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DJWE 2024 — Page 12



**Alfardan pavilion take centre stage at DJWE 2024**



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# PM opens 20th DJWE

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, HE the Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani are seen with prominent Qatari entrepreneur Hussain Alfardan at the Alfardan Jewellery pavilion at DJWE 2024 yesterday.

By **Joey Aguilar**  
Staff Reporter

**Q**atar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs HE Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani inaugurated the 20th edition of Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition (DJWE) yesterday at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

HE the Minister of Interior Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Qatar Tourism (QT) chairman Saad bin Ali al-Kharji, and a number of dignitaries were present at the opening of the QT-organised event which runs until February 11.

In a statement, al-Kharji said: "For the past two decades, DJWE has been a symbol of luxury and sophistication at the local, regional, and global levels for two decades. The continued success of the exhibition is consistent with the increased momentum of the tourism sector. In fact, at the beginning of this year, we marked a record-breaking number of visitors.

"Our goal at QT is to strengthen Qatar's position as a premier tourist destination by constantly developing its tourism assets and maintaining its proven track record in service and hospitality excellence, as well as developing new and innovative tourism products and services. **To Page 12**

# Amir meets Ajman crown prince

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met, in his office at Lusail Palace yesterday, with Crown Prince of Ajman Sheikh Ammar bin Humaid al-Nuaimi. During the meeting, they discussed the existing fraternal relations and ways to enhance and develop them, in addition to a range of topics of mutual interest. **(QNA)**

# Cancer diagnosis for King Charles III

King Charles III has been diagnosed with a form of cancer and has begun treatment, Buckingham Palace said yesterday, just a week after he was discharged from hospital for prostate surgery. The palace said that during his recent hospital procedure for benign prostate enlargement "a separate issue of concern was noted". "Subsequent diagnostic tests have identified a form of cancer," the palace said in a statement, adding that he had begun treatment but without elaborating on the type of cancer found or how advanced it was.

# Blinken visit expected to deliver Gaza truce

Reuters  
Doha/Riyadh

**T**op US diplomat Antony Blinken met Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Mohamed bin Salman yesterday in a visit that Palestinians hope will deliver a truce before a threatened Israeli assault on Rafah, the border city where about half of the Gaza population is sheltering.

Secretary of State Antony

People look for survivors in the rubble of the Abu Saleh family home in Rafah yesterday.

Blinken arrived in Riyadh at the start of his first Middle East trip since Washington brokered an offer, with Israeli input, for the first extended ceasefire of the war.

Blinken's meeting with Prince Mohamed bin Salman lasted about two hours and the secretary did not answer reporters' questions as he returned to his hotel.

The offer, delivered to Hamas last week by Qatari and Egyptian mediators, awaits a reply from Hamas, the Palestinian resistance movement, who say they want

# 27,478 massacred

The health ministry in Gaza said yesterday at least 27,478 people have been killed in the territory in nearly four months of war. A ministry statement said 66,835 people have been wounded since fighting erupted on October 7.

more guarantees it will bring an end to the four-month-old war in the Gaza Strip.



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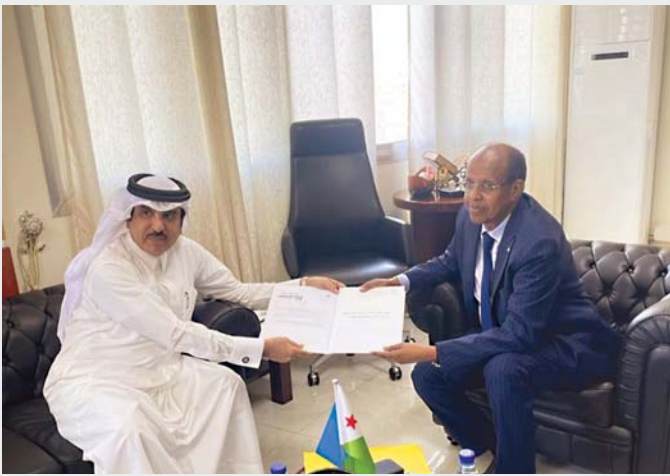
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## Amir sends message to Djibouti president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani sent a written message to Djibouti President Ismail Omar Guelleh pertaining to bilateral relations and ways to support and develop them. Qatar's ambassador to Djibouti Rashid bin Shafeea al-Marri delivered the message during his meeting yesterday with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation and Government Spokesperson of Djibouti Mahmoud Ali Youssef. **(QNA)**



## Qatar-Italy efforts in treating injured Palestinians hailed

Italian ambassador in Doha Paolo Toschi has praised Qatar's co-operation with Italy over treating injured Palestinian civilians in the Italian hospitals. In remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Toschi said that, as Italians, they feel proud to treat patients coming from Gaza in their hospitals and host their families.

He added that they also feel proud that this is being done in co-operation with Qatar, which indicates the excellent level of bilateral relations. The ambassador added that the arrival of the ship Vulcano yesterday in Italy confirms the success of the joint humanitarian efforts made by Italy and Qatar to alleviate the suffering of civilians.

Meanwhile, Qatar's ambassador in Rome Khalid bin Youssef al-Sada said that the arrival of the new batch of wounded Palestin-



ian children and their families to Italy's Port of La Spezia on board the ship Vulcano is the result of co-ordination and co-operation between Qatar and Italy.

He pointed out that a medi-

cal team of six doctors from Qatar Armed Forces accompanied the wounded Palestinians on board the Italian ship and helped the Italian crew in providing the necessary medical support. **(QNA)**

## More injured Palestinians arrive in Doha for treatment

A Qatar Armed Forces aircraft arrived in Doha carrying the 13th batch of injured Palestinians from the Gaza Strip for treatment, as part of the initiative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to provide treatment for 1,500 Palestinians from the Strip. The initiative comes within the framework of Qatar's steadfast support and continuing efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, in collaboration with various regional and international partners, especially in light of the current difficult humanitarian conditions in the Strip. **(QNA)**

## Qatar Armed Forces plane delivers aid for Palestinians

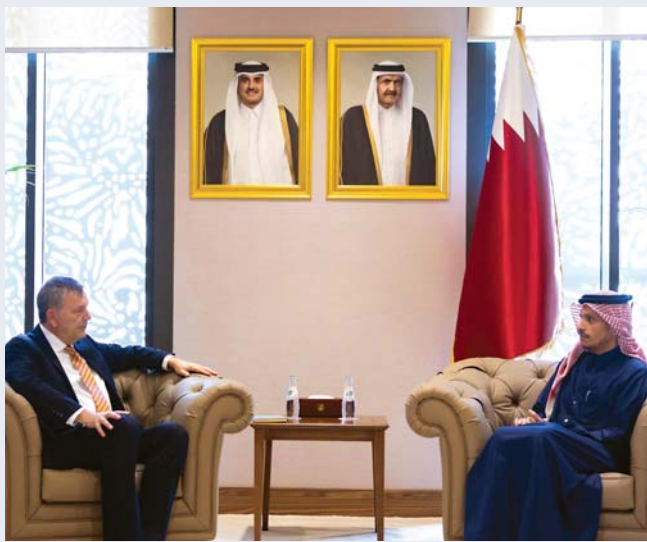
A Qatar Armed Forces aircraft landed in Al Arish, Egypt, with 39 tonnes of aid, including shelter supplies from the Qatar Fund for Development. This takes the total of Qatari relief planes sent to 75, with a total of 2,225 tonnes of aid. This aid comes within the framework of Qatar's full support for the brotherly Palestinian people amid the tough humanitarian challenges they are subjected to. **(QNA)**

## PM meets UNRWA commissioner-general

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met at his Amiri Diwan office yesterday with Commissioner-General of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Philippe Lazzarini.

The meeting discussed co-operation ties between Qatar and UNRWA, especially in the humanitarian field in the Gaza Strip. HE Sheikh Mohamed emphasised that Qatar will continue to support UNRWA whose responsibility has been doubled amid the current cataclysmic humanitarian situation facing the innocent civilian population in the Gaza Strip. He stressed Qatar's keenness to continue the unhindered and sustainable delivery of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip.

He underscored Qatar's appreciation for the critical role performed by UNRWA in helping millions of people in the Gaza Strip, West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. HE Sheikh Mohamed warned of the catastrophic consequences arising from putting the funding for UNRWA to a halt, and called for



separating between UNRWA as a UN agency with deep-rooted values and traditions and the claims unleashed against a handful of its personnel who are being interrogated. For his part, Lazzarini expressed UNRWA's appreciation for Qatar for its generous and unwavering support for UNRWA's programmes to contribute to meeting the emergency humanitarian needs for the Palestinian brothers.

● HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhater also met in Doha yesterday with Commissioner-General of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) Philippe Lazzarini. The meeting discussed the co-operation relations between Qatar and the UNRWA, especially in the humanitarian field in the Gaza Strip. **(QNA)**

# Family charter launched to solidify its role in community

The Ministry of Social Development and Family inaugurated yesterday the 'Family Charter' under the theme 'Family is the treasure of a nation', in a critical step towards promoting familial values and the role of family in building a tight-knit and sustainable community.

HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad attended the inauguration ceremony, alongside a number of ministers. The inauguration was made through the signing of a giant mural across many places such as the Dadu Children's Museum at Expo 2023 Doha, wisdom square and Wefaq Centre. The mural includes a substantial number of signers and will have a positive impact on reinforcing awareness and adhering to joint responsibility.

