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Major US bridge collapses as cargo ship ploughs into pylon; 6 missing



A major bridge collapsed in Baltimore yesterday, blocking one of the busiest US commercial harbours, after a heavily laden cargo ship lost power and smashed into a support column despite desperate attempts to stop in time. Six people – all members of a night-time construction crew repairing potholes on the Francis Scott Key Bridge – were missing, officials said. Maryland Governor Wes Moore told reporters that quick thinking by authorities once the ship issued a Mayday call allowed of-

ficials to stop vehicles from going onto the bridge. “We’re thankful that between the Mayday and the collapse that we had officials who were able to begin to stop the flow of traffic,” Moore said. “These people are heroes. They saved lives last night.” The 1.30am (0530 GMT) disaster occurred at dramatic speed, with video footage capturing the moment the ship, piled high with containers, slammed into one of the bridge supports, instead of passing safely under.

Almost immediately, the steel structure, which was opened in 1977, collapsed like a deck of cards. The number of casualties was still unclear, with divers and other specialist rescue teams combing the frigid waters of the Patapsco River that lead into the bustling industrial harbour just north of the capital Washington. In addition to the six missing construction workers, two others from the same team were rescued, with one of them severely injured. **Page 11**

QC, QT seek ways to bolster tourism sector

Officials of Qatar Chamber (QC) and Qatar Tourism (QT) recently held a meeting to address the most prominent challenges facing the tourism sector, as well as the viewpoints and proposals of businessmen for its development.

The meeting was held in the presence of Qatar Chamber chairman Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani and Qatar Tourism chairman Saad bin Ali bin Saad al-Kharji.

Also present were Qatar Chamber first vice-chairman Mohamed bin Towar al-Kuwari, Qatar Chamber board member and chairman of the Tourism Committee Sheikh Hamad bin Ahmed al-Thani, other board members of the chamber, members of the Tourism Committee, and Qatar Chamber acting general manager Ali Saeed bu Sherbak al-Mansouri, as well as several Qatari businessmen and representatives from companies operating in the tourism sector.

In his remarks, Sheikh Khalifa noted that the meeting is part of the ongoing co-operation between the two entities to address issues relevant to the private sector and discuss the significant challenges encountered by



Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani, Saad bin Ali bin Saad al-Kharji, Mohamed bin Towar al-Kuwari and Sheikh Hamad bin Ahmed al-Thani attending the meeting.

business owners and investors in the sector. He emphasised the chamber's keenness to enhance co-operation with relevant bodies to address the most important challenges and find appropriate solutions.

Al-Kharji noted that Qatar's tourism sector has witnessed significant development in recent years, noting that it is one of the main pillars of the state's strategy for economic diversification under the Qatar National Vision 2030.

He said Qatar Tourism is focusing on developing plans and strategies that streamline procedures and regulations that would

resolve all obstacles facing the sector and align its development with the state's overall progress.

He underscored the importance of supporting and empowering the private sector to drive this vital sector forward, citing numerous plans underway to develop the Hayya Card in a sophisticated and appropriate manner.

Meanwhile, al-Kuwari noted that the private sector faces numerous challenges and emphasised the importance of addressing the demands of the private sector to ensure that the tourism sector fulfils its intended role in the state's development. **To Page 6**


Moscow attackers headed for Belarus

Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko said yesterday that the gunmen who attacked Moscow's Crocus City Hall music venue on Friday tried initially to flee to Belarus, not Ukraine as Russian officials including President Vladimir Putin have insisted. Ukraine has vehemently denied involvement. Lukashenko said security services had co-ordinated their actions as the suspects' car fled southwest from Moscow to the Bryansk region, bordering both Ukraine and Belarus, where it was apprehended. “Belarus had quickly set up checkpoints at the border, that's why they couldn't enter Belarus.”

US denies dawn strikes in Syria

The US yesterday denied that it had carried out dawn air strikes in Syria after Syrian and Iranian state media said US forces had bombed an eastern region and killed at least seven soldiers, including a member of Iran's Revolutionary Guards. Syria state media said a civilian was also killed and at least 19 other soldiers and 13 civilians were wounded in strikes on residential areas and military sites in Deir Al Zor province, with significant damage to public and private properties. Iranian state media said a Revolutionary Guards adviser was killed in the air strikes, without giving his rank.

RAMADAN THOUGHT



And the life of this world is nothing but play and amusement. But far better is the house in the Hereafter for those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious). Will you not then understand? (Qur'an 6: 32)

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Imsak tomorrow 4.02am

‘UNSC resolution would help end Gaza conflict’

QNA
Doha

Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari stressed the necessity for the international community to shoulder its responsibility towards the crisis in the Gaza Strip, especially after the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire.

During the ministry's weekly media briefing, Dr al-Ansari welcomed the resolution and any UN, regional or international diplomatic initiative that puts an end to the horrific conflict and helps in the negotiating process. He expressed hope that the resolution would expedite ending the conflict and have a positive impact on the negotiations.

He underlined the importance of the partners interacting with



Dr Majed al-Ansari briefing the media yesterday.

the resolution, relying primarily on negotiations, especially since it represents a positive pressure tool to reach an agreement. The Qatari efforts are continuing, mediation with the partners is ongoing, and negotiations and meetings have not stopped, he added.

International diplomatic efforts are complementary to each other, and the resolution by itself confirms the position of the international community on the issue, and represents a tool for

• International community must shoulder responsibility towards Gaza: Qatar MoFA spokesperson
• No alternative to UNRWA • Qatar supports Saudi efforts to solve Sudan conflict

diplomatic pressure, Dr al-Ansari pointed adding that it is not a quick field measure, but rather there is a case before the International Criminal Court, a UNSC resolution, and UNGA resolutions. **To Page 4**

12 drown trying to reach aid off Gaza beach

Reuters
Gaza

Twelve people drowned trying to reach aid dropped by plane off a Gaza beach, Palestinian health authorities said yesterday, amid growing fears of famine nearly six months into Israel's military campaign.

Video of the aid drop showed crowds of people running towards the beach, in Beit Lahia in north Gaza, as crates with parachutes floated down, then people standing deep in water and bodies being pulled onto the sand.

In Washington, the Pentagon said three of the 18 bundles of aid dropped into Gaza on Monday had parachute malfunctions and fell into the water, but could not confirm if anyone was killed trying to reach the aid.

It was the latest in a string of incidents involving deaths during aid deliveries in the crowded Palestinian enclave where some people are foraging for weeds to



Palestinians gather on a beach as they collect aid airdropped by an airplane, in the northern Gaza.

eat and baking barely edible bread from animal feed.

Aid agencies say only about a fifth of required supplies are entering Gaza as Israel persists with an air and ground offensive, pushing parts of it into famine already.

They say deliveries by air or sea directly onto Hamas-run Gaza's beaches are no substitute for increased supplies coming in by land via Israel or Egypt.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has urged Israel to give an “ironclad commitment” for unfettered aid access into the Gaza.

Israel has committed genocide in Gaza: UN expert

Reuters
Geneva

United Nations expert told the global body's Human Rights Council yesterday that she believed that Israel's military campaign in Gaza since Oct. 7 amounted to genocide and called on countries to immediately impose sanctions and an arms embargo.

Israel, which did not attend the session, rejected her findings.

“It is my solemn duty to report on the worst of what humanity is capable of and to present my findings,” Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Occupied Territories, told the UN rights body in Geneva,

presenting a report called “The Anatomy of a Genocide”.

“I find that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the threshold indicating the commission of the crime of genocide against Palestinians as a group in Gaza has been met,” she said, citing more than 30,000 Palestinians killed among other acts.

“I implore member states to abide by their obligations, which start with imposing an arms embargo and sanctions on Israel and so ensure that the future does not continue to repeat itself,” she said, prompting a burst of applause.

The 1948 Genocide Convention, enacted in the wake of the mass murder of Jews in the Nazi Holocaust, defines genocide as



Albanese delivers her report during a session of the UN Human Rights Council, in Geneva yesterday.

“acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group”.

Israel's diplomatic mission in Geneva said the use of the word genocide was “outrageous” and said the war was against Islamist group Hamas and not Palestinian civilians.

“Instead of seeking the truth, this Special Rapporteur tries to fit weak arguments to her distorted and obscene inversion of reality,” it said.

Gulf nations such as Qatar, as well as African countries including Algeria and Mauritania, voiced support for Albanese's findings and alarm at the humanitarian situation.

The seats for Israel's ally the United States were left empty. Washington has previously accused the council of a chronic anti-Israel bias.

Countries rally behind expert

Francesca Albanese, the UN expert who concluded Israel was committing acts of genocide in the Gaza Strip received broad support at the United Nations, with countries speaking up to back her and her report. Albanese said Israel was characterising the entire Gazan population as “targetable, killable and destroyable”, and had ostentatiously laid bare its “genocidal intent” to “rid Palestine of Palestinians”.



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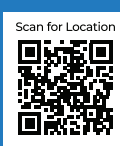


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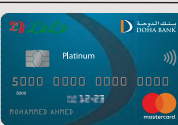


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Shura reiterates parliamentarians' role in supporting disability rights

QNA
Geneva

The Shura Council emphasised the role of parliamentarians in improving the living conditions of persons with disabilities, protecting their rights through legislation, monitoring its implementation, and preparing budgets to ensure a decent life for them.

This came in a speech by Member of the Council Dr Sultan bin Hassan al-Dosari at the meeting of the permanent committee on democracy and human rights of the Inter-Parliamentary Union held as part of the 148th General Assembly of the Union hosted in Geneva. The meeting discussed the topic of sustainable measures to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities, including their opportunities in education and employment.

Dr al-Dosari highlighted the important role of parliaments in monitoring the implementation of agreements concerning the rights of persons with disabilities, noting that Qatar was among the first countries to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, along with similar international conventions.

He pointed out Qatar National Vision 2030's emphasis on achieving equality and justice for all segments of society. He highlighted the rights afforded to persons with disabilities in Qatar under legislation, ensuring their access to education, skills acquisition, medical, psychological,



cultural, and social care, as well as providing employment opportunities suited to their abilities and qualifications. He also mentioned that Doha will host the 4th World Disability Summit in 2028 in collaboration with the International Disability Alliance.

