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Over 80 massacred in strikes on Gaza camp

AFP
Gaza Strip

A Hamas health official said more than 80 people were killed yesterday in twin strikes on a northern Gaza refugee camp, including the UN-run Al Fakhoora school used as a shelter for people displaced by the war.

Social media videos showed bodies covered in blood and dust on the floor of a building, where mattresses had been wedged under school tables in Jabalia, the Palestinian territory's biggest refugee camp.

"At least 50 people" were killed in a dawn strike on the UN-run Al Fakhoora school in the camp, which has been converted into a shelter for displaced Palestinians, a health ministry official in Hamas-controlled Gaza said.

Al Fakhoora is part of the Education Above all (EAA) foundation, the brainchild of Her Highness Sheikhha Moza bint Nasser, a long-time advocate for education.

According to UN figures, some 1.6mn people have been displaced inside the Gaza Strip by six weeks of fighting.

Qatar slams bombing

Qatar condemned in the strongest terms the renewed bombing of Al Fakhoora School, which led to the martyrdom of dozens, majority of them children and women, and considered it a horrific massacre, a brutal crime against defenceless civilians, and a blatant violation of the principles of international law and international humanitarian law. **To Page 4**

Gaza massacre toll reaches 12,300; over 5,000 children killed

Gaza's Hamas government said yesterday the death toll from fighting between Israeli troops and Hamas resistance fighters in the Palestinian territory had reached 12,300 since hostilities started on October 7. The Hamas government said more than 5,000 children were among the dead, alongside 3,300 women.

Patients, staff flee Al-Shifa

Hundreds of people yesterday fled on foot after the director of Gaza's main hospital said the Israeli army ordered the evacuation of the facility where some 2,000 people were trapped.

Columns of sick and injured – some of them amputees – were seen making their way out of Al-Shifa hospital towards the seafront without ambulances along with displaced people, doctors and nurses, as loud explosions were heard around the complex. **Page 8**

PM meets US official, calls for Gaza truce

HE Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani holding talks with Brett McGurk in Doha yesterday.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with the Co-ordinator for Middle East and North Africa at the US National Security Council, Brett McGurk.

Developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories were discussed during the meeting.

HE Sheikh Mohamed stressed the need for concerted regional and international diplomatic efforts to

reach an immediate ceasefire and to permanently open the Rafah crossing to ensure the flow of relief convoys and humanitarian aid to the Palestinian brothers besieged in the Gaza Strip, expressing Qatar's deep concern about the catastrophic deterioration of humanitarian conditions in the Strip.

He affirmed 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, and considered it a dangerous escalation that portends dire consequences for the security and stability of the region.

HE Sheikh Mohamed also stressed Qatar's continued mediation efforts to release the hostages, noting that the continued bombing doubles the humanitarian catastrophe in the Gaza Strip and complicates mediation efforts.

The meeting was attended by US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Barbara Leaf. (QNA)

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Sheikha Alya meets UN official



Qatar's Permanent Representative to the UN HE Sheikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani met in New York with the UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Rabab Fatima. The meeting discussed the solid partnership between Qatar and the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. They also discussed the appropriate means of implementing the Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs, issued by the Fifth UN Conference on the LDCs, which was hosted by Qatar in March. (QNA)

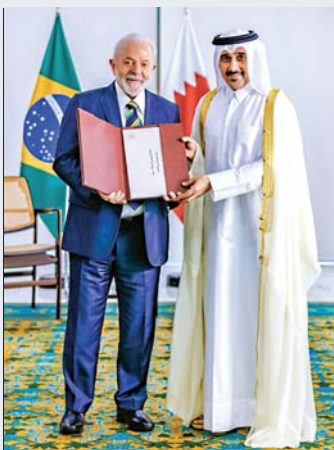
Crown prince of Ajman meets Qatar's envoy



Crown Prince of Ajman Sheikh Ammar bin Humaid al-Nuaimi met yesterday with Qatar's ambassador to the UAE Sultan bin Salmeen al-Mansouri. During the meeting, the crown prince wished the ambassador success in performing his duties, reaffirming the UAE's keenness to develop relations with Qatar as well as the prospects for bilateral co-operation in all fields. (QNA)

President of Brazil receives credentials of Qatar's ambassador

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva received the credentials of Ahmed Mohamed Ali Mohamed al-Shaibani as Qatar's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Brazil. The ambassador conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Brazilian president, and His Highness's wishes of health and happiness to the president and further progress and prosperity to the government and people of Brazil. For his part, the president conveyed his greetings to the Amir, wishing His Highness good health and happiness, and Qatar continued progress and development. (QNA)



'Bombing of QCRG HQ will not deter Qatar from providing aid to Gaza'

QNA
New York

Qatar has said that the Israeli occupation forces' bombing of the Qatar Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza (QCRG) headquarters last week would not deter it from providing assistance to Gaza, stressing that this crime constitutes a blatant violation of international law and an extension of the targeting of humanitarian work represented by the committee's headquarters.

This came in a statement delivered by Qatar's Permanent Representative to the UN HE Sheikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani at the informal plenary meeting to hear a briefing on the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, which took place at the request of the State of Qatar and the Arab League group and the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation group in New York.

HE Sheikha Alya said that Qatar has sent around 10 planes carrying more than 358 tonnes of aid, including a field hospital, shelter supplies, medical supplies, and food, to the Egyptian city of Al Arish since the beginning of the crisis. She reiterated Qatar's condemnation of all forms of civilian targeting and its condemnation of the serious violations of international law and international humanitarian law committed by Israel, the occupying authority.

HE Sheikha Alya considered the targeting of civilian facilities, including the Israeli occupation forces' invasion of the Al-Shifa Medical Complex in Gaza, as a war crime and a blatant violation of international laws and conventions, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention. She warned of the danger of the policy of collective punishment, including attempts

Qatar slams targeting of civilian facilities, including the Israeli occupation forces' invasion of the Al-Shifa Medical Complex in Gaza, at New York forum



at the forced displacement of the Palestinian people. She expressed Qatar's deep concern about the ongoing Israeli ground incursion, which has had devastating effects on the safety of civilians and hostages and catastrophic repercussions on the security and stability of the region, as well as on mediation and de-escalation efforts.

HE Sheikha Alya stated that civilians in the Gaza Strip are facing a humanitarian catastrophe due to the brutal Israeli air strikes, where basic necessities of life have been cut off, with more than two-thirds of them displaced and the number of casualties, injuries, and missing persons under the rubble is estimated to be around 40,000.

She pointed out that the violence disproportionately affects children and women, constituting 70% of the victims, therefore, the Strip has been described as a "graveyard for children", and a joint statement issued by the Special Rapporteurs on Human Rights in Geneva described the situation as "threatening genocide".

HE Sheikha Alya explained that many journalists and UN em-

ployees, including more than a hundred UNRWA employees, lost their lives, expressing Qatar's deep appreciation for these significant sacrifices, as well as for all their fellow UN employees who continue to provide invaluable services under extremely harsh conditions.

She affirmed Qatar's demand to fully implement Security Council Resolution No 2712 and the Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly Resolution 21, including implementing an urgent and sustainable ceasefire, protecting civilians and civilian facilities, and facilitating immediate, full, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access.

At the conclusion of the statement, HE Sheikha Alya affirmed that Qatar will continue its intensive diplomatic efforts with friendly countries and the UN, adding that these efforts, initiated since the beginning of the crisis, aim to achieve further constructive progress in de-escalation, leading to a complete ceasefire, addressing the humanitarian crisis, and the release of all hostages, especially civilians.



The four-day programme was attended by 70 participants including accountants, auditors, and financial managers working for companies and economic institutions in Qatar.

Awqaf concludes corporate Zakat training programme

Under the patronage of HE the Minister of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, Ghanem bin Shaheen bin Ghanem al-Ghanem, the Department of Zakat Affairs at Awqaf concluded the activities of the 23rd session of Corporate Zakat Accounting training programme.

The four-day programme, according to a press statement from Awqaf, was attended by 70 participants including accountants, auditors, and financial managers working for companies and economic institutions in Qatar. The valedictory session also marked honouring the participants.

Ahmed Sultan al-Misifri, assistant director of the Zakat Affairs Department, during the honouring ceremony, said the department

held 23 courses for calculating corporate Zakat. "Around 1,600 accountants, financial managers and auditors from hundreds of commercial and economic institutions were trained during these programmes. The programmes enable them to calculate Zakat dividend of their companies and help other companies," he said.

He urged the trainees to benefit from the course that helped them learn about a specialised style of financial accounting that they had not been able to learn in their academic studies. He also urged them to apply what they learned in their practical lives. The course included lectures, workshops and training and covered the legal and accounting aspects of calculating corporate Zakat. Dr Farid Amin

al-Hindawi, Shariah supervisor of the Department of Zakat Affairs, addressed the training programme through a lecture entitled 'The Jurisprudence of Zakat'.

On the accounting side, Dr Mohamed Oud al-Fazee, professor at Kuwait University, addressed many topics related to Zakat.

Mohamed Jaber al-Buraiddi, assistant director of the Zakat Affairs Department and Mohamed Jaber al-Baridi, head of the Zakat Services Department and head of the work team organising the course, honoured the participants and distributed certificates to them. He explained that the Zakat Affairs Department gives great importance to providing such specific courses specialised in Zakat matters and how to calculate.



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Al-Khulaifi meets UK minister



HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohamed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met yesterday with Lord of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Middle East, South Asia and UN at the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Lord Tariq Ahmed, who is visiting the country. The meeting discussed co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to support and develop them, in addition to the latest developments in the region, especially in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories. During the meeting, HE al-Khulaifi stressed the need for concerted regional and international diplomatic efforts to reach an immediate ceasefire and to permanently open the Rafah crossing to ensure the flow of relief convoys and humanitarian aid to the Palestinian brothers besieged in the Gaza Strip, expressing Qatar's deep concern about the catastrophic deterioration of the humanitarian conditions in the Strip. He also stressed that the continued bombing doubles the humanitarian catastrophe in the Strip and complicates mediation efforts. For his part, Lord Tariq Ahmed expressed his country's appreciation for Qatar's mediation efforts to release the hostages. **(QNA)**

Al-Muraikhi meets Azerbaijan deputy FM

HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met yesterday with the visiting Azerbaijani Deputy Foreign Minister Yalchin Rafiyev. The meeting discussed co-operation relations between the two countries. **(QNA)**

'Camping Season' campaign launched

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) announced the launch of the "Camping Season" campaign for 2023, organised by the General Directorate of Traffic, represented by the Traffic Awareness Department, under the slogan "Safe Camping" with the aim of spreading traffic awareness for road users, raising the level of traffic safety, and reducing accidents in offroad areas.

Launched on Friday in Sealine area, the campaign saw the participation of a number of agencies, namely the General Administration of Civil Defence, the Community Police Department, the Juvenile Police Department, the Patrols and Traffic Investigation Department, in addition to a number of relevant agencies.

During the campaign, a field visit to motorcycle rental shops was organised with the aim of educating campers of different ages and segments of motorcycle users and shop owners about the necessity of following the traffic law,



adhering to traffic safety requirements and rules, and avoiding wrong behaviour in order to preserve the safety of lives and property.

The campaign team also provided some advice and awareness guidance to vehicle drivers and restaurant goers in the Sealine area, where they

were reminded of the necessity of adhering to the traffic law and following the controls and principles of safe offroad driving to avoid accidents. The campaign team called for rational driving, adhering to wearing a seat belt, and complying with safety rules and requirements. **(QNA)**

Amir condolences with Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques

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 Princess Noura bint Saud bin Abdullah bin Jalawi al-Saud. **(QNA)**

Amir congratulates Moroccan king and Latvian president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to King Mohamed VI of Morocco on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable of congratulations to Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch.

