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Sheikha Moza meets QF alumni in New York

QNA
New York

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation (QF), met yesterday with US-based alumni of Qatar Foundation's education ecosystem to hear their stories, ideas, and challenges.

QF alumni whose time within Education City's unique environment of learning has equipped them to be drivers of change in their careers, shared their thoughts on how QF can amplify the support it provides to its current and future students, and emerging trends and opportunities they have identified in their fields that can benefit QF and Qatar.

"Today I was delighted to meet with Qatar Foundation graduates in New York," said Her Highness.

"Working in fields from research and science to international diplomacy, these young people, now based in the US, are excellent ambassadors for Education City. It was inspiring to hear them speak of their achievements — dreams turned into reality through education and perseverance."

Dr Abdallah Tom, a graduate of Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar and current Psychiatry Resident at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, said: "It is an honour to be surrounded by such wonderful people, all very inspiring in their own ways. There was a lot of dialogue surrounding cross-cultural collaboration, and how we can give back to our community in Qatar, which has given us so much over the years."

Nayef Saeed Mohamed al-Nabet, a Georgetown University in Qatar graduate, working at the Office of Intergovernmental Support and Co-ordination for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic Affairs and



PICTURE: Aisha al-Musallam



Social Affairs (DESA) at the UN in New York, stated: "We were absolutely delighted to be at this meeting, which provided us with the opportunity to exchange our thoughts as graduates living and working in the US. This gathering boosted our morale and reminded us of the importance of persevering as we pursue our goals, in large part thanks to the encouragement

and support of Her Highness."

Her Highness went on to express her hope that this international gathering, which generated productive conversations, is the first of many future events. She urged the alumni to continue to strengthen their ties amongst each other and with Education City.

As well as playing key, im-



PICTURES: AR al-Baker

pactful roles within Qatar's workforce, graduates of Qatar Foundation's Hamad Bin Khalifa University and its seven international partner universities are making their mark in countries around the world — including the US — in fields ranging from healthcare and computer science to engineering and diplomacy.

In 2022, the QF Alumni Pro-

gramme was established as a focal point for the 14,000-plus students who have graduated from QF's schools and universities to form a global network based on their shared experience of learning and growing within the Education City ecosystem. It enables them to connect with and support each other and retain their links to QF and Qatar.

Flu vaccination campaign starts today

From Page 1

Dr Hamad al-Romaihi, director, Health Protection and Communicable Disease Control, said while the flu is a serious illness and everyone six months of age and older should take the vaccine to protect themselves, some groups are more vulnerable than others.

"People of all ages and health conditions can catch the flu virus and become sick, but there are certain key population groups who are at increased risk of the virus," Dr al-Romaihi said. "These are people aged over 50 years; those with chronic conditions regardless of their age; children aged between six months and five years; pregnant women; and healthcare workers due to their close interaction with vulnerable patients and children."

Dr Khalid Hamid Elawad, manager, Health Protection, Preventive Health Directorate at PHCC, encouraged the community to take the flu vaccine as soon as possible to build immunity before the winter season hits in coming months.

"I urge all of you to take the flu vaccine as soon as possible because maximum protection against the flu takes up to two weeks to develop, so the sooner people get vaccinated, the sooner they will be protected," Dr Elawad said.

Dr Elawad also reassured the community that they cannot get the flu from the flu shot.

"The virus is inactivated so it can't actually cause the flu after you get the shot," Dr Elawad said. "The flu vaccine is one of the safest and most established vaccines. Hundreds of millions of people around the world have safely received flu vaccines over the past 50 years, and there has been extensive research supporting the safety of flu vaccines."

For more information about the flu, including where to get the vaccine, visit www.fighttheflu.qa


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QLA officials with the award.

QF school wins 2023 Green School Award

Qatar Leadership Academy (QLA) has secured the 2023 Green School Award, reflecting its dedication to sustainability and contributions to environmental stewardship and Qatar Foundation's (QF) commitment to helping build a greener future, a statement said yesterday.

The selection of QLA – one of the schools under QF's Pre-University Education – for the Green School Award recognises its holistic approach to sustainable practices, its efforts to instil eco-conscious values in its students, and how it nurtures a sustainable educational environment.

The Green School Award was presented to QLA during the 7th NYC Green School Conference 2023, held alongside the 78th United Nations General Assembly in New York City, and accepted by Jameel al-Shammari, director general, QLA.

Al-Shammari said: "This achievement serves as a resounding testament to the unwavering commitment demonstrated by our students, staff, and the entire Qatar Leadership Academy community in championing sustainability.

"The receipt of the Green

School Award marks a significant moment of pride and accomplishment for Qatar Leadership Academy, symbolising the culmination of our relentless dedication to fostering environmental awareness and nurturing a culture deeply rooted in sustainability. The award shines a spotlight on the tireless endeavours of our school in executing a wide-ranging spectrum of green initiatives, from conserving energy and water resources to reducing waste and championing recycling."

Al-Shammari emphasised the importance of instilling sustainability principles in students and integrating them within QF, saying: "Teaching sustainability is not just a curriculum; it's a way of life and a commitment to the future.

"We believe that nurturing a generation of environmentally conscious individuals is a fundamental duty. Qatar Leadership Academy is dedicated to this cause, and we are proud to align our efforts with Qatar Foundation's vision for a sustainable future."

The global conference saw the participation of 42 countries and featured over 2,000 international schools.

Registration for next Haj season starts on Wednesday

Registration for the upcoming Haj season starts on Wednesday, the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs announced yesterday.

Speaking at a press conference, Director of the Department of Haj and Umrah Ali bin Sultan al-Misifri said that Qataris and residents can apply on Haj.gov.qa website from 8am on Wednesday, Sept 20 until Oct 20, 2023.

The early registration allows Qatari Haj tour operators to round off their contracts with

corresponding Saudi agencies and better services for pilgrims, al-Misifri said.

He added that the Saudi authorities have allocated Qatar a Haj quota of 4,400 pilgrims.

Qatari applicants must be at least 16 years old, with the possibility of adding five companions. GCC nationals must be at least 18 years old and have the option to add only one companion. For residents, they must be at least 40 years old and completed a 10-year residency in the country. They are allowed to add only one companion. (QNA)



MoEHE sets book fees, transport fares for non-Qatari students

HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi yesterday issued ministerial decision determining the book fees and transportation fares for non-Qatari (GCC nationals) students.

The decision came in the context of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE)'s keenness to review educational policies and reduce the financial burdens on parents.

The decision set the transportation fee for each student at QR200 per semester, if they use

school transportation, instead of QR1,000; a reduction of 78%.

The decision kept the fees of textbooks for each student at QR150 per semester.

The decision also stipulated that the children of Imams and Muezzins of the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs be exempted from the book fees and transportation fares, and that exemption of the children of Qatari women and people with disabilities from the book fees and transportation fares shall continue.

The decision is implemented from the beginning of the school year 2023/2024. (QNA)

Amir condolences with Saudi king

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent cables of condolences to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud of Saudi Arabia on the death of Prince Khalid bin Mohamed bin Abdullah al-Abdulrahman al-Saud. (QNA)

PM meets Uzbek FM



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister Bakhtiyar Saidov on the sidelines of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The meeting discussed bilateral relations and topics of common interest. (QNA)

Qatar, Malaysia discuss security ties



HE the Minister of State for Interior Affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal al-Thani met yesterday with the visiting Malaysian Minister of Home Affairs Saifuddin Nasution. The meeting discussed co-operation relations between the two countries in security fields and ways to promote and develop them. In addition, they discussed several topics of common interest. (QNA)

AUC chairperson meets Qatar's envoy



Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) Moussa Faki Mahamat met with Qatar's ambassador to Ethiopia and representative to the African Union, Hamad bin Mohamed al-Dosari, on the occasion of the end of his tenure in Addis Ababa. Mahamat wished the ambassador success in his future missions and the relations between the AUC and Qatar further progress and prosperity. (QNA)

Rwanda marks its first Liberation Day celebration in Qatar



Officials and other dignitaries at the event.

The Rwandan community recently celebrated the 29th anniversary of Liberation for the first time in Qatar. Hosted by the Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda to the State of Qatar, the event took place at Kempinski Marsa Malaz Ballroom and was a memorable evening of reflecting and connecting for Rwandans and friends of Rwanda.

Liberation Day, typically observed on July 4th each year, holds immense importance for Rwandans and their supporters around the world. It commemorates Rwanda's remarkable transformation from an oppressive and discriminatory regime to a flourishing democratic nation, paying tribute to the brave efforts of the Rwandan Patriotic Front in bringing an end to the tragic 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

The ambassador of Rwanda to Qatar, HE Igor Marara extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guests of honor who graced the occasion. Among them were representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs including HE Mohammed bin Ali Al Mannai, Minister of Communications and Information, HE Ambassador Ibrahim Yousif Abdullah Fahkro, Dean of Diplomatic Missions, HE Ambassador Ali Ibrahim Ahmed, members of the Rwandan community in Qatar, friends of Rwanda, and esteemed guests from various backgrounds.

One of the highlights of the event was an art exhibition featuring the work of the talented Rwandan artist Claude

Nizeyimana, who showcased his remarkable sculptures. Additionally, attendees had the opportunity to experience Rwandan culture through elements such as Rwandan coffee, flowers, and fashion designs. These displays reflected Rwanda's commitment to promoting cultural exchange and fostering economic diplomatic relations with the rest of the world.

Under the theme "Together we prosper," the celebration underscored the importance of unity not only among Rwandans but also in the strong bonds Rwanda continues to build with countries worldwide, especially Qatar.

Ambassador Igor Marara emphasised the deepening relationship between Rwanda and Qatar, stating, "Although we celebrate our past achievements tonight, I am taking this opportunity to honor the strong ties of friendship, marked by a great sense of shared values, that bind Rwanda and Qatar. Our nations are actively collaborating through joint investments in infrastructure, education, health, defence, and more. These are the fruits of a friendship that we are grateful for and vow to continue to nurture."

The evening's festivities were further enriched by mesmerising performances by the Rwandan traditional dance team Amasimbi. This showcased the growing presence of the Rwandan community in Qatar, as they brought a piece of their vibrant culture to their second home.

McDonald's Qatar Expands Partnership with EAA to Offer Scholarships for Higher Education Students

In continuation of its dedicated efforts to strengthen and empower the community, McDonald's Qatar, fully owned and operated by Al Mana Restaurants & Food Company W.L.L., has expanded its existing partnership with Education Above All (EAA) Foundation to sponsor higher education for deserving youth in Qatar.