Dr al-Dosari reaffirmed the Shura Council's support for efforts aimed at enhancing opportunities for education, employment, professional development, and entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities.

In a related context, the Shura Council participated in the meeting of the Permanent Committee on UN Affairs of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which focused on the topic of the sustainability of UN humanitarian work. The meeting, represented by Member of the Council Ahmed bin Ibrahim al-Maliki discussed the humanitarian work of UN agencies and its contribution to achieving sustainable development goals, exchanging views on the subject.

Another topic dealt with reforming the UN Security Council, al-Maliki highlighting the challenges this entails and Qatar's support for negotiations in this

regard. He emphasised the need for the Security Council to be efficient and transparent, which would enhance the legitimacy of its decisions and expedite their implementation. He also discussed Qatar's efforts in this regard and called for restricting the veto right, especially as any reform of the Security Council must go hand in hand with reforms in its working methods and decision-making mechanisms.

Furthermore, the Shura Council delegation participated in the 148th General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, where speeches were delivered by participating delegations on the topic of parliamentary diplomacy. On the sidelines of the assembly, the Shura Council delegation met with a UK parliamentary delegation led by Member of the UK Parliament Karen Bradley and Adibat Sonetivada, who is the First Deputy Speaker of the Thai House of Representatives and head of the delegation participating in the assembly's proceedings.

During the meetings, they reviewed parliamentary co-operation relations and ways to enhance them, as well as several topics on the agenda of the 148th General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Shura Council delegation also met with Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Martin Chungong, where they discussed ways to enhance the close co-operation between the Shura Council and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, along with several topics on the agenda of the General Assembly.



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Umrah trip costs drop this Ramadan: tour operators

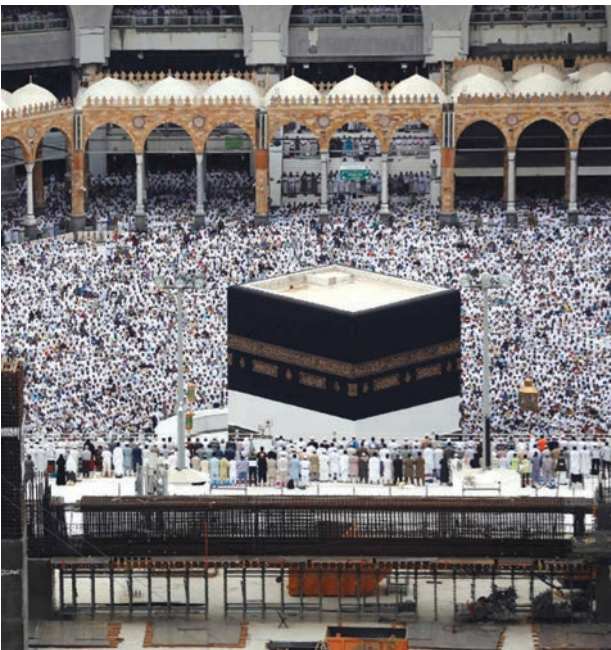
The cost of Umrah packages for the last 10 days of Ramadan this year is around 40% less than the past year, a number of Haj and Umrah companies' owners and operators have pointed out. Speaking to local Arabic daily Arrayah, they noted that such drop in prices could be attributed to the fact that around 75% of those who travel to Makkah use the easily obtainable tourist visas.

Besides, some companies have started to reduce the number of the services they offer during the Umrah trips such as housing the pilgrims in hotels away from the two holy mosques in Makkah and Madinah and doing away with some other extras. They said that the prices for reservations for the land trip to perform Umrah at this time could start at QR1,500 and by air at QR4,500.

Majdi Abdulhameed, manager of a Haj company, said the number of applicants for Umrah is considered normal this year compared to the previous years. However, many people go for the tourist visas rather than the Umrah visa, which could reduce the volume of the business of Umrah companies. But, his company started to offer more affordable trips by reducing the cost from QR2,500 to around QR1,500 for the road trips.

Ashraf Shaheen, manager of a Haj company, said that many companies in the field are competing with each other to attract more clients by offering affordable prices and good Umrah packages. For instance, some companies offer a five-day trip, that starts from just QR500, during the Eid holidays. Some companies also have special packages for smaller groups and families with buses that can accommodate up to 15 passengers, he added.

Abdulhameed al-Mulla, owner of a Haj company, said that the demand on the services of Umrah and Haj companies this year is lower than the previous years due to the ease to obtain tourist visas. This has helped in reducing the prices and make companies



in the field offer more competitive rates and better and diversified packages.

Nasser al-Sulaiti, owner of a Haj company, said he had to modify the packages to reduce the costs to attract more clients. The steps included opting for affordable accommodation options, as the demand has considerably dropped.

Amir sends cables of congratulations to Bangladeshi 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 Bangladeshi President Mohamed Shahabuddin 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 Sheikh Hasina Wazed. (QNA)

Media City Qatar hosts professional content producers to explore opportunities in Doha

QNA
Doha

Media City Qatar hosted a gathering of top professional content producers from around the world to explore production opportunities in Doha. The event, which was attended by over 50 industry representatives, presented participants with ways in which Media City Qatar can assist them in setting up and producing content in Qatar, including co-production, industry-leading incentives, and access to world-class production facilities.

however, was to meet the growing demand for content commissioning in the Mena region, especially in light of Qatar's presence in the international media, which was established during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

Commenting on this occasion, Director of Business Development at Media City Qatar Thair al-Anani said, "I'm delighted that so many talented content producers from around the world were able to join us in Doha. This event is not only aligned with the national agenda aiming to drive growth in strategic areas, but it was also an opportunity to welcome new friends to Qatar and to invite them to join us on our journey to the media world of the future," he added.

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'UNSC resolution would help end Gaza war'

From Page 1

These efforts are important in dealing with the Palestinian issue, as conflicts can only be dealt with through diplomatic efforts and negotiations, which is Qatar's permanent position, he stressed.

Regarding the withdrawal of one of the delegations from the ongoing negotiations in Doha regarding Gaza, the official spokesperson said that the meetings are in full swing and have not been interrupted, the negotiations are continuing, and the discussions are ongoing, pointing that the entry and exit of delegations and their return to their capitals is normal and a natural move in such negotiations.

During the negotiation process, there are new and updated ideas, responses from the parties, and re-presentation of ideas and initiatives, he noted.

As for the Qatari support for UNRWA, Dr al-Ansari stressed that there is no alternative to it, not only in Gaza, but in all areas of its presence (Jordan, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza), especially since the need now is urgent. He added that the international community cannot come up with an alternative to it if funding for it is withheld or if it is cancelled or dismantled. Qatar has increased its funding and is committed to supporting UNRWA, out of belief in the role of this organisation in providing services to the Palestinians in the occupied territories.


On the sea corridor initiative to bring aid into Gaza, Dr al-Ansari explained that it is not an alternative to land corridors and other channels.

None of the channels is preferred over another, he said explaining that one form of bringing aid will not be sufficient in light of the catastrophic humanitarian situation there. The corridor was established specifically to bring in aid and is purely humanitarian and has no other role, he stressed.

On the Sudan issue, Dr al-Ansari explained that since the first day, Qatar has been a supporter of the "Jeddah Platform" and it supports the efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in this regard. Qatar maintains its position supporting the return of talks through Jeddah platform, he said adding that humanitarian situation in Sudan has reached a dangerous stage.

Reports raise concern not only at the state of the conflict, but at the level of the general humanitarian situation, he said affirming that Qatari humanitarian effort has been intensified in recent weeks. Dr al-Ansari called on the international community to pay attention to the Sudanese issue and not neglect it in the context of multiple regional and international tragedies.

The Official Spokesperson touched on the efforts of the ministry and its officials, their meetings and participation in regional and international events, including Qatar's issuance of a statement welcoming the long-awaited UNSC resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza during the month of Ramadan.



QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation

No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	LTC/C/SOH/6541/24 INSPECTION & TESTING OF FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENTS & SYSTEMS	26/03/2024 to 02/04/2024	0	358,184	14/05/2024

Scope of Work:
Tenderer shall be a registered fire protection contractor according to the laws of the State of Qatar. Tenderer shall have all their resources like manpower, equipment etc. inside Qatar and provide services in onshore /offshore facilities. Duration of the Contract shall be for an estimated duration of 3 years with an optional extension of 1 year.

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

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

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




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ANNOUNCES THE ISSUE OF THE FOLLOWING TENDER:

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AUCTION TENDER NO. AAH/TC/02/24	AUCTION FOR USED ENGINEERING ITEMS	NIL	8 th April 2023

- Full document for the above mentioned tender can be obtained by email as per your email request.
- Site visit for the above will be on Monday, 1st day of April 2024 at 10:00am.
- The auction bid should submit in one sealed envelope.
- Tender must be addressed to the Chairman of the Tender Committee, clearly indicating the Tender Number and Subject.
- The closing time for submission of the auction bid should be no later than **2:00pm** of the Closing Date.

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Tenders Announcement: -

Sr. #	Tender No.	Description	Documents Fees (Non-Refundable)	Temporary Tender Bond	Closing Date
1	QRC/EMS/02-2024	The ambulances comprehensive annual maintenance contract at Emergency Medical System For 36 Ambulance Type 2	500 Q.R	25,000 Q.R	28/04/2024

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

Required Documents:

- Authorization letter to receive tender documents + ID copy of the person will be receiving the documents.
- Company's Commercial registration copy.
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- Account Name: Qatar Red Crescent.
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- IBAN: QA09MAFR000000000003100689200

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Green Tent reviews global initiatives taken to address climate change risks

QNA
Doha

Speakers at the “usefulness of climate summits in addressing the risks of climate change” seminar, which was organised by the ‘Flower Each Spring’ programme within its Ramadan Green Tent, emphasised the necessity of concerted efforts at the national, regional, and global levels, and implementing what was agreed upon in successive climate summits since the “Rio de Janeiro 1992” Earth Summit to “COP28” in Dubai.

