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### Amir, Kazakhstan president discuss enhancing ties

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani discussed yesterday with President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to enhance and develop them. During the phone call His Highness the Amir received from the President of Kazakhstan, they discussed key regional and international developments of common concern. **(QNA)**

### PM, Iran FM review ties, developments

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani held yesterday a phone conversation with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran Abbas Araghchi. They discussed bilateral relations and means to support and enhance them, the latest developments in the region, especially in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon, and ways to de-escalate. The deliberations also tackled several issues of joint interest. **(QNA)**

### Saudi hosts group for Palestinian state

Saudi Arabia yesterday hosted the first meeting of a new "international alliance" to press for the establishment of a Palestinian state. The "International Alliance to Implement the Two-State Solution" brings together nations from the Middle East, Europe and beyond. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan said nearly 90 "states and international organisations" were taking part in the two-day meeting in Riyadh.

### Harris sidelines Biden over 'garbagegate'

Biden has been sidelined by Kamala Harris in the final days of her campaign, with his description of Donald Trump supporters as "garbage" underscoring her campaign's fears that the outgoing president is an electoral liability. US media reported earlier this week that Harris's campaign was distancing itself from the incumbent, and that it had politely rejected his suggestions to make more joint appearances on the stump.

## Preserve family values, urges Sheikha Moza

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser opens the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family Conference yesterday.

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation (QF), yesterday stressed on the challenges faced by contemporary families at the opening session of the 30th Anniversary of the International

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser attends the opening session of the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family Conference on Family and Contemporary Megatrends in Doha yesterday. **PICTURES:** AR al-Baker

Year of the Family Conference on Family and Contemporary Megatrends, organised by Doha International Family Institute (Difi). Addressing the opening session, Her Highness said: "Families from the global North and families from the global South share many concerns. The most prominent are the negative impacts of technology and the issue of preserving mother tongues and cultural identities in an increasingly globalised world." **To Page 12** **Page 8**

## PM meets UN deputy secretary-general

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday at the Amiri Diwan with Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Amina Mohammed, who is visiting the country. During the meeting, the two sides discussed co-operation relations between Qatar and the UN and ways to support and enhance them. They also discussed Qatar's ongoing preparations to host the second World Summit for Social Development 2025 (WSSD2), in addition to discussing the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries 2022-2031. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed Qatar's aspiration to welcome participants from all around the world in Doha, as well as to achieve tangible outcomes that contribute to building a better world. He also expressed Qatar's aspiration to strengthen co-operation with the United Nations. **(QNA)**

## Cabinet briefed on referendum preparations


**QNA**  
Doha

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani chaired the Cabinet's regular meeting held at its seat at the Amiri Diwan yesterday.

After the meeting, HE Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi issued the following statement: At the outset of the meeting, the Cabinet welcomed the Shura Council's approval of the draft constitutional amendments in its session on Monday.

The Cabinet emphasised that the constructive co-operation between the legislative and executive authorities, since the referral of the draft constitutional amendments to the Shura Council until it was approved and submitted to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, has reflected the joint keenness of the two authori-

Minister chairs referendum committee meeting



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, chaired the first meeting of the general referendum committee on the proposed draft constitutional amendments. The meeting discussed the legal frameworks and regulatory procedures for the preparation for the referendum from various aspects and the essential logistical means that streamline Qataris' voting on the proposed draft constitutional amendments. **(QNA)**

ties to implement the Amir's vision, which places national unity above all considerations, upholds the principles of justice, consultation and the rule of law, and promotes equal citizenship in rights and duties.

The Cabinet noted the issuance of Decree No 87 of 2024 inviting citizens to a referendum, which

The Cabinet was briefed on the intensive preparations of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the general referendum committee for the voting on the constitutional amendments, as work is currently underway to prepare all the necessary arrangements and procedures for this national event, which will once again embody another image of the unique cohesion between the Qatari people and their leader.

It also highlights the firm belief in the importance of national unity, social cohesion, and steadfastness on the inherited good values and established national principles.

After that, the Cabinet considered the topics on its agenda, where it approved the draft Cabinet resolution to establish and form a committee to inventory government warehouses. The draft's preparation comes within the framework of unifying the procedures of state warehouses, raising the efficiency of their management, and reducing the efforts and budgets allocated to them. **To Page 8**

## Leadership Innovation Forum kicks off

**By Tawfik Lamari**  
Staff Reporter

The first edition of the Leadership Innovation Forum kicked off yesterday under the title 'Leadership Innovation in the Digital Age', in the presence of HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Qatar Leadership Center (QLC).

The forum included several dialogue sessions, most notably a roundtable titled 'Leadership Development in the Digital Age' and 'Leadership in Crises: Strategies Inspired by the Qatari Experience', in which a group of prominent Qatari figures participated, and reviewed their experiences and strategies in facing challenges. In addition 'Strategic Foresight to Enhance Leader-

HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani and dignitaries attend the first edition of the Leadership Innovation Forum yesterday.

ship Innovation in Governance and Business', brought together a group of experts and specialists to discuss innovative strategies aimed at enhancing innovation in leadership and enhancing its role in achieving sustainable development. **To Page 7**

## Lebanon ceasefire likely before November 5

**AFP**  
Beirut

Lebanon's prime minister said US envoy Amos Hochstein signalled during a phone call yesterday that a ceasefire in the Israel-Hezbollah war was possible before US elections are held on November 5. "The call today (Wednesday) with Hochstein suggested to me that perhaps we could reach a ceasefire in the coming days, before the fifth of November," Najib Mikati said in a televised interview with Lebanese broadcaster Al-Jadeed.

Top US officials, including CIA Director William Burns and envoys Brett McGurk and Amos Hochstein, will visit Egypt and Israel today, the White House

confirmed, as Washington seeks to de-escalate tensions in the region. CENTCOM's commander, US Army General Erik Kurilla, also is in the region and will visit Israel as part of the American effort to discuss Iran, Lebanon and the release of hostages in Gaza, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters yesterday.

The latest diplomatic push comes amid efforts to halt hostilities between Israel and Lebanese armed group Hezbollah.

Asked about the potential for such a ceasefire potentially within the next week or two, Jean-Pierre said the White House remained hopeful and was committed to reaching some kind of diplomatic resolution, but gave no other indication about the negotiations.





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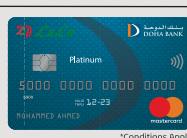


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## Shura Council committee discusses media content on digital platforms



The Education, Culture, Sport and Information Committee of the Shura Council held its first meeting in the current session under the presidency of Chairman of the Committee Khalid bin Ahmed al-Obaidan. At the outset of the meeting, the committee elected Hamad bin Abdullah al-Mulla as Vice-Chairman of the committee by acclamation, in accordance with what was stipulated in the new internal regulation of the Shura Council. During the meeting, the committee proceeded to discuss the request for holding a public discussion on regulating media content and publishing it on digital platforms and decided to complete its studies in the upcoming meeting. **(QNA)**

## Ministry attends roundtable on labour market challenges

The Labour Market Information and Research Department of the Ministry of Labour participated yesterday in the ‘Economist Roundtable’ organised by the Middle East Council on Global Affairs to discuss challenges in Qatar’s labour market. This initiative is part of the ministry’s efforts to strengthen relations with research institutes and study centres. This participation falls within the framework of ongoing co-operation between the Ministry of Labour, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and other relevant stakeholders. The discussions centred on identifying labour market challenges and

exploring effective strategies to address the skills gap in critical sectors of the Qatari economy. In this context, Director of the Labour Market Information and Research Department Hussain Ali al-Hababi said that this engagement aligns with the ministry’s commitment to achieving Qatar National Vision 2030, noting that this vision aims to address the skills gap in the private sector, enhance national workforce participation in the labour market, attract highly skilled expatriate workers, and foster a knowledge-based economy. The discussions also covered strategies for enhancing efficiency and fostering innovation

to advance Qatar’s labour market. A key initiative presented at the meeting was the ‘Enterprise Skills Survey’ (ESS), which aims to collect comprehensive data from employers on current and future skill needs across various strategic economic sectors. This survey embodies the Ministry of Labour’s vision to strengthen the competitiveness of Qatar’s labour market and achieve sustainable development objectives. It seeks to contribute to building a robust economy that meets the population’s needs and ensures a high standard of living for the Qatari people, both now and in the future. **(QNA)**



## Defence minister meets Kosovo counterpart



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohammed al-Attiyah met yesterday with the visiting Kosovo Defence Minister Ejup Maqedonci and his accompanying delegation. The meeting discussed topics of common interest. They also discussed co-operation relations between the two sides and ways to enhance and develop them. The meeting was attended by senior officials and officers from both sides. **(QNA)**

## Pakistan, Vietnam PMs arrive in Doha

Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Doha yesterday on an official visit to the country. He and the accompanying delegation were welcomed upon arrival at Doha International Airport by HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi, Qatar’s ambassador to Pakistan Ali bin Mubarak al-Khater and Pakistan’s ambassador to Qatar Dr Muhammad Ejaz. **(QNA)**



Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh arrived in Doha yesterday on an official visit to the country. He and the accompanying delegation were received upon arrival at Doha International Airport by HE the Minister of State Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Sayed, Qatar’s ambassador to Vietnam Khalid Ali Abdullah Abel, and Vietnamese ambassador to Qatar Nguyen Huy Hiep. **(QNA)**

# How Treasure Deal Makes a Difference

Treasure Deal offers more than just an online marketplace. The platform caters to individuals and businesses, offering easy access to a wide range of services, from loyalty system to flight and hotel room booking services to restaurant delivery system, taxi ride and reservation system in addition to the daily purchases and luxury shopping. “this is the only one application concept, after almost two and half year of hard work development and engineering treasure deal is coming to make the deference” says Al-Rifai

**“Our goal is to rethink e-commerce and create something beyond just buying and selling,” says Al-Rifai. “We’re building a digital space that provides everything individuals and businesses need while we keep prices competitive.”**

Moreover, the TD app will simplify the decision-making process, making it easier for users to navigate the platform and get the most value from their purchases.

### AI and User Experience: Enhancing Shopping through Technology

Treasure Deal uses AI technology to improve various aspects of the e-commerce experience. The system simplifies online shopping by providing access to reliable and profitable deals, helping customers avoid the usual complexities.

**“We developed in-house AI to help drive our platform’s success,” says Al-Rifai. “Our focus is on providing users with a smooth, secure shopping experience while giving merchants tools to stay competitive.”**

For merchants, its AI tools market trends to provide outstanding customer service, helping them to showcase products effectively. For customers, the platform offers personalized recommendations and



MOHAMMAD GHASSAN AL-RIFAI

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connects them to quality goods and services at fair prices, making the shopping process more accessible for everyone.

