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# Amir arrives in Amsterdam



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani arrived yesterday in Amsterdam on an official visit to the friendly Kingdom of the Netherlands. His Highness the Amir was welcomed upon arrival at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol by Adjutant General and

Head of the Military House of the King Rear Admiral Ludger Brummelaar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands Hanke Bruins Slot, ambassador of Qatar to the Netherlands Dr Mutlaq bin Majid al-Qahtani, and ambassador of the Netherlands to Qatar Ferdinand Lahnstein

along with a lineup of senior officials in the Dutch government, and members of the Qatari Embassy in the Netherlands. An official delegation is accompanying His Highness the Amir. (QNA)

## First phase of Smart Cities Solutions Project launched

QNA  
Doha

His Highness the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah yesterday launched the first phase of the Smart Cities Solutions Project, which primarily includes the implementation of a smart waste management system, a vehicle management and task distribution system, and a central operations command platform.

These initiatives are aligned with the ministry's strategy for 2024-2030, focusing on optimising quality of life, prosperity, urban modernisation, service excellence, and digital transformation. HE the Minister affirmed the ministry's commitment to strengthening its public services through the implementation of new and innovative projects and initiatives, highlighting that the launch of these new systems is part and parcel of achieving the digital transformation of the ministry's services, leveraging modern technologies including smart solutions and artificial intelligence (AI).



HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah and other officials at the launch of the project yesterday.

The goal, he said, is to achieve the highest levels of performance, quality, and productivity in services provided to the public, while also reducing operational costs and progressing towards smarter, greener, and sustainable cities. This aligns with the objectives of Qatar's Third National Development Strategy 2024-2030 and the final stages of the Qatar National Vision 2030, striving to establish Qatar as a pioneering country in digital government. HE the Minister of Municipality

emphasised that this system aims to monitor the movement and compliance of vehicles and drivers within specified routes or geographical areas by maintaining a comprehensive historical record of each vehicle's movement, performance, and technical data during operation. Moreover, the system manages and tracks regular and emergency maintenance schedules for vehicles, integrating with the mechanical assets management warehouse. **To Page 12**

## Israeli airstrike kills 8 at Gaza aid centre

Reuters  
Cairo

Eight Palestinians were killed yesterday in an Israeli airstrike on a training college near Gaza City being used to distribute aid, Palestinian witnesses said, as Israeli tanks pushed further into the southern city of Rafah.

The strike hit part of a vocational college run by the UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA that is now providing aid to displaced families.

A Reuters photographer saw a low-rise building completely demolished and bodies wrapped in blankets laid out beside the road, waiting to be taken away. Palestinian resistance movement Hamas denies Israeli accusations it uses civilians as human shields or uses civilian facilities for military purposes. Juliette Touma, UNRWA's Director of Communications, said: "Since the beginning of the war, we have recorded that nearly 190 of our buildings have been hit. This is the vast majority of our buildings in Gaza." A total of 193 UNRWA team members have been killed in the conflict, she added.

### 'Intense fighting in Rafah about to end'

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday that the Israeli military's heavy fighting against Hamas in the southern Gaza city of Rafah is nearly over. "The intense phase of the fighting against Hamas is about to end," he said in an interview with Channel 14. "It doesn't mean that the war is about to end, but the war in its intense phase is about to end in Rafah," he said. "After the end of the intense phase, we will be able to redeploy some forces to the north, and we will do that. Primarily for defensive purposes but also to bring the (displaced) residents back home," Netanyahu said in his first interview with an Israeli network since the start of the war on October 7. Netanyahu said he would not agree to any deal that stipulates an end to the war in Gaza, indicating that he was open to a "partial" deal that would facilitate the return of some hostages still held in Gaza, if not all.

### 'Use of technology key to success'

HE the Governor of Qatar Central Bank (QCB) and Board Chairman of the Qatar Financial Markets Authority (QFMA) Sheikh Bandar bin Mohamed bin Saud al-Thani said that raising the competitiveness of the Qatari financial markets rely on the latest technological methods, tools and programmes and encourage the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in a way that promotes its leadership among the Arab financial markets, places it among the ranks of developed financial markets, and contributes to achieving Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030). This came in his message at the 2023 Annual Report issued by the QFMA yesterday. **Business Page 1**

### 1,301 deaths during Haj due to heat: SPA

Saudi Arabia said yesterday that more than 1,300 pilgrims died during the Haj pilgrimage which unfolded during intense heat, and that most of the deceased did not have official permits. "Regrettably, the number of mortalities reached 1,301, with 83 percent being unauthorised to perform Haj and having walked long distances under direct sunlight, without adequate shelter or comfort," the official Saudi Press Agency reported.

### Gunmen kill 6 police officers in Dagestan

Gunmen opened fire at a synagogue, an Orthodox church and a police post in Russia's North Caucasus region of Dagestan yesterday, killing six policemen and injuring 12, the region's interior ministry said. Two gunmen had been shot dead. The attacks took place in Dagestan's largest city of Makhachkala and in the coastal city of Derbent. An Orthodox priest was also reported to have been killed.

### Macron pledges 'to act' until May 2027

French President Emmanuel Macron said yesterday he would "act until May 2027", the end of his second term, regardless of who wins the snap parliamentary elections he called. Polls suggest that the far-right National Rally will come out on top of the snap vote. Marine Le Pen, the party's figurehead, has said Macron's resignation could be the only solution to avoid a hung parliament for the remaining three years of his term.

## Ooredoo-NVIDIA pact pioneers AI revolution in Mena

Ooredoo Group has announced it is an NVIDIA Cloud Partner (NCP), aligned with its strategy of becoming the leading digital infrastructure provider in the Mena region.

Through this collaboration, Ooredoo is leveraging NVIDIA's advanced accelerated computing platform to help enable the AI revolution in the region.

Capitalising on the significant market demand for accelerated computing and hyperconnectivity across its Mena footprint, Ooredoo is developing an AI-ready platform powered by NVIDIA's full-stack innovation across systems, software, and services.

This platform will serve as a valuable resource, supporting governments and empowering enterprises and startups to securely process their private datasets, as well as produce valuable insights

as tokens that power innovations for its users.

Aziz Aluthman Fakhroo, Group CEO, Ooredoo, said: "Implementing NVIDIA's full-stack platform for accelerated computing and generative AI, Ooredoo is equipped to be at the forefront of the AI revolution in Mena, driving digitalisation and innovation as the leading digital infrastructure provider in the region. Working with NVIDIA, we aim to meet the significantly growing demand for accelerated computing infrastructure to support advanced AI models."

Through this collaboration, governments, enterprises, and startups in Qatar, Algeria, Tunisia, Oman, Kuwait, and the Maldives will have access to NVIDIA's latest full-stack AI platform.

Ooredoo plans to deploy thousands of NVIDIA Tensor Core GPUs in its AI data centres to support the region, enabling



Ooredoo Group CEO Aziz Aluthman Fakhroo and NVIDIA senior vice-president of Telecom Ronnie Vasishtha signing the agreement during TMForum's DTW24 in Copenhagen.

customers to leverage a state-of-the-art AI platform with advanced infrastructure, tools, and software. This will optimise processes and drive operational

efficiencies across industries.

Customers will benefit from Ooredoo's GPU-as-a-Service, which offers on-demand access to some of the most advanced AI and

machine learning tools available, including one of the most transformative technologies available today, generative AI.

Ronnie Vasishtha, senior vice-president of Telecom, NVIDIA, said: "As a trusted regional telecommunications provider, Ooredoo Group combines deep enterprise and consumer relationships with the ability to invest in and deploy AI infrastructure and services. By providing NVIDIA's full-stack AI computing platform to customers, Ooredoo will help make it easier for their customers to deploy generative AI applications and services."

Ooredoo Group's collaboration with NVIDIA is part of its larger aim to boost AI infrastructure in the Mena region while enabling enhanced security, optimised performance, and customisation to align with local standards. **To Page 2**





# Mayor of Rotterdam: Amir's visit a great opportunity to enhance co-operation

**QNA**  
Amsterdam

Mayor of Rotterdam Ahmed Aboutaleb has affirmed that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's visit to the Netherlands is a great opportunity to enhance bilateral co-operation, and it comes at the right time, as there are many global developments, particularly in the Middle East, that are important to discuss.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), he said that this visit is important to strengthen bilateral relations, expressing hope that there will be more co-operation to diversify economic relations between the two countries.

He added that Qatar is a strategic partner for the Netherlands in energy. Qatar is also a crucial mediator in various global conflicts, playing a significant role as a mediator in Western countries.

In this context, he explained that Qatar is the largest exporter of energy to the Netherlands and Europe, and the Port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands mainly hosts a significant amount of Qatari gas, making Qatar an extremely important strategic partner in the energy sector.

Regarding QatarEnergy's signing of two long-term sale and purchase agreements in Oct 2023 to supply up to 3.5mn tonnes per year of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to the Netherlands, he said that



QatarEnergy plays an important role in relations not only with the Netherlands but also with Europe, as the energy they import from Qatar is not only allocated for the Dutch market but also other European markets, adding that they have pipelines from Rotterdam to Germany.

On potential co-operation opportunities between the two countries, the mayor pointed out that the Netherlands possesses advanced technology in food production even under harsh conditions, pointing out that Qatar is moving towards further economic diversification, indicating that

there are many areas of collaboration, such as the economy, culture, technology, knowledge development, building smart cities, and also in education.

Regarding imports from Qatar to his country, mayor Aboutaleb revealed that they mainly consist of energy and LNG, expressing belief that it is important for the Netherlands to export food products, as well as machinery for industry and industrial activities.

Aboutaleb pointed out that the Netherlands does not have a free zone, because, in his opinion, the entire country functions as a free zone. He explained that if the municipality signs an agreement with a certain entity, it is considered binding, which fosters significant trust in the government and enhances companies' confidence in the investment system.

He added that he would never support the concept of a free zone because companies in free zones hardly pay taxes; they are exempt from paying taxes for five or 10 years, or maybe longer.

He added they have Shell, which invests in Qatar's gas sector as the country has an attractive investment environment.

The Mayor of Rotterdam praised the progress made by Qatar, particularly after hosting the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, describing it as "wonderful", highlighting advancements in construction and architecture, as well as in culture and openness to the world, pointing out that Qatar has a story to tell the world.

## AlKhater meets Dutch FM



HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhater met in The Hague yesterday with Dutch Foreign Minister Hanke Bruins. The meeting discussed bilateral relations, the latest regional developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories, along with enhancing regional and international efforts for an immediate ceasefire and facilitating unhindered entry of humanitarian aid across the Strip, in addition to a host of matters of common interest. Qatar's ambassador to the Netherlands Dr Mutlaq bin Majed al-Qahtani attended the meeting. **(QNA)**



# 'Qatar's ties with Netherlands built on solid foundations'



Shura Council Member and Chairman of the Qatari-EU Parliamentary Friendship Group Mohamed bin Fahd al-Muslim highlighted Qatar's strong and distinguished bilateral relations with the Netherlands, emphasising their deep ties and co-operation across various fields.

He told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Netherlands is a significant step towards upgrading bilateral relations to strategic partnerships that serve mutual interests, in addition to serving as occasions to hold discussions on regional and international issues, given Qatar's positive and active role in addressing various dossiers.

Al-Muslim said that Qatar's ties with the Netherlands are built on solid foundations of mutual respect and shared interests, adding that the visit of the Amir presents an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and perspectives on numerous issues of mutual concern, along with facilitating the advancement of bilateral co-operation across several domains, benefiting Qatar and the Netherlands alike.

He praised the parliamentary co-operation between Qatar and

the Netherlands, looking forward to strengthening and developing this co-operation to broader horizons, based on this visit "which will undoubtedly contribute to strengthening parliamentary co-operation, and enhancing understanding on many files and topics of common interest."

Similar to the previous visits of the Amir to a number of European countries which culminated in the signing of various agreements, the Shura Council member expected this visit to follow suit and enhance co-operation, namely in commerce, trade, investment, culture, and education, among others.

He emphasised that the visit comes at an important time when both Qatar and the Netherlands are seeking to enhance co-operation in facing common global challenges such as climate change, food security, and renewable energy, in service of their mutual sustainable development and prosperity.

Al-Muslim expressed confidence that the Amir's visit will positively impact the trajectory of bilateral relations, while reiterating the Shura Council's commitment to supporting and strengthening these relations, opening new paths for strategic co-operation and partnerships for mutual benefit. **(QNA)**



## Mauritshuis official sees potential for art exchange with Qatari museums

**QNA**  
Amsterdam

General Director of Mauritshuis Martine Gosselink in the Netherlands has affirmed that His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's visit to Amsterdam is expected to strengthen co-operation between the two countries across various fields, including the cultural sector.

In her remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Gosselink said that Qatar has rapidly developed in the cultural field over recent decades by organising art festivals and establishing various museums and is a country with an ancient culture.

She highlighted the potential for exchanging and borrowing rare art pieces between the Mauritshuis and Qatari museums. Art exchange is a way of communicating together and trying to understand each other, pointing out her openness to that initiative.

The Netherlands has 750 museums with over 3,000 exhibitions a year and more than 1mn people carry a museum card with which they can enter every museum for free, and these sorts of ideas can be discussed with Qatari officials, she added.

The director expressed her aspiration to expand cultural exchanges between the two countries, including the exchange of art collections, artists, and school visits to exchange ideas and enhance understanding between the two sides.

The interaction of many Arab

artists from Palestine, Iraq, Syria, and other countries living in the Netherlands and other Western countries helps the West understand Eastern and Arab cultures, she explained.

The Dutch's diverse population makes cultural communication between the East and West crucial for mutual understanding. Hence, delving into the lives of people in the Middle East in the Netherlands and the West is useful, she said.

Regarding the Mauritshuis' most prized possession, Gosselink said the famous painting "Girl with a Pearl Earring" by Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer as present in most top 10 lists on the Internet, alongside masterpieces like the Mona Lisa, attracting visitors from around the world.

She revealed that the museum houses many other fascinating paintings, including 11 paintings by the renowned Dutch artist Rembrandt, some of which are available for art loans and exchanges.

She noted that the museum holds two exhibitions a year, which receive about 450,000 visitors, elaborating, "we are not like the Louvre or the Metropolitan, we are a very tiny building." For those who cannot afford to pay, the museum organises hours in a week where people can come for free, she added.

The General Director of Mauritshuis expressed her keenness to visit Qatar for the first time in the near future, expressing her love for the Arab culture and her support for dismantling stereotypes about Arab countries and people.

## Ooredoo-NVIDIA pact pioneers AI revolution

**From Page 1**

As a result, the countries where Ooredoo operates can establish local clouds, facilitating the development of local AI ecosystems and applications and reinforcing data security measures.

Ooredoo will be able to offer GPU-as-infrastructure, giving its customers the flexibility to integrate accelerated computing with their own cloud solutions or directly host them on premises. This ensures customers have the most efficient and tailored AI processing capabilities at their disposal.

The initiative is expected to drive economic growth, job creation, and technological innovation across the region by empowering customers with a state-of-the-art AI cloud platform. Ooredoo will work on the implementation in close coordination with the stakeholders in each

country to ensure alignment with local requirements and to maximise the benefits of its AI initiatives to advance sovereign AI goals.

Ooredoo's digital ecosystem encompasses core telecom services and a dedicated data centre platform, as well as independent entities focused on wireless towers, financial technology, and subsea cable ventures. It aligns with Ooredoo's strategy to transform into a telecom and infrastructure holding with a delayed multi-business structure, with an overarching goal to become the neutral carrier of choice, creating synergies across its ecosystem while ensuring business sustainability and expansion.

