aircraft Corporation, which is sanctioned by the West.

At the Gagarin plant, which is

also specifically sanctioned by the US, Kim inspected the assembly workshops where the Sukhoi Su-35 multirole fighter and Su-57 fighter are made, escorted by Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov, the government said.

Kim, dressed in a suit and accompanied by North Korean military officials in uniform, was shown on Russian state television examining the cockpit of a fighter jet as Russian officials explained its capabilities via a translator.

He then inspected workshops where the fuselage compartments and wing assemblies of Russia’s Sukhoi Superjet 100 are made before watching a demonstration flight of

the Su-35. He nodded with approval as the fighter performed.

Russia has gone out of its way to publicise the visit and to drop repeated hints about the prospect of military co-operation with North Korea, which was formed in 1948 with the backing of the then-Soviet Union.

For Putin, who says Russia is locked in an existential battle with the West over Ukraine, courting Kim allows him to needle Washington and its Asian allies while potentially securing a deep supply of artillery for the Ukraine war.

Washington has accused North Korea of providing arms to Russia, which has the world’s biggest store

of nuclear warheads, but it is unclear whether any deliveries have been made.

The US and South Korea appear worried by the revival of Moscow’s friendship with Pyongyang which they fear could give Kim access to some of Russia’s sensitive missile and other technology.

US and South Korean officials called on Moscow to show responsibility as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

“We agreed to work together to ensure there is a price to pay for the grave violation of Security Council resolutions,” South Korean Vice Foreign Minister Chang Ho-jin told a press conference in Seoul.

Bonnie Jenkins, US undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, who is visiting Seoul, said the US condemned the escalation of defence and political co-operation between Pyongyang and Moscow.

“Obviously the recent reports of the potential sale of arms between North Korea and Russia is concerning. Any such transfer of arms would be a violation of UN Security Council resolutions,” she said.

But it was not immediately clear what - if any - leverage the US and its Asian allies such as South Korea and Japan would have over either Russia or North Korea, both of which have close ties to China.

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

UK train drivers’ strikes to clash with Tory conference

British train drivers will stage two more days of strikes, their trade union said yesterday, the latest walkouts in a long-running industrial dispute and which will coincide with the governing Conservative Party’s annual conference. Passengers in Britain have faced severe disruption to their travel since last year as transport workers seek better pay. Aslef said drivers would strike on September 30 and October 4, and there would also be an overtime ban across the network between September 29 and October 6. The Rail Delivery Group, which represents Britain’s train operators, said the union had rejected a “fair and affordable offer” without putting it to the members.

LAW AND ORDER

Father and two others remanded over girl’s murder

Three people appeared in court yesterday charged with the murder of Sara Sharif, who was found dead at her home last month, including the 10-year-old girl’s father and uncle. Sara was found with extensive injuries at her home in Woking on August 10. Her father Urfan Sharif, 41, his partner Beinash Batool, 29, and her uncle Faisal Malik, 28, had all travelled to Pakistan a day earlier. They returned to Britain on Wednesday when they were arrested. Surrey Police said the trio had all been charged with murder. They appeared at Guildford Magistrate’s Court yesterday where they were remanded in custody until September 19.

DECISION

London’s India Club to close tomorrow

The India Club, a historic London curry house with links to India’s freedom struggle, will close its doors for the last time tomorrow after failing to stop a hotel redevelopment plan. With a non-descript entrance up a precipitous stairway on a busy stretch of The Strand in central London, the restaurant was set up four years after India’s 1947 independence by members of the British-based India League, a campaign group advocating freedom for India from Britain’s colonial rule. For decades, the India Club has drawn regulars craving a masala dosa or bhuna lamb. Indian lawmaker Shashi Tharoor’s late father Chandran helped set up the India Club.

CRIME

Manchester police supplier hit by ransomware attack

Police in Manchester said a third-party supplier that holds some information on its employees had suffered a ransomware attack. The affected data is not believed to have included financial information, Greater Manchester Police said. “We are aware of a ransomware attack affecting a third-party supplier of various UK organisations, including GMP, which holds some information on those employed by GMP,” assistant chief constable Colin McFarlane said in a statement. “This is being treated extremely seriously, with a nationally-led criminal investigation into the attack.”

Global luxury brands to open new outlets at Reliance mall

Reuters
Mumbai

Gucci, Cartier and Louis Vuitton are among brands to sign leases for stores in Indian tycoon Mukesh Ambani’s new Mumbai mall, as luxury firms and Reliance Industries seek to profit from strong economic growth and a rapid rise in the number of millionaires.

The Jio World Plaza, which an industry source said is likely to open this year, is located inside Reliance’s \$1bn business and cultural hub in Mumbai’s business district.

Reliance any has yet to disclose details about the tenants, but lease documents provided by real estate analytics firm CRE Matrix showed that Burberry Group as well as several brands owned by LVMH, Kering and Richemont have agreed to rent shops in the mall, and also share between 4% and 12% of their monthly net revenue with Reliance.

The brands include jewellers Cartier and Bulgari, fashion houses Louis Vuitton, Dior and Gucci, watch brand IWC Schaffhausen and luxury luggage maker Rimowa, which will open its first outlet in India.

Reliance, Burberry, LVMH, Kering and Richemont did not respond to a request for comment.

“Luxury brands have always struggled for quality retail spaces in India and many were forced to open

their first outlets in luxury hotels,” said Anuj Kejriwal, CEO of India’s Anarock Retail. “These brands are now looking for meaningful presence.”

At almost 7,500 square feet, Louis Vuitton’s Jio World Plaza store will be the most spacious of its four outlets in India. Cartier’s store will be its second in the country and for Dior, it will be the third.

To ensure the mall retains its luxury appeal, some lease agreements like that of Dior include a clause that entitles it to a 25% rent reduction if at least four of 10 luxury brands including Gucci, Cartier, Bulgari and Tiffany don’t open their own outlets in the mall within six months.

