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ALL ITEMS UNDER WHOLESALE PRICE

SPORT | Page 4

Qatar win 4th International Camel Handball Championship

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ICAO Council okays implementation of Doha FIR/UIR Phase 2

The Council of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has approved the implementation of 'Phase Two' by the State of Qatar for the management of the Doha Flight Information Region/Upper Information Region (FIR/UIR) and the Search and Rescue Region (SRR). This follows the successful implementation of 'Phase One' where Qatar fulfilled all safety and security requirements. **Business Page 1**

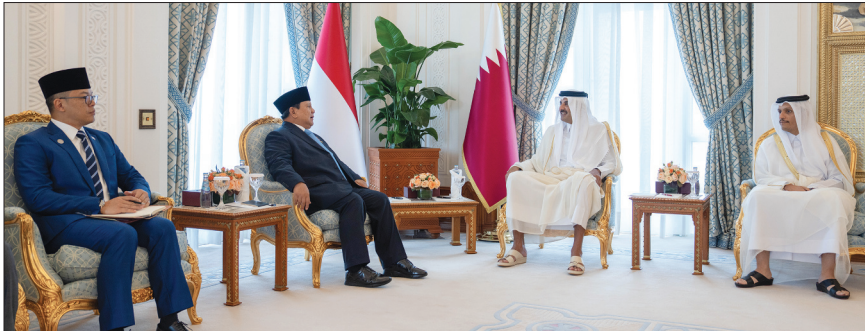
Marc Marquez wins Qatar Grand Prix

Ducati's Marc Marquez returned to the top step of the podium with victory at the Qatar Grand Prix yesterday despite suffering damage to his bike in a collision with his brother Alex on the first lap. Marc, who had taken his fourth straight pole with a lap record as well as a fourth sprint victory on Saturday, won at the Lusail International Circuit for the first time since 2014. **Sport Page 1**

Israeli missiles hit Gaza hospital

Two Israeli missiles hit a major Gaza hospital yesterday, putting the emergency department out of action and damaging other structures. Officials at the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital evacuated patients after a phone call from someone who identified himself as Israeli security shortly before the attack. No casualties were reported in the strike. **Page 8**

Amir, Indonesian president discuss ways to foster ties



● Qatar, Indonesia to establish \$4bn-joint investment fund

QNA
Doha

Qatar-Indonesia strategic dialogue announced

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Sugiono signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch a Strategic Dialogue between Qatar and Indonesia yesterday in Doha, marking a milestone in the deepening bilateral relationship between the two countries. The signing of the MoU took place on the sidelines of the official visit of Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, to Qatar. **Page 12**

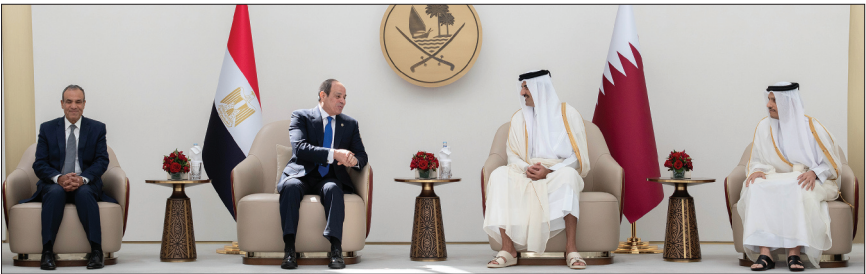
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani held yesterday at his Amiri Diwan office a session of official talks with President of the Republic of Indonesia Prabowo Subianto.

The meeting started with His Highness the Amir welcoming Prabowo and his accompanying delegation and wishing them a pleasant stay. His Highness the Amir stressed the importance of relations between the two friendly nations and voiced hopes the visit would advance co-operation to serve the two countries' shared interests and benefit their friendly peoples. **To Page 12**

Amir welcomes Egyptian president



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani led the well-wishers to welcome President of the sisterly Arab Republic of Egypt Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and the accompanying delegation upon their arrival on an official visit to Qatar at the Amiri Terminal in Hamad International Airport yesterday. The Egyptian president was also welcomed by HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani; HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan, Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Mubarak al-Khulaifi; HE the Minister of State for Foreign Trade Affairs, Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al-Sayed; Qatar's ambassador to Egypt, Tariq bin Ali al-Ansari and Egyptian ambassador to Qatar, Amr al-Sherbini. **(QNA)**





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FUSION
TECHNOLOGY

Qatar, Egypt share cultural, artistic and heritage ties

The cultural relations between Qatar and Egypt are witnessing a remarkable development, reflecting the historical relations between the two brotherly countries, as they share common cultural, artistic and heritage ties, stemming from the depth of Arab culture and its roots extending throughout history.

The cultural activities between the two countries consolidate brotherhood and understanding, in light of the two countries' constant aspiration for more cultural and artistic co-operation, as seen in their mutual participation in various cultural events, which in turn contributes to strengthening rapprochement and the exchange of experiences and expertise based on cultural depth, artistic movement, and heritage roots that the two countries possess.

The cultural co-operation between the two countries was evident in the Egyptian Cultural Week, hosted by Qatar at Darb Al Saai in January. The event marked a new milestone in cultural co-operation between the two countries, with the Egyptian Ministry of Culture presenting various aspects of Egyptian life to the Qatari public, including art, music and popular Egyptian cuisine, attracting a large number of citizens and residents.

The Egyptian Ministry of Culture participated in a similar event in 2010, during which Doha was selected as the Arab Capital of Culture for the year 2010. The week-long event featured a theatrical performance, a visual arts exhibition, and literary seminars on Egyptian culture and its commonalities with its Qatari counterpart, with the participation of a select group of creatives from both countries.

The two countries support joint Arab efforts to preserve heritage and achieve Arab integration through digital projects and regional workshops, particularly the joint co-operation with the Memory of the World (MOW) Committee for the Arab region, which was launched at the conclusion of the regional conference 'Memory in Heritage: Fostering Co-operation on Documentary Heritage in the Arab Region,' organised by Qatar National Archives in January, in co-operation with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco).

In this context, among the heritage files that reflect the depth of the heritage roots between the two countries is the co-operation to register Arab heritage elements on the Unesco's Intangible Cultural Heritage list, such as the palm tree files, Arabic calligraphy, and others. There is also a current co-operation towards nominating 'Sanbuk – Traditional Sailing Boats' as a joint Arab file. Doha witnessed the second meeting for the purpose of preparing this file in February.

To enhance cultural co-operation between the two countries, the Egyptian Ministry of Culture previously announced that Qatar will be the guest of honour at the 58th edition of the Cairo International Book Fair in 2027, which reflects the depth of the cultural relations shown through their mutual participation in book fairs.

Creatives from both countries are keen to participate in various cultural and artistic events, including art shows and exhibitions, as well as photography exhibitions, and literary conferences and seminars. This reflects the exchange of diverse creative experiences and expertise, based on the solid cultural foundations that unite the two countries.

Egyptian creatives participate in numerous cultural awards launched by Qatar, and have won many high ranks. These awards include the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding, the Katara Prize for Qur'an Recitation, the Katara Prize for Arabic Novel, the Katara Prize for Prophet's (peace be upon him) Poet, and others. (QNA)



QSO launches national initiative on uveitis

Qatar Society of Ophthalmology (QSO) yesterday officially launched the first national initiative of its kind in Qatar to provide comprehensive, specialised care for uveitis patients, under the title "uveitis for all."

The initiative was launched in collaboration with the uveitis team at Hamad Medical Corp (HMC) during the QSO's inaugural symposium on uveitis under the auspices of the Qatar Doctors Association.

QSO's officials indicated that the initiative aims to enhance co-operation between healthcare providers in Qatar in the field of diagnosing and treating uveitis.

President of QSO and Senior Consultant in Ophthalmology at HMC, Dr Faisal al-Naqadan, said that the "uveitis for all" initiative is building partnerships with regional and international institutions of excellence to implement the best methods of prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and awareness. The initiative also serves as a basis for joint research, clinical training, and extended awareness campaigns.

Speaking to reporters during the national initiative launch symposium, he noted that the "uveitis for all" initiative is not just a medical project, but rather represents a strategic framework that reflects national priorities in providing advanced specialised care and transitioning from traditional treatment models to an integrated community approach that enhances patient support throughout the disease's stages.

In turn, Vice-President of QSO and Head of Ophthalmology Department at Al Wakra Hospital Zamzam al-Baker said that the national initiative is working to develop modern strategies and comprehensive treatment guidelines that ensure the continued provision of high-quality healthcare services to patients, in line with global developments and standards.

The initiative focuses on national partnerships that include HMC, the Ministry of Public Health, the Primary Health Care Corp, Sidra Medicine, Qatar Charity, Qatar Red Crescent, and private sector ophthalmology providers to ensure comprehensive and equitable access to ophthalmic services.

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The QSO inaugural scientific symposium brought together a host of experts from Qatar and abroad, who discussed the importance of specialised research in the field of uveitis and reviewed the best methods for diagnosing and treating the disease. (QNA)

Qatar condemns bombing of Al Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza

Qatar has condemned in the strongest terms the bombardment of Al Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza, considering this act a brutal massacre and a heinous crime against defenceless civilians, as well as a brazen encroachment upon the provisions of international humanitarian law.

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed Qatar's unequivocal

rejection of the Israeli attacks on civilian objects, including hospitals, schools, and population assembly points in the Gaza Strip. The ministry warned of the crumbling health system in the Gaza Strip, along with the expansion of the conflict cycle in the region due to the unabated Israeli atrocities, calling on the international community to uphold its responsibilities in protecting defenseless civilians.

In addition, the ministry reiterated Qatar's enduring position in supporting the Palestinian cause and the resilience of the brotherly Palestinian people, based on international legitimacy resolutions and the two-state solution to ensure the establishment of the independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. (QNA)

Khaled Mohammed Al-Mana celebrated the wedding of his son Hamad on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at Al-Mana Majlis in Al-Waab





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The View Hospital in affiliation with Cedars-Sinai is proud to announce its recognition as the first Hospital in Qatar in the highly esteemed 2025 Global Hospital Ranking published by Newsweek and Statista, marking a significant achievement in the institution's ongoing mission to provide world-class healthcare.



Commenting on the recognition, Dr. Fatih Mehmet Gul, CEO of The View Hospital, stated:

“We are honored to see The View Hospital recognized in the Global Hospital Ranking by Newsweek. This unique achievement and the only one of its kind in Qatar is a testament to our unwavering commitment to our core pillars: creating a healing environment, embracing cutting-edge technology, and advancing academic care. It reflects the dedication of our entire team in delivering

exceptional patient-centered healthcare, and inspires us to continue setting new benchmarks for excellence.”

This prestigious recognition underscores The View Hospital's commitment to delivering exceptional, patient-centered care, setting the bar high for clinical excellence in Qatar's healthcare sector.

By combining cutting-edge medical technology with a compassionate and healing environment, The View Hospital ensures that every step of a patient's journey is met with the utmost care and professionalism.

The View Hospital is renowned for its use of advanced medical technologies and offers a wide range of services from primary care to specialized treatments.

The hospital's multidisciplinary approach brings together experts across various medical fields, ensuring that patients receive comprehensive and individualized care tailored to their specific needs. Whether it's through advanced diagnostics, minimally invasive surgeries, or innovative treatments, The View Hospital is committed to improving patient health and well-being.



Joe Hazel, CEO of Apex Health, commented on the recognition:

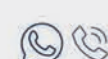
“The recognition of The View Hospital as the first and only hospital in Qatar featured in the Global Hospital Ranking by Statista and Newsweek is a proud moment for all of us at Apex Health. It reflects the level of excellence we consistently uphold across our network of hospitals and medical facilities.”

The View Hospital continues to raise the standards of healthcare in Qatar by creating an environment focused on trust, comfort, and exceptional care.

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Shura Council Speaker meets Italian Chamber of Deputies president



HE the Shura Council Speaker, Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, met yesterday with the visiting president of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Lorenzo Fontana. During the meeting, the two sides discussed ways to enhance co-operation between Qatar and Italy, especially in the parliamentary field. They also emphasised the importance of strengthening parliamentary co-operation channels and intensifying co-ordination in international parliamentary forums. The meeting addressed the developments in the Gaza Strip, where the Shura Council Speaker stressed the need for parliaments to play their moral and humanitarian role in pressuring for an end to the aggression against the Palestinian people, and pushing for the adoption of more effective positions by European parliaments, which would contribute to halting the worsening humanitarian tragedy and supporting international efforts to achieve justice and peace. - **QNA**

Shura secretary-general meets Italian counterpart



HE the Secretary-General of the Shura Council Nayef bin Mohamed al-Mahmoud met yesterday with the visiting Secretary-General of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Fabrizio Castaldi. Discussions during the meeting focused on ways to enhance bilateral co-operation, exchange expertise, and learn about leading practices in the work of general secretariats, in addition to strengthening co-ordination channels to achieve common institutional goals. - **QNA**

PM, Iranian minister discuss ties, Gaza

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani received yesterday a phone call from Iranian Foreign Minister Dr Abbas Araghchi.

