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### Amir to meet South African president tomorrow

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will meet at the Amir Diwan tomorrow with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and the accompanying delegation. His Highness the Amir will hold talks with President Ramaphosa pertaining to bilateral relations and ways to enhance and develop them, in addition to signing a number of memorandums of understanding. The South African president will arrive in Doha today on a state visit to the country. **(QNA)**

### UN flags lowered to mourn Gaza victims

The United Nations (UN) lowered the flags at half-mast at its headquarters around the world yesterday, calling for a minute's silence for the UN's workers killed in Gaza. Flags flew at half-mast at the UN's offices and missions in Doha, joining the worldwide mourning of the killing of the UN employees and mourning the martyrdom of innocent men, women and children in Gaza. The blue and white flag of the UN was lowered around the world the day after the organisation announced that 101 of its employees had been killed in a bombing that targeted the headquarters of the UN's Development Programme in Gaza.

### US forces in Syria attacked

US and international forces in northeastern Syria were attacked with drones and rockets at least four times in the past 24 hours, a US official said yesterday. US forces came under attack three times on Sunday evening, including near the Al Omar Oil field and at a US base at Al-Shaddadi. US and coalition troops have been attacked at least 40 times in Iraq and Syria since early October.

### Jordan king rejects occupation of Gaza

Jordan's King Abdullah rejected any plans by Israel to occupy parts of Gaza or to create security zones within the enclave, saying the root cause of the crisis was Israel's denial of Palestinians' "legitimate rights", state media said yesterday. The king said the war-ravaged enclave of Gaza should not be severed by Israel from the other Palestinian Territories. The monarch told the politicians that the "root of the crisis was Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories and its denial of Palestinians legitimate rights".

### Sunak sacks Suella, Cameron back in govt

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak brought back former leader David Cameron as foreign minister yesterday in a reshuffle triggered by his firing of interior minister Suella Braverman after her criticism of police threatened his authority. The reshuffle followed growing criticism of Braverman from lawmakers. His hand was forced when the ever-controversial Braverman defied him last week in an unauthorised article accusing police of "double standards" at protests, suggesting they were tough on right-wing demonstrators, but easy on pro-Palestinian marchers. **Page 9**

A wounded Palestinian woman from the Baraka family is surrounded by her children upon their arrival at Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip following Israeli air strikes that hit their building yesterday.

## Qatar condemns bombing of Gaza reconstruction HQ

**QNA**  
Doha

**Q**atar strongly condemned the Israeli occupation forces' shelling of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza's headquarters, considering it a clear violation of international law and an extension of the occupation's approach in targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, population centres, and shelters for displaced persons.

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised that the bombing of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza's headquarters is an extension of the policy of targeting civilians, especially since this committee has worked through its projects to alleviate the suffer-

ing of the population in the besieged Gaza Strip due to the long blockade and ongoing aggression.

The ministry underscored the urgent need for the international community to hold Israel accountable for its repeated crimes against civilians and civilian infrastructure and pressure it to comply with international laws.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also called on the Israeli occupation to stop providing insubstantial justifications for targeting civilian facilities, health institutions, civilians, while using misleading information. The ministry underlined that such actions are unacceptable under any circumstance, and it cannot justify targeting the committee's headquarters, which has been involved in the reconstruction of what the occupation has destroyed in its repeated wars on the Gaza Strip.

### Saudi, Kuwait, Jordan, GCC censure bombing

GCC Secretary-General Jasem Mohamed al-Budaiwi, condemned the bombing by the Israeli occupation forces of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, stressing that this bombing is further evidence of the brutality and recklessness of the occupation forces and their continued violation of international treaties, laws and norms. The Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned in the strongest terms the blatant targeting of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza in occupied Palestine by the Israeli occupation forces. Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed Kuwait's condemnation of the bombing of headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza by the Israeli occupation forces, in a new violation committed within a series of heinous crimes targeting Palestinian civilians and civilian facilities. Jordan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs also condemned Israel's continued violations of international law, its crimes against civilians, and its repeated attacks on hospitals and civilian objects, the latest of which was the bombing of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza.**(QNA) Page 8**

## 450 firms to participate in Made in Qatar exhibition

**S**ome 450 companies from different industries in the country are slated to participate in the Made in Qatar exhibition, Qatar Chamber chairman Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani announced in a statement yesterday.

According to Sheikh Khalifa, who is also chairman of the exhibition's Higher Committee, the participating companies will be representing the following sectors: food, petrochemicals, services, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), among other industries.

Sheikh Khalifa said almost all preparations needed for the expo are complete and that the exhibition, which spans 30,000sq m, has witnessed a broad turnout of participating industrial companies.

**The exhibition, to be held from Nov 29 to Dec 2 at the DECC, will feature panel sessions that will address challenges related to the development of local industry**

Held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the ninth edition of the exhibition is organised by the Qatar Chamber, in co-operation with the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (MoCI), from November 29 to December 2 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

He said the exhibition will also feature panel sessions that will address issues and challenges related to the development of the local industry.

Qatar Chamber chairman Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani

These include, during the first day, 'The Future of Industry in Qatar', featuring speakers from MoCI, Qatar Development Bank

## Israeli tanks take position outside Gaza hospital

**Reuters**  
Gaza/Jerusalem

**I**sraeli tanks took up positions at the gates of Gaza City's main hospital yesterday, the primary target in their battle to seize control of the northern half of the Gaza Strip, where medics said patients including newborns were dying for lack of fuel.

Gaza health ministry spokesperson Ashraf al-Qidra, who was inside Al Shifa hospital, said 32 patients had died in the past three days, including three newborn babies, as a result of the siege of the hospital and lack of power.

At least 650 patients were still inside, desperate to be evacuated to another medical facility by the Red Cross or some other neutral agency. Israel says the hospital sits atop tunnels housing a headquarters for Hamas fighters using patients as shields, which Hamas denies.

"The tanks are in front of the hospital. We are under full blockade. It's a totally civilian area. Only hospital facility, hospital patients, doctors and other civilians staying in the hospital. Someone should stop this," a surgeon at the hospital, Dr Ahmed El Mokhal-lati, said by telephone.

US President Joe Biden said yesterday that the Al Shifa hospital in Gaza City must be protected and that he hopes there will be less intrusive action there.

Since Israel launched its campaign last month, thousands of Gazans have been killed and two thirds of the population made homeless. Israel has ordered the total evacuation of the northern half of Gaza.

Since Israeli ground forces entered Gaza in late October and quickly surrounded Gaza City, fighting has been concentrated in a

### Death toll reaches 11,240 including 4,630 children

The death toll in the Gaza Strip rose to 11,240 yesterday, according to the media office of the Hamas-controlled government in the Israeli-besieged enclave. The toll since Oct. 7 includes 4,630 children and 3,130 women, according to the media office spokesperson.

tightening circle around Al Shifa, the enclave's biggest hospital.

There was also fresh concern that the war could spread beyond Gaza, with an upsurge of clashes on Israel's northern border with Lebanon, and the United States launching air strikes on Iran-linked militia targets in neighbouring Syria.

### Gun battle at second hospital

Fighting also took place at a second major hospital in northern Gaza, Al-Quds, which has also stopped functioning. The Palestinian Red Crescent said the hospital was surrounded by heavy gunfire, and a convoy sent to evacuate patients and staff had been unable to reach it.

UN agency UNRWA is now housing around 800,000 people in Gaza, or half of those made homeless by the fighting. It said its emergency fuel depot for the enclave had finally run dry and it would soon be unable to run ambulances, resupply hospitals, provide drinking water or pump sewage.

The conflict has raised fears of a broader conflagration. **Page 8**

Patients and internally displaced people are pictured at Al Shifa hospital in Gaza City.

(QDB), Qatar General Organisation for Standards and Metrology, Investment Promotion Agency Qatar (IPA Qatar), Qatar Free Zones Authority (QFZ), and Qatar Chamber.

Three seminars will highlight the second day focusing on localisation with speakers from QatarEnergy; the Ministry of Finance, the Public Works Authority (Ashghal) and Kahramaa; and Katara Hospitality.

On the third day, a seminar titled 'Investment Seminar to Support Qatari Entrepreneurs' will be held, while the last day will include an interactive seminar with speakers from the Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), QDB, and GS1 Qatar.

The exhibition aims to provide visitors with the opportunity to

gain insights into the latest products and services within the industrial sector. Participants will have the chance to engage with industry experts and investors, get acquainted with the successful companies operating in the state, and understand their capacity for developing their businesses.

It also aims to enhance the Qatari industry, support the state's efforts towards industrial development, promote Qatari products and industry both domestically and globally, encourage the utilisation of local products, decrease reliance on imported items, and stimulate investors to invest in industrial projects.

This year's edition will focus on attracting domestic and foreign investments into Qatar's industrial sector.





## Al-Muraikhi receives copies of credentials of Uruguay, Tanzania envoys

HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi received copies of credentials of Uruguay's ambassador Marcelo Esteban Gerona Morales and Tanzanian ambassador Mohamed Habibu Awesi. HE al-Muraikhi wished the ambassadors success in their duties, assuring them of providing all support to advance the relations between Qatar and their respective countries to a closer co-operation in various fields.



# Amir's speech expressed feelings of all Arab-Islamic peoples: Shura

QNA

Doha

The Shura Council held yesterday its ordinary weekly session, under the chairmanship of its Speaker HE Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem. At the outset of the session, the Council appreciated the participation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, along with heads of state and heads of delegations, in the Joint Arab-Islamic Extraordinary summit, which was held in Riyadh on Saturday.

The Council praised the contents of His Highness the Amir's speech, which expressed the feelings of all Arab and Islamic peoples and peace-loving peoples of the world, by pointing out the failure of the international community to take action that would stop the massacres and put an end to the hostile war on Gaza Strip. The Council also hailed His Highness' call on the UN to dispatch crews to conduct an immediate investigation into the claims and allegations used by Israel to permit the bombing of hospitals in Gaza.

The Council also praised the affirmation in the Amir's speech of Qatar's firm and historical position in support of the steadfastness of the brotherly Palestinian people and their just cause as well as His Highness' call for urgently reaching a humanitarian ceasefire, permanently opening safe humanitarian crossings to deliver aid without obstacles or conditions, and His

Highness' emphasis that the only sustainable solution to this issue is the one that establishes the foundations of justice in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative.

In this regard, HE the Shura Council Speaker asserted that the Amir's speech before the summit was marked by candidness and transparency, it ushered in a novel historical era in addressing the Palestinian predicament and standing up against the marginalisation perpetuated by the occupying entity. He said that it was an expression of the consciences of all free peoples, and that it included strong contents calling on the Arab and Islamic worlds to take action and take a firm stance and deterrence measures within international legitimacy and based on the political, economic and popular weight they have.

In the same context, the Shura Council condemned the continued massacres perpetrated by the occupying entity against the defenceless Palestinian people, its continued destruction of all forms of life in Gaza, and its continued bombing of population centres and educational and health facilities to which civilians took refuge believing that they were safe from the crimes of the occupying entity in accordance with international law and humanitarian norms.

The Council denounced the international community's failure to stop the massacres that claimed more than 11,000 lives, 70% of whom were women and children,



The Shura Council in session.

expressing its categorical rejection of forced displacement of the residents of northern Gaza and all the brotherly Palestinian people from their land, and pushing them to neighbouring countries.

The Council warned against the consequences of leading such policy, as it is considered a war crime against humanity prohibited by international law. Furthermore, the Council underlined the need for world parliaments and parliamentary unions to take action to protect the Palestinian people from the ongoing crimes, violations and massacres committed by the Israeli occupation forces.

After that, HE the Secretary-General of the Shura Council Dr Ahmed bin Nasser al-Fadala read out the session's agenda, and the minutes of the previous session were approved. During the session, the Council discussed the

response of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers to the proposal submitted by the Council related to the topic "The phenomenon of Qatari teachers' unwillingness to join the teaching career," the topic that the Council raised in its first session of the current legislative term, as part of a request for general discussion submitted by a number of the members.

The Shura Council had discussed in previous sessions the aforementioned topic, and in its previous session, it concluded by submitting a proposal at the request of the esteemed government, which included the Council's views and proposals regarding the aforementioned topic.

The proposal included a number of views and proposals that would contribute to reducing this phenomenon and developing solutions for it. After reviewing the

response of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers to the proposal submitted by the Council, it decided to refer it to the Cultural Affairs and Information Committee to study it and provide the Council with its conclusions regarding it.

The Council also reviewed a draft law amending some provisions of Law No 9 of 1987 on Control and Regulation of Control and Regulation of Narcotic Drugs and Dangerous Psychotropic Substances (NDDPS) as referred to it by the esteemed government, and after extensive discussions on it, the Council approved the aforementioned draft law.

In another context, HE the Shura Council Speaker briefed the members on the results and outcomes of the 17th periodic meeting of Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) Speakers of Shura, Representatives, National and Ummah Councils, which was held in Doha last Tuesday. Within this framework, HE the Speaker referred to the active participation in the meeting by the heads of the Gulf legislative councils, in an effort to enhance co-operation and integration between the councils in supporting joint Gulf action, in addition to emphasising the importance of co-ordination and unifying positions and visions in regional and international parliamentary forums regarding issues of priority to the GCC countries.