India’s 1.4bn population, the world’s biggest, has a per capita income of just \$2,300, but the country is also home to more than 800,000 dollar millionaires who are splashing out on everything from luxury homes to expensive SUVs.

Real estate consultants Knight Frank estimate India will have 1.4mn millionaires by 2026, 77% more than in 2021, as the economy continues to strengthen.

The growth in India, where Euromonitor estimates the personal luxury market to expand almost 12% a year in 2022-2026 to nearly \$5bn, contrasts with the slowing economy in China, whose appetite for designer goods has driven sales growth in luxury firms for years.

London Fashion Week opens



Paul Costelloe opened London Fashion Week yesterday, with the Irish designer saying he was “bringing back a bit of romance” to the catwalks with feminine dresses and soft, fluid looks.

Indian opposition to boycott ‘hate-filled’ cable news anchors

AFP
New Delhi

Indian opposition parties have pledged to boycott several television news anchors they accuse of spreading hate and of partisanship towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Hindu nationalist government.

Activists and rights groups have sounded the alarm on press freedoms since Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) took office in 2014. Opposition politicians have accused India’s clamorous cable news shows of being in thrall to the BJP’s agenda, including polarising segments on Muslim and

Christian minorities. “We do not want to legitimise this hate-filled narrative which is corroding our society,” Congress party spokesman Pawan Khera said in a video statement yesterday.

“We will not partake in these showrooms of hate.”

Congress is in an alliance of more than two dozen parties that are hoping to provide a unified alternative to the BJP ahead of national elections next year. Modi’s party is widely expected to win.

The opposition bloc said its members would not appear on the programmes of 14 anchors, including some of India’s most popular TV news personalities.

Raucous and combative debate

programmes are a staple of Indian cable news, with sometimes a dozen or more panellists battling onscreen for a sliver of attention.

Opposition parties have long accused networks of failing to adhere to basic standards of impartiality and of unfairly casting their activities in a negative light.

Sudhir Chaudhary of broadcaster Aaj Tak, one of those named in the boycott, ridiculed the alliance for lashing out at hosts who “refused to lick their boots”.

But he also cautioned that the refusal of opposition lawmakers to face critical questions had put news outlets in a “dangerous situation”. And the News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA), an

industry body representing media outlets, said the boycott went “against the ethos of democracy”. “It betokens intolerance and imperils press freedom,” the group said in a statement.

Since Modi took office, India has slipped 21 places in the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) global press freedom ranking and is now 161st out of 180 surveyed countries.

Journalists who do report critically on the government sometimes find themselves behind bars and are often hounded on social media by supporters of the BJP, which has established itself as India’s dominant political force by championing Hindu identity.

India plans crucial test in crewed space mission by October

India is set to conduct a key test in its ambitious crewed space mission Gaganyaan as early as next month, the project director of the mission R Hutton said. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is currently training four astronauts and looking to expand the cohort as it aims for more future manned missions, Hutton said. The Gaganyaan mission is aimed at developing a human-habitable space capsule that will carry a three-member crew into an orbit of 400km for three days, before returning to safety in a planned splashdown in the Indian Ocean. ISRO has said it will explore ways to achieve a sustained human presence in space once Gaganyaan is completed. The team is aiming to test its crew escape system, which can be used to eject astronauts in emergencies, before undertaking a battery of other tests before the final launch phase, Hutton said.

End of the road for Mumbai’s iconic double-decker bus



Commuters ride on the iconic non-air-conditioned (AC) double-decker bus on the last day of its service in Mumbai, India, yesterday.

UK pumps £500mn into Tata Steel

AFP
London

The UK yesterday said it would provide £500mn (\$621mn) to fund the production of “greener” steel at the country’s biggest steelworks but that 3,000 jobs were still at risk.

The department for business and trade said the money would help finance a new electric arc furnace at Tata Steel’s Port Talbot plant in south Wales, safeguarding 5,000 of the more than 8,000 jobs. Port Talbot steelworks is the UK’s single biggest carbon emitter, and the government has been looking to help Indian-owned Tata Steel and British Steel, run by Chinese group Jingye, to replace dirty blast furnaces.

The Mumbai-based conglomerate had threatened to shut the giant plant unless it received state

aid to help decarbonise production and cut emissions.

Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch hailed the funding as a “historic package of support” that would protect jobs and the UK steel industry.

She dismissed concerns about potential job losses, insisting on a visit to the plant: “We are saving jobs which would have been lost.”

“Without this investment we would probably have seen the end of steelmaking certainly in this part of the country, possibly the whole of the UK.” The government said replacing the coal-powered blast furnaces at the Port Talbot site would “reduce the UK’s entire carbon emissions by around 1.5%”. Experts have said green hydrogen could help the massively-polluting steel industry but producing the clean energy in large enough quantities requires significant investment.

Man arrested over dog attack as UK govt vows action

AFP
London

Police in central England yesterday said a man had been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter, after a 52-year-old man died following the latest in a spate of dog attacks nationwide.

It comes as the issue of dangerous dogs reached the top level of UK politics, with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak vowing to ban the so-called American Bully XL breed involved in numerous incidents.

The latest victim, Ian Price,

was attacked on Thursday by two dogs outside a property in Stonnall, a village just north of Birmingham, and died later in hospital as a result of his injuries.

Staffordshire Police said a 30-year-old man was initially arrested on suspicion of being in charge of dogs dangerously out of control causing injury, and then further arrested for manslaughter.

“Our investigation continues at pace as we try to understand more about events leading up to this horrendous attack,” the force said in an update.

One of the dogs died after be-

ing restrained, and the other died after an injection by a vet.

Officials are now determining the breeds of the dogs involved, but police said they are believed to be American Bullies, known for their stocky and muscular appearance.