●His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable of congratulations to Prime Minister Evika Silina. **(QNA)**

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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

EAA condemns deliberate attacks on UNRWA schools in Gaza, calls for global accountability

Education Above All Foundation (EAA) unequivocally condemns the deliberate attacks on Al Fakhoora UNRWA school yesterday, and the similarly devastating assault on the Al-Falah school on Friday, a statement issued by the foundation said.

"These reprehensible attacks have resulted in the tragic loss of dozens of lives of women, children, and displaced civilians, with many others injured and unaccounted for. EAA recognises these atrocities as part of a distressing pattern of systematic and deliberate targeting of civilians and vital civilian infrastructure. "Attacks on schools, designated shelters for displaced people, are serious violations of International Humanitarian Law, underscoring the gravity

of targeting civilians as outlined in the Geneva Conventions. Education Above All Foundation, in strategic partnership with UNRWA, has been steadfast in its commitment to supporting safe education for children in UNRWA schools in Gaza. This commitment includes the reconstruction and refurbishment of Al Fakhoora school following partial destruction in 2009 and subsequent rebuilding efforts after bombardments in 2014. The EAA's Al Fakhoora programme, initiated in 2009, was established to honour the victims of a prior bombardment of Al Fakhoora school.

"Throughout the ongoing assault on Gaza over the past 43 days from October 7, Palestinian children have not only been denied access to education but

have also been subjected to indiscriminate aerial bombardment. This has led to the heartbreaking loss of 4,506 children, with many more lives still unaccounted for. Attacks on schools and the deliberate targeting of children constitute grave violations of international law and, if intentional, are considered war crimes.

"The Education Above All Foundation calls on the global community to take collective action to end these flagrant violations. Such attacks on education and children must be thoroughly investigated, and those responsible must be held accountable. Schools must never be targeted during times of war. We urgently call for an immediate halt to attacks on schools and stop the killing of innocent children and civilians," the statement added.

Qatar slams bombing of Gaza school

From Page 1

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs renewed Qatar's demand for an urgent international investigation, which includes sending independent UN investigators to investigate the facts regarding the Israeli occupation forces' continued targeting of schools and hospitals.

It also called on the international community to take urgent action to hold Israel accountable, deter it from committing more crimes against civilians, and provide necessary protection for the displaced people who are taking shelter in the school affiliated with the UN Relief and Works Agency for Refugees (UNRWA). The ministry warned that the silence of the international community regarding war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the occupation against the Palestinian people will increase the state of tension, expand the cycle of violence, and lead to further escalation and instability. It reiterated Qatar's firm position on the justice of the Palestinian cause, the legitimate rights of the brotherly Palestinian people, and the establishment of their independent state on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. **(QNA)**

Qatar University, AUB forge partnership in food security

Qatar University (QU)'s College of Arts and Sciences and the American University of Beirut (AUB) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote academic and research collaboration in the areas of food security and sustainable food production systems, aligning with global imperatives for environmentally conscious practices in food cultivation and distribution.

The MoU was signed by Vice-President for Academic Affairs at QU Dr Ibrahim al-Kaabi and Interim Dean of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences at AUB Dr Ammar Olabi. Dr al-Kaabi highlighted the significance of this collaboration, stating: "This partnership underscores our dedication to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in QU. Our joint efforts with AUB will address real challenges within sustainable practices and innovation in food security and business."

Echoing this sentiment, Dr Ammar Olabi emphasised the historic nature of this partnership, saying: "Throughout our history, the relationship between AUB, QU, and esteemed colleagues has evolved significantly across multiple fields like environmental science, education, sustainable practices and innovation in food security and business."

The agreement outlined initiatives

and provisions for student exchange programs aimed at enhancing cultural understanding and academic exposure. Both universities will establish diverse opportunities, ranging from short visits to comprehensive semester-long programmes. Moreover, the collaboration places a strong emphasis on collaborative research pursuits, encouraging joint endeavours that involve faculty and researchers from both institutions.

The agreement also focuses on integrating and complementing the academic and research capabilities of both institutions. This includes a strong emphasis on areas like sustainable production, climate-smart practices, nutrition security, post-harvest technology, food safety, and quality. In addition, the MoU emphasises the joint efforts' potential to drive impactful research initiatives, fostering innovation and knowledge exchange.

The QU college said in a press release that the partnership between QU and AUB represents a significant stride towards enhancing education, research, and community engagement in vital domains of food security and sustainability and underscores a shared commitment to nurture academic exchanges, facilitate staff exchanges, and jointly assess the outcomes of collaborative activities. **(QNA)**

Falcons championship takes off

The 5th Ras Lafan Falcon Championship, organised by Al Gannas Qatari Society, started yesterday at Sbkhath Al Thakhira with hot competitions among various groups of falconers. Accordingly the opening category of Al Tala'a (release of falcons to hunt a Houbara bustard bird) resulted in the qualification of five falconers only for the next round with a difference of a few second among the winning falcons. Mohamed Mubarak al-Ali, head of Al Tala'a Committee at the championship, said that some competitions were rescheduled, as the championship was originally set to start on Friday but due to the weather conditions and the heavy rains, the championship got under way yesterday. He also stressed that the competitions was full of excitement and suspense since their first start, which shows clearly that all the participating falcons are very powerfully and have been well-trained and prepared by their owners. Meanwhile, the participating falconers, who were keen to be present at the site of the contests



before sunset, have highly appreciated the efforts exerted by the organising committee of championship and Al Gannas Qatari Society in supporting them and encouraging them to continue such deep-rooted heritage sports. In particular, they thanked Ras Laffan Community Outreach programme for sponsoring this big event. The championship is set to run until November 25.

Qatar Classic Cars Contest and Exhibition next month

Under the patronage of Qatar Museums (QM) Chairperson HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, the Gulf Qatari Classic Cars Association has announced the launch of a new edition of the Qatar Classic Cars Competition and Exhibition, on December 6-10 at The Pearl Island.

The event will feature the most prominent classic car owners in Qatar, a statement said.

Gulf Qatari Classic Cars Association chairman HE Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani stated: "We aspire to become a social and cultural association that elevates the status of classic cars in Qatar and the region."

He said that the aim of establishing the association is to work to provide a distinct and attractive environment to preserve classic cars as a heritage passed down through generations, and cultivate a community of a professional and conscious generation that has all the skills necessary to preserve this heritage, by providing the owners of these cars with all the necessary educational, artistic and cultural experiences.

"The Qatar Classic Cars Competition and Exhibition has always been a hub for classic car collectors, whose acquisition of these cars is a tradition passed on from one generation to the next," HE Sheikh Faisal added.

Gulf Qatari Classic Cars Association vice-president Omar Hussain Alfardan said that Qatar has now hosted various important events and is witnessing great momentum, especially with the hosting of the Formula 1 competition, attended by fans from all around the world.

"The association provides social and cultural services that will contribute to creating an educated generation with the skills necessary to deal with the preservation of classic cars locally, regionally, and globally, as well as providing the opportunity for enthusiasts to practice their hobby and revel in it freely and professionally within an institutional framework," he said.

Alfardan said that the Qatar Classic Cars Contest and Exhibition will certainly attract visitors, from inside and outside the country and ultimately boost tourism.

It will work to create a heritage



and tourism forum that features classic cars, as well as introducing the public to the importance of the hobby.

"We value our distinguished partnership with United Development Company (UDC) which brings us together to further extend the success with this year's edition of the Qatar Classic Cars Contest and Exhibition," Alfardan added.

Nasser Bin Khaled & Sons Holding chairman Nawaf bin Nasser bin Khalid al-Thani remarked that the Qatari society is witnessing an increasing interest in collecting clas-

sic cars, a number that currently exceeds 4,000 vehicles featuring various models, some of which are extremely rare.

"Some owners even have cars that are incredibly vintage, whose production dates back to the 1920s and perhaps even before that," he said. "This is why the association had to highlight this invaluable tradition."

UDC president, chief executive and board member Ibrahim Jassim al-Othman lauded the distinguished partnership with the Gulf Qatari Classic Cars Association in organising the Qatar Luxury Clas-



HE Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani



Omar Alfardan



Ibrahim Jassim al-Othman

sic Car Contest & Exhibition for the fourth consecutive year on The Pearl Island.

"This partnership reaffirms the importance of the role played by national companies in supporting and sponsoring major events

and activities held in the country," he said. "The Qatar Classic Cars Contest and Exhibition takes the lead among these events this year, enriching the season filled with exciting activities in Qatar at large, and The Pearl Island in particular."

Embassy celebrates 'Week of Italian Cuisine in the World'

The third week of November saw the celebration of the "Week of Italian Cuisine in the World taking" place in Doha, thanks to the joint commitment of the Italian embassy in Qatar, its trade promotion section - Italian Trade Agency (ITA), together with Coldiretti, the biggest Italian association of agriculture, the Foundation "Campagna Amica", and "Terranostra".

The week saw the stakeholders active in the promotion of Italian traditional agriculture and food, with the main hub of the activities being the Italian pavilion at Expo 2023 Doha.

Among the featured events were tastings of organic Italian products, cooking shows in collaboration with the "Farmer Chefs" association, and awareness talks in collaboration with the Evoo School Foundation.

Featured Italian chefs Ilaria



The third week of November saw the celebration of the 'Week of Italian Cuisine in the World'.

Salvadori and Fabrizio Murrocu showcased the gastronomic heritage of Italy through products arrived from all over the country, such as pecorino from Tuscany, carasau bread from Sardinia, as well as Parmigiano Reggiano and Grana Padano.

The events were attended by dignitaries and personalities from the sector of agriculture, including Italian ambassador Paolo Toschi.

During the second day of events,

the World Farmers Markets Coalition and its key principles were also illustrated in the presence of ambassador Toschi and representatives of local agricultural companies: biodiversity, short supply chain, traceability and transparency of products.

The delegation also visited two local farms which represented a model of a local short supply chain: Torba farmers' market and Heenat Salma farm.

Ministry team participates in 42nd Unesco General Conference

The Ministry of Social Development and Family is participating in the 42nd session of the General Conference of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), with a delegation

headed by assistant undersecretary for Social Development Affairs Fahd Mohamed al-Khayarin, as part of the Social and Human Sciences sector of the Social Transformations (MOST) Programme. - **QNA**

AUCTION SALE OF USED VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT (As-Is Where-IS)

Black Cat Engineering and Construction W.L.L.
announces the sale of used vehicles and equipment, the details of which are listed below:


SL. NO.	DESCRIPTION	TYPE	MODEL
1	EXCAVATOR	HITACHI	2007
2	EXCAVATOR	HITACHI	2007
3	SEWAGE TANKER	MITSUBISHI	2008
4	WATER TANKER	MITSUBISHI	2008
5	WATER TANKER	ASHOK LEYLAND	2015
6	PICK UP - SINGLE CABIN	NISSAN	2008
7	PICK UP - DOUBLE CABIN	NISSAN	2007
8	PICK UP - DOUBLE CABIN	NISSAN	2007
9	PICK UP - DOUBLE CABIN	NISSAN	2015
10	PICK UP - DOUBLE CABIN	MITSUBISHI	2011
11	TRUCK	TATA	2015
12	TRUCK + CRANE	IVECO	2014
13	TRUCK + CRANE	HINO	2012
14	TRACTOR	MASSEY FERGUSON	2010
15	SHOVEL	JCB	2008
16	DIESEL WELDING MACHINES	10 UNITS - VARIOUS MODELS	


Clarifications:

- Vehicles and equipment can be inspected at the company's workshop located in the industrial area (Street No. 2004 - Building No. 95 - Area No. 91) starting from Monday, 20/11/2023, until Thursday, 30/11/2023, from 8:00 A.M to 4:00 P.M.
- Price offers must be submitted in a sealed envelope at the company's main headquarters in the Tornado Tower, ninth floor, no later than 06/12/2023.
- For further inquiries and inspection purposes, please call the following phone number: 55543978 / 50385519.


