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**SUNDAY** Vol. XXXXV No. 13085  
July 28, 2024  
Muharram 22, 1446 AH  
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**Gaza truce talks**  
CIA Director William Burns was expected to meet today in Rome with his Israeli and Egyptian counterparts and Qatar's prime minister for talks on a Gaza ceasefire and the release of hostages. Israeli public broadcaster Kan said Israel's response to the latest proposal was handed to Washington yesterday ahead of the expected meeting - the latest effort to reach agreement after months in which Israel and Hamas have blamed each other for the stalemate.

## 36 civilians sheltering in Gaza school massacred

**QNA/Reuters**  
Cairo/Gaza

The death toll has risen to 36 after Israeli occupation forces (IOF) bombed a school housing displaced people in Deir Al-Balah, central Gaza Strip, yesterday.

The victims of the bombing of Khadija School, which shelters thousands of displaced persons include children and women. Over 100 people were injured, with many in critical condition.

At Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir Al-Balah, ambulances rushed the wounded in for treatment.

The occupation forces continued their bombardment across the Gaza Strip. Four Palestinians were killed and others injured in an airstrike on a group of people on Baraka Street, south of Deir Al-Balah.

In Nuseirat, central Gaza, an Israeli drone targeted a car north of

### Rocket kills 11 at football ground; all-out war feared

A rocket attack on a football ground in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights killed 11 people including children yesterday, Israeli authorities said, blaming Hezbollah and vowing to respond against the Iran-backed Lebanese group.

Hezbollah denied any responsibility for the strike, the deadliest in Israel or Israeli-annexed territory since the start of the conflict in Gaza.

"The Hezbollah attack today crossed all red lines, and the response will be accordingly. We

the camp, killing two Palestinians and wounding several others.

In Rafah, south of the Strip, an airstrike on a house near the Musbah area killed two and injured several others.

The occupation forces also demolished a residential block in

are approaching the moment of an all-out war against Hezbollah and Lebanon," Foreign Minister Israel Katz told Axios.

The Israeli ambulance service said 13 more people were wounded by a rocket fired from Lebanon that hit a football pitch in the Druze village of Majdal Shams.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, already due to head back from the US to Israel said he would bring his flight forward and convene his security cabinet upon arrival.

northern Rafah and carried out an airstrike in the Mirage area.

Health authorities in Gaza announced that the total number of casualties from the Israeli aggression since October 7 has reached 39,258 dead and 90,589 injured.

### Mixed reviews for Paris Olympics opening ceremony

French bishops complained yesterday about alleged "mockery of Christianity" during the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympics which has upset conservatives and drawn mixed reviews. Conservatives and far-right politicians in France were also left aghast by what they saw as a "woke" spectacle. The rendition also caused uproar among

Italy's far-right. The four-hour ceremony saw athletes sail down a six-kilometre stretch of the river Seine on 85 boats. A spokesman for France's far-right National Rally party, Julien Odoul called the ceremony "a ransacking of French culture", while conservative US entrepreneur Elon Musk slammed it as "extremely disrespectful to Christians." **Sport page 1**

## Amir, UK PM discuss ways to enhance ties



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday with Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Keir Starmer, at His Highness's residence in the capital Paris. The meeting dealt with discussing bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to enhance and develop them, in addition to discussing a number of regional and international issues of joint interest. The meeting was attended by HE the President of the Qatar Olympic Committee Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, and a number of senior officials. On the UK side, it was attended by Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs Toby Parker and a number of senior officials. **(QNA) Page 2**

### Amir wishes Qatari Mission best results

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani expressed his pleasure to attend the opening ceremony of the 33rd Summer Olympics Paris 2024, wishing the Qatari Mission the best results. In a post on his official X account, His Highness the Amir said that he was happy to attend the opening ceremony of the 33rd Summer Olympics Paris 2024, which presented the city of Paris and the friendly French Republic. His Highness added that he wished the Qatari Mission well and success to all the participating athletes. **(QNA)**

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# Milipol 2024 to discuss AI use in homeland security

By Shafeeq Alingal  
Staff Reporter

Artificial intelligence (AI) will be in focus at Milipol 2024 where safety and security trends, innovations and challenges will come in for discussion.

According to the Milipol 2024 website, 'Artificial Intelligence serving Homeland Security: Mix of Challenges and Opportunities'; is one of the key topics of the seminars at the event. The topic will cover subjects including 'Use of drones, UAV, UAS'; 'Toward a trusted AI: governance' and 'Metaverse / VR'.

In addition to this, the seminars will discuss challenges to safeguard high-rise structures, measures to revolutionise fire prevention and road safety and security. Also, security convergence, integrating physical and cyber security in the protection of critical infrastructures will be discussed while the sessions will shed light



on integrated technologies for smart and safe cities and forensics science for investigation.

The 15th edition of Milipol Qatar 2024 will be held from October 29-31 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC). Themed "The Technology in the Service of Security", the latest edition promises to be a pivotal gathering for industry leaders, policymakers and experts from around the globe.

Organised by the ministry of Interior in collaboration with Comexposium Security, representing the GIE Milipol under Civipol, the co-operation implementer of the French Ministry of the Interior and Overseas, the event plays

a crucial role in addressing Qatar's growing security needs and supports the security goals outlined in Qatar National Vision 2030.

This year's event will feature exhibitors from across the world showcasing cutting-edge innovations in security, safety, detection and prevention equipment and systems. Attendees will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of products and services designed to address contemporary security challenges. From advanced surveillance systems to state-of-the-art detection technologies, the show will present the latest solutions to ensure public safety and protect critical infrastructure.

## QNL to discuss ways to improve AI strategies

By Tawfik Lamari  
Staff Reporter

The Qatar National Library (QNL) seeks to explore solutions to overcome common challenges and improve artificial intelligence (AI) strategies, and ensure ethical considerations, through a session it will hold tomorrow.

Expert speakers will share insights on overcoming common challenges, optimising AI strategies, and ensuring ethical considerations. They will also impart practical knowledge on integrating AI into an organisation to boost efficiency and drive growth.

The library looks forward to keeping pace with developments in the rapidly evolving AI scene, as well as learning about its impact in bringing about a major trans-



formation in various sectors and industries, and the latest trends in the use of AI technologies.

The session will also deal with success stories and innovative applications in employing it in many sectors, such as healthcare, finance, manufacturing and retail. This session will be added to a series of sessions dedicated by QNL to AI, discussing topics such as AI ethics and its impact on libraries,

its effects on the Arab world.

The event is being held in collaboration with GlobalData. It will be conducted in English online via Microsoft Teams, from 11am-12pm. The target audience: the general public, researchers, and public officials. Attendance requires prior registration via <https://events.qnl.qa/event/1NqYD/EN> due to the limited number of seats.

## Amir meets British prime minister



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday with Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Keir Starmer, at His Highness's residence in the capital Paris. The meeting dealt with discussing bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to enhance and develop them, in addition to discussing a number of regional and international issues of joint interest. The meeting was attended by HE the President of the Qatar Olympic Committee Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, and a number of senior officials. On the UK side, it was attended by Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs Toby Parker and a number of senior officials. (QNA)

# National Museum of Qatar achieves Carbon Neutrality Certification

Qatar Museums announced that the National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ) has achieved Carbon Neutrality Certification for the reporting period of April 2022-March 2023. The milestone reflects the museum's proactive approach to sustainable operations, setting an example for cultural institutions worldwide.

Commenting on the occasion, Director of NMoQ Sheikh Abdulaziz al-Thani said: "The National Museum of Qatar's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint has resulted in this remarkable accomplishment. This certification is testimony to the museum's perseverance towards operating in an environmentally conscious manner."

Founding Chairman of Gord Dr Yousef Alhorr said that "by embracing sustainability, museums become guardians of both time and our planet, safeguarding artistic treasures and cultural heritage, all while minimising their environmental footprint. NMoQ's attainment of carbon neutrality not only sets a powerful example for the global art sector, but also serves as an inspiration for organisations across various sectors within Qatar, urging them to prioritise environmental responsibility. Ultimately, NMoQ's success reaffirms Qatar Museums' role in pursuing Qatar National Vision 2030, paving the way for a low-carbon future."



To attain carbon neutrality, NMoQ initiated strategic measures which include transitioning to renewable energy sources, implementing energy-efficient technologies, supporting waste reduction and recycling, promoting sustainable transportation, engaging employees in eco-friendly practices, optimising water usage, and conducting a comprehensive carbon footprint assessment. These comprehensive efforts showcase the museum's unwavering dedication to environmental stewardship and sustainability, solidifying its role as a global leader in responsible cultural institution management. (QNA)



# Qatar calls for implementing rights-based national strategies

QNA  
Salalah, Oman

The two-day regional forum on human rights in Salalah, Oman, has underlined the importance of reinforcing co-operation among national human rights institutions (NHRIs), in addition to sharing expertise in planning and following up on the implementation of national visions, in collaboration with the UN, and other international organisations.

In its closing session the forum came out with an array of recommendations, including expanding the circle of consultations to encompass civil society organisations, particularly the primary segments that have the priority for care and engagement in all stages of national visions' relevant planning and implementation.

The event recommended the importance of unifying efforts in capacity-building area, collecting and analysing data related to human rights and sustainable development to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of implementing human rights-based national strategies, in collaboration with stakeholders.

HE the Chairperson of Qatar's National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah, underlined that the participation in the third edition of the regional forum came to highlight the superb national, regional and global co-operation with Oman Human Rights Commission, alongside the remaining partners in protecting human rights.

HE al-Attiyah emphasised the importance of reviewing the NHRIs' role in planning and following up on implementing national visions in human rights



HE the Chairperson of NHRC, Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah, speaking at the closing session of the forum in Salalah, Oman.

fields, specially that numerous countries have crafted national plans for human rights and national visions for development.

She added that such plans are not only dedicated to upholding international obligations, as the case with the recommendations of Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action 1993, or responding to the sustainable development goals 2030 (SDGs), but rather to innovating consistent responses to challenges and concerns facing national and global human rights, in addition to devising free, innovative, effective, and sustainable solutions, in which everyone engages without exception, including the most marginalised, vulnerable, and affected groups, so that stakeholders, can monitor the progress made, and enable rights holders to

claim their rights, with duty bearers fulfilling their obligations.

HE al-Attiyah added that throughout the past three decades, a global direction has been emerged on human rights-based planning, along with a number of human rights sectoral plans, such as labour and health.

She highlighted that every single person who reviews both the recommendations of comprehensive periodical review and the regional and international human rights commissions, will see that there is no document, whatsoever, which is devoid of a recommendation related to human rights-based planning with its total and partial levels, particularly in the national visions for development.

She pointed out that the world has went far beyond the traditional notion of development which is based on pure benevolence and economic dimensions, to the concept of human rights which deems development as an expansion of human's options, freedom and rights, in addition to extricating humans from the scourges of ignorance, disease and poverty.

The forum brought together over 170 delegates representing more than 50 institutions, UN organisations, alongside international and regional organisations, relevant entities, national human rights institutions, government agencies, and civil society organisations.



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## Notice of Intention to Strike off Qatar Financial Centre (“QFC”) Firms from the QFC Register

The QFC Companies Registration Office (“CRO”) hereby gives notice that, it has issued Notices under Article 131(1) of the QFC’s Companies Regulations to each of the firms listed below ( the “Firms”), of its intention to strike off the Firms from the QFC’s Register.

This action will be taken against each firm, unless the CRO receives sufficient reasons as to why the firm should not be struck off the Register under the above-referenced regulation on or before the Date of Expiry of the respective Notices stated below. Reasons must be submitted in writing to the CRO at [csrs@qfc.qa](mailto:csrs@qfc.qa) by the stated deadlines.