On Saturday, an 11-year-old girl was left seriously injured after she was attacked by an American Bully XL and a Staffordshire bull terrier crossbreed puppy.

Many other violence incidents have been reported over recent months involving Bullies or dogs suspected of being Bullies.

“It’s clear the American XL

Bully dog is a danger to our communities,” Sunak said in a recorded video statement posted on social media.

“I’ve ordered urgent work to define and ban this breed so we can end these violent attacks and keep people safe.”

He added the trend was “not about a handful of badly trained dogs” but “a pattern of behaviour and it cannot go on”.

Bullies are said to have originated in the US in the late 1980s, when American pit bull terriers and American Staffordshire bull terriers were crossed.

There are four variations in the US, with XL the largest.

They are not currently subject to any UK legal restrictions, and the breed is not recognised by the country’s Kennel Club, complicating efforts to legislate them.

The pit bull terrier, Japanese tosa, dogo Argentino and fila Brasileiro are currently banned in Britain.

Sunak said defining the American Bully XL was vital. “We will then ban the breed under the Dangerous Dogs Act and new laws will be in place by the end of the year,” he said.

However, some animal behaviourists urged caution over the response to the spate of attacks.

“Experts including anti-bully

groups agree that if dog bites are to be effectively reduced, much more intervention and legislation are needed than simply banning one breed,” said Carri Westgarth, professor in human-animal interaction at the University of Liverpool.

Westgarth questioned whether banning a single breed will encourage those who want to own a type of dog seen as more prone to aggression to simply turn to owning and breeding other similar types.

She noted this had happened with the development of the American Bully after Pitbulls were banned in Britain.



CHAIRMAN

Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

Deputy Managing Editor

K T Chacko

Production Editor

Amjad Khan

✉ P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar
✉ editor@gulf-times.com
☎ 44350478 (News),
☎ 44466404 (Sport),
☎ 44466636 (Home delivery)
☎ 44350474
📘 facebook.com/gulftimes
✉ twitter.com/gulftimes_Qatar
📷 instagram.com/gulftimes
📺 youtube.com/GulftimesVideos

GULF TIMES

Why is 2023 so hot? A rare Pacific volcano is among the suspects

As the world swelters through record temperatures, scientists say an unusual culprit may be partly to blame: an underwater volcanic eruption off Tonga in the South Pacific last year.

While most big blasts cool the planet with a sun-dimming haze, the eruption of Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai in January 2022 blew the equivalent of 60,000 Olympic swimming pools of water into the stratosphere, high above the planet.

Water vapour is a natural greenhouse gas, trapping heat as it swirls around the globe. By contrast, major land eruptions — such as Pinatubo in the Philippines in 1991 — temporarily dim sunshine with an ashen sunshade before falling back to Earth.

“The majority of volcanoes will have a cooling effect,” said Peter Thorne, a professor of climate science at Maynooth University in Ireland. The Tongan volcano “is an exception to the rule and a significant wild card we haven’t seen before.”

The June-August period this year was the warmest on record worldwide by a puzzlingly wide margin, with heatwaves occurring from Japan to the US.

Many scientists say more research into volcanoes is vital to gauge how far eruptions can briefly affect the long-term trend of global warming.

The eruption in the Polynesian archipelago ejected 150mn-odd tonnes of water vapour into the stratosphere, about 10% of the 1.4bn tonnes typically swirling there, said Margot Clyne, an atmospheric scientist at the University of Colorado, Boulder, in the US.

“We can say with pretty good confidence that a volcanic eruption like this didn’t happen all the way back... to the 1880s, when Krakatoa erupted in 1883,” she said.

Most volcanoes dim sunshine in climate change wild-card

Nature in January said the eruption slightly increased the risk that global temperatures would temporarily breach 1.5C in at least one of the next five years.

Holger Voemel, a senior scientist at the US National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), said it was possible that the eruption would have some effect on global warming.

“But I think the verdict is still out,” Voemel said. Before it erupted, the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai was about 150m below sea level. It is unclear how many volcanoes are in water shallow enough to blow material into the atmosphere if they erupt.

The IPCC says at least one Pinatubo-style eruption is likely this century but that volcanoes have had a negligible effect on the overall trend of global warming driven by human greenhouse gas emissions since the Industrial Revolution.

“Volcanic activity is irregular, unpredictable and uncontrollable,” said Ingo Bethke, of the Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research at the University of Bergen in Norway.

Bethke and Thorne argue that the IPCC should do more to examine the risks of a string of eruptions.

“We can deal with one Pinatubo, but several would be a major stress test for society on top of climate change,” Thorne said.

Amid the unpredictability, however, some scientists say climate change might make eruptions more frequent in certain icy areas where the weight of thick glaciers keeps a lid on some volcanoes. A thaw could unleash eruptions.

In Iceland, for instance, the ending of the last Ice Age about 12,000 years ago coincided with eruption rates that were about 100 times higher than recent times.

And downpours linked to climate change could erode the sides of volcanoes. In Hawaii in 2018, unusually heavy rain may have weakened the flanks of Kilauea volcano.

— Thomson Reuters Foundation

To Advertise

✉ gtadv@gulf-times.com

Display

☎ 44466621 📠 44418811

Classified

☎ 44466609 📠 44418811

✉ gtcad@gulf-times.com

Subscription

✉ circulation@gulf-times.com

© 2023 Gulf Times. All rights reserved

Banning Trump

By Eric Posner
Chicago

A new legal effort to prevent Donald Trump from retaking the presidency next year is afoot. Its backers rely on Section Three of the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution, which bars from office anyone who has “engaged in insurrection or rebellion... or given aid or comfort to the enemies” of the US.

Numerous lawsuits have been filed arguing that Trump’s participation in an insurrection on January 6, 2021 — either by itself or as part of a larger effort to nullify the 2020 election — disqualifies him. Could a constitutional provision adopted in 1868 really save American democracy in 2024?