The mural will be available across the nation to garner a significant number of signatures through explaining the signers' rights and duties.

The inauguration ceremony features an awareness workshop to introduce the charter, its significance, and most important principles, such as the tight-knit family, social cohesion, as well as strengthening the religious values of the entire community.

Commenting on the importance of the charter, HE al-Misnad said the signature of the charter is a crucial step towards solidifying the familial ties and achieving the sustainable development, especially that family is the major incubator of individuals, not only through care but most importantly through helping the community members internalize the religious values.

The charter focuses on a combination of principles and values that organise familial relationships and safeguard individual



rights within the family, HE al-Misnad highlighted, pointing out that the signature is a critical step towards promoting awareness on the significance of preserving the family stability and solidify its role in the community.

She outlined that the charter will ensure the right to language and identity for the entire community, along with the family duty towards the community, fathers' duty towards sons, the right to national upbringing, the right to protect maternity and childhood, the right to human development, the right to expression and dialogue, the right to parental care, moral and religious legacies, mutual respect, as well

as the duty to serve the community and homeland.

HE the minister urged the whole community to effectively participate in the signing of this charter to build a community based on religious and moral values, affirming that the charter grants equal rights and imposes duties that reinforce co-operation values in the family and put emphasis on building a robust foundation based on mutual respect and understanding, and underscores the significance of family as a core unit in the community which is the source of values and upbringing and subsequently help build the entire nation accordingly. **(QNA)**

## Minister meets secretary-general of Arab Interior Ministers Council



HE the Minister of State for Interior Affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal al-Thani met yesterday with the visiting Secretary-General of the Arab Interior Ministers Council Dr Mohamed bin Ali Kuman. The meeting discussed topics of common interest. **(QNA)**

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## QNB hosts planting day for employees at Expo Doha

In a significant stride towards environmental conservation, QNB, the largest financial institution in the Middle East and Africa, organised a unique event where its staff took the lead in planting the bank's garden at Expo 2023 Doha.

As part of its commitment to sustainability, the event was a hands-on experience for the

bank's employees. It allowed them to actively contribute to the creation of a garden space at Expo 2023 Doha, reinforcing the importance of green spaces in urban settings.

The event started with a brief orientation on eco-friendly planting techniques and the significance of local plants in conserving water and promoting biodiversity.

**The event included a brief orientation on eco-friendly planting techniques and the significance of local plants in conserving water and promoting biodiversity**

The bank's senior management and staff members, equipped with gardening tools and seedlings, participated in planting sessions,

transforming designated areas into vibrant green landscapes. The event not only served as a platform for staff involvement, but also

highlighted QNB's full approach to sustainability, integrating environmental stewardship with employee engagement.

By empowering its staff to be active participants in this green initiative, QNB set an example for corporate responsibility and collective action. QNB Group currently ranks as the most valuable bank brand in the Middle East

and Africa. Through its subsidiaries and associate companies, the group extends to more than 28 countries across three continents providing a comprehensive range of advanced products and services. The total number of employees is more than 30,000 operating through more than 900 locations, with an ATM network of 4,800 machines.

## LuLu rolls out Let's Eatalian Festival

LuLu Hypermarket, in collaboration with the Italian Trade Agency (ITA) Doha Office, has launched the "second moment" of the 'Let's Eatalian Festival'. Under the theme 'Let's Eatalian - Authentically Italian Products Promotion in Qatar 2023-2024', the event marks the culmination of a strategic partnership between LuLu Hypermarket and ITA Doha Office, formalising a collaborative relationship throughout 2023 and 2024.

The festival's inauguration was held at LuLu Hypermarket The Pearl-Qatar branch led by Angelo Lo Piccolo, trade analyst at ITA Doha. The event witnessed the participation of representatives from both LuLu Hypermarket and ITA. The main goals of the partnership

include elevating awareness, fostering a deep comprehension of Italian products among the Qatari consumer community, and strengthening the representation of Italian suppliers in LuLu Hypermarket outlets throughout Qatar.

The 'Let's Eatalian Festival' is a celebration of the rich and diverse offerings of Italian cuisine. "Through our collaboration with LuLu Hypermarket, ITA aims to enhance the awareness and understanding of authentic Italian products among the Qatari audience. This event marks the beginning of a fruitful partnership that will contribute to the growth of Made in Italy products in Qatar," said Lo Piccolo.

The promotional campaign showcases an extensive range of products, including dry groceries, canned veg-

etables, pasta, rice, cheese and dairy products, biscuits, coffee, olive oil, fresh fruits and vegetables, chocolate, sauces, spices, and condiments, among others.

LuLu Group's commitment to promoting Italian products is further underscored by its world-class sourcing, food processing, and export hub in Milan, Italy, which opened last year. This business hub is making significant contributions to the growth of Italian food exports to Qatar.

LuLu Hypermarket and the ITA are inviting everyone to savour the flavours of Italy at the 'Let's Eatalian Festival 2nd Moment' and discover the richness and authenticity of Italian cuisine throughout Qatar at LuLu Hypermarket outlets.



Angelo Lo Piccolo, trade analyst at ITA Doha, leading the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the 'Let's Eatalian Festival'.

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## Minister of Labour meets ILO chief

HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri met International Labour Organisation (ILO) Director-General Gilbert Hounbo in Geneva yesterday. The meeting discussed ways to enhance collaboration between Qatar and the ILO and strategies for their future growth and improvement. HE Dr al-Marri also went over with Hounbo the key developments and changes in Qatar's work environment. He stressed that the technical co-operation programme between the ILO and Qatar has achieved multiple successes over the past years, having had a positive impact on the Qatar work

environment, especially after efforts by the ILO Doha office project to co-operate closely with his ministry. HE Dr al-Marri emphasised Qatar's gratitude for the collaborative endeavours undertaken through the partnership with the ILO throughout the execution of the technical co-operation programme, which concluded in late 2023. These include areas such as occupational safety and health, knowledge sharing, and the formulation of robust and comprehensive labour market policies aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of the knowledge-based economy. – **QNA**

## Mol cautions on fake messages, e-mails

Never respond to fake messages and e-mails asking for bank details or one-time passwords (OTPs), the Ministry of Interior (Mol) has cautioned. While addressing the *Police With You* programme on Qatar Radio yesterday, Economic and Cyber Crimes Combating Department (E&CCCD) officer First Lieutenant Nayef Nasser al-Hamidi cautioned against phishing attacks that use e-mails or messaging services that prompt to click on a link or open an attachment containing malicious files. "Verify the web address and avoid opening links from suspicious e-mails (which may be) from fraudsters impersonating the websites of various companies," he said. Al-Hamidi asked Qatar residents to alert the authorities by a direct visit or through Metrash2 if suspected fraudulent activities are noted. In case of they have been cheated, the victims can call the hotline at 66815757 or send e-mail to cccc@moi.gov.qa

## Armed Forces chief of staff at World Defence Show 2024



HE the Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces, Staff Lieutenant-General (Pilot) Salem bin Hamad al-Nabit, attended the opening of the second edition of World Defence Show 2024, which is being held in Riyadh. More than 773 exhibitors from over 75 countries are participating in the show. HE al-Nabit was accompanied by a number of senior officers of the Qatar Armed Forces. – **QNA**

# DIMDEX '24 on March 4-6

The organising committee of the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (DIMDEX) held a diplomatic briefing to introduce the 8th edition of DIMDEX 2024 due to be held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani. Organised and hosted by the Qatari Armed Forces, the DIMDEX will be held from March 4-6 at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC). The organising committee discussed the key logistic preparations with respect to the participation in the DIMDEX 2024 in the presence of representatives of the diplomatic missions, as well as military and commercial attaches in the embassies accredited to Qatar, alongside media professionals.

DIMDEX chairman Staff Brigadier (Sea) Abdulbaqi Saleh al-Ansari said that since the launch of its first edition in 2008, the DIMDEX has witnessed numerous milestones and achieved a constant progress primarily reflected in the obvious increase in the number of exhibitors, visitors, and official delegations, along with the scale of participation and the signed deals. Alongside the exhibition, the DIMDEX is set to organise the Middle East Naval Commanders Conference (MENC)



in partnership with the Centre for Strategic Studies of the Qatari Armed Forces. Strategic Studies Centre director Brigadier-General (Pilot) Dr Rashed Hamad al-Nuaimi said that this year's convention will bring together thinkers and military leaders. He said that participants will explore the ways to counter the challenges facing today's world and set the appropriate frameworks and solutions to handle them. Head of the protocol and official delegations' section First Lieutenant (Naval) Khaled Mohamed al-Siddiqi gave an explanation about the opportunities offered by this event to forge acquaintances and communication with the high-ranking personalities and official delegations that include ministers of defence, chiefs of staff, naval commanders, coast guard commanders and heads of defence companies. Head of the visiting warships and naval logistics affairs department, Major

(Navy) Abdul Rahman Yousef al-Maliki, elaborated on the visiting warships that will dock in Hamad Port, highlighting the security and logistical measures enforced during the docking in Hamad Port. He also gave a briefing on the sports tournament for ship crews, due on the last day of the DIMDEX, at Al Wakrah Sports Club which includes various group games that aim to boost interaction and co-operation. Deputy commander of the signal corps of the Qatari Armed Forces and chairman of the Project 401 committee for special operations, Brigadier-General Ali Hareb al-Hareb spoke on the details and functions of the new project that includes training centres of the special operations specialising in upgrading the capabilities of the special forces and counter-terrorism units in the world. The DIMDEX 2024 features growth, covering over 35,000sq m distributed over seven halls. – **QNA**



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#### فرصة استثمارية مطعم سيادي فاخر على التلال الشمالية بكتارا (KP/B237/24)-(2024/434)

تدعو المؤسسة العامة للحي الثقافي - كتارا شركات المطاعم والمشروبات والمستثمرين المتخصصين أصحاب الخبرات المناسبة لتقديم عروضهم في مسابقة تطوير التصميم المبدئي لتطوير مشروع مطعم فاخر على التلال الشمالية بالحي الثقافي (كتارا)، بما يكتفل تطوير الاستفادة من هذا الموقع الفريد بإطلالته الساحرة على البينّة المحيطة به من تلال كتارا الخلابة وشواطئها الرائعة.

