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Amir, Kazakh president vow to bolster ties

QNA
Astana

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev held an official session of talks yesterday at the Akorda Presidential Palace in the capital Astana.

At the beginning of the session, the president of Kazakhstan welcomed His Highness the Amir and the accompanying delegation, appreciating the Amir's acceptance of the invitation to participate in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) Summit.

He also expressed his aspiration to enhance co-operation relations between the two friendly countries at various levels and

areas of bilateral co-operation.

For his part, His Highness the Amir expressed his sincere thanks to the president for the warm reception and the invitation to participate in the summit, expressing his happiness with the level of co-operation and friendship relations between the two countries, which he looks forward to pushing to broader horizons through the visit, in a way that

achieves the interests of the two friendly peoples.

The talks dealt with developing and strengthening co-operation relations, in addition to exchanging views on the most prominent regional and international developments of common interest.

His Highness the Amir and the Kazakh president also exchanged views on the issues and topics on the SCO summit agenda.

The session was attended by HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Mohamed bin Hamad bin Qassim al-Thani, HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi, and a number of members of the official delegation. **To Page 3**

Biden vows to stay in presidential race

US President Joe Biden vowed to stay in the 2024 presidential race during a call with campaign staff yesterday and sought to reassure top Democrats on Capitol Hill that he is fit for re-election, despite his disastrous debate performance last week. Biden dialled in to a call with worried members of his campaign team and told them he wasn't going anywhere,

according to two sources familiar with the call. "I am running," Biden said, adding he remained the Democratic Party leader and wasn't being pushed out, one source said. The president will meet with Democratic governors to reassure them he is up to the job of standard-bearer for the party after the shaky debate with Republican Donald Trump. Some governors will attend virtually. **Page 11**

Hamas sends new 'ideas' on halting Gaza war

AFF
Gaza

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas said yesterday it has sent new "ideas" to Qatari mediators aimed at ending the nearly nine-month Gaza war with Israel. Israel confirmed that it was "evaluating" Hamas "comments" on a deal to see its hostages in the Palestinian territory freed and would reply. With the death toll from nearly nine months of

war mounting and conditions worsening daily for Gazans, both sides are under increased international pressure to agree a ceasefire. Qatar, working with the United States, has been leading the mediation. "We exchanged some ideas with the mediator brothers with the aim of stopping the aggression against our Palestinian people," a Hamas statement said. The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Mossad intelligence service confirmed the new approach.

Tens of thousands flee S Gaza

Tens of thousands of Palestinians have fled southern Gaza since Israel issued an evacuation order, amid fears of a new offensive in the area which came under Israeli bombardment yesterday. On Israel's northern front, Lebanon's Hezbollah said it fired 100 rockets at Israeli targets in retaliation for a strike that killed a senior commander, heightening fears of full-scale war between the long-time foes. **Page 7**

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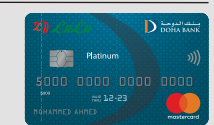


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Ambassadors hail Qatar’s accession to SCO

A number of ambassadors have hailed Qatar’s accession to Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) as a dialogue partner, highlighting the country’s growing role in achieving peace and security at regional and international levels.

In remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Russian ambassador in Doha Dmitry Dogadkin affirmed that Qatar’s accession to the SCO signifies the increasingly prominent role that the country has played both regionally and globally as a mediator in various conflicts, as well as a responsible global actor, facilitating a more peaceful and secure world for all.

He said: “We are certain that both Qatar and SCO have a lot to offer to each other in many aspects and will mutually benefit from this co-operation.”

Over the past two decades, Qatar has emerged as one of the most prominent mediators in the world, successfully helping negotiate peace in a wide array of conflicts and disputes in Sudan, Lebanon, Yemen, Iran, and Afghanistan, including most recently, Gaza. Since October 2023, Qatar’s continuous efforts in bringing the sides to the conflict together for talks and bridging gaps between the two parties cannot be understated, he added.

The ambassador also expressed his gratitude for Qatar’s noble humanitarian efforts by stating, “I cannot but mention that, thanks to our Qatari friends good offices, a number of Russian families separated by the conflict in Ukraine have been reunited, and were graciously hosted in Doha in April to partake in a programme of rehabilitation.”

Mediation requires great patience and tactfulness to be successful. It is not for everyone, but Qatar has proved its capabilities in this regard. Thanks to its proactive foreign policy, it has soared very high both regionally and internationally, he highlighted.

“The Qatari leadership has set an ambitious goal for Qatar to become an indispensable, ‘one-of-a-kind’ mediator with a world-wide portfolio. I wholeheartedly believe that Qatar’s capability and dedication match the ambitious-

Shura member: Amir’s participation in SCO Summit a milestone in Qatar’s relations

Eng Ahmed bin Hitmi al-Hitmi, member of the Shura Council and Chairman of the Qatari-Asian Parliamentary Friendship Group in the Council, stressed the great importance of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani’s participation in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Astana, Kazakhstan, adding that His Highness’ participation reflects Qatar’s commitment to strengthening regional and international co-operation. In a statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA), he said that the participation of the Amir in the summit is a milestone in the process of Qatari relations with the member states of the organisation, explaining that this participation will contribute to strengthening bilateral relations and exchanging experiences and knowledge in various fields for the benefit of Qatar and the organisation’s member states alike. Al-Hitmi expressed his pride in Qatar’s accession to the organisation as a dialogue partner, stressing that this represents a qualitative step in enhancing the vital role of Qatari diplomacy. He pointed out that the SCO seeks to enhance co-operation among member states in the fields of security, economy, culture and science, and that Qatar’s accession



Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic Marat Nuraliev



Indian ambassador Vipul

ness of this noble goal,” he said.

Chinese ambassador to Qatar Cao Xiaolin emphasised his country’s great interest in developing relations with Qatar and its readiness to co-operate with the country in enhancing the role of the SCO, after officially becoming a dialogue partner of the SCO in 2022. This comes as China prepares to assume the rotating presidency of the SCO following the SCO Summit in Kazakhstan.

“Qatar holds significant influence in the Arab world and is an important member of numerous international organisations, actively contributing to regional stability and friendly co-operation among nations. In September 2022, Qatar officially became a Dialogue Partner of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO), which is warmly welcomed by China,” the ambassador said in an interview, adding that Qatar has actively engaged in SCO-related activities.

China looks forward to working with Qatar to enhance its role in the SCO based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, respect for diverse civilisations, pursuit of common development, and strive for international and regional peace and development, he added.

In regard to China’s view of Qatar’s success in mediating conflicts in numerous regions worldwide, “Over the past three decades, Qatar has successfully mediated dozens of conflicts in the Middle East, Af-



Russian ambassador Dmitry Dogadkin



Chinese ambassador Cao Xiaolin

rica, Latin America, and Europe, contributing to the de-escalation of tensions, effective settlement of conflicts, and facilitating family reunions for displaced individuals. These efforts have received high praises from the international community, and mediation diplomacy has become a shining hallmark of Qatar on the global stage,” he said.

Despite the ongoing war in Gaza, Qatar’s relentless efforts to promote ceasefire agreements have been highly commended by the international community, the ambassador highlighted.

Indian ambassador to Qatar Vipul highlighted Qatar’s accession to the SCO, pointing out that hopes are rising that Qatar will contribute effectively to promoting the organisation’s goals.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), the ambassador said: “India held the presidency of SCO for the first time last year and promoted the theme of SCO-SECURE which stands for Security, Economic development, Connectivity, Unity, Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and Environmental protection. We hope to continue our work on all these themes in SCO, including with Qatar.”

“We believe that dialogue and diplomacy are the best way of enhancing international peace and security. Qatar’s active regional and international diplomacy is well acknowledged across the

world. We have always appreciated the deep insights shared by Qatar on the regional situation,” he added.

Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic Marat Nuraliev confirmed that Qatar has proven itself as a very honest mediator who seeks to resolve conflicts in the world fairly, which has led to strengthening its position in the region and the whole world.

In remarks to QNA, he said that Qatar’s accession to the SCO allows it to participate in relevant events within the organisation at the invitation of member states.

He added that within the framework of the organisation, mutual trust, friendship, and co-operation can be strengthened with member states, as well as dialogue partner countries, including Qatar, to maintain and enhance peace, security, and stability in the region.

Tajik ambassador Nurmurod Mahmatali emphasised that Tajikistan is keen on supporting Qatar’s initiatives within the framework of the SCO, noting the steadfast development in the bilateral relations across various fields supported by the leadership of the two friendly countries.

In his remarks to QNA, the ambassador said that Qatar has become an active member within the SCO, as Tajikistan has supported its accession process from the beginning. He added that Tajikistan is counting on Qatar to work with the member states of the organisation to carry out joint activities of a political, economic, and humanitarian nature.

Uzbekistan’s ambassador Ashraf Khodjaev said that Qatar’s accession to the SCO as a dialogue partner came as a result of its robust economy and visionary investment strategy which prioritises innovation and sustainability in sectors like renewable energy, infrastructure and digital technology.

In a statement to QNA, the ambassador said that the country fully supports Qatar’s accession to the SCO, stressing that Qatar’s open and balanced foreign policy promotes peace and stability globally, avoiding international or regional conflicts and disputes with neighbours. (QNA)

Amir arrives in Astana



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani arrived yesterday in Astana, Kazakhstan. He was welcomed upon arrival at Astana International Airport by Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Olzhas Bektenov, Qatar’s ambassador Abdullah Hussein al-Jaber, Kazakh ambassador Arman Issagaliyev, a number of senior officials in the Kazakh government, and members of Qatar’s embassy in Astana. An official delegation is accompanying the Amir.



Amir, Kazakh president vow to bolster ties

From Page 1

On the Kazakh side, it was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Murat Nurtleu; Deputy Prime Minister and Chairperson of the Qatar-Kazakhstan Joint Higher Committee, Serik Zhumangarin; Assistant to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan for external affairs, Erzhan Kazykhan; Minister of Finance Erulan Jamaubaev; Minister of Energy, Almassadam Satkaliyev, and a

number of senior officials.

His Highness the Amir and the Kazakh President held a bilateral meeting during which they discussed ways to enhance co-operation between the two friendly countries and a number of issues of mutual interest.

His Highness the Amir also attended a dinner banquet hosted by President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, at the Presidential Center, in honour of the Heads of State and Government participating in the SCO Summit.

Cabinet approves draft law on health research

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani chaired the Cabinet’s regular meeting held at the Amiri Diwan yesterday. After the meeting, HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi issued the following statement: The Cabinet considered the topics on its agenda as follows: First – The Cabinet was informed of the Shura Council’s approval of the following draft laws: **1—** A draft law amending some provisions of Law No 25 of 2015 regarding civil defence. **2—** ...amending some provisions of the tenders and auctions law promulgated by Law No 24 of 2015. **3—** ...amending some provisions of Law No 9 of 2017 regarding the organisation of schools. **4—** ...amending some provisions of the penal code promulgated by Law No 11 of 2004. **5—** ...regarding the nationalisation of jobs in the private sector. **6—** ...regulating district cooling services. **7—** ...regarding the protection of public electrical and water installations. **8—** ...issuing a unified industrial organisation system (law) for the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council. Second – The Cabinet approved a

draft law regulating travel and air cargo offices, and referring it to the Shura Council. The preparation of the draft law comes to replace Law No 26 of 2006 regulating air travel offices, and Law No 6 of 2010 regulating air cargo offices, within the framework of modernising legislation to keep pace with developments in this sector, and in accordance with the requirements of international organisations. Third – The Cabinet approved a draft law regulating health research, and referring it to the Shura Council. It aims to improve health and therapeutic care, by conducting health research, providing guarantees to preserve the health and safety of participants, and working on the correct application of the principles and ethics regulating health research in its various fields. Fourth – The Cabinet approved the following draft decisions: **1—** A draft Cabinet decision regarding the controls and conditions for registering private documents at the National Archives of Qatar. **2—** ...regarding the foundations, controls and procedures for classifying documents in terms of confidentiality and the rules for accessing them. **3—** ...regarding controls, conditions and rules for the destruction of

documents and archives. **4—** ...to form a committee for the destruction of documents and archives. **5—** ...to form a documents evaluation committee, its work system, and determine the remuneration of its members. **6—** ...regarding controls and procedures for transferring and sorting public documents and transferring archives. **7—** A draft decision of the Board of Trustees of the National Archives of Qatar regarding the conditions, controls and procedures for accessing and benefiting from private archives and documents. The preparation of draft decisions comes in implementation of the provisions of Law No 7 of 2023 regarding documents and archives. Fifth – The Cabinet approved a draft decision of the Minister of Communications and Information Technology appointing Qatar Postal Services Company as a general postal operator. The decision is prepared in implementation of the provisions of Article 14 of the postal services regulation law promulgated by Law No 15 of 2023. Sixth: The Cabinet approved draft decisions of the Minister of Justice regarding: **1—** Determine the controls and procedures for accepting and depositing notarised documents before foreign authorities.

2— Conditions and procedures for submitting an executive copy to replace a lost or damaged one. **3—** Determine the conditions, controls and procedures for transferring the originals of notarised documents, records and documents associated with them from the Documentation Department to the competent court or prosecution. **4—** Conditions and procedures for informing the assigned expert. **5—** Seeking the assistance of a translator from outside the roster of experts. **6—** Controls and procedures for electronic documentation. **7—** Organising the electronic registry of agencies and specifying its data and the rules and procedures for registration therein. **8—** Determine the controls and procedures for organising and preserving records, documents and indexes related to documentation. The preparation of draft decisions comes in implementation of the provisions of Law No 1 of 2023 regarding documentation. Seventh – The Cabinet reviewed the memorandum of the General Secretariat of the Shura Council regarding organising private schools, and the views of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in this regard, and took the appropriate decision regarding it. (QNA)



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Qatar and Rwanda share close friendship, promising partnership

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Coast Guard holds drill to enhance maritime incident response

The Ministry of Interior (MoI), represented by the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security, carried out the Maritime Crisis Management Exercise “Dibel 4” to determine the readiness of the authorities concerned, raise the level of co-ordination and training, and increase the efficiency of these authorities.