Section Three has already been used successfully to remove from office a New Mexico county commissioner named Couy Griffin, the organiser of “Cowboys for Trump,” who helped rally members of the mob that breached the Capitol on January 6. But the effort to remove Trump from the ballot has received further support from a recent article by two distinguished constitutional law professors, William Baude of the University of Chicago Law School and Michael Stokes Paulsen of the University of St. Thomas School of Law, who argue that Section Three does indeed apply.

Baude and Paulsen contend that January 6 obviously was an insurrection, because many of those involved used organised violence to try to prevent the lawful transfer of power. Trump either directly engaged in it or gave “aid or comfort” to participants by refusing to call in the National Guard to halt the violence despite repeated requests over a period of hours.

The article gives special attention to Griffin’s Case, an “appalling opinion” written by Supreme Court chief justice Salmon P Chase in 1869, which will likely play a role in any suit against Trump.

Since this was not a Supreme Court opinion, its precedential significance remains unclear. In those days, Supreme Court justices would “sit circuit” and decide certain appeals on their own. Nonetheless, Chase’s opinion matters because he was a Supreme Court justice, a former member of president Abraham Lincoln’s cabinet, and a significant political and legal figure in his own right. It also matters because it tells us how the US once dealt with the problem



Donald Trump: facing legal fight over bid to retake presidency

of wayward government officials.

The case involved an appeal of a ruling issued by a Virginia judge who had been a Virginia state legislator (and thus an officeholder in the Confederacy) during the Civil War. The defendant (Griffin), who had been convicted of a crime, argued that the judge was disqualified under Section Three. But Chase found it impossible to believe that Congress had intended to disqualify everyone who had held any official position in the South, let alone that a run-of-the-mill trial should be voided on those grounds. Under such a literal interpretation of the text, Chase wrote: “No sentence, no judgment, no decree, no acknowledgment of a deed, no record of a deed, no sheriff’s or commissioner’s sale — in short no official act — is of the least validity. It is impossible to measure the evils which such a construction would add to the calamities which have already fallen upon the people of these states.”

For Chase, it was unfathomable that the South, already reduced to an economic wasteland, would also be deprived of government and reduced to anarchy in the wake of Lincoln’s talk of reconciliation and reconstruction. That outcome would help freedmen no more than the former rebels.

Chase accordingly held that Section Three was not “self-executing.” It instead gave Congress the power to enact legislation to implement it.

Chase’s judicial statesmanship seems to have worked: Congress duly enacted a statute to purge certain southern officeholders. Under the First Ku Klux Klan Act of 1870, Section Three would be enforced only against officeholders who interfered with Reconstruction, not against every recorder of deeds or dogcatcher. Congress then issued a broad amnesty in 1872.

Historians see Section Three as one of many attempts to come to terms with the Civil War. Do we punish the South, reconcile with it, or aim for a little of both? These were hard questions that took decades to resolve — if they were ever resolved at all. Chase saw plainly that, in the immediate aftermath of the war, Congress was in no mood to deliberate carefully, and thus committed the classic blunder of vengeance. As his former boss, Lincoln, understood, reconciliation was a necessary component of reconstruction.

Baude and Paulsen, by contrast, condemn Chase of a technical error of judicial interpretation, committing the “classic blunder”

of “swapping in original intent for original meaning” when he interpreted the amendment. They think Chase should have enforced the ill-considered impulses of Congress, come what may. And they think today’s secretaries of state should enforce those same ill-considered, vengeful impulses, as embodied in the text and original understanding in 1868. The implication is that they should disregard the utterly different context — the elimination from the ballot of a former president and Republican Party frontrunner — despite the impact of disenfranchising a huge portion of the electorate in its own eyes. It is hard to think of a better way to discredit both democracy and the rule of law in a single blow.

It is tempting to summon a deus ex machina to rid the country of a man who has done more to undermine American democracy than any person since Jefferson Davis. But would it revive democracy, or weaken it further, to allow the 2024 election to be decided by the electorate of 1868? — Project Syndicate

● Eric Posner, a professor at the University of Chicago Law School, is the author of How Antitrust Failed Workers (Oxford University Press, 2021).

IMF faces tough call on Argentina

By Jorgelina do Rosario
London

Argentina and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) share a rocky history spanning seven decades — and it looks as if things could get worse.

Just five years ago, Argentina became the Washington-based global lender’s biggest single debtor, receiving a \$57bn bailout to help then-president Mauricio Macri’s market-friendly government steer out of an economic crisis marked by high inflation and a gaping budget deficit. But that programme failed to put South America’s second-largest economy back on its feet.

Fast forward and Argentina is about to enter a recession, with inflation running at more than 100% and its dollar reserves deep in the red.

Meanwhile, the Peronist-led government that took over in late 2019 has missed the modest economic targets mandated by a 2022 IMF loan tailored to refinance \$44bn still owed from the previous programme.

Although the current programme is off track, the IMF is pushing ahead with reviews and disbursements because it does not want to force Argentina into a default that would likely worsen the country’s grim economic circumstances.

Pressure, however, is building inside and outside the IMF to ensure Argentina’s treatment is in line with those of other countries.

Analysts said the IMF needs to take a harder stance when a new government takes power after elections in October.

“No matter who wins after the vote, the IMF should insist that the government either bite the bullet — or otherwise the Fund should pull the plug on its support,” said Mark Sobel, a former US representative at the IMF.

“Even if that means huge arrears.” The next government might feel the heat quickly. Javier Milei, a far-right outsider who vaulted into the front-runner’s position after primary elections last month, wants to dollarise the economy and said the Fund should encourage Argentina to more quickly reduce its primary fiscal deficit, which is targeted at 1.9% of gross domestic product for 2023.