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Proposals shall be evaluated based on the key factors outlined in the Competition Document and in alignment with the global vision of the project.

The Competition Document is available for download via the following link:  
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Submission of Proposals shall be made by uploading the Proposal in a compressed and uneditable PDF format with a prime quality onto the portal according to the procedure stipulated in the Competition Documents.

Closing Date for submission of Proposals shall be no later than 12:00 noon on Sunday 10th March 2024



## PLUME DE PAON NOVELTIES

Frédéric Boucheron was fascinated with the beauty of nature, and he portrayed it in its every detail. One of the Maison's historical motifs, the Plume de Paon, appeared at Boucheron for the first time in the 1860s on hair jewelry and brooches. A symbol of lightness, it constitutes a true challenge for the jeweler, who seeks to loyally render the movement, curves, volume and finesse of a natural peacock feather. More than a century-and-a-half later, the Creative Studio continues to reinvent the Plume de Paon. This season, the Maison pays tribute to its airy grace through ten new designs that nestle against the skin, in the hair, or along the ear, as if to murmur the Boucheron workshops' secrets of savoir-faire.

### WHAT'S NEW ?

#### FEATHERWEIGHT

The use of titanium, a metal three times lighter than gold, enables the jewelry craftsmen to lighten up these new Plume de Paon pieces by a few precious grams, lending them an exquisite ethereality. Moreover, "openworking" – a signature technique of High Jewelry which consists of removing metal from beneath the stones – further lightens the piece and allows the light to filter through in both directions. The sparkle of diamonds and colored stones is greatly increased.

#### TRUER THAN LIFE

For the first time, the collection presents a gradation of colors that mirror those of a real peacock feather. These hues do not exclusively emanate from the diamonds, sapphires, tsavorites and tanzanites that are set into it. An anodization treatment is applied to the titanium to create the precious gradation of bluish greens that evanesces at the extremities. Anodization is a surface oxidation process that both protects and tints titanium.



Plume de Paon ring, set with an oval tanzanite, paved with diamonds, sapphires and tsavorites, in white gold and titanium

This collection is available exclusively at Fifty One East's pavilion at the Doha Jewellery & Watches Exhibition 2024.





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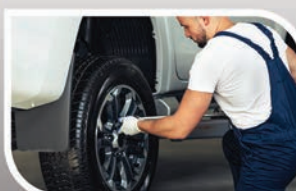


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# Shura Council reviews CGB plans for employing Qataris



The Shura Council held its ordinary weekly session yesterday at Tamim bin Hamad Hall at the Council's premises under the chairmanship of its Speaker HE Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem.

The Council hosted HE the President of the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau (CGB) Abdulaziz bin Nasser bin Mubarak al-Khalifa along with a number of CGB experts to present the strategic plan for recruitment in the government sector, the plans to train and qualify Qataris for the labour market, replacement and nationalisation, and development of government services.

At the outset of the session, HE al-Ghanem stressed the important role played by the CGB in qualifying Qatari citizens, and its efforts in implementing nationalisation and replacement policies, which stems from the centrality of the human element as a fundamental pillar of development, and as an important resource that must be developed and preserved in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030.

Afterwards, the Council listened to the presentation made by the president of CGB, in which he discussed the efforts made to provide sustainable competitive services and to realise the potential of human resources through excellence and innovation.

During the presentation, HE al-Khalifa touched on CGB's specialisations, its efforts in managing and developing human resources, and its role in the recruitment through the "Kawader" platform, by posting job opportunities in 54 government and semi-government entities and the private sector.

He pointed out that the CGB succeeded during the past year in securing jobs for 4,576 citizens (1,476 males and 3,100 females) in the government sector.

He added that the bureau is continuously developing the "Kawader" platform, to provide support to jobseekers by providing courses on preparing CVs and for passing interviews. More than 1,900 jobseekers have benefited from this during 2023.

He highlighted the bureau's efforts to improve the government work system and develop and qualify cadres, reviewing human resources policies and plans in implementing replacement and nationalisation policies in accordance with the directives of the wise leadership.

He added that the implemen-

tation of the relevant plans passes through two paths, the first through immediate replacement via the "Kawader" platform, or through practical training, and the second path is through future replacement through government scholarship programmes.

He pointed out that the first track of the plan is by targeting any job held by a non-Qatari, according to the replacement and nationalisation guide issued by the bureau, to ensure appropriate replacement without disrupting the workflow.

He said that various government agencies succeeded in replacing 712 of the targeted jobs during 2023. Regarding the "Knowledge Transfer" initiative, he said that it is the first-of-its-kind at the state level and aims to develop national talent and the capabilities of government sector employees whose experience does not exceed five years to allow them to build a network of professional relationships and to acquire cognitive, behavioural skills in the fields of studies, data analysis, strategic planning, design concept development, project management and effective communication.

**The bureau is continuously developing the "Kawader" platform, to provide support to jobseekers by providing courses on preparing CVs and for passing interviews. More than 1,900 jobseekers have benefited from this during 2023**

Regarding the "Tamheen" programme, launched by the CGB in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, he said that it aims to attract citizens towards the teaching profession by qualifying non-educational university graduates and preparing them to fill teaching positions.

HE al-Khalifa said the initiative seeks to develop national expertise in various fields based on the needs required in the government sector through a six-month development programme of functional practice and work within consulting companies on existing strategic projects, which contributes to raising the efficiency and performance of employees in particular and the government sector in general.

Regarding the strategic plans in the field of training and qualification, he pointed to the Bu-

reau's efforts to achieve the highest levels of organisational and administrative development and modernisation, as well as to enhance human resources in government agencies and to advance them in a way that increases efficiency, effectiveness and achieves optimal use.

HE al-Khalifa highlighted the achievements of the Institute of Public Administration of the CGB in training and empowering Qatari employees, by providing them with the necessary functional skills that enable them to carry out their tasks effectively.

The institute provided 1,415 training programmes in various fields during 2023 that benefited more than 32,000 government employees, he added.

He also spoke about the efforts of the CGB in developing organisational structures, government services, building capabilities and government leaders, pointing out in this regard the launch of the "Mahara" programme in co-operation with a number of parties to qualify jobseekers and to train them extensively to fill jobs in the technical, technological, administrative and media fields.

HE the President of the CGB also touched on the "Taqaat" initiative launched by the Bureau to optimally handle the challenges faced by institutions regarding efficiency of operating employees by re-establishing, qualifying and training them to occupy new jobs that add value to the government.

He also gave a brief presentation on the bureau's efforts in proposing and reviewing work systems in government authorities with the aim of improving the work environment, such as activating part-time work, launching flexible work systems on an experimental basis to reduce the working hours of female employees of government agencies during vacations, as well as implementing a questionnaire to measure government sector employees' satisfaction with the work environment, to ensure the preparation of plans developed in accordance with employees' points of view.

The presentation also included a comprehensive explanation of the "Ada'a" system launched by the bureau to develop employees' performance and to motivate them to demonstrate their talents and abilities by involving all employees in implementing the employer's goals by linking individual performance to institutional performance. (QNA)

## Katara festivities draw fans, visitors



The programmes by Katara - the Cultural Village that accompany the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023 continue to draw visitors and fans of all nationalities. Performances of street art and popular bands, the Qatar Armed Forces band are among the various events that highlight the culture, heritage and arts of Qatar and other Asian countries. These are in addition to the accompanying events of the fourth Katara International Arabian Horse Festival, which also concludes on February 11. The Wisdom Square at Katara is also preparing to receive hundreds of football fans to watch the semi-finals of the Asian Cup. Fans can watch the matches on big screens that are placed at four corners of Katara. The Thanaya exhibition of 48 paintings celebrate the most important elements of the Qatari heritage and the glory of Arabian horses.



## Culture ministry partners with ICESCO for training session on cultural heritage

The Ministry of Culture held a training session yesterday under the theme of intangible cultural heritage, in collaboration with the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ICESCO) and with the participation of employers from the Ministry of Culture.

The session aims to train the employees at the Department of Heritage and Identity, along with the entities that co-operate with the ministry in the field of intangible cultural heritage, including the Cultural Village Foundation - Katara, the Qatar National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, Qatar University, alongside other parties.

