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Amir discusses regional, global developments with Spanish PM

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani discussed with Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, the regional and international developments, especially those related to developments in the situation in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories. This came during a phone call received by HH the Amir yesterday from the prime minister. During the call, friendly relations and co-operation between the two countries were also reviewed. (QNA)

Shura Council discusses Digital Agenda 2030

The Shura Council held its regular weekly meeting yesterday at Tamim bin Hamad Hall under the chairmanship of HE the Speaker of the Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem. During the session, HE the Secretary-General of Shura Council Nayef bin Mohamed al-Mahmoud read out the session's agenda and approved the minutes of the previous session. (QNA) Page 9

Russia readies nuclear drills

Russia announced yesterday that its troops stationed near Ukraine would run nuclear weapons drills and threatened to strike UK military targets outside the embattled country, citing what it said was an escalation in Western sabre-rattling. The defence ministry announced the drills and also said Russian forces had captured two villages in eastern Ukraine, where outgunned and outmanned Ukrainian troops have been struggling to hold their positions. Page 11

Trump warned of jail time

The New York judge presiding over Donald Trump's historic criminal trial again found the former US president in contempt of a gag order yesterday and threatened to jail him for further violations. Trump, 77, is charged with falsifying business records to reimburse his lawyer, Michael Cohen, for a \$130,000 payment made to an actress just days ahead of the 2016 election against Hillary Clinton. Page 11

American soldier held in Russia

An American soldier was detained in Russia last week on charges of "criminal misconduct," the US Army said yesterday. The soldier - who was not identified by name - adds to the number of Americans held in the country amid deep tensions with Washington over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. "On May 2, 2024, Russian authorities in Vladivostok, Russia, detained an American soldier on charges of criminal misconduct," US Army spokeswoman Cynthia Smith said.

Boeing poised for crewed spaceship

Throughout the annals of American space exploration, a select few spacecraft have had the distinction of carrying human beings beyond Earth. Boeing is poised to join this elite group with the long-awaited launch of its Starliner capsule, just the sixth class of vessel built in the United States for NASA astronauts.

Defiant Israel strikes Rafah despite Hamas ceasefire nod

Reuters
Rafah, Gaza Strip/Cairo

Hamas yesterday agreed to a Gaza ceasefire proposal from mediators, but Israel said the terms did not meet its demands and pressed ahead with strikes in Rafah while planning to continue negotiations on a deal.

The developments in the seven-month-old war came as Israeli forces struck Rafah on Gaza's southern edge from the air and ground and ordered residents to leave parts of the city, which has been a refuge for more than a million displaced Palestinians.

Hamas said in a brief statement that its chief, Ismail Haniyeh, had informed the mediators that the group accepted their proposal for a ceasefire.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said later that Hamas' latest truce proposal falls short of Israel's demands but Israel would send a delegation to meet with negotiators to try to reach an agreement. To Page 12

Qatari delegation heads to Cairo today to resume negotiations

A Qatari delegation will head to Cairo today to resume indirect negotiations between the two parties through the mediators.

Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari, official spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said in a statement to the Qatar News Agency yesterday that a Qatari delegation will head to Egyptian capital to resume indirect negotiations between the two parties through the mediators.

He expressed Qatar's hope that the talks will culminate in reaching an agreement for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the exchange of prisoners and detainees, and the sustainable flow of humanitarian aid into all areas of the Gaza Strip.

He noted that Hamas sent to the mediators a response to their proposals that they put forward to Israel and the movement regarding the truce, and that the response can be described as positive.

Deputy Amir opens new QU buildings



His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Qatar University (QU), inaugurated a number of new university buildings on the QU campus, during a ceremony held yesterday morning. A number of Their Excellencies ministers and senior officials

were in attendance, along with QU administration, college deans, former QU presidents and guests of the ceremony. During the ceremony, HH the Deputy Amir was given an introductory presentation on the new university buildings, which include the building of the Student Affairs and buildings

of the College of Education, the College of Law, and the College of Engineering.

His Highness was also briefed on the specifications of these buildings and the international standards followed in their construction in line with the latest standards of sustainability and operational efficiency. (QNA) Page 2

Latest operation disrupts medical services

Aid groups said yesterday their medical services in Rafah have been affected by the start of Israel's operation in the southern Gaza city, with some services suspended and medical teams blocked. Israel carried out airstrikes in Rafah yesterday and told Palestinians to evacuate parts of the city where more than a million people uprooted by the seven-month war have been crowded together, often in filthy conditions that have contributed to the spread of diarrhoea and disease.

Israel's Rafah evacuation order 'inhumane': UN

AFP
Geneva

Israel's order for Palestinians to evacuate from eastern Rafah in Gaza is "inhumane", the UN rights chief said yesterday, with Israel widely expected to push ahead with an offensive into the city. Volker Turk said forcing hundreds of thousands of people to flee to areas with almost no access to aid for survival was "inconceivable" and warned that the offensive would push suffering and destruction beyond already "unbearable" levels. "Gazans continue to be hit with bombs, disease, and even famine," the United Nations' high commissioner for human rights said in a statement. "And today, they have been told that they must relocate yet again as Israeli military operations into Rafah scale up. "This is inhumane. It runs contrary to the basic principles of international humanitarian and human rights laws, which have the effective protection of civilians as their overriding concern." The statement said that "civilian deaths, suffering and destruction were set to increase beyond already unbearable levels". Israel's military yesterday called for the evacuation of Palestinians from eastern Rafah,

ahead of a long-threatened ground invasion of the southern Gaza city, the prospect of which has triggered widespread international alarm.

"Forcibly relocating hundreds of thousands from Rafah to areas which have already been flattened and where there is little shelter and virtually no access to humanitarian assistance necessary for their survival is inconceivable. It will only expose them to more danger and misery," said Turk.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation said the evacuation order would exacerbate the suffering of people living in already precarious conditions. "The military incursion will plunge this crisis into unprecedented levels of humanitarian need," the WHO said.

"It also poses a risk to the only crossing for fuel into Gaza, which could halt the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid and services, including the few partially-functional health facilities," the UN health agency said.

It said there was "no safe and functional place" in Gaza for people to move to. Israel has conducted a military offensive that has killed more than 34,700 people in Gaza, mostly women and children, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry.



Smoke billows after Israeli bombardment in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. (AFP)

HMC unveils pioneering precision rehab programme

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) has announced the launch of its Precision Rehabilitation Initiative, a groundbreaking programme ascribing to Qatar's Third National Development Strategy to transform the delivery of rehabilitation care in Qatar and beyond.

As one of the first such programmes in the Mena region and spearheaded by HMC's Rehabilitation Therapy Services Department, precision rehabilitation aims to tailor treatments for patients recovering from injuries or surgeries or those managing chronic conditions.

By considering factors like medical history, physical condition, ability, lifestyle and goals as well as leveraging AI-powered systems, physicians can address

the unique needs of each individual and empower patients to achieve their rehabilitation goals.

HMC's Precision Rehabilitation Initiative supports integrates state-of-the-art technology including robotics, exoskeletons, wearable devices, voice-activated technology, virtual and augmented reality applications and smart homes to provide tailored interventions.

Dr Hanadi al-Hamad, deputy chief, Long-Term Care, Rehabilitation, and Geriatrics at HMC, explained: "With Precision Rehabilitation, we are not just administering treatment, we are tailoring our strategies based on detailed real-time measurements of each patient's functional abilities. This method allows us to significantly enhance the effectiveness of our



Dr Hanadi al-Hamad

interventions and elevate patient care to new heights. The integration of innovative technology and scientifically proven methods empowers our patients to excel

in daily activities and helps them reintegrate into their communities with confidence and increased physical capabilities."

"Precision Rehabilitation leverages cutting-edge treatment and technology to deliver the highest level of care to our patients. Our commitment to advanced technology and utilisation of data management solutions supports our focus on setting a standard of excellence in rehabilitation," said Richard Storey, acting chief, Health Information and Communications Technology at HMC.

Precision Rehabilitation with AI, Wearable Sensors, Tele-rehab and recovery tracking (PRAI-WeST) is the model at the heart of this new initiative developed by Dr Ajimsha Sharafudeen, director of rehabilitation at the Qatar

Rehabilitation Institute, with the assistance of Prof Uwais Qidwai from the Department of Computer Science Engineering at Qatar University as well as HMC's Rehabilitation Therapy Services Department and the Health Information and Communications Technology Department.

Dr Sharafudeen added: "The PRAIWeST model represents a significant advancement in rehabilitation practices, offering a predictive and intelligent approach that leverages cutting-edge technology to deliver personalised care. Developed collaboratively with experts from HMC and Qatar University, this model ensures precision, consistency and effectiveness in patient care, setting a new standard for rehabilitation programmes globally."

Spanish PM praises Qatar's mediation for Gaza ceasefire

Prime Minister of Spain Dr Pedro Sanchez hailed the mediation role being undertaken by Qatar for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, underscoring Spain's commitment to supporting the efforts devoted to achieving a just and sustainable peace in the region.

In a post on the media platform X, the Prime Minister of Spain said he held a phone call with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani during which he expressed his sincere gratitude to the Qatar-led mediation role in order to reach a ceasefire and to release the Israeli hostages held by Hamas.

He added that he shared with His Highness the Amir his concern about the potential Israeli operation in Rafah, emphasising Spain's commitment to supporting the efforts for a just and sustainable peace in the region through the two-state solution and mutual recognition of the Palestinian statehood. Last month, HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani affirmed that Qatar has been committed to the negotiation process since the start of the war on Gaza, in pursuit of releasing hostages, helping them return home safely, and in ending the war on the Strip. (QNA)

Qatar's pavilion opens at Arabian Travel Market

Visit Qatar's pavilion at the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024, opened its doors to the exhibition's visitors, yesterday. Held from May 6-9 in Dubai, the UAE, the 31st ATM is themed "Empowering Innovation - Transforming Travel Through Entrepreneurship". Visit Qatar's stand focuses on Qatar's key tourist attractions and unique combinations of the authentic cultural heritage and modernity, and aims to promote the country as a tourist destination. Raya al-Moghaisib, from Visit Qatar's Tourism Marketing and Promotion Sector, said Qatar's participation in the event seeks to bolster Qatar Tourism's

presence in major tourism exhibitions, explore new opportunities, and exchange discussions with the key travel and tourism firms in the Middle East and the world. Qatar Tourism is keen to participate in regional and international tourism exhibitions and events, in order to promote Qatar as a distinguished tourist destination, and to enhance awareness of the offers and experiences that Qatar has for its visitors and partners, she said. She added that these exhibitions provide opportunities to explore new markets, strengthen partnerships with key partners, in addition to introducing the latest tourism developments taking place in Qatar. (QNA)

Nearly 1,000 students to graduate from QF's Education City this year

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Education City will see the graduation of its largest batch at the convocation today, said an official.

"This is the largest graduating class in the history of Education City with about 1,000 students, from about 75 nationalities. About 40% of the graduating class are Qataris," said Dr Abdunnassir al-Tamimi, executive director for student services at QF Higher Education Division.

Dr al-Tamimi said that one of the unique aspects of Education City is its higher education ecosystem.

"We call it multiversity, multiskilled experience making sure that we equip the students with the knowledge, skills and experiences, whether it is through curricular or extracurricular activities. The students basically obtain critical skills that will prepare them for the workplace personally and also professionally," explained Dr al-Tamimi.

He noted that with such a diverse community, the students get to interact with one another in a multicultural environment. He also highlighted another key benefit of studying at Education City as the opportunity for cross registration at different



Dr Abdunnassir al-Tamimi



Dr Abdulaziz al-Khanji

universities "We have what we call, cross registration or cross interdisciplinary studies so that students who are interested in taking a class at any of the universities, can attend them. Another thing is the strict criteria for admission and only the very best get admission at these universities. The admission norms are common for all including the Qataris and non-Qataris and the international students," he said.