Even if he wins the October 22 election and takes power in December, Milei would need alliances in Congress to push through reforms and a new IMF programme — Argentina’s 23rd.

Sobel said the country will require sweeping fiscal consolidation, a halt on reserve money creation, and an extensive and sequenced liberalisation of multiple foreign exchange rates,



capital controls and other restrictions.

Economy Minister Sergio Massa, the centre-left Peronist coalition’s presidential candidate, promised this week to exempt millions of workers from paying income taxes shortly after a fresh IMF disbursement.

Stricter conditions and deeper structural reforms for Buenos Aires should come with a “very strong social component,” said Martin Muehleisen, the former director of the IMF’s Strategy, Policy and Review Department (SPR), adding that a new programme “can’t mean more people living on the streets.”

Four out of 10 Argentines live below the poverty line.

“The message to Argentina from the IMF but also from G7 shareholders needs to be clear: You fix your economy for real or there is just not more money,” Muehleisen said.

A top soybean meal and oil exporter, Argentina is at the mercy of boom-and-bust cycles. Its economic policies have gyrated between protectionism — capital controls, export quotas and tariffs — and market-friendly reforms, leading to a topsy-turvy relationship with the Fund.

In the 1990s, the global lender was a continuous feature in Argentina, providing financing and technical assistance while the government fixed the peso to the US dollar. But quick IMF disengagement in 2001 worsened an economic crisis as the country’s overseas debt bulged.

The rise of leftist Nestor Kirchner to the presidency in 2003 opened a new chapter, as his government took a hostile view of the IMF and repaid some \$10bn owed to the Fund before cutting ties.

Following 15 years with no programmes, Argentina returned to the IMF in 2018 to request a record bailout. That effort paved the way for the \$57bn programme, which ultimately failed and was replaced by the current one.

“The shadow of that failed programme will

linger on both the new administration and the IMF, as there is an institutional memory on how this programme didn’t help,” said Stephen Nelson, an associate professor of political science at Northwestern University in Chicago.

The current programme could end before its expiration in September 2024, but Argentina will still require funds.

“Argentina needs a big liquidity boost. The pressure from IMF members to tighten conditions will get amplified when negotiations turn to a new lending arrangement,” said Nelson, who specialises in the politics shaping IMF lending policies.

Dollar-strapped Argentina maintains a complicated currency scheme of multiple rates that worsened after a recent 18% devaluation. Capital controls are still in place.

Some IMF executive board members have complained in Argentina-related meetings that the country has received preferential treatment, three sources close to the matter said on condition of anonymity.

The lack of “evenhandedness” has come up with countries such as Zambia, Sri Lanka and Ghana facing strict requirements under IMF-led debt reworks.

“How can the worst serial defaulter in the emerging markets asset class continue to receive preferential treatment compared to other EM nations with macroeconomic troubles?” said Walter Stoeppelwerth, chief strategist at financial firm Gletir SA.

Economists have pointed to Egypt and Burundi, which devalued their currencies by more than 40% and more than 30%, respectively, as examples of countries that have had to take harsh medicine under IMF programmes. Simon Quijano-Evans, chief economist at asset manager Gemcorp Capital, noted that Argentina has more outstanding IMF debt than the \$38bn combined from sub-Saharan Africa nations at a time when many of the latter face “debt restructuring delays due to the G20 Common Framework process.”

Without mentioning Argentina, the US — holding the largest voting power in the Fund — recently raised its concerns.

“In some cases, a country will require a follow-on programme to resolve its balance of payments problems,” said Jay Shambaugh, the US Treasury’s undersecretary for international affairs.

“But it cannot be the policy of the IMF to roll over programmes, or approve reviews, only to avoid arrears without sound policy reforms in place.” — Reuters

CLAIM

G7 ‘expected to launch Russian diamond ban’

The Group of Seven (G7) countries is expected to announce an import ban on Russian diamonds in the next 2-3 weeks, Belgian officials told reporters yesterday, in a bid to tighten a squeeze on Russia's capacity to finance the war in Ukraine. The plan could transform the global diamond supply chain, but implementation will depend heavily on India, whose diamond industry employs millions of people who cut and polish 90% of the world's diamonds. The ban, proposed by Belgium where the city of Antwerp is the world's No 1 diamond trading hub, will come into effect on January 1, one of the government officials told reporters in Brussels.



Migrants arrive on an Italian Coast Guard vessel after being rescued at sea, on the Sicilian island of Lampedusa, Italy, yesterday.

Migrant pressure eases on Italian island as political tensions rise

AFP
Lampedusa, Italy

Italian authorities were transferring thousands of migrants off the tiny island of Lampedusa yesterday, after record arrivals that sparked fresh debate over how Europe shares responsibility for asylum seekers. Men, women and children lined up in the sun to take buses and vans to the port, where some were later seen preparing to board ships to the larger island of Sicily, where they will be transferred to migrant processing centres. Lampedusa, just around 145km off the coast of Tunisia, has long been a landing point for migrant boats from North Africa. But this week its migration centre - built for fewer than 400 people - was overwhelmed after some 8,500 people arrived in 199 boats between Monday and Wednesday,

according to the UN migration agency - more than the entire local population. Images of thousands of people sleeping in the open air, scaling the perimeter fence and wandering around Lampedusa town sparked anger among members of Italy's hard-right government, with Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini calling the arrivals an "act of war". Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni argues the European Union must do more to help tackle migration, a message repeated by Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani yesterday, who said Rome would take measures but "action by Italy is not enough." Mass migration is also a key political issue in other EU capitals ahead of European Parliament elections in June. In France, members of the far-right said the government should not allow any migrants from

Lampedusa across the border - to which President Emmanuel Macron responded by calling for European solidarity. "I consider it the responsibility of the entire EU to stand alongside Italy," Macron said, adding that "strictly nationalist policies have their limits". Germany earlier this week confirmed it had stopped accepting migrants living in Italy under a European solidarity plan aimed at easing pressure on EU border nations. It was a "signal to Italy" after Rome last year temporarily suspended EU rules on accepting migrants, a government spokesman said yesterday - adding that Berlin could resume taking migrants "if Italy fulfils its obligations to take back refugees". Lampedusa's migrant centre has struggled for years to cope with the arrivals, with humanitarian organisations reporting a lack of water, food and medical care.