Director of Heritage and Identity at the Ministry of Culture Sheikha Najla Faisal al-Thani said the training session helps the ministry prepare national talents in intangible cultural heritage and to create generations capable of preparing files and logging them in the international organisations, to highlight the cultural heritage of Qatar, in addition to promoting this patrimony at international venues.

The training session intends to shine a spotlight on the conventions relevant to the cultural part in Unesco, such as the 1972 World Heritage Convention, Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Convention on

the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, she added.

She pointed out that the session included a practical application of inventorying the intangible cultural heritage in Qatar, since the process is the key foundation for countries to register the required elements in the Unesco representative list.

The trainer at Unesco Mohamed Baig said the session was held in implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, to help curators of heritage and intangible cultural heritage comprehend the key concepts of the aforementioned convention. (QNA)



# Education ministry launches second SACT competition

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education has announced the launch of the second edition of the Student Awareness Competition Talks (SACT) in co-operation with the US embassy in Qatar, noting the start of judging and evaluation of student entries as well as announcing the finalists for this competition.

This year's edition is a good opportunity for 75 male and female students from elementary and prep public and private schools in Qatar, who are motivated to deliver their vision for the Qatar National Vision 2030.

The competition will provide an opportunity for students to practice thinking skills and the art of dialogue with the public, to raise their level of awareness to reach positive solutions to issues and areas they aspire to improve and advance. (QNA)





# Open House begins at QU

Pre-University Outreach, part of the Student Affairs Sector at Qatar University (QU), yesterday launched a three-day Open House event for prospective students at the Student Affairs building.

Today is dedicated to female students and tomorrow for international schools.

The event aims to introduce high school students, parents and academic advisers to the colleges and academic programmes offered by QU, admission requirements, conditional and early admission, and to learn about the different sectors and centres.

Dr Eiman Mustafawi, vice-president for Student Affairs, said the Open Day provides an opportunity for students and parents to inquire and ask questions to representatives from all colleges, various departments, and service centres at QU.

All secondary government schools in the country have been invited to attend the Open Day event, along with private and international schools. Additionally, the College of Engineering at QU will host its Annual Engineering Week, featuring an exhibition where different departments will offer activities and events that simplify engineering sciences for students, motivate them, and help provide insight.



# QM introduces Design Doha at Inter versus Juventus match

Qatar Museums (QM) has partnered with Inter and Qatar Airways, the Official Global Airline Partner of FC Internazionale Milano, to endorse Design Doha and promote cultural exchange.

The communities of Milan and Doha united at the San Siro stadium to mark the Inter versus Juventus match on Sunday, a pinnacle event in Italy's sporting calendar.

A pre-game reception featured an introduction to Design Doha presented by consultant Ghada al-Khater and Dr Jelena Trkulja, the senior adviser for Academic and Cultural Affairs at QM.

Attendees of the match were then treated to a laser show which introduced Design Doha to a stadium of over 75,000 spectators.

In what was an impressive victory for Inter, the match showcased not only a game of football, but also emphasised the close link between sport and design and the potential of collaboration, underscoring QM's mission to unite people through the transformative power of culture.

Design Doha, spearheaded by QM's Chairperson HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, will serve as a platform for practitioners from across the Arab world, helping to build professional pathways, and engage with the acclaimed design professionals from around the world who will convene at the event.

More than 100 designers from the Mena region will participate in the inaugural Design Doha which begins with a week of special events from February 24-28, with programming running through August 5. The partnership was organised by Qatar Creates, the year-round cultural movement that curates, celebrates, and promotes cultural activities within Qatar.

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# QSC participates in Kuwait fair

The Qatar Scientific Club (QSC), affiliated with the Ministry of Sports and Youth and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), is participating in the 14th International Invention Fair in the Middle East (IIFME) currently being held in Kuwait until February 7.

Manager of QSC Sheikh Ali bin Salman al-Thani leads the Qatari delegation to the conference, along with representatives of the Qatar Science and Technology Secondary School for Boys, Qatar University and Qatari inventors nominated by the General Secretariat of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC).

The delegation includes innovator Khalid Alyafei from QU, innovators Omar Mohamed al-Emadi, Jassim Issa al-Shammari, Nayef Hamad al-Aji, and Bandar Talal al-Mansouri from Qatar School of Science and Technology, alongside candidates of the General Secretariat of GCC, namely Dr Saif Ali al-Hajri and Hithmi Khalifa al-Hitmi.

The delegation is participating in the event by showcasing the Project AquaCare, an innovative system to monitor water quality that ensures the standards of safe drinking water in homes and public places and utilises sophisticated technologies such as the artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT) to constantly test water indicators. The aforementioned project displays a real time data and relays alerts via telegram when diversion from the safe levels occurs, in addition to boosting health and sustainability project granting the individuals the ability to ensure the safety of water.

The Qatari delegation is also showcasing methods of growing crops underneath solar PV panels and wind energy.

Sheikh Ali bin Salman al-Thani said QSC is committed to participating in the exhibition with stellar innovations to highlight the role of Qatari innovators, empower and brief them on the experiences of others, as well as giving them self-confidence and spurring them to explore innovative solutions for problems facing the Qatari community, whether at the environmental, climatic, or health levels. (QNA)



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# Fire Station: Artist in Residence invites applications for programme

Fire Station: Artist in Residence announced the open call of its 9th edition of the Artist in Residence programme, which will run from February 11-April 14. The nine-month residency is scheduled to begin on September 15.

The Fire Station: Artist in Residence is a world-class artist residency programme, designed to nurture, energise, and promote Qatar's artistic and creative community.

The residency programme provides young artists with the opportunity to cultivate their talent through production support, curatorial advice, expert mentorships, as well as access to studio space. At the end of their residency, artists will have the opportunity to showcase their artworks in an exhibition held at the Garage Gallery.

The Fire Station: Artist in Residence garage, covering approximately 700sq ft, has been converted into a dedicated exhibition space called "Garage Gallery", which has hosted public exhibitions of the work of artists in residence, as well as world-class exhibitions organised by Qatar Museums.

The director of Fire Station: Artist in Residence, Khalifa Ahmad al-Obaidly, said: "We are thrilled to announce the return of the much-anticipated Artist in Residence programme at Fire Station for its 9th edition. The programme offers emerging and established artists the opportunity to showcase their talents as well as sharpen their artistic style. We look forward to witnessing the artistic fruition of all participating artists."

Head of programmes and exhibitions, Saida al-Khulaifi, said: "Throughout the past editions of our residency, we have been committed to providing a transformative space where participating artists are given the tools and support they need to explore their craft passionately through a fabrication lab, woodshop, and exhibition spaces to bring their vision to life. Through a dedicated exhibition at the end of the programme, we showcase these diverse narratives, inviting audiences to witness the unique artistic expression of each artist in residence, and encouraging a rich cultural and artistic dialogue."

The deadline to apply is April 14, 2024 for local artists across all disciplines who are above 21 years old and have a valid Qatar ID.

The Artist in Residence programme has been a great success and has expanded to include a three-month residency at the prestigious Cite Internationale des Art in Paris and Studio 209 NY, part of the International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP) in New York City.

Fire Station: Artist in Residence also collaborates with local entities and organisations on a range of activities including workshops and collaborative projects designed to engage all those involved in the programme as well as the wider community. (QNA)

# QC supports Sudan orphanages

Qatar Charity (QC), with the support of the benevolent people in Qatar, implemented a qualitative humanitarian project to support hundreds of orphans and those relocated from Khartoum to Wad Madani due to the fighting.

QC has saved the lives of children at the Mygoma Orphanage by providing both food and non-food items, medicines and other essential items, in addition to paying incentives to the mothers and the staff.

Dr Rahab al-Zain, director of Primary Healthcare at the Ministry of Health, said QC played a crucial role in saving the lives of children during a very critical period after the cessation of support from other bodies.

Zainab Abu Jouda, director of the Mygoma orphanage, praised QC for its significant support in running the orphanage for two months.



Hawwa Jibril, a mother who has been working at the orphanage for 28 years, said: "We have suffered a lot after the war, bombings, water and electricity cuts, and the shortage of working mothers at the orphanage. QC's support with incentives was crucial to help the working staff continue providing services with the required quality."

# NU-Q launches new AI initiative

Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) has launched the Artificial Intelligence Initiative (AI2) focused on meeting the global challenges of AI and making decisive contributions to research, teaching, and professional development in that area.

Launched by dean and CEO Marwan M Kraidy, AI2 is designed to tackle the challenges and potentials of AI as it catapults to the forefront of global consciousness due to recent developments in its capabilities and its unprecedented public availability.

Kraidy said: AI is "a once-in-a-generation opportunity-challenge" that NU-Q, from its location at the confluence of continents and disciplines, is well-positioned to make significant contributions to.

"AI touches upon every domain represented at NU-Q. So we have unique contributions to make to humanity's understanding of AI, to harness aspects of this technology's immense potential for humankind that are relevant to our mission, and to develop and deploy critical research, teaching, and professional tools to navigate the uncharted waters of the rapid and unpredictable developments in AI."



The AI2 initiative is launched by NU-Q dean and CEO Marwan M Kraidy.