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ARTIC
Al Rayyan Tourism Investment Co.
شركة الريان للاستثمار السياحي

TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

Tender No	Subject	Document Fee QAR.	Tender Bond QAR.	Closing Date
ARTIC/IT/11-12/001	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Passive & Active Network at Marriott Marquis City Center Doha Hotel	QAR 750.00	QAR 75,000.00	December 21, 2023

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Interested parties can obtain the tender documents from Al Rayyan Tourism Investment Co., Supply Chain department in the following manner:

- Payment of non-refundable document fee should be deposited to Al Rayyan Tourism Investment Co.- Account No: IBAN: QA56ABQQ00000000001210556325 with Ahli Bank, Main Branch Qatar.
- Submit proof of payment - Bank receipt, valid Company Commercial Registration, Computer Card, and Authorization Letter to **supply.chain1@artic.com.qa**
- Tender Documents will be sent electronically within 24-48 hours during working days.
- Al Rayyan Tourism Investment Co. has the right to increase or decrease the scope of services / products by 20% with the same terms and conditions.
- Al Rayyan Tourism Investment Co is not bound to accept the lowest offer and or cancel the tender and is under no obligation to show reasons thereof.
- Tender response is to be submitted in sealed envelope (original printed copy) & (e-copy on USB).
- Tender response should be submitted not later than **11:00 AM of the closing date to ARTIC Supply Chain department located on the 22nd floor, Marriott Marquis Hotel-City Tower, West Bay Doha Qatar**
- Late submissions will not be considered

For further inquiries or information, please contact: Telephone No: +974 4422 3888

Qatar Charity transforms remote Pakistani village

Qatar Charity (QC) has transformed the Pakistani village of “Kili Ataallah” from a marginalised one that lacked the minimum standards of cleanliness into a village that adheres to environmental standards.

It has received a certificate from Pakistani government agencies in Balochistan province in recognition of its application of safety standards.

The toilets project implemented by Qatar Charity in partnership with Unicef is considered one of the most prominent

pioneering projects in this field.

The project, which was implemented in just six months and at a cost of QR897,982 was a turning point in the lives of the residents of the village and became a model to be emulated.

This success is considered the culmination of the efforts made by Qatar Charity in water and sanitation in Pakistan.

Since 2021, Qatar Charity built 19,658 toilets throughout the country in government institutions, health facilities, mosques, and remote villages.

Qatar Charity succeeded in constructing about 1,000 toilets in these facilities, with a special focus on women and people with special needs.

During this period, Qatar Charity organised awareness sessions on the importance of personal hygiene and sanitation for approximately 236,000 people.

This achievement coincides with World Toilet Day, which falls on November 19 every year, and whose slogan this year focuses on “accelerating change” to realise every person’s human right to safe sanitation.



The project was implemented at a cost of QR897,982.

Youth Edition 2023 tackles regional issues

Doha Forum: Youth Edition 2023, powered by QatarDebate Centre, kicked off the second day of discussions touching on issues ranging from the Palestinian-Israeli war to building a sustainable world for future generations.

In his opening speech prior to the first expert panel discussion, Dr Norman Finkelstein, named in 2020 as the fifth most influential political scientist in the world, said: “We’ve had this brutal, heartless, illegal blockade of Gaza for over 20 years.”

Speaking to an audience of more than 80 delegates from his home in Brooklyn, United States, he said: “It is a 20-year long crime against humanity, which the whole world is cognisant of but allows to continue.”

“However, that’s only half the story,” Dr Finkelstein continued. “The other half of the story is that every few years, Israel ‘mows the lawn’ in Gaza.”

“‘Mowing the lawn’ in Gaza means every few years – 2008, 2012, 2014 – Israel commits a high-tech massacre in Gaza,” he explained.

The first expert panel discussion on *Bridging A Divided World: The Politics of*



Participants at Doha Forum: Youth Edition.

Peace was led by Palestinian moderator A Safaa Jaber and comprised panellists Dr Finkelstein, former *New York Times* corre-

spondent based in Gaza Taghreed Elkhodary, and Mouin Rabbani, a researcher and analyst specialised in Palestinian affairs,

the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the contemporary Middle East.

The panellists discussed the history and

roots of the conflict that has spanned decades, leading to the events of October 7.

Delegates from over 75 countries listened to the talk which shed light on the most prominent challenges facing the Palestinian people, key players and stakeholders in the conflict, global diverging legal views and the crucial role of media and foreign powers.

During the second expert panel session on *Sustainability and Economic Policy*, moderator Arina Najwa from Malaysia led discussions alongside a panel comprising of Unesco Science Sector Programme officer Donia Abdelwahed, Prof Eduardo G Pereira (a worldwide recognised scholar specialising in Natural Resources and Energy Law), and, Prof Damilola S Olawuyi, a Unesco chairholder on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development at the College of Law in Nigeria.

The panel discussed the trends shaping global energy demand and efforts to maintain energy security, energy justice and the diversity of energy flows, as well as the industry’s ability to tackle pollution and reduce its carbon footprint by diversifying energy sources.

QRCS concludes advanced frontline humanitarian negotiation workshop



The QRCS held a four-day workshop.

The Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has concluded the four-day advanced regional workshop on *Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation Management*.

Jointly held by the QRCS, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the Geneva-based Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation, the event was aimed at building the negotiation capacity among Qatar and GCC personnel during field relief and development operations.

Many important topics and drills were introduced, including safer access, key components of negotiation, the Naivasha

Grid, classification of negotiations, design of mandate, identification of red lines, organisational vs negotiator mandate, risk anticipation, settlement in a humanitarian context, high-quality listening to understand the other party’s perspective and identify their motivations, negotiation and influence tactics, persuasive negotiation counterargument, sharing knowledge, negotiation models and adaptability, and factors to build trust and maintain negotiation with the other party.

The last day of the workshop focused on misinformation and disinformation, as a major challenge to humanitarian organisations and personnel.

The participants learnt about how to detect, analyse, and respond to false information, as well as effective mechanisms and strategies to deal with it.

There were presentations and insights given by media experts, including QRCS communication and public relations director Mohamed Rashid al-Marri and ICRC misinformation and disinformation adviser Paco Pangalangan.

A lecture was presented by Dr Turki bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud, director of Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and vice-chairman of the National Committee for International Humanitarian Law.

ANNOUNCEMENT

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Souq Waqif is a popular tourist destination in Doha.

Qatar becomes top tourist destination for GCC citizens

Qatar has become a main tourist destination for a wide segment of the GCC citizens who prefer to spend their holidays and weekends in the country, especially during the winter, local Arabic daily *Arrayyah* reported.

As the temperature has started to drop considerably over the past few weeks, the country has started to see influx of GCC tourists, whether families or groups of young people who are keen to start with Souq Waqif, and then visit popular destinations such as Msheireb, Katara – Cultural Village, Old Doha Port, Lusail, The Pearl Island and the various venues of Expo 2023 Doha.

Speaking to *Arrayyah*, a number of those tourists stressed that they find in Qatar the much sought after privacy for families. Besides, the country is easily accessible to them, so that they can come and stay for short vacations of even a couple of days and enjoy many interesting sites conveniently.

They also pointed out that Qatar has succeeded in maintaining a sophisticated tourist infrastructure while keeping its traditions and heritage alive. Besides, the country has a very effective transport system that has reduced potential traffic crowds to the minimum.

Hassan al-Burasheed from Bahrain, said it is his first time in Qatar, and he was amazed by the development and sophistication he saw across the country. He



stressed that this has made him very proud of Qatar, as it is considered one of the best tourist destinations in the region.

Omar Salim from Oman, said that the country enjoys a high level of safety and security, making it a haven for family tourism. Besides, GCC families enjoy the privacy they highly value in Qatar.

He noted that the organisation

of Expo 2023 Doha is very successful and said he was keen to accompany his family there.

Saif al-Anzi from Saudi Arabia, said many Saudi tourists prefer to spend their weekends in Qatar and that they keep coming again and again, as the country has excellent tourist facilities and offers the best services at competitive prices. Further, it is very easy to come to the country.

VCUarts Qatar holds workshop on design journalism, activism

The Alumni Relations wing at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar), a Qatar Foundation partner, recently organised a workshop and presentation on design journalism, activism and storytelling at its campus.

It was led by Pakistan-based Hazem Asif, an alumnus who holds a BFA in Graphic Design and MFA in Design from VCUarts Qatar and focused on “Art for Activism: A Poster Design Lab”.

In his presentation, Asif shared his journey and experience of researching and designing for various international organisations such as Google, Harper Collins, Bloomsbury, Zee5, Walker Books, The Lancet HIV and Al Jazeera Media Network.

During the workshop, participants crafted activism-inspired posters focusing on a topic of their choosing. At the end of the workshop, each participant/group shared a brief presentation on their



Hazem Asif during the workshop.

poster and the inspiration driving it. Participants also discussed the potential real-world impact and reach of these posters.

The internationally recognised illustrator, designer and social design activist explained more about the convergence of design and journalism, and his approach to it.

“Briefs and features in newspapers – be they print or digital – can often be dull or feel distant to the reader. You’ll notice this as you scroll through digital news plat-

forms; news features, with their read-through links and prompts, seem to dissolve into one another. This set me thinking – ‘What if I took a 500-word news feature and turned it into a design?’ And that’s where it started.”

On December 24, 2021, a doodle created by Asif welcomed viewers to the landing page of Google. He designed the artwork for Google to mark the 71st birthday of Moin Akhtar, one of Pakistan’s most loved actors, comedians and entertainers.

MoPH launches awareness campaign to protect against respiratory infections

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in collaboration with Hamad Medical Corp (HMC) and Primary Health Care Corp, (PHCC) has launched a public awareness campaign aimed at empowering the community in protecting themselves from viral respiratory infections including seasonal influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and Covid-19.

Head of Infectious Diseases at HMC, Dr Abdullatif al-Khal, explained that it is very common for people to get sick from viral respiratory infections at this time of year. “As the temperatures drop and the winter respiratory viruses circulate more widely in the community, it is important that people take action to reduce their risk of getting sick from these respiratory viruses.”

“While anyone can get catch flu, RSV or Covid-19, certain population groups are at increased risk of developing more severe symptoms. This includes people over 50 years of age, individuals with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women, and young children, particularly those below 5 years of age,” explained Dr al-Khal.

He said the symptoms of flu, RSV, and Covid-19 can be similar and include fever, cough, sore throat, nasal discharge, body aches, headaches and

sometimes shortness of breath. Anyone experiencing these symptoms should stay at home to reduce the risk of passing the infection onto other people. If the symptoms are moderate or severe, individuals should seek medical support by visiting a primary health centre for diagnosis and treatment. There are effective treatments for influenza and Covid-19 if given early in the course of infection. This is particularly important for people at increased risk for severe infection because of age or chronic conditions.