FALLOUT

Polish foreign ministry sacks legal chief in visa scandal

Poland's foreign ministry said it had fired the head of its legal service and cancelled all its contracts for outsourcing visa applications amid a growing scandal over the issue of migration a month ahead of elections. The announcement came a day after seven people were charged over alleged irregularities in granting work visas and two weeks after anti-corruption officers looking into the scandal searched the ministry and the deputy foreign minister was also dismissed. Opposition groups have accused the government of being complicit in a system in which migrants received visas at an accelerated pace without proper checks after paying intermediaries.

VERDICT

Russian jailed over military leaks to US

A Russian man was sentenced to 12-and-a-half years in prison after being found guilty of transferring military equipment to the US. Sergei Kabanov was convicted of "high treason" by a court in Tver, Interfax said. He was accused of organising a smuggling network to send "products used in the manufacture of Russian army missiles" to a US-based company, according to Russia's security service. The FSB said the equipment included components of "Russian ground-to-air missile systems." It said the equipment had been transferred via Latvia to an American company called Victory Procurement Services, which was "controlled by the US Department of Defence."

DECISION

Nobel Prize award raised to nearly \$1mn for 2023

Winners of this year's Nobel Prizes will get an extra 1mn crowns, taking the total financial reward to 11mn Swedish crowns (\$986,000), the Nobel Foundation, which administers the awards, said yesterday. The prize money has been adjusted up and down in recent years and the award-givers said it was increasing the amount this year to reflect the Foundation's stronger financial position. In 2012, prize money was reduced from 10mn crowns to 8mn as the Foundation looked to shore up its finances. The prize amount was increased to 9mn in 2017 and in 2020 to 10mn - where it was prior to 2012.

Apple looks to defuse French iPhone 12 dispute as EU scrutiny steps up

Reuters
Paris

Apple yesterday pledged to update software on iPhone 12s in France to settle a dispute over radiation levels, but concerns in other European countries signalled it may have to take similar action elsewhere. France this week suspended sales of iPhone 12 handsets after tests which it said found breaches of radiation exposure limits. Apple contested the findings, saying the iPhone 12 was certified by multiple international bodies as compliant with global standards, but said yesterday it would issue a software update to accommodate the testing methods used in France. Researchers have conducted a vast number of studies over the last two decades to assess the health risks of mobile phones. According to the World Health Organisation, no adverse health effects have been established as being caused by them. But the radiation warning in France, based on results of tests that differ from those carried out in other countries, has prompted concerns across Europe. Belgium's state secretary for digitalisation said he had asked Apple to upgrade the iPhone 12 software across EU countries, even though he said that based on the Belgian regulator's own preliminary review the

handset presents no danger to users. Germany said it was in touch with French authorities to find a European Union-wide solution, while Italy was set to ask Apple to upgrade the software on iPhone 12s there, according to a government source in Rome. However, any request to Apple or separate decisions by Italian authorities will only come after the end of the French investigation, a second Italian government source said. The Dutch Authority for Digital Infrastructure said it was also conducting its own investigation, due in two weeks, and was in contact with Apple as well as German and French authorities. The agency said it had received calls from concerned consumers. The French government welcomed Apple's software update, saying it would be swiftly tested and should allow for sales of the relatively old iPhone 12 model, launched in 2020, to resume. "We will issue a software update for users in France to accommodate the protocol used by French regulators. We look forward to iPhone 12 continuing to be available in France," Apple said in a statement. "This is related to a specific testing protocol used by French regulators and not a safety concern," it said. Apple routinely provides software updates for its phones and computers, mostly to fix a security issue. They can be focused on a particular model or a region, and some-

times Apple issues such updates several times in a month. France's Agence Nationale des Frequences (ANFR) said on Tuesday the iPhone 12's Specific Absorption Rate (SAR) - a measure of the rate of radiofrequency energy absorbed by the body from a piece of equipment - was higher than legally allowed, which prompted the sale suspension. A change in French regulations in 2020 allowed for testing SAR for limbs - holding a phone in hand - as well as for the head and body, used elsewhere. In the French limb SAR tests, which the iPhone 12 failed, it is measured at a distance of 0mm compared with a distance of 5mm for body tests. The Belgian minister for digitalisation, Mathieu Michel, said in a statement yesterday that while a review of the phone by the country's IBPT regulator was still underway, the first results were "reassuring" and there was no need for a recall of the phone in Belgium. Even so, he said he had contacted Apple and asked it to "review its software updates in an identical manner within the whole of Europe." Denmark too moved to reassure owners of the phone, saying its Safety Authority would not take action following France's findings and that it was not concerned about radiation levels from using the iPhone 12.

Pakistan flag carrier PIA struggling to pay bills

Pakistan's national flag carrier yesterday admitted it was struggling to pay bills and wages after local media reports said the fleet may be grounded within days. Abdullah Hafeez, spokesman for government-owned Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), said the company was seeking urgent financial help from the treasury, but had secured funds "for the time being". "But we do struggle due to balance sheet challenges," he said. "That is why PIA is seeking balance sheet restructuring support from the owners." Hafeez said three flights were grounded Thursday and that salaries had been paid late. Twenty-five aircraft from a fleet of 31 were still flying, with the others grounded for scheduled or unscheduled maintenance, he said. Local television channel Geo news this week reported that the airline was on the verge of collapse and flight operations could be suspended in days if emergency funds were not provided.