The exercise scenario included extinguishing a fire, preventing an oil spill caused by an explosion on the maritime vessel “Dibel”, and rescuing injured crew members. Several entities collaborated with the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security in this exercise.

Director-General of Coast and Border Security Major General Nasser Jabr al-Nuaimi explained that the exercise is



Mol carries out naval exercise with participation of various state agencies.

part of the annual plans prepared by the directorate to train and practise for various maritime incidents and tasks, with the participation of other relevant entities.

He stressed that the General Administration of Coasts

and Borders Security is keen to always be fully prepared to confront various incidents that occur in the maritime field, whether they are accidents involving commercial ships and oil tankers, confronting smuggling activities, or combating



the practice of fishing in Qatari waters by non-Qatari maritime means, as well as protecting gas, oil stations and other tasks.

Director of the Operations Department at the General Directorate and commander of the exercise Staff Major (Navy) Has-

san Ahmed al-Sulaiti said the exercise took place with a high level of co-ordination, as the participating parties dealt with the exercise with complete professionalism, which reflected the extent of their readiness to deal with maritime accidents. (QNA)

Amir congratulates Dutch PM and Belarus president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani sent yesterday a cable of congratulations to Dick Schoof on his swearing-in as the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, wishing him success in performing his duties and for the bilateral relations further progress and prosperity.

His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent similar cables of congratulations to Schoof.

● 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 President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable of congratulations to Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko. (QNA)

QPC hosts Palestinian child content creator

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Qatar Press Center (QPC) organised the 3rd session of the Press Cafe sessions, on July 2, where it hosted the Palestinian content creator Ramadan Abu Jazar, “the Little Al-Khwarizmi”, who is talented in reciting poetry and prose, rhetoric and is an ambassador of Gazan children, as well as his father Mahmoud, another child Walid, and a group of writers, media professionals and content makers.

The seminar was moderated by Amal Abdul Malik, in which activist Ramadan Abu Jazar spoke about the efforts of the role of Qatar in supporting the Palestinian cause, and the ongoing diplomatic efforts to reach a permanent ceasefire, facilitate the entry of aid, and host a number of those wounded in the aggression and their families for treatment in Doha, as well as popular solidarity with the people of Gaza.

He explained that his childhood was violated due to the war of extermination waged by the Israeli occupation army, and said their school bags no longer held their books and notebooks, but rather had become mobile lockers that held their identification papers.

In his speech, Ramadan Abu Jazar turned to the state of fear and panic that he and all the children of Gaza have been living in since last Oc-



From left: Mahmoud, Walid, Ramadan Abu Jazar and moderator Amal Abdul Malik.

tober 7 until now. Especially when hearing the sound of an explosion followed by another, he wondered to himself: “Is he and his family the next target? Or will God grant him a lifetime to complete his mission in supporting the Palestinian cause and conveying the voice of the people of Gaza to the world.”

He said: “I am one of the children whom God destined to come to life under the sounds of bombing, explosions, and the smell of gunpowder. My mother's labour came during the displacement of my parents from one place to another during the Israeli aggression on Gaza in 2014. But these circumstances made my parents take upon themselves the responsibility of raising a great human being, a leader, and a preacher. I began memorising the Holy Qur'an at the age of two years, and at the age of two and a half years, I delivered a sermon on Laylat Al-Qadr (Night of Destiny) that impressed everyone who heard it, given my young age. Since then, my passion for reading has doubled.”

He stressed that the ongo-

ing Israeli aggression against Gaza does not differentiate between a child, a young person, or an elderly person, as the people of Gaza are suffering from famine, displacement and genocide. He said: “We used to spend long hours in front of food or water queues to get a sip of water. The humanitarian, relief and medical aid that enters Gaza is very little. It does not reach all areas, and does not meet our needs, so firewood was used instead of gas and shrouds instead of medicines. After the closure of the Rafah crossing, anyone who owned a can of beans or chickpeas seemed as if he owned the world. With the escalation of famine and the scarcity of clean water, we were forced to drink water that was not suitable for drinking.”

Ramadan indicated that during the aggression, he wrote a book titled “A Biography of Childhood and Heroism” for schools designated for displaced people of Gaza to escape the Israeli bombing, as a testimony to the tragedy of the people of Gaza under the bombing and siege.

Qatar's rising appeal attracts European travellers



Visit Qatar CEO, engineer Abdulaziz Ali al-Mawlawi, took part in the launch of Qatar Airways' new route to Hamburg, Germany, on July 1. During a gala dinner, he highlighted the importance of the new route as it reinforces the ambition of the 2030 tourism vision to focus on 15 key markets. The German market has notably increased as a source market since the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. German visitors to Qatar surged from 30,000 to 160,000 in a year. In May 2024, this number soared to 92,000, showcasing Qatar's rising appeal among European travellers. This new era of connectivity will result in welcoming more visitors from Hamburg and beyond to enjoy Qatar's unique offerings and renowned hospitality, a Visit Qatar statement added.

PHCC celebrates Canadian Diamond Accreditation



Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) celebrated its 2024 Accreditation Canada Diamond Level Status and People-Centred Care (PCC) Centre of Excellence award.

PHCC held a ceremony on the occasion in the presence of HE the Minister of Public Health Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari, a number of senior officials in the health sector, and the Canadian Accreditation team.

The accreditation obtained by the institution is the highest distinction granted to health facilities that focus on the involvement of patients and families in healthcare processes. It is also considered the highest level and rank within the framework of the accreditation programme, which is granted to institutions that are committed to the utmost degree and are characterised by high quality and monitoring of results, in addition to the use of evidence and best practices to improve services. In addition,

this title is a testimony to the PHCC's commitment to providing comprehensive and integrated health care that puts patients' needs first.

This accreditation places PHCC among the elite ranks of healthcare institutions globally, which have demonstrated excellence in key areas, including successfully launching initiatives that invite patients to become members of key committees, such as the ethics committee and the quality and patient safety committee, giving them the opportunity to participate in key decisions in the design and development of the service.


In her speech during the ceremony, Managing Director of PHCC Dr Maryam Abdul Malik noted the new achievement accomplished by the PHCC by obtaining the 2024 Accreditation Canada Diamond Level Status and People-Centred Care (PCC) Centre of Excellence award.

She pointed out that these pres-

tigious awards and accreditations are evidence of the endless dedication shown by the leaders of the PHCC, its employees, patients and partners, and their collective efforts to achieve the best services.

Executive Director of Quality and Patient Safety Directorate at PHCC Dr Amal al-Ali said that this comprehensive evaluation from Accreditation

Canada included field visits to all of the 31 PHCC affiliated health centres, in addition to the PHCC's main headquarters, where the evaluation team thoroughly reviewed PHCC's policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that it meets the standards and is consistent in providing the highest level of care while ensuring patient safety. (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	Tender Bond	Bond Curr.	Tender Fee	Fee Curr.
		Start Date	End Date	Closing Date			
1	GT24105700	04.07.2024	10.07.2024	04.08.2024	300,000.00	QAR	500.00 QAR
Title of Tender: DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS AND NON-HAZARDOUS INDUSTRIAL WASTE							
Mid-Tender Meeting Location : To be advised if required							
Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time : To be advised if required							
2	GT24106200	04.07.2024	10.07.2024	18.08.2024	435,000.00	QAR	500.00 QAR
Title of Tender: MAINTENANCE OF COLD BOX HEAT EXCHANGERS IN GAS RECYCLING PLANT ON CALL-OFF BASIS WITHIN DUKHAN OPERATIONS							
Mid-Tender Meeting Location : To be advised if required							
Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time : To be advised if required							
3	GT24105600	04.07.2024	10.07.2024	18.08.2024	400,000.00	QAR	500.00 QAR
Title of Tender: REFURBISHMENT / REPAIR / REWINDING OF ELECTRICAL MOTORS & GENERATORS ON CALL-OFF BASIS AT VARIOUS QATARENERGY OPERATING 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) -> 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>

Temporary closure on Hazem Al Themaid Street in Al Furoush, Al Kharaitiyat

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) has announced a temporary closure on part of Hazem Al Themaid Street in both directions from the roundabout at its intersection with Street 2234 towards Barga Haleema Street in Al Furoush and Al Kharaitiyat from today (July 4) until July 20. The closure, in co-ordination with the General Directorate of Traffic, is for completing the final asphalt layer of the street, as part of the Roads and Infrastructure Development Project in Al Furoush (Package 1). During the closure period, users of Hazem Al Themaid Street who wish to continue towards Barga Haleema Street can turn right onto Umm Shahrain Street and then turn left onto Umm Imneefa Street. Those coming from Barga Haleema Street and wishing to continue towards Hazem Al Themaid Street can turn left onto Street 332 and use the internal roads to reach their destinations, as shown on the attached map. Ashghal will install road signs to alert road users of the traffic diversion, and has urged all road users to adhere to the speed limits and follow the road signs for their safety.



LIQUIDATION ANNOUNCEMENT

"1"

Based on the Extraordinary General Assembly Resolution
To Liquidate
CREATIVE CUISINE (The Company)
(under Voluntary Liquidation)

The Liquidator
Linsar Karupamveetil Shamsudheen

Kreston SVP Chartered Accountants

Announce the Liquidation of

CREATIVE CUISINE
Commercial Registration No. (65575)

Any party who has any claims from this Company should send a registered letter, including all supporting documents, to P.O Box 82297, Doha – Qatar
7712 9898 or 6668 8575 or info@krestonsvp.com
Within the remaining legal period of 45 days.

LIQUIDATION ANNOUNCEMENT

"2"

Based on the Extraordinary General Assembly Resolution
To Liquidate
GREY MATTERS TRADING AND CONSULTANCY W.L.L
(The Company)
(under Voluntary Liquidation)

The Liquidator
FAROOK PUTHENPEEDIKAYIL VEERAN

Kreston SVP Chartered Accountants

Announce the Liquidation of

GREY MATTERS TRADING AND CONSULTANCY W.L.L
Commercial Registration No. (51708)

Any party who has any claims from this Company should send a registered letter, including all supporting documents, to P.O Box 82297, Doha – Qatar
3128 7231 or 6668 8575 or info@krestonsvp.com
Within the remaining legal period of 20 days.

Qatar Rail Contact Centre wins two EMEA awards

Qatar Railways Company (Qatar Rail) Contact Centre won two awards from Contact Centre World, the global association for contact centre and customer engagement, at the 2024 Annual EMEA Regional Contact Centre World Conference in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Qatar Rail's Contact Centre has achieved significant recognition at the Global Top Ranking Performers Awards in the EMEA region, a statement said.

The centre was honoured with the Gold Award for the Best Contact Centre Operational Manager and received the Silver Award for the Best Public Services Centre in the EMEA region.

These awards are among the most prominent in the field of contact centres, aimed at highlighting the outstanding efforts of companies and individuals in this domain.

Qatar Rail's receipt of these awards reflects the recognition of its significant efforts in developing and continuously improving Contact Center services, as well as enhancing the customer experi-



ence at the Doha Metro and Lusail Tram.

Qatar Rail continues to enhance the overall customer experience in co-ordination with its partners by providing ongoing training for the Contact Centre staff.

This training equips them to deliver world-class customer service, ensuring a safe and reliable travel experience for everyone, especially during major events hosted by Qatar.

Qatar Rail's Contact Centre offers 24/7 service through multi-



ple communication channels for customer interaction, including the customer service number 105, e-mail, mobile app, social media channels, and the website.

The Customer Service Centre team works to provide passengers with outstanding customer service experience through timely response by utilising the latest innovative systems and technologies.

Reflecting the provision of the highest levels of service to the customers of the metro and tram networks through various channels, the overall customer satisfaction rate has reached 99.66% since the launch of the Doha Metro Service in 2019.

MGD opens second UK showroom in Leicester



Malabar Gold & Diamonds (MGD), the sixth largest jewellery retailer globally with a retail presence of 350 showrooms across 13 countries, has unveiled its second showroom in the UK at Leicester, a statement said. The new showroom was inaugurated by Peter Soulsby, City Mayor for Leicester in the presence of MGD's international operations managing director Shamla Ahamed, UK and Europe head of operations Mohammed Ziad, regional head Santhosh T, zonal head Naufal Thadathil, other management team members, customers and well-wishers. Located on Belgrave Road's Golden Mile, the new showroom spans over 2,000sqft and features an impressive collection of over 20,000 jewellery designs from 20 countries, catering to bridal, occasional, daily, and office wear in gold, diamonds, and precious gems. "We began our operations in the UK a year ago with our

first showroom in London, and it gives me immense pride that we are launching our second showroom in the UK, in Leicester, within such a short span, which is a testament to the trust placed by our customers," Malabar Group chairman M P Ahamed said. "We remain committed to elevating the jewellery shopping experience for customers with world-class products and assurances like transparency, 100% value for exchange, lifetime maintenance, etc. With every new store opening, we are inching one step closer to our vision of becoming the leading global jewellery retailer", he added. "There is a very vibrant Indian sub-continent community here in the UK who deeply appreciate the artistry of Indian handcrafted jewellery," Shamla Ahamed said. "We have ambitious expansion plans in the UK and Europe region with immediate openings planned in Southall and Wembley in London,

as well as Birmingham and Manchester", he added. In pursuit of promoting India's renowned indigenous craftsmanship on a global scale, MGD has embarked on an ambitious expansion plan, which involves strengthening their retail presence in existing regions with more showroom launches, as well as charting their expansion into new countries such as South Africa, Egypt, Bangladesh, Türkiye and New Zealand. Malabar Group vice-chairman, Abdul Salam K P, added: "Responsibility and sustainability are woven into our business fabric, from sourcing LBMA-certified bullion and conflict-free diamonds to ensuring transparency with customers, fair labour practices, and contributing to society through ESG initiatives. In line with the Make in India and Market to the World initiative, we will remain committed to bringing Indian handcrafted jewellery to a global audience".

Ministry of Municipality, LuLu Hypermarket hold waste sorting programme

The General Cleanliness Department at the Ministry of Municipality, in association with Al Wakra Municipality and LuLu Hypermarket, conducted a waste sorting programme from the source.