He said that the results of the meeting focused on supporting the just causes of the brotherly Palestinian people so that they

regain all their legitimate rights, most importantly the establishment of their independent state in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative, in addition to emphasising the rejection, denunciation and condemnation of the barbaric aggression, genocide and brutal massacres committed by the Israeli occupation forces in Gaza and throughout the occupied Palestinian territories, demanding the need to stop the aggression and protect the brotherly Palestinian people, and the need to allow the rapid entry of aid into the Gaza Strip without obstacles.

HE the Speaker thanked all the parties and institutions that contributed to the success of the meeting of the heads of the Gulf legislative councils, praising their efforts in this aspect.

On the other hand, the Council reviewed the report on the participation of Eng Ahmad bin Hitmi al-Hitmi and Mohamed bin Fahad al-Musallam in the meeting of the Standing Committee on Budget and Planning of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), which was hosted by the Iranian capital, Tehran, last July.

Al-Hitmi said that the Council delegation also participated in the second session of the APA's Working Group on Statutory Document, that touched on enhancing the association's work and building its capabilities, as well as discussing the institutional steps that will be taken to enhance the association's efficiency and organisational capacity. (QNA)

## Labour ministry receives 25,387 work permit applications for Oct

QNA

Doha

The Work Permits Department at the Ministry of Labour received over 25,000 requests for new recruitment, general and private work permits, and job modifications during October.

The October statistical bulletin showed that the Work Permits Department received about 25,387 applications, including 5,003 applications for new recruitment, 15,409 applications for general work permits (extension of the

Identification number), and 1,023 applications for private work permits (sponsorship of their relatives/Gulf citizens/investor/beneficiary of property...). Meanwhile, the total number of requests to modify the profession reached 3,952 requests.

Regarding inspection visits to labour recruitment offices, the statistical bulletin showed that the ministry carried out about 312 inspection visits to recruitment offices, 281 of which ended without recording observations, and 29 warnings were issued to remove a violation, ban one office, one record and one report.

### In October, the Labour Inspection Department carried out intensive inspection campaigns to monitor the extent of establishments' compliance with the laws and ministerial decisions concerned with regulating the labour market in the country

In October, the Labour Inspection Department carried out intensive inspection campaigns to monitor the extent of establishments' compliance with the laws and ministerial decisions concerned with regulating the labour market in the country, with a total number of inspection visits of 5,275 visits in various areas, which

resulted in issuing a warning to 1,008 companies to remove the violation, while 607 reports of violations recorded against companies.

Regarding labour complaints, the statistical bulletin showed that the Labour Disputes Department received about 3,664 complaints from the facility's work-

ers against the establishment, of which 585 complaints were settled, and 262 complaints were referred to labour dispute resolution committees. The Labour Disputes Department also received 113 reports from the public, all of which were settled.

According to the monthly statistical bulletin regarding labour

dispute settlement committees, the number of cases referred to the dispute settlement committees during the past month stood at 262 cases, and the total number of decisions issued by the labour dispute settlement committees reached 507 decisions.

Regarding employment contracts, the statistical bulletin showed that the Labour Relations Department received about 74,961 applications to authenticate employment contracts, all of which were approved, while the number of approved secondments of worker applications amounted to 2,677 applications.

## MoEHE assessment tests

Public and private secondary schools that apply national standards will begin the preparation and holding of the assessment tests for the 2023-2024 academic year from Nov 20 to 29 according to standards and regulations by the Department of Students Assessment at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE). The MoEHE explained that through the assessment tests, students will be familiarised with the format of the tests and question patterns, as well as identify their strengths and weaknesses. The assessment tests will include estimating and monitoring grades, issuing reports on the students' results and publishing them on the school's website so they can serve as an initial experience for the students to prepare them to achieve high grades in the actual tests. Director of the Department of Students Assessment Ibrahim Abdullah al-Muhannadi expressed the importance of these tests in preparing students. He asks the students to take them seriously and to benefit from them in the best possible way. Al-Muhannadi also noted the efforts made by the school administrations and teachers in preparing and holding the assessment tests internally for the first time. (QNA)



## MoI: 1,900 benefit from awareness lectures of Traffic Dept



The Ministry of Interior revealed that 1,900 participants benefited from the lectures and awareness activities provided by the Traffic Awareness Department of the General Directorate of Traffic during October, through 27 events dedicated to safe driving programmes.

In a statement, the ministry explained that these events aimed to raise traffic awareness among various segments of society,

They sought to change their traffic behaviour to ensure their safety and protection from risks. The activities aimed to familiarise them with the economic, social, and health risks resulting from traffic accidents. The events targeted school students, kindergarten children, universities, military and civilian colleges, as well as personnel from ministries, authorities, government entities, private sector companies, driv-

ing schools, and communities. The ministry pointed out that, during the events, the beneficiaries were informed about traffic laws and etiquette, highlighting common mistakes that lead to serious road accidents. Participants were educated about the requirements of safe driving, how to avoid traffic accidents, and the importance of wearing seat belts. Emphasis was placed on avoiding the use of

mobile phones while driving and other violations and risky traffic behaviours.

On another note, the Traffic Awareness Department of the General Directorate of Traffic participated in the 8th Youth Hobbies Conference and AI Exhibition, while awareness segments were broadcasted on the Urdu radio, and a campaign for the Winter Camping Season 2023/2024 was launched. (QNA)





## QMC CEO receives Chinese diplomat



Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) CEO HE Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Thani al-Thani received in his office, Chinese embassy charge d'affaires Chen Yue. During the meeting, aspects of co-operation between the two friendly countries in the field of media were discussed, especially the radio and television. A QMC delegation will participate in the Arab-Chinese Forum in the field of radio and television, being held in China between December 11 and 13, 2023.

## QR1mn award for winner of Qur'an contest



The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs announced on Sunday the winner of the international branch of Sheikh Jassim bin Mohamed bin Thani Noble Qur'an Competition Awwal Al Awael (First of the First) in its second edition. The announcement was made during the closing ceremony of the competition, in the presence of HE the Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Ghanem bin Shaheen bin Ghanem al-Ghanem, a number of prominent Islamic figures, and a group of famous scholars and reciters from countries around the world. The QR1mn award was won by Mohamed Saad Abdel Jalil Abdel Qawi from Egypt. During his remarks at the closing ceremony, Chairman of the Competition Organising Committee Nasser Yousef al-Sulaiti said that the competition was a great success with the enthusiasm of its officials and the dedication of its workers. **(QNA)**

# Katara: Artists from 61 countries to partake in Qatar arts festival

The Cultural Village Foundation - Katara has announced that the 5th Qatar International Arts Festival 2023 will take place from November 20-25 in the Cultural Zone of Expo 2023 Doha at Al Bidda Park, with the participation of 304 artists from 61 countries worldwide. The festival, organised in collaboration with MAPS International WLL and in partnership with Expo 2023 Doha, encompasses 12 events showcasing a range of creative works including painting, music, sculpture, fashion shows, conferences, and artistic workshops.

Speaking to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), General Manager of Katara Prof Khaled bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti said that the 2023 exceptional edition of the Qatar International Arts Festival will be



Prof Khaled bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti



Rashmi Agarwal

held at Al Bidda Park concurrently with the global event Expo 2023 Doha. He added that organising the festival in the cultural zone of Expo 2023 Doha is an investment in this global event to introduce the audience to the local, regional, and global cultural aspects. He

President of MAPS International Rashmi Agarwal said that the upcoming global event offers a professional platform for artists from Qatar and around the world, adding that the 2023 edition witnesses the participation of 12 global galleries. **(QNA)**

## QRCS organises advanced regional humanitarian negotiation workshop

Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) opened an advanced regional workshop on 'Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation Management', co-organised by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Geneva-based Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN).

Announced open by Faisal Mohamed al-Emadi, acting secretary-general of QRCS; and Basma Tabaja, head of ICRC mission in Qatar; the ceremony was attended by Dr Mohamed Salah Ibrahim, director of Relief and International Development Division at QRCS; Yara Khawaja, Humanitarian Affairs Adviser at ICRC mission in Qatar; and humanitarian negotiation experts.

The four-day workshop is attended by representatives of Qatar's Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities, Qatar Fund for Development, Qatar Charity, the Saudi Red Crescent Authority, and Kuwait Red Crescent Society, as well as specialised personnel from QRCS' headquarters and representation office in Somalia.

In his opening speech, al-Emadi said: "This workshop represents our continued commitment to strengthening our humanitarian negotiation capacity and enhancing regional co-operation with colleagues from various National Societies, as well as local and international partners."

He added: "Negotiation is a key everyday life skill for individuals, organisations, and communities. We believe that developing this skill will help overcome many of obstacles facing us as humanitarian providers. The mechanisms of humanitarian negotiation and misinformation control will enable us to deliver humanitarian assistance more effectively and meet the needs of more vulnerable people."

Tabaja said: "Right now, our ICRC colleagues are



conducting frontline negotiations in Gaza and many other places. Negotiation is crucial, and we at ICRC have numerous examples of this from past experience. It is necessary for everyone to pay attention to this area and realise why and when it is important. Sometimes, negotiation takes place at a checkpoint, in a meeting room, or with armed people. You may be negotiating to release prisoners. Negotiation can last for several weeks, just to be announced briefly in the news. It can be successful or not, but failure can have serious outcomes, especially when you know that many lives depend on you."

The four-day workshop builds on the successful basic regional workshop on 'Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation Management', held October 3-5, 2022. It aims at enhancing the participants' humanitarian negotiation training, planning, management, and practice skills, through case studies, group discussions, simulation, and the standard tools of CCHN.

## QM participates in Qatar Sustainability Week 2023

Qatar Sustainability Week (QSW) 2023, held from November 4-11, witnessed a series of activities arranged by Qatar Museums (QM), aimed at raising awareness, inspiring change, and promoting sustainable practices.

These included a number of internal activities for staff, as well as two workshops that with engaged local schools. Activities for staff included a sustainability 'hackathon' that saw a number of QM employees brainstorm and develop innovative solutions to address local sustainability and environmental challenges.

Other activities for staff included a clean-up operation of QM's archaeological sites; the implementation of measures to encourage paperless office practices, advocating for digital documentation, e-signatures, and electronic communication; a bike commuting challenge with incentives and recognition offered for participants; and the introduction of several sustainability pledges, urging employees to take actions such as cutting down on single-use plastics.

For schools, QM opened its doors to students in Grades 5-8 in a lively session which encouraged them to create artworks highlighting envi-



ronmental issues and promoting sustainability. Another interactive workshop was held for students in Grades 9-12, aimed at promoting sustainability in daily life.

Engineer Dhabya Jamal Sayar, director of Facilities Management at QM, said: "Our sustainability initiatives are an integral part of our mission, and we are excited to have the opportunity to educate, inspire, and create lasting change in the pursuit of a more sustainable future."

QM has earned numerous international and regional accolades in recognition of its commitment to eco-initiatives and sustain-

able operations. This outstanding achievement includes three prestigious awards at the 2023 International Beautiful Buildings Green Apple Awards in the UK and the "Overall Winner" award, along with three awards in the Green Building category at the Gulf Sustainability Awards 2023.

QM's Museum of Islamic Art made history by becoming the first-ever carbon-neutral certified museum in the Middle East region. This remarkable accomplishment underscores QM's dedication to environmental responsibility and its leadership in promoting sustainable practices.

## Ashghal educational tour for students



The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) has organised an educational visit to the Doha North Water Treatment Plant for students from Oryx International College in co-operation with the Liverpool John Moores University-UK. The students toured several sections of the plant, learned about the daily operations and how to produce high-quality treated water that complies with international standards, which is reused for the irrigation of green areas and public places. The students also surveyed the green environment surrounding the station, where Ashghal had planted up to 95,000 trees over an area of 12sq km.

# Bright future for Qatari jewellery designers

By Joey Aguilar  
Staff Reporter

Renowned jewellery designer Nada bint Khamis al-Sulaiti is not only creating exquisite pieces but also fostering a vision for the future of Qatari designers. Citing the limitless possibilities that lie ahead for aspiring and emerging designers in the country, the Hairaat Jewellery founder stressed: "The future is very bright. Designers in Qatar have a great opportunity to shine. The world is waiting."

Featured in Qatar Tourism's latest initiative, "Voices of Qatar", al-Sulaiti serves as a shining example of success, spotlighting the valuable contributions of local talents to the nation's history, present, and future. In her Youtube video,

she underscored the significance of cultural roots. She encouraged designers to embrace their heritage, saying: "Embrace your culture, love your tradition, and create something that people will fall in love with."

As a first-generation jeweller, al-Sulaiti says she draws inspiration from her upbringing in the desert, near the sea, and believes in translating the hidden beauty of Qatar into wearable art. The transformation of these elements into modern jewellery that suits contemporary tastes has set Hairaat apart in the competitive industry.