The initiative comes under the leading quick service restaurant's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) platform, Rahlatuna, which ambitions to 'Feed and Foster' community as part of its firm commitment to the human development pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030. Aligned with this mission, McDonald's Qatar initiated its partnership with EAA last year, providing support to the foundation's ongoing endeavors to advance access to education.

Building on the success of the partnership, through its latest offering – the Rahlatuna Scholarship – McDonald's Qatar will continue to prioritize the needs of the society and offer the financial resources required by ambitious young students to pursue their higher education in the country. Customers can support the generous cause by making a donation of as little as QAR 1 at any of the 74 McDonald's Qatar restaurant branches located across Qatar.

Highlighting the significance of the initiative, McDonald's Qatar, Executive General Manager, Mr Mithqal Abu Nasser, said: "Improving outcomes for various sectors of the society is at the heart of McDonald's Qatar's Rahlatuna platform. With this persistent focus, we are thrilled to broaden opportunities for the next generation of leaders in Qatar, removing significant roadblocks such as financial burdens in their way and easing their journey to follow their aspirations and become the change enablers of tomorrow. We truly believe in the transformational power of education in helping us create a brighter future for all."

Reflecting on this expanded collaboration, Mr Talal Al-Hothal, Director of EAA's Al Fakhoora Program, eloquently expressed, "This enhanced support marks the emergence of a deeply meaningful partnership. We are eagerly looking forward to embarking on this joint journey with McDonald's Qatar, expressing our heartfelt appreciation for their unwavering dedication to our shared mission of expanding educational opportunities, especially for the youth facing marginalization. As education stands as the bedrock for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, this collaboration

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Feeding and fostering the community
Prioritizing the needs of society
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Our partnership with Education Above All (EAA) is a testament to our commitment to creating a brighter future for everyone. We are proud to support the foundation's mission of providing access to education for all.

Rahlatuna Scholarship

Eligibility requirements:

- The scholarship is granted to students in their first year of Bachelor's studies who have secured admission at one of Education Above All partner universities
- Applicants must be legal residents of the State of Qatar
- Applicants must be between 16 and 27 years old
- Applicants must have studied for at least 8 academic years at recognized schools in Qatar.
- Applicants must not have received other financial support.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate their financial need to cover education expenses.

For inquiries, please reach out to qsq@eaa.org.qa.

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seamlessly aligns with McDonald's Qatar's latest endeavors. Their commitment to extending scholarships speaks volumes about their resolute dedication to fostering education in Qatar. Through the bestowal of scholarships upon deserving young individuals, McDonald's Qatar not only facilitates access to higher education but also bolsters a more promising future for our nation."

The Rahlatuna Scholarship will be granted to two high-achieving students who have secured admissions at one of EAA Partner Universities.

Steps highlighted to prevent accidental ingestion of medicines by children

Doctors have recommended a number of first aid measures parents should take to help a child who accidentally swallows medication. Speaking to local Arabic daily Arrayah, they said measures include immediately rinsing the child's mouth with water to remove any remnants of the medicine and encouraging the child to drink plenty of water, tea, or juice to dilute the ingested substance. They also warned against forcing the child to vomit, as this can increase the risk of the vomit entering the lungs and may cause pneumonia. Doctors stressed the importance of calling for emergency help as soon as symptoms of poisoning are seen in the child, which could include nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, difficulty breathing, cardiovascular problems, and loss of consciousness. It is very risky to keep medications within the reach of children and these should be stored in places not accessible to kids, they said. The other reasons for accidental medication ingestion by children are children's curiosity and desire to imitate others, and medications being packaged in colourful packaging resembling candies.

Negligence in storing medications could lead to kids consuming them accidentally or taking them for candies, warned Dr Mohamed al-Amri, senior consultant for Pediatric Emergency Medicine and Head of the Pediatrics at Hamad Medical Corporation. Some medication could lead to poisoning in children, he said adding the emergency departments usually receive such cases from time to time. Dr Mohamed al-Batrawi, emergency doctor at Al Emadi Hospital, too stressed the need for medications to be kept in their original boxes and away from food. Parents should avoid telling children these are sweets and explain their real use. Children in their early years tend to imitate adults, so parents have to be careful when taking medications in front of them, he said. Dr Ahmed Saeed, emergency doctor at Doha Clinic Hospital, said that while incidences of children accidentally consuming medicines is not common in Qatar, there are a number of cases that come to the emergency department with medication poisoning, mostly due to parents' negligence.

Qatar Charity signs deal with Snoonu

Qatar Charity (QC) has signed a new co-operation and partnership agreement with Snoonu Trading and Services, a statement said yesterday. Under the agreement, Snoonu allows benefactors in Qatar to use its 'Snoosend' service to deliver their in-kind donations to QC's 'Tayf' project. The agreement was signed by Ali AlGreeb, director of the Resources Development Department at QC, and Abdulaziz al-Qahtani, head of B2B at Snoonu. AlGreeb said he looks forward to the continued co-operation between QC and Snoonu in achieving noble objectives in the field of humanitarian service. He expressed hope for the integration of efforts to explore new horizons in serving the community and enhancing the development



process, within the framework of QC's orientation towards achieving sustainable future development.

"We are excited to collaborate with Qatar Charity," said al-Qahtani. Snoosend is a point-to-point delivery service that aims to transport items such as documents, food, packages, and more from one place to another. Now, this service is all set to promote kindness and generosity by facilitating the delivery of in-kind donations. QC had signed a co-operation and partnership agreement with Snoonu last year and was added to the list of stores available on Snoonu's website and app to allow customers to make specific contributions, in addition to encouraging restaurants partnering with Snoonu to allocate part of their proceeds in support of charitable projects and seasonal relief campaigns.

QRCS inks agreement with CMU-Q

Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) entered into a co-operation agreement yesterday with Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar (CMU-Q), a Qatar Foundation-partner university, aimed at supporting a range of humanitarian and educational initiatives and programmes. The intention of both parties is to establish a non-exclusive partnership and collaboration in areas of scientific research, strategic studies, scholarships, as well as the exchange of computer science professionals, public policy experts, business administrators, information systems specialists, and biological scientists. QRCS noted the collaboration will include training workshops, national capacity enhancement, specialised scientific conferences, and societal development.



Faisal Mohamed al-Emadi and Michael Trick at the signing ceremony.

The agreement was officially signed by QRCS acting secretary-general Faisal Mohamed al-Emadi, and CMU-Q dean Michael Trick. In a statement, al-Emadi said: "This agreement exemplifies the dedication of the Qatar Red Crescent to the promotion of education and its

significance in tandem with humanitarian endeavours to foster human development. It is an extension of the array of alliances that the organisation is actively documenting to realise its humanitarian objectives. "We possess full confidence that this collaboration will pave the way for novel opportunities in attaining sustainable development and empower us to fortify our collective endeavours in supporting humanitarian matters and advancing education and scientific research". Dr Trick said: "At Carnegie Mellon, all of our students apply their studies to a larger context: how can their knowledge, research, and skills shape the world and help those in need? This collaboration with Qatar Red Crescent will create opportunities to better understand humanitarian issues, and find ways to provide relief and assistance."

Announcement
Voluntary Liquidation Ended

I, **Mr. Naresh Dasari**,
a liquidator for
**CORAL MARINE SERVICES
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Commercial Registration No. 101411
announce the end of Liquidation process in
accordance with Qatar Commercial
Companies Law No. 11 Of 2015
as amended by Law No. 8 of 2021.

The company's commercial registration was
duly canceled after the completion of
liquidation process.

Carrefour Qatar Collects 15 Million Qatari Riyals of Customers' Donations for the Benefit of the Education Above All Foundation's Together Project

Carrefour Qatar announced today that it has collected 15 million Qatari riyals of customers' donations in four years since 2019, the largest milestone in its philanthropic history, for the benefit of the Education Above All (EAA) Foundation's Together project. This significant announcement follows four years of active cooperation between Carrefour Qatar and its largest social responsibility partner, the EAA Foundation, and serves as a testament to Carrefour Qatar's unwavering commitment to society, its individuals and its families. Commenting on the announcement, Laurent Hausknecht, Carrefour's Regional Director, Gulf, stated: "Today, we celebrate our valued partnership with Education Above All for the fourth consecutive year, a partnership we truly value. At Carrefour Qatar, we strongly believe in the pivotal role of education for future generations, and remain committed to launching initiatives that drive positive impact towards the society, and within the communities in which we operate." "This milestone has a special meaning for us at Carrefour Qatar, because we believe that education is a great cause, and having greater availability and accessibility to quality education is a life changer for children, and it truly makes a direct positive impact in their future. Also, we really admire the work being done year




after year by the Education Above All Foundation, and its ability to make a tangible difference in children's lives, and we look forward to future projects together," Hausknecht added. On the 15 million Qatari riyals threshold, Education Above All's Director of Partnerships, Parintaj Ankleshvria, stated: "Every riyal raised by Carrefour Qatar will go towards children's education. This milestone shows that only by working together can we ensure that when it comes to education, no child is left behind. We are very grateful to have a partner like Carrefour Qatar, and we look forward to continuing to work together for years to come." Carrefour Qatar introduces innovative mechanisms to facilitate and encourage donations. With over 50 checkout stations distributed across its nine hyper and super stores throughout Doha, Carrefour Qatar ensures a seamless donation process, operating 365 days a year.



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TEDxQatarUniversity 2023 organised

The TEDxQatarUniversity, which explored the theme “Evolution in Action: How the Past Shapes the Future” recently, featured seven speeches by speakers from various disciplines. They provided a diverse range of perspectives from different fields such as healthcare, social sciences, technology, arts, and engineering. “TEDxQatarUniversity is one of the most important platforms and experiences that enrich the lives and knowledge of students, said Abdullah al-Mulla, director of Student Activities Department at QU. Yasser al-Qawasmi, section head of Student Clubs and Organisations at QU and License Owner, said: “TEDxQatarUniversity has always been a unique experience that combines science, art, and creative thinking,



QU president Dr Omar al-Ansari and other officials at the event.

providing attendees with the opportunity to benefit from the experiences of the speakers and

discover their inspiring ideas.” The team’s event management committee head Kawthar Barakat,

expressed delight in the return of TEDxQatarUniversity after a five-year hiatus.



A speaker at TEDxQatarUniversity.

MECC meet highlights Qatar efforts for ozone layer protection

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC) organised an environmental seminar yesterday to mark the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer in collaboration with the University of Doha for Science and Technology, adopting the theme “Protecting the Ozone Layer and Combating Climate Change.” The seminar addressed the risks threatening the ozone layer and their impact on the environment and climate change, such as global warming, which leads to numerous natural crises and disasters like hurricanes and floods. It also discussed Qatar’s efforts to preserve the ozone layer and its commitment to implementing the Montreal Protocol and the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer. The seminar was attended by Abdulhadi Nasser al-Marri, Assistant Undersecretary for Environmental Affairs; Dr Salem bin Nasser al-Nuaimi, President of the University of Doha for Science and Technology; Khalid al-Kalali, UNEP Policy and Enforcement officer at Regional Office for West Asia; and representatives from some government departments and companies related to the sector.