The event at LuLu Hypermarket Ezdan Oasis to promote environmental sustainability and raise awareness about plastic waste reduction, was part of the observance of 'World Plastic Bags Free Day' on July 1 and 2. The initiative aims to educate the public on the importance of reducing plastic bag usage and to encourage the proper sorting of waste, especially plastics, into recycling containers. As part of the campaign, LuLu Hypermarket distributed reusable bags and gifts to participants, demonstrating its commitment to sustainable practices. LuLu Hypermarket has long been a proponent of environmental responsibility, consistently using biodegradable bags in their stores. During the event, municipality officials engaged with customers, providing information on the proper sorting of waste into designated containers and the correct disposal of plastics. This educational effort is part of the Ministry of Municipality's broader initiative to reduce plastic use and foster environmental awareness within the community. A few months ago, the Ministry of Municipality, represented by the General Cleanliness Department, launched the second phase of the waste sorting at source programme. This phase involves



The event which promoted environmental sustainability and raised awareness about plastic waste reduction, was part of the observance of 'World Plastic Bags Free Day' on July 1 and 2.



the provision of specialised containers to households in various areas for the separate disposal of recyclable materials and organic waste. Blue containers are designated for recyclable materials, such as glass, plastic, papers, and metals, while grey containers are for food waste and cleaning materials. This waste sorting initiative is a testament to the ministry's ongoing efforts to promote sustainability and enhance waste management practices across the country. By providing households with the necessary tools and knowledge,

the ministry aims to significantly reduce the environmental impact of waste and encourage more responsible consumption patterns among residents. LuLu Hypermarket has also been at the forefront of sustainability initiatives, continually seeking innovative ways to reduce its environmental footprint. From the use of biodegradable bags to the promotion of reusable products, LuLu Hypermarket has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to supporting environmental causes and encouraging eco-friendly practices among its customers. The General Cleanliness Department at the ministry remains dedicated to its mission of fostering a cleaner and greener environment. The successful waste sorting programme and awareness campaign held in conjunction with World Plastic Bags Free Day were among the many steps being taken to ensure a sustainable future for the community.

QCDC, Retaj Group sign MoU to empower youth, workforce

Qatar Career Development Centre (QCDC), founded by Qatar Foundation, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Retaj Group to establish a framework for collaboration in training and empowering students, youth, and professionals across Qatar.

Abdulla A al-Mansoori, director of QCDC, and Sheikh Naif bin Eid al-Thani, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Retaj Group, were the signatories.

The agreement outlines the co-operation between QCDC and Retaj Group to co-ordinate efforts in highlighting diverse and important career paths and opportunities in the real-estate, hospitality, and tourism sectors. It also includes providing continuous career guidance and development support and services.

Al-Mansoori emphasised the role of leading institutions in the private sector in establishing career culture in the country. "The signing of this MoU reaffirms the



Abdulla A al-Mansoori and Sheikh Naif bin Eid al-Thani at the MoU signing.

joint commitment of QCDC and Retaj Group to provide the best training and educational opportunities for our youth."

Sheikh Naif noted : "Through this agreement, Retaj Group aims to enhance its CSR role and play a more significant part in training students through practical programmes across our various sectors, including hospitality and real estate."

Under the MoU, QCDC and Retaj Group will provide job shad-

owing opportunities for students and youth enrolled in QCDC's "Little Employee" and "My Career - My Future" programmes.

This will provide participants with the opportunity to explore, and experience, career paths in real estate, tourism, and hospitality, enabling them to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to pursue these careers.

QCDC also will provide comprehensive access to the "Al-Dileela" career advising programme.

A summer of fun, discovery at Education City

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Visit Qatar is encouraging residents and visitors to explore Education City's educational and fun-filled offerings with its indoor facilities this summer.

From world-class museums to sporting facilities and community centres, Education City hosts a diverse range of indoor activities ideal for beating the summer heat.

"Education City is more than just a place of learning", said Visit Qatar in a recent social media post. "Beyond the classrooms lies a vibrant hub of culture, innovation and hidden gems waiting to be discovered. Spend a day exploring a side you never knew existed".

The Qatar National Library (QNL), a cornerstone of Education City, invites visitors to dig into Qatar's rich history and heritage. With more than



An interior view of QNL.

1mn books, 500,000 e-books, and a vast array of special collections, QNL serves as a treasure trove of knowledge for scholars, researchers, and curious minds. Beyond its impressive collection, the library offers an array of events, workshops, and programmes for the community.

Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art presents an unparalleled collection of more than 9,000 artworks, showcasing the evolution of Arab art.



Education City mosque.

Visitors can experience the thought-provoking "Shahid" exhibition, an interactive audiovisual installation by Sudanese artist Khalid Albaih, exploring themes of witness and ongoing tragedies.

Mathaf also offers exciting workshops and art lessons for all ages.

The Education City Mosque, a striking architectural masterpiece, offers a tranquil haven for prayer and reflection. Its five large pillars, rep-

resenting the five pillars of Islam, are inscribed with verses from the Holy Qur'an.

For those seeking an active lifestyle, The Dome Padel Club offers a premier indoor padel experience. With state-of-the-art adidas courts, The Dome caters to players of all levels, featuring world-class facilities for a growing community of padel enthusiasts. It is learnt that The Dome is set to host competitions soon, further solidifying its position as a leading sports destination in Qatar.

Families seeking a fun-filled day out will find solace in the Qatar Foundation's Student Centre (Multaq). This unique space, inspired by traditional Arab souqs, offers a lively atmosphere for various age groups. With a wide range of indoor activities, including table tennis, billiards, bowling, foosball, and arcade games, the Multaq promises an entertaining experience for every member of the family.

Aspire Zone Foundation opens registration for summer camp



The Aspire Zone Foundation (AZF) announced the opening of registration for its summer camp for children, which is scheduled from July 21-August 8. The camp aims to provide children with a range of interesting and beneficial activities during the summer breaks and provide them with the opportunity to participate in fun-filled activities. The camp will offer a variety of activities for boys and girls aged 6-12, four days

a week from 8am-1.30pm at the Ladies Sports Hall. The activities will include sports such as football, basketball, martial arts, gymnastics, swimming lessons, and recreational games. There will be field trips to notable destinations in Doha and educational courses in reading and drawing. Previous editions of the camp have been highly successful, attracting more than 500 children to participate in a

wide range of activities. Since its first edition in 2018, the camp has become a significant and prominent event in AZF's annual calendar, reflecting its commitment to offering quality and engaging programmes for children of all ages. Those interested in participating in the camp can find all the terms and registration procedures via the link: www.aspirezone.qa

NOTICE TO TYLER G. GALLAGHER

You have been named as a defendant in a lawsuit filed by the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission ("CFTC") and the California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation ("DFPI") in the United States District Court for the Central District of California. The name of the case is CFTC v. Regal Assets LLC, et al., and it has a case number of 2:23-cv-08078-FMO-SK.

THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST YOU

The CFTC and DFPI have filed a Complaint alleging that, from at least November 2019 through at least October 2022, you and your co-defendants, Regal Assets LLC and Leah Donoso, engaged in a scheme to defraud people throughout the U.S. in connection with the purchase and sale of precious metals, and, as a part of that scheme, misappropriated more than \$21 million from more than 120 customers. As a result, the Complaint alleges that you and your co-defendants violated Section 6(c)(1) of the Commodity Exchange Act, 7 U.S.C. § 9(i), CFTC Regulation 180.1(a)(1)-(3), 17 C.F.R. § 180.1(a)(1)-(3), and Section 29536 of the California Corporations Code. The DFPI also alleges that you and your co-defendants violated Section 29520 of the California Corporations Code by unlawfully selling commodities in California.

SUMMONS

You are directed to contact Rishi Gupta, Senior Trial Attorney in the CFTC's Division of Enforcement, 1155 21st Street NW, Washington, DC 20581, 1-202-418-6773, rgupta@cftc.gov, so that you may be served with the Summons, Complaint, and related materials. If you do not contact the CFTC within 28 days from the date of first publication of this notice, the CFTC will seek entry of a judgment by default against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint, pursuant to Rule 55 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. You may obtain a copy of the Complaint by contacting Mr. Gupta or by reviewing CFTC Press Release No. 8791-23, which is available at <https://www.cftc.gov/PressRoom/PressReleases/8791-23>, and accessing the link to the Complaint.



QC distributes aid in Bosnia

Qatar Charity (QC) provided aid to 126 of its sponsored families in Bosnia, including orphans, students, and people with special needs. The aid was distributed during a visit by the QC office team in Bosnia to several sponsored families in the municipalities of Tuzla and Givnica in eastern Bosnia, in order to learn about their conditions and needs and provide psychological support. The aid included a package of clothes, refrigerators, firewood, wardrobes and payment of electricity expenses, in addition to providing students' tuition fees, in addition to other needs.

The beneficiaries expressed their gratitude to the people of Qatar, including sponsors and donors to QC. Ayla Arnaut, an orphan and a distinguished student in the Department of Chemical Engineering at Tuzla College, who was sponsored by the association four years ago, said she is very happy and thanked QC. QC is currently sponsoring, as part of the efforts of its Rofaqaa initiative, 3,527 people in Bosnia, including orphans, people with special needs, students, teachers, and needy families, including about 2,500 orphans, both

male and female, distributed across the cities and villages of Bosnia. QC has also completed many specific projects in Bosnia, most notably the Orphan Care and Rehabilitation Centre project, which aims to provide free educational and recreational services to the sponsored orphans. A student housing project provides university study opportunities for 110 female students from poor families for all university majors available in the country, provided that the scholarship covers the entire period of study, a statement added.

QCS awareness campaign targets 1,500 workers



The campaign aims to reach out to workers across various health centres.

Qatar Cancer Society (QCS) in collaboration with the Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS), has launched a quarterly awareness campaign to educate workers about the most common types of cancer. The campaign aligns with the global cancer awareness calendar and targets around 1,500 workers across various health centres, including Mesaimeer Health Centre, Fareej Abdelaziz, and Al Hemaila. The campaign commenced in June and will continue over three months, offering education in several languages, including Arabic, English, Urdu and Hindi. The June campaign focused on skin cancer awareness targeting 500 workers and emphasised disseminating educational messages through direct and indirect workshops and lectures. The campaign covered the signs and symptoms of skin cancer, how to deal with sun exposure, especially in hot summer weather, and the risk factors that increase the likelihood of developing the disease. In July, the campaign has shifted its focus to liver cancer awareness, targeting another 500 workers. It highlights the primary signs and symptoms of liver cancer and prevention methods, such as avoiding sharing personal care items like razors and toothbrushes to prevent hepatitis B infection, a significant risk factor for liver cancer. The campaign also includes distributing personal care kits to the workers.

In August, recognised globally as Blood Cancer Awareness Month, the campaign proposes to reach another group of 500 workers with information about blood cancers. The focus will be on adhering to workplace safety standards to minimise exposure to chemicals and radiation, thereby reducing the risk of developing these cancers. Noor Makkia, a health educator at QCS, stated: "These awareness campaigns and activities are launched periodically in line with Qatar National Vision 2030, which places great emphasis on human health. It underscores the importance of spreading health awareness among all community segments." Makkia emphasised the importance of promoting a healthy lifestyle among all workers as the campaigns aim to educate about cancer, its prevention, and early detection. Makkia stressed the importance of promoting a healthy lifestyle among all community members, noting that 40% of cancer cases can be prevented by adopting a healthy lifestyle, and 40% can be cured if detected early. Ammar al-Mashadani, public relations officer at QCS stated: "Launching community partnerships between all state institutions wisely and consciously contributes directly to building and development, especially in the health sector, which is one of the critical pillars for achieving comprehensive development in various fields. Social responsibility is based on co-operation and integration between all forces."

Businesses welcome government initiatives to aid private sector

The decision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to reduce the fees for many of its services for the business and trade sectors as well as that by the Ministry of Municipality to reduce the rental rates of its industrial land plots have been lauded by a number of Qatari businessmen as important steps towards encouraging more investments in the private sector. They told local Arabic daily *Ar-rayah* that such initiatives would further enhance the role of the private sector in the national economy. They also expressed their hopes that the other entities concerned would follow these steps and reduce their fees and charges including the General Directorate of Customs, the General Directorate of Passports, and Kahramaa. They said that the high cost of running business such as water and electricity bills, work permits fees, and custom charges make it difficult for business owners and entrepreneurs. In particular, they

called for more practical solutions for high rental rates of shops and offices as these are among the main culprits of incurring big losses, especially by start-ups. Mohamed bin Ahmed bin Tawar, first vice-chairman of Qatar Chamber, expressed his gratitude for the continuous support of the government to the private sector. He also called for more related government services to reduce their fees, in addition to launching new investment opportunities that suit all types of businesses, especially the small and midsize enterprises. Saad al-Tawah al-Hajiri said that such decisions would certainly reflect positively on the private sector in the country. It would further enhance the power and attractiveness of investing in Qatar. He pointed out that active Qatari manufacturers should be encouraged by giving them more incentives to expand their production. Salem al-Nuaimi pointed out that many young entrepreneurs

welcomed these decisions and are awaiting similar initiatives by related entities, especially customs. He said that some young investors see that the customs charges they have to pay for certain goods they import are too high. Saleh al-Sulaiti welcomed the new decisions and called for more reduction in other operation fees such as expatriate workers' work permits and residency, especially for those who have large numbers of workers. Saad bin Awjan al-Khayareen also asked for reducing the fees for renewing the residency and work permits for the expatriate workers as some businesses have around 1,000 workers, which would eventually reduce the operational costs. Hassan Maeed al-Ahbabi stressed that such positive decisions by the government should drive the business community to further think about increasing their investments in Qatar and expand their operations.

Vodafone Qatar partners with Qatar Charity for knowledge exchange

Vodafone Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Qatar Charity to establish a collaborative partnership for knowledge exchange. This MoU comes in line with Vodafone Qatar's Corporate Social Responsibility Programme, under which Vodafone Qatar will be launching its Better Connections training programme, which comprises a series of courses tailored for Qatar Charity employees throughout the year.

