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Deputy Amir lays foundation stone of world's largest Blue Ammonia Plant at Mesaieed

By Pratap John
Business Editor

Under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani laid the foundation stone of the Blue Ammonia Plant at Mesaieed Industrial City yesterday.

The ceremony was attended by HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, who is also the President and CEO of QatarEnergy, dignitaries, senior executives and officials from the entities involved in the project implementation.

The Blue Ammonia Plant is the largest of its kind in the world and represents an important milestone in QatarEnergy's strategy to expand in the clean energy sector by producing low carbon ammonia – one of the most important solutions to reduce CO2 emissions.

With an investment of about QR4.4bn, the plant will be built in Mesaieed Industrial City, which offers a strategic location, integrated infrastructure, ideal capabilities, and a port that is considered one of the largest petrochemical export facilities in the Middle East.

The plant is expected to start production in the second quarter of 2026, marking a milestone in QatarEnergy's strategy to expand into the cleaner energy sector.

In his remarks at the ceremony, HE al-Kaabi said: "This facility consists of an ammonia production unit with a capacity of 1.2mn tonnes per year, along with an additional unit for CO2 injection and storage, with a capacity of 1.5mn tonnes per year. To Page 2



His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani laid the foundation stone of the Blue Ammonia Plant at Mesaieed Industrial City yesterday.

22 Gazans killed in Israeli strikes

Gaza's civil defence agency said yesterday 22 people were killed in Israeli air strikes and shelling of the Palestinian territory, including 11 killed by a strike on a school-turned-shelter for displaced civilians.

"At least 11 Palestinians were killed and more than 40 injured in an Israeli air strike that targeted Al-Hurriya School, which houses thousands of displaced people."

Palestinian resistance movement Hamas condemned the strike as a "new crime".

Earlier yesterday, the agency said 11 people were killed in overnight Israeli air strikes and shelling.

In the northern city of Jabalia, seven people were killed and several wounded in an air strike on a residential building. Another person was killed in a strike on a house in nearby Beit Lahia. (**AFP**)

Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire takes effect today



People leave after Israeli evacuation orders, at Beirut's seaside Corniche, yesterday.

A ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah will take effect at 4am local time (0200 GMT) today after both sides accepted an agreement brokered by the United States and France, US President Joe Biden said yesterday.

The accord, clearing the way for an end to a conflict that has killed thousands of people since it was ignited by the Gaza war last year, was designed to be a permanent cessation of hostilities, Biden said in remarks at the White House.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu earlier said he was ready to implement a ceasefire deal and would respond forcefully to any violation by Hezbollah.

The Lebanon ceasefire agreement requires Israeli troops to withdraw from south Lebanon and Lebanon's army to deploy in the region, officials say. Hezbollah would end its armed presence along the border south of the Litani River. Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib said the Lebanese army would be ready to have at least 5,000 troops deployed in southern Lebanon. (**Reuters**)

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His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi with dignitaries and senior QatarEnergy and Qafco executives at the event.



Deputy Amir lays foundation stone of world's largest Blue Ammonia Plant at Mesaieed



HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi addressing the event.

From Page 1

"QatarEnergy will provide the new plant with more than 35 megawatts of electricity from the solar power plant currently being built in Mesaieed Industrial City, thereby becoming blue ammonia.

"This plant will enhance our ability to provide the world with low-carbon products, in line with the global efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

"In building this facility, we will rely on our own capabilities and expertise in the construction and operation of ammonia plants used for the production of fertilisers. This will be carried out in cooperation between QatarEnergy and Qatar Fertiliser Company - Qafco."

Al-Kaabi added: "The blue ammonia plant joins a list of QatarEnergy's large and ambitious expansion projects in Qatar and around the world covering LNG, oil and gas exploration and production, petrochemicals, fertilisers, solar power, and more."

HE al-Kaabi concluded his remarks by thanking the consortium implementing the project, consisting of ThyssenKrupp and CCC, as well as the working teams from QatarEnergy and Qafco, whose efforts contributed to the realisation of the project.

He extended sincere thanks to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani for his patronage and unlimited support for the energy sector, and to



His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani, who is the Chairman of QatarEnergy Board of Directors, for laying the foundation stone of the Blue Ammonia Plant.

Interior minister meets UK envoy

HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, met yesterday with UK ambassador to Qatar Neerav Patel. During the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral co-operation between the two countries in the security fields and ways to support and enhance them, in addition to several topics of common interest. **(QNA)**



Deputy PM chairs meeting of 21st session of GCC ministers of defence

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani chaired the 21st session of the Joint Defence Council of Ministers of Defence in Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, held in Doha yesterday. During the meeting, several topics on the agenda were discussed, which contribute to strengthening the efforts of all armed forces in the GCC countries. **(QNA)**

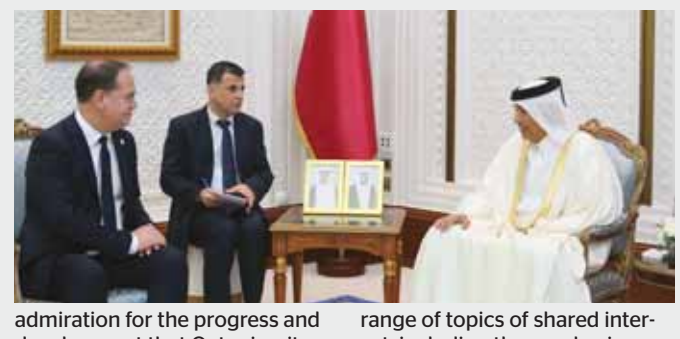
Qatar, Sweden discuss ways to enhance parliamentary ties

The Shura Council and the Parliament of Sweden (Riksdag) held an official session at the council in Doha yesterday.
The session addressed ways to enhance parliamentary relations between the two friendly countries. The meeting was chaired by HE the Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti and the First Deputy Speaker of the Riksdag, Kenneth G Forslund.
During the session, HE Dr al-Sulaiti praised the distinguished Qatar-Sweden relations, which were further strengthened by the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Stockholm in September 2024. The visit witnessed the signing of a number of memorandums of understanding and agreements, including co-operation in the fields of peace and development.
The talks focused on ways to enhance parliamentary co-operation, exchange parliamentary expertise, and activate friendship groups between the two sides.
The talks also included co-ordination on regional and international issues, with emphasis on the importance of parliamentary dialogue in promoting peace and stability in the region, as both sides emphasised the importance of the role played by parliaments in enhancing humanitarian, developmental, and social co-operation between peoples.



Shura Speaker meets first deputy Speaker of Swedish parliament

HE the Shura Council Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem met yesterday with the visiting First Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament Kenneth G Forslund.
At the outset of the meeting, HE al-Ghanem lauded the depth of relations between Qatar and Sweden, as well as the progress these relations have made across various fields. He affirmed that he looks forward to further enhancing parliamentary co-operation between the two countries. For his part, Forslund noted the ever-evolving relations between the two countries, expressing his admiration for the progress and development that Qatar is witnessing at all levels, commending the state's efforts in fostering sustainable peace and development at regional and global levels. The meeting discussed a range of topics of shared interest, including the emphasis on the need to activate friendship groups between the two sides, in addition to discussing ways to co-ordinate joint positions on parliamentary platforms. **(QNA)**



Korea-Middle East forum a vital bridge of dialogue, says minister

QNA
Seoul

Qatar took part in the 20th Korea-Middle East Co-operation Forum, hosted in Seoul, South Korea, under the theme 'Korea and the Middle East: Past, Present and Future Trajectories'. Qatar was represented at the forum by HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad. HE the Director of Diplomatic Institute at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Abdulaziz bin Mohammed al-Horr, also participated.

In her speech, HE al-Misnad said that the forum is being held at a critical moment marked by increasing global challenges and rapid shifts in regional and international dynamics, pointing out that the Middle East, in particular, continues to bear acute humanitarian and political crises, including those in Palestine, Lebanon, and Sudan.



HE Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad

She emphasised that these crises transcend borders, impacting both regional and global stability, while underscoring the urgent need to enhance dialogue, co-operation, and decisive action, and strengthen security, stability, and sustainable development for the benefit of all. HE al-Misnad expressed Qatar's appreciation for the forum as a vital bridge built over two decades of meaningful dialogue and co-operation between the Middle East and Korea, with a focus on co-operation and fostering partnerships in diplomatic, trade, economic, and cultural fields.

She also noted that the forum has become a key platform for strengthening relations, praising the preliminary signing of the free trade agreement (FTA) between Korea and the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC). She described it as a major turning point toward deeper economic integration and mutual growth between the two regions. This partnership can support innovation and investment in sustainability, and promote peace and prosperity for both regions and the world, she added.

HE al-Misnad reaffirmed Qatar's foreign policy, which is based on solid principles of international law and co-operation. She reiterated Qatar's commitment to the principles of mediation, dialogue for peaceful solutions, sustainable development, and the promotion of minority rights.

She said that Qatar's humanitarian efforts are extensive, providing vital assistance in conflict zones and addressing long-term vulnerabilities in areas affected by complex emergencies. She also expressed belief that global challenges require collective solutions, stressing that Qatar is always ready to contribute to this shared mission.

HE al-Misnad called for making the forum a model of the strength of dialogue and co-operation, emphasising the potential to turn challenges into opportunities and build a future characterised by resilience, inclusivity, and shared success.

First Launched in 2003, the Korea-Middle East Co-operation Forum is a platform that brings together prominent figures from the public and private sectors to enhance both sides' relations across various fields. The forum has been held annually in Korea and the Middle East countries alternately.

This year, the forum is discussing key topics through three main sessions entitled 'Harnessing Korea-Middle East Co-operation During Time of Uncertainty', 'Emerging Technologies: New Areas of Co-operation between Korea and the Middle East', and 'Korea and The Middle East: Towards Deeper Educational, Cultural, and People to People Links'.

Al-Misnad meets French ambassador


HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad met yesterday with French ambassador to Qatar Jean-Baptiste Favre. The meeting discussed co-operation relations between the two countries, in addition to a number of topics of common interest. (**QNA**)



HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah inaugurating the first sustainable basketball court in Al Gassar Resort in Doha.


Dignitaries at the inauguration of the first sustainable basketball court in Al Gassar Resort in Doha.


Omar Hussain Alfardan, the president and CEO of Alfardan Group, handing over a ceremonial token to the minister.

Doha's 1st sustainable basketball court opens at Al Gassar Resort

HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah has inaugurated the first sustainable basketball court in Al Gassar Resort in Doha, a statement said. Through recycling used tyres in Qatar, the project was executed by Alfardan Group, in co-operation with Continental ME, the leading German company for tyres and automotive technology.

The inauguration was attended by Omar Hussain Alfardan, the president and CEO of Alfardan Group, and José Luis de la Fuente, managing director of Continental Middle East, as well as Dr Ma'n al-Hamawi, chairman of the Sustainability Committee and CEO of Alfardan Automotive, and Ahmad Nassar, vice-chairman and CFO of Alfardan Group.

The court's surface was constructed using 500 recycled tyres to produce 'Green Rub' tiles, a durable and eco-friendly material, which significantly reduced the carbon footprint compared to using new rubber. In addition, the safety standards of the courts ensure a comfortable playing experience for players of all ages.

Typically producing new rubber for an area of 175-200sq m would result in approximately 800kg of CO2 emissions. By recycling rubber, emissions were reduced to an estimated 350-400kg of CO2, meaning a decrease of over 50% in carbon emissions. The innovative project, which aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030, demonstrates the private sector's commitment to recycling and waste management, a statement said.

The minister emphasised the significance of such initiatives in supporting the Ministry of Municipality's strategic goals. These goals include the safe disposal and reduction of all types of waste which can be achieved through several methods, including recycling and reusing materials, converting waste into energy at the waste management facility in Mesaieed, and producing organic fertiliser.

Al-Attiyah said: "The Ministry of Municipality is keen to collaborate with the private sector to improve waste management and treatment. Through consolidating such efforts, the Ministry aims to achieve Qatar's strategic goals through improving the quality of life and sustainability of resources and their preservation.

"In pursuit of this objective, the state has established Al Afja Industrial Zone for recycling in Mesaieed, where 51 plots of land have been allocated to recycling facilities, including four factories specialised in tyre recycling, aiming to consistently dispose of tyres in the state.

Alfardan said: "Since the group's foundation, Alfardan's name has been synonymous with excellence and luxury. Today, we reaffirm that the true essence of luxury lies in a profound sense of responsibility toward the environment. Therefore, sustainability initiatives have remained a top priority for the Group, which led us to launch a comprehensive sustainability strategy, 'Athar,' across all Alfardan companies. "This project is the result of a fruitful collaboration between Alfardan Properties and Alfardan Commercial, in partnership with Continental Middle East, to promote an active lifestyle and encourage innovation in sustainable sports."

De la Fuente said, "At Continental, sustainability is at the heart of our mission. The renovation of this basketball court in Doha, using recycled tyres, represents our commitment to innovative solutions that benefit both the environment and our communities. "This project would not have been possible without the invaluable partnership and support of Alfardan Group and Omar Hussain Alfardan. Together, we are transforming waste into opportunities and inspiring others to join us in building a greener, more sustainable future for generations to come."

Through partnerships and community-focused innovation, Alfardan Group continues to lead the way towards sustainable development in Qatar. As a member of the UN Global Compact since 2021, Alfardan Group is committed to promoting responsible and innovative practices, a commitment that aligns with the nation's vision for sustainability, the statement added.

Qatar wins second place for best co-operation in drug control

Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Interior, has won second place for best operational and informational field co-operation in drug control at the Arab, regional, and international levels. The announcement of the award was made during the 38th Arab Conference of Heads of Drug Control Agencies, which was recently held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers in Tunis, Tunisia. Qatar was represented by Director-General of Drug Enforcement at the Ministry of Interior Staff Colonel Rashid Saree al-Kaabi. The conference discussed numerous topics aimed at enhancing Arab co-operation in combating the scourge of drugs. **(QNA)**



QMC chairperson participates in opening ceremony of World Media Congress in UAE



HE Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) Chairperson Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer al-Thani participated in the third Global Media Congress opening ceremony, at the invitation of Chairman of the UAE National Media Office Abdulla bin Mohammed bin Butti al-Hamed. Themed vision, empowerment and engagement, the three-day event is held under the patronage of Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Presidential Court Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed al-Nahyan. Deputy Chairman of the Presidential Court for Development and Fallen Heroes Affairs Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan inaugurated the event, organised by ADNEC Group in collaboration with the Emirates News Agency (WAM). It runs through November 28 at the ADNEC Center, Abu Dhabi. The sessions tackle numerous crucial themes, including investigative journalism, artificial intelligence (AI), digital innovation, disinformation and fake news, social media platforms, content creation, emerging news formats, international affairs, and other topics pertinent to media and communication. The congress includes several interactive sessions that review media technologies, along with workshops and panel discussions with the aim of fostering innovation and participants' occupational advancement. **(QNA)**

7th International Conference on Entrepreneurship discusses business transformations in the era of AI

Under the auspices of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, Qatar University (QU) organised the 7th International Conference on Entrepreneurship for Sustainability and Impact (ESI) under the theme "Redefining Business in the Era of the AI Revolution."

