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Resilient economy put Qatar on global stage, says PM

QNA
Doha

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani has affirmed that under the leadership and wisdom of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, embodied in the Qatar National Vision 2030, Qatar has successfully navigated significant challenges, leading to the flexibility that characterises its economy and positioning it competitively on the global stage, with efficient investment in natural resources and human energies.

Addressing the 4th Qatar Economic Forum, under the theme “A World Remade: Navigating the Year of Uncertainty,” HE Sheikh Mohamed said that the Qatari economy continues to achieve indicators reflecting its stability and prosperity, adding that the gross domestic product at constant prices until the third quarter of 2023 recorded growth of about 1.6% and this growth coincided with improvements in financial stability indicators, with the



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani addressing the 4th Qatar Economic Forum in Doha yesterday.

government adopting a flexible financial plan in response to fluctuations in energy prices.

He added that Qatar is on its way towards the final stages of Qatar National Vision 2030, with the government continuing to work on completing and enhancing Qatar's diverse economic infrastructure, driven by initiatives from both the local and foreign

private sectors, supported by a series of regulatory reforms and investment incentives, qualifying it to occupy an advanced position among the top 10 countries in terms of business environment.

HE Sheikh Mohamed further highlighted Qatar's transition towards comprehensive digital transformation through increased investment in technology, innovation, and artificial intelligence. To achieve this, Qatar has allocated a package of incentives worth QR9bn, and the country is hosting several sessions of the “Web Summit” conference for the first time in the Middle East and Africa to enhance partnerships with major investors and exchange expertise with technology leaders worldwide. Alongside this summit, the “Startup Qatar” project was launched, with more than 250 startups registered.

He also announced the launch of the “Al Fanar” Arabic Artificial Intelligence project, which will primarily focus on collecting quality data in the Arabic language, contributing to enriching large linguistic models and preserving the Arab identity.

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Amir patronises opening of 4th Qatar Economic Forum



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani patronised the opening of the 4th edition of Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg, which is held under the theme “A World Remade: Navigating the Year of Uncertainty” at Katara Towers – Fairmont Doha and Raffles Doha – yesterday morning.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani made the opening address. His Highness the Amir attended the inaugural panel discussion with HE Sheikh Mohamed, a panel with Polish President Andrzej Duda, and another panel with Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Anwar Ibrahim. The opening was attended by President Duda, President of Palau Surangel Whipps Jr., President-elect and Minister of Defence of Indonesia Gen. Prabowo Subianto, and Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Anwar Ibrahim. Also present were HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, HE the Shura Council Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, a number of ministers representing sisterly and friendly countries, and heads of the diplomatic missions accredited to Qatar, alongside high-ranking officials, parliamentarians, thinkers, economists, businessmen, media, and representatives of regional and international organisations. **(QNA) Page 2**

Amir welcomes guests of Qatar Economic Forum

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani welcomed the guests of the 4th Qatar Economic Forum, stressing that the forum has become a global platform for presenting constructive ideas.

In a post on His Highness' official account on X, the Amir welcomed the guests of the 4th Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg, wishing them success in crystallising the results of this significant forum, which has become a global platform for presenting constructive ideas on global economic and geopolitical issues as well as presenting innovative proposals to overcome the challenges presented. **(QNA)**

Amir appoints president of General Tax Authority

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani issued yesterday the Amiri Decision No 26 of 2024 appointing HE Khalifa bin Jassim al-Kuwari as President of the General Tax Authority. The decision is effective starting from its date of issue and is to be published in the official gazette. **(QNA)**

Israeli case: ICJ to hold public hearings

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) will hold public hearings on Thursday and Friday with regards to South Africa's request for the indication of additional provisional measures to be implemented by the Israeli entity, including withdrawing its military from Rafah. In a statement, the court indicated that South Africa will make the case tomorrow, in the Gaza genocide case, whereas Israel will deliver its response to the matter on Friday. **(QNA)**

‘Qatar will continue its efforts for Gaza ceasefire’

Qatar will continue its efforts to reach an agreement leading to the cessation of the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip, as long as there is an opportunity to achieve this goal, official spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majid bin Mohamed al-Ansari, said yesterday.

During the weekly media briefing, he highlighted that this Qatari stance has been repeatedly affirmed, and it was reiterated by HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, during his speech at the opening session of the fourth edition of ‘Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg.’

Dr al-Ansari pointed out that from day one, Qatari negotiators have not ceased their efforts to explore and open all doors to reach an agreement, emphasising the

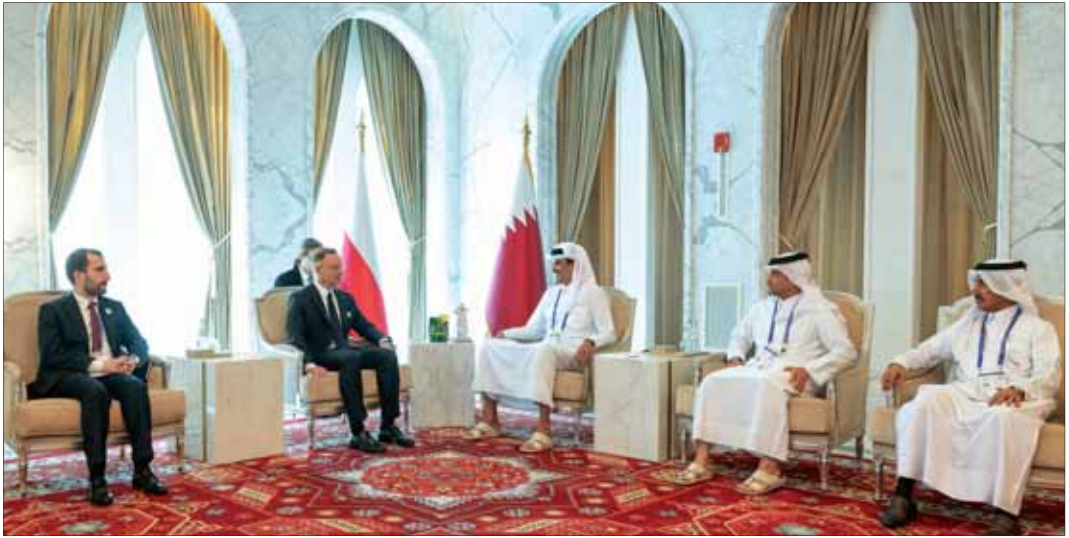


Dr Majid bin Mohamed al-Ansari

need to assess the seriousness of the parties involved in reaching an agreement to end the war, which has been the driving force for Qatar to evaluate its mediation efforts and clarify the points.

He explained that the mediation is ongoing, but Qatar will never accept its mediation being misrepresented or exploited for any political, electoral, or other internal purposes, stating that Qatar has chosen this path sincerely, demonstrated its commitment, and will continue its role as a mediator and work to bridge the gap between the negotiating parties until reaching peace.

Amir meets Polish president



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met with Polish President Andrzej Duda on the sidelines of the 4th Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg, at Katara Towers – Fairmont Doha and Raffles Doha – yesterday morning. The meeting discussed bilateral relations and ways to develop and enhance them across various fields of co-operation, as well as regional and international issues of common interest, especially the latest developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories.

The meeting was attended by HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, and several senior officials. On the Polish side, the meeting was attended by Head of the International Policy Bureau in the Cabinet of the President of Poland, Mieszko Pawlak; Head of the Cabinet of the President of Poland Marcin Mastalerek, and a number of senior officials and members of the official delegation accompanying the president. **(QNA)**

HMC launches sterile compounding pharmacy at NCCCR

A state-of-the-art sterile compounding pharmacy has been opened at Hamad Medical Corporation's (HMC) National Centre for Cancer Care and Research (NCCCR).

The new facility was officially opened at the NCCCR by Ali al-Janahi, acting assistant, managing director of HMC along with other dignitaries.

Sterile compounding involves preparing medications in an environment free from bacteria, viruses, or any other potentially infectious microorganisms. Sterile compounding is used for preparations that will

be administered through injections, including chemotherapy, antibiotics and others.

Dr Mohamed Salem al-Hassan, CEO and medical director of NCCCR and chairman, Corporate Cancer Services at HMC said the new sterile compounding pharmacy will have a direct positive impact on patient care.

“This cutting-edge facility is another key part of NCCCR's advanced treatment options, further establishing its position as a leading cancer care centre in the region,” Dr al-Hassan said.

“The facility is also equipped



Officials touring the new state-of-the-art sterile compounding pharmacy at HMC's National Centre for Cancer Care and Research.

with cutting-edge technologies and staffed by highly trained professionals to ensure the highest standards of safety and efficacy.”

Dr Anas Hamad, director of Pharmacy Department at NCCCR said the new pharmacy is a unique set-up where only very few clean rooms in the entire Mena region have the same high standards.

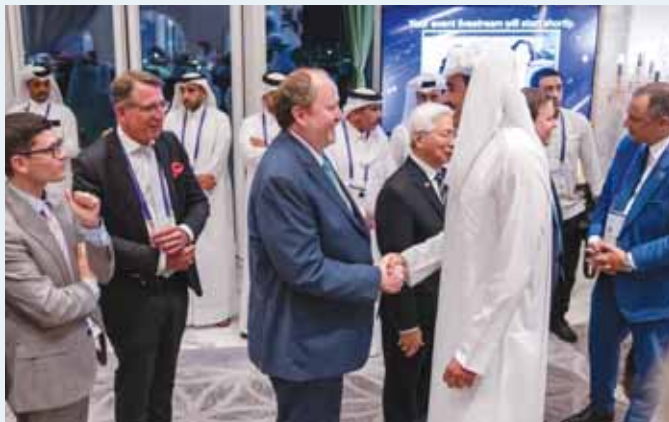
“The pharmacy is designed with utmost precision and adherence to international standards, particularly the guidelines set by top regulatory bodies for chemotherapy compounding,” Dr Hamad said. “It increases the department's capac-

ity of chemotherapy production by 67% and IV medications production by 100% which is of great benefit to our patients, meaning they can get their medications faster and more conveniently.”

The new unit adheres to the stringent standards set by the United States Pharmacopeia (USP), an independent, scientific nonprofit organisation focused on building trust in the supply of safe, quality medicines. The USP standards guarantees the quality and purity of the medications, significantly contributing to positive patient outcomes.



Amir attends reception ceremony of 4th Qatar Economic Forum



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani attended the reception ceremony of the 4th Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg, yesterday evening in Fairmont and Raffles Hotels, Katara Towers. The ceremony was attended by Polish President Andrzej Duda and President of Palau Surangel Whipps, Jr. Also present was HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, along with a number of ministers from friendly countries, and senior businessmen, politicians, thinkers, academics and media figures. During the ceremony, His Highness the Amir discussed with the visiting dignitaries topics of mutual interest. The Amir also attended a dinner banquet in the honour of heads of states and government and senior officials from various countries participating in the forum. (QNA)



Qatar doing its best in Gaza mediation but fundamental differences persist: PM

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani stressed that the best way to stop the ongoing fighting in the Gaza Strip, which Qatar is demanding, is reaching an agreement, putting an end to the atrocities committed against civilians, and negotiating an agreement to release the hostages, considering that achieving this would enable an agreement to be reached within days.

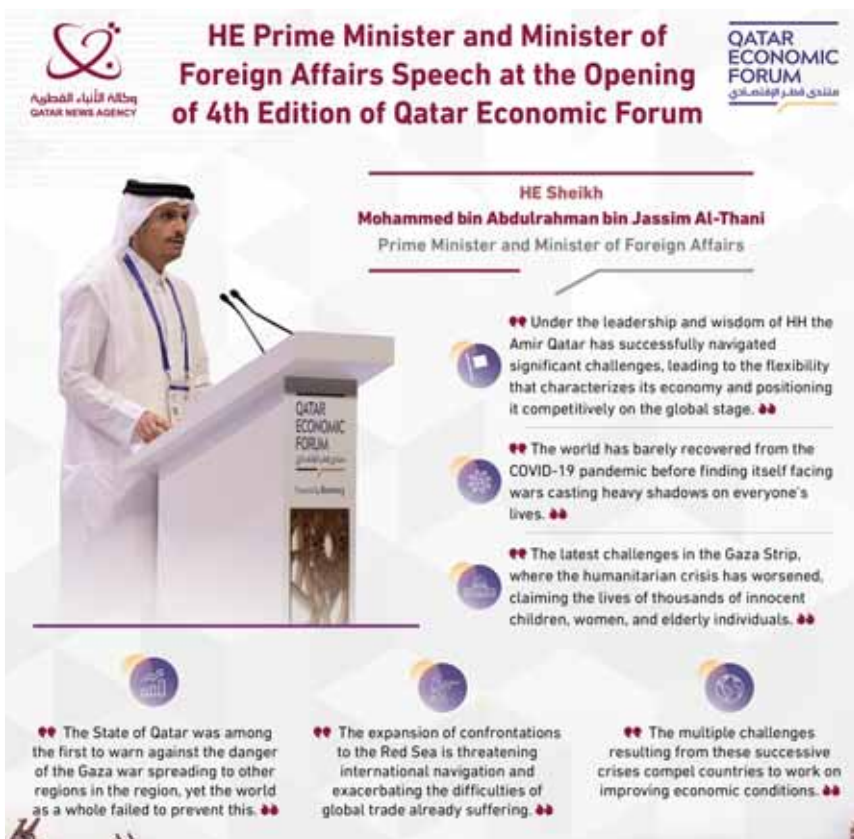
During the opening session of the Qatar Economic Forum, HE the Prime Minister indicated that there is uncertainty about how to stop the war on the Israeli side, which is not inclined to this option, adding that when the talk is about an agreement to reach a ceasefire, a lot of politics say that they would go on with the war. He stressed that Qatar would continue to work and pressure, along with partners to reach an agreement, provided that the warring parties help facilitate this as the issue is ultimately in their hands.