Regarding the current batch of graduates, Dr al-Tamimi said that they are probably one of the toughest and most resilient groups of graduates from the Education City.

"Most of these students started their academic session in the midst of the great pandemic that our era has seen. They joined the classes when Covid-19 was at its peak disrupting everyone's life and these graduates have withstood all the challenges and have

come out in flying colours," he said.

Dr Abdulaziz al-Khanji, head of scholarships at QF said several opportunities and financial support are provided to the students while pursuing their studies at the Education City.

He said: "We provide scholarships on academic performance, we also provide scholarships on academic and social performance and we provide scholarships or grants based on the financial needs of the students. We have a variety of scholarships and grants to support the students. We are glad to see these scholarships and grants recipients graduating every year."

According to Dr al-Khanji, the students are selected for the scholarship on various criteria. "There is a platform to decide on the scholarship or grant for each student. There are various criteria for each type of scholarship," he added.

Municipality minister meets Muscat governor



HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah met in Muscat yesterday with Governor of Muscat in the Sultanate of Oman Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al-Busaidi. The meeting discussed bilateral relations in the fields of cities and municipal work, and ways to enhance and develop them within the framework of the joint work between the brotherly countries. (QNA)

AlKhatier meets Sudanese minister

HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhatier met yesterday with the visiting Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sudan Hussein Awad Ali. During the meeting, the two sides discussed co-operation between the countries and ways to support and develop them, as well as developments in Sudan. During the meeting, HE Minister of State for International Co-operation reiterated Qatar's firm position in support of the unity, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sudan, and the need to stop foreign interference in its internal affairs that fuel conflict, as well as to fully respect the choices of the Sudanese people for freedom, peace, justice and prosperity. (QNA)



MoEHE signs agreement with AACSB to boost business education

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) signed a co-operation agreement with the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the world's largest business education alliance to co-ordinate and strengthen co-operation to develop business administration education.

Chairman of the National Commission for Academic Qualifications and Accreditation at the MoEHE Dr Mazen Hasnah and Chief Global Accreditation Officer at the International Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business Stephanie Bryant signed the agreement.

To mark this occasion, Dr Mazen Hasnah reiterated the commitment to academic excellence and global best practices, stating: "Our partnership with the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business is a testament to our unwavering commitment



to academic excellence. This collaboration is a strategic move to adopt and integrate global best practices into our educational framework, ensuring that our future business leaders are well-prepared to navigate the ever-evolving global economy."

For her part, Stephanie Bryant expressed her optimism about the partnership and said: "We are excited to embark on this journey with the Ministry of Education

and Higher Education in Qatar. This collaboration will enable us to pool our resources and expertise to enhance the quality and value of business education in the region."

Bryant added: "The Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar's deep expertise will greatly contribute globally to the association's efforts and integration in business education." (QNA)

QU seminar puts spotlight on press freedom



Qatar University (QU) organised a seminar entitled, "Ethics of Media Coverage of Wars and Crises" in observance of World Press Freedom Day.

Organised by QU's Mass Communications Department, the seminar shed light on the topic of freedom of expression and the safety of journalists, and the dangers journalists face to their professional and physical safety during coverage of wars and crises. It also aimed to discuss the ethical challenges journalists face during coverage of wars and conflicts.

Department Head of Mass Communication in QU's College of Arts and Sciences Dr Wael Abdelal said: "This event is par-

ticularly significant considering the exceptional challenges faced by journalists and the press globally, especially this year, which is arguably one of the worst in contemporary history regarding violations of press freedom and attacks against journalists. This reality places a doubly significant responsibility on us, to promote awareness and uphold ethical standards in this regard.

"It is imperative for us to firmly confront these challenges. The word, our weapon, must be wielded with precision and integrity. This reality, perhaps, presents challenges and lessons for the entire world. Our students will learn intellectual resilience and

be inspired by our narratives to contribute to the enhancement of press freedom," he added.

Advisor to the QU President and Professor of Digital Media and Politics, Dr Maryam al-Khater, discussed journalism in the context of media coverage of events, reflecting on its historical evolution and the challenges faced during the past decades.

Dr Maryam acknowledged the importance of press freedom and highlighted the sacrifices made by journalists, especially in conflict zones like Gaza, and expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to discuss these issues and emphasised the need to protect journalists and to uphold press freedom. (QNA)

Qatar chairs GCC security media awareness meeting



Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Interior, chaired the eighth meeting of the Technical Team for Awareness in the field of Security Media in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, held virtually. Chaired by Assistant Director of the Public Relations Department at the Ministry of Interior Colonel Dr Jabr Hamoud Jabr al-Naimi, the meeting discussed several agenda items related to security awareness. (QNA)

Media City Qatar, SNRG to host inaugural Esports Forum

Media City Qatar, in collaboration with SNRG, a leading e-sports company, is proud to announce the inaugural Media City Qatar Esports Forum.

Scheduled to take place on May 19, 2024 in Qatar, this landmark event aims to shape Qatar's e-sports future and encourage further developments in the local e-sports ecosystem. Additionally, the inaugural Media City Qatar Esports Forum presented by SNRG will provide a plat-

form for industry leaders, stakeholders, and enthusiasts to convene, exchange ideas, and explore opportunities in the rapidly evolving world of e-sports - through panel discussions, keynote speeches, workshops, and networking sessions.

Qatar is emerging as a significant player in the global e-sports scene, with the Mena region witnessing unprecedented growth and attention due to the investments made in its e-sports ecosystem. As countries across the region focus on

attracting talent, hosting major tournaments, and fostering industry development, Qatar is ready to tackle e-sports head-on and become one of its main players.

With a tech-savvy population, particularly among the youth, Qatar boasts a vibrant online community deeply engaged in gaming and e-sports.

This presents a unique opportunity for Qatar to establish itself as a prominent hub for e-sports in the region and beyond.

"We are delighted to partner with SNRG for this new forum and help drive Qatar's e-sports evolution. This is a key sector in the new media world and we are determined to support Qatar and the Mena region in their efforts to be at its leading edge." Director of Business Development at Media City Qatar Thair al-Anani said.

"The Qatar Esports Federation is proud to be a part of this forum, and to be leading the e-sports evolution in Qatar. We are dedicated to fostering growth and de-

velopment in this sector, to propel Qatar into the global e-sports stage." Head of the Sports Affairs Sector at Qatar Esports Federation Ahmed al-Meghessib added. "SNRG is proud to collaborate with Media City Qatar to drive innovation, foster collaboration, and to shape the future of e-sports in Qatar and beyond. The forum will aim to unlock opportunities and enlighten its attendees about Qatar and its potential in e-sports," co-founder and CEO of SNRG Ibrahim Samha said. (QNA)

Qatar's ambassador receives Poland's Order of Merit



On behalf of President of Poland Andrzej Duda, Head of the International Policy Bureau in the Cabinet of the President of Poland Mieszko Pawlak presented the Order of Merit of Poland to Qatar's ambassador to Poland Abdullah bin Abdulrahman al-Khulaifi, on the end of his tenure. This took place during a farewell ceremony at the Presidential Palace in honour of the Qatari ambassador. During the ceremony, the Head of the International Policy Bureau in the Cabinet of the Poland president said in a speech that the award was a recognition of the efforts of the Qatari embassy in enhancing bilateral relations. In response, the ambassador expressed his gratitude to the Polish president for the honour and highlighted that the co-operation received from the Polish side during his tenure had greatly contributed to enhancing bilateral relations between the countries. (QNA)

Poland deputy minister holds farewell ceremony for Qatar's ambassador

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland Andrzej Szejna held a farewell ceremony in honour of Qatar's ambassador to Poland Abdullah bin Abdulrahman Fakhroo at the end of his tenure. During the ceremony, the deputy minister of foreign affairs of Poland applauded the role of the ambassador in strengthening relations in a range of fields, and wished him success in his

future assignment. Qatar's ambassador thanked the Polish officials for the co-operation offered during his tenure which evidently enhanced the relations between the two countries. The ceremony was attended by a host of ambassadors of the Arab countries accredited to Poland, alongside officials in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (QNA)

QPHI signs agreements with national, int'l organisations

Qatar Precision Health Institute (QPHI), the leading national centre for research and implementation under Qatar Foundation (QF), has inked three agreements to advance the implementation of precision diagnostics and treatments.

The collaborations with Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), the Health Institutes of Turkiye (TUSEB), and the Global Alliance for Genomics and Health (GA4GH) will empower QPHI to deliver on its objectives of advancing preventive health, developing diagnosis and life-saving treatment interventions, and accelerating its National Health Mapping Programmes.

The MoUs were signed at QF's recent formal launch of QPHI, which was established to draw upon more than 10 years of valuable data collection, research, and ecosystem development by Qatar Biobank and Qatar Genome Programme.

Dr Said Ismail, acting president of QPHI, said: "Our collaboration with some of the world's leading health organisations in the field of precision medicine will enable Qatar and its partners to contribute to shaping the future of healthcare both domestically and overseas with tangible benefits in terms of saving lives and improving the wellbeing of people with diseases."



QPHI will usher in a new era of healthcare services across Qatar and the region through collaboration.

Under its MoU with HMC, QPHI will exchange knowledge and capacity-building initiatives to enhance clinical skills and expertise in precision health practices.

Dr Abdullah al-Ansari, acting chief medical officer HMC, said: "We envision a future where precision medicine becomes the cornerstone of healthcare, not just in Qatar but across the globe. Through this partnership, we aim to combine our expertise with QPHI's cutting-edge research to redefine the standards of patient care and treatment, ultimately saving lives and enhancing well-being."

QPHI will also refer patients carrying pathogenic genetic mutations to HMC's Centre for Clinical Precision Medicine and Genomics for further diagnosis and medical care using risk reduction strate-

gies based on international and national guidelines.

The collaboration of TUSEB with QPHI will create a strong network to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experience, and infrastructure. This partnership will utilise the strengths of both parties to promote progress in understanding and initiatives within the healthcare ecosystem. This collaboration will involve forming a joint steering group, managed by both parties, to conduct strategic research and development in genomic technologies. The primary objective is to enhance and shape the scientific landscapes of Turkiye and Qatar.

QPHI is also joining hands with GA4GH, to accelerate the potential of research and medicine to advance human health.

Teffa conference showcases tech and art innovations

Msheireb Properties opened the 'Teffa AI R evolution' conference yesterday, where technology, education, finance, fashion and art innovators came together to discuss the ongoing paradigm shift in innovation driven by advancements in artificial intelligence.

Presented by Msheireb Properties in partnership with Teffa, the three-day event is taking place at M7 at Msheireb Downtown Doha (MDD) until tomorrow (May 8). MDD epitomises sustainable urban regeneration, blending heritage with cutting-edge technology to create a haven for cultural enrichment and sustainable living. Teffa AI R evolution is already making a name for itself as a gathering where transformative ideas are born, bringing together a community of artists and entrepreneurs dedicated to their realisation. "At Msheireb Properties, we share something very important with Teffa



Shaikha al-Sulaiti addressing the event yesterday. Right: A panel in session at the conference.

that defines our community - a spirit that celebrates collaboration and creativity," said Shaikha al-Sulaiti, Doha Design District senior concept manager, Msheireb Properties. "It's a testament to the safe and supportive environment we've cultivated for creatives from around the world to experiment and innovate." This year, the spotlight is on

the revolutionary potential of artificial intelligence and blockchain technology, particularly within the realms of fashion and design. Through immersive workshops, insights from industry trailblazers, and hands-on experiences, attendees will experience the impact of emerging technologies on education, finance, fashion, and art.

NCSA honours cyber event participants

The National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) honoured yesterday the participating entities in the national cyber manoeuvre 2023, in the presence of several esteemed ministers and dignitaries.


During the ceremony, President of the National Cyber Security Agency engineer Abdulrahman bin Ali al-Farhadi al-Maliki honoured some 30 governmental institutions and authorities in the country that achieved the highest ratings among the participating sectors in the 10th edition of the event that was held last November. All other participating entities were also recognised.