The conference, which concluded yesterday, brought together researchers, experts, entrepreneurs, and policymakers, who discussed over four days, innovation and entrepreneurship amid the profound changes driven by artificial intelligence. AI has revolutionised the business landscape, reshaping problem-solving and decision-making across industries. In this context, the conference gathers leading academics, experts, and entrepreneurs to explore the significant impacts of AI on various sectors. Topics include climate change solutions, the circular economy, AIs role in logistics and entrepreneurship, digital finance, retail, accounting, higher education, and more.

Organised by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Organisational Excellence (CEOE) at the College of Business and Economics, the conference aimed to present actionable recommendations for policymakers and foster collaboration between



academia and the private sector to address societal challenges, focusing on sustainability in alignment with Qatar National Vision 2030.

The opening session that was attended by HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Faisal bin Thani al-Thani, a number of officials, and representatives of economic sectors. President of QU Dr Omar al-Ansari delivered a speech in which he pointed out the importance of adopting advanced technologies in business development.

"QU reaffirms its commitment to fostering innovation and international entrepreneurship through knowledge generation that supports a sustainable, knowledge-based economy. We strive to prepare an innovative generation to address institutional and societal challenges while contributing to Qatar's sustainable development," Dr al-Ansari added.

For her part, Dean of the College of Business and Economics at QU and the conference chair Dr Rana Sobh underscored the conference's role as a global platform for academics, experts, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to discuss cutting-edge innovations and strengthen ties between academia and various industries.

"At the College of Business and Economics, we remain dedicated to advancing research and providing innovative solutions to societal challenges in line with Qatar National Vision 2030's emphasis on sustainability and innovation," she added.

In turn, Director of the CEOE at QU and co-chair of the conference Dr Said al-Banna said: "This conference opens doors to exploring the evolving business landscape in the age of AI, attracting over 450 research papers from more than 50 countries. This global interest underscores the importance of integrating technology with sustainable business practices while preserving core human values amidst rapid technological advancements."



QATAR



QCS launches awareness drive on men's health

Qatar Cancer Society (QCS) has launched an awareness campaign "Your Health empowers them" to mark November, recognised globally as Men's Health Awareness Month.

The campaign aims to highlight men's health and increase awareness about the most common types of cancer. It includes a series of educational events and activities, such as workshops and awareness lectures, targeting all segments of society. The campaign also includes early screening initiatives to detect these cancers and disseminating awareness messages through media and social media platforms, encouraging men to adopt a healthy lifestyle and regularly visit doctors.

Speaking about the most common cancers among men, Dr Mohammed Eltagalawi, a health educator at the Qatar Cancer Society, said prostate cancer is the most common globally, followed by lung cancer and colorectal cancer. In the Middle East and Qatar, however, the common types of cancer may vary due to factors such as lifestyle and genetics.

Dr Eltagalawi also emphasised the importance of raising awareness about early detection of urological cancers.

Early detection helps identify the first symptoms of the disease, increasing the chances of effective treatment. He added that awareness helps reduce risks by informing people about risk factors such as smoking and poor nutrition and promotes prevention through encouraging regular screenings and a healthy lifestyle.

Regarding the rates of urological cancers in Qatar, Dr Eltagalawi explained that prostate cancer is the most common urological cancer according to reports from the Ministry of Public Health and the Qatar National Cancer Registry, followed by bladder and kidney cancers. He also noted that testicular cancer is the most common cancer among young people aged 20 to 35.

Early symptoms of urological cancers, he noted, include the presence of blood in the urine, pain in the lower back or sides without an obvious cause, difficulty or frequent urination, and the feeling of not fully emptying the bladder. Symptoms may also include unexplained weight loss or persistent fatigue.

There are major risk factors that increase the likelihood of developing urological cancers including smoking, which increases the risk of bladder cancer, a family history of urological cancer, chronic bladder infections, as well as obesity, and an unhealthy lifestyle.

MoI warns against misuse of medicines

By Shafeeq Alingal
Staff Reporter

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has warned against the misuse of medicines.

Addressing an awareness session on 'Drugs and Prevention Methods' on Monday, Lt Abdullah Saleh al-Shammari from the General Directorate of Drug Control at MoI, said misuse of some medicines has grave risks and consequences that affect the safety of the patients psychologically, mentally and physically.

"Misuse of medical drugs leads to habituation, then to compulsive use, and then develops to addiction," he said while urging to use them only for the prescribed medical purpose, in the dose and quantity required and for the specified period.

"Don't use any medicines prescribed for others, without medical consultation," al-Shammari said.

MoI Public Relations Department organised the anti-drug webinar in cooperation with the General Directorate of Drug Control.

The official noted that it is not allowed



Lt Abdullah Saleh al-Shammari addressing the webinar.

for arriving or departing sick travellers to carry drugs containing narcotics or psychotropic substances except in accordance with the conditions issued by the competent authorities.

He explained that a detailed and attested medical report issued by the hospital that treated the patient, should be with the traveller. The issue date of the report shouldn't exceed six months and must contain personal details of the patient, diagnosis, treatment plan, validity of prescriptions and names of the medicines. Lt al-Shammari also urged to ensure that the baggage doesn't contain narcotic substances and dangerous psychotropic substances without a prescription issued by a doctor or certified hospital in the name of the holder. "Failure to verify the content of the luggage could expose you to legal liability," he said asking travellers not to carry any materials of others without verifying their content as the bearer has full legal responsibility if these materials are prohibited in the country.

"Avoid bringing any suspicious substances or drugs, because some narcotic substances and medicines may be allowed to be used in your country, but they are prohibited in Qatar. Stay away from suspicious places and bad companions. Don't hesitate to report any crime. Security is a shared responsibility that everyone bears," he said.

Lt al-Shammari has also asked drug addicts to report to authorities and avail of the services, being provided by the government. "No criminal case shall be filed against a person taking Narcotic Drugs and Dangerous Psychotropic Substances if he turns up for treatment. Qatar has provided a specialised centre for de-addiction and rehabilitation in line with the best international standards," he said.

He also explained the punishment for drug trafficking and abuse, the symptoms of drug addiction and persons vulnerable to drug abuse.

PHCC promotes antimicrobial resistance awareness



The Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) participated in the global celebration of the World Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Awareness Week this year under the theme, "Educate. Advocate. Act Now."

Celebrated annually from November 18 to 24, the week aims to enhance understanding of drug resistance in microbes and encourages responsible practices to maintain the effectiveness of antibiotics for future generations. It also raises community awareness about the rational use of antibiotics and other antimicrobial agents.

Various activities were held at health centres by healthcare providers as part of this campaign. Each health centre set up an awareness corner to promote the campaign, managed by healthcare providers.

Dr Khalid al-Awad, director of Health Protection in the Preventive Health Directorate at PHCC, explained that the Infection Prevention and Medication Management Team at PHCC organised activities to engage staff and patients at health centres. Additionally, the Infection Control Team, in

co-ordination with the Corporate Communications and Public Relations Team, promoted the campaign through media outlets and PHCC's social media platforms.

The efforts included the distribution of educational cards and hosting awareness lectures for staff and visitors through online platforms in both Arabic and English, focusing on antimicrobial awareness. Daily lectures were also delivered to health centre employees during the week-long campaign, emphasising antibiotic resistance. Patients at health centres were encouraged to participate in the campaign.

Surveys were also sent out to visitors to raise awareness about antimicrobials. Awareness corners were set up, offering educational materials and brochures were also distributed to participating patients.

He elaborated that antimicrobial drugs are used to kill or inhibit the growth of various microbes, such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi, which cause numerous infections in humans, including upper and lower respiratory tract infections, blood infections, tonsillitis, urinary tract infections, fungal infections, and others. Dr al-Awad offered key advice, emphasising that antimicrobials are the most effective tools for combating infections but should only be used when necessary. He cautioned that AMR can lead to prolonged hospital stays, higher medical costs, and increased mortality rates. Therefore, it is essential to use these drugs with care.

MoPH e-learning platform for 'practitioners' unveiled

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has launched an e-learning platform to boost healthcare practitioners' competencies.

The educational portal on the MoPH's official website offers a wide range of free educational and training resources, currently comprising 17 evidence-based educational modules meticulously designed by medical experts.

Additional useful content is being planned to support healthcare practitioners in improving their knowledge, skills, behaviour and overall competence.

This initiative aligns with the MoPH's commitment to improving healthcare services, promoting continuous learning and development among healthcare practitioners.

It supports the National Health Strategy 2024-2030 goals to improve the health and well-being of Qatar's population through excellence in service delivery, with a focus on sustainability and efficiency within an integrated and resilient healthcare system and aligning with the first pillar of Qatar's Vision 2030 (Human Development).

This pillar aims to establish an education system meeting contemporary global standards and includes high-quality learning and training opportunities and lifelong educational programmes accessible to all.

The educational activities on the platform are 24/7 available to users, allowing self-paced learning from anywhere with Internet access, without the need for a fixed schedule.

The training courses are recognised as Category 2 educational activities (completion of self-directed learning modules) within the National Framework for Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Users can download a certificate of attendance upon successfully completing each course and passing its subsequent assessment.

MoPH's Director of the Department of Healthcare Professions Dr Saad al-Kaabi said, "This advanced platform reflects the commitment of the Department of Healthcare Professions to provide a high-quality educational environment and resources for licensed healthcare practitioners in the State of Qatar.

"It aims to enhance their knowledge, improve their competencies, and fulfil the requirements of the National Continuous Professional Development Programme necessary for licence renewal. It also aligns with our dedication to promoting a culture of continuous improvement, development, and excellence in healthcare."

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c) Waste Containers (of different sizes)
d) Waste Skips (of different sizes)
e) Waste Bins (of different sizes)

موعد ومكان استلام وثائق المزاد:

ابتداء من يوم الاربعاء 27 نوفمبر حتى يوم الخميس 12 ديسمبر 2024 خلال ساعات الدوام الرسمي (من 8:30 صباحاً حتى 2:30 مساء)

في مقر شركة مرافق قطر ذ.م.م - إدارة العقود والمشتريات - الطابق السابع - مبنى كتارا للضيافة (برج البراحة) - منطقة المارينا - مدينة لوسيل، قطر

استلام وثائق المزاد:

يكون استلام وثائق المزاد في الزمان وخلال المدة المحددة فقط، وعلى ممثل المزايد تقديم المستندات التالية:

- نسخة بتاريخ حديث من السجل التجاري.
- أصل خطاب التفويض من الشركة موجه إلى مرافق قطر ذ.م.م بتخويل ممثلها باستلام وثائق المزاد.
- أصل إيصال دفع رسوم المزاد.

إرشادات دفع رسوم المزاد:

يجب دفع رسوم المزاد في الحساب البنكي المحددة تفاصيله أدناه فقط؛ ويرجى ذكر رقم المزاد (المشار اليه أعلاه).

الاسم: مرافق قطر ذ.م.م
البنك: مصرف الريان (فرع حمد الكبير)
الحساب: 0003-127914-001
رقم الحساب المصرفي الدولي:
QA68 MAFR 0000 0000 0003 127914 001
سويفت: MAFR QA QA

يرجى التواصل عبر:

البريد الالكتروني: procurement@marafeq.com.qa
الهاتف: +974-4012-0358

الفئات الرئيسية لعناصر المخزون:

ضاغطة محمولة
قفص لإعادة التدوير
حاويات نفايات (مقاسات مختلفة)
حاويات نفايات محمولة (احجام مختلفة)
صناديق نفايات (احجام مختلفة)

تحتفظ شركة مرافق قطر ذ.م.م بكامل الحق في تعديل شروط المزاد في أي وقت بدون إبداء أسباب و/أو إلغاء المزاد بدون أسباب وبدون أدنى مسئولية عليها في هذا الصدد أيا كان نوعها أو مصدرها
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شبكة الجزيرة الإعلامية
ALJAZEERA MEDIA NETWORK

Al Jazeera Media Network announces the following tender:

Sr. No.	Tender Ref. No.	Description	Tender Bond (QAR)	Tender Fee Non-Refundable (QAR)	Bid Closing Date and Time
1	GTC022-24	Manage and Operate Restaurants at AJMN for 3 years	200,000	1,000	30-Dec-2024 (01:00 PM)
		Tenderer qualification requirement: Tenderer should be a Food Catering Company and have at least 10 years of experience in restaurant management & operations and must have the qualification requirement set in the tender document.			
2	SOP009-24	Sale of Used Electrical & Electronic Items (on Where is as is basis)	10,000	No Fee	15Dec2024 (01:00 PM)

- Tender documents can be collected from Al Jazeera Media Network, Procurement & Contracts Directorate, Warehouse Building, 1st Floor, behind Al Jazeera Media Institute Building, TV Intersection Area, Doha by submitting an authorization letter showing the tender number and ID number of collecting person under the company letterhead, after paying the tender fee (as applicable) at QIB Branch inside Al Jazeera's Support Services building.
- Tender documents are to be collected from 27-Nov-2024 to 05-Dec-2024, between 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM (excluding Friday & Saturday).
- The Bid must be submitted with a Tender Bond issued by a Qatari Bank or by a bank operating in Qatar and should be valid for a period of 180 days from bid closing date.
- The offer must be valid for a period of 180 days from the bid closing date.
- The Technical and Commercial offers shall be submitted as per the instructions in the tender documents which shall bear the tender number and bid closing date.
- The last date for accepting the Tender offers shall be 01:00 PM of the bid closing date.
- For more information, please call 44897869.

www.aljazeera.net www.aljazeera.com

UDST hosts career fair with over 80 companies


HE Dr Mohammed bin Saleh al-Sada, HE Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Naimi, and Dr Salem Al-Naemi at the career fair.