Director of Health Protection and Communicable Disease Control at MoPH, Dr Hamad al-Romaihi, said there are simple steps people can take to protect themselves from these common respiratory infections.

“Flu, RSV and Covid-19 all spread in similar ways, so it is important that people adhere to basic infection prevention and control measures to protect themselves and others. This includes reducing contact with people who show symptoms such as coughing or sneezing; keeping your hands clean with regular hand washing; coughing or sneezing into your elbow, or if you are using a tissue, making sure you properly dispose of used tissues immediately after use; and getting vaccinated annually against flu

and Covid-19. Schoolchildren with symptoms of respiratory infections should avoid going to school while they have active symptoms to protect their classmates from the infection.”

Dr al-Romaihi explained the vaccines for flu and Covid-19 are safe, effective and supported by extensive research studies and he encouraged individuals at high risk of more severe symptoms to get vaccinated.

Manager of Health Protection, Preventive Health Directorate at PHCC, Dr Khalid Hamid Elawad, said the seasonal influenza vaccine and Covid-19 vaccine are both provided to all residents of Qatar free of charge. “Influenza vaccines are available at more than 90 healthcare facilities across Qatar, including 31 PHCC health centres, outpatient clinics at HMC hospitals, and more than 45 semi-governmental and private hospitals and clinics, while Covid-19 vaccines are available at all 31 PHCC health centres.”

“Getting vaccinated is not an individual decision; rather, it is an expression of our social responsibility towards our loved ones and all members of society. We can protect people we love and contribute to building a healthy and safe society for everyone by solidarity and getting vaccinated,” added Dr Elawad. (QNA)

MoPH attends World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), healthcare institutions, entities involved in animal health, the food safety and environmental health sector, academic institutions and all other relevant sectors in Qatar are participating in the 2023 World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week under the theme, “Preventing antimicrobial resistance together,” from November 18-23. In a statement yesterday, MoPH announced its collaboration with its partners to organise various events and activities aimed at increasing awareness of antimicrobial resistance and its optimal use in all

healthcare facilities in Qatar. Also, a scientific seminar titled, “Preventing antimicrobial resistance together” will be held today.

Through this year’s events, MoPH aims to shed light on antimicrobial and antibiotic resistance as a problem affecting various sectors, imposing a significant burden on human and animal health and the local, global economy. The activities also seek to enhance optimal use programmes for antimicrobials effectively among healthcare providers, policymakers, patients and the animal sector in Qatar. (QNA)

Mena Diabetes Medical Congress stresses healthy lifestyle

The Qatar Diabetes Association (QDA) concluded the two-day Mena Diabetes Medical Congress 2023 with emphasis on the importance of self-care, pursuit of a healthy, balanced lifestyle and avoidance of obesity, to prevent disease and to reduce its complications and risks. QDA Executive Director Dr Abdullah al-Hamaq affirmed that the conference was a success

by all standards both in terms of the large number of participants including diabetologists, endocrinologists, diabetes educators, neurologists, general practitioners, cardiologists and dieticians from Qatar and beyond, and in terms of working papers, presentations and research, and the meaningful discussions on all matters related to diabetes. Dr al-Hamaq said the conference

was part of the activities organised by the association to mark World Diabetes Day, which is observed on Nov 14 every year. The conference discussed efforts in diabetes treatment, related complications, technology, and disease prevention. It covered various topics, including new policies and strategies for combating diabetes, innovative approaches among others. (QNA)

National Science Research and Innovation Week activities begin today

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education, in collaboration with the Qatar Research Development and Innovation Council (QRDI), today launches the National Science Research and Innovation Week under the slogan “Promising Researchers for Qatar”.

The event will feature the participation of students who have qualified for the final stages from both government and private schools. The week’s activities are scheduled from Nov 19-23 at the Qatar National Convention Centre.

The ministry also announced that the activities of the week would include training workshops, the 15th National Student Research Exhibition, the final rounds of the Academic FameLab competition, a fun cor-

ner for primary school students and presentations by scientific research partners.

The winning research projects will be announced at the award ceremony. The top three winners in all categories and educational stages of the Scientific Research and Innovation Competition 2023 will be honoured.

Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs Maha Zayed al-Ruwaili said the interest in scientific research and innovation represents an opportunity for Qatar’s students to exchange innovative, creative ideas and to develop their research skills.

Al-Ruwaili praised the role of the Qatar Research Development and Innovation Council for the support and assistance of talented and distinguished students and researchers.

This support is integrated and consistent with the ministry’s endeavour to prepare a generation of researchers who can find scientific research skills capable of providing innovative and pioneering ideas, and working to implement them to achieve comprehensive development, human, economic, and social.

Executive Director of Qatar National Research Fund Programmes at the Qatar Research Development and Innovation Council Dr Hisham Saber hailed the launch of a new edition of the National Research and Innovation Week.

“We look forward to meeting participating students’ research and innovation talents next week and in meeting future leaders in Qatar’s research and innovation sector.” (QNA)

QU hosts third interprofessional global partnership symposium

The Global Confederation for Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice concluded the third Interprofessional Global Partnership Symposium, hosted by Qatar University’s (QU) Health.

The event held from November 2-5 was a unique opportunity for global partners to come together, share their knowledge, expertise and learnings, and collectively work towards advancing interprofessional health profession education and collaborative practice. The symposium, brought together 40 representatives from 18 countries affiliated with 11 regional networks around

the globe in interprofessional education and healthcare. The delegates had an opportunity to explore ways to enhance collaboration between professions and regions worldwide.

Dr Alla El-Awaisi, director of Clinical Operations and Engagement, Vice-President Office for Health and Medical Sciences at QU said: “This symposium not only marks a milestone but also sets the stage for the launch of the Arab Network for Interprofessional Collaboration, a dynamic addition to the Interprofessional.Global Confederation contributing significantly to the global discourse on interprofessional education and practice.”

Dr Champion Nyoni, chair of Interprofessional. Global noted: “The opportunity to meet in person in a consensus-based partnership approach is such an advantage, we appreciate the support of Qatar University to help bring us together to build connections and provide us the ability to meet our objectives for the future.”

The third Interprofessional Global Partnership Symposium heralds a new era of health collaboration, where the focus is on sharing knowledge, driving innovation, transforming the healthcare landscape, and serving as a catalyst for global healthcare improvement.



Participants in the third Interprofessional Global Partnership Symposium.



Rallies held across Iran to support conflict-hit Gaza

AFP
Tehran

Thousands of Iranians held rallies across the country yesterday against Israel's unrelenting bombardment of the Gaza strip following the storming by the Palestinian group Hamas last month.

The demonstrations in the capital Tehran and other cities were held in "support of the oppressed children of Gaza" under the slogan "Palestine is not alone", according to local media. Israel's air and ground campaign has killed an estimated 12,000 people in the Palestinian territory, including 5,000 children, according to Hamas authorities, which have ruled Gaza since 2007. Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas in response to the group's October first week storming.

In Tehran, crowds of demon-



Iranians chant slogans and wave flags during a protest in Tehran in support of the people of Gaza, yesterday.

strators waved Palestinian flags, while others held banners reading "Down with America" and "Down with Israel", according to AFP journalists.

Others burnt Israeli flags while some waved the flags of Lebanese

group Hezbollah, which has been engaged in border skirmishes with Israel since October 7.

"The Zionist regime (Israel) can no longer see peace and security," Hossein Salami, the head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard



Hossein Salami, head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, speaks in Tehran in support of the people of Gaza, yesterday.

Corps, said in a speech during the Tehran rally.

"Muslims will take revenge on behalf of the oppressed people of Gaza, and this revenge has no expiration date." Similar demonstrations took place in other major

cities including Shiraz, Kerman and Isfahan. Iran has made support for the Palestinian cause a centrepiece of its foreign policy since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

The Islamic republic has hailed the October first week storming a

"success" but denied any involvement. It has also lambasted Israel's bombardment of Gaza as "genocide" while denouncing the US over its support for Israel.

Yesterday, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani decried Israel's "attacks" on hospitals in the Gaza strip. "Attacking hospitals is in conflict with all human rights standards, international law and Geneva Conventions and makes the criminal nature of this regime even more obvious to the world," he said on X, formerly Twitter, in reference to Israel.

His statement came as hundreds of people fled Gaza's main Al-Shifa hospital, where more than 2,000 patients, medics and displaced people were trapped. Israel has been pressing military operations inside the hospital, searching for a Hamas operations centre it says lies under the sprawling complex — a charge Hamas denies.

Jordan minister casts doubt on Israel's ability to succeed against Hamas



Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi speaks during the IISS Manama Dialogue security conference in Bahrain, yesterday.

Reuters
Manama

Jordan's foreign minister voiced doubt yesterday that Israel could reach its goal of obliterating Hamas with its heavy bombardment and invasion of the Gaza Strip long dominated by the Palestinian movement.

"Israel says it wants to wipe out Hamas. There's a lot of military people here, I just don't understand how this objective can be realised," Ayman Safadi said at the annual IISS Manama Dialogue security conference in Bahrain.

Israel vowed to wipe out Hamas since its October first week cross-border storming into nearby Israeli communities. Israel has bombed much of Gaza City to rubble as it has subbed the north of the enclave and turned to stepping up attacks on Hamas in the south.

Regional power Saudi Arabia called at the conference for an immediate Israeli-Hamas ceasefire. "We are seeing civilians dying every day. And we need to end that today, not tomorrow," said Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin



Palestinians gather as others search for casualties at the site of an Israeli strike, in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

Farhan. Hamas has vowed a long and sustained battle against Israel.

Brett McGurk, US President Joe Biden's top adviser on the Middle East, told the Manama conference that the release of hostages held by Hamas would lead to a surge in the delivery of humanitarian aid and a significant pause in fighting in Gaza.

Former Saudi intelligence chief Prince Turki al-Faisal said a long-time failure to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict had spawned the current crisis.

"We...must consider that war is also an indication of political and diplomatic failure of the international community; all of us have failed solving this problem," he said. "And the responsibility falls on all of us to find a solution."

Israel's blitz of Gaza has raised questions among world and regional powers and the UN over who would govern the densely populated territory at the end of the conflict.

Only the Palestinian Authority (PA), the Western-backed entity that exercises limited self-rule in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, could run Gaza after the Israel-Hamas war is over, European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said.

"Hamas cannot be in control of Gaza any longer," Borrell told the Manama Dialogue, an annual conference on foreign and security policy. "So who will be in control of Gaza? I think only one could do that — the Palestinian Authority." Palestinian President Mah-

moud Abbas has said the PA could play a role in administering Gaza if there was a full political solution — moves towards Palestinian statehood on lands Israel has occupied since 1967 — that also encompassed the West Bank.

Israeli-Palestinian peace talks have been frozen since 2014.

A senior official from the United Arab Emirates, which reached a US-brokered normalisation accord with Israel in 2020, warned that a drawn-out Gaza conflict could breed radicalisation across the wider Middle East.

"The longer the crisis takes, the more danger we have of the crisis spiralling out of control and I think we have to be very, very careful," said Anwar Gargash, diplomatic adviser to the UAE president.



Palestinian children react after an Israeli strike on a house, in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.



Demonstrators attend a protest in support of Palestinians, in Muharraq, Bahrain, yesterday.



Yemenis march during a rally to show solidarity with Palestinians yesterday.



Palestinians fleeing Gaza City and other parts of northern Gaza, carry some belongings as they walk along a road leading to the southern areas of the enclave, yesterday.