The agreement with NVIDIA was signed during TMForum's DTW24 in Copenhagen by Ooredoo Group CEO Aziz Aluthman Fakhroo and NVIDIA senior vice-president of Telecom Ronnie Vasishtha.

## GCC states vow to combat violence against women and girls

**QNA**  
Geneva

The Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states have reiterated their commitment to combating all forms of violence against women and girls and their firm stance against exploitation, abuse and discrimination.

This came in a statement delivered by Qatar's Permanent Representative to the UN Office and other international organisations in Geneva, HE Dr Hind bint Abdulrahman al-Muftah on behalf of the GCC countries, in her capacity as Chair of the Gulf Group, during the interactive dialogue on the report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, and girls, within the framework of the 56th session of the Human Rights Council.

The GCC states made clear that their commitment remains steadfast in protecting society and all its components, especially women, to prevent all forms of violence against them, noting that they have established comprehensive legal frameworks, effective law enforcement mechanisms, and enhanced support systems for survivors of violence.

The GCC states expressed their gratitude to the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls for her valuable contributions, and her commitment to constructive co-operation with her and all stakeholders to advance the rights and protection of women and girls globally.





## ‘Hour and Hour’ holds Eid activities

The “Hour and Hour” programme held a number of cultural and entertaining activities over four days on the occasion of Eid al-Adha, in co-operation with the management of Al Hazm.

“Hour and Hour” chief executive Tamani al-Yafei said in a statement that many diverse activities and training workshops were presented. Workshops on drawing for children, henna, the Qatari Ardha segment, the Katatib (Writings), and cultural competitions witnessed a large turnout from children.

Al-Yafei said that the participation in Eid al-Adha activities came within the framework of the programme’s keenness to consolidate the



authentic Qatari heritage through cultural and artistic visions, in co-operation with the relevant authorities in the country, with the aim of strengthening the partnership with various community institutions.

She praised the success of the cultural and heritage events presented by the “Hour and Hour” programme in co-operation with some entities, the most recent of which was the “Hayya Beya and Eid al-Adha” event, at the Abdullah Lahdan

Al Muhannadi Museum in co-operation with the Qatari Media Centre and with the participation of Al Khor Model School for Boys and Al Dhakhira Primary School for Girls.

The “Hour and Hour” programme is continuing its series of purposeful community participation, organising events and activities in fields, including cultural, social, educational, health, charitable, volunteer and heritage related activities, with a greater focus on the education and sports sectors.

## QPO, Korean institution sign MoU to enhance cultural ties

The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) and the Goyang Cultural Foundation have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance cultural and artistic co-operation.

The MoU marks the beginning of a partnership aimed at promoting culture and the arts to support

community development in both Qatar and Korea.

The QPO and the Goyang Cultural Foundation will embark on a journey of cultural exchange, collaborative performances, and educational initiatives that will benefit artists, audiences, and the broader community in both countries.

A QPO statement emphasised

that this partnership underscores the importance of international cultural co-operation in fostering peace, understanding, and community development.

QPO executive director Kurt Meister said that the MoU represents a wonderful opportunity for cultural and artistic enrichment for both institutions.

By working together, he said, the institutions can share their passion for music and the arts, and inspire communities to embrace cultural and creative diversity.

Acting Goyang Cultural Foundation chief executive Kim Baekki noted that the MoU serves as a model for international cultural exchange and aims to enrich the



cultural experiences of residents in both countries.

He expressed a commitment to continuously develop the relation-

ship between the two entities and provide the best support to enhance their mutual competitiveness and growth. - QNA

## QC honours ‘Initiatives Challenge 5’ winners



Izdihaar, the initiative and volunteer incubator of Qatar Charity (QC), has recognised the winning community initiatives in the fifth edition of the “Initiatives Challenge” programme, launched during Ramadan.

The “Awareness Club for Special Education” claimed first place with their project “We are happy with their happiness”.

The “180° Together Towards Change Initiative” secured second place with “Goodness Has Faces”, while the “Otype Initiative” took third place with “In Return of the Favour”.

In his opening speech, QC Local Projects Department head Farid Khalil Siddiqui said that the fifth edition of the “Initiatives Challenge” attracted 18 initiatives, with 15 successfully completing the challenge.

Judging committee member Aisha al-Muhannadi conveyed deep appreciation for the efforts of participating teams and their high-quality execution, saying that this made the evaluation process challenging for the committee.

The closing ceremony was attended by prominent figures in volunteer and community work, including Arab Federation for Voluntary Activities president Dr Youssef al-Kadhim, president of the Arab Federation for Voluntary Activities, Abdullah Hamid al-Mulla from Qatar University’s Student Activities Department, and Fatima al-Emadi, director of the Student Leadership and Community Service Department, along with Yasser al-Qawasm, head of the Student Clubs Department at Qatar University.

## Popular 10/15/20/30 promotion is back in LuLu Hypermarket

LuLu Hypermarket Qatar has announced the return of its “10/15/20/30 Promotion”, which will run until July 7.

The promo offers customers “an exclusive opportunity to avail themselves of incredible discounts” on a selection of over 2,000 products from various categories, including grocery, fresh food, household items, textiles, footwear, cosmetics, sports items, home decor, stationery, toys, and selected electronics.

A spokesperson from LuLu management said: “The 10/15/20/30 Promotion has consistently been a tremendous success, and each year, we strive to introduce additional product lines tailored to enhance our customers’ regular use, thereby elevating the overall shopping experience.”

The Hot Food and Bakery sections have combo offers spanning Arabic, Western, Chinese, and Indian cuisines, complementing the main promotion with an array of bakery delights.

“This is the best time for home-going customers to purchase travel essentials, gifts, chocolates, nuts, and garments at affordable prices,” it was explained.

The Shop & Win Mega Lucky Draw



meanwhile offers customers the chance to win a QR1mm cash prize, LuLu vouchers, and imm Happiness loyalty points, until August 3.

To participate, simply spend QR50 or more at any LuLu Hypermarket store and receive an e-affle coupon.

Customers can register their e-affle coupons at the customer service counter in-store or online at LuLuhypermarket.com for added convenience.

The grand draw will take place on August 5 at the LuLu Hypermarket located on D-Ring Road.

## New WCM-Q research probes molecular processes that cause diabetes

Researchers at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) have made new discoveries about the complex metabolic and genetic processes which drive the formation of new fat cells, shedding light on the possible causes of obesity and its complications, such as inflammation and metabolic diseases like type 2 diabetes.

Using Crispr gene editing technology, the researchers demonstrated that a protein called UHRF1 plays a key role in the regulation of the formation of new fat cells, known as adipogenesis.

They also showed that the UHRF1 protein suppresses fibrosis, which is the hardening or scarring of bodily tissues and a characteristic of many inflammatory illnesses.

Increased fibrosis in the adipose tissue is a hallmark of insulin resistance and adipose tissue dysfunction.

Working with mouse cells in the laboratory, the researchers used Crispr to delete a gene that codes for the production of the UHRF1 protein.

They then demonstrated that these UHRF1-knockout cells showed significantly reduced levels of adipogenesis, a process of differentiating fat cells from their precursors.

The WCM-Q researchers went a step further by using the college’s advanced genomics and bioinformatics analysis tools to identify the altered molecular and cellular pathways involved in adipogenesis regulation, which are impacted by UHRF1.

This led to the researchers successfully identifying elevated levels of the cytokine TGFβ (transforming growth factor beta) and its downstream targets.

TGFβ is a fibrosis regulator. Additionally, when TGFβ goes awry, it is known to drive the transformation of normal cells into aggressively growing cancer cells.

The researchers also demonstrated that UHRF1-depleted cells show increased expression and secretion of TGFβ as well as Glycoprotein Nonmetastatic Melanoma Protein B (GPNMB).



Dr Muneera Vakayil (right) with Dr Nayef Mazloum (left), Dr Aisha Madani al-Malki and Dr Yasser Majeed.

They also provided evidence that treating cells with GPNMB led to a reduction in adipogenesis and an increase in TGFβ levels and signaling.

Elevated TGFβ in obese subjects is linked to a poor obesity compli-

cation outcome, with symptoms including hypertension, diabetes, inflammation, and adipose tissue fibrosis.

Regulation of TGFβ is important because it is critical for many metabolic processes.

After demonstrating the results in experiments on mouse genes, the team confirmed the same findings in tests on human cells.

This new discovery provides greater understanding of how the metabolism functions, as well as suggesting potential targets for the creation of new drug therapies for the clinical management of obesity and associated metabolic disorders.

The WCM-Q’s Dr Muneera Vakayil, postdoctoral associate in microbiology and immunology, is the lead author of the research paper, which has been published in *Scientific Reports*, a Nature Group publication.

“This has been a really exciting piece of research because it presents potential therapeutic targets for type 2 diabetes,” she said. “We are looking forward to conducting more research in this area to further improve our understanding of the processes which drive metabolic disorders.”

The publication of the paper marks a significant career mile-

stone for Dr Vakayil as it forms part of her PhD, which she pursued at Hamad Bin Khalifa University.

Other WCM-Q researchers who worked on the paper were assistant professor of microbiology and immunology Dr Nayef Mazloum, postdoctoral associate in microbiology and immunology Dr Aisha Madani al-Malki, research associate in microbiology and immunology Dr Yasser Majeed, senior research specialist Dr Shahina Hayat, senior bioinformatics data analyst Shameem Yonuskunju, genomics core assistant director Yasmin Ali Mohamoud, associate professor of genetic medicine Dr Joel Malek, and Dr Karsten Suhre, professor of physiology and biophysics and director of the bioinformatics core.

Maha V Agha of the Translational Research Institute at Hamad Medical Corporation also contributed to the paper.

The research was supported by the WCM-Q’s Biomedical Research Programme, supported by Qatar Foundation.





### Amir congratulates Grand Duke of Luxembourg

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent yesterday cables of congratulations to Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg on his country's National Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable of congratulations to Prime Minister Luc Frieden. (QNA)

### Kazakh deputy FM receives copy of credentials of Qatar's envoy



Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Alibek Bakayev received in Astana yesterday a copy of credentials of Abdullah Hussein al-Jaber as Qatar's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Kazakhstan. (QNA)

## SSC final exam results to be released tomorrow

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) will release on Tuesday (tomorrow) the results of the first round of the secondary school certificate (SSC) final examinations for the academic year 2023-2024.

The results will be available on the

MoEHE's website. Qatari secondary school students appeared for their exams from June 3-12 at well-equipped examination committees inside and outside Doha. The examination committees and schools said they provided all measures needed for a smooth examination process. (QNA)

The General, Limited Tenders Committees and Supply Chain Department announces the following Tenders:

**Important Notice:**  
Suppliers and Contractors who are already registered with QatarEnergy via Mushtaryat Portal can "Buy Tender Online and download Tender Document" from QatarEnergy website (Mushtaryat Portal). Effective from 1st July 2023, bids submitted by a Local company (companies incorporated in Qatar) acting as Tenderer in accordance with this Invitation to Tender, will not be accepted by QatarEnergy without any further notification, if such companies are not in possession of an ICV score in the ICV portal (<https://icv.qa/en-US>) by the specified Original Tender Closing Date or Original due date for submission of COMMERCIAL Package in case of two stage Tendering as per ITT. However, any Local company that has been established within last two (2) years is exempt from this mandatory ICV certification requirement.

Sl. No	Tender Number	Tender Sale Period	Tender Closing Date	Tender Bond	Bond Curr.	Tender Fee	Fee Curr.
1	GT23109300	24.06.2024 - 30.06.2024	22.07.2024	6,000,000.00	QAR	500.00	QAR

Title of Tender: PROVISION OF MULTI DISCIPLINE MANPOWER SERVICES FOR VARIOUS QATARENERGY LOCATIONS

Mid-Tender Meeting Location : To be advised if required

Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time : To be advised if required

\* Tender documents can be purchased and downloaded from QatarEnergy Website-> Supply Management-> Tenders page during the Tender Sale Period mentioned above against each Tender. Request for issuance of Tender after the specified Tender Sale Period will not be entertained.

\* Always refer to QatarEnergy Website ([www.qatarenergy.qa](http://www.qatarenergy.qa)) -> Supply Management -> Tenders page for up to date information on QatarEnergy Tenders. Subscribe to Tender Alert to receive notification in your email on new Tenders.

\* Changes to Tender Sale Period and Bid Closing Date will be updated in QatarEnergy website/Mushtaryat Portal only.

\* Brief Scopes of Work for the above tenders are posted on the QatarEnergy website/Mushtaryat Portal.

\* Suppliers and Contractors who are in possession of a valid SAP ID issued by QatarEnergy are instructed to maintain their Company Registration and Communication details upto date and valid via QatarEnergy Mushtaryat Portal on urgent basis.

\* No queries will be entertained, or bids received, from entities who have not purchased tender documents in compliance with the above provisions.

\* QatarEnergy invites all prospective Suppliers and Contractors interested to participate in QatarEnergy Tenders to register online and obtain a QatarEnergy SAP Vendor Code, a mandatory requirement for the issue of Tender Documents by QatarEnergy.

\* Prospective Qatar based Suppliers and Contractors interested to participate in future QatarEnergy Tenders shall obtain an ICV score. Relevant information pertaining to ICV, ICV Scorecard, ICV Certification, and ICV Guidelines are available on the ICV Digital Portal - <https://icv.qa/en-US>

**The Transport Company**  
**MOWASALAT (KARWA)**

**Mowasalat (Karwa) announces the following tender:**

Tender Ref. No.	Tender Title	Tender Fee	Electronic Tender Fee Payment Dates	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
TC-018-MTS-2024	Supply of Hyundai Spare Parts on Call Off Basis for 3 Years	QAR 1,000	24 June to 1 July 2024	QAR 30,000	1 August 2024
TC-021-WHS-2024	Supply of Office Stationery Items on Call Off Basis for a Period of 3 Years	QAR 800	24 June to 1 July 2024	QAR 15,000	31 July 2024

**CONDITIONS:**

► Interested bidder shall pay the tender fee to Mowasalat Bank Account details as shown:

► Bidder must submit proof of tender fee payment (Bank Deposit Slip + a Signed & Stamped Expression of Interest (indicating Tender Ref. No. and Title / Company Name and details of nominated contact person i.e., Tel. No., Fax No., and Email address) + Copy of valid Commercial Registration to Mowasalat Secretary - Tender Committee at email: [tenders@mowasalat.com](mailto:tenders@mowasalat.com)

► Tender documents will be released via email on the next working day after the tender fee payment date to all bidders who have submitted the bank deposit slip and other documents requested (i.e., **2 July 2024**)

► **Bonds: Tender Bond & Performance Bond:** Bids must be accompanied by Bonds issued by a local bank operating in the State of Qatar as per the Qatar Central Bank template. Further details of bonds can be found in the tender documents. *Bids without Tender Bond shall not be considered.*

► **Tender validity:** Bid validity period shall be 180 days from the bid closing date.