### Strategic Partnerships for Success: Building Long-term Relationships

At Treasure Deal, we prioritize building solid relationships with like-minded organizations that share our vision for revolutionizing the eCommerce sector. We believe that our cutting-edge technology solutions can not only develop traditional business models but also open new avenues for investment and profitability.

We are seeking for a strategic partnership with esteemed business development banks and venture capital firms that specialize in technological investments.

**“On behalf of Treasure Deal, a pioneering force in the eCommerce technology landscape. As we continue to expand our innovative, we recognize the invaluable role of strategic partnerships in fostering sustained growth and success”.** says Al-Rifai.

### Al-Rifai Unveils Plan for the Future of Online Shopping

Treasure Deal is preparing for its soft launch

and will participate in the upcoming two biggest events in the region for technology and e-commerce, WORLDEF event in Dubai and Web summit in Qatar. At the events, Al-Rifai will share his thoughts and plans for the future of e-commerce, highlighting Treasure Deal’s outlook on improving the digital shopping experience.

**“We want Treasure Deal to be the go-to platform for those looking for good deals and an easy shopping experience,” says Al-Rifai. “We’re building something that will improve how people engage with e-commerce.”**

**Al-Rifai added, “We invite Influencers, Service Providers, Suppliers, freelancers, Restaurant Franchises, and businesses to build a strategic partnership to grow their exposure with us. There are exciting opportunities for companies to connect to target audiences with incredible benefits.”**

Treasure Deal confident that it can offer a valuable service for users. The company focuses on collaboration and mutual benefit, aiming to establish itself as a significant player in the e-commerce industry.





HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani with international and regional celebrities and industry leaders at the 2024 FTA Prize.

# Fashion Trust Arabia announces 2024 winners

Fashion Trust Arabia (FTA) hosted its sixth annual FTA 2024 Prize at the iconic El Badi Palace in Marrakech, Morocco, as part of the Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture, bringing together international and regional celebrities and industry leaders to honour seven exceptional designers.

Qatar Museums chairperson and FTA co-chair HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani welcomed guests alongside FTA co-founder Tania Fares. They reiterated their commitment to supporting the next generation

of fashion talent from the Mena region.

The evening, hosted by the renowned international actress Angela Bassett and Egyptian actor Ahmad Helmy, was attended by notable guests such as Alton Mason, Aya Nakamura, Balqees Fathi, Carla Bruni Sarkozy, Da'vine Joy Randolph, Evan Ross, Farida Khelfa, Halima Haden, Hande Erçel, Helena Christensen, Imaan Ammam, Jameela Jamil, James Blake, Jodie Turner-Smith, Isabelle Huppert, Lucien Laviscount, Nadine Njeim, Natalia Vodianova, Nicky Hilton, Paloma Elsesser,

Paris Jackson, Precious Lee, Richard E. Grant, Taraji P. Henson, Yasmine Sabri among others and Sophie Ellis-Bextor took the stage to perform her biggest hits. The winners were chosen by a jury, consisting of industry experts. The 24 designer finalists showcased their collections and competed in various categories: Ready-to-Wear, Eveningwear, Accessories, Jewellery, the Franca Sozzani Debut Talent Award, the Guest Country Award (in partnership with Spain), and the newly launched Fashion Tech Award.

The winners of the 2024 FTA

Prize: Ready-to-Wear designer: Nadine Mosallam; Eveningwear designer: Yasmin Mansour; Accessories designer: Reem Hamed; Jewellery designer: Noura Abdulaziz al-Saud, Sara Naif al-Saud and Mashael Khalid al-Saud; Franca Sozzani Debut Talent Award: Sylwia Nazzal; Fashion Tech Award: Batoul al-Rashdan; Guest Country Award - Spain: Francisco Barroso & Javier Garcia.

Each winning designer receives a cash prize ranging from \$100,000 to \$200,000, as well as a personalised, one-year mentorship programme provided by

FTA's Retail Partners and a global network of industry professionals.

This comprehensive support covers vital topics in fashion business development, including sustainability through mentorship from Maison De Mode.

Additionally, the winners of the Ready-to-Wear, Eveningwear, Accessories, and Jewellery categories will have their collections carried at Harrods internationally and Ounass in the Mena region.

Yasmin Mansour, the Qatar-based designer who won the FTA Prize in the "Evening Wear" cat-

egory, said: "This is my first time visiting Marrakech, as part of the Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture events, and it was an honour to receive the award from Princess Lalla Hasna. "I want to thank Qatar and HE Sheikhha Al Mayassa for their constant support and encouragement, not just for me, but for all creatives in Qatar and the Arab world. I'm also happy to show the public my work that I completed in Doha, this was a message I've been working on for a while, and finally we see 'Made in Qatar' within this fashion category."

# QU announces launch of 'AI Week 2024'

Qatar University (QU)'s Artificial Intelligence Association announced the launch of the third annual AI Week 2024, under the sponsorship of Vodafone Qatar. This event aims to create an interactive platform that highlights the latest innovations and advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), a crucial component of sustainable development in Qa-

tar and globally. In his opening remarks, Dr Abdullah Hamed al-Mulla, Director of Student Activities at QU, said: "AI Week 2024 is a unique opportunity for students to enhance their skills using modern AI technology, preparing them to keep pace with rapid global developments."

Dr al-Mulla also highlighted AI Week's contribution to fostering scientific knowledge and broad-

ening students' horizons.

Ali Atiq al-Abdulla, Head of Media Relations and CSR at Vodafone Qatar, stated: "Our focus at Vodafone Qatar is to build robust partnerships with institutions and strengthen co-operation, driven by our belief that together we can build a stronger community and enhance socioeconomic progress within the country." Kawthar Barakat,

President of the AI Association at QU, affirmed that 'AI Week 2024' serves as a vibrant platform that brings together students, researchers and experts to acquire advanced skills and explore the latest applications in this dynamic field.

AI Week 2024, which will commence on November 12, will feature a diverse array of activities. (QNA)





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CELEBRATING TWO  
DECADES IN QATAR


## Qalam: Great Writers in Conversation with Kamila Shamsie

### Ahdaf Soueif, Booker Shortlisted Author

Sunday, November 10 | 5:30-7:00 PM | Auditorium, Georgetown University in Qatar



Ahdaf Soueif is a writer and activist. She is the author of the celebrated novel, *The Map of Love*, shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 2000 and translated into more than 30 languages. Ms. Soueif is the translator of Mourid Barghouthi's *I Saw Ramallah*, and the curator and editor of *Reflections on Islamic Art* and *This is Not A Border*.



Ahdaf Soueif is the Founder and Chair of the Palestine Festival of Literature (PalFest), a Patron of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, and the Caine Prize for African Writing (UK), a Trustee of *al-Mawred al-Thaqafi* (Beirut) and of the International Prize for Arab Fiction - IPAF. She was the first recipient of the Mahmoud Darwish Award in 2010, and in October 2019, she was honoured with the European Cultural Foundation's Princess Margriet Award for Culture.

**Kamila Shamsie**  
Women's Prize for Fiction winner, *Home Fire*  
Inaugural Writer-in-Residence  
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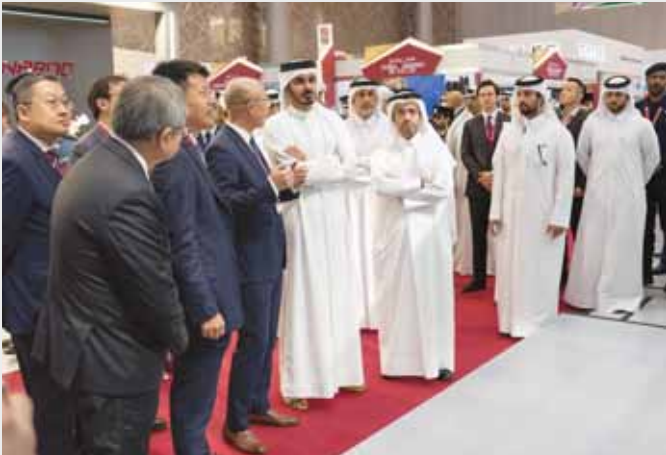


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Interior minister visits pavilions of international, local firms



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani yesterday visited the pavilions of major international and local companies participating in the 15th edition of Milipol Qatar Exhibition. He was briefed on the pavilions and sections of the exhibition which displayed the latest innovations and technologies in security, safety, cybersecurity and civil defence, besides a number of military vehicles, weapons, modern armoured cars and smart technology programmes in the fields of internal security. (QNA)



Ministers visit Milipol Qatar 2024



HE the Minister of Transport Jassim bin Saif al-Sulaiti and HE the Minister of State for Interior Affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal bin Mohammed al-Thani visited the Milipol Qatar 2024 exhibition yesterday. The two ministers visited the Ministry of Interior's pavilion and were briefed on the advanced technical devices and equipment by its various departments. They also toured the pavilions of international and local companies, where they checked the most prominent innovative technological products and devices in the fields of internal security and safety. (QNA)

LoI signed by Lekhwiya, German Police



HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani witnessed the signing of a Letter of Intent (LoI) between the Lekhwiya Force and the German Federal Police on the sidelines of the Milipol Qatar 2024. The agreement, according to an official statement from Mol, was signed on behalf of the Lekhwiya Force by Staff Brig Mubarak Sherida al-Kaabi, Assistant Commander for Administration and Logistics and on behalf of the German side by Dr Dieter Roman, Chief of the German Federal Police.

Milipol Qatar concludes deals worth over QR269mn

The deals concluded on the first and second days of the 15th Milipol Qatar Exhibition and Conference 2024 totalled QR269,584,657, the Milipol Qatar Committee announced yesterday. Milipol Qatar Committee Member, Major General Saud Rashid al-Shafi told at a press conference the deals included contracts with Abdullah Abdulghani Motors at QR95,732,008, Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Company at QR7,709,521, Alzomar Trading Company at QR2,003,115 and Al Fahd Trading and Contracting Company at QR2,202,600. Also among the deals were contracts with Universal Technical LLC at QR41,978,327, Traffic Tech at QR2,964,348, Ishhar Security Services at QR86,875,488, Saudi Chemical Company at QR8,786,250 and Turkish Ares Company at QR21,333,000. (QNA)

Al Abdulghani Motors main official sponsor for Milipol



Al Abdulghani Motors, the official distributor for Toyota and Lexus in Qatar since 1964, is the main official sponsor for Milipol Qatar 2024, which concludes today at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre. As the official car for Milipol Qatar, Toyota is providing a fleet of 45 vehicles to transport the delegates attending the exhibition. At its booth, Al Abdulghani Motors has showcased a selection of Toyota vehicles. Abdulghani Nasser al-Abdulghani, CEO of Al Abdulghani Motors, introduced the displayed models to HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin

Khalifa al-Thani, along with other government officials and dignitaries on the opening day. On the sidelines of Milipol Qatar 2024, al-Abdulghani signed an agreement with Lt Col Mubarak Sherida al-Kaabi, Assistant Commander of Lekhwiya Force for Logistics and Administration, to supply Toyota vehicles. The booth has showcased several Toyota vehicles, including two exclusive models: a never-before-seen Toyota Crown themed as a Traffic Department patrol vehicle and a new Toyota Prado themed as an Al-Fazaa Department patrol vehicle. The booth also features a line-up of Land Cruiser vehicles used by the Amiri Guard, the Industrial Security Force, and Hamad

Medical Corporation, a new model from the Toyota 70 series and a specially modified Toyota Land Cruiser fitted with aftermarket parts and accessories, enhanced for better performance and safety, and a new design of the Lekhwiya Land Cruiser. Al-Abdulghani said: "Milipol Qatar is an important global platform for homeland security and safety, and we are pleased to continue our support for this year's edition, which we have been supporting since 1996. As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of our partnership with Toyota and the 25th anniversary of our collaboration with Milipol, we are displaying specially designed Toyota vehicles for this event."