He pointed out that the negotiation process is long and stressful, as some momentum has been observed over the past weeks, but unfortunately things have not moved in the appropriate direction. The situation is currently going through a state of stagnation, especially after what happened in Rafah.

He added that Qatar has not stopped its role as mediator despite facing many challenges in the past few weeks, which prompted Qatar to conduct a re-evaluation. Qatar did not want to be exploited as a mediator and wanted to make clear to everyone that its role is limited to mediation. Qatar is doing this and will continue to do so, saying that he believes Qatar has achieved great progress.

HE Sheikh Mohamed also noted that what makes the negotiation process difficult is the presence of fundamental differences. There is one side that wants to end the war and then talk about the hostages, and the other side wants to release the hostages and continue the war. As long as there is no point of understanding between the two sides, it's hard to reach a result, warning that what is happening in the Gaza Strip requires saying, "enough".

HE Sheikh Mohamed added that looking at the disaster in Gaza, most reports confirmed that reconstruction requires \$40-50bn and will continue until 2040. This is only what the pictures show, representing 10-20% of the actual destruction, in addition



tion to the risks of war or violence spreading in the region and this is what happened in the Red Sea and Lebanon, and it will increase as the war continues.

Regarding the Hamas movement's office in Doha, HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs indicated that the presence of a political office for the Hamas movement in Doha began in 2012 with the aim of creating a channel of communication between them, the Israelis, and Americans.

He pointed out that this channel has proved to be effective in light of the various conflicts from 2014 until today, explaining that this office has played a major role, including the release of hostages (109 hostages) thanks to Qatari mediation in the negotiations, which is the only hostages' release operation during the ongoing war and did not come as a result of pressure or military action.

Qatar's vision and point of view see the necessity of having access for all parties to resolve the conflict. He stressed that Qatar is not a party to the conflict, adding that

Qatar's principles and policies that support the Palestinians in implementing the two-state solution have not changed, and as long as Qatar has the ability, it will help, as it has done so between Afghanistan, the Taliban and the US, and between the various parties in Lebanon, Sudan, and others. This is at the core of Qatar's foreign policy (to build on mediation to help resolve and settle disputes between the parties and work to find a regional consensus).

Regarding the situation in the Gaza Strip after the war, HE Sheikh Mohamed stressed that it is still too early to talk about this matter. He said that Qatar believes in a single Palestinian government responsible for the West Bank and Gaza. This Palestinian government must be formed by consensus among the Palestinians to lead the transitional process in the country, but the Israeli government's statements reject the existence of the Palestinian Authority.

He indicated that with the total destruction of the Strip without a vision for the role of the Palestinian Authority, the situ-

ation will be difficult not only for Qatar but for the entire world.

In this regard, HE the Prime Minister said that Qatar is working with its Arab partners, the Six-Party Committee, and the US to think about the best way until the day after the war so that it does not affect the Palestinians and the Palestinian cause, and does not undermine the Palestinian Authority.

Regarding Qatar's investment plans and areas in the coming period, HE Sheikh Mohamed stated that the sovereign wealth fund follows a diversification strategy, adding that the US has been a significant market in recent years, and Asia is also attracting major Qatari investments. He added that Qatar is looking to expand in emerging markets like Central Asia and Africa, while ensuring that investments are not high-risk and secure and offer guaranteed returns, especially considering these investments are for the benefit of future generations.

He added that domestically, Qatar has launched its Third National Development Strategy, which is considered the third phase of implementing Vision 2030. He emphasised that while Qatar focused on infrastructure in the past 25 years, the current phase is about building on past achievements, pointing out that the core of the third strategy is focusing on human capital, unleashing its potential, and opening opportunities for the private sector, allowing the government to step back or withdraw, transitioning to a regulatory role. He also noted that the government is working on creating an incentive programme to encourage the private sector and foreign investors, focusing on logistical affairs, tourism, information and communication technology, financial services, and other sectors.

He pointed out that essential sectors like healthcare and education witnessed significant progress in infrastructure investment, with room for improvement in the economic aspect of healthcare, research, and development.

Regarding investment in AI and semi-conductors, the PM reaffirmed that AI requires massive investments in infrastructure and application, pointing out that Qatar is focusing on complementing the efforts of other countries, given ambitious projects in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. He explained that the focus is on improving core programs for AI utilisation or infrastructure-related aspects. (QNA)

Resilient economy put Qatar on global stage, says PM

From Page 1

He pointed out that the government will continue its investment in the energy sector, with Qatar expected to complete its expansion in natural gas production by 2030 through the North Field Expansion project, increasing total production to 142mn tonnes annually.

HE Sheikh Mohamed expressed his pride that Qatar has become a beacon of economic opportunities for many, attracting investors from around the world, due to the foundations it provides for economic success that helps uplift the region, allowing everyone to enjoy this prosperity.

Regarding the current global challenges and crises, HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs said that the world has barely recovered from the Covid-19 pandemic before finding itself facing wars casting heavy shadows on everyone's lives, unfolding in various parts of the world, particularly the Russian-Ukrainian war in Europe, the Sudanese crisis in Africa, and the latest challenges in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis has worsened, claiming the lives of thousands of innocent children, women, and elderly individuals.

He emphasised that Qatar was among the first to warn against the danger of the Gaza war spreading to other regions in the region, yet the world as a whole failed to prevent this, leading to the expansion of confrontations to the Red Sea, threatening international navigation and exacerbating the difficulties of global trade already suffering.

He affirmed that the multiple challenges resulting from these successive crises compel countries to work on improving economic conditions, as this contributes to creating oases of stability.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed his hope in the ability of nations to overcome challenges, stating that in Qatar everyone is determined to bring about change to establish a better future, looking forward to seeing new investment opportunities through the platform of this forum.

Malaysian PM ends Doha visit



Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Anwar Ibrahim left Doha yesterday after a state visit to the country. He and the accompanying delegation were seen off at Doha International Airport by Qatar's ambassador to Malaysia Salah bin Mohamed al-Sorour and Malaysian ambassador to Qatar Zamshari bin Shaharan. (QNA)

PM meets Slovenian deputy PM



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with the visiting Slovenian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Tanja Fajon. During the meeting, the two sides discussed co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to support and develop them, in addition to several regional and international issues of mutual interest. After the meeting, an agreement was signed between the two countries, in regard to exempting holders of diplomatic and special passports from entry visas. The agreement was signed by HE the Prime Minister and the Slovenian deputy PM. (QNA)

Malaysian PM lauds Qatar, partners' mediation efforts for Gaza ceasefire

By **Joey Aguilar**
Staff Reporter

Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Anwar Ibrahim lauded Qatar and other mediators for their concerted efforts towards securing a ceasefire and ending the conflict in Gaza, highlighting the need for lasting peace in the region.

Speaking at a session during the Qatar Economic Forum 2024, Powered by Bloomberg, Dr Ibrahim expressed his support for the mediation initiatives led by Qatar, the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), and the international community.

He stressed the importance of readiness to achieve peace and urged respect for the decisions and recommendations put forth

by neighbouring countries. "What is their strong request? To stop the continued aggression, atrocities against children, (and) women due to the bombardment of Gaza and that includes the settlements... illegal occupation. We are talking about colonisation.

"What was discussed in Ukraine was about colonisation, it is robbing, it's possession of other lands, that's all, and for that, I am sympathetic with them," said Ibrahim at the discussion, moderated by Bloomberg Television anchor Francine Lacqua.

Regarding Malaysia's diplomatic relations, the Malaysian Prime Minister reiterated his country's strong ties with China and the United States, noting the influx of investments from technology giants such as Microsoft, Google, and Nvidia. He cited Malaysia's

growing status as a semiconductor hub in the region in part due to American support.

He also outlined Malaysia's focus on digital transformation, energy transition, and artificial intelligence as key drivers of progress for the nation. He commended Malaysia's efforts in combating corruption, highlighting the impartial and independent work of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission in upholding the rule of law.

About Malaysia's role in the post-war scenario in Gaza, Dr Ibrahim acknowledged the country's limitations as an emerging economy but asserted its commitment to assisting in any capacity possible. "We are a small country relatively struggling to survive as an emerging economy. That is why I maintain excellent relations with

Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkiye and get their sense on what to be done because it is our duty to do whatever is necessary given the limited of whatever capacity that we have," he said, underscoring the importance of consulting regional partners and aligning with the positions advocated by organisations like the OIC.

Addressing the challenges faced by Malaysia, Dr Ibrahim stressed the need to prioritise humanitarian values, compassion, and human dignity alongside economic and developmental agendas. The prime minister's remarks underscored Malaysia's commitment to regional stability, diplomatic engagement, and principled governance in navigating complex geopolitical challenges and promoting peace in conflict-afflicted regions like Gaza.



Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Anwar Ibrahim at the Qatar Economic Forum 2024, Powered by Bloomberg (supplied picture)

Qatar-US relations are flourishing at great levels: US ambassador



Ambassador Timmy Davis interacting with the media yesterday. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen

By **Joseph Varghese**
Staff Reporter

The economic relationship between the United States and Qatar is 'absolutely fabulous' providing great opportunities for both the nations, noted US ambassador Timmy Davis yesterday. Ambassador Davis was speaking to the media on the sidelines of the Qatar Economic Forum 2024 being held at Raffles and Fairmont Doha.

"It is not just because of what has already been done, but because of the opportunity in it what is going to come. I will lead a delegation of Qataris to Select USA, a forum where Qatari business leaders, Qatari government leaders would have opportunities to talk about how to invest in the United States. This relationship, I think can be a right model for the region. While Qatar is geographically smaller than some of the countries in the region, their ability to invest in the right



places and create the right partners, is second to none in the region," said Davis.

Answering a question from *Gulf Times*, Davis said that what Qatar wants to do, mirrors what they are best at. He explained: "Qatar has a burgeoning agriculture industry here. I know that is going to be part of how they want to invest in the

United States. In fact, I think agriculture is going to be a major topic for Qatar. They are obviously interested in technology. I have a trip planned to Silicon Valley in June that will include talking about opportunities in cybersecurity. AI is going to be a big deal and so I can see Qatar investing in those areas in the United States."

Ambassador Davis noted that the US offers immense opportunities for Qatar. He remarked: "We have always said that 50 states in the United States offer 50 or more different opportunities. Different tax structures, different visions for their future, the idea of sub national diplomacy, investment in the heartland in areas that don't get a lot of attention present a great deal of opportunity for Qatar and its businessmen."

The envoy continued that he is quite excited and satisfied with the current economic relationship with Qatar and the United States and more excited about what is to come. As for the co-operation in the education sector, ambassador Dav-

is said that the US universities are doing an excellent service here in Qatar providing such a valuable service, not just for Qatar but for the region and beyond.

"The universities have done such a great service for people who could not have left Qatar to get an education in the United States. Having these six universities here, people come here from various parts of the world to these world-class universities. I find that absolutely heartening and remarkable. It says something about the ways we can absolutely work together."

He also recalled his recent conversation with Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, chairperson of Qatar Foundation and how the vision of Her Highness is reshaping the education scenario in the country and the region. He also said that several US educational institutions have keen interest in collaborating with Qatar and several joint researches and collaborations are already underway between Qatar and the US institutes.

RGS Becomes First School in Qatar to Implement Revolutionary AI Football Tracker, Footbar



Royal Grammar School Qatar (RGSQ), one of the leading British international schools in Qatar, has proudly become the first educational institution in the country to adopt Footbar, the innovative football performance tracker that is transforming the game for players at all levels. The AI technology, which counts international football legend Raphael Varane among its investors, offers detailed playing stats previously only available to professional athletes.

Footbar is a game-changing tracker that has been meticulously designed to be lightweight and non-intrusive. Worn on the calf, this sensor diligently records a player's leg movements during a match or training session. Utilizing advanced artificial intelligence, it converts this data into comprehensive football statistics. Players can then access insights such as the number of shots, passes, shot speed, and sprint speed directly on their smartphones through a user-friendly app, reminiscent of the popular FIFA video game. The app generates a personalized FIFA card for each player, showcasing their real-life performance metrics, which can be shared across social media platforms.