Speakers at the seminar, which was held via direct attendance and video conferencing, considered that international participation and commitment to what was agreed upon is an international goal to confront climate change, and a major challenge affecting various development sectors, environmental systems, and habitats, calling for the necessity of rationalising all natural resources and changing the unsustainable unfair production patterns, depleted and unsustainable consumption, and adaptation to the consequences of climate change due to the impossibility of preventing disasters and



the possibility of reducing their effects.

Speakers stressed the need for environmental solidarity, building human capabilities, developing and transferring technology, increasing spending on relevant research and establishing partnerships, and reducing material and technical support measures between countries to confront climate change. They provided a historical overview of the international response to the challenges of climate change, the causes of disagreement, the lack of international commitment to climate agree-

ments, the role of green technologies and industries in reducing the effects of climate change, and targeted Arab initiatives in this field.

They attributed the reasons for disagreement and lack of international commitment to climate agreements to differing interests, insufficient commitments, as well as lax implementation, and the complexity of international negotiations as it is fraught with differing viewpoints, in addition to technical and financial challenges.

Participants pointed out that green technologies and industries play a vital role in reducing the

effects of climate change, which contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the quality of life, by using clean energy and sustainable agricultural practices, and ensuring recycling, leading to achieving the concept of a circular economy.

The attendees reviewed Arab governmental and private initiatives aimed at addressing climate change in various aspects of sustainable development in the region, including the Saudi Green Initiative, which began in 2021 and aims to protect the environment and transitional energy, sustaina-

The forum emphasises the need to rationalise resources, change patterns of “unjust production”, “depleted consumption”

bility programmes, compensation, and reduction of carbon emissions, afforestation, protection of terrestrial and marine areas, and state efforts.

The also reviewed Qatar’s commitment to plant 10mn trees; Morocco’s strategy to address the effects of climate change by integrating the environmental dimension and the issue of climate change into many key sectors such as energy, agriculture, industry, tourism, and fishing; the Arab Group for the Protection of Nature, which is concerned with planting millions of fruit trees in the occupied territories of Palestine, and the Arab Youth Climate Network to involve them in sustainability activities and programmes to address climate change; and the Arab regional centre for climate knowledge, which works to enhance cooperation between countries to address climate change and enhance adaptation capabilities throughout the Arab region and also highlights

the need for urgent, co-ordinated, and effective action, as well as adequate funding to make a difference in tackling rising temperatures and climate challenges.

Speakers pointed out that what we are seeing in terms of fires, floods, hurricanes, and heat waves in places that are not accustomed to these climates is not the result of a coincidence, or something that happened overnight, but rather is the result of decisions that were not taken for decades, the absence of a global environmental vision, and the marginalisation of some communities and nationalities that are in the first frontline. They noted that the climate change dilemma is not only related to reducing emissions, but rather is part of the issue of achieving sustainable development that includes the right to equality and non-marginalisation and investing resources optimally, without compromising the rights of future generations.

FEC forum discusses challenges facing environmentalists

The Ministry of Sports and Youth’s Friends of the Environment Centre (FEC) held the first symposium of the ‘Third Environmental Forum 2024’, an event seeking to identify and overcome the challenges facing environmentalists.

Themed ‘The Environmental Activist: Challenges and Solutions’, the symposium hosted President and Founder of the Qatari Environment Lens Initiative, Hamad al-Khulaifi, and President and Founder of the Ali Al Henzab Initiative for Afforestation and

Combating Desertification, Ali al-Henzab. The two conservationists called for setting up channels of communication between them and the concerned agencies in a bid to develop a common vision for protecting the local environment and enriching its biodiversity.

They stressed the importance of developing the Environmental Pioneers Initiative launched by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, by developing a specific mechanism to activate it on the ground to preserve and protect the Qatari environment. Call-

ing for intensified environmental awareness campaigns among the local community members to battle environmental challenges, they highlighted the importance of spreading sustainable practices especially among school and university students.

In a press statement on the sidelines of the forum, CEO of the FEC, Farhoud al-Hajri, stressed the importance of the forum in monitoring many local environmental challenges and proposing sustainable solutions to them, through discussions that take place be-

tween experts and environmental enthusiasts and state officials. The two previous successful editions of the forum prompted the FEC to organise the third edition, he said.

He stated that the current symposium focused on the challenges facing activists and those interested in environmental affairs, noting that the topics of discussion included the role of the environmental activist in preserving the environment, and his activity in spreading environmental awareness among segments of society. (QNA)



A new lunar landing for the Bioceramic MoonSwatch - with a moon phase watch

“Houston, the Bioceramic MoonSwatch MISSION TO THE MOONPHASE has landed. A new model, all in white to celebrate the full moon, has touched down on the moon smoothly, in the planned location and on schedule.”

Two years after the launch of the OMEGA X SWATCH collaboration, a new non-limited watch has been added to this iconic collection. Just like the eleven Bioceramic MoonSwatch models, which depict the planets, and the eleven Mission to Moonshine Gold models, this new watch is equipped with the chronograph function. As a cherry on top, it also features a moon phase function, probably the most poetic of all watch complications. Hence its name Full Moon and its all-white color. For the first time in its history, Swatch has combined a moon phase with a chronograph.

The Bioceramic MoonSwatch MISSION TO THE MOONPHASE is a new nod to the OMEGA brand, with Snoopy on the moon phase disc, lying on the moon, which moves in the subdial at 2 o’clock. On the model’s moon phase mask and disc, a hidden quote from Snoopy’s comic strip is nestled amidst crescent moons and stars, that can be seen under UV light.

Snoopy has been NASA’s mascot since the 1960s. In fact, the Silver Snoopy Award is the most prestigious honor the United States’ space agency awards to individuals and organizations for outstanding achievements related to human flight safety or mission success. This prestigious prize was awarded to OMEGA in 1970 for its role in the history of space exploration, including its essential contribution to bringing the crew of Apollo 13 back home safe and sound.

In 1970, an exploding oxygen tank during the Apollo 13 mission placed the astronauts’ lives in danger. One of the many challenges the crew had to face was timing the 14-second launch time that would allow them to get back to Earth. Luckily, they had an OMEGA chronograph watch, the Speedmaster Moonwatch, to get the job done. Not only that, but in May of 1969, the Apollo 10 mission, which was tasked with carrying out the initial sweep before an attempted moon landing, had to skim the surface of the moon and ‘snoop around’ to identify the Apollo 11 landing site. As a result, the lunar module was christened Snoopy. Ever since then, the Snoopy emblem is considered a lucky charm among astronauts.

All of the main features of the original Speedmaster Moonwatch, the first watch to go to the moon, can be found on the Bioceramic MoonSwatch MISSION TO THE MOONPHASE: the asymmetrical case, the famous tachymeter-scaled bezel with the dot over the 90 and the typical Speedmaster subdials. The Bioceramic MoonSwatch MISSION TO THE MOONPHASE watch features its mission statement on the caseback, and the OMEGA X SWATCH logos on the dial and crown. A moon inspired by the world of Snoopy can be seen on the battery cover. A spacesuit-ready VELCRO® strap adds that final touch of astronaut chic.



OMEGA’s legendary Moonwatch is a must-have for collectors. Swatch’s Bioceramic MoonSwatch Collection makes this iconic model accessible to fans worldwide. The moon phase version is the perfect reflection of Swatch’s zest for life and philosophy of innovation.

Like all the models of the OMEGA X SWATCH collaboration, the Bioceramic MoonSwatch MISSION TO THE MOONPHASE is made from the brand’s patented Bioceramic, a unique mix of two-thirds ceramic and one-third biosourced materials produced from castor oil.

The Bioceramic MoonSwatch MISSION TO THE MOONPHASE is available from March 26, only in selected Swatch stores. As with the whole Bioceramic MoonSwatch Collection, only one watch can be purchased per person, per day and per Swatch store.

More to come...



QU Press releases new publication

QU Press, Qatar University’s (QU) publishing house, has released ‘Put Your Feet in Mud’ by Prof Mohamed Ali Mustafa.

The book aims to find a modern approach to heritage reading, criticism, including reassessing the relationship with these concepts. It also opens to the sciences of semantics and explores the characteristics of many Qur’anic words and structures.

The book addresses many linguistic aspects and analyses them in a unique and unprecedented way to answer some intriguing questions in syntax, morphology, and readings.

The book opens the minds of readers to the real importance of investing in the fields of linguistic jurisprudence to produce true knowledge, weaving that knowledge from the available evidence.

The book aims to nurture the readers passions and curiosity, piquing their interest through a flexible, modern, and cohesive research methodology that nei-



ther denies heritage nor disregards scientific principles, nor belittles entrenched cultural identity.

In addition, it opens to various forms of expression through language, its dialects, and the creative bridging of knowledge between them and other arts such as painting, editing, cinematic direction, and others.

Top architect Abdel-Wahed El-Wakil wins ICAA’s Arthur Ross award

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

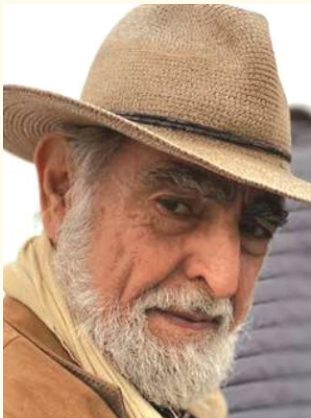
Renowned Egyptian architect Abdel-Wahed El-Wakil has been announced as one of the winners of the prestigious Arthur Ross Awards for Excellence in the Classical Tradition for the year 2024.

The Institute of Classical Architecture and Art (ICAA) revealed this award on its website, recognising El-Wakil’s outstanding contributions to architecture.

ICAA, a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting and preserving classical design, said Prof El-Wakil will be presented with the award in architecture at a ceremony scheduled for May at the University Club of New York.

The event, ICAA noted, will host an array of distinguished personalities from various fields, including architecture, design, education, fine arts, and patronage.

Among the other notable recipients are Féau Boiseres for artisanship and craftsman-



Abdel-Wahed El-Wakil

ship, Julia Watson for education, Markham Roberts for interior design, Thomas Wells Schaller for fine arts, and Stephen A Schwarzman for patronage.

Describing El-Wakil’s architectural prowess, ICAA highlighted his significant role as one of the leading voices in contemporary Islamic architecture.