During the call, they discussed the co-operative relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen them.

They also addressed developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories, along with several other topics of mutual interest.

HE Sheikh Mohammed reaffirmed Qatar's welcome of the negotiations held between Iran and the US in Oman, emphasising Qatar's continued efforts to de-escalate tensions and promote stability and peace in the region. - **QNA**

QCB announces new feature in Qatar's mobile payment system

THE Qatar Central Bank (QCB) has announced the "Multiple wallets per mobile number" feature in the Qatar Mobile Payment (QMP) system.

This, according to the QCB, allows users to open two wallets using the same mobile number with different payment service providers.

It also enables users to set one default account to receive all incoming transfers, manage the accounts and change the default account at any time.

The provision of "Multiple wallets per mobile number" feature in the Qatar Mobile Payment (QMP) system is in line with the 3rd Financial Sector Strategy and part of the QCB's ongoing efforts to enhance the mobile payment services in the country.

"This step marks a significant advancement in mobile payment, enhancing the users' experience, fostering competition and innovation and supporting financial inclusion," the QCB said in a statement. "Additionally, this move underscores Qatar Central Bank's commitment to enhance mobile payment services and financial inclusion in the country."

Qatar slams attacks on Darfur camps

Qatar has strongly condemned the attacks targeting the Zamzam and Abu Shouk displacement camps in the Sudan's Darfur region, which resulted in casualties and injuries, considering them a blatant violation of international humanitarian law.

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised the urgent need

to protect civilians and humanitarian workers in the city of Al Fasher and its surroundings, and to ensure the sustainable delivery of aid to address the humanitarian crisis in the region.

The ministry reiterated Qatar's full support for all regional and international efforts aimed at achieving peace and stability in Sudan. - **QNA**

Al-Hammadi meets Nepal envoy

HE the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi met yesterday with Nepal's ambassador Ramesh Chandra Paudel. The meeting reviewed bilateral relations. - **QNA**



QU Press, Italian embassy launch book to foster cultural dialogue



Officials at the launch event.

Qatar University (QU), represented by QU Press, organised a launch ceremony for the Arabic translation of *Under the Sign of Leo: A History of Islamic Italy*, held at the university's campus in the presence Italian ambassador Paolo Toschi, and QU vice-president (Research and Graduate Studies) Prof Aiman Erbad, alongside a group of academics, students, and staff from the Italian embassy.

In her speech, QU Press director Shaikha al-Thani expressed her pride in this important cultural milestone, highlighting the long-standing collaboration between QU Press and the Italian embassy in Doha.

She emphasised the importance of the project in the context of strengthening cultural exchange.

"What matters to us in this collaboration is the exchange of cultures and the enhancement of Qatar's image within other societies, by selecting peer-reviewed academic books that address meaningful societal issues," Shaikha al-Thani said. "We had previously published a book on the history of Islam in Italy, and today we continue this journey by translating Italian works into Arabic—a language whose presence we are committed to advancing."

Toschi expressed his happiness at seeing this cultural co-operation renewed, stressing the importance of the historical ties between Italy and the Islamic world.

Italy, the Arab World: A millennium of shared history, future vision

THE Qatar National Library (QNL), in collaboration with the Italian embassy in Doha, will host an event highlighting the deep-rooted historical ties between Italy and the Arab world tomorrow (April 15) from 5.30pm–7pm.

The special guest will be Professor Amedeo Feniello, professor of mediaeval history at Italy's University of L'Aquila, who will join a panel discussion exploring the enduring relationship between Italy and the Arab world – from the Middle Ages to the present, with a forward-looking perspective.

He will be in conversation with Italy's ambassador



"I am pleased to see the co-operation with QU bearing fruit once again through the translation of a history book—this time focusing on the long-standing relationship between Italy and the Islamic world," he said.

"This friendship has significantly contributed to the fields of science, architecture, and language," the envoy continued. "When we talk about dialogue between Islam and Italy, we speak of a living connection that remains relevant today and reminds us of our commonalities."

"We celebrate the launch of the Arabic translation of *Under the Sign of Leo: A History of Islamic Italy*," said Prof Erbad.

"This is an exceptional work that reflects the depth of civilisational interaction between the Arab and Italian worlds, and it recalls bright chapters of a shared history that connects our peoples,"

he said. "The Muslim presence in Sicily and southern Italy formed a significant chapter in the region's history—not merely a political or military presence, but an extension of a civilisation that enriched culture, science, the arts, and architecture."

"This joint endeavour is a living embodiment of that role and a blessed step toward expanding the scope of academic and intellectual collaboration between the two countries," Prof Erbad added.

Dr Amedeo Feniello, the author of *Under the Sign of Leo: A History of Islamic Italy*, expressed his gratitude for the translation of his academic work, describing the initiative as a bridge between researchers and cultures.

"I am truly pleased to see this translation, which I consider a valuable opportunity to strengthen ties between Italian historians and the QU," he said.

"I hope this work marks the beginning of a fruitful relationship between Italian culture and the academic community in Qatar," he added. "In today's world, it has become essential for cultural actors around the globe to collaborate."

This project is part of a series of publications through which QU Press seeks to build bridges of academic and cultural dialogue with prominent international institutions, in alignment with its strategy to support scientific research and cultural openness on a global level. - **QNA**

QU hosts Open Day 2025 for future students

UNDER the slogan *Explore It!*, the Pre-University Outreach Department under the Student Affairs Sector at Qatar University (QU) is organising 2025 Open Day, from April 13–17.

The first two days – yesterday and today – are dedicated to boys' schools, while April 15–16 are allocated to girls' schools.

April 17 is designated for international and private schools.

For the first time, evening sessions will be held over three days, allowing various categories of visitors to attend and enjoy the event in a distinctive atmosphere.

"We aim to attract distinguished and talented high school students to pursue their university education at the QU by providing them with all the necessary support and guidance to help them choose the academic path that aligns with their interests and aspirations," said QU vice-president for Student Affairs at QU Dr Mohamed Diab.

He noted that this year's Open Day will provide students and parents with the opportunity to direct their inquiries to representatives from various colleges, departments, and service centres at the university.

They will also be able to participate in activities held alongside the Engineering Week, organised by the College of Engineering in collaboration with student clubs.

Director of Pre-University Outreach at the Student Affairs Sector, Fatma al-Muhammadi, emphasised that the Open Day aims to introduce colleges, academic programmes, and admission requirements to support high school students in selecting the most suitable academic path based on their interests and capabilities.

The event will also highlight student life at the university. - **QNA**

Qatar Charity initiative restores sight to 300 patients

WITH the support of philanthropists in Qatar, Qatar Charity (QC)'s Ibsar (eyesight) initiative restored sight to more than 300 individuals in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Overseen by the QC's Sri Lanka branch, the cataract surgery project brought renewed hope to those suffering from vision loss.

This project targets preventable visual impairment, particularly in underserved regions, by providing medical interventions that enhance patients' quality of life and ease their suffering.

It also aims to reduce pressure on healthcare institutions, raise community awareness about eye

diseases, and help alleviate poverty associated with visual disabilities, especially among those who have waited a long time for treatment.

Overjoyed with the free treatment, beneficiaries affirmed its life-changing impact restoring their sight and allowing them to return to daily life after enduring prolonged visual impairment and the financial burden of unaffordable surgery.

The QC's "Ibsar" initiative offers free eye check-ups, medication, glasses, and surgeries to vulnerable people in several countries.

The initiative also promotes hygiene and prevention awareness for comprehensive eye care. - **QNA**



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Tender No.	Subject	Tender Fees	Closing Date
AT/C/1236/25	Leasing of 18 th Floor Salon on Rental for 3 Years for Men's or Ladies at The Torch Doha	Nil	8.05.2025
AT/C/1237/25	Design, Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of 2 Private Pools at Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel	500.00	8.05.2025

The tender documents are available for collection from the Finance Department (Tel.: 44465612) of The Torch Doha upon presentation of a formal letter of authorization on Company letterhead and copy of the Commercial Registration.

The closing time will be 12.00 noon on the closing date mentioned above, any offer arriving thereafter will not be considered.

A site visit for the above tenders is scheduled on 20th April 2025. Interested companies are advised to purchase the tender documents before that date in order to be able to attend the site visit.

Tenders are to be submitted in duplicate in a sealed envelope (**Technical and Commercial envelopes separately**) addressed to The Chairman, General Tender Committee, The Torch Doha and deposit in the tender box available at The Torch Doha Purchasing Office located in Al Waab Street, Aspire Zone.

Sadu-weaving crafts event concludes

THE Ministry of Social Development and Family (MSDF), represented by the Family Empowerment Department, wrapped up yesterday the cultural crafts preservation programme.

The year-long programme was in partnership with Qatar Museums (QM), represented by Qatar's epicentre for innovation and entrepreneurship in design, fashion, and technology (M7), alongside the Social Development Centre (NAMA).

In a statement yesterday, the ministry highlighted that the programme focused on Sadu weaving techniques, along with the importance of preserving and advancing them to keep up with the world of modern design.

Family Empowerment Department director Fatima al-Nuaimi said that the programme aspires to transform participants into professional craft owners rather than mere consumers, and empower individuals who wield the skill of Sadu weaving to internalise this skill by training owners of productive ventures.

She commended the efforts of the participating entities in the success of this programme to accomplish the intended goals by helping trainees establish new productive ventures marked by an epochal evolution that fuses Qatari heritage with cutting-edge design.

The initiative began with a fundamental step in supporting a new generation specialising in this skill through a devoted programme organised by the MSDF to educate women on this craft.

M7 then streamlined partnerships between designers and female artisans to create collaborative art pieces, currently on display at Studio 7. - **QNA**



Rawabi Food Stuff rebranded as ‘Wholesale Plus’ inaugurated in Al Rayyan

Rawabi Food Stuff, a wholesale brand under the umbrella of the Al Rawabi Group of Companies, has officially rebranded and relocated under its new identity, Wholesale Plus, with a grand inauguration ceremony held at its new outlet in Al Nayef Building 458, Al Rayyan. The inauguration was led by Nayef Abdulla N M al-Dosari, who formally opened the store, marking a significant milestone in the company's wholesale journey. The event witnessed the presence of prominent leaders from the Al Rawabi Group, including Chairman MP Abdulla Haji, managing director, Mohammed Abdulla, executive director, Ajmal Abdulla, board directors, Muhammed Sadik and Harris Thayyil, Kannu Baker, group general manager, and Naushad KTK, assistant general manager. With a fresh identity and strategic location, Wholesale Plus is designed to cater to the wholesale needs of retailers, foodservice



operators, and bulk buyers across Qatar. Operating as a cash-and-carry outlet, the store offers a broad array of essential goods, ranging from groceries, fruits and vegetables, frozen foods, meat and fish, non-food items, health and beauty products, to household essentials – all at

competitive wholesale prices. A unique highlight of the store is the Roastery section, a vibrant and aromatic corner featuring a wide assortment of premium spices, pulses, dry fruits, and nuts. Adding a traditional touch to the shopping experience, the store also offers a self-service grinding area, where customers can freshly



grind their spices and pulses, ensuring unmatched freshness and personal choice. Spanning over 3,000 square metres, the outlet is thoughtfully designed for efficiency and accessibility, featuring an organised layout, modern infrastructure, and ample parking facilities to support

a high volume of customers and smooth logistics for bulk buyers. Mohammed Abdulla stated: “Wholesale Plus represents our continued commitment to supporting Qatar’s dynamic growth and vibrant business landscape. As the country moves forward with its vision of

excellence and innovation, we are proud to evolve alongside it offering our wholesale customers more value, greater variety, and unmatched convenience. This transformation is not just about a new name or location but about rising to meet the growing needs of a nation we proudly serve.”

Ministry starts developing Qatar Public Transport Master Plan

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) has started developing the Qatar Public Transport Master Plan (QPTMP). The plan, according to an official MoT statement, is aimed at creating a more efficient and competitive public transportation system and striking a balance between Qatar’s rapid urban growth and its commitment to sustainability leading ultimately to a more efficient and future-ready public transit system. The QPTMP also aims at improving accessibility and coverage, raising service reliability and exploring innovative mobility solutions that keep pace with the latest advancements. “Bypassing conventional frameworks, the QPTMP will strategically guide the evolution of the transit system to address challenges associated with escalating vehicular dependency, congestion, and environmental impact. The QPTMP will study the status quo of traffic congestion of both private vehicles and public transportation and carbon emissions and their impact on Qatar’s climate quality with a view to suggesting suitable solutions,” the statement noted. Leveraging advanced and efficient public transportation solutions, and sustainable and eco friendly infrastructure is among the plan’s top priorities through providing advanced electric transportation systems. This will help lower carbon footprint and, consequently, improve Qatar’s climate quality in step with the Qatar National Vision 2030’s pillar of environmental development, in addition to serving a



diverse audience, including policymakers, government officials, developers, investors, consultants, engineers and planners by equipping those stakeholders with actionable frameworks and guidelines for effective planning, design, implementation, and operation of public transit services. The QPTMP will also encompass prescriptive policies, laws and regulations, accompanied by a robust monitoring programme for integrated and comprehensive solutions through harnessing innovation to meet the growing needs for a coherent, advanced, and sustainable national public transportation system. This aligns with MoT’s endeavour to achieve the goals of the National Development Strategy and QNV 2030. The QPTMP is poised to serve as a bedrock of a future where public transportation could significantly contribute to generating economic, social, human, and environmental opportunities and enhancing resilience and progress for all who live and thrive in Qatar. The QPTMP’s ripple effects will have far reaching societal and environmental benefits,

supporting healthier lifestyles, fostering economic vitality and mitigating the ecological footprint of urban expansion through reducing carbon emissions utilising smarter transit solutions and rubber-stamping Qatar’s commitment to sustainability. “The MoT believes in the importance of society’s participation and pays great attention to fulfilling their aspirations in the QPTMP to provide solutions that meet their needs. For that, the MoT will be conducting public surveys to gather data on people’s mobility preferences and opinions on public transportation modes. The surveys will be conducted from April to August 2025 at metro, tram and bus stations, public markets and shopping malls,” the statement said. The ministry has invited the public to co-operate with its survey teams and take a few minutes to answer the survey to ensure the accuracy of the data gathered and help reach a better understanding of people’s needs in this respect. All the data gathered will be treated with full privacy and confidentiality and used exclusively for the purposes of the survey.