Addressing the seminar, al-Marri stressed that the occasion represents a crucial opportunity to unify collective efforts in dealing with the issue of ozone layer protection, which is one of the most complex environmental challenges. He pointed out that this day was established to raise awareness about the importance of preserving the ozone layer, educating people on substances that deplete it, and highlighting the

urgent need to reduce the use of such substances. He also stressed the ministry’s commitment to preserving and protecting the ozone layer. He presented Qatar’s efforts in ozone layer preservation through its commitment to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol concerning substances that deplete the ozone layer. He spoke about MECC plan for the gradual phaseout of these substances and its efforts to stay up-to-date with developments related to the control and regula-

tion of these substances and their alternatives. He called on governments, organisations, and individuals to collaborate in protecting the ozone layer, promoting the use of alternative materials, and adopting more sustainable practices. He stressed the importance of supporting scientific research to develop new and innovative environmental technologies. In the meantime, MECC launched a competition for school and university students to encourage to take part in the related awareness programmes.

Difi discusses family policies at Budapest Demographic Summit

Contemporary and emerging challenges that affect the lives of families were the focus of the fifth Budapest Demographic Summit in Hungary with participation from Qatar Foundation’s Doha International Family Institute (Difi) at the heart of the conversation. Discussions at the summit centred around the most prominent results of threats to family security – from the migration crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic to the war in Ukraine and the economic and energy crises. During her participation in a panel discussion on ‘Science and Demography’, Difi executive director Dr Sharifa Noaman al-Emadi, highlighted the importance of policies in supporting families, and shared how Difi has worked

towards implementing such policies globally. “Some of the major limitations of the family are related to the lack of work-family balance policies, structured parenting education programmes, and declining fertility rates,” she said. “The wave towards individualism must be countered by re-giving priority to the family.” Dr al-Emadi ended her panel discussion by highlighting how “familyism” – a concept which puts the family before the individual – is a solution. Dialogue on ways that political decision makers, religious leaders, scholars, media, and civil society can collaborate and harness the power of science and innovation to support families were also held during the summit, which was themed ‘The family is the key to security!’



Dr Sharifa Noaman al-Emadi at Budapest Demographic Summit.

QU’s YSC wins seven awards at iCAN 2023

Qatar University’s (QU) Young Scientists Centre (YSC) has won seven awards in the 8th International Invention Innovation Competition in Canada, iCAN 2023, a statement said yesterday. The YSC’s award sweeps includes two gold, a silver for projects submitted by the students, another silver for the centre itself, in addition to three special awards. This win came after stiff competition with 621 other projects from 50 countries around the world. The iCan 2023 competition, organised by the Toronto International Society for Innovation and Advanced Skills (TISIAS), aims to encourage inventors and researchers by providing a global platform



for scientific competition, serving as a gateway for linking innovative

ideas, technologies and solutions. During the competition, Kha-

led al-Kubaisi, Khaled al-Midfa, Saeed al-Kuwari and Mohamed al-Khulaifi, from Hayat Universal Bilingual School, won a gold medal for their project ‘Innovative Football to Analyse the Players Physical Performance.’ The high school students developed a football that evaluates player performance by utilising artificial intelligence techniques, to be used in training evaluations. This project was made possible through the student’s participation in the Science in Sports programme offered by the YSC. Nouf al-Emadi and Naeema al-Fakhro from Al-Arqam Academy for Girls also won a gold medal and a special award, for a project titled ‘LiMn2O4-MXene as a new composite material to improve the

performance of lithium batteries,’ under the supervision of Dr Abdel Shakour and the YSC. Their project helps in developing sustainable energy systems. Students Yousef al-Enezi and Mohamed al-Kuwari from Qatar Academy for Science and Technology won a silver award and a special award for a research project titled ‘Generating green energy from nanocomposites made of polylactic acid,’ under the supervision of Dr Diba and the YSC. The project aims to use a new, environmentally friendly source of energy by reducing the emission of toxic gases that contribute to the phenomenon of global warming. The YSC also won a silver medal and a special award for its adop-

tion of developed methods and principles for teaching scientific research methodologies, in a project titled ‘An ingenious approach for teachers professional development based on innovative research-based practices towards promoting the scientific research culture in education.’ YSC director Prof Noora al-Thani, congratulated the winners and said, “At the Centre, we are keen to provide a stimulating environment for creativity and innovation. We also encourage our students to develop, search, and disseminate their ideas and experiences at all levels, since it has a major role in developing the knowledge-based economy of Qatar as well as achieving Qatar National Vision 2030.”

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THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT
I, RAJNI SHARMA MADAN PARKASH SHARMA
holder of
CANADIAN Passport No. AY282568
QID No. 27835627223
hereby change my name
from
RAJNI SHARMA MADAN PARKASH SHARMA
to
RAJNI SHARMA
Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

Bentley model recalled
The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Al Wajba Motors, has announced the recall of Bentley Bentayga, 2017-2023 models, as overheating of electrical connectors on the fuel supply module may cause it to stop working. The MoCI said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The MoCI said it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out. The MoCI has urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquires and suggestions through the following channels: call centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, Twitter @MOCIQATAR, Instagram MOCIQATAR. MoCI’s mobile application is available on iPhone and Android devices – MOCI_QATAR

Symposium aims to tackle groundwater level rise in urban areas

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal), in co-operation with the Gulf Water Sciences and Technology Association (WSTA) and the Secretariat General of the GCC, held a symposium on “The Problem of Groundwater Level Rise in Urban Areas in GCC countries”.

The event was attended by President of Ashghal Dr Eng Saad bin Ahmed al-Muhanadi, and a number of officials and academics interested in this field from Qatar and GCC countries.

The symposium aims to come up with policies and solutions to control the issue and raise these to decision-makers in GCC countries.

In addition to sharing scientific and applied knowledge while building the capacity of specialists in urban planning, hydrology, hydrogeology, engineering, environment, the meet discussed other issues relevant to the problem of groundwater level rise in urban areas in the GCC countries, Ashghal said in a statement yesterday.



Eng Abdulrahman al-Mahmoud



Eng Yousef al-Emadi

Projects Affairs Director at Ashghal Eng Yousef al-Emadi said: “Through this co-operation, we look forward to discovering

innovative, effective and sustainable technological solutions to control the problem of groundwater level rise in urban areas in the GCC to reduce its negative impact on the construction process, which in turn raises costs and affects the quality of projects and people's lives.

“At Ashghal, we are keen to make use of the groundwater and to implement sustainable solutions for water use, after ensuring its quality, in some of the projects of the authority,” he added.

President of WSTA Eng Abdulrahman al-Mahmoud said the symposium aimed to explore the most significant problems that occurred in the region due to rapid urban development and population growth, especially in major cities.

These issues have made it challenging to harmonise the requirements of development and the large projects while preserving the infrastructure.

He added it was crucial for the competent authorities to follow scientific research, to gain insight on the causes of the phenomenon that has arisen in several cities in Gulf countries and to look for scientific and practical solutions to address the problem. (QNA)

Malaysia envoy keen to enhance bilateral ties with Qatar

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Malaysian ambassador Zamshari Shaharan expressed optimism about the potential for high-level visits between Qatar and Malaysia soon, aimed at further boosting bilateral ties in various areas of co-operation.

Interacting with the media recently, the envoy hoped that exchange of visits will take place with Malaysian ministers visiting Qatar in the near future.

“Our goal is to elevate these bilateral relations to a higher level, and we also hope for our prime minister to visit Qatar,” Shaharan said, noting that the two countries continue to enjoy strong and deep-rooted ties.

Highlighting a framework of relations established in 2019 through a ‘high-level joint committee meeting (HLJC),’ he pointed out that the full potential of this framework is yet to be realised.

The envoy noted that the establishment of the committee serves as a platform for regular meetings to discuss various aspects of the two countries’ relations, which include economy, healthcare, and education.

About trade and investment, Shaharan underlined Qatar’s proposed investment in Malaysia, which has been under discussion for two years. He noted the concerted efforts on the Malaysian side to welcome more investments from Qatar.

He also expressed confidence that once this initial stage is complete, further investment opportunities will arise, aligning with Qatar’s goal to diversify its investment portfolio.

In a recent visit to Qatar, Malaysia’s Minister of Economy Rafizi Ramli stressed his country’s commitment to further deepen collaboration with Qatar across a range of sectors. He underscored the continuous work towards building strong connections, particularly in



Malaysian ambassador Zamshari Shaharan

the areas of energy and food security.

Noting the Malaysian government’s initiatives to foster co-operation with Qatar, Ramli said the two countries had signed various agreements focused on economic collaboration. This, he added, aims to enhance integration between the public and private sectors in both countries.

Shaharan identified key sectors that Malaysia offers, citing food security as a prominent area of co-operation. He noted that there is a huge potential for co-operation in the hospitality sector, capitalising on the excellent connectivity between Doha and Kuala Lumpur.

About flight connections, he said there are currently three daily flights between the two nations, with Qatar Airways operating one flight and Malaysian Airlines offering two. He noted the significance of Malaysian Airlines initiating flights to Doha for the first time, and highlighted positive feedback regarding the route’s popularity.

On tourism, Shaharan cited a stable flow of Qatari tourists to Malaysia, and pointed to the influx of visitors from various other nationalities from Qatar. He said he sees a big potential for increased tourism promotion in both Qatar and Malaysia.

Regarding visa arrangements, he said Qataris enjoy visa-free entry, while e-visa options are available for other nationalities – applying with ease and making Malaysia more accessible for visitors.

Pierre Marcolini opens first flagship store at Printemps Doha

The Brussel-based luxury chocolatier launches new salon & atelier in the Middle East’s largest department store

Qatar is now home to the first Pierre Marcolini salon, located in Doha Oasis’ department store Printemps Doha. The much-anticipated launch took place recently and opened to an enthusiastic crowd who came to meet the world-renowned chocolatier, named Best Pastry Chef in the World, Pierre Marcolini himself, who was on hand to share his brand’s one-of-a-kind philosophy on chocolate making.

This remarkable establishment marks the very first time that Pierre Marcolini has unveiled a chocolate atelier anywhere in the world. Adorned in a warm and inviting setting, characterized by soothing dusk pink hues, the Pierre Marcolini salon is strategically positioned opposite the Women’s fashion section, making it the perfect post-shopping haven for patrons to unwind, indulge their sweet cravings, or partake in a chocolate masterclass.