Over four decades, it said that El-Wakil has left an indelible mark by constructing mosques, public buildings,

and private residences across the Middle East. His approach beautifully balances tradition with innovation, celebrating the timeless principles of Islamic architecture while incorporating regional nuances into each project.

El-Wakil’s designs integrate traditional elements with modern technology, resulting in structures that are not only functional and environmentally sustainable but also deeply rooted in their cultural context, ICAA added.

Quoting El-Wakil, ICAA cited his profound belief in the importance of tradition in architectural practice. He said: “To abandon tradition, to disregard the achievements and models of the past and to be caught up in the trauma of change means to be incapable of handling the new.”

He said his inspiration was drawn from the natural world, aligning his design philosophy with the divine order.

ICAA noted that El-Wakil’s exceptional talent has earned him prestigious accolades in the past, including two Aga Khan Awards for Architecture (for the Halawa house in Agamy, Egypt, in 1980, and for the Corniche Mosque in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in 1989) and the Driehaus Architecture Prize in 2009.

His architectural accomplishments garnered worldwide recognition, firmly establishing him as a leading figure in the field of classical and traditional architecture.

In a statement, ICAA president Peter Lyden said: “The story of classical and traditional architecture, art, and design is a global one, encompassing a great diversity of practices, languages, and precedents, and fittingly this year’s Arthur Ross Award winners reflect a far-flung cross-section of practitioners.”



Halawa house in Agamy, Egypt, for which Abdel-Wahed El-Wakil won his first Aga Khan Award in 1980.



Qatar Charity, Qatar embassy deliver assistance in Jordan

The Qatar embassy in Jordan, with the support of Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), distributed 874 food packages during the holy month of Ramadan, a statement said yesterday.

The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation (JHCO) and Qatar Charity (QC) concluded their latest four-day campaign aimed at reaching the most vulnerable segments of society, particularly needy families in Mafraq, Zarqa, Jerash, and Amman. More than 3,500 people benefit from this initiative.

The campaign stems from the humanitarian and developmental role in alleviating the humanitarian burden on Jordan and its significant role in hosting refugees. It signifies the brotherhood and friendship between the two sisterly countries.

The campaign is part of a series of programmes provided by Qatar Charity’s office in Jordan in various fields, including family and orphan sponsorship, health programmes, humanitarian projects, and economic empowerment of families, in addition to Ramadan

projects through collaboration and co-ordination with Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation, which serves as Qatar Charity’s primary partner and supporter in Jordan.

Qatar has a history in providing generous support through Qatar Fund for Development. It recently provided \$2mn to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees programme.

This reaffirms the ongoing commitment of the Qatari government to support refugees in Jordan, the statement added.

QC, QT seek ways to bolster tourism sector

From Page 1

Sheikh Hamad underlined the meeting’s significance in addressing the sector’s issues and challenges and finding suitable solutions. He emphasised the pivotal role of Qatar Tourism in supporting and promoting tourism in Qatar, as well as facilitating the private sector’s participation in the sector’s development.


He noted that the chamber’s Tourism Committee would follow up on the outcomes of the meeting

as part of its role to enhance collaboration with tourism companies and understand the most important challenges, stressing that the committee acts as a link between the government and the private sector.

During the meeting, both sides agreed to designate two direct focal points: one for the hotel sector and another for the travel office sector. They also agreed to hold regular meetings with representatives of tourism companies to identify challenges

they face and benefit from the private sector experiences in the tourism sector.

In response to questions from businessmen, al-Kharji said the proposals submitted by Qatar Chamber will be identified, considered, and answered as soon as possible. He also emphasised the significant role of the private sector in implementing the country’s strategic tourism plan, which considers tourism as a vital component of the local economy.



الهلال الأحمر القطري
Qatar Red Crescent

Qatar Red Crescent – Medical Affairs Division

Tenders Announcement: -

Sr. #	Tender No.	Description	Documents Fees (Non-Refundable)	Temporary Tender Bond	Closing Date
1	QRC/WHC/03-2024	Supply and installation Hyper Convergence Infrastructure (HCI)	500 Q.R	20,000 Q.R	28-04-2024

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

Required Documents:

1. Authorization letter to receive tender documents + ID copy of the person will be receiving the documents.

2. Company's Commercial registration copy.

3. Bank deposit voucher with the value of documents (500 QR) not refunded & account details:

4. Account Name: Qatar Red Crescent.

5. Bank: Al Rayan.


6. Account Number: 11199970201

7. IBAN: QA56MAFR000000000011199970201


For more information: please call: (50044554), or

Email whc.tenders@qrccs.org.qa


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Qatar Charity hosts Iftar events for numerous expatriate communities



As part of its ongoing Ramadan campaign 'Endless Giving', Qatar Charity (QC) continues to organize Iftar events for fasting individuals from various communities residing in Qatar, including the Pakistani community. It is expected that 21,000 people will benefit from these Iftar events during the holy month of Ramadan.

The Iftar gatherings, arranged for members of Arab, Asian, and African communities, seek to foster values of solidarity and collaboration among individuals from diverse communities,

while enhancing interaction between them. These gatherings incorporate religious programs and sermons.

Iftar Event for Pakistani Community

In this context, Qatar Charity (QC) organized an Iftar event for members of the Pakistani community residing in Qatar. Around 700 fasting individuals from the community participated in the event, which was held under the supervision of Qatar Charity's Social Development Centre - Communities.

The Iftar event included a sermon delivered by Mr. Mubashir Nadeem the Secretary-General of the Pakistan Welfare Forum (PWF). He spoke about the virtues of Ramadan, emphasizing the importance of fasting, night prayers, good deeds, charity, and social service. He encouraged the participants to contribute to the forum's campaign through Qatar Charity for the benefit of the Pakistani community. Additionally, he provided an overview of Qatar Charity, highlighting the forum's services in education, medical assistance, and family social care, in collaboration with Qatar Charity.

Participants expressed their happiness at being part of this event that brings joy to their community members. Mr. Abdul Moqtader, a member of the Pakistani community, extended his sincere gratitude to the generous people of Qatar and Qatar Charity for organizing a group Iftar event for their community. He emphasized that this initiative symbolizes a unique moment and an excellent opportunity for them to gather during the sacred month of Ramadan, thereby strengthening social cohesion among community members.

He also expressed his eagerness to participate in Qatar Charity's activities and events in the future.

It is worth mentioning that the number of beneficiaries from Qatar Charity's Ramadan campaign 'Endless Giving' within the state of Qatar reaches up to 900,000 people. The campaign's projects include Feed the Fasting, Zakat al-Fitr, Eid Gifts for Orphans and Children of Low-Income Families, in addition to the assistance through the 'Alaqraboon' platform and cultural, social, and volunteer programs and events.

Endless Giving



Double Your Ajir.. Extend Goodness

Seize the best of days and multiply your Ajir by supporting charity projects, with small donations leaving you with a lasting legacy and perpetual charity."



Digging a shallow well

Project cost

5,000 QAR



Building a mosque

Project cost

60,000 QAR



Building a house for the needy

Project cost

25,000 QAR



Digging a deep well

Project cost

30,000 QAR



Togo



Niger



Chad



Tanzania



Uganda



Ivory Coast



Ghana



Nigeria



India



Pakistan



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Nepal

In
12
countries



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Shura Council stresses parliamentarians' crucial role in achieving peace, stability



QNA
Geneva

The Shura Council highlighted the importance of the parliamentary role in achieving peace and stability, by strengthening the role of parliamentary diplomacy, making optimal use of legislative tools and building understanding and dialogue.

This came in a speech delivered by Shura Council member, Ali bin Ahmed al-Kaabi, before the 148th General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, Switzerland, under the theme 'Parliamentary diplomacy: Building bridges for peace and understanding'.

Lawmakers have the tools for change through collaborating with governments and earmarking resources to stop wars and conflicts, al-Kaabi said, highlighting the importance of reforming the UN system and activating the role of its bodies to achieve justice and equality.

He pointed out the necessity of leveraging parliamentary diplomacy to ward off wars and conflicts, through mediation and good offices that lead to reconciliation and peace agreements, pointing in this context to Qatar's neutral and credible mediation efforts, which has gained it the confidence of the international community.

Speaking about the Shura Council's efforts to promote

Shura Council member, Ali bin Ahmed al-Kaabi in a speech delivered at the 148th General Assembly of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, has stressed necessity of leveraging parliamentary diplomacy to ward off wars and conflicts, through mediation and good offices that lead to reconciliation and peace agreements, pointing in this context to Qatar's neutral and credible mediation efforts, which has gained it the confidence of the international community

peace and stability, he highlighted the Council's endeavours to issue an international law criminalising hate speech, rejecting violence against minorities and contempt of religions and their adherents.

In a related context, he highlighted Qatar's hosting of the premises of the Global Organisation of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC).

Al-Kaabi pointed to the parliamentarians' capacities to address unconstitutional changes jeopardising sovereignty in democratic countries, ensure that governments implement international treaties and agreements to achieve

sustainable development, international peace and security, and battle climate change and to take concrete steps to rein in carbon emissions to help address the climate crisis.

Commenting on the situation in the Gaza Strip, He expressed the Shura Council's condemnation of the Israeli occupation forces' brutal aggression and massacres against Palestinians. He also slammed the international community's inability to stop the machinery of killing and destruction, achieve security and peace, and punish those responsible for the genocide in Gaza and in the rest of the oc-

cupied Palestinian territories. He urged parliamentarians and governments to do their part to stop these crimes and provide protection for the defenceless Palestinian people, lift the siege on them and enable them to enjoy their legitimate rights to life, independence and self-determination, in addition to their right to establish their independent state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Meanwhile, the Shura Council delegation to the IPU Assembly held a meeting Monday with Third Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag), Kerstin Lundgren, and several Riksdag

members. Both sides discussed co-operation between the Shura Council and the Riksdag and ways to strengthen them.

The Shura Council, represented by the Council member Dr Sultan bin Hassan al-Dhabet al-Dosari, took part in the meeting of the IPU's Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, held as part of the 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva.

