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'Bombing of QCRG HQ must not go unnoticed'

Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari said that the crime of the Israeli occupation's bombing of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza (QCRG) must not go unnoticed, pointing that Qatar looks forward to the solidarity of the international community in condemning this crime and the symbolism it represents in the context of repeated Israeli crimes. During the weekly media briefing, al-Ansari said that the Israeli occupation's bombing of the QCRG headquarters will not deter Qatar from providing aid to the Palestinian people. **Page 2**

Hostage release will happen: Biden

US President Joe Biden said yesterday he is engaged in daily discussions to secure a release of hostages being held by Hamas and he believes it is going to happen. "Hang in there, we're coming," Biden told reporters at the White House. Biden said he speaks every day with the parties involved in negotiations over a possible hostage release, but did not want to share the details.

Houthis to target Israeli ships

Yemen's Houthi leader said yesterday his forces would make further attacks on Israel and they could target Israeli ships in the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandeb Strait. The Iran-aligned group made several missile and drone attacks against Israel this month. The Houthis control northern Yemen and its Red Sea coasts. "Our eyes are open to constantly monitor and search for any Israeli ship in the Red Sea, especially in Bab al-Mandab, and near Yemeni regional waters," Abdulmalik al-Houthi said in a broadcast speech.

UN chief disturbed by Gaza situation

The head of the UN said yesterday he was "deeply disturbed by the horrible situation" in Gaza hospitals, as the facilities struggle without power and with mounting numbers of decomposing bodies during the Israeli bombardment of the territory. "The Secretary-General is deeply disturbed by the horrible situation and dramatic loss of life in several hospitals in Gaza," Antonio Guterres's spokesman said in a statement.

Amir receives credentials of six new ambassadors



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received the credentials of six new ambassadors to the state at his Amiri Diwan office yesterday. His Highness the Amir received the credentials of ambassador of the Republic of Cuba Alain Perez Torres, ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Salehabadi, ambassador of the Hellenic Republic Ioannis Ioannidis, ambassador of the Republic of Singapore Wong Chow Ming, ambassador of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay Marcelo Esteban Gerona Morales, and ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania Mohamed Habibu Awesi. His Highness the Amir welcomed the new ambassadors, wishing them success in their duties and the ties between Qatar and their countries further development and growth. For their part, the ambassadors conveyed the greetings of the leaders of their countries to His Highness the Amir, and their wishes for further development and progress for the Qatari people. The ambassadors were accorded official reception ceremonies upon their arrival at the Amiri Diwan. Pictured are the Iranian (*right*) and Tanzanian ambassadors with His Highness the Amir at the Amiri Diwan. **(QNA) Page 2**



Qatar dispatches more aid to war-hit Gazans

● Lolwah AlKhater heads Qatar delegation to Al Arish, Rafah to deliver additional aid

QNA
Rafah (Egypt)

HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhater headed Qatar's delegation, which arrived yesterday in Al Arish and Rafah cities of the sisterly Arab Republic of Egypt to deliver an additional aid package to the fraternal Palestinian people. The delegation included representatives of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS), and Qatar Charity (QC).

The additional aid, which includes a field hospital, shelter supplies, and medical and food materials, comes within the framework of Qatar's standing by the fraternal Palestinian people and its full support for them during the difficult humanitarian conditions as a result of the Israeli bombing that the Gaza Strip is being subjected to. In remarks to Qatar News Agen-



cy (QNA), HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed Qatar's thanks to Egypt for its efforts in delivering the aid to the Palestinian people. She said that she witnessed the delivery of the Qatari aid. In that context, she discussed with the

Egyptian side the challenges associated with the intransigence of the Israeli occupation and the inaction of the international community, stressing that Qatar will strive with the brothers in Egypt and UNRWA to deliver aid to those who need it in Gaza despite the obstacles. **To Page 4 Page 3**

Gaza hospital buries dead in mass grave

AFP
Gaza Strip

Gaza's main hospital has been forced to bury dozens of dead patients in a mass grave, its director said yesterday, while thousands of Palestinians were trapped inside by fierce combat.

Israeli forces were at the gates of the sprawling Al-Shifa hospital they say sits atop an underground Hamas command base, but the resistance group denies the charge while doctors say patients and people seeking shelter were stranded in horrific conditions.

"There are bodies littered in the hospital complex and there is no longer electricity at the morgues," said Al-Shifa hospital director Mohamed Abu Salmiya, adding that 179 bodies had been interred so far. "We were forced to bury them in a mass grave," he said.

A witness said the stench of decomposing bodies was everywhere in the Gaza City facility as bombardment and gunfire echoed constantly in the area.

The United Nations estimates that at least 2,300 people — patients, staff and displaced civilians — are inside and may be unable to escape because of fierce fighting from the facility where

Gaza massacre toll hits 11,320 including 4,650 children, 3,145 women

The Hamas government in Gaza said yesterday the death toll from fighting between Israeli troops and resistance fighters in the Palestinian territory had reached 11,320. The dead included 4,650 children and 3,145 women, according to the government.

supplies are nearly exhausted. The situation in Gaza's other hospitals is also dire, with the UN saying 22 of 36 are not functional due to lack of generator fuel, damage and combat. Al-Shifa's fate has become a major focus of the more than five week war that has stirred international criticism of the suffering and death inflicted on civilians in the besieged territory. But the humanitarian crisis in the territory also includes the hundreds of thousands of people who have fled south at Israel's urging to get away from the most intense fighting. Yesterday displaced Palestinians in the south woke up to yet another scourge: rain, soaking their meagre belongings. **Page 8**

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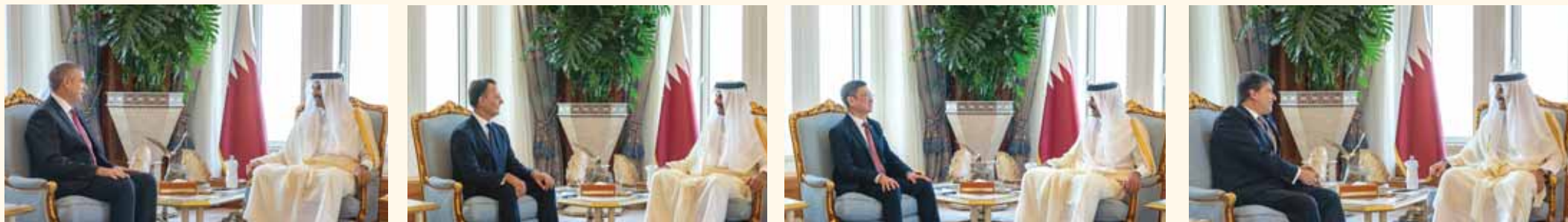
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Qatar looks to position itself as a fintech hub in Middle East





Amir receives credentials of new ambassadors



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received the credentials of new ambassadors to Qatar at his Amiri Diwan office yesterday. The ambassadors included Alain Perez Torres of Cuba, Ioannis Ioannidis (Greece), Wong Chow Ming (Singapore), Marcelo Esteban Gerona Morales (Uruguay). **(QNA)**

Interior minister joins French counterpart in opening of Milipol Paris 2023

HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani joined French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin in the opening of the Milipol Paris 2023 exhibition yesterday. The two ministers inspected the security exhibition pavilions and were briefed on the latest security technology offered by the companies. **(QNA)**



Sheikh Khalifa in Paris meetings



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani met yesterday with French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin at the headquarters of the French Ministry of the Interior in Paris. The meeting discussed several topics of common interest and co-operation relations between the two countries in the security fields and ways to support and develop them. **(QNA)**



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani met yesterday with Singapore Minister for Home Affairs and the Minister for Law K Shanmugam, on the sidelines of his participation in the opening of Milipol Paris 2023. A host of topics of common interest and co-operation relations between the two countries in the security fields and ways to support and develop them were discussed during the meeting. **(QNA)**

Israel's bombing of QCRG HQ must not go unnoticed: MoFA spokesperson

Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari said that the crime of the Israeli occupation's bombing of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza (QCRG) must not go unnoticed, pointing that the State looks forward to the solidarity of the international community in condemning this crime and the symbolism it represents in the context of repeated Israeli crimes.

During the weekly media briefing, Dr al-Ansari said that the Israeli bombing of the QCRG headquarters will not deter Qatar from providing its aid to the Palestinian people, adding that providing aid is not linked to any events, but

rather is a moral and Islamic obligation. Qatar will not be deterred by all attempts of the occupation or others from providing this assistance, he stressed.

He affirmed that Qatar will continue to provide assistance, pointing that, so far, 10 Qatari aircraft carrying a total of 358 tonnes of assistance arrived at the city of Arish. Two Qatari Armed Forces' aircraft arrived yesterday in Arish, carrying 54 tonnes of aid, including a field hospital, shelter supplies, and medical and food materials, provided by the Qatar Fund for Development, the Qatar Red Crescent, and Qatar Charity, in preparation for transporting it to Gaza, he added.

He explained that this aid comes

within the framework of Qatar's support for the brotherly Palestinian people, and its full support for them during the difficult humanitarian circumstances resulting from the Israeli bombing of Gaza Strip. Dr al-Ansari said that the Israeli occupation's bombing of the headquarters of the QCRG is a blatant violation of international law, and an extension of the occupation's approach of targeting civilians and civilian establishments, which also included hospitals, schools, population centres, and IDPs shelters.

The bombing of the Qatari committee's headquarters is an extension of the policy of targeting human beings, especially since this committee has worked through

its projects to alleviate the suffering of the Gazan people, who live in dire hardship as a result of the long siege and ongoing aggression, he added. The spokesperson praised the response of a number of countries and international organisations who condemned the bombing of QCRG's headquarters, most notably in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, in addition to Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation, and the Secretary-General of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and the General Assembly of Secretaries-General of Arab Parliaments.

He stressed the need for the international community to move urgently to hold Israel account-

able for its repeated crimes against civilians and civilian establishments, and to oblige it to comply with international laws. Furthermore, Dr al-Ansari warned against the Israeli occupation committing a new massacre in the Al Shifa Medical Complex in western Gaza, considering that the repeated Israeli provocations by targeting its surroundings and the outpatient clinics building therein are a prelude to targeting the complex, in which a large number of IDPs, estimated at 60,000, have taken refuge, along with medical staff, the sick, and the injured.

He stressed that Qatari diplomatic efforts have not and will not stop, pointing in this context, to the meeting of HE the Prime Min-

ister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani with Minister of International Relations and Co-operation of the Republic of South Africa Naledi Pandor.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs also received a telephone call from Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong, where the two sides discussed the developments in Gaza and the occupied Palestinian territories.

HE Sheikh Mohamed's contacts and meetings with various regional and international parties last week addressed the latest developments in the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel, and ways to reduce the escalation. **(QNA)**

QM showcases diverse array of exhibitions

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Qatar Museums (QM) offers a unique opportunity to discover diverse exhibitions across different museums and art galleries throughout the country, particularly during the colder months.

These captivating displays offer a glimpse into different aspects of history, culture, and artistic expression, with most exhibitions running until next year.

In collaboration with the National Museum of Asian Art in Washington, DC, the 'Fashioning an Empire: Textiles from Safavid Iran' exhibition at the Museum of Islamic Art sheds light on the key role silk played during the Safavid period (1501-1736 CE).

QM noted that the show explores the development of the silk industry under Shah Abbas, citing Isfahan as the heart of the Safavid state. Contemporary commissions by Qatar-based designers bring a modern perspective to the historic textiles, showcasing the enduring influence of Safavid silks on today's creative minds.

As part of the Qatar-Indonesia 2023 Year of Culture, the National Museum of Qatar (NMQ) presents 'Growing Kopi, Drinking Qahwa: Stories of Coffee in Qatar and Indonesia'.



'Cities Under Quarantine: The Mailbox Project'

tar and Indonesia'. This exhibition, running until February 17, 2024, highlights the traditional and contemporary coffee cultures in both countries through interactive displays, immersive projections, and sensory experiences.

At NMQ, another must-see exhibition is 'The Shape of Time: Art and Ancestors of Oceania' from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Featuring nearly 130 works from The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Oceanic collection, this exhibition highlights themes of Voyaging, Ancestors, and Time. The display, on view until January 15, 2024, provides an opportunity to investigate the Pacific Islanders' cultural heritage and artistic expressions across four centuries.

'The Present: The Future of the Past'



'De/Constructed Meanings'

exhibition at the Fire Station: Artists in Residence, running until December 16, offers a unique glimpse into the creative process of 31 artists in residence. The exhibition blurs the lines between the studio experience and the final artworks, bridging the gap between the artistic journey and outcome.

Doha Design District is hosting the 'Masterpieces of Furniture Design' exhibition until December 9, in partnership with the Vitra Design Museum. Featuring more than 50 iconic pieces from the last 200 years, the exhibition spotlights design classics and lesser-known works while expanding the canon of design to include female designers and non-Western creators.

Two exhibitions at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art include 'Distilled



'Masterpieces of Furniture Design'

Lessons: Abstraction in Arab Modernism' and 'Mehdi Moutashar: Introspection as Resistance', both on view until March 5, 2024. The former examines experiments in abstraction within Arab modernism, while the latter marks Moutashar's first solo exhibition in Qatar, showcasing his diverse works inspired by Arabic calligraphy and ornamental patterns.

Mathaf also hosts 'De/Constructed Meanings' and 'Cities Under Quarantine: The Mailbox Project', both on view until March 5, 2024. The former, in collaboration with Virginia Commonwealth University School of Arts in Qatar xLab, looks into linguistic systems and ideology critique, while the latter presents a powerful documentation of life during the Covid-19 pandemic through a unique Artist's Book project.