Kraidy said AI2 will position NU-Q as a central player in shaping understanding and application of AI in global higher education and the media and creative industries worldwide. In its formative years, AI2 will include three core strategic elements:

a new joint curricular collaboration with Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar in media and AI that includes coursework in coding, computer science, ethics, and social impact, currently in development, the AI and Media Lab (AIM Lab), which will drive research efforts on AI and gather faculty members, a postdoctoral scholar, and undergraduate researchers to collaborate on research and organise events; and a professional development component aimed chiefly at staff, encompassing skill development workshops, training exercises, and thought-nourishing discussions.

# DFI announces 2024 Qumra Masters

Doha Film Institute (DFI) has announced its selection of five internationally renowned film visionaries as Qumra Masters for its tenth annual industry incubator event from March 1-6.

Leos Carax, Claire Denis, Atom Egoyan, Martin Hernández, and Jim Sheridan, as 2024 Qumra Masters, will share their directorial expertise with Qumra delegates and registered participants.

Carax's filmography includes notable works such as *Mauvais Sang* (Bad Blood, 1986), *Les Amants du Pont Neuf* (The Lovers on the Bridge, 1991), and the 2012 film *Holy Motors*, selected for Official Competition at the Cannes Film Festival. Carax's latest feature film *Annette* (2021), a pop-rock melodrama starring Marion Cotillard and Adam Driver, won the award for Best Director at the Cannes Film Festival.

Denis' portfolio of work includes acclaimed films such as *US Go Home* (1994), *Nénette et Boni* (1996), *Beau Travail* (1999), *Trouble Every Day* (2001), *Vendredi Soir* (2002) and *35 Rhums* (2009). In 2022, her *Both Sides of the Blade* won the Silver Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival and *Stars at Noon* was nominated for the Palme d'Or and awarded the Grand Prize of the Cannes Film Festival.

Celebrated for his roles as writer, director and producer, Egoyan (*The Sweet Hereafter*, 1997) has won five top honours at Cannes Film Festival and two Academy Award nominations. One of the driving forces of the Toronto New Wave in cinema, his most recent film, *Seven Veils*, will have its International Premiere at this year's Berlin Film Festival. Egoyan has achieved similar acclaim in opera and theatre.

Hernández is an internationally revered supervising sound editor and sound designer whose distinguished career has seen him become a two-time Academy Award nominee for Best Sound Editing for *Birdman* (2014) and *The Revenant* (2015), directed by Alejandro G. Iñárritu. He is also a Bafta winner for *The Revenant* and has been nominated for *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Babel*, and *Birdman*.

Eminent Irish playwright, screenwriter, film director and producer, Sheridan (*My Left Foot*, 1989; *In the Name of the Father*, 1993; *In America*, 2002) has earned six Academy Award nominations and is a pivotal figure in sharing Ireland's culture with the world. His collaborations with Daniel Day-Lewis in three films, including the Academy Award-winning *My Left Foot*, have not only showcased Sheridan's ability as a director but



Atom Egoyan



Claire Denis



Jim Sheridan



Martin Hernandez



Leos Carax

also played a part in establishing Day-Lewis as, according to *Time Magazine*, *The World's Greatest Actor*. Sheridan's versatility as a filmmaker is further highlighted by his work on big-budget studio productions such as *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* (2005), *Brothers* (2009), and *Dream House* (2011).

DFI CEO Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, said: "As the Arab world's first-of-its-kind talent incubator, Qumra has served as the preeminent platform for emerging talents to give their projects a distinct advantage through invaluable networking sessions with leading industry professionals."

Elia Suleiman, artistic advisor at DFI, said: "Our Qumra Masters are bold and visionary filmmakers who have left an indelible imprint in world cinema with unique and innovative approaches to storytelling. Their perspectives on filmmaking will undoubtedly benefit our young filmmakers, and in turn, contribute to a richer body of works by emerging talents in the region and beyond."



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GULF TIMES

Realising potential of climate loss and damage fund

In the vein of *We Are the World*, the 1985 hit that sold more than 20mn copies globally, the song *Lasting Legacy* was released at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai. The official charity anthem features 13 artists from around the world singing about unity, co-operation, and climate action.

One legacy of COP28 that ought to be commemorated in song is the launch of the Loss and Damage Fund. This new channel for multilateral finance aims to support developing countries that are facing ballooning costs from storms, heatwaves, floods, landslides, wildfires, droughts, sea-level rise, biodiversity loss, and desertification. These adverse effects of global warming are causing hundreds of billions of dollars in damage every year.

Currently, however, pledges to the Loss and Damage Fund are well below target. At COP28, donor countries, led by France, Germany, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom, promised around \$700mn – far short of what is needed to meet the challenge. Despite that, the UAE's commitment is a welcome departure from the widely held view that only those countries with a historic responsibility for climate change should pay for loss and damage. It signals to today's world that the responsibility for the state of the planet and its climate must be borne by everyone, while underscoring the importance of multilateral co-operation, especially among powerful governments.

It is in our common interest to assist the most climate-vulnerable countries in a way that does not compromise development gains

This raises the question of where the Loss and Damage Fund fits in this crowded and complex terrain. Certainly, there is still a great need for financing: significant gaps remain, and the lack of grant funding, especially for recovery and reconstruction, is particularly worrisome. It will also be crucial to expand climate-risk insurance coverage and facilitate debt swaps (and deferrals) to create more fiscal space amid surging global interest rates. On the other hand, the new fund risks becoming another vain attempt to mend a multilateral system that is outdated and unfit for purpose – especially if it is underfunded.

To avoid that outcome, the Loss and Damage Fund should move away from a project-based model that involves doling out small amounts of money. Given the scale of the challenge and the intensity of people's suffering, the Fund should instead embrace structural and policy innovations that would help establish a new generation of multilateral organisations. The Summit for a New Global Financing Pact, convened by French President Emmanuel Macron last year, and the Bridgetown Initiative led by Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley provide many starting points and proposals for redesigning the global financial system.

More specifically, the Loss and Damage Fund could create a new template for countries to mobilise domestic resources for climate mitigation and adaption more effectively, and to access global financial markets and multilateral lending at fair terms, as well as different forms of debt relief. The Fund could also design a global insurance scheme for the most vulnerable households and small and medium-size businesses.

In today's fragmented world, the Loss and Damage Fund could easily be derailed. But it is in our common interest to assist the most climate-vulnerable countries with recovery and reconstruction in a way that does not compromise development gains achieved over past decades. Providing these countries with enough resources, financial and otherwise, would ensure stability for us all. — Project Syndicate

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Pakistan elections



Pakistan's prime ministerial candidates Nawaz Sharif (left) in Lahore on January 29, 2024, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari (centre) in Batkhela on January 31, 2024 and Imran Khan in Lahore on May 18, 2023. Pakistan goes to the polls on Thursday in an election that rights observers have dubbed deeply flawed, with the country's most charismatic politician -- Imran Khan -- languishing in jail, barred from taking part. The nuclear-armed nation of 240mn people is cast as the world's fifth largest democracy, but judicial hounding of the former prime minister has some questioning that claim. (AFP) Page 11

Germany's risky alternatives

By Daniela Schwarzer  
Berlin

For years, German foreign policy was rarely a domain of fierce debate over fundamentally different alternatives. Since reunification (1989-91), Europe's largest country and strongest economy has defined its foreign policy in terms of European and transatlantic relations, implying ever-deeper anchoring within the European Union and Nato. In practice, this meant outsourcing German security to the transatlantic alliance, disinvesting militarily, and concentrating on boosting the country's economic power.

Postwar Germany's highest priority has been to forge compromises with fellow Europeans, both deepening and enlarging the EU, which German leaders have seen as the single most important contribution the country can make to peace and prosperity on the continent. Not only is the goal of a stronger EU formally enshrined in Germany's Basic Law, but the country's economic model relies heavily on European integration and global market access. That reliance has only increased now that cheap energy from Russia no longer underpins the economy's competitiveness.

But Germany's party system is changing ahead of this spring's European Parliament elections. Newer, radical parties are openly challenging the postwar consensus. Indeed, the far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) is promoting an exit from the EU, an end to support for Ukraine and sanctions against Russia, and a reversal of the country's decarbonisation policies.

Two years into the current government's tenure, the AfD

has risen to 20% in national polls, and it polls nearly 30% in the three eastern German states that will hold elections this fall. Domestic intelligence authorities are on the watch and have already designated three regional AfD chapters as extremist groups.

Back in 2014 (a year after its founding), the AfD made a point of openly supporting Nato and the United States. But those commitments have faded. In recent years, according to the German investigative outlet Correctiv, AfD politicians have echoed Russian narratives and talking points, describing the US as a "foreign power". Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, AfD politicians continued to travel to Russia and to Russian-occupied territory in Ukraine.

AfD members also continue to promote ties with the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Community and the China- and Russia-dominated Shanghai Co-operation Organisation. And recently, the AfD incorporated the idea of a "multipolar world" – the battle cry of Russian and Chinese nationalists – into its party programme.

These changes should do away with the founding myth that the AfD is a copy of the Christian Democrats of the 1980s, firmly anchored in Western values. Never has a party in the Federal Republic adopted a policy of embracing the Kremlin so strongly. The AfD's strategic re-orientation toward Russia sets it apart even from many other right-wing parties in Europe, including those in Finland and Sweden. In Italy, the right-wing nationalist prime minister, Giorgia Meloni, has openly sided with Ukraine and criticised the AfD for its Russia ties.