The meeting discussed the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The participants held a workshop on artificial intelligence and deliberated sustainable measures to develop the living

conditions of people with disabilities, including their opportunities for education and work.

Addressing the meeting, al-Dosari stressed that the development of technology may enhance democracy by enabling popular participation and increasing transparency. Yet, he warned that the global AI development in particular raises mounting concerns and fears for national security, democracy and human rights.

He stressed the need to study the impact of AI technologies on these vital issues locally, regionally and globally, and to establish national foundations, frameworks and legislation to regulate the use of these technologies in a way that serves the individual and society.

In this regard, he highlighted Qatar's national strategy on AI, which is centred upon six pillars: education, access to data, employment, business, research and ethics. He added that Qatar had formed an AI committee within the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology to develop mechanisms for implementing this strategy.

Meanwhile, Shura Council Member Ahmed bin Ebrahim al-Malki participated in the meeting of the IPU's Standing Committee on UN Affairs. The attendees discussed efforts to ensure youth participation in the work of the UN, the sustainable UN humanitarian work, and a parliamentary proposal to reform the UN Security Council.

VCUarts Qatar launches BFA in kinetic imaging

Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) has announced the start of a new Bachelor of Fine Art (BFA) in Kinetic Imaging for the new academic year in August 2024.

The new undergraduate programme will cater to the growing demand for art and design education exploring new technology and media. Areas of study will include game design, 3D modelling and animation, creative coding (parametric design, generative art, artificial intelligence), sound (sound art, sound design), and interaction design (app design, user interface design). The new department will collaborate with and receive support from the Kinetic Imaging Department at the university's home campus in Richmond.

Levi Hammett, chair of the new BFA in Kinetic Imaging programme, said: "The jobs of the future will require more than just technical skills and training. Industries such as Game Design, App Design, and the many Cultural Production sectors, will require highly creative individuals who can balance the technical aspects of the disciplines with the design and creative thinking strategies that are key to driving innovation. This new programme will train the next generation of innovative creatives who will be prepared to



The programme will start from the new academic year in August 2024.

work in the emerging and high-growth industries that will be at the centre of the creative economies of the future."

Those interested in pursuing BFA in Kinetic Imaging programme need to first complete a one-year Art Founda-

tion programme which will teach them critical skills in creativity, artistic practice and design thinking.

The Bachelor of Fine Arts in Kinetic Imaging is a highly flexible major, offering the opportunity to build a more individualised study that in-

cludes other studio and intellectual interests. The programme's curriculum offers seven area electives and four free electives that provide room for diverse and interdisciplinary learning experiences.

This programme will sup-

port a range study and allow students to focus on specific areas of practice within emerging media and technology. It will cater to students who want to pursue either design careers in leading industries or artistic careers exploring media and technology.

EAA Foundation welcomes UNSC call for Gaza ceasefire

Education Above All (EAA) Foundation has welcomed the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) Resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and release of all hostages. According to the UN Charter, the Rules of the Security Council and the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice, the resolution is legally binding.

This resolution comes as more than 32,000 Palestinians have been killed since October 7, 2023, the vast majority of whom are women and children, while the remaining population has been made to suffer catastrophic famine under occupation, exacerbating the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The EAA statement said: "As a global education foundation committed to promoting access to education and advocating for the rights of children and youth in conflict-affected areas, the EAA Foundation unequivocally condemns the killing of civilians and the use of food and aid as weapons of war.

"We firmly believe that a ceasefire is a crucial first step towards creating a conducive environment for the right to life, the right to education and the provision of urgent humanitarian assistance in Gaza."

"We call upon all parties to comply with the provisions of the resolution by implementing an immediate ceasefire and lifting all impediments to humanitarian aid for Palestinians in Gaza. All parties must uphold their obligations under international law, and prioritise the protection of civilians, particularly children and youth," the statement stressed.



Awqaf opens new mosque at Umm Bishr

The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, represented by the Department of Mosques, has opened the Sheikhha Sheikha bint Abdullah Saleh al-Hassan al-Sulaiti Mosque in Umm Bishr area.

The mosque, according to a statement from Awqaf, accommodates more than 500 male and female worshippers. Spread over a total area of 4,043sq m, the mosque has an Imam house.

The opening of the new mosque, announced by Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohamed bin Jabr al-Thani, comes within Awqaf's plan to expand the number of mosques in all regions of the country, keeping pace with urban and population growth, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

With number 1393, the mosque has a main prayer hall with space for 455 male worshippers in addition to a women's hall for 60.

The mosque also includes a spacious ablution place in addition to a large number of public parking lots, several of which are allocated to persons with disabilities.

The entrances and exits of the mosque are disability-friendly. The mosque also has a tall minaret.

The Department of Engineering Affairs at the ministry is concerned with fulfilling the needs of the regions in the country for mosques and prayer grounds while providing temporary mosques and supervising their preservation as well as preparing the annual plan for the maintenance of mosques and imams' residences. These are in co-ordination with the competent authorities.

For mosque designs, the department takes into account the requirements of different areas along with the guidelines for green and sustainable buildings.

Also, the department focuses



on the conditions for sustainability in the use of electricity and water, and preserving the aesthetics of heritage in designs that reflect the authenticity of Qatari and Islamic heritage by the highest standards.

The ministry's plans to build mosques also take into account the population density map along with engineering, architectural specifications

and the heritage aspect within the framework of caring for the mosques to perform worship and to serve the worshippers.

Awqaf's website provides the facility to search for mosque locations geographically, according to the global navigation system, through accurate and specific maps that facilitate access to mosque locations in all cities across the country.

Lexus, Toyota, Suzuki models recalled

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Al Abdughani Motors, has announced the recall of Lexus LX, and Toyota Land Cruiser, 2022-2024 models, as it is possible that the vehicle parked in gear position 'N (Neutral)' without applying the service brake or the parking brake will move forward at a low speed (up to approximately 5-6kph).

The MoCI, in co-operation with Teyseer Motors, has announced the recall of Suzuki

Jimny, 2018-2019 models, over a possible defect in the fuel pump, which may cause the engine to stall.

The MoCI said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs.

The MoCI said it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that

the necessary repairs are carried out.

The MoCI has urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquires and suggestions through the following channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, X (formerly Twitter) - @MOCIQATAR, Instagram MOCIQATAR.

The MOCI_QATAR mobile application is available on iPhone and Android devices.

What the Qur'an means to Muslims

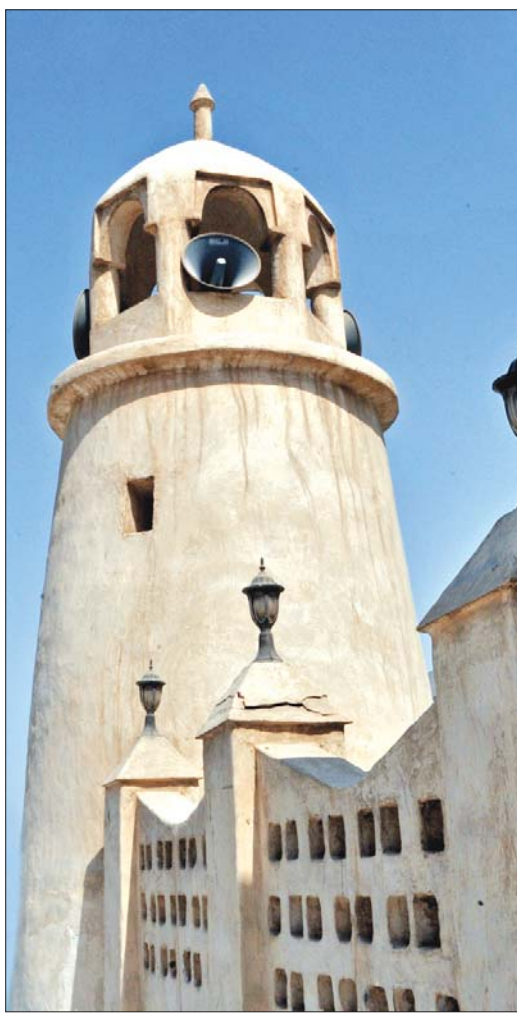
The Qur'an is Allah's speech, not a created thing that may perish nor is it an attribute of any created thing. It is an absolute fact that Allah Himself is not created but rather He is the Creator. One of His attributes which He has informed us about through His Book is that He speaks and speech is of course with words. It is precisely because the speech and words in the Qur'an are from Allah that the Qur'an itself is not created.

One should not be confused between this and the fact that the Words of Allah can be expressed in writing and bound within the pages of a book that human beings can read and recite. Allah states: And if anyone of the mushrikeen (polytheists) seeks your protection, then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of Allah (the Qur'an). [Qur'an 9:6]

The Qur'an was brought down by Jibreel (Gabriel) to Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, and over a period of 23 years it was revealed in portions and piecemeal as circumstances warranted. Allah states: And truly this (the Qur'an) is a revelation from the Lord of the 'aalamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists) which the trustworthy Ruh (Jibreel) has brought down [Qur'an 26: 192-193.] And He said: And those who disbelieved say: 'Why is not the Qur'an revealed to him all at once?' Thus (it is sent down in parts) that We may strengthen your heart thereby. And We have revealed it to you gradually, in stages. [Qur'an 25:32]

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, would memorise the verses he received and recite them to the companions and ordered them to write them down immediately. Whatever those expert scribes and appointed recorders wrote was checked by the Prophet himself. The Prophet Muhammad, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, had no formal schooling and he is referred to by Allah as being ummee or illiterate. This adds to the miraculous nature of the Qur'an and the Prophet's own statements which could not have been uttered by one such as he without divine intervention.

The Qur'an is the last of Allah's scriptures divided into 114 Surahs (chapters) of unequal length. It starts with Surah Al-Faatiha (The Opening) and ends with Surah An-Nas (Mankind). It is one of the fundamental sources of Islamic teachings. It guards the previous revelations and reinforces the eternal truth of monotheism. The Qur'an stands today as it first came down and it always will be. To it there has never been any addition, from it there is no omission, and in it there



has occurred no corruption. Allah said: Do they not then consider the Qur'an carefully? Had it been from other than Allah they would surely have found therein much contradictions. [Qur'an 4:82]

Article source: <http://www.islamweb.net/emain-page/>

Qatar Diabetes Association celebrates Garangao

The Qatar Diabetes Association (QDA) organised an eventful evening for diabetic children and their families to celebrate Garangao.