'Growing Kopi, Drinking Qahwa: Stories of Coffee in Qatar and Indonesia'



'Fashioning an Empire: Textiles from Safavid Iran'



'The Present: The Future of the Past'

Two Qatari aircraft carrying field hospital, aid for Gaza rushed to Al Arish in Egypt



Two Qatar Armed Forces aircraft headed yesterday to Al Arish, Egypt, carrying 54 tonnes of aid. It includes a field hospital, shelter kits, and food and medical supplies provided by Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) and Qatar Charity (QC), in preparation for delivery to Gaza. The aid is part of Qatar's full support to the brotherly Palestinian people amid the difficult humanitarian conditions resulted by the Israeli bombardment of Gaza Strip. **(QNA)**



PM receives phone call from Australian foreign minister

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani received yesterday a phone call from Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong. During the call, they discussed the developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories. HE Sheikh Mohamed emphasised the necessity of concerted regional and international diplomatic efforts to achieve an immediate ceasefire and the permanent opening of the Rafah border crossing to ensure the continuous flow of relief convoys and humanitarian aid to the besieged Palestinian brothers in the Gaza Strip, expressing Qatar's deep concern about the catastrophic deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Strip. He reiterated Qatar's categorical rejection of the repeated crimes committed by the Israeli occupation forces in targeting civilian facilities, including hospitals, schools, and population centres in Gaza Strip, considering these actions as a serious escalation that poses severe consequences for the security and stability of the region. He also underlined Qatar's ongoing efforts in mediating the release of hostages, noting that the continued shelling aggravates the humanitarian catastrophe in the Strip and complicates the ongoing efforts. On her part, the Australian foreign minister expressed her country's appreciation for Qatar's efforts in opening the Rafah crossing to ensure the flow of relief convoys and humanitarian aid to the besieged Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. She also thanked Qatar for its efforts in evacuating Australian citizens from Gaza. **(QNA)**

PM holds talks with South Africa minister of international relations and co-operation



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met at his Amiri Diwan office yesterday with the visiting South African Minister of International Relations and Co-operation Dr Naledi Pandor. The meeting discussed the latest development in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories. HE Sheikh Mohamed stressed the necessity for consolidating the regional and international diplomatic efforts to reach an immediate ceasefire and permanently open the

Rafah crossing to ensure the flow of relief convoys and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian brethren besieged in the Gaza Strip, expressing Qatar's profound concern regarding the catastrophic deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Strip. He stressed Qatar's categorical rejection of the repeated crimes of the Israeli occupation forces by targeting civilian objects, including hospitals, schools, and population centres in the Gaza Strip, considering it a dangerous escalation that portends dire consequences for the security and stability of the region.

HE Sheikh Mohamed also underscored Qatar's continued efforts to mediate the release of hostages, noting that the continued bombing doubles the humanitarian catastrophe in the Strip and complicates the efforts being made. He expressed Qatar's gratitude for the historical stance of South Africa in support of the fraternal Palestinian people, its constant emphasis on the necessity of achieving their legitimate rights, and its current stance calling for lifting the siege on the Gaza Strip, protecting civilians, and an immediate ceasefire. **(QNA)**

GU-Q water conference identifies regional concerns and solutions

Outcomes from Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q)'s "Sustaining the Oasis" Hiwaraat conference are poised to be a catalyst for shaping new dialogues, collaboration, and research partnerships around water security and climate change, both within the region and around the globe.

The conference was a collaboration between GU-Q and the Earth Commons Institute at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Connecting policy with science, and new technology with circular and nature-based solutions, discussions shed light on the role of water as a force to achieve greater regional co-operation and stability, while driving climate change adaptation and mitigation.

"One of the greatest values of dialogues like Hiwaraat is to kick-start important agendas for the future, to bring together people who care about common issues," said GU-Q dean Dr Safwan Masri in his closing remarks. "This conference is just the beginning of a conversation between our campuses and how we build an environmental presence here, in an area that is just so critical," noted Dr Peter Marra, dean of the Earth Commons Institute.

Qatar's water strategy was the focus of a high-level panel with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and representatives from Qatar Foundation's environmental research centres. The country's efforts to honour its international commitments have seen challenges evolve into opportunities for the region, speakers noted, making solutions and technologies more accessible and affordable.



Dr Safwan Masri

Dr Jenny Lawler, senior research director, Water Centre, Qatar Environment and Energy Institute highlighted the value of research collaboration to advance technologies that solve shared global challenges. The role of Gulf countries in defining a water-secure world was the focus of another panel. Speakers pointed to achievements driven by the region's high adaptability, investments in non-conventional water sources, and wastewater reuse.

And although open access to water in the region has helped to drive development in the Gulf region, more sustainable consumption is needed. According to Roula Majdalani, senior climate change adviser, International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, "the agriculture sector is where you can achieve better demand management as more countries in the region oscillate towards food sovereignty." She then outlined promising water-wise solutions in agriculture, including circularity, technology, precision agriculture, and heat-tolerant crops.

Regional disparities arising from conflicts, tensions with neighbours, and weak internal governance were recurring issues. During a panel addressing the food-water nexus, speakers observed that global food disruptions and conflict have compelled countries to rethink the concept of food security. However, varied strategies have strained natural resources, particularly water.

Dr Logan Cochrane, associate professor, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, outlined Qatar's strategy to establish a national food reserve, strategically increase domestic production, develop the domestic market, and diversify imports. Bridging regional water needs and global climate goals, a high-level panel discussed actionable strategies to position water in the climate agenda at COP28.

"As the negotiations become more and more complex, we focus on solutions," said Henk Ovink, former Dutch Special Envoy for International Water Affairs.

"Water, with its interlinkages with food security, energy security, and biodiversity, will play a key role in showing that, if we want to change course in the context of climate change, water is the best driver," he added.

"With COP28 just weeks away, ours is an incredibly timely dialogue and the high-level findings from this conference will be shared with the COP28 Presidency team in support of water-related efforts," noted Dr Raha Hakimdavar, senior adviser to the dean of GU-Q and the dean of the Earth Commons.

Forum discusses roadmap to preserve Qatar's natural heritage

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) organised a nature and wildlife forum on the terrain of Qatar being a sustainable heritage worthy of preservation, in the presence of a number of officials, experts, academics, and those interested in wildlife.

The forum aims to spread environmental culture and exchange expertise, ideas, and best-practices, in addition to setting an effective common vision in the service of public environmental goals. Moreover, participants discussed the role of the media in raising awareness in order to preserve Qatar's terrain and protect threatened wild plants and trees. In his opening speech, Assistant Undersecretary for Natural Reserves Affairs at MoECC Dr Ibrahim Abdul Latif al-Muslimani explained that this forum comes within a series of forums MoECC organises with the aim of highlighting the challenges and obstacles facing the development of wildlife.

He added that the State of Qatar represented by MoECC prioritises maintaining a clean and healthy environment for future generations through protecting natural plants and propagating




them. In turn, forum chairperson Dr Mohamed Saif al-Kuwari stressed that the wild vegetation cover in Qatar faces several challenges, including the deterioration of meadows, deforestation, overgrazing, bad human practices such as bulldozing the soil and slowing down the growth cycle of wild herbs and trees, which then affects the beauty of nature, as well as destroying rare plants and trees that are at a risk of extinction.

In the same context, head of the A Flower Each Spring programme Dr Saif bin Ali al-Hajari highlighted several challenges that the state faces in preserving vegetation including the limited availability of lands suitable for germination, the lack of rain, the


variation in rainy season occurrence, high temperatures, and climate changes, and urban expansion on the expense of germination-suitable-land, lack of awareness on appropriate locations and times for logging and grazing, and camping ethics.

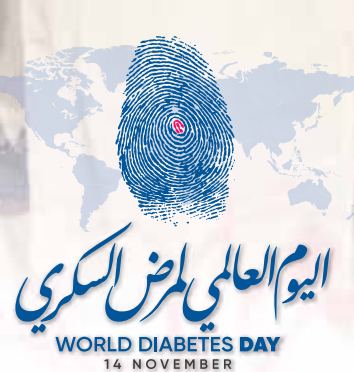
Dr al-Hajari added that the state is making great efforts to overcome these challenges by conducting surveys and scientific monitoring with the aim of having a comprehensive and vast database for researchers, experts, and specialists, in addition to enacting protective legislation, and implementing various community awareness initiatives, as well as encouraging farmers and plant nursery owners to plant local trees. **(QNA)**



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NHRC contacted UN, its agencies to stop Israeli aggression against Gaza

HE the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah, has stressed the committee's keenness to stop the Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip, pointing out that the NHRC defended and still defending the Palestinian people's right to live in peace and with dignity.

In her speech making the Qatar Human Rights Day, which falls on Nov 15 each year, HE al-Attiyah said that the NHRC contacted the UN, its programmes, and agencies to stop the aggression against the citizens of the Gaza Strip and provide them with humanitarian aid and relief.

She added that the NHRC places all its capabilities in helping the Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights to carry out its responsibilities out of belief in the universality and interconnectedness of human rights and adherence to societies in which peace, justice, dignity, and development prevail. She noted that these values are the standard of human conscience and an integral part of the religious teachings and Islamic culture that the NHRC cherishes.

The NHRC chairperson said that the celebration of Qatar Human Rights Day coincides with the awareness and educational activities organised by the NHRC on the sidelines of the Horticultural Expo 2023 Doha, which is the first international horti-



cultural exhibition held in Qatar, the Middle East, and North Africa region.

She stressed that since its establishment 21 years ago, the NHRC has contributed to improving the human rights record in Qatar with achievements that strengthened the role of law, institutions, justice, and human rights.

She added that the NHRC contributed to Qatar's involvement in international human rights instruments, the most recent of which were the International Covenants on Human Rights. The NHRC also proposed many legislations regarding the harmonisation of applicable legislation with human rights standards, as well as the continuous endeavour to spread a culture of human rights in society and build the capabilities of national institutions to consolidate sus-



tainable development and participate in creating it.

She noted the efforts made by the NHRC in educating citizens about the importance of participating in the Central Municipal Council elections, educating students of the National Service Academy about human rights, and allocating the second national forum to discuss the conditions of persons with disabilities and developing a national road map to ensure that they enjoy their rights on an equal basis with others in society.

On the sidelines of the celebration of Qatari Human Rights Day, the NHRC signed a memorandum of understanding with the Qatar Lawyers Association in an effort to establish a state of law, justice and dignity.

The MoU was signed by the NHRC Chairperson and the Chairman of Qatar Lawyers Association Mubarak bin Abdullah al-Sulaiti.

The NHRC chairperson noted that the Qatar Lawyers Association, over the 21 years of the committee's existence, has been a true partner of the committee in defending human rights and providing legal assistance to all who need it.

For his part, al-Sulaiti stressed that the highest goals of lawyers and the legal profession are to preserve rights, return



them to their owners, and prevent corruption whenever possible.

He praised the NHRC's role and its various mechanisms in providing legal assistance to those he needed.

Meanwhile, HE the Director of the Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Turki bin Abdullah Zaid al-Mahmoud, said that the theme of this year's celebration of Qatar Human Rights Day aims to promote the right to a clean environment, which is one of the inherent rights emanating from human rights and protected and promoted by the State, pointing out that holding the celebration in Al Bidda Park reflects the country's interest in the state

is committed to the environment and is keen to create a system of sustainable, safe, healthy and clean places.

Vice-President of the Qatar Lawyers Association HE Sheikh Dr Thani bin Ali al-Thani praised the effective partnership between the association and the NHRC, and the co-operation to establish human rights and defend the oppressed.

He added that there is permanent co-ordination between the association and the NHRC to provide legal consultations and attendance before the courts free of charge for those who are unable, with the aim of strengthening the right to litigation, which is guaranteed by the permanent constitution of Qatar. (QNA)

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Over 3,000 students benefit from special education at MoEHE schools

THE Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has 70 schools with classrooms for integrating students with special needs with other students.

This is in addition to six schools and two kindergartens in Al-Hidaya Schools chain, which provide full services for the mentally challenged and autistic persons, pointed out Fatima al-Saadi, director of the Department of Special Education and Inclusive Education.

She told local Arabic daily *Arrayah*

that the first Al-Hidaya Schools was started in 2017. She highlighted the role of the Audio Education Complex, which targets the individuals with hearing disabilities. Besides, there are four inclusive schools that provide services to visually impaired students from the elementary to the secondary levels.

The official stressed that the inclusion programmes play a significant role in helping individuals with disabilities engage within the daily community activities according to their

capabilities, making them feel important in society.

As many as 3,626 students from the kindergarten to secondary are receiving special education services in the MoEHE schools. She said that the scouts assembly for people with disabilities is part of the programmes sponsored by the MoEHE and the Scouts Society.

The aim is to integrate individuals with disabilities into all programmes conducted by the MoEHE to ensure their integration into society.

Qatar dispatches more aid to war-hit Gazans

From Page 1

HE Lolwah Aikater underscored that Qatar strongly stands by the fraternal Palestinian people and will continue supporting them to overcome the catastrophic humanitarian challenges they are exposed to as a result of the long siege and ongoing aggression. She also stressed that Qatar will continue its efforts to break the collective punishment imposed on Gaza, pointing out that the co-ordination in that context is ongoing with the brothers as one of the outcomes of the Arab-Islamic summit held recently in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Rain forecast for Thursday, Friday

The Met office has forecast thundery rain associated with strong wind and poor horizontal visibility on Thursday and Friday. The offshore forecast adds high seas too. On Thursday, the wind will be variable, mainly Northeasterly - Northwesterly 5 - 15kt, gusting to 40kt with thundery rain, while on Friday the wind speed is to range from 8 - 18kt, gusting to 30kt with thundery rain during daytime. The minimum and maximum temperature forecast for Thursday and Friday are 26C to 29C and 24C to 28C, respectively.

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تدعو شركة المناطق الاقتصادية (مناطق) الشركات المحلية للاشتراك بالمناقصة الآتية:-
MANATEQ (Economic Zones Company) would like to invite the competent Service provider(s) based out of Qatar only for participating in the following tender only:

رقم المناقصة Tender No.	موضوع المناقصة Tender Subject	قيمة التأمين Tender Bond	رسوم المناقصة / غير مستردة Tender Fee / Non-refundable	موعد الإغلاق Closing Date
TC/11/2023	مراقبة خدمات SOC Services	20,000.00 QR	500.00 QR	12 th December 2023 9:00am 12:00pm

Description of work :
Manateq wishes to monitoring Manateq services / network and security devices / platforms / التطبيقات / قواعد البيانات على مدار الساعة طوال أيام الأسبوع وفقاً لهذه المناقصة.

Collection Date and Location:
Starting 19th Nov. 2023 (09:00am to 02:00 pm)
Manateq , The Gate Mall, Tower 2, 11th Floor,
Jameel Khan - IT Support / +974 40323351
Email : J.khan@manateq.qa

وصف العمل:
ترغب مناطق في مراقبة خدمات مناطق / أجهزة الشبكات والأمن / المنصات / التطبيقات / قواعد البيانات على مدار الساعة طوال أيام الأسبوع وفقاً لهذه المناقصة.

موعد ومكان استلام وثائق المناقصة
بدءاً من 19 نوفمبر 2023 (9 صباحاً حتى 2 ظهراً)
شركة مناطق، ذا جيت مول، البرج 2، الطابق 11
جميل خان، مساعد فني هاتف: +974 40323351
البريد الإلكتروني: J.khan@manateq.qa


Tender Document Collection
A copy of the Company Registration and a company authorization letter, against a non-refundable fee paid to:
Account Name : Economic Zones Company - Manateq
Bank : Qatar National Bank Account No. : 0013-026499-001
IBAN No. : QA19QNBA00000000013026499001 SWIFT CODE : QNBAQAAQ

استلام وثائق المناقصة
تقديم نسخة سارية من السجل التجاري وبطاقة المنشأة للشركة المتقدمة وذلك مقابل رسم غير مسترد يدفع بالحساب التالي:
Account Name : Economic Zones Company - Manateq
Bank : Qatar National Bank Account No. : 0013-026499-001
IBAN No. : QA19QNBA00000000013026499001 SWIFT CODE : QNBAQAAQ

لتحصيل وثائق المناقصة يتعين الالتزام بما يلي:
١ - احضار تفويض لاستلام وثائق المناقصة.
٢ - صورة من البطاقة الشخصية للمندوب الذي سوف يحصل على وثائق المناقصة.
٣- إيصال إيداع رسوم وثائق المناقصة.