Qatar Airways, Virgin Australia offer complimentary vouchers for dining at HIA

Qatar Airways and Virgin Australia have launched ‘Dine on Us’ – a complimentary dining programme for passengers travelling through Doha to and from Australia. Starting June 12, Qatar Airways Privilege Club and Virgin Australia’s Velocity Frequent Flyer members, will receive dining vouchers worth \$20 that can be used at more than 50 restaurants and cafes at Hamad International Airport in Doha. Travellers, including Privilege Club Family and Student Club members, automatically become eligible for the vouchers once they add their Privilege Club or Velocity Frequent Flyer number to their flight booking at the time of booking or check-in.

‘Dine on Us’ vouchers can be used at a wide range of dining options at HIA, from cafes including Ralph’s Coffee and Oreo Café, Harrods Tea Room, Gordon Ramsay Burger and Street Pizza Gordon Ramsay. Qatar Airways Chief Commercial Officer Thierry Antinori said: “Affirming once again that our focus is to give passengers the best possible travel experience, Qatar Airways has partnered with Velocity Frequent Flyer to reward our loyalty members with complimentary vouchers to enjoy the offerings at over 50 leading dining options at the award-winning Hamad International Airport – voted the Best Airport in the Middle East and World’s Best Airport Shopping by Skytrax in 2025. We look

forward to welcoming global travellers to ‘Dine on Us’.” Privilege Club Platinum, Gold and Silver members and Velocity Frequent Flyer Platinum and Gold members flying to or from Australia with Qatar Airways or Virgin Australia will be eligible for enhanced priority experience. Qatar Airways is set to relaunch daily flights to Canberra via Melbourne this year, making it the sixth Australian gateway served by the airline. The upcoming flights are complemented by Virgin Australia’s new services from Sydney, Brisbane, and Perth to Doha from June, with Melbourne to follow in December. The Virgin Australia flights will be operated on Qatar Airways’ spacious Boeing 777s.


Malabar Gold & Diamonds launches ‘Gift of Gold’ campaign

Malabar Gold & Diamonds, has unveiled ‘Gift of Gold’ offers providing customers the chance to get free gold coins. With this offer, customers can get assured gold coins with diamond jewellery purchases above QR3,500. Malabar Gold & Diamonds will also be showcasing an exquisite array of jewellery collections in gold, diamond and precious gems across their numerous sub brands such as Mine, Era, Precia, Viraaaz, Ethnix & Divine etc, which are assured to be favourites amongst their customers. The limited period offer can be availed across all Malabar Gold & Diamonds outlets till May 3. As part of the Golden Gift offers, for every diamond or precious gem jewellery purchase worth QR6,000, customers will get free 1gm gold coin and for diamond and precious gem jewellery purchase worth QR3,500 they will be eligible for ½ gm gold coin. Customers can also exchange their old 916 jewellery for the



latest designs from Malabar Gold & Diamonds at zero deduction. Furthermore, Malabar Gold & Diamonds is offering special buy counters across their showrooms, offering discounts on selected jewellery designs. “The Gift of Gold offers from Malabar Gold & Diamonds will definitely be a great compliment to the prosperity that our customers usher in when they buy jewellery. With the assurance of free gold coins on jewellery

purchase along with many more offers, we are certain that connoisseurs of jewellery across the nation will flock to our showrooms. Offering great value on purchase along with a wide host of trendy designs that are a treat for jewellery lovers, Malabar Gold & Diamonds is once again solidifying its position as the go-to place for jewellery shopping,” commented Shamal Ahamed, managing director, International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds. The Festive collection of jewellery that the brand has unveiled presents jewellery lovers with an enthralling array of designs in gold, diamond and precious gem jewellery. The special design has been made available across a wide range of sub-brands such as Mine, Era, Precia, Viraaaz, Ethnix and Divine, comprising of 22k gold, diamonds and precious gem jewellery. Enthralling designs in 18K collection has also been made available as part of the collection.



Invitation to participate in Barwa Tender

Barwa Real Estate Company wishes to invite capable and competent companies to participate in the tender described below:

Tender Reference	Tender Description	Non-refundable Tender Fees	Closing Date
BRE/RFP/GAM/10036/2025	Property Insurance Policies for Barwa PPP projects (Schools)	QAR 250	24 April 2025 12.00 p.m.

To receive the tender documents, a copy of the tender fee deposit slip and valid commercial registration of the bidder must be forwarded to the following email address: Tender.procurement@barwa.com.qa



To pay the tender fee, it should be deposited into the following account:

Beneficiary : Barwa Real Estate Company
Bank Name : Dukhan Bank, Main Branch, Doha – Qatar
Account No. : 200000008022
IBAN Number : QA04BRWA00000000200000008022

No offers submitted beyond the closing date will be considered

Tender bids to be submitted to:

Director - Corporate
Procurements & Contracts
Barwa Real Estate Company
Barwa Al-Sadd Towers – Tower 1 – 17th Floor
P.O Box: 27777 Doha-Qatar





Fishing Exhibition concludes

The inaugural Fishing Exhibition concluded its four-day run at Old Doha Port on recently, marking the end of a celebration of the nation's fishing heritage.

According to the organisers, the exhibition culminated in the Fishing Competition awards ceremony, recognising the top anglers of the two-day event.

Official winners were announced and celebrated for their skill and dedication.

The two-day contest, held in conjunction with the exhibition, added an element of excitement and friendly rivalry to the festivities, it is learnt.

Organisers noted that the exhibition, which attracted local and regional exhibitors, provided a platform for connection, discovery, and celebration.

Visitors had the opportunity to learn about Qatar's fishing legacy, exploring traditional tools and techniques alongside modern fishing gear.

The event also fostered a valuable exchange of knowledge and expertise within the fishing community.



Winners of the Fishing Competition celebrate their victory. **(Supplied Pictures)**



Katara Tech Forum launches digital art workshop

The Katara Tech Forum yesterday launched a specialised digital art workshop in collaboration with the Aptech Qatar Computer Education Centre.

Running through April 20, the event is part of a series of technological and cultural initiatives adopted by the forum since its inception.

It aims to hone participants' skills in artistic disciplines linked to digital transformation, while furnishing them with technological tools that empower creative expression through the language of the modern age.

Addressing the inaugural session, director of the Information Technology Department

at Katara Cultural Village and chair of the Katara Tech Forum, Thamer al-Qadi, said that the workshop is part of the forum's vision to build a technologically erudite generation and keep abreast of the evolution of technological advancements.

He noted that joining hands with the Aptech Centre in delivering a successful workshop serves as an exceptional addition to the training pathway the forum offers to the public.

The event is one of the forum's flagship activities launched this year, specifically devoted to designers and individuals interested in graphic design and visual innovation.

It comprises a package of professional courses in the best digital design programs.

Launched in 2016, the first Katara Tech Forum is a knowledge and training platform dedicated to the intersection of technology and culture, organising a series of leading events on the latest technological advancements, in pursuit of reinforcing digital awareness among various community segments.

The forum is committed to supporting those interested in technology through offering specialised training pathways that keep up with epochal evolution and enhance future skills. – **QNA**

Visit Qatar concludes participation at WTM Africa 2025 in Cape Town

Visit Qatar has concluded its participation at WTM Africa 2025, held recently at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, with notable recognition by receiving the award for the Most Innovative Stand.

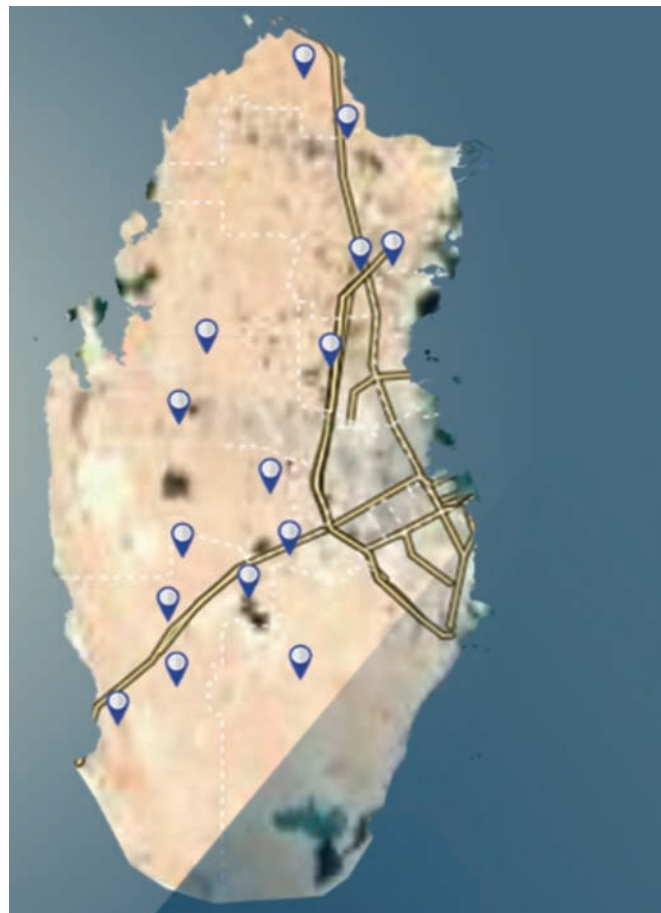
Visit Qatar said in a press release yesterday that Qatar's stand drew strong interest from international trade professionals and media, showcasing the country's cultural richness, world-class hospitality, and year-round event calendar.

Highlights included an augmented reality photo booth featuring animals symbolic of Qatar's natural heritage and an interactive Qatar Calendar booth spot-

lighting the country's events and experiences.

The delegation featured nine key partners from Qatar's travel and hospitality sectors: Qatar Airways, Discover Qatar, Experience Qatar, Al Messila Luxury Collection Resort & Spa, Doha, Ali Bin Ali Travel and Tourism, Marsa Malaz Kempinski, Radisson Blu Hotel Doha, Satguru Travel and Tours, and Tawfeeq Holidays.

According to the release, Visit Qatar held a series of high-level meetings with key African travel stakeholders to promote Qatar as a preferred destination and strengthen collaborations across priority markets in the region. – **QNA**



Farm owners 'should only dispose of agriculture waste at designated areas'

The Ministry of Municipality has called on farm and barn owners to safely dispose of their farm and agriculture waste at the designated areas to maintain the well-being and cleanliness of the local environment.

Accordingly, the ministry has allocated 15 different sites across the country for this purpose.

This project is aimed at providing dedicated sites designated for the collection of green waste, helping to reduce the random disposal of agriculture waste and maintaining public cleanliness.

It also improves organic waste management and recycles them in sustainable methods.

The project helps raise the level of awareness on the importance of the safe and proper disposal of green waste, supports environmental sustainability, and enhances clean agriculture and farming practices.

The ministry urged farm owners to ensure the cleanliness of their farms and regularly move their waste to the nearest designated site.



DI releases book on cyberspace and power shifts in global relations

The Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) has issued a book in Arabic titled *Cyberspace and Power Shifts in International Relations* by Dr Khaled Walid Mahmoud.

The 376-page book offers an in-depth vision of one of the most pressing and contemporary subjects in the literature of international relations and the social sciences.

It probes the uses of cyberspace and the avenues through which it infiltrates, influences, and interacts with shifting international contexts.

Dr Mahmoud, who holds a PhD in political science and is the senior manager of the DI's Media and Communication Department, strives to answer the question – "To what extent has cyberspace contributed to shaping a new form of power in international relations?" – through demonstrating the significance of this space.

The book concludes with the foremost takeaways and offers practical suggestions to develop effective strategies in countering cyber challenges. – **QNA**

A Qatari on the Banks of the Seine: Between Integration and Adaptation released

A book titled *A Qatari on the Banks of the Seine: Between Integration and Adaptation* by Qatar's Permanent Representative to Unesco Dr Nasser bin Hamad al-Hanzab has recently been published by Rosa Publishing House.