Name and QFC Number of the Firm	Registered Office Address/ Address of Principal Place of Business	Date of issuance of the Notice	Date of Expiry of The Notice
LETVEN VENTURES CONSULTING SERVICES LLC QFC No. 00802	22nd Floor, Office No. 2225, Tornado Tower, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 26, 2024	September 26, 2024
SYSCONTEK CONSULTING LLC QFC No. 00447	41st Floor South Tower, Unit 412, Marriott Marquis City Centre, Street 850, Zone 61, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
Kaizen Firm LLC QFC No. 00637	2nd Floor, Office 207 ResCowork06, REGUS D Ring Road, Al MataarAl Qadeem District, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
Speedinvest LLC QFC No. 00801	7th floor, Workinton, Desk 2, Al Gassar Tower No. 27, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
ELU LLC QFC No. 00792	9th Floor, Office No. 930, Al Fardan Offices Towers, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
3 Dimensions Consultancy LLC QFC No. 00835	10th Floor, Office 1017, Al Shoumoukh Towers, Tower B, Regus Business Center, C-Ring Road Al Saad, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
TRUXTUN LLC QFC No. 00798	C/o Sport Accelerator, 2nd Floor, S06, Aspire Logistic Building, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
The Hub Ville LLC QFC No. 942	Office Desk 11, 7th Floor, Office Desk 11, Workinton, Al Qassar Tower, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
Alegnor Systems LLC QFC No. 01016	14th Floor, Office No. 1416, Alfardan Offices Towers No. 12, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
Four Goals HR Consultancy LLC QFC No. 00632	Level 21, Office No. 20, Desk 02, Doha Tower, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
N.A.S.S Events and Management LLC QFC No. 01092	3rd Floor, Office No. WS 92, Hub Business Center, Royal Plaza, No. 26, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
Oscar Hub LLC QFC No. 01230	9th Floor, Office No. 1, Fintech Circle, QFC Tower 1, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
GB Impex LLC QFC No. 00755	1st Floor, Suite 120, Gridco Building, C Ring Road, Steet 230, Zone 24, Rawadat Al Khail, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
ABI RESOURCES DOHA LLC QFC No. 00843	7th Floor, Office No. 5, Al Fardan Offices Towers, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
UDVI LLC QFC No. 00869	3rd Floor, Office No. 305, Retaj Business Centre, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
Mygoldtechs LLC QFC No. 00893	15th Floor, Office no. 1526 DD3, ServCorp, Commercial Bank Plaza, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
AVDA Ventures LLC QFC No. 00887	22nd Floor, 2204 DD02, Tornado Tower, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
Auriga Ventures LLC QFC No. 00886	22nd Floor, Office No. 2204 DD2, Tornado Tower, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
SOUK OF SAMIN LLC QFC No. 00814	Office no. 1013, 10th floor, Al Shoumoukh Towers, Tower B, C-Ring Road, Al Sadd, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
AG Business Management Services LLC QFC No. 00666	13th Floor, Office A, Al Mana Business Tower, Building No. 40, Zone 23, Street -231, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
Pipereye LLC QFC No. 00925	1st Floor, Office No 4, Aspire Logistic Building, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
ADADK LLC QFC No. 00996	1st Floor, Office No. 8, Business Center, QFC Tower 1, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
Belucha Investment LLC QFC No. 00921	1st Floor, Office No. 12, QFC Tower 1, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
Venture Art Consulting LLC QFC No. 00925	1st Floor, Office No. 8, Al Emadi Square Building, C Ring Road, Doha, Qatar	June 10, 2024	September 10, 2024
Energy World LLC QFC No. 00922	1st Floor Office No. 2, QFC Tower 1, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 11, 2024	September 11, 2024
AT Consultancy LLC QFC No. 00566	22nd floor, Office 2204 DD5, Tornado Tower, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
ALWACHSEND TRAINING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES PVT LTD QFC No. 00659	The Gate Building Tower 3, Maysaloun St, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
Time International LLC QFC No. 00532	c/o Al Tamimi & Company International Ltd., 19th Floor, Tornado Tower, Majlis Al Taawon Street, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
Cyber Defense LLC QFC No. 00584	1st Floor, Office 141-01, Al-Jaidah Square Building, Airport Road, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
ALP International LLC QFC No. 00548	C/o Al Tamimi & Company International Ltd., 19th Floor, Tornado Tower, Majlis Al Taawon Street, West Bay, Doha, Qatar	June 9, 2024	September 9, 2024
BPA Worldwide LLC(G) QFC No. 00566	C/o TMF Group, 9th Floor, Al Fardan Towers, Doha, Qatara	May 27, 2024	August 27, 2024

## Hamad Trauma Centre offers drowning prevention advice

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) marked the fourth World Drowning Prevention Day on July 25.

Hamad Injury Prevention Programme (HIPP) and Hamad Trauma Centre are joining forces to raise awareness about the devastating consequences of drowning and to promote water safety measures.

This initiative serves as a reminder of the urgent need for collective action to prevent drowning incidents and save lives. Tsoler Sekayan, programme co-ordinator of the HIPP, the community outreach arm of HMC's Hamad Trauma Centre, said: "Water safety is important for all ages, but especially for infants and toddlers. Drowning is a leading cause of injury and death worldwide in children aged between one and four years old. Young children can drown in as little as an inch or two of water, and it can happen quickly and silently"

Drowning is a silent epidemic that affects communities across the globe, particularly vulnerable groups such as children. Worldwide, an estimated 236,000 people die from drowning every year. It is considered the third leading cause of unintentional injury and death globally and children, males and individuals with increased access to water are most at risk for drowning.

At home, younger children are more likely to drown in the bathtub or backyard pool. Parents must realise the dangers of leaving young children and babies alone,

even for a brief period of time around water. HMC has advised parents to stay within arm's reach of your children whether they are in a bathtub or pool. Young children can drown in as little as one inch of water and in complete silence, so it's very important to keep them within an arm's reach of an adult.

Tubs, buckets, containers and kids' pools must be emptied immediately after use and store them upside down and out of children's reach. Toilet lids and doors to bathrooms and laundry rooms must be closed when not in use.

HMC has also advised to install fences around home or compound pools. A pool fence should surround all sides of the pool and be at least four feet tall with self-closing and self-latching gates.

When at the beach or pool, a responsible adult should watch all members of the group. This 'watcher' responsibility must be shared in shifts among adults, and it is proven to greatly reduce drowning in children. Older children, especially teens, should have a companion when swimming and never swim alone so they can help or call for help when one is at risk.

Children should be taught about water safety rules, including the importance of not running near pools or other water bodies, not diving into shallow water, and not pushing others into the water. It is also important to know how to respond in an emergency with CPR and basic water rescue skills.

## HMC's Aisha Bint Hamad Al Attiyah Hospital launches male physiotherapy outpatient services

Recognising the growing need for dedicated, state-of-the-art physiotherapy services in the northern region of Qatar, Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC)'s Aisha Bint Hamad Al Attiyah Hospital has announced the opening of a new Physiotherapy Outpatient Department for male patients from today.

This marks the first phase of the expansion process to cater to the increasing demand for specialised physiotherapy services in the region. Based on statistical reports, there is a growing demand for physiotherapy services, with an estimated 60% of patients being male.

"This expansion will promote better accessibility to care, reduce waiting times, improve the quality of care and enhance patient satisfaction," stated Refaa al-Enazi, director of Rehabilitation Services who spearhead the project.

"We are delighted to introduce our comprehensive physiotherapy services, to provide the best care, enhance physical performance and ensure fastest recovery possible for our patients. Our state-of-the-art facility is equipped with the latest innovative rehabilitative technology and staffed by a team of highly qualified and experienced physiotherapists."



"We are excited to announce the opening of our physiotherapy outpatient service, marking a significant step forward in our commitment to providing accessible and high-quality healthcare to the community. This expansion will allow us to better meet the needs of our patients by offering convenient and comprehensive care to improving health outcomes," said Dr Ibrahim Mohd Fawzy M A Hassan, medical director of Aisha Bint Hamad Al Attiya Hospital.

"This opening is a crucial step for improving rehabilitation services in the northern region of Qatar. We are thrilled to introduce our male physiotherapy service which represents a significant advancement in our commitment to patient care. Our goal is to offer tailored, high-quality care that helps our patients achieve optimal recovery. Additionally, we are planning

further expansions to include more comprehensive rehabilitation services in the future," emphasised Dr Hanadi Alhamad, deputy chief for Long Term Care, Rehabilitation, Home Care Services & Geriatric Care and Lead of Corporate Rehabilitation Therapy Services at Hamad Medical Corporation.

"Our dedicated team is committed to offering customised treatment plans that address a wide range of conditions to male patients aged 15 and above including orthopaedic pre- and post-surgical care, musculoskeletal disorders and chronic pain management," Dr Hanadi added.

The new male outpatient physiotherapy department at Aisha Bint Hamad Al Attiyah Hospital will replace the current service for male patients at Al Khor Hospital and all existing patients will be contacted with further information for transferring.

## Ooredoo Money partners with DT One for SSS payment feature for Filipino community in Qatar

Ooredoo Money has announced the addition of a new digitally inclusive feature to its app, catering specifically to the needs of its Filipino customers.

Developed in collaboration with its strategic technology partner, DT One, the app now enables users to directly pay their contributions to the Philippines Social Security System (SSS).

DT One is a leading B2B provider of non-cash micropayments and prepaid digital value services. The products offered through their platform include mobile top-ups, data bundles, bill payments, gift cards, and more.

With the new feature in the Ooredoo Money app, Filipino customers in Qatar can now effortlessly manage their SSS contributions directly from their phones at their convenience, without the need for conventional banking. This development is part of Ooredoo Money and DT One's ongoing commitment to providing innovative and user-friendly digital solutions that meet the evolving needs of diverse customer segments.

"Ooredoo Money is continuously looking for ways to enhance its services and offer easy-to-use solutions to our diverse customer base. The introduction of SSS payments on the Ooredoo Money app, developed in partnership with DT One, is a testament to our commitment to the Filipino community in Qatar. This new feature simplifies the process of social security payments, making it more accessible and convenient for our valued Filipino customers to manage their finances and upgrade their worlds," said Mirko Giacco, CEO of Ooredoo Fintech.

Claudio Di Zanni, CEO of DT One, said: "We are delighted to have partnered with Ooredoo Money to deliver this innovative solution that should provide the Filipino community in Qatar with a seamless experience paying for their social insurance services back home. We look forward to expanding our collaboration to introduce more seamless services for Ooredoo's customers."

**"Ooredoo Money is continuously looking for ways to enhance its services and offer easy-to-use solutions to our diverse customer base. The introduction of SSS payments on the Ooredoo Money app, developed in partnership with DT One, is a testament to our commitment to the Filipino community in Qatar"**

The Ooredoo Money app is a comprehensive digital wallet offering a wide array of financial services, including international money transfers to more than 200 countries, the management of both pre-paid and post-paid Ooredoo services, the recharging of Karwa Smart Cards and much more. The app boasts quick transaction times and competitive exchange rates, making it a preferred choice for customers looking to manage their financial

transactions efficiently.

Filipino customers can download the Ooredoo Money app to start using this new feature immediately and begin enjoying the convenience of managing

their SSS payments alongside many other financial transactions. Ooredoo continues to pioneer in delivering digitally inclusive solutions that resonate with the needs of all its custom-



ers, reaffirming its position as Qatar's favourite digital wallet and a leader in the telecommunications sector.



### مناقصة / Tender

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From: Sunday, July 28, 2024, To: Thu, Aug 15, 2024  
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From: MARAFEQ Qatar LLC, C&P Department,  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Katara Hospitality (Al-Baraha) Tower,  
Marina District, Lusail City, Qatar

**Document Collection Process:**

Tender documents may only be collected from the Tender Document Collection Location during the dates and times designated herein. The bidder's nominee must present the following documents at the time of collection:

- copy of a recent date extract of the Bidder's CR
- the original of a delegation letter by the company addressed to Marafeq Qatar LLC, authorizing the nominee to collect the Tender Document; and
- the original proof of payment of the Tender Fees.

**Tender Fees Payment Guidelines:**

Prescribed Tender Fees must be paid into the below Bank Account only. Kindly mention the **Tender No.** (above)

Title: MARAFEQ Qatar LLC  
Bank: Masraf Al-Rayyan (Grand Hamad Branch)  
Account: 0003-127914-001  
IBAN: QA68 MAFR 0000 0000 0003 127914 001  
SWIFT: MAFR QA QA

**Means of Communication:**

Mailto: [procurement@marafeq.com.qa](mailto:procurement@marafeq.com.qa)  
Phone: +974-4012-0358

البريد الإلكتروني: [procurement@marafeq.com.qa](mailto:procurement@marafeq.com.qa)  
الهاتف: +974-4012-0358

تحتفظ شركة مرافق قطر ذ.م.م بكامل حقها في تعديل شروط المناقصة في أي وقت بدون إبداء أسباب وإلغاء المناقصة بدون أسباب وبدون أدنى مسؤولية عليها في هذا الصدد إذا كان نوعها أو مصدرها


MARAFEQ Qatar LLC reserves its right to modify the terms and conditions of the tender advertisement and/or tender documents at any time, or cancelling the tender entirely, without justification or any liability on its part.

# WAREHOUSE FOR RENT

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

**6672 2989**






### AL KHALIJ CEMENT COMPANY INVITATION TO SUBMIT A BID

SER. NO.	TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	DOCUMENT'S FEES	Tender CLOSING DATE	TENDER BOND (Verified cheque / International Bank Guarantee)
1	AKCC/PROC/T05/2024	SUPPLY OF PAPER BAGS FOR CEMENT PACKAGING 50 KG (2Ply X 80 GSM) Dimension: 61x49.5x10.5cms 2ply 80gr high porosity, brown paper	12,000,000 Pcs	100 USD or 365 QAR	30/09/2024	10% of the Bid Value

**General conditions:**

- Tender Documents can be collected from Qatari Investors Group head office at below address:  
Qatari Investors Group  
Lusail, 1st Floor, Zone No: 69 / Street No: 223, P O Box 22504, Doha, Qatar  
TEL. 974 44747000, FAX 974 44860976
- Documents fees should be paid by cash (or) Wire Transfer during collection of documents and not refundable
- Offers should be valid for 120 days from the date of tender closing.
- Tender closing date is 30th September 2024, any offers after this date and time will be automatically rejected.
- Offers should be sent in sealed envelopes along with the company CR and ID copy.



### QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation

No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	SUP/C/SUP/6742/24 FOR MATERIAL MASTER HARMONIZATION PROJECT	28/07/2024 to 08/08/2024	0	0	19/08/2024

**Scope of Work:**  
QatarEnergy LNG operates North, South, and Barzan facilities, along with offshore operations. Company aims to unify the Material Master by merging the duplicate material masters between the North, South and Barzan Facilities.

Tentative start date is: 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2024

Duration of Project: The duration of the CONTRACT shall be for a period of One (1) year from the EFFECTIVE DATE of the CONTRACT and the Project timeline will be completed within 3 months from the date of ITP issuance.