موقع التسليم
أمين سر لجنة المناقصات - شركة المناطق الاقتصادية - البرج 2، الطابق 11 - الخليج الغربي ص.ب: 29000 - دoha - Qatar Tel: 40323333

تحتفظ شركة المناطق الاقتصادية بكامل حقها في تعديل شروط المناقصة في أي وقت بدون إيداع أسباب و/ أو إلغاء المناقصة بدون إيداع أسباب وبدون أدنى مسئولية عليها في هذا الصدد أيما كان نوعها أو مصدرها
Economic Zones Company reserves its right in modifying terms of the tender at any time and/or cancelling the tender at any time without need of providing reasons and without any responsibility on its part whatever its kind

**الهلال الأحمر القطري**
Qatar Red Crescent

Qatar Red Crescent – Medical Affairs Division

Tender Announcement :-

Sr. #	Tender No.	Description	Temporary Tender Bond	Documents Fees (Non-Refundable)	Closing Date
1	QRC/WHC/13-2023	Supply Uniform (Scrub and suit) for the medical staff at workers Health Centers.	5000	500 Q.R	06/12/2023

The documents can be collected from Medical Affairs Division, Ain Khalid Area, Sunday to Thursday from 07:00 am to 02:00 pm till the closing date.

Required Documents:

- Authorization letter to receive tender documents + ID copy of the person will be receiving the documents.
- Company's Commercial registration copy.
- Bank deposit voucher with the value of documents (500 qrs) not refunded & account details:
 - Account Name: Qatar Red Crescent.
 - Bank: Al Rayan.
 - Account Number: 11199970201
 - IBAN Number: QA56MAFR000000000011199970201

**For more information: please call: (50044554), or
Email whc.tenders@qrcs.org.qa**

Minister meets Canadian official



HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met yesterday with Canada's Representative on Hostages Issues Julie Sunday, who is visiting the country. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation and relations between the two countries and the recent developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories. HE al-Khulaifi stressed Qatar's continued efforts to mediate the release of hostages, noting that the continued bombing doubles the humanitarian catastrophe in the Strip and complicates the efforts being made. Sunday expressed Canada's gratitude to Qatar for its efforts in evacuating Canadian citizens from Gaza. - **QNA**

Al-Muraikhi meets visiting Cote d'Ivoire minister



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi held a meeting yesterday with Kacou Houadja Leon Adom, the Cote d'Ivoire minister of foreign affairs, African integration and Ivorians in the diaspora. The meeting discussed the co-operation and relations between the two countries. - **QNA**

Labour minister meets Sierra Leone counterpart



HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri met yesterday with the visiting Sierra Leone Minister of Employment, Labour and Social Security Mohamed Swaray. They discussed recent developments in the labour sector and explored methods to strengthen collaborative efforts between the two countries in relevant fields. - **QNA**

Qatar-S Africa ties growing steadily

Relations between Qatar and South Africa are undergoing steady development in all political, economic and investment fields, reinforced by high-level visits by officials in both countries.

To consolidate relations between the two countries, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will meet South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, who is paying a state visit to the country, today.

His Highness the Amir will hold discussions with Ramaphosa related to bilateral relations and ways to support and develop them.

A number of memorandums of understanding (MoUs) will be signed.

The visit is expected to contribute to strengthening the economic partnerships of the two countries and concluding trade and investment agreements in various fields.

The establishment of diplomatic relations between Qatar and South Africa dates back to 1994.

Qatar was among the countries visited by former South African president Nelson Mandela, in April 1995.

Relations between the two countries were also strengthened through two historic visits, by His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani in May 2002, and by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim in April 2017, to the South African capital Pretoria.

Former South African president Jacob Zuma also made an official visit to Doha in May 2016, during which he met His Highness the Amir and witnessed the signing of a co-operation agreement in the field of defence.

After signing an agreement between the two countries to avoid double taxation and prevent financial evasion with regard to income taxes, the door was opened for mutual investments.

South Africa's exports to Qatar include chemicals and basic minerals for plant products, machinery, medical devices, vehicles, aircraft, ships, and transport equipment, while South Africa imports mineral products from Qatar, as well as chemical products, elastomers, and plastics.

As evidence of the strength of the re-

Ramaphosa arrives in Doha



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa arrived in Doha yesterday evening, on an official visit to the country. HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi and South Africa's ambassador to Qatar Ghulam Hoosein Asmal welcomed the president and his delegation upon their arrival at Hamad International Airport. - **QNA**

relationship between the two countries in recent years, Ramaphosa participated in the first edition of the Qatar Economic Forum in June 2021, Powered by Bloomberg, which was held via videoconferencing.

Qatar's ambassador to South Africa Mubarak bin Nasser al-Khalifa stressed that Ramaphosa's participation in the Qatar Economic Forum 2021 was the result of efforts by the two countries to strengthen bilateral relations that have gained a lot of momentum in the past few years.

On March 15, 2022, the Qatari-South African virtual business meeting was held, with participants calling for enhancing mutual investments and advancing co-operation between Qatar and South African companies through commercial alliances and effective partnerships, especially in the food market.

Qatar Chamber (QC) First Vice-Chairman Mohamed bin Twar al-Kuwari said during the meeting that Qatar has strengthened its partnership with

South Africa in many fields, the most important of which are oil, minerals, and petrochemicals, and that South Africa is seen as one of the most significant future destinations for Qatari investments due to its abundance of promising investment opportunities that should attract Qatari business owners and investors.

Thulani Mpetsheni, the director of Asia and Middle East Region at South Africa's Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, praised the distinguished relations between the two countries, which were strengthened through mutual visits and agreements signed between them.

South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Mtho Xulu said that there are various sectors that attract Qatari investors to South Africa, such as mining, manufacturing, technology, agriculture, food security, and others.

He called on Qatari companies to invest in South Africa and enhance co-operation with South African companies. - **QNA**

Amir sends condolences to 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 the mother of Prince Mohamed bin Mishari bin Abdulaziz al-Saud. - **QNA**

QNB kick-starts campaign with Printemps Doha



The QNB Group, the largest financial institution in the Middle East and Africa, has kick-started its exclusive campaign with Printemps Doha for QNB First members, wherein they will get to enjoy an array of in-store privileges until December 31, 2023.

QNB First members will enjoy 25% discount on specific fashion items along 20% at all restaurants at Printemps Doha.

Additionally, customers will be able to earn double Life Rewards points on purchases and redeem points using their QNB Visa Life Rewards credit cards.

"QNB First leads the premium banking segment by offering attractive products and services with exceptional lifestyle benefits," said senior QNB executive vice-president (Group Retail) Adel Ali al-Malki.

"We are always in the process to keep our premium customers first," he said. "Our team is dedicated to make sure that our members feel the difference with an unmatched world of privileges, rewards, and services."

Doha Oasis chairman Victor Agha said

that Printemps Doha is committed to offer exclusive benefits and discounts for QNB First premium members.

Printemps Doha is housed at the Doha Oasis, a multi-use development project and fashion shopping mall.

"Printemps Doha and QNB aim to re-define the landscape of retail in Qatar, by combining top-tier shopping offers with distinctive banking services," Agha said. "We are here to lead the market and set a new standard for excellence."

With a retail space of more than 40,000sq m, Printemps Doha is the second-largest store after its flagship in Boulevard Haussmann in Paris and the biggest luxury department store in the Middle East.

Through its subsidiaries and associate companies, the QNB Group extends to more than 28 countries across three continents, providing a comprehensive range of advanced products and services.

The total number of employees is more than 30,000 operating through more than 900 locations, with an ATM network of 4,800 machines.



Snapshots from the training session.

'You Matter' initiative holds 'Stadium Falcons' training session

The "You Matter" initiative of the Ministry of Interior (MoI)'s Facilities and Authorities Department, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoE-HE), the Ministry of Sports and Youth, the Qatar Football Association, and the Qatar Stars League organisation, organised yesterday a training session entitled "Stadium Falcons", with the participation of 100 students.

The training session, which also saw the participation of football stars, was



attended by Civil Defence Director-General Major-General Hamad Othman al-Dehaimi, a number of officials from the relevant authorities, and more than 2,700 primary and middle school students.

The training session was presented as a friendly match in which a group of football stars participated, as well as implementing four scenarios for cases of

assault, fainting, fire, and entry into stadiums, to train participants to deal with these situations if they occur.

During the training programme, a mini Civil Defence exhibition was held, while at the end of the training, Major-General al-Dehaimi honoured the participating parties in appreciation of their role in the success of the event. - **QNA**

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
Please send your CV to: qassprecruitment@qassp.com.qa



Qatar Charity organises medical camp for workers

Qatar Charity (QC), in partnership with Centre for Indian Community (CIC) – Qatar organised a medical camp for workers who are in the process of searching for work. Approximately 1,488 workers from various Asian nationalities benefited.

The camp was implemented with the support of the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), the Ministry of Municipality, and Wellcare Pharmacy, in co-operation with the Indian Pharmacists Association Qatar (IPHAQ), the Qatar Diabetes Association (QDA), the General Directorate of Traffic, the Indian Doctors Club (IDC) – Qatar, and the United Nurses of India – Qatar (Uniq).

The health services provided included routine medical examinations like blood pressure and blood sugar checkups, weight measurement, and body mass index assessment.



Additionally, general and specialised medical check-ups were conducted, along with medical consultations.

Medications were provided free of charge.

Awareness workshops were conducted to educate the workers on the proper use of pedestrian

pathways on roads to ensure their safety and on how to prevent diabetes.

Abdulrahman al-Hajri, director of the Local Programmes and Community department, QC, said: “This medical camp is part of Qatar Charity’s efforts to improve the level of healthcare and enhance the

social and health development of workers who play a crucial role in the economic development and infrastructure of the country.”

Dr Amena Abdulla Alansari, manager of Umm Al Seneem Health Center, also thanked all stakeholders. Qasim Abdulrahman, president of CIC, expressed his delight at the



collaboration with QC in organising the medical camp, which provided a significant opportunity for the workers to obtain necessary treatments, undergo essential medical examinations, and receive early detection of certain diseases that could become hazardous over time if left untreated.

Ashraf K P, managing director of Wellcare Pharmacy, also commended QC’s efforts for the local community, expressing hope for continued collaboration between the two entities in the future to benefit workers and individuals with limited income within the country.

Awqaf signs agreement with CCQ

The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs yesterday signed a co-operation agreement with the Community College of Qatar (CCQ) to launch Associate Diploma Programme in Preaching and Islamic Sciences.

Awqaf was represented by Mohamed bin Hamad al-Kuwari, Assistant Undersecretary for Da’wah and Mosque Affairs, and CCQ by its president Dr Khaled Mohamed al-Horr.

The agreement comes within the framework of enhancing co-operation between Awqaf and CCQ with the aim of establishing an academic path and degrees in Islamic studies for students.

The students will be selected and nominated by Awqaf from its employees. Al-Kuwari said the programme aims to prepare and develop the performance of imams, preachers and holders of Shariah positions in the ministry. Starting with 25 students, the programme will continue for two academic years.

“Awqaf also looks to expand the field of co-operation and partnership with CCQ in order to propose and implement other scientific, academic and training programmes for the ministry employees. This contributes to achieving Qatar Vision 2030 in the field of sustainable human resources development,” he said, adding that the agreement also contributes to providing the opportunity for the ministry’s em-



ployees to teach at the Community College in accordance with the policies and regulations in force at the college.

Al-Horr noted that CCQ values the co-operation explaining that the programme provides imams, preachers and holders of Shariah positions a unique opportunity to enhance their knowledge and Shariah sciences by continuing to learn in a way that achieves a positive and sustainable impact.

Sheraton Grand Doha to host charity cycling event

Following the successful events in 2018 and 2019, Marriott Business Councils Qatar yesterday announced the return of the ‘Ride for Education’ cycling event hosted by the Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel.

Set to take place on December 8 at 7am, the event is dedicated to supporting the Education Above All (EAA) Foundation by raising funds through the Road to Awareness – Marriott International’s annual associate fundraising campaign in the region.

The charity bike ride unites various Marriott International properties in Doha to support the EAA Foundation, empowering children globally through education.

This initiative calls upon participants to join forces for the more significant cause of global education, a statement said.

The ‘Ride for Education’ showcases the commitment of Marriott Business Councils Qatar to making a tangible difference in the lives of underprivileged children. As a part of the Road to Awareness initiative, ‘Ride for Education’ reflects Marriott’s dedication to creating a positive impact in local communities, striving to provide a brighter future for those in need.

For those interested in participating in the



File picture of a previous edition of the ‘Ride for Education’ cycling event.

‘Ride for Education,’ tickets can be purchased online via Q-Tickets.

Ticket options come in three tiers: Silver at QR150, including an event jersey; Gold at QR200, including an event jersey and raffle tickets; and Platinum at QR250, which provides an event jersey, raffle tickets, and a bicycle. Registration will begin at 5.30am on December 8, the statement added.

UDST holds symposium on diabetes care

The University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) recently hosted the 2nd Symposium on Diabetes Care: Empowering Global Health through Life-Changing Research, in support of World Diabetes Day 2023.

The symposium was organised with the participation and support of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), Sidra Medicine and Qatar Diabetes Association.

Present at the symposium were Dr Salem Al-Naemi, president of UDST, Sheikh Dr Mohamed bin Hamad al-Thani, director of Public Health, MoPH; Dr Abdelatif al-Khal, director of Medical Education at HMC; Prof Abdul-Badi Abou-Samra co-chair, National Diabetes Committee and director, Qatar Metabolic Institute; Prof Shahrad Taheri, chair, Diabetes Research Sub-Committee National Diabetes Strategy; Dr Rayana Ahmed Bou Haka, official representative of the World Health Organisation office in Qatar and other researchers, distinguished guests, faculty and students.

The sessions aimed to deepen healthcare professionals’ understanding and expertise



in diabetes care, prevention and education, while also promoting the exchange of knowledge and innovation across the global medical community. The symposium goals are aligned with Qatar’s National Vision 2030, and continues the work set out by

Qatar’s National Diabetes Strategy.