► **Tender documents submission:** Bids must be submitted in 3 separate sealed (**IN RED WAX**) envelopes addressed to **Secretary - Tender Committee** clearly highlighting the Tender Ref. No. & Tender Title:

- Envelope 1# must include the Technical Bid submission (1 Original + 1 non-Editable copy in a USB)
- Envelope 2# must include Commercial Bid submission (1 Original + 1 Editable MS Excel spreadsheet copied in a USB)
- Envelope 3# must include the Tender Bond (1 Original)

► **Bid Closing Date:** Bid submission deadline is **12.00 noon Doha Local Time** as on the Bid closing date shown above. The 3 envelopes must be handed over to the Office of The Secretary - Tender Committee, located at Mowasalat Head Office, Industrial Area. Any tender Submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

Beneficiary Name	MOWASALAT-KARWA COMPANY
A/C No.	0013 - 011272 - 060
IBAN	QA07 QNBA 0000 0000 0013 0112 7206 0
Swift Code No.	QNBAGAGA
Branch Address	Corporate Branch, P.O Box 1000, Doha - Qatar
Currency	QAR
CR No.	26887

Tel.: 4458 8724      Fax: 4458 8850

Supplier Registration      Mowasalat Location

# MSDF launches ‘Aazim’ financial awareness project for Qatari families

The Ministry of Social Development and Family (MSDF) has launched the financial awareness project (Aazim) that aims to raise the awareness of Qatari families and youth of the significance of optimal and pre-planned spending, saving and to avoid resorting to borrowing to secure essential living standards.

The programme is part of a prime MSDF strategy aimed at transforming Qatari society into a productive community, reducing irresponsible consumption, and paving the way to prepare future generations to draw on diversified income sources that keep pace with global changes while preserving the resources of families and society. Also, the project targets newly employed individuals, those planning to get married, and borrowers, empowering them with personal economic management tools.

HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad said MSDF intends to build financial awareness based on Islamic values in spending, as well as relying on models for managing financial life that are closely intertwined with the variables of global economic movements, emphasising that the ministry seeks to steer youth and newly formed families away from excessive consumption and unnecessary luxuries, to build



HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad

an informed and sustainable society where future generations are ensured equal opportunities for prosperity and sustainability.

Her Excellency added that the project primarily aims to transform citizens, families, and society in general into smart consumers who are aware of their steps, and to not fall prey to consumer temptations targeting affluent communities.

The project aims to have a societal impact on two levels, namely the behavioural impact by reinforcing individuals’

orientation towards economic management that sustains societal prosperity and optimises individual income utilisation and the cognitive impact by promoting societal awareness of financial planning mechanisms, avoiding pitfalls such as extravagance, borrowing and irresponsible consumption.

Additionally, the project intends to imbue citizens and young people with financial planning skills to serve as a roadmap in achieving financial goals and maintaining wealth by avoiding waste and extravagance, through which citizens can create a comprehensive picture of their income and paths, identify key priorities, and to distinguish them from secondary luxuries.

The project primarily pursues the elimination of debtors in Qatar and enhances the financial situation of the most needy groups by empowering them with financial management tools. It is implemented in collaboration with several state institutions supported by the Social and Sport Contribution Fund (Daam), alongside the Sheikh Jassim Bin Mohamed Bin Thani Social Welfare Foundation.

MSDF hopes that the project will pave the way for alleviating debt burdens within society, benefiting from financial life skills, and strategic planning for responsible spending. (QNA)

## QRCS distributes sacrificial meat to poor in 16 countries



Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) concluded Adahi Project 1445 AH #UdhialisBlessing, through its headquarters in Doha, foreign representation offices/missions, and partners in the target countries. The QRCS said in a statement yesterday that thousands of families benefited from the Adahi Project in Qatar, Gaza, Jordan, Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, Tajikistan, Bangladesh, Mauritania, Benin, Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, Niger and Pakistan. Acting Director of Volunteering and Local Development Division at QRCS, Moza Mohamed al-Kuwari, said: "In pursuit of divine reward and inspired by our strategic slogan 'Saving lives and Preserving Dignity', QRCS provided sacrificial meat for vulnerable people, to bring happiness into their hearts. I would like to warmly thank the generous donors who contributed their Adahi through QRCS". (QNA)



## Fish prices fall on low demand

The retail prices of fish at Al Wakra Fish Market have recently dropped by almost 50% compared to the prices before Eid holidays due to the limited demand, local Arabic daily *Arrayah* reported.

A number of salesmen at the market pointed out that demand has dropped considerably over the past few days, mostly due to the summer holidays as many families often travel outside the country. However, the supply at the market is not much too as the very hot weather make it difficult for fishermen to return with good quantities.

The recent retail prices include QR30 per kg of Hamour, QR8 for Sheri, and QR7 for Faskar, while live Qatari Tilapia was sold fresh for QR18 per kg, displayed inside glass water basins.

Fairoz Ishaq, a salesman at the market, said demand has been low over the past few days, even though the amounts of different varieties of fish are not much.

Accordingly, as the sales dropped, retail prices dropped too. For instance Sultan Ibrahim fish was sold for QR20 per kg, big Sheri fish at QR8, Zubaidi QR25, Hamour or Kingfish QR30 and Red Hamour at QR25 per kg. As for imported Indian shrimps, the prices ranged from QR45 and up to QR75 depending on the size and quality.

Dr AbuAqila al-Smani, veterinarian from the health control section at Al Wakra Municipality Municipal Control Department, stressed that fishermen should be very careful to strictly follow the recommended procedures to keep fish good during such hot weather conditions to avoid potential damage when they return from the fishing trips.

He said that they should swiftly take the fish out of the fishing nets and put them in sealed cooling boxes with plenty of ice pieces, and should completely avoid leaving

the fish exposed to the weather on the deck of the ship or boat. Further, they should use cooled transportation vehicles to take the fish quickly to the market place from the fishing harbour.

He further stressed that failing to abide by

any of such instructions would eventually cause the fish to go bad before hitting the market. It is also considered the main reason behind almost 90% of the rotten fish, which is eventually destroyed by the authorities.

### Liquidation Announcement

Based on the Partner's Resolution  
Dated 05 May 2024

To Liquidate  
**NEWPARK MIDDLE EAST TRADING,  
SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE L.L.C.**  
(Voluntary Liquidation)

**Liquidator / Naresh Dasari**

Announce the commencement of liquidation

**NEWPARK MIDDLE EAST TRADING,  
SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE L.L.C.**  
Commercial Registration No. 136783

Any party who has any claims from this Company should send a registered letter including all supporting documents to P.O. Box 30653, Doha – Qatar, within 75 days from the date of this publication.

Email: [naresh@aksaa.qa](mailto:naresh@aksaa.qa),  
M: +974 6603 9427 / T: +974 4417 2674





# Gaza war blocks exams and shatters dreams of Palestinian students

AFP  
Khan Yunis

Teenagers across the Gaza Strip should have been taking their final exams this month, a last hurdle before university and lifelong dreams, but the war in the Palestinian territory has crushed those hopes.

According to the education ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip, 85% of educational facilities in the territory are out of service because of the war.

"I was eagerly awaiting the exams, but the war prevented that and destroyed that joy", said Baraa al-Farra, an 18-year-old student displaced from Khan Yunis in southern Gaza.

"At first we were waiting in the hope that the war would end and we would catch up," he said.

But "we don't know how long it will last or how many years it will deprive us of our educational lives." Almost nine months of war in Gaza began with an unprecedented October first week storming of southern Israel by the Hamas group.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 37,598 people, also mostly civilians, according to the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza.

The Education Cluster, a UN-backed organisation, estimated in a report this month that more than 75% of Gaza's schools would need full reconstruction or major rehabilitation to reopen.

Many have been turned into shelters for Gaza's displaced and others have been damaged in bombardment.



A child carries his bicycle over rubble on the grounds of the headquarters of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in Gaza City, yesterday, amid the ongoing battle between Israel and the Palestinian Hamas group.

**'BOOKS NOT BOMBS'**

Liliane Nihad, an 18-year-old displaced to Khan Yunis from Gaza City, in the territory's north, said she and her fellow students had "been waiting 12 years to take these exams and pass and feel happy and enter university...but we have been deprived of all that by this damned war".

Nihad said she had been hoping to study English and to get a doctorate, "but all of that has evaporated".

Displaying their anger at the situation, dozens of students and teachers held a protest in Gaza City's Al-Rimal neighbourhood on Saturday.

"We demand our right to take high school exams" and "We want books, not bombs" they chanted, while empty chairs were laid out to symbolise those students killed in the war.

Mediation has failed to bring an end to the fighting, leaving Gaza's young people with deep uncertainty about their futures.

Farra said he wanted to get out of the territory to achieve his dreams.

"I hope that the crossing will be opened so that I can travel in order to complete my education and not waste my years because I am young and want to achieve my ambitions." For now, he faces the

harsh realities of life under siege.

"I wish I could experience the fatigue of staying up late studying now and not the fatigue of queuing for sweet and salty water" in the territory where clean water is scarce, like many other essentials.

Pupils in the Israeli-occupied West Bank will take the exams, as will those Gazans who managed to escape to neighbouring Egypt.

Even for these pupils, however, the war has been hugely disruptive.

"We are psychologically exhausted and not well prepared" said Mohamed Osama, a student from Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah, after completing his religious studies exam in Cairo.

In the West Bank, violence has further escalated since the start of the Gaza war. According to the Palestinian official news agency Wafa, 20 high school students are among the hundreds of Palestinians killed there.

Wafa reported that 89,000 students from Gaza and the West Bank had been expected to take high school exams this year.

Back in Gaza, however, there will be no exams at all.

The UN, citing the Palestinian ministry of education, said about 39,000 high school students in Gaza are unable to take their tests.

Sulaf Mousa, an 18-year-old from Al-Shati Camp west of Gaza City, hit by a deadly air strike on Saturday, said he had hoped to study medicine and become a doctor.

"Now, we hope we will survive the war and not lose more than we have already lost," Mousa said.

## Hezbollah targets Israeli barracks after commander's death

AFP  
Beirut

Lebanon's Hezbollah group said yesterday it had targeted two military positions in northern Israel with an armed drone in response to the killing of a commander.

For almost two weeks, tensions and cross-border fire have escalated, along with bellicose rhetoric, raising fears of a wider Middle East war.

Israel and the Hezbollah, a Hamas ally, had already been exchanging near-daily cross-border fire since the Gaza war erupted in the first week of October.

Hezbollah's announcement of the latest cross-border attacks came hours after it published a video excerpt purporting to show locations in Israel along with their co-ordinates.

On Saturday, another armed group, Jamaa Islamiya, announced the death of one of its commanders, Ayman Ghotmeh, saying he was killed in a "Zionist raid" in Khiara, in Lebanon's eastern Bekaa area near Syria.

Israel later confirmed it had carried out the strike, saying Ghotmeh was responsible for supplying the Fajr Forces, Jamaa Islamiya's armed wing, and Hamas with weapons in the area.

Hezbollah yesterday said its fighters launched a strike "with an attack drone" on a military leadership position in northern Israel's Beit Hillel barracks "in response to the assassination carried out by the Israeli enemy

in the town of Khiara". The Israeli military said in a statement that a drone had "crossed from Lebanon and fell in the area of Beit Hillel" but "no injuries were reported".

Hezbollah later said it had also struck further south into Israel. A "squadron of assault drones" targeted the "headquarters of the newly created 91st Division in Ayelet Hashahar" near the Israeli city of Safed, it said.

Israel's military said one of its soldiers "was severely wounded" as a result of a drone strike and taken to hospital for treatment.

On Tuesday the Israeli military had announced that plans for an offensive in Lebanon had been "approved and validated", after which Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah said no part of Israel would be spared in the event of an all-out war.

Hezbollah on Saturday evening published a video showing Israeli positions and co-ordinates, along with an excerpt of Nasrallah's speech in which he says "if war is imposed on Lebanon, the resistance will fight without restrictions or rules".

Days earlier, it had circulated a nine-minute video showing aerial footage purportedly taken by the movement over northern Israel, including what it said were sensitive military, defence and energy facilities and infrastructure in the city and port of Haifa.

The cross-border violence has killed at least 480 people in Lebanon, most of them fighters but also 93 civilians, according to an AFP tally.

## Egyptian Haj death toll rises to 672

Reuters  
Cairo

The toll of Egyptians who died taking part in the Haj, the annual pilgrimage to Makkah, amid extreme heat, has risen to 672 while another 25 are missing, security and medical sources told Reuters yesterday.

A crisis unit tasked with investigating the situation said in a state-

ment on Saturday it has suspended licenses of 16 tourism companies and referred them to the public prosecutor, accusing them of being responsible for deaths it said were mainly among pilgrims not registered under the official system.

The unit, formed on Thursday and headed by prime minister Mostafa Madbouly, said 31 deaths were confirmed as a result of chronic illness among officially registered pilgrims.

## Drone attack damages merchant ship in Red Sea: UK agencies

AFP  
Dubai

A drone attack damaged a merchant ship in the Red Sea near Yemen yesterday, two maritime security agencies said, with minor injuries reported.

Vessels in and around the Red Sea, which is vital to world trade, have come under repeated

attack for months by Houthi fighters in Yemen. The fighters say they are acting in support of Palestinians during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. The latest attack occurred about 120 kilometres west of the Yemeni port city of Hodeidah, said the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO), which is run by Britain's Royal Navy. "The Master of a merchant vessel reports being hit by uncrewed aerial system (UAS), resulting in damage to the vessel,"

said a bulletin from the agency, adding that the "vessel is proceeding to its next port of call" and initially reporting no casualties.

British maritime security firm Ambrey said the vessel was "a Liberia-flagged, Greece-owned bulk carrier". The Joint Maritime Information Centre (JMIC), working with a Western-led naval task force in the region, said it was "the second time the vessel was targeted" after missiles were fired at it earlier on its voyage.

## Without food or toys, a Gaza family tries to survive

AFP  
Jabalia

Surrounded by a sea of rubble, the Palestinian al-Balawi family in northern Gaza hang blankets above the ruins of their home to create a makeshift tent that provides shade from the searing summer heat.

The family are struggling to feed themselves in the Jabalia refugee camp after the nearly nine months of war that have followed Hamas's October first week storming of Israel.

Gazans are suffering from severe shortages of supplies including food and water alongside Israel's bombardment of the territory, forcing desperate mothers like Umm Siraj al-Balawi to fight for their survival with no end to the conflict in sight.

"There are no vegetables or fruits. No vitamin intake. When you get sick, you stay in bed for two or three weeks to recover," the 33-year-old said.

"This war must stop, because it is a war of displacement. It is a war of annihilation." Jabalia has been hit particularly hard in recent weeks, with Israeli forces carrying out a massive bombardment campaign, part of a fierce ground offensive in northern Gaza – an area the military had previously said was out of the control of Hamas fighters.

Israeli forces retrieved the bodies of some hostages from Jabalia and in May reported "perhaps the fiercest" fighting there since the start of the war.

Desperation among Gaza's 2.4mn population has increased as the fighting has raged, with warnings from humanitarian agencies that they are unable to deliver aid.

Vital supplies of food have piled



Palestinians search for casualties at the site of Israeli strikes on houses, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, at Al-Shati refugee camp in Gaza City.

up undistributed on the Palestinian side of the Kerem Shalom crossing, a key conduit for aid to enter Gaza. Israel says it has let supplies in and called on agencies to step up distribution, while aid organisations including the UN say they have been unable to pick up supplies because of a breakdown in civil order in Gaza.

The war broke out after Hamas's October first week storming of Israel. In retaliation Israel vowed to eliminate Hamas, which rules Gaza, and its ensuing bombing and ground campaign have killed at least 37,598 people, also mostly civilians, according to the territory's health ministry.

The misery of Gazans has only been exacerbated by Israel's bombing raids it says are to destroy the infrastructure of Hamas.

On Saturday at least 24 people died after huge strikes on two Gaza City neighbourhoods.

The strikes left several residential complexes in rubble, while the Israeli military said it had targeted two Hamas military infrastructure sites.

"People are getting displaced from house to house, tent to tent, school to school," said Umm.