Head of Media Relations and CSR at Vodafone Qatar Ali Atiq Alabdulla commented: "Vodafone Qatar is delighted to be working in partnership with Qatar Charity. We take pride in our social investment initiatives which align with our purpose in connecting the people in Qatar and building a digital society that enhances socioeconomic progress and benefits the wider community. Through our Better Connections programme, we aim to support Qatar Charity's

employees adapt and adopt new ways of working and communicating." Throughout the year, Better Connections training programme will provide Qatar Charity with courses focusing on company best practices across its departments, including Customer Services, Sustainability, Health and Safety, and Cyber Security teams, supporting the organisation's dedication to social responsibility towards the community and people of Qatar. (QNA)

QMC wraps up vocal delivery training course

The Qatar Media Center (QMC), a Ministry of Culture affiliate, concluded a training course on the fundamentals of vocal delivery. Delivered by Voice Coach and TV and Radio presenter Ahmad Aljerbi, the three-day workshop covered several topics including developing the skill to identify a voice's capabilities, its strengths and weaknesses, and ways to enhance it in order to achieve the desired impact on the audience. Participants also learned about voice characteristics, ways to identify and employ them to interact with listeners in a professional and effective manner. Moreover, the course touched



on developing vocal communication skills, public speaking and confidence. This course is part of a wide-ranging Qatar Media Center summer programme tailored for individuals in the 14-20 years old age group. The programme will run throughout July, with its second course taking place on July 8, on cybersecurity. (QNA)

Al Meera launches campaign to reduce plastic bag use

Al Meera Consumer Goods Company has launched a campaign to reduce plastic bag use, in line with its commitment to environmental sustainability and on the occasion of 'International Day Without Plastic Bags'. The initiative is part of Al Meera's social responsibility programme and aligns with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's (MoECC) efforts. Al Meera is partnering with QTerminals for the campaign. Al Meera highlighted that this initiative encourages community members to opt for eco-friendly shopping bags instead of plastic, ultimately contributing to waste reduction. The MoECC set up a pavilion at Al Meera's Ain Khaled/Umm Al Seneim branch and disseminated educational messages promoting environmentally friendly habits in daily life. To encourage public participation, the ministry organised a competition with a total prize pool of QR5,000 in shopping vouchers. The ministry highlighted the importance of reducing plastic bag use and adopting eco-friendly alternatives for promoting environmental sustainability and protecting Qatar's natural resources. QTerminals echoed Al Meera's vision for a sustainable future, highlighting that this participation demonstrates its commitment to environmental preservation. This year's campaign features Al Meera distributing over 100,000 paper shopping bags across its branches.



The aim is to encourage customers to embrace eco-friendly alternatives to single-use plastic bags.



The campaign features Al Meera distributing over 100,000 paper shopping bags across its branches.

across its branches. It aims to encourage customers to embrace eco-friendly alternatives to single-use plastic bags. Every year on July 3, the world

observes 'International Plastic Bag Free Day'. This global initiative tackles plastic pollution by raising awareness about the environmental damage caused by single-use plastic bags. Launched in September 2016, the day emphasises the importance of transitioning away from these highly prevalent and detrimental disposable bags. Al Meera has consistently launched a series of campaigns aimed at raising community awareness about the importance of environmental preservation and sustainability, in alignment with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030. Additionally, through its Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs) at various locations nationwide, Al Meera has facilitated the recycling of over 66mn bottles and cans.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MUBTASIM MOHAMMED
MAINUDDIN HOSSAIN

holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. EK0849276
QID No. 30605000008

hereby change my name

From:

MUBTASIM MOHAMMED
MAINUDDIN HOSSAIN

To:

MUBTASIM SHAHRIYAR
MOHAMMED MAINUDDIN

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, ANE NIKAL ABEDERZAAK

holder of

Indian Passport No. L3891025
QID No. 26335604770

hereby change my name

From:

ANE NIKAL ABEDERZAAK

To:

ATHANIKKAL ABDUL RAZAK

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

Qatar attends conference seeking stronger Arab boycott of Israel

The two-day 96th conference of the Liaison Officers of Arab Regional Offices on Boycott of Israel emphasised the importance of strengthening the work of Arab boycott mechanisms.

It highlighted the need for co-ordination and communication with the main boycott office to monitor the implementation of decisions and recommendations and to track any violations of the boycott principles and rules.

Held at the Arab League's General Secretariat headquar-

ters in Cairo, the conference was attended by a representative from the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) and delegations from Arab countries, including Qatar, represented by Deputy Permanent Representative of Qatar to the Arab League, Maryam Ahmad al-Shibi.

According to a statement issued at the end of its proceedings, the conference approved a set of decisions and recommendations based on the established principles and rules of the Arab boycott. These includ-

ed monitoring and documenting the activities and events organised by the international BDS movement during the first half of 2024.

Participants underscored the importance of enhancing co-operation between the Arab League's General Secretariat and the OIC to develop and integrate Islamic boycott mechanisms with the Arab and international boycotts. They also agreed to blacklist several companies violating the rules of the Arab boycott by investing in Israeli settlements and supporting the

Israeli economy and military.

Furthermore, the conference issued warnings to other companies, demanding they withdraw their investments and cease co-operation with the colonial settlement regime, in accordance with established boycott rules. The participants expressed their appreciation for the BDS movement's efforts, recognising its widespread impact and achievements in confronting Israeli occupation, colonialism, and apartheid, as well as supporting the Palestinian people's struggle for

self-determination and statehood. The conference urged the UN Human Rights Council to adhere to the annual update of its "blacklist" of global and Israeli companies operating in Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories (West Bank and Golan), in line with Council resolution 31/36 of 2016, which mandates the annual update of the commercial activities database in the settlements.

The conference condemned legislation or decisions that criminalise and target the BDS movement, prevent divestment,

and boycott actions against Israel, including the law on economic activity for public bodies issued by the British House of Commons, and similar decisions in Germany and some US states and others.

Additionally, the conference called on the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to ban Israel, from participating in sporting and Olympic events, given its ongoing acts of destruction and genocide in the Gaza Strip. (QNA)

Dangerous skin diseases spreading among Gaza children

AFP
Deir el-Balah

Wafaa Elwan's five-year-old son cannot sleep in the Gaza tent city where she and her seven children shelter, but it is not the guns of war that cause his daily nightmare.

"My son can't sleep through the night because he can't stop scratching his body," the anxious mother said.

The boy has white and red blotches over his feet and legs, and more under his T-shirt. He is one of many Gazans suffering from skin infections ranging from scabies to chicken pox, lice, impetigo and other debilitating rashes.

More than 150,000 people in the Palestinian territory have contracted skin diseases in the squalid conditions into which displaced Gazans have been forced since the Israel-Hamas war erupted in the first week of October, according to the World Health Organisation.

"We sleep on the ground, on sand where worms come out underneath us," said Elwan. Her family is one of thousands living on a sandy patch near the sea close to the central Gaza city of Deir al-Balah.

Elwan believes infections are inevitable. "We cannot bathe our children as before. There are no hygiene and sanitary products for us to wash and clean the place. There's nothing." Parents used to tell their children to wash in the Mediterranean. But pollution that has built up as war has devastated basic facilities has accentuated the risk of disease.

"The sea is all sewage. They even throw garbage and baby napkins into the sea," she said.

The WHO has reported 96,417 cases of scabies and lice since the start of the war in Gaza, 9,274 cases of chickenpox,



Palestinian baby girl Wateen al-Adasi who developed a skin condition due to malnutrition rests at the Kamal Adwan hospital in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip.

60,130 cases of skin rashes and 10,038 impetigo cases. Scabies and chickenpox are particularly widespread in the coastal Palestinian territory, according to Sami Hamid, a pharmacist who runs a makeshift clinic in the Deir al-Balah camp.

BLISTERS AND SCABS

Two boys in the clinic showed dozens of the distinctive chickenpox-induced blisters and scabs spread over their hands, feet, backs and stomachs.

Lacking medicines, Hamid, 43, himself displaced, rubbed a calamine lotion on the boys' skin to soothe the itching.

Children's skin suffers from "the hot weather and the lack of clean water", he said.

Mohamed Abu Mughaiseeb, the medical co-ordinator in Gaza for Doctors Without Borders (MSF), said children are vulnerable because "they are children - they play outside, they'll touch anything, eat anything without washing it".

Abu Mughaiseeb said hot weather increases the sweat and accumulation of dirt that causes rashes and allergies, which if scratched lead to infections.

"People are not living in hous-

es anymore, there is no proper hygiene," he said. MSF doctors fear the appearance of other skin conditions such as leishmaniasis, which can be fatal in its most virulent form. Gaza's children are already highly vulnerable to disease, he said, because their immune systems are compromised by malnutrition.

Hamid, the pharmacist, said his team visited a makeshift school recently, where 24 out of 150 students had scabies.

"Some of them have developed skin infections, and unfortunately these infections are spreading among them," said Ola al-Qula, a teacher at one makeshift tent school.

Other diseases have also raged through camps for the displaced, feeding on the poor hygiene, the WHO warned.

"The toilets here are primitive, draining into channels among tents, which ultimately contributes to the spread of epidemics," said Hamid.

WHO said 485,000 cases of diarrhoea have been reported.

The UN said Tuesday there are now 1.9mn people displaced in Gaza out of a population of some 2.4mn.

Naameh" had been killed, and also announced the death of a second fighter.

In a statement, Hezbollah said that "as part of the response to the attack and assassination that the enemy carried out" in south Lebanon's Tyre, its fighters attacked two positions in the Israeli-annexed Syrian Golan Heights "with 100 Katyusha rockets". The group also claimed another retaliatory attack with "Falaq rockets" on a base in northern Israel.

rael in the first week of October, triggering war in Gaza, but an uptick in bellicose rhetoric from both sides in recent weeks has raised fears of all-out war.

"A Hezbollah commander responsible for one of three sectors in south Lebanon was killed" in an "Israeli strike on a car in Tyre", a source close to the group said, requesting anonymity as they were not authorised to speak to the media. The group said that "commander Mohamed Naameh Nasser", also known as "Hajj Abu

Five Palestinians killed in West Bank

AFP
Ramallah

Israeli forces killed five Palestinians in two military operations in the occupied West Bank where tensions have risen because of the Gaza war, Palestinian and Israeli sources said yesterday.

One night-time air strike killed four men at a refugee camp near the town of Tulkarm, which has seen a surge in violence as Israel has intensified raids.

The Palestinian Authority health ministry said the four were "killed as a result of the occupation's bombing of Nur Shams camp".

An Israeli military statement said forces "carried out a precise strike on the fighter cell," killing four it identified as Mohamed Shehade, Mohamed Kanouah, Yazid Shafa and Namer Ibrahim.

The statement said the four were "attempting to plant explosive devices" targeting Israeli soldiers operating in the area.

According to the Palestinian official news agency Wafa, the dead, aged 20 to 25, were killed by a drone near the centre of the camp.

One man was killed by Israeli fire in a separate Israeli operation in the northern West Bank city of Jenin, the Palestinian health ministry said in a state-



A woman reacts during the funeral of four Palestinians killed in an Israeli airstrike, in Nur Shams camp, in Tulkarm, in the West Bank, yesterday.

ment yesterday. The statement identified the man as Nidal Ziad al-Amer, 23.

An Israeli security official said that al-Amer was killed as the Israeli army tried to arrest him for 'fighter' activity. The towns of Jenin and Tulkarm are known as bastions of Palestinian fighters' activity and are frequently targeted by Israeli raids. Violence in the West Bank has spiked since the October first week storming by Hamas of Israel.

On Monday, a woman and child were killed in an Israeli

raid in Nur Shams, according to Palestinian officials. Four others were wounded. A two-day Israeli operation in April left 14 people dead in Nur Shams, the Palestinian Red Crescent said.

At least 560 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli soldiers and settlers in the West Bank since the conflict in Gaza began, according to a health ministry tally.

At least 15 Israelis have been killed in Palestinian attacks in the West Bank over the same period, according to an AFP tally based on official Israeli figures.

Airstrike kills mother, wounds son in Gaza

Reuters
Gaza

Palestinian boy Mohamed Qamar lies wounded in a Gaza hospital after an Israeli airstrike that killed his mother and two other relatives, and injured his five siblings.

The 12-year-old, who suffered wounds to his face, eyes and feet in Monday's attack, cries out for his mother in a scene that is all too familiar after nine months of war.

"I was very sad about it, and I felt angry, I started to cry 'How could you go and leave us, mama? Who did you leave us for?'" he said at the Nasser Hospital in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis.

"Mama, can you hear me? Mama, answer me." Recalling how he used to help his mother about the house, he said: "I loved her a lot and would help her by sweeping and washing the dishes, so she could rest." "I would tidy up the living room and the rooms, I would sweep, and do the dishes for her," he said.



Palestinian child Tareq Qamar, who was injured in an Israeli strike that killed his mother, is carried by his aunt as his brother Mohamed who was wounded along with him rests on a bed, at Nasser hospital, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

A woman sat beside his hospital bed, cradling his baby brother. His father, Ahmed Qamar, and another brother also lay in hospital beds following the airstrike, which shattered windows and filled the living room with dust.

"I lost the soul of the house," said the father, Ahmed Qamar.

"I have children who are one month old, three years old, five

years old, and 10 years old," he said.

"They need a mother, and I cannot do it on my own." The family's plight has become common in the Gaza Strip since the Israeli military began its offensive in response to the deadly October first week storming of southern Israeli communities led by the Gaza-based Hamas group.

Hezbollah fires rockets at Israeli positions after commander killed

AFP
Beirut

Hezbollah said it fired more than 100 rockets at Israeli positions yesterday in retaliation for a strike that killed a senior commander in Lebanon, the movement's second such loss in recent weeks.

Hezbollah has traded near daily cross-border fire with the Israeli army since its Palestinian ally Hamas stormed southern Is-

SA inaugurates unprecedented unity government

AFP
Cape Town

South Africa's new unity government under President Cyril Ramaphosa was sworn in yesterday, the first of its kind in the country after 30 years of rule by the ANC.