She challenges the notion that creativity is solely connected to design, asserting that it is intrinsically linked to collaboration. Being part of the vibrant creative industry in Doha, she said she feels fortunate as it continuously pushes



Nada bint Khamis al-Sulaiti is featured in Qatar Tourism's latest initiative, "Voices of Qatar".

her to explore new horizons.

A proud product of the Young Qatari Designer initiative, she established her jewellery brand and became a regular exhibitor at the



Hairaat's Qatar-inspired designs.

annual Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition. Al-Sulaiti's journey from nurturing her passion since childhood to receiving international awards and establishing

Hairaat Jewellery has made her an epitome of success in the Qatari design scene.

One of her crowning achievements was the exhibition of the

Sakura Necklace in 2015, a commissioned piece that earned her two international awards: the 'Merit Award in International Jewellery Design Excellence' in Hong Kong in 2017 and the 'Golden Award from A' Design' in 2015.

Specialising in bespoke jewellery, al-Sulaiti attests that this exquisite piece was key in propelling her career to greater heights and opening doors to new opportunities.

She also expresses gratitude for the Young Qatari Designer initiative, underlining its role in supporting and promoting the work of Qatari jewellery designers. According to al-Sulaiti, the initiative serves as an important platform for emerging talents, providing them with the chance to showcase their collections alongside renowned luxury brands.





# QBRI refutes consanguinity as autism risk factor

A recent study conducted by Hamad Bin Khalifa University's (HBKU) Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI) has challenged existing beliefs about consanguinity, the practice of marrying within the family, and its association with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).



Despite previous studies suggesting a potential link, this new research, based on data from Qatar, indicates otherwise. Published in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, the study involved the collaboration of scientists and researchers from the Cleveland Medical Clinic, and Oregon Health and Science University. The research analysed information from a national registry and a population-based survey of autism. Dr Fouad Alshaban and his team at QBRI's Neurological Disorders Research Centre, examined 891 children, both with and without ASD. Contrary to previous studies, the analysis revealed no significant association between parental consanguinity and the risk of ASD. These findings provide a significant contribution to the global study of autism risk factors. While consanguinity remains a common cultural practice in the Middle East, North Africa and parts of Asia, the study's results challenge the assumption that it contributes to the prevalence of ASD in these regions. The research team utilised rigorous methods, including multiple logistic regression analyses and comprehensive clinical

assessments, ensuring the reliability and accuracy of their conclusions. The research, based on a substantial sample size and robust methodologies, contradicts previous claims about consanguinity as a risk factor for ASD. This discovery challenges the existing narrative and underscores the need for further research to understand the complex factors influencing ASD prevalence. QBRI's study is particularly significant for Gulf countries, where consanguineous unions are common. The lack of association suggests that consanguinity, while a cultural norm, does not contribute to the risk of ASD in the region. This insight is crucial for families, healthcare professionals and policymakers, providing them with evidence-based information to make informed decisions. The research team acknowledged the study's limitations, including missing data on certain variables. Despite these challenges, the study's comprehensive approach and large sample size make it a landmark contribution to the field of autism research. Dr Alshaban, principal investigator, QBRI, said: "This research not only challenges prevailing beliefs but also highlights the importance of evidence-based studies in shaping our understanding of complex medical conditions like ASD. As the scientific community continues to unravel the mysteries surrounding autism, studies like this one pave the way for more accurate diagnosis, effective interventions, and enhanced support systems for individuals and families affected by the condition. We're confident that our findings have sparked interest among scientists globally, prompting further exploration into the relationship between consanguinity and ASD in other populations."

## Amir condolences with Saudi King Salman

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 Saud bin Mohamed bin Fahd bin Mohamed al-Abdul Rahman al-Saud. (QNA)



## Qatar Charity constructs new school in Nepal

Qatar Charity (QC) has constructed and furnished a 388sq m building for the Shree Janata Secondary School in the Rampurkhap village under the Paroha municipality of Nepal. The building with nine classrooms was inaugurated by Meteb Saeed Al-Marri, general supervisor of QC's office in Nepal, and Shekh Wakil, mayor of the Paroha Municipality. QC also built toilets and handwashing facilities in the school premises and provided furniture such as desks, benches and whiteboards. Wakil thanked the benefactors of Qatar, QC and Rural Development Centre for supporting the construction of the school building. AlMarri expressed his delight with the assistance provided by the benefactors of Qatar to the people in Nepal. QC also distributed bags along with school supplies and sports items to



150 orphans in Kathmandu. The bags, in co-operation with Qatar Airways and in co-ordination with HEAL Nepal, included school supplies such as notebooks, pencils and colour pencils, in addition to other sports items.

## MoPH and partners mark World Diabetes Day

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in co-operation with Hamad Medical Corp (HMC) and Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) are joining hands in celebrating the World Diabetes Day 2023 under the theme, "Know your Risk, Know your Response" to emphasise the importance of screening to discover and manage risk factors to prevent the development of diabetes. Director, Non-Communicable Diseases Prevention Programmes at the Ministry of Public Health, Dr Sheikh Mohamed al-Thani has emphasised the profound impact of World Diabetes Day, celebrated on Novem-



ber 14. He said: "This global awareness initiative serves as a powerful platform uniting the healthcare sector and the public in a collective effort to shed light on the realities of diabetes. Within this initiative, the Ministry of Public Health, alongside affiliated healthcare organisations, assumes

a pivotal role. Together, we work tirelessly to not only raise awareness but also provide crucial support, advocate for impactful policies, and drive forward groundbreaking research. Our collective mission is to combat the diabetes epidemic and enhance public health for all. World Diabe-

tes Day is a reminder of the pivotal importance of diabetes prevention. Together, we stand strong in the face of adversity, striving for a healthier and brighter future." Co-Chairs of the National Diabetes Committee at the ministry, Prof Abdul Badi Abou Samra and Dr Kholoud al-Mutawaa, noted: "Diabetes is a chronic condition that may start 'silently' without symptoms but can progress to serious health complications if not prevented and managed early and properly. By understanding the risk factors and recognising early symptoms, individuals can take steps to prevent and manage diabetes effectively." They emphasised that Qatar's National Diabetes Committee has launched various health initiatives including the implementation of a pioneering national screening programme for diabetes and cardiovascular risk factors, delivered through primary care, and guidelines for a diabetes care model that integrates primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare systems in Qatar to addresses the need of the patients based on their disease status; this plays a crucial role for prevention and management of diabetes and its complications in the community. In addition, Senior Consultant, Family Physician and Executive Director of Operations at Primary Health Care Corp (PHCC) Dr Samya al-Abdulla said: "Primary care, in close collaboration with the National Diabetes Committee, has been at the forefront of implementing the National Diabetes Strategy action plan and new model of care, including the implementation and delivery of an Annual Health Check Service available in all health centres." On his part, Head of Endocrinology, Hamad Medical Corp (HMC) Dr Mahmoud Zirrie noted that "HMC endocrinologists and multi-disciplinary team members play an important role in the secondary and tertiary care of diabetes to prevent development of the devastating diabetes complications on the kidneys, the heart, eyes, and the nervous system. Screening for and management of associated comorbidities are essential for prevention of the long-term complications of diabetes." Endocrinologist and Head of Technology and Diabetes Unit, HMC, Dr Dabia al-Mohanadi, noted that novel technologies for monitoring blood glucose and delivery of insulin have become very useful for the management of diabetes particularly type 1 diabetes. The National Diabetes Center, HMC, has adopted the most advanced blood glucose monitoring and insulin delivery devices to support patients. (QNA)

## PM of Kurdistan Regional Government-Iraq meets Qatar's consul general in Erbil



Prime Minister of Kurdistan Regional Government-Iraq (KRG) Masrour Barzani met yesterday with Qatar's Consul General in Erbil, Hussein bin Ali Saleh al-Fadala. Co-operation between Qatar and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq were discussed during the meeting. (QNA)



### QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation

No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	SUP/C/OFS/6384/23 THIRD PARTY CARGO SURVEYOR FOR MEG OPERATIONS ON CALL OFF BASIS	12/11/2023 to 26/11/2023	0	0	11/12/2023

#### Scope of Work:

Contractor shall perform on call-off basis sampling, gauging, inspection, calculation and confirm MEG quantity available in the MEG ship by issue final inspection report about delivery or receipt of the MEG quantity. Contract duration will be for period of 7 years from October 2024 with an option to extend for 2 years.

**Bid Validity:** Bid should be valid for 180 calendar days from the Tender Closing Date.

#### Place for Tender Collection and Bid Submission:

ITT document for this tender will be available in QatarEnergy LNG website under Suppliers tab >Current Open Tenders. The bids shall be submitted through the QatarEnergy LNG online platform (SMART by GEP).

**Note:** Effective from 1st July 2023, bids received from Local Companies (established under the Laws of State of Qatar with local Commercial Registration) who are not in possession of an ICV score in the ICV portal by Bid Closing Date (or commercial bid submission date if separately mentioned/notified) will not be accepted. Local Company that have been established for less than 2 years and insurance companies are exempted from this requirement. For further details please visit ICV Digital Portal:- <https://icv.qa/US>

## A well-known F&B company in Qatar is hiring:

### 1. Procurement Manager - Job Types: Full-time

#### Responsibilities:

To manage and drive all procurement requirements, analyzing and developing strong strategy, to reach cost savings targets, and managing the supply chain to ensure best value for the company in line with its strategic, financial and operational requirements. Managing the assigned team to ensure compliance and high professional standards are maintained in line with the company policy and procedures.

#### Requirements:

##### Qualifications Essential

- Relevant College or University qualification - Bachelor's Degree or equivalent (Preferred)

##### Previous Experience Essential

- Minimum of 5-8 years relevant experience (Procurement management relevant experience)
- Procurement or related experience in Food and Beverages industry (Is must).
- Strong communication skills.
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite

#### Language:

- Fluent in English – Reading, Writing and Speaking. (Is must)
- Fluent in Arabic – Reading, Writing and Speaking. (Preferred)

**Competitive remuneration with Transportation and Housing allowances.**

### 2. Public Relations Officer (Mandoob) – Job Types: Full-time

#### Responsibilities:

- To provide quick, efficient, and reliable services for all Government related jobs. Adhering to the regular amendments in rules and regulations. Respond promptly to the demands of the Businesses and HR to assist them on all government-related services.

#### Requirements:

- Minimum of 3 years' experience in PRO role.
- Well knowledge of Qatar Labor Law.
- Excellent MS Office skills.
- Good time management and organizational skills
- Valid Driving License (Is must)

#### Language:

- Fluent in Arabic – Reading, Writing and Speaking. (Is must)
- Fluent in English – Reading, Writing and Speaking. (Preferred)

**Candidates must be available in QATAR and able to join immediately with complete NOC Documents**  
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*We wish them continued progress and success*





## Family staycation offer at Fairmont Doha

Fairmont Doha, “a beacon of elegance and luxury”, has announced a family staycation offer, with “an array of exclusive benefits and world-class facilities”.

With rates commencing at QR1,600, guests can bask in the luxurious Fairmont King Room, a statement said yesterday.

Beyond the provision of luxurious accommodations, the hotel presents special benefits designed to elevate family stays.

There is a special offer of a 50% discount on an additional room.

Highlights include complimentary breakfast at Vaya and complimentary movie screenings and freshly popped popcorn in the hotel’s private cinema in the evening.



Children under 12 can dine for free

The family staycation offer is extended until December 30, 2023.

Fairmont Doha also offers a flexible, no-cost cancellation policy, enabling changes to reservations up to 24 hours before the scheduled arrival.

For more information, call +974 4030 7200 or e-mail info.doha@fairmont.com

# NU-Q conference to look into security in the Global South

The Institute for Advanced Study in the Global South (#IAS\_NUQ) at Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) will unpack global power competition and its implications on the Global South at its 2023 conference, “The Global South in an Era of Great Power Competition”, on November 18-19, in collaboration with the Security in Context (SiC) network.

Funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York as part of the Arab Information and Media Studies (AIMS) project, with additional support from the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS) and Georgetown University in Qatar, the conference will examine the contours of the emerging world order in relationship to the politics of security and insecurity, militarism, and geopolitics.

Scholars from Qatar and around the world will look at the ways great power competition produces insecurity in the Global South, the interplay between the agendas of big powers and

the agency of Global South countries, and many other themes related to the security and insecurity of the Global South amid a changing world order and governance.

The conference is organised by Northwestern Qatar professor Sami Hermez, who serves as co-ordinator of the Qatar hub of the ACSS Critical Security Studies network, Security in Context Project director Omar Dahi, and Firat Demir, a professor from the University of Oklahoma.

“By leveraging the collective expertise of Qatar-based scholars and the SiC network, this conference will enable us to explore the evolving dynamics of great power competition within the Global South while advancing original research on one of the biggest issues in the world,” said Hermez, associate professor and director of the Liberal Arts Programme at the NU-Q.

In underscoring the importance of the conference, NU-Q dean and chief executive and #IAS\_NUQ founder Marwan M Kraidy said:

“In a rapidly evolving world, the Global South stands at the crossroads of great power competition.”