"They (Israelis) instructed people to head to Rafah before in-

structing them to evacuate Rafah. They are doing the same in Khan Yunis. Until when?" – 'No house' - The al-Balawi family's dire situation leaves them scrambling in a wasteland of debris for items like pillows and food.

"The situation was very very difficult (before the war). And it became worse after the war," said Umm's husband Abu, 34.

He pulls a pink cushion from the wreckage of buildings, passing it to his wife who beats it to clear it of dust. Elsewhere he uses a spade to claw back mounds of rubble before finding a red teddy bear for his young son.

He then leads his children through a destroyed street to get hold of much-sought-after water, before heading back to their tent where his children share some bread and beans from a bowl.

"There is scarcity of food and water, we can barely find food for our children. Diseases have spread in all the areas where the displaced are gathered." For their nine-year-old boy Siraj the horrors of war are apparent, despite his age.

"We can't find clothes. We have no clothes," he complains.

"There are no toys," he adds, holding up a damaged doll. "We have no house."

## Qatar Cool Recognizes Exemplary Customers in West Bay for Energy Efficiency Efforts



Qatar Cool proudly announces the recognition of exemplary customers in West Bay for their outstanding efforts in energy efficiency and Delta T optimization.

Qatar Cool hosted a recognition ceremony at its corporate office on the Pearl Island to honour the dedication of tower owners and facility management companies in achieving significant reductions in Gallons per Minute per Ton (GPM/TR), thereby contributing to energy efficiency and sustainability goals.

The towers recognized for their remarkable achievements include JW Marriott, Al Areen Tower, Saeed Al Misned Tower, Qatar Insurance Company, Amwal Tower, and Al Asmakh Tower.

Throughout their tenure as valued customers, these towers have demonstrated exceptional leadership in implementing innovative strategies to optimize energy consumption and enhance operational efficiency. By adopting advanced technologies and best practices in Delta T optimization,

they have reduced their environmental footprint and set a benchmark for excellence.

Delta T optimization involves maximizing the temperature difference between supply and return water, allowing for more efficient energy transfer and reducing the overall energy required for cooling. The recognized towers have excelled in this area by enhancing the calibration of instrumentation, implementing water treatment programs, and utilizing pump automation and temperature setpoints. These innovations have significantly decreased the energy consumption of their cooling systems, demonstrating a proactive approach to environmental responsibility.

These energy savings benefit all stakeholders by reducing energy consumption through better utilization of the cooling system, the towers achieve significant cost savings in energy and operations. Improved asset utilization extends equipment lifespan. Furthermore, reduced energy

use translates to a smaller carbon footprint, contributing to broader environmental sustainability goals.

Mr. Yasser Al Jaidah, CEO of Qatar Cool, expressed his appreciation for the dedication of the recognized towers, stating, "At Qatar Cool, we are committed to fostering a culture of sustainability and innovation. The efforts of these exemplary towers in West Bay reflect our collective commitment to environmental stewardship and energy efficiency. We commend their achievements and look forward to continuing our partnership with our customers in shaping a greener future for Qatar."

The recognition ceremony celebrated the accomplishments of the honoured towers and showcased the tangible impact of their energy efficiency initiatives. The event highlighted the importance of collaboration and continuous improvement in achieving sustainability goals, reinforcing Qatar Cool's role as a pioneer in promoting energy-efficient solutions in the region.





## Flooded city streets



A man wades through flood waters on a street in Wadajir district of Mogadishu, Somalia, yesterday.

# Kenya’s Ruto ready for dialogue with protesters

AFP  
Nairobi

Kenya’s President William Ruto said yesterday that he was ready for “a conversation” with thousands of “peaceful” young anti-tax protesters, prompting new calls from the movement’s organisers to accept their demand to cancel the levies.

Organised on social media and led largely by Gen-Z Kenyans who have livestreamed the demonstrations, the protests by thousands of people have caught Ruto’s government off guard, as discontent mounts over his economic policies.

“I am very proud of our young people...they have stepped forward peaceful and I want to tell them we are going to engage them,” Ruto said in his first public comments on the protests.

“We are going to have a conversation so that together we can build a greater nation,” Ruto said during a church service in the Rift Valley town of Nyahururu.

His characterisation of the protests as “peaceful” came after rights campaigners reported two deaths following Thursday’s demonstrations in Nairobi.

A protest organiser, Hanifa Adan, who told AFP that she was in hiding to avoid arrest, said Ruto needed to “respond publicly” to demands that the proposed hikes be cancelled.

“President Ruto can’t claim to support us while his police brutalise peaceful protesters,” she said.

“We’re past the talking stage and won’t be silenced. We demand an end to police violence, respect for our constitutional rights, and



A woman waves a Kenyan flag while marching against the Finance Bill 2024 in downtown Nairobi, yesterday.

the freedom to speak up without fear of arrest or harm.” Amnesty International Kenya said yesterday that “in the last 72 hours, protest organisers, content creators, medics and protesters have been profiled, abducted and detained in violation of our laws”.

The rights watchdog did not elaborate on the number of detainees, and there was no immediate comment by the police.

Thursday’s demonstrations were mostly peaceful, but officers fired tear gas and water cannon throughout the day to disperse protesters near parliament.

A Kenya Human Rights Commission official told AFP on Saturday that 21-year-old Evans Kiratu was “hit by a tear gas canister” during the protests and died in hospital. On Friday, a police watchdog said it was investigat-

ing allegations that a 29-year-old man was shot by officers in Nairobi after the demonstrations. The Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) said it had “documented the death...allegedly as a result of police shooting” on Thursday. Several organisations, including Amnesty International Kenya, said that at least 200 people were injured in the protests in Nairobi, as thousands of people took to the streets across the country.

The protesters have called for a national strike tomorrow.

After smaller demonstrations in Nairobi last Tuesday, the cash-strapped government agreed to roll back several tax increases laid out in a new bill.

But Ruto’s administration still intends to raise some taxes, saying they are necessary for filling the

state coffers and cutting reliance on external borrowing.

Kenya has a huge debt mountain whose servicing costs have ballooned because of a fall in the value of the local currency over the last two years, making interest payments on foreign-currency loans more expensive.

The tax hikes will pile further pressure on Kenyans struggling with cost of living surges, with well-paid jobs remaining out of reach for young people.

Ruto said yesterday that the annual budget included measures to tackle youth unemployment and improve access to higher education. After the government agreed to scrap levies on bread purchases, car ownership and financial and mobile services, the treasury warned of a budget shortfall of 200bn shillings (\$1.56bn).

## Kenya force to leave for Haiti on June 25

AFP  
Nairobi

Kenyan force will leave for Haiti on June 25 to lead a UN-backed mission to tackle gang violence, despite court challenges against it, government and police sources said yesterday.

Kenya offered to send about 1,000 police to stabilise Haiti alongside personnel from several other countries, but the deployment has run into legal challenges in the East African nation.

President William Ruto has been an enthusiastic backer of the mission and said this month that the deployment would begin within weeks.

“The departure is this week on Tuesday,” an interior ministry official said on condition of anonymity.

“Preparations are set for the team to depart for Haiti on Tuesday. We already have two advance teams that left - one last week and another one yesterday,” a senior police official said.

A UN Security Council resolution in October approved the mission but a Kenyan court in January delayed the deployment.

It said the Kenyan government had no authority to send police officers abroad without a prior agreement.

The government secured that agreement on March 1 but a small opposition party in Kenya has filed a fresh lawsuit to try to block it.

Aside from Kenya, other countries that have expressed willingness to join the mission include Benin, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados and Chad.

The United States is providing funding and logistical support, but not boots on the ground in Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas.

Global monitor Human Rights Watch has raised concerns about the mission and doubts over its funding.

Rights groups have accused Kenyan police of using excessive force and carrying out unlawful killings.

On Friday, a police watchdog said it was investigating allegations that a 29-year-old man was shot by officers in Nairobi after youth-led demonstrations against proposed tax hikes.

Haiti has long been rocked by gang violence but conditions sharply worsened at the end of February when armed groups launched coordinated attacks in the capital Port-au-Prince, saying they wanted to overthrow then prime minister Ariel Henry.

Henry announced in early March that he would step down and hand over executive power to a transitional council, which named Garry Conille as the country’s interim prime minister on May 29.

The violence in Port-au-Prince has affected food security and humanitarian aid access, with much of the city in the hands of gangs accused of abuses including murder, rape, looting and kidnappings.

## Seven killed, dozens missing after gunmen attack in Nigeria

Reuters  
Maiduguri

At least seven people were killed and 100 kidnapped last night when gunmen attacked a rural community in Nigeria’s northwestern Katsina state, residents and police said yesterday, the latest attack against residents in the north of the country.

Armed gangs, known locally as bandits, have frequently raided communities in the northwest, kidnapping residents, students and motorists for ransom.

Residents said gunmen on motorbikes arrived in Maidabino village in Damusa local government area of Katsina, and started shooting sporadically, forcing residents to flee.

Hassan Aliyu told Reuters by phone that the attack took residents by surprise and dozens of women and children were confirmed missing.

“They killed seven people, including burning two children,” Aliyu said. “They spent more than six hours destroying our properties”.

Auwalu Ismail, another resident, said the gunmen first blocked all roads leading to Maidabino before the attack.

“They burnt down our shops, vehicles, and took away our livestock. They also kidnapped my wife and more than 100 women and children,” he said.

Katsina state police spokesperson Abubakar Aliyu Sadiq confirmed the attack and the seven deaths but would not say whether anyone was missing.

# SA to dish up more zebra to boost jobs and conservation

AFP  
Bela Bela

Carcasses of impala, kudu and wildebeest hang from a slaughterhouse rail, ready to be turned into steaks, sausages and burger patties of the kind South Africa wants to see more of on the dinner table.

The abattoir in Bela Bela, north of Johannesburg, is among only a handful in the country dedicated to game meat.

Authorities say the untapped sector could create jobs and help preserve wildlife - while pleasing the palates of climate- and health-conscious meat eaters.

“We want to add a dimension into your dinner plate by giving you an organic game meat from the wild,” Khorommbi Matibe, the environment ministry’s biodiversity economy chief, told AFP.

A top wildlife tourism destination, South Africa produces around 60,000 tonnes of game meat a year - equivalent in weight to roughly 60,000 giraffes.

But only a fraction ends up in butcheries and supermarkets. Ninety percent is hunted and consumed informally, according to

the government. Even less is exported.

In 2019, just over 3,000 tonnes of ostrich, crocodile and zebra were shipped to the European Union, China and the UAE, it said.

Authorities would like to serve up much more.

In March, they said they want to grow the sector from 4.6bn rand (\$250mn) in 2020 to 27.6bn rand by 2036, adopting a strategy published late last year.

**LESS METHANE**

With unemployment sitting at 32.9% nationally, this could create jobs in rural, economically deprived areas.

Matibe said there are good reasons for barbecuing more springboks. Game animals release less methane - a greenhouse gas - than cattle, whose burps are a top source of global warming emissions from agriculture.

Foraging in the wild, their meat is by definition free-range and lean.

A 2023 study by researchers at Stellenbosch University, found that zebra meat in particular was highly nutritious and very low in fat.

Eating more of it could also help conservation efforts, the govern-

ment argues. South Africa has long adopted a market-oriented approach to conservation, based on the belief that farmers have a better incentive to look after wildlife if they can profit from it.

Critics say the model exploits and commoditises animals. But it has proved largely successful.

The country’s wildlife population has grown from about 500,000 in the 1960s to more than 20mn today. About 80% is in private game reserves that attract tourists and hunters.

Some meat could come from the hundreds of herbivores that are culled every year to keep numbers within sustainable levels, the government says. And it wants to convert 1mn hectares of communal land to game meat production, which could boost black ownership in a sector where, 30 years after the end of apartheid, more than 94% of operators are white males, said Matibe.

Requiring little equipment, game has “really low” input costs - an advantage for newcomers, added Darren Horner, owner of producer Aloes Meat.

Yet, in a country mad for barbecue, locally known as braai, little currently ends on the grill.



A butcher works on a piece of game meat as carcasses hang at an abattoir in Bela Bela.

This is partially due to the belief that game is less tender than beef and tastes unusual, according to the strategy, which envisages marketing campaigns to boost consumption. “Our grandmothers used to stuff it with bacon and leave it in red wine for three days to get rid of that wild taste. To me it only needs a bit of olive oil and salt,” said Charl de Villiers, head of Game SA, an industry group.

There are other hurdles.

Authorities plan to draw up quality standards so that all meat can be traced to the source and

trusted by supermarkets and restaurants. But these can’t be too stringent or risk scaring away informal producers, said Horner.

Meanwhile, exports of cloven-hoofed animals to Europe have been banned for years as South Africa struggles to contain outbreaks of the foot and mouth disease that farmers blame on inadequate border controls.

State laboratories to test meat are small and outdated, which further limits export potential, producers say. De Villiers currently has to ship his ostrich meat

to Britain for testing, which ups costs.

Stephen Nel, owner of the Camo Meat abattoir in Bela Bela, said he applied for an export licence in 2017 but has since given up on it.

“It was a very big disappointment for me. The government failed us,” Nel said, wearing khaki shorts and a matching shirt inside his refrigerated facility.

About 4,000 animals a year are skinned, weighed, deboned, processed and packaged there.

Almost all are brought in by hunters keen on eating some of their prey. Expanding production to supply supermarkets would require investments, but these are hard to come by, amid scepticism around the sector’s potential, he said. The government has been talking about growth for over a decade, but “nothing gets laid down,” said Nel.

Yet, Matibe is confident the strategy will soon start to bring results and will remain on track even after elections in May that forced the ruling African National Congress to form a coalition government. “In the next three years, we should be able to see a ramp up of this product coming to the market,” he said.



TRAGEDY

Landslide kills eight in China after heavy rainfall

A landslide in a mountainous area of central China has left eight people dead, state media said yesterday, as parts of the country were placed on high alert for bad weather. Heavy rain caused a deadly landslide in a village in Hunan province, according to state broadcaster CCTV. Four houses collapsed early yesterday and all eight missing people “have been found with no vital signs”, the channel said. China has been experiencing extreme weather conditions and unusually high temperatures in recent months. Meteorological authorities issued several red alerts for torrential rain yesterday, including in Hubei and Anhui provinces.

ANNOUNCEMENT

New Zealand ferry that ran aground is refloated

A ferry between New Zealand’s two main islands that ran aground on Friday night was successfully refloated, the government of the Pacific nation said. Operated by state-owned enterprise KiwiRail, the Interislander Aratere ferry ran aground in Picton Harbour on the north coast of the South Island. It had been due to travel to Wellington on the North Island but, according to media reports, hit the shore after a steering failure. There were no injuries although 47 people had to spend the night aboard, local media reported. Transport Minister Simeon Brown said Aratere had “been pulled off the shore and is now floating”.

WEATHER

Indonesia uses cloud seeding to reduce intense rain

Indonesia is using a weather modification technique known as cloud seeding around the site of its future capital to reduce intense rains that have hampered construction of the new city, a weather agency official said. The planned city of Nusantara is set to begin operating on August 17, replacing traffic-clogged and sinking Jakarta as Indonesia’s new capital. But contractors, whose work building the city has been hampered by daily rains, asked authorities to carry out a weather-modifying operation, said Tri Handoko Seto, a senior official at Indonesia’s Meteorological, Climatological and Geophysical agency (BMKG).