This recognition comes within the framework of the agency's encouragement for all governmental institutions and authorities to enhance their readiness and to develop mechanisms to deal with breaches, as well as supporting the enhancement of cyber capabilities from three aspects: human, technological and operational.

In his opening speech, director of empowerment and cyber excellence affairs at the agency Khalid al-Hashimi said that the national cyber manoeuvre began as a pioneering initiative in 2013, highlighting the participation of many governmental and non-governmental entities from all vital sectors in the country during the 10th edition held in November 2023.

He stressed that the National Cyber Security Agency will spare no effort in developing cyber capabilities within entities and continuously works to support and enhance the capabilities of all governmental institutions and vital sectors in the country to ensure their readiness. (QNA)





INVITATION FOR TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond Value (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
QF-2024-SS-31714	Provision of Daily Food Services to Al Shaqab on a call-off basis for two years, with the option of extending for another one (1) year	500.00	100,000.00	6 th June 2024

Al Shaqab Procurement is inviting companies to participate in the above-listed public tenders.

- Tender Fee:** Interested bidders shall first deposit the respective non-refundable and non-transferrable tender fee as mentioned above into the following Qatar Foundation bank account mentioning "QF Tender Reference Number" and "Bidder's Name":
 - Account Name : QATAR FOUNDATION - AL SHAQAB
 - Account Number : 0 0 1 3 - 0 2 4 1 7 1 - 0 5 5
 - Swift Code No : QNBQAQQA
 - IBAN : QA16 QNBA 0000 0001 0013 0241 71055
 - Bank Name : Qatar National Bank


Tender Fee Payment Dates: From 7th May 2024 until 14th May 2024 between 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM, except Friday and Saturday. The tender fees should be paid to the QF account before 14th May 2024, 2:00 PM. Tender documents will not be issued if the tender fees are paid after the specified deadline. Tender Documents Issue Date: 8th May to 16th May 2024.

- All bidders who have paid the required tender fees shall collect the tender documents from the address below by submitting the following:
 - A copy of the bidder's tender fee receipt clearly highlighting "Tender reference number", "bidder's name", and
 - An Authorization letter on the company's letterhead detailing the full name, telephone number and email ID of the bidder's focal point for all tender communications.

The tender collection address will be

Al Shaqab Procurement,
Gate 9, Administration Building,
Building No 25, Zone 52, Street 2720
Education City, Doha, Qatar

- The commercial bid must be valid for 120 days from the bid closing date.
- The commercial bid must be accompanied by a bank guarantee (tender bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar. The bond should be valid for 120 days from the bid closing date.
- The successful tenderer will be required to submit a performance bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
- Qatar Foundation tendering qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.
- For any queries, please write to asp@qf.org.qa 4454613144546210



QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation


No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	SUP/C/FMD/6586/24 FOR DESIGN, FABRICATE, SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SIGNAGE FOR QATARENERGY LNG PREMISES WITH NEW BRANDING	05/05/2024 to 14/05/2024	0	39,702	03/06/2024

Scope of Work:
QatarEnergy LNG is seeking for qualified and competent Contractors to provide the Services of supply and installation of internal and external signage to QatarEnergy LNG Doha Head Quarters, Al-Khor Community and Ras Laffan facilities in accordance with the Scope of Work.

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>



INVITATION TO TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond Value (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
CO-RFQ-157	Provision for Office Hospitality Services (Office Hospitality Manpower, Services, Drinking Water and Supply of Commissary Items) to QF on Call off Basis for 5 Years	2,000.00	100,000.00	10 th June 2024, 2:00 PM
HBKU-RFQ-115	Provision for Supply of Laboratory Chemicals to Qatar Foundation - HBKU on Call-off Basis for 3 Years	500.00	N/A	5 th June 2024, 2:00 PM
QNL-RFQ-16	Single Library Discovery Solution for QNL	200.00	N/A	30 th May 2024, 2:00 PM

Qatar Foundation (QF) Procurement & Program Management Directorate is inviting companies to participate in the above listed public tenders. To receive the tender documents, please follow the below steps:

- Supplier Registration:** It is mandatory to be registered as a supplier with QF in order to participate in the above tenders. Only QF registered suppliers will be allowed to pay the tender fees online. Therefore, please visit QF website at <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration> to complete the Supplier Registration process.
 - Tender Fee:** Interested bidders can Sign in by visiting this link <https://suppliers.qf.org.qa/abstract> and pay the respective non-refundable and non-transferrable tender fee online.
 - All Tender Fees are to be paid using credit cards only.
 - Tender Fee Payment Dates:** Payment of Tender Fee online will be from 7th May until 13th May 2024.
- All bidders, who are registered and have paid the required tender fees online to QF, will then be granted access to download the Tender Document.
- Technical and commercial bids need to be submitted and attached online in QF Supplier Portal as per instructions provided in the "Supplier Portal" work instruction.
 - The commercial bid must be valid for 180 days from Bid Closing Date.
 - The commercial bid must be accompanied by a bank guarantee (tender bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for 180 days from the bid closing date (where applicable as per the Tender documents).
 - The successful tenderer will be required to submit a performance bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
 - Qatar Foundation special qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.

Note: All work instructions for Supplier registration and Supplier portal can be found in below link: <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration>

15th Doha Conference on Interfaith Dialogue begins today

The Chairman of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID) Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Naimi said the agenda of the 15th Doha Conference on Interfaith Dialogue, which will kick off today, will focus on religions' perspective on the family and its importance as the basic building block of the society.



Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Naimi

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), al-Naimi said the conference, which is held under the slogan "Family Structure in Light of Changing World: Religious Perspective", will highlight the shared commonalities among religions regarding family in light of contemporary world changes, and the distortions and challenges the family has become exposed to.

He noted that all religions pay great attention to the family, and has laid spiritual, intellectual and moral foundations for its establishment, survival, development, cohesion and success, and provided solutions to its social, educational and psychological problems.

Al-Naimi said the DICID will announce during the conference winners of the Doha International Award for Interfaith Dialogue 2024 from among individuals and religious institutions active in supporting affected families.

He applauded the great attention Qatar, under the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, attaches to family as the foundation of society and the nations renaissance. He said the establishment of the Ministry of Social Development and Family is a true embodiment of the importance the State attaches to family, the society and the authentic Qatari family values.

He pointed to several activities and events that support the family in Qatar, noting that Qatar will later this year host an international conference commemorating the 30th anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The confirms the great importance that Qatar attaches to family within the framework of its National Vision 2030, he stressed.

The conference will bring together about 500 scholars, religious leaders, researchers, academics and specialists in family and social development, including 200 from Qatar, he said, noting that 90 papers were selected for discussion dur-

ing the two-day conference from among 300 papers.

Since its launch in 2003, the Doha Conference on Interfaith Dialogue has served as a platform for dialogue and debate between followers of the three monotheistic religions (Islam, Christianity, and Judaism) on many daily issues of concern to societies and humanity in general, leading to greater communication, co-operation, and building trust, al-Naimi said.

He noted that previous editions of the conference focused on several vital topics of interest to these religions and their followers, such as human rights, hate speech, the role of youth in promoting dialogue, human solidarity in the event of disasters and crises, and others.

Summaries of the research and working papers discussed are prepared after the conclusion of each conference, and between three to four books are published about them, so that they become an important reference for researchers in the fields of dialogue.

Al-Naimi expressed his regret at emerging negative phenomena affecting family, such as homosexuality and the rights of children to change their gender and name and choose their religion; expressing concern that such negative changes may gradually extend to other countries whether Islamic, Christian, or Jewish.

From this standpoint, the 15th Doha Conference on Interfaith Dialogue will focus on religions and raising children in light of contemporary family changes, he said.

The Chairman of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID) Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Naimi underlined that all religions call for family unity, and emphasise the importance of family cohesion and the values of compassion and co-operation, and the issue of marriage and the formation of the natural family.

He noted that many verses in the Holy Qur'an and Hadith in Islam,

as well as evidence in other religions, call for the same approach, and stress the necessity of protecting the family as the basic building block and cornerstone in building any society, which means that religion is an important factor in building the family, and it is necessary for any society to maintain the family healthy, interconnected and integrated.

He emphasised the important role the educational, academic, religious, cultural, civil, official research institutions have in supporting family solidarity and cohesion; and underlined that the desired balance in the family system, since its inception, is based on the integration of roles between men and women, not by changing them or erasing them.

Al-Naimi noted that many problems and crises that the world is going through today, including economic ones, affect family cohesion. Therefore, the participants will consider how to deal with these challenges.

He added that the identity and structure of the family system and its status, the responsibility and rights of every individual in it, its central role in upbringing and education, and achieving family integration are fundamental issues for all religions.

Al-Naimi pointed to the negative impact of disputes and conflicts on the family and its cohesion, citing the situation of Palestinian families, which he described as a "tragic," especially in the Gaza Strip, because of Israel's devastating war and its barbaric attacks, as well as the situation of families in other countries exposed to conflicts, noting that the conference will discuss all these negative and harmful impacts on the family in plenary and specialised sessions.

Through the rich and powerful discussion and interventions, the participants will come up with important results and recommendations regarding various issues of the family, its cohesion, safety and stability, he stressed.

Regarding the winners of the 5th Doha International Award for Interfaith Dialogue, al-Naimi explained that the winners were chosen based on their achievements, as individuals or institutions, in supporting affected families whether as a result of poverty, disasters and wars, or due to dispersion and asylum. (QNA)

WCM-Q prepares 39 students for medical education

A total of 39 students from 24 high schools successfully completed the Qatar Aspiring Doctors Programme (QADP) at Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar (WCM-Q), a statement said. Organised by the Office of Student Outreach & Educational Development at WCM-Q, the year-long QADP prepares high school students for the pre-medical curriculum through advanced tuition in the physical sciences, biology, research skills, introduction to college writing, and college reading skills.

The course instruction follows a hybrid model, with monthly face-to-face sessions and hands-on activities blended with online self-paced modules. To participate in QADP, students must be in Grade 10, 11, or 12 and interested in pursuing a career in medicine. They must demonstrate excellence in the sciences and mathematics and be nominated by their high school counsellor, with priority given to national students.

Dr James Roach, associate dean for pre-medical education and professor of chemistry, who delivers the physical sciences modules of the QADP, said: "The QADP is an enriching and extremely rewarding programme that offers students the unique opportunity to strengthen their knowledge and skills."

The students who successfully completed the QADP celebrated their achievements during a ceremony held at WCM-Q and received certificates of completion, as well as personal congratulations from the WCM-Q faculty in attendance.

Speaking during the closing ceremony, one of the participating students who completed the QADP with honours, Essa Mubarak al-Buainain, from Qatar Academy Al Wakra, said: "This programme has been a profound journey over two academic semesters, one that has not only demanded academic dedication but also instilled in us the



capacity for self-directed learning." Commenting on her experience, Fatma Wael al-Emadi, from Al Maha Academy for Girls, who also completed the QADP with honours, said: "All in all, I have become the best version of myself during this programme, and I will take the talent and skills that I have absorbed at WCM-Q and apply them to the rest of my educational and working life."

Dr Rachid Bendriss, professor of English as a second language, assistant professor of education in medicine, and associate dean for foundation, student outreach and educational development programmes, said: "The QADP supports talented high school students who excel in mathematics and the sciences with acquiring a solid foundation of knowledge and skills that will effectively prepare them to study medicine and become the physician-scientists of the future."

Year on year, the QADP continues to welcome many academically gifted students who aspire to become scientists. Since its inception in 2015, the QADP has attracted a record number of high school students who have successfully gone on to join WCM-Q's Foundation and Pre-medical programmes.

Qatar participates in meeting of UPU's board of directors

QNA
Bern

Represented by the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) and Qatar Postal Services Company (Qatar Post), Qatar participated in the first regular session of the Universal Postal Union (UPU)'s Board of Directors in 2024.