The book, which falls under the category of memoirs, chronicles Dr al-Hanzab's 21 years spent in France, detailing the linguistic, cultural, academic, and social challenges he faced, as well as his efforts to unravel the complexities of a country rich in cultural and scientific experiences, and known for its secular society.

The author shares the experiences of a young Qatari man, who arrived at the age of 19 from a conservative society and a family deeply rooted in its religious beliefs, national identity, and Arab traditions.

Through this memoir, Dr al-Hanzab attempts to promote the concept of adaptation rather than integration into different cultures, and to highlight the real role of studying abroad as more than just an academic pursuit.



Dr Nasser bin Hamad al-Hanzab

He argues that the true goal is to prepare a generation capable of representing its own culture accurately while engaging with other cultures on the basis of knowledge and mutual understanding.

Dr al-Hanzab told the Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the book aims to present the experience of living abroad, showing how one can coexist in a culturally and civically different society while preserving their original identity, relying on the concept of adaptation rather than integration.

The book, which will be



launched at the 34th Doha International Book Fair from May 8-17, also provides insights into French society from historical, legal, social, and cultural perspectives, all through a real-life experience filled with challenges and obstacles.

Additionally, the book offers a narrative portrayal of Qatari society and its identity, aiming to present a true picture of Qatar to the French-speaking world, including media personnel, researchers, and orientalist.

The book will be translated into French and published in France in the near future. – **QNA**

'Green Strokes' contest for school students

The Ministry of Municipality has launched the "Green Strokes" competition in partnership with the Seashore Group, under the slogan *Together for a Cleaner Environment and a Better Future*.

The competition targets school students across all educational levels and is part of the ongoing efforts to promote a culture of public cleanliness, waste separation at the source, and environmental awareness among the younger generation.

The competition aims to raise students' awareness of the importance of cleanliness and environmental preservation and to encourage them to creatively express these values through innovative artworks that convey impactful awareness messages to the community.

It also seeks to reinforce concepts such as sustainability, recycling, and the optimal use of resources. The competition will require contestants to create artistic drawings that depict clean and sustainable environmental scenes, illustrate the different stages of recycling starting from waste separation, or highlight the positive impact of recycling on environmental protection and resource sustainability.

It also encourages students to envision Qatar's future in the light of the widespread implementation of these environmental practices.



The competition is set to start this month and will run through May.

Entries must be sent electronically in PDF format and must include the student's details, school name, and contact information.

Entries should be e-mailed to seashore@seashore-recycling.com

Entries will be evaluated by a committee comprising representatives from the ministry, the Seashore Group, and a number of art and drawing experts.

The evaluation will be based on criteria such as artistic creativity, execution quality, clarity of the awareness message, colour usage, and innovation in expression.

The organising committee will announce the prizes for the top winners at a later date.



The partnership enables Doha Bank customers to maintain active and healthy lifestyles with greater convenience and flexibility via Ox Fitness Lab and the G8TS app.

Doha Bank partners with Ox Fitness Lab

Doha Bank has entered into an exclusive partnership with Ox Fitness Lab, providing its premium credit card customers with complimentary access to a growing network of fitness studios and gyms across Qatar, through the G8TS app.

The bank is also offering numerous benefits that cardholders already enjoy, including premium valet parking across Doha, car wash, cinema discounts, and lounge access.

Through this collaboration, eligible Doha Bank Credit Card customers can register on the G8TS app, enabling them to book complimentary fitness classes at over 20 premier gyms and fitness studios, with more venues to be added in the future.

"Our partnership with Ox Fitness Lab is a testament to our commitment to offering exclusive lifestyle benefits that go beyond traditional banking services," said Doha Bank Group chief executive Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Fahad bin Faisal al-Thani. "Through this collaboration, our premium credit cardholders can enjoy seamless access to Qatar's leading fitness destinations, helping them prioritise health and wellness as part of their everyday lives."

Mohamed Abuissa, the chief executive and founder of Ox Fitness Lab and the G8TS App, said that the mission of Ox Fitness Lab and the G8TS app is to empower people to lead healthier lives by connecting them to the best wellness experiences across Qatar.

"This partnership marks a significant step toward making that vision a reality, by aligning fitness with convenience, technology, and lifestyle," he said.

Ox Fitness Lab, part of the Salam Group, is a pioneer in digital fitness solutions, redefining how individuals engage with wellness services.

By integrating fitness access with financial services, this partnership enables Doha Bank customers to maintain active and healthy lifestyles with greater convenience and flexibility.

Premium Doha Bank Credit Card customers can activate this benefit by downloading the G8TS app, linking their eligible credit card, and selecting from a wide range of fitness classes.

Dukhan Bank launches House Finance campaign with competitive profit rate, exclusive benefits

Dukhan Bank has launched a new House Finance campaign offering customers exclusive benefits, including a competitive profit rate as low as 5% per annum, a 12-month grace period, and a 50% discount on administration fees at select locations.

The limited-time campaign, which will run until July 10, 2025, reflects Dukhan Bank's ongoing

commitment to providing ethical, customer-focused financial solutions aligned with Shariah principles.

Customers can access home finance starting from a minimum amount of QR1mn, with a repayment tenure of up to 10 years.

Abdulaziz al-Naema, head of Retail Banking, said: "At Dukhan Bank, we are committed to offering Shariah-compliant solutions

that meet the evolving needs of our customers. Our latest House Finance campaign is tailored to support aspiring homeowners in Qatar by providing highly competitive rates and exclusive benefits, making the journey to owning a home more accessible and rewarding." Through this offer, Dukhan Bank continues to reinforce its position as a customer-centric institution focused on

making essential financial solutions more convenient and appealing. The campaign is designed to empower customers with flexible repayment options while benefiting from ethical finance solutions rooted in Islamic values.

Customers interested in the campaign can visit any Dukhan Bank branch, call 800 8555, or apply directly via www.dukhanbank.com



QF's Al-Mujadilah enriches women's Islamic knowledge during Ramadan

In its second Ramadan since opening to the public in early 2024, Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Al-Mujadilah Center & Mosque for Women welcomed more than 16,000 women for nightly Tarawih and Qiyam prayers.



"Ramadan is a time to draw closer to Allah, focus on religious practice, and strengthen our faith. It is also a time to prioritise and embrace family and community," Dr Sohaira Z Siddiqui, executive director of Al-Mujadilah, said. "We met familiar faces from last year and welcomed new members of the community we had not seen before. Each one of us is at a different point in our personal and religious journey but under one roof, Al-Mujadilah offers a space for all. Women from diverse backgrounds and ages gathered each night to pray together."

Al-Mujadilah once again served as a donation centre for the Keswet Al Eid initiative, led by Education Above All Foundation in partnership with Qatar Red Crescent. The campaign collected new clothing and school bags as Eid gifts for children in Gaza and Syria.

Throughout Ramadan, Al-Mujadilah offered a range of programmes, encouraging Muslim women to continue their ongoing

learning, as well as offering opportunities to reflect on the principles and ethical insights within the Prophetic Hadith, and strengthen their connection with the Qur'an. These included programmes dedicated to analysing Surah An-Nissa, Surah Al-Naml, and Qur'anic memorisation (Hifth).

Noora al-Rawahi, a PhD candidate at Hamad Bin Khalifa University, regularly attended the Intensive Hifth programme and successfully memorised Surah Al-Naml. This Ramadan was her first observance in Qatar. She strengthened her connection to the Qur'an and also developed a newfound sense of community.

"Attending the programme, which included both Qur'an recitation and Tadabbur – reflecting on the message of Qur'anic verses – boosted my confidence in memorising the Qur'an,"

she said. "I was able to see my progress alongside a community of women who, like me, wanted to make the most of Ramadan by strengthening our bond with the sacred verses. I now feel more connected, not only to the Qur'an, but also to the welcoming community here in Qatar that surrounds it."

Imam Ahmed al-Qattani led Tarawih and Qiyam prayers through the 27th night of Ramadan, with guest, Imam Mohammad al-Barrak leading the congregation on the 28th and 29th nights.

Looking ahead to the spring and summer seasons, Al-Mujadilah plans to expand its reach, supporting Muslim women in engaging with meaningful discourse, study, and community building – fostering growth in faith, with confidence and resilience.

Creative Avenue hosts event to promote animal care in Qatar

Creative Avenue, in collaboration with Fat Cat Cafe, successfully hosted the Caring for CATar Community Event for Animal Welfare on April 10, bringing together animal welfare advocates, community members, and animal lovers to support Qatar's stray cats and promoting compassion and responsibility for animal care.

This initiative, rooted in the Islamic values of rahma (mercy), and ihsan (excellence in good deeds), seeks to raise awareness for the humane treatment of stray cats in Qatar through education, advocacy, and sustainable solutions.

Dr Amal al-Malki, founder of Creative Avenue, shared the vision of Caring for CATar, a social good campaign aimed at uniting individuals, businesses, and institutions to ensure better treatment and care for Qatar's stray cat population.

The event featured talks from three expert speakers in animal welfare: Dr Hamad al-Ansari from Exotic Animals Vet Clinic, Lana Malkawi from Pawmise Rescue, and Carlotta Gelmetti from TNR Qatar. Each speaker shared valuable insights and personal experiences that resonated with the audience, highlighting the challenges and triumphs of animal rescue work in Qatar. Their collective passion sparked meaningful discussions on how everyone – from individuals to institutions – can play a role in driving change. Throughout the evening, guests had the opportunity to interact with the resident cats of Fat Cat Cafe, petting and feeding them while also capturing memorable moments in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.

As part of the evening's activities, guests were invited to complete a short survey to help shape the future direction of the Caring for CATar campaign. The feedback reflected a strong shared concern for the well-being of stray cats in Qatar, with most participants identifying the issue as both important and urgent. Survey responses emphasised the need for a collective approach to animal welfare. Participants highlighted the valuable roles played by individuals, veterinary clinics, businesses, and institutions – indicating that meaningful progress can best be achieved through collaboration across all sectors of society. When asked how to encourage



The Caring for CATar Community Event for Animal Welfare on April 10 brought together animal welfare advocates, community members, and animal lovers in Qatar. **PICTURE:** Marie Josee Bedard

greater involvement, attendees shared thoughtful ideas such as expanding TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) programmes, introducing school-based education and awareness initiatives, and connecting the cause with Islamic values and Qatar National Vision 2030. These suggestions underline the importance of fostering both compassion and long-term, sustainable strategies.

Looking ahead, participants expressed enthusiasm for future developments, including broader access to TNR services, the installation of feeding and hydration stations, and adoption-focused efforts that promote care and responsibility. There was also interest in enhanced public education and continued support for policies that uphold animal welfare – reflecting a hopeful vision for a community that cares deeply for its animals. Creative Avenue also took the opportunity to honour the campaign's dedicated partners whose ongoing efforts laid the foundation for Caring for CATar. These include: Exotic Animals Vet Clinic, TNR Qatar, Pawmise Rescue Qatar, Fat Cat Cafe, Oryx Veterinary Centre, Animal Kingdom Rescuers, Furry Good Deeds, Sofa Veterinary Care Centre, and Zumra Group. Their unwavering commitment to animal welfare has been instrumental in creating lasting change and inspiring community engagement.

Nahham Al Khaleej Festival inaugurated at Katara Beach



Katara Festival and Award for the Art of Nahma – Nahham Al Khaleej 2025 was inaugurated last evening at the southern side of Katara Beach.

It was launched by Prof Dr Khalid bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti, general manager of the Katara Culture Village. The opening ceremony was attended by a group of intellectuals, heritage enthusiasts, and folk art lovers, celebrating the GCC deep-rooted connection to its maritime traditions.

In his opening remarks, Prof Dr al-Sulaiti stressed that the festival is a significant cultural event that reflects Katara's commitment to preserving and revitalising traditional Gulf arts. He noted that the art of Nahma is not merely a form of sea-bound singing from the past, but a cultural expression of life, work, endurance, and longing, passed down by communities that depended on the sea for survival.

"We are proud to host this distinguished group of Nahhams from across the GCC in a refined artistic competition that honours our shared heritage," said Prof Dr al-Sulaiti.

He added that the festival serves as a platform for interaction, documentation, and innovation, in line with Katara's mission to keep heritage alive and ever-evolving.

The opening ceremony featured a performance by the Children of Bahrain troupe, followed by an introduction of the judging panel



and participating countries. The first round of the competition then commenced.

Running from April 13-15, the festival is held daily from 6pm-10pm and includes the participation of 17 Nahhams from across the GCC countries: four from Qatar, one from Saudi Arabia, three each from Kuwait, the UAE, Oman and Bahrain.

The judging panel includes Faisal al-Tamimi (Qatar), Jassim al-Harban (Bahrain), and Zubair Khalifa al-Omari (Kuwait), who will evaluate performances based on vocal technique, melodic interpretation, pitch control, and artistic expression.