POLLUTION

Malaysia beaches hit by Singapore oil spill

An oil spill off Singapore has spread to beaches in southern Malaysia, a government official said, with clean-up operations underway. Around 25 people were involved in the clean-up of two beaches spanning 1km in southern Johor state, local government official Ling Tian Soon said. The oil spill resulted from an accident at Singapore’s Pasir Panjang terminal between a Netherlands-flagged dredger and a stationary Singapore-flagged bunker vessel, Singapore’s Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) said. Photos posted on Ling’s Facebook showed men in white protective gear picking up black sludge from a beach and placing it into plastic bags.

Manila won’t be intimidated amid China row: Marcos

AFP  
Manila

President Ferdinand Marcos yesterday said the Philippines “will not be intimidated” by anyone after a violent clash between the Filipino navy and the Chinese coast guard in the South China Sea. The confrontation took place on Monday off Second Thomas Shoal as the Chinese sailors foiled an attempt by Philippine forces to re-supply marines stationed on a derelict warship that was deliberately grounded atop the disputed shoal in 1999 to assert Manila’s territorial claims. It was the latest and most serious incident in a series of escalating confrontations between Chinese and Philippine ships in recent months as Beijing steps up efforts to push its claims to nearly all of the strategically located waterway. “We will never be intimidated or oppressed by anyone,” Marcos said in a speech during a visit to the headquarters of the Philippines’ South China Sea forces on Palawan island, the closest major landmass to the shoal. Marcos awarded medals to 80 sailors who took part in the resupply mission, urging them to “continue to fulfil your duty of defending the nation” even as he said the situation has become “dangerous”. Second Thomas Shoal lies about 200kms from Palawan and more than 1,000kms from China’s near-

est major landmass, Hainan island. A Filipino sailor lost a thumb in the clash with Manila also accusing the Chinese coast guard sailors of wielding knives, sticks and an axe and stealing or damaging their equipment, including guns and inflatable boats. Beijing insisted its coast guard behaved in a “professional and restrained” way and blamed Manila for the clash. In previous confrontations Chinese forces have used water cannon and military-grade lasers and collided with Filipino resupply vessels and their escorts. “We have never, never in the history of the Philippines, yielded to any foreign power,” Marcos said to applause, while pledging to “continue to exercise our freedoms and rights in support of our national interest, in accordance with international law. “In defending the nation, we stay true to our Filipino nature that we would like to settle all these issues peacefully,” Marcos said. “Our calm and peaceful disposition should not be mistaken for acquiescence,” he added. The confrontation is fuelling growing concern that the dispute could drag in the US, which has a mutual defence pact with Manila. The US has condemned China’s actions and reaffirmed its ironclad defence commitments against any attack on Philippine aircraft or vessels in the South China Sea under their mutual defence treaty.

Bali Kite Festival



Participants launch a giant kite during the Bali Kite Festival at Mertasari beach in Sanur, Indonesia’s Bali island yesterday.

EU ‘seeks defence industry pacts with Japan, S Korea’

Reuters  
Tokyo

The European Union is seeking security and defence industry partnerships with Japan and South Korea aimed at joint development of military equipment, the Nikkei reported yesterday, citing a senior EU commission official. These would mark the EU’s first such security and defence-related collaboration with Asian nations, the Japanese business newspaper said in a report from Brussels that did not identify the official. The bloc hopes to reach a ministerial-level

agreement with Japan by year end, which could help the EU fund joint projects managed by Japanese and European companies, the Nikkei said. Representatives of Japan’s foreign ministry and the South Korean and EU delegations in Tokyo were not immediately available for comment on the report yesterday. Japan, despite a constitution that renounces war, says it faces “the most severe and complex security environment since World War II”. In recent years it has boosted its defence industry in its largest postwar military expansion, expressing concern about threats from Asia neighbours China and North Korea.

Tokyo signed a treaty last year to establish a programme to develop an advanced fighter jet with Britain and Italy. This month Japan started talks with the US on forging deeper defence industry collaboration under the US-Japan Forum on Defence Industrial Co-operation, Acquisition and Sustainment, established in April by Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and President Joe Biden. Japan-US discussions have so far focussed on naval repairs in Japan that could help free up US yards to build more warships, but co-operation could be extended to aircraft repairs, missile production and military supply-chain resilience.

Australian police probe incident that led to mall evacuation

Australian police said they were investigating an incident at a shopping mall in Adelaide that led to an evacuation of the centre and resulted in some minor injuries. Police said they had received reports of two groups of young males fighting in the food court area of the Westfield Marion Shopping Centre, with some people in the group reported to have weapons. “As a result of the incident, centre management activated an audible alert and evacuation alarm, and the centre went into lockdown,” police in the state of South Australia said in a statement. “Several shoppers who sought refuge in shops were safely escorted from the centre.” Police said they were satisfied there was no ongoing threat to the community, but further investigations were being carried out. South Australia police assistant commissioner Scott Duval said footage from the scene showed it was “not a random attack,” according to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

World Intelligence Expo



A humanoid robot gestures while on display during the World Intelligence Expo in Tianjin, China, yesterday.

Lanka upgrades naval monitoring centre

AFP  
Colombo

Sri Lanka has launched an upgraded naval monitoring centre, funded by its powerful neighbour India as New Delhi pushes to counter China’s expanding regional influence. The Maritime Rescue Co-ordinating Centre – able to track shipping across vast areas – was backed by a \$6mn Indian grant, a statement from President Ranil Wickremesinghe’s office said. Based in Sri Lanka’s naval headquarters in Colombo, it also includes seven remote stations along the island’s eastern seaboard. One lies in the far south of Sri Lanka – close to the Chinese-run port of Hambantota – overseeing major international east-to-west shipping routes. Sri Lanka’s maritime rescue region covers an area of 1.77mn

square kilometres stretching from India to Indonesia, Australia and the Maldives. India’s foreign minister S Jaishankar opened the facility during his first foreign visit since the formation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s new government this month. Jaishankar said on social media that Colombo was a key part of India’s “neighbourhood first” and maritime security policies. Jaishankar also discussed New Delhi-backed infrastructure and energy projects, some funded by India’s Adani group, officials said. In 2021, Sri Lanka awarded a strategic port development in Colombo to India’s Adani group – a 1.4km jetty next to a Chinese-operated terminal. And Adani was last month awarded a deal to establish a \$442mn wind energy plant in Sri Lanka’s north, although that has faced legal challenges from local residents.

Taiwan war games to mimic combat as closely as possible

Reuters  
Taipei

Taiwan’s annual war games this year will be as close as possible to actual combat, no longer just putting on a show to score points but aiming to simulate real fighting given a rapidly rising “enemy threat” from China, a senior official said. China, which views Taiwan as its territory, has been staging regular exercises around the island for four years to pressure Taipei to accept Beijing’s claim of sovereignty, de-

spite Taiwan’s strong objections. Taiwan starts its five-day Han Kuang exercises on July 22. A senior Taiwan defence official, speaking on condition of anonymity to be able to speak more freely, said there was an urgent need to rethink how the drills were conducted. “In recent years, the enemy threat has changed rapidly,” the official said. “Our defence combat plan must also be continuously revised on a rolling basis, and the urgency of comprehensive combat training is becoming more and more important.”

Elements that were mostly for show, like rehearsal drills, have been cancelled, while this year there will be nighttime exercises and, unusually, the capital Taipei will be included too, the official said. “It’s not about scoring points,” the official said. “We want the soldiers to wonder whether this is for real.” Things may go wrong, like vehicle breakdowns, and that is fine, the official added. “These are problems that may be faced in actual combat.” The exercises will be a continuous experience, the official said.

“War does not distinguish between night and day.” China’s defence ministry did not answer calls seeking comment about the exercises outside of office hours at the weekend. It has previously said it is futile for Taiwan to think it can use arms to prevent “reunification”. Announcing the drills in April, Taiwan’s defence ministry said the war games would practice “kill” zones at sea to break a blockade and simulate a scenario where China suddenly turns one of its regular drills around the island into an attack. “Only with real-time,

on-the-ground verification can we truly understand the capabilities and limitations of our troops,” the official said. China held two days of its own war games around the island shortly after President Lai Ching-te took office last month, saying it was “punishment” for his inauguration speech, which Beijing denounced as being full of separatist content. But China has also been using grey zone warfare against Taiwan, wielding irregular tactics to exhaust a foe by keeping them continually on alert without resorting

to open combat. This includes sending balloons over the island and almost daily air force missions into the skies near Taiwan. China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control. Lai, who says only the Taiwanese people can decide their future, has repeatedly offered talks but been rebuffed. The official declined to comment on which parts of the war games Lai would attend, as is customary for the president as commander-in-chief, or whether there would be US observers.





# UK minister compares election betting scandal to Partygate

AFP  
London

A senior British minister compared the latest scandal involving Tory candidates accused of betting on the election date to Partygate, a series of Covid-era parties that

brought down Boris Johnson. Housing Minister Michael Gove compared the betting allegations to the Partygate scandal in an interview with the *Times* newspaper. “It looks like one rule for them and one rule for us... That’s the most potentially damaging thing,” said Gove, who is standing down

this election after 14 years as an MP. “That was damaging at the time of Partygate and is damaging here,” he added. Prime minister Johnson was forced from office in 2022 following public anger at the revelations of parties held in Downing Street when the rest of the country was

under lockdown during the pandemic. Now another senior Conservative Party figure has been caught up in the latest scandal. The party’s chief data officer, Nick Mason, has taken a leave of absence, following claims he placed bets on the timing of the election, the PA news agency re-

ported. He is the fourth Tory figure to be implicated in the affair. The party’s campaign director stepped aside following reports on Thursday that he and his wife, a Tory candidate in the July 4 election, were under investigation. The scandal broke a week earlier, when Tory candidate and Sunak’s ministerial aide Craig Wil-

liams said he was being probed for staking a bet on the snap election date before it was called. On Wednesday, London police said one of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak’s security detail had been arrested for allegedly placing a bet on the date. Sunak has said he is “incredibly angry” over the revelations.

# Job creation India’s top economic challenge: experts

Reuters  
Bengaluru

Tackling India’s chronic joblessness will be the biggest challenge for the government over the next five years, even as the country remains the world’s fastest-growing major economy, according to policy experts. Asia’s third-largest economy grew more than 8% last fiscal year, driven by government capital expenditure that so far has failed to spark sufficient business spending to create enough work, particularly for young people in a country of 1.4bn. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party lost the parliamentary majority it has held for the past decade in national elections that ended in early June over widening inequality, relentless inflation pressure - particularly on food - and a lack of well-paying jobs.

An overwhelming 91% majority of development economists and policy experts, 49 of 54, said unemployment would be the biggest economic challenge for the government’s term in a survey taken May 15-June 18. “In India, we have a very peculiar problem - supposedly very high aggregate growth rates and no increase in employment. Modi came to power offering aspirational youth jobs and a better life, but it’s gotten significantly worse since then,” said Jayati Ghosh, professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

“You have to have a job-specific strategy... You have to dramatically increase public employment in basic social services, health, education, nutrition, sanitation.” The BJP has acknowledged employment was a factor in the election and said “whatever best can be done is being done”. However, most economists questioned the government’s ability to provide jobs or accurately measure its success or failure. Others underscored the role business needs to play in bringing about material change in employment. “Government alone cannot possibly create the jobs required to absorb the millions entering into the workforce every year. That requires the private sector to step up with high, sustained investment,” said Rajeswari Sengupta, associate professor of economics from the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research in Mumbai.

Over the past decade, the BJP government has significantly ramped up spending on the country’s infrastructure, but so far business spending has not followed through in anywhere near the same volume and intensity. Gross fixed capital formation, often used as a measure for private investment, has risen at a compound annual rate of about 8% since 2014, lower than the 14% during the previous decade. “The government needs to identify impediments to private investment, remove policy hurdles and obstacles holding back a revival... and let the private sector do its job

with minimum government hindrance,” Sengupta added. Asked what the government should do to help create jobs, many survey respondents said spurring this follow-through from private investment was key. Other recommendations included raising education standards, reforming tax structures and increasing co-operation between central and state governments. One of the biggest challenges to progress in creating jobs is there is no universally accepted unemployment rate in India, partly because it is very hard to measure in a country which has close to 1bn people eligible to work. Without a commonly agreed starting point, it is difficult to measure success. A recent Reserve Bank of India bulletin estimated about 80% of India’s workforce is part of the unregulated economy. “Official figures of unemployment don’t capture the absence of jobs in the informal sector, and since most of India’s workforce is in the informal sector, especially rural, you’re not going to be recording them as unemployed,” said Bina Agarwal, professor of development economics and environment at the University of Manchester.

The latest government data puts the jobless rate at just 3.2% for the 2022-23 fiscal year, well below an already historically low unemployment rate in the US. But the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy, a private think-tank, reported 7% unemployment in May, up from around 6% before the pandemic.



Passengers queue outside Terminal 1 after an overnight power cut led to disruptions and cancellations at Manchester Airport in Manchester, Britain, yesterday.

# Power cut causes chaos at Manchester airport

AFP  
London

Manchester Airport, the third-busiest in Britain, cancelled over 100 flights affecting thousands of passengers yesterday following a major power cut. At least 20% of all outgoing and incoming flights were cancelled, a Manchester Airport spokesperson said, adding that it expected further disruption. Earlier aviation analytics firm Cirium said 66 departures and 50 inbound flights had been cancelled with easyJet experiencing the largest number of cancellations. Manchester Airports Group, which also operates London Stan-

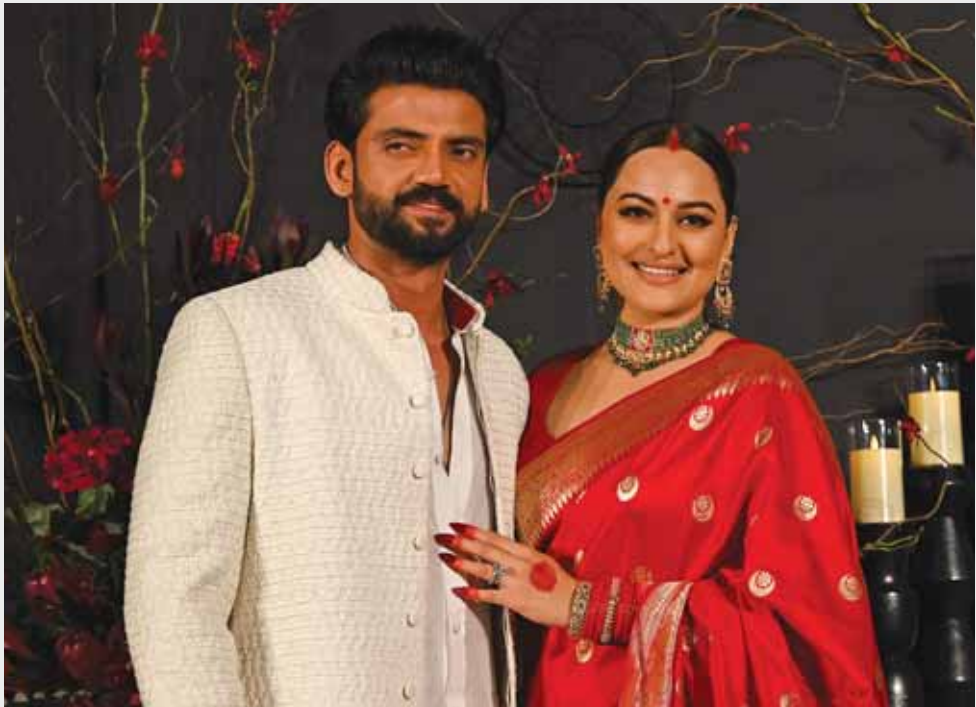
sted and the East Midlands airports, said the airport had been “affected by a major power cut in the area earlier this morning” and passengers at two of the three terminals were told to stay away. The power cut led to problems with airport security and baggage systems, according to Chris Woodroffe, the airport managing director. Flights resumed in the afternoon. Woodroffe said on social media he expected flights to be “back to normal operations” today. The airline Jet2 said that as well as cancelling dozens of flights, it was unable to load bags onto planes as the baggage system remained “inoperable”. EasyJet warned of “very long queues” for security and said passengers could only board flights

with cabin bags. Some arriving flights were diverted to other airports including London Heathrow and Birmingham. Some flyers took to X, formerly Twitter, to describe the “chaos”, with one passenger saying they had been waiting for their bags after landing after midnight and another saying they were “stuck on the plane”. The UK travel industry has been hit by a series of technical and strike disruptions in recent years that have affecting rail and air passengers. Last month, a nationwide outage of immigration e-gates caused long delays for thousands of passengers. In August last year, Britain faced its worst air traffic control disruption in years due to a technical fault.