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

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

# Qatari lawyers stress key role of cheque payment

Bank cheques are meant to be used as a means of payment rather than a guarantee for payment in future, which give it a legal power to be used in commercial and civilian transactions, a number of Qatari lawyers have pointed out.

Speaking to local Arabic daily *Arrayah*, they pointed out that it has been common practice these days to use cheques as a means of

guarantee such as the cheques issued by the tenant to the landlord to pay the rent in future or the cheques used to pay instalments. However, the real legal power of cheque is for the immediate payment. Accordingly, a bounced cheque is considered a criminal act punishable by a jail term that ranges from three months to three years and a fine or any of these.

Lawyer Sheikh Ahmed bin

Mohamed al-Thani stressed the abuse of cheques can lead to serious legal consequences. He said originally a bank cheque is considered a means of payment not a means of credit or guarantee, which means it is used to pay the set sums of money instantly. He noted that using cheques as a means of guarantee rather than payment without proving this such as noting this on the cheque

itself or another accompanying document stating the situation, can make the issuer of the cheque subject to criminal liabilities. He pointed out that the court would not have to look into the reasons for issuing a cheque but will only found its ruling on the legality of the cheque itself.

Lawyer Abdullah al-Mutawa said that the legislators considered the cheque as a means of carrying

out commercial transaction as a substitute for cash with full legal powers and protection. However, real life practices and the cases seen by the courts revealed that some people used it as a means of guarantee or credit.

He also stressed that once the cheque is issued by a person it is due to be cashed regardless of the purpose and a bounced cheque is considered a crime punishable

by law regardless of the intension of the issuer. Lawyer Hawwas al-Shemari advised people to avoid using cheques for any purpose other than immediate payment. In case, a cheque is issued by a person as a guarantee or means of credit, an accompanying document has to state this clearly or the cheque itself should carry a note on this. In this way the issuer can avoid serious legal consequences.

# EU top diplomat seeks ‘political solution’ after Gaza school strike

AFP  
Brussels

EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell yesterday called for a “political solution” to

end the “madness” in Gaza after the Hamas-run territory’s health ministry said an Israeli strike on a school had killed 30 people.

“Ceasefire has to happen now. International Humanitarian Law has to be respected. Humanitar-

ian assistance to civilians needs to be delivered at scale. Only a political solution will end this madness,” Borrell said in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

In another post, he said “yet another attack on a school used as a shelter for internal displaced people in Khan Younis... At the same time an already very fragile population is asked to relocate again and again, with no end in sight”.

The latest strike, which Israel said targeted “fighters”, was at least the eighth time since July 6 a school has been hit, leaving a total of more than 100 people dead, based on figures given by the health ministry and a hospital source.

With most of the Gaza Strip’s 2.4mn people displaced at least once during the war started by Hamas’s storming of Israel in the first week of October last year, many have sought refuge in school buildings including the one hit yesterday.



Palestinians inspect the damage following an Israeli strike on the Khadija school housing displaced people in Deir Al-Balah, in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday.



Palestinians inspect a school sheltering displaced people following an Israeli strike, amid the conflict, in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday.

## VIEWPOINT Lebanon condemns ‘violence against civilians’ after deadly Golan strike

The Lebanese government condemned yesterday “all acts of violence and aggression against civilians”, after Israeli authorities reported 10 killed in the annexed Golan Heights by rocket fire they blamed on Hezbollah, AFP reported from Beirut. “Targeting civilians is a flagrant violation of international law and goes against the principles of humanity,” a government statement said, calling “for an immediate cessation of hostilities”.

**HEZBOLLAH DENIES**

Meanwhile, Lebanese group Hezbollah denied that it fired a rocket which killed people in the town of Majdal Shams in the annexed Golan Heights. In a statement, the group said it “categorically denies the allegations reported by certain enemy media and various media”.

## At least 22 killed in RSF attack on Sudan’s Al-Fashir: activist group

Reuters  
Cairo

A pro-democracy group said Sudan’s Rapid Support Forces (RSF) killed at least 22 people in an attack on the city of Al-Fashir in the western Darfur region yesterday though the paramilitary force denied launching an assault.

The Al-Fashir Resistance Committees said on Facebook that the RSF had fired artillery shells on markets, hospitals and apartments in a surge of violence after weeks of stalemate on that front in the country’s civil war.

The activist group also said the RSF used a drone to target a hospital.

It later said a total of 97 people were killed or injured in the assault.

The RSF dismissed the report and said it did not clash with the army or allied groups in Al-Fashir.

The city is the national army’s last remaining position in the Darfur region, and a key front in its war with the RSF that has turned Sudan into the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

More than 300,000 people have fled their homes in Al-Fashir as a result of fighting that began in April, the UN has said.

## ICBF hosts free medical camp for workers to mark 40th anniversary celebrations




The Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF) recently organised its 48th Specialised Free Medical Camp for Workers.

In association with Naseem Healthcare, the camp was held at Naseem Healthcare, C-Ring Road branch. The camp, according to a statement from ICBF, aimed to positively impact the health and wellbeing of working-class brothers and sisters. The Medical camp was conducted as part of the 40th anniversary celebrations of ICBF formation.

Indian embassy deputy chief of mission, Sandeep Kumar inaugurated the camp and hailed ICBF and Naseem Healthcare for joining hands for a noble cause. He praised ICBF for frequently conducting programmes which benefit needy people in the community. He also took a round of the camp facilities and interacted with participating doctors, patients and volunteers.

The camp provided specialised consultations in various fields including cardiology, urology, dermatology, ENT, general medicine and dental care. Additional services included pharmacy, lab tests, primary blood tests and other procedures including ECG and TMT. Sessions on CPR training, anti-tobacco awareness and heat stress awareness also were part of the medical camp. Over 300 community members benefited from the camp.



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Marine Hull and Machinery Insurance

Tender Reference Number	HPP1-SC001230
Bid Closing Date & Time	11-Aug-2024
Tender Document Fee	QAR 5,000
Last Date of Purchasing the Tender	30-Jul-2024
Tender Bond	5 % of total bid value

QTerminals hereby announces the above tender with the following terms and conditions:

- The offer should be accompanied by a Tender Bond issued by one of the Banks operating in Qatar for the amount shown in the above table and valid for 120 days from the bid closing date. The offer which is not accompanied by the Tender Bond will not be considered.
- The deadline for submitting offers will be **11:00 am** on the date shown above. Any offer received thereafter will not be considered and will be rejected.
- The tender documents will only be released upon payment of the tender document fee.
- The interested suppliers must also register their company via the QTerminals website under the Procurement section <https://qterminals.com/procurement>.
- Supplier must have the relevant Business Activity in their Commercial Registration (CR).

Must have below Criteria for Collection of Tender Documents and Bidding

Companies should have:

- A-rated insurance companies with experience in managing the Hull & Machinery Insurance cover.
- The company should have strong reinsurance partnership with multiple international partners.
- Companies should have minimum of 5 major clients in Qatar/ International for whom you are providing Hull & Machinery Insurance cover.

Tender Document Fee Payment:

The Tender Document Fee of QAR 5,000 non-refundable should be deposited to QTerminals bank account as specified below. Please send a copy of the deposit receipt to:

[suppliersupport@qterminals.com](mailto:suppliersupport@qterminals.com)

Beneficiary Name	QTERMINALS WLL
Bank Name	Qatar National Bank (QNB)
IBAN	QA75QNBAA00000000013192809052
BIC / SWIFT Code	QNBAAQA


Clarifications:


For any clarifications / queries please contact at:

[suppliersupport@qterminals.com](mailto:suppliersupport@qterminals.com) or +974-40445369

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QTerminals W.L.L. | T +974 4044 5000 | F +974 4044 5001 | P.O.Box 11112 - Doha, Qatar | C.R. No. 98511





# South Africa to expel 95 Libyans detained at military-style camp

AFP  
White River

South Africa said yesterday it would deport as soon as possible 95 Libyans arrested at a camp being investigated for running military-style training in violation of regulations. The men were arrested on Friday in a raid at the remote camp in the northeastern province of Mpumalanga that borders Mozambique and Eswatini. Police said the Libyans entered South Africa in April on visas issued for instruction as security guards. However, police suspected they were receiving military training. The Home Affairs department said the visas had been “irregularly acquired” in the Tunisian capital, Tunis, and based on “misrepresentation”. They had been



An armed South African Police Services officer stands near the entrance to a farm where they detained ninety five Libyan nationals for receiving training at what authorities suspect to be a secret military camp in White River, Mpumalanga province, yesterday.

cancelled and the men faced deportation. “It’s clear to us that their being here is illegal...We would want them to be out if the country as soon as possible but we will follow due process,” national police minister Senzo Mchunu told reporters. A sign leading to the facility outside of White River, about 360 kilometres east of Johannesburg, describes it as an academy offering “specialised security training”. It was registered with the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) but appeared to have gone beyond the brief of training for security guards, Mchunu said. “All indications are pointing to this being more of a military training facility than an ordinary security training centre,” he said. “If you like, (it is) wholly military and less, or partially, security.”

Television footage of the camp showed military-style tents but the arrested men were in civilian clothes. Weapons found at the camp were all legal, national police commissioner General Fannie Masemola told reporters. However, questions had to be answered about training “which appears to be basically and fundamentally military,” Mchunu said. South Africa has a huge private security industry that includes training. There are more than 15,000 security firms employing about 2.8mn guards, providing armed response and training services, according to PSIRA. Police have said the owner of the security company that runs the facility is a South African national. He was not under arrest yesterday but was under investigation, they said. Most of the detained Libyans did not speak English and it was not immediately clear whether they were affiliated to any group. Libya has struggled with years of unrest since the 2011 overthrow of long-time ruler Muammar Gaddafi. It is split between a UN-recognised government in Tripoli and the rival administration backed by strongman Khalifa Haftar in the east. Rival factions are known to have sought security training with private companies abroad to create elite military units, said Jalel Harchaoui, an associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute in Britain, told AFP. He pointed to a recent The Irish Times report saying an Irish firm was paid to train Haftar’s forces.

## Severe weather hits Cape Town



A woman takes a picture of sea foam washing ashore following severe weather from a cold front in Sea Point, Cape Town, South Africa, yesterday.

## Unesco adds apartheid massacre site to heritage protection list

AFP  
Johannesburg

Unesco added yesterday the scene of an apartheid-era massacre and a village where Nelson Mandela lived as a boy to its World Heritage List, in an entry honouring South Africa’s struggle that ended white-minority rule 30 years ago. The new listing is made up of 14 locations across South Africa grouped by Unesco as “Human Rights, Liberation and Reconciliation: Nelson Mandela Legacy Sites”. They include the scene of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre when police shot dead 69 black protesters, including children, in a turn-

ing point in the struggle that led the apartheid government to ban the African National Congress (ANC) that now governs. Also on the list is the University of Fort Hare in the Eastern Cape province where anti-apartheid figurehead Mandela studied and the remote village of Mqhekezweni where he said in his autobiography, “Long Walk to Freedom”, that his political activism was first stirred. “I congratulate South Africa on the inscription of these sites of memory, which bear witness not only to the struggle against the apartheid state, but also to Nelson Mandela’s contribution to freedom, human rights and peace on behalf of us all,” Unesco director-general Audrey Azoulay said. Mandela, who died in 2013 aged 95, become

South Africa’s first democratically elected president in 1994, four years after the apartheid government released him from 27 years in jail, including on Robben Island off Cape Town. “Twenty-five years after Robben Island was inscribed on Unesco’s World Heritage List, this new inscription ensures that the legacy of South Africa’s liberation and the values it embodies will be transmitted to future generations,” Azoulay said. The addition of the sites to the World Heritage register was agreed at a Unesco meeting in New Delhi which also approved the inscription of three locations in South Africa important in the understanding of the origins of modern humans.

## Worst yet to come in once-in-a-century southern Africa drought, UN says

AFP  
Johannesburg

A record drought that has devastated crops across southern Africa, causing millions of people to go hungry and pushing five countries to declare a national disaster, is entering its worst stage, the UN has warned. The UN World Food Programme said it expected the number of people struggling to put enough food on the table to increase as the lean season, the period between harvests when food is scarcest, gets underway.

“The worst period comes now,” WFP’s acting regional director for southern Africa, Lola Castro, said in an interview. “People haven’t been able to pick anything and the problem is the next harvest is only in April 2025.” The small kingdom of Lesotho became two weeks ago the latest country to declare a state of national disaster over the El Nino-induced dry spell, after Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Other countries, like Angola and Mozambique, might follow soon or signal a gap between the food they have and the food they need, said Castro.

## Nigeria courts convict 125 insurgents in mass trial

Reuters  
Abuja

Nigerian courts convicted 125 Boko Haram militants and financiers of a series of terrorism-related offences in a mass trial this week, the attorney-general’s office said. A Boko Haram insurgency has killed thousands of people and displaced millions since it began in 2009, creating a humanitarian crisis in northeastern Nigeria and putting pressure on the government to bring the conflict to an end. Kamarudeen Ogunde, the spokesman of the Attorney-General’s office, said in a state-




File photo shows a general view of the damage at a camp for displaced people after an attack by suspected members of the Boko Haram in Dalori, in northeast Nigeria.

ment late on Friday that “they were convicted of charges bordering on terrorism, terrorism financing, rendering material support, and cases relating to International Criminal Courts (ICC) criminality”.