“It’s a flagship store, a vast and exquisitely designed space. In the Middle East, we already have a presence in Dubai’s Emirates Mall and Dubai Mall, with plans for expansion in Saudi Arabia. As for the Printemps Doha store, visitors can first and foremost relax. They can savor top-quality cuisine and service, explore diverse chocolate offerings, and satisfy their sweet tooth. The people of Qatar have a penchant for exclusivity and premium products. Furthermore, they can place orders for their favourite products tailored to special occasions like Eid, weddings, and Ramadan. We cater to bespoke requests based on our customers’ preferences,” Marcolini said.

A dedicated ‘craft’ ice cream counter beckons customers to enjoy a refreshing treat, and for the very first time, guests can



witness pastry chefs in action as they prepare freshly crafted chocolates and confections, as

well as personalized orders at the Pierre Marcolini chocolate atelier. In addition to exclusive

pyramid-shaped, multi-drawer gift boxes, the salon showcases Pierre Marcolini’s signature collection

of Grand Crus tablets, delectable pralines, delightful macarons, mouthwatering chocolate hearts, and exquisite pastries.

Truly distinctive

Pierre Marcolini’s personal artistry permeates every aspect, from the elegant packaging to the selection of premium ingredients, which are sure to captivate the hearts—and taste buds—of customers. For those seeking something truly distinctive, both individual customers and corporate clients can place customized orders, including tailor-made gift boxes, personalized sleeves, and assortments tailored to specific requirements.

Exceptional flavour experiences are at the core of Marcolini’s reputation, not only for his chocolates but also for his ethical principles. He directly sources premium cocoa from independent producers in Cuba, Indonesia, India, Sao Tomé & Principe, Madagascar, Peru, Venezuela, and China.

“I’ve always been deeply passionate about chocolate, and that passion has remained

unwavering. When I opened my first store in 1995, it was a modest 60-square-meter space. In two years, we’ll be celebrating our 30th anniversary. Looking back over these three decades, I’m motivated by what my brand has achieved. We currently have 50 stores worldwide, which is a testament to my goals and aspirations for the future,” Marcolini shared.

“My concept revolves around ‘Bean to Bar.’ To comprehend this, one must understand the essence of cacao—the plant that yields the seeds used to create cocoa and chocolate. These seeds are commonly referred to as cocoa beans. I personally source premium cocoa directly from independent producers in various regions, including Cuba, Indonesia, India, Sao Tomé & Principe, Madagascar, Peru, Venezuela, and China. For instance, Hainan, China’s tropical island province, is celebrated as one of the most esteemed origins for chocolate. It’s been reported that Chinese scientists have developed a new cacao variety in Hainan,” Marcolini explained.

Marcolini firmly believes that chocolate serves as a bridge, connecting diverse people and their cultures. Every chocolate crafted by Pierre Marcolini possesses its own distinct personality. Each one must offer innovative, fresh flavours while maintaining a sense of “lightness” to entice connoisseurs before astonishing them with a completely unique taste experience. Yet, there is more to it—they must always convey a sense of emotion.

“For me, what makes chocolate truly exceptional is that it delivers universal pleasure. It evokes the same emotions, regardless of one’s location, age, or local culture. It works its magic universally, not unlike classical music,” Marcolini concluded.



Qatar’s educational, development initiatives: inspiring successes

Qatar’s participation in the sessions of the UN General Assembly, including the 78th session, reflects the state’s strong commitment to the concerns and issues of the world and the international community, especially issues related to development, peace, security and stability, foremost of which is education as the driving force behind all of these efforts.

The participation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and his speech before this annual global forum stresses Qatar’s firm belief in supporting the efforts of the international community towards urgent and vital issues, which play a role in achieving peace and the well-being of humanity without exception or discrimination, in light of the extremely difficult and complex circumstances

and changes that the world is witnessing and their negative effects, which have special impact on weak, fragile and poor countries and societies.

The world still remembers fondly the announcement of His Highness the Amir in September 2018 of Qatar’s pledge to provide quality education for 1mn girls by 2021, which is a milestone in the history of international development initiatives regarding the provision of quality education for girls and women in developing countries.

The Amir also announced his support for the Charlevoix Declaration regarding the provision of quality education for girls and women in developing countries, especially since Qatar prioritised education both internally and externally, which was reflected in its international development aid programmes.

Within the framework of Qatar’s interest in education, His Highness said that Qatar has led the efforts to issue the UN’s landmark resolution on the right to education in emergency situations in 2010, which indicated that a large proportion of the world’s children out of school live in conflict-affected areas.

In a related context, His Highness the Amir affirmed when he opened the Least Developed Countries Conference hosted by Doha last March, Qatar’s active role in multilateral international action across the fields of development, humanitarian, human rights, and mediation to promote international peace and security.

His Highness added in this context “Based on our National Vision 2030, which upholds the values and principles of co-operation, partnership, and solidarity in

helping countries, peoples, and communities suffering from humanitarian crises, conflicts, poverty, and debts, Qatar has made a lot of humanitarian and development contributions in accordance with the formulas of bilateral and multilateral co-operation, especially within the framework of strategic partnerships with the UN and other leading international institutions.”

Based on the state’s firm commitment to supporting the development process of the least developed countries, His Highness announced a financial contribution of a total of \$60mn, of which \$10mn will be allocated for supporting the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action with Qatar News Agency (QNA), that education is a major goal of the Sustainable Development

Goals set by the UN, and EAA of Action and building resilience potential in the least developed countries.

International Qatari institutions stand out in the fields of supporting education and development in countries in need, led by the Education Above All Foundation (EAA), the Silatech development organisation, and other initiatives, institutions and projects that Qatar presents to the world as a contribution to strengthen international efforts to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Commenting on the educational initiatives led by the Education Above All, Director of External Relations at EAA Leena al-Derham said in an interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA), that education is a major goal of the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN, and EAA

has shown commitment to ensure education keep pace with the requirements of the current era.

She highlighted the role of Chairperson of Education Above All Foundation, Her Highness Sheikhha Moza bint Nasser, in setting the goal of educating 10mn out-of-school children in a decade, noting that EAA exceeded this goal in 2018 by returning 15mn children to schools through partnerships with international organisations and banks, as well as support from the Qatar Fund For Development (QFFD).

The EAA works with around 100 partners through several programs, such as Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict, ROTA, Educate a Child and Al Fakhoora, in addition to managing the Global Innovation Fund and the Together Project. (QNA)

Qatar committed to international covenants, treaties

Since Qatar’s accession to the UN in 1971, the state has not hesitated, based on its firm belief in the importance of multilateral international action, to play its role as an active partner in the international community to support the success of the goals of the international organisation, as it has made intensive efforts, benefiting from its active diplomacy at the regional and international levels, to promote peace, stability, and development around the world, confront global challenges and reduce tension in international relations.

To this end, Qatar has been keen to accede to many international treaties and charters within the framework of its full commitment to activate and implement the principle of the rule of law to achieve international justice and contribute to strengthening international peace and security, achieving stability in the region and the world, and supporting efforts to achieve the goals and objectives of the UN through its active membership in the international organisation and its affiliated bodies, and its continuous efforts to support the international initiatives of those bodies.

In affirmation of Qatar’s respect for international covenants and conventions, the Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar stipulates in Article 6 that the state shall respect the international charters and conventions, and strive to implement all international agreements, charters, and conventions it is party thereof. Article 8 of the constitution added that the treaty or agreement shall have the power of law after ratification and publication in the official gazette.

Based on the awareness of the great importance of combating corruption, and as a continuation of its regional and international efforts to eradicate this scourge for the sake of healthy societies based on the principles of integrity and transparency, Qatar ratified in 2007 the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) as the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument and to strengthen prevention, control, and accountability efforts.

As a continuation of its enlightening and awareness-raising role in combating corruption around the world, and within the framework of Qatar’s support for international and UN efforts to combat this scourge, the Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani Anti-Corruption Excellence Award was launched in 2016.

The award aims to highlight exemplary measures and good practices at the global level, as well as appreciate, promote, collect and disseminate anti-corruption models from around the world to raise awareness, support and solidarity with the aim of fighting corruption to encourage and motivate similar and new initiatives

towards establishing a corruption-free society, as the award works to celebrate and honour those who fight corruption around the world, and not only enhance their image, as well as motivate governments, academic institutions, the media and civil society to adopt, understand, and co-operate in implementing the principles of the UNCAC.

Based on Qatar’s keenness to promote and strengthen the legislative structure of human rights, it has joined a number of international human rights covenants that reinforce the principle of non-discrimination, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) in 1976, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (ICSPCA) in the same year, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2010, which reflects the interest of the wise leadership in promoting and protecting human rights at the national and regional levels.

Qatar supports efforts to achieve the goals and objectives of the UN through its active membership in the international organisation and its affiliated bodies

As an affirmation of the consistent approach and interest in rights and freedoms, especially the rights of children, women, and persons with disabilities, Qatar has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its protocols and has been keen to put into practice the basic principles and provisions of the convention and its protocols.

It has joined other conventions that provide greater protection for children and the environment in which they grow up in, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) under Decree No 28 of 2008, the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime of 2000 (UNTOC) under Decree No 10 of 2009, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) under Decree No 28 of 2009.

In order to build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels, Qatar, represented by the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Centre (ROLACC), which was established in Doha in co-operation with the UN in 2012, contributes to promoting the principle of the rule of law and combating corruption at the regional level, by holding seminars, workshops, and academic programmes for specialists from the countries of the region.

Qatar, out of keenness to strengthen its strategic partnership with the UN and

support its efforts in maintaining international peace and security, joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1989, thus renewing its commitment to work with the international community for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and the achievement of regional and international peace and security.

Within the framework of its support for regional and international efforts to combat terrorism around the world, Qatar has signed many agreements to combat this scourge that ravages societies. It emerged as an active international member in eliminating this phenomenon through the enactment of legislation to enhance efforts to combat terrorism and dry up its funding, and has taken the initiative to support many international mechanisms concerned with combating terrorism, in addition to hosting and organizing many international events and conferences calling for confronting it.

At the Gulf, Arab, regional, and international levels, Qatar ratified the Arab Convention on Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in 2012, the GCC Counter-Terrorism Agreement in 2008, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism in 2014, and the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism in 2006.

At the national level, Qatar issued the Law No 4 of 2010 on Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, in addition to forming the National Committee to follow up the implementation of international conventions on combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

Qatar has also carried out fundamental legislative reforms, perhaps the most important of which is the legal framework regulating the rights of expatriate workers, the issuance of real estate ownership laws for non-Qataris, political asylum law, domestic workers law, permanent residence law, regulation of the entry and exit of expatriates and their residence, and the establishment of a workers support and insurance fund, in addition to establishing the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (NCCHT), which aims to co-ordinate national efforts to monitor, prevent, and combat forms of human trafficking.