Mr Paul Williamson, Principal at RGS, is very proud of this innovative collaboration: "Physical Education and Sport at RGS Qatar aims to provide effective teaching and coaching to allow students to leave the School with the ability to make informed decision about themselves, the activities which they take part in, and an

understanding of how this will affect their lives and their lifestyle. We aim to encourage and foster a healthy attitude towards physical activity and sport, which continues beyond RGS Qatar. We are always keen to develop our sporting facilities and even technology." He analyzes the rapid expansion of football in Qatar: "Following the



FIFA World Cup in 2022 and Qatar winning the Asian Cup this year, practice of, and interest in football has significantly increased in the country. When we discovered Footbar, this revolutionising football tracker, we immediately saw a great potential to involve our students even more on football pitches and allow them to track

their performance and identify areas for improvement using the technology available. This allows the student to take ownership of their own development as a player - a very important part of their journey. Students are also excited to access their own statistics and it creates positive competition amongst them!"

Currently available online at amazon.ae, www.footbar.me, and at all Decathlon stores on the beginning of June, Footbar is now making its mark in Qatar after signing an agreement with RGS. Nicolas Frotiee, co-founder of Footbar Middle East, expresses his enthusiasm too about the collaboration with RGS. "The successful FIFA World Cup in 2022 has already heightened football enthusiasm in Qatar," Frotiee stated. "Our collaboration with RGS is a significant milestone in maintaining this excitement. Through our engaging and gamified app, we aim to draw more Qatari children to the football field while also employing our state-of-the-art technology to scout and nurture the nation's future football stars. Our technology is certified by KNVB, the Dutch football federation. It enables clubs and academies to build a comprehensive player database to monitor match performances and training efforts, optimizing player development and workload balance".

Footbar's introduction at RGS heralds a new era for football in Qatar, one where the fusion of technology and sport can cultivate the next generation of football enthusiasts and professionals alike.

Transport minister meets Polish president

The visiting Polish President Andrzej Duda yesterday met HE the Minister of Transport Jassim Saif Ahmed al-Sulaiti, on the sidelines of the fourth edition of Qatar Economic Forum, a statement from the Ministry of Transport (MoT) said. They discussed bilateral relations in the areas of transport and ways to enhance them, particularly in eco-friendly transport, and several topics of mutual interest.

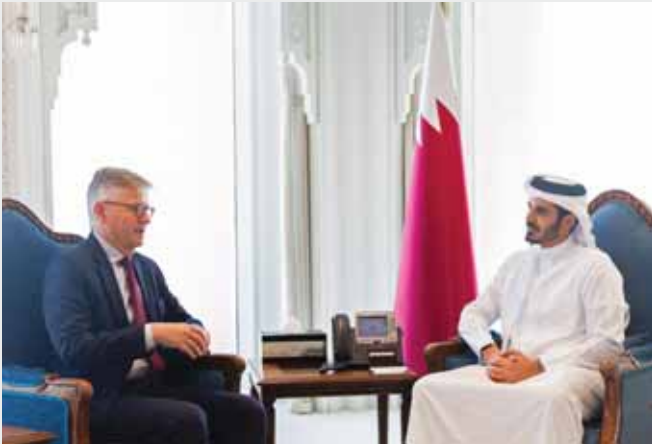


Transport minister meets Uzbek counterpart

HE the Minister of Transport Jassim Saif Ahmed al-Sulaiti met with Uzbekistan's Minister of Transport Ilhom Makhkamov. During the meeting held via video-conferencing, the ministers discussed aspects of bilateral co-operation in the areas of transport, transport services and civil aviation, and ways to enhance them. (QNA)



Interior minister meets UN official



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani met yesterday with the visiting Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations of the United Nations Jean-Pierre Lacroix. During the meeting, they discussed various topics of mutual interest. (QNA)

Polish president stresses support for expanding EU membership

Polish President Andrzej Duda has affirmed his country's support for expanding the European Union, making Europe multinational and with equal rights, voicing his rejection of the idea of Europe turning into a federal system in terms of political union, however supporting the idea of economic union in Europe. In a panel discussion within the Qatar Economic Forum, he said that the priorities of the Polish presidency for the European Union in the coming year will focus on strengthening ties between the bloc and the US, given the strategic nature of this bilateral co-operation, expressing Warsaw's support for other European countries to join the Union. He highlighted the importance of Ukraine, Moldova and the Western Balkan countries joining the European Union, noting that immediately after the outbreak of war against Ukraine, Warsaw sent a letter to the European Commission demanding that Ukraine be accepted into the European Union, as there were great doubts about this matter at the time. In June of the same year, Ukraine was accepted

President Duda has also emphasised the need for the "free world" to work to support Ukraine to regain its lands, in a way that upholds the rule of international law

as a candidate to join the European Union, stressing the importance of this approach for the safety and security of Europe. President Duda also stressed the need for the "free world" to work to support Ukraine to regain its lands, in a way that upholds the rule of international law and confronts any flagrant violation of international charters and agreements. He pointed out that this is what the peace summit that will be held in Switzerland soon will focus on, in which the importance of the rule of law will be discussed, not only at the level of Eastern or Central Europe but also regionally and internationally. In another aspect of his speech at the session, he appreciated the American support for his country, pointing to the role of the US in enhancing the security of Eastern European and Baltic countries, and it is also considered the first donor country to Ukraine in its war with Russia.

Regarding the Russian-Ukrainian war, he warned that Russia is preparing for a new attack on Ukraine during the summer season, noting that he raised this issue during his last visit to Washington in March, where the current American administration confirmed its support for Europe, and this is what the next administration will do whether it was a Republican or a Democrat. Regarding whether Poland would be vulnerable to any Russian attack in the future, President Duda said that he did not say whether Poland would be the next country, rather, he is doing his best to ensure that this does not happen. He ruled out the occurrence of such a scenario for many reasons, but he did not hide the possibility of any change occurring in the Baltic countries, Finland, or even Poland and other countries that were in the eastern camp during the communist era, due to the current events between Moscow and Kyiv. (QNA)

Qatar attends Arab League preparatory meeting



Qatar participated in the foreign ministers' preparatory meeting for the Council of the Arab League at the summit level in its 33rd regular session, which is being hosted by Bahrain. Qatar's delegation to the meeting was headed by HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi. (QNA)

Qatar renews appeal to UNSC to recommend UN membership for Palestine

Qatar has renewed its call for the UN Security Council to make a fair and appropriate decision by recommending full membership for the State of Palestine in the UN. This came in Qatar's statement delivered by HE the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations Sheikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani during the resumed 10th emergency special session of the General Assembly under Agenda item 5 "Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory" regarding the draft resolution admission of new members to the United Nations submitted by the Arab group at the UN headquarters in New York. Her Excellency expressed Qatar's pride in the adoption of the historic draft resolution by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly, which supports Palestine's right to full membership in the United Nations. She expressed Qatar's gratitude to the countries that voted in favour of the draft resolution, affirming that Qatar's participation in adopting the draft resolution reflects its principled and longstanding position in support of the Palestinian people and their just cause. Sheikha Alya stated that Qatar confirms that the State of Palestine meets the required criteria and conditions under Article 4 of the United Nations Charter; therefore, this decision represents a significant victory for the Palestinian brothers and provides a new opportunity for the Security Council to take a unified stance to recommend the membership of the State of Palestine. This decision embodies the purposes



HE Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations Sheikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani.

of the United Nations and international legitimacy resolutions, especially the principle of the right to self-determination, the principle of equal rights among people, and the principle of equality in sovereignty. Accepting the State of Palestine as a full member state is a crucial step toward achieving the two-state solution, which is a key entry point to a just and comprehensive political settlement of the Palestinian issue in accordance with international legitimacy, she added. She explained that despite the importance of this achievement, the Israeli aggression continues in Gaza in clear defiance of international law, international humanitarian law, relevant Security Council and General Assem-

bly resolutions, and the International Court of Justice. Qatar condemns, in the strongest terms, the Israeli occupation forces' bombing of Rafah, the invasion of the land crossing, and the threat to displace citizens from shelters and residences. She called for urgent international action to prevent the invasion of the city and the commission of genocide as well as to provide full protection for civilians under international law and international humanitarian law. She stressed that Qatar warns that forcing civilians to flee from the city, which has become the last refuge for hundreds of thousands of displaced people within Gaza, constitutes a serious violation of international laws and would exacerbate the worsening humanitarian crisis in the Strip. Qatar affirms its commitment to continue mediation efforts in partnership with Egypt and the United States, hoping that sincere efforts will again result in an immediate and lasting ceasefire in Gaza, the release of prisoners and detainees, the continuous delivery of humanitarian aid, and the protection of civilians, paving the way for a serious political process leading to a just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian issue, she said. She reiterated Qatar's steadfast and historical stance in support of the resilience of the Palestinian people and their just cause, in accordance with international legitimacy resolutions and within the framework of the Arab Peace Initiative, which guarantees the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. (QNA)

WAREHOUSE FOR RENT

- ✔ Warehouse for rent in Industrial area
- ✔ Warehouse 600 Sqm/1200 Sqm
- ✔ Municipality Approved
- ✔ Civil Defence Approved
- ✔ Secure Boundary Wall
- ✔ 24/7 Security

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Indonesia president-elect arrives in Doha



President-elect and Minister of Defence of Indonesia Gen Prabowo Subianto arrived in Doha yesterday to participate in the Qatar Economic Forum. The president-elect and the accompanying delegation, was welcomed upon arrival at Doha International Airport by HE Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi. (QNA)

LIQUIDATION ANNOUNCEMENT "1"

Based on the Extraordinary General Assembly Resolution

To Liquidate
GREY MATTERS TRADING AND CONSULTANCY W.L.L (The Company)
(under Voluntary Liquidation)

The Liquidator
FAROOK PUTHENPEEDIKAVIL VEERAN

Kreston SVP Chartered Accountants

Announce the Liquidation of
GREY MATTERS TRADING AND CONSULTANCY W.L.L
Commercial Registration No. (51708)

Any party who has any claims from this Company should send a registered letter, including all supporting documents, to P.O Box 82297, Doha - Qatar
3128 7231 or 6668 8575 or info@krestonsvp.com
Within the remaining legal period of 45 days.

Chief of Staff meets Lebanese army commander



HE the Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces Staff Lieutenant-General (Pilot) Salem bin Hamad bin Aqeel al-Nabit met with Commander of Lebanon Army General Joseph Aoun. The meeting discussed topics of common concern, as well as aspects of bilateral co-operation and ways to strengthen and develop them. The meeting was attended by a number of senior armed forces officers. **(QNA)**

Transport ministry conducts survey for Qatar Bicycle Master Plan update

The Ministry of Transport has conducted a large-scale field survey as part of Stage 2 of the project of updating the Qatar Bicycle Master Plan (QBMP).

The MoT, according to a statement, takes into consideration that the Third Qatar National Development Strategy (NDS3) prioritises a high quality of life by benefiting from Qatar's advanced transportation infrastructure by increasing utilisation and efficiency and accelerating the transition to more sustainable mobility options.

This effort is also aligned with the pillars of the Qatar National Vision (QNV 2030) and the initiatives outlined in the Transportation Master Plan for Qatar (TMPQ 2050).

To ensure inclusivity, a diverse range of male and female participants, both Qataris and residents from all age groups from all areas across Qatar, were surveyed with a particular focus on the most densely populated areas. Interviews were held at 147 diverse locations across the country.

The purpose was to gather information and feedback on people's current and future needs as well as challenges and preferences related to micromobility options like bicycles and e-scooters, how often people use them to get to work or to access public transit facilities, or just for sport and leisure



in addition to the average travel time and distance cut. One more purpose was to diagnose the key barriers and motivators.

The survey showed that the bicycle is the preferred mode of transportation for 89% of all respondents and trip purposes were primarily functional (33.4%) to get to work or for delivery purposes, versus 66.6% for non-functional aspects such as exercise and leisure.

Average travel time varied according to the purpose, with work/school trips averaging 13 minutes, exercise/leisure trips averaging 30 minutes, service/delivery trips averaging eight minutes, and accessing metro/bus trips averaging 10 minutes.

Barriers cited the most by micromobility vehicle users surveyed included lack of tracks/separation from traffic on intersections and

insufficient services needed near such tracks such as charging stations, parking spaces, drinking water and restrooms.

Some other respondents said making such devices available for sharing for free or at low-cost rental can help encourage the use of bikes and micromobility devices. The findings of this survey are crucial to the ongoing updating of the QBMP, particularly with finalising the remaining phases of the plan to move forward with putting the initiatives, developing future infrastructure projects, and setting policies and systems to promote and improve the use of micromobility devices, bringing us closer to a future where sustainable transportation options are accessible and convenient for all with seamless integration into Qatar's transportation network.

GTA's revamped website aims to boost efficiency

The General Tax Authority (GTA) announced yesterday the launch of the newly developed version of its website, providing its browsers, including taxpayers and others, with an innovative digital experience that responds to the latest technological developments in the field.