Over its three-day schedule, the festival features a variety of cultural seminars and traditional performances. On the second day, two seminars will be presented: "Rhythmic Arts across the GCC Countries – Al-Haddadi Arts" by Kuwaiti researcher Abdul Hamid al-Saqr, and "Work Songs Between the Sea and the Land" by Bahraini artist Youssef Adam. These will be followed by the second round of competition.

On the final day, Qatari researcher Abdulhamid al-Yousef will lead a session titled "The Role of the Nahham on the Boat", followed by the third and final round of the competition. The festival will conclude with a performance by the Al-Galayel troupe and the announcement and honouring of the winners.

In addition to the competition, the festival offers a wide array of accompanying heritage activities. These include a live drawing contest, visual arts exhibition, photography competition, and a maritime exhibit chronicling the history of traditional diving and fishing.

Visitors can also enjoy live demonstrations of traditional maritime crafts such as oyster shell opening, shipbuilding, net weaving, making of fishing traps and ropes, diving equipment, plasterwork, and palm frond weaving. The festival grounds also host traditional children's games, cultural competitions, and a dedicated space for local cuisine.

Aspetar hosts course to advance spinal surgery techniques

Aspetar, Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Hospital successfully hosted the AO Spine Advanced Specimen Course: Deformity – Advanced Techniques and Complex Cases recently for the second consecutive year.

Held at Aspetar's Surgical Training Centre, the course brought together elite spine surgeons and experts from around the world to share knowledge, refine skills, and discuss the latest advancements in managing complex spinal deformities. Organised in collaboration with AO Spine, a global leader in spine surgery education, the two-day intensive course featured lectures, interactive case discussions, and hands-on practical sessions using human anatomical specimens. Participants had the opportunity to practise advanced correction



Participants in the AO Spine Course.

techniques and anterior spinal surgery approaches. The course also explored emerging technologies like surgical navigation systems and biologics to enhance patient outcomes.

Dr Abdulaziz Jaham Alkuwari, CEO of Aspetar and chairperson of the event, emphasised: "Aspetar is proud to partner once again with AO Spine to deliver this important course in spinal surgery. Hosting this event for the second year in a row underscores our commitment

to advancing medical education and facilitating knowledge exchange in highly specialised fields like orthopaedic surgery. This initiative directly contributes to enhancing surgeons' skills and ultimately improving care for patients with spinal deformities."

Aspetar's Surgical Training Centre is the first-of-its-kind in the region, offering surgeons an unparalleled environment to develop their expertise in orthopaedic and sports injury surgeries.

Alaraby TV qualifies for Telly Awards voting phase

Alaraby Television Network has qualified for the voting stage of the prestigious 2025 Telly Awards, with three promotional videos and a documentary selected among the nominated entries.

The selected works include the documentary, *Gaza... A Stolen Childhood*, produced by the Long-form & Investigations Unit within the Programmes Department at Alaraby TV.

The film highlights the suffering

of children in Gaza amidst ongoing crises caused by the continuous aggression on the Strip. The promos for the programmes *Secret in the Museum* and *Cinema... Cinema*, both produced by the Programming Department at Alaraby 2 and aired exclusively on its channel and the Alaraby+ app, also made it to the same stage of the competition, in addition to the news filler segment *Gaza... Hands of Fate*.

With the announcement of the



initial nominations, which included thousands of submissions from across the globe, Alaraby Television Network secured three nominations in the promo category. This has made the Qatari-

based media company the only media organisation to achieve this number of nominations, surpassing hundreds of entries from international institutions.

Commenting on this achievement, Hamza Almasri, promotion unit head, said: "The nomination of three entries is a testament to Alaraby TV Network's consistent excellence and innovation. It reflects the network's commitment to delivering high-quality content on technical, creative, and

humanitarian levels as well as its dedication to attracting top talent and adopting the technologies needed to produce outputs that meet global standards."

Regarding the nomination of the documentary *Gaza... A Stolen Childhood*, Dina Demerdash, longform & investigations manager at Alaraby TV, emphasised: "This nomination is a well-deserved spotlight on the tragedies endured by children in Gaza and reaffirms the importance of con-

tinuing to shed light on their ongoing suffering."

She added: "Producing this documentary was a major challenge due to the continuous aggression on the Strip. It represents just a small part of the hundreds of human stories that deserve to be told."

It's worth noting that voting for the Telly Awards continues until April 18 via the official website of the awards. Winners are expected to be announced in May.



Palestinian support gatherings in Pakistan, Senegal



People wave flags during the pro-Palestinian rally called "Gaza Solidarity March", organised by the religious and political party Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) in Karachi, Pakistan, yesterday.



People take part in a protest in solidarity with Palestinians and Gaza, organised by a civil society group, in Dakar, Senegal, yesterday.

Israeli missiles strike Gaza hospital, patients evacuated

Reuters
Cairo

Two Israeli missiles hit a major Gaza hospital yesterday, knocking out the emergency department and damaging other structures, medics said, in a strike which Israel said was aimed at Hamas fighters exploiting the facility.

Health officials at the Al-Ahli Arab Baptist Hospital evacuated patients after a phone call from someone who identified himself as Israeli security shortly before the attack.

No casualties were reported in the strike. The Israeli military said in a statement it had taken steps to reduce harm to civilians before it struck the compound, which was being used by Hamas fighters to plan attacks. Hamas rejected the accusation as "lies" and called for an international investigation.

The hospital – an institution of the Anglican Church – was knocked out of operation, according to Gaza's health ministry.

"Hundreds of patients and injured people had to be evacuated in the middle of the night, and many of them are now out in the streets without medical care, which puts their lives at risk," said ministry spokesperson Khalil al-Deqran.

Yesterday's strikes came as Hamas leaders began a fresh round of talks in Cairo in a bid to salvage a stalled ceasefire agreement with Israel, with Egypt, Qatar, and the United States attempting to bridge gaps between the sides.

Images on social media, which Reuters could not immediately verify, showed dozens of people leaving the hospital, with some assisting patients in their beds.

Reuters footage showed signif-



Palestinians inspect a site where medics said two Israeli missiles hit a building inside the Al-Ahli Arab Baptist Hospital, shortly after patients were evacuated following a call from someone who identified himself with Israeli security, in Gaza City, yesterday.

icant destruction in and outside the hospital compound's church, and patients who couldn't leave.

"The scene was scary. From last night until now, I haven't slept a single minute out of fear. All night, glass was shattering over us inside," said an injured man, Mohammed Abu Nasser.

The Baptist Church in Jerusalem said the warning to evacuate the hospital came 20 minutes before the strike that destroyed the two-storey Genetic Laboratory, and damaged the Pharmacy and Emergency Department buildings and other surrounding structures.

"We call upon all governments and people of goodwill to intervene to stop all kinds of attacks on medical and humanitarian institutions," the church said in a statement.

The Palestinian foreign ministry and Hamas condemned the attack, saying Israel was destroying Gaza's healthcare system.

Israel says Hamas systematically exploits civilian structures,

including hospitals, which the group denies. Israeli forces have carried out numerous raids in medical facilities in Gaza.

In October 2023, a deadly blast at a parking lot in the compound of Al-Ahli hospital was blamed by Hamas on an Israeli air strike. Israel said a failed rocket launch by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad group had caused the blast.

The fighter group denied it was responsible. An investigation by Human Rights Watch concluded the explosion was most likely caused by a failed Palestinian rocket launch.

Separate strikes in the enclave yesterday killed at least 30 Palestinians, including the head of a police station in Khan Younis, in the southern part of the Hamas-run enclave, according to Hamas and health authorities. Six brothers were killed when an Israeli strike hit their car in Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza Strip, medics said.

The war in Gaza was triggered by Hamas' October 2023 storming of southern Israel.

Red Crescent says missing Gaza medic in Israeli custody

AFP
Ramallah

The Palestine Red Crescent Society said yesterday that a medic who had been missing since an Israeli attack on ambulances in Gaza was "forcibly abducted" by troops and is being held by Israeli authorities.

"We have been informed by the International Committee of the Red Cross that medic Asaad al-Nsarah is being held by the Israeli occupation authorities," the PRCS said in a statement.

"His fate had remained unknown since he was targeted along with other PRCS medics in Rafah," it said, referring to the attack that left 15 medics and rescuers dead.

When contacted for comment on the PRCS's latest announcement, the Israeli military referred AFP to an earlier statement noting that army chief Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir had ordered a thorough investigation into the attack.

"We call on the international community to pressure the occupation authorities to immediately release our colleague, medic Asaad, who was forcibly abducted while carrying out his humanitarian duties," the PRCS said.

"He and his colleagues came under heavy gunfire, which led to the killing of eight of them – a grave violation of international humanitarian law."

The killings occurred in the southern Gaza Strip in the early hours of March 23, days into a renewed Israeli offensive in the Hamas-ruled territory.

They have since sparked international condemnation, with Israel insisting there were fighters in the

ambulances. The PRCS has charged that Israeli soldiers gunned down the team with bullets to their upper body with "intent to kill".

Eight staff members from the Red Crescent, six from the Gaza civil defence agency and one employee of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees were killed in the attack, according to the UN humanitarian office OCHA and Palestinian rescuers.

Their bodies were found buried near the site of the shooting in the Tal al-Sultan area of Rafah city, in what OCHA described as a mass grave.

The team was ambushed while responding to distress calls from Palestinians in an area near Rafah that had been struck by an Israeli air strike, the PRCS had said. The Israeli attack appears to have occurred in two phases on that morning.

One of the victims of the attack, medic Rifaat Radwan, captured video and audio of the second assault, which targeted his convoy of ambulances and a firetruck, before he was killed.

An Israeli military official told journalists that the soldiers who fired at the ambulances "thought they had an encounter with fighters".

But Radwan's video, released by the Red Crescent, contradicted this account.

The footage from the phone found on Radwan's body shows ambulances moving with their headlights and emergency lights clearly switched on, while the military official had said that the lights on the vehicles were off.

The sole survivor, medic Mundhir Abed, witnessed the first attack. He said he was initially detained and beaten by the soldiers before being released.

"It's a day I'll never forget because of the torment I witnessed and lived through," he told AFP.

UAE president says wants to support Syria reconstruction

AFP
Dubai

The president of the United Arab Emirates said his country wants to support Syria's reconstruction as he met yesterday with interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa in Abu Dhabi.

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan "affirmed the UAE's keenness to support... Syria to confront the challenges of the transitional phase and rebuild Syria" during

the meeting, the official Emirati news agency WAM reported.

Sharaa has sought Gulf financial support for war-devastated Syria since he led a lightning offensive that toppled longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad in December.

But nearly a week after the fighters toppled Assad, UAE presidential adviser Anwar Gargash said his government found the affiliation of Syria's new rulers "quite worrying".

In mid-January Sharaa spoke

by phone with the UAE president about ways to reinforce ties and "ensure the stability and development of the region". Syria's state news agency SANA said at the time. "Syria's stability and enhanced security are in the interest of the entire region," the UAE president was quoted as saying yesterday.

He added that the Gulf country would "spare no effort in providing all possible support to Syria and its brotherly people in the coming period".

Iran says talks with US to focus solely on N-issue, lifting sanctions

AFP
Tehran

Iran's foreign ministry said yesterday that talks with the United States slated for next weekend will remain "indirect" with Omani mediation, and focused solely on the nuclear issue and lifting of sanctions.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff held talks Saturday in Muscat, marking the highest-level Iran-US nuclear negotiations since the collapse of a 2015 accord. They agreed to meet again in seven days.

"Negotiations will continue to be indirect. Oman will remain the mediator, but we are discussing the location of future negotiations," foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said in an interview with state TV.

He said the talks would only focus on "the nuclear issue and the lifting of sanctions," and that Iran "will not have any talks with the American side on any other issue."

Analysts had said the US would push to include on the agenda

discussions over Iran's ballistic missile programme along with Tehran's support for the "axis of resistance" – a network of groups opposed to Israel.

Tehran has, however, maintained it will talk only about its nuclear programme.

Donald Trump in 2018 pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers during his first term as US president.

He reimposed sweeping economic sanctions against Iran, which continued to adhere to the agreement for a year after Washington's pullout but later began rolling back its own commitments.

Iran has consistently denied seeking to acquire nuclear weapons.

Saturday's rare negotiations came weeks after Trump sent a letter to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urging nuclear talks while warning of possible military action if Iran refuses.

Iran and the US separately described Saturday's discussions as "constructive".

Iran said the talks were held indirectly with Oman's foreign minister acting as intermediary.

Provisional results reveal Gabon junta chief wins presidency

AFP
Libreville

Gabon's junta chief Brice Oligui Nguema has won the presidential election with 90.35% of the vote, according to provisional results released yesterday by the interior ministry.

Oligui, who ended more than five decades of corruption-plagued rule by the Bongo family in August 2023, assuming the role of transitional president, had promised to return the country to democratic rule.

Earlier yesterday, Gabon 24 television had reported that he was "well ahead" in several of the central African country's provinces. On Saturday, voters had flocked to the ballot boxes to have their say in an election marking the end of military rule. The latest provisional figures from the interior ministry put the participation rate at 70.4%.