The Qatari delegation was headed by CRA President engineer Ahmed Abdullah al-Muslimani.

Qatar participated in the four-day meeting as a member of the UPU's Board of Directors, whose membership includes 41 countries that meet annually in Bern, Switzerland, to discuss issues related to the postal sector and union's work. The meeting's agenda included a discussion regarding the board's work programme for 2022-2025, and the 28th UPU conference scheduled to be held in 2025, in addition to topics related to the administrative committee of the Board of Directors and the advisory committee, in addition to other committees affiliated with the union's Board of Directors.

On the sidelines of the meeting, al-Muslimani met with the UPU Director-General Masahiko Metoki and UPU Deputy Director-General Marjan Osvald, with the aim of strengthening bilateral co-operation between Qatar and the UPU and contributing to the development of the global



postal sector in a sustainable manner. Qatar, in partnership with Belarus, also chaired the meeting of the co-operation committee for development and technical assistance, which was held on May 2 and addressed multiple issues related to the implementation of decisions issued by the Universal Postal Conference related to technical co-operation between the union's member states. Participants reviewed reports, presentations and notes on various topics, including the Union's Global Development Co-operation Strategy 2022-2025. Through these meetings, Qatar contributes to shaping the future of the global postal sector and developing it for the better with the rest of the member states, which has a direct impact on the development of the postal sector in Qatar and other local sectors related to postal services.

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QC Gaza aid reaches 2.5mn beneficiaries

Qatar Charity (QC) continues to distribute humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip through the Qatari air bridge and its urgent relief projects, with the number of beneficiaries as of May 5 reaching about 2.5mn.

The volume of aid provided via the Qatari air bridge (which has been or will be shipped) in co-operation with the Qatar Fund for Development and other parties has reached 1,011 tonnes through 95 aircraft, and the number of beneficiaries is estimated at 729,766 so far, while

the number of beneficiaries of urgent relief projects is estimated to be 1,650,670.

QC's aid to the Gaza Strip is distributed in several areas: food supply (hot meals, food baskets, and flour), shelter and non-food items (tents, blankets, winter clothing, and shelter supplies), health (fuel for hospitals, medicines, and medical supplies), water, sanitation, and others.

In this context, Mana al-Ansari, director of the Emergency and Relief Department at QC, said: "The difficult conditions that our brothers in Gaza

are experiencing require us to redouble our efforts to meet the great shortage of essential living needs and the services they need, and to urge charitable people to continue providing support to them and alleviating their worsening humanitarian suffering.

"Praying to God to accept them and reward them with the best reward."

QC continues to receive donations for Gaza through the following link: <https://qch.qa/Gaza>



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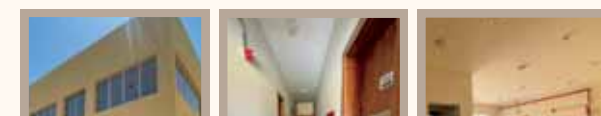
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QCS receives Qatar CSR Summit 2024 award

Qatar Cancer Society (QCS) received the Qatar Social Responsibility Award for its exceptional achievements in 2023. The award was conferred at the recent Qatar CSR Summit 2024.

QCS contributed to the event as a bronze sponsor, showcasing its dedication to the community through an introductory lecture highlighting its mission and services, which cater to individuals affected by cancer, including patients, survivors, and caregivers.

QCS also organised an awareness pavilion, furthering its commitment to raising awareness about cancer-related issues among attendees, a statement said.

HE Sheikh Dr Khalid bin Jabr al-Thani, QCS chairman, emphasised the award's significance in propelling the association towards further progress and prosperity in the field of community service, aligning seamlessly with Qatar National Vision 2030 in investing in the human element.



ling the association towards further progress and prosperity in the field of community service, aligning seamlessly with Qatar National Vision 2030 in investing in the human element.

He thanked all stakeholders, partners, supporters, and honorary ambassadors whose unwavering support has been instrumental in advancing the society's mission. The award reflects the fruit-

ful co-operation between various stakeholders and institutions in support of charitable endeavours, particularly in the field of health-care and cancer awareness, the statement added.

Ooredoo gets top honours at Qatar CSR Awards

Ooredoo has been honoured with the 'Best CSR Initiative in the ICT Sector' award for 2024 during the recently held Qatar CSR Awards attended by prominent business leaders and stakeholders from across Qatar.

This recognition is a celebration of Ooredoo Qatar's outstanding contribution to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) through its organisation of the 2024 Doha Marathon, an event that not only achieved a record-breaking participation of over 13,000 runners from 124 countries but also significantly promoted community engagement and health awareness.

The marathon, which is now a prominent fixture in Qatar's sporting calendar and holds the distinction of being a World Athletics Gold Label-Accredited race, has seen its participation nearly double since last year, making it the largest national marathon in history.



Sabah Rabiah al-Kuwari, director of Public Relations, Sponsorships, and CSR at Ooredoo Qatar, receiving the award.

Sabah Rabiah al-Kuwari, director of Public Relations, Sponsorships, and CSR at Ooredoo Qatar, said: "We are truly honoured to receive this award, which reflects our deep com-

mitment to integrating corporate social responsibility into our core operations.

"The Doha Marathon by Ooredoo is not just an event; it is a platform that unites communi-

ties, encourages healthy lifestyles, and fosters a genuine spirit of sportsmanship and inclusivity throughout Qatar. This recognition motivates us to continue our mission to upgrade people's lives and contribute to our nation's development."

The Qatar CSR Awards are dedicated to recognising organisations and individuals who embody the principles of corporate responsibility in their business operations and philosophies. The awards highlight innovative and sustainable solutions to social challenges, celebrating those who make a significant impact on their communities.

As Ooredoo looks forward to the next edition of the Doha Marathon, the company remains committed to its vision of enhancing the community's well-being and supporting sustainable initiatives that benefit society at large.

Qatar Airways displays Sama 2.0 at ATM Dubai



Qatar Airways Group CEO Badr Mohamed al-Meer with Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed al-Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, CEO and Founder of the Emirates Group, and Ghaith al-Ghaith, CEO, flydubai, during the opening tour of the 31st edition of the Arabian Travel Market 2024 yesterday.

Qatar Airways made a holographic display of Sama, the airline's second-generation AI-powered digital human cabin crew on the opening day of the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024 yesterday. Powered by advanced conversational AI, Sama engaged with ATM's attendees, effortlessly demonstrating her knowledge on Qatar Airways' diverse operations.

"Qatar Airways is thrilled to return this year to ATM Dubai with Sama 2.0, who not only represents the cutting-edge of digital innovation in human interaction but also enhances the travel experience for all our passengers"

The digital human cabin crew, designed to enable personalised travel experiences, will continue to evolve over time to improve responses through passenger interactions in the airline's immersive platform, QVerse. The airline also unveiled

its innovative experience stand at ATM 2024. From virtual reality (VR) tours to the revolutionary multi-sensory pod, Qatar Airways' latest technological advancements continue to enthral visitors.

Qatar Airways Group CEO, Badr Mohamed al-Meer, said: "Qatar Airways is thrilled to return this year to ATM Dubai with Sama 2.0, who not only represents the cutting-edge of digital innovation in human interaction but also enhances the travel experience for all our passengers. As a multiple award-winning airline, this aligns perfectly with our commitment to exceeding expectations, offering both experts and travellers unparalleled, innovative interactions that resonate with them."

Earlier this year, Qatar Airways announced several route launches and resumptions, as well as a significant increase in flight frequencies to meet the growing travel demand and enhance the airline's global network comprising of more than 170 destinations.

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PHCC boosts hand hygiene awareness

Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has partnered with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) for the 13th Hand Hygiene Campaign, coinciding with the World Hand Hygiene Day, marked every year on May 5.

The campaign targets all primary healthcare employees and the community through awareness and mentoring lectures, highlighting the importance of hand hygiene and its proper practices.

This year's participation comes under the theme "Why Is Sharing Knowledge About Hand Hygiene Is Still So Important? Because It Helps Stop the Spread of Harmful Germs in Health Care".

PHCC, through the Communicable Disease and Infection Control Section under Health Protection Department, clarified that observing the World Hand Hygiene Day aims to improve and strengthen hand hygiene practices and motivate the community and healthcare workers to reduce healthcare-associated infections, as this is the responsibility of everyone.

The campaign also focuses on



Dr Ahmed Hashem

raising awareness among health centre employees and patients to prevent the spread of microbes, as one of the campaign's objectives is to raise awareness about the importance of timely knowledge and learning regarding hand hygiene to prevent infectious diseases and to promote learning methods to enable the implementation of innovative and effective training to healthcare workers for improved hand hygiene.

Dr Ahmed Hashem, infection control specialist, pointed out that PHCC is exerting efforts to avoid various risks that may occur in health centres, including preventing

the transmission of microbes, as hands are the primary means of transmitting many infectious diseases through direct contact with individuals, surfaces, offices, family and others. He stressed that poor hand hygiene is a cause of spreading many microbes and diseases such as coronavirus, seasonal flu, diarrhoea and others. The activities planned for this year include the delivery of awareness and mentoring lectures for health centre employees and patients, distribution of pamphlets, and conducting employee-patient satisfaction surveys regarding hand hygiene practices and their satisfaction with the campaign. Patients will also be encouraged to participate in the campaign, and designated areas will contain educational materials and pamphlets to be distributed to participating patients. Additionally, awareness messages will be sent to employees and patients through SMS and social media platforms in both Arabic and English, and there will be a hand hygiene video competition among all PHCC health centres.

QMC and QU leaders discuss joint action plan

Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) CEO HE Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Thani al-Thani, received Qatar University (QU) president Dr Omar bin Mohamed al-Ansari and an accompanying delegation of deans of colleges and department heads.

During a meeting at QMC premises, discussions were held on the various ways of co-operation between QMC and QU, besides the exchange of experiences to contribute to the development of the university's academic media curriculum to cope with the rapidly changing field requirements in light of the developments in technology and modern digital media.

Both the CEO of QMC and QU president stressed the importance of developing a joint action plan to achieve the desired goals of this co-operation.



A few months ago, QMC signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Doha for Science and Technology.

QMC works to strengthen relationships with various universities, academic, and research

institutions in the country aiming to enable these institutions to understand the needs of the job market in the field of media, and to prepare students and researchers to meet such requirements, a statement added.

Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph Jacky Ickx

Limited editions of 250 in Lucent Steel™ and

50 in Lucent Steel™ and ethical 18-carat yellow gold

Celebrating a legendary driver with a timepiece featuring exceptional design and precision timekeeping

Chopard

THE ARTISAN OF EMOTIONS - SINCE 1860



Chopard is celebrating its legendary Ambassador Jacky Ickx with the new Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph JX7 timepiece, the result of the seventh creative collaboration between Chopard Co-President Karl-Friedrich Scheufele and the famous driver. Featuring a design inspired by the bodywork of classic cars and fitted with a superb 'glass box' crystal, this 40.5 mm-diameter chronograph is adorned with a midnight blue dial inspired by the colour of Mr Le Mans' helmet. The rubber strap with its 1960s Dunlop tyre-tread pattern motif - which has been a fixture in the collection for over 25 years - is also available for the first time in a midnight blue colour matching the dial. This model is offered in two exclusive limited editions of 250 timepieces in Lucent Steel™ - Chopard's unique steel alloy endowed with superior properties, made with a recycling rate of at least 80% - and 50 in Lucent Steel™ and ethical 18-carat yellow gold. Over and above the unflinching 36-year friendship that has united Jacky Ickx and Karl-Friedrich Scheufele in a shared passion for motor sport, Chopard has chosen to celebrate a monumental racing figure through this creation eagerly awaited by collectors and devotees of fine mechanical engineering.