The University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) hosted Career Fair 2024, a two-day event with the participation of over 80 local and international companies offering more than 900 opportunities for full-time and part-time jobs, as well as internships.

Organised by UDST's Student Central Services Department, the event was inaugurated by Board of Trustees chairman HE Dr Mohammed bin Saleh al-Sada, Ministry of Education and Higher Education's undersecretary HE Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Naimi, and UDST president Dr Salem Al-Naemi.

The fair attracted a large number of current students, alumni, and high school students. Attendees had opportunities to network with industry leaders, engage in live interviews, and explore diverse career paths, while companies gained access to a pool of talented UDST students and alumni.

As part of its commitment to promoting sustainability, UDST has ensured that the application process for available opportunities is entirely paperless, utilising an advanced electronic system.

Dr Al-Naemi, said: "UDST's commitment to educational excellence in Qatar extends beyond the classroom. The career fair is a vital platform that supports our students and alumni in achieving professional success. By bringing industry leaders from local and international companies and promising students together, we open doors to career opportunities that align with Qatar's growing economic landscape."

Represented industries at the fair included energy, banking, finance, technology, and other sectors, underscoring UDST's dedication to bridging the gap between education and employment.

With over 70 programmes across the Colleges of Business, Computing and Information Technology, Engineering and Technology, and Health Sciences, UDST continues to shape graduates who make meaningful contributions to Qatar's dynamic economy, a statement added.

Al Abdulghani Motors unveils exclusive offer on 2024 Lexus LX600

Al Abdulghani Motors, the authorised distributor of Lexus in Qatar, announced limited-time exclusive offer on the 2024 LX600. This offer includes the flexible 50:50 Finance Plan and the 5-5-5 Package.

Valid until December 31, customers can pay 50% of the vehicle's price upfront and settle the remaining 50% over two years through four equal instalments – all with a 0% profit rate. This flexible financing option caters to those who seek luxury without compromise, making Lexus ownership more accessible than ever, a statement said.

Al Abdulghani Motors is offering complimentary 3M window tinting on every newly purchased LX600.

The 5-5-5 Package elevates the ownership experience further, covering periodic servicing, warranty, and roadside assistance for five years or until the vehicle reaches 100,000km.

The 2024 Lexus LX600 is available in three variants, each equipped with Lexus' renowned technology, superior comfort, and unparalleled off-road capabilities, and designed to meet the varied needs of Lexus enthusiasts.

The LX600 (Urban) comes with a seven-seater option, merging sophistication and functionality to deliver high-level performance on the road.

The LX600 (F Sport) has a five-seater option and an F Sport package that enhances the overall experience in the vehicle, with a strong and sophisticated exterior and a comfortable and stable interior.

The LX600 (VIP) is the epitome of refinement and comes with a four-seater option with reclining seats, providing ultimate luxury to both front and rear passengers.

For more information on the LX600 models, or to schedule a test drive, please visit Lexus Qatar's website or call 800 2929, the statement added.



Qatari comedian to entertain at GU-Q's QND celebration

In celebration of Qatar National Day, Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) invites the community to an evening of culture, laughter, and tradition today from 5pm to 9pm at the GU-Q Oxygen Park entrance.

Headlining the celebration is a live stand-up performance by renowned Qatari comedian and entrepreneur Hamad al-Amari, whose humorous commentary on cultural encounters inspires laughter and reflection.

Hosted by the Office of External Relations in collaboration with the Al Liwan Qatari Cultural Club, the event will offer a dynamic mix of activities, performances, and culinary experiences for all ages.

"We are honoured to welcome the community to our annual Qatar National Day celebration," said GU-Q dean, Safwan Masri. "For 20 years, Georgetown has proudly contributed to a legacy built together, and this joyous occasion serves as a tribute to a nation whose vision and ambition have inspired the world."

According to Khaled al-Yousef, executive director, External Relations, the carefully planned activities are designed with families in mind.

"Students have worked closely with the Office of External Relations to make this event a welcoming space for their siblings, parents, and extended families to share their culture with other families from across Qatar."

Event highlights are: Comedy Performance by Hamad al-Amari, live performances, traditional and modern cultural activities, Qatari art exhibition and food and souvenirs.


GU-Q to hold Qatar National Day celebrations today.

QIB, Injaz Qatar to support preparatory students

Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) has signed an exclusive agreement with Injaz Qatar to sponsor a three-year programme at public schools under the Ministry of Education & Higher Education supervision.

The programme exclusively supports and implements the Life Skills for Preparatory Students Project, which comprises two programmes, for Grade 7 and Grade 9 Preparatory students in Arabic.

The agreement was signed by QIB Group CEO Bassel Gamal and Injaz Qatar CEO Emad al-Khaja. The 'It's My Business' programme, which introduces students to design thinking as a problem-solving process and provides a simulated entrepreneurial experience for students, will be taught to Grade 7 students.

'It's My Future' programme will help Grade 9 students prepare for their professional future. Students will learn how to develop a personal brand and acquire job-hunting skills needed to earn a job. Upon completing the learning experience, students will be able to research potential careers, create their resumes, recognise appropriate behaviour for a job interview, and differentiate between required soft and technical skills when applying for a job.


Bassel Gamal, QIB Group CEO, and Emad al-Khaja, Injaz Qatar CEO, during the signing ceremony.

Injaz Qatar will train all Grade 7 and Grade 9 teachers who will be part of the project on the programme content and how to deliver the sessions.

Gamal said: "We are pleased to renew our collaboration with Injaz Qatar to invest in youth and empower them by strengthening their financial literacy. Sponsoring and participating in this programme is in line with the bank's social responsibility framework and commitment to contributing to Qatar National Vision 2030 in achieving a knowledge-based society."

Al-Khaja said: "We look forward to building on this successful collaboration and making a lasting impact on the future of Qatar's youth."

MWANI QATAR مـــوانـــي قـــطـــر

TENDERS AND AUCTIONS COMMITTEE

TENDERS ANNOUNCEMENT

The Tenders and Auctions Committee of Mwani Qatar hereby announces the below tenders with the following terms and conditions:

SL no.	TENDER FOR	TENDER NO.	TENDER BOND	DOC FEES	CLOSING DATE	CONTACT DETAILS	Remarks
1	REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING 3D CINEMA SERVER AND PLATFORM AT HAMAD PORT VISITORS CENTER	MQ\TAC/TEN \382\2024	QRS. 20,000	QRS. 200	09.12.2024	It.dept@ mwani.com.qa	Two envelope
2	MAINTENANCE OF FIRE ALARM AND FIRE FIGHTING SYSTEMS AT HAMAD, ALRUWAIS AND DOHA PORT THREE (3) YEARS	MQ\TAC/TEN \399\2024	QRS. 150,000	QRS. 500	12.12.2024	d.controller@ mwani.com.qa	Two envelope
3	FACILITY MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR MWANI QATAR (HAMAD PORT, DOHA PORT & ALRUWAIS PORT)	MQ\TAC/TEN \400\2024	QRS. 1,000,000	QRS. 3,000	16.12.2024	d.controller@ mwani.com.qa	Two envelope
4	HIRING OF ROUGH TERRAIN MOBILE CRANE (55T) AT AL RUWAIS PORT FOR 3 YEARS	MQ\TAC/TEN \401\2024	QRS. 75,000	QRS. 400	11.12.2024	rod@ mwani.com.qa	Two envelope
5	DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION OF AL-MINA MARKET EXPANSION AT AL-RUWAIS PORT	MQ\TAC/TEN \402\2024	QRS. 400,000	QRS. 1,000	17.12.2024	d.controller@ mwani.com.qa	Two envelope
6	SUPPLY OF MANPOWER FOR MWANI QATAR EQUIPMENT'S MAINTENANCE & OPERATORS) AT AL RUWAIS PORT	MQ\TAC/TEN \403\2024	QRS. 500,000	QRS. 1,500	15.12.2024	rod@ mwani.com.qa	Two envelope
7	MWANI QATAR ASSET INSURANCE FOR THREE YEARS	MQ\TAC/TEN \404\2024	QRS. 200,000	QRS. 500	10.12.2024	d.controller@ mwani.com.qa	One envelope

1 - Tender documents can be obtained (via Email) from the Finance and Accounting Department Tel No. (40453724/568) , after depositing the non-refundable amount mentioned above at MQ A/C No. (0850 - 102030 - 060) at QNB and submitting the bank depositing receipt and copy of the Commercial Registration to : (tender.secretary@mwani.com.qa) Tel. (40453724 / 568 - 31265655 / 30121037) .
2 - Offer should be accompanied with a Tender Bond / issued by one of the Banks operating in Qatar for the amount shown in the above table and valid for 120 days from the closing date. The offer which is not accompanied by the Tender Bond will not be considered. The successful bidder should submit a Performance Bond of 10% of the total Tender value, which should be valid for (90) days after the expiry of the contract period.
3 - Offers should be valid for ninety (90) days commencing from the tender closing date and MQ has the right (after Tenders and Auctions Committee approval) to increase or decrease the items/services by 20% of the contract value according to its conditions and prices.
4 - The deadline for submitting offers will be **02:00 pm** of the date shown above. Any offer arriving thereafter will not be considered.
5 - The offers should be deposited in the Tenders and Auctions Committee Box of MQ as per the address given above. It should be in closed envelopes, sealed with red wax and addressed to the Chairman, Tenders and Auctions Committee of MQ , writing the number and subject of the Tender. The tender submitting party should confirm that he has received the receipt for delivering the tender
6 - The offers must be submitted in **Two envelope system, (Technical original and copy one envelope + Commercial original and copy one envelope)** The envelopes should not bear any mark denoting the name of the Company. **The original Tender bond must be attached with the Original Technical offer.**
7 - Every tenderer should attach document showing previous similar experience in the field of the required items/servicer.

Mwani Qatar @Mwaniqtr Mwani.qatar Mwani.Qatar Mwani Qatar

www.mwani.com.qa

Sealed-Bid Auction Announcement

Al Abdulghani Motors Company announce for a sealed bid Auction for selling around **9,000 KG of Kansai and Cardea solvent paint materials (Chemicals items)**

For inspection and more info please contact **Mr. Mohammed Siyam (77885023)**
Offers should be submitted to procurement department – Al Abdulghani Motors within 5 days from the advertisement date

آل عبدالغني موتورز
Al Abdulghani Motors

QU launches TEDx events

Qatar University (QU) launched the events of its independent TEDxQatarUniversity, under the umbrella of the global TED platform, with 'Developing the Earth: Innovation and Continuity' as its theme for 2024, in the presence of several QU officials and other interested parties.

Associate Vice-President for Student Life and Services Office at QU, Dr Mohammad Shahin al-Kuwari, in a statement said such initiatives enhance students' self-confidence and contribute to preparing them to be effective leaders in their communities and their professional and personal future.

Dr al-Kuwari stressed the importance of the TEDx events in enriching the students' experience and developing their skills.

Section Head of Student Organisations at QU and licence holder of TEDxQatarUniversity, Yaser al-Qwasmi, pointed out the events reflect the university's commitment to providing a platform that stimulates minds and inspires individuals, adding that creativity and innovation come together to achieve a sustainable vision for developing the Earth. (**QNA**)

QATAR

Minister highlights private sector nationalisation plan

HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri has stressed the importance of the private sector in Qatar's sustainable development and economic growth, highlighting that the nationalisation plan would be shaped through consultations with the private sector before being approved by the Cabinet.

This came in a speech delivered by HE Dr al-Marri at a panel discussion on *Nationalisation of Jobs in the Private Sector for 2025-26*, organised by the Ministry of Labour on Monday.

The session was attended by senior ministry officials, chief executives, and human resources (HR) directors from private sector companies.

The event was aimed at fostering ongoing communication with private sector representatives, ensuring alignment with nationalisation objectives and promoting the integration of a highly skilled Qatari workforce into the private sector.

In his opening remarks, HE Dr al-Marri indicated that the ministry has been working to enhance the digital infrastructure of the labour sector, introducing continuous updates to digital services aimed at simplifying processes for businesses and employers, facilitating quicker transactions, and improving the overall work environment.

He emphasised the crucial role played by the partnership between the public and private sectors in the labour market, enhancing their collective capacity to overcome challenges.



He noted that the ministry has organised numerous meetings and consultative workshops with private sector representatives to improve the work environment and expand employment opportunities for citizens.

The minister further clarified that the enactment of the nationalisation law for the private sector would propel efforts to attract a national workforce into a highly effective trajectory through the implementation of a comprehensive national programme offering facilities and incentives.

HE Dr al-Marri stressed that the primary objective of the law is to support the private sector, not to impose obstacles on companies and institutions.

He said that the ministry would roll out a package of incentive programmes for private sector entities.

These will include covering the employers' contribution to the General Retirement and Social Insurance Authority, granting additional work permits, and providing national awards for entities excelling in nationalisation efforts.

He also highlighted that the Cabinet had, in principle, approved the establishment of the Qatar Nationalisation Award for the private sector, which will serve as a positive competitive incentive among private sector institutions in their efforts to nationalise jobs.

Qatar Chamber chairman Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani emphasised the importance of nationalisation in securing employment for Qatar citizens and contributing to the development of a sustainable workforce.

He added that nationalisation should be viewed as an opportunity for businesses to improve productivity and competitiveness, not merely as a regulatory obligation.

Sheikh Khalifa also praised the ongoing collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and the Qatar Chamber, which serves as a model for effective public-private sector partnership.

He highlighted the joint committees that work diligently to address private sector issues within the ministry's remit.

The nationalisation of jobs is in line with Qatar National Vision 2030, which aims to create opportunities for quality employment and training for all citizens, contributing to human development as a key pillar of national progress. – ***QNA***

MoECC launches 2025-30 strategy for sustainable development

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) recently launched its sectoral strategy for 2024-2030, under the theme *Together towards a sustainable environment for a better future*, as part of the third National Development Strategy, which represents the final phase of the Qatar National Vision 2030, where environmental development has been made one of its four pillars.

Comprising the pillars of environment, sustainability and adaptation to climate changes, research and innovation, digital transformation, governance, as well as sustainable institutional development, the strategy represents a pivotal step toward achieving Qatar's aspirations based on a whole-of-government approach, pertaining to securing the sustainability of economic and social growth.

The Qatar National Vision 2030 emphasised that the intended sustainability cannot be achieved without an overarching environmental vision toward striking a balance between the development needs and conservation of natural resources whether on land, sea or air.