The day after voters poured into polling stations, the streets of the capital Libreville were



Gabon's junta chief Brice Oligui Nguema (centre-left) celebrates with his wife Zita Nyangue Oligui Nguema after winning the presidential election, at his election campaign headquarters in Libreville, yesterday.

calm – in contrast with previous elections in 2016 and 2023 marked by tensions and unrest.

"I hadn't voted in a long time, but this time, I saw a ray or something that made me go out and vote," 58-year-old Catholic Olivina Migombe said while en route to church yesterday.

"I believe in change this time," the professed Oligui voter added. Whoever wins will have to reckon with the oil-rich country's litany of problems,

from crumbling infrastructure to widespread poverty, all while labouring under a crushing mountain of debt.

If Oligui is elected president "he will have lots of work to do," said Patrick Essono-Mve, a 48-year-old unemployed technician, also on the way to mass.

Oligui has sought to shed his military strongman image and even ditched his general's uniform to run for a seven-year term.

Togo accepts AU mediator role in DR Congo conflict

Togo's leader has accepted a role as the African Union's mediator in the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the Togolese foreign ministry said yesterday, AFP reported from Nairobi. President Faure Gnassingbe will take over from Angolan President Joao Lourenco, who last month relinquished the role he was appointed to in 2022. There has been little headway in repeated attempts to pacify the protracted conflict involving the M23 armed group, which recently launched a lightning offensive and seized large swathes of land in mineral-rich eastern DRC. Yesterday, Togolese Foreign Minister Robert Dussey shared an AU statement saying Gnassingbe had been appointed "as Mediator for the AU engagement between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Republic of Rwanda in the context of protracted insecurity in the Eastern part of the DRC". An AU spokesperson verified the statement to AFP. Dussey thanked the African Union and member states for "the confidence expressed" in Gnassingbe, adding he will "actively contribute to the search for sustainable peace, reconciliation and stability in the Great Lakes region".

UK demands answers after MP denied Hong Kong entry

AFP
London

British Foreign Secretary David Lammy yesterday said he was deeply concerned after a UK lawmaker was denied entry to Hong Kong, and said he would be urgently raising the issue

with the Chinese authorities. Wera Hobhouse claimed she was the first British MP to be refused entry on arrival in Hong Kong since the former British colony was handed over to China in 1997. Hobhouse is a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China. "IPAC unites lawmakers world-

wide, promoting democracy and addressing threats to the rules-based and human rights systems posed by the rise of China," the group says on its website. The *Sunday Times* newspaper said Hobhouse, 65, flew to Hong Kong on Thursday on a personal trip to visit her newborn grandson. It said she had her passport

confiscated, was asked about her job and the purpose of her visit, had her luggage searched and was then taken to the boarding gate. "When I was given the decision my voice was shaking and I was just saying: 'Why, please explain to me?'" the British weekly quoted her as saying. Hobhouse said on Bluesky: "I am the first MP to be

refused entry on arrival to Hong Kong since 1997. Authorities gave me no explanation for this cruel and upsetting blow. I hope the foreign secretary will recognise that this is an insult to all parliamentarians and seek answers." It comes a week after two British MPs from the governing Labour Party were blocked from entering Israel and deported.

Hobhouse has been a member of parliament for the smaller opposition Liberal Democrats since 2017. "It is deeply concerning to hear that an MP on a personal trip has been refused entry to Hong Kong," Lammy said. "We will urgently raise this with the authorities in Hong Kong and Beijing to demand an explanation."

Looser food standards off the menu in any US-UK trade deal: Britain

Reuters
London

Britain will not relax its food safety standards as part of any deal to secure lower tariffs on its exports to the US, Business Minister Jonathan Reynolds said yesterday. US President Donald Trump has imposed 10% tariffs on most imports of British goods to the US and a higher 25% rate on imports of cars, steel and aluminium. Although the tariffs imposed on Britain are at the lower end of the US' scale - reflecting broadly balanced trade flows between the two countries - Reynolds said he still viewed the greater trade barriers as "disappointing". Earlier this month, just after the tariffs were announced, Reynolds told the BBC it was "not inaccurate" to say the US and Britain had agreed the broad outline of a possible deal, though Trump had not seen it. However, there has been little sign of progress since and last week Finance Minister Rachel Reeves said she intended to meet US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent "shortly". Attempts to strike a bilateral trade deal during Trump's first term in 2017-21 ran into opposition from Britain's Conservative government at the time over measures to lower animal welfare and environmental standards. Reynolds said yesterday that looser food standards remained off the table for the Labour administration, as he viewed that as breaching promises made in 2024's election campaign.

China 'no longer welcome in UK steel sector'

China is no longer welcome in Britain's steel sector after the government had to pass emergency legislation on Saturday to ensure control of Chinese-owned British Steel, Business Minister Jonathan Reynolds said yesterday. Reynolds said the refusal of China's Jingye Group to accept a roughly £500mn (\$654mn) government aid package last week to stop irrevocable damage to blast furnaces left the government with no alternative to intervening directly. British Steel was not immediately available for comment outside office hours. Against a backdrop of global overcapacity in much of the steel industry and challenges from US tariffs, Jingye wanted to import steel from China for further processing in Britain, Reynolds said in an interview with Sky News. But the closure of blast furnaces at the British Steel plant in Scunthorpe - which need to be constantly fuelled and are losing £700,000 a day - would have left Britain as the only major

economy unable to produce so-called virgin steel from iron ore, coke and other inputs. Previous British governments had been "naive" to allow Chinese companies to be involved in the steel sector, Reynolds said. Large industrial companies such as Jingye Group had direct links to the Chinese Communist Party and China's government would understand why Jingye's proposal was unacceptable to Britain, he added. "You've got to be clear about what is the sort of sector where we can promote, co-operate; and ones, frankly, where we can't. I wouldn't personally bring a Chinese company into our steel sector. I think steel is a very sensitive area," he said. Jingye bought British Steel from the government in 2020 after the company became insolvent. Since coming to office in 2024, the Labour government has stepped up engagement with China after tensions under previous Conservative governments over human rights, Hong Kong and latterly restrictions on investment over security concerns.

"We will never change our SPS (sanitary and phytosanitary) food standards. We've made that perfectly clear to the US," he told Sky News in an interview. Common US and Canadian practices such as washing raw chicken in chlorinated water or feeding growth hormones to cattle are banned in Britain and the European Union.

However, parts of the US food industry did meet British standards, Reynolds said, hinting at a possible area for negotiation on tariffs. Last week Britain's culture minister ruled out any changes to its new Online Safety Act, which can fine big, predominantly US, tech companies up to 10% of their global turnover if they do not moderate content to British regulators' liking.

Tribute to Jallianwala Bagh martyrs



Police personnel pay tribute to martyrs to commemorate the anniversary of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar, India, yesterday.

Growth risks 'to nudge RBI towards deeper rate cuts'

Reuters
Mumbai

The Reserve Bank of India's rate-cutting cycle could be deeper than expected as downside risks to growth and a benign inflation outlook could prompt the central bank to be more accommodative, economists said. Growth in Asia's third-largest economy, which is under threat from slowing urban consumption and tepid private investment, could worsen because of the escalating US-China trade

war and the spectre of steep US tariffs. India hopes to seal a trade deal with the US after President Donald Trump paused "reciprocal" tariffs on dozens of countries, including India, while hiking levies on China. "With growth below potential, falling oil prices and inflation durably aligned to target, policy rates will need to move into the accommodative zone. Hence, we are lowering our terminal rate forecast to 5% from 5.50% earlier," Nomura economists Sonal Varma and Aurodeep Nandi said. On Wednesday, the RBI cut

the key policy repo rate by 25 basis points to 6% and softened its policy stance to "accommodative" from "neutral". The central bank also lowered its growth and inflation forecasts by 20 basis points each to 6.5% and 4%, respectively. Analysts say the downside on growth and price rise could be larger. Nomura expects another 100 basis points of rate reductions this year with 25-bp cuts in June, August, October and December. The tariffs have exacerbated uncertainties but quantifying the impact on growth is difficult, RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra said.

UK pledges £20bn to help firms amid US tariff turmoil

The UK pledged £20bn (\$26bn) yesterday to help exporters including those affected by US tariffs, as President Donald Trump's sweeping stop-start import taxes roil global markets. Britain's finance ministry said the move would expand the UK's export finance package by £20bn to a total of £80bn, with "thousands of UK businesses affected by tariffs set to benefit." Up to £10bn of that support will be used specifically for firms "impacted in the short term by the current situation," it said. Finance Minister Rachel Reeves said the move would help companies weather difficulties ahead. "The world is changing, which is why it is more important than ever to back our world-leading businesses and support them to navigate the challenges ahead," she said. The finance ministry said small businesses will also be able to access loans of up to £2mn as part of the package.

Tulips bloom in London



A woman photographs a garden bed of tulips at St James's Park in London, Britain, yesterday.

Australia premier's party launches poll campaign

Reuters
Sydney

The centre-left party of Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese yesterday pledged to help more would-be home buyers as it launched a campaign for the May 3 election shaping as a tight race with the conservative opposition. Albanese's Labor government, which is running neck-and-neck with the Liberal-National coalition, has promised to build 1.2mn homes by 2030, to ease cost pressures that have sparked dissatisfaction with a lack of affordable housing. "In Australia home ownership should not be a privilege to inherit if you're lucky," Albanese said at the launch of Labor's campaign in Perth. His government pledged that, if re-elected, it would guarantee

part of a first-home buyer's home loan, allowing the purchase with a deposit of 5%. It would also spend A\$10bn (\$6.29bn) on grants and loans to build up to 100,000 homes to help would-be home buyers get on the property ladder, it added. "If you are looking to buy your first time, Labor has got your back," he added at the launch. Liberal leader Peter Dutton, the defence minister in the last Liberal-National government, has also been campaigning on the so-called housing crisis, that he says puts home ownership out of reach for many in the country of about 26mn. At yesterday's launch of the coalition's campaign in Sydney, capital of the state of New South Wales, Dutton pledged tax relief and a rival housing plan allowing first-time buyers of new homes to deduct mortgage payments from income taxes.

World Expo opens in Japan in rocky times

AFP
Osaka, Japan

World Expo opened yesterday with 160 countries and regions showcasing their technology, culture and food, with host Japan hoping to provide the world with some much-needed hope. Highlights at the show in Osaka until mid-October include a Mars meteorite, a beating artificial heart grown from stem cells and Hello Kitty figures in algae form. Surrounding most of the pavilions - a chance for architects' fancies to run wild - is the world's largest

wooden structure, the "Grand Ring". Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said the event would help bring a sense of unity in a "divided society". But with conflicts raging and US President Donald Trump's tariffs causing economic turmoil, that may be optimistic. "Not for sale" states a yellow and blue sign over Ukraine's booth, which contains objects used in the restoration of power facilities damaged by the Russian invasion. Russia was absent from the Expo. "We are the ones who create, not the ones who destroy," Tatiana Bezreznaya, deputy minister of economy of Ukraine, said. The US building has the theme

"America the Beautiful", focusing not on politics but landscapes, AI and space. The nearby Chinese pavilion, evoking a calligraphy scroll, focuses on green technology and features lunar samples brought by the country's Moon probes. France's pavilion is enveloped in immense white drapes and is inspired by the Japanese legend of "Akai Ito", an invisible red thread representing shared values. After enjoying the view atop the Grand Ring's "skywalk", hungry visitors can stop by the world's longest sushi conveyor belt or meet many-eyed Expo 2025 mascot Myaku-Myaku. Among the more bizarre displays are 32 sculptures of Hello

Kitty dressed as different types of algae - to symbolise the plant's many uses - and a "human washing machine". Elsewhere are demonstrations of drone-like flying vehicles, and the tiny artificial heart made from induced pluripotent stem cells (iPS) shown in public for the first time. "It has an actual pulse," Byron Russel of Pasona Group, which runs the exhibit, said. Themes of sustainability run through the Expo, including at the bauble-like Swiss pavilion, which aims to have the smallest ecological footprint. But Expos have been criticised for their temporary nature, and after October Osaka's man-made is-

land will be cleared to make way for a casino resort. According to Japanese media, only 12.5% of the Grand Ring will be reused. Expo is also known as a World's Fair, and the phenomenon, which brought the Eiffel Tower to Paris, began with London's 1851 Crystal Palace exhibition and is held every five years. Osaka last hosted the Expo in 1970 when Japan was booming and its technology the envy of the world. It attracted 64mn people, a record until Shanghai in 2010. But 55 years on, Japan is less of a trendsetter and opinion polls show low levels of enthusiasm among the public for the Expo, particularly af-

ter it went 27% over budget. So far 8.7mn advance tickets have been shifted, below the pre-sales target of 14mn. Japan is also experiencing a record tourism boom, meaning accommodation in Osaka - near hotspot Kyoto - is often fully booked with prices sky-high. But early visitors at the venue voiced their excitement despite persistent rain on day one. Local resident Emiko Sakamoto, who also visited the Expo in 1970, was determined to return to the site repeatedly to see all the pavilions. "I think the Expo is meaningful" in this chaotic time, she said. "People will think about peace after visiting the venue."