The last mass trials of Boko Haram suspects took place between 2017 and 2018, where 163 people were convicted and 887 set free. Ogunde added that from the previous convictions, 400 defendants who had completed their sentence

were moved to a rehabilitation centre known as Operation Safe Corridor in Gombe State, northeast Nigeria “for rehabilitation, deradicalisation and subsequent reintegration”. Boko Haram kidnapped more than 270 girls from a school in the northeastern town of Chibok in April 2014, an attack that sparked outrage and gave rise to the global “#Bring Back Our Girls” campaign, though more than half of the girls have returned, many as mothers of multiple children. The breakdown of the latest convictions showed that 85 people were convicted for terrorism financing, 22 for ICC related crimes, while the rest were convicted for terrorism.



**Qatar Chemical Company Limited**  
Al Dafna – Amwal Tower – First Floor  
P.O. 24646 Doha / Qatar – Tel. 44847111 – Fax 44847695  
Website: www.qchem.com.qa

**ANNOUNCEMENT FOR TENDERS**

No.	Document No.	Description	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1.	QC/TC/MP/67/24	Seawater Intake Structural Modifications at Q-Chem	QR 3,412,500	12:00 hrs on 01 <sup>st</sup> October 2024
<b>Brief Scope:</b> Contractor shall provide EPC services for the Seawater Intake Structural Modifications at Q-Chem. Contractor to carry out Engineering Services, Procurement of bulk materials including HDPE pipes, marine screen etc., all construction works from landside and seaside, convert open channel of seawater intake to conduit system where seawater will flow through HDPE pipes rather than open intake channel, cleaning of intake channel including removal of deposited material (sand / silt etc.) from channel basin and all other associated works.				
2.	QC/TC/IM/71/24	Sale of Used Furnace Coils at Q-Chem and RLOC on Call-Off Basis for Five Years	QR 1,501,500	12:00 hrs on 02 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024
<b>Brief Scope:</b> Two different types of used furnace coils for sale, which are Cr25 Ni35 and Cr35 Ni45 metallurgy. The successful bidder shall be required to collect the available used furnace coils from Q-Chem and RLOC sites.				

Tender Documents for the above description can be obtained as follows:

**A. Pay to Bank and send the original receipt with authorization letter via email.**  
For each tender pay a **non-refundable document fee of QR 1,000/-** Payable to Q-Chem, Bank Account (Contract Services - Tender) – Account Number 001-242007-003 with HSBC Bank) and submit the original receipt with an Authorization letter on Tenderer Company Letterhead with ID copy of the Tenderer representative via email to **tadvertisment@qchem.com.qa** In the authorization letter Tenderer shall nominate a single focal point with contact mobile number, **official email address**, office number, fax number for the communications related to this tender for the transfer and receipt of the tender documents. **The Bank receipt must indicate the tender number and the tenderer name (Company name).**

**B. Date and Time of Tender documents Issuance via email**  
Tender documents issuance from **28<sup>th</sup> July 2024 to 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024, 8am-12noon.**

**C. Proposal details**  
Proposals should be valid for 240 days from the tender closing date.

**D. Submission of Proposals**  
Guidelines for Electronic Bids Submission is attached in the Tender documents.

**Nigeria bids to placate youth to avert looming inflation protests**

Days before a nationwide protest over bad governance and a high cost of living, Nigeria is offering its young people jobs in the state-oil company and billions of naira worth of grants among other incentives to discourage the action, Reuters reported from Lagos. Nigerian activists have been looking to emulate youth-led protests elsewhere in Africa which have rocked the government in Kenya and prompted a tough security response in Uganda. Nigeria's state oil firm, which seven years ago warned job seekers against falling prey to fraudulent messages about job placements in the company, published on Friday nationwide job vacancies in a post on X for the first time in nearly a decade. An NNPC Ltd spokesperson said a flood of applications crashed the company's website. Nigeria's ministry of youth development on Friday also relaunched a 110bn naira (\$70mn) youth investment fund that was started in 2020, aimed at providing grants. The youth ministry had said in May said it would revive the programme but little had been heard about it until Friday. On Tuesday, Nigerian lawmakers passed a new minimum wage, more than doubling the amount the least paid worker will earn monthly. Nigerians are organising online for nationwide protests next week in response to a cost of living crisis that has seen inflation rise to a 28-year high of 34.2%.



**TENDER ADVERTISEMENT**

**ORYX GTL Limited is pleased to announce the following tender(s):**

S. No.	Tender Ref.	Tender Title:	Tender Bond (QAR)	Bid Closing Date & Tender Bond Validity Period
1.	TC-CN-020-24-MC	Call-off Contract for Maintenance of Electrical Transformers in ORYX GTL-RLIC	45,500/-	28 August 2024 at 12.00 noon & 180 days
2.	STC-CN-015-24-MC	Call-off Contract for Provision of Composite Wrapping Services	45,500/-	21 August 2024 at 12.00 noon & 180 days
3.	TC-CN-018-24-PR	Call-off Contract for supply of Corporate and VIP gift items to ORYX GTL	45,500/-	21 August 2024 at 12.00 noon & 180 days
4.	TC-CN-021-24-MC	Call-off Contract for Electrical & Instrumentation Maintenance Support	136,000/-	21 August 2024 at 12.00 noon & 180 days
5.	TC-CN-022-24-MC	Call-off Contract for Hot Tapping Services in GRP Line	136,000/-	21 August 2024 at 12.00 noon & 180 days
6.	TC-CN-023-24-MC	Call-off Contract for Provision of Industrial Insulation and Cladding Services for ORYX GTL's Equipment in RLIC	226,860/-	21 August 2024 at 12.00 noon & 180 days

Companies wishing to register their interest and obtain Tender Document(s) for the above Tender(s) must pay a non-refundable registration fee and register with ORYX GTL as detailed below:

Tender Registration Fee	QAR 500/- (Non-refundable) per Tender
Payable to	ORYX GTL Limited
IBAN (29 Digits)	QA23QNBAA0000000000013010705001
Bank	Qatar National Bank – HQ or any branch (cash only)
Registration Dates	From 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 to 01 <sup>st</sup> Aug 2024 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Registration Process and Requirements:	Write an e-mail to <b>oryxgltenders@oryxglt.com.qa</b> with the following attachments: 1.Copy of Commercial Registration (CR) 2.Copy of bank deposit slip of the Tender Registration Fee. 3. Copy of ICV Certificate

COMPANIES WHO HAVE PAID THE NON-REFUNDABLE REGISTRATION FEE BUT FAILED TO FORMALLY REGISTER AT THE DATE AND TIME STATED ABOVE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED AS ACCEPTABLE TENDERER.

TENDER BOND SHALL BE ISSUED BY A BANK REGISTERED IN THE STATE OF QATAR.

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

**For more information about ORYX GTL and its tenders, please visit our website: <http://www.oryxglt.com.qa>**

# Harris says she is ‘underdog’ to ‘weird’ Trump

Reuters  
Pittsfield

Vice-President Kamala Harris cast herself as an “underdog” in the presidential race against Donald Trump yesterday, despite polls showing the rivals in a virtual tie, and said much of the rhetoric coming from her Republican opponent and his running mate, JD Vance, was “just plain weird.”

Harris, speaking at a private fundraiser headlined by singer-songwriter James Taylor in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, also hit many of the themes she evoked this week during a blitz of campaign appearances since ascending to the top of the ticket after Democratic President Joe Biden dropped his re-election bid.

She again contrasted her background as a prosecutor with Trump’s record as a convicted felon and said her campaign was about the future, while Trump wanted to return the country to a “dark past.”

Her use of the word “weird” to describe her opponents was part of a new strategy from Democrats. The Harris campaign called Trump “old and quite weird” following his appearance on Fox News on Thursday, prompting at least one supporter to show up at the event with a sign proclaiming “Trump is weird.”

Trump was scheduled to rally alongside Vance in Minnesota later yesterday after addressing a cryptocurrency conference in Nashville, part of a broader Republican effort to court crypto holders ahead of the November 5 election.

The party has promised lighter regulation for crypto, while Trump recently slammed Democrats’ attempts to regulate the sector. Trump’s campaign event in St. Cloud, Minnesota, will take place in an 8,000-seat hockey arena, an indoor venue that complies with the US Secret Service’s recommendation that he avoid large outdoor events following an at-



US Vice-President Kamala Harris delivers remarks at a campaign event in Pittsfield yesterday. (Reuters)

tempt on his life at a rally in Pennsylvania two weeks ago. But Trump said yesterday in a post on his Truth Social site that he would continue to hold outdoor rallies and that he believed the Secret Service was capable of protecting him.

Minnesota has not chosen a Republican presidential candidate in 52 years, but it had seemed to move within reach in recent weeks as Biden’s poll numbers dipped following his disastrous June 27 debate performance.

After Biden’s exit on Sunday, however, Harris, the first Black woman and first Asian American to serve as vice-president, swiftly consolidated Democratic support.

Her rise has re-energised a campaign that had faltered badly amid Democrats’ doubts about Biden’s chances of defeating Trump, 78, or his ability to continue to govern should he succeed.

Harris raised more than \$100mn in the 36 hours after Biden’s departure. Yesterday’s fundraiser brought in more than \$1.4mn from some 800 attendees, her campaign said.

Shannon Watts, founder of Moms Demand Action, a gun safety group with about 10mn members, told MSNBC yesterday that more than 200,000 people joined a Zoom call on Thursday to build support for Harris among white women, raising over \$11mn.

Trump and Vance, 39, have attempted to tie Harris to what they say is the Biden administration’s failure to corral high inflation and stem a surge of migrants at the southern border with Mexico. Republicans have also portrayed Harris as more liberal and extreme than Biden.

Trump was scheduled to host a fundraiser in Nashville prior to his remarks at the conference, with tickets ranging from \$60,000 to over \$800,000 per person. Donors were able to contribute via digital currency as well, according to an event invitation.

## Trump tells ‘my beautiful Christians’ they won’t have to vote after this election



Former US president Donald Trump gestures on the stage at Turning Point Action’s The Believers Summit 2024 in West Palm Beach, Florida. (Reuters)

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump told Christians on Friday that if they vote for him this November, “in four years, you don’t have to vote again. We’ll have it fixed so good, you’re not gonna have to vote.”

It was not clear what the former president meant by his remarks, in an election campaign where his Democratic opponents accuse him of being a threat to democracy, and after his attempt to overturn his 2020 defeat to President Joe Biden, an effort that led to the deadly insurrection at the US Capitol on January 6, 2021. Trump was speaking at an event organised by the conservative group Turning Point Action in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Trump said: “Christians, get out and vote, just this time. “You won’t have to do it

anymore. Four more years, you know what, it will be fixed, it will be fine, you won’t have to vote anymore, my beautiful Christians.”

He added: “I love you Christians. I’m a Christian. I love you, get out, you gotta get out and vote. In four years, you don’t have to vote again, we’ll have it fixed so good you’re not going to have to vote,” Trump said.

Trump campaign spokesperson Steven Cheung did not directly address Trump’s remarks when asked to clarify them. Cheung said Trump “was talking about uniting this country,” and blamed “the divisive political environment” on the attempted assassination of Trump two weeks ago. Investigators have yet to give a motive for why the 20-year-old gunman opened fire on Trump.

## US DoJ asks court to reject TikTok civil suit

AFP  
San Francisco

TikTok’s collection of user data makes it a national security threat, the US Justice Department said in response to a civil suit by the Chinese-owned firm aimed at preventing the forced sale of the app.

TikTok’s suit in a Washington federal court argues that a law, which forces the video platform to be sold next year or face a US ban, violates First Amendment rights of free speech.

The US response counters that the law addresses national security concerns, not speech, and that TikTok’s Chinese parent company ByteDance is not able to claim First Amendment rights in the United States.

“Given TikTok’s broad reach within the United States, the capacity for China to use TikTok’s features to achieve its overarching objective to undermine American interests creates a national-security threat of immense depth and scale,” the Justice Department wrote in its filing.

It details concerns that ByteDance could, and would, comply with Chinese government demands for data about US users or yield to pressure

to censor or promote content on the platform, senior justice department officials said in a briefing.

TikTok gives Beijing the “means to undermine US national security” by collecting vast amounts of sensitive data from US users, and by utilising a proprietary algorithm to control which videos users see, the DoJ filing said.

“That algorithm can be manually manipulated, and its location in China would permit the Chinese government to covertly control the algorithm – and thus secretly shape the content that American users receive,” it added.

TikTok responded to the DoJ filing yesterday, saying “the Constitution is on our side.”

“The TikTok ban would silence 170mn Americans’ voices, violating the First Amendment,” the company said in a statement on social media platform X, referring to the app’s users in the United States.

“As we’ve said before, the government has never put forth proof of its claims, including when Congress passed this unconstitutional law.”

The DoJ filing argues that the law’s focus on foreign ownership of TikTok takes it out of the realm of the First Amendment.

# Venezuela vote: Opposition hopeful of win but fears fraud

AFP  
Caracas

Voters on both sides of the political aisle in Venezuela are convinced of victory in today’s presidential elections, in which incumbent Nicolas Maduro faces opposition challenger Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia.

But one side, the opposition, is fearful its win – predicted by pollsters to be by a wide margin – will be somehow snatched away.