Dr Al-Naemi said: “Excellence in diabetes care and management is a huge priority for our country. The National Diabetes Strategy in particular aims to improve health and quality of life in Qatar, by preventing diabetes and its associated complications. This is no easy feat. Collaboration, education and research are key to promoting diabetes awareness, and to advance methods used to manage and treat the disease.”

Prof Abou-Samra, added: “The 2023 World Diabetes Day campaign focuses on the importance of delaying or preventing type 2 diabetes and associated complications with the slogan “Know your risk, Know your Response” underscoring the significance of proactive screening. As a slowly progressive disease that typically originates without symptoms, T2D can exist for many years without being recognised. In Qatar, 25% of diabetes is undiagnosed accounting for approximately 5% of all adult population.”

Free diabetes camp held at Safari Mall

A free diabetes camp was organised by Blueberry Healthcare in Safari Mall to observe the World Diabetes Day in association with Imara Medical Centre, a statement said yesterday. The theme was ‘Diabetes – #thebeginningofnewjoy’

A team of paramedical staff along with Blueberry Healthcare team conducted the camp. The chief guests were Kutty’s Medical Centre managing director Dr Gopal Sankar, Safari Group managing director Shaheen Backer, and RAF Health executive director Aathif.

Dr Sankar spoke on various aspects of diabetes and its care.

The aim of the day-long camp was to create awareness on diabetes and individuals’ health status. More than 500 people benefited. Tests for blood sugar, blood pressure, SPO2 and BMI were done. Blood glucose monitoring machines were given at subsidised rate for Safari Customers on the day.

The camp was organised by Dan-dabany Devarajan and his team from Blueberry Healthcare International with the support of Safari staff.



HMC’s trauma programme has outstanding survival rate

For the fourth consecutive year, in 2022, Hamad Medical Corporation’s (HMC) Trauma Programme demonstrated a mortality rate lower than North American counterparts participating in the American College of Surgeons Trauma Quality Improvement Programme (TQIP) Benchmark Report.

The Trauma System, recently reaccredited by Accreditation Canada international, provides the full spectrum of care for more than 3,000 victims of moderate to severe trauma in Qatar annually.

As per the Spring 2023 ACS TQIP Benchmark Report, Qatar’s risk-adjusted mortality rate is 2.3% compared to the TQIP average of 8%. Looking at the trending performance over time, the rate has remained low since 2018 ACS TQIP Benchmark Report.

Dr Hassan al-Thani, head of Trauma and Vascular Services at HMC, said HMC’s Trauma System has cared for all severely injured patients in Qatar since it was established.

“The Trauma System’s role is providing life-saving treatment, through the Ambulance Service



Dr Hassan al-Thani

and Trauma Centre, as well as the work done by the rehabilitation teams to maximise these patients’ recovery, which is of great importance to Qatar’s population. HMC’s Trauma System is equally committed to injury prevention by improving safety in Qatar with the ultimate aim of reducing the number of people suffering traumatic injuries,” Dr Hassan, said.

“Despite the increase in the sever-

ity of injuries and number of trauma activations over the past four years, the Trauma System, has complied with and exceeded in some cases, standards set by the Trauma Quality Improvement Programme of the American College Surgeons, Committee on Trauma.”

According to Dr Sandro Rizoli, medical director of Trauma at Hamad General Hospital, patients entering the trauma system undergo an immediate and urgent assessment which can include triage and resuscitation in the Trauma Resuscitation Unit.

“From there, their treatment could involve definitive surgical treatment in the operating rooms or interventional radiology, critical care in the Trauma Intensive Care Unit, recovery in the Surgical Unit and continuing care in the Trauma Outpatients Unit,” Dr Rizoli said.

“In addition to providing direct and immediate care, the trauma section co-ordinates multidisciplinary teams from a variety of specialties to each and every patient receives not just optimal trauma care, but also the ongoing medical and emotional support they need.”

Peru embassy participates in GU-Q cultural exhibition

The Peru embassy in Qatar participated along with other Latin American and Caribbean countries in the Cultural Exhibition ‘Seeds of Resilience and Peace’ organised by Georgetown University in Qatar. The exhibition showcased unique artifacts from across Latin America and the Caribbean, celebrating the region’s rich history and culture. The launch of the Cultural Exhibition was attended by Dr Brendan L Hill, the Senior Associate Dean for Students, along with representatives of Latin American diplomatic missions to Qatar. From the Republic of Peru, the significant symbol of medicine in Peru “Tumi” was displayed at the Exhibition; “Tumi” holds a profound significance in Peruvian history and culture, used mainly by pre-Hispanic civilisations on the coast of Peru since the 3rd century BC.



Peruvian ambassador Jose A Benzaquen Perea at the event.



Qatar Travel Mart set to showcase latest trends

Event begins at Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre from Nov 20

Qatar Travel Mart (QTM) 2023 is set to take place from November 20-22 at Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre, under the theme, 'Discover Places, People & Cultures'.

The event, with the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs HE Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, is organised by NeXTfairs for Exhibitions and Conference, a statement said yesterday.

QTM 2023 is described as a premier platform for travel and tourism, bringing together the world's most exquisite destinations to showcase the latest trends in Sports, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions), Business, Cultural, Leisure, Luxury, Medical and Halal tourism.

This year's event features an international conference, the Global Village, a gala dinner, an exclusive Hosted Buyers' Programme, and a B2B matchmaking programme and app that facilitates connections between exhibitors and buyers. These tools enable participants to schedule meetings in advance, access interactive floor plans, stay updated on event activities, and access conference agendas and sessions.

QTM's sponsors and partners are: Strategic Partner: Qatar Tourism;

ism; Title Sponsor: Saudi Tourism Authority, Founding Partner: Katara Hospitality; Event Supporters: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry; Official Airline Partner: Qatar Airways; Official Transport Partner: Mowasalat; Official Destination Management Company: Experience Qatar; Hospitality Partner: Ezdan Palace; Official Insurance: Qatar International Group, Platinum Sponsor: Retaj Hotels and Hospitality; Association Partners: AMFORHT (World Association for Hospitality Tourism Education and Training), World Tourism Association for Culture and Heritage, World Leisure Organisation (WLO) and the Islamic Centre for Development and Trade.

Rawad Sleem, co-founder and general manager of NeXTfairs for Exhibitions and Conferences, said: "Qatar Travel Mart owes its success to the invaluable support of our esteemed sponsors and partners. Together, we are dedicated to cultivating a unified environment within the travel and tourism sector, encouraging collaboration, and driving progress and innovation throughout the industry."

At the core of QTM 2023 is a three-day international conference that attracts a distinguished gathering of industry experts and luminaries. Attendees range from academics, researchers and policymakers to experienced consultants, government officials, students and professionals from

related tourism fields, creating an exceptional blend of minds.

Khalid Hassan Kafood, media and government relations manager of Mowasalat Company (Karwa), stated: "As Qatar's largest transport provider, we feel that it is our mandate to be a driving force behind the country's tourism industry. We co-operate with Qatar Tourism and the local DMCs as a dedicated partner in crafting unforgettable travel experiences. Being the official transport provider of the QTM is a natural result of years of experience in the field, which we seek to share for the benefit of the industry."

In partnership with QT, the Hosted Buyer Programme offers exhibitors and visitors a unique opportunity to engage with over 100 international buyers. Pre-arranged face-to-face meetings catalyse potential investments and transformative partnerships with tourism experts, fostering impactful business collaborations.

The QTM Gala Dinner, set for November 21, features entertainment, speakers and opportunities for social interactions. QTM 2023's Global Village is a hub for diverse cultures, connecting different parts of the world under one roof.

It serves as a remarkable showcase of heritage, traditions and philosophies. Visitors also can explore Qatar's rich traditions and heritage through cultural tours, providing a deeper understanding of the country's unique offerings.

Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas wins awards



Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas won two awards at the first edition of Qatar Tourism Awards for 2023, a statement said yesterday. In addition to the '5-Star Hotel' award, the resort's luxury eforea Spa, was honoured with the 'Spa Outstanding Service Excellence' award. "We are immensely proud to have received this recognition during the Qatar Tourism Awards," said Rishab Sahney, resort commercial director at Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas. Nestled in the Arabian Peninsula and offering unparalleled luxury and amenities, Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas has a picturesque beachfront location.

ConteQ Expo24 panel organises stakeholder meeting for companies

The exhibition organising committee yesterday hosted a stakeholder engagement meeting at the Public Works Authority (Ashghal) headquarters to introduce ConteQ Expo24 to companies in the construction, technology and services sectors.

According to an official statement from Ashghal, representatives of more than 45 companies are set to showcase cutting-edge advancements in technology for the construction and services industries. Scheduled from September 16 to 18 next year at the Qatar National Convention Centre, ConteQ Expo24 promises to be a hub of innovation and progress.

During the meeting, the exhibition's objectives were presented with focus on its pivotal role as a platform to exhibit the latest in technological advancements for these sectors.

"We are excited to unveil ConteQ Expo24, a testament to our commitment to progress in the construction and services domains. This expo will spotlight groundbreaking technology, fostering a



new era of innovation and collaboration," stated engineer Salem al-Shawi, chairman of the exhibition organising committee and technical office manager at Ashghal. Further information is available at www.conteq-expo.com



Precision Medicine and Functional Genomics conference concludes

QNA
Doha

Sidra Medicine, a QF entity, yesterday announced the launch of its Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) facility, on the fourth and final day of its research conference, Precision Medicine and Functional Genomics (PMFG 2023).

PMFG 2023 welcomed nearly 880 registered attendees, speakers, exhibitors and partners over the four days of the conference, which was held from November 11-14.

Dr Iyabo Tinubu Karch, CEO of Sidra Medicine said: "The GMP facility marks a key milestone in Sidra Medicine's Precision Medicine journey, as it will help us develop better treatment protocols and possibly cures, for paediatric diseases including cancers, genetic and rare diseases. It will allow us to quickly scale up the manufacturing of a medication or treatment protocols such as gene therapy or cell therapy for patients in the wards. This is why it is particularly fitting that we make this announcement on the final day of our PMFG research conference, which features sessions on the treatment of cancers and rare disorders."

The GMP facility will develop and manufacture individualised therapeutic products and biopharmaceuticals onsite; allowing for a much faster process of turning basic research into actual products that can be used in patients.

It will also accommodate cord blood banking and haematopoietic stem cells transplantation, which can treat more than 60 dis-



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eases including cancers like leukaemia and lymphoma. Dr Chiara Cugno, director of the Advanced Cell Therapy Core and of the GMP Facility at Sidra Medicine said: "Having our own GMP facility is a critical path to treatment for a wide range of our young patients with cancer, blood disorders like thalassaemia and sickle cell disease, rare congenital and autoimmune disorders like type 1 diabetes. We are finally closing the loop

of precision medicine from the bench to the bedside. The biggest impact the GMP facility will have is that we can now offer advanced and/or experimental cell and gene therapies for patients, who don't need to travel abroad to seek such treatment. This is particularly life-changing for children requiring gene therapy approaches or haematopoietic stem cells transplantation, which can take several months." (QNA)

Nord Anglia Education launches INSIGHTS digital publication offering a refreshingly honest view on the future of education

Leading international schools provider Nord Anglia Education today announced the launch of its groundbreaking new education magazine called INSIGHTS.

The new publication offers a comprehensive look into hot-topic aspects of global education, tackling topics from emotional health in young people to the role of technology, artificial intelligence in learning, and what the future of education and wellbeing could look like.

Lord David Puttnam, Chairman, Nord Anglia's Education Advisory Board said: "We're proud to unveil the first edition of INSIGHTS, which is filled with informative articles and expert opinions. Our mission is to shed light on the complexities of modern education as we all strive to prepare the next generation for a rapidly changing world."



Executive Principal Liz Lamb from Compass International School said: "We are thrilled to introduce INSIGHTS, the latest magazine from Nord Anglia Education. This publication serves as a portal to enlightenment, motivation, and boundless possibilities. Notably, our article on social purpose emphasises our commitment to educating young minds and encouraging them to harnessing the skills and tools they've acquired to drive positive change inside and outside of the classroom. At Nord Anglia Education, we instill values that empower students to broaden their horizons, cultivate empathy, and ultimately evolve into global citizens."

Nord Anglia's new online digital magazine, 'Insights,' is a valuable resource for local and international parents, students, and academics here in Qatar. Rooted in the rich cultural tapestry and core values, 'Insights' celebrates the importance of education as a shared endeavour. Packed with thought-provoking articles, educational resources, and expert insights, it fosters engagement in education, student curiosity, and academic growth while embracing the cultural values of community, knowledge, and innovation. With its global reach and local relevance, 'Insights' connects communities in Qatar, empowering individuals to embrace these values on their journey towards educational excellence.

WHAT'S UNDER THE COVER?

While new articles are launching regularly, at its launch INSIGHTS' articles explore how families can better prepare the next generation for success our rapidly changing world:

- 'In Pursuit of Happiness' delving into the essential role emotional wellbeing plays in the lives of our young learners, emphasising the role of emotional well-being for long term success. Various experts weigh in on the importance of family and schools promoting happiness, suggesting it may be a more significant predictor of adult well-being than academic achievement.
- The Fourth Education Revolution' pushes us to ponder the transformative potential of artificial intelligence in education and argues that AI could revolutionise education by offering more personalised learning experiences. It suggests that AI can address issues like social inequality a student mental health while also relieving teacher workload.
- Life in the Skills Locker' takes a turn towards the importance of soft skills, urging us to think beyond traditional academic metrics. This article highlights the importance of skills such as emotional intelligence and critical thinking for future success. Schools are gradually incorporating STEAM and problem-solving projects to prepare students for a rapidly changing world.
- 'Knowledge is Power?' questions the evolving role of memorisation in our age of information abundance. While foundational knowledge is essential the emphasis is on developing agile learners who can apply their knowledge in real world contexts.
- 'Social Purpose. Real World Value or Virtual Signalling?' challenges us to reconsider what authentic social impact looks like in educational settings. Driven by Gen Z's interest in social and environmental causes, institutions are offering resources for impactful student-led initiatives.

In addition to its collection of thought-provoking articles, INSIGHTS will also serve as a platform to share the latest research findings, interviews with educational leaders, and opinion pieces on best practices in teaching and learning.