Yemeni minister visits Lekhwiya HQ



Yemen's Minister of Interior Maj Gen Ibrahim Ali Ahmed Haidan yesterday visited the headquarters of the preparatory for 'Watan Exercise-2024' at the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya). The minister was received by Staff Lt Col Yusuf Atiq al-Hamad, director of the Watan 2024 exercise. The Yemeni Minister of Interior was briefed on 'Watan 2024 Exercise-2024', scheduled for November 10-13, 2024. The exercise aims to integrate roles and responsibilities to achieve community security and safety and to enhance the readiness of government, security, and military sectors.



Milipol hosts international security conference on AI

A special international conference on artificial intelligence (AI) for homeland security and safety technology at Milipol Qatar 2024 featured a series of sessions focusing on the pivotal role of AI in addressing escalating global security threats and explored avenues to leverage technology to enhance security efforts. During the conference, a key highlight of the 15th edition of Milipol Qatar, leading global experts discussed AI innovations

and ethics focusing on four main themes: AI and smart technologies, AI in security operations, ethics of AI and security challenges and opportunities in AI. According to a statement from the Ministry of Interior, HE the Minister of State for Interior Affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal bin Mohammed al-Thani inaugurated the conference. Experts discussed the ethics of using AI in the security and safety sectors. Engineer Khalid al-Sayed spoke

about AI and its role in balancing privacy and security. He emphasised the importance of predictive policing in data analysis to ensure maximum effectiveness in maintaining both privacy and security. The experts discussed the ways of overcoming challenges related to AI technology and privacy and the role of authorities in taking responsibility for protecting individuals' privacy and ensuring the safe and responsible use of the advanced technology.

Sweden seeks deeper defence ties with Qatar

By Peter Alagos  
Business Reporter

Sweden's Defence Minister, Pal Jonson, has presented a comprehensive strategy aimed at strengthening defence co-operation with Qatar in an exclusive interview with Gulf Times.

Jonson, who was in the country recently for this year's edition of Milipol Qatar, emphasised that the initiative builds on a letter of intent for military co-operation that was signed on the sidelines of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's state visit to Stockholm last month.

With a letter of intent in place, Jonson said potential partnerships between Sweden and Qatar in areas like cybersecurity, maritime protection, and space-based capabilities, are significant factors when addressing various security challenges and regional stability.

The minister also lauded Qatar for its role in international mediation efforts, referring to Doha as "a centrepiece of dialogue and discussions."

Sweden and Qatar have numerous potential areas for collaboration, emphasised Jonson, who also noted that engaging in a series of partnerships in various fields presents several advantages. The minister pointed out that a comprehensive strategy for defence co-operation between Sweden and Qatar presents



Swedish Defence Minister Pal Jonson during the interview with Gulf Times.  
PICTURE: Thajudheen

a significant shift in both nation's relationship in terms of military collaboration, potentially leading to deeper technological and security partnerships.

According to the minister, underwater protection of critical infrastructure could be one potential area of co-operation, noting Qatar's developments in this domain. He emphasised that Sweden has developed a "steep learning curve" in underwater infrastructure protection, citing lessons from the Nord Stream and the Balticconnector incidents.

Similarly, cybersecurity is another essential area for collaboration, stated Jonson, who highlighted Sweden's distinct sectoral approach to digital defence.

He explained that the Swedish government has divided critical infrastructure protection into several distinct sectors, each ad-

ressing specific security needs in the country. Describing Sweden as "one of the most digital countries in the world," the minister also emphasised the importance of bridging the gap between digitalisation and cybersecurity.

Asked about potential collaboration on space-based military capabilities, the minister said Sweden has recently launched a new strategy for security and defence aspects of space, underlining the dramatic increase in the global deployment of satellites.

According to Jonson, Sweden also designated funding for military satellite capabilities and possesses the only space launch facility located within the EU.

Highlighting Sweden's substantial investments in research and development (R&D) and focus on fostering STEM education, Jonson noted the importance of long-term partnerships and technology transfer in defence co-operation, following the country's "triple helix model" involving government, industry, and academia.

According to the minister, Sweden's recent Nato membership could further enhance bilateral opportunities with Qatar, particularly given the Gulf nation's status as a major non-Nato ally of the US and its role in regional security. "Sweden brings extensive experience in international defence co-operation, having been Nato's closest partner for three decades," Jonson added.

Meetings at Milipol Qatar



On the sidelines of the Milipol Qatar 2024, the Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Security Affairs Sheikh Nayef bin Faleh al-Thani on Tuesday met Lt Gen Alamshozoda Abdurahmon, First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan and Vepaly Ataev, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Turkmenistan. The meetings, according to a statement from Mol, discussed several topics of mutual interest and reviewed co-operative relations in security fields and ways to support and develop them.





# Leadership Innovation Forum kicks off

From Page 1

In his opening speech, Abdulla Mohammed al-Binali, general manager, Qatar Leadership Center (QLC), stressed that the forum coincides with the centre's celebration of its 15th anniversary. He explained that the forum is an effective platform that contributes to shaping the future of leadership in Qatar and promoting a culture of continuous learning, providing valuable opportunities to build strategic relationships that contribute to advancing development and administrative excellence in the public and private sectors.

He reviewed the achievements of Qatar Leadership Center since its establishment, and its success in developing an elite group of leaders, and enhancing their presence and influence in national institutions through innovative training programmes and international partnerships, to keep pace with the requirements of leadership in Qatar and the rapid changes in the local and international work environment.

The contribution of the centre was also stressed, which includes more than a thousand graduates, in developing policies and managing major projects in various sectors in the country.

He considered that gathering specialists and graduates on one platform would enhance their capabilities in anticipating the future and building a sustainable future in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

Saleh al-Khulaifi, chairman of the Qatar Leadership Center Alumni Association, highlighted that the forum goes beyond being an event to become an embodiment of the values that the centre has instilled in its graduates.

These include resilience and continuous learning, noting that they have organised more



Innovation in leadership roundtable.



Abdulla Mohammed al-Binali, general manager, QLC.



Saleh al-Khulaifi, chairman of the Qatar Leadership Center Alumni Association.

than nine events in the past six months, including 'Meet the Leader' sessions, community visits, and sports events, which proves that education does not end with graduation.

He also stressed the importance of resilience in the face of the challenges facing graduates, indicating that transforming challenges into opportunities for

growth is the essence of what graduates have learned from the centre, as resilience has become a key factor in achieving innovation and growth.

The forum witnessed the participation of speakers and experts from around the world, to represent a leading platform for leadership development in Qatar.

The forum has the attend-

ance of 17 local and international speakers from Qatar, the Middle East, South Korea, the United States of America and the United Kingdom, in addition to a number of academics and experts specialised in various fields, to discuss the topic of leadership innovation, and to present innovative visions and strategies for leadership in the digital age.

## CRA launches public consultation on draft regulation of Postal Quality of Service obligations

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) has launched a public consultation on the draft regulation of Postal Quality of Service (QoS) Obligations, as part of its commitment to fostering transparency, accountability, and high standards in Qatar's postal services. This draft regulation is now open for comments and feedback from stakeholders and other interested parties. The consultation period will close on November 12, 2024. The draft regulation sets out baseline service standards for all postal Service Providers in Qatar, with specific requirements for Universal Services provided by Qatar Postal Services Company (Qatar Post). These standards are intended to ensure that all postal Service Providers offer consistent, efficient, and reliable services to consumers. The regulation outlines reporting requirements and sanctions for non-compliance, helping to maintain accountability across the sector. The regulation is developed in response to the requirements of the Law No 15 of 2023 Promulgating the Law Regulating Postal Services. It introduces clear service benchmarks that all postal Service Providers must meet, including standards for timely delivery, service availability, and customer

satisfaction. Special obligations are placed on Qatar Post, the Public Postal Service Provider, to ensure that Universal Services are provided to the highest quality across the country. The regulation also focuses on enhancing transparency within the postal sector by requiring Service Providers to publish Quality of Service metrics and submit regular performance reports to CRA. These measures will help consumers track service standards while ensuring that postal Service Providers remain accountable for their service performance. This public consultation offers an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to shaping a regulatory framework that supports the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030, which emphasises sustainable development and world-class infrastructure. The inputs received during this consultation will play a crucial role in finalizing a regulation that ensures fair competition, protects consumer rights, and enhances service quality across the postal sector. CRA invites all interested parties and stakeholders to submit their comments and feedback on the draft regulation via e-mail. The draft regulation and the consultation guidelines are also available on CRA's website. (QNA)

## Ban on grazing in the wild

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change has announced a ban on grazing of sheep and goats in the wild for the second season starting from November 1 until April 30, 2025.

This is according to the ministerial decision No 23 for 2023 regarding the extension of camel grazing ban and the regulation of goats and sheep grazing all over the country.

The decision is meant to maintain the local ecological systems and guarantee the growth of the seasonal plants and herbs, in addition to enhancing the stock of seeds in the soil to help maintain biological equilibrium in the country.

It has been proven that without the seasonal ban on grazing, many plants and the environment in general will be destroyed.

## Media City Qatar partners with Leadership Innovation Forum

Media City Qatar was the media partner for the inaugural Leadership Innovation Forum 2024 (LIF) held yesterday in Doha. Organised by Qatar Leadership Center (QLC) under the patronage of its chairperson, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, LIF brought together global thought leaders and innovators to explore the theme 'Leadership Innovation in the Digital Age'. The partnership highlighted Media City Qatar's commitment to supporting groundbreaking events that drive forward leadership and innovation in the region, a statement said. The participants, including QLC alumni, explored leadership needs in the digital age, with a focus on AI advancements. At the forum, Media City Qatar played a pivotal role in driving media engagement. The partnership further reinforced Media City Qatar's mission to position the country as a global leader in media and technology, in alignment with Qatar National Vision 2030.