The latest version boasts a diverse range of content and offers effortless browsing, utilising cutting-edge electronic display technologies, in line with the best standards adopted. These enhancements are geared

towards boosting taxpayer satisfaction across the user base while further optimising the efficiency of the tax system, GTA said in a statement. The revamped GTA website (gta.gov.qa) offers an immersive digital engagement platform, customising services to cater to the unique requirements of every user. This approach not only meets the demands for awareness and education but also ensures real-time interaction between the GTA and diverse business sectors concerning tax-related affairs and services. **(QNA)**

Shura deputy Speaker underscores Qatar's efforts to empower women

HE the Shura Council Deputy Speaker Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti has affirmed Qatar's significant interest and efforts to empowering women, considering them a model to be followed globally.

Speaking at the Asia Women's Forum 2024 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, HE Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti said Qatar manifests its interest in women's rights through granting them equal opportunities in education and employment, in addition to empowering them to take up leadership positions, with Qatari women having a strong presence in the decision-making arena in the Shura Council, and the fields of education, health, communications, information technology, tourism, corporate boards and banks, the diplomatic corps, and in international organisations.

During a session on eliminating all forms of violence against women and children in Asia, she emphasised Qatar's commitment to protecting women's rights and countering violence against them, highlighting Qatar's pioneering measures in this respect, adding that Qatar has been proactive in adopting policies to protect women, despite the fact that this phenomenon is not widespread in the country.

HE the Shura Council deputy Speaker pointed to the efforts of adopting legislations to protect women from all forms of violence, establishing institutions dedicated to women and family affairs, and promoting respect



and appreciation for women and their role in society in educational curricula, while making reference to the prophetic guidance and Islamic teachings that emphasise caring for and respecting women.

In the same context, Her Excellency noted Article 34 of Qatar's Permanent Constitution on equality before the law, protecting women from discrimination, and providing them with equal opportunities and enhancing their role in community development.

She also shed light on the Qatar Foundation for Social Work and the work of its various centres each of which are dedicated to a target group or issue, including family affairs, orphans, the elderly, and people with disabilities. She noted the issuance of the Family Law, which regulates litigation procedures in family courts, stressing that Qatar continues to review legislation to improve the protection of women. Her Excellency underscored that Qatar's approach

with regards to women's issues tackles them within the context of family and societal issues, and not in isolation, which leads the state to adopt a comprehensive approach, complimenting efforts towards real progress for women.

HE the Shura Council deputy Speaker pointed out that despite international efforts to combat violence against women, conflict zones such as Palestine continue to pose significant challenges for women, as their rights undergo systematic violation under occupation, with little to no action on the part of the international community.

The Shura Council deputy Speaker referred to the violations of the rights of women and children that are taking place in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories for more than 220 days, and of being deprived of their most basic rights and experiencing violence and killing by the hundreds on a daily-basis at the hands of the Israeli occupation's soldiers and settlers. **(QNA)**

Qatar chairs meeting of GCC directors-general of passports



Qatar chaired the 38th meeting of the Directors-General of Passports of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, held in Doha yesterday. In a speech, Director-General of Passports Major General Mohamed Ahmed al-Atiq, who chaired the meeting, underlined the importance of the topics for discussion before the GCC directors-general of passports, praising the GCC General Secretariat's efforts to prepare and co-ordinate the meeting. The meeting discussed mechanisms to facilitate movement between GCC countries and the joint GCC tourist visa, in addition to several other topics on the agenda. **(QNA)**

World and Olympic Champion Neeraj Chopra visits OMEGA

On the eve of the highly anticipated Wanda Diamond League event, Neeraj Chopra, India's illustrious javelin star and proud brand ambassador of OMEGA, graced the vibrant city of Doha with his presence. The distinguished athlete, adorned with accolades from prestigious competitions worldwide, took a momentous pause at the OMEGA Boutique in Doha Festival City, prior to his forthcoming athletic endeavour.

After a warm welcome from OMEGA management and staff, Chopra engaged in insightful discourse with the local press, providing a glimpse into his journey as an athlete and his enduring affiliation with the renowned timepiece brand. Adorning his wrist was the emblematic OMEGA Seamaster Aqua Terra Ultra Light, a faithful companion in his quest for excellence on the track.

Chopra's meteoric rise to global prominence culminated in a golden spectacle at the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2021, where his astounding prowess in javelin catapulted him to the zenith of athletic achievement. With a formidable record boasting triumphs from the Olympics to the World Athletics Championships, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, Asian Championships, and the coveted Diamond League title, Chopra has indelibly etched India's name on the international sporting canvas.

Reflecting on his historic Olympic triumph in Tokyo, where he clinched India's maiden gold in track and field, Chopra reminisced on the defining moments of his career. His record-breaking throw of 87.58 metres not only secured the pinnacle of Olympic glory but also underscored his unwavering dedication and unwilted spirit in the face of formidable competition.



Embracing OMEGA's rich heritage intertwined with the Olympic legacy and the iconic moon landing saga, Chopra commended the brand's relentless pursuit of precision and technological advancement, resonating with his own pursuit of perfection in the realm of athletics.

"I really admire OMEGA for its rich Olympic history and its connection to the monumental event of the moon landing. OMEGA's dedication to Olympic timing and their innovative technologies, like the distance measuring devices for my javelin throws, are just some of the many reasons why I truly appreciate the brand," Chopra said.

As discussions veered towards his imminent participation in the Wanda Diamond League, Chopra exuded confidence in his preparedness and anticipation for the forthcoming challenges.

"It's always great to be here in Qatar. I'm really impressed with the sports infrastructure the country provides for events like the Wanda Diamond League. My training has been excellent, and Doha marks the beginning of my season. Just like last year, starting here feels significant for all javelin athletes. Doha sets the stage for a competitive season ahead," Chopra remarked.

With just months to go for the Paris 2024 Olympics, Chopra is confident of producing another excellent performance on the grand stage when the world converges in the French capital later this year.

"It would be great to perform well here in Doha, but my primary focus this year is on the Olympics. It's the world's biggest sporting

event, and every athlete has been training relentlessly for it. Knowing that the world's top athletes will gather in Paris adds to the excitement. I'll give my all, train rigorously, and believe in my abilities to deliver my best performance. While I can't guarantee a gold medal, I'll certainly give it my all, work harder than ever before, and strive for improvement. That's my main goal, but I'm definitely eager and looking forward to it," Chopra said.

As a brand ambassador for OMEGA, Chopra embodies the values of precision, performance, and innovation that the company is known for. His appearance at the OMEGA Boutique in Doha was a testament to his commitment to excellence both on and off the track.

Speaking about his personal favourite, Chopra said, "I really love the OMEGA Seamaster Aqua Terra Ultra Light version. Omega has a long-standing partnership with the Olympics, and many athletes are already associated with the brand. I admire how Omega has been deeply involved in the world of sports for years; it's one of the main reasons I'm drawn to it. It's a positive feeling for me to be associated with such a reputable and luxurious brand. Plus, being linked to the Olympics adds to its appeal. For any athlete, the Olympics represent the ultimate dream."

In a poignant reflection on the essence of athletic pursuit, Chopra underscored the imperatives of resilience, continuous improvement, and unwavering determination. "What matters to me is staying 100 per cent fit, being consistent during the season and delivering on the day that matters," Chopra concluded, offering a glimpse into the ethos that propels him towards greatness.



WCM-Q launches webinar series on medication safety

Will Cornell Medicine - Qatar (WCM-Q) has launched a professional development webinar series that explores strategies to enhance patient medication safety. The series runs until November 2024.

Co-ordinated by WCM-Q's Division of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), the virtual series is titled 'Optimising Medication Safety in Primary Care & Outpatient Settings: An Interactive Series' targets physicians, allied health professionals, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, and students.

The course is directed by Dr Phyllis Navti, clinical pharmacist and assistant director of CPD at WCM-Q, and Dr Anas Hamad, director of the pharmacy department and head of medication

safety/quality at Hamad Medical Corporation.

The course comprises six sessions focusing on key aspects of medication safety, such as root causes of prescription and medication errors and how to avoid them, polypharmacy and de-prescribing, medicine reconciliation, high-risk medication, and future medication safety strategies.

The next webinar, 'Root Causes of and Mitigation Strategies for Medication Safety Issues', is scheduled for May 20.

The course is accredited locally by the Ministry of Public Health's Department of Healthcare Professions - Accreditation Section and internationally by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education.



HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari with the graduates.

MoPH celebrates graduation of first batch of doctors accredited to QBMS

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) celebrated the graduation of the first cohort of physicians who have successfully earned the Qatar Medical Specialisation Certificate from the Qatar Board of Medical Specialties (QBMS).

HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari, former minister of public Health HE Dr Hajar Ahmed al-Binali, and several senior officials from the health and academic sectors, as well as the graduates and their families were present.

The first cohort included 36 doctors across four specialised programmes: family medicine, anaesthesia, emergency medicine, and psychiatry.

The Qatar Medical Specialisation Certificate adheres to the

highest global standards in the field. It provides doctors with an advanced medical education and equips them with the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver high-quality healthcare to Qatar's residents.

HE Dr al-Kuwari remarked: "The Ministry of Public Health is committed to ensuring the proficiency of healthcare workers. All healthcare workers are highly qualified to provide safe, high-quality care to the population, in line with our health strategies and the Qatar National Vision."

She also extended her congratulations to the first batch of graduates who obtained the QBMS certificate, adding: "The Qatar Medical Specialisation Certificate represents a significant achievement and reflects the ministry's ongoing efforts to enhance the

proficiency of medical personnel in Qatar.

"This certification adopts the highest standards used in evaluating physicians and serves as a reliable indicator that the recipients possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform their noble profession effectively."

Dr al-Binali, praised the first cohort of graduates receiving the Qatar Medical Specialisation Certificate for their significant achievement. He underscored the vital role the new specialists will play in enhancing the quality of healthcare services, wishing them success as they uphold the highest standards of excellence in serving the community.

Dr Saad al-Kaabi, director of the Department of Healthcare Professions at the Ministry of

Public Health and chairman of the Technical Committee, Qatar Medical Specialisation Certificate, lauded the team, adding: "Thanks to the fruitful co-operation with key partners, especially in the fields of medical education, clinical training, and other related areas, their efforts have resulted in the establishment of the Qatar Board at an advanced level and in record time."

QBMS was launched in 2020 and provides physicians with the opportunity to achieve post-graduate certificates in various medical specialties. They are awarded the certificate after completing their training within a specialised medical training programme approved by the QBMS and after passing several special examinations, including written and clinical.

Sidra Medicine to open Qatar's first-ever paediatric HSCT programme

Sidra Medicine, has announced the late 2024 opening of the first-ever paediatric haematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT) programme in Qatar, in partnership with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).

The HSCT programme at Sidra Medicine will treat patients with various blood diseases and cancers including sickle cell disease, thalassemia, leukaemia, lymphoma, solid tumours. It will also be used for the treatment of primary immune deficiencies, metabolic diseases, and certain genetic and autoimmune disorders.

Sidra Medicine is the only hospital in Qatar to provide paediatric haematology and oncology care for children and young people with cancer and blood disorders.

The hospital sees approximately 70 to 100 cases of childhood cancer cases every year, with leukaemia, central nervous system tumours and lymphoma amongst the most common.

HSCT (also referred to as Bone Marrow Transplant - BMT) is often used to treat critically ill patients with cancer, non-malignant blood disorders and metabolic and genetic conditions.

The procedure entails replacing a child's diseased or damaged bone marrow cells with their own healthy stem cells, or that of a donor.



Sidra Medicine and CHOP team in Philadelphia for the MoU signing.

To initiate the launch of the HSCT programme at Sidra Medicine, a memorandum of understanding was signed by Sidra Medicine and CHOP's Cellular Therapy and Transplant Section (CTTS).

CHOP's CTTS will offer Sidra Medicine its HSCT/BMT expertise, provide a robust education plan for the hospital's clinical staff, and assess patient readiness for HSCT treatment protocols.

Dr Ahmed al-Hammadi, acting chief medical officer and executive chair of paediatrics at Sidra Medicine, said: "As a leader in specialist paediatric care in Qatar and the region, Sidra Medicine is proudly working alongside the top international health and research organisations to enhance our expertise in precision medicine. It is truly a milestone that

we will be launching Qatar's first paediatric HSCT programme, with a world-class institution like CHOP, to provide our patients with the most advanced and effective treatment options."

Dr Ayman Saleh, division chief, Hematology and Oncology at Sidra Medicine, said: "Our strategic initiative to establish a comprehensive HSCT programme will better serve patients in need of advanced life-saving treatment. The programme will be a wonderful expansion of Sidra Medicine's excellent specialist paediatric care services which are supported by ground-breaking research."

An MoU event to mark the collaboration with Sidra Medicine was held at CHOP in Philadelphia, USA, and was attended by Mohamed bin Sultan Alkuwari, Consul General of Qatar in New York.

The delegation from Sidra Medicine included Dr Ahmed al-Hammadi; Prof Khalid Fakhro, chief research officer; Dr Chiara Cugno, director of Advanced Cell Therapy Core; and Dr Dina Schnurman executive director of quality, Patient Experience and Health Informatics.