Ahead of the 32 ministers - from six parties - making up the cabinet, Paul Mashatile, who has been re-appointed deputy president, was the first to take the oath during the televised ceremony in Cape Town.

On Sunday, Ramaphosa, 71, unveiled his highly anticipated coalition government, which includes the leader of the former main opposition party and sees the number of

ministries rise from 30 to 32. There are also 43 deputy ministers. His African National Congress (ANC), which has governed since the advent of democracy in 1994, sought to form a government of national unity after losing its outright parliamentary majority in May 29 elections.

The historic party, which won just over 40 % in the poll, keeps 20 cabinet positions, including foreign affairs, finance, defence, justice and police. Its largest coalition partner and long-time critic, the Democratic Alliance (DA), won 21.8 % and will head six ministries, including agriculture, public works and communication.

DA leader John Steenhuisen, 48, was appointed agriculture minister.



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa smiles as Minister of Agriculture John Steenhuisen (centre) shakes hands with Deputy President Paul Mashatile (right), in Cape Town, yesterday.

VOTE

Khamenei urges greater turnout

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called yesterday for voters to participate in tomorrow's presidential ballot, saying that historically low first-round turnout was not an act "against the system", AFP reported from Tehran. Reformist candidate Masoud Pezeshkian and conservative Saeed Jalili will face off after leading the pack in the first round last week, in an election cycle brought forward by the death of president Ebrahim Raisi in a May helicopter crash. Only 40% of Iran's 61mn eligible voters cast their ballots in the first round.

UNREST

'Militant attack' in Mali kills more than 20

An attack blamed on militants in central Mali killed more than 20 civilians on Monday, two local officials said, in the latest killings in the troubled Sahel region, AFP reported from Bamako. "At least 21 civilians have been killed" in the village of Djiguibombo, an official from the provincial authority said yesterday.



POLITICS

Nepal PM faces crisis as key ally drops parliamentary support

Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal faced a crisis yesterday after a key ally in his multi-party coalition withdrew support, pushing his government into a minority in parliament four months after the coalition was formed. The liberal Communist Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) party, which withdrew support and was the biggest group supporting Dahal's government since March, also said eight ministers it had nominated to the coalition would resign. Party officials said UML and opposition Nepali Congress party, the two largest groups in parliament, would unite to form a new coalition and replace the one headed by Dahal.

MILESTONE

Indonesia launches first EV battery plant

Indonesia launched its first electric vehicle battery plant yesterday, President Joko Widodo said, as Southeast Asian countries move to gain a foothold in the emerging industry. The country, which is the region's largest economy and home to the largest nickel reserve in the world, has been seeking to position itself as a key player in the global electric vehicle supply chain. The plant is a joint venture between South Korean manufacturers Hyundai Motor Group and LG Energy Solution (LGES) and can produce up to 10 Gigawatt hours (GWh) of battery cells every year. Widodo said the plant, located in Karawang, was "the biggest in Southeast Asia".

WILDLIFE

Woman swallowed by python in Indonesia

A woman was found dead inside the belly of a snake after it swallowed her whole in central Indonesia, police said yesterday. Siriati, 36, had gone missing after she left her house Tuesday morning to buy medicine for her sick child, police said. Her husband Adiansa, 30, found her slippers about 500 metres from their house in Siteba village, South Sulawesi province. "Shortly after that, he spotted a snake. The snake was still alive," a policeman said. Adiansa became suspicious after he noticed the python's "very large" belly. He called the villagers to help cut open its stomach, where they found her body.

TRAGEDY

Missing child feared attacked by crocodile

Police in Australia's Northern Territory yesterday said a missing 12-year-old child was reportedly attacked by a crocodile and a search and rescue operation was underway. The child was reported missing on Tuesday evening after swimming in a creek in Palumpa, a remote town of around 350 people seven hours by road from the territory capital Darwin. "Local officers are on scene and our thoughts are with the family and the community," senior sergeant Erica Gibson said in a statement. "Officers are currently searching a large section of the creek via boat and we thank the community for their ongoing assistance."

Philippine senator makes claim over China missile plans

Reuters
Manila

A prominent Philippine senator has created a stir by saying on social media she has knowledge of a Chinese plan to target her country with hypersonic missiles, though the national security council said it was unaware of any such security threat.

Senator Imee Marcos, the sister of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and head of the senate foreign relations committee, made her claim in a short video that has so far had over 900,000 views on TikTok and over 100,000 on Facebook.

China's defence and foreign ministries did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the video, which Imee Marcos posted on Tuesday as the Philippines and China held talks on their South China Sea territorial dispute.

In her video, Marcos said China had set 25 targets around the Philippine archipelago that it would attack with hypersonic missiles, and the northern islands of Batanes, close to Taiwan, would be among the first targets.

Marcos provided no evidence to support her claim, which she made as part of an argument that her brother's closer ties with the US has made China see the Philippines as a threat. Reuters could not verify her claim.

"Let's admit the problem: that China thinks we have sided with their enemy," she said in her video.



Marcos and sister Imee: differences over China policies.

"As tensions escalate in the West Philippine Sea, I saw a Chinese plan that they will use a hypersonic missile," she said, without saying where she got the information. West Philippine Sea refers to waters within Manila's exclusive economic zone.

Marcos opposes some of her brother's policies regarding China, including his decision to grant the US expanded access to Philippine military facilities it can use, including those facing Taiwan and the South China Sea.

The Philippines national security council said it would ask Marcos for more information about her statement, with spokesman Jonathan Malaya saying in a message "... we are not aware of any of the security threats she mentioned".

"The Philippines and PRC (People's Republic of China) maintain cordial relations and are committed to managing whatever differences

there may be, thus we see no threat of any imminent attack from the PRC," Malaya added.

Neither the Chinese embassy in Manila nor Imee Marcos' office responded immediately to a request for comment on the video. The US embassy said it had no comment at present.

A spokesperson at the Philippine defence department said it "has no basis for a comment or reaction to senator Marcos' video because we have not seen or read the plans she referred to".

President Marcos' office did not respond to a request for comment.

China accused the Philippines of "stoking the fire" of regional tensions with its military agreement with the US.

Beijing also condemned the deployment of the US' Typhon missile in the Philippines during the allies' joint military exercises.

Anger at Bangladesh job quota system



Students and job seekers shout slogans and block a road at Shahbagh Square in Dhaka, Bangladesh, yesterday as they demand cancellation of the quota system in government jobs.

Taiwan urges China to release seized boat

AFP
Taipei

Taiwan has called on China to release a fishing boat carrying five people that it said was seized by the Chinese coast guard in waters near Taiwanese outlying islands.

The Chinese coast guard has stepped up patrols around Taiwan's Kinmen islands in recent months after a series of deadly fishing accidents, one of which led to bitter blame-trading between the two sides.

The Kinmen islands are administered by Taipei but are located just 5kms from the Chinese mainland.

Taiwan's coast guard said it received a report at 08.14pm (1214 GMT) on Tuesday from the owner of a fishing boat that two Chinese coast guard vessels had intercepted it around 23.7 nautical miles (44kms) from Kinmen's Liaoluo port.

It dispatched two patrol vessels "to try to rescue" the fishing boat, along with a third for assistance, but one was "blocked by" Chinese coast guard ships,

Taiwan's coast guard said in a statement. "To avoid escalating the conflict, we have decided to stop the chase," the coast guard said, adding the fishing boat was taken to China's Weitou port.

Taiwan coast guard officials told a news conference yesterday that there were two Taiwanese and three Indonesians onboard the boat.

A Chinese coast guard spokesman said a Taiwanese fishing boat suspected of illegal fishing off the coast of Quanzhou was inspected and detained on Tuesday.

Flood fears as Yangtze River levels swell

Rising water levels in the Yangtze River following intense rains in southern China have prompted eastern regions downstream to prepare for possible flooding. Water levels in the Jiangsu section of China's longest river continued to rise yesterday as a result of the increased flow from its upper reaches as well as the persistent rainfall. Nanjing, the capital of China's eastern Jiangsu province issued its second highest flood warning and authorities banned various vessels, including passenger ferries, from entering or operating in the river's Jiangsu section, state media reported. China's Ministry of Water Resources had said on Tuesday that water levels in sections of the middle and lower courses of the Yangtze River exceeded the warning mark. Water levels at Poyang Lake in Jiangxi province, where authorities had activated a second-level response for flood control since Tuesday night, were also being closely watched.



A car and piles of debris are pictured on a street after a flood following heavy rainfall in Pingjiang county of Yueyang, Hunan province, China, yesterday.

New Zealand cat-killing contest to keep going

AFP
Wellington

New Zealand's annual cat-killing contest plans to expand next year, the event's organiser said yesterday, describing feral felines as a grave threat to native wildlife.

Feral cats prey on endangered birds, bats and lizards, according to New Zealand's department of conservation, and they are blamed for driving some species into extinction.

The latest edition of the competition was held at the weekend in rural North Canterbury, with hunters killing 370 feral cats alongside possums, rats and deer.

It attracted 1,500 hunters, including 460 children who had to be accompanied by adults. This year, one hunter won

a cash prize of NZ\$1,000 (US\$608) for killing the largest feral cat, which weighed 6.7kgs.

Another NZ\$500 went to the contestant with the highest number of kills - 65 feral cats.

"We'll just carry on with what we are doing and increase the prize money next year to make it bigger and better," hunt organiser Matt Bailey said.

The event grabbed international headlines last year when a public backlash forced it to scrap an event dedicated to children under 14.

But Bailey said the hunt was needed to cull wild felines, which prey on native wildlife and carry diseases threatening livestock.

"Feral cats are crazy when caged. They will bound around trying to have a go at you," he said.

Japan's new banknotes use holograms to fight counterfeits

Reuters
Tokyo

Japan began circulating its first new banknotes in 20 years yesterday, featuring three-dimensional portraits of the founders of financial and female education institutions in an attempt to frustrate counterfeiters.

The notes use printed patterns to generate holograms of the portraits facing different directions, depending on the angle of view, employing a technology that Japan's National Printing Bureau says is the world's first for paper money.

Though existing bills stay in use,

train stations, parking lots and ramen shops are scrambling to upgrade payment machines while the government pushes consumers and businesses to use less cash in its bid to digitise the economy.

The new 10,000-yen (\$62) note depicts Eiichi Shibusawa (1840-1931), the founder of the first bank and stock exchange, who is often called "the father of Japanese capitalism".

The new 5,000-yen bill portrays educator Umeko Tsuda (1864-1929), who founded one of the first women's universities in Japan, while the 1,000-yen bill features a pioneering medical scientist, Shibasaburo Kitasato (1853-1931).

Currency authorities plan to print about 7.5bn newly-designed bills by the end of the current fiscal year. They will add to the 18.5bn banknotes worth 125tn yen already in circulation as of December 2023.

"Cash is a secure means of payment that can be used by anyone, anywhere, and at any time, and it will continue to play a significant role" even when alternative payment methods prevail, Bank of Japan governor Kazuo Ueda told a ceremony celebrating the new notes yesterday.

The central bank has been conducting experiments on digital currencies, but the government has

made no decision on whether to issue a digital yen.

The first renewal of paper money since 2004 spurred businesses to upgrade payment machines for cash-loving customers.

Although cashless payments in Japan have almost tripled over the past decade to make up 39% of consumer spending in 2023, that share lags global peers and should rise to as high as 80% to improve productivity, the government says.

Roughly 90% of bank ATMs, train ticket machines and retail cash registers are prepared to accept new bills, but only half of restaurant and parking ticket machines are ready,

the Japan Vending Machine Manufacturers Association says.

Nearly 80% of 2.2mn drink vending machines nationwide also need upgrades, it added.

"It might take until year-end to respond to this," said Takemori Kawanami, an executive at ticket machine company Elcom. "That's too slow, but we are short of components," he added, as client orders for upgrades exceeded expectations.

Many Japanese fast-food restaurants such as ramen shops and beef bowl stores rely on ticket machines to cut labour costs, but some small business owners battling inflation are unhappy at the

extra investment the new bills entail. "The machine replacement has no sales impact, so it's only negative for us, on top of rising costs of labour and ingredients," said Shintaro Sekiguchi, who spent about 600,000 yen for ticket machines at three ramen shops he runs in southern Tokyo.

As cashless payments grow, Sekiguchi hankered for a cutting-edge machine that could offer clients various payment options, but could only afford cash-only equipment.

"Our ramen doesn't have high unit prices, so running the shop for a day or two would hardly pay for the replacement," he added.

Foxconn iPhone plant executives quizzed on hiring practices

Reuters
New Delhi

Indian labour officials visited a Foxconn factory in the country's south this week and questioned executives about the company's hiring practices, an official said, after Reuters reported that the major

Apple supplier has been rejecting married women from iPhone assembly jobs. A five-member team of the federal government's regional labour department visited the Foxconn factory near Chennai, in Tamil Nadu state, on July 1 and spoke to company directors and human resources officials, A Narasaiah, the

regional labour commissioner, said by telephone yesterday. Foxconn did not immediately respond to a request for comment, while Apple did not address questions from Reuters about the visit. The inquiries come after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government asked state officials and the

office of the federal government's regional chief labour commissioner last week to provide detailed reports on the matter, following Reuters' investigation into hiring practices at the manufacturing facility. "We are collecting information, and have asked the company to submit documents like company policies, recruitment policies" as well as

evidence of compliance with labour laws and information on maternity and retirement benefits, Narasaiah said. "They told us they are not discriminating." Narasaiah said Foxconn told the labour officials the factory employs 41,281 people, including 33,360 women. Of these women, some 2,750, or about 8%, were married,

he said, citing Foxconn's submission. Foxconn did not break down the staffing figures into specific areas such as iPhone assembly, where Reuters reported the discrimination was taking place, Narasaiah said. He added that the labour inspectors interviewed 40 married women inside the plant, who raised no concerns about discrimination.