Already, their candidate Maria Corina Machado has been barred from the race by institutions loyal to Maduro. Ex-diplomat Gonzalez Urrutia is running in her stead.

Amid claims of widespread opposition harassment and dozens of arrests, great uncertainty hangs over what will happen after the ballots are cast.

Voters told AFP of their expectations:

Telecommunications worker Luis Carlos Rodriguez, 54, attended an opposition rally in Caracas, eager to lay eyes on Machado.

He said he wanted change: “more freedom of expression... more economic freedom, less corruption!”

But he was sure Maduro’s government would claim victory “one way or another.”



A man walks inside the media centre of the National Electoral Council in Caracas yesterday. (AFP)

“I don’t see the CNE (electoral authority) announcing that Maria Corina won. That’s not going to happen. The question is what she’s going to do after that,” said Rodriguez, referring to the proxy campaign led by Gonzalez Urrutia.

The regime’s instinct, he said, will be to “hold on, repress.”

Rodriguez did not think there would be large-scale protests, though, with “few people who want to risk going out on the street.”

He, for one, will not.

Pensioner Mercedes Henriquez, 68, agreed the opposition was the only way forward for Venezuela.

“We can’t anymore with this dictatorship,” she said.

“We’re praying that they don’t steal the election. They always have. But this time, we have three million votes” more than Maduro, she added – which, if true, would make it harder to massage the outcome. But if they do? “Well, we have to go out on the street. For my vote. For my children” – two of whom are among the more than seven million Venezuelans living abroad, along with six of her grandchildren.

Marianella, 35, spoke to AFP at a coffee shop in Caracas, but did not want to give her surname “for

fear” of retribution against her children or small business.

“There’s a tense calm out there, because change is coming and everybody knows it,” she said.

“We can’t take it anymore, this country has to move on. We need change in everything. Health, education, all the ministries, all legal entities, all the courts. Nothing works in this country. Nothing.”

Jesus Godoy, 57, recalled a time of shortages in Caracas that he blamed on a “a brutal economic war, a crisis created by the opposition” after Maduro’s first election in 2013, as oil prices plummeted and the country entered a recession.

“Today it’s wonderful, you go to a shop and you find what you need. The dollar (exchange rate) is stable now... thanks to President Nicolas Maduro,” who relaxed foreign currency regulations.

The education ministry worker told AFP at a pro-government rally that today, “we are going to have a double celebration: the election of President Nicolas Maduro... and the birthday celebration of our Commander Hugo Chavez” – Maduro’s predecessor and mentor, born 70 years ago on election day.

At the same rally, a man in a Maduro T-shirt whispered to AFP that he was being “forced” to attend by his employer.

## Spacecraft to swing by Earth, Moon on path to Jupiter

A spacecraft launched last year will slingshot back around Earth and the Moon next month in a high-stakes, world-first manoeuvre as it pinballs its way through the Solar System to Jupiter. The European Space Agency’s Juice probe blasted off in April 2023 on a mission to discover whether Jupiter’s icy moons Ganymede, Callisto, and Europa are capable of hosting extra-terrestrial life in their vast, hidden oceans. The uncrewed six-tonne spacecraft is currently 10mn km from Earth. But it will fly back past the Moon then Earth on August 19-20, using their gravity boosts to save fuel on its winding, eight-year odyssey to Jupiter. Staff at the ESA’s space operations centre in Darmstadt, Germany began preparing for the complicated manoeuvre this week. Juice is expected to arrive at Jupiter’s system in July 2031.

It will take the scenic route. Nasa’s Europa Clipper spacecraft is scheduled to launch this October yet beat Juice to Jupiter’s moons by a year.

Juice is taking the long way round in part because the Ariane 5 rocket used to launch the mission was not powerful enough for a straight shot to Jupiter, which is roughly 800mn km away.



This photograph taken on April 14, 2023, shows Arianespace’s Ariane 5 rocket lifting off from its launchpad, at the Guiana Space Center in Kourou, French Guiana. (AFP)

Without an enormous rocket, sending Juice straight to Jupiter would require 60 tonnes of onboard propellant – and Juice has just three tonnes, according to the ESA.

“The only solution is to use gravitational assists,” Arnaud Boutonnet, the ESA’s head of analysis for the mission, told AFP. By flying close to planets, spacecrafts can take advantage of their

gravitational pull, which can change its course, speed it up or slow it down. Many other space missions have used planets for gravity boosts, but next month’s Earth-Moon flyby will be a “world first”, the ESA said. It will be the first “double gravity assist manoeuvre” using boosts from two worlds in succession, the agency said. Juice will cross 750 kilometres above the Moon on August 19, before shooting past our home planet the following day. The probe will leave Earth at a speed of “3.3 kilometres a second – instead of 3km if we had not added the Moon”, Boutonnet said. As Juice whizzes past Earth and the Moon, it will use the opportunity to snap photos and test out its many instruments. Down on Earth, some will be taking photos right back. Some lucky amateur sky gazers, armed with telescopes or powerful binoculars, may even be able to spot Juice as it passes over Southeast Asia. The move has been carefully calculated for years, but it will be no walk in the park. “We are aiming for a mouse hole,” Boutonnet emphasised. The slightest error during its slingshot

around the Moon would be amplified by Earth’s gravity, potentially creating a small risk that the spacecraft could enter and burn up in Earth’s atmosphere. The team on the ground will be closely observing the spacecraft – and have 12-18 hours to calculate and adjust its trajectory if needed, Boutonnet said. He mostly feared a scenario in which the amount of course corrections needed would erase the gains from the double-world slingshot, meaning they would be “doing all this for nothing”. If all goes well, Juice will head back out into interplanetary space – for a little while at least. It will first head to Venus for another boost in 2025. Juice will even fly past Earth twice more – once in 2026, then a final time in 2029 before finally setting off towards Jupiter. Then comes the really tricky part. Once Juice arrives at Jupiter, it will use a whopping 35 gravitational assists as its bounces around the planet’s ocean moons. During this phase, the probe’s trajectory looks like “a real plate of spaghetti”, Boutonnet said. “What we’re doing with the Earth-Moon system is a joke in comparison,” he added.

## S Korean military investigates leak of information on spies in N Korea

AFP  
Seoul

The South Korean military said yesterday that it is investigating a case that local news media said entailed a leak of highly sensitive information regarding Seoul's intelligence agents spying on North Korea.

The Korea Defence Intelligence Command, a secretive branch of the South Korean military, discovered about a month ago that classified information, including personal data of its agents stationed overseas, had been leaked, according to Seoul's Yonhap News Agency.

Officials have since "detected signs" that the leaked data may have reached the nuclear-armed North, the Yonhap report said.

The case is "currently under investigation by military authorities", the defence ministry said in a statement, without confirming the local reports.

The military plans to handle the case "sternly in accordance with laws and regulations according to the results of the investigation", it added.

The announcement came days after the United States, Britain and South Korea issued a joint warning on Thursday that North Korean hackers have conducted a global cyber "espionage campaign" aimed at stealing classified military secrets in an effort to advance its banned nuclear weapons programme.

The leaked information reportedly included information about South Korean agents posing as diplomats overseas, as well as undercover agents, with some of them even returning home due to concerns about their identities being revealed, according to Yonhap.

Authorities are investigating a civilian official at the military intelligence command after discovering that the organisation's classified information was stored on the official's personal laptop, Yonhap said.

The official is suspected of leaking the information via the laptop, but has reportedly claimed that the device was hacked, South Korean media reported.

Yonhap said authorities are investigating the possibility that the official intentionally left the laptop vulnerable to hacking by North Koreans.

North Korean hackers "currently target sensitive military information and intellectual property of defence, aerospace, nuclear, engineering organisations", the Thursday joint warning by Washington, Seoul and London said.

In May, Seoul police said North Korean hackers stole sensitive data, including South Koreans' individual financial records, from a South Korean court computer network over two years.

Meanwhile, Seoul's spy agency said in February that North Korean spies were using LinkedIn to pose as recruiters and entice South Koreans working at defence companies so the spies could access information on the firms' technology.

## Vehicle crashes into pedestrians in China, killing eight

A vehicle crashed into pedestrians in a major city in central China early yesterday, killing eight people and injuring five, authorities said, without specifying whether the act was intentional or not.

The incident took place shortly after midnight in Changsha, capital of Hunan province, police said in a statement.

"A motor vehicle hit pedestrians," it said, adding that eight people had died in the tragedy and another five had been injured, at least some of whom had been hospitalised. A 55-year-old suspect living in the area has been detained and the investigation is ongoing, the statement said.

Road accidents are common in China due to a lack of strict safety controls. Assaults with vehicles have also occurred, but police have not indicated whether this was a purposeful act. - **AFP**

# China and US spar over South China Sea at talks in Laos

AFP/Reuters  
Vientiane

The top diplomats of China and the US sparred yesterday over the South China Sea, where Beijing is locked in a territorial dispute with US treaty ally the Philippines.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met on the sidelines of a foreign ministers meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) in Laos.

The US hailed the meeting as "open and productive" after Blinken had criticised Beijing's "escalatory and unlawful actions" in the South China Sea.

Chinese and Filipino ships have clashed in the waterway, fuelling fears of a conflict that could drag in the US due to its mutual defence treaty with Manila.

The US should "refrain from fanning the flames, stirring up trouble and undermining stability at sea", Wang said at the meeting, according to a foreign ministry statement.

"The risks and challenges facing China-US relations are still rising," he said.

Blinken also raised "US concerns about provocative actions" by China, including a simulated blockade of Taiwan following the May inauguration of President Lai Ching-te.

China claims the democratic island as its territory and slammed Lai's inauguration speech as "confession of independence".

"Whenever the promoters of Taiwanese independence will



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi at their meeting on the sidelines of the 57th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Vientiane. - **AFP**

make a provocation, we will respond with a countermeasure," Wang said, according to Beijing's foreign ministry.

During the meeting, which a State Department official said lasted one hour and twenty minutes, Blinken also raised US concerns over China's support for Russia as it wages war in Ukraine.

The two had had not arranged another meeting.

Beijing claims the South China Sea - through which trillions of dollars of trade passes annually - almost in its entirety despite an international court ruling that its assertion has no legal basis.

A Filipino sailor lost a thumb in the latest June 17 confrontation when Chinese coastguard members wielding knives, sticks and an axe foiled a Philippine Navy resupply attempt.

Yesterday Manila said that it had successfully resupplied troops on the Second Thomas Shoal - the focus of clashes in recent months - under a deal agreed with Beijing (*see accompanying report*).

According to a Chinese foreign ministry statement released later, Wang said the deal was a "temporary arrangement...to manage the situation", without giving details.

The Philippines' small troop presence on a grounded former US navy ship at the Second Thomas Shoal has angered China for years.

The countries have been involved in repeated altercations, causing regional concern about an escalation that could potentially lead to US intervention.

On Friday, Wang called on the Philippines to "honour its com-

## Philippines completes resupply mission on disputed shoal

The Philippines has completed unimpeded a resupply trip to its troops at a disputed South China Sea shoal, its foreign ministry said, the first such mission under a new arrangement with China aimed at cooling tensions.

The Philippines and China last week announced a "provisional agreement" on Manila's resupply missions to its contingent of troops on a naval ship grounded on the Second Thomas Shoal, after repeated clashes between vessels that have caused regional concerns about an escalation of hostilities.

The Philippines intentionally immobilised the now rusty former US vessel at the shoal in 1999 in an attempt to claim it as its territory and has since maintained a small rotational troop presence there, infuriating China, which has coast guard stationed in the area.

Yesterday's mission involved a civilian vessel, escorted by Philippine coastguard, with no untoward incidents reported, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Chinese vessels were at a reasonable distance with no risk of collision, it said, adding it gave no prior notification to China, which made no attempt to inspect the vessels.

China's coastguard said it supervised the entire process, according to spokesperson Gan Yu.

"It is hoped that the Philippines will honour its commitment, work with China halfway, and jointly manage the maritime situation," he said in a statement.

Speaking at a regional summit in Laos, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said he was pleased the mission was a success and that the two countries were able to reach an agreement.

"We applaud that and hope and expect to see that it continues going forward," he said.

The Philippines and China have both said the agreement would not change their positions on territory.

The shoal is within the Philippines' 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone and located 1,300km (808 miles) off mainland China, which refers to it as Renai Reef.

China claims almost the entire South China Sea as its territory based on historic maps, a claim an arbitral tribunal in 2016 ruled had no basis under international law. - **Reuters**

mitments" under the deal rather than "backtracking or creating complications", warning Beijing would "respond resolutely" to any violation.

Wang also warned the Philippines over deploying a US medium-range missile system on its soil, saying it would "create tension and confrontation in the region and trigger an arms race".

The US Army said in April that it had deployed the Mid-Range Capability missile system in the northern Philippines for annual joint military exercises.

Philippines military officials later said the system would be removed from the country.

Blinken's stop in Laos is part of a multi-nation Asia visit aimed at reinforcing regional ties in the face of Beijing's growing assertiveness, including in the South China Sea,

and its deepening ties with Moscow.

Blinken arrived in Laos two days after the foreign ministers of China and Russia met with the 10-nation Asean bloc - and each other on the sidelines of the meeting.

On Thursday, Wang met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Vientiane and discussed "building a new security architecture for Eurasia", according to Moscow's foreign ministry.