ELECTION Liberian president Weah concedes poll defeat to ex VP Boakai

Liberian leader and football legend George Weah conceded defeat to opposition leader Joseph Boakai after a tight presidential run-off, saying it was "time to put national interest above personal interest," AFP reported from Monrovia. The latest and nearly complete results showed Boakai leading with nearly 51% of the votes in Liberia, Africa's oldest republic founded by freed American slaves. "The results announced tonight, though not final, indicate that...Boakai is in a lead that we cannot surpass," Weah said in a speech on national radio late on Friday. He said his CDC party "has lost the election but Liberia has won," adding: "This is the time for graciousness in defeat". The 78-year-old Boakai lost to Weah, 57, by a large margin in the second-round presidential vote in 2017. With more than 99.5% of the polling stations reporting after Tuesday's second-round vote, Boakai had garnered 50.89% of ballots cast, according to the election commission. Boakai was 28,000 votes ahead of Weah, according to Friday's figures.

LEGAL Police release detained Afrobeat stars

Nigerian police have released on bail two Afrobeat stars held for several weeks in detention in connection with the death of singer MohBad, a police spokesman said yesterday, AFP reported from Lagos. MohBad, whose real name was Ilerioluwa Oladimeji Aloba and who wrote hits such as "Feel Good", died in hospital on September 12, aged 27, in circumstances that have never been fully explained. Social media has been inundated with speculation about the cause. Afrobeat stars Naira Marley, whose real name is Azeez Fashola, and Balogun Samson, known as Sam Larry, were summoned by police in October as part of the investigation into MohBad's death. The pair were subsequently remanded in custody but police said they were freed on Friday.

Sick, wounded children from Gaza airlifted to UAE

AFP
Al Arish/Abu Dhabi

Clutching a blown-up surgical glove as a makeshift toy, a Palestinian child is stretchered onto a plane to Abu Dhabi — one of the Gaza war's first evacuees to the United Arab Emirates for urgent medical treatment.

In the dead of night at Egypt's Al Arish airport, near the Rafah border crossing from Gaza, the child is carried carefully from the back of one of six yellow ambulances waiting near the runway, blue lights flashing.

A hydraulic platform lifts the wheeled stretchers into the back of a plane until eight children in various stages of injury and distress, some accompanied by relatives, are aboard.

These are the lucky ones, spirited away from the dangers and trauma of the Israel-Hamas war to quiet, well-equipped hospitals in Abu Dhabi, capital of UAE.

Five thousand children are



Emiratis speak with a Palestinian mother carrying her child on their arrival in Abu Dhabi, yesterday, after being evacuated from Gaza as part of a humanitarian mission organised by the United Arab Emirates.

among Gaza's dead, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory — an average of about 122 a day — and 30,000 people have been wounded.

The initial group of evacuated children, who arrived in Abu Dhabi early yesterday, are the first of an expected 1,000 who will be airlifted to the UAE for medical help. Among the children, one

has a fractured spine and another a broken leg. Others have burns, and one needs urgent treatment for cancer. Two more with severe injuries did not board and were expected to join the next flight. The humanitarian airlifts for children could now happen daily, an aid official said.

"We would like to carry out daily evacuations because there

are injured people, hospitals out of service, and a shortage of medicines," said Mohamed al-Kaabi from the Emirates Red Crescent humanitarian organisation, describing the situation in Gaza as "catastrophic".

"God willing, during the next week we will have evacuated whomever we can, because time is precious and there are lives we are losing." On arrival in the morning light of Abu Dhabi, one boy with a braced and bandaged leg, and a weary expression on his face, flashes two fingers in a "Victory" sign as he is carried to a waiting white ambulance.

Another young boy aged about three, clutching a white bottle of milk and with his right leg in a bandage, cries as he is pushed across the tarmac in a wheelchair.

The airlifts are among a number of humanitarian initiatives by the UAE. The UAE has sent 51 planes carrying 1,400 tonnes of food and relief supplies as part of a \$20mn aid package, a foreign ministry statement said.

Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign



People attend a protest in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian group Hamas, in Dublin, Ireland.



Actors Liam Cunningham and Irish politician Richard Boyd Barrett attend a protest in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza in Dublin.

Thousands take to streets calling for immediate ceasefire in Gaza

AFP
London

Thousands of protesters took part in rallies across Britain and France yesterday calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza war. Several thousand people marched through central Paris, in torrential rain, behind a banner proclaiming “Halt the massacre in Gaza and West Bank, immediate ceasefire”.

“France must immediately call for a ceasefire so that the guns go silent,” said CGT union secretary-general Sophie Binet, one of several union leaders to speak at the rally. Rallies were held in dozens of towns across France, Binet added. In Marseille, AFP saw several hundred people stage a minute’s silence for Palestinian victims of the war. In Toulouse, more than 1,200 people took part in a march, according to police. Rallies have been held across Europe since October 7.

The health ministry in Gaza says that more than 12,000 people have died in the Palestinian territory in Israel’s military onslaught. Last Saturday saw more than 300,000 people stage a pro-Palestinian march in London. Smaller protests were held this week with one targeting an office where main opposition Labour Party leader Keir Starmer holds meetings. Protesters there waved Palestinian flags and chanted “Ceasefire now”.

Some held placards reading “Stop the war in Gaza” and “Starmer – blood on your hands” amid a heavy police presence in the Camden area of north London. “We are here to basically put pressure on the UK government, and on Keir Starmer specifically as the leader of the Labour Party to pressure the Israeli government for a ceasefire,” said Aziz, a 26-year-old consultant originally from Jordan.

Starmer – whose party is predicted to win an election expected next year – has refused to call for a permanent ceasefire, sparking a string of resignations from his top team. Instead, the former human rights lawyer has called for a humanitarian pause to Israel’s bombardment to allow aid in for the 2.4mn population.

One protester at the London event, Nicoleta, 36, held a placard reading “Bombing hospitals is a crime”.

“Because I’m a healthcare provider I’m here to defend the hospitals, the innocent civilians, the children in incubators,” she said.

“We need a ceasefire and need peace negotiations and an end to the occupation,” she added.



People demonstrate during a protest in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian group Hamas, in London, Britain, yesterday.



Maldives formally asks India to withdraw troops

AFP
Male

President Mohamed Muizzu of the Maldives formally requested yesterday that India withdraw its troops from his strategically located archipelago, fulfilling an election pledge on his first day in office.

Speaking with a visiting Indian minister, Muizzu asked New Delhi to recall personnel deployed to operate three gifted aircraft patrolling the maritime territory.

“The President formally made the request when he met the Minister of Earth Sciences of India Kiren Rijiju, at the President’s Office earlier today,” his office said in a brief statement. It did not set a timeline or specify the number of personnel to be withdrawn,

but Muizzu announced at his inauguration the previous day that removing foreign troops was a priority.

“The country will not have any foreign military personnel in the Maldives,” Muizzu said shortly after being sworn in at a televised, open-air ceremony. “When it comes to our security, I will draw a red line. The Maldives will respect the red lines of other countries too.”

Earlier this week, Muizzu told AFP that his intention was not to upend the regional balance by replacing the Indian military with Chinese troops. A former mayor of the capital Male and a construction minister for seven years, Muizzu had previously promised to cultivate “strong ties” with China, a key financial backer of his nation.

The country’s eighth president since independence from Britain in 1965, Muizzu was elected in September as a proxy for a pro-China predecessor jailed on corruption charges. Primarily known as one of the most expensive holiday destinations in South Asia, with pristine white beaches and secluded resorts, the Maldives has also become a geopolitical hotspot. Global east-west shipping lanes pass the nation’s chain of 1,192 tiny coral islands, stretching around 800km across the equator.

China was represented at Muizzu’s inauguration ceremony by State Councillor Shen Yiqin as a special envoy of President Xi Jinping, who visited the Maldives in 2014 when Muizzu’s mentor Abdulla Yameen was president.

India was represented by Rijiju.

Chinese premier invited to Australia as tensions ease

AFP
San Francisco

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said he had invited China’s Premier Li Qiang to visit, as a long-stormy relationship improves. Albanese, who visited Beijing in early November, saw Chinese leader Xi Jinping for the second time this month at a Pacific Rim summit in San Francisco.

“It was positive. We spoke (about) Premier Li coming to Australia next year now that the latest meetings have been resumed,” Albanese told reporters at the Asia-

Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) forum.

Albanese said he also asked Xi to remove remaining trade restrictions on Australian products.

China is Australia’s biggest trading partner but relations plummeted in 2020 when Beijing exerted major economic pressure – in what was seen as the rising Asian power sending a warning to other Western nations. Australia’s then conservative government, in line with US stances, had barred Chinese tech giant Huawei from 5G contracts and called for an inquiry into the origins of Covid-19, which was first detected in China.

China responded by impos-

ing punitive tariffs on a variety of Australian commodities including coal, barley and wine. China has reversed course and removed most restrictions since Albanese, of the Labor Party, took office in May last year. Xi, welcoming Albanese in Beijing, said the two countries could become “trusting partners” on a range of issues.

Xi also met on the sidelines of Apec with other leaders with whom he has deep differences, including US President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. Some observers see Xi as trying to show a softer side as he seeks to focus on the strong economic headwinds in China.

Taiwan’s alliance falters over joint presidential ticket

Taiwan’s two leading opposition parties failed to agree yesterday on who would lead the ticket in a joint presidential bid for January’s crucial elections. The lead-up to Taiwan’s January 13 vote is being closely watched because it will shape Taipei’s future relations with China, which claims the self-ruled island as its territory. The current frontrunner is Vice-President Lai Ching-te of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which is regarded by China as pro-independence. The Kuomintang (KMT), Taiwan’s biggest pro-Beijing group, and the less established

Taiwan People’s Party (TPP) have both pledged to promote closer ties with China and struck a deal this week to evaluate recent polls to determine their candidate to oppose Lai and the DPP. An announcement had been expected Saturday but the KMT and TPP disagreed on how to calculate the margin of error for polls, which led to a deadlock in negotiations. “We should sit down and resolve this minor dispute – I believe it’s a minor dispute – and quickly form a team to work together,” KMT chairman Eric Chu said. He stressed the importance of a close alliance

between the two parties to come up with the best combination of candidates. The KMT’s candidate, Hou Yu-yih, is the mayor of New Taipei City and has been performing below expectations against Lai. Former doctor Ko Wen-je, who positions his TPP as an alternative to break the usual two-party dominance of the KMT and the DPP, has surged ahead in the polls. Ko said yesterday his goal was to win the election against Lai. “We still hope to continue negotiations with the Kuomintang but don’t ask me... to surrender unconditionally,” Ko said. (AFP)

Fever pitch



Fans paint on a wall outside Narendra Modi Stadium yesterday, ahead of the ICC Men’s Cricket World Cup final between India and Australia in Ahmedabad, India, today.

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GULF TIMES

Crypto’s path to revamp financial transparency

The vertiginous fall of Sam Bankman-Fried, the disgraced founder of the cryptocurrency exchange FTX who was recently convicted of fraud and money laundering in New York, has cast a harsh light on a largely unregulated market. For all the supposed wonders of the blockchain technology underpinning cryptocurrencies, the headline-grabbing events of the past few years indicate an industry in turmoil.

In addition to the criminal activity that led to the spectacular collapse of FTX in 2022 and Bankman-Fried’s guilty verdict in early November, US regulators have sued Binance, the world’s largest crypto exchange, for allegedly operating a “web of deception.” An industry-wide reckoning looms. Will crypto always be a magnet for fraud and malfeasance, or can it eventually transform and democratise finance?