Garangao is one of the most important and popular Ramadan events in Qatar and the Gulf. It comes on the 14th night of Ramadan to celebrate the halfway point of the holy month. About 50 children and their families participated in the event in their traditional costumes singing popular Garangao songs, bringing back memories and reviving Qatar's heritage and traditions.

The QDA's celebration also included a variety of popular games, crafts and artistic activities, as well as gifting traditional Garangao items which brought joy to the children.

The event additionally marked an enjoyable educational experience for the children as they learned about the beautiful past and heritage of their families and grandparents and the value of celebrating Garangao to Qataris. Garangao is one of the most prominent customs and traditions in Qatar. It strengthens the fabric of society, its entity and social interaction. It also develops in children behavioural patterns that contributes to shaping their personalities and instils religious values. **(QNA)**



Specialised education advances Qatari theatre: academics

QNA

Doha

Academic education plays a crucial role in developing and promoting the art of theatre, and is an important approach to developing playwrights, actors, directors, technicians, and others.

A number of academics concerned with the theatre arts programme at the Community College of Qatar (CCQ) stressed the importance of this specialised course in advancing Qatari theatre.

They were speaking on the occasion of the World Theatre Day which is marked on March 27 every year.

Academic education in the field of theatre contributes to achieving a deep understanding of the history of theatre and its development across different eras and cultures, they said. Students learn about classical and contemporary theatrical works, important authors,

and influential theatrical movements, which helps them expand their artistic horizons and develop a comprehensive vision for theatre and reflects positively on the theatrical movement in Qatar, they added.

Dean of the Liberal Arts Division at CCQ, Dr al-Jazi Faraj al-Athba al-Marri, said the theatre arts programme at CCQ, established in 2015, is the only one in the country specialised in theatrical preparation, which represents an added value that contributes to discovering and developing students' creative talents.

She considered the programme a fertile resource that provides Qatari society with new generations of young artists and creators, who interact and participate strongly in theatrical and dramatic works. She noted the programme opens new horizons in the field of digital content creation whether in the fields of advertising or marketing through artistic and creative methods.

One of the most important

features of the Qatar National Vision 2030 is building a modern state with the necessity of preserving its heritage and consolidating its values and traditions, she said pointing out that theatre and the arts in general are considered essential tools for preserving these values, customs and traditions, ensuring their continuity and transfer between generations, as well as instilling the spirit of belonging and citizenship, and urging young people to create, innovate, and develop capabilities.

The human, social, and economic development on which the vision is based is complimented by encouraging and supporting these arts such as encouraging museums, dramatic and performing arts, creative arts, and digital arts, which have become present in theories of economics and modern media.

Dr al-Jazi stressed that the theatre arts programme seeks to advance the artistic and cultural movement by qualifying Qatari

cadres specialised in drama and theatre sciences both in theoretical and applied aspects, pointing out that the Qatari labour market, in its various sectors, is in dire need of artists and creators not only in the field of acting but also in the fields of drama, criticism, design, décor, theatre management, and directing.

Theatre arts programme co-ordinator at the Community College of Qatar (CCQ), Dr Said Ennaji, said the programme offers specialised tracks; drama and criticism, design and decor, theatre management, and acting and directing, which led to many graduates leaving an impact on the artistic and cultural scene in Qatar.

Dr Ennaji explained that the modules in the programme rely on the latest methods of teaching, learning and evaluation by linking the practical and theoretical aspects and encouraging critical and creative thinking among students.

There was a focus to ensure that the theatre arts programme be

at the same level as similar programmes from different universities to have graduates be on the same wavelength as their peers elsewhere and be able to have an efficient and competent presence in Qatar's labour market, he added.

Dr Ennaji said the programme needs to keep pace with the transformations that the field is witnessing worldwide. Performance, writing, and criticism should all be combined to present artistic products with multiple characteristics. Development should also be seen in the fields of design and commercial and economic marketing. Digital content can also be created through videos which could benefit many institutions by showcasing their work. In light of technological developments and artificial intelligence (AI) techniques, the theatre arts programme must also be developed in this regard.

Performing arts have become a key aspect of modern societies for different purposes such as enter-

tainment, marketing, or education.

Dr Ennaji believes that adapting creative arts is needed in countries like Qatar which invests heavily in media, museums, smart parks, smart city design, and more.

The theatre arts programme co-ordinator at CCQ said that there are a number of graduates who have integrated into theatre groups in Qatar, while other graduates preferred to establish their own artistic production companies. Most of the theatre projects launched by the Ministry of Culture feature graduates of the programme.

This has made the programme have a significant impact even at the College which has now embraced theatrical events such as student graduation plays, the celebration of World Theatre Day, as well as holding related workshops.

The continuation of this impact on Qatar's art scene can only be achieved with the support of all concerned parties and institutions, Dr Ennaji said.

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GULF TIMES

Investing in water at risk amid rising demand, scarcity

Water is the ultimate renewable resource, but the world seems to be running out of it. By 2030, global water demand will have exceeded the sustainable supply by 40%. By 2050, nearly 6bn people will suffer from clean-water scarcity, according to a 2022 research report by India-based Observer Research Foundation. The case for investing in water is gaining traction because of rising demand and a scarcity of clean water, according to analysts at Morningstar Inc.

In a report marking World Water Day, they spotlighted five US-based funds, as well as some companies, that focus on expanding access to water, improving water quality and providing solutions that address other water challenges. "Investors looking for exposure to the reliable supply of safe freshwater should carefully consider these investments as part of a well-diversified portfolio," according to the report. "It's a small landscape, but it's also very diverse."

In all, there are 11 water funds in the US with a combined \$6.3bn of assets. All the funds except one devote more than two-thirds of their portfolios to companies that generate the bulk of their revenue from water management and sanitation activities, according to Morningstar.

And the funds have been performing relatively well. The Invesco Water Resources fund, for instance, gained at an annual rate of almost 12% during the past three years, roughly matching the returns of the S&P 500, according to a Bloomberg report.

The water sector today is seen under-financed and chronically short of capacity to meet demand

In a wider sense, the water sector today is under-financed and chronically short of capacity to meet demand. But to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of ensuring clean water and sanitation for everyone, the current global spending on water needs to rise fourfold, to more than \$1tn per year (1.21% of global GDP), according to a Project Syndicate report in 2023.

Higher GDP and population growth levels, as well as the increasingly hot climate, mean the Gulf countries need to spend heavily to meet their energy needs.

According to the CDP, a not-for-profit organisation that collects environmental-impact data, more than \$300bn of business value is at risk globally if no action is taken to address water scarcity. Yet it will cost only one-fifth of that total - \$55bn - to tackle the problem.

The CDP values such "water-related opportunities" at \$711bn, reflecting not just savings on water use but also the growth of long-term potential markets in water-smart technology and the benefits of better community relations.

Another, much-criticised way of investing in water is futures trading.

In late 2020, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) launched the first water futures market. Water then joined gold, oil, and other commodities traded on the Wall Street.

Apart from being a tradable contract, the futures launch also highlighted growing worries that the life-sustaining natural resource is becoming scarce across of the world.

Proponents of the market say that the futures contracts will function more like insurance. Farmers who participate in the market can insulate themselves from volatile changes in water prices by securing another source of income.

But the United Nations had warned in late 2020 that water futures risked an essential public good being treated like gold and oil, leaving the market vulnerable to speculative bubbles.

As a matter of fact, climate change is speeding up. All the major indicators of climate change smashed historic records last year, according to United Nations' World Meteorological Organisation.

The lives of millions of people were upended by natural disasters made worse by climate change, with countries everywhere struggling to cope with billions of dollars in economic losses, according to the WMO report for 2023.

Longer term, from a market perspective, water funds are seen to offer "a thematic investment opportunity," particularly in a world where access to clean water is becoming more and more scarce.

REYNOLD
GULFTIMES
27-03-2024



Looking back at America's year of living dangerously

Only Americans get to vote in November, but the rest of the world will feel the effects

By Richard Haass
New York

More than six dozen countries will hold elections this year, but none will be more consequential than the one scheduled for November in the United States. After all, what happens in the US invariably has outside impact, given America's economic, military, and diplomatic power and influence. Countries in both Europe and the Indo-Pacific count on the US to guarantee their security - a guarantee they have not had reason to question for three-quarters of a century.

Moreover, unlike most presidential elections in American history, this is one in which the differences between the two likely major party candidates far outweigh their similarities. Much the same can be said about which of the two parties wins control of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

What makes the coming year so fraught for America and the rest of the world, though, is the reality that American democracy faces multiple hurdles. Indeed, the near future consists of three distinct phases, each with its own challenges and dangers.

The first phase is already under way and will continue through election day, November 5. The problem is already in plain sight: with politics taking priority over policy, it has become nearly impossible to enact important legislation. Military

aid to Ukraine has been put on hold because the Republican-controlled House, following the lead of Donald Trump, the party's presumptive presidential nominee, refuses to approve it. Two years of successfully resisting Russian aggression in Europe have been put at risk.

House Republicans also refuse to pass legislation that would improve security at the country's southern border, in this case because Trump apparently believes that the influx of migrants weakens public support for President Joe Biden. The political dynamics could make it impossible for the US to maintain, much less expand, immigration policies that have done so much to contribute to the country's economic success.

The second distinct set of challenges will follow Election Day. The peaceful transfer of power - a hallmark of the American system - can no longer be assumed. The 75-day window between election and inauguration could well become the most perilous phase of a dangerous year. The violent insurrection of January 6, 2021, occurred during this interval.

The accurate counting and verification of ballots, which is carried out first at the state and then at the national level, will be imperative. As most readers will know, US presidents are not elected on the basis of the national popular vote.

Each of the 50 states tallies the votes cast there, and in all but two whoever receives the most votes garners all of the state's electoral votes (equal to the size

of its congressional delegation). For example, California, the most populous state, has 54 electoral votes, while six low-population states (and the District of Columbia) get three each. A candidate must have 270 Electoral College votes to win.