Ruth Frey, vice-president, Global Strategy and Business Development at CHOP, said: "CHOP is dedicated to improving health outcomes for children across the world. We are thrilled about this collaboration and the opportunity to offer CHOP's BMT expertise to support Sidra Medicine's launch of the first-ever pediatric BMT programme in Qatar."

The MoU with CHOP will also extend to supporting Sidra Medicine's genomic research programmes for rare paediatric diseases.

'Wearable tech to contribute to preventative medicine growth'

Artificial Intelligence is going to change the face of health-focused technology, said Will Ahmed, founder & CEO of Whoop, in a talk yesterday at Qatar Foundation. Whoop is described as 'the most advanced wearable on the market'. Held as part of the Education City Speaker Series, the moderated discussion, titled "Sports, Health, and Tech: Building a Wearable for the Future", took place at Multaqa and explored the future of innovation in the area of health and wellness.

Explaining how artificial intelligence (AI) is already a key component of the Whoop technology, Ahmed said: "Whoop has always used AI in a lot of our algorithms. I think the piece that's most new for Whoop, and also the whole world, is generative AI. And a lot of the large language models that allow you to interact very seamlessly within AI. "Whoop has been at the forefront of this - we were the first wearable company to partner with OpenAI. We now have a coach in the Whoop app you can interact with and ask questions about your data, such as what your workout of the day should be, or when you should go to bed, or why are you feeling run down, or if you're getting sick. These are the questions you can now ask Whoop, and it will answer based on your data and a lot of the population data that Whoop has access to."



Will Ahmed at Education City Speaker Series.

But according to the entrepreneur, AI will allow wearable technology to continue to evolve eventually transforming into becoming a wearer's 24/7 coach, trainer, nutritionist, and doctor. "I think the power of health monitoring is that it will be able to predict illnesses, heart attacks, strokes, diseases and all sorts of things," he said. "And I do feel in the next three to five years we are going to see this massive golden age for health awareness. "I really believe we're going to see an unbelievable growth in preventative medicine." Ahmed grew up playing sports, and this is where the idea of whoop stemmed from. He added: "I played squash at Harvard, so I saw what it was like to train as a competitive athlete, and the experience of training as an athlete made me feel like there wasn't a lot of information on what I was doing to my body."

Waseef Signs Cooperation Agreement with BaderGo

Residents of Waseef Projects Introduced to the Benefits of the BaderGo App

Waseef, one of the largest fully integrated property and facility management services companies in Qatar, has signed an agreement with Badr Technologies, "BaderGo," to provide smart digital mobility solutions.

Under the agreement, the Qatari company Badr Technologies will offer ideal, reliable, and flexible services through its locally developed mobile app, "BaderGo" an app used for ordering limousine services. The beneficiaries and employees of the residential and office projects managed by Waseef can book limousines at competitive prices. Additionally, a promotional campaign for the residents of Waseef projects will be launched, including draws for shopping vouchers and electronic gifts.

The agreement was signed by Mr. Khalifa Salman Al Muhannadi, Director of Support Services at Waseef, and Mr. Shadi Mohammed Khair Shhadah, the Chief Operating Officer at Badr Technologies.

The smart app "BaderGo" allows its users to instantly book limousines, or make advanced reservations; either by the hour or for all trips throughout the month,



to take advantage of special pricing with drivers registered on the "BaderGo" app. These services can be used for regular daily

commutes for app users, such as going to school, university, or work, and also allows them to fully customize their journey by

adding or removing stop points during their travel.

On this occasion, Mr. Khalifa Salman Al Muhannadi said: "We are pleased to cooperate with Badr Technologies, a Qatari company that has managed, in a short period, to offer distinctive services for individual transport via mobile application. This agreement is part of Waseef's strategy to employ modern means to keep pace with technological development and enhance the quality of services it provides, ensuring an improved experience for the beneficiaries and employees from the projects it manages, and enhancing its leading position as one of the largest real estate asset management companies in Qatar."

Mr. Al Muhannadi added: "This agreement will also enhance the concept of smart city models for the residential projects managed by Waseef, such as Madinatna and the Argentine neighborhood, which have been equipped with the latest smart technology related to communication systems and information technology, to ensure that beneficiary categories enjoy sustainable residential environments according to the highest specifications and standards."

From his side, Mr. Shadi Mohammed Khair Shhadah said: "We are delighted and proud to play a vital role in the field of transportation in the State of Qatar. It is important to highlight that the BaderGo app is licensed and registered with the Ministry of Transport, which adds a layer of trust for our customers and the drivers registered with us."

"We are pleased to cooperate with Waseef, a leading company in the real estate sector. This cooperation is part of our commitment to enhancing the transportation sector through the user-friendly BaderGo app, designed to smoothly connect passengers with drivers, offering new features and secure payment options to ensure a convenient and efficient travel experience, with priority given to safety and efficiency," added Shhadah. "We expect our competitive prices to be well received by the residents of Waseef complexes, and we will strive to offer special deals from time to time for the residents of these projects."

Shhadah continued, "We envision the BaderGo app as just the beginning of our journey. We proudly look forward and aspire to expand the BaderGo experience across the Middle East and Asia in the coming months."

Police Academy seminar at DIBF on security culture

The Police Academy organised a seminar at the 33rd Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) on the dimensions of security culture, in addition to the role of community participation as one of its components.

Head of the Scientific Publications Department at the Police Academy's Security Research and Studies Centre, Captain Mohamed Rashid al-Dosari, provided the theoretical framework for security culture, starting from the concept used by security and governmental institutions to raise awareness among all segments of society and cultivate a generation that actively participates with security agencies in crime prevention and deterrence, adding that security is everyone's responsibility.

Al-Dosari discussed the objectives of security culture, notably the necessity to reduce crime and deviant behaviour, protect society, and instil in individuals a culture of proper conduct that ensures their safety. - QNA

Readers seek translations of fiction, sciences: publishers

Books on various subjects translated from other languages into Arabic and vice-versa attracted readers and visitors to the 33rd Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), which reflected the keenness of translators to meet the needs of readers, a number of publishers have said.

In statements to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), the publishers pointed out that literature in general, and novels in particular, are at the forefront of readers demands, in addition books on psychology, history, and general medical knowledge.

They said that crises with global implications, such as the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and wars, have increased reader interest in learning about areas of knowledge that were previously largely limited to specialists, prompting many publishers to take action to meet the growing demand.

Munira Saad al-Rumaihi, a writer at Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKU Press), said that readers and translators are mostly interested in translations of literature.

She noted that HBKU Press has a strict approach in its translation choices, since it is a bridge to convey literature and knowledge to the world, and to facilitate the transfer of knowledge to Arab readers.

Translator Hussain Nahaba, head of the Ebjed Foundation for Translation, Publishing and Distribution in Iraq, said that his works in translating literature to and from Spanish amounted to 41 books, the most prominent of which are novels.

He added that reader interest is often linked to age groups.

Nahaba pointed out that most of the visitors to the Ebjed pavilion look for translations of publications in the field of history and psychology, while younger readers enquire about translations of works in the field of human development.

Egyptian publishing house Aseer Al-Kotob supervisor Alaa Mohamed said that his company focuses on modern literature, especially drama and fantasy, and the works of contemporary writers in the field of psychology.

Head of Kuwait's Basma Publishing and Distribution House, Hamdan al-Jubairi, said that visitors to the Basma pavilion look for translations of novels with a social, philosophical and educational dimension. - QNA

Al-Nuaimi holds meeting with Finnish minister



HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi met Finnish Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Ville Tavio yesterday. Topics of mutual interest were discussed during the meeting. - QNA

Qatar planes with aid for flood victims arrive in Afghanistan



Two aircraft of the Qatar Armed Forces with 57 tonnes of aid onboard landed at Mazar-e-Sharif Airport in Afghanistan. The assistance includes food items, shelter essentials and two ambulance vehicles provided by Qatar Charity and the Qatar Red Crescent Society as part of Qatar's support for Afghanistan and its people and those affected by the floods that hit Baghlan province in the country's north. - QNA

MoI, Ras Laffan outreach programme organises events for workers

In collaboration with the various departments of the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the Ras Laffan Community Outreach Programme (COP) has organised various cultural and awareness events as part of the "Bedar" initiative for community engagement with workers.

According to a statement from the MoI, more than 900 workers representing 11 local companies participated in the event at the Barwa Workers Recreation Complex in Al Khor.

Officers from the Human Rights, Public Relations, Civil Defence, Criminal Investigation, Drug Enforcement, Community Police, Traffic, Al Fazaa and North Security Departments presented a security awareness quiz during the programme.

Sheikha Al-Anoud al-Thani, head of the Media Studies Section at the MoI's Public Relations Department, emphasised the importance of such events, which align with the ministry's strategic directions aimed at enhancing proper communication between workers and society, and raising awareness



among workers about security concepts, public safety and occupational safety at work sites, to reduce the risk of life-threatening injuries.

Senior Ras Laffan COP officer Sheikha Dana al-Thani said that the programme continues to support the cultural and community initiatives for all segments of society, including workers in local companies.

She praised the efforts made to engage the labour community in implementing the programme's message and various initiatives, notably the Bedar initiative.

Mohamed al-Mashiri of the Ras

Laffan COP said that such events reflect the programme's strong commitment to social responsibility.

There were recreational activities and awareness workshops to promote mental health awareness, physical fitness, safety and security among workers.

Various cultural competitions were held among companies in the northern regions.

The event included the honouring of awareness ambassadors and representatives of companies who have made continuous efforts to disseminate awareness guidelines in their companies.

Chery Group Sells 182,049 Units in April, up 43.7% Year-on-Year



In April, Chery Holdings Group reported vehicle sales of 182,049, a significant increase of 43.7% compared to the same period last year. Among these, 89,377 vehicles were exported, showing a significant growth of 18.3% year on year. Additionally, sales of new energy vehicles reached 32,995 units, an impressive increase of 165.2% year on year. Looking at the cumulative sales from January to April, Chery Holdings Group achieved 711,653 vehicle sales, marking a substantial year-on-year increase of 55.7%. Specifically, the Chery brand sold 117,726 units in April alone and 482,947 units from January to April, representing a year-on-year growth of 57.5%.

Chery Group's sales performance has been remarkably robust since the beginning of this year, showcasing accelerated

growth in three key areas. Initially, the overall growth rate significantly surpasses industry norms. In the first quarter, Chery Group led the industry with an impressive growth rate of 60.3%. This trend continued in April, with Chery Group maintaining positive growth at 43.7%. Furthermore, the new energy segment has also experienced accelerated growth. From January to April, sales of new energy vehicles reached 93,128 units, a significant increase of 137.3% year on year. Lastly, the Chery Group continues to dominate automobile exports from China. From January to April, 342,795 vehicles were exported, representing a solid year-on-year growth of 34.2%.

Chery's deep globalization strategy has facilitated the establishment of a robust pattern of international and domestic dual-market operations, enhancing its dual-cycle approach. At the Beijing Auto Show, Chery's exhibition area stood out as one of the most "international," with 3,000 overseas guests learning about Chery's innovative advancements in new energy and technology. The global premiere of the Tiggo 9 PHEV, which serves as the new flagship of the Tiggo family, was a highlight of the event, attracting much attention and showcasing Chery's commitment to cutting-edge automotive solutions.

From April 25th to April 26th, Chery's Tiggo 9 PHEV and Arrizo 8 PHEV embarked on a CHERY Long-distance Endurance Test, spanning from Beijing to Wuhu. This rigorous test was broadcast live by Chery's professional team alongside special guests from overseas, inviting the entire network audience to join and witness the event. The test culminated in an impressive result of 1,214 kilometers, marking the successful completion of the challenge.

At the same time, Chery unveiled its vehicle ecological strategy at the Eco Exhibition while unveiling the marketing system targeting one million sales and emphasizing ESG practices at the 2024 Chery International Business Conference. With the successful conclusion of this series of events at the 2024 Chery Beijing Auto Show and the 2024 Chery International Business Conference, Chery not only showcased its robust strength and forward-looking vision in the new energy sector but also vividly illustrated its globalization ethos of "In somewhere, for somewhere" through a range of innovative products, technological breakthroughs, and ecological initiatives.

Chery Group was founded in 1997, and its subsidiary, Chery Automobile, is one of China's earliest self-owned automotive brands to surpass one million units in sales and expand into international markets. In 2023, their sales soared, marking "twelve consecutive growth" with 1,881,316 vehicles sold, a 52.6% increase. From January to April 2024, they sold 711,653 vehicles, up by 55.7% from the previous year. Their global user base now stands at 13.8 million, maintaining the top spot as China's primary passenger car exporter for 21 years.

Chery thrives on independent innovation, boasting eight R&D centers globally and filing for over 29,000 patents by 2023, leading the industry. Business spans 80+ countries, with export products including Tiggo, Arrizo, and eQ series, featuring ICE, BEV, and PHEV. Their brand core values "Green, Technology, Family, and Companionship," driving initiatives in green tech and low-carbon solutions, and expanding into new realms like new energy and intelligent connectivity.