An increasingly obvious paradox has emerged. Satoshi Nakamoto, the pseudonymous creator of Bitcoin, proposed the idea of a purely peer-to-peer version of electronic cash in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis, when confidence in governments and central banks was at its nadir. Soon after the launch of Bitcoin in 2009, Nakamoto wrote that “the root problem with conventional currency is all the trust that’s required to make it work.” Today, the system that was supposed to eliminate the need for trust between people and in traditional financial institutions is experiencing a crisis of trust.

Cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Ethereum rely on computer code and networks that are not controlled or managed by a central party. Remarkably, such decentralisation works. Transactions can be completed in

a secure manner, without relying on a bank, credit-card company, or other institution. In principle, this should make financial systems less vulnerable to fraud and manipulation.

Unfortunately, grifters and unscrupulous companies have exploited customers and investors enamored with the new technology and, in the process, obscured crypto’s most compelling innovation: blockchain-enabled tools that can improve transparency and strengthen the trustworthiness of the financial sector. Maintained on computers around the world and publicly

accessible by anyone with an internet connection, blockchains are digital ledgers that carry an immutable record of all transactions in a system. Their reliance on algorithms, rather than human interaction, creates a robust money trail that traditional financial infrastructure lacks.

So, how did we end up with a crypto industry that often contradicts its founding ethos? One answer is that any innovation inevitably attracts speculative mania and chicanery, especially in the early stages of its development. In the nineteenth century, banks deceived examiners by padding gold reserves with nails. More recently, the dot-com era gave us the likes of Enron, while a biotech boom brought us Elizabeth Holmes and Theranos.

Another problem is that the industry’s consumer-facing platforms have simply grafted old ways of doing business onto a technology designed specifically to do away with them. For example, while FTX was an “exchange” – a gateway to blockchain-powered cryptocurrencies – it did not make fundamental use of decentralized technologies. Ironically, most crypto holders today store their assets in exchanges that require high levels of trust and carry many of the risks of traditional financial institutions.

Behind the scenes, the crypto industry has started using technology to shift the balance back toward innovation. One example is the development of proof of reserves, a mathematically-based method that enables institutions to verify their crypto assets. Such tools could help prevent debacles like FTX, where the lack of transparency allowed Bankman-Fried to conceal financial fraud.

Importantly, proof of reserves and similar tools work best for cryptocurrencies, not for ordinary financial assets – including the US dollar. These technical advances have therefore prompted traditional financial institutions – the very ones Bitcoin sought to replace – to embrace crypto. JPMorgan, for example, has plans to move trillions of dollars of value on to the blockchain, while monetary authorities are exploring central bank digital currencies, which would involve using blockchain technology to issue digital versions of their fiat currencies.

To be sure, the crypto industry faces several daunting challenges: the large environmental footprint of Bitcoin mining, its use for illicit transactions, privacy shortcomings, and more. But, as proof of reserves suggests, the crypto community is innovating powerful new ways to harness the inherent transparency and trustworthiness of blockchain technology to create a more secure and flexible financial ecosystem.

As these innovations proceed, governments around the world are exploring ways to safeguard consumers from the crypto industry’s excesses. They would do well to look past the headlines and seek a balanced approach that enables this remarkable technology to thrive. – Project Syndicate

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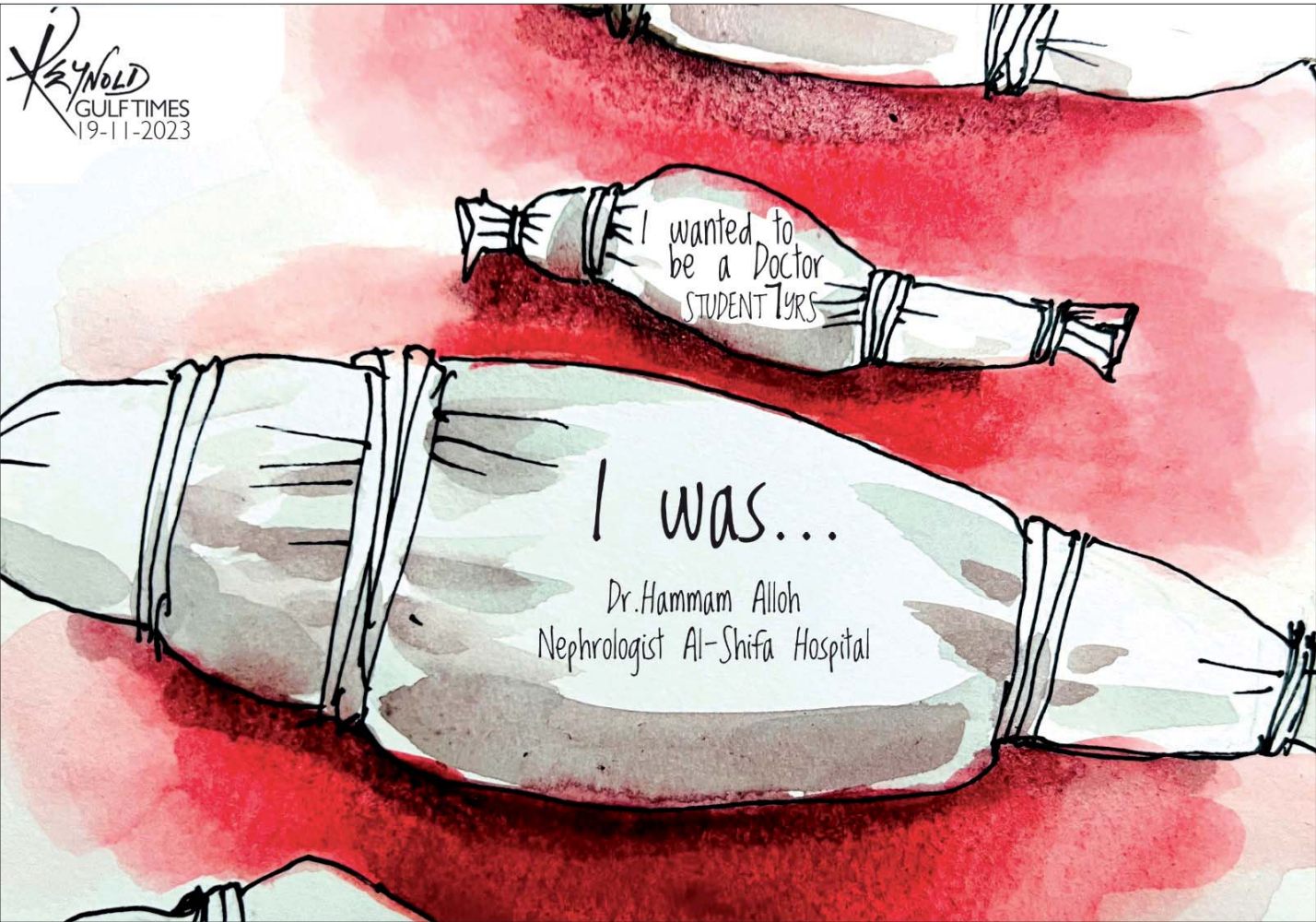
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After the storm, Biden and Xi pick low-hanging fruit

By Stephen S Roach
New Haven

“A better Biden-Xi Summit?” was the title of my commentary last month, and the emphasis was on the question mark. With good reason: Last year’s summit in Bali was a flop. Owing to poor preparation and an overemphasis on slogans (setting a “floor” for the troubled US-China relationship), any effort to ease tensions was quickly scuttled by the US downing of a Chinese surveillance balloon in February. There were no guarantees that the meeting in San Francisco would be any better.

The good news is that the San Francisco summit was indeed an improvement on last year’s meeting. Above all, both sides took the preparations far more seriously this time. It wasn’t just the high-level diplomatic engagement that resumed in the summer, with visits to Beijing by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, and climate envoy John Kerry. Equally important was identifying in advance the key issues on which the two leaders could cooperate and eventually agree.

I wrote my last commentary in part to offer a framework by which the San Francisco summit could be assessed. My tentative day-after verdict is based on a careful comparison of the official readouts from both sides. US President Joe Biden’s post-summit press conference, Chinese President Xi Jinping’s speech to a group of US business leaders at a dinner in San Francisco, and the in-depth reporting of major media outlets. Unsurprisingly, at least

according to my template, most of the progress was made on fairly obvious deliverables, or what I called “low-hanging fruit.” Two areas stand out: resumption of military-to-military communications, and joint efforts to collaborate on the fentanyl crisis.

With tensions in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea showing no signs of abating, neither side could afford the risk of another military communications blackout like the one that occurred during the balloon fiasco. As responsible superpowers, there was no choice other than to re-establish regular dialogue between the two defence departments. And the US fentanyl crisis speaks for itself, as synthetic-opioid overdoses are one of the leading causes of death for Americans aged 18 to 45; that brought the Chinese supply chain of fentanyl’s precursor chemicals into sharp focus as an unquestioned source of leverage in addressing a horrific crisis.

Other, less consequential low-hanging fruit were also plucked in San Francisco. In addition to a joint commitment to increase direct air flights next year and a joint recognition of the need to expand cultural, sports, and business exchanges, Xi said that China is ready to invite 50,000 young Americans to the country on exchange and study programs over the next five years.

Moreover, Xi’s announcement that China was ready to continue its co-operation with the US on panda conservation was a pleasant surprise; following the recent departure of three pandas from Washington, DC, this obviously struck a sentimental chord with

many animal-loving Americans, including yours truly.

In my latest book, *Accidental Conflict, I focused on the importance of finding common ground on which to re-establish trust. A shared agenda has been sorely missing in this era of Sino-American conflict escalation. While there is no simple recipe for dispelling mutual suspicion, especially after the animosity of the past five and a half years, picking the low-hanging fruit in San Francisco represents important baby steps on the path to conflict resolution.

I wish I could say the same for the other two categories of conflict resolution addressed in my previous commentary: the existential threats (climate change and global health) that both countries face and improvements in the architecture of engagement. The only notable exception was the so-called Sunnylands agreement, reached on the eve of the San Francisco summit, which promises to establish a new working group aimed at advancing climate cooperation ahead of the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai. By contrast, there was no meaningful breakthrough on artificial-intelligence governance, other than an agreement on the need for bilateral talks to reduce the risks from advanced AI systems. Nor were there any breakthroughs on cybersecurity, human rights, or territorial frictions – all issues where the two superpowers have a long history of talking past each other.

On the architecture of engagement, it was all about diplomacy and very little about shifting to an institutionalised model for deepening and perpetuating ties. With diplomats

on both sides driving the meeting, this was hardly a surprising outcome. But, in view of last year’s failed summit in Bali, it leaves me unsettled. While I credit skilled diplomacy for sparking the shift toward re-engagement, collaboration, and trust-building, those skills do not guarantee a resilient relationship that can withstand unexpected turbulence. This year, it was China’s surveillance balloon – who knows what could come next?

In this era of politically constrained, thin-skinned leaders, I continue to believe that solving disputes between the two superpowers requires more than personalised diplomacy. The case for institutionalisation remains compelling as a complement to diplomatic conflict resolution. Although it didn’t make the cut in San Francisco, a US-China secretariat remains my preferred option for augmenting the tools needed to defuse conflicts and repair the bilateral relationship.

Yes, the San Francisco summit cleared the low bar set by Bali. But deep questions remain about the contours of the Sino-American conflict, especially concerning the economic, trade, and technology issues that precipitated it. These issues were given surprisingly scant attention in the readouts of the four-hour summit. In the end, it was far easier for Biden and Xi to pick the low-hanging fruit.