The director of the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies's Economic Studies Unit, Dr Hazim Rahahleh, said that by launching the strategy for environmental protection and addressing climate challenges for 2024-30, Qatar reiterates its commitment and response to the evolving global issues and challenges, affirming that the strategy falls within the development and humanitarian role the country is performing at regional and global levels.

Researcher in the fields of food security and social and economic development at Qatar University's Gulf Studies Centre, Farah al-Qawasmi, stated that the strategy launched by the MoECC for 2024-30 underscores that Qatar has adopted a whole-of-government approach in addressing climate change challenges and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The targets of the MoECC strategy include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2030, restoring 30% of environmentally impacted natural resources, protecting 30% of island and coastal areas, as well as preserving 17 species of endemic and endangered species.

Associate professor of applied geography and geographic information systems (GIS) at Qatar University (QU), Dr Ammar Abulibdeh, said that Qatar, despite being an oil producer and one of the largest gas producers in the world, is striving to diversify energy sources and rely on renewable energy sources.

Associate professor of GIS and remote sensing in the Applied Geography Programme at the QU, Dr Rana N Jawarneh, said that Qatar has many ambitious goals in terms of protecting the environment and adapting to climate challenges, which are evident in the many policies and plans made, as well as pioneering projects on the ground. – ***QNA***

Qatar chairs meeting of OIC anti-graft agencies

Qatar chaired yesterday the Meeting of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Agencies in the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) Member States, hosted by the Administrative Control and Transparency Authority (ACTA) in Doha.

The meeting discussed several decisions, the foremost of which was the formation of an open-ended government expert team to examine the mechanisms and methods of implementing the Makkah Al Mukarramah Convention of the OIC member states.

The team will focus on measures related to anti-corruption laws, including the mechanism for the periodic review of the enforcement of the convention, in addition to determining the working mechanism and developing a technical and legislative guide to expedite the implementation of the convention in member states.

Furthermore, the meeting discussed establishing of a joint forum between Saudi Arabia and the Maldives, aiming to promote integrity in the tourism sector in the latter.

The outcomes of these discussions are to be submitted to the ministerial meeting scheduled to take place today in Doha.

Director of the ACTA's Control and Development Department, Amal Ahmed al-Kuwari, who is also the chairperson of the meeting, emphasised that this convention is a crucial step toward building on the significant efforts to bring the Makkah convention into force.

She expressed hope that this meeting would serve as a productive platform for sharing experiences and strengthening co-operation among OIC member states in the fight against corruption, as a global challenge that requires collective efforts and resources to succeed.

The meeting was attended by representatives from international institutions, including the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Interpol. – ***QNA***

QNL opens exhibition on the art of book production in Morocco

The Qatar National Library (QNL) has opened an exhibition on the history of book production in Morocco, marking the latest event in its series celebrating the Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture.

Titled "From Material to Market: The Art of Book-Making in Morocco", the exhibition offers an in-depth look at the ancient techniques and materials used in Moroccan book production, many of which have remained unchanged for nearly a thousand years.

The exhibition also features a unique collaboration with five Qatari artists, each of whom has created a new work inspired by Moroccan traditions.

HE the Minister of State and president of the QNL Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari emphasised the significance of the event, saying: "This exhibition provides visitors a rare opportunity to immerse themselves in Morocco's centuries-old book production traditions."

"It highlights the artistry that has flourished in the Islamic world for generations, while celebrating our shared heritage," he said. "It reflects the Library's ongoing commitment to strengthening Qatari-Moroccan ties through cultural exchange, an objective central to the Years of Culture programme."

Among the featured items are fine copies of religious texts such as *Al Shifa* and *Dala'il Al-Khayrat*, as well as the oldest Moroccan manuscript in the QNL's collection, which showcases the exquisite Maghribi script from Fez.



In a special live demonstration, a Moroccan calligrapher personalised bookmarks for visitors, offering a glimpse into the timeless art of Moroccan calligraphy.

QNL executive director Tan Huism said: "Morocco's tradition of creating books and manuscripts was amongst the most active in the Islamic world, surviving for many centuries until the decline of French colonial rule in the 1940s."

"This exhibition presents a unique opportunity to explore Morocco's rich tradition of bookmaking, blending craftsmanship with intellectual heritage," she said. "It also serves as a platform to showcase the new works created by Qatari artists, fostering a dynamic exchange between the two cultures and highlighting the evolving dialogue in the region."

The exhibition runs until April 26, 2025. – ***QNA***

Canvases by students to be showcased at Al Ghorrah fest

Students of schools across Qatar Foundation (QF)'s ecosystem of learning have painted more than 40 canvases for display at the upcoming Al Ghorrah for Literature and Arts, from November 28-December 2, in Education City.

The five-day event will celebrate local and regional cultural heritage, highlighting manuscripts produced under the Arab Islamic civilisation.

The canvases painted by students in QF schools depict five stories: *The Wonders of Creatures and the Marvels of Creation*, *Sindbad and the Old Man of the Sea*, *The Fisherman and the Genie*, *The Ruined Man Who Became Rich Again Through a Dream*, and *The Three Knights and the Treasure*.

Participating schools under the QF's Pre-University Education umbrella include Qatar Academy Doha, Qatar Academy Al Wakra, Qatar Academy Al Khor, Qatar Academy Msheireb, Academyati, Awsaj Academy, and Renad Academy.

Art teacher Hissa al-Thani of Awsaj Academy guided her 11 grade 5 students through the painting process.

"We used basic colours like yellows, browns, greens, and metallics such as gold," she said. "I was with them every step of the way, and they really enjoyed it."

Specialist teacher and collaborator Charlene Kasdorf of Academyati helped lead the painting sessions.

"The majority of the work happened over the course of just a morning," she said. "Up to 80 children came in, and there was music, mixing, and painting; it was celebratory."

The canvases will be displayed within the Multicultural Zone at Al Ghorrah.

Other family-friendly activities in this area include bookmark making, book binding, chest decorating, and calligraphy.

Tickets are available at educationcity.qa/al-ghorrah, priced at QR35 for children, QR50 for adults, and QR200 for specialised workshops.

beIN Media Group to release *Here* across region

Miramax Studios, the film and television production company owned by beIN Media Group and Paramount, has announced the release of *Here*, directed by Robert Zemeckis and starring Tom Hanks and Robin Wright, in cinemas across the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region tomorrow, following its US release earlier this month.

Based on Richard Maguire's novel, *Here* takes viewers on a journey through time to explore the lives of people who inhabited the same place throughout the ages.

Set in a single location, the film spans prehistory to the distant future.

Through a range of personal and universal themes, the film invites viewers to reflect and contemplate many human emotions, such as love, loss, and the passage of time, a statement said.

7th GCC Theatre Festival for Persons with Disabilities opens at Katara

The activities of the Seventh GCC Theatre Festival for Persons with Disabilities kicked off yesterday at Katara – the Cultural Village's Drama Theatre and will continue until December 3.

Held under the patronage of HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi, the festival coincides with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which is marked on December 3 each year.

The festival aims to integrate persons with disabilities, highlight their talents and artistic abilities, and seeks to enhance their self-confidence and showcase their creativity in the theatrical field, giving them an opportunity to express their issues in their own way within an artistic framework that reflects their great creative abilities and important role in society.

The performances will begin on the first day with the Qatari play *Al Dana*, written by Taleb al-Dous, directed by Nasser Abdul Redha, and starring Faisal Rashid, Fahad al-Baker, Fatima al-Shorouki, Khaled Youssef, Maryam al-Kuwari and Jassim al-Mohannadi, with actors from the Shafallah Centre.

The second day of the festival will witness the presentation of the play *A Lifetime's Journey* from the UAE, while the third performance is titled *The Trial of Dobi* from Bahrain.

The fourth day of the festival will see the Saudi performance *Deja Vu*, and on the fifth day the festival's audience will witness the Omani performance *The Ship Is Still Standing*.

The sixth and final show would be Kuwait's *Habel Hessa*. – ***QNA***

Qatari takes part in Luxor photographic art forum

Qatari artist Ibtisam al-Saffar is participating in the 17th Luxor International Forum for Photographic Art, alongside 24 others hailing from Arab and foreign countries.

The forum will continue until December 7.

Al-Saffar said that the paintings presented during the forum embody the principles of abstract expressionism, creating artwork that emphasise a deep appreciation for water and lakes, with a particular focus on the River Nile.

These works, al-Saffar said, engage with the unique landscape of Luxor, a city of immense archaeological significance, drawing broader attention at cultural and civilisational levels.

The forum was inaugurated on Monday under the sponsorship of the Egyptian ministry of culture. – ***QNA***

Global headquarters of Qatar Airways to relocate to MDD

Qatar Airways will relocate its global headquarters to Msheireb Downtown Doha (MDD) next year.

The announcement followed a signing ceremony at Qatar Airways' main office, attended by Msheireb Properties board vice-chairperson Saad al-Muhannadi.

The new offices will offer Qatar Airways employees state-of-the-art facilities in four interconnected towers, 9km away from the airline's hub operations centre, Hamad International Airport, a statement said yesterday.

The new location will provide enhanced accessibility to Qatar Airways's Doha-based employees, located just 10m from Msheireb Metro Station, where all Doha Metro lines connect.



The new Qatar Airways headquarters has already earned the prestigious SmartScore certification, the global standard for smart buildings.

SmartScore champions cutting-edge technology in real estate, setting industry standards for best-in-class buildings that deliver exceptional user experiences, drive cost efficiencies, and are fully future-proof.

The building design supports workplace wellness, with a host of amenities accessible through digital platforms.

Daily operations will also receive a boost with the help of advanced algorithms that can predict mechanical issues before they arise and monitor energy and resource consumption for more sustainable operation.

Qatar Airways Group chief executive Badr Mohammed al-Meer said that the new headquarters would enable the Group to drive the innovation, productivity and efficiencies required to power the operations of the world's leading airline into the future, as well as reflect the Group's commitment to its employees and to sustainability through smart urban design and eco-friendly architecture.

This is the first large-scale office relocation for Qatar Airways Group, which currently occupies three separate buildings in the Old Airport area of the city.

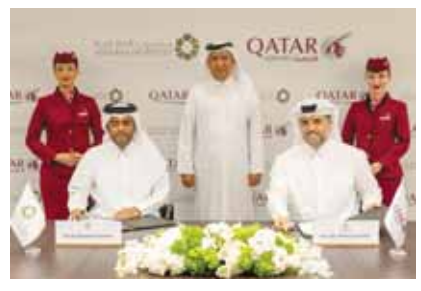
The new office towers are owned by real estate development company, Msheireb Properties, a subsidiary of Qatar Foundation.

Blending Qatar's architectural heritage with modern design, the MDD is the world's first fully built smart and sustainable city district, with Platinum Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

"It has always been our ambition to create a vibrant environment that attracts pioneering organisations to Msheireb Downtown Doha," said al-Muhannadi.

"Qatar Airways, as one of the world's leading airlines, perfectly exemplifies this vision," he continued. "We take great pride in welcoming them to our community, as their presence further establishes Msheireb Downtown Doha as a premier destination for global business excellence."

"Msheireb Downtown Doha is rapidly growing into Qatar's tech, tourism and creativity hub, attracting partners and collaborators who share our and Qatar



Airways' vision for a connected, future-ready city," said Msheireb Properties chief executive Ali Mohammed al-Kuwari. "We are eager to welcome Qatar Airways into the Msheireb Downtown Doha family, sharing a commitment to sustainable development and a desire to build a human-centric community in Qatar."

Situated on Al Nakheel Street, Qatar Airways's new head office is the highest building in Msheireb, offering views of Doha's iconic skyline.

With a total gross area of 51,602sq feet, the four interconnected towers share a lobby.

Tower A, the tallest in Msheireb Downtown Doha, rises to 20 storeys high, while Tower B stands at 15 storeys.

Towers C and D are both six storeys high, the statement added.

MAZDA CX-90 MHEV wins the BEST FAMILY SUV AWARD at the 2024 ARAB CAR OF THE YEAR (ARABCOTY) EVENT

The winners of the 2024 "Arab Car of The Year" (ARABCOTY) awards were announced during a glittering ceremony held on 20th November at THE CHEDI – Katara Hotel & Resort—a gala event featuring an audience of motoring journalists, industry insiders, and automotive distributors who gathered to see this year's most remarkable vehicles celebrated for their innovation, style, and performance across the region. Now in its 10th edition, "Arab Car of The Year" (ARABCOTY) is one of the most prestigious automotive accolades in the middle east region.

A distinguished panel of Jurors from the middle east region lead by Maqina middle east evaluates, tests, and selects the most aesthetically exciting, technically advanced, and powerful cars in almost all car categories: from sedans and sports cars through to SUVs and crossovers. Awards were granted in this year's in more than 21 categories, and they rigorously tested and evaluated the cars against four key criteria: overall design, performance, safety, and technological advancements. The aim being to choose and celebrate the best cars in each segment.

MAZDA CX-90 MHEV won the ARAB CAR OF THE YEAR award 2024 for the BEST FAMILY SUV category.

The first-ever Mazda CX-90, introduced in GCC during January 2024 with the "For the Voyage of Your Life" concept, this wide-body three-row SUV offers greater comfort, functionality, and safety performance, making driving more enjoyable and travel more pleasant together for friends and family.



The first-ever Mazda CX-90 was introduced in 2024 with the "For the Voyage of Your Life" concept, this wide-body three-row SUV offers greater comfort, functionality, and safety performance, making driving more enjoyable and travel with friends and family more pleasant.

Receiving the award, the spokesperson from Mazda Qatar stated: "Our goal is to provide a distinguished customer experience, and with each new launch, we challenge ourselves with design and engineering that blend its high-performance appearance with world-class refinement. Mazda CX-90 riding on All-New Performance-Oriented Platform, offers New Electrified Powertrains.

All New Mazda CX-90 with 3.3 litre inline 6-cylinder MHEV has been made available in Qatar by National Car Company (NCC), the sole agent for Mazda vehicles in Qatar celebrating 50 years of their partnership in excellence with Mazda Corporation-Japan. All New Mazda CX-90 variants are on display and for sale at the state-of-the-art Mazda showroom located at Al Nasr, Doha.