The pair also agreed to jointly "counter any attempts by extra-regional forces to interfere in Southeast Asian affairs", it said.

China has a strong political and economic partnership with Russia, with North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato) members labelling Beijing as a "key facilitator" of Moscow's involvement in the war in Ukraine.



This picture taken on Thursday shows waves crashing on the coast of Sansha town as Typhoon Gaemi approaches, in Ningde, China's Fujian province. - **AFP**

## Typhoon Gaemi forces evacuation, factory suspension in China

More than 27,000 people in northeast China were evacuated and hundreds of factories were ordered to suspend production as Typhoon Gaemi brought heavy rains, the official Xinhua news agency reported yesterday.

Gaemi lashed towns on China's coastal Fujian province on Friday with heavy rains and strong winds as the most powerful storm to hit the country this year began its widely watched trek from the southeastern coast into the populous interior.

Heavy rains caused water levels to rise in 40 reservoirs across Liaoning province, the area is expected to experience torrential rain early today until Tuesday, the report said.

Hundreds of chemical and mining companies across the province have suspended operations and nearby residents have been relocated to avoid flood risks, Xinhua said.

The storm, which killed dozens as it swept through Taiwan and worsened seasonal rains in the Philippines, has affected almost 630,000 people in China's Fujian province, with almost half of them being relocated, Xinhua has reported. - **Reuters**



Youth and students participate in an evening gala to mark the occasion of the 71st anniversary of the end of the Korean War, at the Kim Il Sung Square in Pyongyang. - **AFP**

## North Korea's Kim calls for a 'people's paradise'

Reuters  
Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said it was a sacred mission of the current generation to build a "paradise for the people" based on the ideology defended by a previous generation of victors with their blood as the country marked the Korean War anniversary yesterday.

Kim visited memorials honouring the veterans of the 1950-53 war on Friday including the Tower of Friendship remembering the Chinese People's Liberation Army soldiers who fought with the North Koreans, KCNA state news agency reported.

North Korea signed an armistice agreement with the United States and China on July 27, 1953 ending the battle in the three-year war.

US generals signed the agreement representing the United

Nations forces that backed South Korea.

"Comrade Kim Jong-un said it is the sacred mission and duty of our generation to protect the ideology and system defended by the previous generation of war victors with blood...and to build a paradise for the people," KCNA said.

North Korea calls July 27 "Victory Day" even though the armistice drew a border dividing the Korean peninsula roughly equally in area and restoring balance after the two sides had made major advances back and forth during the war.

South Korea does not mark the day with any major events.

Festivities were held throughout North Korea to celebrate the day including banquets, a parade by the revolutionary youth vanguard and a mass dance in Pyongyang's main square attended by patriots under celebratory fireworks, KCNA said.

## Philippine coastguard says oil leaking from sunken tanker

AFP  
Manila

Some of the 1.4mn litres of industrial fuel oil inside a sunken Philippine tanker has started to leak into Manila Bay, the coastguard said yesterday, as they raced to avoid an environmental catastrophe.

The MT Terra Nova sank in bad weather off Manila early on Thursday, killing one crew member and leaving the country potentially facing its worst oil spill disaster.

The oil slick has more than tripled in size and is now estimated to stretch 12-14km (7.5-8.7 miles) across the bay, which thousands of fishermen and tourism operators rely on for their livelihoods.

Divers inspected the hull of the vessel

yesterday and saw a "minimal leak" from the valves, coastguard spokesman Rear Admiral Armando Balilo said, adding it was "not alarming yet".

"It's just a small volume flowing out," Balilo said, adding "the tanks are intact".

"We're hoping that tomorrow we will be able to start syphoning the oil from the motor tanker," he said.

The ship that will carry the recovered oil

is on its way to the area, he said.

The coastguard has warned that if the entire cargo leaked it would be an "environmental catastrophe".

Oil containment booms have been deployed for what Balilo earlier described as "the worst case scenario" of the cargo leaking out.

Three coastguard vessels were also spreading dispersants on the oil.

## Modi likely to visit Ukraine in August, local media reports

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to visit Ukraine next month, a local media report said, his first visit to the country since its war with Russia began and just weeks after he met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

Ukraine's embassy in New Delhi said it had no information to share immediately.

There was no immediate response from India's foreign ministry.

Western countries have imposed sanctions on Moscow following its all-out invasion of Ukraine in 2022, but "friendly" nations such as India and China have continued to trade.

India has refrained from directly blaming Russia, while urging the two nations to resolve their conflict through dialogue and diplomacy.

Modi met Putin just as a Russian missile struck a hospital in Kyiv killing at least 41 people.

The Indian leader told Putin that the death of innocent children was "painful and terrifying".

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky expressed unhappiness over Modi's visit, calling it a "huge disappointment and a devastating blow to peace efforts" to see him hug "the world's most bloody criminal in Moscow on such a day".

The US State Department has raised concerns over India's relationship with Russia especially at a time when it has been seeking to strengthen ties with India as a potential counterweight to an ascendant China.

The final date of Modi's visit is not yet confirmed, *The Print* reported yesterday. – **Reuters**

## Asean urges Myanmar to start peace process

Reuters/AFP  
Vientiane

Foreign ministers of the Southeast Asian regional bloc Asean have condemned violence against civilians in military-ruled Myanmar and urged all parties to end hostilities and follow an agreed peace plan.

In a joint communique issued two days after their closed-doors retreat in Laos, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) also welcomed unspecified practical measures to reduce tension in the South China Sea and prevent accidents and miscalculations.

It described North Korea's missile tests as worrisome developments and urged peaceful resolutions to the conflicts in Ukraine, as well as Gaza, expressing concern over the dire humanitarian situation and "alarming casualties" there.

Australia's foreign minister meanwhile called on Myanmar's junta to "take a different path" from its bloody crackdown on dissent, saying

that the situation in the war-torn country is "not sustainable".

Penny Wong made the comments at the Asean meeting.

The country was plunged into a civil war after the military seized power in a coup in 2021.

Weeks after it seized power and launched a crackdown on dissent the junta agreed to a five-point peace plan with Asean but has failed to implement it.

"Myanmar is deeply concerning, we see it in the economy, instability, insecurity, deaths," Wong told journalists at a press conference. "The message I want to send to the military regime is 'this is not sustainable for you and your people'."

"We urge them to take a different path and reflect the five-point consensus," she added.

The junta has been barred from high-level Asean meetings over its crackdown on dissent.

It had previously refused to send "non-political representatives" but two senior bureaucrats are representing the country in Vientiane.

A Southeast Asian diplomat told AFP on con-

dition of anonymity earlier this week that the military's readiness to re-engage diplomatically was a sign of its "weakened position".

In recent weeks ethnic minority armed groups have renewed an offensive against the military in northern Shan state, seizing territory along a vital highway to China.

Myanmar's generals have yet to make any meaningful counterattack following a previous offensive by ethnic armed groups in October that seized swaths of territory along the border with China.

The losses triggered rare public criticism of its top leadership.

Asean has spearheaded diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis but with little success.

Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines have called for tougher action against the junta, while Thailand has held its own bilateral talks with the generals as well as detained democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

The conflict in Myanmar has forced 2.7mn people from their homes since the coup in 2021, according to the United Nations.

## UK police arrest two men after assault on anti-fascism protester

UK police arrested two men yesterday following an assault on a participant in an anti-fascism protest, held to counter another nearby demonstration organised by far-right agitator Tommy Robinson.

London's Metropolitan Police said the pair were arrested on suspicion of assaulting a "Stand Up To Racism" protester in Victoria Embankment Gardens in the city centre.

Officers gave the victim first aid after he sustained a head injury in the incident, and he will be taken to hospital to be checked, according to the force.

It noted that, contrary to social media reports, the arrests were not related to the carrying of any flags.

The Met, as the London force is known, said around 1,000 officers were on duty yesterday as part of the policing operation to deal with the two rallies, as well as another protest.

Thousands gathered in the heart of the British capital from late morning for the demonstration organised by Robinson, a far-right firebrand and founder of the now defunct Islamophobic English Defence League organisation.

Meanwhile, the counter-protest staged by Stand Up To Racism and others also rallied in the heart of London, with the Met imposing so-called conditions on the two marches "with the aim of preventing serious disruption".

They included requiring participants to stick to certain areas and streets and disperse by stipulated times.

"Our first priority is to keep the peace to ensure that those exercising their right to lawful protest can do so safely," Chief Superintendent Colin Wingrove said ahead of the weekend events. – **AFP**

# Bangladesh says student leaders in custody for their own safety

AFP  
Dhaka

Bangladesh said three student leaders had been taken into custody for their own safety after the government blamed their protests against civil service job quotas for days of deadly nationwide unrest.

Students Against Discrimination head Nahid Islam and two other senior members of the protest group were on Friday forcibly discharged from hospital and taken away by a group of plainclothes detectives.

The street rallies organised by the trio precipitated a police crackdown and days of running clashes between officers and protesters that killed at least 201 people, according to an AFP tally of hospital and police data.

Islam earlier this week told AFP he was being treated at the hospital in the capital Dhaka for injuries police inflicted on him during an earlier round of detention.

Police had initially denied that Islam and his two colleagues were taken into custody before home minister Asaduzzaman Khan confirmed it to reporters late on Friday.

"They themselves were feeling insecure. They think that some people were threatening them," he said. "That's why we think for their own security they needed to be interrogated to find out who was threatening them. After the interrogation, we will take the next course of action."

Khan did not confirm whether the trio had been formally arrested.



Soldiers are seen near the country's Secretariat in Dhaka as the curfew is relaxed after the anti-quota protests. – **AFP**

Days of mayhem last week saw the torching of government buildings and police posts in Dhaka, and fierce street fights between protesters and riot police elsewhere in the country.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government deployed troops, instituted a nationwide Internet blackout and imposed a curfew to restore order.

The unrest began when police and pro-government student groups attacked street rallies organised by Students Against Discrimination that had remained largely peaceful before last week.

Islam, 26, the chief co-ordinator of Stu-

dents Against Discrimination, told AFP from his hospital bed on Monday that he feared for his life.

He said that two days beforehand, a group of people identifying themselves as police detectives blindfolded and handcuffed him and took him to an unknown location to be tortured before he was released the next morning.

His colleague Asif Mahmud, also taken into custody at the hospital on Friday, told AFP earlier that he had also been detained by police and beaten at the height of last week's unrest.

Police have arrested at least 4,500 people

since the unrest began.

"We've carried out raids in the capital and we will continue the raids until the perpetrators are arrested," Dhaka Metropolitan Police joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarker told AFP. "We're not arresting general students, only those who vandalised government properties and set them on fire."

Islam and other thousands of other students were protesting the June reintroduction of a scheme reserving more than half of all government jobs for certain candidates.

With around 18mn young Bangladeshis out of work, according to government figures, the move deeply upset graduates facing an acute jobs crisis.

Critics say the quota is used to stack public jobs with loyalists to Hasina's Awami League.

The Supreme Court cut the number of reserved jobs last Sunday but fell short of protesters' demands to scrap the quotas entirely.

Hasina has ruled Bangladesh since 2009 and won her fourth consecutive election in January after a vote without genuine opposition.

Her government is accused by rights groups of misusing state institutions to entrench its hold on power and stamp out dissent, including the extrajudicial killing of opposition activists.

Yesterday Hasina again surveyed some of the damage caused during the unrest.

"This does is nothing but cripple our economy and turn us into a nation of beggars," she told reporters. "I want justice."

## Australia bans mining at Indigenous site

Australia moved yesterday to ban mining at one of the world's largest high-grade uranium deposits, highlighting the site's "enduring connection" to Indigenous Australians.

The Jabiluka deposit in northern Australia is surrounded by the heritage-listed Kakadu national park, a tropical expanse of gorges and waterfalls featured in the first *Crocodile Dundee* film.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the national park would be extended to include the Jabiluka site – which has never been mined – honouring the decades-long desires of the Mirrar people.

"They were seeking a guarantee that there would never be uranium mining on their land," Albanese told a crowd of Labor Party supporters in Sydney. "This means there will never be mining at Jabiluka."

Archaeologists discovered a buried trove of stone axes and tools near the Jabiluka site in 2017, which they dated at tens of thousands of years old.

The find was "proof of the extraordinary and enduring connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander have had with our land", Albanese said.

"The Mirrar people have loved and cared for their land for more than 60,000 years," he said.

Discovered in the early 1970s, efforts to exploit the Jabiluka deposit have for decades been tied-up in legal wrangling between Indigenous custodians and mining companies.

It is one of the world's largest unexploited high-grade uranium deposits, according to the World Nuclear Association.

Rio Tinto-controlled company Energy Resources of Australia previously held mining leases at Jabiluka.

The conservation of Indigenous sites has come under intense scrutiny in Australia after mining company Rio Tinto blew up the 46,000-year-old Juukan Gorge rock shelters in 2020. – **AFP**

## Japan's Sado mines added to World Heritage list after S Korea drops objections

AFP  
New Delhi

A network of mines on a Japanese island infamous for using conscripted wartime labour was added to Unesco's World Heritage register yesterday after South Korea dropped earlier objections to its listing.

The Sado gold and silver mines, now a popular tourist attraction, are believed to have started operating as early as the 12th century and produced until after World War II.

Japan had put a case for World Heritage listing because of their lengthy history and the artisanal mining techniques used there at a time when European mines had turned to mechanisation.