The promotion and protection of human rights is one of the main pillars of the policy of Qatar and a strategic choice that is relied upon in the comprehensive reform process pursued by the state that was emphasised in the Qatar National Vision 2030, which included important axes related to major human rights issues in the fields of education, health, environment, labour rights, women’s empowerment, children’s rights, national development strategy, and the strengthening of relevant national institutions. (QNA)



UNHCR’s partnership with Qatar a beacon of hope for refugees

Representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to Qatar Ahmed Mohsen has affirmed that the strong and established partnership between Qatar, its various institutions, and UNHCR, represents a beacon of hope for millions of refugees and internally displaced persons around the globe.

In an interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA), Mohsen expressed his hope for the continuation of this partnership that embodies a distinguished model of stable partnerships, to help refugees and forcibly displaced persons most in need around the globe, pointing out Qatar’s generous contributions to support UNHCR programmes over the years. These contributions amounted to about QR1bn and QR400mn, which helped provide education, healthcare, shelter, and promote economic development for millions of people around the globe, he added.

He noted that Qatar’s contributions particularly focus on the sectors of education, shelter, healthcare, livelihood opportunities and material support, enabling it to provide a sustainable humanitarian response in various regions, especially in the Middle East, North Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Qatar co-operates with UNHCR in implementing various projects that benefit hundreds of thousands of people most in need, including Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon, Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and internally displaced people in Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, and many other countries, Mohsen added.

Qatar has been at the forefront of donor countries to UNHCR since 2019 through its generous contributions to support UNHCR’s efforts and initiatives aimed at responding to the humanitarian needs of communi-

ties suffering from asylum and forced displacement, he said, noting the establishment of the UN House in Doha, which hosts the offices of several UN agencies, including the Office of UNHCR, as part of Qatar’s continued support for the programs and initiatives of UN and its various agencies.

He stressed that Qatar has continued its strong support over the years for diplomatic and humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan, especially its support for Afghan refugees and the countries hosting them, which culminated in its recent assumption of the presidency of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees Support Platform (SSAR). SSAR constitutes a platform to support voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration, provide support to host communities and promote peaceful coexistence among them, he explained.

The UNHCR representative commended Qatar’s humanitarian efforts during the Afghan crisis in 2021 and its keenness to transport humanitarian aid by air and deliver tonnes of emergency supplies to support the most vulnerable displaced families in Afghanistan, pointing out that these efforts have supported UNHCR’s programs and missions in Afghanistan to help vulnerable Afghans adapt to the harsh conditions of winter.

Mohsen also said that Qatar continues to support UNHCR’s efforts in Afghanistan, noting that the total Qatari contributions to support the situation in Afghanistan have reached more than \$5.6mn through supporting education for refugees and internally displaced persons, in-kind donations, flights, humanitarian aid and non-food items, in addition to supporting UNHCR’s efforts to provide financial assistance to many returning refugee families who are most in need. (QNA)

US ambassador: Qatar is leader in supporting humanitarian work around world

US ambassador in Doha Timmy Davis has said that Qatar is a leader in supporting humanitarian work around the world and responding to the emergency needs of the UN and other regional and international organisations that provide sustainable humanitarian programmes in many countries of the world.

In an exclusive interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA), ambassador Davis said that Qatar’s participation in UN programmes is an example of how collective effort can help make a difference in the world, noting in this regard Qatar’s continued support for the programmes and

initiatives of international humanitarian and development organisations, as well as its efforts and significant contributions in humanitarian and development work.

He stressed that Qatar can do a lot in the UN and multilateral forums to serve humanity.

He emphasised the strength of the strategic relations between Qatar and his country, saying that “our naming Qatar as a major non-Nato ally was an indication of the strength of our relationship, but even more, it was an indication of the strength of our future as partners in providing humanitarian assistance around the world.”

He added: “I see our relationship growing not just in ways that are bilateral. But our partnership can make a difference in multilateral settings.”

The ambassador highlighted the existing co-operation between Qatar and the UN in all fields, especially in the energy sector, as well as educational partnerships in light of the presence of American universities in Qatar such as Carnegie Mellon, Virginia Commonwealth, Weill Cornell Medicine, Texas A&M, and Georgetown, in addition to commercial partnerships with major American companies operating in Qatar.

He stressed his country’s keenness to co-ordinate with Qatar on various issues pertaining to the region and the world. He also pointed to the Qatari investments in many US states and cities in various economic and commercial fields and sectors.

Ambassador Davis added: “I have a great interest in Americans understanding Qatar because I believe Qatar is a force for good throughout the world. I believe the current people have a great culture, believe in education, in the same priorities and values that many Americans believe in,” emphasising his interest in consolidating and strengthening

relations between the two countries in various fields, especially in tourism, educational exchange and other fields.

The ambassador praised the prominent global position achieved by Qatar, saying that Qatar has shown itself to be a very capable and able mediator in crises around the world.

He said that there is no better partner in some of the efforts, whether it’s in the Russia-Ukraine crisis, and the crisis in Lebanon, Libya and Somalia. “Qatar’s mediation has been vital. I would also say that it has been generally well placed.”

He appreciated that Qatar’s foreign policy is not unilateral, saying “Qatar is looking for partners just as we are. And beyond finding strength in our relationship, Qatar has found strength in partnerships around the world.”

In response to a question about the agenda of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly, Davis explained that there are many issues that require hard diplomatic work, pointing out that the world will have a clearer understanding of the situation in Russia, Ukraine, Libya, and other issues in the region and the world, which may lead to solutions down the road.

Indigenous rights supporters rally across Australia before vote

AFP
Sydney

Australians rallied around the country yesterday to fight for a landmark Indigenous rights reform that is bleeding support in the polls before an October 14 referendum.

Tens of thousands joined “Walk

for Yes” events in major cities ahead of the vote that could grant Indigenous Australians a constitutionally enshrined right to be consulted on policies that affect them - a so-called Voice.

More than 200 years since British colonisation, Indigenous people - whose ancestors have lived on the continent for about 60,000 years - have shorter lives than

other Australians, poorer education and are far more likely to die in police custody.

“I think we need a voice in parliament and I think it’s about time,” said Laurel Johnson, a 58-year-old retired Indigenous community services worker who joined hundreds of people at the Sydney rally, many seeking shade during a spring heatwave.

Asked if the Voice would improve the lot of Indigenous people, she said: “I jolly well hope so.”

Her sister Priscilla Johnson, 53, said some Indigenous people still lived in “Third World” conditions.

“Australia is considered a First World country. The poor social determinants of health have been continuous since the 1788 invasion,” she said, referring to the

landing of the First Fleet that established a British penal colony in Australia.

In Melbourne, more than 10,000 supporters marched through the streets, some with banners reading: “You’re the voice, vote yes”

Thousands more gathered in Canberra, Perth, Brisbane, Darwin, Hobart and Alice Springs.

But the “Vote Yes” campaign,

launched just weeks ago by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, faces an uphill battle.

Recent surveys show about 60% against the reform versus 40% in support - a near reversal of the situation a year ago.

To pass, the referendum needs majority support across Australia but also a majority in at least four of the six states.

Heavy rains in Gujarat



A boy plays on a flooded road amid heavy rainfall in Ahmedabad, India, yesterday. Several villages in Gujarat were flooded as the Narmada and other rivers are in full spate, prompting shifting of hundreds of people to safer places, officials said.

Canada delays planned trade mission to India

Reuters
Ottawa

Canadian Trade Minister Mary Ng is postponing a trade mission to India planned for October, an official said, reflecting increasingly tense diplomatic relations just days after India’s prime minister scolded his Canadian counterpart at a G20 summit in New Delhi.

“At this time, we are postponing the upcoming trade mission to India,” said Shanti Cosentino,

a spokesperson for the minister, without giving a reason.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who held formal bilateral meetings with many world leaders during the G20 summit, snubbed Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, allowing only a short, informal meeting on the sidelines of the event.

Canada has the highest population of Sikhs outside their home state of Punjab in India, and the country has been the site of many protests that have irked India.

“They are promoting seces-

sionism and inciting violence against Indian diplomats, damaging diplomatic premises and threatening the Indian community in Canada and their places of worship,” India’s government said after the leaders met.

Earlier, India said it had paused trade talks with Canada. Canada made a similar announcement earlier this month, saying such a pause was needed to “take stock”.

Only about four months ago the two nations said they aimed to seal an initial trade agreement this year.

Re-enactment of 1645 English Civil War



Musketiers of The Marquis of Winchester Regiment fire their guns on the battlefield during a re-enactment of the 1645 English Civil War, at Old Basing House near Basingstoke south east England, yesterday. After the decisive defeat of King Charles I's army at Naseby in Northamptonshire in June 1645 Oliver Cromwell led part of the New Model Army to “mop up” remaining royalist bases in Wiltshire and Hampshire. He appeared before Basing House around October 8, determined to capture this major royalist stronghold, containing both a garrison and civilians, including many Catholics, which had resisted earlier sieges and had long been a thorn in parliament's side. He subjected the place to heavy bombardment and by October 13 had opened up breaches in the defences. He and his men stormed and captured the stronghold on the morning of October 14.

BBC ‘urgently looking’ into issues raised by Brand report

Reuters
London

Britain’s BBC yesterday said it was “urgently looking into the issues” raised by allegations of sexual assault made against the broadcaster’s former employee, British comedian and actor Russell Brand, who denies the accusations.

Brand, 48, the former husband of US singer Katy Perry, worked on BBC radio programmes between 2006 and 2008.

He issued a denial on Saturday to unspecified “very serious criminal allegations” hours before the accusations of sexual assaults, including rape, were published online by the *Sunday Times* newspaper and later aired on Channel 4 television.

The Times and documentary show Dispatches reported that the alleged incidents had taken place between 2006 and 2013 and said one woman had made

an allegation of rape, while another said Brand assaulted her when she was 16 and still at school.

Two of the accusers reported that the incidents occurred in Los Angeles, the paper said.

A BBC spokesperson said in a statement: “The documentary and associated reports contained serious allegations, spanning a number of years. Russell Brand worked on BBC radio programmes between 2006 and 2008 and we are urgently looking into the issues raised.”

Women’s charity Trevi, which helps women affected by violence and abuse, said it had ended its association with Brand, and Tavistock Wood, a talent agency, said in a statement it “has terminated all professional ties to Brand”.

“Russell Brand categorically and vehemently denied the allegation made in 2020, but we now believe we were horribly misled by him,” it said.