As we saw in 2020, though, it is possible that the results will be challenged. Legislation passed in late 2022 and signed into law by Biden makes it more difficult, but not impossible, to do so. Such challenges would be considered in a joint session of Congress (most likely on January 6, 2025) presided over by the sitting vice-president, Kamala Harris.

In addition, there is the potential for political violence. It is most likely that the outcome will be decided by tens of thousands of votes (out of more than 150 million cast) in a handful of states. A close and contested result could well lead to civil disorder, especially if the process results in Biden's re-election and a loss for Trump.

What is all but certain is that a country distracted and divided over the results of the election will lack the focus and unity to act in the world. America's adversaries could be tempted to take advantage and press to achieve long-sought objectives.

The third and final challenge will begin early next year on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2025. If Biden is re-elected, much will depend on whether his election is accepted by Trump's supporters and on which party controls the Senate and the House. One can imagine a scenario in which little changes:

Republican congressmen refuse to work across party lines to pass needed legislation.

A different sort of test faces America and the world if Trump regains the presidency. Trump has voiced scepticism of America's membership in Nato and even encouraged Russia to attack Nato members that do not spend enough on defence. He has threatened to levy 60% tariffs on Chinese imports while reportedly questioning whether the US should defend Taiwan against Chinese aggression. He continues to show a penchant for autocrats and a disdain for America's democratic allies.

Yes, the US has a system of checks and balances, but presidents enjoy great latitude when it comes to hiring and firing personnel and setting the policy agenda, especially if their party controls both chambers of Congress.

If Republicans gain control of the executive and legislative branches, both the post-World War II international order and American democracy itself could come under enormous pressure.

Only Americans get to vote in November, but the rest of the world will feel the effects. As a result, America's year of living dangerously could easily become everyone's. - Project Syndicate

• Richard Haass, President Emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, is a senior counsellor at Centerview Partners and the author of The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens and the weekly newsletter Home & Away.



REMATCH: The world will be waiting with bated breath to see the outcome of the likely second duel for presidency in November this year between the incumbent Joe Biden (left) and Donald Trump.

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Tears, relief as first Kenya cult massacre bodies released

Kenyan authorities yesterday began releasing the bodies of victims of a doomsday starvation cult to distraught relatives, almost a year since the discovery of mass graves in a grisly case that shocked the world. One tearful family received four bodies that were loaded into a hearse from a morgue in the Indian Ocean town of Malindi, said an AFP correspondent at the scene. They are the first bodies to be handed over to their relatives for burial after months of painstaking work to identify them using DNA. "It is a relief that we finally have the bodies but it is also disheartening that they are only skeletons," William Ponda, 32, told AFP, saying he has lost his

mother, brother, sister-in-law and nephew in the tragedy. "I do not have any hope that we will find the other members of the family," Hundreds of bodies, including those of children, have been dug up from the shallow mass graves discovered in April last year in a remote wilderness inland from Malindi. Self-proclaimed pastor Paul Nthenge Mackenzie is alleged to have incited his followers to starve to death in order to "meet Jesus" in what has been dubbed the "Shakahola forest massacre". The former taxi driver turned messiah has pleaded not guilty to 191 counts of murder, manslaughter and terrorism. He has also been charged with child torture and cruelty.

So far, 34 of the 429 bodies exhumed between April and October last year have been positively identified through DNA profiling. While starvation caused many deaths, some of the bodies, including of children, showed signs of death by asphyxiation, strangulation or bludgeoning, according to government autopsies. Families have had to endure a painful wait for the bodies of their loved-ones after the DNA profiling was delayed by lack of reagents and equipment. Roseline Odede, chair of the state-backed Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), lamented the slow process of identifying the victims and the release of the bodies. "There are 390 plus bodies yet to be

identified positively. Going at this rate we are going to be here for 10 years," she told reporters in Malindi. "The government must intentionally commit resources towards this process so that we are able to give closure to families." Last week the KNCHR accused security officers in Malindi of "gross abdication of duty and negligence". "They not only failed to be proactive in collecting and acting on intelligence to forestall the Shakahola massacre but also unjustifiably failed to act on credible and actionable reports," Odede said at the time. Chief government pathologist Johansen Oduor said the identification process was slow because most of the families

have not been coming to claim the bodies, posing a challenge to obtain DNA samples. Oduor said Monday that at least 35 other mass graves have been identified in Shakahola and further exhumations set to begin soon could drive up the overall death toll. A homicide officer from the Directorate of Criminal Investigations told AFP it was up to relatives to make their own burial arrangements. Questions have been raised about how Mackenzie, a father of seven, managed to evade law enforcement despite a history of extremism and clashes with the law. The case also led the government to flag the need for tighter control of fringe denominations.

Cargo ship slams into Baltimore bridge

■ Biden vows federal help, promises to visit ■ Govt 'will reopen port as soon as possible'

Reuters
Baltimore

A massive cargo ship smashed into a bridge while sailing out of Baltimore early yesterday, sending cars and people into the river below and closing one of the busiest ports on the US Eastern Seaboard.

Rescuers pulled out two survivors, one of whom was hospitalised, and searched for more in the Patapsco River after huge metal spans of the 1.6-mile Francis Scott Key Bridge crumpled into the icy water around 1:30am. The ship reported a power issue before impact, which enabled officials to stop traffic on the bridge before the collapse.

"By being able to stop cars from coming over the bridge, these people are heroes. They saved lives last night," Maryland Governor Wes Moore said at a briefing. The bridge was up to code and there were no known structural issues, Moore said.

There was no evidence of foul play, officials said.

Work crews had been repairing potholes on the bridge at the time of the collapse and sonar detected vehicles under the water, which was about 50 feet deep at that point, said Paul Wiedefeld, Maryland Secretary of Transportation.

Eight people were on the bridge at the time and six remained unaccounted for, the state's transportation secretary said hours after the collision, which closed one of the busiest ports in the United States.

The 948-foot vessel, as long as three football fields placed end to end, had experienced a momentary loss of propulsion and dropped anchors as part of emergency procedures before impact, its management company, Synergy Marine Pte Ltd reported, according to the Singapore Port Authority.

The Dali, owned by Grace Ocean Pte Ltd, collided with one of the pillars of the bridge, according to manager Synergy. All 22 crew members aboard the Singapore-flagged vessel were accounted for, it said.

Ship traffic was suspended at the Port of Baltimore until further notice. It is the busiest US port for car shipments, handling more than 750,000 vehicles in 2022, according to port data.

The closure of one of the US East Coast's



major ports threatens to disrupt supplies of goods from cars, to coal and other commodities like sugar. It could create bottlenecks and increase delays and costs on the Eastern seaboard, experts say. The port handles the most car imports and is among the largest for coal exports.

President Joe Biden said the US Coast Guard responded quickly to the mayday call and commended the fast action of Maryland transportation officials who shut the bridge before it was struck and "undoubtedly saved lives."

The primary focus continues to be the search and rescue operation, Biden said at the White House. He promised to visit Baltimore, 40 miles away, as soon as possible and said he wanted the federal government to pay to rebuild the bridge.

"I'm directing my team to move heaven and Earth to reopen the port and rebuild the bridge as soon as humanly possible," Biden said. The bridge, named for the author of the Star-Spangled Banner, opened in 1977.

The US Coast Guard reported the collapse at 1:27am and it deployed crews for an active search and rescue mission after the Singapore-flagged container ship forced the trellis-like bridge up into a mangled mass of metal.

Jayne Krause, 32, was working a night shift on shore when the cart of packages in front of her shook violently at around 2am in what sounded like an intense thunderstorm. A coworker at an Amazon logistics facility told her the bridge had collapsed and she ran out to look.

"I went over there, and sure as anything, it was gone, the whole bridge was just like, there was nothing there," she told Reuters. "It was a shocking sight to see."

She did not see anyone in the water, nor hear any cries for help from where she stood at the bay.

The Francis Scott Key bridge was the main thoroughfare for drivers between New York and Washington who sought to avoid downtown Baltimore. It was one of three ways to cross the Baltimore Harbour,



(Left) The steel frame of the Francis Scott Key Bridge sits on top of the container ship Dali after the bridge collapsed, Baltimore, Maryland, yesterday. (Above) A satellite image shows a closer view of the Dali and collapsed bridge. (AFP, Reuters)

with a traffic volume of 31,000 cars per day or 11.3mn vehicles a year.

Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott described a scene of twisted metal shooting into the sky. "It was something out of an action movie. It was something you never thought you'd see," he said.

A live video posted on YouTube showed the ship plunging into the bridge in darkness. The headlights of vehicles could be seen on the bridge as it crashed into the water and the ship caught fire.

The same ship was involved in an accident in the port of Antwerp, Belgium, in 2016, when it hit a quay as it tried to exit the North Sea container terminal.

A later inspection in June 2023 carried out in San Antonio in Chile found the vessel had "propulsion and auxiliary machinery" deficiencies, according to data on the public Equasys website, which provides information on ships.

Yesterday's disaster may be the worst US bridge collapse since 2007 when the I-35W bridge in Minneapolis collapsed into the Mississippi River, killing 13 people.

The National Transportation Safety Board was sending a team to investigate.

Moore, the governor, declared a state of emergency to quickly deploy federal resources to deal with the emergency. The

FBI in Baltimore said on X its personnel were on the scene.

The Dali was chartered by shipping company Maersk at the time of the incident, the Danish company said in a statement.

"We are horrified by what has happened in Baltimore, and our thoughts are with all of those affected," Maersk said.

Baltimore port's private and public terminals handled 847,158 autos and light trucks in 2023, the most of any US port. The port also handles farm and construction machinery, sugar, gypsum and coal, according to a Maryland government website.

The port handles imports and exports for major automakers including Nissan, Toyota, General Motors, Volvo, Jaguar Land Rover and the Volkswagen group - including luxury models for Audi, Lamborghini and Bentley.

General Motors and Ford Motor will re-route affected shipments, but the companies said the impact will be minimal.

More than 40 ships remained inside Baltimore port including small cargo ships, tug boats and pleasure craft, data from ship tracking and maritime analytics provider MarineTraffic showed. At least 30 other ships had signalled their destination was Baltimore, the data showed.