A legendary helmet at the heart of the design

In sculpting the look of this new timepiece, Karl-Friedrich Scheufele and Jacky Ickx were inspired by the aesthetics of one of the latter's emblematic helmets. Standing out in many respects from the drivers of his time, Jacky Ickx was notably the first to wear a full-face helmet in 1969. At his request, his then supplier worked with him to design a version that would provide better

head protection during competitions, as those of that era were deemed not safe enough by Jacky Ickx.

This helmet, initially in electric blue and then in midnight blue from 1972 onwards, features twin windows protected by a visor and enhanced by white stripes whose shape earned the helmet its 'owl' nickname. Acting as the driver's signature, the helmet's graphic design remained identical for 30 years: more than the car number, it was this helmet that served to identify the driver.

The Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph JX7 model is packed with symbols and references to Jacky Ickx, starting with this helmet, whose midnight blue colour sets the aesthetic tone on the dial. Punctuated by white markings, this dial guarantees optimum legibility by day or night, thanks to the Super-LumiNova® used for the hour-markers as well as the hours and minutes hands. The date disc displays the days in white numerals. In a nod to Jacky Ickx's six victories in the 24 Hours of Le Mans, the 6 and 24 numbers are distinguished by red markings.

Embellished with a flange bearing a graduated tachymeter scale essential for speed calculations, the dial is topped by a prominent 'glass box' sapphire crystal secured by a slender bezel. Widely used from the 1930s to the 1960s, 'glass box' crystals of this type offer an obvious aesthetic advantage by endowing the dial with a sense of perspective and emphasising the watch's nicely balanced overall proportions. More complex to machine than the usual sapphire crystals, they maximise the depth of the dial opening, allowing light to pour in from the top and sides while creating

exquisite shimmering reflections playing across the dial.

The watch comes in a special presentation box alongside a miniature reproduction of the legendary accessory that inspired it. As the ultimate signature of the collaboration, the watch's sapphire crystal case-back is adorned with the famous 'owl' helmet and bears the words Time Attack to recall the spirit of competition and performance instilled into the design details of the Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph JX7 model. This term designates a qualifying race in which drivers are timed over several laps to determine their position on a race's starting grid. It's a stage that proved decisive for the outcome of a competition, even though Jacky Ickx demonstrated in the course of his career that he was capable of crossing the start line last and the finish line first in a given race.

Commenting on this new collaboration, Jacky Ickx said: "The JX7 chronograph is the expression of a friendship born 36 years ago through our shared passion for exceptional timepieces. For me, it's an opportunity to pay tribute to all the artisans who have contributed to the creation of this beautiful timepiece, so dear to my heart."

A watch 'engine' with certified precision

The exhibition case-back



properties and a pattern recalling the marks left on the road by cars driven to extremes.

Chopard is thus continuing a long tradition of rubber sports straps. In 1998, following up on the joint idea that struck Karl-Friedrich Scheufele and Jacky Ickx while they were taking part in the 1000 Miglia at the wheel of a Porsche 550RS A Spyder, the Manufacture's workshops were among the first to use this highly creative material on the straps of Mille Miglia chronographs. This trend, which the collection has continued to fuel, has since spread far and wide across the watchmaking scene.

The 'tyre' strap has now swapped out its traditional black colour for a blue matching the dial of the Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph JX7. This chromatic unity once again accentuates the ultimate elegance of these creations designed by two gentlemen drivers.

The Mille Miglia collection

As all watch and car enthusiasts know, both cars and watches are marvels of engineering. Chopard is even more keenly aware of this kinship, as the Maison has been inextricably linked with the world of classic racing since it became world sponsor and official timekeeper of the famous Italian 1000 Miglia race in 1988.

A bracelet inspired by the automobile world

This partnership - the longest in history between a watchmaker and a motorsport event - gave rise to the Mille Miglia collection, capturing the entire essence and spirit of what Enzo Ferrari called "the most beautiful race in the world". Perpetuating with each new edition the thrilling emotions of the 1000 Miglia, Chopard has constantly pushed the limits of its creativity.

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CMU-Q celebrates largest graduating class

Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar (CMU-Q), a Qatar Foundation (QF) partner university, celebrated the Class of 2024 at a ceremony in Education City yesterday.

The class is the largest in the CMU-Q's history, with 120 graduates, a statement said.

HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad al-Thani, Vice-Chairperson and chief executive of the QF, attended the ceremony to congratulate the new graduates who hail from 31 countries.

US ambassador Timmy Davis was also in attendance.

CMU-Q dean Michael Trick and CMU president Farnam Jahanian addressed the gathering.

Two graduates represented the Class of 2024 during the ceremony.

Diram Tabaa read the Arabic poem, *Students of Knowledge and Virtue* by Khalil Gibran.

Abdulrahman Darwish Fakhroo was the student speaker. The CMU-Q announced a number of awards during the ceremony. Christos Kapoutsis, associate teaching professor of computer science, received the Meritorious Teaching Award.

Five students received Outstanding Academic Achievement Awards for plac-



ing first in their respective programmes: Adel Fergatova (biological sciences), Sweetey Devnani (business administration), Ulan Seitkaliyev and Diram Tabaa (computer science), and Huda Baig (information systems).

The dean also recognised the four Qatar Campus Scholars - Ahmad Alhal-

laq, Yahya Elkhatib, Amiko Gogitidze, and Ulan Seitkaliyev - with Alhallaq and Seitkaliyev also named Andrew Carnegie Society Scholars.

The CMU-Q now has an alumni network of more than 1,300 graduates who live and work in Qatar and around the world, the statement added.



Shura Council discusses Digital Agenda 2030

The Shura Council held its regular weekly meeting yesterday at the Tamim bin Hamad Hall under the chairmanship of HE the Speaker of the Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem. During the session, HE the Secretary-General of Shura Council Nayef bin Mohamed al-Mahmoud read out the session's agenda and approved the minutes of the previous session.

The session was attended by HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohamed bin Ali al-Mannaai at the invitation of HE al-Ghanem to elaborate on the ministry's plans for digital transformation in the services offered by ministries and government bodies, along with the accomplishments of the e-government and its enhanced infrastructure, and the ministry's efforts to encourage investment in the information and communications technology sector.

HE the Speaker of the Council and other members of the council welcomed HE al-Mannaai and applauded the efforts being undertaken by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) to advance the communication and IT sector and encourage investment, and the efforts to accomplish digital transformation in all services afforded to citizens, in pursuit of achieving the development goals and the Qatar National Vision 2030.

HE al-Mannaai presented overviews of the ministry's digital transformation strategy.

He said that the strategy focuses on key themes that include upgrading the digital infrastructure and spurring innovation in the e-government services.

The minister noted that the 2030 Digital Agenda strives to upgrade government efficiency and focus on the services offered to the public.

On the MCIT's strategic objectives, HE al-Mannaai said that they entail promoting the level of government services to individuals and companies, as well as government administrative processes and increasing the level of transparency and community engagement through government openness.

He noted the implementation of three major projects in the first phase to enhance community participation, which include the electronic participation project and the open data portal project.

In terms of policy and legislation, HE al-Mannaai spoke of the ministry's efforts to enhance information and communications technology by crafting appropriate laws, policies and standards in support of these efforts.

He added that the MCIT has achieved most prominent milestones and performance indicators to evaluate those achievements, and affirmed that the ministry has succeeded in increasing the percentage of government services available online, and improving the user experience.

The minister underlined that performance indicators include providing a periodic evaluation of the extent to which the Qatar Digital Government achieves its vision and goals, including monitoring digital services and evaluating digital transformation in government agencies.

HE al-Mannaai stressed that the launch

of the Digital Agenda 2030 is a critical event that reflects the comprehensive digital transformation within the country, enhancing Qatar's position as a pioneering global hub for technology and innovation.

HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology indicated that the digital agenda includes a number of programmes that fall under six strategic pillars that support foreign investment, the government sector, entrepreneurship, the private sector, and attract the world's leading information technology companies and digital talents.

He cited the digital factory as one of the important initiatives launched by the MCIT to provide a unified digital platform aimed at relaunching government services and provide them interactively to citizens and residents.

Regarding digital transformation, HE al-Mannaai indicated that the digital transformation of government services includes modernising and improving government services to become more effective and easy to access online, including the reduction of paper procedures.

On the matter of encouraging investment and educating society about the uses of technology, he said that the MCIT is working to encourage investment in the information and communications technology sector, and is carrying out campaigns to educate society about the importance of using technology and familiarising it with the pros and cons of its use, through training and awareness programmes, and holding workshops for both individuals and companies.

On supporting innovation and emerging projects, the minister stressed that supporting innovation and encouraging emerging projects is one of the main goals of the MCIT's strategy.

HE al-Mannaai pointed out that the ministry has launched investment funds aimed at supporting promising projects in their early stages, in addition to working to remove regulatory obstacles that prevent the growth of these projects and enhancing the business environment to make them more attractive for investment.

The Shura Council members voiced their appreciation of the MCIT's efforts.

At the conclusion of the presentation, HE the Speaker of the Shura Council al-Ghanem, on behalf of the Council members, expressed his thanks and appreciation to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani for the interest given by His Highness to the information and communications technology sector, which reflected in the establishment of a ministry for this vital and important sector, as well as the establishment of a special national agency for cybersecurity to strengthen the country's efforts in seeking digital transformation.

HE al-Ghanem stressed the Shura Council's keenness to support the MCIT's efforts and provide everything that would contribute to developing the information technology infrastructure, enhance digital transformation efforts and facilitate and digitise government procedures to achieve the Qatar National Vision 2030.

- QNA

Cote d'Ivoire premier meets Qatar's envoy



Cote d'Ivoire Prime Minister Robert Beugre Mamebe has met Qatar's ambassador Mubarak bin Hussein al-Marri. Their meeting discussed relations between the two countries. - QNA



MSDF launches initiative to qualify trainers within First Year Marriage Programme

The Ministry of Social Development and Family (MSDF), in collaboration with the Social & Sport Contribution Fund (DAAM), the Family Consulting Centre (Wifaq) and Tarbeya Centre, inaugurated the National Programme to Qualify Certified Trainers within First Year Marriage Programme, which aims to strengthen the early self-awareness, familial values, prepare those who are about to marry from both genders and create a tight-knit marital relationship. The First Year Marriage Programme primarily targets higher secondary school and college students, young people from both genders who are about to marry, emerging families, newlyweds, married couples wishing to promote their marital lives, as well as parents who seek to impart knowledge to their children, the MSDF stated. - QNA

CGB honours Ashghal



The Civil Service and Government Development Bureau (CGB) has honoured the Public Works Authority (Ashghal), represented by its Human Resources Department, for achieving the Qatarisation target for the second year in a row. The honouring took place during a ceremony held on the sidelines of the 7th human resources managers workshop organised by the CGB.

Police Academy wins approval to launch Masters Programme in Security Leadership

The Police Academy has obtained approval from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) to establish a Master's Programme in Security Leadership, following the completion of licensing standards and requirements for the programme.

The programme is scheduled to commence in the 2024/2025 academic year in collaboration with academic and security institutions inside and outside the country. The programme targets a specialised category of officers who meet the required criteria.

Graduates of the programme, upon successful completion of the requirements, will be awarded a Master's Degree in Security Leadership accredited by the MoEHE. - QNA

Islamic Summit Conference commends Qatar's efforts for development, global peace

The final communique of the 15th Islamic Summit Conference of the Member States of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) noted Qatar's efforts in the humanitarian, legal, and economic fields to maintain international peace and security and supporting the development process, as well as its permanent cooperation with the United Nations.

The communique also welcomed the inauguration of the United Nations House in Qatar, which serves as a centre for international work in the region.

The Islamic Summit Conference took place in Banjul on May 4-5. - QNA

DIBF launches mobile children's library

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Ministry of Culture has launched a mobile children's library as the first activity of the 33rd Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), to be held from May 9-15 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) with the slogan *With knowledge, civilisations are built*.

The mobile library is a miniature model so that children can have an experience similar to the exhibition.