N Korea’s Kim heads home after week-long visit to Russia

Reuters
Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was heading home by train yesterday, Russian news agencies reported, after a week-long visit to Russia that included talks with President Vladimir Putin on closer military and other co-operation.

A video published by Russia’s state-run RIA news agency yesterday showed Kim walking along a red carpet to his train carriage in the Russian Far Eastern city of Artyom, and waving goodbye to the sounds of a military band.

Artyom is about 254km from Khasan station on Russia’s border with North Korea.

The trip by the North Korean leader, who seldom leaves his country, signifies “a fresh heyday of friendship and solidarity and co-operation is being opened up in the history of the development of the relations between the DPRK and Russia,” North Korean state news agency KCNA said, using the initials for the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Moscow wanted to develop “equal and fair cooperation” with North Korea despite sanctions imposed on Pyongyang by the UN

Security Council. “We have not declared sanctions against North Korea, the Security Council did that. So appeal to the Security Council, and we will develop equal and fair cooperation with the DPRK,” Lavrov said in a state TV interview, excerpts of which were broadcast yesterday.

The Kremlin earlier said it abides by UN sanctions, but that it has a right to develop neighbourly relations, including in relation to sensitive topics. The US and its allies worry about warming military ties between the two neighbours as Russia presses its invasion of Ukraine and North Korea, a reclusive communist state, proceeds with missile

and nuclear development. South Korea and the US say military co-operation between North Korea and Russia would violate UN sanctions against Pyongyang and that the allies would ensure there was a price to pay. South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol called such a military partnership “illegal and unjust”, saying the international community would “unite more tightly” to cope with deepening ties between Moscow and Pyongyang, in written responses to the Associated Press yesterday.

Yoon will head to New York today for the UN General Assembly.

Russia has gone out of its way to publicise Kim’s visit, dropping repeated hints about the prospect of

military co-operation with North Korea, a country formed in 1948 with the backing of the Soviet Union. On Saturday, Kim met Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, who showed the North Korean leader Russian nuclear-capable strategic bombers, hypersonic missiles and warships.

Kim and Shoigu “exchanged their constructive opinions on the practical issues arising in further strengthening the strategic and tactical co-ordination, co-operation and mutual exchange between the armed forces of the two countries and in the fields of their national defence and security,” KCNA said yesterday.

Moscow is discussing joint military exercises with North Korea, Shoigu told Russian media. He visited Pyongyang in July and toured a weapons exhibition with Kim, one of the most striking signs of deepening ties up to that point.

During his trip to Russia, Kim toured Russia’s Pacific Sea Fleet, equipped with strategic nuclear submarines among other military vessels, KCNA said, quoting him as praising the fleet for its contribution to peace in the region. Oleg Kozhemyako, governor of Russia’s far eastern Primorsky region, gave Kim a bulletproof vest and six dresses produced in the region, RIA news agency said.

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TIMES

The mystery of extraterrestrial life and earthlings

If the hugely popular 1982 film *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*, caught the world’s fancy, and the *Men in Black* science fiction comedy film series debuting in 1997 approached the topic in a lighter vein, any news about the possibility of finding extraterrestrial life continues to attract attention always. Two separate developments last week prove this.

The first incident in Mexico City, saw the alleged bodies of two “non-human beings” presented during a congressional hearing, generating a mixture of surprise, disbelief and ridicule on social media on Wednesday, as reported by AFP.

The purported mummified remains were exhibited on Tuesday – the first time the Mexican Congress has officially addressed the issue of possible extraterrestrial life.

The alleged corpses, which had a grayish colour and facial features similar to humans, were brought by Jaime Maussan, a controversial Mexican journalist and researcher who reported finding them in Peru in 2017.

“They are non-human beings. We don’t want to call them extraterrestrials because we don’t know,” Maussan said during the session called by ruling party lawmaker Sergio Gutierrez, who defended the event as being in the “public interest.”

Maussan cited carbon dating analysis by the National Autonomous University of Mexico that he said showed “these beings are around 1,000 years old.”

During the hearing, Gutierrez said Maussan requested the session after a US congressional committee in July was told by a former intelligence official that humans were not alone in the universe and American authorities were covering up the evidence.

In June, the US space agency Nasa held its first public meeting on the issue, and urged a more rigorous scientific approach to clarify the origin of so-called unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAPs).

The second development was on Thursday when a Nasa panel recommended in a report that the US space agency increase its efforts to gather information on UAP, by the government – and play a larger role in helping the Pentagon detect them, Reuters said. The panel, comprised experts in scientific fields ranging from physics to astrobiology.

“Nasa has a variety of existing and planned Earth- and space-observing assets, together with an extensive archive of historic and current data sets, which should be directly leveraged to understand UAP,” the report said.

“Although Nasa’s fleet of Earth-observing satellites typically lack the spatial resolution to detect relatively small objects such as UAP, their state-of-the-art sensors can be directly utilised to probe the state of the local earth, oceanic, and atmospheric conditions that are spatially and temporally coincident with UAPs initially detected via other methods. Thus, Nasa’s assets can play a vital role by directly determining whether specific environmental factors are associated with certain reported UAP behaviours or occurrences,” the report said.

The US government in the past few years has made several disclosures of information it has gathered regarding a subject that once was met by virtual official silence. The new report called UAPs “one of our planet’s greatest mysteries.”

“Despite numerous accounts and visuals, the absence of consistent, detailed, and curated observations means we do not presently have the body of data needed to make definitive, scientific conclusions about UAP,” it added.

The US government issued a watershed report in 2021 compiled by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence in conjunction with a Navy-led task force encompassing numerous observations, mostly from military personnel of UAP.

The report included some UAP cases that previously came to light in the Pentagon’s release of video from naval aviators showing enigmatic aircraft off the US East and West Coasts exhibiting speed and manoeuvrability exceeding known aviation technologies and lacking any visible means of propulsion or flight-control surfaces. The report said defence and intelligence analysts lacked sufficient data to determine the nature of some of the objects.

Nasa has a variety of existing and planned Earth - and space - observing assets, together with an extensive archive of historic and current data sets’

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Expo 2023 Doha for the world

By Jose A. Benzaquen Perea
Ambassador of Peru

If there are activities that characterise Qatar and are projected globally, they are the events that are held with the aim of benefiting the entire international community, such as the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, when the world was brought together to enjoy a sport meeting of global friendship.

These meetings that Qatar offers to the world have an admirable continuity over time, with the sole purpose of offering benefits and promoting the development of all countries since they share common objectives.

Qatar frequently hosts international exhibitions in Doha, which are organised in different areas of development and culture.

One of the upcoming international exhibitions is Expo 2023 Doha, which will take place between October 2, 2023 and March 28, 2024. The theme of the expo is “Green Desert, Better Environment,” and it aims to raise awareness of the importance of preserving our environment through innovations and technologies.

The International Horticultural Exhibition Expo 2023 Doha Qatar will be the first international horticultural exhibition to be held in the Middle East and North Africa region. Some 88 countries

and international organisations have confirmed their attendance, and they will participate with pavilions that showcase their designs and advances in research and innovation.

Heads of Governments, representatives of international organisations, ministers of state, various personalities committed to safeguarding a better world with changes and representatives of the private sector will also attend.

We are confident that this event will offer the opportunity to promote diplomatic and business meetings, as well as an attractive hub for the arrival of a large number of tourists, among other benefits.

We will surely see, given the theme of the Expo, interesting examples of the innovations that can be applied to combine sand deserts with a diverse flora and make them a place for new life, within the concept of sustainability, understood as the solution to improve life without harming the environment.

Expo 2023 Doha will also raise awareness and educate visitors about climate change and the need for a more sustainable lifestyle, and will feature educational programmes, cultural events, and interactive exhibits to engage visitors about the importance of sustainability.

It is worth mentioning, Horticulture is a field that has developed significantly in the 20th century, with the introduction of new methods of cultivation, such as hydroponics and aquaponics. These methods allow for more efficient use of water and nutrients, and they can be used to grow crops in harsh environments.

We know that these transformative systems can control factors such as water distribution, cultivation periods, product quality, and the use of fertilisers.

As for the facilities of Al Bidda Park, where the Qatar Expo 2023 international exhibition will be held, they have already been completed in a very successful way and with the modernity that characterises the projects undertaken by Qatar.

Without a doubt, Expo 2023 Doha is sure to be a success, and it will leave many beneficial lessons and the advances that the whole world needs. It will be a showcase for innovative solutions to environmental challenges and help to promote sustainable development.

I believe that in the near future, we can see deserts transformed into green landscapes.

At London arms fair, global war fears good for business

By Peter Apps
London

As Russia’s Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un met last week to discuss what analysts believe will be a deal for an exchange of weapons, the West’s leading companies were descending on Europe’s biggest arms show in London.

Since the last iteration of the biennial Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) in September 2021, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and dramatically increased tensions over Taiwan and North Korea have given a shot of adrenaline to arms manufacturers worldwide.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, European defence spending rose 13% in 2022 alone, bringing total global spending to an all-time high of \$2,240bn.

Consultancy McKinsey reports that Russia saw its defence exports fall 21% over the first year following the Ukraine invasion, creating further openings for Western arms sales in the developing world.

Overall, it expects military spending to increase globally by an average of 4% a year through to 2028, led by Japan increasing its military budget by an unprecedented 14% a year.

“We are extremely busy,” says Michael Elmore, head of sales at MTL Advanced, which specialises in processing and fabricating armoured steel at its factory near Sheffield.

Within days of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, it was supplying basic body armour plating for Ukrainian combat troops.

Since then, demand has only increased, particularly for armoured vehicle components to be used by both Britain and other European states. The firm says finding suitably skilled labour is a mounting problem, prompting it to step up its apprenticeship programme over the last two years.

The need for greater armour is one of the more obvious lessons of fighting in Ukraine, analysts say. Others include the importance of being able to move quickly, minimise electronic emissions to avoid detection, and the mounting importance of high volumes of unmanned systems.

Estonian firm MILREM, a market leader for light unmanned ground vehicles, says some of its equipment has already been trialled in action in Ukraine for tasks such as route clearance, surveillance and casualty evacuation.

Already, battlefield experience has highlighted the importance of night operations and resistance to electronic jamming, CEO Kuldar Vaarsi said.

“Ukraine is a very interesting combination of First and Second World War technologies and very modern technology,” said Vaarsi, also pointing to the development of “loitering munitions” and artificial intelligence analysis.

“Before the war in Ukraine, these were more theoretical concepts.”

MILREM says it has struggled to secure sufficient financing in Europe, prompting it to turn to Middle Eastern investors in the United Arab Emirates to fund the next round of development and expansion – a move only approved by European Union regulators with the strict provision that data from MILREM’s European military work would not be accessible by their non-European partners.