Media City Qatar CEO engineer Jassim Mohamed al-Khori said: "Our involvement in the inaugural LIF, in collaboration with Qatar Leadership Center, was about shaping what's 'next' in Qatar's creative and business landscape." QLC general manager Abdulla Mohammed Khalifa Albinali said: "Through this collaboration, we are working towards establishing Qatar as a hub for forward-thinking leadership, while shaping the future of the digital age."

## HMC launches Sealine clinic for winter camping season

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) will open its Sealine Medical Clinic for the 2024/2025 winter camping season in the Sealine area today (Thursday), marking its 15th consecutive year of operation. The clinic will remain open throughout the season until April 30, 2025. Hassan Mohammad al-Hail, chief communications officer at HMC and project manager for the Sealine Medical Clinic, explained that the clinic will operate throughout the season every weekend, opening at 2pm each Thursday and remaining operational without interruption until 10pm on Saturdays. This weekly schedule will continue throughout the camping season. Al-Hail said: "The opening of the Sealine Medical Clinic each camping season reflects HMC's commitment to providing safe, compassionate, and effective year-round healthcare for everyone in Qatar, regardless of their location." "The clinic is conveniently located in its usual spot on the Sealine beachfront, allowing easy access for both patients and visitors. The clinic offers

medical and emergency services to all beachgoers and campers in the Sealine and Khor Al Adaid areas during the camping season," added Al Hail. Al-Hail expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change for its continued co-operation with HMC on the Sealine clinic project, as well as to those involved in maintaining the Sealine area as a leading tourist and leisure destination by providing amenities such as shops, restaurants, and cafes. He also urged all visitors to the area to follow safety guidelines and take precautions, especially when swimming, barbecuing, or preparing food, to ensure a safe and enjoyable camping experience. Dr Warda Ali Alsaad, senior consultant of Emergency Medicine at HMC and medical supervisor of the Sealine Clinic, said that the clinic is fully equipped with necessary supplies and medications and accepts all types of medical emergencies. A physician and nurse will be on-site during the clinic operating hours, with a helipad for air ambulance support nearby. (QNA)

## MoPH reviews National Health Strategy implementation plans

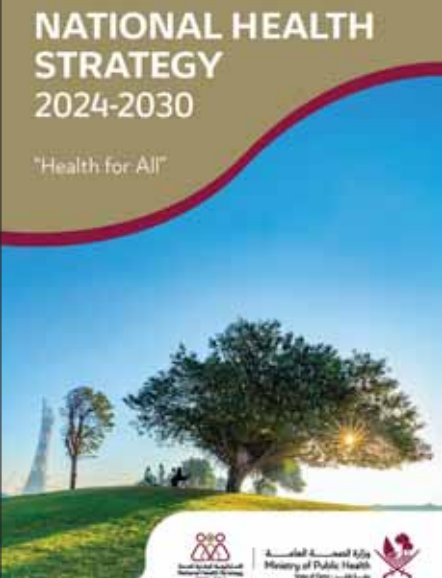
The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) recently held a workshop focusing on the executive action plan for the upcoming phase of the National Health Strategy 2024-2030.

The event was attended by strategy outcome leaders and their deputies.

Dr Salih al-Marri, Assistant Minister for Health Affairs at the Ministry of Public Health and Leader of the Strategy's First Priority, 'Improved Population Health and Well-being', opened the workshop by presenting the aspirations of the National Health Strategy 2024-30. He reviewed the strategy's progress and its alignment with Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Development Strategy 2024-30.

Dr Mariam Abdul Malik, managing director of the Primary Health Care Corporation and leader of the Second Priority, 'Excellence in Service Delivery and Patient Experience', delivered a briefing on the governance framework of the new strategy, including a comprehensive overview of the National Health Strategy Committee and its reporting structure.

Huda al-Khtheeri, director of the Strategic Planning and Performance and Innovation Department at the Ministry of Public Health and leader of the Third Priority, 'Health System Effi-



ciency and Resilience', presented the outcomes, initiatives, and projects of the strategy, with each priority leader offering insights on their respective priorities.

The workshop reviewed key areas for implementing the National Health Strategy 2024-30, including the communication plan, strategic alignment, resource allocation, and the next steps for project alignment with the National Planning Council. It featured an interactive session with attendees to ensure inclusivity and to communicate concepts related to processes, workstreams, governance structures, and the responsibilities required to achieve the strategy's goals.

The National Health Strategy aims to fulfil the health sector's ambition to build a health-focused society supported by an integrated health system centred on clinical excellence, sustainability and innovation through a range of initiatives designed to achieve the strategy's 15 defined outcomes.

Key outcomes of the National Health Strategy 2024-30 include enhancing public health awareness, empowering patients and caregivers, proactive disease prevention and detection, ensuring comprehensive and integrated health and well-being across all sectors, developing updated and comprehensive care models, pathways, and standards, and achieving excellence in primary, community, secondary, and specialised care.

## HMC creates awareness on World Osteoporosis Day

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) joined the global efforts to focus on bone health by marking the World Osteoporosis Day.

This year the focus was on raising awareness of the importance of bone health, promoting early diagnosis, and educating people on the risk factors and preventive measures for osteoporosis. The overarching theme, "strong bones for a lifetime," highlights the need to maintain bone health through all stages of life.

"As part of the campaign, a booth at Hamad General Hospital featured information sessions for healthcare professionals and the public, aiming to spread knowl-

edge and improve outcomes. By enhancing public awareness, promoting proactive management, and fostering a culture of bone health, the WOD campaign seeks to reduce the incidence of osteoporosis and improve overall patient care," said Dr Nabeel Abdulla, consultant from HMC's Rheumatology Division.

He explained that osteoporosis is a condition characterised by weak and brittle bones, which increases the risk of fractures with minimal trauma, especially in older adults. He emphasised the importance of early detection and awareness, noting that osteoporosis puts individuals at higher risk of fractures, particularly older



HMC raises awareness of the importance of bone health.

adults and women. Dr Abdulla pointed out key risk factors, including older age, female gender, family history of osteoporosis, and lifestyle habits like diet, exercise, and smoking.

The campaign at HMC stressed preventive measures such as maintaining a calcium-rich diet, ensuring adequate vitamin D intake, and engaging in regular weight-bearing exercises to keep

bones strong. Dr Abdulla highlighted the seriousness of osteoporosis-related hip fractures, with over 100 cases reported at Hamad General Hospital's Emergency Department in 2023 alone.

"Hip fractures can reduce a person's ability to live independently and possibly even shorten their life as well. They place a considerable burden on the well-being of the individual, their family and carers. Other osteoporotic fractures, such as vertebral and distal forearm fractures, were even more frequent than hip fractures," he highlighted.

Dr Abdulla said HMC has established specialised clinics aimed at early identification and treatment of osteoporosis-related fractures.

"At the forefront of these initiatives is the Fracture Liaison Service Clinic, located at the Bone and Joint Center and Al Wakra Hospital. This clinic focuses on identifying patients who have suffered fractures due to osteoporosis, ensuring they receive timely treatment to prevent future incidents," he stated.

HMC also operates Rheumatology Osteoporosis Clinics which proactively screen and treat patients at risk for osteoporosis before they experience fractures. "Referrals to these clinics come mostly from orthopaedic and primary care doctors. Treatments help reduce the risk of hip fracture by up to 40%, and vertebral fractures by 30-70%," he added.





HE the Minister of Transport Jassim Saif Ahmed al-Sulaiti and Difi executive director Dr Sherifa Noman al-Emadi at the conference yesterday.

# Difi conference explores ways to support families

Policies to protect families in countries affected by conflict, the global impact of population decline, and striking a balance between work and family life were placed in focus on the opening day of the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family Conference on Family and Contemporary Megatrends yesterday.

Organised by Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Doha International Family Institute (Difi), the two-day conference brought together experts and policymakers from around the world to explore key global megatrends affecting families, policies and programmes that strengthen the family's place at the heart of society.

In a session titled 'Shattered Lives: The Impact of War and Conflict', Dr Nour Naim, executive director of AIMinds Academy, spoke about the targeted destruction of the middle class and education in Gaza – where she is originally from, and where her father continues to work as a frontline doctor despite being injured.

She explained that the situation in Gaza is dismantling the connection between families and their homeland, forcing them to migrate to different corners of the world, but said: "Despite the ongoing tragedy, family bonds have reached a peak, with families making decisions together about displacement and their fate."

"The strength of the Gazan community lies in these tight family ties. Families are moving into each other's homes, living together as if they were one family. These values are the foundation of society in Gaza. Unlike what typically happens in wars, there is a strong civil society with youth volunteers working to support poor families



A panel discussion at the conference.

and assist with nursing care."

Speaking in a discussion on 'Work-Family Reimagined', Dr Maimoonah Khalil al-Khalil, secretary-general, Family Affairs Council, Saudi Arabia, highlighted the main challenges and opportunities facing working families in the country, saying: "Research has shown that when both parents are both working and away from home for long hours, it affects fertility, marriage age, and divorce rates, so initiatives must be introduced to ensure that women are active in the workforce, but also to ensure that we are practising the role of parenting well."

The panel 'Saving the Earth, Securing the Family' explored the impact of climate change on families, focusing on the effects of climate-induced migration, food security, water scarcity, and eco-anxiety. "Climate change is multidimensional, and we need to deal with it in a holistic manner," Mahinur Ozdemir Gokta, Minister of Family and Social Services, Türkiye, said.

Dr Mohammed Behnassi, senior environmental expert at the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, based in Rabat, Morocco, highlighted three interconnected climate change phenomena affecting families. "First is climate-induced displacement; second is food insecurity, which is worsened by climate change; and finally, war

insecurity," he said. "These inter-related challenges are triggering what we call climate migration – migration that is triggered by environmental issues and is amplified by water stress, flooding, desertification, and deforestation."

Speaking at the conference on the issue of declining fertility rates, data scientist and demographer Stephen Shaw said: "Four out of five women who remain childless for life were planning to have children."

"Life is complicated – 'not yet' and 'I'm not ready' are the most common phrases I heard in every single country I visited during my research. I believe society needs to help women have children, as some are waiting for the right time and others are searching for a good partner."

During a session titled 'Family Time X Screen Time: Finding the Right Balance', Abeer al-Khalifa, president of Pre-University Education, QF, emphasised the importance of co-operation between families and schools to ensure there is a positive environment for students using technology.

"Parents face many challenges, including the digital trust gap, as there is a big difference between parents and children in terms of their ability to use various technologies or electronic platforms," she said.

# The Sufferings of Gaza book launch at QPC

The Qatar Press Center (QPC) hosted the signing ceremony of the book *The Sufferings of Gaza... Very Short Stories* by writer and media figure Dr Ahmed Abdulmalik. The ceremony is the first of the activities and programmes of the Cultural Press Committee headed by Mohammed Salaan al-Marri.