The bus, which will display children's books and visual materials to provide them with a diverse cognitive experience, will travel throughout the country, visiting schools and academies.



There is also an area designated for displaying the exhibition's visual materials with a group of authors and publishers.

The DIBF pays special attention to children's activities, through the "Children's Oasis", which opens the horizon for them to learn, think and create in an attractive entertaining way through several interactive activities.

The DIBF will be open to visitors from 9am-10pm, except on Fridays (3pm-10pm).

QNL plans events, activities at DIBF

The Qatar National Library (QNL) will hold a lineup of events and activities in its pavilion at the 33rd Doha International Book Fair (DIBF).

The DIBF will be held at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) on May 9-18.

The activities will include an interactive social media picture-taking and heritage filter selecting activity, an escape room involving working out proverbs and puzzles, a virtual reality tour of the library, a journey with dinosaurs, and a space exploration trip.

Participants will embark on a journey to learn about the Arab and Moroccan traveller Mohamed bin Abdullah al-Tanji, more commonly known as Ibn Battuta, in addition to an activity through which participants will explore the treasures of the Heritage Library's collection, including its rare pictures, books, manuscripts, documents and maps that tell the stories of ancient cities visited by Ibn Battuta. - QNA

Fanar opens new branch at Asian Town

The Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zaid Al Mahmoud Islamic Cultural Centre (Fanar) at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has opened its new branch in Asian Town to serve thousands of workers, a statement said.

The opening ceremony took place in the presence of Fanar director Dr Saleh bin Ali al-Marri, department heads, Muslim community co-ordinators co-operating with the centre, and a representative of the Nass Holding Group, which is responsible for operating the facilities and services of the Asian Town centre.

Dr al-Marri said that the new centre will serve Asian Town's residents and the surrounding areas.



"It allows them a better opportunity to learn about Islamic culture," Dr al-Marri said.

A video film explaining the sections of the new branch and

its importance was screened during the ceremony.

This was followed by the official opening of the branch in the presence of co-ordinators of Ethiopian and Indian com-



Fanar director Dr Saleh bin Ali al-Marri.

munities along with representatives from Urdu, Filipino and Tamil communities.

The new branch of Fanar contains nine classrooms, each with a capacity of 20-30 students. There is also a lecture hall that can accommodate 500 people.

The new branch holds programmes that offers Islamic teachings for reverts.

It also offers Sharia, behavioural and Arabic courses.

**CHAIRMAN**

Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

Deputy Managing Editor

K T Chacko

P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar
 editor@gulf-times.com
 44350478 (News),
 44466404 (Sport),
 44466636 (Home delivery)
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Apple has big AI ambitions – at a lower cost than its rivals

For most of the past year and a half, Apple Chief Executive Tim Cook has fielded questions from Wall Street analysts about his plans for artificial intelligence (AI) amid grumbling that the iPhone maker has no AI story to tell.

After the company reported quarterly earnings on Thursday, Cook insisted that Apple will have concrete details about its plans for AI to talk about very soon.

“We continue to feel very bullish about our opportunity in generative AI and we’re making significant investments,” Cook told Reuters in an interview, noting the company has spent \$100bn over the past five years on research and development.

Apple’s Big Tech rivals have spent comparable or even greater amounts on R&D over the same period, but they have also been spending heavily to build data centres to host AI services.

Microsoft shelled out \$14bn in the most recent quarter on capex, with Alphabet’s Google not far behind, at \$12bn. Meta Platforms told investors last week to expect as much as \$40bn in capital expenditures this year.

Apple thinks different. Its capital expenditure for all of 2023 was just over \$10bn.

Shares of Meta, Google and Microsoft – all of which make money selling software or advertising services – have all soared to record highs

Apple, which makes most of its money selling consumer devices, has paid a price for that stance most of this year, with its shares falling 10% as investors worried the company was falling behind in the AI race.

On Friday, Apple share rose 6.4%, recovering some of their recent losses.

Shares of Meta, Google and Microsoft – all of which make money selling software or advertising services – have all soared to record highs as the companies grapple to dominate the emerging AI landscape, though investors have

also flinched at skyrocketing price tags for data centres and specialised processors required to train AI models.

Apple hinted on Thursday it won’t take the same tack. While Apple is expected to unveil new AI features at its annual software conference next month and overhaul its product lines with AI-ready chips, Chief Financial Officer Luca Maestri said Apple investors should not expect a huge change in how the company handles capital expenditures.

Responding to an analyst’s question, Maestri noted the company’s longstanding practice of splitting the cost of manufacturing tools with its suppliers, which has kept Apple’s costs down and its cash generation up for more than a decade.

“We do something similar on the data centre side,” Maestri said. “We have our own data centre capacity, and then we use capacity from third parties. It’s a model that has worked well for us historically, and we plan to continue along the same lines going forward.”

That could be just as well for Apple, because it remains unclear whether AI features such as chatbots that run directly on a device will spur users to buy new phones, tablets or laptops, which remain Apple’s biggest source of revenue and profits.

Ben Bajarin of Creative Strategies said that while better processors could serve as a “line in the sand” for some users who need AI tools for professional use, those features may not ignite a sales boom.

“It’ll be something that helps lift sales, but I don’t expect it to be super cycle,” Bajarin said. “You have to be careful to temper expectations.”

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The European Union’s new triumvirate

By **Sławomir Sierakowski**
Warsaw

Recent speeches by French President Emmanuel Macron and Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski show just how much European thinking has changed since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. With German Chancellor Olaf Scholz endorsing Macron’s basic message, a more dynamic, coherent foreign policy for the European Union may be at hand.

Macron himself has come a long way. Back in 2019, he famously warned that Nato was becoming “brain dead” and called for greater strategic autonomy for Europe, even openly contesting US policies (and not just those of the Trump administration). While many thought he had blundered, his misdiagnosis had positive consequences. After all, even if Nato wasn’t brain dead, it was at least comatose, with most European members having disarmed since the Soviet Union’s collapse. Europe did need to learn to stand on its own two feet.

Since then, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine (following its seizure of Ukrainian territory in 2014) has revived Nato and even led to the alliance’s enlargement, with the recent addition of Finland and Sweden. Moreover, Europe has begun to devise its own joint defence policy, buying weapons collectively, coordinating more efficiently, and matching the United States in its military and economic support for Ukraine.

The main message of Macron’s latest speech was straightforward: “Our Europe is mortal. It can die.” This resonates with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk’s own warnings that Europe is now in a “pre-war era”

Moreover, by describing Europe as a common liberal-democratic project spanning from Lisbon to Odesa, Macron gave a strong nod to Ukraine’s eventual EU membership.

Europe faces threats not only to its security (from Russia), but also to its prosperity, owing to disruptions in global energy markets, US and Chinese protectionist and industrial policies, and other factors. In keeping with his tendency to launch revolutionary projects, Macron has now called for a doubling of the EU budget, with significant increases in public spending on artificial intelligence, quantum computing, space technologies, biotechnology, and energy.

That proposal is sure to upset the Germans, as are Macron’s ideas about creating European corporate “champions,” establishing a “European preference” in defence procurement, and assigning the European Central Bank an additional mandate to support growth, in addition to fighting inflation. And yet, something has changed in the recently deteriorating Franco-German relationship. Immediately after Macron’s speech, Scholz tweeted: “France and Germany both want Europe to remain strong. Your speech contains good ideas on how to achieve this,... Together we are moving the EU forward: politically and economically. For a sovereign and innovative EU. Long live Europe!”

In his own speech before the Polish Sejm (parliament) on April 25, Sikorski went even further. Like Macron, he believes that, “The Union must become a geopolitical actor equal to other international powers,” and he has called for reforms to move the European Council

away from strictly unanimous decision-making. “Poland and the Polish people deserve to be one of the leaders in the process of further European integration,” he declared. “A leader is, by definition, someone who can achieve their goals in a way that will win them supporters. ... Poland has this potential.”

If Macron and Sikorski’s speeches rhymed, that is partly because Polish foreign policy is finally coming back into alignment with that of its closest allies. The broad transatlantic consensus is that defence policy must stand on two legs: American and European. This realisation has dawned even on Germany, which is now Ukraine’s most important European supporter.

For Poland (and the Baltic states), Europe’s strategic sea change is obviously a welcome development, given their proximity to Russia. It was therefore gratifying to hear Sikorski repeatedly and explicitly mention Polish-German rapprochement in his speech.

Sikorski also outlined Poland’s priorities for its presidency of the EU, which starts at the beginning of 2025. It will focus on security and the supranational fight against populism. Poland has much credibility and soft power on the latter issue, given its recent experience enduring the illiberal Law and Justice (PiS) government, before voters rejected it decisively in last October’s election.

The restoration of normality since then has felt like a slowly grinding revolution, because the Polish electorate remains effectively divided into two parts with opposite foreign policies. Even Poland’s “Second Republic” (1918-39), which was quickly pieced together at World War I’s end to right the

eighteenth-century partitions by Prussia and the Habsburg and Russian empires, did not have such opposing policies. While warring Polish factions clipped each other’s wings, their strategic outlooks were broadly complementary. Later, everyone agreed that Józef Piłsudski, the leader of the Socialists, gave Poland its eastern border, and Roman Dmowski, the leader of the Nationalists, who participated in the Versailles conference, gave the country its western border.

Whatever one thinks of Dmowski, he had a strategic concept, and did not merely pursue a foreign policy of sheer resentment, as PiS’s leader Jarosław Kaczyński has done vis-à-vis Germany. Historically, when the Germans were clearly the biggest threat to Poland, seeking dialogue with Russia made a kind of sense (odd as it is now to think that the Polish right was traditionally pro-Russian).

Today, the roles are reversed: Russia is the main threat, and Germany is an obvious potential friend and partner for Poland. To continue leaning on 1930s-era clichés about the Germans is not only anachronistic; it is dangerous idiocy. The map on which Kaczyński operates exists only in his head.

The new messages emanating from Europe augur a reactivation of the post-1991 Weimar Triangle (France, Germany, and Poland). But it will no longer be just a regional or symbolic alliance; rather, should it hold, it will become the new engine of the EU, as well as a new pillar of support for Polish sovereignty. — Project Syndicate

• Sławomir Sierakowski, founder of the Krytyka Polityczna movement, is a Mercator senior fellow.



French President Emmanuel Macron (left), Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk (centre) and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz: the Weimar Triangle states are among Ukraine’s greatest political, military and financial supporters.



Judge threatens Trump with jail over continued gag order violations

AFP/Reuters
New York

The New York judge presiding over Donald Trump's historic criminal trial has again found the former US president in contempt of a gag order and threatened to jail him for further violations.

Trump, 77, is charged with falsifying business records to reimburse his lawyer, Michael Cohen, for a \$130,000 payment made to an adult entertainment actress just days ahead of the 2016 election against Hillary Clinton.

Judge Juan Merchan held Trump in contempt of court and fined him \$1,000 yesterday for a violation of the gag order prohibiting him from publicly attacking witnesses, jurors or court staff and their relatives.

Trump was also fined a total of \$9,000 last week.

However, Merchan said these penalties were not serving as a "deterrent" and he would have to consider jail time for further violations.

"As much as I do not want to impose a jail sanction ... I want you to understand I will," Merchan told Trump, who sat silently at the defence table dressed in a dark blue suit and red tie.

"At the end of the day I have a job to do and part of that job is to maintain the dignity of the justice system," the judge said, calling Trump's defiance a "direct attack on the rule of law".

India election chiefs warn parties against AI deepfakes

India's election authorities have warned political parties against using artificial intelligence (AI) to create deepfake videos and spread misinformation during the country's ongoing general election.

Millions of voters will head to polling stations today in the third of seven voting phases in the world's most populous country.

A rash of deepfake and doctored videos and misinformation have circulated on social media in recent weeks.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) warned against "misuse of AI-based tools to create deepfakes that distort information or propagate misinformation". - AFP

Mali junta launches national talks to seek an end to crisis

AFP
Dakar

Junta leader Colonel Assimi Goita has launched the national phase of inter-Malian dialogue in a bid to find a domestic response to the country's years-long crisis.