“From the unsettling shadows of militarism to the intricate web of geopolitics, this conference will seek to understand the roots of insecurity in the Global South while trying to answer some of the critical questions that define our global landscape,” he said.

The conference is part of the AIMS project at #IAS\_NUQ, which seeks to expand the field of critical media and information studies in the Arab region and transform it into an interdisciplinary, multilingual, collaborative, research-oriented, and policy-relevant field.

The SiC is a transnational organisation of scholars and policy researchers committed to building knowledge about the root causes of insecurity.

They aim to educate the public and policymakers about solutions that account for conditions of structural violence.

## JBL Tour One M2 wireless headphones launched in Qatar

Authorised distributor of JBL products in Qatar, Jumbo Electronics, has launched the Tour One M2 wireless premium over ear noise cancelling headphones, a statement said yesterday.

True adaptive noise cancelling (ANC) technology automatically uses four noise sensing mics to adjust the listener’s surroundings in real-time for a superior audio experience.

The ANC mode control can be adjusted with the JBL Headphones app.

The high-quality 4-mic technology features the “4-mic crystal call algorithm”, which enables better conversations even in loud or windy environments or to get help from preferred voice assistant.

The “VoiceAware” technology allows the user to decide how much of his or her voice the user hears by controlling the amount of mic input routed back into the headphones.

The headphones also have a “Smart Talk” technology for seamless chats.

The advanced voice recognition technology reacts to the user’s voice, pausing the music and enabling “talk thru”.

Owing to extensive global research and testing, the superior JBL sound curve delivers precise, accurate audio and less distortion at any frequency or volume.



The Tour One M2’s big 40mm drivers offer the ultimate sound performance, from rich, punchy bass to thrilling top notes.

Immersive JBL “Spatial Sound” provides the cinema sound experience and feel like being in a theatre, at a concert or in the studio with one’s favourite artist.

The headphones have “Personi-Fi 2.0”, a feature to match personal listening profile with

interactive customisation tools to provide the exact sound curve.

The headphone also has the customary hands-free voice control.

Just say “Hey Google” or “Alexa” to control the headphones with voice prompts in multiple languages.

Fast Pair enabled by Google and Microsoft swift pair Discover Bluetooth accessories near the device and then connect with a single tap.

The JBL Tour One M2 features the latest Bluetooth 5.3, for a more stable and secure connection.

“JBL headphones features versatile performance with a comfortable fit and well-built design,” said Jumbo Electronics director and chief executive C V Rappai.

“Loaded with features and latest technology, these are high-quality devices delivered to Qatar market at reasonable price,” he said. “Customers must protect themselves by buying genuine JBL products from the authorised distributor – Jumbo Electronics or our partners. Our extensive service network ensures complete customer satisfaction.”

Tour One M2 is available at all Jumbo electronics stores, e-commerce platform Jumbosouq.com, leading hypermarkets and electronic stores.

## Jumbo Electronics technicians top LG’s MEA skill test

Technicians from Jumbo Electronics, a prominent distributor and service provider for LG Electronics (LGE) products in Qatar for the past four decades, have achieved a remarkable milestone in the LGE Skill Level Evaluation programme of 2023.

Five of its technicians have achieved the prestigious Level 5 ranking, the highest accolade within LGE’s evaluation framework, a statement said yesterday.

Jumbo Electronics is the sole entity within the region to attain this significant achievement within the home electronics category.

The LGE Skill Evaluation test, which spans the MEA (Middle East and Africa) region, is assessed by LGE’s expert technical team.

In the year 2023, a total of 1,269 technicians participated in this

comprehensive evaluation programme, spanning various categories such as Repair, Installation, and ID B2B.

The evaluation process begins with a written examination, followed by the assessment of the highest-ranking individuals through a practical repair test.

Successful candidates then undergo one-on-one interviews with the LGE training team to further identify the best talents.

The technicians’ past service performance is considered to ensure a demonstrated commitment to customer satisfaction.

In recognition of their achievement, Level 5 technicians selected by the LGE technical team will participate in a year-long programme which aims to nurture their skills and provide opportunities for en-



hancing product quality, operational improvements, and meeting evolving customer expectations.

Jumbo Electronics director and chief executive C V Rappai said:

“The future belongs to those who acquire a best of the best skill set and combine them with creative approaches to exceed customer expectations at every interaction.”

## Five chefs from Zual Resort bag awards

Five members of the culinary team of Zual Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som have won at the Salon Culinare 2023 Awards as part of Hospitality Qatar, held on November 6-8.

The Zual Wellness Resort culinary team enjoyed exceptional success in the Signature Healthy Dish category, a statement said yesterday.

Chef Jindarat clinched a gold medal and trophy, chef Juni won a gold medal, and chef Bhupender snagged a bronze medal.

Chef Chandra won a silver medal in the Four Plates Desserts category, while chef Arindom bagged a gold medal and a trophy in the Finger Food Canapés category.

“We thank Hospitality Qatar for providing us with this remarkable opportunity,” Execu-

tive Wellness chef Mayssam Abdulkhalek said. “Special appreciation goes to our dedicated chefs for their passionate commitment to crafting healthy gastronomic delights, aligning seamlessly with our resort’s sustainability goals and wellness ethos.”

The menus of all five dining outlets at Zual Wellness Resort – Aizoon, Al Sidra, Acacia, Casuarina, and Malbu – feature purposeful ingredients which are anti-inflammatory, high in fibre, low in fat, contain antioxidants, promote heart health, support digestion, offer a source of high energy, and enhance satiety.

The culinary concept follows an ingredient-focused approach where each ingredient serves a purpose, is fresh, seasonal, locally sourced and organic in line with the ancient principles



of Traditional Arabic Islamic Medicine (TAIM) that Zual Wellness Resort is known for.

With a focus on sustainability, portion sizes at Zual Wellness Resort are half the size of a normal restaurant offering, yet guests are satisfied with the nutrient-dense flavourful food.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

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## Aspetar to host International Rehabilitation Conference - The Complete Guide to the Athletic ACL

The Aspetar Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Hospital is to host the Aspetar International Rehabilitation Conference - The Complete Guide to the Athletic ACL on November 18-19 at Khalifa Stadium.

The conference is the first of its kind in the world that is dedicated to the rehabilitation of cruciate ligament injuries in the knee, Aspetar said in a press statement yesterday.

The conference will bring together a distinguished group of lecturers from Aspetar and international experts from around the world to share their valuable experiences, with the participation of 400 from 50 countries, making this event an unparalleled opportunity for knowledge exchange and professional networking, the statement added.

The conference programme includes a series of sessions that fully cover the main factors of cruciate ligament injury rehabilitation, with each session covering specific topics such as testing, strength, endurance training, running and changing direction,

rehabilitation in the field, Recovery, sleep, and nutrition.

The conference provides valuable opportunities for attendees to gain in-depth knowledge in all aspects of cruciate ligament rehabilitation, from biomechanical analysis to sports development and sport-specific training.

The conference will also provide a comprehensive understanding of the latest developments and cutting-edge technologies in the field, enabling professionals to provide exceptional care to their patients.

Aspetar is a world-leading specialised orthopaedic and sports medicine hospital and the first of its kind in the Middle East region.

Since 2007, with a world expert team, the hospital has provided top-level comprehensive medical treatment to all athletes in a state-of-the-art facility that sets new standards internationally.

In 2009, Aspetar was accredited as a “FIFA Medical Centre of Excellence” by the FIFA Medical Assessment and Research Centre (F-MARC). – QNA

## QU Alumni Association organises joint meeting for Arab Toastmasters Clubs

The Qatar University (QU) Alumni Association organised a joint meeting for Arab clubs for the year 2023-2024 as part of the collaboration between Sector 116 of the Arab Clubs in Toastmasters International in Qatar and the Toastmasters chapter of the QU Alumni Association.

In a media statement that was issued on this occasion, head of Arab Clubs Affairs Fatima al-Zahiri said: “This meeting is part of the Arab Clubs Affairs plan aimed at gathering experiences and exchanging knowledge under one roof for the benefit of all.”

She emphasised that the meeting provided guests from outside Toastmasters the opportunity to experience public speaking and practical communication, contributing to enhancing their skills and directing their impact through their words.

President of the Toastmasters chapter of the QU Alumni Association, Lubaba Youssef, said: “The Toastmasters chapter of the QU Alumni Association is keen on collaboration with various entities to achieve common goals, including collaboration with Arab Toastmasters Clubs in Qatar in this joint meeting, whether through logistical support or participant gifts.”

She emphasised the importance of seizing such opportunities and the active participation of multiple chapter members in various leadership roles at the event, allowing them to develop their skills further.

The Toastmasters chapter of the QU Alumni Association is the largest Arab club in Toastmasters International in Sector 116.

The club comprises active and inspiring members totalling more than 40 Qatar University graduates. – QNA

## 38 countries nominated for Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation

The Board of Trustees of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding has announced that the Steering Committee of the Award has completed the preliminary screening process for nominations, which were submitted for the award in its ninth season for 2023.

This year’s award entries represent individuals and translation institutions from 38 countries around the world.

The 9th edition of the award has adopted the Spanish language as a main language, after English, while Bulgarian, Sindhi, and Somali were chosen as sub-languages.

This aims to stimulate translation efforts to and from Arabic in countries that speak these languages, encouraging continued cultural exchange between these nations and Arab communities.

The award’s spokesperson Hanan al-Payyad said that several countries were nominated for the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding, with Egypt ranking first among Arab countries with 58 nominations, followed by Saudi Arabia with 29 nominations, and Qatar with 13 nominations.

Among non-Arab countries,

Spain topped the list with 29 nominations, followed by Pakistan with 12 nominations, and the United Kingdom with 10 nominations, she added.

The nominated works include those in various fields of human sciences, such as literature, Islamic studies, philosophy, social sciences, political sciences and history.

The announcement of the winners in the various categories of the award is scheduled to take place during an official ceremony on December 12 in Doha.

Founded in 2015, the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding is the largest translation award globally for translations to and from the Arabic language with a total value of \$2,000,000.

It seeks to honour outstanding individuals and institutions in the field of translation, recognising achievements and long-term efforts in the translation domain.

The Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding acknowledges the role of contributors in strengthening the bonds of friendship and co-operation amongst the peoples of the world, building bridges between nations, and spreading the values of diversity, pluralism and openness. – QNA

## Qatar University’s Gulf Studies Centre gears up for international conference

In collaboration with the Doha International Family Institute (Difi), Qatar University (QU)’s Gulf Studies Centre in the College of Arts and Sciences is set to host the international conference on *Gulf Families: Continuity and Change*.

Scheduled on November 19-20, the event aims to delve into the intricate dynamics of Gulf families, exploring their continuity and changes within the context of the evolving Gulf society, a statement said yesterday.

The conference will cover eight pivotal themes, addressing crucial topics such as the impact of social media, the dynamics of gender, youth, health, issues of divorce and marriage, arts and sports, the nexus between migration and family, and family policies in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries.

The event also aims to serve as a platform for scholars and experts in Gulf Studies to exchange views, insights, and analyses on these complex issues.



# Intricacies of Diabetes and its management in adult

Diabetes Mellitus(DM) is the most common metabolic disorder resulting from an impaired carbohydrate metabolism leading to high blood sugar level. In the last 10 years, the disease is showing a high global prevalence. About 90% of them are Type 2 DM. Uncontrolled diabetes can cause heart disease , kidney damage , nerve damage, visual defects ,erectile dysfunction and frequent skin infections.



Authored by – DR. GIREESH KUMAR  
Specialist - Internal Medicine  
MBBS, MD (General Medicine)  
Aster Hospital , Old Airport Road

According to International Diabetes Federation 53.7 crore people are suffering from Diabetes mellitus worldwide. That is 1 in 10 adult population is suffering from this disease. It is estimated that about 1 in 2 adults, that is 44% of world population remains undiagnosed.

An early detection and initiation of effective life style modifications can prevent the development of diabetes and many of its complications at its root level. Recent studies have proven the possibility of reversal of type 2 diabetes at its early stages.

### Who should be screened?

- Adults with overweight or obesity (BMI >25 kg/m2 or >23 kg/m2 in Asian Americans), whose first degree relatives suffer from Type 2 DM
- History of cardiovascular disease
- High risk race/ethnic people like African-Americans, Latinos, American natives, Asian Americans and Pacific islanders
- Individual with high blood pressure (> 140/90 mmHg) or those who are on Blood Pressure lowering medication.
- Polycystic disease
- Physically inactive persons
- Features of insulin resistance

- Prediabetes
- Previous history of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus
- Individuals with age more than 35 years also should be screened

Hence regular evaluation and follow up is highly recommended in these group of population.

### Healthy life styles can prevent the onset of the disease and its complications

A healthy lifestyle can prevent and control many non-communicable diseases, which require health education, nutritional support , regular exercise , optimal weight management, positive behavioral attitudes , good sleep hygiene , stress relieving techniques and mental health care.