Another radical party that has jumped to double-digit support

in the polls is the Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht (BSW), founded just last month by Wagenknecht, a longtime senior figure in Germany's far-left party, Die Linke. Wagenknecht wants immediate "peace" negotiations with Vladimir Putin and a resumption of cheap Russian hydrocarbon imports. When it comes to Russia's war of aggression and internationally recognised war crimes against the Ukrainian people, she is largely silent. With Russian disinformation campaigns gearing up ahead of this year's elections, her party has a good chance of entering German state governments and the European Parliament.

Support for the BSW and the AfD has come at the expense of the ruling coalition members: the Social Democrats, the Greens, and the pro-business Free Democrats. Their popularity is now at historic lows, with some eastern German chapters polling at levels below the 5% threshold to remain in parliament.

True, support for the coalition parties is higher nationally (the eastern states represent only one-fifth of the electorate), and even if the AfD or the BSW make it into regional governments, foreign policy would remain primarily a federal matter. Nonetheless, the AfD's growing support has led established parties – especially the centre-right Christian Democrats – to harden their positions on issues such as migration.

German business leaders are waking up to these developments as the country enters its second year of recession. One big worry is that if the AfD gains more ground, sorely needed high-skilled migrant labour may dry up and foreign investment may decline. Companies planning to set up shop in Germany – such as

the chip producers TSMC and Intel – would have a hard time persuading their staff to move to a country with increasingly nativist politics. Corporate leaders are speaking up, realising that protecting Germany's open society is an economic priority as much as it is a moral and political one.

Even more importantly, millions of Germans have taken to the streets following a report by Correctiv that AfD members had met with neo-Nazis to discuss mass deportations of immigrants and "non-assimilated citizens." Even the French far-right leader Marine Le Pen has now distanced herself from the AfD.

Following these revelations, this year's Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27) and the promise of "never again" acquired a newly poignant resonance. More people are recognising that far-right extremists could become a part of the government in the near future. The fragility of democracy, and the possibility that Germany – or even Europe – will return to the darkness of its past, cannot be discounted.

For now, Germany's commitment to Ukraine holds. While the governing coalition is often criticised for late arms deliveries, it has just earmarked another €7bn (\$7.6bn) for Ukraine aid. Germany is now shouldering over half of all EU aid, even though it accounts for only one-quarter of the bloc's GDP.

But with the prospect of a victory for Donald Trump in this year's US presidential election, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has made it clear that others must step up. Germany needs to invest billions into digitalisation, the green transition, its ailing military, transportation infrastructure, and education; but it cannot afford to weaken its European commitment. While the three governing parties have each become somewhat more restrictive on migration, they have doubled down on strengthening the EU.

That means the upcoming European elections will finally offer voters a real choice with far-reaching implications. Moderates will need to explain that a symbolic protest vote for radicals holds real dangers. As Scholz recently warned: "Nationalists act against national interest." At a time when Germany and Europe must adapt to a new geopolitical environment, the danger is acute. — Project Syndicate

● Daniela Schwarzer, a member of the Executive Board of the Bertelsmann Stiftung and a senior fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center, is a former director of the German Council on Foreign Relations and former executive director for Europe and Central Asia at the Open Society Foundations.



Demonstrators protest against the far-right AfD party during a rally under the motto 'We are the firewall' called for by international non-profit organisation 'Hand in Hand' to protest against right-wing politics in front of the Reichstag building in Berlin on Saturday. (AFP)



## China hands suspended death sentence to Australian writer

Chinese-Australian dissident writer Yang Jun was yesterday handed a suspended death sentence for espionage in China, Beijing said, five years after he was detained on a rare visit to his homeland.

The Chinese-born Australian citizen has been in jail since 2019 on spying allegations and is said to be in ill health.

The writer, whose pen name is Yang Hengjun, has denied the allegations, telling supporters he was tortured at a secret detention site and that he feared forced confessions may be used against him.

His sentencing is one of China's heaviest in a public trial for espionage in years.

Yang, who gained a huge following in exile for his spy novels and calls for greater freedom in his homeland, was sentenced by a Beijing court yesterday "in an espionage case", the foreign ministry said.

"It found that Yang Jun was guilty of espionage, sentenced him to death with a two-year suspended execution, and confiscated all his personal property," foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said.

Canberra has condemned the death sentence, which it said could be commuted to life in jail after a period of two years, during which time Yang would remain imprisoned.

"The Australian government is appalled at this outcome," Foreign Minister Penny Wong told a news conference.

"We will be communicating our response in the strongest terms," the Australian minister said.

## Chile mourns 122 killed in wildfire

Chile began two days of national mourning yesterday for at least 122 victims of a raging wildfire, as the search continued for the missing and survivors picked through the scorched remains of their lives.

"All of Chile weeps for Valparaiso," President Gabriel Boric said Sunday as the central coastal region reeled from the weekend inferno that has become the world's third-deadliest wildfire this century.

Crowded hilltop neighbourhoods that overlook the tourist hotspot found themselves without electricity and with limited water, the streets strewn with charred cars, debris and ash.

"The most important parts of my house were saved, but now we are without electricity, we can't do anything or charge our cell phones. Traffic is complicated with burned cars, everything is devastated," said Patricia Guzman, 63, in the otherwise razed Canal Chacao neighbourhood.

Volunteers streamed to the worst-hit areas to help families, rescue pets, and deliver food, water, and tents.

Meanwhile, rescue workers scoured the rubble for further victims.

The state forensic agency yesterday reported the toll stood at 122 dead, with only 32 of the victims identified.

Boric had warned Sunday that the earlier death toll of 112 could rise "significantly."

Most of the deaths have been in Vina del Mar, a popular tourist spot known for its beaches and botanical gardens.

## US storm brings record rain, floods

Millions of people faced dangerous flooding in California yesterday after a storm brought record rains and gusting winds, leaving at least one person dead.

The US National Weather Service warned of "life-threatening" flash flooding caused by "excessive rainfall," especially in the southern part of the state, as a so-called "atmospheric river" came ashore from the Pacific Ocean.

"This is a serious storm with dangerous and potentially life-threatening impacts," said Governor Gavin Newsom as he declared the state of emergency for eight counties in Southern California.

Areas under the emergency order include Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Santa Barbara.

According to the NWS, another five to eight inches of rain were expected to fall around the Los Angeles area Monday, bringing the total amount of rain in the last 48 hours to up to eight to 14 inches in some areas.

# Jailed Khan looms large over flawed election

By David Fox, AFP  
Islamabad

Pakistan goes to the polls this week in an election that rights observers have dubbed deeply flawed, with the country's most charismatic politician languishing in jail, barred from taking part.

The nuclear-armed nation of 240mn people presents itself as the world's fifth largest democracy, but judicial hounding of former prime minister Imran Khan has some questioning that claim.

In the past week Khan, a former international cricketer who led Pakistan to victory in the World Cup in 1992, has been sentenced to lengthy jail terms for treason, graft, and an illegal marriage.

Analysts say the character assassination shows how worried the military-led establishment is that his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party could still prove a decisive factor in Thursday's vote.

"I am sure they are worried about it, and the military doesn't have the capacity to put in a fix at national level," said analyst Shuja Nawaz, author of *The Battle for Pakistan*, a book examining Islamabad's relations with Washington.

"PTI can squeak in with a sizeable number and still be a player," he told AFP.

Shuja said while Western nations were avoiding making any comment on the political chaos gripping Pakistan, they were still watching events closely, worried about the risk of insecurity.

"In a broad sense, an election in Pakistan



**SPOTLIGHT:** In the past week Imran Khan, a former international cricketer who led Pakistan to victory in the World Cup in 1992, has been sentenced to lengthy jail terms.

is a mere blip on the radar, given all the crises proliferating around the world," said Michael Kugelman, director of the South Asia Institute at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington.

"But let's be clear: Pakistan's polls do matter." The country has been run by the military for much of its history since partition from India in 1947, and occupies a strategic space neighbouring also Afghanistan, Iran and China.

It has been at the centre of the so-called

"war on terror", with Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden finding shelter in the country until he was killed in a Navy Seal commando raid in 2011.

The architect of the 9/11 attacks on the United States, Khalid Sheikh Mohamed, is a Pakistani, now incarcerated at Guantanamo Bay.

The strategic importance is highlighted by the fact that Beijing made the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) the centrepiece of its trillion dollar Belt and Road initiative, giving the world's most populous nation access to the Arabian Sea and beyond via an "all-weather friend".

The country itself, however, appears permanently in crisis.

Deeply in debt, the economy has for decades been propped up by successive bailouts from the International Monetary Fund and loans from wealthy gulf Arab nations.

Inflation is galloping at nearly 30%, the rupee has been in freefall for three years — losing nearly 50% of its value since 2021 — and a balance of payments deficit has frozen imports, severely hampering industrial growth.

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is expected to win the most seats in Thursday's vote, giving its 74-year-old founder Nawaz Sharif a fourth shot at running the country.

He will most likely have to form a coalition with one or more junior partners — including the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), another family-run dynasty now led by Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari.

But the showing of PTI's candidates — forced

to run as independents since the party was barred from competing as a bloc — will be crucial.