Bombing of Qatar panel for Gaza reconstruction HQ is war crime: League

QNA
Cairo

The League of Arab States condemned, in strongest terms, the Israeli occupation's bombing of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, considering it a war crime added to the record of Israeli crimes in the brutal war waged against Gaza Strip and its civilian population. In a statement released yesterday, Secretary-General of the Arab League Ahmed Aboul Gheit said these crimes targeting civilians and civilian facilities should not go unaccounted. Aboul Gheit added that targeting an organisation serving to reconstruct what was left behind by the devastation and destruction caused by the occupation reveals the nature of this barbaric Israeli attack and its lack of commitment to the most basic

principles of human conscience and morals, not to mention the international humanitarian law, which criminalises targeting of civilian facilities in times of war. Meanwhile, Egypt condemned the Israeli occupation forces' bombing of the headquarters of Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, saying this represents a blatant extension to a series of Israeli violations of international law, which stipulate the necessity of protecting civilians and refraining from targeting civilian facilities. For its part, Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed in a statement that bombing an important headquarters belonging to an Arab country that plays an essential role in supporting the reconstruction efforts of Gaza Strip is inconsistent with the principles and values, and cannot be justified under any pretext or false justifications. The statement expressed also

Egypt's solidarity and full support with Qatar against this brutal attack, reiterating its call on the international parties to take serious and clear stances and assume its responsibilities towards putting an end to Israeli assaults in Gaza Strip, in addition to describing the violations by its true names without equivocation, and holding their perpetrators accountable. Meanwhile, the Association of Secretaries-General of Arab Parliaments condemned in the strongest terms the Israeli occupations bombing of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, as yet a new challenge to the international community and a blatant violation of all international laws, conventions, and humanitarian norms, QNA added from Kuwait. In a statement yesterday, the association considered that the occupation forces continued targeting of civilians and civilian facilities, including residential

communities, hospitals, schools, places of worship, and others, as being the result of the international community's inability to hold this entity accountable, and exacerbated by the policy of double standards and silence adopted by some prominent countries regarding the crimes committed by the occupation forces. The Association of Secretaries-General of Arab Parliaments called on the UN and all international human rights organisations to take a firm and deterrent position against the Israeli occupation, and to hold its extremist government accountable before the International Criminal Court for the humanitarian crimes it commits in the Palestinian territories. UAE CONDEMNS The United Arab Emirates (UAE) also strongly condemned the Israeli attack, affirming its absolute rejection of targeting the Committee and all civilian

institutions and facilities in the Gaza Strip, QNA reported from Abu Dhabi. The UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed in a statement the need for an immediate ceasefire and said the main priority is to preserve the lives of civilians and ensure that humanitarian, relief and medical aid reaches them in the Strip safely, urgently, sustainably and without hindrance. The ministry called on the international community to make every effort to avoid further escalation of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. IRAQ CRITICISES Iraq's Ministry of Foreign Affairs also condemned in the strongest terms the Israeli occupation's bombing of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, QNA added from Baghdad. The ministry's spokesperson Ahmed al-Sahhaf said in a statement on Monday that Iraq

condemns in the strongest terms the Israeli occupation's continued systematic violation of international law, their crimes against Palestinian citizens and their repeated and blatant attacks on buildings and service facilities, the most recent of which was the bombing of the headquarters of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza on Monday, with no regard for the international demands for the immediate need to stop this aggressive war on the Gaza Strip. Al-Sahhaf affirmed the solidarity of the Iraqi government and its people with those in Gaza and demanded an end to the hostile attacks on innocent lives, which is a serious violation of the provisions of international and humanitarian law. The ministry also renewed its call to the Security Council and the international community to assume their responsibilities and put an end to these violations that have reached an indescribable level.

Heavy rain in Gaza brings new fears for Palestinians

Reuters
Gaza/Geneva

Heavy rain in Gaza yesterday brought new concerns and challenges for Palestinians, many of whom are homeless and living in makeshift tents after weeks of Israeli bombardment. The start of the rainy season and the possibility of flooding increased fears that the densely populated enclave's sewage system will be overwhelmed and disease will spread. At a UN shelter in Khan Yunis in southern Gaza, the rain brought dismay for displaced people who woke to find the clothes they put out to dry the night had been drenched by rain. "We were in a house built of concrete and now we are in a tent," said Fayeza Srour, who sought safety in the south after Israel began its military offensive in response to the Oct first week storming by Hamas fighters into southern Israel from Gaza. "The nylon tarps, the tent and the wood will not resist any flooding... People sleeping on the floor, what will they do? Where will they go?" Winters can be wet and cold in Gaza, and the enclave is sometimes hit by flooding. Another displaced Gazan, Karim Mreish, said people at the shelter were praying for the rain to stop. "Those children, those women, those elderly pray that it doesn't rain," he said. "If it does it will be very difficult and words will fail to describe our suffering." The World Health Organisation (WHO) said last week that Gaza faced an increased risk of disease spreading because Israeli air bombardments had disrupted the health system,



Children take shelter from the rain under a tent at a school run by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

limited access to clean water and caused people to crowd in shelters. It voiced concern yesterday about the prospect of rain causing flooding and overwhelming already meagre and damaged sewage facilities. "We've already got outbreaks of diarrhoeal diseases," WHO spokesperson Margaret Harris said in Geneva. She said there were more than 30,000 cases of diarrhoea in a period when WHO would normally expect 2,000 cases. "We've got so much infrastructural damage. We've got a lack of clean water. We've got people very, very crowded together. This is another reason why we are begging for a ceasefire to happen now," she said. Ahmed Bayram, a spokesperson for the Norwegian Refugee Council, said the start of the rainy season could mark "the most difficult week in Gaza since the (military) escalation began." "Heavy

rains will mean more impeded movement for people and rescue teams," he said. "It will make it harder to save people stuck under the rubble, or to bury the dead, all of this amidst ceaseless bombardment and a fuel shortage catastrophe." Facing the daunting scale of the humanitarian needs of Gaza's 2.3mn people, aid organisations have been unable to plan for the challenges posed by rain and flooding. Juliette Touma, Director of Communications at the UN Palestinian refugee agency (UNRWA), said the organisation was focused on meeting the population's needs "here and now." "We're barely able to make it from one hour to the next ourselves, because the situation on the ground is so, so, so desperate," she said. Touma said just a small amount of rain could cause the streets of Gaza to flood, given the sewage system's inability to absorb water.

"This is on a normal day. This is not when half of Gaza, if not more, is in rubble," she said. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said it had also been unable to plan far beyond Gazans' daily needs. "The situation is so volatile and complicated as a result of the hostilities that we have focused really squarely on the humanitarian consequences as they shift from one day to the next," said William Schomburg, head of the ICRC delegation in Gaza. The rain brought relief for some displaced Palestinians in the central Gaza Strip town of Deir al-Balah who had not been able to drink clean and fresh water in the past weeks. Some placed plastic buckets outside their tents to gather rainwater to drink. "We have been drinking salty water for 30 days. There has been no fresh water. I have just collected this from the rainwater," said Um Mohamed Shahin.



People walk past buildings destroyed following the Israeli bombardment of Gaza, in Bureij in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday.



Women react as they mourn Palestinians who were killed in an Israeli raid, in Tulkarm, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, yesterday.



Demonstrators take part in a protest in support of Palestinians in Gaza, near the British embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, yesterday.

Conflict brings misery to nursing mothers

AFP
Rafah

With eyes wide open and his tiny fists clenched tightly, Mohamed Kullab is just a few days old, having started life in Gaza amid the chaos of the Israel-Hamas war. "Nobody should be born in such circumstances," sighed his mother Fadwa Kullab, who has sought shelter at a UN school building in Gaza's southern city of Rafah. Kullab now has seven children but said Mohamed's "birth was the most difficult experience of my life". Like other mothers of newborns AFP spoke to in Gaza, she said her baby son had been refusing her breast milk. "I'm not eating well," Kullab said, stressing that she had successfully breastfed her other six children. Breastfeeding mothers are advised to drink at least three litres of water a day – but finding clean water and food in Gaza is becoming harder by the day. The already poverty-stricken and long blockaded Palestinian territory was plunged into its worst ever war after its Hamas rulers launched their storming of Israel in the first week of October.

The war unleashed by the attack has seen Israel relentlessly bombard and besiege Gaza and launch a ground invasion. More than 11,200 Palestinians have been killed, most of them women and children, according to the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza. Nearly two thirds of Gaza's 36 hospitals, already overwhelmed with war-wounded, have been knocked out of service due to a lack of fuel to power their generators. Gaza City's biggest hospital Al-Shifa, packed with patients and displaced, is now inside a fierce urban combat zone, with its director reporting scores of dead buried in a mass grave in the complex. Among those who died were seven premature babies in its disabled neonatal unit, Gaza's deputy health minister Youssef Abu Rish said. Countless new mothers in Gaza now fear the very worst, among them Kullab who said she feels helpless and unable to protect her children. She has struggled to find baby formula and nappies, she said as she cradled her tiny son, swaddled in blankets. Another woman, Najwa Salem, 37, said her newborn has jaundice, marked by yellowish skin and eyes. The condition can be worsened by low milk intake and dehydration



Fadwa Kullab carries her newborn son, Mohamed at a UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) shelter in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

and is often treated with daylight exposure. To minimise the risk of neurological damage, Salem would like to take her infant boy outside, but said she hesitates because of the "rubbish piling up and the bombing". Inside the UN school classroom Salem now shares with about 70 others, the mother worried because the scar from her Caesarian section had become infected. Although she gave birth in a hospital, she said she was asked to leave after just one night "because they had too many wounded people to care for".

Outside, the huge amount of dust from the incessant bombing is causing breathing difficulties that spell special dangers for infants. Another woman, eight-months-pregnant Umm Ibrahim Alayan, complained of coughing fits since she fled her neighbourhood as it was being bombed. Her intense coughing may have provoked the early contractions she has suffered, she said, her hands flitting nervously between her rounded belly and her face. "I'm terrified, all I want to do is hold my baby in my arms," she said, sobbing. "I feel I could lose

the baby at any moment." The UN Population Fund's top official for the Palestinian territories, Dominic Allen, said pregnant women in Gaza "have nowhere to go, there is nowhere safe". The UN says there are more than 50,000 pregnant women and an average of 180 births a day in Gaza, with a population of 2.4mn. "We estimate that a minimum of 15% of these births will have complications, which will require basic or comprehensive obstetric care," Allen said. The war is creating "a high-stress environment" likely to foster "complications of birth and may lead to miscarriages," he said. The UN agency has cited the "nightmarish" case of one woman discharged just three hours after giving birth. It said there were shortages of blood to treat postpartum haemorrhage and of antiseptic for stitches and treatment after umbilical cords are cut. So far, the UN agency has managed to get 8,000 delivery kits into Gaza. They contain umbilical cord cutters, blankets for newborns, disposable sheets and other items. But these only address a fraction of the need, and Gaza's health ministry says some women have been forced to give birth without a midwife in the overcrowded shelters

UNREST
Mali junta seizes rebel stronghold town of Kidal

Mali's army has recaptured the strategic northern town of Kidal, a stronghold of Tuareg-dominated separatist groups that has long posed a major sovereignty issue for the ruling junta. AFP reported from Bamako. The capture of Kidal is a significant symbolic success for Mali's military leaders, who seized power in 2020. Violence has escalated in the north of Mali since August, with the military, rebels and militants vying for control as the UN stabilisation mission, Minusma, withdraws from the country and evacuates its camps, triggering a race to seize territory.

ELECTION
Liberians vote in presidential run-off

Liberians were voting yesterday to decide whether to hand former football star George Weah a second term as president despite a mixed record or elect political veteran Joseph Boakai. AFP reported from Monrovia. "I'm in the race to win", Boakai said and other journalists outside his home near the capital Monrovia after casting his ballot. He alleged that the ruling party was "panicking" and taking shortcuts including pre-marking ballots. "We hear about all of that, but we are not afraid", he said.

MILITANCY

Myanmar rebels seek to control border areas near India

Anti-junta fighters in Myanmar’s Chin state are trying to gain control of part of the porous border with India, after taking over two military outposts on the mountainous frontier. Dozens of rebels battled the Myanmar military from dawn to dusk on Monday to overrun two camps next to India’s Mizoram state, Chin National Front (CNF) vice-chairman Sui Khar said. Spokespersons for Myanmar’s military and India’s foreign ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Following the rebel attacks, 43 Myanmar soldiers crossed over to the Indian side and were held by Indian security forces in Mizoram.

RULING

Rajapaksa brothers ‘guilty of sparking economic crisis’

Sri Lanka’s Supreme Court issued a symbolic ruling that the Rajapaksa brothers - including two ex-presidents - were guilty of triggering the island’s worst financial crisis by mishandling the economy. The case was filed by corruption watchdog Transparency International Sri Lanka and other four activists against top former officials including ex-presidents Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Mahinda Rajapaksa. It also included their younger brother, ex-finance minister Basil Rajapaksa, two former central bank governors and other treasury officials. The crisis sparked months of public protests with dire shortages of food, fuel and medicines.

FALLOUT

Thailand drops joint patrols with China police after backlash

Thailand yesterday rolled back plans of joint patrols with Chinese police in popular tourist spots after public backlash. Tourism officials on Sunday floated the idea of having Chinese and Thai police patrol much-visited areas to build confidence among tourists, including Chinese nationals. The plan, however, sparked uproar online, drawing criticism that it compromised national sovereignty, and a rebuke from the country’s police chief. “There are many alternative ways to build confidence for tourists in Thailand...but we will not have joint patrols,” Tourism Minister Sudawan Wangsuphakijkosol said yesterday.

COMMENT

Prime minister-elect not to attend APEC: New Zealand govt

New Zealand prime minister-elect Christopher Luxon will not attend Apec in San Francisco and instead the country’s caretaker trade minister will represent the country, the political parties confirmed. A spokesperson for the caretaker government said Damien O’Connor, who remains the country’s trade minister until a new government is sworn in, will attend the Apec meeting on behalf of the government this week. The National Party won the largest share of votes in the October 14 election but needs the support of both right-wing ACT New Zealand and the populist New Zealand First Parties to form a government. Negotiations are ongoing.

Rescuers battle to free trapped workers



Members of rescue teams yesterday prepare to conduct a rescue operation after a portion of an under-construction tunnel collapsed in Uttarkashi in the northern state of Uttarakhand, India. Excavators have been removing debris since Sunday morning from the site to create an escape tunnel for the 40 workers, who are all alive.

UN states concerned China, Russia helping N Korea, says Austin

Reuters
Seoul

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin yesterday said UN member states enforcing the Korean War armistice are concerned that China and Russia are helping North Korea expand its military capabilities by enabling Pyongyang to evade UN sanctions. Austin was speaking at a meeting in South Korea with defence ministers and representatives from the 17 countries that make up the UN Command (UNC) - the body that oversees the armistice.

“We are deeply concerned that the PRC and Russia are helping the DPRK expand its capabilities by enabling it to evade sanctions from the UN Security Council,” Austin said, referring to the People’s Republic of China and North Korea’s official name, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

“We’re also troubled by the recent growth in military co-operation between Russia and the DPRK,” he said.

Washington has accused North Korea of supplying military equipment to Russia for use in its war with Ukraine, and Moscow of providing technical military support to help the North.