### Life style modification and weight management programmes

#### Nutritional supports

Medical Nutritional Therapy play an integral role in the management of Diabetes. Diabetic and prediabetic patients should have an awareness of food with high glycemic index. The nutritional support should be tailored or individualized according to the patients condition ,choices, his or her cultural preferences. Low carbohydrate, low fat ,high protein foods are preferable for a better glycemic control. In the absence of any underlying deficiencies, multivitamins and micronutrients have no role in the management of diabetes.

#### Regular Exercise

Regular exercise can be started in graded manner and to target a minimum 30-45 minutes per day or 150 minutes in a week. Those who are having high cardiac risk and complications can individualize their physical exercise plan after consulting their healthcare provider.

#### Weight Reduction

Those who are having Prediabetes, Type 1 or Type 2 Diabetes with excessive body weight require intensive weight reduction plans. Multiple studies and trials have

shown a reduction of minimum 5 % of body weight results in a better glycemic control , improvement in blood pressure and lipid levels . 7-10% weight reduction delays the development of Type 2 DM in prediabetic and those who are at high risk of developing Diabetes.

### Positive Health Attitudes

A positive attitude to improve the heath condition helps in early metabolic control, minimizes the development of complications, prolongs maintenance of glycemic control. Regular self monitoring of blood sugars and other metabolic parameters, motivational attitude from caregivers and family members, usage of diabetes technologies via digital health tools are equally important for optimal health outcomes.

### Sleep Hygiene

Various studies have proven that sleep has an important role in insulin sensitivity and glycemic control especially fasting blood glucose. Sleep disorders such as insomnia, obstructive sleep apnea and sleep disturbances are common among patients with uncontrolled diabetes.

### Stress Relieving and Mental health

Diabetic distress, anxiety, depression and other mental illness can adversely affect the diabetic management. Diabetic distress is very unique in patient ,when they are unable to meet the target glycemic parameters and when there is a new development of diabetic complications. Constant monitoring and trained specialist care are required for managing such situations. Various measures like motivational talks, group activities, physical activities like Yoga, tai chi have important role in maintaining a good mental health.

### Take Home Messages

- Early detection of diabetes and its complications
- Early adaptation to healthy lifestyle including diet, exercise, sleep and good mental health.
- Weight management
- Good glycemic and lipid control
- Maintaining blood pressure below 130/80mm Hg
- Regular monitoring and follow-up of blood sugar levels and other parameters



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# OIC, GCC condemn bombing of Qatar committee HQ in Gaza

The Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), GCC countries and Jordan have strongly condemned the Israeli occupation's bombing of Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza.

The OIC considers this act as part of Israel's ongoing military aggression which targets Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip, including hospitals, schools, universities, places of worship, and residential buildings, in a blatant violation of international humanitarian law.

The organisation renewed its call on the international community to intervene and force Israel, the occupying power, to comply with international humanitarian law and the relevant UN resolutions, the most recent of which was issued by the UN General Assembly 10th emergency special session on Oct 26, titled "Protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations", which calls for the protection of civilians, civilian facilities, humanitarian

and medical workers, and humanitarian facilities and assets, in addition to providing the Gaza Strip with an immediate, safe, sustainable, and unimpeded access to humanitarian aid.

GCC Secretary-General Jasem Mohamed al-Budaiwi condemned the bombing, stressing that it is further evidence of the brutality and recklessness of the occupation forces and their continued violation of international treaties, laws and norms.

Al-Budaiwi said in a statement yesterday that the Israeli occupation, by targeting the Qatar committee's headquarters along with schools and hospitals among other population centres, confirms its lack of interest in protecting the lives of innocent civilians, and its direct targeting of them.

He praised the clear role of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza and its significant contributions to reconstruction operations in the Gaza Strip, and that targeting it demonstrates the inten-

tion of the occupation forces to destroy the infrastructure of the Gaza Strip and the institutions that support it.

The GCC secretary-general stressed the need for the international community, with all its countries and institutions, to intervene directly to end the crisis, establish an immediate ceasefire, and urgently open safe corridors for relief and humanitarian aid to enter the Gaza Strip.

He stressed that the GCC countries stand with the Palestinian people to restore their legitimate rights to establish their state on the 1967 lands, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned in strongest terms the blatant targeting of the headquarters of the Qatar committee, considering it an extension of a series of Israeli violations of all international laws and norms.

In a statement yesterday, the ministry expressed Saudi Arabia's solidarity and stand with Qatar against this blatant at-

tack, reiterating its demand for the international community to assume its responsibility and put an immediate end to the violations committed by the Israeli occupation authorities, and hold them accountable in accordance with international humanitarian law for the crimes they committed against civilians, hospitals, and vital installations in the besieged Gaza Strip.

Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the bombing as a new violation committed within a series of heinous crimes targeting Palestinian civilians and civilian facilities.

The ministry affirmed its support for all efforts that lead to the Palestinian people restoring their legitimate rights by all means in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Oman expressed its condemnation of the targeting of the Qatar committee headquarters, expressing its solidarity with Qatar.

The Omani Foreign Ministry said this attack is a new and blatant violation of international law and a continuation of the brutal Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people and its blatant disregard for human feelings and international humanitarian law.

Jordan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs condemned Israel's continued violations of international law, its crimes against civilians, and its repeated attacks on hospitals and civilian objects, the latest of which was the bombing of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, considering it a heinous war crime that Israel adds to its criminal record.

The ministry's spokesperson Sufyan Qudah emphasised that Jordan strongly rejects and condemns the act, adding that it goes against international humanitarian law, international law, and all moral and human values, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention. (QNA)

# UN warns fuel shortage to halt Gaza aid work in '48 hours'

AFP  
Gaza Strip

Hundreds of people stranded in Gaza's biggest hospital were enduring "inhuman" conditions yesterday while heavy fighting raged around them, a doctor said as the Hamas-run health ministry reported a rising patient death toll.

Israel argues Hamas fighters built their military headquarters under the Al-Shifa hospital complex — a charge Hamas denies — while UN agencies and doctors in the facility warned a lack of generator fuel was claiming lives, including infants.

Witnesses reported intense air strikes, with tanks and armoured vehicles just metres from the gate of the sprawling Al-Shifa compound at the heart of Gaza City, now an urban war zone.

"The situation is very bad, it is inhuman," a surgeon with Doctors Without Borders (MSF), the medical charity group, wrote on social media.

"We don't have electricity. There's no water in the hospital," added the doctor, who was not named.

The Hamas government's deputy health minister Youssef Abu Rish said the death toll inside Al-Shifa rose to 27 adult intensive care patients and seven babies since the weekend as the facility suffered fuel shortages.

Gaza has been reliant on generators for more than a month after Israel cut off power supplies following the October first week storming and the besieged territory's only power plant ran out of fuel.

A lack of fuel was also hitting the UN agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA. The group's Gaza chief Thomas White said operations "will grind to a halt in the next 48 hours as no fuel is allowed to enter" the territory.

The World Health Organisation in the Palestinian territories said early yesterday that at least 2,300 people — patients, health workers and people fleeing fighting — were



A Palestinian youth holds his younger brother as they stand amid debris of a destroyed building in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

inside the crippled Al-Shifa facility.

The Israeli army pushed on with their campaign, determined to destroy the Hamas movement.

Israel said 44 of its troops have been killed in its Gaza ground operation.

**ISRAEL FACES PRESSURE OVER CIVILIAN SUFFERING**

But Israel is facing intense international pressure to minimise civilian suffering amid its massive air and ground operations that Hamas authorities say have killed 11,180 people, including 4,609 children.

Israel's top diplomat, as quoted by his spokesman, said the nation has "two or three weeks until international pressure really steps up." Foreign Minister Eli Cohen added that Israel is working to "broaden the window of legitimacy, and the fighting will carry on for as long as necessary.

**FEAR OF REGIONAL CONFLICT**

The Israel Defence Forces yesterday reported more heavy fight-

ing and again stressed its claim that Hamas was hiding in civilian infrastructure. Teams of Israeli troops ran between jagged ruins in Gaza while air strikes shown on grainy military-released video shattered buildings.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said Hamas must first release the hostages before any ceasefire would be considered, but he told US media on Sunday that "there could be" a potential deal. Israelis are stunned by the October first week storming. The war in Gaza has also spurred concerns of a wider regional conflict.

At least eight pro-Iran fighters were killed in US strikes on eastern Syria, a war monitor said, in response to attacks on American forces.

It was the third time in less than three weeks that the US military has targeted locations in Syria, amid a spike in attacks on American forces in the Middle East linked to the Israel-Hamas war.

International attention has fo-

cused on the plight of Palestinians, and protests have been held worldwide in solidarity with the 2.4mn under bombardment and near-total siege for more than five weeks. About 980 trucks carrying humanitarian aid have been let into Gaza since October 21, according to the UN humanitarian agency.

Before the war, 500 trucks entered every day, it said.

Palestinian prime minister Mohamed Shtayyeh called on the European Union and the UN to "parachute aid" into Gaza.

Fuel is a crucial need, especially for hospital generators, but Israel has been concerned that any fuel deliveries could be diverted to Hamas fighters.

Palestinians in Gaza's south have been forced to adapt to the lack of basic resources.

"People are using now (traditional) ovens in order to cook. What else can they do?" said a woman, who asked not to be named, making the ovens in southern Khan Yunis.



A Palestinian woman and children react after Israeli strikes, at a hospital in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.



A Palestinian man holding a child flees north Gaza as they move southward, as Israeli tanks roll deeper into the enclave, amid the ongoing conflict, in the central Gaza Strip.

Almost 1.6mn people — about two-thirds of Gaza's population — have been internally displaced since October 7, according to UNRWA. Some people were being allowed to leave the besieged territory via the Egypt-controlled Rafah crossing and yesterday more than 550 foreigners passport holders and nine wounded Palestinians wounded and companions crossed.

Israel's military said it would observe a "self-evacuation corridor" yesterday, allowing people to move from Al-Shifa southward, but admitted the area was still the

scene of "intense battles".

The area of fighting "currently includes the area surrounding the Al-Shifa hospital but not the hospital itself", an IDF spokesperson said.

The Israeli army also said its ground soldiers had hand-delivered 300 litres (80 gallons) of fuel near the hospital "for urgent medical purposes".

Al-Shifa director Abu Salmiya said he told Israeli authorities he needed far more — at least 8,000 litres to run the main generators and "save hundreds of patients and wounded, but they refused".

## Norway urges Israel to release full Palestinian tax transfer

Reuters  
Oslo

Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre urged Israel yesterday to release the full tax transfer it is withholding from the Palestinian Authority (PA), saying the payment was "critical" for the welfare of the Palestinian population.

Norway is the chair of the international donor group to the Palestinian territories, known as the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee. It was a facilitator in the 1992-93 talks between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation that led to the Oslo Accords providing for limited Palestinian self-rule.

On Nov 2, Israel said it would proceed with a tax revenue transfer to the PA in the Israeli-occupied West Bank but would withhold funds bound for Hamas-ruled Gaza, where the PA helps cover public sector wages and pay for electricity. Israel's decision came after an internal cabinet debate over whether to make the transfer as Israel battles Hamas fighters that rule the Gaza Strip.

On Nov 6, the PA said it would

not accept a partial transfer from Israel. It is estimated to spend some 30% of its budget in Gaza, where it also pays for medicine and social assistance programmes.

"We call on Israel to maintain the agreed transfer of what is Palestinian value creation, because these are taxes and VAT and financial sources (of income)," Støre told Reuters in an interview in Oslo.

The tax transfer helped deliver essential services in Gaza and in the West Bank, he said, so withholding it was "directly affecting the welfare and health of the Palestinian population".

"Norway has been very clear that any development towards (the) breakdown of the PA will only serve other forces on the Palestinian side," he added.

Støre did not say how much the withholding of money was worth but said it was "a substantial amount".

The Western-backed PA exercises limited self-rule in the West Bank but does not administer Gaza, where Hamas holds control since 2007. The PA still has thousands of Gaza civil servants on its payroll.

Reuters  
Gaza

The tiny babies lie side by side, some wrapped in green fabric roughly taped around them for warmth, others wearing only nappies, a picture of vulnerability, their lives in grave danger with every minute that passes.

The newborns are under the care of exhausted medics at Gaza's Al-Shifa hospital, which is besieged by Israeli tanks battling Hamas fighters, and lacks electricity, water, food, medicines and equipment.

"Yesterday I had 39 babies and today they have become 36," said Dr Mohamed Tabasha, head of the paediatric department at Al-Shifa, in a telephone interview yesterday.

"I cannot say how long they can last. I can lose another two babies today, or in an hour," he said.

The premature babies, who weigh less than 1.5kg (3.3 pounds) each and in some cases only 700 or 800 grammes, should be in incubators where the temperature



Screen grab from a handout video shows newborns placed in bed after being taken off incubators in Gaza's Al-Shifa hospital after power outage, amid the ongoing conflict, in Gaza City.

and humidity can be regulated according to their individual needs.

Instead, they had to be moved to ordinary beds over the weekend because of a shortage of electricity, said Tabasha. They were placed side by side, surrounded by packets of nappies, cardboard boxes of sterile gauze and plastic bags.