The book includes 60 selected stories about major issues that the residents of the Gaza Strip have been experiencing for more than a year, but they were presented in a few words that are very similar to Japanese haiku poetry. They were presented in 128 pages, summarizing the suffering of the residents of the Gaza Strip and the betrayal of the world that claims to be free, while it witnesses the crimes of the occupying entity without moving a finger.

The signing ceremony was attended by Khaled al-Obaidan, member of the Shura Council, Ali Bakhtiari, Cultural Counsellor at the Iran embassy in Qatar, and a number of writers, intellectuals, the public and interested parties.

Sadiq Mohammed al-Amari, Director General of the Center, stressed that the launch of the book *The Sufferings of Gaza... Very Short Stories* comes amidst the escalating events in the Gaza Strip, and the crimes that the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples are being subjected to as a result of the ongoing Israeli aggression against the two peoples, without anyone knowing where the hand of aggression will extend. Noting that the event is the first of the programmes and activities of the Cultural Press Committee, he looked forward to the committee continuing its programmes with the same strength of presentation, and discussing issues that have an impact on local affairs. He stressed that the door of the Qatar Press Center is open to creators, and it will always stand by inspiring initiatives that add to the centre and the Qatari community.

Mohammed Salaan al-Marri appreciated the efforts of the QPC in shedding light on cultural affairs and embracing activities and programmes that would enrich culture and intellectuals, so that Qatar would be a beacon for the cultural movement not only at the local level but also regionally and globally. He announced the availability of the book *The Sufferings of Gaza... Very Short Stories* electronically. To encourage the new generation to read, for a symbolic



Second from left, Dr Ahmed Abdelmalik



Part of the audience.

price of 5 Riyals and its equivalent in other currencies, readers will be able to read the book for a week. This initiative aims to encourage reading and convey the voice of Gaza to the world through this book.

Dr Ahmed Abdulmalik expressed his gratitude to QPC for its efforts in supporting various literary arts, and for giving him the opportunity to host the signing ceremony of his 50th book, which reflects the suffering of the Palestinian people, especially during the bloody war and the genocidal war committed by the occupying enemy for more than a year.

Abdulmalik said he sought to complete this work in conjunction with the first anniversary of the war witnessed by the Gaza Strip in light of the Security Council's slumber, and the great powers that claim to be biased towards human rights while they are witnessing the massacres committed against the residents of the Gaza Strip, leaving more than 43,000 martyrs and wounded, more than 10 thousand missing, and 1.9mn displaced; that is, nearly 85% of the residents of the Strip have become displaced according to UN-RWA, and many are suffering from malnutrition and famine that has killed dozens of children and the elderly.

He said: "Taking the step of abbreviating the tragic stories witnessed by Gaza and its people was a cry from a free Arab citizen amidst a lot of political hypocrisy, so I had to leave my mark and record this historical era with my pen for the generations that will come after us. So I chose to write in the style of Japanese haiku poetry, which summarises a big issue in a few words in a rich creative style, not famous in the Arab and Gulf region, and I found this method more appropriate in light of the digital age that has become superior to other styles of writing in many cases."

Abdelmalik indicated in his presentation that he began writing these texts by abbreviating dozens of scenes, then he began writing until 120 stories were formed. From these he selected 60 stories, and each story was accompanied by an image drawn by AI to emphasise the importance of technology and the necessity of using it in these situations. To facilitate and accelerate the printing and publishing procedures, thanking in this context Dar Nebras and the team in charge of it that facilitated many tasks and technical details for him. Before the signing ceremony, there were a number of interventions from the audience.

# Doll-making and recycling workshop at Katara ends

A unique workshop, titled "The Art of Doll-Making and Recycling" recently concluded at Katara – the Cultural Village, spanning three days and featuring participants in the 10-15 age group from Al Dana Girls Centre.

The aim was to enhance the artistic and creative skills of young girls, with a strong focus on the importance of recycling as a means of environmental protection and sustainability.

The participants learned how to use recyclable materials such as paper and cardboard to create innovative dolls that reflected their imaginations and ideas. The instructor

provided detailed explanations and diverse artistic techniques, fostering the girls' self-confidence and encouraging them to express their creativity.

At the workshop's conclusion, a special tour of Katara's facilities was organised. Participants enjoyed visits to the Postal Stamp Museum and the Traditional Dhow Museum, where they learned about Qatar's maritime and cultural history. They also watched a film at Al Thuraya Planetarium, adding a rich cultural and educational experience to their programme.

Such educational workshops are an essential part of Katara's strategy to support

arts and culture, playing a significant role in developing youth skills and raising cultural and environmental awareness. Through these activities, Katara aims to create an inspiring learning environment that enables participants to explore new skills.

Ongoing workshops at Katara cover diverse fields such as fine arts and creative writing, reflecting Katara's commitment to promoting arts and culture within the community. These initiatives open new horizons for the younger generation, contributing to the development of creativity, innovation, and the shaping of an aware and creative generation.



# Cabinet briefed on referendum preparations

From Page 1

The Cabinet also approved the draft Cabinet resolution amending some provisions of Resolution No 32 of 2013 appointing the Chairperson and members of the Grievances Committee of the Qatar Financial Markets Authority.

The Cabinet decided to approve a draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) for co-operation in the fields of tourism and business events between the governments of Qatar and Algeria.

The Council was also briefed on the MoU between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar and the Folke Bernadotte Academy – the Swedish peace, security, and development agency (FBA) in Sweden, regarding co-operation in the field of peace, mediation, and conflict resolution, signed on 3-9-2024.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Cabinet reviewed three reports and took appropriate decisions regarding them. These included the second report on the results of the work of the steering committee of the Government Resource Planning and Management System project – June 2024, the annual report on the activities of the Qatar Financial Markets Authority (QFMA) and its financial position for the fiscal year 2023, and a report on the results of the participation of Qatar delegation headed by HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry in the Qatari-Finnish businesspersons forum.

# Qatar offers blend of events in November

Qatar's event calendar features an array of cultural, artistic, and sporting activities with the beginning of the winter season, according to Qatar Tourism (QT).

Qatar Calendar offers a seamless way to stay up to date with the events. With art exhibitions, theatrical performances, and thrilling sports events, November promises a variety of experiences catered to all tastes.

In a press statement, Sheikha Noor Abdulla al-Thani, head of Tourism Events and Festivals Organising Section at QT, said: "Our vision for the newly revamped Qatar Calendar is to establish a central hub where both residents and visitors can explore the country's vibrant and diverse range of events."

Art aficionados can look forward to the Hermes Heritage Exhibition at the National Museum of Qatar (NMQ), running until November 9, which showcases the exquisite craftsmanship behind the iconic Hermes brand.

The Mal Lawal 4 Exhibition will also take place at NMQ from November 20-April 2025, providing a

unique opportunity to explore Qatar's rich heritage.

From tomorrow, the Chaumet & Nature Exhibition will take centre stage at M7, Gallery 3, Msheireb Downtown Doha, showcasing the delicate relationship between luxury and the natural world.

The Tethkar Exhibition, from November 2-6 at Al Jewan Hall, Al Dana Club, features a diverse array of artistic and cultural artefacts.

The King Kong 2 Theatrical Play will run at Katara Drama Theatre from today to November 2.

The family-friendly Abracadabra 2 will take place at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) from today to November 4.

Musical highlights include a concert by Kadim al-Sahir at Katara Amphitheatre on November 7. The Nawal El Kuwaitia Concert is on November 21.

Families can also look forward to Disney on Ice Presents Let's Celebrate Show at Ali Bin Hamad Al Atiyah Arena from November 22-30.

The Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix 2024 takes place at

the Lusail International Circuit from November 29-December 1. The Qatar Running Series (QRS) Fall Edition 2024, which began on October 18, will run until November 29 across various stadiums in Qatar.

Al Shaqab International Arabian Horse Show, showcasing the beauty and elegance of Arabian horses, will be held at the Longines Indoor Arena, Al Shaqab, from November 6-9. AutoMadness Qatar Exhibition, with displays of unique and luxury vehicles, is from November 21-23.

The 2nd Doha Promotion Tournament 2024 (Padel) will run from November 18-24 at the Khalifa International Tennis & Squash Complex. Football fans can revel in the Legends El Clasico, where Real Madrid will take on Barcelona at Khalifa International Stadium on November 28.

The Qatar Boat Show 2024 will take place at Old Doha Port from November 6-9, showcasing some of the world's most prestigious yachts.

The Qatar Travel Mart 2024 will be held at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre from November

25-27, gathering industry experts to explore the latest trends in global travel and tourism.

The 14th Katara Traditional Dhow Festival will celebrate Qatar's maritime heritage at Katara Beach from November 27-December 7.

AlGhorrah for Literature and Arts, an event that celebrates a wide range of arts, including theatre, music, poetry, is from November 28-December 2. The Ajyal Film Festival 2024 is from November 16-23.

The International Tegahwa Exhibition, which runs from November 14-22, is set to bring together art and culture enthusiasts, while the WISH 2024: World Innovation Summit for Health will take place on November 13-14, focusing on innovative health solutions.

Families can enjoy the Katara Children Festival from November 23-25, along with the Geekend Market from November 20-23.

Hospitality Qatar 2024 will be hosted from November 12-14, showcasing the latest trends in the hospitality sector.



# Zulal Wellness Resort wins Qatar Tourism Awards



Zulal Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som, Qatar's first full-immersion wellness destination and the largest in the Middle East, won both the Exceptional Resort Experience and Exceptional Spa Experience honours at the Qatar Tourism Awards 2024, a statement said. Presented by Qatar Tourism and the World Tourism Organisation, Qatar Tourism Awards recognise innovation and excellence in the nation's tourism sector, aiming to raise awareness of the country as a world-class tourism and leisure destination.



Ammar Samad, general manager of Zulal Wellness Resort, said: "Receiving these awards is a recognition to our Zulal family, who create personalised wellness journeys that inspire positive, sustainable lifestyle changes for our guests. As Middle East's premier wellness destination, our passionate wellness team empowers each guest with knowledge and tools to embrace a healthier lifestyle. "We remain committed to leading the way in holistic and innovative approaches to health, enhancing the wellbeing of our guests through our unique programmes and exceptional service."

## Zulal Wellness Resort gets new GM

Chiva-Som International Health Resorts, a pioneering brand in transformative wellness globally, has appointed Ammar Samad as the general manager of Zulal Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som in Qatar, a statement said.

A seasoned hospitality professional with more than 20 years of experience, Samad brings a wealth of knowledge, leadership, and passion to the helm of Zulal Wellness Resort, underscoring its commitment to holistic wellness and exceptional guest experiences.