Northern Ireland former unionist leader's trial starts in Sept

Donaldson arrived at the court separately from his wife and former parliamentary secretary Eleanor, 58, who is also facing five charges of aiding and abetting

AFP
Newry, United Kingdom

Jeffrey Donaldson, former leader of Northern Ireland's main pro-UK unionist party, will face trial in September on 18 sex offence charges, including rape, a court was told yesterday. Judge Eamonn King said there is "sufficient evidence" for the 61-year-old, one of the British province's best-known politicians, to be sent to trial. Donaldson has previously said that he will "strenuously" contest the allegations. The former UK parliament MP is facing one charge of rape, four counts of gross indecency with or towards a child and 13 counts of indecent assault on a female. Donaldson arrived at the court separately from his wife and former parliamentary secretary Eleanor, 58, who is also facing five charges of aiding and abetting. It was the first time either had been seen in public since their last court appearance in April. The judge remanded the pair on bail conditions and told them to return to court on September 10 when their trial will be arranged. "I am satisfied on the basis of the papers before the court that

there is a prima facie case to answer," said King. The two complainants, whose accusations span two decades between 1985 and 2008, cannot be named for legal reasons. The politician resigned as leader of the Democratic Unionist Party on March 29 after he was charged by police. A longtime player in Northern Irish unionist politics, Donaldson was first elected in 1997 and was the longest serving Northern Ireland MP. Before the charges Donaldson had been expected to lead the DUP into the UK general election, which takes place today. In May, Donaldson's lawyer confirmed he would not run for re-election. Donaldson became DUP leader in 2021 before his party collapsed power-sharing at the Northern Ireland assembly in Belfast in February 2022 in protest at post-Brexit trade arrangements for Northern Ireland, which shares the UK's only land border with the European Union. It argued that the trade terms - agreed to avoid a so-called hard border with EU member the Republic of Ireland to the south and preserve peace after 30 years of sectarian conflict over British rule - risked cutting Northern Ireland adrift from the rest of the UK. Donaldson announced in February that the party had struck a deal with the government to break the deadlock, paving the way for the assembly to resume.



Floods wreak havoc in Assam
People make their way across flood waters in Lehpati village of Morigaon district in India's northeastern state of Assam yesterday. Six people have been killed in floods precipitated by torrential rains across northeast India and neighbouring Bangladesh that inundated the homes of more than a million others, officials said.

India govt 'plans hiking rural housing subsidies to over \$6.5bn'

Reuters
New Delhi

India plans to increase state subsidies on rural housing in the upcoming federal budget by as much as 50% from the previous year to more than \$6.5bn, after setbacks for the prime minister's party in elections, two government sources said. The planned hike in housing subsidies is part of a broader government initiative to boost spending on rural infrastructure including village roads and a jobs programme to help millions of young people stuck in the agriculture sector amid limited manufacturing jobs. If approved, it would mark the largest annual increase in federal spending on the rural housing programme since its inception in 2016.

"The government is worried over widespread rural economic distress, driven by higher food inflation and sluggish growth in farmers' incomes," said one of the government sources with knowledge of budget discussions. Shares of Housing and Urban Development Corp rose as much as 9% after the Reuters report, while Aadhar Housing Finance and GIC Housing Finance rose around 4.5%. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is having to rely on allies to run the government for the first time in a decade, after the opposition did much better than expected in a bitterly fought national election that ended last month. Under the PM Awas Yojna (Rural) housing scheme, the government aims to facilitate construction of an additional 20mn houses over

the next few years, after providing aid for more than 26mn homes for poor households over the past eight years. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is expected to announce details of plan during the budget presentation later this month. "We expect a substantial increase in allocations for several rural schemes this year, including housing, roads and jobs programme," said the second government source, noting federal subsidies for rural housing could exceed Rs550bn (\$6.58bn), up from Rs320bn last fiscal year. He said state spending on the rural jobs programme was expected to increase substantially from an earlier estimate of Rs860bn, but the government may seek parliament approval for this additional spending later, not as part of the budget.

Bailed Indian opposition leader to return as chief minister

A top Indian opposition leader is set to return as chief minister of Jharkhand state, days after he was released from prison on bail, a key party official said yesterday. Hemant Soren, 48, who was arrested and jailed in February on corruption charges, was granted bail on June 28 in the eastern state. Before being taken into custody, Hemant had stepped down from his position, handing over the reins to party colleague Champai Soren. The two men are not related. Yesterday evening, Champai, 61, in a widely expected move, tendered his resignation to the state's governor. "We had a change in leadership at that time, so I got the responsibility," Champai said. "Now that he is back, our alliance has chosen him as our leader, and I have resigned from my post." Hemant heads a party that is part of the opposition alliance that fought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the weeks-long election that concluded last month.

Farage addresses voters



Britain's Reform UK Party leader Nigel Farage addresses local voters, at Clacton Pier during a campaign visit in Clacton, Britain, yesterday.

Major tabloid The Sun backs Labour in election

AFP
London

Major UK tabloid *The Sun* yesterday said it was "time for Labour", backing the opposition party for election victory and calling the ruling Conservatives "exhausted" and divided after 14 years in power. Political leaders of all stripes have long courted the influential newspaper, which is part of Rupert Murdoch's global News Corporation group and last backed Labour during Tony Blair's tenure from 1997. Announcing its endorsement, the famously playful tabloid previewed its front page for today, when Britons vote and are widely predicted by polls to return Labour to power by a landslide. "Time for a new manager," it

headlined, in a football-themed cover to coincide with Euro 2024, adding: "and we don't mean sack (England team manager Gareth) Southgate!" *The Sun* said in a lengthy editorial that it supported many of beleaguered Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's policies, including the contentious plan to deport thousands of asylum-seekers to Rwanda. But it added the party's rule over the last 14 years had been "often chaotic" and that it has "become a divided rabble, more interested in fighting themselves than running the country". "Put bluntly, the Tories are exhausted," the paper concluded. On centre-left Labour, *The Sun* said its leader Keir Starmer, who would become prime minister as the leader of the largest party in parliament, had "won the right to take charge".

Johnson tries to fire up Tories' flagging poll campaign

AFP
London

Ex-prime minister Boris Johnson tried to rally the Conservative party faithful as UK politicians yesterday spent a final day campaigning ahead of the general election. The Brexit stalwart, ousted by his own Conservative lawmakers in 2022 after a string of scandals, made a surprise appearance at a party rally in London, urging supporters not to see the result as a "foregone conclusion". "I know that it is not," he said, adding that opposition Labour lead-

er Keir Starmer would try to "usher in the most left-wing Labour government" since World War II. His last-minute intervention came after Survation pollsters indicated that Labour was on track to defeat Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Tories today in a landslide bigger than its 1997 poll victory under Tony Blair. Labour has enjoyed a consistent 20-point lead in the polls over the past two years with many voters dissatisfied at the Conservatives' handling of a range of issues including the cost of living, public services, immigration and the economy. Johnson, who won the Tories an 80-seat majority at the last election

in 2019, allowing him to take Britain out of the European Union, has been a notable absentee in the campaign. Sunak - his former finance minister - was one of several who quit in protest at one scandal too many, forcing Johnson to resign, and there is no love lost between the pair. The last day of the campaign saw Starmer crisscross the UK with visits to England, Scotland and Wales while Sunak ended his campaign in the traditionally Conservative supporting heartlands of southeast England. "If you want change, you have to vote for it," Starmer told reporters, adding he was "not taking anything for granted".

But even as the Tories prepared to fight for every last vote, one of Sunak's most loyal ministers predicted Labour was on the cusp of a historic victory. "If you look at the polls, it is pretty clear that Labour at this stage are heading for an extraordinary landslide on a scale that has probably never, ever been seen in this country before," Work and Pensions Secretary Mel Stride told GB News. The Tories have been going all out to play upon people's fears, warning of tax rises and weaker national security if they are voted out, in what Labour sees as a desperate last stand to cling on to power. Former interior minister Suella

Braverman, meanwhile, urged the Conservatives to "read the writing on the wall" and "prepare for the reality and frustration of opposition". Right-winger Braverman, sacked last year by Sunak after a series of outspoken comments, said the party was "haemorrhaging votes" to Nigel Farage's anti-immigration Reform UK party. "Why? Because we failed to cut immigration or tax or deal with the net-zero and woke policies we have presided over for 14 years," Braverman, seen as a party leadership contender, wrote in the *Daily Telegraph*. She urged the party to conduct a "searingly honest post-match analysis", adding that it would "decide whether our party contin-

ues to exist at all". Attention in the British media is turning to what a Starmer government would look like when the results for the 650-seat parliament start dropping from about 2230GMT today into tomorrow morning. Today's vote is Britain's first July election since 1945, when Labour under Clement Attlee defeated the Conservatives of World War II leader Winston Churchill, ushering in a period of transformational social change. Attlee's government created the modern welfare state, including the National Health Service, Britain's most cherished institution after the royal family.

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French vote, China trade row cast cloud over Europe earnings

French political uncertainty and an EU trade spat with China are casting a shadow over European corporate earnings, investors say, despite forecasts that companies are set to deliver better results.

Second-quarter earnings for companies in the pan-European STOXX 600 are seen rising 2% and revenues increasing by 1.7%, LSEG I/B/E/S data shows, in what would be the first quarter of growth since the first three months of 2023.

Investors had been warming to Europe's equity markets as the European Central Bank embarked on looser policy and the economic outlook improved, but French President Emmanuel Macron's shock decision to call parliamentary elections has sparked doubts.

Concerns about France's fiscal discipline under new right- or left-wing governments have shaken confidence, as have fears of tax and minimum wage rises under the left. Analysts have responded by trimming earnings expectations for French blue-chip firms and reining in expectations for European shares in the last two weeks.

The STOXX 600 index, which touched a record high on June 7, the last trading day before Macron dissolved parliament, is down 2.5% from that peak. France's CAC 40, at its lowest since January, has borne the brunt of the selling.

"It could be the typical seasonal pattern where you get some downgrades going into earnings season, but you're not getting as positive a signal as you got last quarter," said Citigroup European equity strategist David Groman.

"You have all these political risks coming to the fore, even as the fundamental story had been looking pretty strong," he said.

Results season kicks off in earnest from mid-July, with Barry Callebaut releasing results on July 11, Richemont on July 16 and ABB on July 18. Last week, Nike's worse-than-expected 2024 outlook and H&M's downbeat trading update knocked confidence in consumer demand.

On Sunday, Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally (RN) party won the first round of French parliamentary elections, a huge setback for Macron, although analysts noted the party won a smaller share of the vote than some polls had projected.

"Up until the European election, we think the European market was getting a bit more interest from global investors," said Steffen Weyl, euro-area fund head at Union Investment.

Redemptions from French equity funds hit a four-week high in the latest week, data from fund flow data provider EPFR showed.

Political risks were driving outflows from European funds, Citi's Groman said, adding: "The French election is a key flashpoint."

"I wouldn't be surprised if European companies started acknowledging that it's been a general source of uncertainty and would expect equities to be sensitive to these political risks."

Political risks are a key reason why Citigroup recently downgraded continental European stocks to neutral in its global equity strategy.

Markets are likely most fearful of a possible victory for the left-wing New Popular Front (NFP) alliance, Weyl said.

"It's much more unstable because you have so many different parties in there, from Greens to the ultra-left and the centre."

An NFP victory would also likely increase labour costs for French firms, noted Gilles Guibout, head of European equity strategies at AXA Investment Managers. The NFP promises to raise the minimum wage by 14%. As the broader European market trades near all-time highs, investors are looking for reassurance from the companies which were optimistic at the start of 2024.

"A lot of the anecdotal evidence...is that companies are clinging to their guidance and still have a positive view towards H2," said Mark Schumann, head of European large-cap mutual funds at DWS Group.

"Now with a lot higher altitude in terms of the index levels, the market is getting increasingly nervous about getting some tangible evidence when it comes to these H2 outlooks."

The euro area's growth indicators are mixed. While there had been signs that the contraction in the euro zone's manufacturing activity might have hit a trough, Citi's economic surprise index, which measures how economic data performs versus expectations, dropped into negative territory for the first time since January.

And the closely watched Ifo Institute survey showed German business morale fell unexpectedly in June, underlying concerns about recovery in the euro area's largest economy.

Escalating trade tensions between the European Union and China are also clouding the picture. Brussels proposed hefty duties on imports of Chinese-made electric vehicles to combat excessive subsidies which has unleashed countermeasures from Beijing, which launched a dumping probe into EU pork imports.