Beyond business, Chery prioritizes public welfare, supporting causes like environmental protection and education. Their \$6 million donation to UNICEF for the "Global Education Thematic Programme" underscores their global responsibility. Recognized by SASAC and CIGC as a top overseas image enterprise and topping the Kantar BrandZ list, Chery also leads in J.D. Power's IQS among domestic brands, with models like Tiggo 8, Tiggo 7, and Tiggo 4 reigning in their segments.



Awqaf opens new mosque at Al Ebb

The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, represented by the Mosques Department, has opened a new mosque at Al Ebb. Spread over 4,271sq m, the mosque can accommodate 1,135 worshippers, according to a statement from Awqaf. The mosque includes housing for the imam and muezzin. The mosque was endowed by Tariq Mohamed Majli and built within the framework of the ministry's plan to expand the number of mosques and developing them in all regions of the country to keep pace with urban growth and population increase, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030. With the number M.S. 1389, the mosque has separate prayer halls for male and female worshippers. It has a spacious ablution place and a large number of public parking lots, which

include a number reserved for people with special needs. The entrances and exits are disabled-friendly. The ministry's Department of Engineering Affairs is concerned with fulfilling the needs of the regions in the country for mosques and prayer grounds, providing temporary mosques and supervising their preservation as well as preparing the annual plan for the maintenance of mosques and imams' residences. These are in co-ordination with the competent authorities. With regard to mosque design, the department takes into account the requirements of different areas along with the guidelines for green and sustainable buildings. The department focuses on the conditions for sustainability in the use of electricity and water, and preserving



the aesthetics of heritage in designs that reflect the authenticity of Qatari and Islamic heritage. The ministry's plans to build mosques take into account population density. Awqaf's website provides the facility to search for mosque locations geographically, according to the global navigation system.

Dar Kitab Publishing holds book signing event at DIBF

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

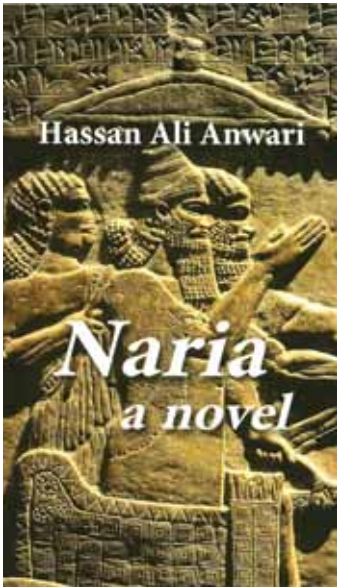
Cairo-based Dar Kitab Publishing and Distribution Pavilion organised a signing ceremony for three books yesterday at the 33rd Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), being held at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) until May 18, under the slogan *Knowledge Builds Civilisations*. "Our publications range from literature, law, business and human development skills, to children's books," said Dar Kitab manager Tarek Ramadan. The authors – Hassan Ali al-Anwari, Qatari playwright Talib al-Dous and journalist writer Nancy Osama – spoke to *Gulf Times*. "Naria is an Arab political and symbolic novel," said Arrayah marketing and advertisement director al-Anwari. "It is based on eastern mythology, and addresses the issue of the exploitation of religious beliefs to control people, manipulate their destiny, incite bloody wars in the name of supporting God," he said, adding: "How superstitious beliefs control regimes in those religious countries, ruled by clergymen." "The name 'Naria' is symbolic ... it does not represent any city or civilisation," al-Anwari continued. "Rather, it is a symbolic projection of the present time, in which we criticise many parties."



Talib al-Dous (left), Hassan Ali al-Anwari, Nancy Osama and Tarek Ramadan (right) at the signing event yesterday at the DIBF. PICTURE: Shaji Kayamkulam

"I was keen to have the novel translated into English to increase its popularity," he said. "It will also be translated into French, Spanish, and Persian in future." "There are more than 10 critical studies and literary readings on the Arabic version of the novel, which received much praise from a number of Arab critics and reviewers," the writer added. About his future projects, al-Anwari said: "I wrote a second novel, which is currently in its second edition, titled *I Loved the Weeping Woman*, and I am preparing a historical novel for publication in the future." Playwright al-Dous, who signed his collection of plays titled *Tears*

in the joy of a brush, said: "I wrote my first play *Souls and money* in 1985 and continued with my contributions in drama, for the theatre and TV, radio and cinema, and through my work with MBC channel with a 240-episode drama." Some of his works won best theatrical script accolades at local festivals.



The cover of the novel *Naria* by Hassan Ali al-Anwari. The author has explained that the name 'Naria' is symbolic and does not represent any city or civilisation. Rather, it is a symbolic projection of the present time.

due to be presented in the forthcoming Qatar Theatre Festival. "All of these are one-act plays, which are usually only presented at festivals," al-Dous said. "I put them in one collection so that the Arab reader gets introduced to this genre, which is rare in our region." "Our target audience is not only those who attend plays ... we want the one-act play to get to a wider audience too," he added. Writer and journalist Osama, who signed her first novel *Norissa Noon Stories*, said: "It is a collection of eight short stories." "Noon" is the Arabic name for the letter "N". "Norissa is the title of a story set in Greece, about a girl enamoured with Greek literature," she said. "She has a personal crisis, which is the borderline personality." "Another story is about a migrant from Syria to Germany – which I did report on as a journalist – and it is based on a true story," Osama explained. "Another story is about a young Egyptian man who migrated to the US, and his experience is completely different from that of the Syrian man's," she said. "Then there is a story about migration between Zanzibar and the Gulf countries." "Most of the protagonists' names begin with the letter 'N', and all the stories are based on duodrama between a man and a woman," Osama said. "I hope that it will be appreciated by the readers."



Snapshots from the Ministry of Municipality's pavilion at the 33rd Doha International Book Fair.



Ministry of Municipality pavilion hosts daily events

The Ministry of Municipality is taking part in the ongoing 33rd Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), held in the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) until May 18, under the theme *Knowledge Builds Civilisations*. Director of the ministry's Public Relations Department Dr Fayqa Abdullah Ashkanani said that the ministry's pavilion consists of two sections: the first is dedicated to highlighting the ministry's work, achievements, services, and publications covering its five competency areas, in addition to annual reports and building permit manuals, available in both hard-copy and soft-copy formats. The second section is dedicated to informing visitors on the Panda House Park and holds educational and entertainment activities and competitions for children, such as the Suhail and Thuraya competition, which is held daily. – QNA

Islamic calligraphy, ornamentation showcased

The 33rd Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) is adorned with over 65 creative works in the Islamic Calligraphy and Arabic Art Gallery, featuring artists and decorators from Qatar and the Arab world, representing the diverse trends and aesthetics of these arts. The works highlight the diversity in the application of these arts in the Islamic world and their connection to the aesthetic foundations of Islamic architecture in the past and present, as well as the openness of creators to new and contemporary trends in the cultural landscape. Visual artist Ali Dasmal al-Kuwari, a member of the

organising committee for the Islamic Calligraphy and Arabic Art Gallery, said that the Ministry of Culture celebrates creative calligraphers and decorators, given the link between these arts and creativity to the book as a genuine source of knowledge and to the heritage of Arab and Islamic architecture and its aesthetics. He said that the works reflect the diversity of styles and treatments in the Arab and Islamic world by highlighting the aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy and its arts in some, the aesthetics of ornamentation in others, and the blending of Arabic calligraphy and Islamic ornamentation in some. – QNA



HBKU Press launches Ejaz app at book fair

Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKU Press) has launched a new app, Ejaz, at the ongoing Doha International Book Fair (DIBF). Ejaz is described as a breakthrough for literary development that connects readers with literature and academic contributions by authors and scholars from around the world, in both Arabic and English, facilitating greater learning and access to quality literature while introducing the world to critical Arab scholars and novel writers. Ejaz enables users access to an ever-growing list of books to read, both fiction and non-fiction. Titles available on the app include books originally published in Arabic or English, and similarly provides respective key insights in either or both languages. The app empowers readers with different learning preferences by offering digestible information in text and audio. Users who favour learning by text will be able to quickly grasp core concepts through high-quality prose, while auditory learners will be able to listen to takeaways in both Arabic and English. The Ejaz playlist feature makes it easier to save and organise audio digests for on-the-go use. The app introduces a unique global book club through its Chat Club feature, where users can create personal profiles, engage with fellow readers, and leave comments and reviews. New titles will be added regularly to Ejaz, ensuring a consistently growing and evolving platform as more users register and interact with the app. Users will also be able to make suggestions for titles they would like to see on the app for future access. Ejaz can be downloaded for free via getejaz.com, Android and iOS. After a comprehensive trial period, new users can upgrade to full membership, a statement added.



Safari launches mango festival, anniversary promotion

Safari Hypermarket has launched a mango festival and 19th anniversary promotions across all categories, it was announced yesterday.

The Safari Mango Festival features more than 80 varieties of mangoes imported from countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Colombia, Peru, Thailand, Philippines, and Brazil.

The highlights include Indian mangoes such as Alphonso, Malgoa, Kokumalli, Rumani, Thottapuri, Moovandan, Badami, Kalapadi, Chakarakutti, Kesari, Cinduram, Neelam, Panchavarnam, and from Saudi Arabia Mango Hindi, Mango Sibda, Mango Sudani, and Mango Tumi, Mango Kenat, Mango Jilant.



The Safari Bakery and Hot Food section have also prepared various mango dishes for the mango fest, including mango cake, mango rasmalai, mango stew, fresh mango pickle, mango fish curry, mango shrimp curry, and mango

chicken kebab.

In the grocery section, mango biscuits, mango pulp, other products in mango flavour, mango pickles, mango dry fruit, mango fresh juice and mango ice cream have been prepared.

Safari's 19th anniversary promotions are available across all categories, including Bakery & Hot Food, Grocery, Frozen, Cosmetics, Household, Garments, Toys, and Electronics. Many products are available at Safari out-

lets at significant discounts, including prices that are lower than usual.

Safari has also introduced a "buy one, get one" promotion in the garments and ready-made category. Customers can buy one Wanter Brand men's shirt and get another absolutely free. This promotion, available at all Safari outlets until May 18, is launched in conjunction with the Safari anniversary promotion.

Through Safari's newest mega promotion, the Safari Shop and Drive promotion, on offer are 25 MG cars, including Morris Garages' six RX8-2024 model SUVs and 19 MG5-2024 model cars. Every purchase of QR50 entitles customers to one raffle coupon.

Qatar Charity launches huge food aid convoy in Sudan locality

As part of the ongoing humanitarian efforts of Qatar, the governor of Sudan's Khartoum State, Ahmed Osman Hamza, launched a massive convoy of food aid in the Karari locality, provided by Qatar Charity (QC).

This is part of a project aimed at providing 50,000 food packages to affected families in Sudan, a statement said. The project is implemented by QC field teams and funded by the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD).

The governor of Khartoum expressed his gratitude to Qatar and its people for standing with the Sudanese people in all the hardships and disasters.

He also highlighted the significant contributions of the Qatari people through QFFD and QC. He was speaking at the inauguration of the QC aid convoy, comprised of 10,000 food packages for 60,000 beneficiaries.

Sadeq Farini, Minister of So-



cial Development in Khartoum State, said QC's timely arrival with substantial food aid is a significant support for the local people. He also highlighted the strong partnership between his ministry and QC to serve vulnerable groups like women, children, and the elderly in Khartoum State.

Khalid Abdul Rahim, Humanitarian Aid Commissioner in Khartoum State, stated that the significant food assistance provided by QC will have a substantial impact on the beneficiaries.

QC has been actively involved in mitigating disasters and crises since it started working in Sudan three decades ago, the statement added.

Joyalukkas expanding US operations

Leading jeweller Joyalukkas is expanding its operations in the US, with new stores in Dallas and Atlanta and reopening of renovated stores in Houston, Chicago, and New Jersey, a statement said.

Led by Joy Alukkas, chairman of Joyalukkas Group, these events mark a significant step in the brand's expansion strategy in the US market.

The festivities will kick off with the reopening of the renovated store in Houston on May 18, followed by the inauguration of the new store in Dallas on May 26. The new store Joyalukkas store in Atlanta will be unveiled on June 2, followed by the renovated outlets in Chicago on June 9 and New Jersey on June 15, it was explained.

To commemorate these special occasions, Joyalukkas is offering exclusive limited time promotions across all its US outlets. Customers purchasing gold jewellery worth \$1,000 or more will receive a complimentary 0.200gm gold coin, while those purchasing diamond and polki jewellery worth



\$2,000 or more will be gifted a 1gm gold coin. John Paul, managing director of Joyalukkas Group, who oversaw the expansion plan, said: "We are thrilled to roll-out our new and revamped outlets in the US. With our exquisite jewellery collections and unparalleled customer service, we aim to cater to the discerning tastes of our American clientele."

Balmanan Championship from today

The activities of the first edition of the Balmanan Championship, organised by Katara - Cultural Village will be launched today and will continue till Saturday, with the participation of the 15 first winning teams at the 10th edition Senyar Festival, in addition to the team which caught the largest fish.

Jihad al-Jaidah, member of the championship's organising committee and head of the judging committee, explained that the participating traditional dhows will set sail at 7am today from the Old Doha Port towards Haloul Island, 90km away from Doha.