"At Mazda, our focus is to deliver an ownership experience that enriches the lives of our customers. With each new vehicle launch, we challenge ourselves to progress through our human-centric approach of design and engineering," said an official communique during the release of the 2025 model. "CX-90 offers powerful and responsive performance, alluring design, and intuitive technology. We're very proud of our team's work on CX-90, which we know is a breakthrough vehicle in its segment", said the release further.







MAZDA CX-90: FEEL THE VITALITY

The CX-90 design expresses a feeling of vitality rooted in Mazda's KODO or "Soul of Motion" design theme. The aesthetic of subtraction or "less is more" produces a simple shape and realizes dynamic and majestic proportions. The interior is an expression of Japanese aesthetic throughout, incorporating the dynamism of light and natural materials in an orderly elegant space.

For the powertrain, Mazda will offer a new turbocharged 3.3-liter inline six-cylinder gasoline engine augmented by a 48-volt mild hybrid system for the GCC market including Qatar. In combination with the new rear-biased AWD architecture, the CX-90 offers superior environmental performance while honoring the driver's intentions.

As with all Mazda vehicles, CX-90 is designed with the driver in mind. With seating for up to eight passengers, CX-90 can accommodate families and friends in all three rows. Cabin space, cargo capacity, safety features, and amenities are optimized for their needs.

Mazda also focused meticulous attention on creating a comfortable environment for all on board. The interior space has been enlarged around all seats. The third row is designed to seat three and equipped with its own air conditioning vents.

Furthermore, inclusion of See-Through View, capable of intuitively discerning information necessary for vehicle operation, as well as a large active driving display to support safe vehicle operation and enhance the driver's peace of mind.

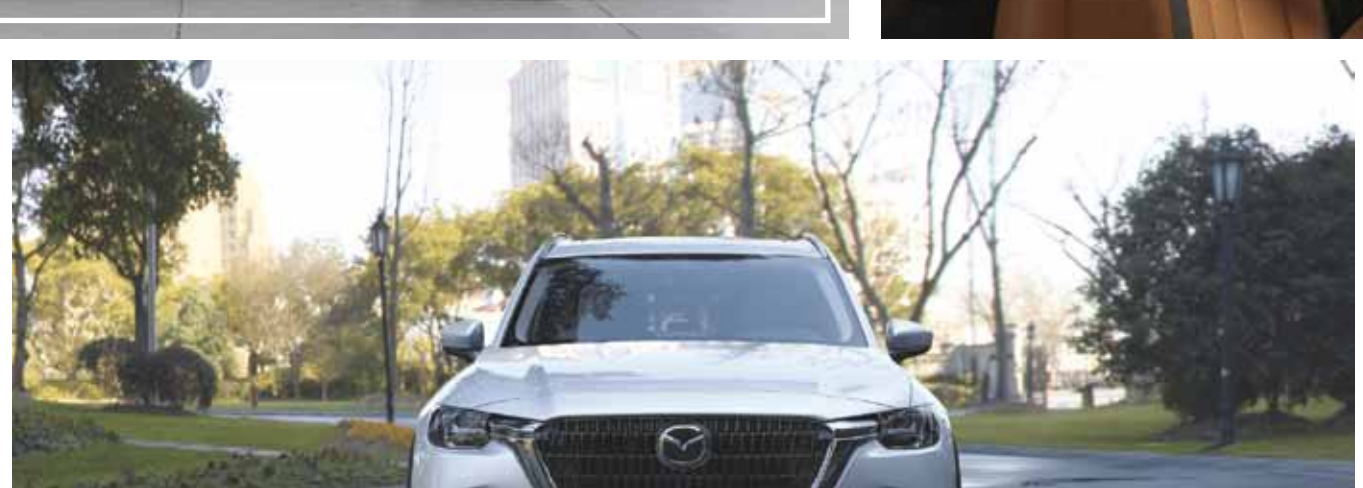
MOST POWERFUL GASOLINE ENGINE DEVELOPED BY MAZDA

Mazda CX-90 is being offered with a highly anticipated all-new powerful and responsive e-Skyactiv G 3.3L Inline 6 Turbo engine. The available 3.3-liter inline 6 turbo will have the highest horsepower and torque from a mass production gasoline engine developed by Mazda with 340 horsepower and 369 lb-ft of torque when using the recommended premium fuel. This engine provides CX-90 with an engaging driving experience with a rewarding exhaust note. This engine also is equipped with M-Hybrid Boost (a mild-hybrid system) to provide efficiency without compromising on its remarkable performance. The electric motor is placed between the engine and transmission, creating a smooth acceleration from a standstill, and allowing the motor to directly power CX-90 at low speed. This engaging powertrain provides the CX-90 with an upscale feeling, a smooth-driving experience, engaging sound, and efficiency.

focuses on comfort and safety for customers." He added: The CX-90 offers strong performance, great responsiveness and attractive design, and we believe this award is a recognition of the human centric brand philosophy of Mazda visible across its entire product range

ARABCOTY has quickly established itself as a hallmark of prestige, thanks to its rigorous selection process. Judged by a diverse panel of world-class motoring journalists and car experts, the awards offer unbiased recognition of the vehicles that are shaping the future of mobility in the Middle East. The winning cars now carry a badge of distinction that elevates their reputation among consumers and enthusiasts alike, further solidifying their status in a highly competitive market.

Built on Mazda's all-new large platform, the three-row crossover represents Mazda's new flagship vehicle with wider, longer, and more aggressive proportions that perfectly



POWERFUL, RESPONSIVE PERFORMANCE

CX-90 is built on an all-new large platform that features a front-engine, rear-wheel-bias longitudinal layout to elevate Mazda's signature driving performance. CX-90 is equipped with Kinematic Posture Control, which first debuted on the MX-5 Miata, a software feature that suppresses body lift on tight corners to enhance the grip and allows all occupants to maintain a natural posture. Focus was put toward optimizing rigidity across the entire vehicle body, while meticulously designing the seats and suspension to provide better balance, control, and confidence in a range of driving situations. With these thoughtful developments, along with standard i-Activ all-wheel drive, drivers can enjoy the full potential of the available high-output powertrains.

Spectators' guidelines for Formula 1 Qatar Grand Prix 2024

As the Formula 1 season nears its thrilling conclusion, the Lusail International Circuit (LIC) is preparing to host the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix 2024 from Nov 29 to Dec 1. This penultimate round of the championship promises an unforgettable fusion of high-speed racing action and world-class entertainment, featuring both the season's final F1 Sprint race and the Grand Prix under LIC's floodlights.

Stay Connected with the LIC Apps

LIC App: Download the official LIC App to enhance your Formula 1 experience. The app includes various features including a 3D map to help navigate your way around the circuit, a comprehensive FAQs section covering venue timings, weekend track schedule and more.

Lusail Tickets App: You can access your mobile tickets through the Lusail Tickets App, where you can view your tickets and find event information, competition schedules, venue navigation, and important notices.

LIC Gate Opening Times

Lusail International Circuit will open its gates to the public at the following times:
Friday: 11:00 - 22:00
Saturday: 13:30 - 23:00
Sunday: 12:00 - 21:00

Navigating to the Circuit

The LIC App serves as your digital guide to reaching and exploring the venue. Its immersive 3D map provides real-time navigation, where you can explore the venue through detailed 3D models of key landmarks, locate F&B outlets, merchandise stores, and special events.

Private Cars: For those driving to the circuit, the app will direct you to optimal parking zones based on your grandstand location and allows you to save your parking spot for easy reference.

VIP ticket holders can locate their exclusive entrances and dedicated shuttle services, ensuring you don't miss out on any experiences during the race weekend.

Stay informed about route changes and access the latest venue updates throughout your journey.

Metro: The modern Doha Metro system will serve as the backbone of your journey, with the Red Line connecting the city centre to Lusail QNB Station. Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix 2024 ticket holders can get a complimentary 3-Day Pass valid for unlimited journeys on Doha Metro & Lusail Tram from Nov 29 to Dec 1.

Redemptions can be made at the goldclub office at any Doha Metro stations or the ticket office in selected Lusail Tram stations.



Terms and conditions apply.

For the race weekend, Doha Metro & Lusail Tram services have been specially extended as the following:
Friday from 12pm to 2am
Saturday from 5:30am to 1am
Sunday from 5:30am to 2am.

From the station, complimentary shuttle services ensure a seamless transition to the circuit gates.

Taxi: For those preferring more flexibility, Karwa and Uber offer a convenient drop-off point at the venue.

LIC Gate Opening Times
Friday: 11:00 - 22:00
Saturday: 13:30 - 23:00
Sunday: 12:00 - 21:00

Security & Entry Procedures

All attendees must pass through security checks upon arrival. Review the prohibited items list before arriving to avoid confiscation. Ensure your mobile phone is charged with sufficient data as QR code tickets must be displayed at venue gates and grandstand entry points. It is important to note that no re-entry will be allowed once you leave the security venue perimeter.

Concert Access

All valid ticket holders can access the post-race concerts, taking place in a dedicated concert arena accessible through the Fan Zone. Concert gates open at 21:00 on Friday and 20:00 on Sunday, with performances beginning approximately one hour after race events. Follow venue signage and staff directions to concert areas.

Fan Zone

The Fan Zone features F1 experiences, entertainment shows, and activities suitable for families. Food and beverage vendors offer a variety of international and local options.

Comfort and Convenience

Days remain warm during November while evenings can turn surprisingly cool, making light layers your best friend. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes and stay hydrated.

The circuit offers numerous amenities, including a diverse range of food and beverage options that cater to all tastes and dietary requirements.

The newly renovated facility boasts expanded seating capacity and enhanced viewing areas, including the innovative Lusail Hill at Turn 1, offering spectacular views of the racing action. The circuit's commitment to accessibility means all fans can enjoy the excitement.

What to Bring

Your ticket and valid ID are essential, and comfortable walking shoes.

The circuit operates largely cashless, so ensure you have your bank cards ready. Power banks are permitted (one per person) to keep your devices charged throughout the day.

For the latest updates and information, download the official Lusail International Circuit (LIC) App or visit the F1 website.

Note: All times are local (UTC+3). Schedule subject to change. Please check official communications for final confirmation of times and activities.

Winter rains pile misery on war-torn Gaza's displaced



People dig channels to ease flooding at a camp for displaced Palestinians in Al-Zaywayda in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday, amid the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas.

AFP
Gaza City

At a crowded camp in Gaza for those displaced by the war between Israel and Hamas, Ayman Siam laid concrete blocks around his tent to keep his family dry as rain threatened more misery.

"I'm trying to protect my tent from the rainwater because we are expecting heavy rain. Three days ago when it rained, we were drenched," Siam said, seeking to shield his children and grandchildren from more wet weather.

Siam is among thousands sheltering at Gaza City's Yarmuk sports stadium in the north after being uprooted by the Israel-Hamas war.

He lives in one of many flimsy tents set up at the stadium, where the pitch has become a muddy field dotted with puddles left by rainfall that washed away belongings and shelters.

People in the stadium dug small trenches around their tents, covered them with plastic sheets, and did whatever they could to stop the water from entering their makeshift homes.

Others used spades to direct the water into drains, as grey skies threatened more rain.

'CATASTROPHIC'

The majority of Gaza's 2.4mn people have been displaced, often multiple times, by the war that began with Hamas' storming of southern Israel in October 2023.

With many displaced living in tent camps, the coming winter is raising serious concerns.

Mahmud Bassal, spokesman for Gaza's civil defence agency, said that "tens of thousands of displaced people, especially in the central and south of Gaza Strip, are suffering from flooded tents due to the rains", and called on the international community to provide tents and aid.

International aid organisations have sounded the alarm about the deteriorating situation as winter approaches.

"It's going to be catastrophic," warned Louise Wateridge, an emergency officer for the UN agency for Palestinian refugees currently in Gaza.

"People don't have anything that they need," she said from Gaza City.

"They haven't had basic, basic, basic things for 13 months, not food, not water, not shelter," she added.

"It's going to be miserable, it's going to be very desperate." The rainy period in Gaza lasts between late October and April, with January being the wettest month, averaging 30 to 40 millimetres of rain.

Winter temperatures can drop as low as six degrees Celsius (42 Fahrenheit).

Recent rain has flooded hundreds of tents near the coast in Deir el-Balah, in central Gaza, as well as in Khan Yunis and Rafah in the south, according to Gaza's civil defence.

'NOTHING LEFT'

Auni al-Sabea, living in a tent in Deir el-Balah, was among those bearing the brunt of the weather without proper accommodation.

"The rain and seawater flooded all the tents. We are helpless. The water took everything from the tent, including the mattresses, blankets and a water jug. We were only able to get a mattress and blankets for the children," said the displaced man.

"Now, we are in the street and we have nothing left," said the 40-year-old from Al-Shati Camp.

At the stadium, Umm Ahmed Saliha showed the water that pooled under her tent during morning prayers. "All of this is from this morning's rain and winter hasn't even started properly." Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed 44,235 people in Gaza, according to figures from the Hamas-run territory's health ministry that the UN considers reliable.

UN says first food trucks in months reach famine-hit Sudan camp

AFP
Geneva

The United Nations' World Food Programme said yesterday its first food trucks in several months had got through to a famine-stricken camp for displaced people in conflict-ravaged Sudan.

War has raged since April 2023 between the Sudanese army under de facto ruler Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) led by his former deputy, Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

It has triggered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. More than 25mn people — over half the population — are facing acute hunger.

"WFP food trucks arrived in North Darfur's Zamzam camp last Friday, where famine was confirmed earlier this year," the UN agency's Sudan spokeswoman Leni Kinzli told a media briefing in Geneva.

"These are the first WFP food items that we have been able to transport into the camp in many months, carrying emergency food aid for 12,500 people," she said, speaking from Nairobi.

"While the amount of aid on this convoy is just a drop in the ocean... these trucks are delivering hope to people in Zamzam who have been battling famine on their own, cut off from aid for many months."

The North Darfur state capital, El-Fasher, has been under siege by the RSF for months, disabling nearly all aid operations in the region and pushing nearby Zamzam into famine.

"My colleagues on the ground in Zamzam camp told me that people were lined up on the road cheering as the WFP convoy arrived," said Kinzli.

"Families are eating crushed peanut shells to survive," she said, adding that the shells are normally used for animal feed.

"Across the camp there are parents who are mourning the deaths of their children who passed away from malnutrition."

Following talks on Monday with new UN aid chief Tom Fletcher, Sudan's Burhan announced that all relevant UN agencies would be allowed to establish supply hubs in El Obeid, Kadugli and Ad-Damazin.