## India approves \$9bn new port to boost trade with Europe

India’s cabinet has approved the development of a new deep-water port that the government said will be a crucial part of a plan to connect the Asian country with Europe by sea and rail links through the Middle East. The VadHAVAN port will be built on India’s western coast, about 150km from financial capital Mumbai, for Rs762bn (\$9.14bn), Information Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told reporters. The port has a natural draught of up to 65 feet, allowing it to handle the largest ships in the world. It will be an all-cargo port with zones for containers, dry and wet bulk. The port will include terminals to accommodate “mega vessels” and terminals for petroleum, automobiles and other imports, with annual capacity of 298mn metric tonnes, Vaishnaw said. The minister added that the first of two phases of construction is expected to be completed by 2029.

## Stars wed in Mumbai



Bollywood actress and model Sonakshi Sinha (right) and Bollywood actor Zaheer Iqbal pose for photographs during their wedding reception party in Mumbai, India, yesterday.

# Minister’s aide trashes Rwanda migrant plan

AFP  
London

The UK interior minister has defended a parliamentary aide who rubbished the government plan to deport illegal migrants to Rwanda, in a leaked audio revealed by the BBC yesterday. A controversial law by the Conservative government allowing irregular migrants arriving in the UK to be deported to Rwanda was finally passed in April, after months of parliamentary wrangling. But in the recording James Sunderland, a parliamentary aide and Conservative party candidate, was heard dismissing the policy. “But it’s not about the policy,” he went on to say, speaking at a Youth Conservatives conference in April. “There is no doubt at all

that when those first flights take off it will send such a shockwave across the Channel”, Sunderland clarified. Home Secretary James Cleverly said he was “surprised”, when asked about the audio, before saying Sunderland was making a “counter-intuitive statement to grab the attention”. Cleverly told Sky News yesterday that his aide Sunderland “is completely supportive of the deterrent effect”. Sunderland told the BBC he was “disappointed” to have been recorded at a private event, and said although the policy is “not the be all and end all”, it is “part of a wider response”. No flights deporting asylum seekers have actually taken off yet for the African country, due to lengthy legal challenges and with parliament dissolved ahead of a looming general election on July 4.

# Indian forest activist at the coalface of mining battle

AFP  
Korba, India

Deep in an Indian forest, activist Alok Shukla greets friendly faces among a small band of protesters sitting in the way of plans to turn the surrounding wilderness into coal mines. Shukla has led a decade-long grassroots campaign against some of India’s conglomerates - including one operated by Adani Group, helmed by Asia’s second-richest man - seeking to tap one of the country’s richest subterranean stores of fossil fuels. The movement had a major tri-

umph in 2021 when, bowing to its demands, the government established an elephant reserve in a 445,000-acre swath of the threatened Hasdeo Aranya forest, an area bigger than the size of London. “It was a great achievement for our struggle,” Shukla said from his base in the woodlands of central Chhattisgarh state. “Our final fight is that no more mines should be opened and not even a single tree should be cut down here now.” Shukla, 45, was recently announced as one of the recipients of this year’s Goldman Prize, awarded to campaigners for “sustained and significant” efforts to protect the environment.

Through a combination of protest marches, pressure on lawmakers and court cases, Shukla rallied support from thousands living in the forest’s isolated tribal communities to battle the mining giants. Seventeen proposed mining sites were closed off from development as a result of the elephant reserve’s establishment but large stretches of the forest remain earmarked for coal projects. Another six proposed mining sites were left out of the reserve, Shukla said, five of which remain dormant while another - belonging to the Rajasthan state government but run by Adani Group - is already operational and planning an expansion.

Shukla and the Hasdeo forest’s inhabitants have maintained a sit-in protest for the past two years at the village of Hariharpur, set to be swallowed up if the expansion proceeds. The campaign “isn’t just a struggle to save the forests or environment but an effort to question the prevalent view around economic development,” Shukla said. India is the world’s third-biggest emitter of greenhouse gases but has committed to achieve a net zero emissions economy by 2070 - two decades after most of the industrialised West. For now, it is overwhelmingly reliant on coal for power generation. The Hasdeo woodlands are esti-

mated to sit atop an estimated 5bn tonnes of underground coal eagerly sought by conglomerates such as that owned by tycoon Gautam Adani, who has branched into ambitious green energy projects but built his fortune on meeting India’s voracious appetite for the dirty fuel. Adani Group said in a statement that its charitable arm was “committed to improving quality of life of the communities” around the mine. “Certain self-proclaimed activists... are working with a clear agenda to malign the reputation of Adani Group,” it said. When Shukla first arrived in the Hasdeo forest in 2012, its inhabitants had come to accept the mining

projects as inevitable. “No one wanted to give up their land but they were all resigned to the idea that they couldn’t do anything,” he said. Shukla went from village to village explaining the legal recourses and constitutional protections for tribal communities that could be used to stop the mines. He and his allies said they had resisted bribes, violent threats and warnings of legal action in the course of their fight. “It took a long time, it was tough, but people gradually organised and joined the effort,” 47-year-old Shakuntala Ekka, one of the first few to join his cause, said.



## East Canada prisoners relocated as hundreds flee wildfires

Wildfires in eastern Canada forced the evacuation of hundreds of people — including 225 inmates from a maximum security prison, officials said yesterday. The federal penitentiary in Port-Cartier, about 500km north of Quebec City, was ordered evacuated along with about 1,000 local residents over the weekend, and 750 workers at a hydroelectric dam in Labrador further north. In a statement, correctional services commissioner Anne Kelly said the prison was closed and inmates “were successfully moved from the affected area to other secure federal correctional facilities.” The prison has housed some of the nation’s most notorious criminals including several serial killers. A local state of emergency was declared on Friday as wildfires menaced the town of Port-Cartier.

## Lending a hand on campaign rail



US Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) reacts during a rally for Jamaal Bowman (D-NY) at St. Mary’s Park in the Bronx borough of New York City. Supporters gathered three days before New York’s primary elections as incumbent Bowman attempts to retain his seat in a heated primary race. (AFP)

## Dalai Lama arrives in New York for knee treatment

Tibet’s spiritual leader the Dalai Lama arrived yesterday in New York to undergo knee treatment, drawing a warm and festive welcome from thousands of followers. His office in the Indian hill town of Dharamsala, his adopted home, announced earlier this month that the 88-year-old Buddhist spiritual leader would travel to the United States to undergo “medical treatment” on his knees, but no further details have been released. Followers, many wearing traditional Tibetan outfits, waited outside the Dalai Lama’s Manhattan hotel in crushing heat hoping to catch a glimpse of the man. “Once we saw him, it felt really powerful. And everyone was, like, emotional because he’s, like, our leader,” said one of them, 18-year-old US-born Tenzin Pasang, who has now seen the Dalai Lama three times. “So it’s very nice to see him in New York,” she said. She welcomed the spiritual leader by joining in a performance of a traditional Tibetan dance. Last week a group of senior US lawmakers including former House speaker Nancy Pelosi met with the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamsala, sparking heavy criticism from China.



People visit the beach at Coney Island on a sweltering afternoon on the first weekend of summer in the Brooklyn borough of New York City. (AFP)

## Heatwave scorches US East Coast, West in sights

More than 100mn people across the US were under heat warnings yesterday, with cities on the East Coast bracing for record-breaking temperatures as the heat dome causing the dangerous conditions expands to the West Coast. Baltimore and Philadelphia are forecast to touch records near 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) yesterday, while temperatures rise into the 90s F in states like Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, as much as 15 degrees above normal for this time of year. The extreme heat will then shift to Nebraska and Kansas on Monday, the National Weather Service (NWS) said. Officials are warning of dangerous conditions in the Philadelphia region where high humidity could drive heat indices above 105F (41C), making it feel even hotter than the actual temperature. “It likely means we’ll be seeing periodic periods of excessive heat across a decent part of the country into July,” NWS meteorologist Marc Chenard said. “Not continuous at any one spot, but the overall pattern will continue to favour these above normal temperatures.” Temperatures have cooled in the Ohio Valley, Great Lakes and New England regions, but excessive heat in the 90s F continues to stretch from Virginia to New York. Climate change is driving dangerous heatwaves across the Northern Hemisphere this week and will continue to deliver dangerous weather for decades to come, research shows. Extreme heat is suspected of causing hundreds of deaths across Asia and Europe as it has taken over cities on four continents. More than 1,000 have died during Haj, the annual pilgrimage to Makkah in Saudi Arabia, amid sweltering temperatures this year, according to a Reuters tally. In New Mexico, officials are responding to multiple weather events, including a dust storm, flooding and two wildfires. The Biden administration last week declared an emergency over the wildfires, which have been blamed for two deaths and more than 1,400 destroyed structures. The FBI has offered a \$10,000 reward for information leading to an arrest of anyone responsible for the fires. The blazes have scorched 25,000 acres around the village of Ruidoso, according to the government wildfire tracking website Inciweb. While excessive heat is causing problems in many states, other states are also contending with flooding.

## Woman seriously hurt in wolf attack at French zoo

Police and prosecutors were investigating how a 37-year-old woman came to be attacked and seriously injured by three wolves in a zoo outside Paris yesterday. The woman was bitten “on the neck, the calf and the back” at the Thoiry zoo around 40km west of the French capital, a source close to the case told AFP. Maryvonne Caillibotte, chief prosecutor in Versailles, had said the woman’s life was in danger, but later yesterday a source told AFP her injuries were no longer life-threatening. The woman, went out early last morning for a jog after spending the night with her family in the safari-style lodge at the zoo, according to initial findings of the investigation. CEO of Wow Safari Thoiry, Christelle Bercheny, told AFP that the woman had “crossed the American reserve on foot”, a place normally “only accessible by car”. Bercheny said that there were signs reminding people of the “rules of survival” to be followed in the park. “The behaviour of the animals in the reserves is that of animals in freedom or semi-liberty,” she added, referring to their reaction to the intrusion of a human. Lodges in the wolf zone, advertised on its website at between 220 and €760 (\$235-810) per night, promise “silence, rest and disconnection”, according to the zoo’s adverts. They offer “a one-of-a-kind, very intimate experience with the arctic wolves you’ll be able to see from the living room”. The woman “ended up in the safari zone, which is supposed to be restricted to cars. That’s where she was attacked by three wolves,” Caillibotte said. It was not clear “whether she made a mistake or the trail wasn’t clearly marked”, she added. First responders got to the scene “very quickly”, the wolves were “moved away, then returned to their area”, Caillibotte said. The source familiar with the case said earlier the woman must have got through “security systems, a trench and an electric fence supposed to keep the animals in”. Police are investigating the incident.

AFP  
Moscow

Russia yesterday said the United States had responsibility for a Ukrainian missile attack on Russian-annexed Crimea, which it said killed five people, including three children, and wounded over 100.

A missile exploded above a beach area of the city of Sevastopol, firing shrapnel at people relaxing there, Russian-appointed officials said.

Russia’s defence ministry said Washington and Kyiv bore “responsibility for a deliberate missile strike on peaceful residents”, which it said used US-supplied ATACMS missiles.

Sevastopol governor Mikhail Razvozhayev said in a video posted on Telegram that three children and two adults had died and almost 120 people were injured.

The Black Sea port city and naval base on the Crimean peninsula was annexed by Russia in 2014 but is still internationally recognised as part of Ukraine.



## Malian singer detained in Italy

Malian singer Rokia Traore (pictured) has been arrested in Italy over an outstanding two-year prison sentence in Belgium handed down in a child custody dispute, prosecutors in Brussels said yesterday. The singer and guitarist was sentenced in absentia in October on charges of parental abduction, after fleeing France in 2020 when she was due to be handed over to Belgian authorities. Italian media reported that the award-winning musician was arrested at Fiumicino airport in Rome on Friday after she flew into the country for a concert. A spokesperson for the airport told AFP that border police had confirmed her arrest. There was no official confirmation from the Italian authorities. Prosecutors in Brussels told AFP that “Ms Traore’s arrest in Italy follows a decision by the Brussels Criminal Court on October 18, 2023, which sentenced her in absentia to two years imprisonment for failing to hand over a child to the person entitled to custody”. Traore had been arrested in Paris in March 2020 on a European arrest warrant over a Belgian court ruling ordering her to return her daughter, now aged nine, to the child’s Belgian father. She later defied a ban on leaving France and flew home to Mali several months later, before she could be sent to Belgium.

## ■ 5 killed, including 3 children, more than 100 injured: Moscow

Sevastopol regularly comes under fire from Ukraine but yesterday’s attack was unusually deadly.

Razvozhayev said the attack hit Uchkuyevka, an area with sandy beaches and hotels.

Videos posted on social media showed people running from the beach as explosions went off and people in swimming outfits carrying a stretcher. AFP could not verify their authenticity.

A local news channel on Telegram, ChP Sevastopol, cited witnesses as saying that an elderly woman was killed as she swam in the sea.

The investigative committee, which probes major crimes, said it was opening an investigation into “a terrorist act”.

The governor said Ukraine had launched five missiles which Russian air defences intercepted over the sea but fragments fell onto the shore wounding people.

Razvozhayev said shrapnel hit

beach areas in the north of the city and set fire to a house and woodland.

A Russian defence ministry statement said Ukraine committed a “terrorist attack on the civilian infrastructure of Sevastopol with US-supplied ATACMS tactical missiles loaded with cluster warheads”.

The ministry said four missiles were downed but a fifth changed trajectory after being intercepted “with its warhead exploding in the air over the city”.

It added that “all flight missions for US ATACMS are entered by US specialists based on the US’s own satellite reconnaissance data”.

“Such actions will not be left without a response,” the ministry warned.

Ukraine’s military has not commented on the attack, which came a day after a Russian guided bomb strike on the city of Kharkiv hit an apartment building, killing two

people and injuring more than 50.

Yesterday, Russian strikes hit a house and a children’s educational facility in Kharkiv, killing one person and injuring 10 including two teenagers, regional governor Oleg Syngubov said.

A drone launched by Ukraine on Russia’s southern Belgorod region yesterday killed a man, the governor said.

Three Ukrainian attack drones struck Graivoron, near the border with Ukraine, said Belgorod governor Vyacheslav Gladkov, with one hitting a car park near a multi-storey block of flats.

“A peaceful civilian was killed. The man died from his wounds at the spot” and three people were wounded, Gladkov wrote on Telegram.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in a social media post urged supporter countries to help Ukraine step up attacks on Russian soil.

“We have enough determination to destroy terrorists on their territory — it is only fair — and we need the same determination from our partners. We can stop Russia,” Zelensky wrote.

## French feminists march against the far-right

AFP  
Paris

Thousands of people turned out in France yesterday for feminist demonstrations against the far-right, which is expected to come out on top in June 30 snap elections, as parties sought to shore up support with days to go.