The dhows will be accompanied by dhows of the organising

The team winning the first place will receive a prize of QR300,000, the second winner QR200,000, and the third QR100,000

committee's operation room, and the ambulance boats, as well as the boats from the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security to enhance the safety and security measures in case of emergency.

The official expected the participating dhows to reach their destination at Heer Balmanan, 2km away from Haloul Island, at around 4pm today. Various categories of the fishing championship will then start.

He said the return of the participating dhows is scheduled for Saturday morning, when the concluding ceremony will be held at Katara Beach with the participation of the public to crown the winners of the competition.

The team winning the first place will receive a prize of QR300,000, the second winner QR200,000, and the third QR100,000.

The team catching the largest fish will receive QR50,000.

Balmanan Championship is part of the Senyar 2024 Festival activities and celebrates the original Qatari heritage of fishing and pearl diving.

UN says informed Israel of vehicle fatally hit in Gaza

AFP
Geneva

The United Nations yesterday said it had informed the Israeli authorities of the movements of a vehicle carrying UN staff which was hit in southern Gaza, killing an Indian.

One UN security services member was killed and another wounded in the attack on Monday, the United Nations said, marking the first death of a UN international employee in the Palestinian territory since the war began more than seven months ago.

The employee killed was an Indian national, UN spokesman Rolando Gomez told a media briefing.

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of Col Waibhav Kale, working for the UN Department of Safety and Security (DSS) in Gaza," India's mission to the UN in New York confirmed on X.

"Our deepest condolences are with the family during this difficult time."

A second UN DSS staff member who was in the vehicle at the time was wounded in the attack, Gomez said, adding that the two had been travelling to the European Hospital in Rafah when their vehicle was hit.

"The UN informs Israeli authorities of the movement of all of our convoys. That has been the case in any theatre of operation. This is a standard operating procedure," said Gomez.

"This was the case on Monday morning, so we have informed them. And it was a clearly marked UN vehicle."

He added: "This is a sheer illustration that there's really nowhere safe in Gaza at the moment."

When asked about the attack, the Israeli military sent a

statement apparently drafted on Monday saying that the DSS had informed it of the hit.

"An initial inquiry conducted indicates that the vehicle was hit in an area declared an active combat zone," the military said, maintaining that it had "not been made aware of the route of the vehicle."

"The incident is under review," it said, without attributing responsibility for the strike.

Gomez said UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres had called for a full investigation.

"Of course we want accountability. This is the ultimate aim of this investigation. International humanitarian workers are not targets, so such attacks must end," he said.

The US, Israel's main ally, backed calls for a probe, with

state department spokesman Vedant Patel calling the strike "incredibly disturbing."

"UN and humanitarian workers must be protected, and they need to be able to continue their life-saving work," Patel told reporters in Washington.

"We join calls for a full investigation into this incident," he said.

While Monday's attack marked the first time a UN international employee has been killed in the Gaza war, a large number of local staff have been killed.

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, alone has lost 188 of its 13,000 Gaza staff, according to UN figures.

"No one is safe in Gaza, including aid workers," UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said on X, formerly Twitter.



A girl walks in a school yard of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), housing Palestinians displaced by the ongoing conflict in Jabalia in the north of the Palestinian territory yesterday.

Women and children at least 56% of Gaza war dead: UN

AFP
Jerusalem

Women and children make up at least 56% of the thousands killed in the Gaza war, the UN said yesterday, amid controversy over the toll based on numbers from the health ministry in Gaza.

The United Nations was clarifying a fresh breakdown of the death toll in Gaza, after Israel slammed the world body for "parroting... Hamas's propaganda messages".

Due to a lack of access, UN agencies have since the beginning of the Gaza war on October 7 relied on death tolls provided by the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory.

This has drawn criticism from Israel, but the United Nations says the ministry's tolls before the war were deemed reliable, and that it will strive to verify the figures "when conditions permit".

The ministry said yesterday that

at least 35,173 people have been killed in the territory due to Israeli military operations since the war erupted.

Gaza authorities have consistently said women and children make up a large majority of those killed in the Palestinian territory.

A fresh breakdown was provided by the health ministry and published by the UN last week.

The ministry said that as of April 30 it had fully identified nearly 25,000 of those killed, with identification elements missing for the remainder of the nearly 10,000 others who had died.

Of those fully identified, it said 40% were men, 20% women and 32% children, while another eight percent were elderly - a category not broken down by gender.

WHO spokesman Christian Lindmeier yesterday said the new breakdown as "the most comprehensive" provided to date.

He told reporters in Geneva that by applying the same ratio to the

unidentified and assuming women represent half of the elderly, it could be expected that at least "56% women and children" were among the more than 35,000 dead.

And that did not take into consideration the likelihood that more women and children were likely to be among the thousands believed to still be under the rubble "because they are the ones typically staying at home", he said.

So from a "minimum statistical calculation", he said, "you come to 60% women and children".

Jens Laerke, a spokesman for the UN humanitarian agency OCHA, said the new breakdown did not contradict previous estimates that women and children made up more than two thirds of those killed.

What had been provided by the health ministry now was simply "more detail about a sub-section of the overall tally of 35,000 deaths", he said.

"These are not mutually exclusive."

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GULF TIMES

ESG under fire amid backlash and regulatory crackdown

The focus on environmental, social and governance (ESG) is part of a wider strategy known as sustainable investing. Broadly, the goals are to achieve societal impact, align with personal values or manage risks.

But a boom in the use of ESG factors in the financial world has fed scepticism that the approach is nothing more than a marketing gimmick, fuelling a backlash and regulatory crackdown.

US fund managers have suffered their worst-ever quarter for ESG-focused products as the pace of client redemptions intensified.

Client withdrawals from US funds targeting ESG goals reached \$8.8bn in the first three months of 2024, according to Morningstar Inc. That stood in stark contrast to the roughly \$11bn of inflows into ESG funds in Europe, where sustainable investing regulations are far more entrenched.

It's also the latest sign that US investors are turning their backs on the investment strategy, which has been targeted by high-profile Republicans.

At the same time, many core ESG industries such as wind and solar have suffered setbacks, leading to poor returns and further alienating many investors.

The development comes as investors wait to see how elections across the globe affect green policies that are likely to impact ESG investment strategies.

In the US, Donald Trump and President Joe Biden are polling neck-and-neck. On the other side of the Atlantic, European Parliament elections are likely to give parties that have voiced scepticism toward

Investors are waiting to see how elections across the globe affect green policies that are likely to impact ESG investment strategies

green policies a bigger foothold in the bloc's legislature.

ESG was developed about two decades ago by United Nations officials working with the finance industry. They argued that weighing key ESG risks, such as climate change, worker disputes and litigation stemming from poor corporate governance, helps protect investments.

As time passed, the ESG label has been slapped on investments that run the gamut from owning green-energy stocks to things like funds that track benchmark bond indexes containing oil

companies or assets in nations such as Russia. According to Morningstar, ESG and sustainability labelled funds had almost \$3tn of assets at the end of 2023.

ESG risks have become all the more prominent as extreme weather events and worker strikes have hurt automakers, insurers and travel companies.

At the same time, in the US, some state officials have derided ESG efforts as "woke", claiming they prioritise liberal values at the expense of financial returns.

It didn't also help ESG's cause that Russia's invasion of Ukraine drove up oil stocks in 2022. While ESG funds recovered in 2023, they mostly underperformed market benchmarks.

For example in Europe, which has the biggest market, ESG-related funds rose about 16% on average, compared with the 24% gain of the MSCI World Index and the 16% return of the STOXX Europe 600 Price Index.

European and US regulators have now started to clamp down on firms they said were exaggerating their ESG bona fides.

In September, the US Securities and Exchange Commission adopted a rule that requires that 80% of a fund's investments be in line with its stated focus. Revisions to European Union rules led fund managers to strip the top ESG tag from about €200bn (\$215bn) of client funds from July 2022 to March 2023.

Some investors and academics complain that sustainable investing's impact has amounted to far less than its supporters suggested.

Detractors also say the idea that sustainable investing alone is enough to address complex problems is being shown to be wrong and that more government intervention is needed to address societal issues such as minimum wages and rising greenhouse gas emissions.

Broadly, global sustainable investments are estimated to range between \$35tn and \$40tn.

Amid mounting concern that only a fraction of such assets are bona fide ESG investing, there are calls for tougher regulations to stamp out the false claims by fund managers.

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Demolition gone wrong



Bystanders follow rescue operations in front of a collapsed building that was under demolition in the Mathare informal settlement of Nairobi, yesterday. Several people were rescued after being trapped under the rubble of a collapsed building that was under demolition as efforts to reach others suspected to be trapped continued according to Kenya Red Cross. Kenyan security agencies continue to demolish homes near riverbanks as Kenyan President William Ruto ordered security agencies in the country to evacuate everyone living in flood-prone areas after more than 140 people have been killed since March as torrential rains pound the country. (AFP)

India's solar power subsidies for homes face scepticism

By Bhasker Tripathi
New Delhi

Lakshmi Narayan was one of the first to see the light: in 2020 the engineer put solar panels on his roof in India's Bhopal city, becoming a clean energy pioneer because of his desire to help his country move away from planet-heating fossil fuels.

"I understand the importance of renewable energy and thought that everyone should adopt it," said Narayan, 60, whose action inspired many others to do the same in the capital of Madhya Pradesh state in central India.

Now, a new government scheme — unveiled before voting began in nationwide elections in April — aims to encourage more people to install solar panels on their roofs as part of India's commitment to triple renewable capacity by 2030.

The new programme, launched in February, provides Rs75bn (\$9bn) in subsidies to install grid-connected rooftop solar systems on around 10mn homes, allowing consumers to reduce their electricity bills when the sun shines and sell extra units to the grid to earn some money.

It is expected to create 30 gigawatts (GW) of solar capacity in homes, leading to a reduction of 720mn tonnes of CO2 equivalent planet-heating emissions over the 25-year lifespan of the rooftop systems.

"I want three things. Every household's power bill should be zero; we should sell surplus electricity and earn money; and I want to make India self-reliant in the energy sector as we transition to the era of electric vehicles," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a televised interview in late April.

The process, which was previously complicated and fragmented, has been simplified with the creation of a one-

stop online portal to smooth applications and facilitate installations. Subsidies are deposited directly into people's bank accounts.

India overtook Japan to become the third-largest solar power generator in 2023, providing 5.9% of global growth in solar, a report by think tank Ember said on May 8.

But Ember noted that wind, solar and other low-carbon sources are not yet growing fast enough to meet India's rising electricity demand.

The new rooftop solar programme is meant to boost that growth but Narayan's experience offers a cautionary tale.

He says the new online portal will provide answers to a lot of the bureaucratic headaches that used to bedevil the process but, in his experience, the bigger challenge is getting the electricity distribution companies, or DISCOMs, on board.

A December 2023 study by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), a Delhi-based think-tank, said DISCOMs were supposed to provide seamless access and connectivity for rooftop solar systems to the national grid but that this was sometimes "in direct conflict with business interests of the companies".

Narayan said that although he saved up to Rs250,000 (\$2,996) in electricity bills over three years thanks to his 6 kilowatt (KW) solar system, selling excess electricity to the grid proved to be problematic with debt-ridden DISCOMs proving ineffective partners.

"The electricity distribution company charges me 8 rupees for each unit that I consume from the grid, but for the surplus solar electricity that I sell back to the grid, they pay me Rs1.5 per unit. How is that fair?"

And he said that the distribution

company added a fixed charge of Rs500 to his monthly bill after he installed the panels.

"They said that this is the minimum amount we will charge you even if your bill is zero," he said, adding that he got no answer when he enquired about the reason for the new tariff.

The pledge to cut electricity bills by boosting the solar power sector was a key election promise from Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and reflects India's long-term commitment to boost renewables.

In 2015, India promised to install 40GW of rooftop solar capacity by 2022 but progress has been slow. By the end of 2023, it had only installed 11GW, including 3GW in homes with the rest in commercial or industrial properties.

That original commitment has now been revised to 100GW of rooftop solar installations by 2026, 40GW of which would come from the residential sector alone.

Energy experts say India's solar drive is hampered by fears of DISCOMs losing income, a shortage of skilled workers to make, install and service solar panels, and the proliferation of substandard products.

Danish Ali, who has installed a 4KW solar system on his roof in Lucknow in northern India, said another problem arose from the fact that the grid-connected solar systems cannot deliver power during outages unless they have a separate battery to operate them.

"In areas where there are long power cuts, grid-connected systems will not work because they do not provide any power back-up," the 50-year-old said. Ali has to endure up to two hours of power outages a few times a week during peak summer months when temperatures regularly rise above 40C (104F).

He said that adding a battery to the grid-connected system could solve the problem, but the

government subsidy does not cover the installation of such hybrid systems.

Shreya Mishra, CEO of Mumbai-based SolarSquare Energy, which installs solar panels and is one of India's largest rooftop solar companies, said the industry could be on the brink of a boom; in 2023, 150,000 rooftop systems were installed and there are plans to target 2.5mn houses this year, she said.