"I never expected in my life that I would put 39 babies side by side on a bed, each with a different disease, and in this acute

shortage of medical staff, of milk," said Tabasha.

The infants are too cold, and the temperature is not stable because of power cuts, he said. In the absence of infection control measures, they are transmitting viruses to each other and they have no immunity.

He said there was no longer any way of sterilising their milk and bottle teats to the required standard. As a result, some had contracted gastritis and were suffering from diarrhoea and

vomiting, which meant an acute risk of dehydration.

**DEADLY CONDITIONS**

Dr Ahmed El Mokhallalati, also involved in caring for the babies, described the conditions as deadly.

"They are in a very bad situation where you slowly kill them unless someone interferes to adjust or to improve their situation," he said, also by telephone from Al-Shifa.

"These are very critical kinds of cases, where you have to be very sensitive in dealing with them. You have to take care of each of them in a very special way. Currently they are all in open space, they are all with each other," he said.

Tabasha listed everything he would need to keep the babies safe: electricity to run the incubators, a proper steriliser for the milk and bottle teats, medicines, and support machines in case any of them went into respiratory failure.

He said the situation was harrowing for the doctors and the four nurses in charge of the babies. "We are exhausted emotionally and physically," he said.



POLITICS

US moves to break political impasse in Bangladesh

The US ambassador to Bangladesh has sought meetings with leaders of the country's three major parties, the embassy said yesterday, as Washington seeks to break a political impasse ahead of elections. Dhaka is set to hold a general election in January, but the main opposition, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), and its allies have said they will boycott the vote unless Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina quits power and lets a neutral government oversee the polls. The US embassy said ambassador Peter Haas "has requested meetings with officials in all three major political parties", as violence gripped the country with the opposition enforcing two weeks of strikes.

TRAGEDY

Five people killed in London house fire

Five people, including three children and all thought to be members of the same family, were killed in a house fire in west London, police and the fire service said yesterday. There was no immediate indication what caused the fire at the mid-terraced property in Hounslow near Heathrow airport and a neighbour dismissed suggestions that Diwali fireworks were to blame. Fire crews and police were called to the property at about 10.30pm (2230GMT) on Sunday. The bodies of the five victims were discovered inside. A sixth person left the house before the emergency services arrived and a seventh is unaccounted for.

APPEAL

Japan urges China to release national jailed on spy charges

Japan has urged China to release one of its nationals who was sentenced to 12 years in prison on espionage charges, Tokyo's top government spokesman said yesterday. "We are aware that on November 3, the verdict of 12 years in prison to a Japanese man in his 50s, who had been detained in July 2019, was finalised, as his appeal was turned down" at the high court in China's Hunan province, Hirokazu Matsuno said. "The Japanese government will continue offering every support we can from the viewpoint of protecting Japanese citizens," he added. When asked about the case, China's foreign ministry declined to provide further details.

DECISION

Nepal to ban TikTok as it 'disturbs social harmony'

Nepal said it will ban TikTok, citing the app's negative effects on the country's social harmony. The popular video-sharing platform, has faced restrictions in many countries for allegedly breaking data rules and for its potential harmful impact on youth. "The decision to ban was made today, and relevant authorities are currently addressing the technical issues," Minister for Communications and Information Technology Rekha Sharma said. Sharma said the decision was made because TikTok was consistently used to share content that "disturbs social harmony and disrupts family structures and social relations".

Picturesque Kashmir



A man walks amid maple trees at Nishat Garden in Srinagar, Kashmir, yesterday.

Indian rescuers battle to save 40 workers trapped in tunnel

AFP  
Dehradun, India

Rescuers in northern India battled for a second day yesterday to save 40 workers trapped underground after the road tunnel they were building collapsed, bringing down tonnes of debris. Teams using heavy excavators have been working nonstop since the collapse early Sunday morning to clear piles of concrete and earth, but with more debris falling as workers tried to clear a passage, a giant steel pipe was being prepared as an escape route. "All the 40 workers trapped

inside the tunnel are safe," Karamveer Singh Bhandari, a senior commander in the National Disaster Response Force, said from the site in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand, adding that water and food had been sent. Oxygen was being pumped into the blocked portion of the tunnel, with food sent through a water pipe. Rathodi said excavators had removed about 65 feet of heavy debris, but the men were 40 metres beyond that point. "Due to excess debris in the tunnel, we are facing some difficulty in the rescue, but our team is leaving no stone unturned," Bhandari added. Teams plan to use a heavy ma-

chine to drive a steel pipe with a width of 90 centimetres, wide enough for the trapped men to squeeze through, the government's highway and infrastructure company said. "Water, food, oxygen, electricity all are available with the work force trapped inside the tunnel... All the stranded workers are safe as communicated by them," the statement added. Initial contact was made via a note on a scrap of paper, but later rescuers managed to connect using radio handsets. "Some small food packets were sent in through a pipe which is also taking oxygen inside," rescue official Durgesh Rathodi said from the site.

Sunak brings back Cameron, sacks interior minister in new Cabinet reset

Reuters  
London

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak brought back former leader David Cameron as foreign minister yesterday in a reshuffle triggered by his firing of interior minister Suella Braverman after her criticism of police threatened his authority. It was the latest reset for a prime minister whose party is badly lagging the Labour Party before an election expected next year. The return of Cameron suggested Sunak wanted to bring in a more centrist, experienced hand rather than appease the populist right of his party which supported Braverman. It also reawakens divisive debate over Brexit: Cameron held the referendum on European Union membership in 2016 and was hated by many on the right of the party after he campaigned to remain. He quit hours after Britain voted to leave. The ministerial reshuffle followed growing criticism of Braverman from opposition lawmakers and members of the governing Conservative Party, enabling Sunak to bring in allies and remove ministers he felt were not performing. While Braverman's removal was

not a surprise, it was the appointment of Cameron which caused shock in the party, welcomed by more centrist lawmakers but loathed by some on the right who described it as the ultimate "Brexit surrender". Cameron said he was glad to take on his new role at a time of global change: "It has rarely been more important for this country to stand by our allies, strengthen our partnerships and make sure our voice is heard". "Though I may have disagreed with some individual decisions, it is clear to me that Sunak is a strong and capable prime minister, who is showing exemplary leadership at a difficult time," he wrote on X, formerly Twitter. Cameron has been out of politics since 2016 and will be able to return to government via an appointment to the House of Lords upper house of parliament. Lawmakers in the centrist wing of the party said Cameron's appointment would bring international experience, and send a wider message to the country. "It's a sign to the Tory blue wall and moderate voters, we aren't heading to the right," one Conservative lawmaker said, using a phrase that is used to describe traditional Conservative-supporting areas in the south of England. Some lawmakers had feared

that Braverman was determined to remake the Conservatives as the "nasty party" with her headline focus on immigration and social issues, a moniker former prime minister Theresa May used in 2002 to try to persuade the party to shed its reputation of being uncaring. But Cameron's return compounded the anger felt by some on the right after her sacking. They backed her stance on protests and predicted she would remain a vocal force. Some Brexit supporters also said Cameron's role in the Brexit vote meant the so-called "remain" wing of the party had taken over. James Cleverly, previously foreign minister, was appointed to replace Braverman. He is seen as a safe pair of hands and said his new role was "to keep people in this country safe". His first challenge will come tomorrow when the Supreme Court rules on whether asylum seekers can be deported to Rwanda. A defeat in the key policy would lead some lawmakers to amplify calls for Britain to quit the European Convention on Human Rights. With Braverman sidelined, her attentions might focus on preparing for a possible future race for leader of the party if, as opinions polls suggest, the Conservatives lose the election expected next year.

Critically ill UK girl dies following court battle

A terminally-ill British girl at the centre of a legal battle over her treatment died yesterday, less than 24 hours after specialists withdrew life support, her parents announced. Indi Gregory passed away in the early hours of yesterday after the eight-month-old's parents lost a bid to transfer her to Italy for treatment, despite the government in Rome awarding her citizenship. Her emotive case became the latest in Britain to pit parents against the country's legal and healthcare systems. Indi was diagnosed with mitochondrial disease, a genetic condition that prevents cells in the body producing energy. There is no cure for mitochondrial disease and her parents - Claire Staniforth and Dean Gregory - had wanted her to be treated at the Vatican-owned Bambino Gesù hospital. But Britain's National Health Service and multiple UK courts ruled against transferring her, arguing it was not in the eight-month-old's best interests.

Critically endangered elephant born



A newborn male Sumatran elephant stands next to an adult elephant at the Way Kambas National Park in western Indonesia. The birth gives renewed hope to conservation efforts. Weighing about 108kg, the yet-to-be-named male calf was in good health and his mother was being monitored.

Australia to apologise for 'Thalidomide tragedy'

Reuters  
Sydney

Australia will issue a national apology to all citizens affected by the "Thalidomide tragedy", Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said yesterday, more than half a century after babies were born with birth defects when mothers took the morning sickness pill. Thalidomide was the active ingredient in a sedative widely distributed to many mothers in Australia and around the world in the early 1960s. It was found to cause malformation of limbs, facial features and internal organs in unborn children. "The thalidomide tragedy is a dark chapter in the history of our nation and the world," Albanese said in a statement. "The survivors, their families, friends and carers have advocated for this

apology with courage and conviction for many years. This moment is a long overdue national acknowledgement of all they have endured and all they have fought for." The thalidomide scandal triggered a worldwide overhaul of drug-testing regimes and boosted the reputation of the US Food and Drug Administration, which proved a lone voice in refusing to approve the drug. Thalidomide, developed by the German firm Gruenenthal, killed an estimated 80,000 children around the world before they were born, and 20,000 more were born with defects. An Australian woman, who was born without arms and legs after her mother took Thalidomide, in 2012 won a multi-million dollar settlement from Diageo Plc, the local distributor. In 2010, Diageo agreed to make an A\$50mn (\$32mn) payment to 45 victims in Australia and New Zealand.

Jailed Philippine rights campaigner de Lima granted bail

AFP  
Manila

Philippine human rights campaigner Leila de Lima was "triumphant" yesterday when a judge granted her bail, putting her a step closer to freedom after nearly seven years behind bars. De Lima, one of the most outspoken critics of former president Rodrigo Duterte and his deadly anti-drug war, was jailed on narcotics-related charges she says were fabricated to silence her. The former senator, justice minister and human rights commissioner waved to supporters as she exited

the Manila court, surrounded by police officers and journalists. "This is a moment of triumphant joy and also thanksgiving," de Lima said before being taken back to prison briefly ahead of her release. "I've been praying so hard for this day to come. It's very painful to be jailed despite being innocent." De Lima, 64, is accused of taking money from inmates inside the largest prison in the Philippines to allow them to sell drugs while she was justice minister from 2010 to 2015. Multiple witnesses, including prison gang bosses, died or recanted their testimonies, resulting in the dismissal of two of the three charges against de Lima.

She still faces life in prison if convicted on the remaining charge. In a decision dated November 10, judge Gener Gito allowed de Lima and her four surviving co-accused to post bail of 300,000 pesos (\$5,350) each. Hours after the bail announcement, de Lima left the national police headquarters where she had been held in a compound for high-profile detainees, rather than one of the country's overcrowded prisons. "Precious freedom, free at last," she shouted to reporters as she was driven away. Since President Ferdinand Marcos came into office in June 2022 there have been renewed calls from human rights groups, foreign diplomats and politicians for

de Lima's release. Justice Secretary Crispin Remulla said the court's ruling showed "democracy is alive and well in our country". Rights groups and foreign diplomats welcomed the bail decision. "She never should have been unjustly prosecuted and detained by former president Rodrigo Duterte," Human Rights Watch deputy Asia director Bryony Lau said. Lau said Duterte's administration "concocted evidence and used the machinery of an abusive state to punish her for performing her duties as a senator and speaking out against the 'war on drugs'". Amnesty International called for the last remaining drug charge to be

"dismissed expeditiously" and those behind her detention to "be brought to justice". US ambassador to Manila MaryKay Carlson said: "We continue to follow her case closely and look forward to seeing the remaining charges against her resolved in accordance with Philippine law." But Salvador Panelo, who was chief legal counsel for Duterte when he was president, insisted there was "strong evidence" that de Lima was guilty. "The government can appeal the erroneous grant of bail by the lower court to the higher courts," Panelo said. Before her arrest on February 24, 2017, de Lima had spent a decade investigating "death

squad" killings allegedly orchestrated by Duterte during his time as Davao City mayor and in the early days of his presidency. She conducted the probes while serving as the nation's human rights commissioner, and then from 2010 to 2015 as justice minister in the Aquino administration that preceded Duterte's rule. De Lima became one of the few opposition voices after winning a senate seat in the 2016 elections that also swept populist Duterte to power. Duterte then accused her of running a drug trafficking ring with criminals when she was justice secretary, forcing her from the senate and into jail.



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GULF TIMES

A new approach to international tax co-operation

As one of the world's most unequal regions, Latin America is desperately in need of additional revenues if it is to solve its knotty economic, social, and environmental problems. But tax collection in Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries is low, averaging 21.7% of GDP in 2021, compared to 34.1% for OECD members. What accounts for this gap, and what should be done to close it?