In his previous roles, Samad led end-to-end operations, ensuring exceptional guest experiences and optimal profitability, while overseeing the successful opening and management of multiple properties of some of the most well-known hotel groups in Doha. His expertise in managing spa and recreation facilities has further solidified his leadership in both the hospitality and wellness industries.

Raised in the US, Samad has a global outlook on hospitality. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and marketing from La Roche College, followed by further studies at Georgetown University.



Ammar Samad

"Wellness is more than a professional focus for me; it's a lifestyle," Samad said. He was particularly drawn to Chiva-Som's core values: putting people first—both guests and employees—and embracing wellness as a shared commitment, not just a tagline.

His belief that wellness is integral to overall wellbeing drives his leadership approach and aligns perfectly with the resort's holistic offerings, combining Traditional Arabic and Islamic Medicine (TAIM) with modern health principles.

Krip Rojanastien, chairman and CEO of Chiva-Som, said: "Ammar's leadership, dedication to wellness, and deep understanding of the region make him the perfect fit for Zulal Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som."

## EuroCHRIE 2024 Conference to begin in Qatar on November 5

The event will bring together more than 150 delegates from over 35 countries, offering a dynamic platform for dialogue and collaboration on the evolving landscape of hospitality and tourism

The EuroCHRIE 2024 Conference, described as a landmark event for hospitality and tourism educators is set to begin on November 5 at the National Museum of Qatar.

EuroCHRIE is the European Federation of the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education, dedicated to connecting educators and industry leaders in hospitality, tourism, and events.

The conference taking place in Qatar for the first time, will be hosted by Al Rayyan International University College (ARIU), the oldest private higher education institution in the country and the only provider of university-level hospitality and tourism education.

EuroCHRIE 2024 will run from November 5-8 at ARIU's campus and other select venues



"We are deeply thankful to our platinum sponsors – QNB, Visit Qatar, and Katara Hospitality – for their commitment to advancing hospitality and tourism education"

ues under the theme 'Hospitality and Tourism in a New Era: Building Bridges and Overcoming Challenges'.

The event will bring together more than 150 delegates from over 35 countries, offering a dynamic platform for dialogue and collaboration on the evolving landscape of hospitality and tourism.

Prof Ivan Ninov, executive dean of ARIU and EuroCHRIE 2024 conference chair, said that having the



event in Qatar for the first time reflects the region's rising importance in global hospitality and tourism education.

"We are deeply thankful to our platinum sponsors – QNB, Visit Qatar, and Katara Hospitality – for their commitment to advancing hospitality and tourism education," he said. "We also recognise Qatar Museums, our gold sponsor, and our silver sponsors – CoStar Group SHARE Center, the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI), and the National Restaurant Association (ServSafe)," he added.

For more information and to register, visit EuroCHRIE 2024 website, the statement added.

## New GM for Sheraton Grand Doha



Peter Katusak-Huzsvar

The Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel has announced the appointment of Peter Katusak-Huzsvar, an industry veteran with more than three decades of luxury hospitality experience, as its new general manager.

The Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel is a defining icon in the city's skyline, a statement said. Renowned for its distinctive pyramid architecture and prime location along the Arabian Gulf, the hotel seamlessly fuses Qatari heritage with modern sophistication.

Peter has earlier served in Doha as the opening hotel manager of W Doha in 2008 and as a task force general manager at Sheraton Grand Doha in 2015.

"Peter's deep market knowledge and innovative leadership make him the perfect choice to lead this iconic property forward," said Safak Guvenc, area managing director luxury, Marriott International. Throughout his career, Peter has held pivotal roles in renowned hotels across Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, including The Ritz-Carlton Jeddah, W Dubai – The Palm, SO/Vienna, W Dubai – Al Habtoor City, W Guangzhou and W St Petersburg, transforming them into city landmarks. His expertise in pre-openings, rebranding and repositioning has set industry standards.

In 2023, Peter was named General Manager of the Year by Hotelier Middle East. He was also included in Hotelier Middle East's General Manager Power 100 List UAE in 2021 and 2022. Further accolades include the Stephen Garff, Marriott Award of Excellence for Culture and the Debbie Marriott Harrison Leader of the Year Award in 2022 and 2021, respectively.

With 371 beautifully designed rooms and suites, award-winning dining venues and a cutting-edge convention centre, Sheraton Grand Doha continues to be the preferred destination for business and leisure travellers seeking an unparalleled and refined experience, the statement added.

## QNL unveils lineup of cultural events in November

QNA  
Doha

Qatar National Library is hosting a myriad of cultural activities and celebrating the Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture in November through a series of engaging lectures, performances and exhibitions that highlight the rich heritage of both nations.

On November 2, the library kicks off its monthly activities with a creative writing challenge inspired by the internationally popular National Novel Writing Month. As part of the challenge, the library's English Creative Writing Circle will meet every week in November to write a 50,000-word novel in just one month.

On November 4, the Library hosts the latest instalment in the seminar series, "Western Travellers Accounts of Qatar: A Historical Perspective".

The session will provide valuable insights into the Library's travelogue collection through a series of presentations that will focus on the unique perspectives that travelogues offer into the country's cultural, political, economic

and geographical history.

The Library celebrates the rich tapestry of folk culture on November 5 with a performance of Folks Beautiful Melodies by the CineMoon Ensemble.

Visitors will have the opportunity to experience the enchanting sounds of folk music and hear traditional tunes come alive in a captivating show.

On November 6, the Library, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and Hamad Medical Corporation, hosts an engaging and insightful lecture to explore practical strategies for nurturing mental well-being.

Titled "Nurturing your Mental Health – What Works", the session will cover evidence-based approaches to managing stress, anxiety and emotional health, while offering tips on self-care, mindfulness and building resilience.

A week later, on November 13, the Library kickstarts its monthly activities as part of the Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture with a study day titled, "The Ancient Libraries of Morocco: From Preserving Manuscripts to Beacons of Knowledge".

The event will provide an in-depth ex-

ploration of the historical development of ancient Moroccan libraries, tracing their founding and evolution to the current day.

The Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture events resume on November 18 with the Library hosting the "Let's Talk Morocco!" reading circle to discuss the country's history, art, food and cultural scene.

On November 21, the focus turns to youth with the Library hosting the latest instalment of the "Our Children Matter" forum to support language development among young people.

Titled "Reading Challenges Insights and Strategies to Effectively Support Language Development," the session will address the challenges that children face not only in education, but also in their personal, social and family lives, as well as the importance of reading.

The Library launches the second edition of its seminar series, "From the Memory of Private Collections in Qatar," on November 25 which sheds light on how family libraries are more than just personal treasures, but serve as essential pillars of Qatar's rich cultural heritage.

The Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture activities return on November 26

with "From Material to Market: The Art of Book-Making in Morocco", an exhibition that brings to life the centuries-old traditions and techniques of book production in Maghribi tradition.

A hands-on workshop will also take place on the sidelines of the exhibition to shed light on the history of Moroccan calligraphy, offering participants the opportunity to learn and practice this art.

On November 27, the Library hosts another event centred around Morocco, this time to explore the history and cultural significance of Moroccan tea, delving into the traditions, rituals and social aspects associated with this iconic beverage, and providing insights into its origins and how it has become an integral part of Moroccan society.

On November 29, the Library turns its focus to Palestine, hosting an event for young adults to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

The event explores the role of social media in conveying the truth about Palestine and its impact on society, and will also showcase items from the Library's heritage collection, including manuscripts related to Palestinian history.

## GU-Q, QM launch 'Gérôme X Georgetown' panel series

Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) has partnered with Qatar Museums (QM) to launch Gérôme X Georgetown, a four-part series running from November 2024-February 2025.

The series offers an in-depth exploration of the influential 19th Century French painter Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), whose widely disseminated work shaped both cultural narratives and artistic techniques, with lasting resonance today.

Guided by Sheikha Nouf Mubarak bin Saif al-Thani, deputy director of Learning and Outreach at Lusail Museum and Postdoctoral Fellow at GU-Q, the event series is hosted at GU-Q and runs alongside the "Seeing Is Believing: The Art and Influence of Gérôme" exhibition at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art.



Prof Dr Alain Fouad George

The exhibition organised by the future Lusail Museum and Mathaf will showcase more than 300 artworks to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the artist's birth. Through this collaboration, audiences will have a unique opportunity to engage with Gérôme's artworks through a critical lens drawing from the historical record to inform con-



Dr Emily Weeks

temporary understandings of representation, art, and culture.

"We hope that through Gérôme's work, audiences will confront the complex legacies of Orientalist art and reflect on how visual culture has influenced the way cultures perceive each other across time," said Sheikha Nouf. "This series is an invitation to examine these his-



Dr Giles Hudson

torical perspectives and foster understanding of how art continues to shape cultural narratives and perceptions."

The series opens on November 3 with "Curators in Conversation," a panel discussion featuring the curators of the Seeing is Believing, Dr Emily Weeks, Dr Giles Hudson, and Sara Raza, moderated by Prof Dr



Sara Raza

Alain Fouad George, director of the Lusail Institute. Together, they will offer fresh perspectives on Gérôme's legacy and his ability to blend historical storytelling with breathtaking realism. The event promises an engaging dialogue for art lovers, students, and scholars alike.

Gérôme's works, such as The Death of Caesar and The Slave

Market, are renowned for their meticulous attention to detail and almost photographic precision. Beyond their artistic value, these pieces invite reflection on the enduring influence of Orientalist art on perceptions of the "Orient."

Gérôme's art serves as a gateway for broader conversations on how history, power, and representation intersect in visual culture – topics that continue to be debated in the art world today.

Building on the vision of Dean Safwan Masri to position GU-Q at the forefront of interdisciplinary learning and cultural dialogue, this partnership with QM offers students and the wider community rare access to top global art experts and enriching discussions that bridge the past and present, encouraging audiences to rethink the stories art tells.



CHAIRMAN

Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

Deputy Managing Editor

K T Chacko

- P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar
- editor@gulf-times.com
- 44350478 (News),
- 44466404 (Sport),
- 44466636 (Home delivery)
- 44350474
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GULF TIMES

China’s fiscal package to stabilise rather than boost growth

China’s planned fiscal package targets damaged property and local government balance sheets that weigh on the economy and fuel deflationary pressures, thus acting as a stabiliser rather than the instant growth booster markets craved.

Larger-than-expected monetary stimulus last month fuelled unfettered investor speculation about a complementing, blockbuster fiscal programme to immediately revive sagging economic activity.

On Tuesday, Reuters reported that China is considering approving next week new debt issuance of more than ¥10tn (\$1.4tn) in coming years.

Some ¥6tn will go chiefly towards lowering the off-books debt of municipalities, while ¥4tn will fund buybacks of idle land from cash-strapped developers and help reduce a giant inventory of unsold flats.