– Project Syndicate

● Stephen S Roach, a faculty member at Yale University and former chairman of Morgan Stanley Asia, is the author of Unbalanced: The Codependency of America and China and Accidental Conflict: America, China, and the Clash of False Narratives.



Chinese President Xi Jinping waves as he walks with US President Joe Biden at Filoli estate on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation summit, in Woodside, California, on Wednesday. (Reuters)



Sam Altman at the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Leaders' Week in San Francisco, California, on Thursday. (AFP)

‘Sam Altman built a company from nothing to \$90bn in value, and changed our collective world forever’, says former Google chief

Reuters
San Francisco

The board of the company behind ChatGPT on Friday fired OpenAI CEO Sam Altman – to many, the human face of generative AI – sending shock waves across the tech industry. OpenAI’s Chief Technology Officer Mira Murati will serve as interim CEO, the company said, adding that it will conduct a formal search for a permanent CEO. “Altman’s departure follows a deliberative review process by the board, which concluded that he was not consistently candid in his communications with the board, hindering its ability to exercise its responsibilities,” OpenAI said in the blog without elaborating. Greg Brockman, OpenAI president and co-founder, who stepped down from the board as chairman as part of the management shuffle, quit the company, he an-

nounced on messaging platform X late on Friday. “Based on today’s news, i quit,” he wrote. The departures blindsided many employees who discovered the abrupt management change from an internal message and the company’s public facing blog. It came as a surprise to Altman and Brockman as well, who learned the board’s decision within minutes of the announcement, Brockman said. “We too are still trying to figure out exactly what happened,” he posted on X, formerly Twitter, adding, “We will be fine. Greater things coming soon.” The now four-person board consists of three independent directors holding no equity in OpenAI and its Chief Scientist Ilya Sutskever. The organisation did not immediately answer a request for comment on Brockman’s claims. Backed by billions of dollars from Microsoft, which does not have a board seat in the non-profit governing the startup, OpenAI kicked off the generative AI craze last November by releasing ChatGPT. The chatbot became one of the world’s fastest-growing software applications. Trained on reams of data, generative AI can create human-like content, helping users spin up term papers, complete science homework and even write entire novels. After ChatGPT’s launch, regulators scrambled to catch up: the European

Union revised its AI Act and the US kicked off AI regulation efforts. Altman, who ran Y Combinator, is a serial entrepreneur and investor. He was the face of OpenAI and the wildly popular generative AI technology as he toured the world this year. Altman posted on X shortly after OpenAI published its blog: “i loved my time at openai. it was transformative for me personally, and hopefully the world a little bit. most of all i loved working with such talented people. will have more to say about what’s next later.” Altman did not respond to requests for comment. Murati, who has worked for Tesla, joined OpenAI in 2018 and later became chief technology officer. She oversaw product launches including that of ChatGPT. At an emergency all-hands meeting on Friday afternoon after the announcement, Murati sought to calm employees and said OpenAI’s partnership with Microsoft is stable and its backer’s executives, including CEO Satya Nadella, continue to express confidence in the startup, a person familiar with the matter told Reuters. The Information previously reported details of the meeting. “Microsoft remains committed to Mira and their team as we bring this next era of

Come to us: France throws open doors to Altman

Ousted OpenAI CEO Sam Altman is welcome in France, France’s digital minister said in a statement on X, a day after the board of the company behind ChatGPT fired Altman without giving a reason. “Sam Altman, his team and their talents are welcome in France if they want to,” Digital Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said in a statement on X yesterday. In May, during on a trip through European capitals for talks with political leaders, Altman met with French President Emmanuel Macron to discuss the place of France and Europe in the global race for artificial intelligence (AI). Microsoft-backed OpenAI released its ChatGPT chatbot in late 2022. It uses generative AI meaning it can learn from past data to create new content including text, images and computer code. In a video message to tech leaders on Friday, Macron said generative AI has huge potential and that France plans a conference about AI in Paris next year. He added France had been an AI pioneer five years ago, with a dedicated strategy and a €1.5bn budget. Macron said it is a “civilisational challenge” for France to make sure AI algorithms are not only fed English-language content. “I want it to also reflect our French culture and language and our way of thinking,” Macron said, adding France would open its databases to AI, while protecting copyright and ensuring adequate regulation.

AI to our customers,” a spokesperson for the software maker told Reuters on Friday. In a statement published on Microsoft’s website, Nadella said: “We have a long-term agreement with OpenAI...Together, we will continue to deliver the meaningful benefits of this technology to the world.” The shakeup is not the first at OpenAI, launched in 2015. Tesla CEO Elon Musk once was its co-chair, and in 2020 other executives departed, going on to found competitor Anthropic, which has claimed it has a greater focus on AI safety. Well wishers and critics piled onto digital forums as news of the latest shuffle spread. On X, former Google CEO Eric Schmidt called Altman “a hero of mine,” adding, “He built a company from nothing to \$90bn in value, and changed our collective world forever. I can’t wait to see what he does next. I, and billions of people, will benefit from his future work – it’s going to be simply incredible.” “This is a shocker and Altman was a key ingredient in the recipe for success of OpenAI,” said Daniel Ives, an analyst at Wedbush Securities. “That said, we believe Microsoft and Nadella will exert more control at OpenAI going forward with Altman gone.” The full impact of the OpenAI surprise will unfold over time, but its fundraising prospects were an immediate concern. Altman was considered a master fundraiser who managed to negotiate billions of dollars in investment from Microsoft as well as having led the company’s

tender offer transactions this year that fuelled OpenAI’s valuation from \$29bn to over \$80bn. “In the short term it will impair OpenAI’s ability to raise more capital. In the intermediate term it will be a non-issue,” said Thomas Hayes, chairman at hedge fund Great Hill Capital. Other analysts said Altman’s departure, while disruptive, would not derail generative AI’s popularity or OpenAI or Microsoft’s competitive advantage. “The innovation created by OpenAI is bigger than any one or two people, and there is no reason to think this would cause OpenAI to cede its leadership position,” said DA Davidson analyst Gil Luria. “If nothing else, Microsoft’s stake and significant interest in OpenAI’s progress ensure the appropriate leadership changes are being implemented.” As late as Thursday evening, Altman showed no signs of concern at two public events. He joined colleagues in a panel on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) conference in San Francisco, describing his commitment and vision for AI. Later he spoke at a Burning Man-related event in Oakland, California, engaging in an hour-long conversation on the topic of art and AI. Altman seemed relaxed and gave no indication anything was wrong, but left right after his talk was over at 7:30pm. The event organiser said at the event that Altman had another meeting to attend.

French senator accused of drugging MP for assault

A French senator has been charged on suspicion of drugging a lower-house MP with a view to assaulting her, his lawyer said, in a case that has rocked France’s parliament. Joel Guerriau was arrested on Thursday after the alleged assault attempt against Sandrine Josso, a source familiar with the case told AFP. Josso felt ill after accepting a beverage on Tuesday night at the Paris home of the 66-year-old senator, with whom she was not in an intimate relationship, prosecutors said. A Paris investigator charged Guerriau with “administering without Sandrine Josso’s knowledge a substance likely to alter her judgement or self-control, to commit a rape or sexual assault”, his lawyer Remi-Pierre Drai said. He was also indicted for “possession and use of substances classed as drugs” and placed under judicial supervision, the lawyer added. The Paris prosecutor’s office confirmed the charges and told AFP the senator was banned from visiting the home of the alleged victim and from contacting her or witnesses. Tests revealed that Josso had ecstasy in her system, investigators said, prompting her to file the criminal complaint.

Swift ‘devastated’ by fan’s death

American superstar Taylor Swift yesterday was mourning the death of a 23-year-old fan during her first show in Brazil before a crowd of 60,000. The death came in an overheated venue in Rio de Janeiro during which Swift, as seen in videos on social media, tried to help thirsty fans by dispatching aides to pass out water bottles and even throwing one to the audience herself. “It’s with a shattered heart that I say we lost a fan earlier tonight,” Swift said in a post on Instagram to her millions of followers. “I can’t even tell you how devastated I am by this.” The Rio Health Secretariat reported that patient Ana Benevides died Friday evening after suffering cardiorespiratory arrest in the Nilton Santos stadium during Swift’s concert. It said efforts to revive the young woman failed and an investigation has been launched. “At this time, the cause of death cannot be determined,” the agency said.



Thousands demonstrate in a protest called by Foro Libertad y Alternativa against an amnesty bill for people involved with Catalonia’s failed 2017 independence bid, in Madrid. (AFP)

170,000 throng Spain protest

About 170,000 people marched through Madrid yesterday in the largest protest yet against an amnesty law which Spain’s Socialists agreed over Catalonia’s 2017 separatist bid in order to form a government. The demonstration, the latest in a series of protests in cities across the country against the amnesty, took place two days after Spain’s Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez won a four-year term with the backing of Catalan and Basque nationalist parties in return for agreeing to the law. Protesters, many waving Spanish flags and holding signs that read “Sanchez traitor” and “Don’t sell Spain”, demonstrated against the law which four judicial associations, opposition political parties and business leaders said threatens the rule of law and the separation of powers. Authorities put the number of demonstrators at 170,000. Alberto Nunez Feijoo, leader of the opposition conservative People’s Party, and Santiago Abascal, leader of the far-right Vox party, also attended the march which was organised by civil groups. After the rally, hundreds of people protested in the motorway near the Moncloa Palace, the prime minister’s residence in Madrid. The A6 road was closed for about an hour during the protest but later reopened after the police cleared the area.

Musk threatens lawsuit against watchdog that lured top dogs from X

Reuters
Washington

Elon Musk threatened yesterday to sue media watchdog Media Matters and those who attacked his social media platform X, following moves by several large US companies to halt advertising on the site after being promoted alongside antisemitic content. Musk on Wednesday commented on an antisemitic post on X that claimed members of the Jewish community were stoking hatred against white people, drawing sharp condemnation, including from the White House. “The split second court opens on Monday, X Corp will be filing a thermonuclear lawsuit against Media Matters and all those who colluded in this fraudulent attack on our company,” Musk wrote in a post on X, without naming any other parties. Numerous companies suspended ads in the last two days, including IBM, Disney, Warner Bros Discovery and Comcast, Lions Gate Entertainment and Paramount Global. Axios reported that Apple, the world’s largest company by market value, would do the same. “This week Media Matters for America posted a story that completely misrepresented the real experience on X, in another attempt to undermine freedom of speech and mislead advertisers,” a statement posted by Musk said. He accused Media Matters of creating an alternative account designed to “misinform advertisers” about their posts. Media Matters yesterday said Musk was a “bully” who threatens “meritless lawsuits”. “Musk admitted the ads at issue ran alongside the pro-Nazi content we identified,” Media Matters President Angelo Carusone said in a statement. “If he does sue us, we will win.” Musk has threatened legal action against other parties in the past, most specifically the Anti-Defamation League, a nonprofit organisation that fights antisemitism, blaming it for X’s loss of ad revenue. He has not yet sued the ADL, however.

SpaceX Starship launch fails minutes after reaching space

SpaceX’s uncrewed spacecraft Starship, developed to carry astronauts to the moon and beyond, failed in space shortly after lifting off yesterday, cutting short its second test but making it further than an earlier attempt that ended in an explosion. The two-stage rocketship blasted off from the Elon Musk-owned company’s Starbase launch site near Boca Chica in Texas, helping boost the Starship spacecraft as high as 90 miles above ground on a planned 90-minute test mission to space and back. But the rocket’s Super Heavy first stage booster, though it achieved a crucial manoeuvre to separate with its core Starship stage, exploded over the Gulf of Mexico shortly after detaching, a SpaceX webcast showed. Meanwhile, the core Starship stage boosted further toward space, but a few minutes later a company broadcaster said that SpaceX mission control suddenly lost contact with the vehicle.