Regionally, the overall lack of progressive taxation certainly plays a role. But the international tax architecture is also to blame. All too often, multinational corporations and the wealthiest in our societies can exploit the rules to avoid paying. The unfairness baked into the current system not only reflects and reproduces inequalities, but also fuels demagogic discourse and undermines faith in the rule of law.

Many of the rules that form the basis of the international tax system were drawn up a century ago by wealthy countries. No surprise, then, that these countries – and their richest citizens – benefit the most from the current framework. That is why the African Group at the United Nations tabled a resolution in October calling for a new round of negotiations on international tax co-operation.

This process could create more equitable rules that reflect the interests of developing economies. Ensuring fairness is important, to be sure, but so is giving governments a realistic chance of generating sufficient revenue to fund sustainable development, climate action, and infrastructure investment, as well as to tackle social inequality and sovereign-debt crises.

LAC countries should welcome the UN's involvement in shaping global tax policy. For starters, the drawn-out negotiations under the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) have been disappointing for many in the Global South, who blame the initiative's lack of inclusivity and flawed decision-making process. Few believe that the resulting agreement to reform international corporate taxation, even if implemented, will deliver meaningful and sustainable revenues for the developing world.

Inclusiveness is a prerequisite for successful implementation of a progressive and efficient tax system

UN-led negotiations would allow LAC countries to advocate their shared interests. Despite facing common challenges when it comes to cross-border taxation, especially regarding digital businesses, we have not come together to devise common solutions, whether at home or in global discussions. That must change.

As part of this new approach, policymakers must build on and go beyond the reallocation of taxing rights provided for in the OECD agreement. The current design, lacking a comprehensive and effective strategy for taxing mega-corporations operating in digital markets, must be reformed to ensure a more equitable redistribution of these rights.

More crucially still, even if enough BEPS members sign the multilateral treaty, securing the two-thirds Senate majority required for ratification in the United States is highly unlikely. Given that many of the world's largest tech firms are headquartered in the US, the deal would end up being written in water, and the global digital economy would remain under-taxed.

In the short term, developing countries should implement unilateral measures, rather than wait for others to decide on their behalf. This could mean introducing digital-services levies or taxation based on the principle of significant economic presence. While not a comprehensive reform, such measures (which Colombia recently enacted during my tenure as finance minister) ensure that multinationals start paying their fair share of tax in the countries where they earn their profits.

At the same time, the UN process would allow for a broader reconsideration of how to close the loopholes in the international tax system. For example, the scope of reform could be widened to include co-ordination on taxing individual wealth.

A recent study by the EU Tax Observatory shows that a 2% global wealth tax on the world's billionaires (roughly 3,000 people) would raise a total of \$250bn annually, and around \$7.3bn in Latin America alone. While the BEPS framework has normalised the idea of a global minimum tax rate for corporations, intergovernmental negotiations at the UN could do the same for ultra-wealthy individuals.

The UN is uniquely positioned to address these issues, given its universal membership and its founding principle of sovereign equality. Recent history has demonstrated that inclusiveness is a prerequisite for successful implementation of a progressive and efficient tax system. When a negotiation agenda is built collectively, the outcomes are seen as more legitimate by all parties involved, often leading to greater compliance. Moreover, at the UN, developing countries are organised into negotiating blocs, through which they gain more leverage to promote their interests. — Project Syndicate

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INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN CULTURAL PROPERTY

Qatari, Arab, Islamic efforts to preserve our heritage

QNA  
Doha

The world will commemorate today the International Day against Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property, which falls on November 14 of each year, to remind everyone that theft, looting, and illicit trafficking of cultural property occur in all countries, depriving their inhabitants of their culture, identity, and history.

The theft of cultural property and its illicit trafficking are considered crimes. According to the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) database, the only international database, the number of stolen artworks amounts to 52,000 items, in addition to unreported items in various countries.

Trafficking in cultural property ranks as the third-largest international criminal activity, following only drug and arms trafficking. Experts estimate that the total value of illicit trafficking in cultural property alone may reach up to \$10bn annually, with this figure having increased in the past decade, according to Interpol.

Various reports indicate that the number of archaeological pieces and cultural properties seized by legal institutions in Europe has reached 567,465 items. This implies that multiples of these numbers have been sold and traded.

In the Arab world, more than 14,000 manuscripts were stolen and smuggled from Yemen alone, with their fate still unclear. Additionally, the painting "Poppy Flowers" by Van Gogh, valued at \$60mn, has not yet surfaced after being stolen from a museum in Cairo.

The international efforts continue to combat the illicit trafficking of cultural property, striving to recover pieces and artifacts that have unlawfully left their original locations.

In a statement to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), Maxin Nasra, Head of the Library Collections Maintenance Department, Distinguished Collections Department, Qatar National Library (QNL), explained that QNL, as the regional centre for the preservation of heritage materials in the Arab and Middle Eastern countries, plays a pivotal role in preserving documentary heritage and facilitating access to it in Qatar and the Arab world.

He emphasised the library's role through training sessions and workshops to build the capacities of workers and specialists, providing references in Arabic through translating internationally recognised standards, shedding light on challenges in the region, holding conferences and forums to discuss sustainable solutions in collaboration and partnership with heritage institutions in the region and relevant regional and international organisations dedicated to heritage preservation.

He stressed the importance of international collaboration as the most effective means to protect cultural properties globally, noting that in 2020, the library launched the strategic project "Protection," aiming to engage international and regional organisations and all relevant institutions to enhance and coordinate efforts to combat illicit trafficking and trading of documentary heritage in the Middle East and North Africa. The project also seeks to provide training and capacity building for specialists in heritage protection and customs officials to raise awareness about the importance of protecting and preserving documentary heritage.

Nasra highlighted that the Qatar National Library has organised a significant number of training sessions at its premises, along with online courses in Arabic, English, Turkish, and Persian. These courses cover the legislative and legal framework for protecting cultural properties and combating their illicit trafficking. Specialised training courses have been conducted for customs officials in Qatar

and Arab countries. Additionally, an annual international conference on the same topic is held in September each year at the library's headquarters in Doha.

Regarding the library's efforts to document stolen Arab artifacts and cultural properties, Nasra said that the library collaborates with local and international organisations to raise awareness among specialists and professionals in heritage institutions about the importance of registering looted items in the Interpol database for stolen artifacts. The library also provides training on how to search the database and utilise the available information. Furthermore, in collaboration with the Qatar Computing Research Institute at Hamad Bin Khalifa University, the Qatar National Library is working on developing an intelligent content management system called "Fahris/index." This system monitors advertisements and publications related to the illicit trade of cultural properties, with a focus on manuscripts, on social media platforms. It has the capability to document and archive all this data.

Qatar hosted the announcement of the strategy of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (Alecso) for legal assistance for the recovery of illegally seized heritage property in the Arab countries, during the Second Doha International Workshop on Countering the Trafficking of Cultural Property.

Regarding this strategy, Tunisian judge Najiba al-Zayer, a legal adviser at Alecso, said in an interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA) that Alecso's strategy addressed the goals of recovering cultural property in a way that represents a victory for our identity and the history of our peoples, pointing out that the recovery strategy from a legal perspective included the legislative and realistic diagnosis of retrieval, and the general principles of international agreements related to retrieval.

She explained that these principles are found in the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict 1954, then in the Unesco 1970 Convention, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) Convention 1995, and in the Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention.

She added that the strategy identified the practical aspect of response and recovery by defining methods of response through engaging in international agreements, strengthening national laws, working to strengthen diplomacy from inside and outside, concluding bilateral and multilateral approvals, and preparing a special file for the properties requested to be recovered and adequate means of proof. The strategy also specified the legal procedures for recovery.

At the conclusion of her speech, she said that the Alecso strategy works to enhance the protection of cultural property, the most important of which is taking effective measures to prevent the illegal transfer of cultural property, and emphasizing the protection and guarding of archaeological sites and museums at the national level.

On this document, Director of the Department of Legal Affairs and International Standards at ISESCO Mohamed al-Hadi al-Suhaili confirmed that the document is considered an extension of the organisations efforts in the field of combating illicit trafficking in cultural property. The organisation has engaged in international efforts to protect and preserve heritage in its member countries.

He said that the existence of a strategy to combat illicit trafficking in cultural property in the Islamic world came with the aim of finding joint mechanisms among the countries of the Islamic world to combat this widespread phenomenon. It also attempts to fill the gaps and shortcomings that still plague international mechanisms regarding the preservation and recovery of cultural property, pointing out that

this strategy focuses on three integrated and interconnected axes: the first related to legislative mechanisms that include guarantees and legal legislation that must be respected and adhered to. The second axis relates to the executive mechanisms and everything related to maintenance, restoration, protection, preservation, documentation, and the preparation of exploratory studies. The third axis is related to international co-operation, whether with regard to issuing international legal rules or assistance in the material dimension.

The Director of the Legal Affairs Department at the ISESCO Mohamed al-Hadi al-Suhaili said that the new strategy, presented for the first time in Doha, aims to enhance the cognitive and material capabilities of stakeholders in the field of combating illegal trafficking in cultural property. It also seeks to analyse the most important legal, procedural, and institutional mechanisms regulating the issue.

He added that the strategy works on unifying the definition of the concept of cultural properties and heritage among member countries, in order to achieve justice in the field of combating illegal trafficking in cultural property. The goal is to establish a unified code of conduct to describe cultural properties, with a standardised time factor for the concept of cultural properties. The strategy aims to unify the texts of laws related to illegal trafficking between interested countries to facilitate the procedures for recovering archaeological properties. Additionally, the strategy involves establishing a national digital database connected to Interpol's network containing a database of stolen artifacts, along with providing information to specialised authorities for the quick identification of stolen pieces.

Shili clarified that the strategy aims to increase the legal specialists' capabilities and train some in the field of private international law related to cultural properties. The strategy proposes acknowledging the presence of legal specialists in international law within each defence ministry to advocate for their interests regarding illicit properties. It also emphasises the importance of cultural awareness regarding the significance of any archaeological piece, regardless of its history. The strategy suggests creating a specialised force at various entry points for exporting and transit countries, unifying their training approaches to detect culturally smuggled properties through official channels of the countries.

He underlined the importance of enhancing mechanisms for recovering cultural properties through friendly means such as negotiations and diplomatic avenues, which have proven effective in recovering many cultural pieces. Additionally, he highlighted the need to strengthen regional cooperation among Islamic countries. This involves signing agreements for the return and recovery of cultural properties and contributing to establishing a regional database specifically for stolen or smuggled cultural pieces. The strategy aims to facilitate the exchange of expertise and best practices among countries and mitigate the trade of cultural properties, particularly on social media platforms. The document prepared by ISESCO will be presented again at the 13th Conference of Ministers of Culture in Islamic World for approval and subsequent adoption at the public policy level.

Unesco first adopted November 14 as the International Day against Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property during its 40th General Conference in 2019, with the aim of drawing more attention to this crime and the ways to combat it, as well as to highlight the importance of international co-operation and proactive measures through the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970).



# Poland's pro-EU bloc wins speaker post

AFP  
Warsaw

Poland's pro-EU parties scored a first win in the new parliament yesterday after general elections in October with their candidate elected speaker of the lower house, the country's second most important post.

Szymon Holownia won the vote widely seen as a litmus test for three parties bidding to form a government and oust the conservative and populist Law and Justice (PiS) party.

"After this vote, no-one can doubt that there is a majority in this parliament ready to take power," said Holownia, a former TV host who launched his own centrist party.

He got 265 votes against 193 for the PiS candidate Elzbieta Witek in the 460-seat house.

The parliament speaker's post is the number two position in the country as per the constitution. The speaker replaces the president in case of death.

The first parliament session after the election comes as both the opposition and governing populists bid to take power.

The PiS fell short of a ruling majority despite finishing first in

the election — but was given the first shot at forming the government by conservative President Andrzej Duda.

In his opening speech to parliament, Duda declared his "readiness" to co-operate with new lawmakers as he praised his PiS allies for the "eight good years" they had spent in power.

Duda had earlier said he would ask current Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki to form a government, a task analysts say he has no chance of fulfilling.

Morawiecki formally resigned yesterday but is expected to be officially tapped as the prime ministerial candidate.

In a eurosceptic speech to lawmakers, Morawiecki sought to win over support from the opposition, claiming Polish "sovereignty" and "independence" were at stake.

Three pro-EU parties led by ex-prime minister and former European Council president Donald Tusk won enough votes for a majority and are gearing up to form a government, though they first will have to wait for PiS's efforts to fail.

"This is an unprecedented situation in more than 30 years of the history of democratic Poland," said Stanislaw Mocek, a sociologist and president of the Collegium Civitas university in Warsaw.



Co-leader of Third Way coalition Szymon Holownia receives flowers after he was elected as the new Speaker of Parliament, during the first session of the newly elected Polish parliament in Warsaw yesterday. (Reuters)

PiS holds 194 seats in the lower chamber, compared to 248 seats for the pro-EU opposition.