North Korea and Russia have denied any arms deals, though their leaders pledged closer military co-operation when they met in September in Russia’s far east.

China, North Korea’s closest

ally, has said it was complying with international obligations.

The UNC “will be united upon any renewal of hostilities or armed attack on the Korean peninsula,” a joint statement between UNC and South Korea said, condemning North Korea’s “unlawful” nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

“If the countries that backed North Korea during the Korean War ever try to help again, then those countries will also receive grave punishment from the international community along with North Korea”

South Korean Defence Minister Shin Won-sik said Pyongyang had been warned not to attempt any aggressive acts, noting that unlike in 1950, when the Korean War broke out, North Korea is now a member state of the United Nations.

“If North Korea ever invades the South again, it will be self-contradictory, where a UN member state would be attacking the UN Command,” Shin told the meeting. “If the countries that backed North Korea during the Korean War ever try to help again, then those countries will also receive grave punishment from the international community along with North Korea.”

China and the Soviet Union backed the North in combat against UN member states led by the US.

China and North Korea are

parties to the armistice with the UNC.

The 17 member countries of the UNC, which include the US, Britain, Australia and Türkiye, sent troops or contributed medical support during the 1950-53 Korean War.

Established in 1950, the UNC was mandated to restore peace and enforce the armistice while acting as a channel of communication with North Korea.

It is led by the commander of the US military stationed in South Korea.

North Korea on Monday called the UNC “a US tool for confrontation” that has nothing to do with the United Nations and an “illegal war organisation” that must be dissolved if the outbreak of a new war on the Korean peninsula is to be prevented.

On Monday, Austin and Shin agreed to revise a bilateral security agreement aimed at deterring North Korea’s growing nuclear and missile threats.

The defence chiefs also agreed to step up joint drills and co-operate with Japan to deter and better prepare for any North Korean attack.

South Korea, the US and other UN member states agreed to expand exercises, the joint statement said, while seeing the need for dialogue as a path toward peace on the peninsula.

The US and South Korean navies are carrying out joint drills this week off the east coast of the peninsula, including anti-submarine exercises, the South Korean navy said yesterday.

Tesla to double component imports from India: minister

Reuters
Bengaluru

US electric car maker Tesla is planning to double the number of components it imports from India, Indian Trade Minister Piyush Goyal said yesterday through a post on social media platform X.

“Proud to see the growing importance of auto component suppliers from India in the Tesla EV supply chain. It is on its way to double its components imports from India,” Goyal posted on X, earlier called Twitter, after visiting Tesla’s manufactur-

ing facility at Fremont, California.

He was, however, unable to meet Tesla chief Elon Musk during his visit to the plant, Goyal added.

He said in September Tesla was aiming to source components worth between \$1.7bn and \$1.9bn from India this year, having bought \$1bn of components last year.

The minister’s visit to the US was supposed to include discussions with Musk around Tesla’s plans to setup an Indian factory, manufacturing a \$24,000 car there, sourcing more components and establishing charging

infrastructure across the nation, Reuters reported last week.

It was earlier reported that India is considering tax cuts on the imports of completely-built units of electric vehicles, for a period of up to five years, as it tries to entice the likes of Tesla to sell and eventually make its cars in the country.

The Indian government is working on an electric vehicle policy that would allow international car manufacturers to import battery-powered vehicles on concessional duty rates if they commit to eventually building them in India, people familiar with the matter said.

Australia plans to boost AUKUS tech-sharing

A new Australian law will toughen restrictions on how industries and universities share defence technology with foreigners, while exempting AUKUS partners Britain and the US from such controls, a draft of the measure shows. The law is meant to replicate US export controls to defence technology, seen as a key step to beginning the AUKUS plan to build a new class of N-powered submarine in Australia and UK. Scrutiny by the US state department of Australia’s ability to protect defence secrets has partly contributed to delays by the US Congress in passing legislation to allow the sale of Virginia-class submarines to Australia and enable greater sharing of defence technology for AUKUS. The proposed law creates three criminal offences, further restricts sharing of defence technology to foreign persons inside and outside Australia, while allowing licence-free sharing among the AUKUS partners.

King Charles celebrates 75th birthday by launching new food project



Britain’s King Charles and Queen Camilla visit FareShare Didcot to launch the Coronation Food Project on his 75th birthday, in Didcot, Britain, yesterday. The scheme aims to tackle food poverty and help cut the millions of tonnes of discarded food at the same time.

Russia to supply, license production of anti-aircraft weapons to India

Russia has signed a contract to supply Igla-S hand-held anti-aircraft missiles to India and allow production of the Igla there under licence, the Russian state news agency TASS quoted a top arms export official as saying yesterday. The Igla-S is a man-portable air defence system (MANPADS) that can be fired by an individual or crew to bring down an enemy aircraft. “We have already signed the corresponding document and now, together with an Indian private company, we are organising the production of Igla-S MANPADS in India,” TASS quoted Alexander Mikheyev, head of the state arms exporter Rosoboronexport, as saying. India is the world’s largest arms importer and Russia remains its largest supplier despite the damage to the reputation of its army and weaponry from the war in Ukraine, where Russia has suffered numerous setbacks

at the hands of a smaller but highly motivated and Western-equipped military. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Russia accounted for 45% of India’s arms imports between 2018 and 2022, with France providing 29% and the US 11%. Another Russian state news agency, RIA, quoted Mikheyev earlier as saying that “Rosoboronexport is working with Indian private and public enterprises to organise joint production of aviation weapons and integrate them into the existing aviation fleet in India”. No details were provided about which Indian companies would be involved or when potential production would start. Mikheyev said Rosoboronexport and Indian partners had provided the Indian ministry of defence with Su-30MKI fighter jets, tanks, armoured vehicles and shells.

UK’s Sunak to learn fate of Rwanda migrant plan today

Reuters
London

Britain’s Supreme Court will today deliver its ruling on whether the government can go ahead with its plan to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda, a decision which could have far-reaching ramifications for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

At hearings in October, government lawyers argued that the top court should overturn a ruling that the scheme to send thousands of asylum seekers more than 6,400km to East Africa was unlawful as Rwanda was not a safe third country.

Sunak hopes the Rwanda scheme will help stop the flow of migrants across the Channel from Europe in small boats, and so deliver one of his key policy pledges and energise his ailing premiership ahead of an election expected next year.

With his Conservative Party languishing about 20 points behind in the polls and immigration a major concern for some voters, victory in the Supreme Court would be seized on by the government as a sign it was getting to grips with the issue. Defeat would be viewed as another failure.

The court’s decision could also magnify calls from some Conservative lawmakers for Britain to pull out

of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), especially after Sunak upset some on the right of his party by sacking Suella Braverman, a vocal critic of the treaty, as the minister in charge of the issue on Monday.

The government has suffered a number of major defeats in the Supreme Court in recent years, most notably when it found former prime minister Boris Johnson had acted illegally when he suspended parliament in 2019.

The five senior judges, including the court’s president Robert Reed, will deliver their decision at about 1000GMT today.

During three days of hearings, the

judges heard from government lawyers who said there was a “serious and pressing need” for the Rwanda scheme.

They argued Rwanda was “less attractive” to those who might come to Britain, and so the scheme would be a deterrent, while the deal struck with the East African country would ensure the human rights of migrants deported there would be protected.

“There is a strong public interest in deterring illegal, dangerous and unnecessary journeys from safe third countries to the UK, whilst ensuring that those who continue to make such journeys are removed to a safe third country,” they said.

Rwanda has said it would offer

migrants sent from Britain the opportunity to build a new, safe life.

But lawyers representing asylum seekers from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Vietnam and Sudan who face being sent to Rwanda argued it was unlawful to send people there because it would breach the ECHR, and put them at risk of being returned to their home countries despite having valid asylum claims. They also said asylum seekers faced inhuman or degrading treatment within Rwanda, and their argument has support from the United Nations’ refugee agency.

The Rwanda deal, struck by former prime minister Boris Johnson in April 2022, was designed to deter asylum seekers from mak-

ing dangerous journeys across the Channel, and Sunak has made ending the influx one of five priorities as he seeks to turn around his and his party’s fortunes.

“We will stop the boats,” James Cleverly, Braverman’s replacement as interior minister, said on X, formerly known as Twitter.

This year more than 27,000 people have arrived in Britain on small boats without permission, after a record 45,755 were detected in 2022.

The scheme was put on hold in June last year after the European Court of Human Rights granted a last-minute injunction, blocking the first planned flight. That directive has now expired.

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GULF TIMES

Slippery gains: Oil’s march towards \$100 loses momentum

These are, for sure, tough times for the oil market. Just weeks ago, Brent crude was on the cusp of finally fulfilling industry forecasts of a return to \$100 a barrel as record fuel demand and Saudi Arabia’s supply cuts depleted global oil inventories. The eruption of conflict in the Middle East shortly after heightened the risk of a price spike. But on November 8 the benchmark retreated to a three-month low under \$80 a barrel. Concerns about supply are giving way to doubts about plunging refinery profits in China and Europe, lacklustre physical cargo trading and an uncertain economic outlook for the US.

The situation is a sharp reversal from late September, when Brent rallied above \$97 a barrel and the Opec alliance projected an unprecedented decline in oil inventories amid record fuel demand and extra production cuts by Saudi Arabia.

Oil prices rose on Monday after Opec’s monthly market report eased market concerns about waning demand in the United States and China. Prices steadied yesterday as the International Energy Agency indicated the market isn’t as tight as previously expected, even as demand continues to climb.

But investors had been worried after the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) has said the country’s crude oil production this year will rise by slightly less than previously expected and that demand will fall.

Weak economic data last week from China, the world’s biggest crude oil importer, also raised fears of faltering demand. Chinese refiners asked for less supply for December from Saudi Arabia, the world’s largest exporter.

Falling oil prices may spell relief for big consuming nations like the US, where gasoline prices near \$4 a gallon have squeezed households and threatened to become a political liability for President Joe Biden. And it could offer respite for central banks such as the Federal Reserve, as it seeks to wrap up a spell of prolonged monetary tightening. On the other hand, oil’s retreat is a particular setback for Saudi Arabia, which leads a coalition between the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries and other major crude producers including Russia. Next year, oil supplies from the US, Brazil and Guyana are also projected to swell. Many traders have said they were having to discount cargoes due to weaker demand from refineries, which face a slide in the profits for making fuels like gasoline and high shipping costs. European consumption of diesel and naphtha – fuels that power trucks, trains, ships and construction – has plunged. Goldman Sachs Group, which had led Wall Street’s calls for the return of \$100 crude, said in a report last month that the acute inventory declines anticipated by the industry had yet to materialise.

Next year, US gasoline demand per capita will plunge to the lowest in two decades, just as production climbs to a record above 13mn barrels a day, according to the EIA.

Oil’s see-saw trajectory is a double-edged sword. Major oil producing countries will lose money regardless of the market share they enjoy. The Gulf countries produce oil at the lowest cost; but due to high government spending, they need higher prices to balance their budgets.

But big importing nations such as China, India and Germany could get some relief from falling energy bills. But cheap oil can cut investments to develop new oil and gas fields.

Matter-of-factly, few analysts would realistically expect oil prices to return to the sustainable \$100-plus levels in the long-term. But oil companies say global energy future envisages rising demand and population growth, making oil an important fuel for decades to come.

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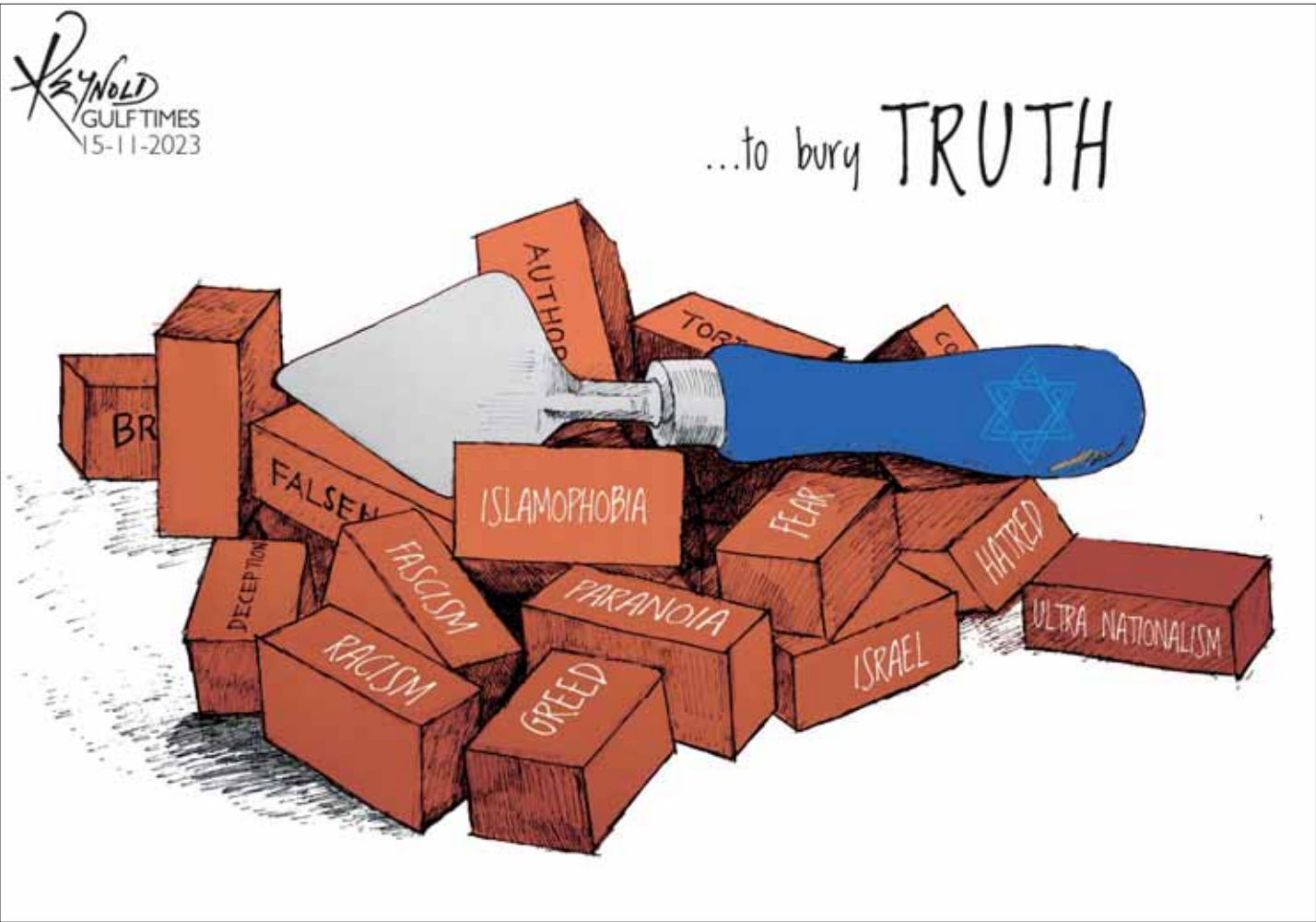
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Panama court may revoke First Quantum copper mine contract

By Valentine Hilaire and Divya Rajagopal

Panama’s top court is likely to rule against Canadian miner First Quantum when it decides on the fate of a key copper mine contract in the coming weeks, a majority of lawyers in a Reuters survey said, citing precedent for a similar verdict.