The measures in the works represent a more calibrated approach to stimulus, which is a departure from previous all-out strategies to revive growth.

In 2008, for example, China threw lavish resources directly at the infrastructure and property sectors to counter the effects of the global financial crisis.

“The primary goal of this stimulus is clearly more about shoring up balance sheets rather than boosting near-term GDP growth,” said Christopher Beddor, deputy China research director at Gavekal Dragonomics.

“It should ease the strains, but not necessarily generate instantly higher spending.”

This prudent approach is partly informed by the fact that China is now suffering from the excesses of previous stimulus. But it also leaves open questions about the impact the measures will have on short- and long-term growth.

This prudent approach is partly informed by the fact that China is now suffering from the excesses of previous stimulus

Local governments, facing high debt and falling revenues, have been cutting civil servants’ pay and other expenses. Property developers starved for cash have struggled to resume work on incomplete projects, hitting jobs and incomes.

China hopes to unclog the pipes that transmit money to businesses and consumers by shifting liabilities onto the central government’s healthier balance sheet, which only carries a debt load of 24% of GDP.

“Policymakers seem to sense that there’s a major liquidity squeeze right now unfolding among local governments, in large part due to the property downturn, leading many local authorities to stop paying their staff and corporate suppliers,” Gavekal’s Beddor said.

Tackling that squeeze releases resources into the real economy, but the impact may only show up in the second half of 2025, he added.

Another lingering question is whether the package merely postpones the debt crunch.

The International Monetary Fund calculates explicit local government debt at 31% of GDP at the end of 2023, that of their finance vehicles at a further 48% of GDP, and other government-related debt at another 13%.

Add the central government’s debt and the total reaches ¥116tn, the Fund estimates.

In the property sector, Goldman Sachs estimates the unsold real estate inventory, if fully built, would amount to ¥93tn.

Overcoming these past excesses hinges on whether the package can kick off a virtuous growth circle that allows China to curb, rather than simply transfer these liabilities.

Many analysts say a decades-old household consumption deficit holds back such prospects.

Low wages, high youth unemployment and a feeble social safety net leave China’s household spending below 40% of GDP, or about 20 percentage points behind the global average.

While Beijing is also expected to unveil consumer subsidies for appliances and other goods, the amount will be a tiny fraction of the gap.

“It seems support for consumption remains modest,” said Louis Kuijs, chief Asia economist at S&P Global.

“That means it remains unlikely that we will see a substantial improvement of the economic growth outlook or that deflation risks have been vanquished.” — Reuters

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As US election nears, Europe frets over Ukraine war, Nato

Reuters spoke with over 20 senior European officials about the impact on Ukraine of US vote. One theme dominated their comments: Uncertainty

By Andrew Gray, John Irish and Lili Bayer  
Brussels

As Kamala Harris and Donald Trump enter the final days of their close-fought White House contest, Europe is jittery about the potential impact of the US presidential election on the war in Ukraine and the continent’s security.

“A half-sentence uttered in a farm in southern Idaho brings everybody from Porto to Helsinki to panic,” Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg quipped to Reuters, urging Europeans to stay calm to avoid feeding a sense of insecurity.

Finnish President Alexander Stubb told Reuters “all of us are waiting for the elections to be over” due to their international ramifications.

When it comes to Ukraine and European security, many European officials say they are worried about a win for Republican former president Trump on November 5, given turbulent transatlantic relations in his previous term, his past strong criticism of Nato and his ambivalent view of Kyiv’s fight against Russia’s invasion.

They say any end to the Ukraine war that Vladimir Putin sees as a victory could embolden the Russian president to attack a Nato country. A German spy chief warned this month Russia could be in a position to do so by the end of the decade at the latest.

Putin has denied he has any intention of attacking a Nato country.

In recent weeks, Reuters spoke with more than 20 senior European officials about the impact on Ukraine of the US vote. Many spoke anonymously

to discuss a vital ally. One theme dominated their comments: Uncertainty, fuelled by what they cited as Trump’s unpredictability during his 2017-2021 first term.

Together with the Biden administration, European officials have implemented measures they say should soften the blow of any quick withdrawal of US aid to Kyiv were Trump to take office in January, including a \$50bn loan to Ukraine and a rejig of military aid co-ordination.

Those would be only a temporary reprieve for Kyiv, however.

Harris, the Democratic candidate and President Joe Biden’s vice-president, is widely expected to keep supporting Ukraine while seeking to avoid escalation if she wins the election.

Harris has been strongly critical of Putin and has said that if she wins she will work to ensure Kyiv prevails in the war and achieves a just peace, although she has not set out a detailed Ukraine strategy.

Trump has said that if he wins on November 5 he could end the war in a day, before even taking office. He has not said how he would do so.

He has also criticised the amount of US aid given to Ukraine, has repeatedly called President Volodymyr Zelensky “the greatest salesman on Earth” and this month accused him of helping start the war, even though the conflict broke out after Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Trump added, “that doesn’t mean I don’t want to help him because I feel very badly for those people”.

In response to a request for comment for this story, Karoline Leavitt, a Trump campaign spokesperson, said: “When President Trump was in office,

Nato was strong, there was no war in Ukraine, and the Middle East was stable.”

She said Trump would “restore world peace through American strength and ensure European nations carry their weight by paying their fair share to our mutual defence to lighten the unfair burden on American taxpayers”.

**Tough moment for Kyiv, allies**

The tight US election race comes at a tough moment for Kyiv and its European backers.

Moscow’s forces are advancing in eastern Ukraine. A harsh winter looms after massive Russian attacks on energy systems.

Domestic political troubles weigh down German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron. Public finances are tight across the continent. Russia-friendly populist parties have scored election successes in recent months in the European Parliament, Austria, and eastern Germany.

“The longer it (the war) lasts, the harder you have to work to maintain support for it because the more there will be voices that say: ‘Why are we prolonging this conflict? It’s a huge meat grinder,’” said a senior diplomat from a Nato country.

The main measure that Europeans hope would cushion Ukraine from any sudden US policy change is the G7 loan of \$50bn, using profits from frozen Russian assets.

The loan — details of which were agreed last week — should allow Kyiv to keep buying arms even if American aid is cut.

“The G7 \$50bn for Ukraine is really important,” said a Western official. “Get that done and I think Ukraine is really fairly well set for 2025”.

Nato, meanwhile, is setting up a command to co-ordinate military aid for Ukraine, taking over much of the work of a US-led ad-hoc coalition.

Officials say putting the effort under a Nato military structure insulates it from sudden political change. But it is far from bulletproof, given the US is Nato’s dominant power.

**Trump appeal**

In public comments, European officials are aiming to influence Trump and his supporters by declaring that a victory in Ukraine for Putin would make the US look weak and embolden both Russia and China to challenge American power.

Nato boss Mark Rutte declared this month that Trump understands the war “is not only about Ukraine, it’s also about the safety and the future security of the United States”.

Trump and Harris met Zelensky separately in New York in September.

The Ukrainian leader has not publicly favoured either candidate, but said after the meetings it was important “America has a direct understanding of Ukraine” and that the war “must be stopped with fairness, so that no aggressor will ever do what Russia is doing”.

Not all European leaders are nervous about Trump. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, a Trump ally, opposes military aid to Ukraine and has made clear he thinks Trump shares his views.

Some Ukrainian and Eastern European officials, by contrast, speculate Trump might cross red lines set by Biden by giving more long-range arms and ending a ban on striking deep inside Russia — if Putin refused or reneged on any deal he offered. — Reuters



LOOMING SPECTRE: Republican presidential nominee and former US president Donald Trump and Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky at the Trump Tower in New York City last month. (Reuters)



# Is digital diplomacy the future?

## ■ From conflicts to collaboration, a new diplomatic DNA

By Laura Iancu

In a reality overshadowed by wars, conflicts, and an unending flood of global disinformation, are we really probing into the root of problems to find lasting solutions?

Shouldn't we be rethinking diplomacy in an era where mainstream media often fans the flames of chaos rather than fostering understanding?

Digital diplomacy, a powerful approach to global relations, offers a bold solution — one that moves beyond the old power structures of yesteryear and the delegation of authority that seems to have built up around “this is how we do it” diplomacy. It creates opportunities for collaboration, transparency, and peace. But why aren't more countries embracing it fully? And more importantly, who should lead this transformation?

It's time to question whether we're doing enough to counter the vast scale of disinformation plaguing the world. Can conventional diplomacy, with its closed-door negotiations and slow-

moving bureaucracy, really keep up with the speed at which false information spreads? Digital diplomacy, powered by technology and social platforms, is the antidote we need — one that engages the public, provides real-time fact-checking, and delivers accurate, trustworthy information. But are we ready to embrace this shift? And, even more critical, who is truly prepared to wield this powerful tool effectively?

Innovations like Big Data are fundamentally reshaping how nations communicate and engage with one another. Research shows that nearly 75% of diplomatic missions are now using social media to communicate and engage with the public.

Imagine a country with a unique diplomatic DNA and commitment to stability that stands out as the nation best positioned to lead in this arena. This is a country with a long-standing tradition of fostering dialogue, mediating high-stakes conflicts, and advocating for peace. Such a nation embodies the very principles of digital diplomacy.

This country's leadership in digital diplomacy is not just about extending its influence — it is about building a more secure and interconnected world.

**Innovations like Big Data are fundamentally reshaping how nations communicate and engage with one another. Research shows that nearly 75% of diplomatic missions are now using social media to communicate and engage with the public.**

But as disinformation continues to fuel division, are nations willing to step up and challenge the lies being perpetuated online? Why aren't we seeing more global collaboration on this front? When false narratives spread like wildfire, digital diplomacy can be the key to putting out those flames before they cause irreparable damage. Yet, for all its potential, why does it remain underutilised by many countries that claim to advocate for peace?

Can digital platforms serve as the new negotiation tables for international diplomacy? Maybe the real question is, why are we so slow to adopt this vision on a global scale? Are we ready to trust technology to guide us toward peace, or are we still too fearful of its impact on international relations?

In an era where disinformation is the weapon of choice for those seeking to destabilise nations, digital diplomacy may be the most important tool we have to combat it. Shouldn't we be asking ourselves why this approach hasn't been universally adopted yet? How many more conflicts fuelled by misinformation need to erupt before we recognise that digital diplomacy isn't just an option — it's a necessity?

As we navigate a world divided by wars, misinformation, and power struggles, the path to peace lies not through more conflict, but through smarter diplomacy. Could this ideal leader in the digital diplomacy space be Qatar, a country that has quietly championed stability and peace? Is Qatar equipped with this new diplomatic DNA?

## India, China ‘complete troops pull-back’

India and China have completed pulling back their troops from two face-off points on their disputed Himalayan frontier as planned, an Indian defence official said yesterday.