"UN personnel will also be authorised to accompany convoys and oversee aid distribution," he said on X.

Fletcher welcomed the announcement, saying more humanitarian hubs "will allow us to reach more Sudanese".

Kinzli said the WFP and its partners had been providing locally sourced food to around 100,000 people in Zamzam in recent months while pushing for road access.

SA opposition seeks to revive impeachment proceedings against Ramaphosa

Reuters
Johannesburg

South African opposition party the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) brought a case to the country's top court yesterday to try to revive impeachment proceedings against President Cyril Ramaphosa over the scandal dubbed "Farmgate" by local media.

The scandal centred on the alleged theft of millions of dollars hidden in furniture on Ramaphosa's Phala Phala game farm, which a former intelligence official revealed to police.

An independent panel report found evidence Ramaphosa may have committed misconduct over the incident.

But in late 2022 lawmakers from Ramaphosa's African National Congress (ANC), which had a majority in the National Assembly at the time, voted to reject the report and prevented an impeachment committee from being set up to probe the allegations.



Members of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) protest in the streets as they make their way to the Constitutional Court, where the political party is challenging the National Assembly's rejection of a report that could have led to impeachment proceedings against President Cyril Ramaphosa due to the Phala Phala scandal in Johannesburg, yesterday.

ELECTION

Namibians head to the polls wanting change

The mix of people milling around Windhoek's Zoo Park reflect the hopes and disappointments of Namibians who head to the polls today in a test for the party that brought independence 34 years ago but has left many feeling let down, AFP reported from Windhoek. Employees on their lunch break and young homeless people share spots on the grass of this downtown meeting point at the corner of Independence Avenue and Fidel Castro Street.

TRAGEDY

Nigeria boat accident leaves five dead, 20 missing

At least five people were killed and 20 others are missing after a speedboat struck a submerged log and capsized in Nigeria's southern state of Delta, a police spokesperson said yesterday, Reuters reported from Yenagoa. The incident happened on Friday in the remote Gbaramatu Kingdom of the state's Warri South-West district. Emergency responders are still conducting a search and rescue operation to find the 20 missing people. Six survivors are receiving treatment at a local hospital.

Survivors, bodies recovered from capsized Red Sea tourist boat

AFP
Cairo

Rescuers yesterday recovered five survivors and four bodies from a dive boat that capsized off Egypt's eastern coast a day earlier, Red Sea governor Amr Hanafi said. A military-led team rescued two Belgians, one Swiss national, one Finnish tourist and one Egyptian, the governor said, bringing the total number of survivors from the accident to 33.

The "Sea Story" had been carrying 31 tourists of multiple nationalities and a 13-member crew when it was hit by a large wave near Marsa Alam in southeastern Egypt early on Monday, causing it to capsize. The four bodies recovered yesterday have not yet been identified, and seven people are still missing after 28 were rescued on Monday.

A government source close to rescue operations said the five survivors were found yesterday morning inside the boat, which the governor said had been thrown on its side by an early morning wave but had not completely sunk.

"They were found inside one of the rooms which had not filled with water," the government source told AFP, requesting anonymity because he was not authorised to brief the media. The group had spent at least 24 hours in the overturned vessel after authorities first received distress calls at 5:30am (0330 GMT) on Monday.

"Rescue operations are ongoing today, supported by a military helicopter and a frigate in addition to multiple divers," the Red Sea governor told AFP yesterday.

OBITUARY

World's oldest man dies aged 112 in England

John Tinniswood, an Englishman born the same year the Titanic sank and who survived two world wars and two global pandemics, has died aged 112, Guinness World Records said yesterday, months after it recognised him as the world's oldest man. Tinniswood passed away on Monday at a care home in Southport, northwest England, surrounded by "music and love", his family said. Born in August 1912 in Liverpool, he went on to meet his wife Blodwen at a dance before marrying her in 1942, at the height of World War II when he served in the Royal Army Pay Corps, which was responsible for finances and food supplies.

LAW AND ORDER

Filipino fugitive wanted for $68mn scam held in Indonesia

Indonesia's immigration office said it handed an Interpol-listed fugitive over to Philippines' authorities yesterday, after he was charged with defrauding thousands of people out of $68mn dollars in a casino-related scheme. According to the Philippines Securities and Exchange Commission, Hector Aldwin Liao Pantollana was involved in a Ponzi scheme that promised high returns for investing in the casino junket industry. Criminal charges were filed against Pantollana in May, but Philippines' authorities said he had long since fled the country. He was detained on November 9 on Indonesia's resort island of Bali as he attempted to board a plane to Hong Kong.

LITERATURE

'Enshittification' is Macquarie Dictionary's word of the year

Australia's quasi-official Macquarie Dictionary has picked "enshittification" as the word of 2024, tapping into a growing sense that once-great digital services are bad and getting worse. "ENSHITTIFICATION - Noun. Colloquial, the gradual deterioration of a service or product brought about by a reduction in the quality of service provided, especially of an online platform, and as a consequence of profit-seeking." The word, coined by writer Cory Doctorow, refers to a process in which apps start off as incredibly useful, but gradually worsen as they seek to make a profit. Enshittification beat out words like "brainrot" and "overtourism".

OFFBEAT

Man puts on 20kg in bid to evade military service

A South Korean man was handed a suspended prison sentence for intentionally gaining weight in a bid to avoid bootcamp and other strenuous activities in military service, a Seoul court said yesterday. All South Korean men under the age of 30 must perform around two years of military service. While all able-bodied men must serve in the military, people with health issues may be assigned alternative duties. A 26-year-old man was sentenced earlier this month to one year in prison - suspended for two years - for violating the Military Service Act after deliberately binge-eating to gain weight and be classified as unfit for active duty.

Officials summon Duterte over threat to have Marcos killed

Reuters
Manila

Philippine law officials yesterday summoned vice president Sara Duterte for questioning over her weekend statements that she had contracted someone to assassinate President Ferdinand Marcos Jr if she were to be killed.

Duterte accused the administration of twisting her words to create a false narrative that Marcos' life was under active threat, saying in a statement yesterday her remarks were a "conditional act of revenge".

The summons from the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) requires Duterte to appear at its offices on November 29.

According to the summons, Duterte will be questioned over the alleged offence of making a grave threat and possible violations of the anti-terrorism law.

In an online press conference on Saturday, Duterte said she had spoken with an assassin and instructed him to kill Marcos, his wife and his cousin, the speaker of the Philippine House, if she were to be killed.

Duterte's office said she was not in when the summons was served and had not read the order. On Monday, Duterte said she would comply if summoned by investigators.

The estranged vice president's stunning remarks were the latest salvo in a bitter row that has intensified since the collapse of a formidable alliance between their powerful families in which Marcos won the 2022 election by a huge margin, with Duterte running alongside him.

Both Marcos and Duterte are children of former presidents.

Marcos said in a national address on Monday that he would fight "reckless and troubling threats" against him and would not allow such criminal attempts to pass, without naming Duterte.

Unlike the president, the vice president does not enjoy immunity from prosecution, according to the justice ministry.

In her statement, Duterte said her remarks did not amount to a threat on Marcos' life.

"I raise this caution as the president and his sycophants aggressively sell a narrative based entirely on my statement, which is taken out of its logical context," Duterte said.

"Common sense should be enough for us to understand and accept that a supposed conditional act of revenge does not constitute to an active threat," she said.

Duterte's attack on Marcos came just weeks after her father, former president Rodrigo Duterte, was the subject of marathon parliamentary inquiries into thousands of killings during the notorious "war on drugs" that defined his 2016-2022 presidency.

Congress is separately probing the younger Duterte over alleged misuse of public funds.

Bangladesh police disperse protest



Police personnel baton-charge protesting supporters of Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari, a jailed Hindu monk leader, member of the Bangladesh Sammilito Sanatan Jagaran Jote group and former member of Iskcon, during a demonstration after court denied his bail in Chittagong yesterday.

Modi's party distances itself from Adani amid protests

Reuters
New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party said it had no reason to defend billionaire Gautam Adani yesterday following his US indictment over alleged bribery to secure power deals in India.

The main opposition Congress party has accused Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of shielding Adani and stonewalling independent investigations into his dealings in the country, charges the ruling party has denied. Congress workers have also held street protests demanding a parliamentary probe.

US prosecutors have charged Adani, the ports-to-power group's founder, his nephew Sagar Adani and six others for their alleged roles in a $265mn scheme to bribe Indian officials to secure power supply deals across five Indian regions. The group has denied the charges, calling them "baseless".

Federal Indian investigating agencies and the markets regulator have not commented on the indictment and did not respond to queries.

"We have nothing to defend him and we are not involved. Let him defend himself," BJP spokesperson Gopal Krishna Agarwal said by phone. "We are not against industrialists. We consider them as partners in nation-building. But the law will take its own course if they do something wrong." Agarwal's comments came after a state ruled by an alliance including the BJP, Andhra Pradesh, said it would explore if it was possible to cancel a power supply contract linked to the Adani Group in the state.

Sources said Andhra was likely to suspend the contract and ask the federal government to investigate the charges. US authorities have charged Gautam Adani and the other defendants with agreeing to pay bribes to unnamed Indian government officials to obtain solar power-supply contracts in Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh states, as well as Jammu and Kashmir, between 2021 and 2022.

All the states named by US authorities were at the time ruled by parties opposed to Modi's ruling alliance. Those parties have denied any wrongdoing, saying they had not dealt with Adani but a federal government agency.

China deploys forces as US aircraft flies over Taiwan Strait

Beijing said it deployed air and naval forces to monitor a US military plane as it flew over waters separating China and Taiwan. The US and its allies regularly cross through the 180km Taiwan Strait, either by ship or aircraft, to reinforce the international status of the waterway. China considers Taiwan to be part of its territory. Beijing regularly deploys fighter jets and warships around the island, while opposing transits by military ships and aircraft belonging to the US and its allies. "A US Navy P-8A Poseidon transited the Taiwan Strait in international airspace on November 26, 2024," the US Navy's 7th Fleet said. China said it had monitored the aircraft and condemned the flight for being "openly hyped". "US remarks distort legal principles, confuse the public and mislead international perception," said Cao Jun, a senior colonel and spokesman for China's Eastern Theatre Air Force, in a statement.

Indonesia flooding, landslide toll hits 20



A girl walks past the site of a landslide caused by heavy rain at Semangat Gunung Village in Karo, North Sumatra province, Indonesia. Rescue workers in western Indonesia used heavy equipment yesterday to clear the debris from weekend flooding and landslides that have killed at least 20 people, the national disaster agency said.

UK to offer mental health support to ailing workforce

Reuters
London

Prime Minister Keir Starmer yesterday announced plans to get Britain's ailing workforce back into jobs with better support for mental health and finding work, but the government delayed a consultation on reforming welfare to encourage people into work.

Mental health support will target geographic areas with high rates of labour market inactivity and job centres will focus more on career advice than on policing benefits, the government said in a policy paper.

Starmer has set a target of getting Britain's employment rate up to 80% - from just under 75% now - as part of a plan to accelerate economic growth.

Britain is the only major economy where the inactivity rate remains above its pre-Covid-19 levels, largely driven by a significant rise in the number of people out of work due to long-term ill health. Spending on sickness benefits is now projected to top £100bn ($126bn) a year by the end of this parliament in 2029, double the level before the pandemic.

But the government pushed back until next year a consultation for how it plans to change the health and disability welfare system to encourage more people to seek work. "This government inherited a country that simply isn't working. But today we've set out a plan to fix this," said Starmer, whose Labour Party won July's parliamentary election.

The opposition Conservative Party said the government had "dodged the tough decisions" on welfare reform after the proposals were announced.

Large fire breaks out at Japan rocket test site

AFP
Tokyo

A huge fire erupted yesterday at a Japanese rocket testing station, sending flames and smoke soaring into the sky, in the latest mishap for the country's ambitious space programme.

There were no reports of injuries in the incident, in a remote area of Kagoshima in southern Japan, where a solid-fuel Epsilon S rocket was being tested.

Footage on national broadcaster NHK showed towering balls of fire and white fumes rising from the Tanegashima Space Center.

Journalists stationed around 900 metres away reported a large explosion shortly after the combustion test began at 8.30am.

Yesterday evening, hours after the accident, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) said "the cause was still unknown".

It will take the agency "at least a few months" to identify the cause, make adjustments and, if necessary, conduct another combustion test, JAXA project manager Takayuki Imoto told a briefing.

The agency said earlier that there was "an abnormality" during yesterday's test.

The incident could severely complicate the agency's plan to launch the Epsilon S - the successor to the Epsilon - by March, with the Asahi Shimbun daily describing the target as "hopeless".

The latest setback will have a "significant" impact on the timeline of JAXA's space mission, Imoto said.

In July 2023, one engine of an Epsilon S exploded during a test around 50 seconds after ignition.

In that incident, a piece of metal from the ignition melted and damaged the thermal insulator covering the engine, allowing fuel to catch fire, Kyodo News reported.

Since that misstep last year, "we have done everything we can to identify what went wrong...we regret this happened again, and feel sorry we failed to live up to everyone's expectations," Imoto said.

It was one in a string of setbacks for Japan's space programme, including launch attempts for its next-generation H3 launch system.

JAXA managed a successful blast-off in February this year for the H3, which has been mooted as a rival to SpaceX's Falcon 9.

But that followed a failed attempt in February 2023 when the ignition process failed. The following month a destruct command was issued shortly after blast-off.

"Including the Epsilon S, the development of flagship rockets is extremely important for the independence of Japan's space development programme," top government spokesman Yoshimasa Hayashi told reporters at a regular briefing yesterday.

In January, Japan successfully landed an unmanned probe on the Moon - albeit at a crooked angle - making it just the fifth country to achieve a soft landing on the lunar surface.

But in March a rocket made by a private Japanese company exploded seconds after launch.

Tokyo-based Space One's 60-foot Kairos rocket blasted off in the coastal Wakayama region of western Japan, carrying a small government test satellite.

Around five seconds later, the solid-fuel rocket erupted in fire, sending white smoke billowing around the remote mountainous area as orange flames raged on the ground, live footage showed.

Burning debris fell onto the surrounding slopes as sprinklers began spraying water, in dramatic scenes watched by hundreds of spectators gathered at public viewing areas including a nearby waterfront.

Space One said at the time that it had taken the decision to "abort the flight" and details were being investigated.