"The programme has turned rooftop solar into a dinner table conversation that has turbocharged the consumer interest," she said.

But more training is needed for workers in these new green jobs and domestic manufacture of solar panels must also be ramped up, she added.

The government says the new solar programme will create around 1.7mn direct jobs across various sectors, including manufacturing, logistics, sales, installation, operation, maintenance, and other services.

An expert with a solar consultancy, who did not wish to be named, said that the relatively limited growth of home solar systems had already caused friction with DISCOMs.

"Imagine millions of homes being hooked up to the grid and injecting their excess electricity in a system that is already facing so many technical losses," the expert said, referring to losses caused by, for example, damage to transmission lines or electricity theft.

For Narayan, solving distribution issues will be central to encouraging more people to switch to solar and install panels on their rooftops.

"If the government can enable people to truly earn some money, not for show but justified money, with these rooftop systems, it will be a hit among customers. Who would not want it?" he said. — Thomson Reuters Foundation



The government says the new solar programme will create around 1.7mn direct jobs across various sectors.

280 citizens recruited for Russia-Ukraine war: Sri Lanka

Around 280 Sri Lankans have been recruited to fight on both sides of Russia's war in Ukraine, officials tasked with investigating its citizens' involvement in the conflict said yesterday. Complaints began pouring in from relatives after the defence ministry set up a special unit last week to collect information on those who had travelled to both countries to join the war effort. "We have received complaints from approximately 280 family members," public security minister Tiran Alles told AFP. Most had been recruited for the Russian army and duped with promises of high salaries and falsely told they would be given non-combat roles, lawmaker Gamini Waleboda told parliament on Monday. There was no official count of how many Sri Lankans may have died in the conflict. Sri Lanka has repeatedly warned its citizens against travelling to Russia or Ukraine to join the fighting. But there are no restrictions on Sri Lankans travelling abroad and large numbers have left the island nation in the wake of an unprecedented economic crisis in mid-2022. A notice on the defence ministry website published since the taskforce was established asked relatives to "provide information about retired Sri Lankan military personnel who have joined the Russia-Ukraine war". Police have arrested two retired army officers, including a major general, for illegally acting as recruiting agents for Russian mercenary firms. Sri Lanka's South Asian neighbours India and Nepal have also confirmed that numerous citizens of those countries had been recruited to fight alongside the Russian army over the past year. More than two years since Russia's invasion began, tens of thousands of its soldiers have been killed in Ukraine, and Moscow has been on a global quest for more troops. Russia's army held off a much-hyped Ukrainian counter-offensive last year, and it has since made gains on the front lines as Kyiv struggles with ammunition and manpower shortages.

Modi files candidacy for election in Hindu holy city

AFP
Varanasi

Cheering crowds greeted Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday as he submitted his candidacy for a Hindu holy city's parliamentary seat in a general election his party is strongly favoured to win. Modi remains roundly popular in India, in large part due to his cultivated image as an aggressive champion of the country's majority faith. Varanasi is the spiritual capital of Hinduism, where devotees from around India come to cremate deceased loved ones by the Ganges river, and the premier has represented the city since sweeping to power a decade ago. "I swear on God... I will have faith and allegiance to India's constitution," Modi said before hand-



Preschoolers interact with educational and interactive robot Nao at "La Nanosphere" creche in the university campus of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, western Switzerland. (AFP)

Swiss nursery lets robot do the talking

Sat in a circle on the nursery floor, a group of Swiss three-year-olds ask a robot called Nao questions about giraffes and broccoli. By the time these children become adults, interacting with robots may well be as commonplace as using a smartphone, experts believe. So one Lausanne creche has decided to give them a head start. Nao has been a regular visitor at the Nanosphere nursery on the campus of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology university since the New Year. He is what is called an "interactive learning companion" rather than a substitute teacher. As the children were dropped off, Nao — who is only 58cm (less than two feet) tall — stood on a bench to greet them at eye level. "Hello, my name is Nao. I'm happy to be at the Nanosphere today," he said, in a child-like high-pitched voice. "I left my planet some time ago to come and meet you. I look forward to getting to know you and being able to talk with you in the weeks ahead." Some children walked straight past, some waved, pointed, touched his hand or simply gazed at him transfixed. "What will the children's future be like? Will

they have to work with robots? Very probably yes," Olivier Delamadeleine, director-general of the Educalis group of nurseries and primary schools in Lausanne, told AFP. "So as we are in a place of learning it is important to get them familiarised early so that they're used to working with robots," he added. Back in the class, teacher Eve L'Eplattenier and the 14 children sat in a circle on the floor with Nao in the middle. "He's going to come and explain things to you," she said. "Do you like broccoli? It's very good for your health," the robot said. L'Eplattenier picked him up and put him on a table. She said Nao would not grow any taller as children do. The children gathered excitedly around, some jockeying for space. "No squabbling!" Nao told them. Prompted by their teacher, the children tried to catch him out with questions such as, "I am an animal with a trunk. What am I?" When he got it right, they giggled. Gabriel Paffi, a Master's student in robotics, sat in the corner feeding Nao his answers. He programmed the robot and is working on how to adapt it for a nursery's needs.

"The goal is to make it automated so that he no longer needs me to move around and respond to the children," Paffi said. The first Nao robots hit the market in 2008. Now on generation six, the brand is owned by the Germany-based United Robotics Group and more than 15,000 units have been sold. The plan is for this Nao to spend several years in the Educalis nurseries as his capacities expand. L'Eplattenier said the children are thrilled when Nao turns up, and have bonded with their diminutive friend. "They are curious to see what he will say, what he will do," she said. "He's a companion with little tips and bits of advice. 'I think he will quickly position himself as the little know-it-all of the group.' As for the parents, they too are keen to see how Nao will settle in. 'I think it's a good way to help the children progress with new technologies,' said Guillaume Quentin. When it was time for Nao to "fly back into space", each child in turn shuffled towards him to say goodbye and give him a wave. He replied to each by name. "I love you. I will come back soon," he told them.

US to back Ukraine until security 'guaranteed'

AFP
Kyiv

The United States will back Ukraine until its security is "guaranteed", US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on a trip to Kyiv yesterday, hours after Russian forces claimed further advances in the northeastern Kharkiv region. Blinken's visit comes just weeks after the US Congress finally approved a \$61bn financial aid package for Ukraine following months of political wrangling, unlocking much-needed arms for the country's out-gunned troops. "We're with you today. And we will stay by your side, until Ukraine's security, sovereignty, and ability to choose its own path is guaranteed," Blinken said in a speech. "The assistance is now on its way. Some of it has already arrived. More will be arriving," he had told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky during a meeting earlier. "That's going to make a real difference against the ongoing Russian aggression on the battlefield," he said. Zelensky thanked Washington for the aid, which he said was "crucial" — but stressed it was "important to get it as quickly as possible." "We need a noticeable acceleration of supplies. Now too much time passes between the announcement of packages and the actual appearance of weapons on the frontline," he said in an evening address. Zelensky said air defence was the "biggest problem" for Ukraine and requested two Patriot batteries for the Kharkiv region, where Russian forces have been advancing and pounding villages along the border since Friday. Blinken was on his fourth visit to Kyiv since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. After meeting Zelensky, he met Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba in Veterano, a pizzeria set up by a military veteran in the city centre. Russia's surprise ground offensive in the Kharkiv



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky (left) greets US Secretary of State Antony Blinken prior to their meeting in Kyiv yesterday. (AFP)

region has forced thousands to evacuate and pushed Kyiv to mobilise troop reinforcements. Ukraine said several civilians have been killed by Russian fire in the region, including yesterday two aged 80 and 83. The governor of the Kharkiv region said 15 people were wounded by Russian strikes in the border territory's largest city, also called Kharkiv. One civilian, a 47-year-old man, was also reported killed in the city of Nikopol in southern Ukraine. In a call to Zelensky, French President Emmanuel Macron condemned the "intensification of Russian strikes" and the Kharkiv offensive. Russia's defence ministry, meanwhile, said its forces had captured another village in the Kharkiv region. "Units of the North group of troops liberated the village of Bugruvatka in the Kharkiv region and advanced deep into the enemy defence," the ministry said in a statement.

North Korea 'laundered \$147.5mn in stolen crypto'

North Korea laundered \$147.5mn through virtual currency platform Tornado Cash in March after stealing it last year from a cryptocurrency exchange, according to confidential work by United Nations sanctions monitors seen by Reuters yesterday. The monitors told a UN Security Council sanctions committee in a document submitted on Friday that they had been investigating 97 suspected North Korean

cyberattacks on cryptocurrency companies between 2017 and 2024, valued at some \$3.6bn. That included an attack late last year where \$147.5mn was stolen from HTX cryptocurrency exchange before being laundered in March this year, the monitors told the committee, citing information from crypto analytics firm PeckShield and blockchain research firm Elliptic. In 2024 alone, the monitors said they had been looking at "11

cryptocurrency thefts ... valued at \$54.7mn," adding that many of those "may have been conducted by DPRK IT workers inadvertently hired by small crypto-related companies." The monitors said that according to U.N. member states and private companies, North Korean IT workers operating abroad generate "substantial income for the country." North Korea has been under UN sanctions since 2006.

Record 76mn displaced worldwide, says monitor

Conflict in Gaza and Sudan pushed the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) worldwide to a record 75.9mn at the end of 2023, an NGO monitor said yesterday. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) said the figure was a new end-of-year numerical high, with the number of people displaced within their own borders having increased by more than 50% in the last five years. The figure was up from 71.1mn at the end of 2022. While refugees are those who have fled abroad, internal displacement refers to the

forced movement of people within the country in which they live. In its annual Global Report on Internal Displacement, the IDMC said that 68.3mn people worldwide were displaced by conflict and violence, and 7.7mn by disasters. Over the past five years, the number of IDPs resulting from conflict has increased by 22.6mn, with the two biggest increases in 2022 and 2023. At 9.1mn, Sudan has the highest number of IDPs recorded for a single country since records began in 2008, the monitor said.

Court acquits Polanski in defamation trial

A French court yesterday acquitted French-Polish filmmaker Roman Polanski of defaming British actor Charlotte Lewis after she accused him of raping her when she was a teenager. Polanski, 90, was not in court for the verdict at the Paris criminal court. Lewis told the court in March that she became the victim of a "smear campaign" that "nearly destroyed" her life after she spoke up about abuse that took place in the 1980s. "He raped me," the 56-year-old actor told the court, explaining it had taken her time to put a name on the incident that occurred in Paris when she was 16.



Sheikh Abdul Rahman bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz al-Thani speaking at the event.

Left: Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim addressing the gathering.

Right: Dignitaries at the opening of UKM Qatar yesterday.

PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam



An exterior view of the UKM Qatar building in Lusail.

Hamad Award affirms role of translation in building cultural co-operation

The Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding, in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Qatar to Unesco and the Social and Human Sciences Sector of Unesco, organised a seminar on the contribution of the award.

This seminar at Unesco headquarters was aimed at strengthening the partnership agreement between Unesco and the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding in December 2023. The agreement focuses on three areas: translation and publishing, enhancing the Arabic language for social cohesion, and highlighting the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in translation and related issues. The first phase of this partnership involves translating Unesco publications related to the Silk Road into Arabic.

The seminar began with a speech by Dr Nasser al-Hanzab, Qatar's Permanent Delegate to Unesco, emphasising Qatar's pioneering role in promoting tolerance and dialogue among nations.

He also spoke about the importance of translation in achieving sustainable development in countries and encouraged all attendees to support the Arabic language through its use and related programmes and initiatives. - **QNA**

Former deputy PM discusses Qatar's energy history at DIBF

Former deputy prime minister HE Abdulah bin Hamad al-Attiah, who was also a former minister of energy and industry, has affirmed that Qatar has become a formidable figure in the gas sector that is difficult to surpass, thanks to its robust infrastructure and extensive history in the energy sector.

This came during an open discussion at the 33rd Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), with him on the main stage, in the presence of HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani and prominent figures, thinkers, and intellectuals.

Al-Attiah spoke about the beginning of his tenure as minister of energy and industry in 1992 and the challenges he faced at that time.

He explained that despite significant challenges, Qatar embarked on its path in the gas sector, with the first gas shipment exported from Ras Laffan Port in late 1997.

Al-Attiah said Qatar now possesses the

world's largest gas field, spanning 110sq km.

He added that Qatar has become the largest exporter of helium and compressed natural gas in the world, and has built the world's largest condensate refinery.

The country also owns the world's largest gas carrier company, Nakilat, underscoring that Qatar has become a formidable player in this industry that is difficult to surpass.

Al-Attiah highlighted that Qatar's 45-year journey was the result of continuous effort, diligence, and dedication of a complete team of nationals who contributed to this success.

During his discussion, he touched on his upbringing and childhood memories in the Bidda area, moving from there to the Al Sadd area, his education, and graduation, leading to his joining the Ministry of Finance and Petroleum as head of the Public Relations Department in the early seventies.

He then became director of the International



Relations Department before becoming director of the Minister's Office in 1989, and subsequently moving to work as director of the Minister of Interior's Office. - **QNA**

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