The proposal was opposed by Seoul when it was first put because of the use of involuntary Korean labour during World War II, when Japan occupied the Korean peninsula.

However, South Korea's foreign ministry said it had agreed to the listing "on the condition that Japan faithfully implements the recommendation ... to reflect the 'full history' at the Sado Gold Mine site."

Unesco confirmed the listing at its ongoing committee meeting in New Delhi after a bid highlighting the archaeological preservation of "mining activities and social and labour organisation".

"The inscription was the result of a 14-year effort," Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said on X. "I would like to share this joy with local people as well as all Japanese citizens."



Japan had reiterated a pledge to keeping the memories alive of "the harsh labour conditions of all workers", the foreign ministry in Tokyo said in a statement.

It added that exhibits on Sado island included data showing a higher percentage of Korean labourers were engaged in dangerous underground tasks, while others fled or were detained.

Historians have argued that recruitment conditions at the mine effectively amounted to forced labour, and that Korean workers faced significantly harsher conditions than their Japanese counterparts.

"Discrimination did exist," Toyomi Asano, a professor of history of Japanese politics at Tokyo's Waseda University, told AFP in 2022.

"Their working conditions were very bad and dangerous. The most dangerous jobs were allocated to them."

The Sado mines were listed alongside the Beijing Central Axis, a collection of former imperial palaces and gardens in the Chinese capital.

The 589-hectare heritage area reflects "the ancient Chinese tradition of urban planning, serving as an important emblem

that highlights the distinctive characteristics of Chinese civilisation", state news agency Xinhua said.

Other listings this week include the centuries-old, ornate burial mounds of the Ahom Dynasty in northeastern India and the Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia.

The Saint Hilariion complex, one of the oldest monasteries in the Middle East dating back to the fourth century, was meanwhile added to a list of World Heritage sites in danger due to the war in Gaza.

The Unesco committee meeting runs until Wednesday.



People visit the Drum and Bell Towers in Beijing. The Drum and Bell Towers is part of Beijing Central Axis – a building ensemble that runs through the core area of the Chinese capital. – **AFP**

Left: This photo taken on May 9, 2022 shows mannequins inside the Shohdayu mine on Sado island. – **AFP**

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GULF TIMES

Air travel recovers fully, surpassing even demand before pandemic

Air travel demand continues to outpace economic growth in an increasingly connected world.

Four years after the pandemic grounded most of the global fleet, air traffic growth has returned to the long-term trend industry analysts have forecast.

With air travel fully recovered and even surpassing pre-pandemic demand, the airline industry is bullish about its economic prospects over the next few years.

“With a record five billion air travellers expected in 2024, the human need to fly has never been stronger”, according to International Air Transport Association (IATA), the global body of airlines.

Thanks to solid and persistent demand for air transportation, the airline industry can now turn the page on the Covid-pandemic. Air traffic has now caught up with 2019 levels, and profitability has returned to the industry, IATA noted recently.

While the trend will in all probability stay positive regarding both growth in activity and profitability, the pace of improvement is likely to slow, industry experts point out.

A key variable to watch is unemployment, which could challenge the trend were it to begin to rise. In the interim, gains will also be capped by capacity constraints pertaining to labour and aircraft.

Airbus predicted in an annual report on jet industry trends that the global fleet would more than double over the next two decades to 48,230 planes

projected a 3% increase in airplane deliveries over the next 20 years, with carriers requiring nearly 44,000 new commercial airplanes by 2043.

Leading into the Farnborough International Airshow, Boeing released its 2024 Commercial Market Outlook (CMO), which also predicts emerging markets and global single-aisle market demand will remain primary growth drivers for the industry.

Air transport connects remote and landlocked regions to the global economy, fostering economic inclusion and development. It plays a critical role in delivering humanitarian aid and disaster relief, providing rapid response capabilities in times of crisis.

The industry enables the transport of essential supplies, medical personnel, and equipment to affected areas quickly.

It enhances business efficiency by reducing travel time, enabling quick face-to-face meetings and faster decision-making processes.

As for job creation, the air transport industry directly creates millions of jobs worldwide, including pilots, flight attendants, ground staff, maintenance workers, and administrative personnel.

Indirectly, it generates employment in related sectors such as tourism, logistics, manufacturing, and retail.

Countries with well-developed air transport infrastructure attract more foreign direct investment (FDI) as businesses prefer locations with reliable and efficient transport links.

Airports often become hubs of economic activity, leading to the development of surrounding areas and increased investment.

Undoubtedly, the growth of the air transport industry is a key driver of global economic progress, supporting trade, tourism, employment, and technological advancement, while enhancing global connectivity and fostering international co-operation.



Macron, Europe’s centrists are out of good options

By Yanis Varoufakis  
Athens

France’s political impasse reflects an economic conundrum that is insoluble under the present European construction. After four years of pandemic-induced fiscal laxity, the eurozone’s rules are back in force, demanding of Paris a wave of severe austerity that no political party, including President Emmanuel Macron’s, can or would want to implement. This is the main reason Macron called a parliamentary election that he knew he would lose.

That the European Commission, with the tacit support of the European Central Bank, will impose painful austerity on France is indisputable for one simple reason: Germany is already doing the same to itself, even though its budget and debt are far smaller than France’s.

Pushed by the German Constitutional Court’s strict adherence to the so-called debt brake, which caps annual deficits at 0.35% of GDP, Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Finance Minister Christian Lindner have set Germany on a harsh austerity course that will most likely end their political careers. They have done so to eliminate a modest deficit of 2.5% of GDP at a time when their country desperately needs major infrastructure investment. How can they explain to their own parties that they will tolerate a French deficit of 5.5% and rising? They can’t, so they won’t.

France can expect a form of pressure straight out of the European Commission and ECB’s euro-crisis playbook. Negative comments from Brussels will begin to worry holders of French

bonds. The interest rate that France must pay to roll over its €3.1tn (\$3.4tn) public debt will rise slowly, as will anxieties about whether the ECB will come to its assistance. Already, in a comment that met with a chorus of denunciations in France, Lindner warned the ECB not to make use of the recently announced “transmission protocol instrument” (TPI) to bail out the French. It is highly unlikely that the German finance minister did not understand his comment to be anything but the start of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The TPI bailout scheme was announced by the ECB to settle post-pandemic nerves. It is designed to apply to countries, like France, with excess deficits, but only if they accept austerity measures dictated by Brussels.

What makes it politically toxic in France is the fact that even if a new government were to go along with the new austerity drive, it is not clear that France’s fiscal balance would follow a smooth path back to the EU-specified limits. In other words, any compliant French government faces a terrible prospect: political chaos (since austerity is vehemently opposed by two-thirds of the National Assembly) with no guarantee of a return to fiscal probity (since austerity depresses growth).

The writing was on the wall well before the European Parliament elections in June. Their outcome convinced Macron that only two political paths are consistent with the EU’s current institutional setting, which he previously tried, but failed, to change. One path would be to do to his main rival, Marine Le Pen, what was done to Alexis Tsipras, the former leader of Syriza in Greece, in 2015: allow her to form a government that

would then be forced to choose between clashing with the EU or acquiescing – with Macron edging Le Pen toward the latter.

The second path was the one that the electorate opted for: A four-way split parliament that, under the burgeoning fiscal pressures, will eventually yield a grand coalition comprising Macron’s party, the rump Republicans, and anyone from within the left-wing New Popular Front who is willing to part from Jean-Luc Mélenchon’s France Unbowed. (Another, worse option is a technocratic government whose budget would be imposed by presidential decrees.)

Even if all this works out for Macron, he will be blamed for austerity-induced discontent. Le Pen will claim that an undemocratic president stole her victory, and her own presidential campaign will gain momentum. The success of Macron’s best-laid plan may transform his legacy from that of a populist slayer to that of an arrogant president who paved the way for the ultra-right to storm the Elysée.

Why are France’s elites so short of decent options? The answer was delivered on March 23, 1964, by Kurt Schmücker, West Germany’s economy minister, to Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, his French counterpart, when the latter proposed an immediate monetary union between France and Germany. Shocked, Schmücker tried to warn d’Estaing that he was, unwittingly, proposing that France forfeit its sovereignty over the French budget. He was right. Why would Canada ever share a currency with the United States – or New Zealand with Australia – despite the two countries’ deep economic and cultural ties?

However hard Europe’s elites try to dismiss this reality, they cannot. A monetary union

is only sustainable between economies with similar trade balances and similar levels of capital utilisation. A monetary union between Germany and the Netherlands would be sustainable – though not necessarily useful – because both have large trade surpluses and economies where capital use is large and uniformly distributed across sectors. Germany and France, however, are like chalk and cheese.

Last May, a typical month, France’s trade balance was €8bn in the red, whereas Germany had a surplus of €25bn. Similarly, while France has some highly advanced industries, its economy remains divided between cities and rural areas, with the latter typified by high labour, and low capital, intensity.

There are three ways that such dissimilar economies can remain within a single market. The first is through a proper federation built on a fiscal union – the path that Macron invited the Germans to take, to no avail. The second option is a gradual currency devaluation for France – a path that Macron and the rest of the political centre have sworn not to take. That leaves the third option: permanent austerity, which is the root cause of today’s political impasse.

It is a grim irony that by refusing to bargain for a federal solution, using the second-best option of a return to the franc as his backup plan, Macron has pushed the political centre toward its worst option, substantially increasing the likelihood of a Le Pen presidency in the near future. – Project Syndicate

• Yanis Varoufakis, a former finance minister of Greece, is leader of the MeRA25 party and Professor of Economics at the University of Athens.



SPECTRE: President Emmanuel Macron has pushed the political centre toward its worst option, substantially increasing the likelihood of a Le Pen presidency in the near future, says the author.

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# How rain ruined year-long effort to cover Paris ceremony

By Guy Jackson  
Paris

AFP's coverage of the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympics had been meticulously prepared for a year, with every detail scrutinised to determine the optimal position for the best shot or the best reportage. It was an unprecedented ceremony on the River Seine – an Olympics had never opened before outside the main stadium – and it merited unprecedented coverage. At this Olympics, Paris-based AFP are also 'playing at home'. But all the planning was put in jeopardy by an uninvited guest – the rain.

In the air, on the roofs of monuments in the City of Light, on the decks of boats or on the banks of the Seine, around 60 AFP text and photo journalists were poised to capture history on Friday. Then the rain started falling. And it didn't stop.

"Until the day before, the forecasts said it would rain on Friday morning and that the evening would be dry," said Chief Photo Editor Martin Bureau, who for a year had led the scouting missions to determine the best positions for the 48 AFP photographers involved.

Instead, the hoped-for vivid colours against a Parisian sunset were replaced by rain-blighted gloom before night fell and the spectacle was lit up.

AFP sent out 3,500 photos, which includes the pooled content produced by all the international agencies. That number is double the production for a classic Olympics opening ceremony in a stadium.

"The weather made it harder for all of the photographers," said Martin. "It definitely had an impact, it meant we sent fewer photographs than we had planned."

The rain also meant plans had to be changed fast.

"My position could have produced very different things with different weather conditions," said photographer Julien De Rosa, who spent the day on the north tower of Notre-Dame cathedral, under renovation following a devastating fire in 2019.

Like the other rooftop positions



An overview of the Trocadero venue with the first delegation arriving, raindrops cover the lens, during the opening ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. (AFP)

(at Chatelet Theatre, the Musée d'Orsay, the Louvre, Chailiot and, of course, the Eiffel Tower), access had to laboriously negotiated.

Julien faced strict conditions because of the presence of lead in the renovation – he had to strip to his underwear and put on a disposable white suit, boots and helmet. And then carry 15kg of equipment up the tower, hoping for a magnificent view of the Seine.

Sadly, the clouds and rain spoiled that idea.

"I had imagined doing the series of bridges with La Défense (business district) in the background. It was not possible," he said.

Hovering in the sky above was

another photographer, Lionel Bonaventure, in a helicopter accompanied by an editor who was responsible for transmitting the photos straight to the validation desk at the Olympics Main Press Centre.

The helicopter had to stay on the right bank of the river Seine, at 600 metres.

There were just two helicopters below them – one for US broadcaster NBC which followed the USA boat, and the other from Olympic Broadcasting Services (OBS).

The helicopter had to make several passes in a window of around two hours. "I couldn't open the



Attendees wear rain covers as they sit in the stands with the Eiffel Tower in the background. (AFP)

door, I just took photos through the window. But I had to get back in quickly, because the lens was quickly soaked."

The helicopter ended its flight prematurely at 10pm, landing in the close suburbs and it didn't receive authorisation to take off again. So Lionel's mission was also cut short – but he will remember the experience for years.

"It was still an exceptional thing to be there. I was amazed," he said.

Photographers on the ground had to wear black to avoid showing up on the TV images. Many looked very wet.

"It was hell, but what a great moment, what excitement!" said Franck Fife, who was on the French delegation boat on the Seine.

"The French team got on the boat looking a bit down," he said. "But the atmosphere quickly picked up. There really is a special emotion in this kind of moment. It's really their thing, as athletes. They were impressed by the number of people who had stood in the rain to watch them pass. It was huge. And also I was able to work as I wanted."

His summary of the evening was pictures of joy – and two cameras out of action.

Among other unexpected mishaps a robot camera installed at Trocadero in May to capture the culmination of the ceremony at

the Eiffel Tower was suddenly obscured by a tarpaulin cover that had blown loose on the eve of the show.