The court’s nine judges are weighing whether to revoke First Quantum’s contract for the Cobre Panama mine, a significant resource that contributes 5% to Panama’s GDP and 1% to global copper production.

The contested contract, which was approved on Oct. 20, provides First Quantum a 20-year mining right with an option to extend for another 20 years, in return for \$375mn in annual revenue to Panama.

However, the contract has faced numerous legal challenges due to protests that claim it favours the miner too much and allege corrupt practices in its approval. Such protests have escalated into an anti-government movement, resulting in two deaths.

The miner’s contract has snowballed into a lightning rod ahead of the May 2024 Panama election. Meanwhile, Standard & Poor’s has revised Panama’s economic outlook to negative from stable due to potential risks to investors’ confidence.

The uncertainty has also wiped about C\$8bn (\$5.80bn) from First Quantum’s market value. Amid the rout, China’s Jiangxi Copper Co Ltd, First Quantum’s biggest



shareholder, last week raised its stake in the Canadian company to 18.5%.

Two Panamanian prosecutors have deemed the contract unconstitutional after examining legal challenges submitted to the court.

However, Maritza Ceden, the president of the country’s bar association, noted that past rulings have deviated from the initial positions of these officials.

She declined to disclose her stance, saying the court should work without pressures.

Four out of the seven lawyers polled by Reuters predicted the top court will nullify the contract, possibly as soon as mid-December. Two others believe the court will uphold the contract, while one remains uncertain.

“There is precedent...” said lawyer Ariel Corbetti, pointing out that the contract has similarities to the initial First Quantum deal, which was scrapped by the court in 2017.

That contract was inherited by First Quantum in 2013 after it became the operator of the mine. However, Panama’s top court in 2017 deemed unconstitutional the law under which First Quantum was operating the mine.

The ruling was upheld in 2021, resulting in last month’s fresh deal with the government.

A representative for Panama’s top court declined to comment on the possible outcome, and directed Reuters to a statement saying resolving the challenges is the body’s “number one priority.”

First Quantum did not reply to a request for comment on the future of the contract pending court proceedings.

Granting a concession requires a public tender, which did not happen with First Quantum, Corbetti said, adding that foreign state-owned entities cannot own mining resources, which he said happens in this case with China.

If the court deems the contract unconstitutional, Panama would

be in a tricky spot, lawyers said, as the government on November 3 signed a bill banning all new mining concessions and extensions. That would prevent the two parties from negotiating a new deal.

Panama has issued seven orders to cancel mining concessions to abide by the new law, the trade ministry said last week, without providing detail.

Corbetti also said authorities should seek an agreement with the company for its exit to avoid international litigation.

Panama’s mining chamber has urged against cancelling the contract, saying First Quantum could sue Panama for at least \$50bn.

Another lawyer said the court could also move to declare parts of the contract unconstitutional, which would not annul it completely.

Others say the court will rule in First Quantum’s favour.

“This conflict cannot be solved in a temperamental way,” said lawyer Juan Carlos Arauz, former head of the country’s bar association, adding he does not see a scenario under which the court would deem the miner’s contract unconstitutional.

Arauz said revoking the contract would put Panama in a weak spot if the matter goes to international arbitration and could open leaders to litigation.

Lawyer Victor Baker said proper consultations were conducted for the contract’s approval and there was no need for a bidding process since the miner had existing operations, as he expressed confidence in a ruling favouring the company. — Reuters

How Russia-US tensions have undermined treaties

By Mark Trevelyan

Russia’s formal withdrawal from a landmark arms treaty last week is the latest example of the crumbling of the security architecture that was set up to make the world safer at the end of the Cold War.

Arms control pacts in the 1980s and 1990s were a sign of easing tensions and increased trust in East-West relations. Now the opposite is the case: Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has brought about the deepest crisis in ties between Moscow and Washington since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, with the Kremlin describing relations as “below zero”.

Here is a list of the most important treaties and their current status:

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev agreed in 1987 to scrap an entire category of nuclear weapons by permanently eliminating all missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500km (310 and 3,400 miles).

From 2014 onwards, the United States

repeatedly accused Russia of deploying a non-compliant missile, which Moscow denied. President Donald Trump said in 2018 that the United States would therefore terminate the agreement, and Washington formally withdrew the following year.

Russia said it too would suspend its INF treaty obligations following the US move.

Conventional Armed Forces In Europe (CFE) Treaty

Signed by 22 countries in 1990, the treaty set equal limits on the amount of weaponry, including tanks, heavy artillery and combat aircraft, that Nato and the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact could deploy between the Atlantic Ocean and the Ural mountains.

Russia formally withdrew on November 7 but had not actively participated since 2015. Moscow said the US push to enlarge Nato had led to alliance members “openly circumventing” its restrictions; Nato allies condemned Russia’s withdrawal and said they would suspend their own treaty obligations.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

The CTBT, agreed in 1996, bans “any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear

explosion” anywhere in the world, with the goal of reducing and ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons. Russia ratified it in 2000 but President Vladimir Putin last week signed a law revoking that decision, arguing that Russia should mirror the position of the United States which has never ratified the pact. Russia says, however, that it will keep supplying data to the treaty’s verification regime and will not conduct a nuclear test unless the United States does.

New Start Treaty

Signed in 2010, the New START treaty caps the number of strategic nuclear warheads that Russia and the United States can deploy. Putin said in February that Russia was suspending its participation, alleging that Washington was using information obtained under the treaty to help Ukraine attack Russian strategic sites. The United States said in June it would stop providing Russia with some notifications required under the treaty, including on its missile and launcher locations, to retaliate for Moscow’s “ongoing violations” of the accord.

New START is the last remaining pillar of nuclear arms control between the two countries, and is due to expire in 2026. — Reuters

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Gamma-ray burst in faraway galaxy disturbed Earth’s upper atmosphere

About 2bn years ago in a galaxy far beyond our Milky Way, a big star met its demise in a massive explosion called a supernova that unleashed a huge burst of gamma rays, which pack the most energy of any wave in the electromagnetic spectrum. Those waves traversed the cosmos and finally reached Earth last year. This gamma-ray burst, researchers said yesterday, caused a significant disturbance in Earth’s ionosphere, a layer of the planet’s upper atmosphere that contains electrically charged gases called plasma. Scientists previously determined that this was the strongest such burst ever detected. The ionosphere is situated about 30-600 miles above Earth’s surface, stretching to the very edge of space. It helps form the boundary between the vacuum of space and the lower atmosphere inhabited by people and Earth’s other denizens. The gamma rays from the burst

impacted Earth’s atmosphere for a span of about 13 minutes on October 9, 2022. They were detected by the European Space Agency’s Integral (International Gamma-Ray Astrophysics Laboratory) space observatory and various satellites orbiting close to Earth. The gamma rays caused a strong variation in the ionosphere’s electric field, according to Mirko Piersanti, a space weather researcher at the University of L’Aquila in Italy and lead author of the research published in the journal *Nature Communications*. “It was similar to what happens in general during a solar flare event,” Piersanti said, referring to powerful bursts of energy from the sun. But the gamma-ray burst occurred a vast distance away – with the rays travelling about 2bn light years – compared to the sun’s relative closeness, showing how even faraway events can influence Earth. A light year is the



An undated artistic impression depicts the effect of a powerful blast of gamma rays that provoked a significant disturbance in Earth’s ionosphere, the result of a gamma-ray burst from a star’s supernova explosion in a galaxy almost 2bn light-years away. (Reuters)

distance light travels in a year, 5.9tn miles. Instruments on Earth showed that the gamma rays disturbed the ionosphere for several

hours and even set off lightning detectors in India. The disturbance reached into the lowest layers of the ionosphere. Scientists since the 1960s have

been measuring gamma-ray bursts – outpourings of energy released in supernovas or the merging of two neutron stars, which are the dense collapsed cores of massive stars. A burst as strong as the one detected last year would be expected to reach Earth about once every 10,000 years, according to scientists. The ionosphere, which helps protect life on Earth by absorbing harmful ultraviolet rays from the sun, is highly sensitive to changing magnetic and electrical conditions in space, usually connected to solar activity. It also expands and contracts in response to solar radiation. While this gamma-ray burst did not cause deleterious effects for life on Earth, it has been hypothesised that a strong one originating within the Milky Way and pointed right at us could pose a danger – including mass extinctions – by subjecting Earth’s surface to a flood of harmful ultraviolet radiation.

However, “the probability that this happens is really negligible,” said astronomer and study co-author Pietro Ubertini of the National Institute for Astrophysics in Italy. The effects of this gamma-ray burst were studied with the help of the China Seismo-Electromagnetic Satellite (CSES), also called Zhangheng, a Chinese-Italian mission launched in 2018. “Here we were lucky since we used the power of the EFD (electric field detector) instrument on board the CSES that is able to measure the electric field with unprecedented resolution,” Piersanti said. Ubertini said the disturbance that occurred in the ionosphere was not seen by anyone on the ground. “Nobody detected anything, but we don’t know if it could have been possible to see some visible signal looking at the right time at the sky,” Ubertini said.

Bodyguards for fugitive Catalan leader amid amnesty row

Reuters
Madrid

Spain is expected to approve a request to provide bodyguards for fugitive Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont days after he reached an agreement to back acting Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez’s bid for another term in exchange for an amnesty, a government minister said yesterday.

Tensions are running high in Spain over a controversial amnesty law agreed with Puigdemont’s party Junts that will exculpate hundreds of politicians and activists involved in an attempt to separate Catalonia from Spain that peaked in 2017.

Puigdemont, who is the subject of an extradition order for leading the failed attempt, is likely to be the most high profile beneficiary of the amnesty law, a draft of which was registered in parliament on Monday.

His office first filed a request for “protection and security” from the authorities in 2018 and has habitually refiled it without success.

On November 6, in a letter seen by Reuters, Puigdemont’s office argued that there had been “an increase in the level of danger and risk”. His spokesperson declined to provide further details.

Cabinet Minister Felix Bolanos said the request was likely to be approved, saying every Spanish citizen had a right to safety “no matter how many ideological differences there may be”, in a radio interview on RAC1, a Catalan-language radio station.

Opposition leader Alberto Nunez Feijoo, of the centre-right People’s Party that is leading protests against the amnesty, said the security agreement was “surprising”.

“(Puigdemont) wields enormous power,” he told reporters. “He’s gone from having an arrest warrant for him to be handed over to the Spanish police to being escorted by the Spanish police.”

‘Flower tattoo’ Briton identified 31 years after murder

A woman found murdered 31 years ago in a river in Belgium has been identified over three decades later thanks to her flower tattoo and an international appeal, Interpol said yesterday. The Lyon-based global police organisation said she was Rita Roberts from Cardiff in Wales and British. Roberts, found lying against a grate in the river Het Groot Schijn in Antwerp on June 3, 1992, had a tattoo of a black flower with green leaves and the inscription “R’Nick” on her right forearm. She was 31 when she moved to Antwerp from Cardiff in February 1992 and last communicated with her relatives via postcard in May 1992, according to Interpol. “For three decades, the victim remained nameless,” Interpol said. But a breakthrough came after the police organisation in May launched a campaign to identify 22 women believed to have been murdered in Belgium, Germany and The Netherlands, but whose identity was never found in cases dating back decades. “A family member in the United Kingdom recognised the tattoo on the news and notified Interpol and Belgian authorities,” Interpol said in a statement. The Operation Identify Me campaign has seen Interpol for the first time share previously confidential information – so called Black Notices – about unsolved cases hoping for input from the public. Rita Roberts is the first case of the 22 victims to have been identified in the campaign



This handout photograph made available by Antwerp’s public prosecutor’s office yesterday shows a portrait of Rita Roberts, the Briton found murdered 31 years ago in a river in Belgium. (AFP)

although some 1,250 tips have been received from the public. Rita Roberts has been “formally identified” by her family who travelled to Belgium to meet investigators. The family have asked for the media not to contact them during their grieving process, Interpol said. “Whilst the news has been difficult to process, we are incredibly grateful to have uncovered what happened to Rita,” the family was quoted in the statement as saying. Police in Durham, England, said they had supported the family, some of whom live in the area, “during what has been a heartbreaking time for them”. Durham Constabulary called the case “historic”. Durham police quoted a statement from the family, who had asked to remain

anonymous, saying they had last heard from her via a postcard from Belgium in May 1992. “The news was shocking and heartbreaking. Our passionate, loving, and free-spirited sister was cruelly taken away,” the family said. “There are no words to truly express the grief we felt at that time, and still feel today. “Rita was a beautiful person who adored travelling. She loved her family, especially her nephews and nieces, and always wanted to have a family of her own,” the family said. “She had the ability to light up a room, and wherever she went, she was the life and soul of the party. We hope that wherever she is now, she is at peace.” Belgian police hope for further input from the public to clear up the circumstances of Roberts’ violent death, it said. It said that Roberts was believed to have spent time in The Netherlands. She was 1.70m (five foot, seven inches) tall, and wearing a blue-green-purple T-shirt, Adidas jogging trousers and hiking boots when she was found. “After 31 years an unidentified murdered woman has been given her name back and some closure has been brought to her family,” Interpol Secretary-General Jurgen Stock said. “Such cases underline the vital need to connect police worldwide, especially when missing persons are involved.” Interpol, an inter-governmental organisation for police co-operation between the 195 member countries, emphasised: “The work of Operation Identify Me continues.”