"No party will get an outright majority, leaving the top finishers — likely led by the PML-N — to put together what will probably be a weak coalition susceptible to heavy influence by the military," predicted Kugelman.

"If PTI loses, its large support base — already reeling from crackdowns on the party — will be highly aggrieved."

His supporters took to the streets last May after Khan was first arrested, a year after he was controversially ousted from office following a National Assembly vote of no-confidence.

Khan claims his dethroning was orchestrated with the help of Washington, angered by his visit to Moscow the day after Russia invaded Ukraine and his refusal to take sides in that conflict.

Khan is out of the picture for now, sentenced to prison terms of 14, 10 and seven years in three hastily-run trials held inside a prison court last week.

But disgrace rarely lasts long in Pakistan politics — frontrunner Sharif was himself sentenced to lengthy jail terms and exile abroad, only to have the convictions quashed when his party's fortunes improved.

It all depends on the mood of the military, said Munizae Jahangir, co-chair of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.

"They first make up all these leaders and then they demolish them," she told AFP last week.



(From L) Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary Chris Heaton-Harris; newly appointed Northern Ireland's First Minister, Sinn Fein's Michelle O'Neill; newly appointed Northern Ireland's deputy First Minister, Democratic Unionist Party's Emma Little Pengelly; and Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak pose at Stormont Castle in Stormont yesterday. (AFP)

## UK, Ireland leaders in Belfast as power sharing resumes

AFP  
Belfast

The prime ministers of the UK and Ireland met Northern Ireland's new political leaders in Belfast yesterday to mark the return of power-sharing in the province after a two-year impasse.

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak arrived in the Northern Ireland capital on Sunday, a day after Sinn Fein's Michelle O'Neill made history by becoming the province's first Irish nationalist leader.

Sunak and his Ireland counterpart Leo Varadkar, who arrived in Belfast yesterday morning, met O'Neill and the pro-UK Democratic Unionist Party's (DUP) Emma Little-Pengelly, who holds the Deputy First Minister post.

The return of devolved governance in the province comes after the DUP, Northern Ireland's biggest pro-UK party, ended a two-

year boycott of Northern Ireland's parliament, Stormont.

The stalemate, which collapsed the devolved government in 2022, was broken after a deal was struck with Sunak's government in London over post-Brexit trade rules in Northern Ireland.

"It has taken a lot of hard work and indeed courage to get us sitting round this table," Sunak told the joint heads of the ministerial executive at Stormont.

"Today isn't the end. It's the beginning, and the real work starts now." The UK government has offered a £3.3bn (\$4.15bn) package to stabilise the region's finances and settle public sector pay claims.

Sunak said the offer represented "a generous and fair settlement", but policy-making ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive are expected to press for more.

Varadkar vowed that his government would "do everything that we can do to help this executive to be successful", adding that

"we're keen to get north-south co-operation going again."

O'Neill, who predicted on Saturday that the UK territory will hold a vote on unification with Ireland within the next decade, said on Saturday that Northern Ireland's funding model was the executive's number one priority.

Northern Ireland was created in 1921 with an in-built Protestant majority after Ireland gained independence from Britain.

Three decades of sectarian conflict erupted within the territory in the late 1960s.

A 1998 peace deal largely ended the violence and provides for the possibility of an all-Ireland vote on unification, often referred to as a border poll.

Under the terms of the accord, the British and Irish governments should organise a vote if it becomes apparent that "a majority of those voting would express a wish" for Northern Ireland to split from the UK.

## Swift wins record 4th best album Grammy at star-studded gala



**US singer-songwriter Taylor Swift accepts the Best Pop Vocal Album award for *Midnights* on stage during the 66th Annual Grammy Awards at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles. (AFP)**

prize for Song of the Year, which honours songwriting, went to Billie Eilish and Finneas O'Connell for *What Was I Made For?* from the *Barbie* soundtrack.

"This award is amazing but I really hope it doesn't change anything because my life was beautiful yesterday," Cyrus said

onstage as she accepted her prize, her second of the evening — and the second of her career.

"Not everyone in the world will get a Grammy, but everyone in this world is spectacular, so please don't think that this is important."

The already decorated Eilish was

equally humble in accepting her prize, saying: "I just want to say everyone in this category, like — that was a crazy list of incredible people, incredible artists, incredible music!"

And Victoria Monet won the coveted Grammy for Best New Artist, her third prize of the evening.

Monet entered the night with seven nominations, including one for Record of the Year, after her debut studio album *Jaguar II* sparked a commercial breakthrough following years in the industry.

"Thank you to the champagne servers of tonight. That's my first thank you," Monet told the audience, also thanking her mother.

A clean sweep of the top awards for women was a triumph for the Recording Academy, which has been working for years against criticism that it heavily favours white men.

"As a woman, it feels a lot of the time like you're not being seen...

this makes me feel very seen," Eilish told journalists backstage, when asked what the banner year for women meant to her going forward.

"Sometimes it feels really good to, like, have somebody telling you 'good job.'"

This year, just one man, the jazz polymath Jon Batiste, was up for Album and Record of the Year; he left the gala empty-handed.

Top nominee SZA, who entered the night with nine nods, seized three total prizes, including Best R&B Song, Best Progressive R&B Album and Best Pop Duo or Group Performance with Phoebe Bridgers.

She burst onto the stage in a fluster to claim her Best R&B Song prize, telling the crowd she had just finished changing following her sizzling performance.

"I'm just really overwhelmed," she said. "You don't really understand, I came really, really far and I can't believe this is happening."

AFP  
Washington

Former US president Donald Trump urged Republicans yesterday to reject a bipartisan Senate deal trading tough new border security measures for \$60bn in Ukraine funding and other national security priorities.

"Don't be STUPID!!!! We need a separate Border and Immigration Bill. It should not be tied to foreign aid in any way, shape, or form!" said Trump, who running for reelection and is desperate to deprive President Joe Biden of a major legislative win ahead of the November vote.

With the White House race looking almost certain to be a rematch of 2020, the Republican former president has been hammering his Democratic successor over record numbers of undocumented migrants crossing the southern border.

Senators unveiled one of the harshest immigration bills in a generation Sunday, including significant restrictions that Biden has committed to signing into law.

The \$118.3bn package includes \$60bn for Ukraine, \$14bn for Israel, \$10bn in humanitarian

aid, nearly \$5bn for Asia-Pacific partners including Taiwan, and \$20bn in new border funding.

It would be a major win for immigration hawks — full of concessions that Democrats would normally have strongly opposed, such as the curbing of presidential discretion in allowing in refugees for humanitarian reasons, an expedited removal process and a mandate to close the border when apprehensions reach 5,000 daily.

It also includes none of the priorities Democrats typically push for, such as a path to citizenship for the country's estimated 11mn undocumented migrants.

But Trump has an iron grip on Republicans leading the House of Representatives, and has called repeatedly for the party to kill the legislation and deny Biden and his Democrats a political victory ahead of November's election.

"This Bill is a great gift to the Democrats, and a Death Wish for The Republican Party," Trump added.

"It takes the HORRIBLE JOB the Democrats have done on Immigration and the Border, absolves them, and puts it all squarely on the shoulders of Republicans."

## Outrage over Senegal bid to delay poll

Senegalese President Macky Sall on Saturday announced a delay to the February 25 vote, just hours before campaigning was officially set to begin.

The opposition says the postponement is part of a plan by the presidential camp to avoid defeat or even to extend Sall's term in office.

Senegalese MPs were debating the proposal yesterday amid tight security in the capital. It will need the support of three-fifths of the 165 lawmakers and does not appear to be a done deal.

"If the proposal passes today, Macky Sall will never stop," Diouf said indignantly.





HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani inaugurates the 20th DJWE at DECC yesterday.

## PM opens 20th DJWE

From Page 1

“Our support for Qatari youth is at the top of our priorities, this comes with the support of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, indicating the state's interest in nurturing and developing Qatari talent in the jewellery industry,” al-Kharji said.

The QT chairman added that over the years, the “Qatari Designers” initiative evolved into an autonomous pavilion within the exhibition, providing a platform for emerging Qatari designers, regardless of gender, to showcase their collections alongside globally acclaimed jewellery brands.

Several internationally renowned brands, including Dolce & Gabbana, Key Gems, AlMajid Home, Renee Jewels, Nailah Jewellery, Kooheji Jewellery, and Hessa Jewels have made their debut at the DJWE.

The Qatari Designers pavilion shines

a spotlight on the extraordinary artistry of 10 homegrown Qatari designers.

The DJWE reveals a thoughtfully curated assortment of distinctive creations that capture the individual philosophy and influences of each designer.

The featured designers for this year are Al Ghla Jewellery, De Throve, Ghand Jewellery, H Jewellery, Kaltham's Pavilion, Midad Jewellery, Nouf Jewellery, Thameen, Trifoglio, and DW Jewellery.

Alfardan Jewellery, one of Qatar's largest and most influential jewellery retailers that plays a key role in shaping the country's jewellery landscape since the mid-1900s, marks its 70th anniversary at the DJWE.

The prestigious exhibition partnered with Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, an initiative founded by Qatar Foundation Chairperson Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, collaborating with Brazilian jeweller and designer Silvia Furmanovich



alongside several Qatari designers, to present exclusive designs as part of the “Educate A Child” initiative.