One of AFP's robot-camera specialists, Francois-Xavier Marit, managed to move the offending cover out of the way using a seven-metre (23-foot) telescopic rod.

Thank goodness he did – a "surprise" promised by organisers turned out to be French-Canadian superstar Celine Dion belting out a show-stopping number from the first level of the Eiffel Tower and the camera was there to capture the moment.

Text journalists also grappled with the weather.

The normal protection of umbrella, capes, raincoats was insufficient – the rain got everywhere.

"It wasn't easy, but we're not complaining. We were not in a theatre of war, in Ukraine in the middle of winter," said Karine Perret, one of 15 writers spread along the route of the parade.

Adam Plowright was with spectators at the Alexandre III bridge – but it was a tricky evening.

"Like the spectators in the stands, we reporters on the ground could only see a very limited part of the ceremony and spent much of the evening watching big screens to know what was going on," he said.

"Unlike the spectators, we

hadn't paid hundreds, if not thousands of euros, for our seats."

Ben Stansall's job was to record the stunning moment when the Olympic cauldron was lit in the Tuileries Gardens by Jose-Marie Péric and Teddy Riner – it formed the base of a hot air balloon that lifted off the ground in a plume of light.

"It was quite a spectacle because they had smoke coming out of the cauldron and it lit up as it went into the sky. It was really quite something to see," he said.

It was the fifth Olympics opening ceremony Ben has covered – but this experience was very different.

"It is hard to compare because all the previous ones I did were stadium-based. It was very strange not to see anything at all until the relay runners arrived with the torches," he said.

"I had no idea what else was happening in the ceremony until then."

For Photo Chief Martin, several images stood out: Celine Dion's surprise performance; the stunning laser show around the Olympic rings on the Eiffel Tower and huge plumes of white, red and blue smoke on the Austerlitz bridge.

In truth, all the moments AFP recorded on a remarkable night will live on for decades.

## Climate protest in Paris foiled on first day of Olympics

AFP  
Paris

French police yesterday blocked climate activists from holding a demonstration in central Paris on the first official day of the Olympic Games.

Protesters from Extinction Rebellion (XR), once notorious for shutting down bridges over the Thames river in London, had planned to occupy the Pont des Arts bridge over the Seine, which had hosted the Games' opening ceremony only hours earlier.

Yesterday morning, police officers "arrested 45 people belonging to a radical ecology group who were about to carry out a demonstration," Paris prosecutors told AFP.

Security forces are on high alert nationwide after saboteurs early Friday disrupted train travel throughout France.

The stint on the bridge, which organisers previously said would be "more visible than disruptive", was called off after police arrested XR activists before the protest even began, the group said

in a statement. "Around 30 people were preventively arrested Saturday in Paris, without there being any offence to truly accuse them of," Alexis Baudelin, one of the group's lawyers, told AFP.

A group of journalists preparing to cover the protest were also kettled.

"The French government has deployed great resources to block our special Olympic action," Extinction Rebellion France posted on X.

"Our democracy burns and we are watching the flame of Paris 2024."

Activists are calling for more participative democracy and the creation of a citizen assembly to design a new constitution for France, which finds itself in a political impasse following elections earlier this month.

"We need a new model for society, which has to be fair and democratically accepted. We want to put citizens back at the heart of the political project that we want to see," said Sandro, an XR activist who didn't want to give his full name.

The foiled protest comes after

nine XR activists, including a minor, were preventively arrested Friday east of Paris, according to Paris prosecutors.

On Tuesday, eight activists were also arrested and released for putting up stickers critical of the Games in the Paris metro.

Organisers of the 2024 Paris Olympics promised to take "unprecedented" action for the climate by halving the event's carbon footprint compared to previous Games. But academics and campaigners have been sceptical, criticising car giant Toyota's sponsorship of the Games.

Earlier this month, around 100 scientists signed an open letter arguing that "Toyota's promotion of a hydrogen car is scientifically misaligned with net-zero and will damage the reputation of the 2024 Games".

Climate campaigners put up mock adverts in Paris and five other French cities this week highlighting Toyota as a high-emitting company.

Toyota previously told AFP that hydrogen would play "a critical role among different decarbonisation technologies".

## Russia stands to gain as 'irrational' West loses power, says Orban

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said yesterday Russia's leadership was "hyper rational" and that Ukraine would never be able to fulfil its hopes of becoming a member of the European Union or Nato.

Orban, a nationalist in power since 2010, made the comments during a speech in which he forecast a shift in global power away from the "irrational" West towards Asia and Russia.

"In the next long decades, maybe centuries, Asia will be the dominant centre of the world," Orban said, mentioning China, India, Pakistan and Indonesia as the world's future big powers.

"And we Westerners pushed the Russians into this bloc as well," he said in the televised speech before ethnic Hungarians at a festival in the town of Baile Tusnad in neighbouring Romania.

Orban, whose country currently holds the rotating EU presidency, has sharply differed from the rest of the bloc by seeking warmer ties with Beijing and

Moscow, and he angered some EU leaders when he went on surprise visits to Kyiv, Moscow and Beijing this month for talks on the war in Ukraine. He said that in contrast to the "weakness" of the West, Russia's position in world affairs was rational and predictable, saying the country had shown economic flexibility in adapting to Western sanctions since it invaded Crimea in 2014. He added that Ukraine would never become a member of the EU or Nato because "we Europeans do not have enough money for that". "The EU needs to give up its identity as a political project and become an economic and defence project," Orban added. The EU opened membership talks with Ukraine late last month, although a long and tough road lies ahead of the country before it can join the bloc. A declaration at the end of the Nato summit this month said the alliance will support Ukraine on "its irreversible path" towards membership.

## France eyes return to normal on trains

AFP  
Paris

France's national rail operator yesterday said train travel was gradually returning to normal after multiple sabotage acts paralysed the network hours ahead of the Olympics opening ceremony.

It remains unclear who carried out the three attacks overnight Thursday to Friday on rail infrastructure and if they were deliberately timed to disrupt the Olympics opening ceremony that took place later that day.

Tens of thousands of rail passengers struggled through a second day of cancelled and delayed trains yesterday with 160,000 of the 800,000 people due to travel on a major holiday getaway weekend still facing cancellations.

Transport Minister Patrice Vergriete said national rail operator SNCF had mobilised a hundred workers overnight to repair the damage "in difficult weather conditions" and ensure a return to normal for tomorrow.

During the night, "with floodlights, in the rain, they patched up the wires one by one," said SNCF chief executive Jean-Pierre Farandou.

"Everything will be repaired by Monday morning" on the SNCF network, he added.

Fibre optic cables running near the tracks and ensuring the transmission of safety information for drivers, such as signalling lights and points, were cut and set on fire during the night from Thursday to Friday on three of the main TGV lines, in the west, north and east of France.

No claim of responsibility has been made for the meticulously planned night-time attacks. Maintenance workers thwarted a fourth attack.

Paris prosecutors have opened a probe into an attack on "fundamental national interests".

Observers have noted that the nature of the attacks indicate the culprits would have needed deep knowledge of the functioning of the railways.

Interior Minister Gerald Dar-



SNCF employees work at the Gare Montparnasse train station in Paris yesterday. Tens of thousands of rail passengers struggled through a second day of cancelled trains as investigators tracked saboteurs who paralysed the network just ahead of the Paris Olympics opening ceremony. (AFP)

manin said the investigation was progressing, as he also expressed "relief" that the opening ceremony had taken place without any mishap.

"We have uncovered a certain number of elements that allow us to think that we will soon know who is responsible for what clearly did not sabotage the Olympic Games but did sabotage part of the holidays of the French people," Darmanin told France 2 television.

He said it was "too early" to say who was behind the attack. "It could have come from inside (France) or from the outside."

French authorities are on high alert for a terrorist attack during the Games, which run through August 11. Tens of thousands of police and troops are on security duties during the Olympics.

Some 250,000 people missed their train on Friday, according to SNCF.

About three out of every 10 trains were cancelled yesterday in the three regions affected by the attacks, with most trains still operating delayed by between one and two hours, SNCF said.

Nearly one third of trains were cancelled in northern, west-

ern and eastern France. About a quarter of Eurostar high speed trains between Paris and London and Paris and Brussels were also called off.

Bruno Cevalier and Pauline Favard tried to get from Bordeaux in the west to the northern city of Lille for an Olympics basketball game. "We have to change trains in Paris and the games are not going to wait for us," said Cevalier.

Kathleen Cuvellier, speaking in Lille, said her journey to Avignon in the south was going to be "hell".

Cuvellier, travelling with her two-year-old son, said she now had to take a slow train to Paris and then switch to another for Avignon. "The travel time was four hours and now it's going to be seven."

With normal services set to be fully restored tomorrow, the situation is already expected to improve markedly today.

Nine out of 10 TGV high speed trains will be able to run on the western and southwestern lines today, while service will be more patchy in the north, where seven out of 10 trains are due to run, SNCF said. Trains to eastern France have not been affected.



The 2nd Katara Space Science Programme (KSSP) saw more than 400 students take part.

# Katara space programme inspires future scientists



And ... we have lift-off!



The 2nd edition of the Katara Space Science Programme (KSSP), organised by MAPS International in collaboration with Katara – the Cultural Village Foundation, has concluded.

The event, held on July 23-25, featured activities centred around the theme *Rocketing to Infinity: Deep Space Exploration and Returning to the Moon – The Artemis Programme*.

This edition of KSSP brought together a prestigious lineup of scientists, including former US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) chief technologist Jim Adams, and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientists and former directors Dr Brinda V and Prof Dr PV Venkitakrishnan.

Their expertise and insights provided vital experience for all attendees.

The programme was structured into three sessions over three days, each offering a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical experiences.

One of the highlights was the hands-on workshop where the participants built prototype rockets and launched them from the Al Thuraya Planetarium.

Under the guidance and supervision of the visiting scientists, these rockets soared to heights exceeding 100m, providing a tangible demonstration of the fundamental principles of rocket science.

In addition to the scientific presentations and live interactions, the programme featured the second edition of the “Cosmic Canvas – Space Art Exhibition”.

This exhibition showcased art and photography related to the theme, contributed by 20 artists, offering a creative



perspective on space exploration.

The success of the KSSP's July 2024 session was marked by a remarkable turnout of more than 400 students from more than 80 schools across Qatar, alongside corporate officials.

The event served as a dynamic platform for young minds to engage in thought-provoking discussions, interactive workshops, and impactful presentations.

The enthusiasm and dedication displayed by the participants were truly inspiring, highlighting the immense potential of the next generation of scientists.

A notable feature of the programme was the competition, which included impressive prizes such as signed certificates from the visiting scientists.

This not only motivated the participants but also recognised their commitment and passion for space science.

The KSSP, a monthly initiative by Katara at Al Thuraya Planetarium, is open to all, and participation is free.

Interested individuals can register for upcoming sessions through the programme link: <https://apply.katarassp.net>



## Old Doha Port transforms into a luxury yachting haven



Mohamed Abdulla al-Mulla.

By Joey Aguilar  
Staff Reporter

The Old Doha Port has undergone a transformation, emerging as a luxurious yachting haven that is attracting discerning clientele and establishing Qatar as a premier yachting destination, Old Doha Port chief executive Mohamed Abdulla al-Mulla has said.

“Old Doha Port has significantly revolutionised tourism in Qatar

by offering visitors luxury yachting experiences at the port,” he told *Gulf Times*, adding that they forged strategic partnerships, including a co-operation agreement with Yas Marina in Abu Dhabi.

This, he said, is aimed at bolstering maritime tourism and excursions through unique offers and benefits for members of both marinas.

Al-Mulla said the Port collaborates with Qatar’s other marinas, ensuring exclusive benefits for yacht owners throughout the country.

The Port boasts The Cruise Terminal, a gateway for cruise tourism in collaboration with Visit Qatar, offering round-the-clock immigration and customs services.

As the only marina in Qatar capable of accommodating superyachts, he noted that Old Doha Port has positioned the country as a critical destination for luxury sea travel.

This strategic enhancement has diversified Qatar’s tourism offerings and elevated its profile in the global yachting community, according to al-Mulla.

“Old Doha Port uniquely meets all visitors’ needs by combining an official seaport with world-class food and beverage options, mari-

time facilities, recreational amenities, lush greenery, and a 5-star hotel, all in one location,” he said.

The Port’s long-term plans include the launch of the inaugural Qatar Boat Show this year.

This annual event will showcase the pinnacle of luxury yachting, marine innovation, and leisure lifestyle, bringing together local, regional, and international experts in the heart of Doha.

“We have set out to make Old Doha Port a symbol of our nation’s vibrant culture and readiness to meet the demands of the maritime world,” al-Mulla said.

In addition to the Qatar Boat Show, he said that Old Doha Port is welcoming private sector proposals for new concepts within the Mina Park areas and undeveloped plots, encouraging further development and innovation.

The Port features a world-class marina, the colourful Mina District, one of the world’s most beautiful cruise terminals, a reimagined shipping container complex, the nation’s largest slipway, and more than 200,000sq m of greenery.

Its central location in Doha, adjacent to popular landmarks such as Doha Corniche and Souq Waqif, makes it an attractive destination for visitors.



Old Doha Port is the only marina in Qatar capable of accommodating superyachts.