Russia pardons ex-cop convicted of journalist’s murder

Russian authorities have pardoned a former policeman jailed over the 2006 killing of investigative journalist Anna Politkovskaya after he fought in Ukraine, his lawyer said yesterday. Sergei Khadzhikurbanov was one of five people jailed in connection with the murder of Politkovskaya, who worked for the independent *Novaya Gazeta* newspaper. She was shot dead in the lift of her Moscow apartment block aged 48. “As a special forces fighter, (Khadzhikurbanov) was invited to sign a contract to participate in the special military operation. Which he did,” lawyer Alexei Mikhalechik told AFP. “When the contract expired, he was pardoned by presidential decree,” Mikhalechik said. Khadzhikurbanov went on to sign another contract as a volunteer and is still fighting in Ukraine, he added. Thousands of prisoners are thought to have been sent to the battlefield since Moscow launched its offensive last February, with critics warning some have committed new crimes after returning home. Khadzhikurbanov was initially acquitted of Politkovskaya’s killing by a jury in

2009, embarrassing prosecutors. But after the Supreme Court threw out the original verdict he was sentenced in 2014 to 20 years in prison. He would have served until at least 2030 had he not been pardoned, his lawyer said. Her children and the editorial board of the *Novaya Gazeta* newspaper, which is now banned in Russia, said in a statement that they had not been told in advance about Khadzhikurbanov’s pardon. “For us, this pardon is not evidence of the redemption and remorse of the murderer,” they said. “It is a monstrous fact of injustice and arbitrariness, a desecration of the memory of a person killed for their beliefs and the fulfilment of their professional duty.” The head of Reporters Without Borders, Christophe Deloire, said Putin had “graced” the murder accomplice, calling it “the usual cynicism by the Kremlin chief.” Politkovskaya was well known for her forthright criticism of the Kremlin, denouncing alleged abuses by Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov and writing a scathing book on President Vladimir Putin’s rise to power.

Reuters

San Francisco

US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping will meet today before a summit of the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) forum in San Francisco, seeking to reduce friction in what many see as the world’s most dangerous rivalry.

The leaders of the world’s two largest economies have known each other for over a decade and have shared hours of conversation in six interactions since Biden’s January 2021 inauguration. But they have met only once in person since then and Xi has not visited the United States since 2017 when Donald Trump was president.

What issues are they likely to discuss? The White House says the aim of the summit, to be held at an unannounced location in the San Francisco Bay Area, is to boost communication to prevent an intense rivalry from veering into conflict. The meeting is expected to cover global issues from the conflict in the Middle East to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, North Korea’s ties with Russia, Taiwan, human rights, artificial intelligence, as well as “fair” trade and economic relations.

Biden is expected to tell Xi that the US remains committed to standing with its allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific, in the face of Chinese pressure against democratically governed Taiwan, which China claims as its own, and in the South and East China Seas. He will also express a specific commitment to the security of the Philippines, US officials said.

What deals can we expect? The White House says Washington is looking for specific outcomes and hopes to see progress in reestablishing military-to-military ties with China and in combating the trade in the potent synthetic opioid drug fentanyl, the use of which has become a scourge in the United States. Any deal on fentanyl would likely mean Washing-

ton having to lift human rights sanctions on China’s police forensic institute in return. Biden said yesterday his goal would be to resume normal communications with China, including military-to-military contacts. With elections in Taiwan in early 2024, political analysts expect China to seek US assurances that it will do nothing to encourage pro-independence elements, while Xi will also be hoping to persuade Biden to ease up on tariffs and the export controls that aim to keep the most advanced semiconductors from being sent to China.

In a separate dinner with business leaders, the Chinese president will also been looking to boost flagging investment by US firms in China. The leaders may highlight plans to increase commercial flights between the two countries and policy experts said they could move to ease restrictions on journalist visas, which would be to the benefit of both sides. Biden is also expected urge China to use its influence with Iran to not broaden the conflict in the Middle East.

But no-one is expecting a reset of the relationship or any grand bargain that will dramatically alter how the countries see each other. “We remain in an enduring period of competition and tension,” said Richard Fontaine of Washington’s Center for a New American Security. “There’s not going to be any big breakthroughs, there won’t be any real change in substance.”

How will the meeting impact markets? Market participants will keep a keen focus on the talks to gauge sentiment between the two governments.

The 21 Apec members and the world beyond hope for an easing of US-China tensions, and progress on that score would be viewed positively, but political analysts said any improvement in the mood could be only temporary. Elections in Taiwan early next year and the November 2024 US presidential vote that could bring a return of Trump, promise a year fraught with uncertainty.

Spain up in arms over PM’s controversial Catalan amnesty deal

Acting Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez’s agreement to grant an amnesty to hundreds of Catalan separatists in order to secure another term in office has sparked angry protests across the country. Sanchez says the measure will help ease lingering tensions over Catalonia’s failed 2017 bid to break away from Spain. But his opponents argue the amnesty – which the Socialist premier had previously said he would never agree to – is a self-serving means to remain in power. The divisive amnesty accord follows an inconclusive general election in July which left Sanchez needing the support of Catalan separatist parties ERC and JxCat to win a vote of confidence in parliament and be sworn in for another term. The parliamentary vote is due to take place tomorrow. In exchange for their support, the two Catalan parties have

demand an amnesty for hundreds of people facing legal action, mainly over their roles in Catalonia’s failed push for independence in 2017. That bid involved a referendum on secession for Catalonia that went ahead despite being banned by the courts and was marred by police violence. Sanchez, who has been in power since 2018, has defended the amnesty deal. He argues it makes “a virtue of necessity” and will turn the page on an independence bid that sparked Spain’s worse political crisis in decades. The draft amnesty law, which was tabled in parliament on Monday, covers all events related to the Catalan independence drive, from 2012 to the present day, including a symbolic vote held in 2014 and the 2017 referendum. Backers of the bill estimate the amnesty could benefit around 400 people, primarily minor officials and ordinary citizens who helped



A woman holds a sign as people take part in a protest near the Spain’s Socialist Party headquarters, after Spain’s socialists reached a deal with the Catalan separatist Junts party for government support, in Madrid on Monday. (Reuters)

stage the 2017 referendum or took part in protests. Police officers facing legal action over their sometimes violent efforts to stop the referendum from going ahead

or their clashes with protesters are also covered. The most high-profile beneficiary would be JxCat founder Carles Puigdemont, who was head of the Catalonia

regional government in 2017 and fled to Belgium shortly after the referendum to avoid prosecution. Other top Catalan separatist leaders who were serving lengthy prison sentences over the secession bid and who Sanchez pardoned in 2021 – such as ERC leader Oriol Junqueras – will see their ban on holding public office lifted. The amnesty law has the backing of Sanchez’s Socialists as well as far-left party Sumar and smaller Basque, Catalan and Galician nationalist and separatist groups. That gives it the support of an absolute majority of 178 lawmakers in the 350-seat parliament. But opponents accuse Sanchez of violating the rule of law just to remain in power. The main opposition conservative Popular Party and the far-right Vox plan to challenge the amnesty in the courts and describe it as “giving into blackmail”. Police unions, judges, leading law

firms, civil servants and Spain’s main business lobby group, the CEOE, have also rejected the amnesty plan, arguing that it undermines the separation of powers and legal security. Sanchez’s government has also agreed to forgive €15bn (\$16bn) owed by Catalonia to the national government dating from the 2008 financial crisis, and to address “lawfare”, a term used by Catalan separatists to describe the alleged use of the courts to persecute pro-independence activists. Judges have expressed concern over plans to set up parliamentary “commissions of enquiry” to look into court decisions that the separatists say constitute use of the judiciary for political purposes. This goes against “the independence of the judiciary” and constitutes “an unacceptable distrust of the functioning of the judiciary”, several magistrates’ groups said in a joint statement last week.



Interfaith, humanitarian solidarity rally slams war in Gaza

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID) organised last night a rally with the theme *Together against the war in Gaza* at the amphitheatre in Katara – the Cultural Village.



Hundreds of people participated in the event at Katara yesterday.



Gaza's plight putting 'human conscience to test'

Palestine is a test of humanity, dignity, and human conscience, an American Muslim scholar and civil rights leader told Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Education City Speaker Series about the war on Gaza.

The talk on *Palestine: A Test of Human Conscience* was delivered by Dr Omar Suleiman, founder and president of the Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research and a theologically driven activist for human rights.

"Palestine is a test to the 'fitra' of all humanity, a test specifically to the faith of all Muslims, the natural human conscience of every human being that claims to uphold any moral framework," he said. "How much can you witness without acting, how much can you see without seeing, how much can you hear without crying?"

"There is something that Palestine does to each and every single one of us," Dr Suleiman said. "And this is that it reminds us of the reality of our own purpose, and it reminds us of

the basic idea of being committed to something greater than yourself."

"There is one cause that can fill the streets in the Global North and Global South, that can fill the streets in the Muslim world, and fill the streets in the Western world, and it's this cause of Palestine," he said.

Dr Suleiman aired his belief that the Palestine situation "exposes those that claim to be on the side of truth of justice and that speak about a moral high ground when they act in the lowest of ways", saying: "Palestine exposes friends and enemies. Palestine exposes the way that humanity can betray its basic inclinations when there's a political advantage."

He also questioned whether a child "with no political education" would believe the attacks on Gaza and the resulting death toll were justified.

"An eight-year-old would say it's not," Dr Suleiman stated. "But somehow, seasoned diplomats, politicians, and media commentators

can look the world in the eye and say this is entirely justified."

"Your prayer is significant the most significant form of protest that you have, the most significant form of connection, and the most effective tool of what is at your disposal," he said.

Telling the audience that "average people using social media are breaking through the hypothesis of legacy media", he said: "What is effective is sustained, collective work."

"Sustained, because Israel is counting on us to get tired and the protests to die down," Dr Suleiman added. "And when you work together strategically, you can work miracles."

"If you come together, you think of a single campaign, and you're able to galvanise around that campaign," he continued.

"We all have to challenge, with what has been made available to us, and where our voice is going to be most effective," Dr Suleiman concluded.



Dr Omar Suleiman at the event yesterday.

Right: Members of the audience at the talk.



Vietnam's pavilion at Expo 2023 Doha highlights rich heritage, culture and landscapes

Vietnam's pavilion was inaugurated at the international area at the Horticultural Expo 2023 Doha, featuring a group of plants and flowers that were brought from Vietnam to Doha, in addition to displaying Vietnam's efforts in agricultural development and preserving its environmental diversity.

The pavilion was inaugurated by Vietnamese ambassador to Qatar Tran Duc Hung and Expo 2023 Doha Commissioner-General Bader bin Omar al-Dafa, in the presence of a number of heads of diplomatic missions and ambassadors accredited to the state, government officials, and a number of members of the Vietnamese community in Qatar.

The pavilion tells the story of a people with a rich heritage, full of possibilities and opportunities, a vibrant culture and beautiful landscapes.



Snapshots from the event yesterday.

It also showcases Vietnam's success stories in agriculture and its vision of preserving the environment and achieving

sustainable development.

The pavilion highlights information about the Vietnamese people, the nature

of their country, and development trends as it mixes traditional and contemporary elements in all its tourist places.



The speakers at the event with Palestinian envoy, Munir Ghannam (third right). **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam

■ Sheikh Abdullah Mohamed al-Naama, Imam Muhammad AbdulWahhab Mosque (Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs) preacher

■ Archbishop Makarios Mavrogianakis, Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church – Christian Churches Steering Committee

■ Sheikh Ahmed al-Buainain, director of the Family Reconciliation Office – Family Court

■ Fr. Beda Robles, Head of Anglican Church – Christian Churches Steering Committee

■ Sheikh Abdul Salam Bassiouni, Abdullah bin Zaid al Mahmoud Islamic Cultural Centre

■ Maysa Wael Abu Hilal, member of the General Secretariat of the Popular Conference for Palestinians Abroad.

The Katara amphitheatre was thronged by hundreds of Qatar citizens and residents of all faiths, who participated in the rally in solidarity with the Palestinian people, and against the war on the Gaza Strip.

Representatives of many Qatar institutions, Arab and foreign em-

bassies accredited in Doha, and a large number of imams and clerics, both Muslims and Christians, were present at the rally called for by the DICID.

The call for the rally came from the DICID in an effort to take a clear religious and humanitarian stance against the war on Gaza, an expression of clear condemnation of what the Israeli occupation forces is committing, the shameful humanitarian crimes, bombing of hospitals, demolishing of homes, intimidating and killing of children, and the bold committing of war crimes and genocide, as well as the massacres of unarmed civilians.

All the speakers called for an immediate ceasefire, and the two-state solution with East Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital.

The participants raised Palestinian flags and banners supporting the Palestinians, Al-Aqsa Mosque, and the resistance in Palestine, and demanded an end to the war, holding the Israeli occupation forces accountable for the crimes being committing against



DICID chairman Ibrahim al-Naimi addressing the gathering.

the Palestinian people, and to stop the targeting and bombing of civilians in the Gaza Strip.

They also raised many placards.

Some read "You don't have to be a Muslim to support Gaza – All you need is to be a human being".

Others read "No to the forced displacement of the population of Gaza" and "The Palestinian Kofia is the symbol of resistance".

A small boy held up a sign that

read "Where are the international human rights organisations?"

Those present wore both the Palestinian flag and Kofia.

DICID chairman Dr al-Naimi said in the concluding statement that what is happening is "a brutal war against the Palestinian people in Gaza, lacking the lowest meanings of religious and human values".

"We must have a clear stance against this war and against the practices of the Israeli aggression," he stated. "Against its brutal war machine that targets civilians, children and defenceless women, and its boldness to bomb homes and target hospitals, mosques and churches that shelter innocent people."

"These despicable practices have reached the point of not allowing the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid, and attempting the forced displacement of the population of Gaza, and committing all kinds of war crimes and genocide," Dr al-Naimi said.

QRCS mourns the loss of doctor in Gaza bombing

The Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) is mourning the loss of Dr Hammam Mahmoud al-Louh, a consultant nephrologist and assistant professor of nephrology.

A graduate of the QRCS's Specialist Medical Scholarships Programme in Jordan, Dr al-Louh and his family lost their lives in a bombing at their home in Gaza City, a statement said yesterday.

The rescue operation was hindered by a full curfew imposed on the city, resulting in a prolonged effort by civil defence personnel to retrieve their bodies from the rubble.

Dr al-Louh's medical specialisation was rare in Gaza.

He worked at Al-Shifa Hospital and Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, and taught medical students at the Islamic University of Gaza and Al-Azhar University – Gaza.

Dr al-Louh was one of the QRCS's consultants who recently contributed to the "Specialised Surgical Operations for Poor Patients in Gaza" project.

This sorrowful incident is part of the tragedy of Gaza's health sector. According to Palestine's ministry of health, 135 medical facilities were deliberately targeted, with 22 hospitals, 49 health centres, and 51 ambulance vehicles rendered out of service, as well as 198 medical professionals and 20 rescue personnel killed.

Despite the shortage of medicine, fuel, and medical supplies in most of Gaza hospitals, hundreds of doctors and medical professionals continue to perform their medical and humanitarian duty with whatever means available.

Refusing to leave thousands of patients and injured people without medical care, they are striving to provide every possible form of support to keep them alive.

The QRCS reiterates its condemnation of the flagrant violations against medical and relief facilities, teams, and vehicles, stressing that doctors, paramedics, and relief workers are #NotATarget.



Dr Hammam Mahmoud al-Louh