The "inter-Malian dialogue for peace and national reconciliation" follows local consultations and is due to wrap up on Friday.

A major part of the opposition has boycotted the process, accusing the colonels of exploiting the dialogue to bolster their increasingly contested legitimacy and stay in power.

The West African nation has been ruled by juntas since back-to-back coups in 2020 and 2021, with the military promising to hand over power through the ballot box in February.

However, they have postponed elections until an unspecified date, citing a precarious security situation aggravated by religious militant attacks.

In April, the military authorities suspended all party political activities after muzzling opponents, journalists and human rights activists.

Goita insisted that the dialogue framework had been "entirely inclusive" in line with his wish for all Malians to "take part and express themselves freely".

"We have decided that Malians will get together without intermediaries to draw up a new structure for peace," the colonel said during a ceremony broadcast on national television.

The authorities are counting on the dialogue to strengthen their peace efforts after ending a major 2015 agreement with armed separatist groups in the north.

The deal was considered internationally as a strong stabilising factor, but a section of public opinion saw it as a foreign-led attempt at partition.

The separatists took up arms against Bamako again last year and the junta withdrew from the deal.

Russia announces nuke drills, threatens UK military targets

AFP/Reuters
Moscow

Russia has announced that its troops stationed near Ukraine would run nuclear weapons drills and threatened to strike UK military targets outside the embattled country, citing what it said was an escalation in Western sabre-rattling.

The defence ministry announced the drills and also said Russian forces had captured two villages in eastern Ukraine, where outgunned and outmanned Ukrainian troops have been struggling to hold their positions.

Officials in the border region of Belgorod meanwhile said that Ukrainian aerial attacks had left at least seven people dead and wounded more than 30, including several children.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who ordered the nuclear drills, has upped his nuclear rhetoric since ordering his army into Ukraine in 2022, warning in February there was a "real" risk of nuclear war.

The defence ministry gave no date for the exercises, but said they would involve the air force, navy and troops stationed near Ukraine.

It said they were aimed at ensuring Russian territorial integrity in the face of Western "threats".

The Kremlin specified that the exercises were a response to statements by French President

Emmanuel Macron and British officials.

Russia has in recent days hit out at Macron for telling *The Economist* magazine that he was "not ruling anything out" in the West's response to the conflict in Ukraine, including sending troops to the country.

It has also blasted UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron for saying Kyiv that has the right to strike targets inside Russia.

"They are talking about the readiness and even the intention of sending armed contingents to Ukraine - that is, in fact, to put Nato soldiers in front of the Russian military," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. "This is a completely new round of escalating tensions. It is unprecedented and requires special measures."

The Russian foreign ministry meanwhile said that it had summoned the UK's ambassador in Moscow and warned him that if Ukraine used British weapons to attack Russia, that Moscow could hit UK military targets in Ukraine "and beyond".

It also summoned France's envoy after "increasingly belligerent statements" by Paris, following Macron's comments.

"The Russian side presented its assessment that Paris's destructive and provocative line is leading to an escalation of the conflict".

Ukrainian forces have been dependent on Western military aid to battle Russia but the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato) has

said it will not send troops into Ukraine.

Russia's defence ministry said troops from the Southern Military District, which borders Ukraine and includes the occupied Ukrainian territories, will take part in the drills.

"During the exercise, a set of measures will be taken to practise the preparation and use of non-strategic nuclear weapons," it said in a statement.

Non-strategic nuclear weapons, also known as tactical nuclear weapons, are designed for use on the battlefield and can be delivered via missiles.

Russia and the United States are by far the world's biggest nuclear powers, holding more than 10,600 of the world's 12,100 nuclear warheads.

China has the third-largest nuclear arsenal, followed by France and Britain.

Russia has about 1,558 non-strategic nuclear warheads, according to the Federation of American Scientists, though there is uncertainty about exact figures for such weapons due to a lack of transparency.

No power has used nuclear weapons in war since the United States unleashed the first atomic bomb attacks on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

Major nuclear powers routinely check their nuclear weapons but very rarely publicly link such exercises to specific perceived threats in the way that Russia has.

Building collapse in South Africa leaves two dead, dozens trapped

AFP
Cape Town

A multi-storey building under construction in South Africa's coastal city of George collapsed yesterday, killing at least two people and trapping some 50 workers in the rubble, police said.

Two of the 22 people rescued from the building and sent by ambulance to hospitals in the region succumbed to their injuries, city authorities announced in the evening.

A construction crew of 75 people were on the site at the time of the collapse, city spokeswoman Chantel Edwards said.

In addition to the people hospitalised and the two dead, no information was yet available for the 50 or

so others still trapped under the rubble.

Mario Ferreira, spokesperson for the charity Gift of the Givers, assisting at the site of the incident, told AFP that rescue workers had "communication with some of the people under the rubble".

The five-storey building, including an underground parking lot, collapsed in the early afternoon, for reasons still undetermined.

Photographs shared by the municipality showed a flattened construction site with multiple rescue services present.

The building's broken roof was still clearly visible atop the pile of rubble as high-powered lights lit up the site.

"There have been people taken out, seriously injured," said Ferreira.

Rescue operations continued into the evening at the site which had been cordoned off.

Charles marks first anniversary of coronation

AFP
London

Britain's King Charles III marked yesterday the first anniversary of his coronation following a difficult year that has seen a cancer diagnosis and continuing tensions with his estranged son Prince Harry.

To celebrate the occasion a 41-gun salute rang out from Green Park next to Buckingham Palace at noon (1100 GMT), followed an hour later with 62 volleys fired from another central London location.

No official events, however, were planned with the milestone coming less than a week after King Charles resumed public duties since his diagnosis.

He visited fellow cancer patients at a London hospital on Tuesday after doctors said they were "very encouraged" by his progress.

The 75-year-old monarch, who has not disclosed the type of cancer he has, was also reportedly keen to mark the day with minimal "fuss" given the link between his accession and the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II.

The Archbishop of Canterbury



Members of the Honourable Artillery Company fire a 62 Gun Royal Salute, to mark the first anniversary of the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, from Tower Wharf, by Tower Bridge in central London.

Justin Welby, who crowned King Charles a year ago at Westminster Abbey, praised his "sense of duty".

"The past year has presented the king with some great personal challenges. But I have been struck by his continued sense of duty, having recently returned to royal engagements following treatment," he said. "His openness in sharing his condition has been characteristic of his

willingness to help and support others."

The anniversary comes as an Ipsos poll for the *Daily Mail* saw King Charles's personal popularity rating rise slightly to 56%.

His son and heir Prince William and his wife Catherine, the Princess of Wales, were the most popular members of the royal family on 69% each, up 8-10% since last April.

Catherine, 42, also known as

Kate, announced her own shock cancer diagnosis in late March following abdominal surgery which had already forced her to withdraw from public life.

The double blow of both Charles's and Catherine's ill health has left the royal family facing a shortage of frontline royals, with William also stepping back for a while to help care for his wife and family.

Queen Camilla, 76, stepped in to take over many of her husband's engagements while King Charles's sister Princess Anne and his youngest brother Prince Edward have also taken on more prominent roles.

However, King Charles and Catherine's absence was felt even more keenly as the king's younger son Harry is no longer a working royal.

Harry dramatically relocated to North America in 2020 with his wife, former actress Meghan Markle.

Harry will return to the UK this week to attend a ceremony marking the 10th anniversary of his Invictus Games for disabled military veterans.

The domestic PA agency reported that he was "likely to be reunited with (King) Charles" at some point during his visit.

Philippines won't use water cannon on Chinese ships

President Ferdinand Marcos said yesterday that the Philippines would not respond in kind to China's deployment of water cannon against its vessels, ruling out the use of "offensive" equipment as Manila asserts its sovereignty in the disputed South China Sea.

Beijing has dispatched hundreds of coastguard and other vessels to press its claims over most of the waterway despite an international tribunal ruling that its assertion has no legal basis.

In the latest confrontation on April 30, Manila said the China coastguard damaged

a Philippine coastguard ship and another government vessel with high-pressure water cannon as the boats were bringing supplies to Filipino fishermen at Scarborough Shoal.

"We will not follow the Chinese coastguard and the Chinese vessels down that road," Marcos said yesterday when asked if Manila would start using the water cannons on its own coast guard vessels to retaliate. "It's not the mission of our navy, our coast guard to start or to increase tensions ... we have no intention of attacking anyone with water cannons or any other such offensive (equipment)."

Marcos added that "the last thing" the Philippines wanted was "to raise the tensions" in the disputed waters.

Asked about Marcos's comments at a regular briefing yesterday, a spokesperson for Beijing's foreign ministry urged Manila to "stop spreading false information that misleads the international community" and "stop forming cliques and showing off military force".

Marcos said yesterday that the Philippines would continue responding to South China Sea incidents through diplomatic means. - AFP

Australia denounces China over 'unsafe' aerial confrontation

A Chinese fighter jet endangered an Australian military helicopter during an "unsafe" and "unacceptable" confrontation over the Yellow Sea, Australia said yesterday.

The Chinese air force J-10 jet dropped flares above and several hundred metres ahead of an Australian MH60R Seahawk helicopter, which was on a routine flight on Saturday in the Yellow Sea as part of an op-

eration to enforce sanctions against North Korea, Defence Minister Richard Marles said in a statement.

The helicopter, flying from destroyer HMAS Hobart, dodged the flares, but the possible impact would have been "significant".

"This is a very serious incident, it was unsafe and it is completely unacceptable," he said. "We have formally expressed our

concerns about this incident, and formally expressed that this was both unsafe and unprofessional."

The confrontation put the aircraft and those on board at risk, although no one was hurt, the Department of Defence said in a separate statement.

China's ministry of defence did not immediately respond to a request for comment. - Reuters

Reuters wins two Pulitzers

Reuters
Washington

Reuters won two Pulitzer Prizes yesterday, taking home the breaking news photography award for searing images of the Israel-Gaza conflict as well as the national reporting award for a series of investigations into Elon Musk's manufacturing empire.

ProPublica won the coveted public service award for stories detailing undisclosed gifts and trips that US Supreme Court justices, particularly Clarence Thomas, accepted from wealthy donors.

The *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* each captured three prizes.

The annual Pulitzers, first presented in 1917, are the most prestigious honours in US journalism.

Reuters photographers - often working at great risk to their personal safety - have produced thousands of images documenting the war between Israel and Hamas, which began with the events of October 7 attack that killed 1,200 people.

Since then, Israel's retaliatory offensive in the Gaza Strip has killed more than 34,000 people, including many children, and displaced the majority of its 2.3mn residents.

The winning photos include an image taken in October by Reuters photographer Mohamed Salem, depicting a Palestinian woman cradling the body of her five-year-old niece in Gaza.

That photograph previously won the prestigious 2024 World Press Photo of the Year.

Reuters's Musk series, *The Musk Industrial Complex*, revealed a spate of worker injuries and one death at Musk's rocket company SpaceX and the mistreatment of animals at his brain-implant company, Neuralink.

In addition, Reuters found that electric car pioneer Tesla covered up dangerous defects, rigged its cars' dashboard driving-range estimates and shared sensitive images recorded by its vehicles without drivers' knowledge.

The series prompted investigations in the US and Europe and calls for action from US lawmakers.

Reuters shared the national reporting prize with the *Washington Post*, which won for its examination of the AR-15 rifle and its role in US gun violence.

The *New York Times* won the international reporting prize for its coverage of the Israel-Gaza conflict, while the newspaper's Hannah Dreier was awarded the investigative reporting prize for exposing the use of migrant child labour in the US.

Lookout Santa Cruz, a digital-only local news outlet, won the breaking news reporting prize for its coverage of catastrophic flooding that struck California in January 2023.