With the far-right National Rally (RN) polling at around 35%, “we have to remind people that they’re the ones who are always attacking family planning services,” said Morgane Legras, a nuclear engineer and feminist activist taking part in the Paris march.

There were between 13,000 (police estimate) and 75,000 (organisers’ estimate) people at yesterday’s demonstration.

Protesters, many wearing violet, marched from the Place de la Republique square in central Paris to Place de la Nation in the east, bearing signs with messages such as “Push back the far-right, not our rights”.

Police sources said 53 rallies took place across the country, and said 33,800 people had taken part.

France’s two-round election system makes it difficult to predict which party could ultimately claim a majority in the lower house of parliament, handing them the prime minister’s post which is second in power only to President Emmanuel Macron.

Since Macron dissolved parliament after a European Parliament election battering the centrists are badly lagging the RN as well as a reformed left-wing alliance called the New Popular Front (NFP) in surveys of voting intentions.

The RN has garnered unprec-



Protesters sing during a demonstration called by the ‘Justice and Hope’ Christian collective against the rise of far-right parties, in front of Hotel des Invalides, in Paris, yesterday. (AFP)

edented levels of support after a decades-long “de-demonisation” push to distance its image from its roots, including a co-founder who was a member of the Nazi Waffen-SS paramilitary.

But the core of its message remains hostility to immigration, Islam and the European Union.

Senior RN lawmaker Sebastian Chenu gestured towards Muslim and Jewish voters yesterday by vowing not to ban the ritual slaughter of livestock to produce halal or kosher meat.

“Everyone will be able to keep eating kosher meat if they want,” Chenu told Jewish broadcaster Radio J.

He added that a historic far-right policy of barring the kippa in public spaces — in the footsteps of an existing law forbidding the full-body burka worn by some Muslim women — was not top of the RN’s agenda, saying its priority was to fight “the Islamist threat”.

In Macron’s camp, Prime Minister Gabriel Attal acknowledged

that the European Parliament result — where they scored just 14% — was “a message to us that we have to do better with our methods, with our governance” of the country.

If his party defies the odds to come top in the legislative polls, he vowed “change”, including a turn to “seeking out coalitions with the French public, with civil society” in an interview with broadcaster RTL.

Macron’s alliance would open up to “all who want to come, from the conservative right to the social-democratic left”, Macron’s former prime minister Edouard Philippe told broadcaster France 3.

Attal also hammered the centrists’ mantra about the threats from “extremes” on the left and right, saying both promised a “tax bludgeoning... a shredder for the middle classes”.

The RN especially is “not ready to govern... it’s a party of opposition, not a party of government”, Attal said.



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GULF TIMES

Intensifying heatwaves highlight dire climate crisis

Going by the excruciating heat waves experienced across the world, it is not difficult to believe the World Meteorological Organisation when it says there is an 86% chance that one of the next five years will eclipse 2023 to become the warmest on record. Climate change is fuelling more extreme temperature peaks - making heatwaves more common, more intense and longer-lasting. On average globally, a heatwave that would have occurred once in 10 years in the pre-industrial climate will now occur 2.8 times over 10 years, and it will be 1.2C warmer, according to an international team of scientists with the World Weather Attribution (WWA) group.

Scientists say heatwaves will continue to intensify if the world continues to unleash climate-warming emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. If the world hits 2C of global warming, heatwaves would on average occur 5.6 times in 10 years and be 2.6C hotter, according to the WWA. Deadly heatwaves are scorching cities on four continents in a sign that climate change may again help to fuel record-breaking heat that could surpass last summer as the warmest in 2,000 years. Record temperatures in recent days are suspected to have caused hundreds, if not thousands, of deaths across Asia and Europe.

If the world hits 2C of global warming, heatwaves would on average occur 5.6 times in 10 years and be 2.6C hotter

forecasters are anticipating yet another year of extreme heat ahead. "If we look at the forecast for the next three months in the long range, it's suggesting that the trend that we're seeing in baseline warming could continue, and so 2024 could rival 2023 for being the hottest year on record, which is very scary," says Chloe Brimicombe, a heatwave researcher at the University of Graz.

The aggravating heatwaves are also attributed to El Nino officially ending and ripples from its demise shaking up weather around the globe. El Nino - a natural climate pattern marked by warmer than average ocean temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean - has gripped the planet since the start of last summer. It reached super status earlier this year after boosting temperatures during the hottest year on record and influencing other global weather events.

Most notably, El Nino helped push both air and ocean temperatures to record levels globally. Every month from June 2023-May 2024 was the world's hottest such month on record, CNN previously reported. Global ocean temperatures first climbed to record breaking levels in March 2023 and have remained at historic levels since then. Despite records starting before El Nino arrived on the scene, the toasty climate pattern only exacerbated the situation as record heat in the air seeped into the oceans. Oceans are incredibly slow to cool, especially since about 90% of the world's excess heat produced by burning planet-heating fossil fuels are stored in them.

Now, with El Nino out of the spotlight, its opposite is preparing to take centre stage later this summer: La Nina. The transition to La Nina isn't the only factor influencing temperatures during the hottest time of the year. They are always on the rise in a world warming due to fossil fuel pollution. So back to square one it is, sadly though.

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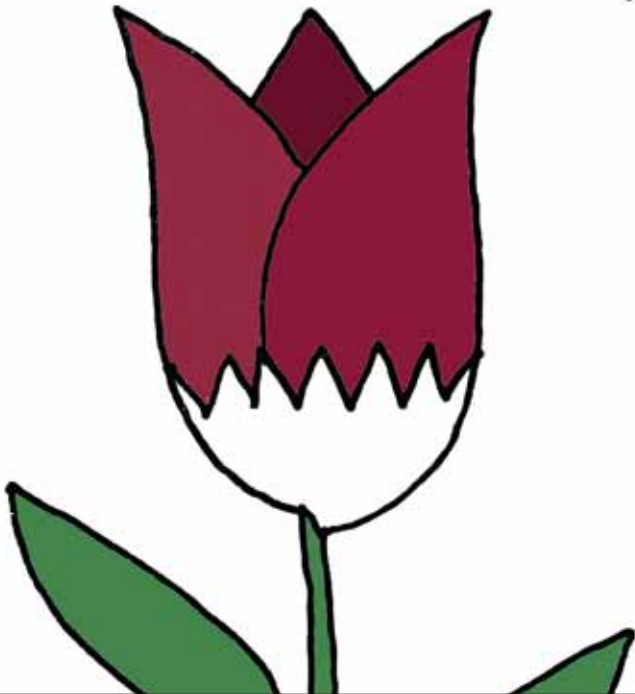
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Petals of Partnership  
Qatar & the Netherlands Cultivate a Blossoming Future



The global implications of EU tariffs on Chinese EVs

By Shang-Jin Wei  
New York

On June 12, the European Union (EU) announced new provisional levies on Chinese electric vehicles (EVs), with the tariff level to be based on estimates of how much state support an EV exporter receives. The new tariffs follow from a months-long investigation into China's use of financial subsidies, and they will be imposed on top of the 10% tariff that the EU already has in place. They are "provisional" because they might be revised downward if Chinese producers can offer evidence that the support they receive is less than estimated.

Separately, if the EU can reach an agreement with China to reduce the volume of Chinese EV exports to Europe, the new tariffs may not be implemented.

The new tariffs reflect the EU's upper-bound estimate of the total subsidy per vehicle that Chinese producers receive from all levels of government throughout their supply chains. The investigators sent requests for co-operation to all Chinese EV producers, and selected three from among those who complied: BYD, Geely, and SAIC. They then pored over those companies' records and interviewed company insiders and industry experts.

Concluding that the rates of subsidies are 17.4% at BYD, 20% at Geely, and 38.1% at SAIC, the investigators set tariffs on each company accordingly. All other EV producers who agreed to cooperate with investigators will face a tariff of 21% (the weighted average of the three), while producers who have not pledged

co-operation will be subject to a 38.1% tariff.

The EU's findings provide insight into the true nature of the United States' 100% "anti-subsidy" tariff on Chinese EVs. The US tariff, announced last month (with no serious investigation), is so much higher than any reasonable estimate of Chinese subsidies that its protectionist intent is obvious.

Even before President Joe Biden's administration imposed the 100% levy on Chinese EVs, US tariffs on Chinese imports - erected under Donald Trump, but carried over by Biden - were already at levels similar to the infamous US Smoot-Hawley tariffs of the 1930s.

In 2020, a World Trade Organisation panel (consisting of experts from countries other than the US and China) ruled that these tariffs are inconsistent with US legal obligations at the WTO. But both the Trump and Biden administrations have chosen to ignore WTO rules.

Most governments have said nothing publicly about the US policy, partly because the tariffs have raised the relative competitiveness of their own products in the same market (by dint of reducing Chinese producers' competitiveness). Following the Trump tariffs, direct US imports from China declined precipitously, while imports from Mexico, India, Vietnam, and many other countries increased.

Some commentators seem to believe that since China's cost advantage is so large, a 30% tariff is not enough to curtail Chinese EV exports. But this assumption is mistaken for at least two reasons.

First, because different markets

have different standards for safety and other matters, auto producers often must adjust car designs accordingly, and this reduces the number of sales per model in a given market. (For example, Chinese standards emphasise the safety of pedestrians and others outside a vehicle in the event of a collision, whereas the US standard emphasises the safety of the driver and others inside the car.)

Second, any given model needs to reach a certain threshold of sales volume to be profitable. Thus, any tariff that can reduce the expected quantity of sales sufficiently could remove the incentive for exporting to that foreign market altogether.

Some Chinese EV producers might consider locating production in the US, which could be good for US job creation and tax revenues. But since the US government review of inbound foreign investment is perceived to be anti-China by Chinese firms, many producers may simply give up on the US market entirely.

The primary victims of the US tariffs (besides Chinese exporters and American consumers) are producers from smaller countries that now face an elevated risk of larger countries imposing protectionist measures with seeming impunity.

As EVs are an important tool in the world's transition to a net-zero economy, some subsidies are better than none. A globally efficient subsidy rate for EV production and consumption is higher in the absence of a sufficiently high global carbon tax. The EU and US probably prefer tariffs on foreign goods to subsidies on domestic EV production because both are

already burdened by high levels of debt.

The new tariffs will certainly harm Chinese EV manufacturers' prospects, in terms of both profits and jobs. But they are also bad for European and American households, because they will raise prices (domestic producers will face less competitive pressure) and delay the transition from highly polluting traditional automobiles.

At the same time, the new tariffs will create two opposing forces in the rest of the world. By shutting Chinese EVs out of the US and EU markets, they may drive an increase in Chinese exports elsewhere. That will benefit consumers in these countries, and ease their transition to cleaner transportation. Among countries with small domestic auto industries, such as Australia and New Zealand, there are no obvious losers. But for countries with a sizeable auto industry, there will be even greater competitive pressure, and these governments may feel compelled to imitate the US and the EU.

The world would have been much better off if major powers had found a way to negotiate a common pro-climate subsidy scheme for EVs, and a common tax on carbon emissions. Instead, we may get a self-destructive race to the bottom. - Project Syndicate

Shang-Jin Wei, a former chief economist at the Asian Development Bank, is Professor of Finance and Economics at Columbia Business School and Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.



A view of the BYD Seal at the Japan Mobility Show 2023 in Tokyo last October. (Reuters)



# How Chinese savings can support the global green transition

By Daniel Gros  
Milan

Tensions are again rising in the global trading system, with China becoming the target of criticism from many sides. US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has urged market-oriented allies to present a “wall of opposition” to the country over its excess industrial capacity, which she argues is a result of generous state subsidies and other industrial policies. Similarly, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has called for action against Chinese “subsidised products,” from electric vehicles (EVs) to steel, that are “flooding the European market.”

The problem is that much of the bashing focuses on specific Chinese government actions, such as Chinese regulators’ recent demand that financial institutions increase credit to strategic industries, like artificial intelligence, and green manufacturing. But these actions are aimed at treating the symptoms of a deeper challenge: excess Chinese savings.

China’s national savings rate remains stubbornly close to 45% of GDP, compared to about 26% in the European Union and less than 17% in the United States. For decades, these savings were channelled mostly toward real-estate and infrastructure investment, which long amounted to an estimated 25-30% of GDP. But Chinese households have a per capita living area of over 41 square metres (about 441 square feet), as much as the average European, and China has a highly developed transport infrastructure, with more high-speed train lines than the rest of the world combined. Unless China wants yet more ghost cities and empty highways, a slowdown in construction spending is unavoidable.

Something similar happened in Japan in the 1990s, after its property bubble burst. As in China, construction activity had long been financed by high



Given that a faster green transition benefits everyone, China’s high savings rate should be viewed not as a problem to be solved, but as an opportunity to be seized. Unfortunately, the US is so fixated on its geopolitical rivalry with China that it has effectively closed its market to green Chinese products.

domestic savings. At a certain point, however, property prices stopped rising, and construction investment slowed sharply. Recognising that the savings had to go somewhere, the government sharply increased its own investment spending. But Japan needed only so much infrastructure, and the proliferation of bridges to nowhere forced the government to abandon this policy. With that, the savings surplus had only one place to go: abroad, via a weaker yen and a large trade surplus.

Other economies – especially the US and European countries – responded to Japan’s export surpluses with measures aimed at protecting Western incumbents in sectors facing new competition from

Japanese producers. When it came to automobiles, in particular, the Japanese government had to agree to “voluntary” export restraints to appease its Western trading partners. Such obstacles to Japanese exports did little to reduce Japan’s trade surplus, which was determined by domestic excess savings, but they did shift competitive pressure to other sectors.

Of course, China is much larger than Japan – about 12 times larger by population, and five times larger by GDP. But in its heyday in the 1980s – when the world economy was much smaller than it is today – Japan accounted for about 17% of global GDP and a similar share of global trade. That is not much less than China

today. While China will become much more important than Japan ever was – its much larger population translates into huge growth potential – its relative weight in the global economy today is comparable to Japan’s a few decades ago.

There are, however, important differences in the two countries’ circumstances – beginning with the geopolitical environment. Democratic Japan was viewed as a pillar of – not a threat to – the world order. By contrast, increasingly autocratic China overtly seeks to overturn the existing global geopolitical order. For the West, this looks like a good reason to attempt to constrain China’s economic power.

But there is a second key difference:

climate change, which necessitates an urgent reduction in global greenhouse-gas emissions. The technologies needed to replace fossil fuels in energy production require large initial capital investments – say, to construct solar or wind parks – but energy is then produced at essentially zero marginal cost.

A capital-abundant country like China thus has a natural advantage in the green transition. In this sense, excess capacity is not a bug, but a feature of an economy with excess savings. In fact, Chinese producers would likely dominate green industries, such as renewables, batteries, and EVs, even without any special government subsidies.

Given that a faster green transition benefits everyone, China’s high savings rate should be viewed not as a problem to be solved, but as an opportunity to be seized. Unfortunately, the US is so fixated on its geopolitical rivalry with China that it has effectively closed its market to green Chinese products. US President Joe Biden administration’s recent decision to quadruple the tariff on Chinese EVs, bringing the rate to 100%, is a case in point.

The EU is much less concerned about geopolitical rivalry with China. The bloc does not have as dominant a position to lose and is running a large overall trade surplus, with its imports from China falling over the past year. But despite this overall favourable position, the EU Commission recently imposed anti-subsidy duties of around 20% on imports of battery EVs from China. This is a step in the wrong direction, though it is, at least, much more moderate than the 100% tariffs imposed by the US.