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GULF TIMES

Dire wolf resurrection sparks scientific awe and controversy

In an age when conservationists are concerned that the disappearance of thousands of wildlife species is imminent due to human irresponsibility, the recent claim by a US biotechnology company of resurrecting the long-extinct dire wolf through genetic engineering has created excitement as well as shock. The species was native to the Americas but went extinct some 10,000-12,000 years ago, probably because their megaherbivore prey also disappeared around this time. Dallas-based Colossal Laboratories & Biosciences, said it is “a scientific breakthrough for global conservation efforts” and is even trying to bring back the extinct woolly mammoth by 2028.

Dire wolves lived in a variety of habitats including plains and mountainous areas of North America and arid areas of South America. Fossils have been found in the asphalt pits at Rancho La Brea in Los Angeles and in paleontological sites in the midwestern US, according to the Illinois State Museum. Colossal said two of the dire wolves were born late last year, while the third arrived in early 2025. All three live in a secure 2,000-acre nature preserve at an undisclosed location. “This massive milestone is the first of many coming examples demonstrating that our end-to-end de-extinction technology stack works,” said Ben Lamm, Colossal’s cofounder and CEO, in a news release. “Our team took DNA from a 13,000-year-old tooth and a 72,000-year-old skull and made healthy dire wolf puppies.”

But many scientists are crying foul. What Colossal has done, they point out, is edited some of the genes of the not-very-closely related grey wolf to make it resemble their distant cousin. “Colossal has introduced a small number of changes to the genetic material of a grey wolf to produce grey wolf pups with dire wolf features such as pale coats and a potentially larger size,” says Philip Seddon, a professor of zoology at the University of Otago in New Zealand. Nic Rawlence of the same university’s Palaeogenetics Laboratory wonders how the pups will learn how to be dire wolves. “Currently, they’re wolves running around in a paddock. And does the ecosystem it once lived in still exist?”

But Colossal firmly rejects the many criticisms that have been made. Chief science officer Beth Shapiro says it doesn’t matter that the two species are not closely related. “When Colossal successfully edited 20 carefully chosen genetic variants into grey wolf DNA – 15 of them extinct variants that haven’t existed for over 12,000 years – we were attempting to resurrect key features tied to the functional essence of an extinct species,” she adds. Those features, it says, include being 20-25% larger than a grey wolf and having more muscle mass and an Arctic white coat.

On the issue of how these animals will learn to be dire wolves, Shapiro says Colossal has created management strategies modelled on red wolf and Mexican grey wolf reintroduction programmes. “Those strategies include a stepwise approach to reducing human intervention, mimicking wild diet types and increasing the difficulty in which food items are presented to encourage the expression of wild behaviours,” she says. Colossal has become well-known for its pioneering approach to gene-editing extant, living species to make them more closely resemble related extinct ones – it is also attempting this with both the thylacine and the woolly mammoth, but what it has called the Colossal dire wolf is its first actual success with the technology.

A number of experts say that bringing back extinct animals will not solve any conservation problems and that efforts would be better spent trying to find ways to save current critically endangered or vulnerable species. Worldwide, more than 41,000 species are currently threatened with extinction and more than 16,300 are considered endangered, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s Red List of Threatened Species.

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A strategic brotherhood for a changing region

QNA
Doha

Qatar and Egypt share deep-rooted, historical fraternal ties built on mutual respect, shared interests, and a common vision for the future. These relations, grounded in unity of purpose and destiny, continue to grow and thrive thanks to the shared commitment of both countries’ leadership to further develop and diversify bilateral co-operation. Their aim is to elevate these ties into a model of strategic partnership and investment that sets a standard for collaboration between brotherly nations.

In line with the shared commitment of the Qatari and Egyptian leaderships to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination between Doha and Cairo, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi of Egypt is embarking on an official visit to Qatar. This visit to Doha carries significant weight amid the current regional and global developments, which call for enhanced consultation and co-ordination between the two countries.

These efforts aim to address the latest developments and issues impacting Arab security, the legitimate aspirations and rights of Arab peoples, and to foster Arab unity, security, and stability in the region and beyond serving the collective interests and positions of Arab nations on various international platforms.

The Qatari-Egyptian summit in Doha reflects the high level of excellence reached in bilateral relations and underscores the shared determination of both leaderships to deepen co-operation and co-ordination across all levels for the benefit of the two countries and their brotherly nations.

Qatar-Egypt relations witnessed a dynamic momentum, marked by reciprocal visits between the two leaders. In June 2022, His Highness the Amir paid an official visit to Egypt, during which he discussed with President al-Sisi ways to strengthen and expand bilateral ties, particularly in the fields of investment, energy, defence, culture, and sports. The talks also touched on a range of current regional and international issues, with both leaders exchanging views especially regarding developments in the Middle East.

Again, in November 2023, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani made a fraternal visit to Egypt. During the visit, His Highness and President al-Sisi held official talks at Al-Ittihadiya Palace in Cairo. Discussions focused on further enhancing bilateral relations across various sectors, as well as reviewing pressing issues on the regional and international stages. Chief among these were the situation in occupied Palestinian territories and joint efforts to end the aggression on Gaza, de-escalate tensions, and facilitate the urgent delivery of humanitarian aid aimed at protecting civilians and contributing to regional stability.



Both sides reaffirmed their unwavering and continuous support for the Palestinian cause and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people particularly their right to establish an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the two-state solution. They also strongly condemned all violations against the Palestinian people, their land, and their holy sites, which undermine efforts to reach a just resolution to the issue.

In September 2022, President al-Sisi paid an official visit to Qatar. His Highness the Amir and the Egyptian president held official talks, during which they discussed the close bilateral relations and explored ways to strengthen and develop them across various fields, particularly in investment, transport, and social affairs. The talks also covered several regional and international issues of mutual concern. During the visit, the Amir and the president witnessed the signing of several memorandums of understanding between the governments of Qatar and Egypt in the fields of investment, ports, and social development.

President al-Sisi extended an invitation to Qatari business leaders to visit Egypt and explore the wide range of investment opportunities available across all economic sectors. Speaking at the opening of the Qatari-Egyptian Business Forum, he emphasised that sectors such as agriculture, commerce, real estate, and industry are all open for investment whether in partnership with the government or with Egypt’s private sector.

He also expressed Egypt’s readiness to offer genuine investment opportunities to Qatari private enterprises, highlighting Egypt’s progress in modernising infrastructure such as new road networks, power plants, and modern public transport systems as well as legal and regulatory reforms that meet investors’ expectations and pave the way for sustainable growth.

As part of the ongoing high-level exchanges between the two countries, HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, has made several visits to Egypt including a visit in March 2022 and again in November 2024. In turn, Prime Minister of Egypt, Dr Mostafa Madbouly, paid an official visit to Qatar in February 2023 and returned to Doha in December to participate in the 2024 Doha Forum.

In March last year, Doha hosted the fifth session of the Qatar-Egypt Joint Supreme Committee. The session reviewed the growing co-operation between the two nations and explored ways to further develop their ties particularly in the areas of trade, investment, diplomacy, social affairs, education, youth, and sports. In this regard, both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to strengthening bilateral relations in a way that also contributes to broader Arab co-operation.

The discussions also addressed the latest developments in Gaza and occupied Palestinian territories, with both sides emphasising the urgency of reaching an immediate ceasefire, ensuring the protection of civilians under siege, and guaranteeing the uninterrupted delivery of humanitarian aid into Gaza. During the session, a number of memorandums of understanding and executive co-operation programs were signed between the two sides in areas such as investment, diplomacy, social affairs, public education, youth, and sports.

Qatar-Egypt relations have seen significant progress on the economic front over the past three years particularly in the area of investment which helped boost bilateral trade and expand mutual investments.

The volume of trade between the two countries rose to approximately \$1.2bn in 2024, up from \$890mn in 2022. This growth is attributed to several factors, including streamlined

investment procedures, removal of customs barriers, and strengthened collaboration on joint projects.

There has also been a flurry of activity in mutual visits by trade and economic delegations between the two countries, with a strong focus on enhancing investment co-operation particularly in sectors such as tourism, healthcare, real estate, oil, and gas. Multiple Egyptian delegations visiting Doha briefed Qatari business leaders on Egypt’s ongoing economic renaissance and its landmark development projects, including New Administrative Capital, new ports, and expansive road networks, as well as the range of incentives offered to foreign investors.

They also highlighted a wealth of investment opportunities across various sectors, including industry, agriculture, tourism, healthcare, education, hospitality, green energy, food processing, automotive manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, and port development. These efforts are backed by Egypt’s advanced infrastructure, favourable legislation, streamlined procedures, and access to export markets.

The country is also expanding its network of free zones currently home to nine with additional zones in the pipeline.

In turn, the Qatari business sector invited Egyptian companies and investors to explore investment opportunities in Qatar, which has emerged as a leading investment destination both regionally and globally. This position is underpinned by a progressive legal and administrative framework that allows 100% foreign ownership across a wide range of economic and commercial activities. Besides to a world-class infrastructure designed to meet the full spectrum of investor needs. Key logistical advantages include Single Window platform for business registration, a network of free zones, Hamad International Airport, and Hamad Port.

There are about 261 Qatari companies operating in Egypt, with Qatari investments totalling \$2.165bn. Of this, \$249mn is in the tourism sector, around \$208mn in construction, and about \$36mn in the industrial sector. In March 2022, Qatar announced investments worth \$5bn on the sidelines of the visit of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani to Cairo.

Several Egyptian companies are actively operating in the Qatari market, while Qatar also maintains significant investments in Egypt. Notably, Qatar Investment Authority holds investments estimated at around \$3.317bn in resorts and tourism projects within Egypt.

Reflecting the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Qatar and Egypt, Doha hosted the Egyptian Cultural Week in January, 2025. The event showcased a wide array of creative expressions from visual arts and music to traditional crafts, folklore performances, and cultural exhibitions highlighting the richness of Egypt’s contemporary cultural scene as well as its heritage.

Bernie Sanders fights apathy on American left

AFP
Los Angeles

Bernie Sanders is emerging as one of the most vocal opponents to US President Donald Trump, with the 83-year-old senator drawing tens of thousands of people to his “fighting oligarchy” rallies around the country.

Supporters packed the Gloria Molina Grand Park in Los Angeles on Saturday as guests including politicians, union representatives and musical acts took to the stage before speeches by Sanders and Democrat representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

“There are some 36,000 of you, the largest rally that we have ever had,” Sanders told the cheering crowd.

“Your presence here today is making Donald Trump and Elon Musk very nervous.”

The self-described socialist, an independent who has never been a member of the Democratic Party, has been attracting crowds over the past two months on his nationwide “fighting oligarchy” tour.

His progressive, leftist rhetoric has resonated with people opposed to Trump’s policies and with those disappointed in established Democrats’ lack of political resistance to Trump.

Folk rock legend Neil Young led the LA crowd on Saturday in chanting Take America Back! while he played the electric guitar.

Feminist singer-songwriter Maggie Rogers dubbed the event “Berniechella,” a nod to the massive Coachella music festival taking place in the Californian desert.

Alex Powell, a 28-year-old art teacher in the audience, said Americans “need hope.”

“I’m really disappointed by the Democrats’ response, I want more action on their part, more outrage,” she told AFP.

“Donald Trump’s new term is distressing, it’s really scary,” Powell said, describing how some of her middle school pupils were “traumatised” after one of their parents was deported from the United States under Trump’s anti-immigrant campaign.

Sanders addressed a litany of grievances, including Trump’s massive cuts to government funding and threats to healthcare and research.

Mentions of Elon Musk, the owner of Tesla and X, drew boos from the crowd.

The South African billionaire has been tasked by Trump with dramatically reducing government spending, and is for many Sanders supporters a symbol of the corrupting influence of wealth in politics.



Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) hold hands during a stop on their ‘Fighting Oligarchy’ tour at Grand Park in Los Angeles, California. (AFP)

Sanders was “right the whole time,” 27-year-old Vera Loh told AFP.

“The collusion of money and politics has had terrible effects.”

Loh, a housekeeper, said she was stunned by the apathy of many Democrat leaders since Trump’s

defeat of presidential candidate Kamala Harris in November.

“The party put too much focus on minorities,” Loh said.

“If people don’t see it as a class war, then we just get lost with the identity politics.”

She told AFP she wanted politi-

cians to remember “we want higher pay, we want housing, we want to be able to afford things.”

“We are living in a moment where a handful of billionaires control the economic and political life of our country,” Sanders said on Saturday.

Trump is moving the United States “rapidly toward an authoritarian form of society,” he said.

The senator from Vermont hopes to encourage new independents to run for office without the Democrat label, at a time when the party is at an all-time low in the polls.

Sanders has no ambitions to run for president in 2028, but has taken rising progressive Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez under his wing.

“No matter your race, religion, gender, identity or status, no matter if you disagree with me on some things... I hope you see that this movement is not about partisan labels or purity tests, but it’s about class solidarity,” the 35-year-old congresswoman told the crowd on Saturday.

“She would make a good presidential candidate,” Lesley Henderson, a former Republican supporter, told AFP.