“We have lost the data from the second stage...we think we may have lost the second stage,” SpaceX engineer and livestream host John Insprucker said. He added that engineers believe an automated flight termination command was triggered to destroy the rocket, though the reason was unclear. About eight minutes into the test mission, a camera view tracking the Starship booster appeared to show an explosion that suggested the vehicle failed at that time. The rocket’s altitude was 91 miles. The launch was the second attempt to fly Starship mounted atop its towering Super Heavy rocket booster, following an April attempt that ended in explosive failure about four minutes after lift-off. The US Federal Aviation Administration, which oversees commercial launch sites, confirmed a mishap occurred that “resulted in a loss of the vehicle,” adding no injuries or property



SpaceX’s Starship rocket launches from Starbase during its second test flight in Boca Chica, Texas, yesterday. (AFP)

damage have been reported. The agency said it will oversee a SpaceX-led investigation into the testing failure and will need to approve SpaceX’s plan to prevent it from happening again. The mission’s objective was to

get Starship off the ground in Texas and into space just shy of reaching orbit, then plunge through Earth’s atmosphere for a splashdown off Hawaii’s coast. The launch had been scheduled for Friday but was pushed back

by a day for a last-minute swap of flight-control hardware. Starship’s failure to meet all of its test objectives could pose a setback for SpaceX. The FAA will need to review the company’s failure investigation and review its application for a new launch licence. SpaceX officials have complained that such regulatory reviews take too long. On the other hand, the failure in a program for which SpaceX plans to spend roughly \$2bn this year was in line with the company’s risk-tolerant culture that embraces fast-paced testing and re-testing of prototypes to hasten design and engineering improvements. “More things were successful than in the previous test, including some new capabilities that were significant,” said Carissa Christensen, CEO of space analytics firm BryceTech. “There’s not money and patience for unlimited tests, but for a vehicle that is so different and so

big, two, three, four, five tests is not excessive,” Christensen said. At roughly 43 miles in altitude, the rocket system executed the crucial manoeuvre to separate the two stages – something it failed to do in the last test – with the Super Heavy booster intended to plunge into Gulf of Mexico waters while the core Starship booster blasts further to space using its own engines. But the Super Heavy booster blew up moments later, followed by the Starship stage’s own explosion. SpaceX in a post on social media platform X said “success comes from what we learn,” adding that the core Starship stage’s engines “fired for several minutes on its way to space.” A fully successful test would have marked a key step toward achieving SpaceX’s ambition producing a large, multi-purpose, spacecraft capable of sending people and cargo back to the moon later this decade for Nasa, and ultimately to Mars.

Aspetar hosts world's first ACL rehabilitation conference

Aspetar International Rehabilitation Conference, an event dedicated exclusively to the rehabilitation of cruciate ligament injuries in the knee, commenced yesterday at Khalifa International Stadium.

The conference, the first of its kind worldwide, has drawn more than 400 participants from 58 countries, solidifying its status as the premier international platform for ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) rehabilitation.

Aspetar chief executive Abdul Aziz al-Kuwari welcomed participants and set the tone for an event that promises to redefine the landscape of ACL rehabilitation.

"Today marks a historic moment in sports medicine as we bring together global experts to advance the understanding and treatment of cruciate ligament injuries," he said. "Aspetar is proud to lead the charge in shaping the future of ACL rehabilitation."

Attendees represent a diverse spectrum of professionals, including physiotherapists from prestigious Premier League

Clubs (Arsenal, Liverpool, Chelsea, Tottenham Hotspur, Everton, Brentford, Bournemouth, Wolverhampton, Crystal Palace, Leicester City, West Bromwich, Birmingham City), international football associations (Rangers FC, FC Zenit, KNVB), and healthcare professionals from the GCC, Asia, Europe, Australasia, and the Americas.

The first day of the conference featured an array of sessions led by renowned professionals, with topics that included the importance of symmetry in ACL injury assessment, strategies for strength and jump testing, running and change of direction analysis, and comprehensive clinical pearls.

Presenters included experts such as Chris Bishop (UK), Vasilis Sideris (Aspetar), Roula Kotsifaki (Aspetar), Benoit Pairot de Fontenay (France), and Joao Marques (Aspetar).

A highlight of the conference was the introduction of Clinical Practice Guidelines on Rehabilitation after ACL Reconstruction (ACLRL).



Some of the officials and speakers at the conference with Aspetar chief executive Abdul Aziz al-Kuwari.

This resource, intended for physiotherapists managing patients post-ACLR, is poised to be a crucial tool in outpatient clinics.

The guidelines also hold relevance for physicians, orthopaedic surgeons, athletic trainers, nurse practitioners, and other healthcare professionals involved in ACL rehabilitation.

A unique aspect of the conference was the emphasis on athlete experience.

Stakeholders involved in ACL return-to-play decision-making shared their insights, providing a valuable perspective into the thought processes guiding critical decisions in athletes' rehabilitation journey.

As the conference moves into its second day, the agenda includes discussions on individualising athletic development after ACL reconstruction, key factors outside the gym in ACL rehabilitation, practical pearls, hot topics in ACL rehabilitation, and a panel discussion on Return to Play (RTP) decision-making.

Day 2 will feature a keynote address by



Participants at the inaugural session of the conference.

FIFA director Dr Andy Massy addressing *The Aspetar ACL Way – How we guide an athlete through their journey from the operating table back to the top of their sport.*

The day will also delve into topics such as explosive strength, reactive strength,

running mechanics, change of direction/agility, and individualised reconditioning.

The Aspetar International Rehabilitation Conference serves not only as a forum for knowledge exchange but also as a nexus for international collaboration.

HBKU's College of Public Policy organises EvalSouth Conference 2023

The Programme of Social Policy and Evaluation Research (PROSPER) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU)'s College of Public Policy (CPP) organised the EvalSouth Conference 2023 recently to promote and advance the state of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) sector in the Global South.

Held under the theme *Driving Progress: Evaluation in the Global South*, EvalSouth Conference 2023 sought to strengthen the integration of M&E in the political, social, and professional systems of the Global South by fostering a vibrant knowledge exchange among professionals, researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers from around the world.

The UN Population Fund (UNPF), New Development Bank



Participants at the conference.

(NDB), and Qatar Charity served as partners, supporting PROSPER in organising the conference.

The conference began with a panel discussion on the culture of evaluation driving the adoption of

evaluation practices within policy-making in the Global South.

Participants included Lebanon member of parliament Halimé Kaakour, Sri Lanka member of parliament and chair of the Global

Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation Kabir Hashim, UNPF Evaluation Office director Marco Segone, NDB Independent Evaluation Office director-general Ashwani K Muthoo, and Zenda Offir, the

South African representative at the NDB High-Level International Evaluation Advisory Committee.

CPP associate professor and PROSPER founding director Dr Anis Ben Briq said: "Developing

the M&E sector throughout the Global South supports the development of more effective public policies that meet the unique demands of communities throughout these countries."

"Our successful hosting of EvalSouth Conference 2023 demonstrates the HBKU's and CPP's commitment to transcend borders and build capacity in Qatar and beyond," he said.

Participants gathered to explore existing evaluation policy frameworks and the culture of evaluation throughout the Global South.

They also discussed contemporary topics in the field, including the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence in M&E, evaluation-informed policymaking, evaluation advocacy, youth engagement and capacity development.

Sudanese pavilion inaugurated at Expo 2023 Doha

Sudan's pavilion was inaugurated at the international zone of the International Horticultural Expo 2023 Doha in the presence of a number of ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions, government officials, environmental enthusiasts, and a large group of the Sudanese community in Qatar.

Sudan's ambassador to Qatar Ahmed Abdel-Rahman Mohamed Hassan Siwar al-Dahab, who inaugurated his country's pavilion, expressed his happiness at participating in the exhibition despite the challenging circumstances currently faced by Sudan.

He pointed out that expo is being held in a non-agricultural country for the first time, giving it a unique distinction.

Al-Dahab affirmed Sudan's commitment to demonstrate to the world that it is a first-class agricultural country with vast natural resources, opening up opportunities for partnerships, investment, and showcasing Sudan's heritage and culture.

The ambassador expressed his gratitude to the organising committee for facilitating the opening of the pavilion and showcasing Sudan's agricultural status in horticulture.

He emphasised that Sudan's participation reflects its efforts in addressing the impacts of climate change, which significantly affect the country through recurrent destructive floods and flash floods, in addition to challenges such as



Snapshots from the opening of Sudan's pavilion at the expo.



sand dunes, desertification, and drought in other regions.

Despite these challenges, Sudan has made tangible progress in facing them, thanks to the efficiency of Sudanese people, he added.

Al-Dahab also highlighted Su-

dan's consistent participation in all international and regional events organised by Qatar, and commended the excellent organisation of major events such as the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and the expo, which he said reflects the



accumulated experience and competence of the people of Qatar in organising global events.

Expo 2023 Doha secretary-general Eng Mohamed bin Ali al-Khouri expressed his delight at the opening of the Sudanese pavilion,

noting that this pavilion contributes to achieving the exhibition's theme *Green Desert, Better Environment*, especially given that desertification and the consequences of climate change affect all countries worldwide.

He said that the expo serves as a crucial platform for exchanging experiences and experiments, holding significance for the future of the Arab, Islamic, and global countries.

Meanwhile, the undersecretary of Sudan's ministry of agriculture and forestry Ablla Malik, affirmed Sudan's commitment to participating in Expo 2023 Doha despite exceptional circumstances that the country is facing.

She said that the exhibition's theme aligns with Sudan's priorities, as desertification consumes millions of fertile acres, posing risk to economic, social, and industrial sectors while erasing significant portions of agricultural land.

She said that two-thirds of Sudan's northern region suffer from desertification, with the Nile River choking from desert sands.

The official said that this has prompted initiatives to achieve food security, enhance adaptive capacities for small farmers and pastoralists, and cultivate green belts to create suitable local climates for sustainability and agricultural protection.

Malik added that Sudan is keen on participating in global events addressing desertification, considering the environmental, economic, social, and cultural impacts, stressing that the goal is to protect the environment and embrace the new concept of development, moving beyond economic growth to preserve natural resources. – QNA

Save the Planet play highlights importance of water



The *Save the Planet* play was presented on Friday in the Family Zone of Expo 2023 Doha at Al Bidda Park, as part of the expo's artistic, cultural and entertainment activities.

It illustrated the importance of water in our lives and in supporting the continuity of life on planet Earth and the urgent need to preserve it.

The theatrical performance relied on a combination of captivating stories and distinctive melodies, reflecting the delicate balance between human existence and the natural environment.

It encouraged audience members to make efforts to contribute to preserving the planet's resources and protecting the ecosystem for future generations, while urging them to be a source of inspiration for building a sustainable and prosperous world.

The cultural and entertainment activities at Expo 2023 Doha have been enjoying great public interest since its launch last month, reflecting interaction with the most prominent global event in Doha.

Daily activities include sports, a Sand Meet, an Eco challenge, Qatari & International Street Games, and cultural workshops.

The digital park offers the "Digital Challenge" and the "Green Desert, Better Environment" shows in the cultural square, in addition to the green park games and environmental workshops. – QNA