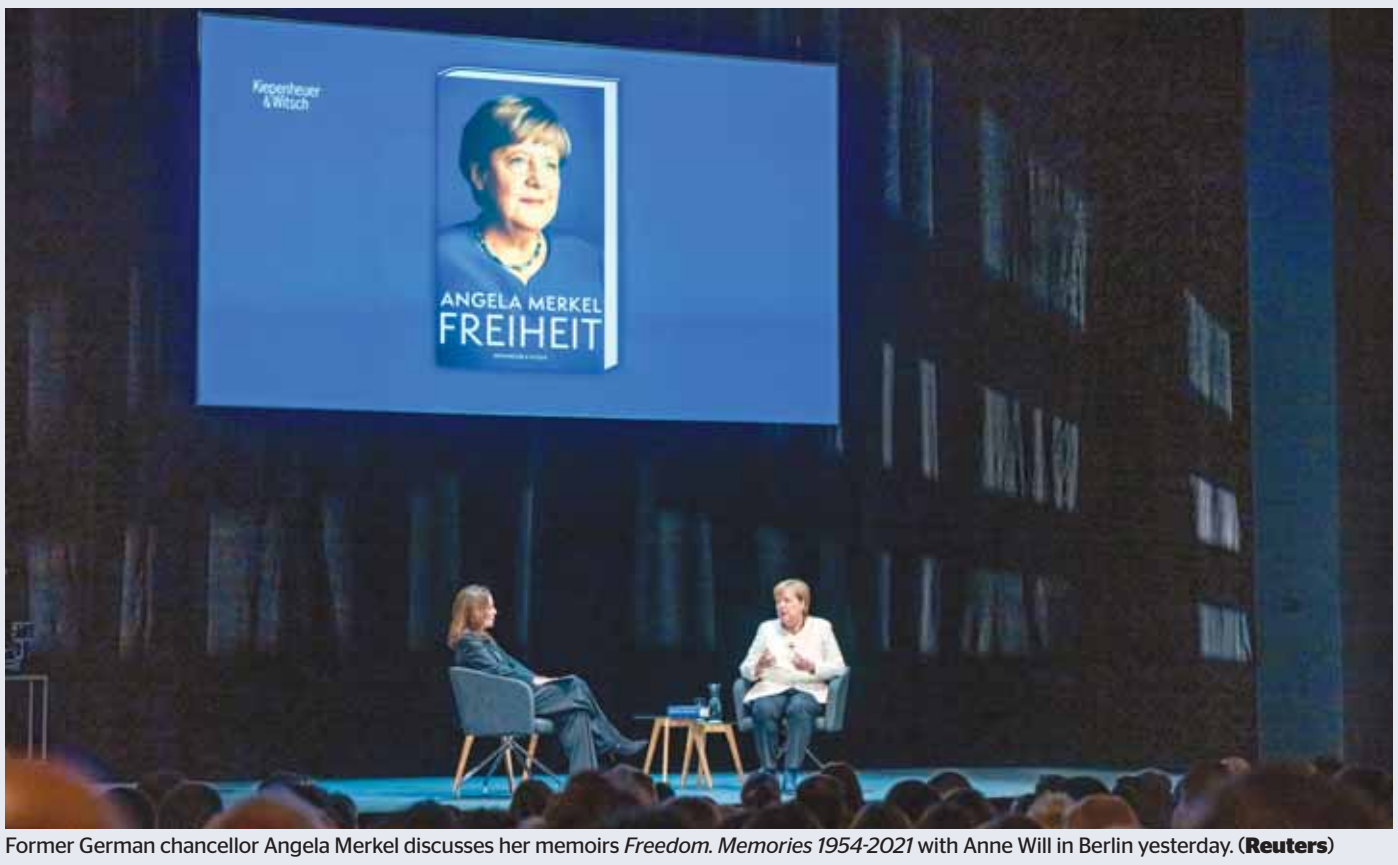
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GULF TIMES

Angela's story



Former German chancellor Angela Merkel discusses her memoirs *Freedom. Memories 1954-2021* with Anne Will in Berlin yesterday. (**Reuters**)

Dollar strength in focus amid US growth exceptionalism

The greenback has an overarching sway over the financial world with the central role US banks and the currency play in the global economy.

The dollar last week posted its longest weekly advance in over a year as Donald Trump's presidential victory and persistent economic growth pushed traders to boost their bets on further gains.

The Bloomberg Dollar Spot Index climbed as much as 0.7% last Friday, capping an eight-week rally, the longest since September 2023.

The euro fell to a two-year low and the Swiss franc slid to the weakest against the greenback since July.

"I would not step in front of this speeding train as long as the US growth exceptionalism story continues," said Paresh Upadhyaya, director of fixed income and currency strategy at Amundi US Inc.

The dollar's rally has been fuelled by speculation that Trump's tariffs and tax cuts will fan inflation and add fuel to an economy the Federal Reserve has already been trying to restrain.

That has caused traders to dial back expectations for how much the Fed will cut interest rates in the months ahead, driving up bond yields and giving overseas investors an incentive to shift money to the US.

"From max bullish on the dollar, we have transitioned to a moderate bullishness on the dollar," said Alessio de Longis, a senior portfolio manager at Invesco. "We are slowly but steadily taking profits on our dollar overweights and going to a more neutral stance."

Trump likes the dollar's role as the world's reserve asset, and the accompanying economic and geopolitical power. But he also wants a weak enough foreign-exchange rate to buoy the US manufacturing sector

Deutsche Bank said that not all of Trump's policies have been priced in and the dollar has more room to go up.

A "maximalist" scenario where Trump enacts his most extreme policies is only 30% priced into financial markets, according to George Saravelos, global head of FX Research at Deutsche Bank.

It's no secret that Trump likes the dollar's role as the world's reserve asset, and the accompanying economic and geopolitical power. But he also wants a weak enough foreign-exchange rate to buoy the US manufacturing sector.

The duelling forces may become a pillar of his administration's economic agenda, and as Treasury chief, Scott Bessent would oversee US currency policy.

"The reserve currency can go up and down based on the market. I believe that if you have good economic policies, you're naturally going to have a strong dollar," Bessent said in interview published in Financial Times in October.

At the same time, currency traders are betting that Trump's policy agenda is about to jumpstart volatility in the $7.5tn-a-day foreign exchange market.

After years of benign moves, a gauge of one-year volatility on the euro-dollar exchange rate surged after the election. Hedge funds are scooping up options contracts that pay out if currency swings increase and strategists have dramatically revised their currency forecasts.

While it's not yet clear how quickly Trump will implement policies such as trade tariffs that could cause significant pain to currencies like the euro, investors are pretty certain that unpredictability will be a major feature of his term in office.

Investors are underestimating trade war risks under a Trump presidency, according to strategists at Bank of America who predict a 5% slide in emerging-market currencies over the first half of 2025, and a selloff in sovereign debt.

Exchange rates do matter because depreciating currencies increase the cost of imported goods, stoking inflation as those expenses feed through to prices in grocery stores and factories.

Meanwhile, there's a higher likelihood that money will pour out of a nation with a weak currency in search of higher yields elsewhere — so-called capital flight — harming domestic investment and growth.

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Russia's evolving influence in Sudan: Shifting alliances and strategic gains



By Mohamed Sulieman al-Shazly

In 2024, Russia shifted its backing from the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) to the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), signalling a major change in its involvement in Sudan's ongoing conflict. This shift can be traced to the 2019 coup, which ousted President Omar al-Bashir. The coup had support from Russian officials, including Yevgeny Prigozhin.

In the aftermath, Russia provided crucial backing to the RSF, including military assistance and strategic advice, to help stabilise the new regime. Russia and China blocked a UN Security Council resolution condemning the RSF's deadly crackdown on protesters in June 2019, justifying the violence as necessary for maintaining stability.

The connection between Russia and Sudan deepened when Wagner Group mercenaries began aiding the Sudanese government in suppressing large protests in 2018. Wagner operatives trained Sudanese security forces and advised on tactics to undermine opposition, including using disinformation to smear protesters and manipulate media narratives. As protests escalated due to severe economic difficulties and human rights abuses, the government responded with violent repression, with evidence later linking Russian mercenaries and military equipment to the crackdown.

In 2023, Sudan descended into a full-scale conflict between the SAF and RSF. Russia's role as a supposed peace mediator became increasingly problematic as Wagner mercenaries were shown to be directly involved with the RSF. While Russian officials expressed concern over the violence, their continued support for the RSF undermined their credibility as neutral brokers.

Russia's broader influence in Africa, especially in countries like Sudan, Mali, and the Central African Republic, has capitalised on weaknesses in Western policies and sanctions. Moscow has leveraged these opportunities to gain political, diplomatic, and economic leverage from authoritarian regimes, but this often comes at a high human cost.

A central element in Russia's growing influence in Sudan has been the country's vast gold resources. M-Invest, a company connected to the Wagner Group, secured mining rights in Sudan, allowing Russia to extract valuable gold. Russian mercenaries soon arrived to assist Sudanese forces, and Sudan's involvement in peace talks for the Central African Republic made it a critical part of Russia's strategy in the region.

The ties between Russia and Sudan deepened in 2017 after the US lifted sanctions on Sudan. Omar al-Bashir travelled to Sochi to meet with President Vladimir Putin, seeking protection from US hostility. In return, Sudan offered Russia military support and access to critical resources, including gold, and allowed the establishment of a Russian naval base in Port Sudan.

As Sudan's political crisis unfolded, Russia's support for Bashir and his successors contributed to the country's instability. Following the 2019 coup, Russian mercenaries, linked to Wagner and its affiliate Meroe Gold, became involved in the illicit gold trade. When the US imposed sanctions on Meroe Gold, Sudanese officials created a new front company, Al-Solag, to continue these operations covertly. Despite efforts to curb this trade, Sudan's military government, after staging a coup in 2021, disbanded the anti-corruption committee that had uncovered these illicit activities, silencing opposition to the gold smuggling operations.

With the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, Sudan's gold became crucial for Russia as a means to bypass international sanctions and fund its war effort. Sudan further aligned with Russia, abstaining from UN votes condemning Moscow's actions in Ukraine and even granting approval for a Russian naval base on its shores. Despite public concerns about the violence in Sudan, Russia's continued support for the military regime and its backing of the RSF exacerbated the crisis, leading to even greater suffering for the Sudanese people.

Russia's growing influence in Africa is part of a broader strategy that exploits the weaknesses of Western interventions and sanctions. Countries like Sudan, Mali, and the Central African Republic, where Russia has offered political and military support to authoritarian governments, have become crucial partners for Moscow.

However, this relationship comes at a heavy humanitarian cost. Russia's support for oppressive regimes only deepens the violence, corruption, and human rights abuses in these countries. While Moscow positions itself as a counterbalance to Western influence, its actions reveal a stark contradiction — fostering authoritarian rule while criticising foreign interference. The citizens of these countries bear the greatest burden, enduring the consequences of Russia's exploitative policies.

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In the face of mixed COP29 climate messages

By Simon Jessop, Karin Strohecker, Virginia Furness
Baku

COP29 deals on finance and carbon markets could lead to billions more dollars flowing around the business world if countries next year can deliver climate plans with clear policies for markets and investment.

Those plans, which are due to the climate body of the United Nations before the next UN climate summit in Brazil, need to describe steps for making projects realistic - and less risky. Yet questions remain on the pace of transition after some countries sought to slow down the world's shift from fossil fuels, giving boards already wrestling with the implications of Donald Trump returning to the US presidency even more tough questions to ponder.

Two weeks of acrimonious negotiations in Azerbaijan's capital Baku resulted in a deal for $300bn in annual climate finance by 2035. Many developing countries said the pledge would not be enough to help them deliver robust national climate plans. While private sector investment was teased throughout the summit - including in a multilateral development bank pledge to mobilise $65bn of it each year - the devil will be in the details.

Some of those details could come up in discussions between countries in the run-up to next year's COP30 summit, where they will be mapping out their next set of emissions-cutting plans.

Countries are meant to submit their national climate plans in February, but many have said they will miss the deadline.

Businesses have called for those plans to include projects and efforts that are "investment ready" - and with as much specificity as possible - to help investors gauge their long-term commitments and risks.

Money will start flowing only after the shared goals agreed at events like COP29 are translated into "regulation, legislation and other policy measures", said Thomas Tayler, head of climate finance at asset manager Aviva Investors.

Equally important will be showing commitment to implementing these policies and rules and reporting on their progress, Tayler said.

While climate negotiations are hard going even at the best of times, the latest round began in Baku only a week after Trump, a climate denier, won the November 5 US presidential election. Few expect Trump to deliver climate finance from the world's biggest economy or to protect US policies friendly for climate investment.

While countries at COP29 set the new $300bn climate finance target, they guaranteed the sum only by 2035, though they pledged to prioritise the most vulnerable nations for those funds. They also have begun discussing new potential revenue streams such as global taxes - on polluting industries such as aviation and cargo shipping, on oil and gas trades, on financial transactions and on super-wealthy people. While these efforts could help to make infrastructure projects more appealing in riskier parts of the world, the work of attracting profit-focused investors is still in progress.

The world's green energy transition has already been slowed by war in Ukraine and a resulting energy crisis, with governments slowing green reforms and companies like BP and Unilever rowing back on their efforts.

On that point, COP29 did not help. Amid lobbying by countries including Saudi Arabia, according to several country sources at COP29, the summit failed to offer any steps for furthering last year's COP28 pledges to shift away from fossil fuels and to triple their renewable capacity by 2030.

"The influence of fossil fuel lobbies remains a significant obstacle that must be addressed ahead of COP30 if it is to deliver meaningful progress," said David King, chair of the Climate Crisis Advisory Group.

For companies involved in carbon removal projects, COP29 offered a rosier outlook by delivering a long-fought agreement to resolve rules for trading national carbon offsets, including establishing a central registry that can also issue those credits and track their sales.

The hope is that clarity around the market structure will encourage countries and companies to invest while also addressing their worries about reputational risk. The deal, however, made clear that the UN registry's involvement did not amount to an automatic seal of approval for the quality of credits.

"There's a lot more financing to be done on the basis of this agreement," said Eliot Whittington, chief systems change officer at Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership. - Reuters

New Russia missile fired at Ukraine 'had warheads without explosives'

Reuters
Kyiv

A new ballistic missile fired by Russia at the Ukrainian city of Dnipro last week carried multiple warheads but no explosives, and caused limited damage, two senior Ukrainian government sources said.