Depressed by the news since January, the 52-year-old nursing assistant was attending the first political rally of her life with her husband. “I just hope it’s not too late,” she said, alarmed by Trump’s talk about ruling an unconstitutional third term.

“If no-one’s standing up and saying anything now, what makes us think that there might even be midterms, or a next presidential election?”



A woman casts her vote during the presidential runoff election in Quito yesterday. (AFP)

Ecuador votes in razor-tight runoff

AFP
Quito

Ecuadorans were voting yesterday in a too-close-to-call presidential election that pits incumbent Daniel Noboa against a charismatic leftist challenger, after a campaign plagued by drug-related violence.

The 37-year-old president narrowly won February’s first round, but not by enough to avoid another duel against a resurgent Luisa Gonzalez, who is bidding to become Ecuador’s first woman president.

The election has been dominated by anger over the lacklustre economy and cartel violence that has transformed Ecuador from one of the safest countries in Latin America into the most deadly. In the volcano-ringed capital Quito, early voters wrapped up against the Andean morning chill and flocked to the polling stations. In total about 13.7mn Ecuadorans are obliged to vote.

“I think Ecuador is divided, but I think we all understand we are in a situation where we have to unite, whoever is leading the government” said 21-year-old architecture student Camila Medina. On the eve of the ballot, Noboa declared a 60-day state of emergency in the capital and several provinces, underscoring the tense state of affairs.

This once-peaceful nation averaged a killing every hour at the start of the year, as cartels vied

for control over cocaine routes that pass through Ecuador’s ports. Noboa, the guitar-strumming son of a billionaire banana magnate, has staked his political fortunes on “iron fist” security policies designed to snuff out the gangs.

He has deployed the military to the streets, captured drug capos and invited the United States to send special forces.

By contrast, 47-year-old single mother Gonzalez has pitched herself as a political everywoman, born to a humble family and laser-focused on improving the lot of poor Ecuadorans.

She may have a growing constituency. Rampant bloodshed has spooked investors and tourists alike, fuelling economic malaise and swelling the ranks of Ecuador’s poor to 28% of the population. Ecuador faces two very different paths depending on which candidate wins.

A Noboa win would likely see him double down on hardline security policies and further nurture a budding bromance with US President Donald Trump.

If Gonzalez wins, it would signal a sharp shift to the left and a likely cooling of Ecuador’s relations with the United States.

Gonzalez is closely allied with ex-president Rafael Correa, who delighted in lobbying barbs at Washington during his decade in office. He now lives in exile in Belgium, avoiding a corruption conviction he claims is politically motivated. He remains a deeply polarising figure in his homeland.

Separatists kill 8 Pakistanis in Iran

Separatists killed eight Pakistanis in Iran, Islamabad said yesterday, across the border from Pakistan’s Balochistan province where there are regular deadly attacks.

Pakistan has been battling a decades-long insurgency in Balochistan, which militant groups claim is being exploited by outsiders, with wealth from its natural resources siphoned off with little benefit to the local population. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif yesterday condemned the “brutal killings of eight Pakistanis”, calling on Tehran to “immediately arrest the culprits, give them appropriate punishment, and make the reasons behind this brutal act public”.

The Baloch Nationalist Army (BNA), a Pakistani separatist group, and Jaish al-Adl (Arabic for Army of Justice), a Baloch jihadist group that is based in Pakistan but is also active in Iran, claimed responsibility for the attack. The eight men killed were from Pakistan’s most populous province, Punjab, according to the Associated Press of Pakistan news agency.

Armed separatists in the area have in recent months intensified attacks on workers from other provinces, particularly Punjabis who are viewed as having strong links to the military.

Russian strike on Ukraine’s Sumy city centre kills 34

AFP
Sumy

A Russian missile strike yesterday in the city centre of Ukraine’s city of Sumy killed at least 34 people, Kyiv said, with European and US officials condemning the attack — one of the deadliest in months.

Kyiv said Moscow hit the northeastern city, close to the Russian border, with two ballistic missiles yesterday morning and that the attack also wounded nearly 120 people.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, stressing that the attack occurred on Palm Sunday, flayed the attack.

US President Donald Trump’s special envoy to Ukraine, retired lieutenant general Keith Kellogg, said on X that the attack by Russian forces on civilian targets “crosses any line of decency”.

The strike came two days after US envoy Steve Witkoff travelled to Russia to meet with President Vladimir Putin and push Trump’s efforts to end the war.

The local emergency service in its latest bulletin that 34 people died, including two children, and 117 were wounded, including 15 children.

That revised upwards a previous toll of 32 dead and 99 wounded.

Bodies were seen covered in silver sheets at the scene of the strike in the centre of the city, with a destroyed trolleybus. Rescuers worked through the rubble of a building.

The head of Ukraine’s GUR military intelligence, Kyrylo Budanov, said on Telegram that Russia used two Iskander-M/KN-23 ballistic missiles on Sumy.

One woman told AFP she heard two explosions.

“A lot of people were very badly injured. A lot of corpses,” she said, struggling to speak.

It was the second Russian attack this month to cause a large civilian death toll.

Trump has previously voiced anger at Moscow for “bombing like crazy” in Ukraine.

Zelensky called on the United States and Europe to give a “strong response” to Russia, adding: “Talking has never stopped ballistic missiles and bombs.”

French leader Emmanuel Macron said the strike showed Russia’s “blatant disregard for human lives, international law and the diplomatic efforts of President Trump”.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he was “appalled” by the attack, which Italian counterpart Giorgia Meloni described as a “cowardly” act by Russia.

The fact the bloodshed fell on Palm Sunday outraged several leaders.

It was “a barbaric attack, made even more vile as people gathered peacefully to celebrate Palm Sunday,” European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said on X.

“The Russian version of a ceasefire. Bloody

Palm Sunday,” said Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, while Danish leader Mette Frederiksen said the “missile attack on civilians gathered on Palm Sunday... shows Russia’s true face”.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said the killing “as many people made their way to prayer on Palm Sunday” demonstrated that “Putin underscores with blood that he seeks not peace but destruction”.

Dutch premier Dick Schoof urged more air defences “so that Ukraine can defend itself against this violence”.

Russia did not immediately comment on the strike. Moscow has refused a US-proposed unconditional ceasefire in Ukraine.

Local authorities in Sumy published footage of bodies strewn on the street and people running for safety, with cars on fire and wounded civilians on the ground.



A Ukrainian rescuer works to extinguish a fire at the site of a missile attack in Sumy, northeastern Ukraine, yesterday. (AFP)

Trump plans separate levy on exempted electronics

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said yesterday that smartphones, computers and some other electronics, just exempted from steep tariffs on imports from China, would face separate new duties along with semiconductors within the next two months.

Lutnick’s comments on ABC’s *This Week* on critical technology products were the latest twist in President Donald Trump’s tariff plans, which have upended the global trading order and rolled financial markets since they were announced on April 2, which Trump branded as “Liberation Day.”

Late on Friday the Trump administration granted exclusions from the steep reciprocal tariffs on smartphones and a set of other electronics products, which was seen as a big break for technology firms such as Apple and Dell Technologies that rely on imports from China. Lutnick’s comments yesterday suggested that reprieve won’t last long.

Trump’s back-and-forth on tariffs has ratcheted up the uncertainty faced by investors and businesses, prompting the wildest swings on Wall Street since the Covid pandemic of 2020. The benchmark Standard & Poor’s 500 index is down more than 10% since Trump took office on January 20. Lutnick said Trump would enact “a special focus-type of tariff” on smartphones, computers and other electronics products in a month or two, alongside sectoral tariffs targeting semiconductors and pharmaceuticals. The new duties would fall outside Trump’s so-called reciprocal tariffs, under which levies on Chinese imports climbed to 125% this week, he said.

“He’s saying they’re exempt from the reciprocal tariffs, but they’re included in the semiconductor tariffs, which are coming in probably a month or two,” Lutnick said in the interview on ABC, predicting that the levies would bring production of those products to the United States. “These are things that are national security, that we need to be made in America.”

Lutnick’s comments appeared to go beyond what was communicated on Saturday, when a White House official told media that Trump would launch a new national security trade investigation into semiconductors soon that could lead to other new tariffs.

Beijing increased its own tariffs on US imports to 125% on Friday in response. Yesterday, before Lutnick’s comments, China said it was evaluating the impact of the exclusions for the technology products implemented late on Friday.

“The bell on a tiger’s neck can only be untied by the person who tied it,” China’s Ministry of Commerce said.

Billionaire investor Bill Ackman, who endorsed Trump’s run for president but who has criticised the tariffs, on Sunday called on him to pause the broad and steep reciprocal tariffs on China for three months, as Trump did for most countries last week.

If Trump paused Chinese tariffs for 90 days and cut them to 10% temporarily, “he would achieve the same objective in causing US businesses to relocate their supply chains from China without the disruption and risk,” Ackman wrote on X.

Sven Henrich, founder and lead market strategist for NorthmanTrader, was harshly critical

of how the tariff issue was being handled yesterday.

“Sentiment check: The biggest rally of the year would come on the day Lutnick gets fired,” Henrich wrote on X. “I suggest the administration figures out who controls the message, whatever it is, as it changes every day. US business can’t plan or invest with the constant back and forth.”

US Senator Elizabeth Warren, a Democrat, criticised the latest revision to Trump’s tariff plan, which economists have warned could dent economic growth and fuel inflation.

“There is no tariff policy — only chaos and corruption” Warren said on ABC’s *This Week*.

In a notice to shippers late on Friday, the US Customs and Border Protection agency published a list of tariff codes excluded from the import taxes. It featured 20 product categories, including computers, laptops, disc drives, semiconductor devices, memory chips and flat panel displays. For the Chinese imports, the exclusion of the tech products applies only to Trump’s reciprocal tariffs, which reached 125% this week. Trump’s prior 20% duties on all Chinese imports that he said were related to the fentanyl crisis remain in place.

In an interview on NBC’s *Meet the Press*, White House trade adviser Peter Navarro said the United States has opened an invitation to China to negotiate, but he criticised China’s connection to the lethal fentanyl supply chain and did not include it on a list of seven entities — the United Kingdom, the European Union, India, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Israel — with which he said the administration was in talks.



Amir, Indonesian president discuss ways to foster ties

From Page 1

Prabowo expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation to His Highness the Amir for the warm welcome and generous hospitality, expressing his keenness to bolster bilateral co-operation and development relations, elevating them to broader horizons across all fields.

The two sides agreed to equally establish a joint \$4bn investment fund.

The talks addressed bilateral relations and ways to foster them across various fields, particularly in the areas of economy and investment.

Also on the table were regional and international issues of common concern.

The talks session was attended by HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, HE the Amiri Diwan Chief Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Khulaifi, HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman al-Thani, and HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Khulaifi, alongside several senior officials.

The Indonesian side was represented by Minister of Foreign Affairs Sugiono, Minister of Defence Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin, Minister of Investment and Downstream Rosan Perkasa Roeslani, Minister of Culture Fadli Zon, and Minister of Housing and Settlement Areas Maruarar Sirait, along with other senior officials accompanying the president.

His Highness the Amir and the Indonesian president held a one-on-one discussion on the latest regional and international developments and joint efforts to promote peace and stability.

They also attended the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the governments of the two countries on strategic dialogue.

His Highness the Amir hosted a luncheon banquet in honour of the president and his accompanying delegation.

Prabowo was accorded an official reception ceremony upon arriving at the Amiri Diwan.

Amir: Held constructive talks with Indonesian president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani affirmed that he held constructive talks with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, underscoring the joint efforts of both countries to fully harness their shared potential in pursuit of common aspirations and to broaden the scope of co-operation.

In a post on his official account on X, His Highness the Amir stated that he met Subianto in Doha, where they discussed prospects for expanding the bilateral partnership.

The discussions also touched on enhancing economic ties through increased trade exchange and investment opportunities.

His Highness the Amir further noted that the strong and steadily growing relations between Qatar and Indonesia continue to deepen, with both nations committed to advancing their co-operation to new heights. – QNA

Qatar and Indonesia launch strategic dialogue

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani and Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to launch a strategic dialogue between Qatar and Indonesia yesterday in Doha, marking a milestone in the deepening bilateral relationship.

The signing of the MoU took place on the sidelines of the official visit of Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto to Qatar.

The strategic dialogue underscores the strength of the bilateral relationship and highlights mutually beneficial opportunities to deepen co-operation in areas of shared interest, marking a new chapter in the partnership between the two countries.

This includes deepening collaboration in a range of key sectors, including but not limited to areas of political co-operation on international and regional issues of mutual interest, advancing security, defence, and counter-terrorism efforts and enhancing economic co-operation, particularly in trade, investment, alongside fostering greater cultural exchange, building cultural bridges, and strengthening people-to-people connections.

Qatar and Indonesia believe their strong and historic mutual partnership will benefit the interests of both countries elevating their bilateral relationship into higher level of co-operation. – QNA



Indonesian president ends Doha visit



Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto left Doha yesterday after an official visit to the country. He and the accompanying delegation were seen off at Hamad International Airport by HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani and Indonesian ambassador Ridwan Hassan. – QNA