Instead of implementing protectionist measures to prevent Chinese goods from “flooding” its market, the EU should welcome cheap green goods from China, effectively harnessing Chinese savings to lower the cost of the clean-energy transition. – Project Syndicate

● Daniel Gros is Director of the Institute for European Policy-Making at Bocconi University.

# What are tactical nuclear weapons?

By Mark Trevelyan  
London

Russia and its ally Belarus carried out exercises to practise the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons early this month.

What are these weapons, how might they be used and what do we know about the drills?

**What are tactical nuclear weapons and how powerful are they?**

Tactical nuclear weapons are intended for battlefield use, as opposed to strategic weapons designed to be fired across vast distances to wipe out enemy cities. The underlying physics is the same, using nuclear fission and fusion reactions to release vast amounts of energy. The destructive power of tactical nuclear weapons, while typically smaller than strategic weapons, is still comparable with the atomic bombs used by the United States to destroy the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War Two.

**How many do Russia and the US have?**

The United States has about 200, half of which are at bases in Europe. Russia has about 1,558 non-strategic nuclear warheads, experts at the Federation of American Scientists estimated in March. These could be delivered by different means including being dropped as bombs or fitted to a variety of missiles that are capable of carrying either nuclear or conventional warheads.

**What do the Russian exercises look like?**

Russia said the first phase, conducted last month, involved Kinzhal and Iskander missiles. It took place in the southern region of Akhtubinsk, according to geolocation confirmed by Reuters. Video released by the defence ministry showed convoys of vehicles transporting Iskanders and presumably the nuclear warheads intended to be fitted to them. The warheads were blurred in the video. It also showed a Tu-22M Backfire bomber plane and a MiG-31K fighter, both capable of carrying the hypersonic Kinzhal. Video of the second phase on Tuesday showed an Iskander system being driven into a field and the missiles raised into position, as well as MiG-31 supersonic interceptors and Tupolev Tu-22M3 long-range supersonic bombers.

**Why is Russia holding the drills?**

Russia says such exercises are normal practice but that they were made necessary by what it sees as hostile actions by the United States and its European allies. Moscow said last month it hoped the drills would cool “hotheads” in Western capitals, after French President Emmanuel Macron raised the possibility of sending European troops to fight with Ukraine against Russia and



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko observe training launches of ballistic missiles as part of the exercise of the strategic deterrence force, in Moscow in 2022. (Reuters)

British Foreign Secretary David Cameron said Kyiv was free to use Western-supplied weapons against targets on Russian territory. Western nuclear experts say Russia is sending a signal aimed at deterring Nato from wading more deeply into the Ukraine war.

**What would be the aim of using a tactical nuclear weapon?**

Experts say the point would not be to capture territory, because the use of such a weapon would create a poisoned radioactive wasteland. Rather, some believe Russia might use one in a scenario where its troops were in retreat and facing a major defeat. In a report for the International Institute for Strategic Studies in January, former Pentagon and Nato official William Alberque said Russia might consider using a non-strategic nuclear weapon (NSNW) to “sober up” the West and coerce it into resolving a conflict on Moscow’s terms, calculating that the US would be unwilling to cross the nuclear threshold in retaliation. President Vladimir Putin said last week that Russia would be able to achieve victory in Ukraine without resorting to nuclear weapons.

**How would we know if a tactical nuclear weapon was used?**

Experts say preparations to launch one would probably be visible to Western military intelligence satellites, as it would involve the kinds of steps seen during the exercises, including moving warheads from a central storage facility. These would take place over a number of hours, with Russian command and control centres being placed on high alert. From the point of view of Russia’s adversary, incoming missiles carrying tactical nuclear warheads would be indistinguishable from the types of missiles with conventional warheads that Russia has been firing at Ukraine for more than two years. But an actual nuclear strike would be clearly identifiable by the scale of destruction, the seismic shock and the massive release of radiation. – Reuters

## Islamic charitable giving could fund Bangladesh climate adaptation

By Md Tahmid Zami  
Satkhira

Religious scholars in Bangladesh say the country should harness the generosity of Muslims around the world and use their charitable giving to help the country adapt to climate change. They said global faith-based finance could be a crucial way to support poor countries whose needs for funds to adapt to climate change are 10 to 18-times greater than they currently receive.

“Being good to others as well as the environment is seen as integral to being a good person in Islam,” said Md Riaz Uddin, an Islamic scholar and human rights activist from Bangladesh who is the head of Boroikandi Madrasa, a religious seminary.

Riaz Uddin said there were different forms of charity that were either obligatory or voluntary for Muslims, but all could be used to support people who were destitute, or were exposed to serious risks due to climate change and natural disasters. Zakat – giving to the poor and needy mandated by Islam – in Bangladesh alone has the potential to raise close to \$9.8bn, according to a study last year. Meanwhile, Bangladesh needs about \$9bn a year for climate adaptation, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury said last month. Giving Zakat is mandatory for all Muslims with wealth above a certain threshold in order to support the poor, the debt-ridden, or people migrating with limited resources. In Bangladesh, people mostly give informally and as they see fit – often handing out clothes to poor relatives, or people in the neighbourhood. Riaz Uddin said that had limited long-term impact on the lives of the beneficiaries. Zakir H Khan, chief executive of the Dhaka-based research organisation, Change Initiative, has studied the potential of Islamic charity for financing climate action. He said that given the amount of money donated every year, better co-ordination would do more to help the most climate-vulnerable groups. “Instead of using the charity money for one-off do-gooding, the money could be pooled together and used in a planned way to transform the lives of climate survivors,” Khan said.



“Being good to others as well as the environment is seen as integral to being a good person in Islam,” said Md Riaz Uddin, an Islamic scholar and human rights activist from Bangladesh who is the head of Boroikandi Madrasa, a religious seminary.

Some organisations are already using Zakat to adapt to climate change. Wateraid, an international non-governmental organisation, focused on water, sanitation and hygiene, is using Islamic charitable donations to build water solutions for salinity-affected communities in countries in the global south that have large Muslim populations such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Mali. “We raise a lot of Zakat money from countries like the UK to help communities at the frontline of the climate crisis,” said Hasin Jahan, Wateraid’s Bangladesh country director. On the southwest coast of Bangladesh for example, religious schools struggle to provide clean drinking water to students as there is little funding to address issues such as the growing salinity of the water, which is made worse by climate change. Wateraid focuses on girls and young women in these areas whose needs are often neglected. “Salt-free drinking water at school is a relief – and on top of that we get free sanitary pads to protect our health,” said Suraiya Khatun, a 15-year-old student in the region. Islamic schools teach about 2.8mn children in Bangladesh. They are now seeking international religious donations to tackle growing heat, salinity, and other climate-related hazards that increasingly impact students’ health. One country that has made progress in utilising Islamic charity for climate action is Indonesia – a nation that needs \$323bn to meet its

climate targets by 2030. Indonesia’s council of religious scholars this year issued rulings on how Zakat could be used to build water facilities, or endow trusts with land or money to plant more forests. There have been debates about using Islamic charity for meeting climate needs, but religious scholars and finance experts are converging on the conclusion that it can be used.

“We hope that people will now have clarity that the religious scholars agree that climate change is real and our scriptures teach us to protect the people’s future,” said Hayu Prabowo, chairman of the Environment and Natural Resources Body at the Indonesian Ulema Council, made up of Indonesia’s top Islamic scholars. World Bank estimates show Zakat financing could range from 1% to more than 4% of the gross domestic product of Muslim countries such as Bangladesh, Indonesia or Sudan – which could act as a social safety net for the poor and vulnerable.

Faith-based climate finance needs to choose the right mix of tools and technology to meet the needs of beneficiaries, said Prabowo who is also a trustee of Faithinvest, a network of impact investors from different religious groups. For example, Zakat can only be used to help poor Muslims, but other forms of giving such as sadaqah, which is purely voluntary, can support people of any faith. A third mode of funding called waqf can be provided to institutions for long-term investment.

A range of organisations, including Wateraid, are tapping into sadaqah funding, while Indonesia is using ‘green waqf’ endowments to create forests on degraded land. Technology is key at every stage of the faith-based financing process, from raising money to implementing projects and ensuring trust in the process, Prabowo said. Organisations like Wateraid are raising Zakat donations online, while Indonesian scholars are working towards using blockchain technology to allow people to see where their money is spent. “Faith-based charity has enormous potential to drive climate action – and with more and more good examples on the ground, I hope faith-based climate finance will gain more momentum,” said Prabowo. – Thomson Reuters Foundation





HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani with M7 director Maha al-Sulaiti, *Vogue* writer Sarah Mower, and designer Yasmin Mansour. **PICTURE:** Ben Broomfield



Designs by Yasmin Mansour.



Shirotsu brand on showcase.

# M7 presents collections of 3 fashion designers in London

M7 presented three designers at the M7 London Designer Showcase last week, a new bespoke initiative aimed at spotlighting Qatari and Qatar-based designers on the international stage.

The programme offers expert mentorship, networking opportunities and tailored support for established and promising designers in the country.

In a press statement, Qatar Museums (QM) Chairperson HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani said: “The M7 Industry Programme is one of our key initiatives to foster the creative industries, bringing together prominent figures in fashion and design with rising talents in Qatar to provide opportunities for dialogue and growth.”

“Now, as a part of the programme, we are bringing collec-

tions by remarkable designers and studios based in our country to London’s Institute of Contemporary Arts and the wider world,” she said. “I congratulate the designers in this year’s programme and look forward to seeing awareness of their work spread far and wide.”

The event took place at London’s Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), and included a short panel discussion, facilitated by *Vogue* critic and fashion journalist Sarah Mower.

The discussion introduced the designers to London’s fashion community, while Mowers shared her experience as a mentor for M7’s emerging talents.

“Bringing homegrown talent to London for this special initiative is part of M7’s wider mission to bridge Qatar’s creatives to the wider design community, providing platforms for them to show-

case their work on an international scale and raise awareness of Qatar’s impressive rising talents,” M7 director Maha Ghanim al-Sulaiti said.

M7 presented the talents behind three Qatar-based brands at the event.

Among them was 1309, a brand by Ghada al-Subaey that draws inspiration from art, nature, and global culture, celebrating women’s multifaceted and versatile nature.

At the heart of 1309 is a minimalist, feminine aesthetic that merges seasonal trends with a design perspective informed by the brand’s Qatari roots.

Clean silhouettes, bold colour, artful prints, and carefully considered detail are hallmarks of the brand.

Yasmin Mansour, a Prêt-à-couture fashion house, was also showcased at the event.

Mansour founded one of the first luxury and sustainable fashion labels in Doha in 2014.

Driven by her imagination and transformative vision on sustainable fashion, the label offers a sophisticated range of haute couture, art, and accessories.

Since its inception, the brand has engaged in numerous iconic collaborations with other brands and artists, including Bouthayna al-Muftah, Leo Vanweersch, and Nespresso.

Mansour’s passion is to inspire young artists and designers through her work.

She continues to collaborate with local artists and promote sustainable fashion through her unique pieces, aiming to encourage creativity in both fashion and art.

The third brand showcased at the event was Shirotsu, a fashion design studio founded by Sayuri



1309 is a brand by Ghada al-Subaey that draws inspiration from art, nature, and global culture.

Kurotsu and Giovanni Innella.

Shirotsu often uses discarded garments and materials in combination with traditional or unconventional techniques to create new clothes, whether as unique pieces, or small series collections.

Shirotsu’s vision is to blend the approach of a fashion design stu-

dio and propose a new human image.

The event featured unique installations displaying artists’ collections, a short panel discussion, refreshments, and an opportunity for guests to interact with Sarah Mower, the designers and the M7 team.



Children took part in a number of activities to mark the International Olympic Day yesterday at the 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum. **PICTURES:** Thajudheen

## 3-2-1 QOSM marks International Olympic Day with Let’s Move 2024 X Paris 2024



The 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum (QOSM) organised an event featuring an array of activities for various age groups to mark the International Olympic Day yesterday.

Themed *Let’s Move 2024 X Paris 2024*, the event was in collaboration with the Olympic Museum Network, Qatar Olympic Committee, sports federations, and Get Started Sport Centre.

It is aimed at inspiring the community to embrace sports and learn about the Olympic Games’ history.

The Activation Zone buzzed with interactive competitions testing speed, agility and strength, reflecting the Olympic motto *Citius, Altius, Fortius* (Faster, Higher, Stronger).

Winners received medals for their impressive performances.

Demonstrations of Olympic sports provided attendees with the chance to gauge their own speed, agility, and strength.

Workshops explored the core Olympic values, engaging participants in activities



like crafting Ancient Olympic crowns and Modern Olympic gold medals.

The presence of the Paris 2024 Mascot added a fun and educational element to the day.

Organisers noted that this event embodies their mission at the 3-2-1 QOSM, noting that they strive to research, collect, educate, and share the stories of global and Qatari sports in a captivating and empowering way.

By engaging the community through participatory spaces and programming, 3-2-1 QOSM aims to inspire people to participate in sports and physical activity.

The “Let’s Move 2024 X Paris 2024” event aimed to capture the spirit of International Olympic Day, fostering a love for sports and promoting the values of the Olympic movement within the community.

# Municipality minister launches first phase of Smart Cities Solutions Project

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The system features the capability to monitor vehicle drivers and evaluate their performance, as well as re-evaluate vehicle movement routes and geographically redistribute them to ensure the shortest routes and minimise time, consumption, and costs.

It also involves assigning tasks to vehicles and drivers, monitoring and tracking them in real time, and recording their trips.

The system maintains a historical record of trip routes, which can be referenced as needed for verification and auditing purposes.

Assistant Undersecretary for Shared Services Affairs at the Ministry of Municipality Hamad Khalifa al-Khalifa said that the project will have a significant impact across multiple levels: operationally, by enhancing productivity, quality, and operational control; economically, by reducing costs and expenditures; and environmentally and health-wise, by achieving sustainability and improving quality of life.

He added that the implementation of the first phase of smart waste management, vehicle tracking, and task distribution has commenced in Al Wakra Municipality.

This project, he highlighted, is noted as the largest of its kind being implemented at a city level in the Middle East region.

Assistant Undersecretary for Public Services Affairs at the Ministry of Municipality, engineer Abdullah Ahmed al-Karani said the implementation of the smart waste management system and vehicle tracking and task distribution system as a first phase in Al Wakra Municipality has had a positive impact on advancing and improving operations in public cleanliness management and mechanical assets management.

He said that recent efforts have been focused on combining recycling containers into the automated collection plans within the new system as part of an independent collection plan, setting the stage for expanding the implementation of waste recycling and reprocessing projects.

Currently, he said, the system autonomously manages all waste collection plans without human intervention.

This approach has already shown a significant reduction in the number of collection trips and waste compactor vehicles.

Moving forward, the ministry aims to further minimise the number of trips and vehicles involved, aligning with the primary goals of the project.

Al-Karani said that as part of this project, 1039 tracking devices have been installed to monitor the government fleet of vehicles and equipment, including sewage tankers equipped with specialised sensors to measure liquid levels.

Director of the Ministry of Municipality’s Information Systems Department, Dr Hamda al-Maadeed, said the first phase of the project includes a centralised platform for operations and command, providing both General Cleanliness Management and Mechanical

Assets Management with essential tools for operations management, execution monitoring, and generating necessary statistical reports.

The platform also features real-time monitoring dashboards for all system components, ensuring comprehensive oversight.

Dr al-Maadeed said that the central command platform will serve as the core hub for monitoring and managing operations across all current and future smart city systems and solutions.

She affirmed that in the future the ministry plans to integrate additional smart city projects into this platform.