Their comments appeared to confirm the Kremlin's own description of the weapon's use last Thursday as a warning to the West after the United States and Britain allowed Ukraine to fire their missiles into Russia. The two sources provided more details about the new weapon as Western experts try to learn more about what US officials say was an experimental intermediate-range missile.

Intermediate-range ballistic missiles are typically meant to be used for long-range nuclear strikes on targets thousands of kilometres away. One of the sources said the missile was carrying dummy warheads and described the damage caused as "quite small".

The second source said: "In this case, (the missile) was without explosives...There were no types of explosions like we expected. There was something, but it was not huge."

Russian President Vladimir Putin said the Oreshnik intermediate-range ballistic missile strike was a successful test and that it reached its target - a missile and defence enterprise in the Ukrainian city of Dnipro. Ukraine has seldom disclosed information about airstrikes on military targets since Russia's February 2022 invasion. Putin also said Russia would continue to test the Oreshnik in combat and that it had a stock ready for use. Kyiv has said Ukraine is already working to develop air systems to counter the weapon.

US officials have said Russia probably possesses only a handful of these missiles, which Western experts say appears to have been derived from the RS-26 intermediate-range ballistic missile.

Leaving out the explosives in a "reentry vehicle" - the heat-shielded part of the missile that carries the warhead - leaves room for instrumentation, which countries testing missile designs can use to measure performance, experts say.

It is not publicly known whether the Russian warheads carried such gear. The RS-26 has a reported range of more than 5,000km although the missile that struck Ukraine from the Russian region of Astrakhan region flew only about 700km.

Security forces in midnight raid to remove Khan supporters

- **Govt rules out negotiations as ex-PM calls protest surge in numbers**
- **Amnesty questions govt's 'excessive force' as turmoil rattles investors**

AFP/Reuters
Islamabad

Pakistan's security forces launched a sweeping midnight raid on supporters of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan who had stormed the capital demanding his release yesterday, local media said, with hundreds arrested amidst chaotic scenes.

Thousands of protesters had earlier gathered in the centre of Islamabad after a convoy, led by Khan's wife.

Local broadcasters Geo News and ARY both reported that a massive raid was launched by security forces amidst a pitch-dark central Islamabad, where lights had been turned off and a barrage of tear gas was fired. The protest gathering was almost completely dispersed, they reported.

Imran Khan had called late yesterday for more supporters to join protests in the capital, after a day of deadly confrontations between marchers and security forces.

At least six people, including four paramilitary soldiers, were killed during earlier clashes between security forces and protesters, led by Khan's wife, who made it all the way to the edge of the city's highly fortified red zone, before being pushed back by hundreds of security force personnel.

The red zone, being guarded by army soldiers, houses the country's most important offices and buildings, including the parliament and an enclave of foreign missions.

Khan's party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), had said they plan on staging a sit-in in the red zone until the release of Khan.

Zulfikar Bukhari, spokesman for PTI, said two protesters had also been killed and 30 injured in the clashes, the worst political violence seen in months in the South Asian nation of 241mn people.

One of the protesters was shot dead and the other was run over by a vehicle, Bukhari said. Authorities did not respond to a query seeking to confirm the deaths.

Convoys of pro-Khan demonstrators have been marching on Islamabad since Sunday, hauling aside roadblocks and skirmishing with police and paramilitary forces firing volleys of rubber bullets and tear gas.

Khan has been jailed since August 2023, sidelined by dozens of disputed cases he claims were confected to prevent his comeback in elections this year marred by rigging allegations.

Since the February vote his party has defied a government crackdown with regular rallies, but yesterday's is by far the largest to grip the capital.

In the evening, Khan issued a statement from his jail cell outside Islamabad, telling more people to join crowds attempting to occupy a public square in the city's government enclave.

"Those who haven't yet joined the protest must also head to D-Chowk," said Khan's message posted on social media and shared by his party.

"All Pakistanis participating in the protest must remain peaceful, stay united, and stand firm until our demands are met."

Despite a ban on public gatherings, AFP journalists saw thousands of protesters in the city centre, facing off with police.

"This is not our government, this government is made up of traitors," protester Abdul Rashid told AFP, his face covered by a thick scarf. "Long live Imran Khan."



Policemen fire tear gas shells to disperse Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters during a protest demanding the release of former PM Imran Khan at the Red Zone in Islamabad yesterday. **Below**: Security force personnel walk as smoke billows from tear gas shells fired to stop the protesters. (**AFP**, **Reuters**)



The government said rioters killed four members of a state paramilitary force, running them over with a vehicle on a city highway leading to the government sector. However, this was quickly debunked with journalist Matiullah Jan reporting that the paramilitary troops were run over by their own vehicles as they fled the scene, quoting the brother of one of the deceased.

One police officer was also reported killed in unrest on Monday. There was no immediate official figure available for any casualties among the demonstrators with various accounts on the social media including bodies of protestors and injured.

"These disruptive elements do not seek revolution but bloodshed," Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said in a statement. "This is not a peaceful protest, it is extremism."

The capital has been locked down since late Saturday, with mobile internet sporadically cut and more than 20,000 police flooding the streets, many armed with riot shields and batons.

"The state's response is completely unwarranted and disproportionate. We have the right to protest," PTI lawmaker Waqas Akram told AFP by phone.

"They treat their own people as enemies," he said.

"There will be no negotiations with violent people," Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi told reporters late yesterday. "They want to see dead bodies. Their intentions are not good."

Amnesty International however, questioned the government's actions.

"As protesters enter the capital, law enforcement officials have used unlawful and excessive force". Amnesty said the government must fully protect the rights of protesters and immediately rescind "shoot-on-sight" orders that it said gave undue and excessive powers to the military.

PTI's chief demand is the release of Khan, the 72-year-old charismatic former cricket star who served as premier from 2018-2022 and is the lodestar of their party.

Sharif's government has come under increasing criticism for deploying heavy-handed measures to quash PTI's protests.

Khan was controversially ousted by a no-confidence vote after falling out with the kingmaking military establishment, which analysts say engineers the rise and fall of Pakistan's politicians.

But as opposition leader, he led an unprecedented campaign of defiance, with PTI street protests boiling over into unrest that the government cited as the reason for its crackdown.

PTI won more seats than any other party in this year's election, but a coalition of parties considered more pliable to military influence shut them out of power.

The turmoil has rattled investors. Pakistan's benchmark share index closed down a record 3.57% yesterday.

Trump's team weighs direct talks with North Korea's Kim

Reuters
Washington

President-elect Donald Trump's team is discussing pursuing direct talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, hoping a fresh diplomatic push can lower the risks of armed conflict, according to two people familiar with the matter.

Several in Trump's team now see a direct approach from Trump, to build on a relationship that already exists, as most likely to break the ice with Kim, years after the two traded insults and what Trump called "beautiful" letters in an unprecedented diplomatic effort during his first term in office, the people said.

The policy discussions are fluid and no final decisions have been made by the president-elect, the sources said.

Trump's transition team did not respond to a request for comment.

What reciprocation Kim will offer Trump is unclear. The North Koreans ignored four years of outreach by US President Joe Biden to start talks with no preconditions, and Kim is emboldened by an expanded missile arsenal and a much closer relationship with Russia.

"We have already gone as far as we can on negotiating with the United States," Kim said last week in a speech at a Pyongyang military exhibition, according to state media.



US President-elect Donald Trump (left) meets North Korean leader Kim Jong-un during the former's first stint. (**File photo**)

During his 2017-2021 presidency, Trump held three meetings with Kim, in Singapore, Hanoi, and at the Korean border, the first time a sitting US president had set foot in the country.

Their diplomacy yielded no concrete results, even as Trump described their talks as falling "in love". The US called for North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons, while Kim demanded full sanctions relief, then issued new threats.

It was not clear what result a new diplomatic effort would yield. An initial Trump goal would be to re-establish basic engagement but further policy aims or a precise timetable have not been set, the people said. And the issue may take a backseat to more pressing foreign policy concerns in the Middle East and Ukraine, according to one person briefed on the transition's thinking.

North Korean state media have not yet publicly mentioned the re-election of Trump, and Kim said this month that the United States was ramping up tension and provocations, raising the risks of nuclear war.

Trump and some of his allies left office with the impression that the direct approach was Washington's best shot at influencing behaviour north of the demilitarised zone, which has divided the Korean Peninsula for seven decades. The countries' war was never technically ended even as the guns fell silent.

On Friday, Trump named one of the people who implemented that initial North Korea strategy, former State Department official Alex Wong, as his deputy national security adviser. "As Deputy Special Representative for North Korea, he helped negotiate my Summit with North Korean Leader, Kim Jong-un," Trump said in a statement.

Fewest new HIV cases since late 1980s

Fewer people contracted HIV last year than at any point since the rise of the disease in the late 1980s, the United Nations said yesterday, warning that this decline was still far too slow.

Around 1.3mn people contracted the disease in 2023, according to the new report from the UNAIDS agency. That is still more than three times higher than needed to reach the UN's goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

Around 630,000 people died from AIDS-related illnesses last year, the lowest level since a peak of 2.1mn in 2004, the report said ahead of World AIDS Day on Sunday.

Much of the progress was attributed to antiretroviral treatments that can reduce the amount of the virus in the blood of patients.

Out of the nearly 40mn people living with HIV around the world, some 9.3mn are not receiving treatment, the report warned. And despite the global progress, 28 countries recorded an increase in HIV infections last year.

Efforts to make preventative treatment called Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) available in these countries has seen "very slow progress", the report pointed out.

"Only 15 percent of people who need PrEP were receiving it in 2023," the report said.

UNAIDS deputy director Christine Stegling said that "progress has been driven by biomedical advances, advances in the protection of human rights and by community activism".

"But big gaps in the protection of human rights remain, and these gaps are keeping the world from getting on the path that ends AIDS," she told an online press conference.

She warned that if current trends continue, "we will end up with a much, much higher number of people living with HIV, long after 2030".

UNAIDS emphasised how laws and practices that "discriminate against or stigmatise" people with HIV were hindering the fight against the disease.

A new drug called lenacapavir, which early trials have found is 100% effective in preventing HIV infection, has been hailed as a potential game-changer in the battle against the disease.

But concerns have been raised over its high price — US pharmaceutical giant Gilead has been charging around $40,000 per person per a year for the drug in some countries.

Last month Gilead announced deals with generic drugmakers to make and sell the drug at lower costs in some lower-income countries.

However activists have warned that millions of people with HIV will not be covered by the deals. Stegling said that such "game-changers will really only get us to the right reduction in new infections when we make sure that everybody will have access to them".

QATAR

Celebrating Creativity:

350 Artists from 73 Countries Unite at Qatar International Art Festival





The sixth edition of the Qatar International Art Festival (QIAF) is currently underway at the Cultural Village Foundation, Katara, in collaboration with MAPS International Company. Running until November 30 in Hall 12, the festival showcases the talents of 350 artists from 73 countries, offering a unique convergence of ideas, perspectives, and aesthetic visions.

The festival features an impressive array of art forms, including fine arts, calligraphy, painting, decoration, design, graphics, and sculpture, representing diverse artistic schools and methodologies. Visitors can also explore a rich schedule of accompanying activities such as art exhibitions, panel discussions, workshops, and fashion shows.

A Global Platform for Art and Creativity

Speaking at the event, Prof. Dr. Al-Sulaiti emphasized the festival's role as a vital platform for global artistic exchange. "The Qatar International Art Festival provides a space for artists from around the world to express their creativity and engage with an audience eager to experience art and beauty. This event embodies Katara's vision of enriching the cultural landscape and fostering art as a bridge between people," he stated.

He further highlighted Katara's commitment to establishing Qatar as a global destination for art and culture. "The festival attracts a distinguished group of visual artists, offering a rich experience that celebrates diverse cultures and artistic styles," he added.

Showcasing Artistic Diversity and Cultural Exchange

Prof. Dr. Al-Sulaiti also noted the festival's emphasis on cultural exchange, which allows artists from various backgrounds to share their unique experiences and styles, enriching artistic dialogue and fostering collaboration. He praised the partnership with Maps International, describing it as a testament to their shared commitment to nurturing creativity and supporting artistic talent.

In this context, Head of the festival Ms Rashmi Agarwal, founder and president of Maps International, expressed her happiness with the success and distinction achieved by the festival for the sixth consecutive year, noting that the festival in its current edition was able to attract 350 artists and creators from all over the world, and from different schools and artistic trends, who gathered in Katara to light up the walls of Hall (12) in Katara with their diverse artistic creations, amidst the interaction of the large audience that has been following the festival since its launch yesterday, Monday, which is reflected in the number of attendees who interact with the dialogue sessions, cultural and musical performances and workshops. Rashmi welcomed art lovers and culture enthusiasts, hoping that the festival would give them a valuable opportunity to enjoy the colors of art, creativity and cultural values that bring together people and their artistic heritage.





Lebanese artist Mary Haddad expressed her delight at participating in the festival for the first time, describing it as an invaluable opportunity to exchange ideas and build connections with artists from around the world. She emphasized the festival's pivotal role in fostering cultural dialogue and enhancing aesthetic appreciation.

German artist Dr. Dana Corina Schmidt also celebrated her debut at QIAF, presenting works inspired by Arab heritage and motifs such as horses and deer. Her use of oil paints and gold leaf reflects a deep engagement with the region's culture. "The festival offers a platform for creators worldwide to share their diverse visions and explore the intersections of human culture," she remarked.

Iranian artist Mohsen Yazdaneshnas contributed intricate silver filigree (melilla) works, showcasing traditional hand-welding techniques that blend beauty, precision, and craftsmanship. He praised QIAF for building bridges between artistic communities and creating a space for dialogue and innovation.

Canadian artist of Iraqi origin Iman Toma brought handmade pieces combining plastic art and embroidery that celebrate the identity and heritage of Mesopotamia. Her vibrant use of silk threads reflects the rich tapestry of Iraqi culture, deeply rooted in tradition and storytelling.

This year's festival includes 16 global galleries , and 22 artistic pavilions representing countries and a packed agenda of 15 cultural and artistic events over six days. Highlights include live drawing sessions, underwater art displays, cultural evenings, and fashion shows inspired by participating works. The festival will culminate with an awards ceremony honoring outstanding contributions on the final day.

The Qatar International Art Festival 2024 continues to be a beacon of creativity, promoting cultural exchange and artistic innovation on a global scale. Don't miss this extraordinary celebration of art and culture!

For more information, please visit the official festival website: www.qiaf.net