This initiative, spearheaded by the EAA, aims to enhance global access to education.

Qatari designers contributing to this

meaningful cause include Papion, offering a brooch; Nouf Jewellery, presenting a necklace; De Trove Jewellery, showcasing a bracelet; Ghand Jewellery with details to be confirmed; and Mahain Jewellery, contributing two brooches.

# Alfardan pavilion takes centre stage at DJWE



The Alfardan Jewellery pavilion at the DJWE 2024 houses renowned luxury brands. PICTURE: Shaji Kayamkulam

By Joey Aguilar  
Staff Reporter

The Alfardan pavilion takes centre stage at the 20th Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition (DJWE), showcasing an array of unique and exclusive collections from renowned luxury brands.

The DJWE 2024, taking place at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) until February 11, brings together more than 500 international brands from 10 countries under one roof, according to Qatar Tourism (QT).

At the Alfardan pavilion, Chopard is presenting novelties such as L'Heure du Diamant, Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph, and Happy Diamonds Planet.

Qatar Special Editions like the Mille Miglia GTS with a green dial and exclusive references of Mille Miglia and L'heure du Diamant are also on display.

Tiffany & Co unveils its 2024 Bird on a Pearl collection for the first time at the event.

The exhibition is also featuring 2023 Sch-

lumberger by Tiffany Bird on a Rock and a campaign showcasing creations worn by House Ambassador Anya Taylor-Joy.

Vacheron Constantin displays novelty timepieces, including Overseas self-winding, Overseas moon phase retrograde date, Overseas self-winding in gold and light, Traditionnelle manual-winding, and Patrimony retrograde day-date.

Marli showcases signature collections including Tip-Top, Empire, Cleo, Avenues & LIFE, with a special focus on the newly introduced LIFE collection from the previous year.

Giard-Perregaux's spotlight is on the Neo Constant Escapement and the Esmeralda A Secret Edition, featuring four new limited colours, including pink gold and purple enamel, pink gold and brown enamel, white gold and grey enamel, and white gold and green enamel.

Franck Muller showcases the exclusive Zodiac collection along with other Qatar's Vanguard limited edition watches in various captivating colours.

Chaumet reveals an exclusive, one-of-a-kind Iris High Jewellery necklace, featuring a

rare 24.26-carat Tanzanian spinel.

Another highlight is the Soir de Fete High Jewellery set, capturing the essence of Qatar's rich pearl heritage with intricate diamond details.

Noudar will launch the Maha's Henna collection, inspired by the classic Henna and Enamel collections, while Satoro is focusing on its Happy collection.

Gallery Al Tawash, curated by Aisha Alfardan, presents the Aisha Collection, embodying the intersection of tradition and modernity within Qatar's pearl heritage.

Dolce & Gabbana is making its mark at the DJWE in collaboration with Alfardan Jewellery, showcasing its exquisite creations throughout the event.

Butani Jewellery debuts its new Bridal collection at the DJWE 2024, capturing the essence of eternal love and celebrating the beauty of brides on their special day.

Alfardan Jewellery's 70th-anniversary celebration offers a breathtaking experience, merging tradition with innovation, and showcasing the finest in the world of luxury and craftsmanship.

## Alfardan Automobiles to elevate luxury at exhibition with fleet of BMWs

Alfardan Automobiles, the official importer of BMW vehicles in Qatar, has announced its continued partnership with the Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition (DJWE) as a key sponsor.

Celebrating its 20th edition, DJWE 2024 opened yesterday at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

Alfardan Automobiles will be providing a luxurious fleet of BMW vehicles to assist organisers and transport VIP guests to and from the DECC during the week-long event.

“Our association with the DJWE, a prestigious event that celebrates the finest craftsmanship and quality, mirrors our own commitment to excellence and luxury,” said Alfardan Automobiles general manager Nasr Jairoudi in a statement.

“We are thrilled to once again contribute to



Alfardan Automobiles will be providing a fleet of BMW vehicles to assist organisers and transport VIP guests to and from the DECC.

this iconic event with our fleet of luxury BMW vehicles, lending a touch of elegance and comfort to the guest experience.”

Complementing the opulence of the exhibition, the BMW fleet – made up of four 7-Series vehicles – will be stationed at the DECC.

Having celebrated more than two decades of partnership with the BMW Group, Alfardan Automobiles has actively contributed to Qatar's strong culture of luxury.

Their newly opened BMW Retail.Next facility at Jerry Al Samur – which offers a 360° sales and service experience – embodies a concept aimed at providing customers a first-class luxury experience.

The 20th DJWE is expected to host approximately 30,000 visitors from more than 175 countries, offering an unmatched showcase of luxury watches, necklaces, rings, earrings, diamonds, gold and silverware.

## GAC support for DJWE

The General Authority of Customs (GAC) is providing all customs facilities to traders and exhibitors at the ongoing 20th Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition (DJWE) to ensure a smooth and speedy entry of exhibits.

Yousef Miteb al-Nuaimi, assistant director of the Air Cargo Customs Department and head of the GAC team at the DJWE, said that a specialised work team has been formed to facilitate the procedures for the exhibits, starting from their arrival at the customs ports.

Customs duties are collected only on the sold items while closing the daily sales at the exhibition.

“Daily sales are deducted from the original invoice on the same day or the day following the sale,” al-Nuaimi said. “This will save time and effort for the GAC and exhibitors when re-exporting the remaining exhibits.”

He said that customs provides clearance services through the unified window system for electronic customs clearance, Al Nadeeb.



## Noudar unveils exclusive collection

By Joey Aguilar  
Staff Reporter

Noudar, a globally acclaimed Qatari jewellery brand inspired by the enduring opulence of Arabian civilisation, is showcasing its exclusive collection “Maha's Henna” at the 20th edition of Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition (DJWE).

The collection pays homage to the legacy of its parent company, Alfardan Jewellery, on its 70th anniversary. It represents a feminine reinterpretation of the classic Henna collection, maintaining the modernity and versatility inherent in all of Noudar's lines.

The latest Noudar collection draws inspiration from Islamic

motifs, Omani mosaics, and the beauty of Henna patterns.

Maha's Henna presents romantic yet bold designs meticulously crafted to cater to the modern woman's penchant for timeless pieces.

Reinventing patterns with a modernist approach, the collection serves as a bridge between the past and the present, showcasing the aesthetic allure of Henna designs.

Established in 2012 by Noor Ali Hussain Alfardan, Noudar is Alfardan Jewellery's inaugural local in-house brand, capturing the essence and sophistication of Arabian culture and blending it with a contemporary approach to luxury jewellery.

Recent high-profile appear-



The latest Noudar collection. PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam

ances by celebrities such as Jennifer Lopez, Taylor Swift, Rihanna, Sofia Vergara, Jenna Ortega, Ashlee Simpson Ross, Charli XCX, Issa Rae, Keke, Chrissy Teigen, Erin Lim, and Becky G have brought attention to Noudar's popular and timeless pieces.

Noor draws inspiration from

geometric forms, Islamic patterns, and traditional ceremonial jewellery, stressing meticulous craftsmanship to elevate both functionality and versatility in contemporary luxury jewellery.

As a proud Qatari brand, Noudar has been a leader in design and innovation locally and globally for

over a decade, captivating hearts worldwide.

Noudar's bold collections stand as a symbol of sophistication, gracing local events and international celebrity red carpets.

The intricate patterns, rooted in traditional jewellery, now find a global stage.

## Envoy hails China-Qatar relations

By Ayman Adly  
Staff Reporter

The Chinese embassy in Doha celebrated yesterday the Spring Festival and the Chinese New Lunar Year in the presence of a number of senior Qatari officials, heads of various diplomatic missions, and Chinese community members.

Chinese ambassador Cao Xiaolin expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the “Qatari friends for their continuous support to the growth of the excellent Qatari-Chinese relations”.

“I arrived in Qatar on January 2, and presented my credentials to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad

al-Thani on January 28,” he told the gathering. “I would like to thank the help received from the Qatari side in such a short period of time.”

“This also reflects the great importance that the Qatari side attaches to China-Qatar relations, and I greatly appreciate this,” Cao added.

“I have deeply felt that Qatar is a prosperous and safe country: Qatar's economy is thriving, the people enjoy a high quality of life, and Qatar's diplomacy is very active,” the envoy said.

“I have also deeply felt that my Qatari friends highly commend the China-Qatar relations and look forward to closer co-operation between the two countries,” Cao continued. “It is a firm belief and common consensus in both the Qatari

government and all sectors of society to develop friendly relations and co-operation with China.”

“Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1988, no matter how the international and regional situation changes, our two countries have consistently respected, understood, and supported each other, and written a splendid chapter of friendly co-operation between countries of different political systems, economic scales and cultures,” the envoy pointed out.

“We will celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year, the year of dragon, in four days,” he said.

“In traditional Chinese culture, the dragon symbolises fortune, wisdom and strength,” Cao explained.



Chinese ambassador Cao Xiaolin with dignitaries cutting a cake on the occasion. PICTURE: Thajudheen

“In the coming year, my colleagues in the Chinese embassy and I wish to work with our Qatari friends to enhance ex-

changes and communications for more fruitful results in co-operation in various fields,” he said.