The nuclear-armed neighbours reached a deal last week on patrolling the frontier in the Indian territory of Ladakh to end a four-year military stand-off, paving the way for improved bilateral political and business ties. The disengagement that began last week has been completed and verification of the process is in progress, the Indian official told Reuters. Soldiers will exchange sweets in a goodwill gesture today and will begin their patrols of the frontier soon after commanders on the ground finalise the modalities, he added.

There was no immediate comment from Beijing on the troops pull-back. The mostly undemarcated border of about 4,000km that runs along the Himalayas has been a source of tension between the world's two most populous nations for decades and led to a brief but bloody war in 1962.

Four years ago, 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers were killed during border clashes. The two sides then stopped patrolling several points on the border in Ladakh to avoid new confrontations, while moving tens of thousands of new troops and military equipment closer to the freezing mountainous region. They later pulled back troops from five face-off points but the last such withdrawal took place over two years ago. Days after the two countries reached their new border pact, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held their first formal talks in five years on the sidelines of a Brics summit in Russia and agreed to boost communications and resolve conflicts to help improve relations.

## Biden to attend presidential swearing-in even if Trump wins

President Joe Biden will attend the inauguration of the next US president in January regardless of who wins next Tuesday's election, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters yesterday, vowing a peaceful transfer of power. “This president believes in the peaceful transfer of power, and that's what you're going to see this president do,” Jean-Pierre said. “It's not about him. It's about the American people. That's what the American people need to see regardless of who wins.” “He certainly is going to partake in that,” she said, noting that outgoing presidents regularly attended the inauguration of their successors. She made no mention of Republican former president Donald Trump's decision to not attend Biden's own inauguration in January 2021.

## Judge extends mail ballot deadline after Trump lawsuit

A judge in the swing state of Pennsylvania yesterday extended the deadline for voters in Bucks County to request a mail-in ballot after Donald Trump's campaign sued alleging that some supporters seeking ballots were improperly turned away. Voters in that county, which narrowly voted for Democratic President Joe Biden in the 2020 election, will have until tomorrow to apply for, receive or return a mail-in ballot, according to an order from Judge Jeffrey Trauger. The lawsuit filed earlier yesterday by the Trump campaign, Republican US Senate candidate Dave McCormick and the Republican National Committee said that voters were turned away from a county office on Tuesday after long lines formed ahead of a 5pm deadline to apply for a mail-in ballot. Pennsylvania is one of seven states likely to decide the outcome of the election and its 19 electoral votes are seen as crucial for either Trump or his opponent Democratic Vice-President Kamala Harris to win the presidency.

# Spain races to rescue victims as floods kill 95

AFP  
Sedavi

Spanish rescuers yesterday scrambled to save people trapped by surging tides of muddy water in floods that killed at least 95 people, tossed cars and wreaked transport havoc.

Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez urged citizens to remain vigilant as the danger persisted and three days of mourning were declared in the European nation's worst such disaster in more than 50 years.

Heavy downpours and fierce winds have lashed Spain since the beginning of the week after a storm formed over the Mediterranean Sea, with up to a year's worth of rain falling in just hours in some areas.

The body co-ordinating emergency services in the eastern Valencia region announced a provisional death toll of 92, adding that bodies were still being recovered and identified.

Two people died in neighbouring Castilla-La Mancha and another victim was reported in Andalusia in the south, both regions' leaders told journalists.

The toll is likely to rise because “there are many missing people”, government minister Angel Victor Torres told public broadcaster TVE.

A sea of piled-up cars and mud swamped streets in Sedavi, a suburb of the Mediterranean coastal city of Valencia, AFP journalists saw.

Stunned residents attempted to clean the sludge and grabbed buckets to bail out water from their homes ahead of a long night without water or electricity.

In Ribarroja del Turia on the outskirts of Valencia city, town councillor Esther Gomez said workers were stuck overnight in an industrial estate “without a chance of rescuing them” as streams overflowed.

“It had been a long time since



Pedestrians stand next to piled up cars following deadly floods in Sedavi, south of Valencia, eastern Spain, yesterday. (AFP)

this happened and we're scared,” she told AFP.

According to Spain's weather service AEMET, the town of Chiva, west of Valencia, recorded 491mm of rain in just eight hours on Tuesday — almost equalling a year's worth.

Sanchez said the government's “absolute priority” was to help the victims. “All of Spain weeps with all of you... We won't abandon you,” he said in a televised address.

The disaster could not be considered over and “we will deploy all the necessary resources for as long as necessary so that we can recover from this tragedy,” he added.

King Felipe VI said he was “devastated” by the news on X and offered “heartfelt condolences” to families of the victims, thanking emergency services for their “titanic” response.

Damage to telephone networks and flooded roads were hampering efforts to reach stricken communities in the Valencia region.

Some 155,000 homes are without electricity in Valencia region due to the storm, energy company Iberdrola said, adding that it had dispatched 500 workers to restore power there.

Defence Minister Margarita Robles told reporters more than 1,000 troops backed by helicopters were being deployed in the face of “an unprecedented phenomenon”.

The European Union activated its Copernicus satellite system to help co-ordinate Spanish rescue teams, commission chief Ursula von der Leyen told a news conference in Brussels.

The bloc has also offered to use its civil protection mechanism to send further reinforcements, she said.

Officials in the Valencia region announced survivors were being sheltered in temporary accommodation such as fire stations.

Rail and air transport remained severely disrupted. The high-speed line between Valencia and

Madrid will remain suspended over the next four days at least, rail infrastructure authority Adif announced.

The downpours are expected to continue. AEMET issued a red alert for heavy rains in the countryside near the southern coastal city of Cadiz and rough weather was expected in the northeastern region of Catalonia.

The flood toll is Spain's deadliest since 1973 when at least 150 people were estimated to have died in the southeastern provinces of Granada, Murcia and Almeria.

Meteorologists have said the latest storm was caused by cold air moving over Mediterranean's warm waters, which produced intense rain clouds, a phenomenon common for the time of year.

Scientists warn extreme weather events such as storms are becoming more intense, last longer and occur more frequently as a result of human-induced climate change.

## Migrant dies trying to cross Channel, 3 more bodies found

A migrant died yesterday trying to cross the Channel to Britain, French authorities said, while the date of death was not immediately clear for three more people found dead on beaches. The finds bring the number of deaths this year linked to crossings in overcrowded dinghies to around 60.

With British and French authorities seeking to crack down on people smuggling gangs, activists say traffickers are now herding larger groups of migrants hoping for a better life in the United Kingdom into increasingly unsafe boats.

The man who died yesterday was one of around 15 who fell into the sea off Hardelet in northern France, the French Maritime Prefecture of the Channel and North Sea said.

A helicopter transported the migrant to land where he was declared dead.

Fire chief Baptiste Gournay said the man was 28 years old, while prosecutors in Boulogne-sur-Mer said he “may have been Kuwaiti”.

In total, 61 people were rescued, including one whose condition was very critical and another five also taken to hospital.

Gournay said three other migrants were also battling for their lives after a second rescue operation off the area of Merlimont, some 20km to the south.

Many people had tried to cross overnight and in the early morning as weather conditions were calm, the prefecture said. Hours after the death, three migrants' bodies were discovered on separate beaches in northern France, including at Hardelet. It was not immediately clear when the men might have died.

“For now, we're counting the dead,” assistant prosecutor Patrick Leleu said.

Yesterday morning, a deflated blue and black dinghy lay on the beach in Hardelet, an AFP journalist saw.

Rescue services, including fire trucks with their lights flashing, had been deployed on the shore. Rescuers led around 20 migrants into a nearby building to warm up.

# Canada-India tensions may escalate cyber threats

## ■ Indian Minister accused of masterminding violence against Sikhs; Delhi rejects charges ■ Cyber espionage likely to increase, fears Canadian intelligence ■ Trade unaffected

Reuters  
Ottawa

Canada's deepening dispute with India over its alleged campaign of violence against Sikhs in Canada could intensify Indian-based cyber espionage and hold back immigration, but analysts and experts see no immediate impact on trade.

Concern about a widening rift between the two countries comes after a senior Canadian official told a parliamentary national security committee on Tuesday that Indian Minister of Home Affairs Amit Shah, a close ally of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was the mastermind behind the alleged plots.

While Indian officials dismissed the official's statement, the disclosure might worsen a dispute that started a year ago

when Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cited credible evidence linking Indian agents to the June 2023 shooting of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia.

In response, Canada expelled six Indian diplomats earlier this month, accusing them of involvement. Four men have been charged with his murder.

The Canadian signals intelligence agency that monitors foreign-based cyber threats said New Delhi was most likely already conducting threatening cyber activity against Canadian networks for spying purposes.

“As Canada and India potentially may have some tensions, it is possible that we may see India want to flex those cyber threat actions against Canadians,” Caroline Xavier, head of the agency, known as Communications Security Establishment Canada, told a press conference yesterday. The agency has previously described India

as an emerging threat.

On the diplomatic front, Ottawa was unlikely to take more punitive steps until more details of the Nijjar case emerge, said Vina Nadjibulla, vice-president of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada think tank.

Cabinet ministers are due to testify about the matter to the national security committee and the murder trial of the four men has yet to start, she noted.

“If there are charges laid in the process on individuals that are living in India at whatever level, then it would trigger an extradition process which could take years. And of course, India is unlikely to co-operate,” she said.

Officials working for Trudeau and Foreign Minister Melanie Joly did not respond to requests for comment about what steps Ottawa might take next.

India is the top source for temporary foreign workers and international students

coming to Canada but a backlog of applications has built since Trudeau's allegations last year.

Canada only has four immigration officials left in India, down from 27 in October 2023. This affects Canada's ability to process visas on-site, Immigration Minister Marc Miller said.

“I have told my colleagues in Parliament that this could get worse before it gets better, and they need to brace for it,” he said in an interview last Friday.

That could mean fewer people travelling between the countries for legitimate reasons, he said.

India is Canada's 10th largest trading partner and New Delhi has made clear it does not want flows to be hit. Nadjibulla's foundation carried out a study showing Trudeau's statement in October 2023 had little or no effect on bilateral trade.

“Whether that would be the case now I

think it's a bigger question mark, because the disruption is on a bigger scale, and we are still not, I don't believe, at the bottom of this,” she said by phone.

Canada is the biggest exporter of pulses, such as lentils, to India. Pulse Canada President Greg Cherewyk, asked about the potential impact of the diplomatic dispute, cited the strength of the relationship.

“In a time of stubborn food price inflation and strong demand for pulse crops, we are confident that affordability and availability will continue to drive decision-making at a government level,” he said in a statement.

“We have thankfully not seen the political tensions affect trade,” said Michael Harvey, executive director of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance. “India and Canada have great potential in their trading relationship and CFTA hopes we can work back to positive trade discussions.”