5 Chinese workers, driver killed in Pakistan suicide attack

AFP
Peshawar

Five Chinese nationals working on a major dam construction site were killed along with their driver yesterday when a suicide bomber targeted their vehicle in northwest Pakistan, officials said.

Their vehicle plunged into a deep ravine off the mountainous Karakoram Highway after the bomber rammed his car into them and detonated his explosives, police said.

Beijing has poured billions of dollars into Pakistan in recent years, but Chinese-funded projects have sparked resentment and their citizens have frequently come under attack. Images shared with AFP show smoke rising from the valley, near Besham city in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

"Five Chinese and their local driver were killed in the attack," Mohamed Ali Gandapur, a senior provincial police official, told AFP. He said the vehicle was travelling between the Dasu hydroelectric dam site, under construction by the China Gezhouba Group Company, and the capital Islamabad.

Zahid Khan, a senior local police official, told AFP that "a suicide bomber crashed his vehicle into theirs".

"The vehicle caught fire and

plunged down the ravine," he said.

In 2021, a bus carrying engineers to the same construction site was hit by a bomb, killing 13 people including nine Chinese workers.

Yesterday's attack comes days after security forces killed at least seven militants as they attempted to storm the offices of Gwadar Port in southwest Pakistan, considered a cornerstone of Chinese investment.

Militants also killed one soldier as they attempted to storm a major naval air base in the country's southwest, Pakistan's military said yesterday.

"Strategic projects and sensitive sites vital for Pakistan's economic progress and the well-being of its people are being targeted as a conscious effort to retard our progress and slow discord between Pakistan and its strategic allies and partners, most notably China," the army said.

The Chinese embassy in Islamabad described the bombing as a "terrorist act" in a statement reported by Chinese state media.

"The Chinese embassy and consulates in Pakistan strongly condemn this terrorist act, and express deep condolences for the victims of both countries and extend sincere sympathies to the families of the victims," the embassy said.

The United States also condemned the attack, with State Department spokesman Matthew

Miller saying "No country should suffer acts of terror."

Beijing is Islamabad's closest regional ally, readily providing financial assistance to bail out its often struggling neighbour.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has seen tens of billions of dollars funnelled into massive transport, energy and infrastructure projects - part of Beijing's transnational "Belt and Road" scheme.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and as well as Pakistan's interior and foreign ministers arrived at China's embassy in Islamabad within hours of the bombing.

"Once again, the adversaries of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have plotted to disrupt it through such cowardly acts," Sharif said in a statement.

"However, they will never succeed in their malevolent ambitions."

Separatist groups say locals see little benefit from major Chinese projects, with most jobs going to outsiders.

The security of Chinese workers has long been of concern to both countries. "The Chinese workers were already scared and feared that another attack was coming," said Azeem Khalid, a Chinese investment expert at COMSATS University Islamabad.

"With every such incident, the speed of the project will be slower."

UK summons Chinese official over alleged cyber hacking

Britain yesterday summoned the chargé d'affaires of the Chinese embassy in London after accusing Chinese state-backed hackers of stealing data from Britain's elections watchdog and carrying out a surveillance operation against parliamentarians. Britain said the Chinese hackers stole the voter registration data - mostly names and addresses - of about 40mn people from the Electoral Commission and tried to break into lawmakers' e-mails.

"The (Foreign Office) set out the government's unequivocal condemnation of Chinese state-affiliated organisations and individuals undertaking malicious cyber activity against UK democratic institutions and parliamentarians," a spokesperson for Britain's Foreign Office said in a statement. A spokesman for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said yesterday the government is close to finalising a new foreign influence registration system that would require anyone working undeclared for a foreign country in the so-called "enhanced tier" to declare their activity.

Under Britain's new National Security Act, individuals, such as lawyers, a public relations company or an undercover spy working for a country in the "enhanced tier" would have to record their activity in a register or face prosecution. British Deputy Prime UK summons Chinese official over alleged cyber hacking.

Jailed Indian politician to run capital from cell

AFP
New Delhi



Modi in upcoming elections, was arrested on Thursday in connection with a long-running corruption probe.

Atishi Marlena Singh, New Delhi's education minister and fellow member of Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (Common Man Party, AAP), said "statutory and constitutional provisions" allowed him to remain in his post while behind bars.

"We are very clear that Arvind Kejriwal will remain the chief minister of Delhi," Singh, 42, told AFP.

"If he were to resign when there's been no trial and no conviction, it opens up the route for other opposition chief ministers to be removed," she added.

India's main financial investigation agency, the Enforcement Directorate (ED), which arrested Kejriwal, has launched probes into at least four other state chief ministers or their family members. All the investigations involve political opponents of Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

While Modi enjoys high levels of support among his backers, critics accuse him of using law enforcement agencies to intimidate opposition leaders.

Kejriwal, 55, denies the charges against him. His supporters, who held a rally in the city yesterday demanding his release, say charges against him are politically motivated and aimed at sidelining challengers of Modi ahead of the polls. Modi's political opponents and international rights groups have long sounded the alarm on India's shrinking democratic space.

QU College of Health Sciences honours Dean's List students

The College of Health Sciences (CHS) at Qatar University (QU) honoured 217 of its outstanding female students with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher in the Spring 2023 and Fall 2023 semesters, through an annual ceremony honouring Dean's List students. The ceremony, held in the presence of families of the outstanding students, had QU officials including CHS dean Dr Hanan Abdul Rahim, Academic Quality and Strategy assistant vice-president Dr Mohamed Ahmedna and CHS assistant dean for Academic Affairs Dr Layla Kamareddine. Eman al-Muhammadi, the host of the ceremony and a student in the Department of Biomedical Sciences, gave the opening remarks. The CHS dean welcomed the gathering with a speech. The ceremony also included speeches from the families of the students on the Dean's List, followed by the distribution of medals.



QCS hosts 'Hope Suhoor' for over 500 people living with cancer



The event gathered more than 500 people living with cancer.

Qatar Cancer Society (QCS) hosted a 'Hope Suhoor' event that gathered more than 500 people living with cancer at Sheraton Grand Doha.

Many public figures and prominent personalities attended the event in which Kiddy Zone distributed gifts to children living with cancer. Dr Muhanned Adnan, director of Programme Management at QCS, welcomed the attendees and said: "QCS is keen to organise this event every year to provide psychological and societal support for people living with cancer. The annual event was in conjunction with QCS' mission to prevent cancer and control its burden in Qatar by working with its partners to educate the community and to support, empower and advocate individuals living with cancer."

The official said QCS is keen to provide all means of support for people living with cancer, whether material, psychological, social, or educational. He



Kiddy Zone distributed gifts to children living with cancer.

noted that organising an annual 'Hope Suhoor' aims to shed light on bright models that have been able to conquer the disease and overcome it.

He thanked all partners - Ooredoo Qatar, Suhail Industrial Hold-

ing Group, Aamal Company, Qatar Charity and Kiddy Zone Toy Store - that support the society's vision of being the community partnership platform for making Qatar a leader in cancer prevention and its burden control.

Qatar delivers 40 tonnes of aid to Sudan

A Qatar Armed Forces aircraft arrived at Port Sudan Airport carrying 40 tonnes of food and other supplies provided by the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD). The aid comes within the framework of Qatar's support for the brotherly Sudanese people and their resilience in the face of the difficult circumstances they are experiencing due to the ongoing conflict. (QNA)



QU hosts Dr Zakir Naik for Ramadan lecture



Qatar University (QU) hosted esteemed scholar Dr Zakir Naik as part of its ongoing campaign 'Ramadan: Our Light and Knowledge', organised by the Public Relations and Communication Administration and the Mishkat Qur'an Club throughout the holy month.

The campaign features a variety of religious events and lectures.

Dr Naik's lecture, titled 'Dawa or Destruction?', witnessed a large audience including university officials, faculty members, staff and students. The lecture, held on the university campus, provided valuable insights into the importance of Dawa in Islam.

Dr Naik emphasised the role of every Muslim in Islamic propagation, irrespective of their professions, specialisations or social roles. He also highlighted the significance of higher education institutions in Islamic propagation, presenting part of his professional career that led him to pursue the field of Islamic advocacy over the past years.

In a statement regarding the event, Eattidal al-

Qatami, director of Communications and Public Relations Department, said: "The lecture aimed to enhance spiritual and cultural awareness during the blessed month of Ramadan, shedding light on the importance and impact of invitation in individuals' lives and society. It also provided a unique opportunity for our students and university community to engage with one of the foremost preachers in the Islamic world, who enjoys a large fan base. We believe that the participation of prominent figures like Dr Zakir Naik plays a significant role in stimulating critical thinking and offering different perspectives on important contemporary issues for our students and the university community as a whole."

Ali Hassan Jamal, vice-president of the Mishkat Qur'an Club, said: "The primary goal of the Mishkat Qur'an Club's activities is to connect QU members with the Qur'an, as Dawa is one of the purposes brought by the Qur'an. It is part of the club's core objectives, and we work towards our goal through continuous lectures and seminars."

MoPH holds workshop on 'Open Disclosure' policy in health sector

In the context of building national capacity on Open Disclosure, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in partnership with the Medical Education Department at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), conducted a full-day training workshop on Communication Skills for Healthcare Practitioners for Open Disclosure.

This training is an integral element of the pilot implementation of the open disclosure programme, which comes after the endorsement of the policy by the National Healthcare Quality Committee towards the end of 2023. The policy is a strategic priority for Healthcare Quality Department and is in line with regional and global priorities for patient safety policies and legislations.

The training was attended by 60 participants from several healthcare organisations across the country, mainly from Sidra

Medicine and Aster DM, the two organisations currently running the pilot implementation of the policy, along with representatives from healthcare facilities that will roll out the policy soon.

The programme was tailored to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills required for successful implementation for the open disclosure within their respective organisations, including understanding open disclosure principles and communication skills required for acknowledging patient safety incidents.

This programme comes as a collaborative effort between MoPH and the medical education department at HMC that designed and delivered the course, in order to enhance quality of care and patient experience by making the most use of the nation's knowledge and resources.



The training was attended by 60 participants from several healthcare organisations.