"Longer term it's a big problem for Germany as they're the big exporting economy within Europe," said Nathan Sweeney, CIO of multiasset at Marlborough. — Reuters

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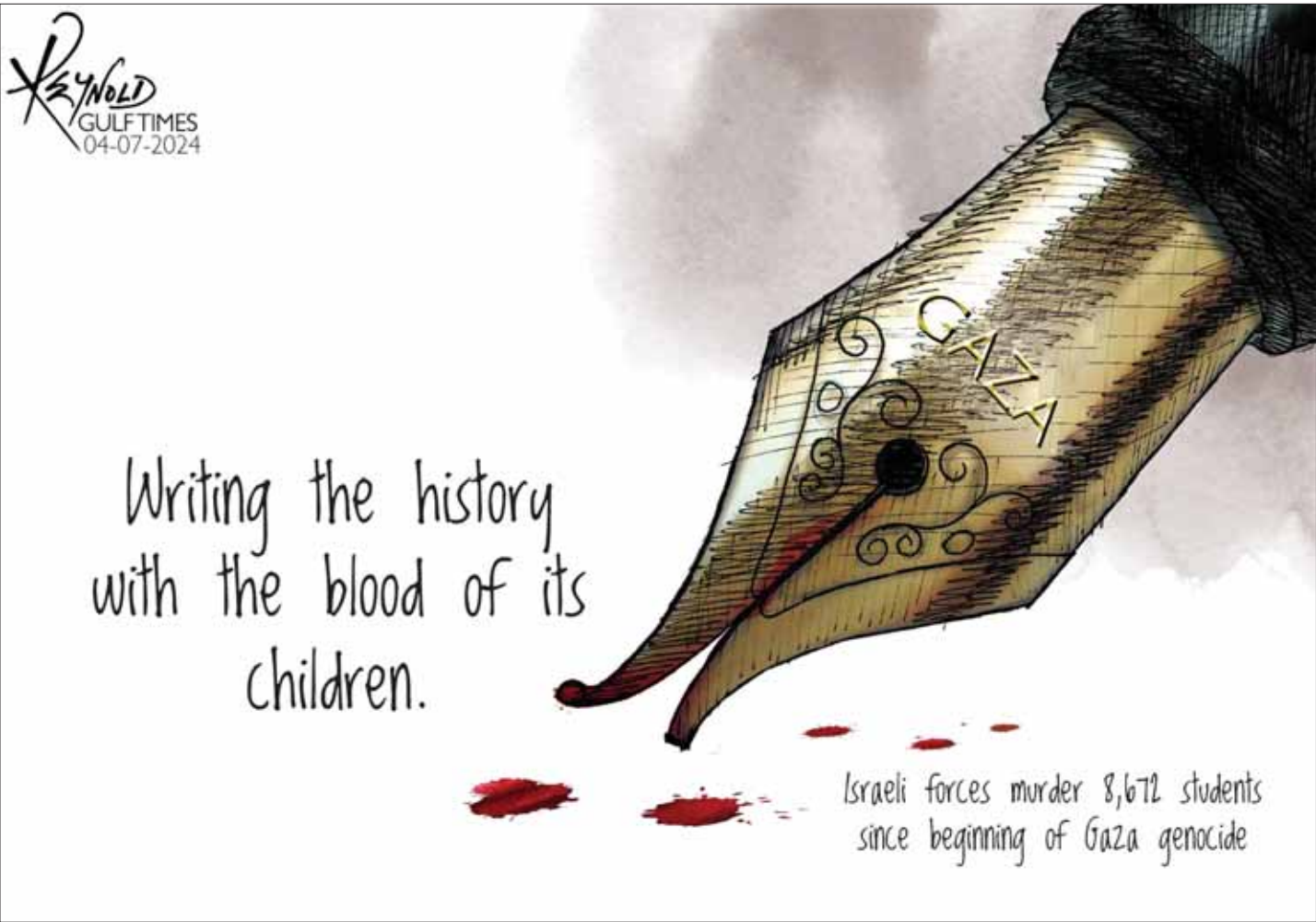
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Not so shrewd after all: Why Macronism failed

By Jan-Werner Mueller
Berlin

Following his party's decisive loss to the far-right National Rally in the European Parliament election, French President Emmanuel Macron shocked everyone by dissolving the National Assembly and calling a snap election. He has justified his decision by claiming that an election will "clarify" the political situation, but his compatriots do not share this view.

Even those who do not fear that Macron's gamble will bring the far-right to power are anxious about the chaos that might ensue. As Édouard Philippe, Macron's prime minister from 2017 to 2020, put it, the president has needlessly "killed the presidential majority": A hung parliament with National Rally as the largest party is now considered the most likely outcome. Still, Macron's decision has clarified one thing: his strategy to create a powerful centrism in France has failed. Other European leaders should take note.

Legend has it that the first question Napoleon would ask about a military officer was not whether he was talented, but whether he was lucky. When Macron triumphed in the 2017 presidential election, he was extraordinarily lucky. The incumbent was so unpopular that he did not even bother to run for a second term, and the likely conservative winner was felled by a scandal. Macron seized the moment to offer what one might call a Second Coming of the "Third Way". Just like Tony Blair, the British Labour Party leader who came to power in 1997, Macron held that the old

ideological cleavage of left and right was dépassé, and that centrists should simply pick the policies that "worked best".

Macron appealed to both socialists and conservative Gaullists, on the assumption that all reasonable people could unite happily in the moderate middle. Anyone who rejected the invitation was, by definition, an unreasonable extremist. For a while, this approach had traction, because Macron's seemingly ever-expanding centre was flanked by Marine Le Pen's National Front (now National Rally) on the far-right and by the firebrand Jean-Luc Mélenchon's France Unbowed on the far-left. But the technocratic approach – "if you're not with us, you're unreasonable" – ultimately failed to transform the political landscape.

The far-right, far left, centre left, and centre right each still tend to win at least a fifth of the vote in the first round of French presidential elections, on average. But the centre-right Republicans have been hemorrhaging votes to National Rally, prompting the party's leader, Éric Ciotti, to endorse an alliance with the far-right. This matters, because Macron's overwhelming support in the second round of the 2017 and 2022 elections – when he was facing off against Le Pen – was largely due to voters' hostility to the far-right, not burgeoning enthusiasm for Macron-style technocracy.

On the contrary, technocracy tends to provoke a backlash, because it creates an opportunity for populists to argue – reasonably – that there are no uniquely rational solutions to complex problems, and that democracy is supposed to be about choice and popular

participation, not elites decreeing that there is no alternative.

Macron's haughty style – already in 2017, he let it be known that he wanted to rule like "Jupiter" – certainly did not help. Rightly or wrongly, it has made him an exceptionally hated political figure. But quite apart from the personal failings of a man who fancies himself a philosopher-king, a centrist project aimed at taking the best from the left and the right was always more likely to alienate both than to harmonise their contradictory agendas.

Once Macron had lost control of the National Assembly in 2022, his prime minister, Elisabeth Borne, heroically tried to cobble together ad hoc majorities to advance the president's agenda. But on more than 20 occasions, she resorted to constitutional shortcuts to ram through measures that clearly lacked popular support.

Macron's centrism not only looked increasingly authoritarian; it also acquired a rightward tilt. Hence, his hardline interior minister went so far as to accuse Le Pen of being soft on Islamism, and Borne introduced an immigration law that seemed to legitimise what the far-right had been saying all along. If you are constantly tacking rightward, you eventually will reach a point where you can no longer blackmail voters with the argument that you are the only thing standing in the way of right-wing extremism and the end of the Republic.

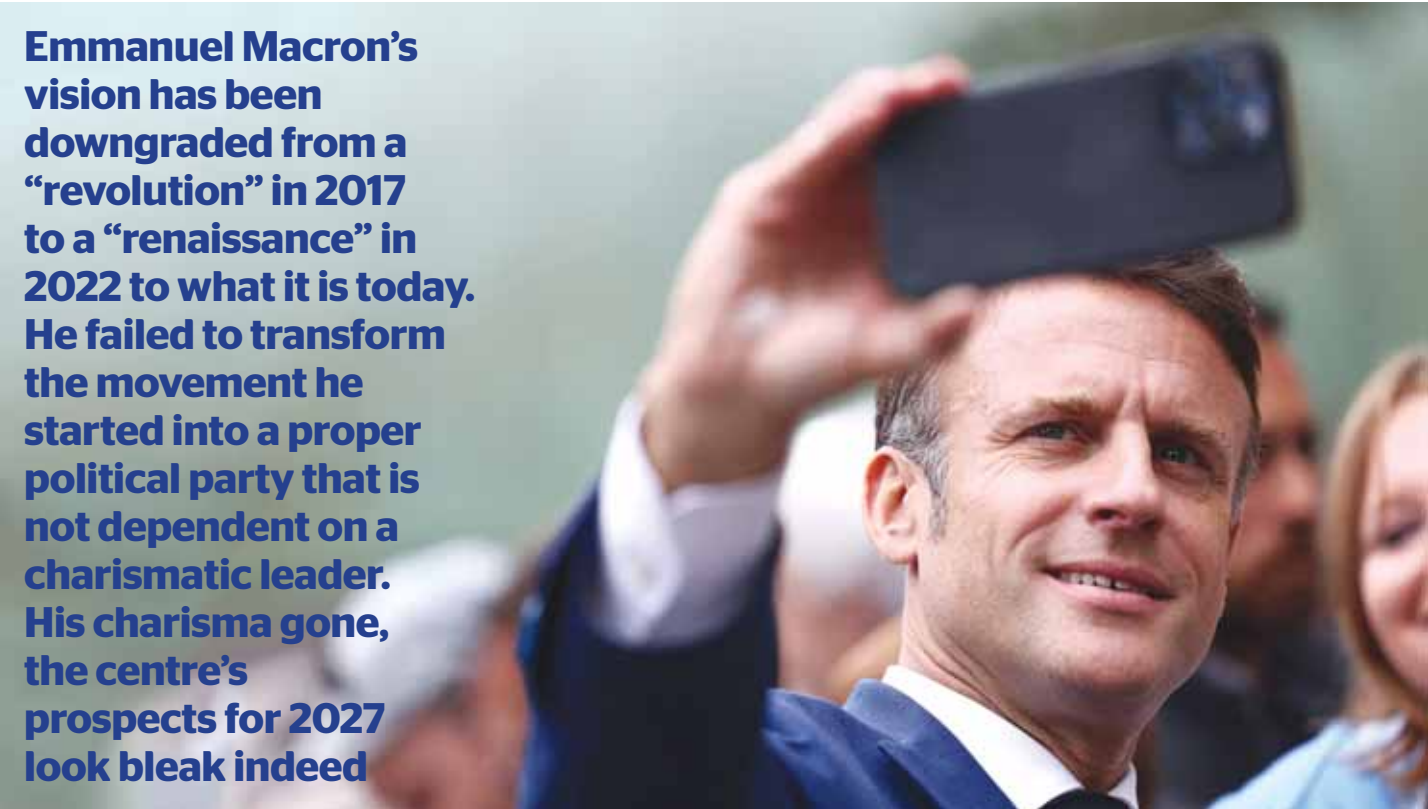
Some commentators speculate that Macron wants the National Rally to govern until the 2027 presidential election, on the grounds that it will prove itself incompetent and set the stage for a triumphant shift back

toward the centre. But this kind of quasi-pedagogical project – with the headmaster showing his pupils that the substitute teacher doesn't know how to do the job – is misguided for several reasons.

For starters, not all far-right populists have overly simplistic policy ideas or are amateur administrators. And even in cases where they do show themselves to be incompetent, their fortunes can recover. When Austria's Machiavellian Christian Democratic chancellor, Wolfgang Schäussel, brought Jörg Haider's far-right Freedom Party into government in 2000, the populists did descend into infighting and revealed their incompetence and corruption. But after splitting up and licking its wounds, the Freedom Party sailed to victory in last month's European elections.

Moreover, since the French system allows for "cohabitation" – when the president and the prime minister belong to opposing parties – a governing party that appears incompetent can simply blame the other side for tying its hands. Wielding the extraordinary powers of the French presidency, Macron will doubtless find an outlet on the international stage. But it is sobering to see that his vision has been downgraded from a "revolution" in 2017 to a "renaissance" in 2022 to what it is today. Macron failed to transform the movement he started into a proper political party that is not dependent on a charismatic leader. His charisma gone, the centre's prospects for 2027 look bleak indeed. — Project Syndicate

• Jan-Werner Mueller, Professor of Politics at Princeton University, is the author, most recently, of Democracy Rules.



OUT OF FRAME: French President Emmanuel Macron takes a selfie with supporters after voting in the first round of parliamentary elections outside a polling station in Le Touquet, northern France, on Sunday. (AFP)

French far-right ‘falling short of majority in run-off’

Reuters
Paris

Marine Le Pen's National Rally (RN) will not win a majority of seats in next Sunday's parliamentary run-off election, according to a poll yesterday, suggesting efforts by French mainstream parties to block the far-right might work.

A Harris Interactive poll for *Challenges* magazine — the first to be published after politicians across party lines formed an anti-RN front — showed the RN would fall short of the 289 seats required to control the 577-seat National Assembly.

The RN and its allies would get just 190 to 220 seats, according to the poll, while the centre-right Republicans (LR) would win 30 to 50 seats. This could rule out the possibility of a far-right minority government supported by part of the LR parliamentary group.

“The result of the withdrawals is a clear step back for RN,” *Challenges* reporter Remi Clement wrote on X.

The poll was published after more than 200 candidates across

the political spectrum withdrew their candidacies to clear the path for whoever was best placed to defeat the RN candidate in their voting district, in a process known as the “republican front.”

Before the withdrawals, pollsters had calculated the first round put the RN on track for 250-300 seats.

Asked if she feared the RN would fall short of the 289 figure required for an absolute majority, Le Pen told TFI TV: “No, I am very confident. French people have a real desire for change.”

After the withdrawals, there were 92 three or four-way battles to come, according to a Reuters tally. Three-way votes favour the RN, while two-way contests are seen as better for the anti-RN alliance, experts say.

The Harris poll showed that the leftist New Popular Front alliance would win 159 to 183 seats, while President Emmanuel Macron's Together alliance would win just 110 to 135 seats.

Various other parties would win 17 to 31 seats.

French Prime Minister Gabriel Attal, a close ally of Macron, said earlier yesterday that he believed



People gather to protest against the French far-right Rassemblement National party, at Place de la Republique, following results in the first round of the early 2024 legislative elections, in Paris. (Reuters)

the cross-party bid to deprive the far-right RN of a majority could succeed. However, he dismissed suggestions that Macron's centrists could look to form a cross-party government in the event of a hung parliament, proposing that moderates in the assembly worked together to pass legislation on a case-by-case basis instead.

“What these withdrawals show

is that we can avoid an absolute majority for the far-right,” Attal told France Inter radio.

“I hope the (Macron-allied) Ensemble camp is as big as possible,” he said. “After that we will seek to secure majorities on a project-by-project basis.”

In a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, Macron rejected the option of a coalition that would include

the far-left France Unbowed (LFI) party of Jean-Luc Melenchon, one participant said. It was unclear if he mentioned other coalition options.

Their comments underline that, even if the RN does not come to power, France could face months of political uncertainty through to the end of Macron's term in 2027, when RN's Le Pen is widely expected to mount a challenge for the presidency itself.

The question remains whether voters will go along with the effort to block the anti-immigrant, eurosceptic RN. Centrist voters may balk at supporting a far-left rival to the RN, while many left-wing supporters are so disillusioned with Macron that they will not stomach backing someone from his alliance.

Le Pen has said she could reach out to other parties if the RN falls short of an absolute majority. Her prime ministerial pick Jordan Bardella has said he would decline to form a government without a sufficiently strong mandate.