The Associated Press won for feature photography for its coverage of migrants trekking from Latin America to the US.

The prizes are administered by Columbia University. They are named for newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer, who died in 1911 and left money to create the awards and establish a journalism school at the university.

Mathaf presents 'Khalid Albaih: Shahid' exhibition

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art opened its doors to the "Khalid Albaih: Shahid" exhibition yesterday, showcasing the poignant work of Sudanese artist and political cartoonist Khalid Albaih.

Running until August 10, the exhibition offers visitors an immersive and thought-provoking experience, inviting them to reflect on their role as witnesses to ongoing tragedies, particularly that the artist described as "an ethnic cleansing in Gaza".

Albaih's installation, titled *Shahid*, which translates to "witness" in Arabic, confronts viewers with the stark realities of the conflict in Gaza.

Through interactive audiovisual elements, the exhibition compels visitors to contemplate their response to the crisis and recognise the humanity behind the staggering statistics of lives lost.

During a media tour, Albaih highlighted the aim of his installation, saying: "In this one (installation), I ask the viewer to stand and to say these people's names and be involved in those images that we all see."

"There are a few images that we know who these people are, but there are 6,647 names that we'd never seen their pictures, we don't know who they are," he continued.

"But here, we say their names and we stand witness to their lives ... if the world can't see Gaza with all the evidence coming out of there, how can they see Sudan; which means if they can see Gaza, they can definitely see us and all of us," he added.

The artist stressed the impor-

ance of acknowledging the individual lives lost, urging viewers to engage with the names and stories behind the images that often circulate on social media.

Curated by Fatma Mostafawi and Hadeel al-Kohaji, the exhibition features four powerful digital illustrations displayed on a mirrored wall.

These illustrations capture pivotal moments from the conflict, drawing attention to the human cost of violence and displacement.

Visitors' reflections in the mirror merge with the depictions of victims, reinforcing their role as witnesses to the tragedy in Gaza.

The exhibition incorporates a recorded recitation of the names and ages of martyrs, sourced from the Palestinian ministry of health.

Albaih reiterated the urgency of bearing witness to these lives, highlighting the global community's responsibility to confront injustice and amplify marginalised voices.

Speaking to *Gulf Times*, Mathaf director Zeina Arida underlined the timeliness of the exhibition amid ongoing crises, noting that the artist informed her about the urgency and the pressing nature of his task - a factor that motivated Mathaf's decision to organise the exhibition.

Welcoming Albaih's initiative, she cited the artist's clear vision and trusted his direction, saying: "Khalid is a politically engaged artist who brings his two-dimensional work to three-dimensional installations, addressing urgent issues with clarity and vision."

Arida expressed her pride in debuting Albaih's exhibition at Mathaf, citing the museum's dedication to highlighting a diverse range of Arab artistry and tackling urgent social and political issues.



Sudanese artist and political cartoonist Khalid Albaih interacting with the media at Mathaf yesterday. PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam

Left: Mathaf director Zeina Arida.



The exhibition features four digital illustrations displayed on a mirrored wall.



Albaih stressed the importance of acknowledging the individual lives lost.

Global witnessing amidst launch of 'Shahid' exhibition

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Sudanese artist and political cartoonist Khalid Albaih's "Shahid" exhibition shines a spotlight on the interconnected nature of the ongoing crises in Gaza and Sudan, and the urgent need for collective witnessing.

The artist's powerful installation, which opened yesterday at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, confronts viewers with the stark realities of conflict and displacement in Gaza while drawing attention to the neglect faced by Sudan in Western media narratives.

"We are all aware of Sudan's neglect by Western media, particularly during the simul-

taneous devastations in Gaza and Sudan over the past year," Albaih said in a statement. "This disregard of Sudan can largely be attributed to Western media's struggle to simplify the country's multifaceted issues into black-and-white narratives, overlooking its interconnectedness with the same regional powers."

"In my interactive installation *Shahid*, which means 'witness' in Arabic, I aim to highlight a few of the early viral images from Gaza, which were often quickly forgotten as the world witnessed wave after wave of horrific imagery from the ongoing massacres," he said.

"Additionally, practical challenges, like limited Internet access on the ground in Sudan, contribute to the scarcity of footage available for use by the media," Albaih added. "Amidst

my constant search for news on Sudan online, like many around the world, I became a firsthand witness to Gazans documenting their own genocide."

The exhibition invites visitors to immerse in the experiences of those affected by conflict.

"Through this act of solidarity with Gaza, I also stand in solidarity with Sudan and other overlooked countries in conflict in the Global South. I firmly believe that only when the world sees the well-documented genocide in Gaza, will it see us all," he said.

Albaih's work challenges mainstream narratives and calls for a reevaluation of how global crises are perceived and addressed.

Through art, the artist advocates for solidarity, empathy, and action in the face of adversity.

She lauded the artist's ability to provoke meaningful dialogue through his immersive installations, which challenge viewers to confront uncomfortable truths.

"It is with great pride that we unveil Khalid Albaih's exhibition at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, reflecting Mathaf's role as a platform for regional artists to

showcase their visions," Arida said. "Since its inception, Mathaf has always been committed to illuminating the diverse tapestry of Arab artistry, covering unique, im-

portant causes and shedding light on the way societies are structured as it interrogates the role art plays in our local and regional contexts," she said in a statement.



The BFA + MFA Exhibition 2024 is a collective presentation of the unique and often convention-breaking works of VCUarts Qatar's senior students.



Several projects drew inspiration from Qatar.

VCUarts Qatar's BFA + MFA Exhibition 2024 open to public

Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar), has opened its BFA + MFA Exhibition 2024 to the public.

Visitors can view the exhibition between 9am and 5pm, Saturday to Thursday, until May 12.

The exhibition is on the ground floor of VCUarts Qatar's campus within Education City and online at <https://qatar.vcu.edu/bfamfa-thesis-2024/>

The exhibition's formal launch on Sunday was attended by key stakeholders from Qatar's creative sector, and family and friends of the graduating students.

The show is a collective presentation of the unique and often convention-breaking works of VCUarts Qatar's senior students from the undergraduate programmes of graphic design, interior design, painting and printmaking, and fashion design, as well as the

university's postgraduate programme in design. Culture, language, identity, mental health, physical well-being, and the environment were just some of the themes researched by the Class of 2024.

Some students explored the notion of cultural identity shaped through memories, highlighting history and heritage, while others examined the implications of displacement and colonisation.

The psychological effects of being a third-culture kid continued to be a popular topic for investigation.

This year, several projects explored health-related issues. Projects tackling obesity, maternal health, autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and digital over-use underscored the role of design in promoting well-being and addressing health concerns, lifestyle-induced and otherwise.

Further projects drew inspiration from Qatar: the country's unique marine biosphere and landscapes, ship-building heritage, and the history and significance of its banknotes and stamps.

Students used a variety of media, resources and tools that allowed them to incorporate techniques such as light, sound, video, animation, textile design, silk printing, fabrication technology, visual language, product, print and website design, typography, coding, interior graphics, printmaking, digital painting, screen-printing, lithography, computer programming, and photographic stencil techniques, in their final projects.

"This class began their studies with VCUarts Qatar through the early days of the pandemic and their artwork tells their story, inviting each of us along on their journey," said VCUarts Qatar dean Amir Ber-

bic. "The themes of displacement, colonisation and duality are found in some pieces, while others encourage exploration of the expat experience, and the questions surrounding the balance between utility, creativity, and personal artistic expression."

The day of the launch also saw prospective students visit the campus for "Hayakom", the traditional welcome accorded to students offered places at VCUarts Qatar, for the 2024 Fall semester.

Some members of the Class of 2024 have been recognised through international awards - such as the Telly Awards, the Venice TV Award, the International Property Awards, and the Red Dot Award - while others have had their work displayed at prestigious exhibitions and events in places such as Doha, Dubai, Milan, Venice, London, Berlin, Moscow, Paris, and Hong Kong.

Defiant Israel strikes Rafah despite Hamas ceasefire nod

From Page 1

In a statement, Netanyahu's office added that his war cabinet approved continuing an operation in Rafah. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged Israel and Hamas "to go the extra mile needed to make an agreement," his spokesman said.

An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity said the proposal that Hamas accepted was a watered-down version of an Egyptian offer and included elements that Israel could not accept.

"This would appear to be a ruse intended to make Israel look like the side refusing a deal," said the Israeli official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

But an official briefed on the peace talks, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said the offer Hamas accepted was effectively the same as one agreed at the end of April by Israel.

A US official familiar with truce negotiations told Reuters that Netanyahu and the war cabinet "have not appeared to approach the latest phase of negotiations in good faith."

US State Department spokesman Mat-

thew Miller said Washington would discuss the Hamas response with its allies in the coming hours, and a deal was "absolutely achievable".

"We want to get these hostages out, we want to get a ceasefire in place for six weeks, we want to increase humanitarian assistance," White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said, adding that reaching an agreement would be the "absolute best outcome".

More than 34,600 Palestinians have been killed in the conflict, according to Gaza health officials.

The UN has said that famine is imminent in the enclave.

Any truce would be the first pause in fighting since a week-long ceasefire in November, during which Hamas freed around half of the hostages.

Since then, all efforts to reach a new truce have foundered over Israel's insistence that it would discuss only a temporary pause.

Taher al-Nono, a Hamas official and adviser to Haniyeh, told Reuters that the proposal met the group's demands for reconstruction efforts in Gaza, return of

displaced Palestinians and a swap of Israeli hostages for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

The Hamas deputy chief in Gaza, Khalil al-Hayya, told Al Jazeera television that the proposal comprised three phases, each of six weeks, with Israel to pull its troops out of Gaza in the second phase (**see box on the right**).

Earlier yesterday, Israel ordered the evacuation of parts of Rafah, the city on the Egyptian border that has served as the last sanctuary for around half of Gaza's 2.3mn residents.

Israel's closest ally, the United States, has called on it not to assault Rafah, saying that it must not do so without a full plan in place to protect civilians there, which has yet to be presented.

Washington is committed to stopping Israel's Rafah attack, the US official said.

Israel said yesterday that it was conducting limited operations on the eastern part of Rafah.

That was being accompanied by massive air strikes, according to Palestinian residents.

"They have been firing since last night

What's in the 3-phase ceasefire deal

Palestinian group Hamas said yesterday it had agreed to a three-phased deal for a ceasefire and hostages-for-prisoners swap, although an Israeli official said the deal was not acceptable to Israel because terms had been "softened". Based on details announced so far by Hamas officials and an official briefed on the talks, the deal that the Palestinian group said it had agreed to included the following:

PHASE-1
○ 42-day ceasefire period
○ Hamas releases 33 Israeli

hostages in return for Israel releasing Palestinians from Israeli jails.
○ Israel partially withdraws troops from Gaza and allows free movement of Palestinians from south to north Gaza.

PHASE-2
○ Another 42-day period that features an agreement to restore a "sustainable calm" to Gaza, language that an official briefed on the talks said Hamas and Israel had agreed in order to take discussion of a "permanent

ceasefire" off the table.
○ The complete withdrawal of most Israeli troops from Gaza.
○ Hamas releases Israeli reservists and some soldiers in return for Israel releasing Palestinians from jail.

PHASE-3
○ The completion of exchanging bodies and starting the implementation of reconstruction according to the plan overseen by Qatar, Egypt and the United Nations.
○ Ending the complete blockade on the Gaza Strip.

and today after the evacuation orders, the bombardment became more intense because they want to frighten us to leave," Jaber Abu Nazly, a 40-year-old father of two, told Reuters via a chat app. "Others are wondering whether there is any place safe in the whole of Gaza."

Instructed by Arabic text messages,

phone calls, and flyers to move to what the Israeli military called an "expanded humanitarian zone" around 12 miles away, some Palestinian families began trundling away in chilly spring rain.

Some piled children and possessions onto donkey carts, while others left by pick-up or on foot through muddy streets.