Sweden celebrates king's golden jubilee



Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf (second left) and the Prince Carl Philip of Sweden (right) oversee the Changing of the Guard in the Outer Courtyard for the 50th anniversary of King Carl XVI Gustaf's accession to the throne at the Royal Palace in Stockholm, Sweden, yesterday. Sweden began two days of celebrations to mark the occasion. A weekend of celebrations that include galas, street parties and a procession through Stockholm has been lined up.

Afghan-Pakistan border crossing reopens

Reuters
Peshawar, Pakistan/Kabul

The main land crossing on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan reopened yesterday after a closure of nine days following shooting between guards on both sides, a senior Pakistani official said. Thousands of travellers and hundreds of trucks laden with goods were stranded last week by the closure of the Torkham border crossing, at the western end of the Khyber Pass. "It's opened for pedestrian and vehicular traffic," Abdul Nasir Khan, deputy commissioner of Pakistan's Khyber district, said. A security official in Torkham said talks between the two sides had resolved the issue. Spokespersons for Pakistan's foreign ministry and authorities in Af-

ghanistan's eastern province of Nangarhar confirmed the reopening. The road is a key lifeline for landlocked Afghanistan, linking the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar to Jalalabad, the main city in Nangarhar, and the route onwards to the capital, Kabul. "The border closure was causing huge losses to traders and common people of the two neighbouring countries," said Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, director of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Among dozens of families braving the heat and humidity in a bid to return home was an Afghan refugee, Mohamed Ismail, who had spent a week in a makeshift shelter in Peshawar with his wife and four children, waiting for the border to open. "They're not letting us go back," Ismail said.

EU ‘unafraid’ of trade war with China

AFP
Santiago de Compostela, Spain

The EU yesterday insisted that its economy could survive any retaliation from China, after Beijing warned that Brussels' probe into Chinese electric car subsidies would harm trade relations. Europe put itself at risk of a trade war when European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen announced the anti-subsidy investigation on Wednesday, accusing China of keeping car prices "artificially low by huge state subsidies".

The investigation could see the European Union try to protect European carmakers by imposing punitive tariffs on cars it believes are unfairly sold at a lower price. The day after von der Leyen's announcement, the Chinese commerce ministry hit back at the EU's "naked protectionism", and said the measures "will have a negative impact on China-EU economic and trade relations". Trade with China makes up around 2.5% of eurozone GDP, but economy commissioner Paolo Gentiloni appeared to be unfazed by the warning when asked about whether the bloc's economy could survive any tariffs.

"I'm confident, but we have to address this issue very seriously. I think there is no specific reason for retaliation but retaliation is always possible," he said, before a meeting of eurozone finance ministers in the Spanish city of Santiago de Compostela. The probe comes after France pushed Brussels to take stronger action to defend European industry against growing threats from China and the US. French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire made a passionate defence of the EU's strength as he rejected accusations of protectionism. "We don't have to fear any coun-

try. We are the EU... We are one of the most powerful economic continents," he told Bloomberg TV last yesterday. "We are not here to trigger any kind of trade war," he said, adding: "It has nothing to do with protectionism." "It's good news that Europe realises the necessity to defend its economic interests," Le Maire said, pointing to US and China acting to protect their economies. Germany, one of the world's biggest carmakers, is more reticent since its large, well-known brands are more exposed to the Chinese market than French manufacturers.

Although Berlin had concerns before the announcement, German Finance Minister Christian Lindner backed the probe in comments yesterday. "If there are concerns that it is not fair then it needs to be looked at. World trade is based on rules and (they) of course also apply to electric vehicles," he said. Gentiloni acknowledged that the level of trade with China "is differentiated among member states". China represents the largest global market for major German car brands such as Volkswagen, Audi, Mercedes and BMW. It is also the main destination for French luxury giants LVMH, Kering and Hermes.

Spanish Economy Minister Nadia Calvino insisted the EU was "a world trade superpower", and fervently backed the commission's actions against China. "I am absolutely convinced that the European Commission will continue to drive a trade policy on the basis of an open rules-based trade framework," she said. Experts believe Chinese cars undercut European competitors by around 20%, and Brussels believes this may be due to illegal practices but Beijing argues its industry is reaping the benefits of investment. In the race to produce more clean tech, the EU is seeking to avoid its past mistakes.

Es'hailSat launches Playout Services to empower broadcast excellence

Es'hailSat – Qatar Satellite Company has launched state-of-the-art Playout Services tailored for television broadcasters. The initiative comes as a collaborative effort between Es'hailSat and leading technology innovators and experts, aimed at bringing the very best of broadcast management and delivery to Qatar and the Mena region.

President and CEO, Es'hailSat, Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari, said: "Since our inception in 2010, Es'hailSat has collaborated with global and regional broadcast & telecommunication partners to



bring the best of what is available globally to Qatar's ICT infrastructure. With a fleet of two satellites, Es'hail-1 and Es'hail-2 co-located at 25.5/26 degrees East we are able to offer resilient and reliable satellite services across the Middle East and North Africa region. In addition, our 50,000sq m Teleport facility outside of Doha enables the provision of services such as hosting, managed VSAT and broadcast distribution.

"The launch of Es'hailSat's Playout Services signifies a pivotal

moment in the media landscape in Qatar, reflecting our dedication to embracing innovation and enhancing the quality of content delivered to households across Qatar and the Mena region," added al-Kuwari.

"This culmination of effort and collaboration between Es'hailSat and playout technology providers marks a significant leap forward in transforming the broadcast industry, setting new benchmarks for excellence, efficiency, and content delivery."