The RN came out well ahead in Sunday's first-round vote after Macron's gamble on a snap election backfired, leaving his centrist

camp in a lowly third place behind the RN and a hastily formed left-wing alliance.

Le Pen has worked for years to soften the image of the RN, but rights groups cite concerns about its “national preference” and anti-migrant policies, while its pro-found euroscepticism would pose serious threats to future European integration.

It has signalled plans to reverse Macron's reforms, such as his unpopular move to increase the retirement age, but economists question whether RN spending plans are fully funded.

Financial markets were reassured by the bid to create a so-called “republican front” against Le Pen's party, lowering the risk premium on France's sovereign debt. “The strategy would significantly limit the chances of Le Pen winning an outright majority,” Jefferies chief Europe economist Mohit Kumar said in a note.

The National Rally has attacked the cross-party bid to block it as anti-democratic and an attempt to undermine voters' wishes. Bardella told *Le Figaro* newspaper: “The real ‘republican front’ — that is us.”



Hurricane Beryl approaches Jamaica in a composite satellite image over the Caribbean Sea yesterday. (Reuters)

Hurricane Beryl lashes Jamaica

AFP
Kingston

Powerful Hurricane Beryl churned toward Jamaica yesterday with dangerous winds and sea surge, as residents braced for a storm that killed seven people and caused destruction in the Caribbean.

The hurricane — unusually strong so early in the Atlantic season — was expected to pass near or over Jamaica in the next hours as a life-threatening Category 4 storm on a five-level scale, meteorologists said around midday.

Beryl is the first storm since US National Hurricane Center (NHC) records began to reach the Category 4 level in June and the earliest to reach Category 5 in July.

Across Jamaica, people removed boats from the water and tied them to fences for safety and rushed to buy food, water, gasoline and other essentials.

As of midday yesterday the storm was packing maximum sustained winds 145mph, said the NHC. Tropical storm conditions are spreading through the island, it said.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness has declared an island-wide 6am to 6pm curfew and urged Jamaicans to comply with evacuation orders.

“If you live in a low lying area, an area historically prone to flooding and landslide or if you live on the banks of a river,” he said in a

video posted on social media, “I implore you to evacuate to a shelter, or to safer ground.”

Desmon Brown, manager of the National Stadium in Kingston, said his staff has scrambled to be ready.

“We've taped up our windows, covered our equipment — including computers, printers and that sort of thing. Apart from that, it's mainly concrete so there's not much we can do,” Brown said told the *Jamaica Observer* newspaper.

Hurricane warnings were also issued in the Cayman Islands further west, which Beryl was expected to pass near or over last night or early today, according to the NHC.

Then it is forecast to head in a more weakened state toward Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula.

Beryl has already left a trail of death with at least three people killed in Grenada, where the storm made landfall Monday, as well as one in St Vincent and the Grenadines and three in Venezuela.

Grenada's Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell said the island of Carriacou, which was struck by the eye of the storm, has been all but cut off, with houses, telecommunications and fuel facilities there flattened.

“We've had virtually no communication with Carriacou in the last 12 hours except briefly this morning by satellite phone,” Mitchell told a news conference.

The 13.5-square mile island is home to around 9,000 people.

Pak ex-senator among 5 killed in bomb attack

AFP
Bajaur

A former Pakistan senator running in a by-election was killed yesterday along with four others in a targeted attack on their car near the border with Afghanistan.

“It appears that a remote-controlled bomb targeted the car carrying the former senator,” a district police spokesman told AFP, who asked not to be named because he was not authorised to speak to the media.

“An investigation is currently underway to ascertain the type of explosives used and who was behind it. But miscreants have stepped up their activities in the region lately.”

Former senator Hidayatullah Khan, his two companions and two police guards were killed in Bajaur district, just 45km from the Afghan border, in an area where militancy has been rising since the Taliban took control of Kabul in 2021.

The deadly blast took place ahead of by-elections due on July 11 in which he was running as an independent candidate.

In January, a candidate supporting jailed former prime minister Imran Khan was shot dead in the same district ahead of the general elections, in an attack claimed by the local chapter of the Islamic State group.

Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) — a separate group from the Afghan Taliban but with a similar ideology — and groups linked to it are the most active in the region, largely targeting security officials.

No group has claimed responsibility for yesterday's attack, which the TTP denied involvement in.

Last month, the government announced the launch of a new counterterrorism operation to support armed forces in their fight against militancy.

Our Eurasian security key to global stability, Putin tells friend Xi

Reuters
Astana

Russian President Vladimir Putin and China's Xi Jinping hailed their Eurasian security club yesterday as a force for global stability at a summit of the regional body, which is seen by Moscow and Beijing as a tool to counter Western influence.

Putin and the Chinese president have expanded the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO), a club founded in 2001 with Russia, China and Central Asian nations, to include India, Iran and Pakistan as a counterweight to the West.

“The organisation has firmly established itself as one of the key pillars of a fair, multipolar world order,” Putin said, adding that bilateral ties between Moscow and Beijing were at their best in history.

“Our co-operation is not aimed against anyone, we are not creating any blocs or alliances, we are just acting in the interests of our peoples,” Putin said.

In his opening remarks, Xi told Putin that China and Russia should “uphold the original aspiration of friendship for generations” in response to an “ever-changing international situation.”

Calling Putin an “old friend”, Xi alluded to the progress the two countries had made in putting in place “plans and arrangements for the next development of bilateral relations.”

Putin and Xi have instructed national companies to agree terms of delivery for the Power of Siberia 2 gas pipeline “as soon as possible,” Interfax reported, quoting Russian deputy prime minister Alexander Novak.

“Work will continue on agreeing the terms and parameters. Instructions have been given to do this as soon as possible,” Interfax quoted Novak as saying.

The Kremlin said Putin had held a series of bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the SCO sum-



Russian President Vladimir Putin meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation member states leaders' summit in Astana yesterday. (AFP)

mit, which is taking place in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan, and ends today.

The SCO promotes common approaches to external security threats such as drug trafficking and also focuses on countering any domestic instability.

Ahead of his meeting with Xi, Putin met Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, and the presidents of Azerbaijan and Mongolia, Ilham Aliyev and Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh.

India said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is expected in Moscow later this month, would not attend the Astana gathering, sending Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar instead. China and Russia declared a “no limits” partnership in February 2022 when Putin visited Beijing, days before he sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine. Since then, Xi and Putin have deepened relations.

Xi and Putin believe the US-dominated post-Cold War era is crumbling. The US casts China as its biggest competitor and Russia as its biggest nation-state threat. US President Joe Biden says this century will be defined by an existential contest between democ-

racies and autocracies.

At last year's virtual summit, the group criticised what it called the negative impact of “unilateral and unlimited expansion of global missile defence systems by certain countries or groups of countries”, without directly referring to Nato expansion or Western military assistance to Ukraine.

In a move that highlighted Beijing's pragmatic economy-driven approach, Xi presided over a ceremony yesterday with his Kazakh counterpart just hours before meeting Putin, to mark the departure of a fresh batch of cargo along the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route.

The route, also known as the Middle Corridor, starts in south-east Asia and China, runs through Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, Georgia and further to Europe. It has been heavily promoted by the West as an alternative to Asia-Europe land transit via Russia.

Belarus will attend the Astana summit for the first time as a full member of the SCO, the Kremlin said.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is also expected to attend the Astana gathering.

Defiant Biden to stay in the race, scrambles to reassure Democrats

US President Joe Biden vowed to stay in the 2024 presidential race during a call with campaign staff yesterday and sought to reassure top Democrats on Capitol Hill that he is fit for re-election, despite his disastrous debate performance last week.

Biden dialled in to a call with worried members of his campaign team and told them he wasn't going anywhere, according to two sources familiar with the call.

“I am running,” Biden said, adding he remained the Democratic Party leader and wasn't being pushed out, one source said.

The president was to meet with Democratic governors last night to reassure them he is up to the job of standard-bearer for the party after the shaky debate with Republican Donald Trump. Some governors will attend virtually.

Asked yesterday if Biden was considering stepping down, White House Press

Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said: “Absolutely not.”

Biden spoke to Representative Hakeem Jeffries, the minority leader in the House of Representatives, on Tuesday, and Senator Chuck Schumer, the majority leader in the Senate, yesterday, a White House official said. He also spoke with House Democrat Jim Clyburn yesterday, whose office said afterward they had a long, private conversation.

Clyburn — a kingmaker of sorts within the Democratic Party and who was instrumental in Biden's 2020 win — told CNN yesterday that the party should hold a “mini-primary” if Biden steps aside, the first senior party member to talk publicly about how, exactly, replacing Biden as a candidate would work.

Clyburn, who said on Tuesday that he would back Vice-President Kamala Harris as the presidential candidate if Biden were to depart, added: “If she were to be the nominee, we need to have a running



US President Joe Biden speaks during a briefing from federal officials on extreme weather at the DC Emergency Operations Center in Washington. (Reuters)

mate and a strong running mate. And so all of this would give us an opportunity, not just to measure up who would be good to be at the top of the ticket, but also who would be best in second place.”

Biden's halting, shaky debate performance against Trump in Atlanta last week sparked calls for him to step aside as the Democratic presidential candidate for the November 5 election. Trump repeated a well-worn slate of falsehoods, including that he won the 2020 election.

Democrats raised fresh concerns about Biden on Tuesday, with one House member calling for him to drop out and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a longtime Biden ally, saying it was legitimate to ask whether Biden's performance in Atlanta was an “episode” or a condition.

The president has said he was tired after two foreign trips and the White House has said he had a cold. His campaign has held damage control calls with donors,

and Biden has shown no signs so far abandoning his quest for a second term.

White House chief of staff Jeff Zients held a call with demoralised White House staff yesterday as well, acknowledging that it had been a challenging few days while stressing that the Biden team had a record to be proud of and more work to do.

A handful of governors are potential rivals to Biden if pressure for him to step aside were to increase, but many of them also speak on Biden's behalf on the campaign trail.

Harris is the likely successor if Biden does step aside, multiple sources told Reuters. However Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, California Governor Gavin Newsom, Illinois Governor J B Pritzker, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro and Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear have all been mentioned as possible replacements to Biden if he decided to bow out as the 2024 candidate.

HMC hosts training workshop for Iraqi delegation



Participants at the workshop.

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC)'s Department of Geriatrics and Long-Term Care, a WHO Collaborating Centre for Healthy Ageing and Dementia in Qatar hosted a 3-day training workshop for Icope (Integrated Care for Older People).

In attendance were 21 specialist multi-disciplinary delegates from Iraq as well as clinicians from Qatar to undergo capacity building and foster learning exchange. The main aim was to highlight Qatar's current Icope implementation strategy and be support system to implement a similar model in Iraq.

Dr Abdulla al-Ansari, chief medical officer, HMC, said: "Choosing Qatar

as the first pilot site in the Middle East region is a great honour, and I appreciate the education and knowledge investment that Dr Hanadi al-Hamad, national lead of Icope with her team have made in sharing their expertise and helping to train our primary care teams involved in this amazing project. This is a real demonstration of what collaboration can achieve based on a joint commitment to deliver the best evidence-based care to our older population and now in extension in Iraq."

Dr al-Hamad explained: "Icope care model reflects a unique community-based approach that will help to reorient health and social services towards a more

person-centred and co-ordinated model of care that supports optimising functional ability for older people."

Dr al-Hamad continued: "The Icope healthcare approach helps broader health and social care systems respond more effectively to the diverse and complex needs of older people. The WHO Icope guidelines provide recommendations for healthcare workers on how to best assess older people's health and effectively address their needs, ideally in community-based healthcare settings that are easy to access. The aim is to promote healthy ageing practices and prevent, slow, or reverse declines in the physical and mental capacities of older

people." She added that working in close collaboration with the primary care services the Department of Geriatrics at HMC with the WHO centre has taken lead in setting up the first Icope clinic in the entire Middle East region.

Icope is a public health integrated care programme for people above 60, which aims to support the independence of older people living in society. Icope proposes evidence-based recommendations for health care professionals to prevent, slow, or reverse declines in the physical and mental capacities of older people.

The workshop gave teams a platform to engaged in extensive discussions on how to adapt and implement the Icope

programme most effectively for elderly population in Iraq.

Working in close collaboration with Primary Health Care Corporation, two Icope clinics have been set up at Al Wajba Health Centre and Rawdat Al Khail Health Centre. The clinics have a reception desk, assessment and treatment rooms that focus on diagnosing and managing the numerous physiological changes that often occur with increasing age.

The Iraqi delegation visited Qatar Rehabilitation Institute where they were able to see the advancements in technology at areas such as the Gait Lab, Easy Street and in-patient paediatric ward.

Qatar Fine Arts Society opens permanent exhibition in Katara

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Qatar Fine Arts Society opened yesterday a permanent exhibition titled "Qatari Fine Art", at its headquarters in Katara - the Cultural Village, in Building 19, Hall 2.

The exhibits range between trends, visions, artistic contents, different schools, works and experiments. The artists have dabbled in realism, abstraction, impressionism, and surre-

alism. Where each artist participates with his experience and distinct artistic style, using his visual language and different technical materials, whether oil, acrylic, or from the arts of printing, graphics, ceramics, and woollen thread.

The exhibition will bring together a group of Qatari visual artists to reflect their creative visions and different artistic schools of abstraction, realism and impressionism. As well as expressionism and surrealism, which will constitute a valuable opportunity

to highlight the creative capabilities of Qatari artists through their new works that reflect new horizons of innovation and creativity through the use of colour, technology and ideas.

The exhibition comes within the framework of the association's keenness to continue presenting various exhibitions with the aim of supplying the Qatari art scene with distinguished artistic works, focusing on the most important experiences and displaying artistic works belonging to different generations.



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24.QR.00

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Al Badia Full Cream Milk 1Ltr x 4pcs

20.QR.00

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Kohinoor Everyday Basmati Rice 4.5kg

9.QR.00

الغزال زيت دوار الشمس ١.٥ لتر - ١ حبة

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10.QR.00

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