Such nervousness over information leaks is increasingly widespread - the United States and its allies are now engaged in a protracted worldwide effort to minimise loss of critical technology to Moscow and Beijing. Other worries include a lack of sufficient industrial capability to make basic weapons such as artillery shells as well as more expensive items such as drones and rockets.

Ukraine fighting continues to consume huge volumes of Western stocks. According to experts at the conference, the waiting time to order a US Javelin anti-tank missile is now in excess of three years. Britain’s BAE Systems unveiled a new artillery shell at DSEI this week specifically designed to be cheaper and faster to manufacture.

Britain doubled its arms exports in 2022 to a record £8.5bn. British officials also hope the AUKUS agreement with the US to provide nuclear submarine technology to Australia will open the door to further deals.

DSEE is designed to build on that. But according to the organisers, this year has also seen a significant uptick in the presence of Asian, eastern and northern European manufacturers, many of them beneficiaries of Ukraine-related sales and rapidly shifting international partnerships.

South Korea’s tech and defence industries have made particular inroads into Europe, viewed as an alternative to China to manufacture high-tech chips and striking an increasingly confident series of defence deals to conquer the European market.

The largest, a 2022 \$13.7bn deal to supply Poland with equipment including tanks, artillery pieces and jets, began delivering weapons within months.

Defence industry insiders say South Korean firms are also now shipping increased amounts of weaponry to Taiwan, although this has not been acknowledged publicly.

Ukraine is also striking its own deals with foreign suppliers. Ukraine and Sweden this month announced a deal to jointly produce 1000 CV-90 infantry fighting vehicles for the Ukrainian army. Multiple firms including Britain’s BAE, Germany’s Rheinmetall and Finland’s Patria have all been reported to be talking with Ukraine to build factories there.

As one defence executive put it: “War is good for business.”

Ukraine has used unmanned drones at sea on a scale few Western navies could currently hope to match. On other areas, such as unarmed ground vehicles particularly for major resupply, the technology is still believed a year or two away from being truly operational – and with different countries pursuing a variety of priorities.

“Germany will most likely field autonomous logistic convoy capabilities before combat vehicles,” Rheinmetall Vice President for Business Development and Innovation Alain Tremblay said.

“The UK will probably be the first Nato country to formally integrate unmanned ground vehicles into their land forces. The US Marine Corps are also moving very rapidly.”

Much depends on regulation. Rheinmetall and other firms say they already have the technology to push “trains” of multiple trucks across Europe with several vehicles following a single human driver. Getting permission to do that on ordinary roads would either require more testing or a major international crisis.

Such a crisis, however, is what many firms are quietly now preparing for.

Dominic Philpott, chief operating officer of Hanwha Phasor – a UK-based satellite relay firm now purchased by South Korean conglomerate Hanwha that serves both civilian and government clients – noted several shifts. Clients with sensitive projects no longer wanted microchips from China, he said, citing concerns over both security and future supply.

Those wanting satellite communications were also now requesting to access multiple different satellite systems at different levels in Earth orbit, giving them greater resistance to jamming or other deliberate action.

“That’s all happened very quickly,” he said. “Companies are looking for resilience.” – Reuters

Investigators probe Brazil plane crash that killed 14

AFP
Manaus

Investigators travelled yesterday to a remote town in the Brazilian Amazon to probe a plane crash that killed 14 people and left no survivors, as authorities brought the bodies to be identified.

The small turboprop plane was flying a group of Brazilian sport fishermen into the northern town of Barcelos Saturday when it crashed in stormy weather, apparently after starting its descent too late and skidding off the end of the runway, said officials in Amazonas state.

A team of five air force investigators flew from state capital Manaus to Barcelos to begin analysing the crash, which killed all 12 passengers and two crew aboard.

A second flight carried empty coffins to the town so the bodies could be brought back to Manaus to be identified, along with a second set of teams to transport them and assist in the investigation, officials said.

Military personnel could be seen at the Manaus airport using a forklift to load the dark wood coffins onto the air force plane early yesterday, an AFP photographer said.

"The Amazonas state government dispatched teams to help transport the victims of the accident from Barcelos, 399km from Manaus," state officials said in a statement.

"The teams comprise 10 people from the department of forensic investigation, emergency response and police."

Officials said the bodies were expected to arrive in Manaus around 6:00pm (2200 GMT) yesterday.

Covered mostly in dense rainforest, Amazonas is a popular adventure travel destination. It receives hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, according to Amazonastur, the state tourism company.

Located on the Rio Negro tributary of the Amazon, Barcelos, a town of 19,000 people, is a popular jumping-off point for expeditions into the jungle.

The plane, a twin-engine turboprop made by Brazilian company Embraer, was operated by regional airline Manaus Aerotaxi.

Media reports showed the small white plane belly-down on a dirt track, its front end crumpled into the dense vegetation to the side.

Officials said two aircraft approaching Barcelos around the same time had returned to Manaus because of the weather.

Initial news reports had said US nationals were believed to be on the plane, but Amazonas officials said preliminary investigations indicated all the victims were Brazilian.

The plane's passengers were all men who were travelling to the Amazon from various parts of Brazil to go fishing, officials said.

Greek rescue team members killed in road accident

Reuters
Cairo

Four members of a Greek rescue team en route to the flood-ravaged city of Derna and three members of a Libyan family were killed in a road accident yesterday, the health minister for the Libyan eastern government said.

Fifteen of the Greek rescue team were injured, including seven in a critical condition, Othman Abduljaleel told a televised news conference. Two of the Libyan family were also critical, he said.

The Greek Armed Forces said a bus carrying medical personnel collided with a vehicle moving in the opposite direction, but it did not confirm the deaths.

"The causes and circumstances of the incident are being investigated in co-operation with the Libyan authorities, while an operation is underway to gather the personnel in Benghazi and repatriate them," it said in a statement.

The Greek foreign ministry was not immediately available to comment on Abduljaleel's statement regarding the killing of four Greeks.



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni attend a press conference at the airport after a visit to the hotspot, a reception centre for migrants, and later the port where they arrive, in Lampedusa, yesterday. (Reuters)

Biden aide in hours of 'constructive' talks with China diplomat

Reuters
Washington/Beijing

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Malta for hours this weekend, Beijing and Washington said yesterday, as the world's two largest economies seek to stabilise troubled relations.

Both sides held "candid, substantive and constructive" talks during multiple meetings held September 16-17, according to separate statements from the White House and the Chinese foreign ministry published yesterday.

There were also "limited" early signs that severed military communications between the two sides may start to be restored, a senior Biden administration official said.

Chinese officials did not comment on the prospect of military-to-military communication.

Sullivan's meeting with Wang was the latest in a series of high-level discussions between US and Chinese officials that could lay the groundwork for a meeting between US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping later this year.

They come amid a string of upheavals in the Chinese government's top ranks,

including the disappearance of defence minister Li Shangfu, and wobbles in the country's economy that have caused consternation in foreign capitals.

The Malta talks spanned about 12 hours over the two days, a senior Biden administration official told reporters. Sullivan last met Wang in Vienna in May.

China's foreign ministry said both sides agreed to maintain high-level exchanges and hold bilateral consultations on Asia-Pacific affairs, maritime affairs and foreign policy.

The United States told China it was ready to work together on counter-narcotics, artificial intelligence and climate change even as it expressed concerns over unspecified Chinese support for Russia and Beijing recently sending fighter jets across the sensitive median line of the Taiwan Strait, the US official said.

Wang cautioned the United States that the Taiwan issue is the "first insurmountable red line of Sino-US relations," according to the Chinese foreign ministry statement. China claims the self-ruled island as its own territory.

The US official said "there have been some small or limited indications" that Beijing is ready to re-open some cross-military communications used to de-escalate conflict between the two countries after those ties were cut fol-

lowing an Aug. 2022 visit by former US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan that enraged China.

In its statement, the White House strongly suggested that more meetings are to come between the US and China, adding that both sides "committed to maintain this strategic channel of communication and to pursue additional high-level engagement and consultations in key areas ... in the coming months."

Biden this month expressed disappointment that Xi skipped a summit of Group of 20 leaders in India, but said he would "get to see him." The next likely opportunity for Biden to hold talks with Xi is an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco in November, where US aides for months have hoped to stage such a meeting.

US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Biden climate envoy John Kerry have travelled to China this year to thaw relations and ensure continued communication between the two countries amid tensions that flared after the US military shot down a Chinese surveillance balloon that travelled over the United States.

Biden and Xi last met in 2022 on the sidelines of a G20 summit on Indonesia's resort island of Bali.

US admits ousting Russia from Ukraine territory tall order

The United States' highest-ranking military officer said yesterday that while Ukraine's counteroffensive has not "failed," the country's broader goal of ousting Russian forces from its territory faces a "very high bar." General Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also defended US weapons assistance being sent to Kyiv, saying Washington is doing its best and cannot just boost Ukraine's battlefield power by sprinkling "magic dust."

Milley said that while the current counteroffensive by Ukraine was "slower than the planners had anticipated, it has been steady." "I know there's some commentary out there that somehow this offensive



General Mark Milley

has failed. It hasn't failed," Milley said, adding that Ukraine has "a lot of combat power remaining. The Ukrainians are not a spent force." However, when it comes to the likelihood of achieving more ambitious goals such as reaching the southern coast and recapturing the city of Mariupol, Milley said he didn't want to "make a prediction." He said that the overall strategy of liberating all Ukrainian territory from occupation and managing to "completely kick out all the Russians" is "going to be a very significant effort."

"It'll take a considerable length of time to militarily eject all 200,000 or plus Russian troops out of Russian-

occupied Ukraine. That's a very high bar. It's going to take a long time to do it." Milley defended the rate at which the US has been providing weapons and other aid to Ukraine since the full-scale Russian invasion began in February 2022. Despite criticism – including from inside Ukraine – that the US government is dragging its feet, Milley said some \$40bn in weapons and \$100 billion in overall aid was "extraordinarily generous." The speed of deliveries, however, is governed by logistics and "how fast they can absorb it. So, it's not just, sprinkle magic dust and the stuff starts showing up."

Climate activists spray paint Berlin's Brandenburg Gate

Reuters
Frankfurt

Climate activists sprayed orange and yellow paint on the columns of Berlin's landmark Brandenburg Gate yesterday to push demands for a stop to the use of fossil fuels by 2030.

"Members of the so-called 'Last Generation' sprayed the columns on the east side of the Brandenburg Gate with orange paint from fire extinguishers during the morning," Berlin police said on X.