PiS has said it will "do everything" to be able to form a new government within the constitutionally allocated 14 days.

It will then have to pass a vote of confidence within 14 days.

"This mission is destined to fail," Mocek said, adding that PiS was just "playing for time" to receive additional financing, put their people in key posts and "ensure a soft landing" when it goes into the opposition.

Jaroslaw Kuisz, a political analyst, said PiS could simply "wait"

for its next chance and "sow discord between allies" in the pro-EU coalition likely to form the next government.

The leaders of the pro-EU parties — including one co-headed by Holownia — signed a formal coalition agreement on Friday to serve as a "roadmap" for the alliance once it comes to power.

"We really wanted Polish women and men... to see that we are ready to take responsibility for our homeland and for the coming years," Tusk said.

Wlodzimierz Czarzasty, a co-leader of the bloc's Left party, said "the most important thing now is to make Poland tolerant, open, law-abiding, responsible", calling for Warsaw to have a "strong place" within the European Union. The agreement presents the coalition's position on key issues like the economic and environmental management of the country, rebuilding good relations with the EU, reforming state media, separation of Church and State, and abortion.

If Morawiecki fails to form a government, the next candidate would be nominated by the parliament. Analysts estimate that the current opposition would only be able to take power from mid-December.

## EU plan for new Russia sanctions in offing

Reuters  
Brussels

European Union officials are finalising the "last details" of a proposed 12th package of sanctions on Russia that will include a diamond ban, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said yesterday. Borrell said the European Commission, the EU executive, could approve the proposed package tomorrow. It would then go to the Council of the EU, comprising the bloc's 27 member countries, for discussion and approval.

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EU has already applied 11 packages of sanctions against Moscow to diminish the Kremlin's ability to finance the war. The measures span across sectors and include some 1,800 individuals and entities.

"This twelfth package will include ... new export bans, among them ... diamonds, actions to tighten the oil price cap, in order to decrease the revenue that Russia is getting from selling its oil — not to us but to others — (and) fighting against circumvention," Borrell told reporters after a meeting of EU foreign ministers. EU diplomats told Reuters last week said the 27-nation bloc had been waiting for a G7 green light to move ahead with the diamond ban. An EU official said the current timing for a European Commission proposal for the package, that would then be debated by the EU's 27 governments, was "early next week".

## Artificial intelligence images of white faces are now 'hyper-real': study

Images of faces generated by artificial intelligence (AI) can now appear more real than pictures of real people — as long as they are white, a study said yesterday.

AI is now so good at depicting white people that the images are "hyper-real", said the report in the journal "Psychological Science". But AI tends to depict people of other ethnicities with white features because the data used to train the algorithms is biased, said lead author Amy Dawel from the Australian National University (ANU).

"If white AI faces are consistently perceived as more realistic, this technology could have serious implications for people of colour by ultimately reinforcing racial biases online," she said.

The authors said it was vital to educate the public about the hyper-realism of today's AI to avoid misinformation and online scams.

The researchers used 200 pictures — 100 AI-generated and 100 real humans — and asked 124 participants which were AI and which were genuine. Of the five faces most often identified as human, four were AI. Of the top five judged as AI, four were human.

The researchers ran another experiment to try to understand why this was the case, asking more than 600 people to rate various qualities of the images — attractiveness, familiarity, image quality.

Clear differences remained between AI and real images, said the researchers, but the participants were either misinterpreting the details or missing them entirely.

For example, participants tended to judge faces as human if they were more proportional, less memorable and more familiar — but these qualities were more prominent in the AI images.

The researchers used the data based on these perceptions to program a model that was able to accurately identify more than 90 percent of the faces.

"However, we can't rely on these physical cues for long," said Dawael. "AI technology is advancing so quickly that the differences between AI and human faces will probably disappear soon."

## Berlin rendezvous



Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer (left) shakes hands with European Council President Charles Michel next to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz ahead of the European Union heads of state meeting at the Chancellery in Berlin yesterday. (Reuters)

## Pakistan opens new border crossings to expedite Afghans' repatriation

Pakistan yesterday opened three new border crossings to accelerate the repatriation of undocumented Afghan nationals who have been ordered to leave the country or face expulsion, officials said.

Many Afghans have opted to go home voluntarily to avoid deportation under a government push for undocumented migrants to be expelled. Pakistan's move affects more than 1mn Afghans, many of whom Islamabad says have been involved in militant attacks and crime, a claim Kabul rejects.

The new crossings were set up at the Afghan border in southwestern Balochistan province in addition to the main crossing in Chaman district, said Jan Achakzai, information minister for the provincial caretaker government.

The main crossing had been overwhelmed with Afghan refugees seeking to return home voluntarily,

he said. More than 280,000 Afghan nationals have left Pakistan since the new policy was announced in early October, according to the United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees (UNHCR).

Islamabad has begun round-up operations across the country after the deadline for voluntary departure expired on November 1.

Pakistan has so far rejected calls from the United Nations, rights groups and Western embassies to reconsider its expulsion plan or to identify and protect Afghans who risk persecution at home.

Kabul has also asked Islamabad to give Afghan nationals ample time to leave.

The expulsion drive has driven relations between the neighbours to a new low, with Islamabad reiterating its claim that militants use Afghan soil to plan and carry out attacks in Pakistan. Kabul says Pakistan's security is a domestic problem.

# China and Pakistan navies kick off drills

Reuters  
Beijing

The Chinese and Pakistani navies are holding week-long drills in the Arabian Sea days after the Russian Pacific Fleet and Myanmar practised repelling attacks in their first maritime exercise, while India and the United States pledged security co-operation.

At a naval base in Karachi on Saturday, the Chinese and Pakistani navies kicked off the exercise in the waters and airspace of the northern Arabian Sea in drills that include anti-submarine operations. The exercise will end on November 17.

During the exercise, China and Pakistan will conduct joint maritime patrols for the first time, the *People's Liberation Army Daily* reported yesterday.

The exercise follows what Moscow describes as "the first Russian-Myanmar naval exercise in modern history" held from November 7-9 in the Andaman Sea on the north-eastern fringe of the Indian Ocean, a milestone for Russia's naval presence in a sea that the United States counts as one of its global security interests.

Admiral Tributs and Admiral Panteleyev, two large Russian anti-submarine ships, conducted exercises with a frigate and a corvette

of Myanmar's navy, according to Interfax news agency last week.

Amid the push for deeper security ties between China and Pakistan, and Russia and Myanmar, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin held defence talks in New Delhi on November 10 with their Indian counterparts.

In a joint statement released after the so-called "2+2 Dialogue", the US and Indian governments expressed deep concern over the war in Ukraine but made no explicit mention of Russia. They also pledged their commitment to safeguarding a free and open Indo-Pacific.

New Delhi has carefully preserved its longstanding relations with Russia, including co-operation in defence, even as its ties with Washington have grown steadily stronger.

China was also not mentioned in the joint statement, even though an Indian government official said ahead of the talks that China would be one of the "key focus points".

The careful navigation of those talks comes ahead of a highly anticipated meeting between US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping in San Francisco this week, where Washington is expected to seek a re-establishment of military-to-military ties with Beijing.

## Protesting Polish truckers say Ukraine talks fail

Polish trucking representatives said yesterday that the latest talks with Ukrainian officials had failed to end a dispute over what they call unfair competition from the neighbouring country's businesses. The hauliers say the easing of EU access rules in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine has led to an influx of Ukrainian competition, taking a serious toll on their earnings.

In response, Polish truckers began blockades last week of three major border crossings.

Yesterday, some of the protesting truckers met with representatives of the Ukrainian and Polish governments. "We have not reached an agreement. The Ukrainian side does not take our demands into account," Rafal Mekler, a leader of a protest in the border town of Dorohusk, said on social media. Polish transportation companies want to reinstate the use of EU entry permits for Ukrainian trucks, a system waived by the bloc following Russia's assault against Ukraine.

## Son rises at Trump civil fraud trial



Former US president Donald Trump's son and co-defendant, Donald Trump Jr., attends the Trump Organisation civil fraud trial, in New York State Supreme Court in the Manhattan borough of New York City yesterday. (Reuters)



# Registration concludes for Ras Laffan Falcons Championship



A large number of falcons have registered for the Ras Laffan Falcons Championship at the headquarters of Al Gannas Qatari Society at Katara – the Cultural Village. The registration concluded yesterday. The organising committee of the Qatar International Falcons and



Hunting Festival (Marmi 2024) also concluded yesterday pre-registration for the popular competitions of Haddad Al Tahadi (where the falcon has to hunt a homing pigeon within set conditions) category. Abdulwaham bin Omair al-Nuaimi, deputy director of the championships at Al Gannas Qatari Society and Marmi Festival, said that a draw will be held to select the participants of each team, following which the time schedule of the matches will be announced. He thanked the Ras Laffan Community Outreach programme and the companies supporting it for sponsoring the championship for the fifth consecutive year. This is part of maintaining the heritage and traditions of the ancestors and passing them to the new generations, he stressed. The tournament organising committee had earlier launched the online registration process to facilitate the process for falconers. For those with new falcons, the only remaining step was to present the falcons to the committee for the installation of the hood on them. Apart for the various competitions for the adult and professional falconers, there will be a competition for the aspiring young falconers and the young falconer competition.

# Expo 2023 Doha records more than 650,000 visitors

By Shafeeq Alingal  
Staff Reporter

Expo 2023 Doha has recorded more than 650,000 visitors since the exhibition opened on October 2, secretary-general Engineer Mohamed Ali al-Khoury told *Gulf Times* yesterday. Speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of the Gulf Engineering Union's pavilion at the International Zone, he said that the expo has drawn visitors, including school students, to learn about preserving the environment, sustainability, Qatar's future plans, and the cultures and customs of the participating countries. The Gulf Engineering Union, through its pavilion, will educate visitors about the latest trends in sustainability and techniques in the farming and irrigation sectors.

The pavilion encompasses four vital areas, with an exclusive area for engineers to exchange experiences. The educational area features engineering techniques in developing agriculture, including smart irrigation methods, and vertical agriculture while highlighting the use of robots in farm management. There are also entertainment and sport areas. "The Gulf Engineering Union pavilion has programmes for school students," al-Khoury said. "Three schools will be received on a daily basis ... the number may increase in the future." He noted that more than 80% of the expo's pavilions are now open, with a number of the countries taking part in the expo for only a few months. Al-Khoury said that the exhibition also offers lectures by local



Officials and students at the opening of the Gulf Engineering Union's pavilion at Expo 2023 Doha yesterday. PICTURES: Thajudheen

universities and seminars organised on the event's sidelines. Engineer Khaled al-Nasr, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Qatar Society of Engineers, highlighted that the Gulf Engineering Union has made many contributions to the development of agriculture.



# Two QF schools awarded Eco-Schools Green Flag

The Eco-Schools Green Flag has been awarded to Awsaj Academy and Qatar Academy Al Khor, under Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Pre-University Education. The Eco-Schools Green Flag is an initiative recognising young people dedicated to protecting and preserving the local environment. The award involves schools committing to a two-year programme that comprises three main elements: The Seven Steps Framework, which includes completing tasks like forming an eco-committee, conducting a sustainability audit, and making an action plan. Highlighting the Eco-Schools Themes, such as Biodiversity & Nature, Climate Change, Energy, and Food. An assessment for the Green Flag. "As a school director, I take immense pride in our students' remarkable achievements," said Qatar Academy Al Khor director Lina F Mouchantaf. "Their passion and commitment demonstrate that we can seamlessly integrate sustainability into our daily lives." "We highlight the importance of students initiating change within themselves and promoting sustainability in their immediate surroundings, thereby nurturing an environmentally conscious society," she said.

Explaining the significance of the award, Mouchantaf said: "Receiving the Green Flag imposes a greater responsibility on us to extend the values observed in this student group to our entire school and, hopefully, to society as a whole." Maurice al-Haddad, lead teacher of Awsaj Academy's Eco-Schools Club, said: "At Awsaj Academy, we have nurtured a culture of environmental consciousness, leaving a lasting impact on our planet for future generations to cherish." "Our work has been challenging, but the rewards of a greener, brighter future make every step worthwhile," the teacher said. "With this recognition, we are inspired to continue our journey towards a sustainable future." Awsaj Academy's Eco-Schools Club president Mohamed al-Abdulla, a student at Awsaj Academy, said: "The Green Flag award has not only enriched our academic curriculum but has also enhanced our overall educational experience." "It has exposed us to a wide range of environmental issues, enabling us to develop a deeper understanding of how our actions impact the planet's interconnected systems," al-Abdulla said. "Through workshops, guest speakers, and field trips, we have explored topics such as climate change, conservation, and sustainable development, empowering us to become



The Awsaj Academy Eco-Schools team with the Green Flag. Right: Qatar Academy Al Khor students with the Eco-Schools Green Flag.

proactive global citizens." Two other QF schools, Qatar Academy Doha Primary and Qatar Leadership Academy, have been previously honoured with the Eco-Schools Green Flag award, making them the first QF schools to be recognised by the programme.