With a commitment to providing television broadcasters an unparalleled edge, Es'hailSat's Playout Services offer a comprehensive solution encompassing scheduling, content preparation, graphics integration, and seamless transmission. Broadcasting professionals across Qatar and the Mena region can now optimise their operations, ensuring an uninterrupted and engaging viewer experience, and leveraging cutting-edge automation, real-time monitoring, and 24x7 multi-lingual professional support. Es'hailSat's playout services broadcasters can not only create their TV channel but also reach millions of viewers in one step. (QNA)

A tale of Qatar and Indonesia coffee cultures

The 'Growing Kopi, Drinking Qahwa; Stories of Coffee in Qatar and Indonesia' exhibition is set to open at the National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ) on October 24, taking visitors on a journey through the global history of coffee by exploring the coffee cultures of the two countries.

Organised in partnership with the National Museum of Indonesia, the exhibition is a part of the Qatar-Indonesia 2023 Year of Culture and Qatar Creates, and will remain on view until February 17, 2024.

The exhibition was created by the joint curatorial teams from NMoQ and the National Museum of Indonesia, including Exhibit and Multimedia Interpretive specialist Dr Marie-Pierre Lissor, Social and Oral History researcher Najma Ahmed, deputy director of Curatorial Tania Abdulmonem al-Majid, associate curator of Social History Sara Saqr al-Mo-

hannadi, associate curator of Oral History Sara al-Maadheed, head Curator of Oral History Amal al-Hideous and National Museum of Indonesia members Daroe Handojo, Prawoto Indarto, Sekar Arum Romadhani, Nusi Lisabilla Estudiantin.

The exhibition brings to life the history of coffee growing, trading, and drinking around the world, with a particular focus on the traditional and contemporary coffee cultures of Qatar and Indonesia, using interactive displays, immersive projections, sights, smells, soundscapes, a specially commissioned contemporary artwork, and more.

"As Qatar and Indonesia have come together this year to celebrate their shared traditions, the importance of coffee culture in both nations has emerged as an area with significant meaning in daily life," said Aisha al-Attiya, director of Cultural Diplomacy at Qatar Museums.

Indonesian ambassador Ridwan Hassan said: "The Qatar-Indonesia 2023 Year of Culture has been filled with many remarkable events that celebrated our shared cultural connections. This exhibition will not only celebrate the rich tapestry of flavours that Indonesian farmers bring forth but also embodies the deep-rooted connections between cultures, transcending borders through a shared appreciation for hospitality, tradition, and building human connection."

Dr Marie-Pierre Lissor added: "From a historical perspective, coffee is a fascinating commodity that connects the globe. Studying the history of coffee can teach us about everything from community development and human ingenuity to the cultural practices of hospitality and even colonial exploitation. Coffee-making rituals are integral parts of many cultures, includ-

ing Qatar's, which are on display in the National Museum of Qatar permanent galleries."

Growing Kopi, Drinking Qahwa is organised in five thematic sections, ranging from growing to drinking coffee as part of shared traditions. The exhibition also explores topics ranging from sustainable farming to social and cultural development.

The exhibition's first section, What is Coffee?, introduces the visitors to the coffee plant and its prized beans. It also explains the origins of the term kopi (coffee in Bahasa Indonesia) from the Arabic word for coffee, qahwa. Next, Growing and Trading Coffee focuses on the history of coffee in the Arab World and Indonesia. It explains how coffee went from the forests of Ethiopia to Indonesia's Java Island. This part of the exhibition also features a contemporary art installation Bloom in Agony (2022), from the Indone-

sian artists' collective Gegerboyoy, which explores connections between Indonesia's colonial heritage and modern coffee practices.

Roasting and Brewing engages audiences through sensory experiences using coffee beans and spices highlighting different roasting and brewing traditions. Via videos, visitors can learn about qahwa brewing from an elder Qatari coffee expert and enjoy a coffee-making competition showing the recipes of different Qatari families.

Among the final section of the exhibition is Serving and Drinking, which focuses on the rituals associated with coffee drinking in Qatar and Indonesia. Highlights in this section include a 360-degree projection that transports the visitor to Filosofi Kopi, an iconic coffee shop in the heart of Jakarta, while another circular space evokes a Qatari majlis. Inside, two screens display a short film cre-

ated in collaboration with Qatari youth showing the complexity of the coffee serving and drinking etiquette in Qatar, often with humorous outcomes.

Finally, Coffee and Creativity explores the many ways in which coffee helps foster the creative individuals and industries in Qatar and Indonesia. The section highlights Indonesian cultural practices such as batik textiles and traditional mask dances, and celebrates Qatari artists and entrepreneurs.

Accompanying the exhibition will be a series of public programmes engaging local coffee shops, artists, and baristas from Indonesia, as well as activities including barista experiences and competitions, special tours, and partnerships with local shops.

The exhibition was made possible with assistance from Lead Sponsor Expo 2023 Doha with additional support from Partner & Partners.



This part of the exhibition also features a contemporary art installation Bloom in Agony (2022).



The exhibition brings to life the history of coffee growing, trading, and drinking around the world.

Coffee enthusiasts brew up a global show



The first edition of Doha International Coffee Exhibition 2023, which concludes today, has brought together coffee enthusiasts and professionals from across the globe at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre. This premier global coffee trade show, organised by the Qatar Specialty Coffee Association, is presenting some of the most coveted brews alongside the latest developments in coffee procurement, handling, roasting, brewing, and distribution.

Opened on September 14, the event continues to draw a large number of visitors: from proprietors of cafes, roasters, retailers, and baristas to coffee lovers and representatives from the hospitality, restaurant, and catering industries.

In addition to an array of coffee beans sourced from diverse corners of the globe, the exhibition also showcases cutting-edge coffee machines, equipment and other accessories currently in use in the market. Many exhibitors provide opportunities for coffee tasting, with highly-skilled baristas expertly crafting both classic and signature beverages on-site. The event also hosts lectures, workshops and training sessions on coffee, led by industry experts.

The remarkable proliferation of coffee shops and specialty cafes, not only in Qatar but also in other GCC nations, has created an unprecedented demand for highly skilled baristas, it is learnt.