It added that police officers noticed a hydraulic lift was being operated at the gate and they kept the protesters from scaling the landmark building. They arrested all 14 protesters at the site and

launched an investigation into property damage. The Last Generation, a Germany-based group within the Europe-wide A22 network that includes Britain's Just Stop Oil, has made headlines in Germany with hundreds of road blocks by protesters who glued themselves to the tarmac.

Their action has triggered a law-enforcement crackdown by Germany's federal states.

The Last Generation posted pictures of the spray-painting on X.

"We will not stop our protest unless a pivot is initiated. We have to exit oil, natural gas and coal by 2030 at the latest," it said.

Germany aims to reach net-zero emissions by 2045, but it missed annual targets for the last two years.



People walk in front of the Brandenburg Gate after Last Generation climate activists threw paint on the columns of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin yesterday. (Reuters)

Italian PM calls for EU help: migrant surge

AFP
Lampedusa

Italy's prime minister warned yesterday that the "future of Europe is at stake", after droves of migrants landed on the Mediterranean island of Lampedusa.

Thousands of migrants on vessels from the North African coast landed on Italy's southernmost island this week, sparking a crisis that has rekindled debate over the division of responsibility among the EU nations.

At a press conference with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen during a visit to the island, Giorgia Meloni said the bloc needed to work together to face the challenges of uncontrolled migration.

It is "the future that Europe wants for itself that is at stake here, because the future of Europe depends on Europe's capacity to face major challenges," Meloni said.

Between Monday and Wednesday, around 8,500 people – more than the island's entire local population – arrived in 199 boats, according to the UN migration agency.

"Irregular immigration is a European challenge that needs a European response," von der Leyen said, calling on other members of the bloc to take in some of the migrants.

The Italian Red Cross, which runs the overcrowded Lampedusa migration centre, said yesterday that 1,500 migrants remained there despite having a capacity for just 400.

Transfers of migrants to Sicily and the mainland have not kept up with the flow of new arrivals, although further transfers were expected to be made yesterday, the Red Cross said.

The officials were met on arrival at the airport by residents unhappy with the mass arrivals, threatening to block their motorcade.

"We are doing everything possible," Meloni had said in response.

Large vessels operated by NGOs like the Geo Barents by Doctors Without Borders (MSF), which have rescued nearly 500 migrants in 11 operations, are headed for major Italian ports.

But dozens of small boats continue to make the perilous sea-crossing to Lampedusa, where the migrant management system has come to the brink of asphyxiation.

In July, von der Leyen – with Meloni's strong backing – struck an agreement with Tunisia aimed at curbing the flow of irregular migration from the North African country. More than 127,000 migrants have arrived on Italy's shores so far this year, almost double the same period last year.

Over 2,000 people have died this year crossing from North Africa to Italy and Malta, according to the UN migration agency. The EU is pushing to overhaul rules on how to handle the migrant flow.

In France, members of the far right say Paris should not allow any migrants from Lampedusa across the border from Italy.



Qatar Museums celebrates 10th anniversary of Al Zubarah as Unesco World Heritage Site

Qatar Museums (QM) celebrated in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the 10th anniversary of the inscription of Al Zubarah Archaeological Site as a Unesco World Heritage Site.

The event commemorated the history and cultural legacy of Al Zubarah, highlighting the achievements and challenges of the past decade, and fostering global collaboration for its continued preservation.

Qatar's ambassador to Saudi Arabia Bandar bin Mohamed al-Attiyah, Qatar's permanent representative to Unesco Dr Nassir al-Hinzab, Unesco Doha Office for Gulf States and Yemen's director and representative Salah Khaled, World Heritage Committee director Lazare Eloundou Assomo and other official delegates were present.

Al Zubarah stands as a testament to the region's vibrant past, dating back to the late 18th century when it flourished as a thriving port during the pearl trading era. Its unique urban layout and architectural features offer a glimpse into the maritime and trading activities that shaped the area's history.

Recognising its exceptional value, Al Zubarah was inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List in 2013 for its outstanding preservation and representation of a historic trading port.

Over the past decade, QM has led comprehensive conservation efforts to safeguard Al Zubarah's structures, artefacts, and environment. Numerous restoration projects have been successfully completed, preserving the authenticity and integrity of the landmark.

QM's collaboration with universities and educational institutions to deliver workshops, lectures, and seminars has deepened the understanding of Al Zubarah's heritage. QM has outlined a vision for the future development of Al Zubarah, aiming to enhance visitor experiences, expand educational offerings, and further elevate the site's global prominence.

QM acting CEO Mohamed Saad al-Rumaihi added: "Under the patronage and leadership of HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Chairperson of Qatar Museums, we strive to preserve cultural heritage and archaeological sites and preserve the properties of the cultural and historical offerings of Qatar. We also support the continued co-operation of all experts in this field to exchange experiences between all organisations. Over the past ten years, Qatar Museums has made great efforts to develop and preserve Al Zubarah Archaeologi-



cal site, which will preserve the authenticity and integrity of the Historical city."

The local communities surrounding Al Zubarah have also played a vital role in its preservation and promotion, showcasing a strong sense of ownership and pride in their heritage. This partnership has strengthened the site's significance not only on a national level but also within the global community.

Dr Fatema al-Sulaiti, director of International Co-operation and government Affairs at QM, expressed her enthusiasm for the event, saying: "Celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Al Zubarah Archaeological Site during the 45th session of the Unesco World Heritage Committee in Riyadh enhances Qatar Museums efforts and other concerned institutions in

Qatar to preserve this world heritage site. These efforts express the effective role played by the State of Qatar on a global level, as a member of the World Heritage Committee.

"I look forward to this session to exchange experiences between members, and we look forward to the participation of Qatar as an effective member in the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage."

The event is a testament to Qatar's commitment to preserving its cultural heritage and promoting its historical significance on the global stage. It seeks to cultivate a sense of pride and ownership among local and global communities in safeguarding this remarkable historical site for future generations.



Qatar to host 12th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers next week

Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Culture, will host the 12th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers under the theme 'Toward renewing cultural action in the Islamic world' from September 25-26.

The conference, which the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ICESCO) is organising within the framework of its competencies, will discuss a number of topics, including issues of cultural development in the Islamic world, and mechanisms for developing the ICESCO's Programme for Cultural Capitals in the Islamic World, in addition to some projects such as the programme to value living human treasures and traditional knowledge in the Islamic world, cultural policy guidelines and indicators for sustainable development in a transforming world, and strategy to combat illicit trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic world.

The conference will highlight the success story of Doha Capital of Culture in the Islamic World 2021, and follow up on the efforts and cultural achievements of member states and organisations. An intellectual symposium to discuss the influences on Islamic civilisation and its impact on humanity will be organised, while the Doha declaration on renewing cultural action in the Islamic world will be adopted in the closing session of the conference.

Before the start of the Ministerial Conference, the Advisory Council for Cultural Development in the Islamic World, whose General Secretariat is held by ICESCO, will hold its 18th meeting next Saturday to discuss a number of draft decisions and documents related to the work of the Ministerial Conference, most notably the adoption of the draft agenda of the 12th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers, and the formation of the office of the Advisory Council for Cultural Development in the Islamic World. Assistant Undersecretary for Cultural Affairs at the Ministry of Culture Ghanem bin Mubarak Al Ali said that Qatar's hosting of the 12th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers culminates the efforts of the Ministry of Culture in supporting joint cultural action, consolidates the traditions of cultural and civilisational exchange between the peoples of the Islamic world, and affirms the common civilisational and cultural values on which Qatar's vision for a diverse and rich Arab-Islamic cultural scene is based.

He added that the ministry hopes that the conference sessions will contribute to promoting constructive intellectual and civilisational discussion to unify efforts aimed at establishing true cultural development among the member states of ICESCO, which will be reflected in the cultural scene in the Islamic world. For her part, Director of the Department of Culture and Arts Maryam al-Hammadi said the conference's theme embodies ICESCO member states' ambition to promote cultural partnerships, exchange knowledge and skills that aim to develop heritage and arts in Islamic countries, and strengthen bilateral efforts to launch programmes and initiatives aimed at supporting young people, creatives, and intellectuals in the Islamic world. She added that the conference will represent an interactive and rich platform for member states to come up with recommendations and doable action projects and to support cultural development programmes in member states. (QNA)

70% of public buses in Qatar are EVs

From Page 1

HE al-Sulaiti noted that MoT is focusing on the infrastructure too. "We make specifications and are testing the roads and then give the approval to Ashghal. We also have plans to extend the Metro Rail services leading to greater connectivity and a lot of infrastructure development," he explained.

As for electrical vehicles (EVs), the minister said that currently charging is free of cost. "Now when you fill your car with petrol you might be giving an estimated amount of QR150 or more for fuel. But when you charge an EV vehicle fully, it amounts to QR12 and currently government of Qatar is paying it. So you can see the difference in the amount of money for fuel between an EV and other vehicle," added the minister.

Al-Sulaiti inaugurated the MoT's "Sustainable Transportation and Legacy for Generations" Conference and Exhibition, at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre, held under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani.

HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Qatar Central Bank governor HE Sheikh Bandar bin Mohamed bin Saoud al-Thani, HE the Minister of Municipality Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie, HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry



Sheikh Mohamed bin Hamad bin Qassim al-Thani, HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohamed bin Ali al-Mannai, and several other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

Minister al-Sulaiti said Qatar's investments in developing the infrastructure projects and the transportation sector's support services came in implementation of the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, and resulted in the country having an integrated, connected, and sustainable transit system, positioning the country high on world map of transportation industry, and enabling it to host major events efficiently.

At the event, the minister also announced the launch of the Autonomous Vehicles Strategy, a plan over the com-

ing five years to regulate the terms and conditions of using autonomous vehicles in Qatar to provide smart, and environmentally conscious transit systems.

The minister said MoT is currently working on studying the standards and specifications of EVs to approve the minimum technical specifications and safety standards, in addition to establishing a centre for inspecting EVs' specifications conformity and issuing approval certificates.

On maritime transportation, HE al-Sulaiti said the advanced infrastructure and technologies at Hamad Port contributed to transforming the port to a regional hub expanding transportation network with over 100 ports worldwide. The minister also highlighted the development works at Al Ruwais Port and Doha Port.

Al-Sulaiti highlighted the outcomes of the major efforts to develop the air transportation sector through establishing a modern system supported with modern services. He noted that during FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, over 26,500 aircraft movements were recorded at both Hamad International Airport and Doha International Airport. He noted that the two S-band radar system and long-range L-band radar have started operations. The minister added that the meteorology field also saw great progress with weather information stations currently reaching 48.

Following the opening session the dignitaries visited the stalls of the accompanying exhibition. There were three panel discussions on the first day of the conference. The conference and exhibition concludes today.